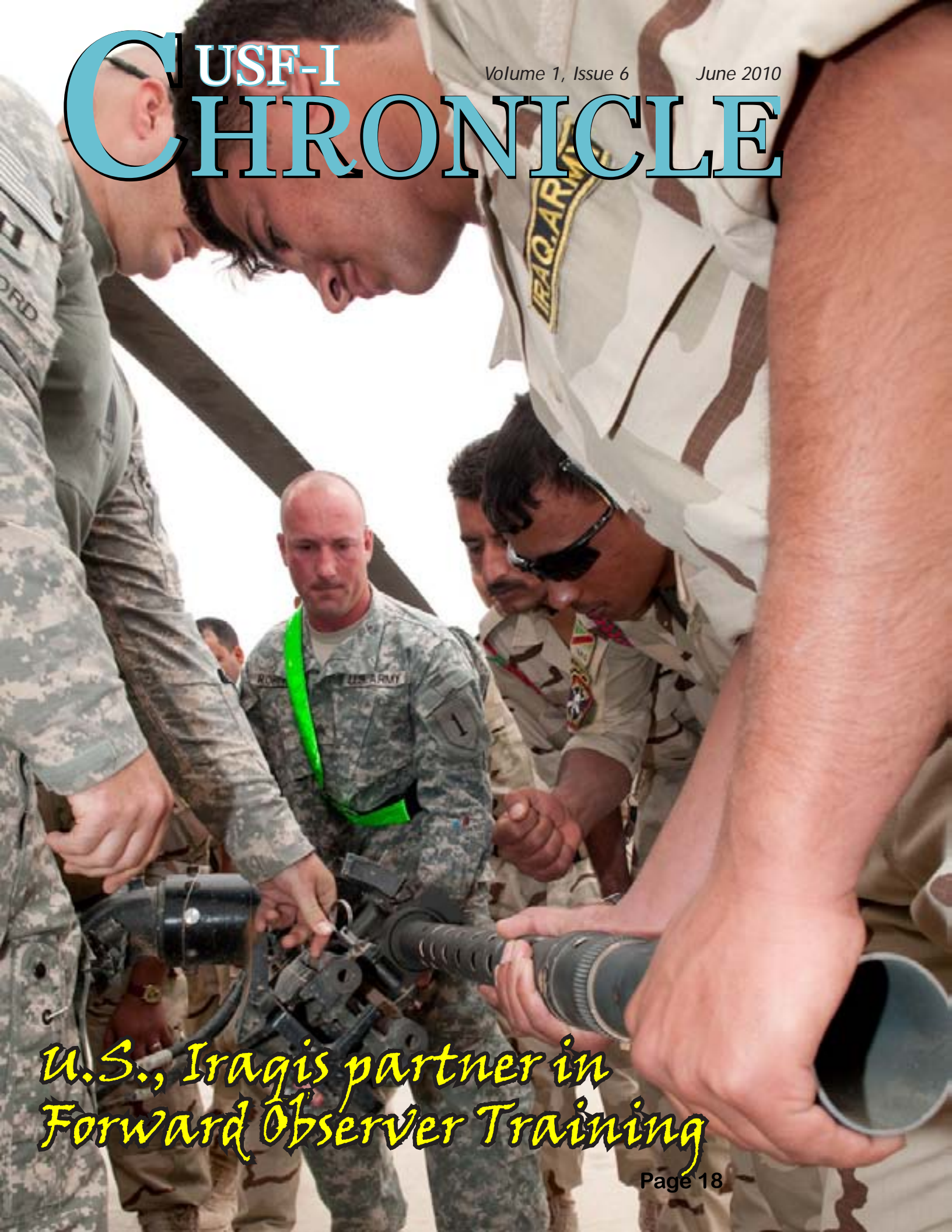


# CUSF-I CHRONICLE

Volume 1, Issue 6

June 2010



*U.S., Iraqis partner in  
Forward Observer Training*



U.S. Soldiers show Iraqi Army scouts how to mount a .50-caliber machine gun on a Kiowa helicopter at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, May 20. The scouts were in day two of a three-day training event for forward observers. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Michael J. MacLeod)



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EOD technicians honor their fallen



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MASCAL exercise held at Joint Base Balad



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USAF helps Iraqi Air Force rebuild

# USF-I CHRONICLE

The Official Magazine of  
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# New Riverine Squadron Gets Feet Wet in Basra

*Story and photos by  
Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Smith  
USD-S Public Affairs*

FEATURE UP FRONT

Sailors from Detachment 2, Riverine Squadron 1, currently on a six-month deployment out of Little Creek, Va., pass under a bridge on the Karmat Al-Ali Waterway in southern Iraq, May 26.

**BASRA, Iraq** – The river delta of southern Iraq is the livelihood for many Iraqis in the area, providing important waterways for commerce and the main source of irrigation for farmers.

Recognizing the importance of these river highways, Riverine Squadron 1 began their six-month deployment from Little Creek, Va., in early May with their main focus on securing these routes.

U.S. Navy Lt. Gregory Roberts, officer-in-charge of Detachment 2, RIVRON 1, from Houston, said his Sailors' mission is more multifaceted than simply patrolling the waterways.

"We have several missions," Roberts said. "One of them is doing [counter indirect-fire] patrols on the waterways, and we have other missions like training Iraqis."

Working with the Iraqis, some of their other missions involve going ashore to pursue enemies, recovering downed aircraft, and gathering intelligence on the areas around the

river.

Roberts, who is on his second deployment with the squadron, said that while his unit has only had its current mission for less than two weeks, the squadron is well-prepared.

Petty Officer 3rd Class Derek Washington, a gunner's mate from Saint Mary's County, Md., and on his first deployment, said he is happy to be a part of a unique group, many of whom are on their second or third deployment.

"I had a small idea of what [Riverines] did and I volunteered for it," Washington said. "Toward the end of A-School, I found out I ended up making it. When I found out, I was excited; instead of going to the regular fleet, I was going to do something more specialized."

"I'm glad to be here, and I feel like I'm well-prepared to do what I was trained to do," he said.

Part of the preparation the Riverines went through before deployment included conducting

contact drills on rivers at Fort Knox, Ky., and Fort Pickett, Va., similar to how they would respond to contact in Iraq.

Roberts said the training has paid off, as indirect-fire incidents from near the rivers are virtually non-existent when the Riverines are conducting patrols.

While the counter-IDF mission is important for the security of both U.S. forces and Iraqis, the Riverines also work with their Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police counterparts to ensure that they are prepared to take over the river security mission when U.S. forces are no longer present.

Roberts said his detachment works with the Iraqi Army's 52nd Brigade to accomplish this mission.

As the Sailors made their way down the river toward an Iraqi Army outpost to meet with an officer about the upcoming missions for RIVRON 1, Roberts said he felt good about the day's mission.

"It's a great day to be a Riverine," he said.

Sailors of Detachment 2, Riverine Squadron 1 set out on patrol of the Karmat Al-Ali Waterway in southern Iraq, May 26. The Riverines deployed out of Little Creek, Va.



Below: **Petty Officer 2nd Class Ben Clemens**, an engineer with Detachment 2, Riverine Squadron 1 from Sachse, Texas, scans his sector while on patrol on southern Iraq's Karmat Al-Ali Waterway, May 26. Since the Riverines began patrolling the river, indirect-fire incidents from near the water have reduced dramatically.



**U.S. Navy Lt. Gregory Roberts**, officer-in-charge of Detachment 2, Riverine Squadron 1 from Houston, speaks with an Iraqi Army officer while on patrol on southern Iraq's Karmat Al-Ali Waterway, May 26. In addition to countering indirect-fire attacks, the Riverines work with the Iraqi Army's 52nd Brigade and the Iraqi Police Service River Police to secure Basra Province's waterways.

# EOD Technicians Gather to Remember Their Fallen

Story and Photos by  
Sgt. 1st Class Roger Dey  
USF-I Public Affairs



Identification tags representing the 16 EOD technicians who died in 2009 hang from a cross during a memorial ceremony at Al Faw Palace, Baghdad, May 1. Senior NCOs from each branch of service represented in Task Force Troy added the 16 to 238 sets of ID tags engraved with the names of all the EOD techs who have fallen in the line of duty since the declaration of World War II.

Sixteen sets of dog tags were hanging from a small wooden cross near the center of the Al Faw Palace conference room, May 1. As the names on each set were read, the tags were taken off the cross and added to more than 200 sets already hanging from the M16 in a combat memorial set up a few paces away.

As the dog tags were draped on the rifle, the explosives ordnance disposal technicians, who had gathered from throughout Iraq, made a simple promise that echoed off the marble covered walls of the room.

“We remember!”

The event was timed to coincide with the annual ceremony at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, during which the names of the EOD technicians who have died in the line of duty around the world in the last year are added to the wall of the national EOD Memorial.

Rear Admiral Frank A. Morneau, deputy director for operations, DJ-3 United States Forces-Iraq, drove home the significance of the event to the young technicians who were attending the event for the first time.

“Your life as an EOD technician will change tonight,” said Morneau, who has been an explosives ordnance disposal expert since 1987.

“These people died too young. They should have been my age. They sacrificed way too young,” Morneau said. “Our job is to keep their spirit alive. Our job is to make sure we do remember, every day, in our own way.”

The message was not lost on Army 1st Lt. Jarod Pugh from Montgomery Ala., the newest member of the EOD community in Iraq.

“It makes it real,” said Pugh, who graduated from EOD technician school in December. “It lets you know what can happen out there, what really can happen. It’s proof of the dangers and the hazards that EOD



Gunnery Sgt. Jimmy V. Callins, noncommissioned officer-in-charge of Task Force Troy’s combined explosives exploitation cell, reads the ID tags of one of the eight Marine EOD technicians who died in the line of duty since April 2009.

techs face day after day over here.”

Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Joseph W. May, from Gibbstown N.J., with Task Force Troy has been in EOD for 20 years. He’s no stranger to memorial ceremonies like this, nor is he a stranger to seeing the names of people he knew added to the memorial.

“In my EOD class we had about 20 guys graduate. We lost two of those guys over the years, one in the first Gulf War, one out on a range clearance on Twenty-Nine Palms.”

This year May’s involvement in the ceremony was both symbolic and personal.

“Adam Ginnet was probably one of my better friends,” May said, referring to Tech. Sgt. Adam Ginnet, of Knightdale, N.C., who lost his life in an IED explosion in Afghanistan in January. “I’ve tried to steer Adam the right way on some things in his life and even tried to steer him in his career. When his career and life was cut short it was devastating.”

As the senior Air Force non-commissioned officer with Task Force Troy, it fell to May to add the

four sets of Air Force dog tags to the combat memorial, placing them on the weapon at the same time the names were added to the wall of the EOD memorial in Florida.

“The exact time that they were putting the names on the wall down in Florida, was the same time we were putting the tags on the weapon,” May said. “It allowed us to be there even though we weren’t.”

“I was placing the Air Force ones on there and I knew three of those (Airmen) well,” he said. “I could see my hand just shaking. I was upset. But it felt good that I was honoring them.”

“That’s the point of the whole ceremony, to show that we will remember these warriors ... to let everybody know that we’ll remember them and remember their families.”

The EOD memorial at Eglin Air Force base bears the names of all the EOD school graduates, in all four branches of the military, who lost their lives on active duty since the declaration of World War II. As of May 1, that number now stands at 254.



An etched-glass memorial plaque presented to Rear Adm. Frank Morneau at the EOD memorial ceremony May 1, is examined while being auctioned off to benefit the EOD Memorial Scholarship fund. The plaque earned a winning bid of \$800.

# Balad hosts mass casualty exercise for Iraqi medical professionals



Physicians with the Iraqi Air Force secure a patient to a stretcher during a mass casualty exercise at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, May 20. The physicians are learning how to perform basic medical care, as well as how to teach the information. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Brittany Y. Bateman)

Story by Senior Airman Wes Carter  
332nd AEW Public Affairs

**JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq** - In an effort to increase the capability of local health care, Iraqi medical professionals came to Balad to participate in a mass casualty exercise, May 20.

"Iraqi medical personnel from three different areas (of Iraq) came to the theater hospital to participate in an exercise that evaluates their effectiveness of handling a mass casualty," explained Col. Paul Doan, the 332nd Aerospace Medicine Squadron chief. "They have been coming every three to four weeks for the past six months to train with American medical personnel in an effort to build the capability of their medical response."

The training has the possibility to affect a large percentage of the Iraqi populace. The local physicians are not only getting refreshers on basic medical care, but also learning how to train others.

"Our goal is not to teach them how to do something," Doan said. "We want them to leave here with the ability to teach others."

The opportunity to learn from Air Force medical professionals is not being lost on the 10 Iraqi participants.

"This training is important to them," said Master Sgt. David Smith, independent medical technician with Iraq Training and Advisory Mission - Air Force.

Smith travels throughout the country with the Iraqi doctors to help with training and supply issues that might arise.

"They realize America is sending people over to train them and that we are asking nothing in return," he said. "They want their country to thrive, but while we are here, they want to absorb everything from us."

At this point, the training has

proven to be worthwhile for the students, Smith said. Each scenario has uncovered something new to him.

"They are making progress," Smith said. "There is room for everyone to improve, Iraqi or American. They are doing so each time we practice."

The mass casualty exercise marked the completion of six months of training. Currently, Iraqi physicians are scheduled to train with American health professionals for another six months. Preceding the exercise, the Iraqis received a certificate of completion from Lt. Gen. (Dr.) Charles Green, the Air Force Surgeon General.

Right: A dressing is placed on a patient's arm during a mass casualty exercise at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, May 20. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Brittany Y. Bateman)

Below: Two physicians with the Iraqi Air Force place a dressing on a patient's leg wound during the training event. The physicians are learning how to perform basic medical care, as well as how to teach it to others. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Brittany Y. Bateman)



# Deployed College Students Graduate at Al Faw Palace

Story and photos by  
Spc. Britney Bodner  
USD-N Public Affairs



**Brig. Gen. Donald Currier**, 49th Military Police Brigade commander, gives the commencement address to service members who graduated during the 2009-2010 school year at the 2010 Graduation Ceremony in Al Faw Palace, Camp Victory, May 17.

Service members in cap and gown filled the rotunda in the Al Faw Palace, May 17, waiting to make their journey across the graduation stage.

As their names were called, 70 graduates proudly received a certificate, honoring them for earning their college degree.

The graduates came from across Iraq to participate in the Camp Victory Education Center's 2010 graduation ceremony.

While the service members will receive their diplomas in the mail from their respective colleges, Patricia Davis-Mullins, an education services officer at the Camp Victory Education Center, said it was the military's way to honor their achievement and give them a chance to perform the ceremonial graduate's walk across the stage.

Providing service members a ceremony like they would have at home shows them the military recognizes their accomplishments and supports their efforts to complete their education, said Davis-Mullins.

"It's the touch of being home that we bring to Iraq," she said.

For the students, this ceremony was a meaningful celebration of their educational achievements, which ranged from associate degrees to a doctorate.

"We missed our commencement ceremony back in the states so this means a lot," said Staff Sgt. Renee Villegas, an operating-room technician from Silver City, N.M., assigned to the 28th Combat Support Hospital out of Fort Bragg, N.C.

"I had to accomplish a lot of online distance learning because of my previous deployment of 15 months," Villegas said after receiving her bachelor's degree in applied science. "A little over two years later and I was deployed again."

The graduates received their certificates from Brig. Gen. Donald Currier, the 49th Military Police Brigade commander, who along with Carolyn Baker, the chief of global education center from the Department of Defense, congratulated the service members for continuing their education and earning their degrees while serving in the military.

"Your degree is a wonderful

testament to what you've been through, to what you've accomplished, and what you've learned," Currier said during his address at the ceremony.

Quoting author Christian Larson in his address, he added, "Take pride in how far you have come, and have faith in how far you will go."

1st Lt. John Saindon Jr. from San Antonio, Texas, an Army reservist assigned as an environmental officer with the 13th Expeditionary Sustainment Command based out of Fort Hood, Texas, called the event historic.

"There are Soldiers, Airmen, and Sailors in the middle of Iraq, in Al Faw Palace no less, getting the opportunity to be recognized for their accomplishments," said Saindon, who recently earned his Doctorate of Health Science.

This is the second graduation for service members who have completed their degrees through the Victory Base Complex education centers, online distance-learning programs, or through the GoArmyEd website, said Davis-Mullins. The first was held last year on the same day.

Service members share their excitement with fellow graduates after moving their tassels on their caps to symbolize their commencement during the graduation ceremony in the Al Faw Palace Rotunda at Camp Victory, May 17. Seventy service members who recently earned a college degree were recognized for their achievement during the ceremony.



A tripartite force consisting of 4th Brigade, 1st Iraqi Army Division; Diyala Iraqi Police; and 3rd Peshmerga Brigade Soldiers, along with Soldiers from A Troop, 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, rehearse hot-load training on a CH-47D Chinook helicopter at Contingency Operating Location Cobra, in Salah ad Din Province earlier this year. The Chinook, piloted by a crew from 3rd Battalion, 25th General Support Aviation Battalion, Task Force Hammerhead, was part of an air assault for Operation Chelan III. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Tyrone C. Marshall)



Master Sgt. Brandon Short, Operations Noncommissioned Officer In Charge for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, and a native of Detroit, Mich., fires up the crowd during the BSB Talent Show, May 9. Short acted as Master of Ceremonies for the show, and expressed a belief in the benefits of such activities. "You have to have things like this to break the monotony," said Short. "It was a very motivating, morale-boosting event." (U.S. Army photo by Pvt. Emily V. Knitter)



Minnesota Vikings Cheerleader Lissa Steffen experiences first-hand how it feels to be taken down by a military working dog at the Camp Liberty kennels, May 20, when several Vikings cheerleaders visited Soldiers assigned to 501st Military Police Company, 1st Armored Division. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Phillip Valentine)



Iraqi Air Force Brig. Gen. Nadhem Lefta places his unit insignia patch on the chest of Col. Frank Muth, commander of Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, during a Cinco de Mayo celebration at Camp Taji May 5. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Roland Hale)





**U.S. Army Pfc. Mark Ayers**, "Gun 3" Team, Alpha Battery, 1st Platoon, 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery, stands ready to dispose of spent brass during a artillery live fire qualification range on Memorial Range, Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, May 21. The artillerymen conducted the qualification ranges to keep the fire team's accuracy and timing at it's best. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jason Stewart)

**Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo** (far left), commander of Task Force Marne and **Command Sergeant Major Byron Loyd** (far right), Division Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division command sergeant major, cut a cake with participants of the Task Force Marne Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month Celebration, May 21 at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq. (Courtesy photo)



Above: **U.S. Army Maj. Eric Aguila**, a surgeon assigned to 2nd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment shows a prosthetic leg as part of his class to introduce Iraqi medical personnel to amputation and prosthetics at a local hospital in Abu Ghraib, Baghdad, Iraq May 25. The squadron gave the class in support of Operation Medical Alliance.

**Spc. Michael Burris**, a Fayetteville, N.C., native, and fire service adviser with the Provincial Reconstruction Team – Baghdad, assigned to the 414th Civil Affairs Battalion, U.S. Division – Center, and Iraqi firefighter Kareem Kasim work together to win a three-legged race, May 2, at a campground located in the International Zone. The 72nd Joint Area Support Group sponsored a day of activities for Iraqi Boy and Girl Scouts held at the campground. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Phillip Valentine)



Left: **A young Iraqi girl** enjoys ice cream in a local village near Kirkuk, May 8. U.S. Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division and Bravo Company, 414th Civil Affairs Battalion, visited villages around Kirkuk, meeting and speaking with the locals about current conditions in the area. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Becky Bort)

**Lt. Col. Ross Coffman**, battalion commander of 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, signs paperwork to hand over Joint Security Station Ashura to the Iraqi Army, May 15. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Gregory Gieske)



Airman 1st Class Rodney Jones, of the 732nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, Detachment 2 driver, sits in the turret as he performs a visual check over the vehicle's .50 caliber machine gun. He and his squad members have been on more than 500 missions to aid local Iraqi police. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Allison M. Boehm)



Navy maintenance personnel signal the pilot during pre-flight checks as an A6B-Prowler with the VAQ133 Electronic Attack Squadron prepares to launch at Al Asad, Iraq. The land-based squadron is one of three currently flying the Prowler with AF EWOs. The joint warfighters are conducting aerial overwatch operations for convoys at Al Asad. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Linda C. Miller)

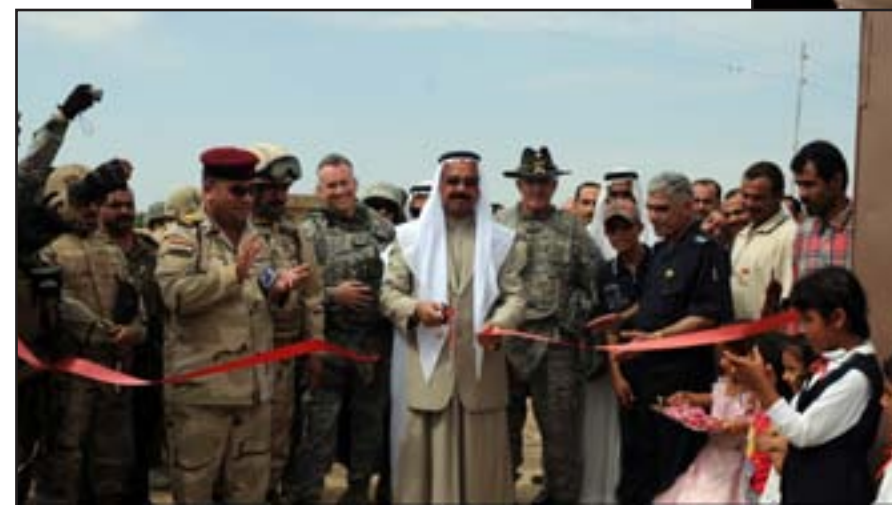
Spc. Amie Jimenez, a Soldier with 558th Military Police Company, is hugged by a woman seeking medical attention during a combined medical assessment between a local Iraqi doctor and a team of U.S. Army healthcare providers in the village of Dulaub, Iraq, May 12. Females visiting the temporary clinic were provided security by female U.S. soldiers and were seen by female medics. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Michael J. MacLeod)



Right: U.S. Army Sgt. Kyle Dager, of Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, from Fort Wayne, Ind., connects with a right hook during a boxing match against Air Force Master Sgt. John Frank, of 482nd Security Forces Squadron, from Miami, at Forward Operating Base Warrior in Kirkuk, Iraq, May 8. (U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Matthew Leistikow)



Ahmed Kurdin Nasahr, a member of the Rashaad Sub-district Council, cuts a ribbon to signify the opening of the Nasaria School in Nasaria, Iraq, May 3. U.S. Soldiers from Bravo Troop, 6th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armor Division, joined members of the Rashaad Sub-district Council in a ribbon cutting ceremony for the school which will support five villages and more than 75 students. (U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Matthew Leistikow)



# IRAQI AIR FORCE REBUILDS WITH ASSISTANCE FROM U.S.

Story and photos by  
Spc. Jessica Rohr  
USD-N Public Affairs



Above: **U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Paul McArdle**, an aircrew flight equipment airman with the 52nd Expeditionary Flying Training Squadron, tests **Iraqi Air Force Lt. Col. Hamid Hussein's** helmet for any possible air leaks to ensure he will receive adequate oxygen while flying the Hawker Beechcraft T-6A aircraft.

**U.S. Air Force Maj. Chris Breffitt**, an instructor pilot with the 52nd Expeditionary Flying Training Squadron, inspects the Hawker Beechcraft T-6A aircraft as his co-pilot, **Iraqi Air Force Lt. Col. Rased Sedeek**, enters the cockpit to prepare for a training flight.



**CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq**—Iraqi Air Force pilots train with the U.S. Air Force 52nd Expeditionary Flying Training Squadron as they work to rebuild and regain air sovereignty.

In March 2010, The Iraqi Air Force College opened its doors at Contingency Operating Base Speicher with the support of the 52nd EFTS instructor pilots.

A small group of Iraqi pilots was selected by Iraqi Air Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Anwer Hamad Amen Ahmed to conduct training with the 52nd EFTS at COB Speicher. The pilots ranged from new first lieutenants, who have only been flying for the last three years, to lieutenant colonels with 28 years of experience.

To implement this program, the Iraqi Air Force purchased 15 Hawker Beechcraft T-6 military trainer aircraft, eight of which are currently at COB Speicher.

The training consisted of eight days of academics, including an introductory-level systems class combined with formation and aerobatics maneuvering, according to Lt. Col. Jeffrey Myer, operations officer of the 52nd Expeditionary Flying Training Squadron.

“These classes prepared them for the six flights with the 52nd EFTS pilots. The flights allow the Iraqi pilots to witness firsthand what the planes are capable of,” he said.

The Iraqi Air Force pilots selected to go through the



**U.S. Air Force Maj. Damien Ludwick**, an assistant director of operations with the 52nd Expeditionary Flying Training Squadron, uses a model of the Hawker Beechcraft T-6A aircraft to brief U.S. and Iraqi Airmen on possible hazards and expectations prior to conducting a formation training flight at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq.

training play a vital role in their country's future.

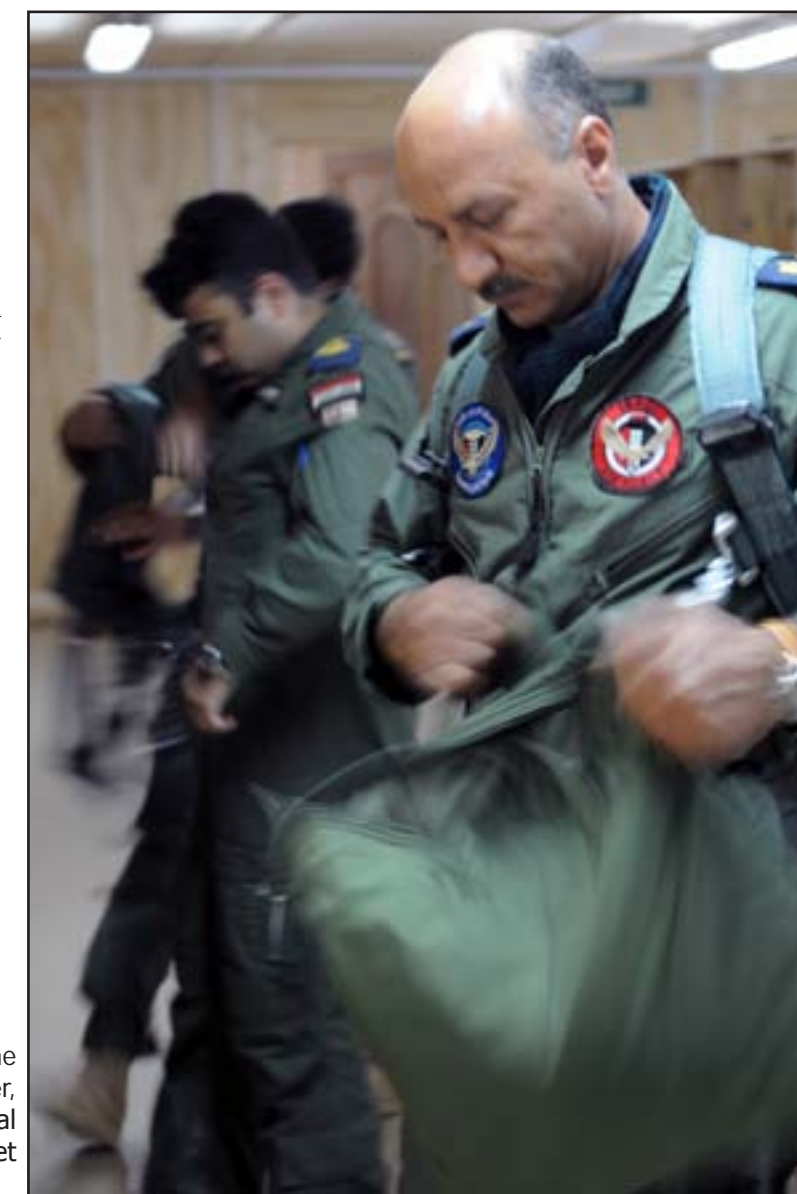
“When the Iraqi instructor pilots graduate, these pilots can begin training our cadet pilots,” said Ahmed. “It is very important for us that we can depend on ourselves after 2011, for training our pilots for our future.”

“Overall, this helps with the military drawdown. And the goal there again is that the Iraqis need to provide for their own defense,” said Myer. “Just as we have been training their forces on the ground - the Iraqis are ready to take the lead on defending their air space. In doing so, it reduces the need for us to provide that protection in their air space, allowing us to withdraw or reduce our air footprint here in Iraq.”

“As the Iraqi Air Force, we are moving in the right direction,” said Iraqi Air Force 1st Lt. Harith Nabil Abdulkader, an Iraqi Air Force College student. “This is one of the baby-steps into the right direction. I am very happy to be one of the first pilots to go through this course.”

“What we (the 52nd EFTS and Iraqi Air Force) are doing right now lends itself to the Government of Iraq being stable in the future,” said Lt. Col. Westbrook. “It lends itself for the people of Iraq to be a sovereign nation, to defend them and to move forward into a world where they are now a free democracy that can stand on its own two feet. So it is very exciting to be a part of that history.”

**Iraqi Air Force Lt. Col. Hamid Hussein**, a student at the Iraqi Air Force College at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq, prepares for his flight as he puts on his survival gear. The Iraqi Air Force College opened its doors to the first set of students in March 2010.



# U.S., Iraqis partner in forward observer training

A flare lights up the night for helicopters attacking ground targets with rockets on a firing range outside Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, as Soldiers with the 27th Brigade, 7th Iraqi Army Division, watch from their gun truck, May 21. The Soldiers took part in the three-day course to learn fire support skills.



Story and photos by  
Sgt. Michael J. MacLeod  
USD-C Public Affairs

**AL ASAD AIR BASE, Iraq** – U.S. paratroopers taught Iraqi soldiers how to call in fire from armed helicopters to neutralize targets in a live-fire exercise, May 21.

Fire support specialists with 1st Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division (Advise and Assist), trained Iraqi Army scouts how to integrate air and ground forces by calling in rocket and machine-gun fire on ground targets from OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopters. The aircraft were operated by pilots of Task Force Saber, Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division.

Integrating air and ground assets is a core competency for a standing army, according to Maj. Douglas Hayes, operations officer for 3rd Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, the primary artillery component of 1/82 AAB.

“An army first and foremost needs to protect its borders against external threats,” said Hayes. “This starts to build the foundation of a capability that they (the Iraqis) have not had, at least for a while – understand

the procedures for marking their location and that of the target, and how to convey that to aircraft.”

Twelve IA scouts and their platoon leader, 2nd Lt. Mohammad, all from 27th Brigade, 7th Iraqi Army Division, based in nearby Baghdadi, completed two days of classroom training prior to the live-fire exercise, said Staff Sgt. James Giovanni, noncommissioned officer in charge of the training.

The Kiowa helicopters fired rockets and .50 caliber machine guns in dozens of runs at a firing range target just outside Al Asad Air Base, in daylight and darkness, said Giovanni.

Mohammad, who once served in intelligence in Saddam’s army, said that, with American support, the Iraqi army was gaining competency at an accelerated rate.

“The army was very strong under Saddam, but Saddam was no good,” said Mohammad. “It will take 20 years to build our army as strong as Saddam’s without American support, but with the Americans, it is taking

far less time.”

Sgt. 1st Class Zachary Moon, targeting NCO for 1st Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, one of 1/82 AAB’s two infantry battalions, said that training a foreign army was actually good for his junior Soldiers.

“We have guys here from Bravo and Charlie Company fire support teams who are very experienced controlling aircraft, both in-theater and in training in the rear,” said Moon. “It’s a great opportunity for them to teach what they know.”

Once an observer-controller at the U.S. Army’s National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., Moon said the training closely followed Army doctrine.

“The training out here is really quite good,” he said. “Incorporating Iraqis into the training actually makes the training better for our guys because it makes them have to teach and explain through the interpreters. They have to be very clear and concise.”

“It really makes them step up

Staff Sgt. James Giovanni (right), the noncommissioned officer in charge of a partnered forward observer training class with 3rd Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division (Advise and Assist), teaches Iraqi Army scouts from 27th Brigade, 7th Iraqi Army Division, how to use a map to call in helicopter fire on a target at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, May 19-21. Giovanni previously served 10 years with the Marine Corps and has deployed all over the world.



and not make any mistakes in their instructions,” he said.

The Iraqi scouts were engaged in the exercise and asked many questions, said Sgt. Max Lewis, a forward observer with 1-504th PIR.

“Today, we taught them how to properly conduct five-line [call for fire] procedures; the different types of markings for friendly and enemy positions for both day and nighttime,” said Lewis, who is on his third deployment with the Army.

“This is the first time I’ve ever worked with a national army of the

country I deployed to. It’s been really good for me too,” he said.

During the training, 27th IA Brigade commander, staff Brig. Gen. Adnon Aubaid Mushin Rashid, called Mohammad to check on his platoon’s progress and to ensure the lieutenant had kept all the training documentation for future reference, said Mohammad.

“We are very proud to be here,” said Cpl. Khalid Hamed al Abaydi, a four-year veteran with the brigade, from Hit, Iraq.

“My goal is to fight the terrorists,

even if I risk my life,” said Khalid. “I want to live in peace. We want to feel like human beings, like people do in other countries.”

The overall mission for 1/82 AAB, as nested with United States Division – Center, is to advise and assist the Iraqi army in all aspects of professionalization, said Hayes.

Air-ground integration is a capability that’s needed for an army to continue to grow and to succeed, he said.

“That’s why we’re here,” said Hayes, “to help them out with that.”



Pfc. Robert Nichols, with 558th Military Police Company, 728th MP Battalion, 8th MP Brigade, marks a target for an approaching OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopter during a partnered training exercise teaching forward observer skills to Iraqi Army scouts at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, May 21.

# Medic visits Iraqi father, hopes to help ailing son

Story and photo by  
Spc. Britney Bodner  
USF-I Public Affairs

**A**ir Force Master Sgt. Keoki Rapoza, lead medic for Detachment 2, 732nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, has worked with kids for most of his military career.

That experience was put to use when he traveled with Det. 2 to a Baghdad police station, May 12, to speak with a policeman and his son.

Sattar Jabur Nasir first approached the unit leadership in April and told them his son, Abdullah, had a heart ailment, Rapoza, said.

According to Nasir, Abdullah had problems breathing and eating when he was younger. A local doctor said he had asthma, but the medication he prescribed did nothing to help.

Nasir then took Abdullah to two separate specialists and, after an



Air Force Master Sgt. Keoki Rapoza, lead medic for Detachment 2, 732nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, discusses the medical condition of Abdullah with his father, Sattar Jabur Nasir, as the child looks on.

echocardiogram was performed, it was determined that Abdullah had three holes in his heart.

After looking for assistance without success, Nasir approached the leaders of Det. 2. They asked Nasir to bring Abdullah to the police station where he works so Rapoza could examine him and ask questions about the boy's health.

Rapoza has been an Air Force medic for 17 years. Although he deployed to Balad in 2007 and worked in the intensive care ward, he said that most of his experience has been with kids.

"We went and touched base with dad and son," Rapoza said. "There's only so much I can do, but the questions that I got to ask him painted a pretty good picture of what might be going on."

Rapoza talked to Nasir about Abdullah's health and history of treatment, and checked the boy's heart rate and breathing.

The notes he took during the meeting were taken back to Victory Base Complex for a qualified doctor to look at, Rapoza said. He is hoping to get a new echocardiogram of Abdullah's heart to better determine if they can be of help to the family.

"It's great to be able to touch other lives and be able to show the Iraqis that we are here to help them," Rapoza said.

"The Americans have value for the human being and now I feel that there is hope for my son," said Nasir. "I have faith that the Americans will be able to help heal my child or send me someplace that can help if they can't."

# IN MEMORIAM

NAMES OF SERVICE MEMBERS WHO DIED BETWEEN MAY 1 AND  
MAY 31, 2010 WHILE SERVING IN OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

**GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS: THAT A MAN LAY  
DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS.**

*JOHN 15:13*

**May 3**

***Staff Sgt. Esau S.A. Gonzales, 30***

**May 4**

***Sgt. Ralph Mena, 27***

**May 20**

***Spc. Stanley J. Sokolowski, III, 26***

**May 21**

***Staff Sgt. Amilcar H. Gonzalez, 26***

**May 24**

***Maj. Ronald W. Culver Jr., 44***

**May 30**

***Spc. Alvaro R. Regalado Sessarego, 37***



**An OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopter** with Task Force Saber, Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, flies past the setting sun outside Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, May 21. The helicopter was participating in partnered fire aerial-ground integration training between the 82nd Airborne Division and the 7th Iraqi Army Division. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Michael J. MacLeod)