

Victory Times



Telling the United States Forces - Iraq story

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USF-I service members celebrate Women's History Month

Story by Sgt. Kenneth Bince
49th Military Police Brigade-Public Affairs

With the theme of "Writing Woman Back into History," United States Forces-Iraq celebrated National Women's History Month during a ceremony March 3 at Camp Victory, Iraq.

More than 50 service members and civilians gathered at the Al Faw Palace for the event to highlight women's contributions and achievements in world history.

Upon completion of the invocation by 49th Military Police Brigade chaplain, Lt. Col. Daniel Viveros, and the national anthem, event organizers showed an eight-minute video highlighting women in the U.S. Armed Forces and Iraqi Police Force.

"Growing out of a small-town school event in California, Women's History Month is a celebration of women's contributions to history, culture and society," said Master Sgt. Steve Melton, the event's master of ceremonies. "The United States observes it annually throughout the month of March."

One month prior to the women's history event, an essay contest was held and the winner was asked to read their essay during the ceremony. 1st Lt. Kristen Johnson, 472nd Signal Company's executive officer, won top honors and read her

essay that incorporated works of literature with the current accomplishments of women in the military.

Four women guest speakers talked about a variety of experiences and historic women figures. Spc. Jakeya French, 49th MP Brigade human resources specialist, spoke about her

experience of witnessing the first class of women Iraqi Police officers that graduated Nov. 10, 2009.

Sergeant Deleal Gladney, 49th MP Bde. human resources sergeant, talked about four women in her family who played pivotal roles in her personal development as a woman and as a Soldier.

Maj. Teresa James, 151st Military Police Battalion executive officer, spoke about a special group of women in the history of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Lioness team, and how they changed the face of the combat Soldier.

"The Lioness team originated out of the necessity of the need to search the Iraqi women during missions," said James. "Mechanics, signal Soldiers and administrative clerks were assembled, trained and conducted side-by-side

operations with Army and Marine combat units.

"These women went beyond their scope of their trained



Graphic by Senior Airman Luis Loza Gutierrez

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Happy Groundhog Day, Again

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Leonard Higgins
Garrison Chaplain

Have you ever seen the movie "Groundhog Day" with Bill Murray?

In the movie, actor Bill Murray plays Phil, an arrogant, Scrooge-like weather forecaster who spends the night in Punxsutawney, Penn., where he is to do a broadcast the next day about the annual ritual of the coming out of the groundhog.

He wakes up the next morning, does his story and is annoyed to discover that he is trapped in Punxsutawney for a second night because of a snowstorm that comes in after the groundhog ceremony.

When he wakes up in his room the next morning, to his amazement, it is the morning of the day before all over again. Everything that happened to him the previous day all happens again. This goes on day after day with the same events repeating themselves like a broken record.

If he does nothing different, events will repeat themselves

as they were on the original day. But if he changes his behavior, people will respond to his new actions, opening up all kinds of possibilities for playing with the unfolding of events. Either way, with each "new" day, he alone remembers what happened in previous editions of the same day.

The movie shows us a personality who is like the worst in ourselves. Murray's character is arrogant and sarcastic, absorbed in his own discomforts, without hope, and cut off from other people. Like us, he finds himself in a perplexing situation—a plaything of fate. But, unlike us, he gets the

bonus of being stuck in the same day until he gets it right.

In telling this story, the movie hits on a message that expresses an important truth. When we get beyond denial and resentment

When we get beyond denial and resentment over the conditions of our life, and accept our situation, it tells us—life ceases to be a problem and we can become authentic and compassionate.

over the conditions of our life, and accept our situation, it tells us—life ceases to be a problem and we can become authentic and compassionate.

When you wake up tomorrow, think before your feet hit the floor: what lessons has the monotony of each day taught me, and how can I apply those lessons to this day.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT RESPONSE AND PREVENTION POINT OF THE WEEK



From the USF-I SHARP Team: Consent is a choice in which an individual agrees by free will to engage in sexual acts. Because a person is in a current relationship or had previously been in a relationship does not mean that person automatically consents to sexual activity. Your USF-I SARC team is available 24/7.

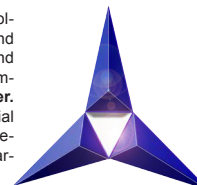
Call the USF-I Deployed Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (DSARC) at 485-5085 or 435-2235 for help. Army members should seek assistance with their Unit Victim Advocate (UVA) or DSARC.



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specialties to accomplish the mission,” she said.

The PBS documentary “Lioness, There for the Action, Missing from History” was televised Nov. 13, 2008, and chronicles five members of the team, said James.

Colonel Grace Edinboro, deputy commander, 49th MP Bde., focused on prominent women in world history.

“Perhaps there is not the need to write women back into history, but include the study of significant women in our history, something Women’s History Month encourages us to do,” she said.

“I’m happy with how the event turned out,” said Brig. Gen. Donald J. Currier, 49th MP Bde. commander. “The speakers were interesting, passionate, articulate and informative. I think we all learned something about women in history this evening. When you think about it, we have a lot of female service members making history right here, right now. I’m proud of every one of them.”



Photo by Sgt. Kenneth Bince

Col. Grace Edinboro, 49th Military Police Brigade deputy commander, quizzes the crowd who attended the Women’s History Month event at Al Faw Palace about prominent women figures in history. Edinboro spoke about the adversity many women still face in many cultures and nations throughout the world.



U.S. aids Iraqi prosthetics lab

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Dan Yarnall
United States Forces-Iraq Public Affairs

A team of medical professionals with United States Forces-Iraq traveled to the Al Muthanna district in Baghdad to visit with some colleagues and friends established through a medical partnership between the U.S. and Iraq.

The team, led by USF-I Deputy Surgeon Col. Theresa Schneider, visited the Al Muthanna Artificial Limb and Physical Therapy Center March 2, to transfer extra physical rehabilitation supplies. For some of the team it would be their last visit. They made the trip to witness the progress made by their Iraqi counterparts and say goodbye before heading back to the U.S. with I Corps.

In 2005, members of the 353rd Civil Affairs Command identified a need to help the Iraqi medical community in Baghdad with improved prosthetics capabilities. Soon after, the U.S. Army Surgeon General's office set up a team with the mission of establishing a working relationship between the U.S. and Iraq that would aid Iraq in the prosthetics and physical therapy medical fields.

Improved medical technology allowed the Iraqis to take a huge step forward in 2008. The U.S. provided the center with a computer aided design system and computer aided manufacturing system to produce prosthetics. The machinery vastly improved their production of prosthetics parts for Iraqis who had lost a limb.

"Before we received this system we did things the old-fashion way of molding prosthetics by hand," said Maj. Adel Dassim, Assistant Director for the Center. "Now we have the technology of scanning and having a computer create the mold for a patient."

The "old-fashion" way consisted of an artist who would measure, draw, and create a mold by hand and then



Iraqi military doctor, Maj. Adel Classim, displays prosthetics parts to Soldiers of United States Forces-Iraq when medical personnel from USF-I visited the Center on March 2 to provide their Iraqi counterparts with some additional medical material. USF-I has a long history of support to the center and its ability to provide services to the Iraqi people.

construct a prosthetic part for the patient. It would often take two or three tries to get the part right. In contrast, the computer aided design system scans the patient's body part and sends the data the computer aided manufacturing system that cuts a precise mold of that part, which is then fitted with the correct prosthetic part.

Schneider explained that even though this U.S. and Iraqi partnership may have started out as more mentoring and training, they are all now associates on the same professional level, "standing shoulder to shoulder as partners."

"In a crawl, walk, run phase, they are definitely in the run phase in the prosthetics side for the Ministry of Defense and we are standing by to provide that expert level of collaboration, coordination, and consultation," said Schneider.

In supplying the Al Muthanna Artificial Limb and Physical Therapy Center with the most up-to-date medical supplies and technology, and by sharing medical knowledge, the U.S. has established a

true partnership.

"By what the U.S. Forces have done, they have proven they are more than just a friend. We appreciate what they have done for the Iraqi people," said Dassim.

Lt. Col. Erica Clarkson, USF-I medical civil military operations officer, had extra physical therapy equipment that the clinic could put to good use. She gave the clinic an assortment of individual exercise tools that patents could use at home.

"This will really benefit the patients, you can teach them how to do physical therapy at home and they can continue to do their rehab program without having to travel to the clinic," Clarkson said.

As Schneider looks forward to heading out of Iraq, she said she will remember her role in what the U.S. has accomplished by assisting the Iraqi medical community.

"It's absolutely gratifying. You go home saying, 'here's a great example of the good that the partnership between the Iraqis and the Americans have created,'" Schneider said.

MORALE DOG HELPS SOLDIERS

Story by Spc. Britney Bodner
United States Forces-Iraq Public Affairs

"Every unit should have a morale dog when they deploy, not only for Soldiers' morale but to reduce stress and in turn suicide rates," said Staff Sgt. Arlyce Baty, retention officer and equal opportunity leader with the 49th Military Police Brigade.

Sophie, an Australian Shepherd mix, performs this duty for service members without fail when visiting areas on Victory Base Complex, Baghdad.

The journey to bring her to Iraq began when Brig. Gen. Donald Currier, 49th MP commander, conducted a site visit with their 93rd MPs Battalion.

Currier said the 93rd had a therapy dog and suggested they bring one to Iraq to help Soldier morale and mental health.

"I watched the dog interact with the Soldiers as they returned to the forward operating base from missions and was very impressed with how well the dog provided a distraction from the stress of their operational duties," Currier said.

"When we returned from our site visit in May of 2009, I asked my staff to research the Army's program on therapy dogs and to try to procure one for the Headquarters and Headquarters Company Unit Ministry Team," said Currier.

A county animal shelter in California gave Sophie to the unit and she was placed in Baty's care.

Baty said Sophie was originally supposed to be with the chaplain so she could help him with Soldiers having a hard time on deployment, but it was decided that Sophie would be more effective with the equal opportunity leader.



Maj Robert Paoletti, chief of operations for the 49th MPs, and Sophie play a game of fetch.

However, after some research the staff recommended that they pursue obtaining a morale dog instead of a therapy dog. "Army regulations restrict the use of therapy dogs to mental health professionals working within a combat stress center," said Currier.

Baty said the leadership wanted Sophie to be able to interact with all Soldiers, and a morale dog better fit that goal.

Many obstacles came with the decision to bring Sophie into theater as a morale dog.

The effort to bring Sophie was endorsed by all levels of leadership, but the question was how to get her to Iraq, said Capt. Charles Stone, trial counsel with the 49th MP Bde.

Morale dogs are authorized by the regulations, but only Military working dogs are authorized on Air Force flights, Stone said.

While training for deployment at Fort Dix, N.J. all of Sophie's veterinarian visits were taken care of and she was certified as a therapy dog from Therapy Dogs International, he said.

"As a certified therapy dog, the brigade received an exception to policy from the Air Force to travel on a military flight," Stone said.

General Order No. 1, which prohibits the adoption of any type of domestic or wild animal as a pet or mascot, became another obstacle because it created several opinions that any animal was a violation of the regulations. However, when the 49th MPs submitted an exception to the policy, the Staff Judge Advocate accepted the request to allow Sophie to travel to Iraq, Stone said.

Baty said that all of the work to get Sophie here has been worth the effort.

"Sophie's duties include spending time with Soldiers who need a distraction from their issues at home and in theater, including consoling those Soldiers who have lost a teammate to injury or death," said Currier.

"I am thankful that we have Sophie as she has been a tremendous benefit to the Soldiers in our HHC and all those Soldiers from our subordinate units that interact with her," he said.

Stone added, "This was one of the best things we were able to accomplish for the troops. You can see how Sophie and the Soldiers interact and how having her reduces stress and helps with overall military readiness and fitness."

VICTORY VOICES

MARCH MADNESS



What team is going to win the NCAA Championship?



Spc. Michel Diamond

“Duke’s going to win simply because they are the Blue Devils.”



Spc. Timothy Noonan

“Ohio is the heart of it all. And nothing can beat a buckeye, it’s a poisonous nut.”



Aundrey Barnes
DoD civilian

“I’m picking Georgetown, they’re the dark horse. Things are kind of shaky for them right now, but they’ll come through.”



Maj. Harold Anderson

“I like the Ohio State Buckeyes to win the National Championship. They have the best player in college basketball in Evan Turner. They will win a National Championship. Go Buckeyes.”



Maj. Brian D. Alverson Jr

“The NCAA tournament is about the Cinderella story; it’s about the Butlers and the Ganzagas, But in the end the Kentucky Wildcats will win the tournament.”



Sgt. Montaveous Thomas

“Duke is just an awesome team and I would especially like to see them beat North Carolina, go Blue Devils.”

Engaged leaders make safety a priority

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Roger Dey
United States Forces-Iraq Public Affairs

When Lt. Col. Robert Menti, commander of III Corps Special Troops Battalion, calls his unit to attention they sound off with the motto, "I can save my own life! Phantom Warriors!"

Menti, a veteran of six deployments, thinks that's a pretty important statement and feels that personal responsibility by Soldiers is the first line of defense for ensuring their safety.

"We push the individual responsibility for the choices that individuals make," he said. "A lot of times Soldiers will not realize they stepped into a big pile of trouble until it's too late. That's why we talk about taking responsibility for your own actions."

While Soldiers have a personal responsibility, Menti also said that the leaders need to be engaged and know their Soldiers and ensure they are doing the right thing.

"We expect first line leaders to do monthly counseling with their Soldiers so that there is a dialogue that includes safety," he said, adding that such counseling sessions are part of the Soldier care process where first-line leaders really get to know their Soldiers.

Menti expects leaders in his battalion to get to know their Soldiers on a personal level. It's part of a policy of engaged leadership for risk management and accident prevention that Lt. Gen Robert Cone, III Corps commanding general and United States Forces-Iraq deputy commanding general for operations put out to the Fort Hood Soldiers in November. It places the responsibility on leaders to know their troops, work to understand where a Soldier might go wrong, and help them to stay safe.

For Sgt. Maj. Timothy Livengood, the USF-I

Special Troops Battalion sergeant major, influencing Soldiers to be safe is something that should be done on a daily basis, just by working with Soldiers and letting them know what's right.

"First and foremost it's your presence." Livengood said. "Your presence more than anything shows the Soldier what's important to you. You might tell them something, but if you're not checking on it, they have that inherent tendency to go 'Oh, that's probably not that important. It's just lip service.' But if you're down in the motor pool checking on things: are they properly licensed on the vehicle that they're using? Are they wearing the proper PPE? That shows the Soldier it's important to you."

Menti said he and Livengood both work to make sure they are helping to keep Soldiers safe by coaching, teaching and mentoring company commanders, first sergeants and first-line leaders about the importance of getting involved.

Livengood said that to be a leader, dedicated to keeping Soldiers safe, you sometimes have help other leaders set the example.

"I think using that general military authority, not necessarily laid on by an individual's immediate supervisor, you should say 'hey, something that you're doing here is unsafe: You're not wearing a vest, where's your battle buddy, why are you hanging out here in a dark area?'" Livengood said.

Engaged leadership is not just about making corrections, he said. It is about training and mentoring your Soldiers to be future leaders so not only do they know what right looks like, but they will do the right thing when no one else is around.

Operating Hours

Coalition Cafe DFAC
Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Dinner 5 - 9 p.m.
Midnight Dining 11 p.m. - 1 a.m.

Sports Oasis DFAC
Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Dinner 5 - 9 p.m.

Education Center
8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Camp Liberty Post Exchange
8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Fitness Center
Open 24 Hours

Victory Main Post Office
Monday-Sunday 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Saturday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

USF-I Unit Mail Room
Customer Services/Mail Call:
3-6 p.m.

Al Faw Palace Post Office
Wednesday and Sunday
12:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Golby TMC Sick Call
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Dental Sick Call
Monday - Friday 7:30 - 10:30 a.m.
Saturday 9 - 10:30 a.m.

Mental Health Clinic
Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. - noon

Pharmacy
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon;
1 - 4:30 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon

Notice

To all USF-I personnel:
Remember to apply OPSEC to your e-mails, blogs, Facebook, and other social networking sites.

Use the USF-I and Reduction of Forces critical information lists if you are unsure whether or not it should be posted.

This applies to any time on a NIPR computer or personal computer.

Make sure your families know about OPSEC as well.

Time to get yer green on! St. Patty's day be coming soon and the question begs ta be asked:

Do ya feel lucky?

If ya be, then see if ye can find me pot-a-gold hidden within these very pages!



Insight of Authors, Expansion of Opportunity

Editors note: The following is 1st Lt. Kristen Johnson, 472nd Signal Company, winning essay from the Women's History Month Essay Contest hosted by the 49th Military Police Brigade. It was read aloud in its entirety during the Women's History Month Observance at Al Faw Palace, March 3.

In Alice Walker's novel "The Color Purple," the character Nettie states, "The world is changing. It is no longer a world just for boys and men."

Looking around today's battlefield and serving in this modern military, the same could certainly be observed among our ranks. As a female officer, I wonder if my predecessors of decades and centuries past could have imagined the wide scope of influence, occupation, and skill that women are bringing to the U.S. forces today: the mechanic, the pilot, the Stryker driver, the commo chief, the four-star general.

Though women have served, at least as civilians, in the U.S. Army since 1779, their roles were extremely limited; nursing, sewing, and cooking were the primary functions available for females within a military context.

Charlotte Bronte, through the eyes of Jane Eyre notes, "It is narrow-minded...to say that [women] ought to confine themselves to make puddings and knitting stockings. It is thoughtless to condemn them, or laugh at them, if they seek to do more or learn more than custom has pronounced necessary for their sex."

The U.S. Army seemed to agree during World War II when the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps was formed in 1943, permitting women to enlist and receive commissions. By the time of the Korean War, female Soldiers and officers worked in fields as varied as cryptography, supply, intelligence, and communications. Today, entering a new decade in 2010, the U.S. Army offers 91 percent of its MOSs to females, trains men and women side by side, and has seemingly done the impossible: enabling women's assimilation into the most revered male-dominated institution on earth. Female Soldiers and officers are no longer an anomaly. Women in the U.S.

military are valued members of the team, their efforts devoted to the success of all US missions and the protection of their brothers and sisters in uniform.

Washington Irving's short story "The Wife," speaks to today's military women by saying, "There is in every true woman's heart a spark of heavenly fire, which lies dormant in the broad daylight of prosperity; but which kindles up, and beams, and blazes in the dark hour of adversity."

This spark was evident in the valor of medic Spc. Monica Lin Brown, the 2008 Silver Star recipient who in Afghanistan reacted to an IED and ambush, shielded a peer from small arms fire, and treated 5 wounded Soldiers until their evacuation 30

minutes later. Perhaps the public admiration of such bravery and quiet courage brought to the battlefield by America's daughters accounts for the popularity of books like Holmstedt's best-selling 2007 account "Band of Sisters: American Women at War in Iraq," leading readers into the daily lives of deployed female Marines.

Poet Maya Angelou emphasized, "How important it is to recognize our heroes and our she-ros."

Today's female service members have found both

job opportunities and personal empowerment within the U.S. military. Women are wisely utilizing military programs to earn their civilian education. They prove that having a family while serving our country is doable and sometimes with benefits that civilian women are not afforded. Female NCOs are even mentoring their foreign counterparts, as in the current AFRICOM effort in Liberia, to show women worldwide that they can expand their skills and bolster their confidence as leaders.

Surely the swift progress experienced by women within the U.S. military was launched through a similar partnership with courageous female role models. Renowned author Ayn Rand was quoted as saying, "The ladder of success is best climbed by stepping on the rungs of opportunity."

To those women in uniform of all branches of American service who boldly paved the way for our generation's widespread opportunities, we promise that you are indelibly written into our history forever with great gratitude.



Photo by Sgt. Kenneth Bince

1st Lt. Kristen Johnson, 472nd Signal Company's executive officer, stands beside a poster board displaying her winning essay for Women's History Month.