

ANACONDA TIMES

AUGUST 23, 2006

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Knowledge

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Local servicemembers take time out of their day to donate platelets for wounded Soldiers

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NEVER FORGOTTEN >>

Maupin receives third promotion

ARLINGTON, Va. (Army News Service) – Sgt. Keith “Matt” Maupin, the only Soldier listed as captured in Iraq, was promoted to staff sergeant Aug. 3.

This is Maupin’s third promotion since he was captured as a private first class on April 9, 2004, when his convoy was attacked near Baghdad by enemy forces with rocket propelled grenades and small arms fire.

“This will keep Staff Sgt. Maupin in line with his peers so that when he returns he’ll have some catching up to do as far as proper schooling goes, but at least he’ll have the rank of his peers, who are now part of the NCO corps,” said Maj. Annmarie Daneker, 88th Regional Readiness Command Public Affairs Office.

Missing after the attack, Maupin was immediately placed in an accountability status referred to as “Duty Status: Whereabouts Unknown.” His status was later changed to “Missing-Captured.” Maupin is a member of the 724th Transportation Company from Bartonville, Ill., but assigned to the 88th RRC for the deployment.

Maupin remains entitled to rights and privileges for pay and promotions as long as he remains on active-duty status. His basic monthly pay continues to go into an account Maupin set up before deploying.

In an Army statement announcing Maupin’s promotion, officials cited the Warrior Ethos, “I will never leave a fallen comrade,” adding that the Army remains committed to finding Maupin.

“We have faith that he is following the Soldiers Creed and staying true to Army values,” Daneker said. “We hope for him to return soon. We’d like to put him back with his family.”

CORPS SUPPORT >>

6th IA takes charge of motorized regiment

“The discipline and professionalism in this unit is second to none.”

- said Col. Gustave Perna, commander of the 4th Sustainment Brigade, about the 6th MTR

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“I will never accept defeat.”

I am Spc. Champagne Guzman, from Lawrence, Mass.

B Company, 64th Brigade Support Battalion >> driver, gunner



STEADFAST Selfless Service

by Brig. General Rebecca S. Halstead, 3rd Corps Support Command Commanding General

“STEADFAST Leadership”... “S” -- “Soldiers” ... “T” -- “Training” ... “E” -- “Excellence” ... “A” -- “Attitude” ... “D” -- “Discipline” ... “F” -- “Family/Friends”... “A” -- “Accountability”... and this week is “S” for “Selfless Service.”

There are many among us who serve, but how many of us selflessly serve? I have become a firm believer that selfless service is not reserved or limited to a specific rank or position, not even military or civilian, faith or gender. I believe selfless service is inextricably linked to what is on the “inside” much more than what is on the outside. Selfless service must be a part of our character before it can truly manifest itself in our actions. It cannot be measured and it is not a goal to be reached. It is a desire of the heart. It is a sense of purpose.

I want to believe, especially for those in the military, that the more responsibility one is given the more selfless one may become. Too often, though, it seems the more responsibility some are given, the more they expect others to recognize and cater to them. It is easy to fall into the “high maintenance,” “large and in charge,” power ego trip. When in reality, the higher we go the more we should give. The more approachable we should be for others. The more understanding we should have for the struggles and challenges of those around us. When we are successful, we should let others sing our praises and not do so ourselves. More importantly, we should be the one recognizing the good in others and not worrying if anyone sees the good in us.

What a wonderful world this would be if we

would be “others” -focused over “self” focused. Giving instead of receiving. Not caring who gets the credit. Defining our success by how we make others successful. By sharing. Who have you helped today? When is the last time you let someone in line first? Said, “Thank you?” Said, “You are welcome?” Hugged? Smiled? Said, “Hello?” Responded, “Hello, and how are you?” Asked, “Do you need help on that project?” These things might sound too simple, but the small “selfless” words and actions of our daily life accumulate into a lifetime of service....yes, the little things in life do count.

My hope for all of us is that we remain proud to serve our Nation....selflessly serve our Nation and each other...and that it will show in our words and deeds every day.



File Photo

Media exchange with local-area journalists series: Social security network helps people of Balad

by Najam Al-Jamili

Special to the Anaconda Times

Dozens of citizens go inside the building of the city council of Balad and dozens of them leave it. Lines of people stand waiting in front of the window in rooms full of clerks who volunteered to help in the process of social security. This scene led us to inquire about the steps that need to be taken to finalize the procedures. We also had a meeting with the network council for Balad to learn about the goals of the social security office. The beginning of the meeting was with Mr. Sadiq Al-Zubaidi, the council president. He is also the director of Al-Amal Institute in Balad; he provided us with the following information:

1. The council is related to the Social Care Department in Salah Eddine. First of all, the committee was created in Balad in order to lessen the work load on the county's department, and make it easy on the citizens for follow up.
2. The work of that committee is to determine the proper allowance to the families that do not make enough money to cater for their needs. It also provides the jobless people with temporary unemployment pay until they get a job.
3. As far as the eligible groups are concerned, Mr. Sadiq Al-Zubaidi says that they are those who are not able to work and also those that can work but can not find a job. Plus the widows who have minor children and divorced women depending on their age.
4. Women at the age of 55 and men at 60. The other eligible groups are married students who are still attending school; those with poliomyelitis; people with chronic diseases with the exception of the blind people and those who suffer from quadriplegia. The latter are provided allowances from

another social security department.

5. Amongst the documents that should be presented to the committee are the following (civil status I.D, the Iraqi certificate of citizenship, residency card, ration card, two colored pictures) and it is mandatory that the applicant provides a copy of record of civil status and the decision of the medical committee.

6. After evaluating the application and registering it, it gets sent to the department of social care and they decide on who deserves the approval.

7. The allowance is as follows: the minimum wage is (50,000 Dinars) and the maximum wage is (120,000 Dinars) based on the following system:

- The father 50 percent
- The wife 20 percent
- The children: each child 10 percent
- The third child 10 percent.

There are about 251 applications that have already been processed and sent to the governorate. And there are 1146 applications waiting to be sent. There are 80 applications in preparation and they will be sent soon. As for the daily applicants the number is 500 and the committee workers are 10 volunteers and they represent different particular parties such as (the city council, the association of the paralyzed and other organizations) finally the work of this committee covers the county of Balad and the county of Dujail.

After this important introduction to the process we met with some of the workers at this committee dealing with one of the citizens who was waiting impatiently for his turn. The first meeting was with Mr. Samir Abul Hussein, a volunteer from Al-Hadi cultural league, and he stated the following: My

work covers everything from double checking the documents to sending them out to the medial committee...etc and I deal daily with 50-60 applications approximately.

We also met with Mr.Hamid Ibrahim Abid, a volunteer from the association of the paralyzed and he said: the nature of my job is to take care of the paralyzed people's applications and helping with others and that amounts to 250 applications daily.

Mr. Riad Abdul Mutalib, a volunteer from the Kurdish National Union, is responsible for all the files that are sent from the medical committee in Balad. He has to be very careful in studying them and then he has to hand them back to the applicants in case one or more documents are missing.

Mr. Lafta Magdi Salih is a volunteer from the city council and he says: the nature of my job in this committee is to receive the application, study it and then send it to the hospital for the medical committee review. He also sends memos to the department of civil record in order to supply the citizens with certificates of life and at the end we make sure the application is okay (we write down the numbers of the citizenship certificate and other stuff). But as far as the number of applications that Mr. Lafta does, he affirms that it varies between 100-150.

He adds: we deal with citizens with extreme kindness and we proffer all our efforts to serve them. We also get their respect in exchange.

Mr. Hani Abdul Azzim is a volunteer and is tasked with administrative orders from the Department Of Social Security in Salah Eddine. The nature of his job is to verify that the final steps of the applications are in order for citizens to be eligible and from there it gets sent to the Social Security Office in Tikrit.

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Deployed Soldiers test Body Ventilation System

FORT BELVOIR, Va. (Army News Service) - The Army's Rapid Equipping Force delivered 500 Body Ventilation Systems to heat-stressed Soldiers in Iraq and Kuwait last month.

The portable, lightweight ventilation system will help reduce heat-related injuries, and will undergo one year of assessments by such Soldiers as drivers, military police and machine gunners. Another 1,700 vests will be shipped and issued to Soldiers in similar units and duty positions in upcoming months.

"The BVS project is another example of how the Army culture is changing in order to provide warfighter solutions in a timely manner," said Col. Gregory Tubbs, REF director. "It also provides another example of how much good can be accomplished when Army organizations like the program executive office Soldier and the Rapid Equipping Force team to help the warfighter."

The BVS weighs less than five pounds and can be worn under body armor. Air circulates inside the vest to increase the Soldier's comfort and performance in hot-dry climates by significantly increasing the evaporation rate.

The BVS has two main components - a Ventilation Unit and an Air Distribution Garment that looks like a vest. The VU, or blower, is a battery powered fan that can be attached in a va-

riety of positions to meet the Soldier's need and comfort. The filtered blower system fits neatly into a pouch and is similar to a fanny pack.

"It definitely keeps me cool," said Sgt. Mark Waits, an M1114 gunner with the 3rd Battalion, 29th Field Artillery Regiment. "I don't feel as fatigued after a mission in the BVS."

The BVS operates approximately eight hours with commercial lithium rechargeable batteries, with a recharge time of four to five hours. Filters are the system's primary maintenance.

"When GlobalSecure approached us with their quick, simple and reliable BVS design, I knew we could work with and count on the REF to get it to Soldiers," said Col. Richard Hansen, director, project manager Soldier Warrior.

GlobalSecure was selected among other vendors for its overall quality and product design, service, timeliness and price.

The Rapid Equipping Force is committed to working with industry and governmental partners such as Soldier Warrior to develop versatile equipment that protects Soldiers and ensures their survivability and lethality.

"If the warfighters need it, then I won't rest until I explore every option to meet those needs," Tubbs said.



U.S. Army Photo

Sgt. Mark Waits, an M1114 gunner assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 29th Field Artillery Regiment, puts on his Individual Body Armor with the Army's new Body Ventilation System before leaving for a mission. The BVS is an advanced prototype cooling system that is being tested in Iraq and Kuwait for one year.

Army supports 172nd Stryker Brigade families



Photo by Spc. James P. Hunter

A Soldier with Company B, 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, 172nd Stryker Brigade, and an Iraqi Soldier play with an Iraqi child while on patrol in Mosul. They patrol the area to defeat insurgency and set the conditions to build democracy in Iraq.

FORT WAINWRIGHT, Alaska - To help families of the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team cope with Soldiers' extended deployment in Iraq, the brigade is offering a variety of support services through Family Assistance Centers at Fort Wainwright and Fort Richardson, both in Alaska.

The unit's deployment was extended to meet new mission requirements July 27, just days before the scheduled redeployment of the brigade. Some families had already reserved flights and accommodations for vacations, while others were preparing permanent change of station moves.

"The Army and U.S. Army, Alaska, recognize that we have asked this brigade, and that includes their families, to do something extraordinary for the country, and we will take extraordinary effort to take care of them," said Maj. Gen. Charles H. Jacoby Jr., commander, U.S. Army, Alaska.

"Nothing is more important to me than bringing the balance back into these families' lives so their Soldiers can focus on getting the job done," he added.

The FACs have been augmented with family-life specialists, chaplains, psychologists and community service personnel to help families cope emotionally. Officials are also helping those who made PCS or vacation plans before the

extension was announced get refunds for airline tickets. Army Emergency Relief is absorbing fees for changes made to tickets that aren't covered by airlines. Letters to landlords requesting lease extensions or deposit refunds are also being provided upon request.

Regular family meetings have been scheduled to help facilitate communication between families and Army leadership.

The extension could last up to four months, although brigade commander Col. Michael Shields said their mission is event-driven and would be based solely on what's happening on the ground, not on a timeline. About 400 Soldiers have already returned from Iraq. Those who have mission-essential skills may have to return, but Shields said that will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

"The commander in Iraq needed the best, most experienced unit," Shields said. "He picked the 172nd because of their agility, their ability to turn on a dime and get the job done right no matter what the task. They are the best unit for the job."

(Editor's note: Compiled from stories by Kamryn Jaroszewski and Julie Cupernall, from the U.S. Army Alaska PAO.)

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ARMY RESERVE

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4th Iraqi Army Division Assumes Security Lead

TIKRIT, Iraq - The 4th Iraqi Army Division assumed the lead for security operations in the Salah Ad Din, Sulaymaniyah and Kirkuk Provinces from coalition forces in a ceremony at Forward Operating Base Dagger, in Tikrit.

The 4th IA Div. becomes the fifth Iraqi Army division to assume primary responsibility for military operations in Iraq. Half of the 10 IA divisions now have assumed the lead for security operations within Iraq.

The 4th IA Div. is the second division in Task Force Band of Brothers area of operations to make this transition. Its area of responsibility includes the cities of Tikrit, Kirkuk, Bayji, and Samarra, as well as the major oil and electrical infrastructure in northern Iraq.

The 5th IA Div. assumed the lead for security operations in Diyala Province in July. Throughout northern Iraq, 33 battalions, nine brigades, and two divisions have demonstrated their ability to operate independently and now lead the fight against terrorists and anti-Iraqi forces.

Lt. Gen. Abdul-Aziz Abdel-Rahman Al-Mufti, commander of the 4th Iraqi Army Division, and Maj. Gen. Thomas Turner, commander of Task Force Band of Brothers, presided over

the ceremony, which was capped by the unveiling of the 4th IA Div.'s unit colors.

Attending the ceremony were the Iraqi National Security Advisor, Dr. Mouwafak al-Rubaie, the Iraqi Minister of Defense, Gen. Abdul Quder Muhammed, U.S. Ambassador to Iraq, Dr. Zalmay Khalilzad, the governors of Salah Ad Din, Sulaymaniyah and Kirkuk provinces, commander of Multi-National Forces-Iraq, Gen. George Casey, and a host of other local leaders

"I think this is a good day for Iraq," Khalilzad said. "The people of Iraq are starting to get organized so they can take on more responsibility for their own country."

"I think what you saw here today was a great statement in progress and unity in Iraq," Casey said. "They (Iraqis) keep taking small steps and getting better and better everyday."

The process of Iraqi units taking the lead for security operations throughout Iraq highlights the success and dedication of the thousands of Iraqi soldiers who have stepped forward to defend their nation.

(Editor's Note: Story submitted by the 101st Airborne Division Public Affairs Office)



Submitted story and photos
Lt. Gen. Abdul Aziz, Commander of the 4th Iraqi Army Division (left) and his division sergeant major (right) unveiled the Division colors during a ceremony held at Forward Operating Base Dagger Tikrit, Iraq to mark the 4th Iraqi Army Division's taking the lead on security for the provinces Sulymaniya, Salah Ah Din, and Kirkuk. This assumption of responsibilities marks the 50 percent mark of primary control of Iraq by Iraqi Security Forces.

Operation River Falcon reminds townspeople they are not forgotten

story and photo by Cpl. Michael Molinaro

2nd BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

FOB KALSU, Iraq – Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, conducted Operation River Falcon July 25-27 in, and around, the town of Sayifiyah.

"The goal was to set conditions in the area in support of future projects and more kinetic operations," said Capt. Colin Brooks, commander, B Company, 2nd Bn., 8th Inf. Regt.

Sayifiyah had once been a "French Riviera"-type region for Sunnis, who were given preferential treatment under the Saddam regime, Brooks said. Located southeast of Baghdad on the Tigris River, the small area, which is full of date palm groves and plush two-story waterfront houses, had become a sanctuary for terrorists.

Some difficult regions to the northwest caused security force leadership to shift their focus to those areas, leaving the relatively peaceful town of Sayifiyah unguarded, said 1st Lt. Leon Satchell, platoon leader, B Co.

Soldiers departed here July 25 and rode into town in the pre-dawn hours inside humvees and Bradley Fighting Vehicles in search of terrorists residing in town. Five men, all of whom were on a suspect list, were detained during the initial cordon and search mission.

"We sent a strong message that the area is no longer a place where the enemy can move freely," Brooks said, a native of Cleveland. "They will think twice about conducting (terrorist) operations in Sayifiyah."

Soldiers continued searching houses and introducing themselves to many weary and mystified residents, who were unsure of the Soldiers' reasons for coming into town. The Soldiers set up a temporary operating base on the outskirts of town.

Soldiers continued patrolling the streets, looking for anything out of the ordinary. One platoon was tasked with combing a thick date palm grove in the Abasha Farms section of

town that drew the suspicions of many. The suspicions turned out to be valid as Soldiers unearthed an enormous cache that will affect enemy logistics, both in the short-term and long-term scheme of things, Brooks said. Multiple vehicles suspected of being used to transport weapons and car-bomb attacks were also found.

One man was detained after Soldiers witnessed him attempting to emplace a roadside bomb in front of a traveling combat patrol. The detainee was caught with detonation chord, an ignition battery and admitted to his crime on tape.

Soldiers discovered numerous defensive roadside bombs in front of known safe houses. The large bombs were buried underneath the concrete road. An explosive ordnance disposal team conducted a controlled detonation of the bombs.

"We definitely disrupted the insurgency," said Sgt. 1st Class Ken Hignight, platoon sergeant with B Co., 2nd Bn., 8th Inf. Regt., a native of Moline, Ill. "The cache was the big-



FOB KALSU, Iraq – Sgt. 1st Class Ken Hignight, platoon sergeant, B Company, 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, carefully hands over munitions found buried in the ground July 26 in the Abasha Farms section of Sayifiyah. The Soldiers were conducting Operation River Falcon, aimed at quelling a terrorist safe haven.

gest we have found since we got to Iraq."

Soldiers set out on the final day of the operation to meet the residents and explain to them they were in town to get rid of the terrorists. They handed out humanitarian aid bags, food, a variety of helpful items and TIPS cards so the residents could inform Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers or Iraqi security forces if terrorist activity was occurring in the area.

Locals discussed the lack of power their town had experienced for the past four to six months. The power line had been severed by terrorists in Baghdad. Without power, the water purification plant shut down, and many were unable to work without electricity.

"Without electricity, we have nothing," said a resident mechanic. "I had to send my son to Baghdad to live with other family members because it got too hot here. I can't work because none of my tools work without power."

At first, the people seemed unsure of why Soldiers were in town all of a sudden and weren't convinced they wanted to communicate with anyone, Satchell said, a resident of Rialto, Calif.

"They soon realized we were here for their well-being and opened up to us," he added. "Once we start producing, they'll start telling us who the enemy is."

Soldiers could see the perception of the locals change in just three days, Brooks commented.

"We neutralized (roadside bombs), exploited weapons caches, detained known terrorists and engaged with the local leaders," he said. "We also identified several in-roads to help the town and its people, such as projects and future raids to root out any remaining insurgency."

"Until a few days ago, the terrorists were winning in this town. That is no longer the case."

Another unit will assume Sayifiyah as its area of operations as 2nd Bn., 8th Inf. Regt., continues its counter-insurgency campaign in the Babil province.

The Soldiers witnessed a community that doesn't want terrorists in their town, Hignight said.

The future face of Iraq

story and photos by Spc. Linsay Burnett

4th Infantry Division Public Affairs

HAWIJAH, Iraq -- One of the primary missions for coalition forces stationed in Iraq is the training of the Iraqi security forces. The development of a disciplined and commanding force is essential for protecting the reconstruction process and ensuring stability throughout the country. As coalition forces develop plans for withdrawal from the country, it is essential they ensure provisions are in place to continue this training. Spotted throughout the country, platoons of highly skilled Iraqi Army soldiers are assuming responsibility for the training of their country's soldiers.

One such program just wrapped up operations at Forward Operating Base McHenry, located near Hawijah, Iraq, home to Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). Soldiers from the 24th Scout Platoon, 2nd Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army, conducted a three-week training course for soldiers from the Iraqi brigade. During the course, soldiers cover an array of topics including weapons maintenance, basic rifle marksmanship, reflexive firing, basic infantry skills, and urban terrain combat tactics. The final test of their training is the execution of a series of raids in the Hawijah district.

Arriving at the range around 9:30 a.m., the instructors prepare for the day. With arms swinging to a 90-degree angle in front of them, soldiers from the 2nd Bde., 4th IA

high step in time up the dusty road to the range. Following the range briefing, the soldiers line up to receive magazines and earplugs.

Magazines in hand, the enthusiastic students line up facing their paper targets. Lying down in the prone, they wait for the command to lock and load. As the students engage their targets, the instructors watch carefully providing on-the-spot corrections. When the firing stops, the instructors make their way down range to inspect the pox-holed targets. Markers in hand, they identify shot groupings and make minor adjustments on the various weapons to tighten up the students' accuracy. As shot groupings become more precise and consistent, the students progressively receive passing marks and move off the range.

The next skill tasking is reflexive firing. The students turn their attention to 1st Sgt. Dani Ali Risheed, 1st Sgt. for the 24th Scout Plt., 2nd Bde., 4th IA, as he demonstrates the proper posture and technique necessary to effectively execute this drill.

The students line up on the 50 meter mark, face their inanimate adversaries and load their magazines. "Haya! Arme!"

"Ready! Fire," yells Muhammed, one of the instructors, with commanding vibrancy. The students execute. This repetitive exercise continues on at the 100, 150, and 200 meter markers, and their shots become steadier and form sturdier.

At the end of the day, Risheed stands before the formation, relaying some observations from the day, tips for improvement, and expectations for the remainder of the course. In a quiet voice underscored by regimented authority, the students listen with faces of inquiring exhaustion, eyes squinting into the blazing sun that profiles Risheed as he speaks. Finally the students are released back to their chain of command and the day is at an end.

As the days progress so do the students. "The soldiers are getting much better and we have had no real problems," comments Risheed (through a translator). Cpt. Hussein Ali Hammed, one of the students and also commander of the special forces platoon, 2nd Bde., 1st IA, is incredibly pleased with the training (through a translator). "The instructors are teaching us skills we didn't know before and are helping us improve. From the first day until now (the final day of training) everything has been perfect."

The final element of the training is urban terrain combat skills. The group moves from the range to the adjacent fabricated "shoot house." The students break up into groups of nine. Forming a line on the outside wall of Hescos, the first man in the line runs his hand around the outside of the door. Moving back into the line

"My soldiers and I are proud of the coalition forces for everything they have done for us and we will never forget them,"

-- Cpt. Hussein Ali Hammed

he signals the number five man who charges up, kicking in the door then immediately moving to the side to provide external security. The remaining eight soldiers storm the house, splitting into groups of four going left and right into the respective rooms. They engage paper targets placed in various locations in the room. Once they confirm that the targets have been neutralized, they stack up again and storm the adjacent room. As errors are observed, the instructors halt the training, point out the mistakes, and make them start again until the execution is perfect.

With this final piece of training complete, the students are ready to take their training to the streets. With the three-quarter moon overhead providing a muted light, tan and brown humvees with the Iraqi flag painted on either side line up in the gravel lot near the tents. The soldiers mount up; gunners adjusting the weapons in their turrets and truck commanders performing radio checks. The convoy rolls out the gate of the forward operating base and makes its way down the deserted two lane road into the streets of Hawijah.

They reach the first target house. One vehicle reves its engine and rams the metal gate separating the house from the street, ripping it from the hinges and contorting the metal under the massive weight of the tires. The soldiers dismount and storm the residence. The flash of weapon mounted tactical lights and headlamps guide their way as they methodically move from room to room, rounding up the residents and searching for any suspicious or illegal items.

Once the house is secured, questions answered, and any potential suspects detained, the soldiers regroup and exit the house. The mission continues on with several more houses and concludes just as the sun pierces the horizon. With no violent incidents, the soldiers return to the forward operating base with a satisfying fatigue.

As the soldiers prepare to return to their units and pass on this training to their fellow soldiers, they are eager about the future. "My soldiers and I are proud of the coalition forces for everything they have done for us and we will never forget them," asserts Hammed. As Iraq slowly matures away from coalition assistance, this type of training is a cornerstone for developing an Iraq able to govern and protect itself. Hammed avows that "We are getting stronger and this three week course taught by Iraqi instructors shows that we are almost to a point where we can start taking things into our own hands."



Iraqi policemen from the Doura police station and Soldiers from A Company, 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, patrol the Doura Market in southern Baghdad.



2nd Lt. Terry Gambrel, platoon leader, A Company, 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, patrols the Doura market in southern Baghdad July 25. Gambrel and his platoon, along with Iraqi police, conduct combined patrols to deter terrorist activity in the Doura neighborhood.

Donations fill need, shelves for Iraqi doctors

by Sgt. Gary A. Witte

Anaconda Times Staff Writer

BALAD, Iraq – The patients didn't seem to care about the boxes of books or the Soldiers carrying them. Even as the group of Iraqi doctors eagerly waited to see what was being provided, a woman with a crying boy came in the doorway and beckoned for a physician's attention.

The books may mean more to the future of Balad General Hospital and the future care of its patients than they know.

Capt. Yancy W. Caruthers, a reserve Soldier, is familiar with the urgent needs of hospitals. While in Iraq, he works as the assistant medical plans officer for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Corps Support Command. In his civilian job in Missouri, he works as an emergency room nurse and police officer.

His efforts led to the stateside donation of more than 300 up-to-date medical books and more than 700 of the latest professional journals to the civilian physicians at Balad General Hospital. The latest shipment, delivered on July 25, served as a starting point for discussions between U.S. troops and hospital administrators about the need for future assistance.

"I hope more will come of this," Caruthers said. "The better relationship we can have with the Iraqi medical system, the easier it will be to help them build their capability."

The books, providing the latest information on how to better care for patients, are a change from the older textbooks Iraqi civilian doctors are normally forced to rely on.

"We need medical materials. We need medical equipment," one Iraqi surgeon said as Soldiers from the 404th Civil Affairs Battalion and B Company, 1st Infantry, 8th Combined Arms Battalion carried the boxes of books into the hospital's library. "This will help us a lot. Every couple of years the strategy of medicine changes. The strategy of treatment changes."

Caruthers said he began his efforts soon after arriving in Iraq last year. He discovered that while Iraqi doctors learn their profession in English, they had neither the funds nor the access to get new medical books.

Basing his efforts on similar programs elsewhere in Iraq, Caruthers worked with his hometown hospital, the Ozarks Medical Center, to organize an effort by American doctors to donate reference materials.

The first round brought 20 boxes of books, many used, yet still more current than what the doctors had. Caruthers said he was pleased with the shipment delivered to the hospital in March, but never expected a



"This will help us a lot. Every couple of years the strategy of medicine changes,"

-- Iraqi surgeon

followup delivery.

And even when it became clear that the American doctors were willing to do more, he said he didn't expect the second shipment to be as large as the first. Instead, the American doctors purchased hundreds of new books, with subjects ranging from pediatrics to gerontology, nearly equaling the size of the original effort.

One doctor from West Plains, Mo., donated his entire reference collection, Caruthers said. Doctors also sought out specific texts based on requests put in by their Iraqi counterparts. Another doctor provided more than a half-dozen 2006 Physician's Desk Reference, brand new on compact disc.

"The Iraqi doctors love that," Caruthers said of the new materials. "They feel like they have a peer-to-peer relationship."

Capt. Anthony D. Coppola, B Company, 404th CAB, met with the civilian administrators after the donation and discussed the continuing relationship between Logistical Support Area Anaconda and Balad General Hospital.

"The hospital needs to be brought up to a point where they can care for Iraqi soldiers when they are seriously wounded," he said afterwards. "The biggest thing we need to work on is the process ... The hardest part about the Army mission right now is getting the overall populace to use their government."

Coppola said the medical books program is a good example of efforts that can help the community.

"I think we need a lot more great ideas like that," he said, noting that those with ideas to



Photos by Sgt. Gary A. Witte

Top left - The Balad General Hospital medical library. Above - Capt. Yancy W. Caruthers of HHC 3rd COSCOM talks to Iraqi doctors. Caruthers organized the donation effort with support from physicians in the United States. At left - An Iraqi doctor examines what books are contained in the donation. Iraqi doctors learn medicine using English. A previous donation of medical reference texts was made in March.

assist the Iraqi populace should talk to 3rd COSCOM operations before attempting to implement them.

Caruthers will soon have to continue his program on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. He is scheduled to go home in September. "I'm going to try to keep it alive on that end," he said.

Although his chosen careers are focused on helping people, his deployment to Iraq has made him want to do even more to impact others' lives.

"You don't want to be content to be an observer in life," Caruthers said. "Sometimes people feel they can't do something that matters. That's not true at all."

6th IA takes charge of motorized regiment

story and photos by Spc. Amanda Solitario

Anaconda Times Staff Writer



(Above) An Iraqi soldier with the 6th Motorized Transportation Regiment is hoisted above the crowd during a ceremony on Aug. 3 at Camp Taji, Iraq. The Iraqi Army took charge of the unit, officially transferring it from the U.S. Army's 4th Sustainment Brigade. (Right) Iraqi soldiers from the 6th Motorized Truck Regiment march around the field during the ceremony. The 4th Special Troops Battalion trained the 6th MTR for the last 11 months, and they are now ready to support the 6th Iraqi Army Division.



CAMP TAJI, Iraq - When the U.S. Army's 4th Sustainment Brigade arrived here in October, the Iraqi 6th Motorized Transportation Regiment had to walk side-by-side with coalition forces on all missions. Today, they are on their own.

The 6th Iraqi Army Division took charge of the 6th MTR during an Aug. 3 ceremony here, officially transferring it from U.S. control.

After a harmonious Arabic prayer opened the ceremony, key leaders within the 6th MTR and the 6th Iraqi Army Division took turns addressing the soldiers in their native language. The officers commented on how far the troops have come and how hard they have worked.

The commander of the regiment told his Soldiers to be proud of what they have accomplished and asked God to protect them.

The stage was lined with a mix of Iraqi and American officers, symbolizing the unity of the two armies and the respect they have for one another.

"We have learned much from you," said Col. Gustavo Perna, commander of the 4th Sustainment Brigade. "Because of our relationship, we as soldiers and as leaders will be better on both sides."

Perna said he has enjoyed watching the Iraqi unit during its transition.

"It has been my pleasure over the last 11 months to have worked with these fine soldiers and leaders, to watch their unit grow, and to witness their great success," Perna said. "The discipline and professionalism in this unit is second to none."

The transfer of the regiment is extremely important for the overall success of the Iraqi Army, said Lt. Col. William Schiek, commander of the 4th Brigade Troops Battalion from Fort Hood, Texas.

One of the responsibilities of the Iraqi unit is to disseminate supplies and equipment to its troops.

"If this regiment was incapable of doing their mission, there would be a greater price to pay in the rest of the Army," he said.

Perna said the support this unit provides has

stimulated the growth of the Iraqi Army and has enhanced the morale of the entire organization.

Since the beginning of their deployments, the 4th BTB and a Military Transition Team have been coaching the 6th MTR on how to function as a unit, Schiek said.

"It has been a training process that has taken a little bit of time," he said.

The embedded transition team spent grueling hours over the months showing the soldiers basic combat skills, convoy protection, equipment maintenance, and logistical management, said Maj. Roger Glenn, force protection officer with the MITT.

Schiek said the 4th BTB was arranging and leading all the missions for the regiment at the beginning. However, the training has paid off. For the last three months, the regiment has conducted more than 40 missions on their own without losing a soldier.

The 6th MTR conducts a wide range of transportation missions ranging from supply movements to convoy security, he said. Everything is now planned and executed solely by the Iraqis.

The coalition forces still remain in the rear and monitor from a distance, Schiek said. The 4th Sustainment Brigade will stay on the sidelines to provide assistance if the unit needs it.

"We will do that until we are told not to," he said.

Schiek said the regiment's operations have taken them all over the country, and they are an extremely successful unit.

This is the second Iraqi transportation regiment to stand on its own, and more will follow, Schiek said. This unit will be the model for all other Iraqi units working hard to operate independently.

As the blistering sun shined down upon their faces, the ceremony closed with a pass and review of all the companies. Following the troops was a parade of the unit's vehicles, giving the audience a taste of the regiment's capabilities.

After the last truck rolled past, Brig. Gen. Rebecca S. Halstead, commanding general of the 3rd Corps Support Command, officially relinquished authority to the 6th Iraqi Division.



Photo by Spc. Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown

Spc. John M. Laporte, a truck driver with the 400th Quartermaster Company, and reserve Soldier from Aguilar, Colo., gets his nails touched up at the beauty shop here. Laporte only has two weeks left in Iraq before re-deploying back to the United States.

Military journa
from Garner,
is one glimps
LSA Anacond

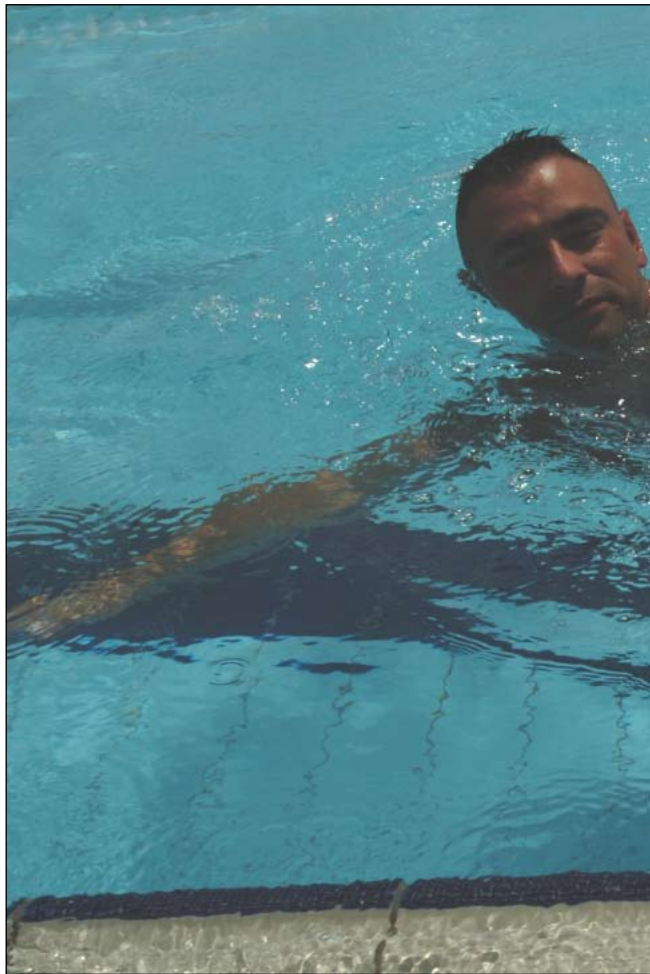


Spc. Rolando Garcia, from Plainfield, Colo., sets his sites on sinking



Photo by Sgt. Gary A. Witte

Sgt. Joshua M. Ledbetter of Jacksonville, Fla. (right), 21st Cargo Transfer Company, 548th Logistical Task Force, eats lunch with Pfc. Enrico F. Monacelli of Scranton, Pa. outside the Logistical Support Area Anaconda east side post exchange.



Sgt. Oscar M. Otero, Embassy noncommissioned officer, E Company, 1st Cavalry Division, relaxes at the pool, as well as relax his mind from the 12 hours of work he has put in at Logistical Support Area Anaconda since November. Otero's h

August 12, 2006

analists assigned to the 210th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, an Army reserve unit N.C., captured one minute of the 525,600 minutes a Soldier will spend in Iraq. This se of history through our camera's lens. This is the American Soldier at 11:45 a.m., on da, Iraq.

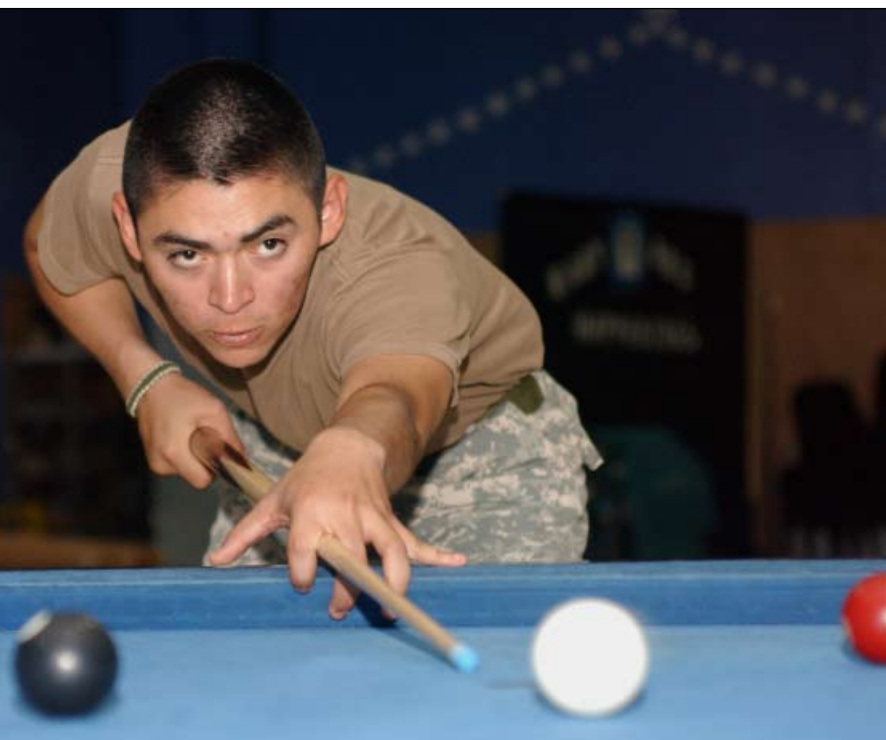


Photo by Spc. Amanda Solitario
inview, Texas , an engineer with HHC, 1-68th Combined Arms Battalion from Fort Carson, the 10 ball in a game of pool at the East Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Center.



Photo by Spc. KaRonda Fleming
pany 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment out of Fort Carson, Colo. takes time to cool off he does for his unit each day. The Active Duty Soldier is on his second tour and has been hometown is Albuquerque, N.M.



Photo by Sgt. Kevin McSwain
Spc. Anthony Ortegon of the 64th Brigade Support Battalion plays the guitar during a jam session at the East Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Center here. Ortegon is the member of a band called Lazy Boy Productions located on forward operating base War Horse.

Mechanic keeps vehicles on the road

by Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bell

Anacoda Times Staff

Q-WEST, Iraq – At the age of 6, he helped his father carry break pads and other items to his father's Monte Carlo as they spent their nights and weekends rebuilding old cars as a hobby.

Today, Spc. Brian Beers, 21, from Wilkes Barre, Penn., spends his weekends and late nights working on vehicles that bring his fel-

low Soldiers home alive after five million miles and a year in northern Iraq.

For this light-wheeled mechanic assigned to the 828th Quartermaster Company, 71st Corps Support Battalion, working on things that are broken and getting dirty has been a way of life for him.

Prior to deploying to Iraq 10 months ago, Beers spent three years working on his 1995 Chevy S-10 truck.

"It was definitely something that needed to be fixed up," he said laughing. "I've always loved fixing cars and trucks. It's in my blood."

But one year into rebuilding his truck, Beers decided he needed a change.

"I really wasn't sure what I wanted to do, but I needed a change," he said about his visit to his hometown Army recruiting station. "I needed the discipline. I knew signing up would be a matter of time before I would end up in either Iraq or Afghanistan."

Two-years later, with his S-10 safely stored away in Pennsylvania, Beers traded his work boots for desert combat boots and a collection of old garage tools for the Army's state-of-the-art diagnostic vehicle computers.

Nearly one year later and thousands of hours of sweat, near dehydration, and eye-blinding sandstorms, Beers said he has learned a lot during his tour in Iraq.

"I learned to accomplish the mission and get things done on time," he said. "Soldiers rely on these vehicles to bring them home."

Using a metal shed to give some relief from the sun, Beers spends endless hours in the "shop" going over every last detail of armored-up Humvees to ensure they are mission capable. But for every one Humvee he is working on, there are two more waiting in the makeshift parking lot just a few hundred feet away – a quick reminder there is always more work for tomorrow.

"It's very stressful being here," he said wiping his oil-stained brow. "It's never ending. There's always something that needs to be fixed around here."

From transmissions to depleted vehicle batteries, Beers has learned a lot since that old Monte Carlo in the early 1990s.

"I have never worked on Detroit diesels before coming to Iraq," he said. "Even in our military school, we never really got into the details of troubleshooting and repairing engines. Everything has been hands-on learning from my friends and supervisors here."

With more than 1,000 repairs under his belt, Beers said he now realizes the importance of preventative maintenance checks and services.

"You always hear about doing proper PMCS, but I am here to tell you that it really does make the difference between a vehicle breaking down in the middle of a hostile area or coming home without incident."

Beers said the Army's fleet of combat vehicles survive the harsh Iraq terrain because of proper service and PMCS.

"We rely a lot on drivers finding out the things that are wrong on their vehicles before something serious goes wrong," he said. "They need to be checking the vehicle's fluids, greasing the chassis, servicing the tires, and ensuring all the bolts are securely tightened."

Whether it's his dad's old Monte Carlo or the Army's newest Humvee, the M1151, Beers makes sure that every mission is done to the best of his ability.

"I know what I do saves lives," he said. "Sure, I'm not out on the roads and pulling a trigger, but I am making a difference – making a difference in the lives of the drivers that rely on me and other mechanics to bring them home to their families."



(Above) Spc. Brian Beers, 21, from Wilkes Barre, Penn., a light-wheeled vehicle mechanic assigned to the 828th Quartermaster Company, 71st Corps Support Battalion, works on an armored-up humvee recently. (Right) A 71st CSB vehicle is ready to use for a recent convoy operation.



Ghana, from Page 16

"I haven't saved much money," he said. "If I keep money, save it, someone down there is going to die."

Adjapong says that after he makes sure his family is provided for, the rest of his paycheck goes into the clinic. Adjapong also reenlisted while in Iraq, receiving a reenlistment bonus which went entirely to the clinic, he said.

Adjapong also receives financial help from other investors in his clinic, including the vice president of the Bodomase clinic, Dr. Paulyn Jansen. Jansen. He is a friend that shares his vision of helping the poor. Jensen, based out of Germany, is the founder of the African Youth Foundation and contributes to Adjapong's clinic from abroad.

The clinic's staff currently consists of one doctor, nurses, and assistants. It also has an internet satellite uplink to communicate with doctors around the world to help in diagnosing patients, Adjapong said.

The clinic will be a reduced-rate medical facility unless it gets outside funding, then he hopes it will be free.

Adjapong doesn't get to visit the clinic as much as he would like, but plans to see it at least once per year, he said. The doctor there will be in charge of running the clinic, but Adjapong will check in periodically. He calls the clinic almost every day, and keeps a close eye on its proceedings from afar.

Once the clinic is up and running, Adjapong wants to start more businesses in Ghana to provide jobs for his family members and friends.

Adjapong is dedicated to helping people, and still has the dream of becoming a doctor one day.

"I have to do the best I can while I still have the breath of life," he said.

For more information on the clinic, visit the clinic's website: www.bodomaseclinic.org.

Hoaxes are a real threat.

Always treat them as real.





Staff Sgt. Ryan Trusty, a technician at the platelet collection center, checks the flow of blood from Sgt. Jeremy Parker's arm. Parker, a seasoned donor, is a noncommissioned officer with the 61st multi-functional medical battalion from Fort Hood, Texas.

Doctors, medics are not alone

Local servicemembers donate much needed platelets to give trauma teams the edge on life-threatening injuries



After cleaning the site, Staff Sgt. Ryan Trusty, a technician at the platelet collection center, carefully inserts a needle into Sgt. Jeremy Parker's arm. Parker, a seasoned donor, has donated five times during his deployment here.

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq —Housing one of the largest trauma centers in Iraq, LSA Anaconda sees some of the most critically-wounded servicemembers on a daily basis. Having a readily available supply of platelets at the hospital is crucial to the patient's survival.

Armed with a professional medical team, the Air Force Theater Hospital here is constantly saving lives, but medics and doctors are not the only ones giving the gift of life.

Servicemen and women, regardless of occupation, are doing their part too. It is through their platelet donations, the medical teams are able to perform their jobs.

"We are a level-one trauma center, so it is important these people donate," said Air Force Staff Sgt. Steven A. Beck, apheresis donor recruiter with the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group. "It helps [the patient] live, and it allows them to get home and see their families again."

Platelets are a key ingredient in blood that assists in clotting. One unit of apheresis platelets is equivalent to six whole blood donations, he said. By extracting only the platelets from the blood, the staff is able reduce the amount of whole blood donations.

Because platelets only have a shelf life of about five to seven days, it is almost impossible to have them shipped from the United States, Beck said. The donations need to come from deployed servicemembers.

As of now, the platelet collection center remains busy throughout the day, he said. The tiny trailer just outside the hospital has their regular

patients who come in weekly to donate, but in about a month that will change.

With the big transfer of authority season quickly approaching, the donor pool will drastically shrink.

Beck said it is hard to get people in to donate during this time of year because they are busy with outprocessing. As servicemembers move out of offices and prepare to go home, the five-man staff has no way of contacting the donors.

People donate for a variety of reasons, he said. Aside from the intangible rewards, the team gives out T-shirts after two donations and a coin after four. Some do it for the promotion points they can get after five complete donations.

"I donate to help out, and I won't be able to give blood when I get home," said Sgt. Jeremy Parker, a noncommissioned officer in charge with the 61st Multi-Functional Medical Battalion.

Whatever the reason, there is no bigger satisfaction than saving the life of a brother or sister in arms, Beck said.

Individuals interested in donating platelets are encouraged to stop by the collection site on Tuesdays or Fridays for pre-screening, he said. It takes about 15 minutes to fill out the questionnaire sheet and conduct the interview.

"We ask about travel history, medical history, and lifestyle," he said.

Some of the factors disqualifying a potential donor include a tattoo or a body piercing during the last 12 months, Beck said. Additionally, if a person has lived in Europe for an extended period between 1980-1996 they are ineligible to donate.

More than 25 percent of the department of defense cannot donate for this reason, he added.

"If people are unsure of their eligibility I would rather get a phone call then have them eliminate themselves without ever asking," he said.

After the question and answer session, one of the technicians will draw blood samples, which will be sent to the United States for testing, Beck said. It takes about a week for the results. Once the potential donor is found to be in good health, they will receive an email to set up an appointment.

On donation day, Beck said servicemembers should eat before coming to the office and stay well hydrated. The entire donation process takes about an hour and a half.

The donor is hooked up to the machine, and the person's blood is cycled through the instrument filtering out the platelets. The blood is then pumped back into the donor.

While donating, servicemembers can rest and watch an array of movies. With a freezer full of popsicles and a table packed with snacks, the team provides a relaxing environment for the donors.

Upon completion of the process, the donor is given a post-donation instruction sheet.

They are reminded to leave the bandage on and to avoid exercise for the remainder of the day.

If anyone is interested in helping out the platelet program call Staff Sgt. Steven Beck at DSN 443-6549.

Movie Schedule

Sustainer Reel Time Theater

(schedule is subject to change)

August 23
5 p.m. The Omen
8 p.m. World Trade Center

August 24
5 p.m. World Trade Center
8 p.m. The Omen

August 25
2 p.m. Cars
5 p.m. Snakes on a Plane
8 p.m. World Trade Center

August 26
11 a.m. Nacho Libre
2 p.m. Snakes on a Plane
5 p.m. World Trade Center
8 p.m. Snakes on a Plane

August 27
2 p.m. Garfield
5 p.m. World Trade Center
8 p.m. Snakes on a Plane

August 28
5 p.m. Snakes on a Plane
8 p.m. The Lake House

August 29
5 p.m. Snakes on a Plane
8 p.m. The Fast and the Furious

August 30
5 p.m. Nacho Libre
8 p.m. Snakes on a Plane



Religious Schedule

Roman Catholic Mass
Saturday 5 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel
Saturday 8 p.m. Provider Chapel
Sunday 8:30 a.m. Freedom Chapel
Sunday 9 a.m. Tuskegee Chapel
Sunday 11 a.m. Provider Chapel
Sunday 11 a.m. Air Force Hospital
Monday - Friday 7 p.m. Tuskegee
Sacrament of Reconciliation
30 minutes prior to each mass
Church of Christ
Sunday 2 p.m.. Tuskegee Chapel
Islamic Prayer
Friday 12:30 p.m. Provider Chapel
Samoan Congregational Service
Sunday 4 p.m. Provider Chapel
Latter Day Saints
Sunday 1 p.m. Provider Chapel
Sunday 4 p.m. Freedom Chapel
Sunday 7 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel
Friday Shabbat Service
Friday 7 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel
Eastern Orthodox Prayer Service
Sunday 3:30 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel
Protestant-Gospel
Sunday 10 a.m. Sustainer Indoor Theater
Sunday 11:30 a.m. Freedom Chapel
Sunday 2 p.m. Air Force Hospital Chapel

Sunday 7 p.m. Provider Chapel
Protestant Praise and Worship
Sunday 9 a.m. MWR East Building
Sunday 9 a.m. Eden Chapel
Sunday 7 p.m. Freedom Chapel
Sunday 7:30 p.m. Eden Chapel
Wednesday 7 p.m. Freedom Chapel
Protestant-Contemporary
Sunday 11 a.m. Town Hall
Protestant-Traditional
Sunday 9:30 a.m. Air Force Hospital Chapel
Sunday 9:30 a.m. Provider Chapel
Sunday 10 a.m. Freedom Chapel
Sunday 5 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel
Sunday 7:30 p.m. Air Force Hospital Chapel
Protestant-Praise and Worship
Sunday 9:30 a.m. Sustainer Indoor Theater
Sunday 9:30 a.m. DFAC Four Overflow Room
Sunday 5:30 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel
Non-Denominational
Sunday 9 a.m. Signal Chapel
Non-Denominational Spanish
Sunday 2 p.m. Freedom Chapel
Latter Day Saints
Sunday 1 p.m.. Provider Chapel
Sunday 4 p.m.. Freedom Chapel
Sunday 7 p.m.. Tuskegee Chapel

Religious schedule subject to change

Movie Synopsis for August 23-30

Cars
G, 116 min
Lightning McQueen, a hotshot rookie race car driven to succeed, discovers that life is about the journey, not the finish line, when he finds himself unexpectedly detoured in the sleepy Route 66 town of Radiator Springs. On route across the country to the big Piston Cup Championship in California to compete against two seasoned pros, McQueen gets to know the town's off-beat characters—including Sally, a snazzy 2002 Porsche, Doc Hudson, a 1951 Hudson Hornet with a mysterious past, and Mater, a rusty but trusty tow truck voiced, who help him realize that there are more important things than trophies, fame and sponsorship.

Garfield: A Tail of Two Kitties
PG, off-color elements 80 min
When Garfield follows his owner, Jon Arbuckle, to England, the U.K. may never recover, as Garfield is mistaken for a look-alike, regal cat who has inherited a castle. Garfield savors the royal treatment afforded by his loyal four-legged subjects, but his reign is in jeopardy. The nefarious Lord Dargis is determined to do away with Garfield, so he can turn the castle into a resort. Garfield's bigger, better, more purr-fect world is soon turned upside down in this tale of two kitties.

The Lake House
PG, language, disturbing image 98 min
An independent-minded doctor who once occupied an unusual lakeside home begins exchanging love letters with its newest resident, a frustrated architect. When they discover that they're actually living two

years apart, they must try to unravel the mystery behind their extraordinary romance before it's too late.

Nacho Libre
PG, off-color elements 80 min
Nacho is a man without skills. After growing up in a Mexican monastery, he is now a grown man and the monastery's cook, but doesn't seem to fit in. Nacho cares deeply for the orphans he feeds, but his food is terrible—mostly, if you ask him, a result of his terrible ingredients. He realizes he must hatch a plan to make money to buy better food. When Nacho is struck by the idea to earn money as a Lucha Libre wrestler, he finds that he has a natural, raw talent for wrestling.

Snakes on a Plane
R, sexuality, drug use, terror, violence 106 min
A ruthless assassin unleashes a crate full of lethal snakes aboard a packed passenger jet over the Pacific Ocean in order to eliminate a witness in protective custody. The rookie pilot and frightened passengers must band together to survive.

World Trade Center
PG-13, intense/emotional content, disturbing images, language 129 min
In the aftermath of the World Trade Center disaster, hope is still alive. Refusing to bow down to terrorism, rescuers and family of the victims press forward. Their mission of rescue and recovery is driven by the faith that under each piece of rubble, a co-worker, a friend or a family member may be found. This is the true story of John McLoughlin and William J. Jimeno, the last two survivors extracted from Ground Zero and the rescuers who never gave up. It's a story of the true heroes of that fateful time in the story of the United States when buildings would fall and heroes would rise, literally from the ashes to inspire the entire human race.

Books keep on giving in Iraq

by Spc. KaRonda Fleming

Anaconda Times Staff Writer

AD DUJAYL, Iraq - The town of Ad Dujayl may have limited electricity, but there are still avenues in which the community is able to excel.

Town leaders are looking into ways to help their village academically grow.

Soldiers of the 404th Civil Affairs Battalion, from Camp O’Ryan, often deliver books to the Abraham Bin Alashter Public Library in Ad Dujayl. This second book delivery took place on Aug. 8. The initial delivery was in July.

Community leaders within the town have specifically asked for both Arabic and English books to be donated, said Staff Sgt. Bill S. Lear, B Company 404th CAB. One of the things the Ad Dujayl community leaders are looking to do is to teach their people English at the library, he said.

It’s a significant mission because it provides books for children and adults of Ad Dujayl, said Staff Sgt. Magda R. Khalifa, B Co., 404th CAB.

“Books keep on giving,” she said, noting they can be handed on to younger generations as opposed to donating perishable goods, such as food that can only provide a one-time benefit.

This shipment of approximately 750 books were donated from a hospital in Heidelberg, Germany.

Lear said the books donated include psychiatry, radiology, urology, pediatrics, general surgery, obstetrician, and gynecology books.

The 404th CAB is able to provide a liaison between the Iraqi people and the U.S. military, Khalifa said. The battalion acts as the eyes and ears for the military by informing their commanders of the needs and wants of the town’s people she said.

“Typically, we focus on issues regarding electricity, water,

sewage, and agricultural problems,” Khalifa said. “However, security seems to be the first and foremost important concern of the Iraqis today.”

Generators are very popular in Ad Dujayl. Many villages have limited power with only a couple of hours of electricity each day, Khalifa said.

They work their daily lives around the electricity problems. Many of the stores and shops in Ad Dujayl close during the hottest hours of the day, Khalifa said.

Khalifa said many of the community leaders want to see the U.S. forces stay in Iraq so their people will feel safe about going on with their daily lives. Eventually, they will have to rely on the Iraqi Army and Iraqi police to do that job.

“Civil affairs have been securing the victory and winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people,” Lear said, “On a mission like this, we are looking at the generations down the road.”

“We want to show them what America is all about. It’s not just about going into somebody’s country and re-organizing it for no reason at all. We are trying to build the future here,” he said.

Lear said Iraq is not a poor nation; it is very wealthy. Iraq has a lot to offer to the world, and the civil affairs battalion wants the younger generation to see that. The battalion wants the children to grow up knowing that they have something very positive to offer.

Education was a much larger focus for civil affairs in the earlier years of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Khalifa said. The problem with schools in Iraq is not so much the actual buildings, but the number of qualified teachers willing to instruct the students, she said.

“That’s why a project such as donating books to Ad Dujayl is so significant,” Khalifa said. “It does not have the overhead that establishing schools would have. Therefore, it was an ideal project for this time and place for civil affairs.”



An Iraqi child smiles as he holds one of the books donated to the library.



An Iraqi interpreter speaks to the librarian about future plans of the U.S. military donating supplies to the library.



Staff Sgt. Calvin A. Coates, platoon sergeant, 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, carries a box of children’s books into the Abraham Bin Alashter Public Library in Ad Dujayl, Iraq. Coates’ hometown is Douglas, Ga. He is an Active Duty Soldier stationed at Fort Carson, Colo.

ANACONDA ACTIVITIES

Your one-stop connection to activities around LSA Anaconda
to add your activity to the event calendar, email mark.bell@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

Open Water Scuba Training

Classes Fri/Sat

7 p.m. - 10 p.m.

Sun 7 a.m. 10a.m.

email

rugglesj@mmcs.army.mil

Slam-dunk Competition

AUG. 23 >> 8 p.m.

Sign-up during the 3-point shootout

BUFFETFEST '06

Sunday, Sept. 3 – Outdoor Pool from 4:45 p.m. to 11 p.m.

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Two-person Island Raft Race

Jimmy Says

Cancun Cannonball Dive

Pink Flamingo Relay

DRAWINGS EVERY HALF-HOUR FOR GREAT PRIZES

Medical care top priority for Alabama troops

story and photos by Sgt. Joshua Salmons

4th Sustainment Brigade

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – With all the inherent hazards of war, access to adequate medical care is paramount to saving lives, whether on convoys or on camp.

B Battery, 1st Battalion, 117th Field Artillery Regiment, takes this truth to heart and not only has a 97 percent combat lifesaver qualification record for its personnel, but also has an

impressive on-site medical care facility that operates out of a supply trailer.

The command emphasis on medical training from Andalusia, Ala., National Guard unit has led to nearly every Soldier being CLS qualified, and an additional 16 personnel having attended the ranger first responder course, according to Staff Sgt. Jeff Birge, battery senior medic.

What originally was used as a supply closet has grown

piece-by-piece into a compact aid center for the unit, complete with cardiac drugs, incubation equipment, and a defibrillator.

"It's one of three places on Taji where a patient can be defibrillated," Birge said.

The battery has enough supplies and equipment on hand to treat everything but the most serious injuries, allowing patients to be stabilized during the crucial first minutes after injury while waiting for an ambulance. "Those minutes could mean life or death if this trailer wasn't here," he said.

"[The trailer] is a lot more than a Band-Aid station," said Staff Sgt. Scott Burk, laughing. Burk is a driver with the battery who is also called upon to assist with the medical goings on due to his civilian paramedic experience. He helps monitor the wet-bulb thermometer and posts the heat categories as they change throughout the day, among other duties.

In fact, several personnel in the battery that are in the medical field at home lend a hand when they can to the training and medical needs of the battery. The battery is home to several paramedics and registered nurses.

"A medic can be spread out on a convoy," said Sgt. Victor Staples, one of the battery's "official" medics. "Something can happen on one vehicle and I might not be able to get to it in time."

Having such a widespread number of Soldiers able to perform first aid on injuries on and off the forward operating base makes the battery medic's lives easier.

It is true that war-time injuries are unique, but the civilian medical experience of the individuals available to the battery is equally important in first aid.

"Trauma is trauma," Birge noted. "Civilian and Army care starts with the same steps. It doesn't matter if someone is a medic. You just do the steps."



Staff Sgt. Jeff Birge performs a check on a defibrillator the unit has on hand in their aid center on Camp Taji June 28. Birge is a combat medic with B Battery, 1st Battalion of the 117th Field Artillery Regiment, an Alabama National Guard unit based in Andalusia, Ala.



Sgt. Victor Staples searches through medical supplies stored in the unit aid center on Camp Taji June 28. Staples is a combat medic with B Battery, 1st Battalion of the 117th Field Artillery Regiment, an Alabama National Guard unit based in Andalusia, Ala.

Combat medic saves lives in Iraq, Ghana

story and photos by Spc. Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – When going to the ear, nose, and throat clinic at the Air Force Theater Hospital here, you may find yourself in the presence of a jack of all trades. From teacher, to computer tech, to medic, to entrepreneur, Army Spc. Adomako Adjapong has big dreams, and he is achieving them. He's already started a medical clinic in his hometown in Ghana and doesn't plan on stopping there.

Adjapong, an ophthalmology technician for the 207th Medical Team here, has held enough careers that you need two hands to count them all before his 35th birthday.

He describes himself as, "A farmer by occupation, a teacher by profession, a computer specialist by career and a Soldier by choice."

Born in Bodomase, Ghana, Adjapong said he lived there until the age of 26. Growing up in hard times made him realize the importance of medical attention, as many of his family members, including himself, suffered from preventable illnesses, Adjapong said.

"From the age of 6 to 12, I went to the hospital almost every month," Adjapong said, who had measles as a child.

For Adjapong though, a trip to the hospital meant a 12-mile hike by foot, he said, as his village didn't have any medical facilities.

It was a scary time for Adjapong when, as a child, he watched his own parents suffer illnesses. As coco farmers, his parents relied on their health to produce their livelihood, and if they couldn't work, they couldn't make money, he said.

"My parents were sick because they didn't have any money, or anywhere to go," he said.

However, Adjapong spoke of his home country of Ghana with pride, and said that besides the poverty, it was a good place to grow up.

"You grow up as a member of society, of a small community," he said. "Everything that happens affects everyone. There is not that much individualism there."

Adjapong, a member of the Asona clan of the Asanti tribe, said that everyone is related, either by blood or spiritually through a tribe. There are eight clans within the Asanti tribe, who trace their roots maternally.

Although he was interested in the medical field since childhood, Adjapong said there was



Lt. Col. Mark L. Nelson examines the eyes of Spc. Adomako Adjapong in the ophthalmology clinic at the Air Force hospital here.

precise time in his life when he knew he wanted to become a doctor.

When he was in high school, Adjapong went to visit an uncle he hadn't seen in five years because he lived far away, he said. As soon as he arrived, his uncle started complaining that he had been sick for a while, so Adjapong made it a priority to get his uncle seen by a physician.

There was a carpool truck that left early every morning from his uncle's village and went into the city where there was a medical clinic and returned at night, Adjapong said. The truck didn't run on the weekend, but that is when Adjapong's uncle desperately needed medical attention, so they began a 15-mile trek into the city.

When the two arrived at the hospital, it was just past 11 a.m., but because the clinic closed at 11, the personnel there refused to see his uncle.

"I can still see my uncle turning and tossing in pain and weeping," Adjapong said. The medical staff saw how much discomfort his uncle was in, but because they were closed, they were going to let him suffer, he said.

It wasn't until after several phone calls were made and favors were asked of friends of the family, that Adjapong's uncle was finally

admitted to the hospital, where he stayed for 30 days.

"That was a wake-up call for me to be a doctor," Adjapong said, who has yet been unable to achieve his dream of becoming a doctor in Ghana because of poverty.

After graduating high school, Adjapong needed to find steady work and had always been a natural instructor, he said. So he earned his teaching certificate and taught Junior High in Ghana for three years.

"Teaching was a channel to get to medical school," he said. Adjapong's plan was to begin taking medical school classes while teaching so he could pay for tuition and books.

Those plans changed when, in 1997, he had the opportunity to go to the United States. Through a program called the Diversity Visa Lottery, which awards 55,000 U.S. visas to applicants from around the world each year, Adjapong moved to Virginia.

Adjapong said that he could not have come to the United States if it wasn't for the help of his two childhood friends, Kwadwo Larbi Asare and Kwasi Amoakohene Kodua.

He came to the United States, leaving his wife and four children behind, hoping to send for them when he raised enough money, he said. Since then, Adjapong's wife gained a visa to the United States, and they've had another child. Unfortunately though, his other four children are still in Ghana with Adjapong's parents.

Adjapong went to work for the information technology sector, holding jobs in Virginia, and later in Massachusetts, he said. While he was working for Siemens business services in Massachusetts, the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11 hit, and there was a stock market crash.

"A lot of people lost their jobs after 9-11, and two months after it happened, I was let go," Adjapong said.

After losing his steady job, Adjapong struggled to find another before deciding to join the Army.

Adjapong went to basic training in 2003 and became a medic before being recruited into the eye technician program, he said. The active-duty Soldier was stationed at Ft. Meade, Md., before being deployed in Oct. 2005.

Currently, Adjapong is the only ophthalmology technician in Iraq, he said. Some of his duties here include assisting with running an eye clinic at the hospital and helping out with eye surgeries.

Being in Iraq for 10 months now, Adjapong has seen hundreds of grisly injuries in the operating room, but said it doesn't bother him.

"Because of my background in Africa, I have seen a lot of suffering before," he said. "I have fortitude built up because of my upbringing."

Adjapong, who is on 24-hour call for emergency surgeries said the trauma he sees has made him realize how fragile life can be.

"The trauma we see over here has really helped me to understand myself," Adjapong said. "It's taught me how to be a human being and inspired me to do the best for humanity."

It's hardest for Adjapong when he sees innocent bystanders who are injured as a result of conflict.

"The most difficult part of my job is seeing children and women blown up," he said. "These are people that have nothing to do with the war."

Adjapong said the worst kind of accidents for any doctor to see are those involving children.

"It doesn't make sense," Adjapong said. "It's unimaginable that someone could shoot a child."

Adjapong has taken that same compassion and zeal for the medical field to start a clinic in his hometown in Ghana, where there were previously no

medical facilities.

"I'm going to use my training I received from the U.S. military to help people from around the world," he said.

Adjapong started work on his clinic in Sept. 2005, and while it is not open yet, it should be ready to take patients by the end of August, he said.

The clinic's Website tells about its services and history.

"Our mission to our community is clear. Bodomase Clinic exists to improve the health status of all people within our community," according to the Web site.

The clinic will offer services ranging from preventative health to minor surgeries, giving the citizens of Bodomase a chance for a healthier future. The site of the clinic is currently a renovated house that Adjapong has rented out for five years, and will be one of the first clinics in Ghana to have a computerized patient logging system, he said.

How does a Soldier on specialist pay afford to open his own clinic while supporting himself, a wife, and five children? For Adjapong, the answer is easy.

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Spc. Adomako Adjapong and Lt. Col. Mark L. Nelson take a break from normal clinic operations to pose for the camera.