

July 2006 ♦ Vol. 1, Issue 9



BAND OF BROTHERS





Captain Geoffrey Farrell of the Special Police Transition Team attached to the 101st Airborne Division leads a platoon of Iraqi Police Officers from the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 1st National Police Division to a live fire range being held at Patrol Base Olson in Samarra, Iraq to zero their AK-47 rifles. (Story on page 13)

photo by Staff Sgt. Russell Lee Klika

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On the cover...

Private 1st Class Christopher Ricker, Company C, 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, 172nd Stryker Brigade, sets up and prepares to fire 60 mm illumination flares from the roof of an Iraqi police station in Mosul, Iraq.



photo by
Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Locke

IPS in ACTION

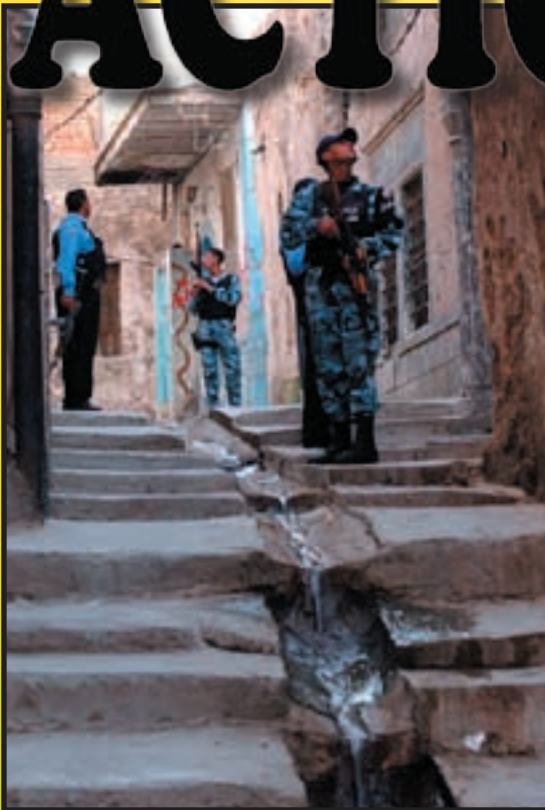


photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steven Petibone

(Above) Iraqi police walk through the streets of Mosul, Iraq, during a cordon and search mission as part of Operation Lion Hunt June 22.



photo by Staff Sgt. Steve Duga

(Above) Teams learn to clear rooms at a remote range in Irbil Iraq under the watchful eyes of the 549th MP Company Police Training Team. (Below) Iraqi security chiefs meet outside of Tal Afar for the graduation of the Iraqi Police Special Response Team June 23.



photo by Spc. Rich Vogt

BAND OF BROTHERS

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Band of Brothers is published monthly by the Task Force Band of Brothers Public Affairs Office, HHC 501st STB, 101st Abn. Div., FOB Speicher, APO AE 09393, DSN 318-849-2118.

Band of Brothers is an authorized publication of the Department of Defense. It is distributed free to members of TF Band of Brothers. Circulation is 10,000.

Contents of *Band of Brothers* are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by the U.S. Government or the Department of the Army.

Editorial content is the responsibility of the TF Band of Brothers PAO.

“Our year of sacrifice and separation is testament to the selfless service you display in the face of insurgents who have unsuccessfully attempt to deter us from the mission at hand.”



Soldiers of Task Force Band of Brothers, July 4th is a very special day for America and the history of democracy. Our nation was founded free from the British Empire in what proved to be a victorious win for America and our Army during the Revolutionary War in 1776. Just like Soldiers who helped form our great nation, you all are responsible for the freedom Iraqis now have.

The oppression Iraqis were subjected to by the former dictator Saddam Hussein came to an end over three years ago and the past ten months you have served here have been valuable to the independence Iraqis have established for themselves through voting and defending themselves

against a determined insurgency movement.

Our year of sacrifice and separation is a testament to the selfless service you display in the face of insurgents who have unsuccessfully attempted to deter us from the mission at hand. The world's newest democracy is beginning to evolve amongst the violence carried out by petty thugs who are trying to bring the country to it's knees. You have helped prevent chaos with your continuous efforts in training qualified Iraqi Security Forces who have stepped up to protect their own country, a free country.

While we have dedicated ourselves to progress and peace in Iraq, a number of our brothers and sisters in arms have made the

ultimate sacrifice. No matter how their deaths occurred, these fallen heroes demonstrated valor and honor during their service to our country and the Iraqi people. The price they paid in blood will not be left in vain as our fellow Soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division take control of the area of operations and continue the mission.

You all have made history during the past 10 months with successes during Operation Swarmer and Operation Iron Triangle. A large number of insurgents and weapons caches have also been uncovered during everyday missions throughout the Task Force. Soldiers have stepped up in taking the initiative to achieve significant victories that have saved countless American and Iraqi lives. The threat of IED attacks will continue, but many have been thwarted by Soldiers looking to stop the senseless violence and defend Iraqis whenever possible.

Continue your mission with safety always in mind as the upcoming months become hotter and hydration will determine whether you can perform to standard amongst your battle buddies. Stay focused on the fight and prepare for your approaching homecoming with family and friends back at Fort Campbell, Ky. Air Assault!



EAGLE SIX SENDS

CSI: Iraq

Story and photo by
Spc. Linsay Burnett
1st Brigade Combat Team
Public Affairs

KIRKUK, Iraq --

In May, Soldiers from the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, and officers working at the Kirkuk Police Academy, organized their first-ever police symposium.

The symposium brought together police leadership from across the Kirkuk province.

Along with promoting departmental cohesion, it also served as a forum to address key issues facing the police force, specifically focusing on their major crime unit capabilities.

Soldiers presented lectures on investigative techniques, leadership values, police ethics and detainee treatment to a packed room of leaders and cadets.

Colonel Jamal Samir, chief of the Kirkuk Police Academy, felt the symposium was incredibly beneficial.

"I've talked to some of the officers and they really like this kind of conference," he said. "They feel it will help improve the capabilities of the officers so they can develop a good relationship with other forces and better serve the people," he said.

Coalition Forces seemed just as pleased with the outcome of the event.

"Everyone seems extremely receptive to [training]. All the upper echelon leadership is here and they have fully imparted upon the other leadership the importance of this training. So we're very pleased and hope to be doing follow up sessions on different subject matters the rest of our time here," said Maj. Richard Snodgrass, executive officer for the Police Provincial Transition Team, a reserve unit attached to the brigade.

The day long symposium ended with a mock crime scene investigation held



Officers from the Kirkuk Major Crimes Unit investigate a mock murder during a police symposium held at the Kirkuk Police Academy.

on the grounds of the academy -- a simulated murder.

Smearred with "blood," the victim collapsed to the ground as the assailant fled, gun in hand.

Iraqi Police rushed to secure the scene, quickly roping it off with white tape.

Another group tracked down the perpetrator and placed him under arrest, demonstrating the proper treatment of detainees.

Crime scene investigators proceeded with their inspection, while a group of officers provided security on the perimeter.

Scrutinizing every detail, each officer had appointed tasks: photo documen-

tation, evidence marking, bagging and labeling, diagramming the scene, analyzing the body, and recording fingerprints.

Once the investigation was complete and the scene neutralized, a white chalk outline in the dirt was all that remained.

The partnership between Coalition Forces and the ISF has been essential in developing a competent police force.

As Coalition Forces gradually begin to pull out of the region, the ISF will depend heavily on the training they have received, and will be responsible for imparting these skills to future Iraqi soldiers and police. ■

Soldiers vs. Turks:

Soccer stress relief

Spc. Yolanda Moreno Leon

138rd Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

MOSUL, Iraq -- The World Cup isn't the only place to see good international soccer action.

At Forward Operating Base Marez, Capt. Gabriel Scheibum, executive officer, 577th Military Intelligence Company, and his Soldiers from Fort Wainwright, Alaska, challenged Capt. Moises Soto, 1st Battalion, 321st Field Artillery Regiment and the Turkish civilian contractors on the FOB to a friendly exhibition match as a way of boosting morale.

"We thought this game would be a good way for everyone to have the chance to have some fun and relax," Scheibum said. "Even though we are in a war zone, people need a chance to relax and have some play time."

Even though it was a friendly match, where the score was not recorded, the American players still dished out some trash talk.

"This game is a punishment to the Turkish, who said they were national players, but aren't. This is going to be an easy game for the Soldiers to win," said Command Sgt. Maj. Hector Davila, command sergeant major, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Task Force Band of Brothers. "Our next game will be against an Iraqi Army team."

The TF Band of Brothers Soldiers were ready, willing and able to do battle on the soccer field.

"I've been playing since I was a little kid," said Staff Sgt. Fernandez Reyes, Company A, 1st Battalion, 17th Field Artillery.

"CSM Davila told me there was a soccer game at 5:30pm and told me I better be there," said Kristofer Dunlap, scout, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Bn, 1st Inf.

Rgt., 172nd SBCT. "I was not going to let the team down, so I was there to do my part."

Both teams found the experience to be fun and rewarding.

"The U.S. is the guest, so in my opinion, it does not matter who won," said Ale Sari from Turkey. "We all had fun; my team had a great time and we want a rematch."

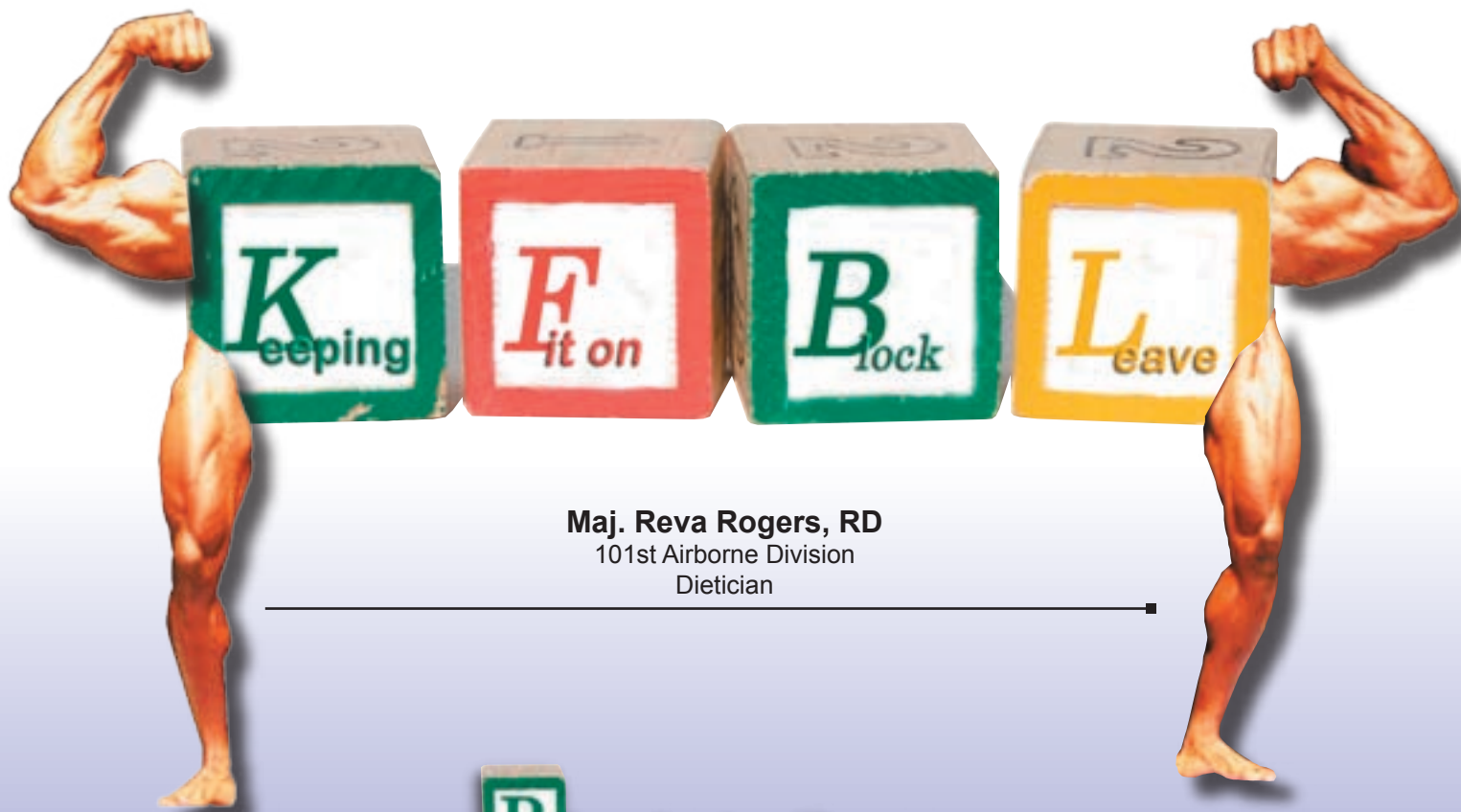
Dunlap said the game is a good morale boost Soldiers in Mosul, especially since they are close to going home. He invites other units to come out and play.

"I was interested in playing soccer against people all over the world, once we came to Iraq. I played with the Turks, Albanians, Iraqis and South Koreans," Dunlap said. "I think every unit, no matter what the sport is, should go and play to take out the stress and frustration of combat in a positive manner." ■



photo illustration by Spc Joshua Hutcheson

A Soldier from 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, has full control of the soccer ball against the Turks.



Maj. Reva Rogers, RD
101st Airborne Division
Dietician

During the past nine to 10 months many task force Soldiers have increased their fitness level by getting strong in the weight room or shedding a few unwanted pounds.

With the majority of Task Force Band of Brothers heading back to the States in the next few months, many of us have started to think about what we are going to do when we get home.

As you start to make plans for block leave, you should also think about how you are going to maintain your fitness level. It isn't uncommon for Soldiers to gain five, ten, or even twenty pounds while on block leave.

If you put on weight easily, but have a difficult time taking it off, it's a good idea to develop a plan for limiting weight gain while on leave. The following techniques can help...

Check In

Weigh yourself once a week while on leave. When you reach a weight that is five or ten pounds heavier than your starting weight, start paying attention to nutrition and increase your activity level.

By checking in once a week you can limit the weight you gain to a manageable amount.

Plan Active Events

Make plans with friends to play basketball, go for a swim, or ride bicycles. Boosting your activity can help burn the extra calories you consume.

Your active event doesn't have to be a major production. It can be something as simple as taking the dog for a morning and evening walk. Remember, if you plan events you enjoy, you'll be more likely to do them.

Workout First

Some people do best if they do their workout immediately after waking. By doing your workout before your family wakes up or before you meet your friends for the day you can make sure it gets done.

Sometimes, despite our best intentions, we can miss a workout or two, or three, because things happen and life gets in the way.

Either Or

Another technique to control weight gain is to make trade-offs while dining out. One typical choice is to either have appetizers or dessert instead of both.

Having a plan before you go to the

restaurant can also help you make choices. If the place you are going to serves your favorite dessert, plan on having a lighter main entrée so you can really enjoy dessert.

Many restaurants have nutrition information posted on the Internet. By checking out their Web sites before going to the restaurant, you can map out an either-or strategy on how to have your cake and eat an appetizer too.

Watch Fluid Calories

Fluid calories can quickly add up and will not make you feel full for very long. Just by having two extra 20-ounce sodas a day you increase your calorie intake by close to 500 calories --enough to cause you to gain a pound a week.

Some people are blessed with a fast metabolism and do not have to worry about gaining unwanted weight, others are able to maintain their weight with just a little bit of exercise, and then there are the rest of us.

For us it takes a little extra effort to maintain weight.

What ever your circumstance, if you have a plan to enjoy block leave while limiting weight gain, you'll be more likely to come back from block leave healthy and fit. ■

“I consider it an indispensable duty to close this last solemn act of my official life by commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God and those who have the superintendence of them into His holy keeping.”

- George Washington



Chaplain (Maj.) Scott Hammond

It was a few great men and women, looking for a way to express their religious faith, who discovered America. They came looking for freedom to worship our Lord.

We recall the story of the pilgrims and how they came to Plymouth Rock on the Mayflower. Just as they landed, they joined together and made what was called the Mayflower Compact in 1620.

“In the name of God, amen. Having undertaken for the glory of God and for the advancement of the Christian faith, do solemnly and mutually in the presence of God, covenant and combine ourselves together.”

In these days, our Day of Independence should reflect our dependence

One nation under God

on our God.

Our forefathers founded our nation on Godly principles and America will live on as long as the Lord is her God.

Psalm 33:12: *Blessed in the nation whose God is the Lord.*

Greece built a civilization on culture and it failed. Rome built its civilization on power and it crumbled. But as long as we have a few great men and women who realize the need of God in our country, we can and will remain strong. It is our country “under God.”

What does that mean?

It means that this country did not become the “*land of the free and home of the brave*” by blind fate or coincidence, but that a wise and benevolent God was hovering over us from the very hour of our conception.

It is for the living today that we dedicate ourselves in dependence on God. Dedicated to continue the unfinished work of those who have fought and died before us, who nobly advanced the cause for which they, as Abraham Lincoln pointed out “gave the last full

measure of devotion, that we here, so highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain.”

I close in acknowledging dependence upon God with a prayer. Almighty God, we pray for our beloved nation. We need your help. We seek your direction and your guiding wisdom. Help us Lord, to know that America’s greatness is her people rooted in your righteousness.

Help us, the citizens of America, to want to do the right things for the right reasons. Instill within our hearts the right attitudes. Make our motives pure motives.

Bless with your favor all those who are bearing the brunt of the responsibility to keep America free, those at the point of the spear.

Keep us vigilant to maintain the liberties so dearly earned. God bless and keep America beautiful and help her to keep her trust in you. Bless the Soldiers and families of Task Force Band of Brothers. These things we humbly and confidently request. ■

142nd CSB celebrates Army birthday with simulator unveiling

Staff Sgt. Brian Speech

138rd Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

MOSUL, Iraq -- The Army turned 231 years old June 14, 2006 and the 142nd Combat Support Battalion located on Forward Operating Base Diamondback, Mosul, Iraq is celebrating it in style.

"The Army turned 231 years old and we commemorate this birthday with the grand opening of our new Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Center and the unveiling of the 142nd Combat Support Battalion's Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer (HEAT)," said Lt. Col. Ronald Green, commander, 142nd CSB. "It is a great day,"

As the Army celebrated its birthday and the 142nd CSB showed off their accomplishments, Greene met with the 3rd Motorized Transportation Regiment of the Iraqi Army at FOB Diamondback to enter the final phase of training with the transition team and the staff of the 142nd CSB, and he was also in the final stages of redeployment of the unit.



"We have brought a valuable tool to the battlefield," he said. "Right now the only rollover training given to Soldiers is at Camp Buerhing, Kuwait, for just arriving in theater. We have built [a trainer] out of leftover vehicle parts and can begin training Soldiers in theater."

The average cost of producing the trainer is \$76,000.

The current rate of production is two per month.

The 142nd CSB built theirs in three months out of spare parts at no further cost to the government.

"This is one more way we are going to save lives in theater at little to no cost. The Soldiers responsible for building this are quite simply the best," Greene said.

"We are just as proud of the new Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center we have created with the equipment from the closure of FOB Courage," he said "We have designed it based on the human being. One building for body, one for the Mind and one for the Spirit. Body is for the weight lifting and aerobic equipment. Mind has the computer and phone center and Spirit is a quiet place to read and watch tv and has a chaplain on duty for anyone who is in the need for one. Although the 142nd is leaving in the near future we are leaving something for our replacements, to make their tour a little better."



photo by Spc. Lindsay Holguin

The 142nd Corps Support Battalion commemorated the 231st birthday of the U.S. Army June 14, at Forward Operating Base Diamondback, Mosul, Iraq. After the 5k run, the battalion got together to unveil the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer (HEAT) that was recently built as a way to train Soldiers in what needs to be done in case their vehicle rolls over.

FEMALE NURSES BRING AID TO IA

Women make headway in male-dominated culture

Spc. Cassandra Groce

133rd Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

KIRKUK, Iraq --Under the former regime, women in Iraq were associated with heavy robes, veils and oppression. Now, these same females are making their mark in the Iraqi Army.

Sandreek Nissan Khoshaba and Suhad Kareem Jabir are nurses at the Iraqi Army clinic at K1, an IA training facility near Kirkuk, Iraq. They are part of an increasing number of women in the typically male-dominated IA.

"The women bring a certain level of expertise and a sense of family into the clinic," said Maj. Curtis Aberle, clinic medical advisor for the Coalition Military Training Team. "They are highly respected by the men; highly respected for their professions. They are vital

members of the team."

Khoshaba, who specializes in setting broken bones, has nine years experience in nursing.

Jabir, who has been at the clinic for six months, has been a nurse for 13 years.

The women nurses are considered members of the Iraqi Army and radiate pride in their positions.

"I am very interested in working with my brothers in the military," Jabir said. "I need to work with the Army because they are my brothers."

The work can be very consuming. Khoshaba admits to often being so engrossed with helping Soldiers that she forgets

everything else.

Medical diagnosis is not the limit of challenges for women working in the IA; they must also overcome years of ingrained opinions on a woman's position in society.

Two months ago, the women working on K1 were targeted by an insurgent group, and two female Soldiers were killed. This has not deterred Jabir and Khoshaba from continuing to do their job.

"It's a challenge, and I am not afraid," Khoshaba said.

Because of the assault, the women were allowed to stay home for several weeks.

However, they eagerly returned to their positions at K1.

"I am very impressed by their courage and determination to stick with the Army and ultimately stick with the formation of this country," Aberle said. "In the face of the attack that killed their two friends, they came back and continued working. They are very courageous." ■



photos by Spc. Cassandra Groce

Suhad Kareem Jabir, a nurse at the Iraqi Army clinic at K1, an Iraqi Army training facility in Kirkuk, gives an IV to a heat injury patient.



Jabir checks the drip from an IV bag after tending to a heat injury patient. Suhad has been working in the Iraqi Army after four years of school training as a nurse.

Ribbon-cutting ceremony reopens water treatment plant

Pfc. Paul Harris

3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division

BAQUBAH, Iraq -- A water treatment and distribution facility reopened June 25 -- a joint effort between Coalition Forces and Iraqi Government officials in the town of Hibhib, Iraq.

Members of the civil military operations team from 1st Battalion, 68th Armor Regiment, 3rd Heavy

Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers, and Hibhib Mayor Ali Husan Ali were on hand to cut the ceremonial red ribbon, signifying the facility was operational.

"If you look at the big picture, the Iraqis have a government that has been installed," said Lt. Col. Thomas Fisher, commander, 1st Bn., 8th Inf. Rgt. "They have their national sovereignty. Part of a sovereign

nation's responsibility is to take care of its people. [This] is a great step toward demonstrating to the good citizens here in Khalis Kada the government is looking after their needs."

The facility now has 11 kilometers of new piping and can provide clean water for up to 4,000 people, said Capt. Brian Soule, civil military operations planner, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Bn.,

68th Inf. Rgt.

The project cost \$130,000 and was paid for by funds from the commanders emergency response program.

"[The people of Hibhib] have not had their needs met by their government in 35 years living under a self-ish dictatorship," Soule said. "We have two roles here as an Army: we (have) to find the bad guys, then we have to help the good guys. And 95 percent of the population are the good guys." ■



photo by Spc Yolanda Moreno Leon

Soldiers from the 795th Adjutant General Company, sort out the mail for the surrounding units in the northern part of Iraq at the post office of Forward Operating Base Diamond Back, Mosul, Iraq.

Mail Call!

Spc. Yolanda Moreno Leon

138th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

MOSUL, Iraq -- Soldiers use any way possible to stay in touch with loved ones such as the phone or Internet, but the most popular is still regular mail. Receiving a letter in the mail puts a smile on a Soldier's face and boosts morale.

For the Soldiers of 3rd Platoon, 795th Adjutant General Company at Forward Operating Base Diamondback, Mosul, Iraq, getting the mail out is a job they take seriously.

"We are here to get the mail to Soldiers," said Staff Sgt. Daryl Brandt, noncommissioned officer in charge of the Custodian Postal Effects/Finance Office. "Mail is an important morale builder for the troops, and I think we

are doing a very good job in getting the mail delivered."

According to Staff Sgt. Lee Creason, Operations NCOIC, when the mail comes off the plane, it is broken down by unit and then sorted to be transported to each FOB and Combat Out Post.

"We sort mail for FOB Sykes, Q-West, COP Rawah, and a few others," Creason said. "We are the bench mark for post offices in Iraq."

The post office has two sections: Finance and Operations. Operations sorts all the mail, and Finance is responsible for weighing packages and applying postage to send mail back to the states.

The post office averages about 200 Soldiers a day. Each package a Soldier wants to mail is inspected before it is sent, for security reasons. 3rd Platoon, 795th Adjutant General Company ensures that no one tries to send weapons, ammunition, or Iraqi artifacts to the U.S. without prior approval, Creason said.

"It is my job to inspect all packages and secure them after I am finished," said Spc. Nicholas Holcomb, Parcel and Package Inspector. "If I find something that can't be sent home I return it to the Soldier."

The efforts of Soldiers of 795th Adjutant General Company, have kept the morale of Soldiers in northern Iraq high, enabling Soldiers to better focus on the mission at hand.

"We have done a really good job here," Holcomb said. "People seem happier when receiving a letter, and I am glad we can do our small part to put a smile on Soldiers faces when they have had a bad day." ■



photo by Staff Sgt. Russell Lee Klika

Staff Sgt. Brent Briggs, Special Police Transition Team, attached to the 101st Airborne Division, teaches an Iraqi police officer proper breathing techniques during a live fire range conducted at Patrol Base Olson in Samarra, Iraq, for the officers of the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 1st National Police Division.

Staff Sgt. Russell Lee Klika

133rd Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

SAMARRA, Iraq -- Whenever the Minister of Interior in Baghdad orders a company of national police to move to hot spots around Iraq, a special group of coalition Soldiers moves with them.

The Special Police Transition Team, which is made up of Soldiers from the U.S. Army European Command and attached to the 101st Airborne Division, is responsible for training and advising the Iraqi National Police force from the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 1st National Police Division.

"We have been with this division since February," said Maj. Cory Crosbie, team leader for the SPTT. "When they move, we move. We plan, rehearse, and conduct raids with them."

The team trains and advises the Iraqi Police on movement tactics, operations planning, cordon and search procedures and weapons.

This particular week, the team was training 20 policemen a day on how to fire, clean and clear a malfunction using their AK-47 rifles at Patrol Base Olsen in Samarra.

"We train them as we train our own," said Crosbie. "We teach them on the proper ways of handling a weapon, from breathing techniques to trigger squeeze."

Crosbie said the biggest problem they run into is that the NP become frustrated if they cannot hit the target. When this happens, SPTT Soldiers get down on the ground and demonstrate the proper procedures.

"You show them that it can be done, and it usually motivates them," said Staff Sgt. Brent Briggs, a SPTT member. "Once they see that they can hit the target, their confidence level goes way up."

Once the firing ended, the round casings were picked up and the range cleared, the SPTT handed out cigars to every police officer for a job well done. ■

Miracle Rescue

Soldiers find baby in roadside box

Pfc. Paul Harris

3rd Heavy Brigade Combat
Team, 4th Infantry Division

BALAD, Iraq -- Soldiers from Logistical Support Area Anaconda in Balad saved the life of an abandoned, near-death baby June 9, while on patrol.

Staff Sgt. Donald White, patrol leader, Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 29th Field Artillery, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, and his team came across a box on the side of the road.

Initially, he thought it was an improvised explosive device until he heard crying coming from the box.

White made sure there were no wires protruding from the box and made sure it was not booby trapped. Then he picked the box up.

"I ran as fast as I could, snatched the box off the ground and kept on running, thankfully nothing blew up," White said.

White then asked Spc. John Sullivan, healthcare specialist, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3rd Bn., 29th FA, to evaluate the child and as-

sess its medical needs.

The skin was literally hanging off the child and we could see it was massively dehydrated and malnourished, Smith said. In transit to Balad Air Base hospital, Sullivan turned the air conditioning vents in the baby's direction so the air would cool the child.

"[He] did not cry at all in the vehicle, but his eyes rolled in the back of his head and I thought, 'Oh my goodness he is starting to die on me,'" Sullivan said.

By the time the patrol made its way to the Balad Air Base hospital, the staff was already waiting for them. The Air Force medical staff treated the child.

After a while, the baby regained its strength and was in stable enough condition to be released. The baby was reunited with his mother June 19. The mother of the child told Iraqi Police she left the child in her daughter's care. The daughter was carrying the baby on the road near the LSA when she was chased by wild dogs and left the baby so she could run faster, according to reports. ■



Major Jase Dean, physician, 332nd Expeditionary Medical Operations Group from Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas, holds a baby he treated for dehydration at Balad Air Base, Iraq. The baby was found abandoned on the side of the road near Logistical Support Area Anaconda by a patrol from Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 29th Field Artillery, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers.

DEPT
SECRET



FAST ROPING

The art of getting out of a perfectly good helicopter

Sgt. Ryan Matson

101st Combat Aviation Brigade
Public Affairs Detachment

TIKRIT, Iraq -- We have all seen Special Weapons and Tactics teams fast rope onto a rooftop in a Hollywood movie.

But for the Pathfinder Company, the only infantry company attached to the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, and the pilots of 5th Battalion, 101st CAB, fast roping is not a Hollywood stunt, but a technique they may have to employ on a combat mission.

"We try to teach the Soldiers the fundamentals so they can perform a controlled descent down a rope to insert a team in any operation that has limited access, or anything where we're trying to gain an element of surprise," said Staff Sgt. Chad Stackpole, a Rope Master with the Pathfinder Company who led the training.

He said the method of inserting Soldiers via a fast rope is called the Fast Rope Insertion/Extraction System (FRIES), and it would be employed in a situation which called for Soldiers to get into a tight spot quickly where the aircraft was unable to land. He said it is one of the Pathfinders essential tasks they must stay current on and conduct



training on at least every months.

The Pathfinders and 5th Battalion air crews conducted four days of FRIES training in the 5th Battalion area Contingency Operating Speicher, Iraq, from June 21. The training certifies the Pathfinder Soldiers, including interpreters, medics, as fast ropers, 5th Battalion pilots and FRIES pilots.

Private 1st Class Todd Davis, Pathfinder Company, had never fast roped before the training.

"We learned to use our hands," Davis said. "I also learned that if you do everything right, nobody gets hurt. It's a fast way to get down to the ground."

He said getting the correct form down, and learning to fight against the

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instincts to do something wrong and properly slow down on the rope, was the most challenging part of the training. He added employing the fundamentals on the helicopter was his favorite part.

Even though sliding down a rope may seem like a simple task, the pilots and Pathfinders both said there are many risks to this type of operation and it must be executed properly to ensure the safety of everyone involved.

The aircraft must be at a stable hover to ensure the fast ropers hit their objective safely.

The ropers must be comfortable with moving around in the aircraft and descending quickly but under control, watching the area below them, and clearing the rope area so as to avoid each other.

Stackpole said this becomes more challenging with the additional weight of the Individual Body Armor.

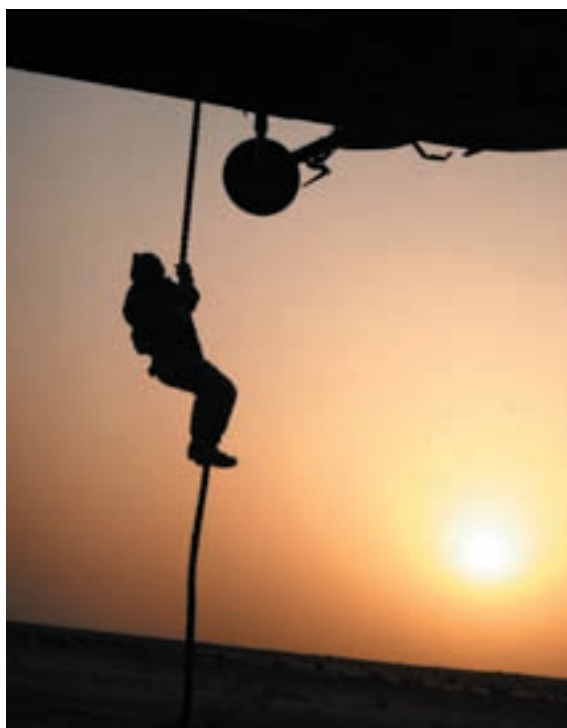


photos by Sgt. Ryan Matson

Staff Sgt. Chad Stackpole, Pathfinder Company, 5th Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, scans the area a team of Pathfinders are about to fast rope onto June 20 at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq.

***// If you do everything right,
nobody gets hurt. It's a
fast way to get down to
the ground. //***

Private 1st Class Todd Davis



A Pathfinder is silhouetted in the desert sun as he fast ropes out of a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter from 5th Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade during FRIES training.

By the end of training, Pathfinders had qualified as ropers. They performed six controlled descents from the tower, including one without equipment, one with equipment, a static hold or lock without equipment and with equipment.

In the static hold, the Soldier must form a teardrop and demonstrate the ability to hold himself for more than five seconds, Stackpole said, and in the lock, they must be able to hold themselves for 20 seconds. The Pathfinders must execute two descents from the tower in combat stacks properly, and five controlled descents from the aircraft, three during the daytime and two at night, with and without equipment. Once all of these requirements have been met, Stackpole said the Soldiers are qualified as a current roper for six months.

"The first time you go through and you see if you do everything right and get a good landing, you don't get hurt. I didn't get hurt, I'm still walking," Davis said. "It was good training. It's another thing that I know how to do now, so if we have to do it, I'm confident I can do it." ■



(Above) A Pathfinder demonstrates a secure "lock out" to his Ropemaster instructor during tower training June 19 prior to qualifying on fast ropes from a helicopter. (Below) A Pathfinder looks down as he fast ropes from a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter during Fast Rope Insertion/Extraction System training.



Home sweet home

Capt. Amy Bishop
133rd Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

SAMARRA, Iraq -- Iraqi Army officials conducted a ribbon-cutting ceremony, marking the completion of a \$12 million billeting project for Iraqi Army Soldiers in Samarra June 15.

The new billets at Forward Operating Base Seven, located near FOB Brassfield-Mora, will house more than 860 Iraqi Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division.

The completed project includes not only the billets, but a dining hall and shower facilities as well.

Prior to the completion, the Soldiers on FOB Seven were living in cramped tents, many of which leaked and had no climate control.

There were also limited washing and dining facilities.

Other projects underway include a

motor pool and storage facility.

Soldiers at FOB Seven train closely with Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, Task Force Band of Brothers stationed at Brassfield-Mora.

The 3rd BCT Soldiers currently provide FOB Seven with many of the things they require to operate until they can establish their own systems.

The completion of this project was a step in that direction.

The goal for the project was to include Iraqis in all stages of the process from the architect and contractor down to the labor force.

"The contractor is called 'First Iraqi, First Kuwaiti,' said Capt. Thomas Swint, U.S. Military Transition Team leader for FOB Seven. "They have several other projects in the Samarra area and they have done, for the most part, very good work."

The U.S Army Corps of Engineers began the project more than two years ago to assist in the stand-up of Iraqi

Security Forces.

During this time, it has undergone many, many changes.

The changes factored in logistics and weather issues during construction and changes to the initial design to compensate for the extraordinary heat and weather conditions in the Iraqi desert.

"I think what we learned from this construction experience is that the 'fast-track' design system may not always be the way to go ...with the heat and the weather and the type of construction," said Lt. Col. Robert Mitrocsak, Provincial Reconstruction Team Engineer.

The ribbon cutting ceremony included a speech by both the 1st Brigade Commander, Col. Ali Al Jaborah and Mitrocsak, and a presentation of awards and gifts to those involved in the completion of the project.

The Iraqi Army hosted a luncheon in their new dining facility at the conclusion of the ceremony. ■



photo by Capt. Amy Bishop

Iraqi Army officials cut the ribbon on a new soldier billets at Forward Operating Base Seven that will house and feed more than 650 Iraqi Army Soldiers.

RESOLVE: III

Spc. Anna-Marie Hizer

133rd Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

KIRKUK, Iraq -- When a call comes in to a 9-1-1 center in the United States, emergency response teams spring into action. The people of Kirkuk, Iraq, now has a very similar unit -- ready to serve them and assist the police of this province.

Kirkuk's Emergency Response Unit is a new group of police officers trained to deal with crisis situations and get things under control before the regular

police force arrives.

"They're like a 9-1-1 center," said 1st Lt. Andrew Salmo, executive officer, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division. "Getting on the scene first and ... conducting initial investigations for the police force."

Salmo's unit helped train the ERU and get them ready to be a fully-fledged force in just under a month.

"Four weeks ago, leaders of this unit signed for an empty building in an empty compound; they had no

vehicles, no equipment, and just a few good men who wanted to do their part to protect their fellow countrymen from terror," said Col. David Gray, commander, 1st BCT, 101st Abn. Div. "Today, thanks to the efforts of police chiefs and leaders from around the region, this unit has nearly 900 serving members."

While the ERU is less than a month old, the efforts of No Slack Soldiers in training these officers, along with the Iraqi's determination and willingness to learn, has paid off considerably.

Gray added that the ERU has shown what strength and determination can accomplish -- even in an ethnically diverse area, such as Kirkuk.

"Four weeks ago, this unit was a dream -- a hope of increased security," he said. "Today, members of the Emergency Response Unit stand before us a successful reality ... a sign to the world of what can be accomplished when people put aside their differences and work to protect and serve their community."

With continued supervision and training from Coalition Forces, Kirkuk's newest security force is on track to be a viable strength in Iraq's war on terror.

"What you, the leaders of Iraq, have accomplished is the embodiment of freedom," Gray said. "Your actions and your determination to protect and serve is an inspiration for leaders throughout the world." ■

Motorpool has *the* go-to guys

Sgt. Wayne D. Haley

133rd Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

TIKRIT, Iraq -- Many units have a "go-to guy", the cream-of-the-crop, the guy who can get it done, no matter what. One of the motor pools in the 3rd Brigade Combat Team has two of these guys. These mechanics are so good at what they do, they have the reputation of being the motor pool's top two Soldiers.

Specialist. Zachary Boudreau and Spc. Stacy Harms, both assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, are well respected by their team leader, Chief Warrant Officer Robert Lakes, battalion maintenance technician.

"Both of these Soldiers are my go-to-Soldiers," Lakes said. "These are the guys when I have to get a job done, and it has to get done right the first time ... I give these jobs to them. I wish I could have about 30 more of these two (Soldiers). They both have good attitudes and I'll take a person with a good attitude, who is willing to learn, over the most knowledgeable mechanic with a bad attitude."

The Army's leaders have trained

and mentored these two men into top-notch mechanics and Soldiers.

Harms is a mechanic and tow truck driver-operator who spends a lot of his time towing M1114 Humvees that either broke down or received battle damage while outside the security of the base.

Boudreau is a mechanic that performs general maintenance tasks but a few special ones as well. One of his unique challenges has been replacing wiring harnesses. This is a two-week long task that is normally done by contractors with special training. However, this part of Iraq does not have any of these contractors, so the job of making these Humvees fully mission capable is left up to Soldiers like Boudreau.

The two have made a huge impact on the unit's 97 percent mechanical readiness rating, which means Soldiers in the field can count on their equipment being fixed and back in the fight as soon as possible.

"We can count on the 3rd Special Troops Battalion motor pool to fix the problem," said 2nd Lt. James Gasapo, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Special Troop Battalion. "We work with them on a daily basis, and they've never let us down." ■



photo by Spc. Anna-Marie Hizer

Colonel David Gray, commander, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, addresses the crowd during a ceremony honoring the new Emergency Response Unit.

Takes lead role in provincial Security

Staff Report

101st Airborne Division
Public Affairs

KIRKUK, Iraq -- It was July 31, 2005 when Iraqi Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division, hoisted the Iraqi flag over Forward Operating Base Khamees in a ceremony that marked the transfer of authority for one fifth of the Diyala Province to a brigade-sized element in the Iraqi Army.

One year later, Coalition Forces are successfully transitioning operational control of a majority of the province to a division-sized element.

The 5th Iraqi Army Hadeed Division officially assumed the lead for security in Diyala Province from Task Force Band of Brothers July 3, at the Kirkush Military Training Base after months of training and preparation.

"This division will be successful because it is composed of the full spectrum of Iraqi people," said Gen. Ahmed Klepos Awad Majhool al-Kozae, commander of the 5th IA, during the ceremony. "It represents the hand of the government that carries the weapon and the olive branch at the same time."

Ahmed promised his division would be "the strong hand of the Iraqi people in defeating the insurgency."

This ceremony was a demonstration of the Hadeed

Division's commitment to providing security for their own country.

They successfully conducted their validation

operation in May, which tested their ability to work independently of Coalition Forces.

The Soldiers of the Hadeed

Division have been proving themselves in battle ever since.

One month ago, 5th IA Soldiers joined with Iraqi Police just south of Baqubah to fight off four separate attacks and force terrorists to give up their cause and retreat.

The 5th IA lost no Soldiers that day and provided quick response medical care and evacuation for wounded police officers and civilians.

The Division's successes in their operations directly resulted in the jurisdiction they assumed in Monday's ceremony.

Task Force Band of Brothers' 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division has been in Diyala since January, assisting with the transition from coalition to Iraqi control. They will remain in the area to provide necessary support.

British Maj. Gen. Peter Everson, who serves as deputy commanding general, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, said the 5th Division was the first Iraqi Army division in Multi-National Division-North validated to conduct independent combat operations.

It is only the fourth division to attain that status in all of Iraq.

"Gen. Ahmed's Soldiers have worked hard for the day that this division would be prepared to assume



photo by Spc. Lee Elder

Iraqi Army Maj. Gen. Ahmed (left) grasps his division's colors during the 5th Division's transfer of security lead ceremony. He was given the colors by British Maj. Gen. Peter Everson, deputy commanding general, Multi-National Corps-Iraq.



Iraqi Army Maj. Gen. Ahmed addresses Soldiers during the 5th Division's transfer of security lead ceremony. The ceremony gave control of almost the entire province to the IA.

responsibility for this large, complex province," Ever-son said. "And that day has come."

Diyala Province spans from the eastern edge of Baghdad to the Iranian border and covers 70,000 square miles.

It has been a long journey for the Soldiers of the Hadeed Division. Members of the 5th IA's Military Transition Team, made up of elements from the 101st Airborne Division and the Army Reserve's 80th Division from Virginia, have been helping the Soldiers prepare.

Colonel William Gothard, 80th Div., commands the MiTT in charge of training the division. His unit members work and live with their



Iraqi Soldiers march toward the reviewing stand during the 5th Division's transfer of security lead ceremony.

Iraqi Army counterparts, preparing them for this day.

"They take the lead now," Gothard said. "They conduct combat operations on their own with us providing support where they request it."

Gothard said the walk toward validation has not been an easy one. In addition to training tasks, the division's Soldiers have seen action in campaigns not only in Diyala, but also in neigh-

boring areas like Fallujah, Samarra and Baghdad as well.

The progress of the Iraqi Army in this area of Diyala Province is setting the example for others to follow for the security and safety of the people of Iraq.

Ahmed said he has been pleased with his Soldiers' performance in the area. Most of the troops have been with the division since

it was founded in 2004, and have participated in many history-making events, including three elections in the past year.

"They are very proud because they have participated in building this country," Ahmed said after the validation operation in May. "When they are conducting operations, they feel like they are giving something to this country." ■

BOB ON THE FOB

by SGT Albert J. Merrifield

YEAH, I WAS IN HERE EARLY ONCE AGAIN, SINCE I'VE GOT SO MUCH MORE WORK TO DO THAN EVERYONE ELSE... YEAH, THIS PLACE WOULDN'T RUN WITHOUT ME...

I'M GOING TO THE UH... GYM, SINCE I WAS HERE SO EARLY I DIDN'T GET A CHANCE TO DO PT LIKE EVERYONE ELSE... I'LL BE BACK IN A LITTLE BIT...

I'LL PROBABLY END UP HAVING TO WORK LATE AGAIN, SO IF I'M NOT IN FIRST THING IN THE MORNING IT'S 'CAUSE I SLEPT IN AFTER WORKING SO LATE...



Hard lurker n. (hård'·lærk'ər)

1. One who avoids as much work as possible, while working hard to make it appear that one is a productive, active, and important member of the team. The hard lurker is exceptionally skilled at projecting the appearance of hard work while superiors are around (i.e.- the start and end of each shift) yet manages to disappear for the rest of the day. They can usually be found at the coffee shop, gym (although never working out), or in the Internet Cafe during regular work hours, and if found will usually explain that they are "on short errands" that somehow last all day. (See also **spotlight ranger**)

Got a phrase for BOB on the FOB? Email it to bobonthefob@gmail.com, and if your suggestion is used, you'll receive credit in the strip!



HUTCH'S TOP 10

**Top 10 Things to remember
when you get back to America
by SPC. Joshua Hutcherson**

10. America has stop lights, stop signs and people obey the rules of the road (well, sometimes).

9. In America there are more options when it comes to food. And while you might not know if that hamburger from your favorite fast food chain is actually beef, you can be 100 percent sure that it isn't camel.

8. The water that comes out of the faucet, though not the best tasting, is usually safe for you to drink.

7. You don't need a multi-vehicle convoy whenever you want to go somewhere.

6. When you go to stores, you're going to be dealing with

actual change, so don't throw the coins away like those AAFES pogs.

5. You'll have the ability to watch *non-bootleg* movies, in theaters during their *first* run!

4. You're allowed to wear different clothes.

3. There are other color schemes for cars besides orange and white, or cammo. And cars aren't made out of 50 to 80 percent bondo paint.

2. Gravel isn't the only thing to walk on, there's grass too.

1. No General Order #1!

**MAN
ON THE
STREET!**

**WHAT HAS
BEEN THE BEST
PART OF THIS
DEPLOYMENT?**

by Sgt. Joshua
Ferrier-Watson

Spc. Anthony McKie
18th FA Bde.

*"You get to see
different sides of
the Army and the
world."*

Spc. Shani Lee
B Co 626th BSB

*"How everybody came to-
gether throughout the year to
accomplish the mission."*

Sgt. Candido Bernabe
A Co 501st STB
*"Is that a rhetorical
question?"*

Sgt. Antoinette LaForce
B Co 626th BSB
*"The extra training
we received."*

Capt. James Page
HHC 501st STB

*"Seeing all of our junior
Soldiers working hard to
make a difference."*



Delivering the goods

Staff Sgt. Brian Speech

138nd Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

MOSUL, Iraq -- As Coalition Forces help rebuild Iraq, getting basic medical care and medical supplies for the Iraqi people is still an on-going concern.

1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, 172nd Striker Brigade Combat Team has made this issue a top priorities.

The battalion delivered much needed supplies to the Primary Health Center in Homadat, Iraq.

"This is a very small amount of what they need," said Capt. Matthew Fargo, medical officer, 1st Bn, 17th Inf. Rgt., 172nd SBCT. "The Ministry of Health is doing all they can as well as

Coalition Forces. This is one of the bigger and better clinics in Iraq. People travel from as far as Tal Afar to receive care. That shows how desperate the need for more clinics has become."

The Primary Health Center has eight doctors and four dentists. They are open six days a week and have two shifts. The clinic is general practice and treats everybody. On average, 600 patients a month are seen and treated.

"Doctors are very limited in Iraq, so security is a big concern. We are a target of the insurgents because of the money we make and our families our targeted too," said a doctor at the clinic who asked not to be identified.

The delivery of medicine to the clinic was a welcome site to the doctor. He replenished his shelves and was able to continue to see the women and

children that were there for care.

"Children under the age of 12 are seen for free and receive free medicine. Those over the age of 12 are charged 5000 Dinar or 50 cents," he said. "Every time U.S. forces deliver medications it is a welcome relief."

The Ministry of Health has a very limited budget. The doctors that serve in the Iraqi Army receive more pay than the doctors employed by the Ministry of Health.

The medications that are purchased by the ministry come from various countries, including China, England, and Japan.

The other obstacle that the Ministry faces is getting medical equipment.

After the war most hospitals and clinics in Iraq were looted leaving them with no equipment to operate with. ■

Soldiers, airmen, go for glory in rigorous patrol competition

Capt. Lyn Graves

133rd Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

TIKRIT, Iraq -- 101st Airborne Division Soldiers ran across the Iraqi desert, dropped their rucksacks and disassembled then reassembled their weapons behind their backs.

They were not suffering from the

heat, but competing to find out who would be known as having the best patrol skills.

Soldiers and Airmen had the chance to show off some of their war fighting skills during a patrol competition held at Contingency Operating Base Speicher June 15.

First place went to Sgt. 1st Class Sterling Deck, of the 501st Military Intelligence Detachment, 101st Airborne Division.

Deck finished the race in one hour and twenty-five minutes and said simply, "It was challenging."

The competition, organized by members of Air Force Detachment 1, 732nd Expeditionary Mission Support Group, began with a ladder climb, followed by a three and half mile ruck march to the firing range.

Once at the range, competitors were required to disassemble their weapons and

then reassemble the weapons behind their backs.

The competitors then fired five rounds into a target at 50 meters.

After firing, the competitors picked up their rucksacks and began the three and half mile march back to the starting point.

They then had to drag a sandbag-laden stretcher weighing 120 lbs. across a field and answer a memory test.

The test asked questions about the ruck march course, requiring the competitors to be observant as if they were on patrol.

"They could have chosen any route they wanted to get to and from the range, our way was not necessarily the straightest path there," said Air Force Staff Sgt. John Kennedy, one of the competition organizers. "However, our memory test asked questions about the course that we had set up."

Air Force Lt.Col. Max Dubroff, commander of Detachment 1, 732nd Expeditionary Mission Support Group, was a central figure in organizing the event. He was also the first to begin the course.

Organizers said that 29 Soldiers and Airmen completed the course. ■



photo by Capt Lyn Graves

Staff Sgt. Becker of the 101st Airborne Division drags a sand bag laden stretcher during the Patrol Competition held at Contingency Operating Base Speicher.

I am an American Soldier ...and citizen

Spc. Anna-Marie Hizer
133rd Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

BALAD, Iraq -- The American Dream -- it is what many people long for and what many American citizens take for granted.

But for three Soldiers from the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, the dream is becoming a reality.

Sergeant Sergio Del Vecchio is one such Soldier.

The Guatemala City native moved to California with his parents at age eight.

He joined the U.S. Army in 2002 as a medic in the hopes of becoming an

American citizen.

"It was one of my goals," he said. "The opportunity here is so much better than anywhere else."

Del Vecchio said he began the process to gain his citizenship when he returned from Operation Iraqi Freedom I.

But because of delays he had to start the process over again during this rotation.

"It took about one and a half to two months to get everything finalized," he said. "My commander ... platoon sergeant ... worked to get everything finalized."

Another Soldier going through the naturalization



photo by Staff Sgt. Monika Comeaux

Sergeant Sergio Del Vecchio poses with his certificate of naturalization with the Rome District Director of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, John M. Bulger (left) and Logistical Support Area Anaconda mayor Col. Mark Hampton (right). The ceremony was the culmination of months of hard work for Del Vecchio and took place July 1.

process is Spc. Hernan Hernandez, Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st BCT, 101st Abn. Div.

Hernandez was born in Mexico and, like Del Vecchio, moved to the United States when he was about 8 years old.

Hernandez also said citizenship was one of his many goals in joining the Army.

He added that he is very happy to have been able to complete his paperwork while deployed.

"I never thought it was possible to do your citizenship in a combat zone," he said. "I'm very thankful to my command ... they really helped me out."

Hernandez said he is happy to be in the final stage of obtaining his citizen status and noted that now he is aiding some of his buddies who are in the first stage of

their process.

"I have friends going through the process and they're always asking me what's next," he said.

Most importantly, he notes, Soldiers should not be discouraged by the length of time the process may take.

"Don't give up," he said. "Anything is possible ... if I did it, I know they can."

In addition to support from his chain of command, Hernandez said his family has backed him up throughout his citizenship quest and his time in the service.

"I talked to my mom and I gave her the news ..." he said, "she's proud of me for getting my citizenship and for what I'm doing here -- being in Iraq and defending our country."

These Soldiers have made the choice to serve the United States.

After their oath of citizenship, July 1, they can official-

How cool would it be to have an arena full of people stand up and give you a "high five" for the service you have given to your country?

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www.army.mil/otf

Superman a Fourth of July treat



photo by Pfc. Paul Harris

First Sgt. Martin Kelley, first sergeant, Bulldog Troop, 2nd Squadron, 9th Cavalry, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers, barbecues at the troop cookout July 4.

Pfc. Paul Harris

3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team
4th Infantry Division Public Affairs

BALAD, Iraq -- Service members celebrated the Fourth of July at Logistical Support Area Anaconda near Balad, Iraq even though they were thousand of miles away from the United States.

For Bulldog Troop, 2nd Squadron, 9th Cavalry, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers, the day started promptly at 9 a.m. with a promotion and awards ceremony followed by a troop barbeque.

Staff Sgt. Scott Lathan, senior medic, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop attached to B Troop, received a Purple Heart for wounds to the face from an improvised explosive device while on patrol.

Sergeant Travis Rupert, senior dismount on red alpha patrol, B Troop, received the Army Commendation Medal for spotting an insurgent carrying IED assembly equipment and alerting Co-

alition Forces to the location where the man was later detained.

"It is an honor [to receive this award] considering this is Independence Day and to be awarded on a day like today compares to no other," said Rupert.

Captain Ronald Magtanog, executive officer for B Troop, who was newly promoted to captain as of July 1, was happy to stand before the troop for the festivities.

Until then, the troop had been scattered across different bases assisting in the Iron Brigade's mission. It was their first time together in a long time.

"We are a long way from home but we are with our family," Magtanog said, "This is my family right now while I am away."

Those Soldiers who did not have to go on patrol later in the evening were given the rest of the day off and were encouraged to take part in the activities Morale, Welfare and Recreation had planned for the service members of the LSA.

The pool was a busy place on the

fourth with service members' barbecuing, playing water volleyball or horseshoes.

MWR set up two special events: a water dodge ball tournament and a tug of war competition.

Due to security reasons pyrotechnics were prohibited for the evening, but there was a special screening of *Superman Returns*.

In every seat was a postcard that has been mailed from the U.S with messages of encouragement.

The program entitled Operation Superhero had the message printed on the postcards 'Let our troops know why they are true super heroes.'

Participants in the U.S. were asked to write messages to the troops in Iraq and mail the postcards to Warner Bros. who would send them on to the screening.

Most of the handwritten messages contained phrases like 'you are the real Supermen' and 'please come home safe.' ■

*I like
my kryptonite on a
lightly grilled bun with
ketchup and mustard!*





Iraqi Police to acquire police training center

Spc. Cassandra Groce

133rd Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

TIKRIT, Iraq -- Forward Operating Base Remagen is on the verge of being transferred from Coalition Forces to Iraqi Police control.

The base currently maintains more than 1,000 Coalition Forces troops and civilians, all of whom will be moved to other bases to make way for an Iraqi Police Training Center --the first in the Salah Ah Din Province.

"The FOB will be turned over to a national police brigade," said Sgt. 1st Class John Chango, the FOB's mayor and a Soldier in Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division. "Eventually this will become a training camp for them. They will be able to house and train approximately 1,000 Iraqi Police at any given time."

The base is ideal for setting up the training center because of the amount of available space.



photo by Spc. Cassandra Groce

Emergency Security Unit Police Officers conduct an area search during a five-day skills validation course being held at Forward Operating Base Remagen. The base is due to be handed over to a National Police Brigade in the coming months to become a full fledged Police Training Center in the Salah Ah Din Province.

"There is enough space up on the north side of the FOB that they could make small mock cities to do all of their search training," Chango said.

It is also already equipped with most of the assets required to conduct top-level training including housing, weapons ranges, a jail facility, classroom training areas, a helipad and a fully-equipped dining facility.

Newly-trained Iraqi Police Officers, who have completed an Iraqi Police training course outside the province, come to FOB Remagen for skills validation.

The five-day course is designed to reinforce the training they have already received from Iraqi trainers.

The course reviews movement for-

mations, reacting to IEDs and reacting to contact.

Community policing, marksmanship training, weapon safety and personnel search are also covered.

"They come through us already trained through a police academy, or advanced training course," said Staff Sgt. Michael Ledbetter, a squad leader in A Company, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment. "They know the stuff already. We just fine tune it."

With the completion of the hand over, the Salah Ah Din province will no longer require validation training.

They will instead be training their own officers to take over the difficult duties of maintaining law and order in the province. ■

IA Soldiers try out new role: gift givers

Sgt. Dennis Gravelle

138th Mobile Public
Affairs Detachment

MOSUL, Iraq -- Handing out toys to children is not what Iraqi Soldiers are used to doing, but by the response they received it won't be the last time.

Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Iraqi Army

Division conducted a school supply hand-out in Aitha, Iraq that showed a new side of the many strengths of the battalion.

This contrast was noticed by all the villagers and especially appreciated by the children who were treated to candy, t-shirts, crayons, color paper, folders and other school supplies.

The significance of this

event was the impact that these items had on people of the village.

They realized just how special it is to have these Soldiers there, cementing their presence in the village and making a strong statement to everyone that they were there to stay.

Recently, 1st Bn. has focused on Aitha to establish a strong presence in order to

deny terrorists control of the area, and to show that they have compassion for the children and adults.

The IA has assumed more security responsibility for many areas in the Mosul area.

A civil affairs mission lets the residents see that the IA are out patrolling and care about the rebuilding of this nation. ■



TASK FORCE BAND of BROTHERS IN MEMORIAM

*Once firmly grounded upon this earth,
these Screaming Eagles now soar in brighter skies.*

June 24

Staff Sgt. Virrueta A. Sanchez, 33

1st Battalion, 68th Armor Regiment,
3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team
4th Infantry Division
Houston, Texas



June 29

Sgt. Bryan C. Luckey, 25

562nd Engineer Company,
172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team
Tampa, Fla.

June 29

Sgt. James P. Muldoon, 23

1st Battalion, 68th Armor Regiment,
3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team
4th Infantry Division
Bells, Texas



(These are the names that have been released as of July 11)