

AnacondaTimes

AUGUST 22, 2007

PROUDLY SERVING LSA ANACONDA



Photo by Pfc. Gaelen Lowers

Fallen Soldier memorial

3rd SB memorializes fallen comrades with rock dedication ceremony.

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Web Image

What can IG do for you?

Learn how the inspector general can help you.

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Knowledge Management

316th ESC enhances wartime-logistician decision-making power with computer technology.

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Photo by Master Sgt. Rodney Williams

Staff Sgt. Glen Skaggs, 123rd Armor and Department of Public Works liaison for FOB Q-West, along with Iraqi children, helps carry a piece of the newly constructed playground equipment built by the 2nd Battalion, 123rd Armor for the Iraqi villages of Fruga and Jedallah Sofia.

National Guard unit delivers playground equipment

by Master Sgt. Rodney Williams

3rd Sustainment Brigade

FOB Q-WEST, Iraq — Over a dozen members of the 2nd Battalion, 123rd Armor, Kentucky Army National Guard ventured out to the Iraqi villages of Fruga and Jedallah Sofia to do something special. For nearly a year, the unit has put forth an effort to improve village schools.

"We bring supplies out to the schools and actually work with the kids a couple of days on writing and reading," said Lt. Col. Mike Farley, commander, 2nd Battalion, 123rd Armor. "We then looked at what the kids didn't have like playground equipment. I then asked my sergeant major to go ahead and take a look at building them some swings and a couple of

other things as well."

The Soldiers of the 123rd were real excited about building some equipment. As soon as the word was put out about the project, there were more volunteers than the commander needed. After almost three months of waiting to get the supplies together and finalizing the designs on the swing sets, monkey bars and climbing apparatus, the work began. Some Soldiers would work a 12-hour shift and then an additional three to four hours on the equipment.

"Today we are bringing (the equipment) to the children and setting them up in the schools," said Farley. "Our main goal is to encourage the children to learn but also to be able to come to school and have fun. As you

"This is the best part of the job; to be able to help these kids and show them that you care."

Staff Sgt. Glenn Skaggs
123rd Armor

can see by the looks on the Soldiers faces they are smiling just as much as the kids are."

"This is the best part of the job; to be able to help these kids and show them that you care," said Staff Sgt. Glenn Skaggs, 123rd Armor and department of public works liaison for Q-west. "I think it affects the Soldiers that do have kids back home. You realize that if you can help

the kids, that's where the best start is. The future of Iraq is with the kids."

"Any day you can make a child smile is one well worth the effort put into it," said Spc. Andrew Haberer, 148th Quartermaster Company as he stirs some cement mix with his arm. "It's awesome to experience in the midst of a combat zone, something like this, where you are able to go out the gate and make a difference in someone's life."

This is just the latest chapter of this school improvement project. It initially began when members of the 123rd spoke with some of the folks in the local area and noticed there were a lot of school-age children out

See Play, Page 4

Air Force takes over LSA Anaconda operations

by Sgt. 1st Class Neil K. Simmons

Anaconda Times staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq — The mayor cell has always been the hub of activity here, where servicemembers and contractors can go to get answers about base operations. However, visitors will now notice one key difference; the person helping at the counter is no longer Army, they are Air Force.

Since July 28, the Airmen of Detachment 1, 332nd Expeditionary Mission Support Group have managed the daily operations here.

“We are the focal point for all customer service for basic life support for the garrison,” said Air Force Col. Ralph J. Romine, Det. 1, 332nd EMSG commander and sole Air Force Reserve Airmen in the detachment. “So, whether you’re transitioning or you live here, are permanent party or are visiting, we manage it all.”

The more than 90 Airmen and one Soldier of Det. 1 work night and day to ensure contract work is done on everything from base construction to communication. By mid-September, there will be well over 100 Air Force men and women serving here in the mayor’s cell, and they are no strangers to their work.

“We do this on the Air Force side all the time. All my guys work in their specialty back in their Air Force bases,” said Romine, who deployed from Wright Patterson Air Force Base. “We’re not bringing them into something new. This is what they do every day.”

Adding to the capabilities of Romine’s team is the fact a majority have deployed be-



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Neil K. Simmons

Air Force Col. Ralph J. Romine, Det. 1, 332nd EMSG commander, oversees daily operations on LSA Anaconda.

fore. However, providing logistical support here is only part of Romine’s mission.

His primary purpose is to evaluate the feasibility of Air Force personnel taking over more base operations throughout Iraq and how Air Force and Army procedures can be adapted to work together.

“We work together extremely well. Even before I got here the Army worked really well with the Air Force,” said Romine. “What’s been hard for us is not knowing all the intricacies of how an Army base operates. There are a lot of things we can streamline, but we have to be careful in streamlining the processes we

implement, because whatever we do affects 28,000 people.”

Many improvements will be transparent to the user, said Romine. Personnel here will never know there were changes. Others will be made slowly over many weeks to limit their impact on operations.

Also, part of Romine’s improvement plan is getting cooperation from all military and civilian personnel here in addressing several priority issues.

The first of these is force protection. Servicemembers must secure their ID, their weapon and keep practicing in-direct fire drills.

Second is safety. Everyone

should use the battle buddy concept and be more attentive while driving. Don’t take short cuts.

“There’s enough dangers outside the wire, we don’t need to be creating any additional hindrances to our mission on the inside,” said Romine. “We need to take our time and be safe.”

Third is environmental. “We owe it to the Iraqi government that, when we turn over this base some day, we turn it over in good condition environmentally,” said Romine. “Don’t dump your hazmat into the sewer system.”

Lastly, servicemembers should have a good tour and

use the programs available to them.

“Our MWR calendar looks like the calendar of a cruise line and we do that on purpose. We want to make sure that it’s not just about the work. You’ve got to enjoy yourself a little bit,” Romine said.

With so many great things in the works, the Airmen of Det. 1 should have no problem proving the Air Force has what it takes to assume base operations in the future.

“They’re doing an amazing job,” said Romine. “As a commander, I couldn’t be any more pleased with the team that I have.”

ANACONDA TIMES

316th ESC Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Gregory E. Couch

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CJSOTF-AP

3rd SB ceremony memorializes fallen comrades

by Pfc. Gaelen Lowers
3rd Sustainment Brigade

FOB Q-WEST, Iraq — The 3rd Sustainment Brigade held a “Fallen Comrade Rock Dedication,” in memory of two of its fallen heroes Aug. 11.

Sgt. Courtney D. Finch, 27, of Leavenworth, Kan. and Staff Sgt. Travis S. Bachman, 30, of Oklahoma, both of the 714th Maintenance Company, 524th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Kansas Army National Guard (KARNG) were honored during the memorial. Individual memorial stones were placed at the symbolic monument here to honor their service, commitment and sacrifice.

Finch was born June 8, 1980 in Baldwin, Wis. After completing Basic Combat Training at Fort Knox, Ky., he was assigned to the 35th Infantry Brigade, Kansas Army National Guard.

Finch began serving with the 1st Battalion, 635th Armor, Company C (Forward), Kansas Army National Guard in September 2005 with whom he was deployed to Kosovo in support of Operation Noble Eagle. He volunteered to deploy with the 714th Maintenance Company, KARNG, in August 2006 in support of OIF ’06-’08.

He died of non-combat related injuries while proudly serving his country in Iraq.



Photo by Pfc. Gaelen Lowers

Soldiers stand at attention at the “Fallen Comrade Rock Dedication,” in memory of two of its fallen heroes Aug. 11 at Forward Operating Base Q-West to honor their service, commitment and sacrifice.

“He was a very valued member of 2nd platoon,” said Sgt. 1st Class Marty F. Fleig, Finch’s platoon sergeant. “He was a devout Soldier and a rewarding Soldier.”

Bachman was born November 29, 1976 in Oklahoma. He entered into active military service Nov. 30, 1993 and was assigned to Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery, KARNG, in Garden City, Kan.

Bachman also deployed in support of Operation Noble Eagle. See **Memorial**, Page 4

Worship services

PROTESTANT – TRADITIONAL

Sunday 7:30 a.m. Air Force Hospital Chapel
9:30 a.m. Provider Chapel
10 a.m. Freedom Chapel (West Side)
5:30 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel (H-6)
7:30 p.m. Air Force Hospital Chapel

PROTESTANT-GOSPEL

Sunday 11 a.m. MWR East Building
11:30 a.m. Freedom Chapel (West Side)
2 p.m. Air Force Hospital Chapel
3:30 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel (H-6)
7 p.m. Provider Chapel

PROTESTANT-CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP

Sunday 9 a.m. MWR East Building
10 a.m. Town Hall(H-6)
6:30 p.m. Eden Chapel
7 p.m. Freedom Chapel (West Side)

Wednesday 8 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel(H-6)

PROTESTANT –LITURGICAL(LUTHERAN)

Sunday 11 a.m. LUTHERAN(PROVIDER ANNEX)

PROTESTANT- LITURGICAL (EPISCOPAL)

Sunday 11 a.m. Tuskegee Chapel(H-6)

PROTESTANT-PRAYER SERVICE

Saturday 7 a.m. Signal Chapel

ROMAN CATHOLIC MASS

(Sacrament of Reconciliation 30 min prior to Mass)

Saturday 5 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel (H-6)
8 p.m. Freedom Chapel (West side)
9:30 p.m. Air Force Hospital Chapel
Sunday 9 a.m. Tuskegee Chapel (H-6)
11 a.m. Provider Chapel

LATTER DAY SAINTS- (LDS)-(MORMON)

Sunday 1 p.m. Provider Chapel
3:30 p.m. Freedom Chapel
7 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel (H-6)

JEWISH WORSHIP SERVICES

Friday 7 p.m. Signal Chapel

ISLAMIC SERVICES

Friday 12 p.m. Provider Chapel

PAGAN/WICCAN FELLOWSHIP

Thursday 7 p.m. Eden Chapel

Combat Stress Control

113th Medical Company (CSC)

433-2402

Individual counseling by appointment or walk-in

Command referrals

Services for combat and operationally stressed soldiers

RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

MONDAY TO SATURDAY

3:30 TO 4 P.M.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

MONDAY AND THURSDAY

10 TO 11 A.M.

HOME FRONT ISSUES

MONDAY AND THURSDAY

5 TO 6 P.M.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY

11 A.M. TO NOON

ANGER MANAGEMENT

TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

11 A.M. TO NOON

ANXIETY AWARENESS

WEDNESDAY

3 TO 3:30 P.M.

SATURDAY

10:30 TO 11 A.M.

SLEEP HYGIENE

MONDAY AND THURSDAY

6 TO 6:30 P.M.

GOAL SETTING

MONDAY AND THURSDAY

11 A.M. TO NOON

DEPRESSION AWARENESS

WEDNESDAY

2 TO 3 P.M.

SATURDAY

10 TO 10:30 A.M.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

10 TO 11 A.M.

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

WEDNESDAY

9 TO 11 A.M.

for more information,
email:

melissa.kale@us.army.mil

433-2402

Play, from Cover



Photo by Master Sgt. Rodney Williams

Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 123rd Armor set up playground equipment for Iraqi children in the Iraqi village of Fruga and Jedel-lah Sofia.

everywhere when they should have been in school.

"This has been a dream of mine," said Farley. "One thing I wanted to tackle in the local area was to get the kids back in school."

After further investigation, the 123rd found out that the kids were not in school because the teachers were not being paid by the minister of education. The unit is working through that process right now. In the meantime, some friends of the Kentucky based unit started a website, www.ruwillingandabell.org, which is named after the unit's Executive Officer, Maj. William Abell. Members back home conducted fund raisers, bake sales and cookouts held as well as accepted

donations and raised enough money to pay the salaries of the school's teachers in the local villages for two years. To this day, fundraisers, donations and supplies are still being held and accepted through the website to further fund the teachers and increase the supplies for the schools.

"Our long term goal is to provide them an education so they (Iraqi children) can learn to read and write and see that there is more out there to life than what's just in the village," added Farley. "I'm a firm believer that you can attempt to restore the country but, if you don't educate the children, you're just going to continue to spin the cycle without education."

Memorial, from Page 3



Photo by Pfc. Gaelen Lowers

Staff Sgt. Gary Merrick, convoy commander for the 714th Maintenance Company, places a rock dedicated to his fellow comrade in arms, Sgt. Courtney D. Finch, who died while proudly serving his country.

gle in Kosovo and later volunteered to deploy with the 714th Maintenance Company in June 2006 in support of OIF '06 - '08.

He was killed in action when his armored security vehicle was hit by an improvised explosive device Aug. 1 in northern Iraq.

"Staff Sgt. Travis Bachman was a good man, a fine [non-commissioned officer] and leader," said Staff Sgt. Gary Merrick. "He was never down; he would always have time for anyone and everything."

"What could be more symbolic?" said Col. Darrell K.

Williams, commander of the 3rd Sustainment Bde. "Like a rock, these great Soldiers stood in the way against our enemy. Like a rock, they were steadfast in commitment to their fellow Soldiers and like a rock, they were solid in support of our nation and her call in support of liberty here in Iraq."

Williams added, "May God bless you Sgt. Courtney Finch. May God bless you Staff Sgt. Travis Bachman. May God bless the 714th Maintenance Company and its families and may god bless America. Heart of the Rock!"



Balad's medical group trades tent tunnels for pre-engineered facility

by 1st Lt. Shannon Collins

332nd Air Expeditionary Wing PA

BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq — Approximately 150 base volunteers and 380 Airmen with the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group moved patients and equipment as they closed the doors on the old Air Force Theater Hospital (AFTH), the last Air Force military level three trauma tent hospital in the theater and opened the doors to their pre-engineered facility here Aug. 3.

Starting at 4 a.m., Airmen in each tent tunnel section began moving patients and final equipment in a safe yet timely manner. Throughout the past two months, a transition team, along with the help of volunteers, set up the upgraded facility. They pre-positioned as much equipment and supplies as they could to make the transition easier for patients and medical staff.

Thousands of patients, ranging from American military members to Iraqi freedom fighters and civilians, have been treated at the hospital. The staff currently performs more than 2,000 surgical procedures a month.

"We have an outstanding survivability rate, reaching 98 percent, unheard of in prior conflicts," said Col. Brian Masterson, 332nd EMG commander. "The new facility helps to enhance that capability and helps improve the survivability and minimization of the



Photo by 1st Lt. Shannon Collins

Senior Airman James Ray and Tech. Sgt. Christopher Harwell, 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group Operating Room surgical technicians, move OR equipment from the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group's Air Force Theater Hospital's tent facility to its newly upgraded, pre-engineered facility here Aug. 3.

consequences of war. Inside the new facility lies the most sophisticated lifesaving technology you'll find anywhere in the world."

About 250 contractors worked during the day and

about 150 worked during the night to upgrade the pre-engineered facility within seven months. The existing building had been about 4,265 square feet and had been the original Iraqi Air Force Academy Hos-

pital.

The tent hospital was originally set up by the U.S. Army when the U.S. military came to Balad in 2003. In September 2004, the Air Force assumed the trauma center mission. In December 2005, the Air Force opened the Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility collocated with the newly remodeled, pre-engineered facility.

The 332nd EMG's tent hospital was about 63,105 square feet and a labyrinth of more than 30 tents. The new facility is approximately 97,000 square feet. Though there is a certain sentimental attachment to the tents, the upgrade gives the hospital and its staff of about 379 servicemembers several advantages.

The new facility has up to 20 intensive care units, 40 beds and eight operating tables. Better environmental controls, better power production and distribution systems, conditioned power, indoor plumbing, having all medical services in one area, safety and space are just some of the many advantages of the new facility, said Lt. Col. Michael Glass, 332nd EMG logistics flight commander.

The previous tent hospital had very little insulation and

the environmental control units could only reduce the temperature by 20 degrees less than the ambient temperature outside, Glass said. During the summer months here, the temperature reaches 120 degrees on a regular basis.

"When these systems were operating at full capacity, they tripped the breakers, causing temporary but frequent power outages," he said. "When the power went out, the tents heated up very fast. The new hospital has hundreds of AC units to provide very controlled temperatures, and it should stay around 75-80 degrees year round."

The new facility has cleaner power systems and power conditioning systems, meaning less wear and tear on the most expensive medical equipment.

One of the biggest advantages is space. The new facility has double the number of trauma bays and six isolation beds for potential infectious patients, beds they did not have in the tents. The operating rooms and patient rooms are also bigger and better, said Glass.

Bigger and better operating rooms are just one of the ben-



Photo by 1st Lt. Shannon Collins

2nd Lt. Christine Duro, 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group emergency room nurse, and Staff Sgt. Derrick Tibbetts, ER medic, draw blood as Master Sgt. Nancy Quemuel, Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility medic, discusses air evacuation and treatment for Army Cpl. Erick Rodriguez, a cavalry scout with 2nd Infantry Division, deployed from Ft. Lewis, Wash., Aug. 3.

See Hospital, Page 12



Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Christopher Perez

WASIT PROVINCE, Iraq - An Iraqi Army soldier stands guard while U.S. Special Forces search a gas station in the Wasit province checking on suspicious activities during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Iraqi Security Forces, U.S. Special Forces capture five al-Qaida terrorists; destroy VBIED weapons cache

Courtesy Story

CJSOTF-AP

TAJI — Iraqi Security Forces, with U.S. Special Forces as advisers, captured five suspected al-Qaida in Iraq terrorists near the village of Ibrahim Sinjar during intelligence driven operations in western Iraq Aug. 7.

Information from local residents indicated al-Qaida in Iraq used the village for meetings and storing weapons caches and medication. These suspected terrorists are believed to be involved in attacks against Iraqi Security Forces using improvised explosive devices.

During the operation, a house used by al-Qaida in Iraq to store explosives,

stage attacks and facilitate operations, was destroyed. After moving residents to a safe distance, U. S. Special Forces destroyed the building. In addition, weapons, ammunitions and Iraqi and U.S currency at the site were seized.

In a second operation, a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device cache was destroyed Aug. 6 in the village of Bi'ag, near Sinjar, Iraq.

Already in the area conducting vehicle inspections, the Iraqi and U.S. air-assault force noticed suspicious materials in the bed of a white truck that contained four individuals. The forces stopped the vehicle, causing the four armed suspected terrorists to

exit and run in opposite directions. The assault force however secured the vehicle.

The vehicle contained five 120mm mortar rounds, one 120mm mortar system including the tripod and base plate, a rocket-propelled grenade, one PK general purpose machine gun with 1,000 rounds of associated ammunition, one improvised-three tube rocket launcher system, two cell phones and a video camera.

Using controlled proportional fire, the vehicle was destroyed in place.

No Iraqi or U.S. Forces were injured during either operation.

Cordon searches result in 16 al-Qaida detained

Courtesy Story

CJSOTF-AP

TAJI — Iraqi Security Forces, with U.S. Special Forces as advisers, conducted multiple cordon and search operations detaining 16 suspected al-Qaida in Iraq insurgents Aug. 11 in the village of Subayat Hamash, near Sinjar.

Four of the detainees are suspected al-Qaida in Iraq cell leaders wanted by the Iraqi Army for improvised explosive device and mortar attacks, facilitation of al-Qaida in Iraq terrorist attacks against civilians and hijacking food shipments. Their actions have resulted in the deaths

of numerous innocent Iraqis in the Sinjar area.

Six vehicles, including four passenger cars, a pick-up truck and a dump truck, were seized during the operation.

This operation was conducted in order to provide security to the people of Subayat Hamash, while simultaneously limiting al-Qaida in Iraq the ability to operate. The expanded purpose was the continued degradation of insurgency support activities in an effort to weaken threats against the Government of Iraq.

No Iraqi or U.S. Forces were injured during the operation.

Tired citizens bring cache to patrol base

Courtesy Story

Multi-National Division - Center

PATROL BASE INCHON, Iraq — Citizens tired of terrorism in their communities brought 185 cans of ammunition to Coalition Forces Aug. 9.

Two men from the town of al Taqa delivered the ammunition to Soldiers of 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat

Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) working at Patrol Base Inchon, located along the Euphrates River.

The ammunition was for use in Soviet-made DShKa heavy machine guns and each ammunition can was estimated to contain 40 rounds, for a total of 7,400 machine-gun rounds.

An explosive ordnance team disposed of the cache in a controlled detonation.

Baqouba Guardians help secure city

Courtesy Story

Multi-National Division - North

TIKRIT, Iraq — A new neighborhood watch program established by local citizens has already made significant contributions toward efforts to secure the city according to Coalition Forces (CF).

In late July, Col. Steve Townsend, the commander of the 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, met with local citizens interested in contributing to the future security plan for the provincial capital city of Diyala.

That meeting launched the Baqouba Guardians, which have been credited with the recent identification of several suspected members of al-Qaida and leading Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police to uncovering unexploded ordnance found in the city.

"Because the people are from Baqouba, they can provide valuable information to our intelligence systems on al-Qaida attempting to hide among the population or reenter the cleared areas in Baqouba," said Townsend.

Attacks against Coalition Forces have plummeted in the last 50 days, said Maj. Jon Clausen, the brigade's intelligence officer.

Those events have trailed off by 79 percent citywide and by 93 percent on the west side of the city.

The Baqouba Guardians differ from other pro-Coali-

tion Forces groups, sometimes referred to as "concerned local citizens."

The Guardians are required to take an oath which commits them to unite with the CF and ISF (Iraqi Security Forces) in their battle against terrorism.

Every member is uniquely identified and registered in a U.S. Army database.

They are regular people who have come forward to be part of

the future security in Diyala Province. The Guardians want to make a difference by securing their neighborhoods and eventually hope to become part of the formal Iraqi Security Forces, providing them an opportunity for institutional training and official hiring.

While concerned local citizens support the Iraqi government, they have not formally registered with Coalition Forces or the legitimate Iraqi Security Forces.

The Guardians in Baqouba wear identifiable uniforms and coordinate their actions with the Coalition and ISF to prevent personnel from being targeted by friendly forces.

"We understand there are challenges with this new program, but the benefits outweigh the challenges," said Townsend. "The Guardians' charter is to protect their neighborhoods from terrorists."

Australian partners focus on IA logistical success

by Sgt. 1st Class Nicholas Conner
15th Sustainment Brigade

CAMP TAJI, Iraq — Ongoing efforts to develop an effective and self-reliant Iraqi Army (IA) logistic and sustainment force brought Australian coalition partners to the Iraqi Army Services and Support Institute (IASSI) located here.

In their eighth rotation since 2003, the Australian Army Training Team-Iraq (AATT-I8) culled senior logistical professionals from the Australian Army and Royal Australian Air Force to oversee training courses that support both the IASSI and the Taji National Depot.

“Our focus is on training the (Iraqi) trainers and enabling them to do the job,” said Australian Lt. Col. Jeremy Hanson, AATT-I8 commander. “Already in many of the Iraqi Army schools where the (AATT-I8) is working, the Iraqis are giving all the lessons and we are in the background in an advisory and mentoring role.”

The goal is to re-enforce the maintenance and logistics of the Iraqi army at the recruit and officer level, said Australian Army Capt. John Stanfield. The coordinated approach allows for an in depth look at training doctrines and development methods.

“Our focus has been producing [and translating] training aids,” said Stanfield. “We’ve had time to look at each course and see what aids and developments are needed.”

Current courses at IASSI start with operator, or level



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Nicholas Conner

An Iraqi instructor demonstrates the proper wear of welding safety equipment to his students during the opening day of the IASSI course on the Iraqi side of Camp Taji. Senior logistical professionals from the Australian Army and Royal Australian Air Force provide training program development and support to IA units.

one, training. By working with Iraqi Army instructors, the Australians see their mission as an enduring effort, said Australian Maj. Christian Hamilton, operations officer for the AATT.

“We developed the course program, and (the Iraqi Army instructors) deliver the lesson,” he said. “They have the skills and the doctrine to go forward.”

Hamilton expects AATT-I8

will spend about six months mentoring IASSI logistics instructors and assist with the implementation of new IASSI courses, such as the M-16 armor course.

With the Iraqi Army transitioning from the AK-47 assault rifle to the American M-16A4 and M-4 rifles, small arms maintenance and repair becomes a necessity to units already fielding the new weapon system.

While Iraqi forces desire the new rifles, the cleaning and maintenance standards differ greatly from the old system, explained Australian Sgt. Jason McLinden, an armor instructor from Albury, Australia. A technical expert in a wide variety of small arms, McLinden assists primary Iraqi Army instructors to modify and improve their lesson presentations.

“I stand back from the instruction process,” he said. “To transfer the Iraqi Army to self-reliance, we’re not playing a major [classroom instructional] role. The IA instructors are doing that.”

Iraqi Army Cpl. Ajel, an IASSI armor instructor agrees with the greater Iraqi presence in the classroom.

“It’s better to have the Iraqis teaching,” he said. “We understand the language, the culture and our students.”

He, along with other IASSI instructors, is confident the partnership with the AATT enables him to train fellow Iraqi troops effectively.

“We can teach 600 students every year,” said Iraqi Sgt. Jawad, a senior Iraqi armor instructor. “But it is important for us to continue to receive support from the Coalition Forces.”

In some cases, Australian

forces find the material and equipment support for their Iraqi counterparts paramount to mission success. To begin a basic welding course, Australian Army Sgt. Dan Priems started from scratch.

He and his team converted a dilapidated warehouse into a practical classroom, created detailed training aids as well as plan to add another eleven welding stations. The expectation is not to produce experts during the 19-day course, said Priems, but to help Iraqi instructors train competent Iraqi welders.

“We do hope to teach the basics of safety,” he said. “Our primary focus is for [the Iraqi students] to use their equipment without injury or death.”

According to AATT officials, since 2003, Australian teams assisted the Iraqi Army in training more than 16,000 recruits, non-commissioned officers and officers. Hanson expects to see continued improvement from the Iraqi cadre and staff during his team’s mission here.

“For the remainder of our tour here our goal remains the same,” Hanson said. “That is to help the Iraqi Army gain the skills, knowledge and leadership so that, in time, they can run the training independently.”



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Nicholas Conner

Australian Army Capt. John Stanfield (left) and Sgt. Dan Priems (right) speak with an Iraqi army officer during an Aug. 7 IASSI welding course on the Iraqi side of Camp Taji.

Patrolling Paratroopers ready at a moment's notice

by Spc. Jaime Avila

1st BCT, 82nd ABN DIV

CAMP SCANIA, Iraq — After a long and hard night patrolling the streets of Iraq, the Paratroopers of 3rd Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division return here, their home for the next 14 months. Just as some of them are walking back to unload their gear and others head out to refuel their trucks in preparation for the next day, they get a call over the radio. "We need you to go back out and recover a vehicle that was hit by an IED."

Without a moment's waste, they throw on their gear and run back out to their trucks. Within minutes, they're back out on the road heading towards an unpredictable mission.

Any day can be like this for the Paratroopers of 3-73 Cav. These guys don't have a regular work schedule; they are on call 24/7.

"We work toward accomplishing our primary mission which is to secure the route and work with the Iraqi citizens to better Iraq," said 1st Sgt. Juan I. Rodriguez, first sergeant for Troop A 3rd Sqdrn. 73rd Cav. Regt., 1st BCT, 82nd Abn. Div.



Photo by Spc. Jaime Avila

Soldiers from Troop A, 3rd Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, provide security for fellow Paratroopers recovering a disabled vehicle on a road near Camp Scania, Iraq.

Although they have fewer Soldiers than their predecessors, the 3-73 Cav. still meets and exceeds the standard set for them.

"Challenges at this time are to conduct offensive operations and secure Main Supply Route Tampa with fewer Soldiers than the unit we just replaced. 3-73 has doubled that workload by increasing the

time it spends on securing the route and working in the zone to identify Iraqi citizens who want to volunteer information to identify the anti-Iraqi forces," said Rodriguez.

The Paratroopers are constantly out on the road to accomplish the mission, even if it means they have to be out for longer than was expected.

"(The mission) can not be put off just because the Paratroopers are tired and they know it. They do their job even though they have been out on mission for the long, hot periods of the day," said Rodriguez. "The unit doesn't just clear the route; it stays out until the last convoy has safely rolled through our sector."

"The unit doesn't just clear the route; it stays out until the last convoy has safely rolled through our sector."

1st Sgt. Juan I. Rodriguez
73rd Cav. Reg.

To show his Paratroopers they are making a difference in the towns and areas they patrol, Rodriguez gives them the opportunity to go into the towns and interact with locals in the area.

"The locals let the Paratroopers know how much they like them and appreciate what is being done in their area," said Rodriguez.

Although these guys give a lot, they don't ask for much when they return from their mission.

Rodriguez said, "After they return from a long mission their concerns are simple. 'When are we going out again and is the dining facility open?' These questions can never be completely answered due to unknown timelines, but we can count on Paratroopers to execute missions on a moment's notice."

Coalition Soldiers rescue 2-year-old Iraqi boy from well

Courtesy story

Multi-National Division - Baghdad

CAMP TAJI, Iraq — Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers rescued a 2-year-old Iraqi boy from a dry well in which he fell Aug. 9.

Soldiers with Company B, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division responded to the pleas for assistance from the father of a 2-year-old boy who had fallen into a dry well near the family's residence.

The company commander, Capt. David Powell of Newport Beach, Calif., was about to begin a scheduled security patrol when the boy's father approached the gate of his Coalition outpost on foot.

Using an interpreter, Powell quickly assessed the situation and sent the patrol to assist with the recovery of

the child.

The father directed the Soldiers to the location of the well and Powell used his flashlight to find the child at the bottom.

"I could see that the baby had fallen some 25 feet and was lying at the bottom of the well," Powell said. "He appeared to be breathing, but would not answer to our calls."

Using a back hoe from the outpost, the patrol began a slow and meticulous process of digging a parallel shaft to the dry well, then tunneling to the well horizontally, being careful not to cause the well to cave in.

"The back hoe made quick work of the rescue shaft just to the south of the well. Then the real digging began," said Powell.

Because of the instability of soil, a fear of a cave-in and desire to not risk any of his Soldiers, Powell selected himself and Staff Sgt. Raul



U.S. Army photo

Capt. David Powell from Newport Beach, Calif., holds the 2-year-old Iraqi boy the day after he rescued him. The boy fell into a dry well Aug. 9.

Torres, a native of San Venito, Texas, to dig the horizontal shaft to the well.

Using an entrenching tool, a flat-head screwdriver, rebar and other primitive farming tools, Powell and Torres went to work.

After several hours of digging, a faint crying was heard from the boy.

"He sounded scared, but OK," said Powell. "I don't think I have ever heard a more beautiful sound."

After five hours of digging

the horizontal shaft reached the well. The well was basin shaped at the bottom, making the boy very difficult to locate.

After several attempts to reach for the boy, Powell was able to pull the boy to safety.

Coalition medics on the scene quickly assessed the boy, finding no serious injuries.

The child was then returned to his mother and father, who were thankful for the assistance.

The patrol then filled in the hole they dug, and returned to their outpost.

The following day, Powell visited the family's residence with a medic to ensure the child was not having any medical issues from the fall.

The medic determined the child was in perfect health.

"In my 18-years in the Army," Powell said, "this is, by far, the greatest thing I have ever done."



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Neil K. Simmons

Maj. Clinton E. Young, medical logistics officer, 316th ESC, plays a game of chess against Sgt. Rob S. Pinches, aka "Rob on the Fob," broadcast journalist, 302nd MPAD. Despite his efforts, Rob on the Fob lost twice to Young's unmatched strategy.

Chess is more than a game

by Maj. Christopher E. West

316th ESC PAO

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq — To Army Maj. Clinton E. Young, the game of chess is more than a recreational activity. It is a competitive way to continually sharpen his concentration, memory, problem solving, critical thinking and decision-making skills. Young, who serves as the medical logistics officer for the 316th Expeditionary Sustainment Command here, has been playing chess for more than 40 years.

"I first started playing when I was about four years old,"

said Young. "My nanny, Jenon, taught me how to play when my father was stationed in Taipei, Taiwan."

Throughout his life, Young's mastery of chess has enabled him to win numerous state, national and international tournaments. He placed second in the 1998 U.S. Army chess championship as well as recently won of the 2008 chess playoffs here and at Camp Beuring, Kuwait.

"To me chess is the gymnasium of the mind. It is a mental work-out that requires constant alertness, incessant

intuition and critical reasoning to be successful at it," said Young.

"I thank God for giving me the ability to play chess and for giving me the desire to show others how playing (chess) can help make them become a better, well-rounded person," he added.

Young is a nationally ranked life member of the U.S. Chess Federation. His ultimate goal is to become a grand master and world champion chess player. As evident by his recent wins, he is on his way to making his dream a reality.



Remember your whistle campaign

316th ESC EO office

One of the goals of the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response program (SAPR) is to focus on awareness and prevention. The "Remember Your Whistle" campaign uses the whistle not only as a form of a security device, but as a symbol to Soldiers.

The concept is every Soldier will have a whistle hanging by the door of their office or living quarters. When they exit the area, they will see the whistle and stop to think; what time of day is it? Where am I going? Do I need a battle-buddy? All of the safety questions each of us should be asking ourselves daily. The next time a Soldier has a visitor to their trailer and sees the whistle; hopefully they will stop and think; should I be letting this person into my room? Is there a better situ-

ation I can put myself in? It is all about getting Soldiers in the mindset of situational awareness and safety.

Will the whistle save a victim from being attacked? I can't say it will, but it could possibly be a deterrent. Just like the Army Ethos card we carry around, it will be a device to get Soldiers to think about their actions.

The 316th Expeditionary Sustainment Command Equal Opportunity office and Sexual Assault Response Coordinator office (Warrior Support Center, building 4121) has whistles available for Soldiers. Soldiers can feel free to stop by to pick up a whistle and an educational brochure about the SAPR program. For more information please contact Master Sgt. Colleen Shanklin or Sgt. 1st Class Elondre Johnson at 433-2527.

Before filing Inspector General complaints you should know...

by Spc. Jay Venturini

Anaconda Times Staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq — Around the barracks the "rumor mill" is usually full of gripes and complaints which some times end with, "I swear I'm going to file a complaint with the Inspector General (IG)"

Well, before you start filling out that complaint form, you should know what the IG is and what your options are.

"The IG is the eyes, ears and conscience of the commanding general," said Lt. Col. Blaine Fessler, 316th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) inspector general officer in charge.

The IG is responsible for

keeping the commanding general updated on the economy, efficiency, discipline, morale and readiness of assigned Soldiers as well as other attached units and the effectiveness of command activities.

There are five ways the IG effects change in a unit. The IG can enhance a unit by teaching, training, providing assistance, conducting inspections and conducting investigations.

The first step in the IG process is filling out a complaint form to address a grievance. There are many different things you can file a complaint about. The most common issues brought to the attention of the IG are unfair treatment

issues, policy issues, pay issues, promotions and leave or pass issues.

"The first thing a person needs to do to file a complaint is run it up their chain of command," said Fessler.

The IG does not cover legal actions, non-judicial punishment, discharges, military police actions or other matters; most of these matters can be handled by the Staff Judge Advocate.

The IG office is open from 8:00 a.m. through 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. They can be reached at 318-433-2125 or at the warrior support center, at the intersection of New Jer-

sey Ave. and Hawk Ave.

If you can't get to the office during business hours there is a table outside the office with complaint forms you can fill out, place in a confidential envelope, and slip in a box on the office door.

You can also e-mail, or call in a complaint. To e-mail a complaint please contact Master Sgt. Butler at Juanamette. Butler@iraq.centcom.mil, or call on a DSN phone at 318-433-2125. The IG also has a link on the 316th homepage that can answer most questions you might have.

So before you consider filing an IG complaint, always consider whether the IG is really the proper place to go.

What can be an IG complaint:

- Problems with orders
- Leave and pass problems
- Unfair treatment
- Promotion problems
- Whistle-blowers
- Line-of-duties
- Bonus
- Command issues
- Medical issues
- Retirement
- Retention

What can't be an IG complaint:

- Criminal charges
- Non judicial punishment
- Pending/requesting discharges
- Command policy
- Recommend adverse action
- Report of surveys
- Claims



Photo by Sgt. Dave Lankford

Spc. Jordan Skaggs, a Kentucky National Guardsman with the 410th QM, 15th BTB, 15th SB, pulls guard from a tower on the perimeter of Camp Taji, Iraq. Though the older steel towers provide the necessary protection from small arms and improvised explosive device attacks, Skaggs prefers the added security and greater visibility of the newer concrete towers. Spc. Skaggs observes the community surrounding Camp Taji from a window which shows extensive evidence of hostile fire.

Improved guard towers enhance security

by Sgt. Dave Lankford

Anaconda Times staff

CAMP TAJI, Iraq — The perfect foxhole is never built in a day. It begins as a hole in the ground, with no room to move and very little overhead cover. As days pass, continued work goes into improving that hole until it becomes fully operational and, if at all possible, comfortable. The same is true for guard towers.

Virtually no perimeter security existed when Coalition Forces took over here in 2003.

"The first guard towers were prefabricated steel, assembled along the base perimeter," said Capt. Stephen Young, force protection officer with the 15th Brigade Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade.

Though they carry the scars of shrapnel and small arms fire, the square steel towers have done well to protect the guard force and the perimeter.

However, just like foxholes, there is always room for improvement.

Earlier this year, the 15th SB began construction and installation of improved concrete towers. Young believes the new towers are a vast improvement over the steel design.

"If the insurgents shoot at us, we are not only better protected, but can shoot back more effectively; and they know it."

Capt. Stephen Young
15th BTB

The round concrete towers are designed to defend against rocket-propelled grenades as well as vehicle borne improvised explosive devices and small arms fire. This design causes projectiles and shrapnel to glance off, said Young.

Recently, an airburst over a steel tower injured two 15th SB Soldiers on guard duty.

Though the steel tower saved their lives, Young believes concrete may have averted their injuries all together.

Soldiers performing base security said it was common for insurgents to take pot shots at steel towers just because they felt they could get away with it. Roadside bomb attacks and indirect fire near the steel guard towers were commonplace as well.

Spc. Jordan Skaggs and Pfc. Sara Merryman, both

members of the 410th QM, 15th BTB, 15th SB, Kentucky National Guard, believe the new towers have better placement as well.

"Insurgents had an angle of approach toward the old steel towers as well as the ability to escape undetected," said Skaggs.

The improved concrete towers cut off that angle, so anyone trying to plant any form of explosive device or conduct a close attack has no chance of success or escape.

"There have been situations where people definitely wish they would have had a concrete tower. The new concrete towers have not been shot at yet," said Merryman.

The closer proximity to the wall also allows for extended views of approaches, improved interlocking fire, and a better over watch outside of the perimeter.

Both Soldiers and base defense officials feel more secure by their new concrete surroundings, but agree the most important improvement has been to perimeter security.

"The new towers give us much better cover and visibility," Young said. "If the insurgents shoot at us, we are not only better protected, but can shoot back more effectively; and they know it."

CAB Soldiers benefit from "down range" reenlistments

by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton

12th CAB Public Affairs

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq — 12th Combat Aviation Brigade's Sgt. John Yang became 28-thousand dollars richer in the course of a day. He got the money in one lump sum... tax free.

Yang, a supply clerk for C. Co., 412th Aviation Support Bn., is one of hundreds of 12th CAB Soldiers who have been holding out for the beginning of the deployment to extend their commitment to the Army.

Brigade senior career counselor, Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Organ says they expect some 240 Soldiers to once again raise their right hands by October 1st.

"We've been talking to some of these Soldiers for about nine months," said Organ. "We told about 80 percent of the people we counseled to wait until they came down range."

Soldiers, like Yang, are taking advantage of a combination of benefits: Because combat zone entitlements are tax free, so too are any bonuses Soldiers earn while in a combat zone.

In addition, all enlisted Soldiers are now eligible for a bonus designed for deployed reenlistments. These bonuses are not military occupational specialty specific, so anyone can get it provided they haven't already received a bonus in their current retention zone.

Finally, the Army now offers some Soldiers, including Yang, the chance for a "lump sum" bonus. This is an alternative to the conventional program that splits the bonus over time. The lump sum bonus is MOS specific, and according to Organ is experimental.

"A lot of young Soldiers don't know about the benefits of money on a deployment," said Organ. "Money is a concern for many of them and we try to benefit the Soldier however we can."

With the amount of money the Army is spending to keep its people, part of the career counselor's role becomes that of a financial advisor.

"We talk to them a lot about the thrift savings plan and the savings deposit program," said Organ. "We

want them to do something with their money other than buy a new car."

As for Yang, he plans to pay some bills, get some things for his house and invest some money for his future. He's also planning to stay in the Army for at least 20 years.

"I enjoy my job and the life I can provide for my kids and my family," he said.

Of course, money is not the only benefit to Soldiers on the verge of reenlistment. Some reenlist for duty station of choice, some for training or reclassification and some just for the benefit of continued service.

Sgt. 1st Class Jimmy Chatelain, an intelligence analyst for Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 12th CAB reenlisted for his last time in the Army's indefinite reenlistment program. He got a bonus, but says that played a very small part in his decision to re-up.

"The money's nice, but I would have done it anyway," said Chatelain. "I plan to stay around the Army for a long time."

Not all Soldiers are eligible for the same benefits. The main thing, said Organ, is for Soldiers in their reenlistment windows to talk to a career counselor.

"There are several bonus options as well as other re-up options they may not know about. We'll go over all of it with them," he said.



Photo by Sgt. Brandon Little

Sgt. John Yang raises his right hand and recites the reenlistment oath with C Co. Commander, Capt. Clive Cummings at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Yang received a 28 thousand dollar bonus that was tax free because he waited until he deployed to reenlist.

Knowledge management: key weapon in war on terror

by Sgt. Jasmine Chopra

Anaconda Times staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq — Whether it's the Girl Scouts or the enemy, organizations depend on timely, accurate data for intelligent decision making. The Army is no different.

In the 316th Expeditionary Sustainment Command, Knowledge Management (KM) is enhancing the war-time-logisticians decision-making power.

KM seeks to give Soldiers dominance over the enemy. It does this by linking hardware, software, computer networks and people together to share timely and accurate information which results in superior decision-making at all levels, said Lt. Col. Teresa Pendleton, a land use planner from Mineral, Va. She serves as 316th's knowledge management chief.

"Every person needs to be able to make the best decisions, not just leaders. Soldiers at all levels make decisions all the time and KM involves everybody and helps maintain awareness of the common operating picture," she said.

A common operating picture makes joint planning easier and assists all ranks to achieve situational awareness.

"Instead of just hearing where an (improvised explosive device) took place, you can see live pictures, the actual street where it (detonated), you can pull up maps, you can see recent activity."

1st Lt. Gregory Bridges
316th ESC

Using programs such as SharePoint and graphic location plotting systems such as Blue Force Tracker, Movement Tracking System and Command Post of the Future to name a few, will give leaders at all levels in the battle an edge against the enemy.

"Trying to maintain situational awareness at distant locations and even not so distant locations, locations just beyond our workspace, can be tricky. KM brings all the pieces together to help maintain that awareness," said Pendleton.

Perhaps the Secure Internet Protocol Router portal, SharePoint and Command Post of the Future are the

knowledge management tools most here are familiar with.

"People use them to post and store data and get answers to their queries, said 1st Lt. Gregory Bridges, a graphic designer from Tacoma Park, Md.

Among his many duties, Bridges makes sure that battle update briefs go off without a hitch from the technology side of the house. He also helps parties use technology to share and access information.

Technology is allowing us to see the battlefield in real time from any location, he said.

"Instead of just hearing where an (improvised explosive device) took place, you can see live pictures, the actual street where it (detonated), you can pull up maps, you can see recent activity," said Bridges.

All of these tools serve to help leaders make vital choices. In the logistics world, KM helps leaders decide what routes convoys should take, where pallets of precious water should go and which camp needs fuel in a timely manner.

For 316th leaders, KM has the potential to improve decision-making and to accomplish missions more efficiently and effectively.

Operation Hoplite clears Had Maksar

Courtesy Story

Multi-National Division - North

DIYALA RIVER VALLEY, Iraq — Iraqi Army (IA) and Coalition Forces (CF) in the Had Maksar area of Diyala province targeted al-Qaida operatives and other terrorist forces during a three-day operation beginning Aug. 4, in a continued effort to deny the enemy the use of any perceived safe havens in the Diyala River Valley.

Taking advantage of the increased forces in Diyala, the 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army, partnered with Soldiers from the 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, attached to 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, conducted Operation Hoplite in the Had Maksar area, resulting in five enemy killed and ten suspected terrorists detained.

"This operation is imperative as it not only denies al-Qaida's freedom of maneuver, but provides a safe and secure environment for the people living in the lower portion of the Diyala River Valley," said Col. David W. Sutherland, commander of Coalition Forces in Diyala. "Citizens of Had Maksar were extremely pleased with the presence of the Iraqi Army, clearly showing the security forces are having a significant positive impact on the population as they continue to fight for their country."

During the operation, two house-borne improvised explosive devices were discovered and destroyed; two weapons caches were discovered; four IEDs were discovered and reduced; and one al-Qaida vehicle was destroyed.

Attack helicopters from the 25th Combat Aviation Brigade began the opera-

tion, with an air assault of Soldiers from 5-73 Cav. into the main objective areas. The IA and CF conducted a thorough search of the objective areas, to include a detailed cordon and search of each village and clearance of the palm groves.

"We developed a detailed plan in conjunction with some of the local leadership, which provided the ability to isolate, kill and capture the al-Qaida elements who began to seek shelter and safe haven in the village," said Lt. Col. Andrew Poppas, 5-73 Cav. commander. "As the enemy continues to seek shelter, we will find them, target them and ultimately bring them to justice."

After observing armed men trying to escape the objective area, attack helicopters from 25th CAB engaged and killed five terrorists. Ten suspected terrorists detained during the operation were transferred to a facility for further questioning.

The weapon caches consisted of rocket-propelled grenades, artillery munitions, mortar tubes, IED-making material and assorted small-arms munitions.

"Our forces will remain aggressive and persistent in targeting the enemy forces throughout Diyala," Sutherland continued. "The people continue to recognize the hatred and destruction al-Qaida offers, which is another indicator that the terrorists have no safe haven in Diyala."

Following the clearance of the Had Maksar area, the IA constructed a patrol base to maintain a permanent presence, further denying the enemy's abilities to target the citizens of the Diyala River Valley.



Photo by Pfc. Ben Fox

A combined force of Iraqi and U.S. Army Soldiers move from house to house during Operation Hoplite, clearing the town of Had Maksar, in Diyala province, Iraq.

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Hospital, from Page 5



Photo by 1st Lt. Shannon Collins

Volunteers and Airmen with the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group remove sandbags from part of the Air Force Theater Hospital's tent facility Aug. 3.

efits Maj. Vik Bebart, 332nd EMG emergency medicine chief and flight commander for the emergency department, and his team of 24 are looking forward to.

"The controlled climate, limited dust and better lighting will allow us to provide even better care to our injured Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines," said Bebart, on his second deployment to the tent hospital.

"Working in the tents for eight months was a unique experience," he said. "The intimate 'soft wall' setting created a tropism for cohesiveness, communication, passion, urgency, efficiency and patient-focused critical medical care. I hope that ethos carries over to the new setting."

During the day of the move to the new setting, the emergency department (ED) Airmen set up a department in each hospital and worked on patients in both facilities until the transition was complete. The ED staff evaluates about 750 patients a month and 625 are admitted. About 65 percent of the patients are traumatic injuries, most of which are combat related.

"We act as the entry point for all critically ill patients at the AFTH," Bebart said. "We assess, resuscitate and stabilize all traumatic and medically ill patients. Our primary mission integrates with all facets of the hospital."

One of the facets is the operating room (OR). The 36 Airmen who make up the OR staff also set up a department in each section.

Lt. Col. Jim Keeney is the chief of orthopedic surgery and a regular member of the OR staff. He worked in the tent hospital from September 2005 to January 2006 and May 2007 to today. Though he is attached to the tent hospital environment and how it made people feel like they were working in a combat environment, the tent environment did pose a few challenges.

"During the summer months, temperatures inside the tents would reach peaks over 100 degrees," he said. "The operating rooms were in portable units with a ceiling height of approximately seven feet. Bars and light fixtures suspended from the ceiling made frequent contact with surgeon heads. The general size of the rooms made positioning of equipment tight. This was particularly the case during surges in patient-care activity, when we typically had two surgeries being performed within the same room simultaneously."

In the pre-engineered, upgraded facility, the

operating rooms are significantly larger, providing better ability to move equipment and ease the process of performing procedures, said Keeney. Climate control is better regulated throughout the building as well.

During an average month, the 332nd EMG teams admit approximately 625 patients, requiring more than 700 trips to the operating room for an average of 3.5 surgical procedures per patient. The success of the AFTH trauma system is reflected in a 98 percent survivorship of U.S. military members evacuated to definitive care. The survival of wounds during past conflicts was less than 80 percent, Keeney said.

From patient wards to the emergency department to the operating rooms, the pre-engineered facility offers a variety of improvements to make combat patient care even better. Whether staff members work in tents or a pre-engineered facility, they find their deployment highly satisfying, Keeney said.

"This is certainly the best professional deployment for Air Force surgeons with an interest in trauma," he said.

Though Aug. 3 was a very long day for the volunteers and medical staff, many of them consider the move a success, Keeney said.

"From the perspective of a surgeon, the best thing about the move was the fact that it was coordinated well enough to fully maintain our ability to provide trauma care without a hitch during the transition process," he said. "This occurred from the thoughtful planning of leadership, the coordinated efforts of individual department heads and the tireless efforts of the many Airmen who contributed to provide the physical work of pre-positioning reserve supplies and equipment, and transitioning the equipment and patients effectively and safely on the day of the move."

Senior Airman Scott Hatch, a 332nd Expeditionary Medical Support Squadron biomedical equipment technician, was part of the transition team that helped upgrade the former Iraqi Air Force Academy Hospital.

"The new facility is amazing," Hatch said. "It's easy to forget sometimes that it's an expeditionary project. Seeing the new facility near the tent hospital is like a night and day difference. The new facility will make a wonderful gift to the Iraqi people when our mission here is accomplished."

On the street with Spc. Jay Venturini

"Who is your favorite celebrity?"

Spc. John Friend
316th ESC HHC

"M.C. Hammer because he knows the importance of saving money."

Cpl. Cory Lankford
2nd ID, 2/12 Field Artillery

"Tommy Lee, because he isn't afraid to do crazy things."

Sgt. Erin Murphy
316th ESC SJA

"Kid Rock because he supports the troops."

Matthew C. Hensinger
We miss you and hope you had a good birthday. We love you and send you lots of hugs and kisses! Love, Brenda, Jacob, Jaydon and Dominic

Dan Herlihy
Daddy, Congratulations on taking command! Mommy and I are so proud of you!!!! We wish we could be with you on your special day and help you celebrate. You are in our hearts and minds constantly. Congratulations! Love, Scooter

Leslie Leroy Pernsley
Hey my love. Sophia and I just wanted to let you know that we love and miss you very much. The time is going by way too slow but our love will help us get through this. You're the best hubby and the best daddy we could wish for, you are doing a great job down there and we are more than proud. We love you, Tatjana

GJ. Camilo
Mi Rubio Precioso!
I can't believe it's been a month! Rest assured that not a day goes by that I don't wish your mission was over already. But I stay strong because everyday that passes means is one

day closer to the day I have you back in my arms again. Remember, do your thing. Have fun. Be safe, but most importantly... Come back! Since there's only the rest of our life to look forward to... Para siempre y solo tuya, Naty

Everett Chadwick
Son, Love and Miss You! Keep chin up and head down! Vicki Billings

Stephen Jones
Hi Baby! I miss you and I love you so much. I'm counting the days until you are back home. You are my everything and I'm so proud of you. I Love You, Anitrea

Kenneth D. Horst
Hi Daddy! I love & miss you very much! When will you be home from Army work? Hugs & kisses!!!! Love, McKenna & Brady

Jerime K. Frost
I am very proud of you. I send much love your way and pray for your safe and speedy return home. I know they need you there, but you are sure missed and needed

back home. The whole family sends you love, and prayers go out daily for you. JI love you Son..... I want to thank all of you brave Men and Women for keeping our Country Safer! There are so many people that don't know what we go through having a loved one over there. My heart hurts for you, and your wife and children that you had to leave behind! Hopefully you will go home soon, and this whole thing will be over. I can't tell you enough how much I love you, and how proud I am of you. Love, Mom

Matthew Bryant
Just wanted to say I miss you deeply and love you till death due us part and can't wait till you are in my arms safely forever, my one and only love BD love you baby. We will soon be together. Soroya

Anton Epshteyn
All of us (all your family and relatives from Los Angeles) wish you all the best, be safe and be healthy. We all are missing you and proud of you. Happy Birthday son! And

remember: You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream. - Les Brown
Epshteyn's family

Eric Dennard
Great job on the board passing and we love you and miss you greatly. And to all his boys, keep your spirits up; time is almost ready to come home. Love you baby, your wife, Veronica Dennard

Matthew Szabo
Hey Handsome! I hope you are doing ok. From the sounds of the newsletter I received in my email, it sure sounds like you've been busy and making history! I also see that that there have been new platoon leaders installed. Obviously, there has been a lot going on. I can't wait to hear from you again and can't wait for you to be home for good. I miss you. Please stay safe and be careful in everything that you do. I love you! Come home soon!
Your Loving Wife, Ash

Kenneth D. Horst
Ken, we love you, and miss you very much! Things in Indianapolis, In. are good.

We hope you are too. We are very proud of you and can't wait 'til your return. As each day passes, know that you are loved very much and are thought of every day. We love you!!!! Love, Kathy, John, Josh, Kelli, Becky, McKenna & Brady

I miss you **John Caldwell!**
Nastassja V. Johnson

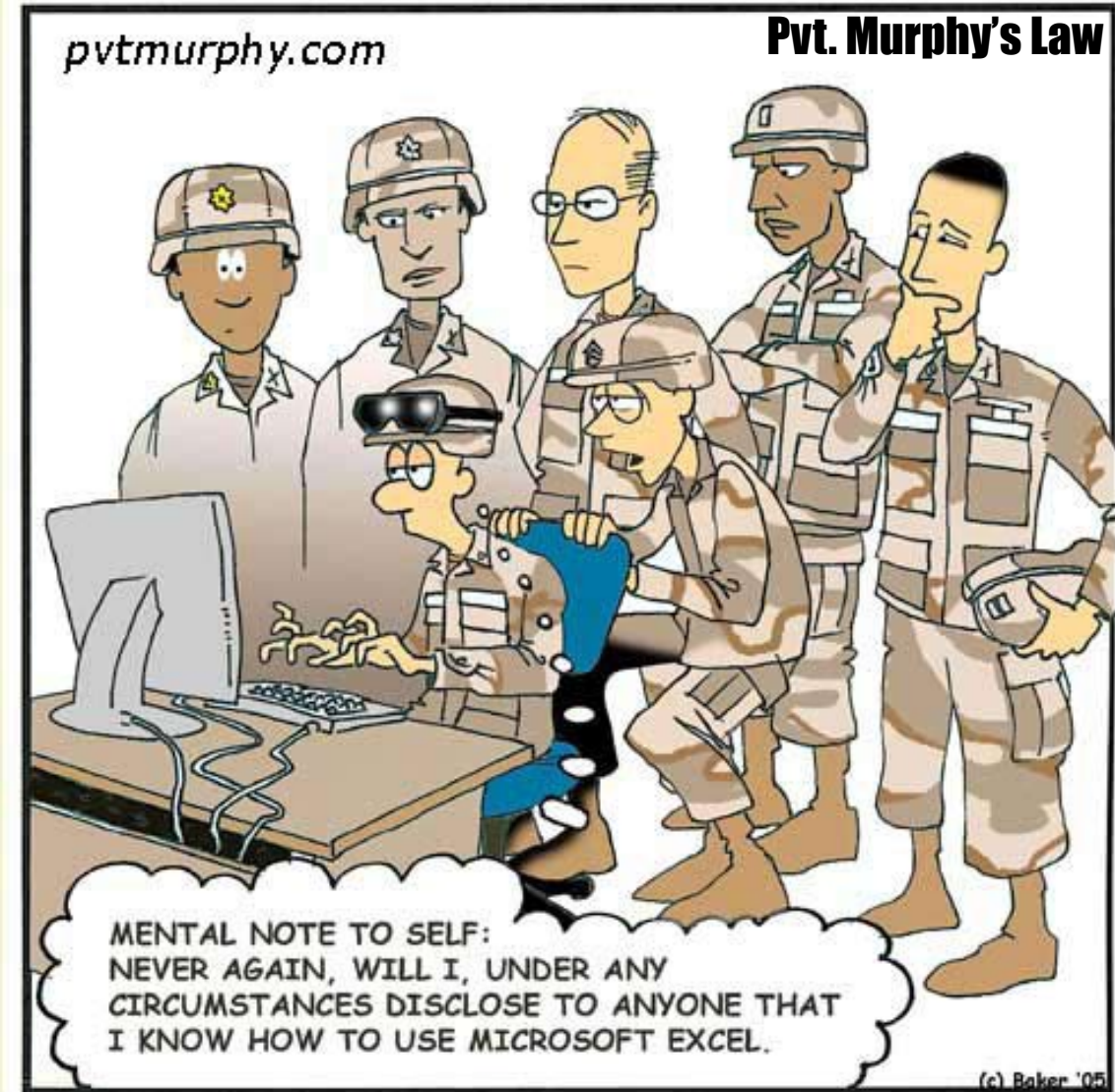
Kenneth Ashline
Just want to let you know, that we think of you everyday and miss you a lot. The kids can't wait to see you again. Lot's of kisses and hugs from Germany to our hero. Love you always, Ina Ashline, Steven Ashline, Angelina Ashline and Sam Ashline!!!!

We love you and miss you. We pray that God will continue to dispatch angels all around you and protect you from all hurt, harm, and danger. We can't say it enough of how proud we are of you. Stay focused and know that you are blessed. You may be small in statue, but you are large in spirit. Take care of yourself and be encouraged.
From the Thompson family

SUSTAINER REEL TIME THEATER

(Schedule is subject to change)

Wednesday, August 22	
5 p.m.	Waitress (PG-13)
8 p.m.	Knocked Up (R)
Thursday, August 23	
5 p.m.	Ocean's 13 (PG-13)
8 p.m.	Rush Hour 3 (PG-13)
Friday, August 24	
2 p.m.	Nancy Drew (PG)
5 p.m.	Fantastic Four: 2 (PG)
8:30 p.m.	Stardust (PG-213)
Saturday, August 25	
2 p.m.	Knocked Up (R)
5 p.m.	Stardust (PG-13)
8 p.m.	Ocean's 13 (PG-13)
Sunday, August 26	
2 p.m.	Stardust (PG-13)
5 p.m.	Nancy Drew (PG)
8 p.m.	Fantastic Four: 2 (PG)
Monday, August 27	
5 p.m.	Ocean's 13 (PG-13)
8 p.m.	Stardust (PG-13)
Tuesday, August 28	
5 p.m.	Stardust (PG-13)
8 p.m.	Fantastic Four: 2 (PG)



August 22

ANACONDA ACTIVITIES

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

Spades & Ping Pong
2 a.m., 2p.m. and 8 p.m., H6
MWR

9-Ball Tourney
3 p.m. and 8 p.m.,
East MWR

Step Aerobics
5:30 p.m., East Fitness Center

Aerobics
7 p.m., West MWR

Green Bean Karaoke
8 p.m., West MWR

8-Ball Tourney
8 p.m., West MWR

Floor Hockey
8 to 10 p.m., MWR Circuit
Gym

R&B Music
8:30 p.m., H-6 MWR

Salsa Dance Class
8:30 p.m., West MWR

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu
9 p.m., East Fitness Center

August 23

Tae Kwon Do
Midnight, East Fitness Center

9-Ball and Dominoes Tourney
2 a.m., 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., H6
MWR

Intermediate Swim Lessons
6 p.m., Indoor Pool

Soccer and Tennis
7 p.m., West Fitness Center

Country/Western Dance Class
7 p.m., East MWR

Pilates
7:30 p.m., West Fitness
Center

Water Aerobics
7:45 p.m., Indoor Pool

Console Game Tourney
8 p.m., West MWR

Dodgeball League
8 p.m., Circuit Gym

Combatives Training

8:30 p.m., East Fitness Center

Karaoke Night
8:30 p.m., H6 MWR

Tejano Dance Class
8:30 p.m., West MWR

August 24

Texas Hold'em
2 a.m., 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.,
H-6 MWR

Aerobics
5:30 p.m., East Fitness
Center

Country Night
8:30 p.m., H-6 MWR

Open Volleyball
7 p.m., West Fitness Center

Friday Night Spikes
7 p.m., East Fitness Center

Hip-Hop Dance Class
7 p.m., East MWR

Gaston's Self Defense
7:30 p.m., West Fitness
Center

Hip-Hop Coffee Shop
8 p.m., West MWR

Scrabble Tourney
8 p.m., West MWR

Chess, Spades and
Dominoes
8 p.m., West MWR

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu
9 p.m., East Fitness Center

R&B Music Night
9:30 p.m., H6 MWR

August 25

Pilates
11 a.m., West Fitness
Center

Boxing
3 to 4:30 p.m., West Fitness
Center

Basketball Tourney
7 p.m., MWR Circuit Gym

Aerobics
7 p.m., West MWR

Salsa Dance Class
7 p.m., East MWR

Tae Kwon Do
7 p.m., East Fitness Center

Screaming Eagle Poker
7:30 p.m., East MWR

Country/Western Dance Class
8 p.m., West MWR

Texas Hold'em
8 p.m., West MWR

August 26

Darts and Foosball
8:30 a.m. and 8:30 p.m., H-6
MWR

Capoiera
12 p.m., East Fitness Center

Ryu Ryu
2 p.m., East Fitness Center

Aerobics
7 p.m., West Fitness Center

Poker
7 p.m., East MWR

Poetry Night
7 p.m., East MWR

Gaston's Self Defense
7:30 p.m., West Fitness Center

Swing Dance (Advanced)
8 p.m., East Fitness Center
(Aerobics Room)

Green Bean Karaoke
8 p.m., West MWR

Spades, Dominoes & R&B
8 p.m., West MWR

Abs Salute
8 p.m., H6 Fitness Center

Salsa Dance Class
8:30 p.m., H6 Recreation

August 27

Texas Hold'em
2 a.m., 2 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.

H6 MWR

Tae Kwon Do
Midnight, East Fitness Center

Spin Class
3:30 p.m., H6 Fitness Center

Step Aerobics
5:30 p.m., East Fitness Center

Aerobics
7 p.m., West MWR

Boxing
7:30 to 9 p.m., East Fitness
Center

9-Ball Tourney
8 p.m., West MWR

Karaoke
8 p.m., East MWR

Poetry Jam
8 p.m., West MWR

Floor Hockey
8 p.m., MWR Circuit Gym

Brazilian Jiu-Jutsi
9 p.m., East Fitness Center

August 28

8-Ball Tourney
2 a.m., 2 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.
H6 MWR

Kung Fu
7 p.m., H6 Fitness Center

Tae Kwon Do
7p.m., East Fitness Center

Pilates
7:30 p.m., West Fitness Center

Swing Dance (Basic)
8 p.m., East Recreation Center

Foosball/Ping Pong
8 p.m., West MWR

Combative Training
8:30 p.m., East Fitness Center

Balad Idol
8:30 p.m., H-6 MWR

August 29

Spades & Ping Pong
2 a.m., 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., H6
MWR

Dance Aerobics
5:30 a.m., East Fitness Center

9-Ball Tourney
3 p.m. and 8 p.m.,
East MWR

Spin Class
3:30 p.m., H6 Fitness Center

Aikido
5-7 p.m., East Fitness Center

Step Aerobics
5:30 p.m., East Fitness Center

Open Volleyball
7 p.m., East Fitness Center

Aerobics
7 p.m., West MWR

Green Bean Karaoke
8 p.m., West MWR

Cardio Funk
8 p.m., H6 Fitness Center

8-Ball Tourney
8 p.m., West MWR

Floor Hockey
8 p.m., MWR Circuit Gym

Salsa Dance Class
8:30 p.m., West MWR

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu
9 p.m., East Fitness Center

Did we forget a class?

If you don't see your
favorite MWR class
or activity here, let us
know.

E-mail us:

[anaconda.times@iraq.
centcom.mil](mailto:anaconda.times@iraq.centcom.mil)



Do you have a story idea?

Contact the Anaconda Times
anaconda.times@iraq.centcom.mil

Romanian forces transfer authority on Camp Dracula

by Spc. Robert H. Baumgartner

82nd Sustainment Brigade

CAMP ADDER, Iraq — The Romanian paratroopers of the 495th Infantry Battalion handed over their mission to soldiers of the 32nd Infantry Battalion during a transfer of authority ceremony here August 8, 2007 at the Romanian enclave known as Camp Dracula.

"It was a pleasure for me to work together as part of the Coalition for the Iraqi people to have a better future," said Col. Georges Constantin, commander of the 495th Infantry Battalion.

Constantin thanked the guests for their support, who included American, Australian, British and Iraqi commanders, as well as the Romanian ambassador to Iraq and two local sheiks.

"It is an honor and a pleasure to have here all the Coalition detachment representatives from Camp Adder and our Iraqi hosts, both military and civilian," he said.

"The cooperation between Romanian and Coalition soldiers was a special one. Together we did numerous and diverse activities that consolidated the spirit and honor and camaraderie. Aside from our military cooperation, I'm sure that the soccer games between our soldiers will live on as fond memories for you as they have for us," Constantin said.

The paratroopers of the 495th were commended by their commander for a job well done. Constantin praised



Photo by Spc. Robert H. Baumgartner

Romanian Army Lt. Col. George Dinulica leads his soldiers from the 32nd Infantry Battalion past spectators during a transfer of authority ceremony here August 8, 2007.

their commitment and discipline and cited their cooperation with Coalition soldiers as confirmation of their professionalism and dedication to completing the mission.

With that said, the Commander of the incoming 32nd Infantry Battalion stood up at

the podium. With the warm summer breeze gently waving the units newly unfurled colors behind him, Lt. Col. George Dinulica expressed confidence that his soldiers will maintain the same high level performance as their predecessors.

"Through our presence here we continue the participation of Romanian troops in Iraq. We look forward to the next 6 months and are anxious to confirm the trust that the Romanian army has vested in us," said Dinulica.

"I wish to express my sin-

cere congratulations to the troops of the 495th Battalion for the way they successfully completed their mission. I assure you my soldiers will prove the same commitment and dedication and will perform in the same manner. So help me God," Dinulica said.

Iraqi and U.S. Army Engineers respond immediately to suicide bomber attack

by 2nd Lt. Jennifer Patterson

20th Engineer Brigade (HHC)

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq — Iraqi Army Engineers are teaming up with the 502nd Multi-Role Bridge Company (MRBC) of the 92nd Engineer Battalion to repair the bridge on Main Supply Route (MSR) Tampa across the Grand Canal in Taji that was attacked Aug. 14 by a suicide bomber.

The attack on this major highway bridge demonstrates insurgent attempts to disrupt the lives of average Iraqis and their wanton disregard for the welfare of the population. The 6th Iraqi Army Engineer Company and the 9th Iraqi Army Engineer Regiment will lead the repair effort with support

Senior Iraqi leaders immediately demonstrated their resolve in response to these senseless terrorist attacks directed against the Iraqi population...

from the 502nd MRBC.

Both Iraqi units conducted joint training two weeks ago on the emplacement of military bridging, coordinated through the Iraqi Army Engineer School.

Their rapid response demonstrates the ability of the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Government to take on increasingly greater

roles in the fight against terrorists and Anti-Iraqi Forces.

Senior Iraqi leaders immediately demonstrated their resolve in response to these senseless terrorist attacks directed against the Iraqi population and their commitment to restoring essential services and infrastructure. The 20th Engineer Brigade, the 92nd Battalion's higher headquarters, immediately dispatched a reconnaissance team after the attack to assess the damage and assisted their Iraqi engineer counterparts with repairs.

Civil engineers from the 20th Brigade staff worked through the night to provide technical assistance and recommendations for the design and construction of the bridge.



Web Image

The units will partner in the final repairs beginning Aug. 15 and are estimated to be complete in a few days.

The attack will have minimal impact on Coalition opera-

tions due to the agility and capabilities the Coalition Force. The rapid Iraqi response again demonstrates their increasing capabilities in providing for the welfare of the population.

Soldiers help better relationship with local village



Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class (DSW/SW) Christopher Perez

Iraqi children wish peace as Iraqi Army and U.S. Special Forces visit their village.



Navy Photos by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class (DSW/SW) Christopher Perez

(Above) A father brings his child to U.S. Special Forces while they visit a village to distribute humanitarian assistance and medical aid.

(Below) Iraqi Army and U.S. Special Forces Soldiers visit a village to conduct humanitarian assistance. The Soldiers were also able to hand out treats to many excited Iraqi national children.



Navy Photos by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class (DSW/SW) Christopher Perez

(Above) A young man is examined by a U.S. Special Forces soldier while his team visits a village just outside their compound to distribute humanitarian assistance and medical aid.

(Below) Iraqi Army and U.S. Special Forces Soldiers visit a village just outside their compound to conduct humanitarian assistance for the local nationals during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

