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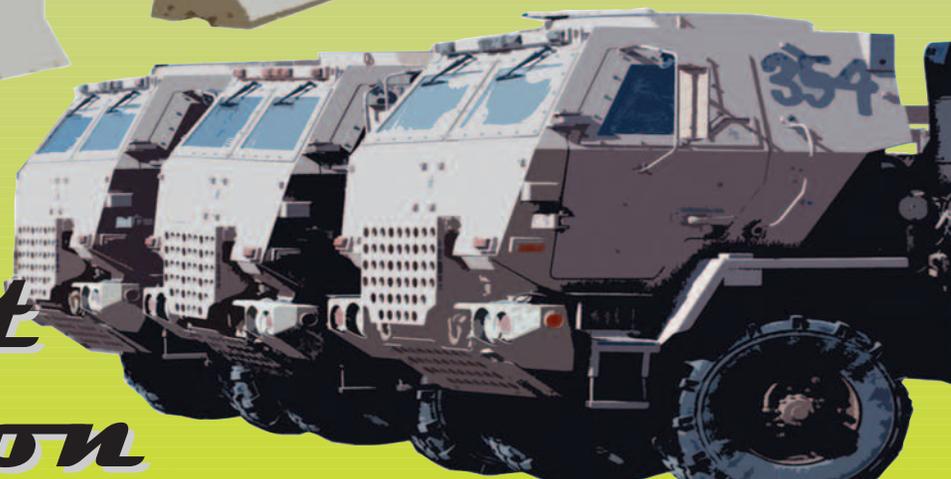


VOL. I, ISSUE V

JUNE 15, 2006



704th Support Battalion



Georgian celebration --pg. 8



Secretary of Army in IZ --pg.11



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Front Cover Art by
Pfc. Jason Dangel



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COBRA⁶ on POINT

As we near the midpoint of our deployment, I would like to commend our Cobra Brigade Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen. During the past six months our team has accomplished remarkable objectives in the most historic period of Iraq's march to enduring democracy.

In the face of the ever changing threat of the insurgents, our young men and women have performed heroically. They continually meet the challenges and dangers of central Baghdad head-on with vigor; never quitting.

To this point, in partnership with the Iraqi Security Forces, we have conducted nearly 7,500 Patrols, cleared about 11,500 miles of road, and performed over 300 Cordon and Search operations. We have also facilitated more than twenty humanitarian assistance projects and completed nearly thirty essential service projects to improve, water, sewage, power and road and construction projects. We are on glide path to finish about the same amount by the end of the year.

We have completed Operation Scales of Justice and have begun Operation Together

Forward. Iraqi forces are leading this operation which is designed to neutralize or destroy the terrorist network in and around Baghdad. Iraqi soldiers and police are operating traffic-control points, mobile roadblocks, cordon-and-knock missions, and many other tactics to find and capture or kill insurgents who target innocent Iraqis. We are participating in some missions, but are mostly acting as a quick-reaction force to be called on if needed.

Together with the ISF, the Iraqi Government and the Coalition, we have had many recent successes. Not the least of which are that the parliament has been made complete and we have captured and killed scores of terrorists in central Baghdad, to include the head of the al



Col. Michael F. Beech

Qaeda in Iraq just last week. However, we are not fooled that ridding Iraq of Zarqawi will instantaneously stop the violence in our midst.

It's our mission to ensure that the Iraqi Security Forces continue to build on their success. It's not only in the interests of the Iraqi people; it's in the interest of our families and for people who love freedom which we will celebrate soon on our own Independence Day.

So, although we and the Iraqis have much to be proud of, we still have tough days ahead of

us. We dearly hold your continued patience and perseverance to further strengthen our resolve to secure a peaceful life for our children and grandchildren.

For all your continued support and efforts to maintain the home front, thank you.

COBRA 6 OUT!!

F* R* O* M T H E F* R* O* N* T



Command Sgt. Maj. Anthony Walker

To all, I am Command Sgt. Maj. Walker of the 4th Special Troops Battalion. Before I get started, first I must say that Command Sgt. Maj. Moody is currently on environmental leave and will return soon to share his words of wisdom and experience for the Cobras.

I will do my best on this mission to provide counsel and guidance.

If Soldiers listen, analyze and apply the messages that the Brigade Command Sergeant Major has sent out over the months, we will learn something.

Perhaps it may reaffirm that Soldiers and leaders are already doing the right thing.

He has addressed all leaders across the 4th Brigade Combat Team, and in the last two issues of the *Cobra Strike!* he addressed Standards and enforcing them, Discipline, Complacency, and Hydration.

By the time this issue is out, the BDE will have reached the midway point of its tour of duty.

I recall when I was on my very first 25-mile Ruck March in Korea. Rucking up and down the mountainous terrain, we came to a tactical halt, or a "rucksack flop."

I asked my squad leader as he was making a squad blister check, "Are we there yet?"

He replied, "No, we are only half way. Let's get ready to ruck up and continue the mission."

Then as he walks away, he said to me with usual flavor of a squad leader, "When we're back at the compound, you can rest, but out here stay alert. Stay prepared."

This was still my first lesson learned about keeping mission focus and stopping Complacency in its tracks. Self-Discipline got me through that Ruck March.

Our Fighting Forces have some of the best equipment in the World; and we pull maintenance on it at least weekly. We get it serviced because of a published service schedule or a direct order. We maintain new

pieces of equipment with the published Technical Manuals or Mobile Training Teams' instructions.

With all this knowledge and all the studies, the one thing we don't take very good care of in the Heat, is the human body. Our body requires physical training, but not to an excess. It requires nourishment, but you don't have to eat all the food the servers are willing to give you in the Dining Facility. The body requires rest to relieve stress, and in the heat, it requires Hydration.

Leaders have to make it happen. This is where Soldiers and their leaders need to ensure Hydration is getting done down to the lowest level. The "I told you so" style of leadership can mean an unnecessary lost of a Soldier.

CSM Walker Out!

704th Support Battalion



The Lifeline to the Brigade



Story and Photos by Pfc. Jason Dangel

The combat support Soldier and the services they provide are a quintessential element to successful combat operations on the battlefield. These support capabilities, functions and activities are crucial for sustainment at all levels of war.

Frequently referred to by many Soldiers as "the lifeline" to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, the 704th Support Battalion provides mission essential services to approximately 4,000 Soldiers within the "Cobra" Brigade.

The "Blacksmith" Battalion is responsible for all aspects of support for the brigade's maneuver units; to include supply, maintenance, transportation, health services, and other services required by aviation and ground combat troops, allowing those units to accomplish their missions in combat, said Lt. Col. Victor Harmon, commander, 704th Spt. Bn., 4th BCT, a native of Philadelphia, Pa.

"Our Soldiers feel that what our battalion does here is the lifeline of the brigade," Harmon said. "If we didn't

constantly deliver the fuel, the parts, or whatever, all the great things our guys are doing out there on the ground wouldn't be able to happen.

"Each Soldier in this battalion knows their role in the brigade's mission," he said. "We can not afford to have an off-day because whatever we do will ultimately effect the patrols on the ground."

The dynamic nature of the combat support and combat service support of the Blacksmiths allows support Soldiers to operate right beside maneuver units on the battlefield, Harmon said.

This ability comes from the support of a gun truck platoon operated by 704th's Company B, also known as the "Rat Platoon", enabling supply to be moved throughout the 4th BCT area of operations.

Harmon said he is proud of the success of the "Rat Platoon," which has allowed the delivery of parts, fuel, water and other essential supplies from the main supply support activity warehouse at Forward Operating Base

Falcon to the Forward Logistic Elements throughout the AO.

To date, Co. A, with security support from the Rat Platoon, has delivered approximately 3,200,000 gallons of fuel to the units of the Cobra Brigade, which is an average of 50,000 per day.

Aside from the Rat Platoon, Co. B also provides maintenance as well as vehicle recovery services to the brigade, said 1st Lt. John Woo, executive officer, Co. B.

"Our company is basically responsible to repair and maintain everything from a M1A2 Abrams Tank to individual weapons," Woo, a native of Cerritos, Calif., said.

Other notable services the Blacksmiths provide include key medical services that keep Cobra Soldiers healthy and fit to fight.

Co. C, commonly referred to as the Blacksmith Medics, make available health services such as the brigade dentist, brigade surgeon and brigade psychiatrist while simultaneously providing support for units on the ground.

According to Command Sgt. Maj.

Spc. Pascual Delgado, mechanic, Company E, 704th Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division repairs a HMMWV at Forward Operating Base Prosperity May 25.

Delgado is part of the Forward Support Company that is attached to 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div. The 704th Spt. Bn. provides these FSC's all throughout the brigade to help support daily operations.

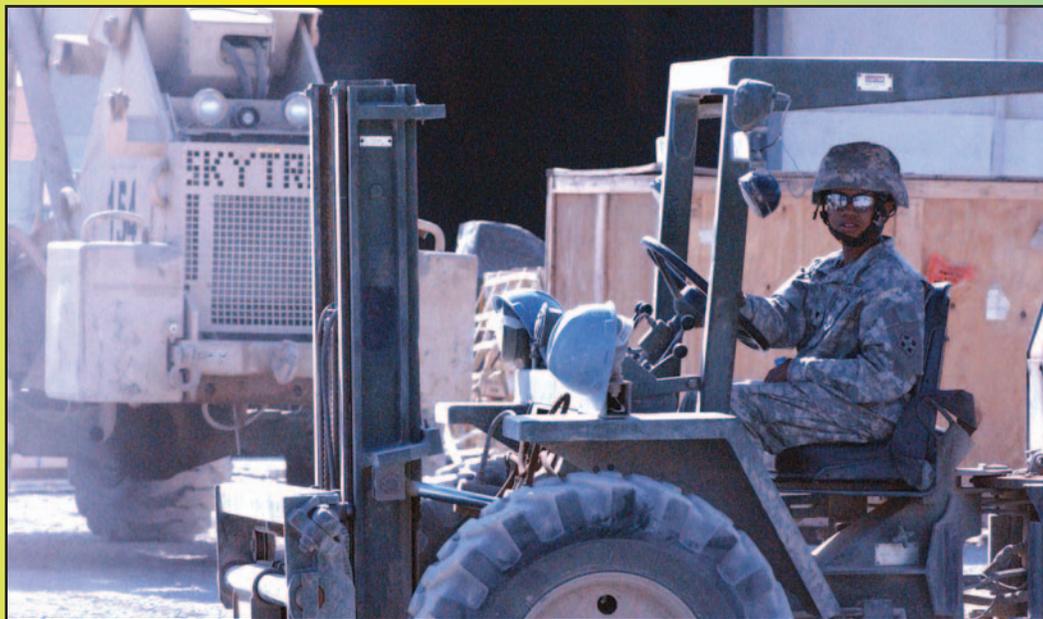


Harry Lockamy, 704th Spt. Bn., despite the continued success of the battalion's support operations, his Soldiers must be ready for any change in tactics and operating procedures.

"When our Soldiers first got here, they really didn't have a good grasp of what to expect, but adapted quickly and became very successful," said the native of Wilmington, N.C.

"I continually stress to the Soldiers that they have to be ready at all times; a new tactic, technique and procedure comes out everyday, and they have to keep their minds in the game."

As the Blacksmith Soldiers of the 704th Spt. Bn. continue to provide essential services to the Cobra forward, Lockamy said his Soldiers welcome challenge and continue to set



A Soldier from the 704th Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division prepares to load supply at the Supply Support Activity yard located at Forward Operating Base Falcon June 5.

the standard in support operations for the brigade.

"I am very proud of each and every one of the Soldiers in this battalion," he said. "We have been very successful so far, and

I expect this to continue as we carry on with our mission here."

Warrior Ethos shapes the

Battlefield



U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Brent Williams

Sgt. Daniel Mootosammy, squad leader, and Spc. Izzy Flores, Jr., combat medic, scout platoon, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment put duty before self May 29 when their leaders and sergeants were struck by a detonating vehicle-borne improvised explosive device. Flores, a 20-year old native of Monterey Park, Los Angeles, actions saved two American Soldiers and a U.S. reporter, while Mootosammy assessed casualties and provided security.

Story by Staff Sgt. Brent Williams

As small-arms fire could be heard nearby the burning vehicle, Spc. Izzy Flores, combat medic, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, said he thought to himself, "Please don't shoot me now; I've got to finish this."

The explosion of the vehicle-borne improvised-explosive device sent a wave of searing heat, a heart-rattling concussion and a hail of shrapnel whipping through the air, leaving two Soldiers from the 4th BCT faced with the harsh realities of battle May 29.

Quickly assessing the situation, Sgt. Daniel Mootosammy, squad leader, scout platoon, 1st Bn., 12th Inf. Regt., dismounted from his gunner's turret to find 11 casualties, many seriously wounded, on the ground and in their vehicles.

Within moments, the noncommissioned officer from Las Vegas, Nev., realized that he was the senior ranking Soldier and the commander on the ground.

According to Mootosammy, his first thoughts were for the security of the survivors, and once he realized that his Soldiers were hurt, his instincts took control.

"As NCOs, as Soldiers, we apply the training," Mootosammy said of the situation. "As a person, not necessarily as an NCO, I knew people were hurt. I had seen them thrown on the ground, and I knew I needed to develop the situation."

Upon order from Mootosammy, Spc. Michael Potter, cavalry scout, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Bn., 12th Inf. Regt., badly burned and in great pain, manned the M2 .50-caliber machine gun, providing cover for the wounded from the turret of the M1114 Up-Armored Humvee.

On the street, the NCO went through a checklist of priorities in his mind and began checking the blocks.

Mootosammy looked to the combat medic, Flores, a 20-year-old from Monterey Park, Calif., also uninjured in the blast.

"When it first happened, the disbelief, I didn't want to accept it," Flores said. "Then I saw Spc. Kenneth Snipes bleeding from his face, and I knew it was happening."

The medic began the triage for the casualties almost immediately, assessing the most visibly injured from the explosion, pausing only to apply tourniquets and bandages for the severely wounded.

"It was tough to see leaders down," Flores said, "and being on the site first, I assumed duties as senior medic."

Once bandaged by his "doc", Snipes, a driver for the platoon, began to work on the vehicle radios disrupted by the blast.

Meanwhile, Sgt. Ezequiel Hernandez, Jr., despite moderate injuries, worked with Mootosammy to pull the wounded from a burning vehicle and to safety.

Mootosammy quickly made the decision, based upon the applied risk assessment combined with enemy threat levels, to wait for support. The sergeant then secured a humvee to provide cover for his medic.

Flores was working on a critically-injured Soldier when he heard small-arms fire. Lowering his head, the medic continued the work at hand, "applying tourniquets and plugging

holes,” while other Soldiers tightened security. Only later was he made aware that the rounds he heard were from the burning Humvee, which was “cooking off” rounds.

Since the first day of his military training nearly two years ago, Flores has prepared for the worst possible scenario – mass casualties.

As the supplies in his aid bag were running out, the medic continued to work, looking desperately for assistance.

“Just in my mind there were so many people down. I didn’t have the time,” he explained. “In a perfect world, I would have had the time to sit down and perform a full scope of work on them; I didn’t have that time.”

The support teams arrived, and the additional personnel began to assist in securing the site and treating the wounded.

Flores wouldn’t leave the scene of the

attack until all the patients were evacuated; the Soldier stayed behind on site pulling security until his team had left.

It is hard for Flores to accept the magnitude of his actions as he remains thankful that some of his leaders, Soldiers and friends will live to fight another day.

“To be honest, everyone comes up to me telling me that I did a good job,” he said. “In my mind, I was just doing my job. I don’t want to accept the depth of what happened, because that is my job.”

The actions of the Soldiers from the scout platoon, when challenged with mental and physical adversity, saved many lives that day and prevented a dreadful situation from worsening.

Spc. Flores’ actions saved two American Soldiers’ lives and one U.S. reporter’s life, said 1st Lt. Mark Schmidt, executive officer and acting commander, HHC, 1st Bn., 12th Inf.

Regt. Six Soldiers were critically wounded when the VBIED detonated; one will return to duty.

“In the situation they were in, those guys performed to the best of their ability,” said Schmidt, a West Point graduate from Chadron, Neb. “They were all trained correctly. Sgt. Mootosamy saw that he was the highest ranking guy on the ground and he knew what he needed to get done. Spc. Flores, he knew his job. He jumped up and treated his casualties.”

The events that day turned out to be the biggest test faced by Mootosamy, who said he looks forward to a successful career in the U.S. Army.

“In my eyes, I passed it,” he said. “I did what I had to do to the best of my ability. It is one of those things that you have to pass; you don’t dwell on it.”

Mootosamy credits his NCOs and leaders who instilled the Warrior Ethos and raised him according to The

WARRIOR SOLDIERS save lives



U.S. Army Photo by 1st Lt. Kyle Simon, 1st Bn., 12th Inf. Regt.

Spc. Izzy Flores, Jr., combat medic, scout platoon, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment displays his medical aid bag. Flores found himself the senior medic on the ground May 29 when their leaders and sergeants were struck by a detonating vehicle-born improvised explosive device. Flores, a 20-year old native of Monterey Park, Los Angeles, actions saved two American Soldiers and a U.S. reporter.

Soldier’s Creed, making him the leader he is today.

For Soldiers who might and will someday face the same situation, Mootosamy, who has lost good friends in combat, wants his Soldiers to keep hope.

“Keep your head up. Keep focused on what we are doing. Stay strong and persevere,” he said.

“Basically, if we give up now, we get tired and relax and basically are just doing our time; then we have lost,” Mootosamy said. “Hold that fight; fight that reason to its fullest and hand it off, or basically they died for nothing.”

Capt. James A. Funkhouser, commander, 1st Bn., 12th Inf. Regt., and CBS cameraman Paul Douglas and soundman James Brolan, were killed in the VBIED attack.

Georgians celebrate Independence Day

A formation of Georgian Soldiers from the 22nd Light Infantry Battalion, 2nd Brigade, listen to Capt. Lasha Karmazanashvili, commander, 22nd Lt. Inf. Bn., during a Georgian Independence Day celebration in central Baghdad May 26.



Story and Photos by
Pfc. Jason Dangel

The 22nd Light Infantry Battalion, 2nd Brigade of the Georgian Army celebrated its country's independence day in the International Zone May 26.

The Georgian Independence Day celebration, held at Forward Operating Base Union I, marked the day the country officially declared its independence from Russia in 1918.

Responsible for peacekeeping operations in the IZ, the battalion works directly with the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division. The Georgian Army has been involved with peacekeeping operations in Iraq since 2003.

Georgian Capt. Lasha Karmazanashvili, commander, 22nd Lt. Inf. Bn., 2nd Bde., thanked his Soldiers for the contribution to their nation, as well as their current mission



Georgian Army Soldiers from the 22nd Light Infantry Battalion, 2nd Brigade, muster before their battalion commander to commemorate Georgian Independence Day at FOB Union I in central Baghdad May 26.

deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The 22nd Lt. Inf. Bn., officially assumed responsibility of peacekeeping operations from their counterpart the 21st Light Infantry Battalion, April 21, said Karmazanashvili, and are grateful to be part of the coalition team as they work to rebuild the Iraqi Capitol.

"This day is a very important day not only for the Georgian people but the

Georgian Army," said 1st Lt. Ambroladze, operations officer, 22nd Lt. Inf. Bn.

According to Ambroladze, his battalion is constantly improving everyday from their experience in Iraq, and said it is great to celebrate Georgian Independence Day while bringing back knowledge that will ultimately benefit their country.

Col. Michael Beech, commander, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., congratulated the

Georgian Soldiers and thanked them for contributing to the mission in Iraq.

"It's my distinct honor and pleasure to stand before you on your independence day," Beech said to the large formation of Georgians participating in the celebration.

"I would like to thank you and your country for standing alongside your coalition partners in this great adventure. Your contribution to the coalition and the mission here in Iraq is greater than you know. Simply stated, we could not do this without you," Beech said.

Independent from 1918-1921, Georgia was forcibly integrated into the Soviet Union following the Russian Revolution. Georgian declared its independence upon the collapse of the Soviet regime in 1991.

In 1992, the country became the 179th member of the United Nations.

704th Spt. Bn. keeps "Fighting Fourth" fit

Story and Photos by Pfc. Jason Dangel

"Doc" is not a man or woman with an advanced degree in medicine, not even a registered nurse. The Doc is a 19-year-old combat medic, right out of high school, whose job is to save lives.

Company C, 704th Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team runs rampant with these young heroes, whose mission is to provide essential and immediate medical care for the more than 4,000 Cobra Soldiers as well as tenant units operating in the Iraqi capitol.

Operating from Forward Operating Base Falcon in central Baghdad, the company consists of three different platoons, or sections; Headquarters Section, Treatment Section and Evacuation Section, and each has its own unique responsibilities, said Staff Sgt. Sean Stevens, treatment platoon noncommissioned officer-in-charge, Co. C, 704th Spt. Bn.

The Headquarters Section deals with all aspects of administration, preventive medicine, and is responsible for the Brigade Medical Supply Office, which is the central distribution point for medical supplies for the brigade.

The Treatment Section provides Level Two Healthcare Services to Cobra Soldiers. This includes but is not limited to sick call operations and dental, x-ray, physical therapy and pharmacy services.

The Evacuation Section's primary responsibility is to provide ground evacuation assets to injured Soldiers on the ground and provide immediate medical treatment while simultaneously transporting them to combat support hospitals in the brigade's area of operations.

"We're here to put Soldiers back in the fight," Stevens said, a native of Perry, Mo. "If it wasn't for a lot of the services we provide here, some of these guys would have to be transported to the CSH. Instead they can rehab here and go back to their units performing their missions," Stevens explained.

A rookie to the medical field and the Army, Spc. Tavories Davis, a medic from Montgomery, Ala., said the unit's deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom has given him a chance to do his job while gaining experience in the medical field.



Col. Todd Dombroski, physician, Company C, 704th Spt. Bn., 4th BCT, performs a spinal adjustment on a Soldier during sick call hours at the FOB Falcon TMC.

"I never really had a chance to do my job when I was back in the rear," Davies said. "We were always so busy training and preparing for this deployment I never had a chance to use my skills."

Davis' responsibilities range from the screening of patients at FOB Falcon to providing trauma care to Soldiers injured by improvised explosive devices.

"When we were training to come over here we were shown a lot of pictures of some of the injuries we would have to deal with, but until Soldiers are actually here, dealing with this is totally different," Davis explained. "Pictures can't prepare medics for the real thing."

According to Davis, the high operational tempo has kept the "Blacksmith" Medics of the 704th Spt. Bn. on the alert and awaiting their next mission.

"All the guys from my company are always on call, and we're always ready," he said. "We like our job, because we like to help people. That is what this job is all about."

Taking care of a patient at sick call or performing lifesaving emergency medical care to a Soldier during a firefight, the Soldiers of Co. C feel they have been successful, and continue to contribute to the mission in Baghdad.

"Before we deployed to come over here I had my doubts about how well we could work together to get something accomplished," said

said Pvt. Joanne Wilkins, patient administration specialist, a native of Killeen, Texas, "but in my opinion, we've done a great job."

"Everyone knows their part, and we work together to get things done. That is what makes us successful," she said.



Sgt. Thomas Ritter, medic, 704th Spt. Bn., fills a prescription at the TMC at FOB Falcon June 5.

Starting Fires For a Living

Story by 1st Lt. Winfield Pinkstaff
704th Support Battalion

It is not the growing heat of the upcoming summer making the tin-roofed open bay of the 4th Brigade Combat Team's 704th Support Battalion Service and Recovery section hot.

The S&R section of the "Blacksmiths" Battalion's Company C "starts fires for a living," or welds, and is constantly on the go to provide recovery and fabrication assets for the 4th Infantry Division's newest unit of action, deployed to Baghdad in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The section has the task of supporting the battalion as well as the forward support companies working with the 4th BCT in its mission to secure and rebuild the nation of Iraq.

The section supports the tenant units of Forward Operating Base Falcon, such as the 4th Inf. Div.'s 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry, and units attached to 4th BCT, such as 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry, 101st Airborne Division and the 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry, 1st Armored Division.

Warrant Officer Robert Pruitt, an Allied Trades Technician, who has spent his military career, in his own words, "starting fires for a living," heads the section.

Led by Pruitt, the S&R section is composed of three different Military Occupational Specialties: 63B, Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic; 63H, Tracked Vehicle Mechanic; and 44B, Metal Worker.

The three MOSs combined give the section the ability to remain adaptable to whatever mission may come their way. With two wrecker trucks and one M88A2 Hercules Tracked Recovery Vehicle at their disposal, the section has the ability to recover any piece of equipment from the High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicle to the M1A2 Abrams Main Battle Tank.

With the addition of a welding trailer, they have been able to repair anything from the new "Rhino" system to performing bolt extraction and replacement on the under plating of the M1114 HMMWV.

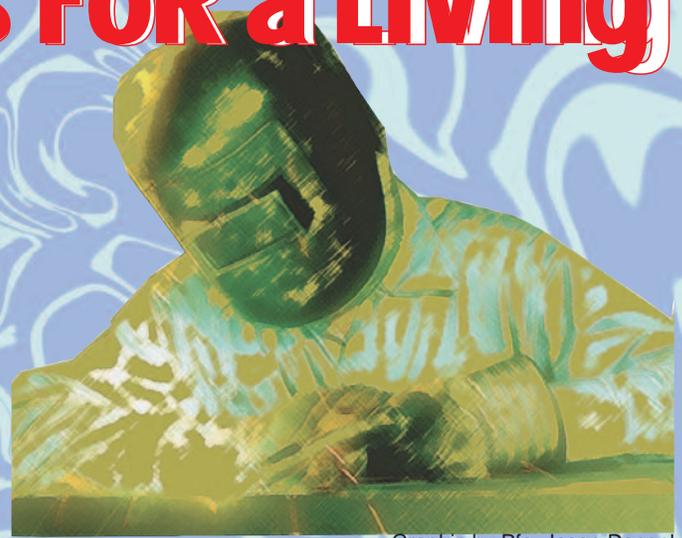
With the ever-changing battlefield and the constant change of the terrorist's techniques and procedures, the ability to adapt is extremely important.

A gun truck platoon leader, 1st Lt. Casey Newell, Company A, 704th SB recognizes the necessity for a section such as the Blacksmith's S&R.

"To be successful in this conflict means that you need to be able to adapt to an ever-changing enemy," Newell said.

"The technical expertise offered by CW2 Pruitt and his Soldiers provides us with that means of adaptation," he said.

The S&R provides the means of adapting by fabricating devices such as the installation of the ballistic glass around



Graphic by Pfc. Jason Dangel

Company C, 704th Spt. Bn., 4th BCT Division is responsible for all aspects of vehicle service and recovery for the Cobra Brigade. The "Blacksmith" Battalion also provides Forward Support Companies to provide these same services to maneuver units on the ground.

the turret of the M1114 HMMWV, which allows gunners to have a greater field of view while remaining protected from enemy fire.

The Soldiers of S&R are learning to adapt as well by cross-training with the other MOSs of the section, said Staff Sgt. Gerald Williams, the section noncommissioned officer-in-charge and wheeled vehicle mechanic.

"I thought there would be more of a mission for recovery than welding; however, with the higher demands for fabrication, it has allowed me the opportunity to cross train with chief and learn more about welding and develop a better understanding of what the 44Bs are capable."

Williams' positive outlooks are shared by the rest of the Soldiers of the sections, and their attitudes can be summed by what Sgt. Eddie Corpuz had to say; "I am proud just to be a member of the section that helps make up the backbone of the battalion."

With the high motivation and the combined technical expertise shared within the Service and Recovery Section, the 704th Support Battalion and the "Cobra" Brigade will stand prepared to adapt and overcome any logistical or operational requirement for recovery and fabrication.



U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Jason Dangel

Pvt. Blain Gallup, mechanic, 704th Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division replaces parts in the cab of a High Mobility Expanded Tactical Truck fueler.

ARMY

The Secretary of the Army Hon. Frances J. Harvey, Jr. checks out the Cobra Combat Team

Story by Staff Sgt. Brent Williams

The Department of the Army's senior leader visited Baghdad's International Zone to check on the progress of Iraqi Army forces and to visit with Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers deployed in support of Operation Freedom.

The Honorable Dr. Francis J. Harvey, Secretary of the Army, met with leaders of the 4th Infantry Division's 4th Brigade Combat Team and the Iraqi army's 5th Brigade, 6th Division, during a visit to their forward operating bases May 11.

Harvey traveled to the Iraqi army's FOB Honor to observe military training that demonstrated progress made by Iraq's Security Forces in honing their skills.

"Our view is that the ISF secured this place," Harvey said to Iraqi army Brig. Gen. Mohammed Wasif, commander, 5th Bde., 6th Div. "You did a great job on the national election. You also did a great job on the aftermath of the (Al Askari) Mosque bombing."

Wasif assumed responsibility for FOB Honor back in January, taking over the mission of providing security for the International Zone and Karradah Peninsula, said Col. Michael Beech, commander, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div. "Since that time, his brigade has been operating independently," Beech explained to Harvey. "Although we are partner brigades and often assist each other in operations throughout central Baghdad, his jundi (soldiers) work with my Soldiers on all the entry control points."

"This is a great outfit – very well led, very well trained," he said of his Iraqi counterparts.

Following demonstrations in first-aid training, small-unit infantry tactics and motorpool maintenance, the Harvey stopped at FOB Prosperity to meet with Soldiers of the 4th Brigade Combat Team.

Joining Harvey for lunch with a group of Soldiers selected by their units to attend the special function at the King Cobra Café were Maj. Gen. J.D. Thurman, commanding general, and Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald Riling, both of Multi-National Division – Baghdad, and Beech and Command Sgt. Maj. John Moody, Jr., 4BCT, 4th Inf. Div.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Carmen Burgess

(From left to right) Col. Michael Beech, commander, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., the Secretary of the Army Hon. Frances J. Harvey, Jr., Iraqi Army Brig. Gen. Mohammed Wasif, 5th Bde., 6th Div., and the 4th Infantry Division Commanding General Maj. Gen. James D. Thurman, inspect Iraqi Soldiers conducting weapons training at Forward Operating Base Honor May 11.

Following the meal, the Soldiers introduced themselves to the Secretary of the Army, who then entertained a question and answer session, during which Soldiers asked a wide array of questions ranging from Iraq's terrorist threat to the length of deployments for units abroad.

"Right now, the baseline that we are trying to get to for the active regular army is one year deployed for every three years in service," Harvey responded to one Soldier's question. "We want to be able to do one year deployed with 24 months at a home station. That is part of the Army's Force Generation Model."

Harvey said he foresees units having to deploy for two six-month periods, one at the beginning of their unit's three year life-cycle and one at the end.

"I know the American people, a vast majority of the people, have a great, high regard for the American Soldier.

"Because of you and your fellow Soldiers, peace freedom and the democratic way of life have been preserved," Harvey said. "Because of you, 50 million people in Iraq and Afghanistan have been liberated from oppressive regimes; and because of you, the cycle of terrorism in the Middle East is beginning to be broken."

SPOT REPORT

(LEFT) Famous country music star Toby Keith performs a free concert for Soldiers deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom at Freedom Rest in central Baghdad on Memorial Day. Hundreds of Soldiers turned out to watch the performance and to remember the legacy of the nation's fallen heroes. The festivities lasted approximately two hours where Soldiers had the opportunity to swim, eat and listen to Keith perform many of his number one hits.



U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Jason Dangel



U.S. Army Photo Staff Sgt. Brent Williams

Spc. James Malebranch, trauma specialist, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, currently attached to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, administers medical care to a wounded Iraqi shurta wadaniya, or national police. A registered Emergency Medical Technician, Malebranch, a native of Chicago, Ill., bandaged and treated the Iraqi police officer, who was wounded during a small arms firefight in Baghdad's Al Dora District May 23.



U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Brent Williams

Sgt. Jason Krieger, psychological operations noncommissioned officer, 312th Psychological Operation Company, conducts assessments with Iraqi citizens working in Al Dora Market. The 312th is under operational control of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division.



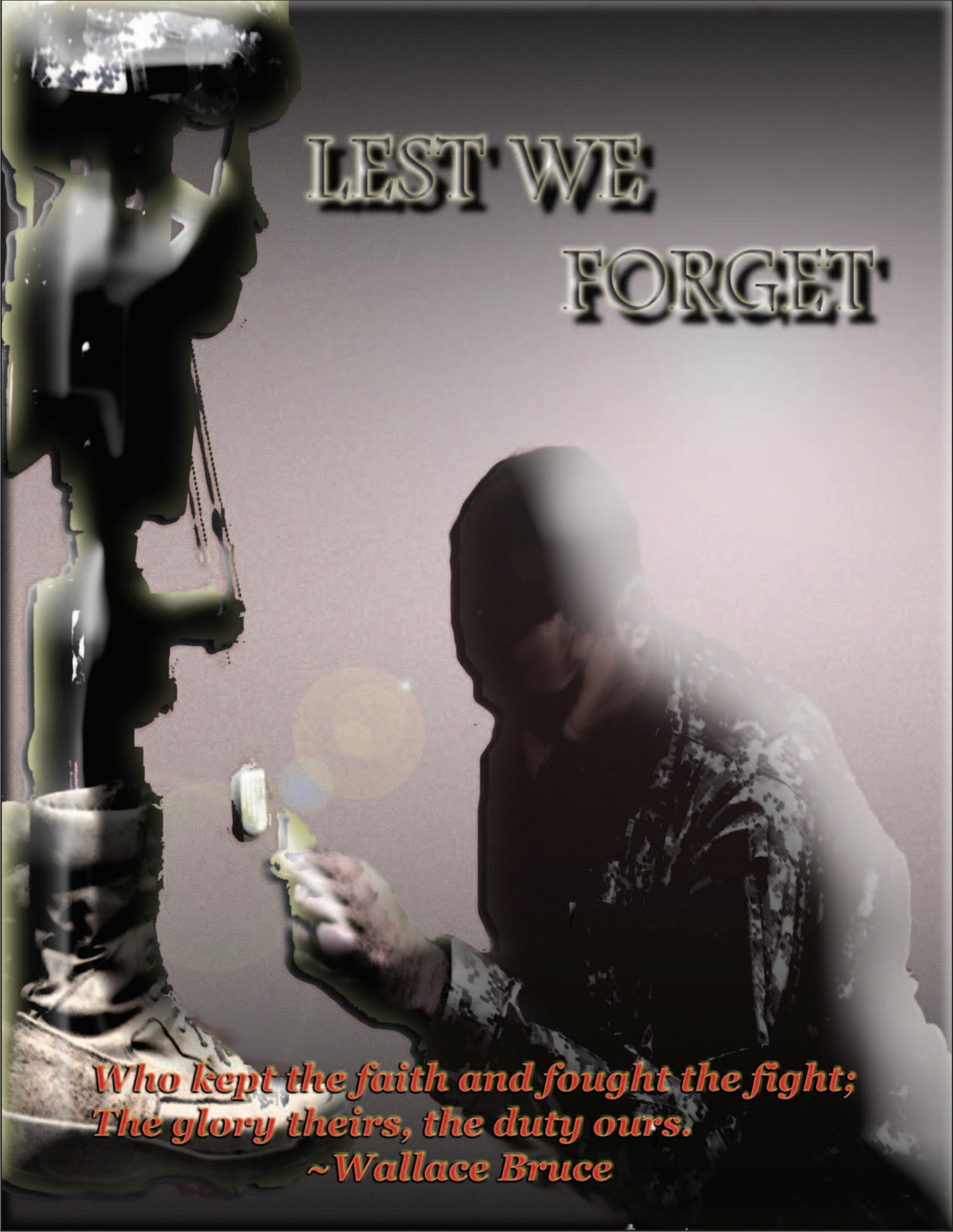
U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Jason Dangel

Capt. Don Makay, commander, 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division and his Iraqi interpreter question an Iraqi citizen during Operation Bull Fight, an operation aimed to root out terrorists responsible for attacks on Coalition Forces and Iraqi civilians. The 2nd Bn., 6th Inf., is currently under operational control of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division.



U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Brent Williams

The 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment's Company E, 101st Airborne Division, currently attached to and operating with the 4th Infantry Division's 4th Brigade Combat Team, patrol Al Dora Market Place. Cobra Brigade Soldiers conduct combined, security and combat patrols in Al Dora daily in order to ensure that its citizens do not fall victim to sectarian violence and crime.

A soldier in camouflage is kneeling on the ground, focused on cleaning a rifle. The scene is dimly lit, with a soft light source creating a lens flare effect. The soldier's hands are visible as they work on the weapon. The overall mood is somber and reflective.

LEST WE

FORGET

*Who kept the faith and fought the fight;
The glory theirs, the duty ours.
~Wallace Bruce*

Rough Riders remember fallen brother-in-arms



Capt. Klaudius Robinson, commander, Trp B, 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry, 4th BCT, says goodbye to one of his Soldiers during a memorial ceremony at Forward Operating Base Falcon May 21.

Stories and Photos by Pfc. Jason Dangel

May 21, 2006 was a day of remembrance as the Rough Riders of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry

Leader, friend honored at FOB Prosperity

"Let all of us here at this memorial ceremony use this as a point to rededicate ourselves to the determined pursuit of victory, the same victory and pursuit of which our warrior brother sacrificed himself for so nobly."

With these words, a solemn and serious Lt. Col. Robert Estey, commander, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, bid farewell to a commander and a friend at the Forward

Operating Base Prosperity Chapel June 2.

Capt. James Funkhouser, commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Bn., 12th Inf., 4th BCT was killed of injuries sustained when a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device detonated during a reconnaissance patrol in central Baghdad May 29.

Funkhouser, a native of Katy, Texas, is survived by wife, Jennifer, and daughters, Kaitlyn and Allison.

Division said farewell to a brother-in-arms at Forward Operating Base Falcon.

Cpl. Brandon L. Teeters, Lafayette, La., M2A3 Bradley Team Fighting Vehicle gunner, Troop B, 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry, was remembered as a true leader, loyal to the Army, and was described by Lt. Col. Gian Gentile, commander, 8th Sqdn., 10th Cav., as a "perfect Soldier."

Teeters, 21, died May 12, in Lanstuhl, Germany, of injuries sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his Bradley Fighting Vehicle during combat operations in Southern Baghdad April 20.

Seriously burned from the IED attack, Teeter clung hard to life for three weeks before dying in the arms of his parents, said Gentile.

"The patrol that Cpl. Teeters was on, that ultimately took his life, was a patrol that was vital for the future of Iraq, because its purpose was to improve the Iraqi Security Forces," Gentile said to Soldiers attending the ceremony.



Soldiers from the Cobra Brigade and Iraqi Army's 5th Brigade, 6th Division gather to honor a leader, a friend.

Fallen Soldiers honored in South Baghdad



Lt. Col. James Danna, commander, 2nd Bn., 6th Inf., 2nd BCT, 1st AD and Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald Orosz honor their fallen.

The Gators of 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armor Division bid farewell to a leader and a Soldier during a memorial service at Forward Operating Base Falcon May 30.

Capt. Douglas Diczno, commander, Company C, 2nd Bn., 6th Inf., and Spc. Robert Blair, infantryman, Company C, 2nd Bn., 6th Inf., were remembered for their bravery, honor and courage, as comrades gathered at the Steel Falcon Chapel to say goodbye to their fellow brothers-in-arms.

Diczeno, 30, a native of Plymouth, N.H., and Blair, 23, a native of Ocala Fla., were killed in southwest Baghdad May 25, when their convoy was hit by an improvised explosive device while on patrol.

"Capt. Diczno and Spc. Blair's actions reflect the finest traditions in the modern American infantry," said Lt. Col. James Danna, commander, 2nd Bn., 6th Inf. "No greater love has he, than to lay down his life for his brothers," he said to the large group of Soldiers attending the ceremony.

4-27 Field Artillery takes on new mission in southern Baghdad

Story and Photos by Pfc. Jason Dangel

As the sun begins to set, beckoning another Baghdad night, the rumbling sounds of armored vehicles resonate from a small patrol base south of the Iraqi capitol.

The mission is underway for the Soldiers of 1st Platoon, Battery B, 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery Regiment, currently attached to the 4th Infantry Division's 4th Brigade Combat Team, deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Recently reassigned to a new area of operations, "Bear" Battery, accustomed to patrolling densely populated areas in southern Baghdad, finds its Soldiers patrolling through rural, open fields and searching through farmlands for hidden weapons caches.

The Soldiers who man the guard towers and patrol the area daily live in austere conditions, yet despite this fact, some refer to the patrol base as their second home.

"Up until about three weeks ago, we were primarily doing patrols all throughout Baghdad," said Staff Sgt. Richard Butler, squad leader, Btry. B, 4th Bn., 27th FA.

According to Butler, a native of Beaumont, Texas, the platoon conducted mounted and dismounted patrols, route clearance security and responded to hostile activity while patrolling the streets of downtown Baghdad.

"Everybody in this unit has seen enemy contact," Butler explained. "It's something that happens all the time. You can't expect to go out and not get attacked; you have to be ready all the time."

Butler and his troops have many stories about their time on the streets of the Iraqi capitol.

Spc. Steven Schaefer, gunner, Btry. B, 4th Bn., 27th FA said he and his fellow Soldiers have seen improvised explosive devices and small-arms attacks while



Soldiers from Battery B, 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division and Iraqi National Police stand guard south of Baghdad.

working in their new area of operations.

Even though the mission for Battery B has changed, Schaefer, a native of Youngstown, Ohio, said he remains ready, and he and the Soldiers from his unit will not be complacent.

The day starts like most days for the Soldiers of "Bear" Battery. The field artillery unit, working as a motorized infantry platoon, awakens early for mission briefings.

Capt. Kirill Tsekanoeskiy, platoon leader, 2nd Platoon, briefs his Soldiers with detailed diagrams on the mission at hand.

His platoon sergeant, Sgt. 1st

Class Deoraj Baldeo sends the Soldiers to get some rest and prepare their equipment for the mission.

"The mission we will be conducting today is called operation Bear Hunt," Tsekanoeskiy, a native of Ukraine, says to his Soldiers. "It's going to be a hot one out

over the Baghdad horizon, the troops and their Iraqi counterparts are already on the objective searching through the farmlands for anything out of the ordinary.

The Soldiers identified numerous possible hiding spots for weapons, but by the end of the day, they have found no caches.

The mission is still important to the Soldiers of Bear Battery; their attitudes toward the task at hand are a reflection upon their commitment to its success.

"Everybody in this unit works hard and loves what they're doing," said Sgt. Chris Myers, team leader, 2nd Platoon, Btry. B, a native of Littleton, Colo. "Regardless of whether or not we actually find something, we are still making a difference, because we out there doing our jobs."

Walking back to his M1114 Up-Armored High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicle, sweat dripping from his brow, Butler expresses frustration, but remains optimistic about the days to come.

This is only the first day of the mission, he explained. Tomorrow is another day.

The 26 year-old squad leader who has not spent a birthday with his wife since 2001, is commonly asked why he does what he does and why he risks his life everyday.

His response is simple; "I love what I do."

The majority of the Soldiers from Bear Battery would answer the same way: and failure is not an option.

2-77 FA



Opens Artillery Dome

Story by Pfc. Jason Dangel

The 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division celebrated the grand opening of a multi-faceted recreational facility located at Forward Operating Base Union in Baghdad's International Zone May 4.

Soldiers from the Cobra Brigade's 2nd Battalion, 77th Field Artillery, working with Kellogg, Brown and Root employees, spent approximately 2 months building the "Artillery Dome."

The official ribbon cutting ceremony was held May 6 after the conclusion of

basketball tournament.

The idea for the Artillery Dome was initially brought to the table by Capt. Brian Oberg, battalion supply officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Bn., 77th FA, later joined by Staff Sgt. Dwan Miller, personnel noncommissioned officer, HHB, 2nd Bn., 77th FA.

Ms. Sarah Smith, the KBR Morale Welfare and Recreation coordinator, later joined the team as the three came together to make the idea a reality.

The project leaders consider themselves the "epicenter" of the operation and worked tirelessly to recruit Soldier volunteers from the battalion to help with the construction of the project.

According to Oberg, the new Artillery Dome gives Soldiers a chance to get out of the Baghdad heat and enjoy sporting events inside the huge air-conditioned facility.

"The big thing during the summer months in Baghdad is the heat," Oberg said. "This facility will provide the Soldiers somewhere to go and play some basketball out of the heat."

"Since we opened the place there hasn't been a night where there hasn't been a full court game ran here," he said.

Oberg also acknowledged the safety of the facility, mentioning the Artillery Dome is located in the middle of the building, making it safe from



Photo by Staff Sgt. Brent Williams

Command Sgt. Maj. Keith Young, 2nd Bn., 77th FA, 4th BCT participates in a ribbon-cutting ceremony with Capt. Brian Oberg and his Soldiers for the new "Artillery Dome" at FOB Union III in the International Zone May 6.

enemy mortar and missile attacks.

According to Smith, the Artillery Dome is growing in popularity and has already played host to civilian contractors and Soldiers alike during their first basketball tournament, and she expects the upward trends to continue.

"Contractors from the (U.S. Embassy) and different parts of the IZ participated in the tournament, and everyone seems to really like this place," she said.

Despite the appearance of the Artillery Dome, which looks like a huge indoor basketball court, Smith is planning to schedule a plethora of events at the facility to include dance parties and other activities for anyone wishing to participate.

As the Artillery Dome continues to improve and grow in popularity, Miller said the main goal for the new facility is to reach as many people in the IZ, providing people the opportunity to come together and have fun while supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"This is just another great way to make our Army better and build team cohesion while deployed in Iraq," he said.

For more information about upcoming events at the Artillery Dome contact Sarah Smith at sarah.smith1@halliburton.com.



the facility's Photo by Staff Sgt. Brent Williams

A Soldier drives for the basket during the inaugural basketball tournament held at the new "Artillery Dome" at FOB Union III in the International Zone May 6.

Cultural Notes: All work, no play ...

Iraqis challenge the terrorists with a little fun

Story by D. Saleeh

In spite of all the challenges that the Iraqis face every day, they are living normal lives; because they have the courage to face the terrorism.

Recently, I saw many people going to the zoo in Baghdad, and they took their kids, challenging the threats of the terrorists.

So what we need to do is stay together, and support our leaders; because we choose them, so we have to support them to be able to defeat the terrorism and have a better future for our kids.

The terrorists want Iraqis to be desperate and hopeless. But the Iraqis are keeping the faith by their religious concept. It urges them to have fun and live a normal life.

So what the terrorists want to do is make the people stay in the darkness, because they can't be like the normal people; because they can't face the new sun of the freedom.

So the Iraqi people they go to the public places and enjoy their time, but we notice that recently the terrorists are targeting the public.

These terrorists are showing the real reason for what they are trying to do by blowing up a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device near a hospital or inside a bus station.

They aren't targeting the Army Soldiers like what they claim.



Photo by D. Saleeh

A stork suns itself outside of its habitat at Al Zawraa Zoo. The zoo is one of two zoological sites located in Baghdad.



Photo by Pfc. D. Saleeh

Iraqi people enjoy a day at the Al Zawraa Zoo located in Al Mansour District in central Baghdad.

June 7, 2006, a historic day for Iraq

Story by A.S. Abudi

Eventful day in Iraq!!

Iraqi citizens have suffered for three years since the arrival of AL Zarqawi in 2003.

Iraqi Security Forces and U.S. Forces put an end to this suffering by destroying AL Zarqawi and five of his assistants in Hehhib City in Baquba north of Baghdad.

The Iraqi Prime Minister Al-Maliki announced the event during a press conference with General George W. Casey, Multi-National Forces-Iraq commander.

Casey said Iraqi civilians played a big role by giving information about the place where AL Zarqawi was hiding, which led to his ultimate demise

At the same time, we witnessed the parliament session which approved the names given by the prime minister for the remaining cabinet positions.

After this great news, Iraqis went out to the streets and celebrated. They thanked the government and U.S. Army for killing AL Zarqawi and celebrated the nominations for the ministries.

This day is a historical day for Iraqis.



Military/AP

Reenlistments

Soar high

in 4th BCT



Col. Michael Beech, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, reads the oath of reenlistment to Sgt. Daniel Hernandez, personal security detachment, 4th BCT, during a reenlistment ceremony at Forward Operating Base Prosperity.

Story and Photos by Pfc. Jason Dangel

The 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, provides some of the most diverse and fulfilling jobs in the world, yet this organization has the same challenges as modern enterprises, such as retention, productivity and mission. These common threads keep the unit career counselors and retention noncommissioned officers of the 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., poised to keep the best assets available in the Army: the Soldiers.

To date, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., has the highest retention rate for a brigade combat team (1-4) in the entire division for fiscal year 2006, said Staff Sgt. Stacey Coleman, Division Retention operations noncommissioned officer.

According to Sgt. 1st Class Keith Green, 4th BCT Retention noncommissioned officer-in-charge, these rates will only increase in the coming months.

Green, a native of Toledo, Ohio, attributes the retention success to many things, but mainly for love of country and the tax-free bonuses Soldiers receive when they re-enlist while deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Right now, the deciding factor for a lot of these guys in terms of reenlistment has been the deployment bonus they can receive, but some of the career Soldiers reenlist simply because they love the Army," said Green.

Regardless of the reasoning behind why so many Soldiers are reenlisting, leadership and camaraderie have played a huge part in the retention success of the 4th BCT, said Staff Sgt. Andre Tillman, retention NCO, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th BCT.

According to Tillman, a native of McGee, Ark., the 1st Bn., 12th Inf. Regt., "Warriors" have the highest reenlistment rate of any battalion in the 4th Inf. Div. To date, approximately 150 Soldiers have raised their hand in reenlistment ceremonies.

"Our Soldiers receive a lot of support from the command group and the NCOs. We want to let the Soldiers know we care about them, and we're here to help them with whatever

decision they make, whether it is to reenlist or move out into the civilian sector," Tillman said.

Despite the potentially record-setting number of reenlistments the Warriors have accrued, it is not about the numbers, Tillman said.

"The general message I tell the Soldiers when they come to this office is that the Army needs them more than they need the Army. I care about the Soldiers and help them decide what is best for their future," Tillman said.

"I truly have a concern about the wants and needs of the Soldiers," he continued.

Spc. Charles Abraham, administration specialist, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Bn., 12th Inf. Regt., recently reenlisted and said he is thinking about the future and wants to take advantage of the benefits the Army offers.

Abraham received a \$9,500 bonus for opting to continue to wear the uniform, and is taking full advantage of the college benefits the Army offers.

Although Abraham does not foresee a career in the Army, he plans to take all of the knowledge he has gained to make a successful life for himself in the civilian sector.

"The best advice I can give to a Soldier who is thinking about reenlisting is to make sure the Army is something you really want to do. You shouldn't reenlist just for the bonus," he said.

Many things weigh on a Soldiers decision to reenlist, but it starts with the leadership, said Command Sgt. Maj. John Moody, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., a native of Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

"When leaders talk to the Soldiers and lay all the options out on the table, it's up to the Soldier to make an informed decision," he explained.

"Leaders help by first asking them to stay in, and then getting them the career counselor so that they can get the correct information," Moody said.

This Day in History

FIRST WOMAN IN SPACE:

June 16, 1963

On June 16, 1963, aboard Vostok 6, Soviet Cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova becomes the first woman to travel into space. After 48 orbits and 71 hours, she returned to earth, having spent more time in space than all U.S. astronauts combined to that date.

NAPOLEON DEFEATED AT WATERLOO:

June 18, 1815

At Waterloo in Belgium, Napoleon Bonaparte suffers defeat at the hands of the Duke of Wellington, bringing an end to the Napoleonic era of European history.

OIL FLOWS IN ALASKA:

June 20, 1977

With a flip of a switch in Prudhoe Bay, crude oil from the nation's largest oil field begins flowing south down the trans-Alaska pipeline to the ice-free port of Valdez, Alaska. The steel pipeline, 48 inches in diameter, winds through 800 miles of Alaskan wilderness, crossing three Arctic mountain ranges and hundreds of rivers and streams.

LOUIS BECOMES CHAMP:

June 22, 1937

In Chicago's Comiskey Park, Joe Louis wins the world heavyweight boxing title when he defeats American Jim Braddock in an eighth-round knockout. Louis was the first African American heavyweight champ since Jack Johnson, who lost the title in 1915.

EISENHOWER TAKES COMMAND:

June 25, 1942

Following his arrival in London, Major General Dwight D. Eisenhower takes command of U.S. forces in Europe. Although Eisenhower had never seen combat during his 27 years as an army officer, his knowledge of military strategy and talent for organization were such that Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall chose him over nearly 400 senior officers to lead U.S. forces in the war against Germany.

U.N. CHARTER SIGNED:

June 26, 1945

In the Herbst Theater auditorium in San Francisco, delegates

from 50 nations sign the United Nations Charter, establishing the world body as a means of saving "succeeding generations from the scourge of war."

4th ID pushes inland during D-Day:

June 6, 1944 - July 2, 1944

From the staging areas in England, the division trained for its major role in Operation Overlord (D-Day) -- the amphibious invasion of Europe June 6. The 4th Division was one of the first units to hit the beaches of Normandy. For 26 days the division pushed inland reaching the Port Of Cherbourg. The unit sustained over 5,000 casualties en route to relieving the isolated 82nd Airborne Division at St. Mere Eglise.

LEE DEFEATED AT GETTYSBURG:

July 3, 1863

On the third day of the Battle of Gettysburg, Confederate General Robert E. Lee's last attempt at breaking the Union line ends in disastrous failure, bringing the most decisive battle of the American Civil War to an end.

U.S. DECLARES INDEPENDENCE:

July 4, 1776

In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the Continental Congress adopts the Declaration of Independence, which proclaims the independence of the United States of America from Great Britain and its king.

THE LIBERTY BELL RINGS:

July 8, 1776

In Philadelphia, the Liberty Bell rings out from the tower of the Pennsylvania State House (now known as Independence Hall), summoning citizens to the first public reading of the Declaration of Independence, by Colonel John Nixon.

MEDAL OF HONOR CREATED

July 12, 1862

President Abraham Lincoln signs into law a measure calling for the awarding of a U.S. Army Medal of Honor, in the name of Congress, "to such noncommissioned officers and privates as shall most distinguish themselves by their gallantry in action.

SAFETY FIRST!

Preventing Fire Injuries In **COMBAT**

- Use Combat locks in M1114s to take help prevent entry of flame, fragmentation & blast effects into the vehicle form an IED
- Wear cotton underwear or as much cotton in a cotton-synthetic mix as possible next to your skin.
- Only wear full synthetic underwear on FOBS & in low risk areas to prevent potential injuries from their lower melting temperatures
- Wear RFI issued Nomex gloves or all leather gloves to prevent hand burns and injuries from synthetic gloves
- Wear polycarbonate ballistic eye-wear (very good heat resistance) to protect your eyes, try to keep elastic straps for goggles on helmet
- If daytime temperatures permit, wear uniform blouse collar up and closed for added protection
- Wear uniform sleeves down over the top of the Nomex gloves to prevent providing a heat “chimney” in a flash fire
- Wear watches with rubber / synthetic bands over the top of the glove cuff to protect your skin
- Wear identification tags between the tee-shirt and uniform blouse especially if rubber “silencers” are used
- When purchasing undergarments try to buy natural materials or Nomex (Aramid) for maximum thermal protection



Make sure to wear Nomex gloves or gloves that are flame retardant to prevent serious burns and injuries to hands.

COBRA FITNESS

Stay fit in the combat zone!

Fitness advice by
Staff Sgt. Johnny Thompson
Personal Trainer certified by the American Counsel on Exercise

This month's topic: Soldiers and Supplements



U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Jason Dangel
Spc. Joseph Ink, Co. B, 4th STB, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div. performs a standing lateral at the Cobra Gym at FOB Prosperity.

NOTE: Always consult a certified physician before taking dietary supplements.

Col. (Dr.) Todd Dombroski, our Sports Medicine Physician, wanted me to talk to everyone briefly about weight training and supplements while deployed in Iraq.

I know what your thinking, but this isn't one of those articles where we bad mouth different supplements, because I use them myself.

I want to talk to you about some tips on using them if you're a beginner and some issues for those with more experience.

So now let's get down to business. Supplements can be helpful in gaining muscle or losing fat. Supplements are not required, but most body builders I know take them.

There are many supplements and many combinations of these supplements. I will discuss how much to take, and the individual and environmental factors to consider.

When the makers of the supplements put on the bottle the recommended dose, they don't take into consideration the kind of lifestyle of deployed Soldiers. Nor is it their job to give us the dosage they think works. Remember, the more they sell, the more money they make. This really leaves it up to us to figure it out. So let's talk about some of the more popular supplements Soldiers are using out here.

Protein powder is the most common supplement, but again has to be less than the dose on the bottle, as it also requires a lot of water intake or the kid-

neys can have problems. Cutting the dose in half for the summer is a good idea, and taking it before a meal can cut your appetite if that is what you are trying to do.

Creatine is taken for muscle mass and strength gains. However, Soldiers also have to be careful about how much to take in this very hot environment.

Creatine helps the muscle absorb water to increase its mass. Unfortunately, this will dehydrate you a lot faster than normal. When we're working 14-hour days in 120 degree weather, Soldiers can't risk a heat injury or dehydration. For this reason, we should seriously think about cutting this supplement out all together until we are in an environment getting the proper amount of rest and water needed for this supplement to do its job.

If you insist on taking it, I would consider cutting the dose to 25 percent of the dose recommended on the bottle. Now if the Soldier is in a less hectic area, they still need to monitor the amount of water you intake because we need this to help filter creatine and other supplements through the body.

The Nitric Oxides act as a vasodilator which helps increase blood flow to the muscles to help them grow. Soldiers need to consider the amount of rest (or lack thereof) you are getting to allow the muscle to heal after a workout combined with the constant stress we put on our bodies outside the wire.

So for instance, my product calls for 2 to 3 scoops before a work out. I have found taking half of that works well for me, and well for my Soldiers who train with me. Plus it saves us money.

Always start out with less and gradually work up to give your body time to adjust with the work schedule you have.

One of the big things to remember is when you start to see results...don't start taking more hoping to see results faster. All you are doing is putting yourself in a greater risk for a heat injury or worse.

Remember these supplements are not going to work if you just take them and don't work out, don't get the right amount of water, food and rest. Most supplements recommend you get 8 to 10 hours of sleep at night which we know isn't going to happen, so it's just another reason to cut the dose by 50% or more.

My medics and I are seeing an increase in the amount of dehydration and high blood pressure cases.

Many of these Soldiers are taking diet supplements to lose weight, but they are out in the heat, skipping meals and not drinking water.

The body can only take so much before it starts to go down. The best thing to do is to ask some body qualified before you start taking these supplements, like a doc in your Aid Station or a certified trainer.

Remember the recommended dose is a guide line, so if the dose is calling for you to take two pills before each meal and you skip a meal, doesn't mean take the two pills anyway. Just wait until you are ready to eat later before taking the diet supplements.

COBRAS' LIGHT

Small Actions Matter...

*CH (Capt.) Joe Schrock
2nd Battalion, 77th Field Artillery
"Steel Warriors"*

The small, seemingly insignificant actions we take, or words we speak affect us and the people around us deeply even to the point of being life changing. Case in point, my favorite college team, The Ohio State Buckeyes, nearly won a national title this past season finishing fourth after teaching a few lessons of the game to Michigan and Notre Dame. Yet the biggest lesson taught went to Troy Smith and his teammates.

For you see, Troy is OSU's quarterback and is the match of any of the other teams' quarterbacks except they did not take a \$500 gift after winning against Michigan the previous year. Troy did and not only did it cost him playing in the bowl game and the first game of the 2005-6 season, but it forced him to not practice in any way with his team for nearly a year. Those who know football know that quarterbacking is more than

just throwing it hard and deep. It is about timing and touch, two aspects that can only be achieved through daily repetition with those starting receivers who must match their speed with the distance and time that the pass is thrown. In the close losses to Texas and Penn State, Troy did not have his timing or his touch down and it showed costing him and his teammates the game and the chance to play for the title.



U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Brent Williams

Lt. Col. Troy A. Smith, deputy commander, 4th Brigade Combat Team, leads the "Prayer for our Nation" commencing the 4th Brigade Combat Team Memorial Day Prayer Breakfast at Forward Operating Base Prosperity May 29.

That \$500 is the costliest \$500 ever received. The seniors on the team no longer had a chance for a second national title.

The fans and coaches were left with "What if" and "Next Year", and the university was left with a stain on its reputation even though they did not have anything to do with the wrongly accepted gift.

I am sure it seemed insignificant at the time but wrong actions often do seem small until they explode with ied force.

God tells us our actions and words affect everyone even if we do not see the direct link. The Army tells us if we lose focus we can get our buddies killed. And in our relationships, one little mistake one night or one little betrayal of our buddy or spouse and our relationship ends.

Learn from Troy Smith and act with integrity and with focused dedication on "every play" on every day! God's peace to you all!

FALCON MEMORIAL CHAPEL SCHEDULE

Worship Services

Latter Day Saints	0800
Contemporary Protestant	1030
Catholic Saturday	1500
Gospel	1300
Traditional Protestant	1930

Bible Studies

Monday	1900
Growing in Grace	
Tuesday	2015
The Book of Galatians (OCF)	
Wednesday	1900
The Book of James	

Other Services

Thursday	1400
Prayer Service	
Thursday	1900
Gospel Choir Practice	
Friday	1900
Contemporary Praise & Worship	

SGT'S TIME

RISK MANAGEMENT



Risk Management is a part of everything we do. Risk Management is the process of identifying and controlling hazards and making risk decisions to protect the force. It is applicable to any mission or environment, on or off duty.

IDENTIFY HAZARDS to the force. Consider all aspects of current and future situations, environment, and known historical problem areas.

ASSESS HAZARDS to determine risk. Assess the impact of each hazard in terms of potential loss based on probability and severity.

DEVELOP CONTROLS AND MAKE DECISIONS that eliminate the hazard or reduce risk.

- A. Reassess hazards given the controls.
- B. Determine the proper decision authority.

IMPLEMENT CONTROLS that will eliminate the hazard or reduce risk.

SUPERVISE AND EVALUATE. Enforce standards and controls. Evaluate the effect of controls and adjust or update as necessary.

S-STOP before you act, don't rush into a situation or mission without considering the risks against the benefits.

T-THINK about what you are about to do, what is the right way to safely accomplish the task.

O-OBSERVE the situation and surrounding environment. What are the Risks? How can I reduce them?

P-PLAN. Develop your plan to reduce the risks and decide how to best implement the plan.

P-PROCEED with Safety. Supervise continuously and constantly look for ways to improve.