



## Iraqi Police Day

Above: Col. Peter Baker (left), the 214th Fires Brigade commander, renders honors during the Iraqi National Anthem at a ceremony in recognition of Iraqi Police Day Jan. 9 at Al Kut Soccer Stadium. Left: An IP “pats down” a role-playing “suspect” at a demonstration during the IP Day ceremony, which included a pass and review, sports competitions, a riot demonstration and a police chase.

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Stacy Niles



Spc. Ben Hutto

Spc. Jonathan Colton, 1-15th Inf. Regt., pulls security following a sniper attack at a pump station outside Kassipa Dec. 21.

## 1-15 Inf. Regt. patrols Kassipa

**SPC. BEN HUTTO**  
3RD HBCT, 3RD INF. DIV.

FOB HAMMER — The National Policeman ran towards the Soldiers as they approached the pump station outside Kassipa, near Salman Pak, Dec. 21. Bent over with weapon clutched tightly, he appeared worried.

The Soldiers from the mortar platoon, Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment sought cover as Capt. Chris Pearson, platoon leader, and Sgt. 1st Class Robert Lucas, platoon sergeant, ran over with their interpreter to talk to the Policeman.

The pair followed the Policeman to a pump station next to the Tigris River.

The Policeman explained that a sniper on the other side of the river was shooting at the station. His explanation was confirmed as the sound of rifle fire rang out across the water and a round struck the ground nearby.

On the road outside the pump station, Soldiers strained to see where the gunshot came from. Sgt. Jason Neale, from Punxsutawney, Pa., reminded his Soldiers to use the cover around them.

At the pump station, Lucas and Pearson scanned across the river for the sniper. Lucas saw a man move quickly from cover and disappear into the palm grove on the other side of the

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## KASSIPA: 1-15 Inf. mortar platoon keeps streets safe in Iraqi village

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river. Unfortunately, he was unable to get a clear shot at the shooter.

"I was in Fallujah my last deployment," said Lucas, from Laguna, Calif. "It was all desert and hills there. This is ... all palm groves and dense vegetation here, near the river. Fighting tends to be more up close and personal."

Pearson decided to continue on with the patrol.

"We're going to change up our route," said Pearson, from Baton Rouge, La. "We went the same way the last time we were over here, so we're going to change it up just to be on the safe side."

Keeping their intervals and staying on opposite sides of the road, the Soldiers of the mortar platoon pushed on until small arms fire erupted from the right side of the patrol. They immediately hit the ground and sought concealment along the roadside as enemy bullets whistled overhead. They began firing back into the thick vegetation.

"Is anyone hurt?" Pearson asked. When everyone responded they were okay, Lucas popped up and started directing his Soldiers.

"All right!" Lucas shouted. "We are bounding around the corner! Move!"

Bodies low and weapons at the ready, two teams took turns guarding each others' movements as they worked around to a small group of houses the gunfire was coming from.

Sgt. William Ball, from Columbus, Ohio, wiped blood from his face as he moved. A cut across the bridge of his nose, where an enemy bullet ricocheted off rocks in front of him and tore off his eye protection, proved only a minor inconvenience to the determined mortarman.



Spc. Ben Hutto

Sgt. Newroy Henry examines the daughter of Sheik Hamed, a local leader in Kassipa, a village near Salman Pak, at the girl's home Dec. 21.

Sgt. Newroy Henry, the platoon's medic, went to inspect Ball, but was waved off by the Soldier.

"It's fine," Ball said as he prepared to go into the first house. "It's just a scratch."

Methodically, the platoon searched each house and checked every male there for gunpowder and explosive residue. Neale and Spc. Jonathan Colton, from Peach Tree City, Ga., swabbed each man's hand and arms, but every test came back negative.

The homes contained no contraband or used shells, so the Soldiers gave up their search.

"They're gone," Ball said. "They ran as soon as we started firing back."

The platoon continued with the patrol despite having taken contact.

"It's real good to get out," Neale

said. "Our guys need to get out and see the country and the people here. When the people here see us they try to give us gifts and chai. They attempt to feed us. Some of them know me by name. My team does a good job of interacting with people. It helps us out in a lot of ways."

Neale recounted what it was like at Combat Outpost Cahill when he first arrived.

"It was hot out here at first," he said. "After our first week here, we started attacking the insurgents and the attacks have really fallen off. When you go (from) getting hit with indirect fire every few days to getting hit with indirect fire every other month, it's huge."

Lucas explained reasons for the im-

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### THE Dog Face Daily

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Spc. Ben Hutto

Capt. Chris Pearson and Sgt. 1st Class Robert Lucas meet with Sheik Hamed, a local leader in Kassipa at his home Dec. 21.

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provement.

“The reason we haven’t been shot at in a while is a combination of the Concerned Local Citizens and aggressive patrolling. We know the area and the people here,” Lucas said. “It makes a difference.”

Shortly after the attack, the platoon arrived at the home of Sheik Hamed, a local leader in Kassipa.

Hamed greeted the Soldiers warmly, making sure to shake everyone’s hand and offering chai to the platoon.

Pearson and Lucas talked with the local leader about the progress of several projects that Pearson and the 489th Civil Affairs Battalion, a reserve unit from Knoxville, Tenn., currently attached to the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, had started in town.

As their visit came to a close, Henry checked on Hamed’s daughters who had both been injured in a mortar attack two weeks prior. The girls were cleaning and peeling vegetables in their backyard when a mortar round landed near them. Both took significant shrapnel damage in their legs.

On the platoon’s previous trip, Henry made sure the wounds were healing properly and changed both girls’ dressings.

As the family gathered around, Henry gently examined each wound and made sure they were clean. An ugly five-inch gash on the eldest’s upper leg worried him and he applied more anti-biotic cream.

“I know it hurts, but you have to keep it clean,” he explained to the family through the platoon’s interpreter. “The shrapnel will eventually work itself out,

but you cannot let it get infected. Then we will have problems.”

When Henry was satisfied the family understood what needed to be done, he nodded to Pearson and it was time to leave.

The patrol continued their march down to a Concerned Local Citizens check point.

“We are working with them to help them protect their communities,” Pearson said. “We are near a major route and we need the CLCs to help us monitor it. They have really stepped up and coordinated security here.

“Our platoon is trying to help the Concerned Local Citizens to protect their community here. We are trying to help them with check points and the program gives them jobs ... By patrolling out here every day, we are showing them that we will work and fight with them,” Pearson said.

Pearson explained that the area was much more dangerous before the 1-15th Inf. Regt. arrived.

“When we took over patrolling this town, no one wanted it,” he said. “The local leader here had been killed a year prior and people here were afraid ... Sheik Ali (the leader of the CLCs in the area) and the CLCs have done a good job of working with us to push the insurgents out of the area.”

The CLCs manning the checkpoint were happy to see Pearson’s platoon and greeted them as they walked by.

“It makes a huge difference having them out here,” Pearson said.

After patrolling for five hours, the platoon headed back to the COP to get ready for their fire missions that night.

“They all work hard,” Pearson said. “You couldn’t ask for a better group of Soldiers.”

## Safety Thought of the Day

### Refueling Operations

**Listed below are the minimum requirements for safe refuel operations:**

- Ground and bond vehicles/equipment to permit safe discharge of static electricity.
- Post one Soldier with a portable fire extinguisher.
- Turn off engine, set master switch to the off position.

- Prohibit smoking within 50 feet.
- Wear protective gloves and chemical splash goggles.
- Ensure correct type of fuel is used.
- Ensure clean water is readily available to flush eyes or saturated body parts.
- Ensure operators are familiar with emergency shut-off procedures.
- Ensure the use of drip pans and spill kits.

Headline Highlights

# Smokers' revenge; Antarctic Christmas mayhem

## Staff fired for not smoking

BERLIN (Reuters) — The owner of a small German computer company has fired three non-smoking workers because they were threatening to disturb the peace after they requested a smoke-free environment.

The manager of the 10-person IT company in Buesum, named Thomas J., told the Hamburger Morgenpost newspaper he had fired the trio because their non-smoking was causing disruptions.

Germany introduced non-smoking rules in pubs and restaurants on January 1, but Germans working in small offices are still allowed to smoke.

"I can't be bothered with troublemakers," Thomas was quoted saying. "We're on the phone all the time and it's just easier to work while smoking. Everyone picks on smokers these days. It's time for revenge. I'm only going to hire smokers from now on."

## Bird dog kills hunter

HOUSTON (Reuters) — A Houston-area man was killed in a hunting accident after his dog stepped on a loaded shotgun in the back of a pick-up truck, triggering a blast that pierced the vehicle and the hunter's leg, a local sheriff said.

Perry Price, a 46-year-old math teacher, shot a goose on Saturday then put his gun in the back of the truck where the dog was waiting to retrieve the bird.

"I've been in law enforcement 20 years and this is probably the strangest

*"Everyone picks on smokers these days. It's time for revenge."*

— Thomas J., on firing non-smoking staff

one I've had," said Chambers County Sheriff Joe LaRive.

Investigators found paw prints and mud from the dog, a chocolate Labrador retriever named Arthur, on the shotgun, LaRive said.

Price was taken to a local hospital, but died from a loss of blood after doctors were unable to revive him.

## Antarctica Christmas fun gets a little out of hand

WELLINGTON (Reuters) — A bad Santa, a drunken car chase, a bloody punchout. Festivities in Antarctica got a little out of hand this Christmas.

Complaints were made against a Santa who had posed for photographs on a decorated snowmobile at the U.S. McMurdo station, on the edge of the continent, a New Zealand newspaper reported on Wednesday.

That incident was followed by another in which a U.S. staff member, suspected of drunk driving, raced along an icy road in a four-wheel-drive vehicle chased by a fire engine before she was intercepted, said Christchurch-based The Press newspaper, without citing sources.

McMurdo base is home to about 1,000 U.S. scientists and staff during

the summer months and is the largest community in Antarctica.

At a different U.S. station at the South Pole a worker had to be flown out to a hospital in Christchurch, over 5000 km (3000 miles) away, after his jaw was broken in a Christmas punchout with a fellow staff member, The Press said.

Both the bad Santa and rogue driver were summoned before their managers while the attacker in the South Pole brawl had been sacked, it said.

## Italy sentences teacher who cut pupil's tongue

ROME (Reuters) — An Italian teacher who cut an unruly 7-year-old pupil's tongue with scissors was given a two month suspended sentence and fined more than 7,000 euros (\$10,000) by a Milan court Tuesday, lawyers said.

But the court found teacher Rosa Sciliberto did not intentionally slice the pupil's tongue to silence him — as Police and prosecutors had argued.

"The sentence shocks me," prosecutor Marco Ghezzi told Italian media. "I'm waiting to read the motivations and if I'm not convinced, I'll appeal."

The defense had argued that the headline-grabbing tongue-cutting in February was just an accident, partly the fault of the hyperactive child.

The child needed to go to hospital for five stitches.

Sciliberto has since been removed from her elementary school job in Milan, but a lawyer at the firm handling her case said she intends to return to teaching someday.

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

from Sudoku: The Original Brain Workout From Japan

Solution to yesterday's puzzle:

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

## ARABIC PHRASE OF THE DAY

Get me a ...

jeeb lee ...