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December 29, 2009

U.S., Iraqi Soldiers begin their own MACP training

Pfc. Ronald Leydet
1st Battalion, 77th Armor Regiment 

MUTHANA, Iraq -- To instill the "Warrior Ethos," the Modern Army Combatives Program is required training for all Army units. In Iraq, banter between Soldiers often leads to combatives matches often just for the fun of it.

Second Platoon, "A" Co., 1st Bat., 77th Armor Regt. was scheduled to leave for Joint Security Station Soto in the morning, Dec. 8. But, the Iraqi Police escort was delayed, so it left them with about an hour of downtime.

While 2nd was staged by the clearing barrels to wait for a new escort, some friendly competition started. It



Photos by Pfc. Ronald Leydet

1st Lt. Dale Cox, platoon leader from Henderson, Tenn., attempts to pull Pvt. Aaron Sahnnow, an Infantryman from Tuscon, Ariz., down to the ground during an impromptu combatives match at Joint Security Station Soto in Muthanna province, Iraq. The Soldiers are deployed with "A" Co., 1st Bn., 77th AR. to enable the civil capacity efforts of provincial reconstruction teams.



Pfc. Ronald Harvey, an indirect fire infantryman from Harrisburg, Pa., grapples with Iraqi Cpl. Ahid Willy during a friendly combatives match. Harvey is deployed in Muthanna province Iraq with 1st Bn., 77th AR.

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"Im so happy with my unit and the training we do."

10th Iraqi Cpl. Ahid Willy from IA Division, 39th Brigade, 2nd Battalion



Sgt. Christopher Robles, an infantryman from San Juan, Puerto Rico defends himself as Pfc. Ronald Harvey attempts to apply a choke hold during a friendly combatives match at Joint Security Station Soto, Iraq. The Soldiers are deployed from Fort Bliss, Texas with 4th Brigade, 1st Armored Division.



Pvt. Aaron Sahnnow applies an "arm bar" on Pfc. Jason Haselgard of Rockport, Mass. during a combatives match. The Soldiers are deployed with "A" Co., 1st Bn., 77th AR to enable the civil capacity efforts of Provincial Reconstruction Teams.

Fly the Flag program reaches milestone

By Spc. Stephanie Cassinos
MND-S



COB BASRA – “When I took on this program I never thought it would be this popular,” said 2nd Lt. Kenneth Toole of the Red Bull Visitors’ Bureau. “But when I am out there flying flags, it’s not just an American Flag that I am flying. I am doing something for someone else.”

“Popular” is quite an understatement. The RBVB proudly flew their 3,000th flag over Contingency Operating Base Basra Dec. 18, as part of the “Fly the Flag” program. One of the flags was flown and presented to members of Serving Our Troops, an organization that recently hosted steak dinners in St. Paul, Kuwait and COB Basra for Soldiers and their families.

Day after day, Toole and other members of the RBVB tote dozens of Star Spangled Banners out to the flagpole at the entrance to the Multi-National Division South, Division Headquarters building. There, they diligently raise, properly salute, lower and carefully fold each and every flag, while passing foot traffic snaps to attention and silently pauses to pay tribute to Old Glory.

Imagine doing that 238 times in one day, as the RBVB did Sept. 11. During their busy days, some people might not have the patience or desire to complete such a task, but the Soldiers who volunteer their time to fly the flag have a different perspective.

“Someone is going to give that flag as a gift. To give a flag that has been flown over here means something to the person that has taken the time to buy the flag and bring it in,” said Toole. “It is a true gift from the heart.”

Toole, who was touched by photos of someone who received a flag he flew with tears in her eyes, understands



Photo by Spc. Stephanie Cassinos

Commanding general of Multi-National Division South, Maj. Gen. Rick Nash, and Division Command Sgt. Maj. Doug Julin and members of Serving our Troops stand by to witness 2nd Lt. Kenneth Toole fly the 3,000th flag over COB Basra as part of the “Fly the Flag” program.

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THE RED BULL REPORT

34th Red Bull Infantry Division
Public Affairs Office



Commanding General
Maj. Gen. Rick Nash



Command Sergeant Major
Command Sgt. Maj. Doug Julin

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Photos by Spc. Francesca Stanchi

(Left) Soldiers prepare to try traditional Iraqi foods cooked at the grand opening of the Oasis Restaurant, Dec 26, at COB Basra. (Above) Kabobs are just one of the traditional items served at the Oasis Restaurant. Other items included fish, rice, fried finger potatoes, soft drinks, juice smoothies and various desserts. The Oasis Bazaar offers a little taste of Iraqi culture in a relaxing environment to shop, eat, ride a camel, smoke a hookah and meet new people.

WHAT A GRAND OPENING

Oasis Restaurant opens at bazaar

By Spc. Francesca Stanchi
367th MPAD



COB BASRA— To mark exactly three months of the Oasis Bazaar at Contingency Operating Base Basra being open, the Al Moosawi Group celebrated with a grand opening of the Oasis Restaurant, Dec. 26.

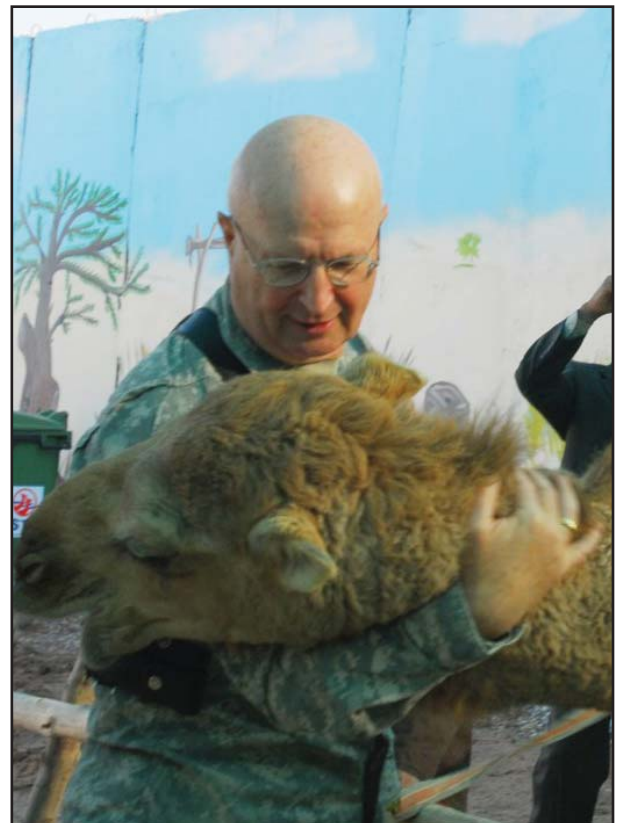
This opening was more than just a chance to try traditional Iraqi fare; it was a way of thanking the 34th Inf. Div. for all their support over the months in making the bazaar a reality.

The Oasis started as a brainstorming idea to provide a cultural experience for the Soldiers as well as strengthen local businesses. By working with the Al Moosawi Group, the 34th Inf. Div. was able to move forward with the project, said Capt. Andrew Nathan, Oasis liaison officer, with the 34th.

“The whole idea is, it’s a campaign where you are trying to build that positive relationship between the local nationals and us,” said Nathan. “It’s bringing us together to have a better relationship not only for the present, but for the future.”

By August, the project was approved by Maj. Gen. Rick Nash, commander of Multi-National Division South and 34th Inf. Div., allowing Nathan to proceed with the mission.

The Basrah Provincial Reconstruction Team was already working with the Al Moosawi Group and suggested a partnership to Nathan, believing the group was the best choice to represent the Iraqi start-up and the Iraqi people to provide the cul-



Maj. Gen. Rick Nash, commander of Multi-National Division South befriends Wodhan the camel. Wodhan, born six months ago, is the youngest of the three camels at the bazaar. Nash, who attended the opening, praised the progress the Oasis Bazaar has made in the past three months.

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MATCH

some friendly competition started. It began with some of the platoon members playing soccer before Pvt. Aaron Sahnaw, an infantryman from Tucson, Ariz., and Pfc. Jason Haselgard, a combat medic from Rockport, Mass., began to spar.

It quickly turned into a combatives match, and it was "game on." The match between them lasted for roughly 1 minute and 30 seconds and ended when Sahnaw got Haselgard into an "arm bar," causing him to tap-out. Although the match didn't last long, Haselgard gave Sahnaw a good challenge.

After they completed their match others started calling each other out.

The next to enter the ring was Pfc. Ronald Harvey, an indirect fire infantryman from Harrisburg, Pa., and Sgt. Christopher Robles, an infantryman from San Juan, Puerto Rico. The match between them lasted five minutes, both giving a tough fight, and ended in Harvey achieving a choke hold on Robles.

It really got exciting when Sahnaw challenged the platoon leader, Henderson, Tenn., native 1st Lt. Dale Cox. Both were even on weight, but Sahnaw had more knowledge in combatives, which gave him the upper-hand in the match. With everything Sahnaw threw at Cox, he was still able to overpower him and get out of most holds. Yet, although Cox was stronger than Sahnaw, Sahnaw came out on top with superior technique.

The match between them lasted for a minute and a half, ending in Sahnaw putting Cox in an "arm bar," and Cox tapping out.

The next challenger brought a cheer from gathering group of platoon members and Iraqi Army Soldiers as Iraqi Cpl. Ahid Willy from 10th IA Division, 39th Brigade, 2nd Battalion, challenged Harvey to a match.

Willy's unit trains on boxing and other hand-to-hand combat tactics and he was very confident he could take down this American private.

They were well-matched as each took turns almost taking the other down. The match lasted a minute and a half ending with Harvey getting him in a headlock choke before Willy finally tapped out.

"I'm so happy with my unit and the training we do," said Willy after the match.

His platoon leader, 1st Lt. Saady, when asked what he thought of the friendly fights said, "It is refreshing to see your officers train, interact and play with the Soldiers. It is not something we are used to. You are an inspiration to us all and we are so glad that you are here."

For more of Pfc. Leydet's stories, visit www.TheRedBulls.org/Leydet

HOMETOWN HIGHLIGHT

During the American Civil War, Harrisburg was a significant training center for the Union Army, with tens of thousands of troops passing through Camp Curtin. It was also a major rail center for the Union and a vital link between the Atlantic coast and the Midwest. As a result of this importance, it was a target of General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia during its two invasions.

Reminder

To Friends and Family

Last day to send mail to redeploying Red Bull Soldiers is Jan. 1, 2010

ARABIC WORD OF THE DAY

Ana fahim ~
I understand



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*For additional information
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Session 3

"Interview Techniques and Preparation"

JAN 6, 1000-1130 or 1730-1900

Session 4

"One on One Practical Interviews"

JAN 7-18

Schedule an Appointment with CW2 Yu



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tural experience Nathan was looking for in a bazaar.

The significance of this is that the Al Moosawi Group funded the majority of it, said Nathan. They provided most of the materials. Most importantly, it provides a partnership to build upon.

Nathan envisions how the relationship and partnership can grow by working closely with Abdul Hussain Al Matar, the bazaar manager.

"It is not only a business, but more of a relationship," said Abdul Hussain. "The Moosawi family decided this bazaar is a window to

have cooperations with our friends, the U.S. forces and local society. We try to be a bridge between the two sides and we are successful."

The grand opening of the restaurant was one more step in strengthening that relationship, said Nash.

"This restaurant opening is much more than simply a dining experience. It is a solid example of our valued partnership and friendship advancing to a higher level," said Nash. "Built upon the success of the Oasis Bazaar, it offers an opportunity for both U.S. forces and local business."

Abdul agrees that the opening is more than the sharing of food. He wants the bazaar to be a place for

the Soldiers to relax and meet local residents.

"[We want to] be sure that when he [the Soldier] comes here not to just shop, but to relax, because it's a good chance to meet local people, have a good time, and a good experience," said Abdul.

Talking through a translator, Abdul Hussain stressed the importance of the role of the bazaar as a whole.

"This bazaar is a place where ideas and thoughts can converge and can be exchanged between two different cultures," he said.

For more of Spc. Stanchi's stories, visit www.TheRedBulls.org/Stanchi

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Sunday, January 17, 2010

at the Red Bull USA Volleyball courts from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

This is an opportunity to sell your items privately, from service member to service member or to donate items to charity! Provide your own display, and set your own prices. Pick up bags to store donations* prior to Jan. 17 at the Red Bull MWR tent.

*SUGGESTED ITEMS - clean towels and bed linens, useable running shoes, civilian clothes, etc.

*PROHIBITED ITEMS - uniform clothing items, undergarments, any military equipment, any item with an NSN, and weapons.

WHEN YOUR RENTAL HOME FACES FORECLOSURE

Today's housing market is tough on everyone, even landlords. Renters don't expect the place they are renting to get foreclosed on and if it does there may be few options for the renters. In many cases, the renters are evicted when a new owner takes over the property. Fortunately, in May of 2009, the United States Legislature signed greater protections for renters into law: The Protecting Tenants at Foreclosure Act of 2009.

This new laws say that if the home is foreclosed on, a renter cannot be evicted for at least 90 days after the foreclosure. The law also says that if the house is foreclosed on the renter may stay to the end of the lease.

This Federal act is a benefit to service members in that it provides blanket protections to renters in all states. All states still have their own laws that protect renters, but with the frequency of moving from state to state that military members experience a law that applies to all states will be less confusing. Military members own homes at a rate of 25% compared to the overall U.S. population that owns homes at a rate of 65% foreclosure on rental properties is sure to hit military members with some frequency.



For more of JAG's comments, visit www.TheRedBulls.org/TheGavel

SUDOKU

8	9	2	3			7	1	
		7		1		4		
				9	6			3
	5				4			
9						5	7	
2				3		6		9
6		3				2	8	7
			1			9		
	7			2				

For puzzle solutions visit: www.TheRedBulls.org/puzzlesolutions

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how much of an impact this simple gesture can have.

"This program isn't just about the flags," explained Toole. "It's about doing something for someone else and being part of something bigger."

"In ten years people will have forgotten many of the projects we built or some of the tasks we completed," he said, "but for generations to come those flags that were flown here will still be displayed in someone's house or in an office and forever will they say that they were flown over COB Basra, Iraq, by the Soldiers of the 34th 'Red Bull' Inf. Div. during their service in Operation Iraqi Freedom."

"The program has been a great success and it has been an honor to fly the flags over Basra, however, as with all things it too will come to an end," Toole stated

The last day flags will be flown for the program is Jan 2, 2010. It is estimated that by that time the RBVB will have flown more than 3,500 flags, a number that exceeds Toole's goal of 1,000.

For more of Spc. Cassinos' stories, visit: www.TheRedBulls.org/Cassinoss

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Around the world in 34 seconds



TEHRAN – At least fifteen anti-government protesters, including a nephew of Mir Hossein Mousavi, Iran’s opposition leader, were shot dead yesterday as the smoldering confrontation between the regime and the so-called Green Movement finally erupted. Early reports put the number of dead at five, but as clashes continued late into the night, Iranian state television reported that the number of dead had risen to 15. The Ministry of Intelligence said more than 10 were members of “anti-revolutionary terrorist” groups. The other five who died during the bitter clashes in the Iranian capital were killed by “terrorist groups,” Iranian TV claimed. Analysts heralded the start of what could be a bloody endgame as hundreds of thousands of opposition supporters poured on to the streets of Tehran and other cities and fought running battles with the security forces.



WASHINGTON – Despite the ease with which an alleged terrorist boarded a Detroit-bound flight with explosives, the Obama administration says the incident shows the U.S. aviation security system worked yet has ordered investigations into how travelers are placed on watch lists and explosives are detected on passengers. “The investigation will look backwards and figure out if any signs were missed, if any procedures can be changed,” White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said on ABC’s “This Week.” Billions of dollars have been spent on aviation security since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, when commercial airliners were hijacked and used as weapons.



NEW ORLEANS – It took an emotional team meeting, a sleepless night and about an hour of practice for coach Urban Meyer to change his mind about resigning at Florida. With his health and his family still major concerns, Meyer withdrew his resignation Sunday and decided instead to take an indefinite leave of absence. He will coach the fifth-ranked Gators in the Sugar Bowl against No. 4 Cincinnati on Jan. 1, then take some time off in hopes of alleviating recurring chest pains. His announcement capped a wild and weird two days for Florida. He stunned college football twice in a 20-hour span, first by saying he planned to walk away from coaching and then by revealing he expects to be back on the sideline next season. “I do in my gut believe that will happen,” Meyer said. Flanked by athletic director Jeremy Foley and quarterback Tim Tebow, the 45-year-old Meyer stoically responded to repeated questions about his health, his heart and his head. With his wife and three children seated a few feet in front of him, Meyer declined to reveal much detail about his condition. He acknowledged the possibility he might need a procedure to alleviate chest pains that started four years ago, but would not say if he had a heart condition. He insisted he didn’t have a heart attack and refused to say whether doctors told him he needed to step away.



ELK GROVE, Calif. – A Northern California elementary school teacher sent her students home for the summer with a video of class memories, only the DVD included six seconds of her having sex on a couch. Officials at the Elk Grove Unified School District asked families of the teacher’s 24 students to get rid of the DVD after the unintended clip was found spliced in a scene where children were sharing stories in class. Torrey Johnson, spokeswoman, said the teacher, whose name isn’t being released, sent the DVD home with her students from Isabelle Jackson Elementary on the last day of class Friday. She learned of the mistake after a parent called her. She then called all the parents to ask them to destroy the DVD. The school district, located just south of Sacramento, initially sent a letter home to parents asking them to return the DVDs, but then asked parents to simply destroy them.