

AnacondaTimes

FEBRUARY 13, 2008

PROUDLY SERVING LSA ANACONDA



Air Force photo by Master Sgt. John Nimmo

Iraqi trainees “virtually” fly

Airmen train Iraqi pilots to fly the not so friendly skies.

Page 6



Web Image

Quick action saves life

Soldiers aid Iraqi troop suffering from a heart attack.

Page 10



Web Image

Got Tires, will travel

Local plant produces any tire to meet operational needs.

Page 5



Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini

2nd Lt. Jamie Bell, 316th ESC personnel officer, hands a bag of toys to an Iraqi child during a humanitarian aid mission at a local primary school. The aid was received well by the children, as many displayed smiling faces.

Soldiers strengthen ties through aid

by Spc. Jay Venturini

Anaconda Times staff

JAMBORIAH, Iraq – With an emphasis being placed on giving control of Iraq back to the Iraqis, it is important for sustained stability here that the generations of tomorrow also understand the concept of freedom.

Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment (FAR) did their part to win the hearts and minds of approximately 300 children at a local primary school.

The Soldiers passed out school supplies and toys to the children as part of a humanitarian aid mission.

For Soldiers of the 2-320th FAR, this was not a typical mission. They are accustomed to kicking in doors and hunting

“(My Soldiers) were happy that we got to give something back to the people of Jamboriah. It is their favorite town.”

Sgt. 1st Class Robert Numerick
2-320th FAR

insurgents. However, this mission proved to be a welcomed deviation from their normal operations.

“(My Soldiers) were happy that we got to give something back to the people of Jamboriah. It is their favorite town,” said Sgt. 1st Class Robert Numerick, 2-320th FAR Headquarters and Headquarters Battery.

“Since the people have been helpful, it feels good to give back a little.”

The supplies were donated from St. Margaret of Scotland Catholic School in Green Tree, Pa.

Col. Kenneth Walter, 316th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) (ESC) personnel assistant chief of staff, has children who attend St. Margaret’s, and the children of the school spearheaded the operation.

“The kids at the school wanted to do something,” said Walter. “They started collecting

clothing and school supplies and really got the community involved.”

After receiving all the donations, Walter coordinated with 316th ESC civil affairs to go distribute the supplies to a local village.

The Iraqi children were very receptive to the Soldiers. Laughter quickly filled the halls and many of the children displayed smiling faces as they waited their turn to receive their share of school supplies and toys.

Once all the supplies were distributed and all the children returned to class, the Soldiers went into the town to foster good relations with the local shop owners.

“It’s very important to have

See AID, Page 7

Eliminate discriminatory behaviors to improve teamwork, loyalty, success

Courtesy of Sgt. 1st Class Elondre Johnson

316th ESC

On behalf of the 316 Expeditionary Sustainment Command Equal Opportunity/Human Relations team, we want to say thank you to those who continuously give their all to sustain the victory.

As we continue with our forward mission, we want to remind all our Soldiers, civilians and family members on the role your Equal Opportunity/Human Relations team plays and how you can help in creating a positive sustainment command environment.

The Equal Opportunity program formulates, directs and sustains a comprehensive effort to maximize human potential and to ensure fair treatment for all persons based solely on merit, fitness and capability in

support of readiness. EO philosophy is based on fairness, justice and equity. Commanders

“All of us do not have equal talent, but all of us should have an equal opportunity to develop our talents.”

John F. Kennedy,
American President 1961- 1963

are responsible for sustaining a positive EO climate within their units.

Goals:

~ Provide EO for military personnel, DoD civilians and family members, both on and off post and within the limits of

the laws of localities, states and host nations.

~ Create and sustain effective units by eliminating discriminatory behaviors or practices that undermine teamwork, mutual respect, loyalty and sacrifice of men and women who make up this proud organization.

~ Additionally, remind Department of Defense civilians they may use the Equal Employment Opportunity complaint system.

Policy ~ The U.S. Army will provide equal opportunity and fair treatment for military personnel, DoD civilians and family members without regard to race, color, gender, religion or national origin, and provide an environment free of unlawful discrimination and offensive behavior. This policy applies both on and off post, and during duty

and non-duty hours. The policy applies to working, living and recreational environments.

EOA ~ Equal Opportunity Advisors are officers and non-commissioned officers serving in full-time equal opportunity positions, at brigade (or equivalent) level, or higher. EOA's are members of the commander's special staff with the primary responsibility of advising and providing training to commanders, Soldiers, DoD civilians and family members on policies concerning equal opportunity.

Complaints ~ An informal complaint is any complaint that a Soldier, DoD civilian or family member does not wish to file in writing. Informal complaints may be resolved directly by the individual, with the help of another unit member, the commander or other person in the ap-

propriate chain of command. A formal complaint is a complaint an individual files in writing and swears to be accurate information. Formal complaints require specific actions, are subject to timelines, and require documentation of the actions taken.

Your Role:

~ Individuals are responsible for informing the command of the specifics of sexual harassment and unlawful discrimination complaints, while allowing the command an opportunity to take appropriate action to rectify/resolve an issue, submitting only legitimate complaints and exercising caution against unfounded or reckless charges.

For more information, contact the Equal Opportunity/ Human Relations Office at: DSN (318) 433-2527, located in Building 4121 at LSA Anaconda.

Provost Marshal Office: Weekly police blotter

(Week of Jan. 28- Feb. 3)

The PMO conducted: (202) security checks, (13) traffic stops, issued (45) DD Form 1408 Armed Forces Traffic Tickets, registered (276) vehicles on the installation, (6) minor traffic accidents, (1) major traffic accident, (21) Common Access Cards were reported lost. (4) personnel barred from LSA Anaconda.

The PMO is currently investigating: (1) Larceny Government/Personal Property case and (1) General Order #1 violation.

PMO Recommendations: All personnel should continue to take reasonable precautions to protect themselves, including locking doors at all times, never opening the door for strangers and making sure exterior

quarters lighting is illuminated during hours of darkness. Emergency Responder vehicles i.e. military police, fire department and medical are equipped with lights and sirens. Yield to all emergency responders when lights and/or sirens are in use. Pull your vehicle to shoulder of the road. If you are stopped for a traffic violation, stay in your vehicle for your safety and the safety of the on-scene officer(s).

Crime Prevention: Report all suspicious activity to the Provost Marshal Office Law Enforcement Desk at 443-8602.

Lost & Found: To find out if your lost item has been turned into PMO, contact PMO/Investigations at 443-6105.

By Air Force Staff Sgt. Mirta Jones

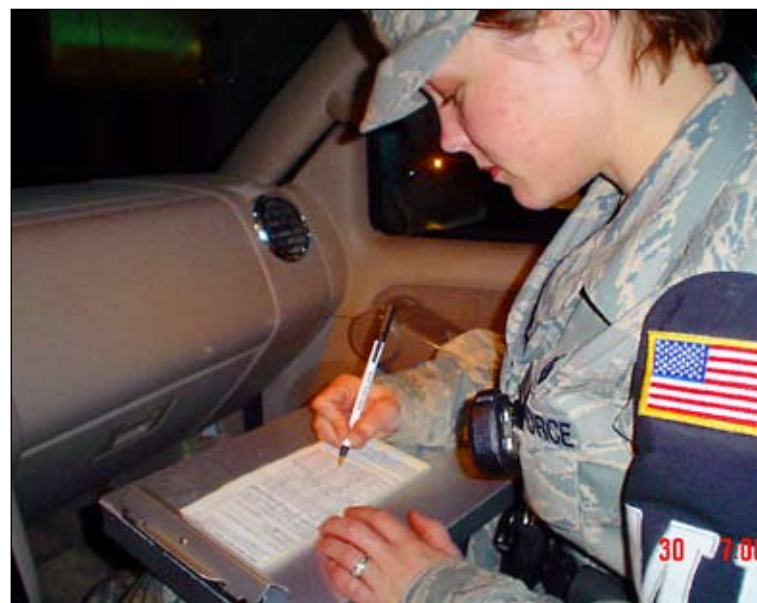


Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Mirta Jones

PMO patrolman, Staff Sgt. Samantha Webb cites an illegally parked vehicle. Parking in the vicinity of critical facilities and areas of frequent troop concentrations on LSA Anaconda/Balad Air Base is restricted. Parking within 25 feet of concrete barriers in housing areas is prohibited unless granted an exception by garrison commander or housing area manager.

ANACONDA TIMES

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

Anaconda Times is authorized for publication by the 316th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) for the LSA Anaconda community. The contents of the Anaconda Times are unofficial and are not to be considered the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, including the Department of Defense or Operation Iraqi Freedom.

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332nd Air Expeditionary Wing
20th Engineer Brigade
213th Area Support Group
402nd Army Field Support Brigade
507th Corps Support Group
CJSOTF-AP
Task Force 49

Mission Statement: Produce a weekly newspaper that provides the command leadership team a means of disseminating command information to servicemembers on Logistical Support Area Anaconda and subordinate 316th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) units throughout Iraq. Contents of the paper will target enlisted servicemembers, officers, and civilian staff as well as primarily highlight the mission and experiences of 316th ESC units and personnel, with a secondary objective of detailing the activities of the LSA Anaconda community.

Dust can kill: do not take it lightly

CFLCC Safety Gram
U.S. Army Safety Center

Dust is nothing new. In 1940's war-torn France, dust sometimes meant death for Soldiers and civilians alike. In Iraq, a Coalition Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC) Soldier was killed recently when the convoy he was part of experienced a collision as a result of brown-out conditions. Desert ground and road conditions are very dry and can often be extremely dusty.

Remember:

- Faster speed and larger

convoy speed to existing road conditions.

Do not:

- Stop on the roadway unnecessarily.

If visibility is limited:

- Slow down, illuminate flashers, exit the road way slowly and stop well away from the road.
- Communicate with the convoy commander.
- Conduct preventive maintenance checks and services (PMCS) on all Army vehicles.

Note:

- All disabled CFLCC vehicles and lost equipment on roads must be recovered.

Do not:

- Leave debris from your vehicles or let vehicles left on the roadway go unreported.

If safe:

- Recover your equipment.

If unsafe to recover:

Report the loss and/ or disabled vehicle to your chain of command so recovery can be coordinated at a later time.

- In limited visibility conditions including dust, illuminate headlights.
- Always maintain the rules of the road.
- Obey speed limits.
- Recognize the right of way.
- Drive on the proper side of the road.
- Only pass when conditions permit.
- Conduct convoy and safety briefings and follow all instructions provided.
- Maintain convoy intervals. Convoy commander sets

convoy speed to existing road conditions.

Do not:

- Stop on the roadway unnecessarily.

If visibility is limited:

- Slow down, illuminate flashers, exit the road way slowly and stop well away from the road.
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Multinational Force-Iraq photo



Multinational Force-Iraq photo

Please note, schedule is subject to change.

Worship services

PROTESTANT – TRADITIONAL

| | | |
|--------|------------|----------------------------|
| Sunday | 7:30 a.m. | Air Force Hospital Chapel |
| | 9:30 a.m. | Provider Chapel |
| | 10:30 a.m. | Freedom Chapel (West Side) |
| | 11 a.m. | Castle Heights (4155) |
| | 5:30 p.m. | Gilbert Memorial (H-6) |
| | 7:30 p.m. | Air Force Hospital Chapel |

PROTESTANT – GOSPEL

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

PROTESTANT – CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP

| | | |
|-----------|------------|----------------------------|
| Sunday | 9 a.m. | MWR East Building |
| | 10:30 a.m. | TOWN HALL(H-6) |
| | 8 p.m. | Eden Chapel |
| | 2 p.m. | Castle Heights (4155) |
| | 7 p.m. | Freedom Chapel (West Side) |
| | 9:30 p.m. | Freedom Chapel (West Side) |
| Wednesday | 8 p.m. | Tuskegee Chapel (H-6) |

PROTESTANT – LITURGICAL

| | | |
|--------|-----------|--------------------------|
| Sunday | 9 a.m. | EPISCOPAL Freedom Chapel |
| | 11 a.m. | LUTHERAN (Chapel Annex) |
| | 3:30 p.m. | EPISCOPAL (Tuskegee H-6) |

PROTESTANT --MESSIANIC

| | | |
|--------|-----------|----------------------------|
| Friday | 8:30 p.m. | Freedom Chapel (West Side) |
|--------|-----------|----------------------------|

PROTESTANT—PRAYER SERVICE

| | | |
|----------|--------|---------------|
| Saturday | 7 a.m. | Signal Chapel |
|----------|--------|---------------|

PROTESTANT—SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

| | | |
|----------|--------|----------|
| Saturday | 9 a.m. | Provider |
|----------|--------|----------|

PROTESTANT—CHURCH OF CHRIST

| | | |
|--------|-----------|-----------------------|
| Sunday | 3:30 p.m. | Castle Heights (4155) |
|--------|-----------|-----------------------|

ROMAN CATHOLIC MASS

(Sacrament of Reconciliation 30 min prior to Mass)

| | | |
|----------|-----------|----------------------------|
| Saturday | 5 p.m. | Gilbert Memorial (H-6) |
| | 8 p.m. | Freedom Chapel (West Side) |
| | 11 p.m. | Air Force Hospital Chapel |
| Sunday | 8:30 a.m. | Gilbert Memorial (H-6) |
| | 11 a.m. | Provider Chapel |

| | | |
|---------|------------|-----------------|
| Mon-Fri | 11:45 a.m. | Provider Chapel |
|---------|------------|-----------------|

| | | |
|----------|-------|------------------|
| Mon-Thur | 5p.m. | Gilbert Memorial |
|----------|-------|------------------|

LATTER DAY SAINTS-(LDS)-(MORMON)

| | | |
|--------|----------|----------------------------|
| Sunday | 1 p.m. | Provider Chapel |
| | 3:30p.m. | Freedom Chapel (West Side) |
| | 7 p.m. | Gilbert Memorial (H-6) |

JEWISH SHABBAT SERVICES

| | | |
|--------|--------|------------------------|
| Friday | 7 p.m. | Gilbert Memorial (H-6) |
|--------|--------|------------------------|

ISLAMIC SERVICE

| | | |
|--------|------|----------------------------|
| Friday | Noon | Freedom Chapel (West Side) |
|--------|------|----------------------------|

PAGAN/ WICCAN FELLOWSHIP

| | | |
|--------------------|--------|-------------|
| Thursday, Saturday | 7 p.m. | Eden Chapel |
|--------------------|--------|-------------|

BUDDHIST FELLOWSHIP

| | | |
|---------|--------|-------------|
| Tuesday | 7 p.m. | Eden Chapel |
|---------|--------|-------------|

1st SB Soldiers get “patched” in ceremony

by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude

1st Sustainment Brigade

CAMP STRYKER, Iraq – Lt. Col. Robert Brem, commander of the Special Troops Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, awarded combat

patches to the Detachment E, 230th Finance Battalion “Battle Hawks;” Detachment 1, 374th Finance Battalion, and the 24th Finance Company out of Fort Stewart, Ga.

For many of the Soldiers, it is their first combat patch

and they were proud to receive the honor of wearing it on their right sleeve.

Others in Det. E favor wearing a patch from a previous deployment, due to the meaning of that deployment for them.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude

Memphis, Tenn., native, Pvt. Zachery Chandler with Detachment E, 230th Finance Battalion, gets his combat patch from Miami resident Sgt. Jose Wellington at a recent patch ceremony at Camp Stryker, Iraq.

Michigan National Guard Soldiers get combat patch



Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude

Pfc. Gregory Mitchell, a Humvee driver with 1st Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, receives a combat patch from Staff Sgt. Jeffery Meek, a convoy commander with the Michigan National Guard.

BHM show draws all performers



Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq– Air Force Col. Ralph Romine, LSA Anaconda garrison commander, performs in a blues band during the 2008 Black History Month Talent Showcase at MWR East Feb. 2. The showcase featured performances from many different genres of music made famous by African Americans throughout the years.

Black History Month events

Feb. 23: Soul Food Nights Dinner @ DFAC 1 and 4

Feb. 10, 24: Poetry Slam, 8 p.m. MWR East
Soul Food Sunday Lunch @DFAC 3

Feb. 21: Black History Month Knowledge Bowl 6p.m.-7:30 p.m. MWR East

Feb. 22: prayer breakfast 7 a.m. DFAC 4

Feb. 24: 5K Run 6 a.m. Holt Stadium,

Feb. 27: Black History Month Luncheon, 11 a.m.- noon

Feb. 28: Black History Month Knowledge Bowl 6 p.m.-7:30 p.m. MWR East

Feb. 29: Sgt. Debra Gipson in an original stage play, 7p.m.- 9 p.m. at the Sustainer Theater

Don't forget to check out MWR East throughout February for movies celebrating Black heritage and history.

Please note schedule is subject to change.



Photo courtesy of Library of Congress



Photo courtesy of Library of Congress

Flats are no match for tactical vehicle tire plant

by Spc. Jay Venturini

Anaconda Times staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq- An Army mechanic can fix almost anything on a vehicle. From replacing a transmission to a broken headlight, they can fix it quickly and efficiently. But what if you get a flat tire that won't inflate?

That is where 1st Battalion, 402nd Army Field Support Brigade (AFSB) Tire Assembly Repair Program (TARP) comes in to save the day.

The TARP produces more than 100 tires per day and 1,500 per month. It produces tires for 43 different tactical vehicles including route clearance vehicles and the massive IED-mitigating buffalo.

"Our biggest demand is for Humvee tires," said Mr. Robert Bland, 1-402nd

AFSB TARP supervisor. "We make 700 to 900 Humvee tires per month."

The tire material is shipped directly here from the United States and Kuwait. When it arrives, workers attach the tires to rims and have them inflated.

The TARP has been in operation since September 2005 and is the only tire-producing facility in Iraq. Before the plant, Soldiers had to rebuild the tires themselves, which would take three hours per tire.

To keep tires available for Soldiers, the TARP works closely with the class nine yard which is responsible for providing Coalition Forces with repair parts and equipment.

The yard is always well-stocked with tires to minimize the wait time for Soldiers.

"We keep the class nine yard stocked with at least 200 Humvee tires and different amounts of other tires," said Bland. "This dramatically cuts the wait time for Soldiers. They can have new tires within minutes instead of hours, which gets them back on the road faster."

Another way the TARP supports the warfighter is through the forward redistribution point (FRP) here.

When the class nine yard becomes over stocked, the excess gets moved to the FRP to be distributed throughout theater.

Despite the help of machines, building so many tires day in and day out is a tedious and physically demanding task. However the TARP workers understand how important their mission is.

"It's definitely a lot of back-breaking labor, but we are here to support the Soldiers that go outside the wire and keep us safe, so it's well worth it," said Mr. Jose Roberto 1-402nd AFSB TARP worker.

Many of the TARP workers are on their second and third year of working here. Many of them have stayed on due to a sense of purpose and dedication to the mission.

"There's not a vehicle out there that moves without tires, except for tracked vehicles," said Bland. "We keep the warfighters moving everyday."



Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini

Mr. Jose Roberto, 1-402nd AFSB TARP worker, ensures every lug nut is properly secured to make sure no air leaks after workers inflate the tire.



Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini

Mr. Roger Spears, 1-402nd AFSB TARP worker, ensures the rim fits properly on a 6K forklift tire at the tire plant here. The plant produces more than 1,500 tires for 43 different tactical vehicles per month.

Petraeus pays respects at memorial



Photo by Staff Sgt. Dave Lankford

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – Gen. David Petraeus, Multi-National Force-Iraq commander, attended a memorial service here Jan. 24 for three Soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division who lost their lives during an intense firefight.

Ferocious tornados kill 55



Photo by Master Sgt. Randy Harris

A Tennessee National Guard member captures an aerial view of tornado damage in Tennessee while travelling with the governor, Phil Bredesen's staff, Feb. 6, to assess the situation. An unusually ferocious winter tornado system killed 55 people and injured hundreds more as it swept through Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, Kentucky and Tennessee.

Young pilot shares vision for Iraqi Air Force

Senior Airman Eric Schloeffel

332nd Air Expeditionary Wing

BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq-

Inside the newly-opened Iraqi Flying Training School here, Iraqi Lt. Abdul applies fluid motions to gently land his aircraft on a digitized strip of runway.

His trainer, a U.S. Air Force major, stands silently in the background and nods with a sense of unconcerned approval, like a calculus teacher testing his best student on simple addition.

The Iraqi soon exits the Cessna simulator he'd been flying and is met with a few words of praise and pointers from his instructor pilot.

To watch this seemingly routine exchange, it can be difficult to grasp the enormous impact these small events might have on the strategy for long-term success in Iraq.

In fact, the school itself appears unassuming at first glance. The significance of a re-born Iraqi Air Force is hidden within the school's dozen or so pre-fabricated structures that stand beside a row of one-engine Cessna's.

Like many things in this country, the Iraqi Flying Training school is a work in progress.

"All of us Iraqi pilots dream to fly the F-16 and F-15," said Lieutenant Abdul, whose real name cannot be revealed for security purposes. "But we know the Iraqi Air Force needs to start from zero, and it's a step-by-step process to get all the things we want."

For all the things the Iraqi Air Force must wait on, motivated trainees are surely not one of them.

"These young pilots understand they have the opportunity to lay down the foundation for their future," said U.S. Air Force Maj. Scott McCartt, an instructor pilot at the school. "They can change the way things have been in Iraq for generations and turn it in a positive direction. These guys don't take that lightly."

While Lieutenant Abdul ponders the possibilities of flying some of the most advanced fighter jets in the western world, it was only a couple years ago when he doubted his chances of becoming a pilot at all.

Like many U.S. pilots, Lieutenant Abdul was inspired by adrenalin-fueled epics featuring Americans "dog fighting" with multi-million dollar air-



Air Force photo by Senior Airman SerMae Lampkin

An Iraqi pilot takes control of a Cessna simulator at the Iraqi Flying Training School here. Iraqi pilots have begun flying their own missions and have earned some initial successes. An all-Iraqi crew flying on a recent reconnaissance mission spotted several terrorists manufacturing improvised explosive devices. The crewmember's alerted Iraqi Police who arrived on-scene soon after to impede the terrorist's efforts.

craft.

"I think the first time I ever dreamed of becoming a pilot was after watching 'Top Gun' when I was a child," said Lieutenant Abdul. "I saw the Americans flying their F-16s and F-15s; it all looked so heroic and exciting."

As he got older, the Baghdad-native pursued his education at a four-year university and graduated with a software engineering degree in 2006.

After college, Lieutenant Abdul jumped onboard the wave of 20-somethings who joined the Iraqi military to help their country and earn a steady paycheck while doing so. He chose to follow his trade and work as a structural engineer in the newly formed Iraqi Air Force.

"The main reason I joined was that I wanted Iraq to be great," Lieutenant Abdul said. "I love my country and want to live like many do in the rest of the world - in peace. But like everyone else in Iraq, I need money too. It wasn't a hard decision for me to make; there were many good reasons."

Despite working for an air force, the lieutenant never thought he would reach the seat of a cockpit and achieve his early aspirations.

His fate made a sharp turn one day when his engineer-

ing unit was asked to provide volunteers for a new pilot program.

"I got news one day that Americans were asking the engineers if they wanted to become pilots," he said.

"There were 13 of us engineers, and we all raised our

"The main reason I joined was that I wanted Iraq to be great. I love my country and want to live like many do in the rest of the world - in peace. But like everyone else in Iraq, I need money too."

Lieutenant Abdul
Iraqi Flying Training School

hands to answer 'yes.'"

Similar to the selection process in the U.S. Air Force, volunteers for the program couldn't just raise their hand to enter full-fledged pilot training. Lieutenant Abdul and his co-workers underwent vigorous medical and physical tests during the application process. Recruits were also required to

pass an English proficiency course.

Out of the 13 of his fellow engineers who originally answered 'yes,' only four could pass all tests.

"This was always my dream since I was a child, and the American pilots gave me a chance," he said. "I never thought I'd get the opportunity to do this; it was very exciting for me."

Lieutenant Abdul arrived at the Iraqi Flying Training School Oct. 1, 2007, to begin his first phase of training lasting one year.

His training includes hands-on instruction with the Cessna 172 and 208 models. The lieutenant currently has 30 flight hours logged.

While the lieutenant achieved his childhood dream, this personal success does not come without a price. Even now, Lieutenant Abdul cannot reveal his occupation to close friends in Baghdad.

"I have just one problem with this job; my family's safety," he said. "I must keep it a secret that I'm working with Americans - I can only tell my closest relatives. The terrorists would kill me if they found out I am a part of the Iraqi Air Force."

"When I come home to

Baghdad, I always have a different story to tell my friends explaining where I am," added the lieutenant. "I'm not worried about my friends though; they would be happy for me. But it wouldn't be smart to reveal my occupation, because they could tell other people in the neighborhood."

He said terrorists have previously uncovered identities of other Iraqi Air Force pilots. They were murdered shortly after.

"My family is excited for me," he added, "but fearful at the same time."

The lieutenant admits to feeling "a little pressure," but has no regrets of putting himself in great personal danger.

"This is all worth it to me," said Lieutenant Abdul. "This is the only way I can help keep my country safe. I hope to bring peace to the people of Iraq."

Fortunately, Lieutenant Abdul said he feels no danger performing his daily duties alongside Shiites, Sunnis, Kurds and students from many other Iraqi cultural and religious sects.

Tension and violence between these groups often dominate headlines from Iraq, but Lieutenant Abdul says these conflicts are non-existent in the

See PILOT, Page 7

AID, from Page Cover

good relations with the local civilians," said Walter. "When you have a good rapport with them, they are more willing to provide information to Coalition Forces."

After eating a few falafels and sharing a few laughs with local villagers, the Soldiers returned to LSA Anaconda, many with a smile and good

feeling after a successful mission.

"The mission really went great," said Walter. "I really can't say enough about how well the 2-320th FAR Soldiers conducted the mission and brought everyone back safely."

"I wouldn't have changed a thing," added Numerick, referring to the mission.

There are future humanitarian aid missions planned to many local communities. If you are interested in donating clothing, toys or school supplies contact Sgt. 1st Class Nicholas Relacion, 316th ESC civil affairs NCO at nicholas.relacion@iraq.centcom.mil or at DSN: 433-2547.

"When you have a good rapport with (locals) they are more willing to provide information to Coalition Forces."

Col. Kenneth Walter
316th ESC



Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini

A Soldier with 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, hands an Iraqi boy school supplies. This mission was not typical for the 2-320th as they are accustomed to hunting insurgents.



Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini

2nd Lt. Jamie Bell, 316th ESC personnel officer, hands a bag of toys to an Iraqi child during a humanitarian aid mission at a local primary school. The donated items included toys, clothing and school supplies.



Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini

Col. Kenneth Walter, 316th ESC personnel assistant chief of staff, and Iraqi children hold a banner sent from children at St. Margaret of Scotland Catholic School in Green Tree, Pa.

PILOT, from Page 6

Iraqi Air Force.

"Most of my friends here are Sunni, and I'm Shiite," he said. "We are all from different places in Iraq and many of us have different backgrounds. We never talk about these things at work though, and it's never a problem. In the Iraqi Air Force, the only thing that matters is your ability to be a pilot."

As Lieutenant Abdul progresses with every flight, the Iraqi Flying Training School continues on a similar path.

Iraqi pilots have begun flying their own missions and have earned some initial successes. An all-Iraqi crew flying on a recent reconnaissance mission spotted several terrorists manufacturing improvised explosive devices.

The crewmember's alerted Iraqi Police who arrived on-scene soon after to impede the terrorist's efforts.

Since opening last fall, the school has graduated four instructor pilots and is expected to reach full operational capacity by July. The end goal is to have 130 Iraqis earn their wings



Air Force photo by Master Sgt. John Nimmo

A C-130 Hercules from the 777th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron shuts down its inboard engines as it taxis to the ramp at Balad Air Base which is home to the Iraqi Flying Training School.

each year at the school.

Upon graduation, the Iraqi pilots are assigned to a unit that conducts either an airlift mission with C-130 aircraft, or a surveillance mission with King Air 350, Cessna 208 and CH-2000 aircraft. The school is also planning to teach Iraqi's how to fly helicopters in the near future.

"The training here is good, and we

are getting step-by-step experience from the Americans," Lieutenant Abdul said. "If we stick together like we have been, I have no doubt we will overcome the obstacles in Iraq. The situation can be dangerous right now, but everyday the Americans here are showing me a way I can help - by becoming a good pilot."

Along with the Iraqi Army and Po-

lice, pilots here believe they are taking the lead to secure a stable democracy in their homeland. Lieutenant Abdul's family encourages him to continue this role, as they talk of quieter nights and safer streets in their hometown of Baghdad.

"I hear from my family that the situation is getting better everyday with the help from the Americans and Iraqi government," he said. "Of course, the people are still going without certain things that would improve their lives. But the people of Iraq are tired of violence and want to be safe."

After graduating from pilot school, Lieutenant Abdul will work to accomplish another dream that also once seemed like a long shot.

"I want to travel to America to attend the U.S. Air Force Academy," he said.

Like the old adage says and this young Iraqi lieutenant has shown - where there is a will, there is a way.

And while the roar of an F-16 is still just another dream when Lieutenant Abdul cranks up his Cessna's engine - recent successes here show progress pays very little respect to boundaries.

Rustic Rustamiyah: Soldiers do their part fo



Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude

Phoenix native Spc. Rogel Javier, (right) a cashier with Detachment A, 106th Finance Management Company, Special Troops Battalion, cashes a third party check for Magalia, Calif. native, Spc Robert Zamora, a supply specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 230th Infantry Battalion. "It was fast service," said Zamora.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude

From left to right, Sumter, S.C., native Sgt. Marquas Washington and Austin, Texas, native Sgt. Bryson Hill, both fuel specialists with Company A, 94th Brigade Support Battalion, utilize a 350 gallons per minute pump to fill a customer's truck with 5,000 gallons of JP8.

war effort at small camp



Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude

Baton Rouge, La., native Spc. Donnie Smith with Company B, 94th Brigade Support Battalion, measures a sheet of metal that will be used to reinforce side plates on a Humvee. “The vehicles don’t leave here the same,” said Smith. “They leave better.”



Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude

Washington, Ill, native Spc. Ryan Thompson (right) a metal worker with Company B, 94th Brigade Support Battalion cuts metal pieces that will increase the protection of vehicles and thereby personnel operating out of Rustamiyah.

Web Image

Against the odds, two Soldiers save Iraqi counterpart's life

by Staff Sgt. Dave Lankford

Anaconda Times Staff

KIRKUK, Iraq – Two Soldiers from the 240th Quartermaster Company assigned to the 2414th Logistic Transition Team were awarded the Army Commendation Medal here Jan. 25 for their part in saving the life of an Iraqi soldier.

Sgt. Charles Mutinda and Staff Sgt. Nde Wanki were heading to work one day when they noticed an Iraqi soldier being sternly reprimanded by his superior.

The reprimand included strenuous physical exercise and when it was over the soldier was visibly exhausted.

After observing the soldier for a moment Mutinda and Wanki feared the man's



Col. Michael Timberlake awards the Army Commendation Medal to Sgt. Charles Mutinda, 240th Quartermaster Company assigned to the 2414th Logistic Transition Team here Jan. 25 for his part in saving the life of an Iraqi soldier who was suffering a heart attack. Staff Sgt. Nde Wanki, also of the 240th QM, 2414th LiTT was also awarded the ARCOM.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Dave Lankford

condition was much worse than simple exhaustion.

"We saw that he was out of breath and not saying anything," said Mutinda.

He wasn't really responding to us so we took him to the Iraqi Army dispensary," he said.

At the time they arrived there was no doctor on site, only a nurse who suggested the Iraqi soldier simply lie down and rest for a while, even though it was apparent to Mutinda and Wanki his condition was rapidly deteriorating.

With no other alternative, Mutinda and Wanki set out with their interpreter to find a doctor and rush him back to the dispensary.

Upon their return to the dispensary, with the Iraqi doctor in tow, Mutinda and

See **ATTACK**, Page 14

Paving the way for new roads means detours and patience

by Spc. Jay Venturini

Anaconda Times Staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – It's one of those things you can't seem to get away from no matter where you are in the world: road construction.

Even though it makes you detour from your usual route and may add some time to your commute, the end product is usually worth the hassle.

The 557th Expeditionary

Red Horse Squadron (ERHS) has the daunting task of resurfacing a busy section of North Victory Loop here.

"The necessity to repave the road was due to the asphalt deteriorating and weakening on a section of road under heavy traffic flow," said Air Force Master Sgt. Sylvester Bloomfield, 557th ERHS noncommissioned officer-in-charge.

The project started in November by removing the old

pavement.

Due to many weather related factors, the repaving of the street was delayed.

"To lay asphalt you have to have the right conditions," said Air Force Staff Sgt. Gregory Whittet, 557th ERHS pavement and equipment craftsman.

"It has to be above 50 degrees and dry weather. Because of the recent cold, damp weather, it really pushed us

back from getting this started."

Another factor was that the asphalt plant here was in the early stages of operation and there were some setbacks in receiving the right type of asphalt.

During the six-week project, an estimated 5,380 tons of asphalt will be laid on the north and south bound lanes of North Victory Loop. The road will be lowered two inches to save \$167,000 in asphalt.

This required workers to lower the elevation of drainage boxes which proved to be a difficult task.

"We had to drop every single drainage box three inches along the road. There are 23 along the road," said Whittet.

"It was an obstacle and we still have to do the same thing to the other side."

The 557th ERHS asks residents of LSA Anaconda to be patient with the project and understand it will take some time to complete.

"We want to get the job done as much as anybody," said Bloomfield. "There are a lot of factors that are out of our control when it comes to laying asphalt. We are doing our best to get the job done right."



Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini

Tech Sgt. Fredrick Denne, 557th ERHS pavement and equipment craftsman, compacts newly laid asphalt on a section of North Victory Loop. There will be 5,380 tons of asphalt laid over the six week project.



Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini

Tech Sgt. David Johnson, 557th ERHS pavement and equipment craft lead, evens out newly laid asphalt on a section of North Victory Loop on LSA Anaconda Jan 21. The 557th will repave both sides of the road over six weeks.

PRESIDENT'S DAY

WEEKEND

TASK FORCE READY

017 07-08

INDOOR SOCCER

Tournament

FEBRUARY 15-17 2008

TOURNAMENT LOCATION: EAST SIDE CIRCUIT GYM

COACHES MEETING: 13 FEB. 2008 TIME: 1930hrs

MEETING HELD AT WEST SIDE MWR

SIGN YOUR TEAM UP TODAY AT THE WEST MWR!

MWR WEST

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Zahirovic.Muhamed@kbr.com

MWR WEST

SLOW THE FLOW

Water: Necessary to sustain life.
If you want it, conserve it!

Black History Month

films Feb. 13- 20

Film:

Date:

Time:

Reflections of Carter G. Woodson

Feb. 14 and 19

11a.m.- Noon

Film:

Date:

Time:

Black History Media Presentation

Feb. 14 and 19

noon- 1:30p.m.

Film:

Date:

Time:

History of Black Achievement

Feb. 14 and 19

1:30p.m.- 4:30p.m.

Film:

Date:

Time:

Thurgood Marshall

Feb. 14

5p.m.- 6:30p.m.

Film:

Date:

Time:

The Promise Land

Feb. 14

6:30p.m.- 9p.m.

Film:

Date:

Time:

Men of Honor

Feb. 16

8p.m.

Film:

Date:

Time:

Glory

Feb. 17

8p.m.

Film:

Date:

Time:

Buffalo Soldiers

Feb. 19

1:30p.m.- 2:30p.m.

Film:

Date:

Time:

Voices of Civil Rights

Feb. 19

6:30p.m.- 9p.m.

Film:

Date:

Time:

Soldier Story

Feb. 20

8p.m.

All films will be shown at the MWR East Movie Room. Please note, schedule is subject to change.

America's warrior

A snapshot of servicemembers in the Global War on Terrorism

THOMPSON

U.S. AIR FORCE

Name:

Unit:

Job title:

Time in service:

Age:

Hometown:

Pastimes:

Life-changing event:

Lesson learned:

Senior Airman Randall Thompson.

332nd Air Expeditionary Wing, Detachment 1, Mayor Cell.

Administrative technician.

Two years and six months.

20.

Dillon, South Carolina.

Listening to music, hanging out with my friends, exercising and playing soccer.

Living in Jamaica opened my eyes to how good our life is in America.

The grass is

not always greener on the other side.

The person I admire most:

If I wasn't in the Army:

The one thing I would change about the Air Force:

What does the Air Force do best:

and strengthening morale.

What makes a good Airman:

Motivations in life:

Goals:

Hardest part of my job here:

Best part of my life:

by Spc. Jennifer Sierra

First USO center in Iraq opens

by Spc. Jay Venturini

Anaconda Times staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq - In recent years, the United Services Organization (USO) has opened centers in Kuwait, Qatar and Afghanistan for the benefit

of servicemembers deployed in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. And here Feb. 7, the USO celebrated the grand opening of its first facility in Iraq.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Dave Lankford

Gen. David Petraeus, Multinational Force-Iraq commander, as well as others instrumental in the organization and establishment of the new USO center gathered to cut the ribbon on the facility here Feb. 7.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Dave Lankford

Hundreds of servicemembers and civilians turned out for the grand opening ceremony of the first USO center in Iraq Feb. 7.

In 1941 President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked Americans to help provide morale and recreation services to our men and women in uniform. In response to this request the Salvation Army, Young Men's Christian Association, Young Women's Christian Association, National Catholic Community Service, National Travelers Aid Association and the National Jewish Welfare Board unite to form the USO.

"Since 1941 the USO has had one mission, and only one, and that is to bring the heart of America to our men and women who serve," said Ned Powell,

president and chief executive officer of the United Services Organization Worldwide.

The USO will provide services, free of charge, to servicemembers living on or passing through LSA Anaconda including internet service, phones, game rooms and movies. They will also offer the United Through Reading program (see Jan. 30, Anaconda Times for details).

Honored guests were attended the grand opening including Gen. David Petraeus,

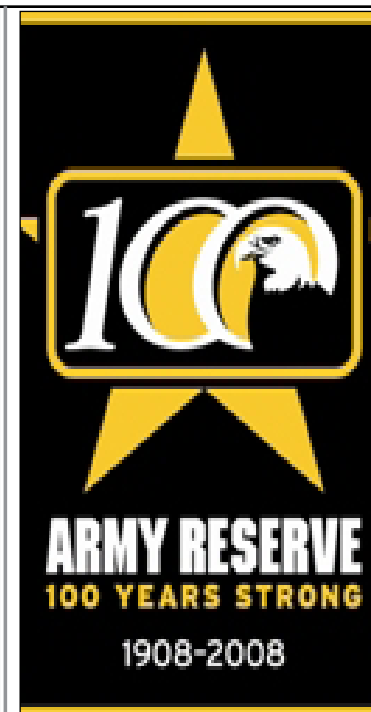
See **USO**, Page 14

Baghdad welcomes hundreds of new Iraqi Police



by Sgt. Daniel D. Blottenberger

BAGHDAD, Iraq- Iraqi Police graduates dismount a patrol vehicle during a demonstration of capabilities here Facility Feb. 2.



U.S. Army Reserve Timeline

1989 Panama - After the U.S. invasion, Army Reserve civil affairs and military police units help restore order.

1990 - 1991 Persian Gulf War - More than 84,000 Army Reserve Soldiers provide combat support and combat service support to the Army.

1992 Somalia - Army Reserve Soldiers provide postal, logistical and other assistance to support U.S. relief efforts.

1995 - 1996 Haiti - Army Reserve helps restore democracy, providing more than 70% of all Reserve component support.

1995 - 2001 Bosnia - The Army Reserve contributes more than 68% of the Reserve Soldiers mobilized, providing civil affairs, medical, postal, engineer and transportation support to Operation Joint Endeavor/Joint Guard/Joint Forge. This includes more than 11,150 Soldiers from more than 330 units.

1999 Army Reserve sends units to Central America in support of New Horizons '99 (Nuevos Horizontes '99), the relief effort for Hurricane Mitch.

Upcoming sports on AFN

Wednesday 2/13/08

Michigan State @ Purdue live 3:00 a.m. AFN/sports
Philadelphia Flyers @ New York Islanders live 3:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
Kentucky @ Vanderbilt live 5:00 a.m. AFN/sports
Anaheim Ducks @ Colorado Avalanche live 5:30 a.m. AFN/xtra
North Carolina @ Virginia replay 12:00 p.m. AFN/sports
Denver Nuggets @ Miami Heat replay 5:00 p.m. AFN/sports

Thursday 2/14/08

Maryland @ Duke live 3:00 a.m. AFN/sports
Denver Nuggets @ Orlando Magic live 3:00 a.m. AFN/sports
Phoenix Suns @ Golden State Warriors live 5:00 a.m. AFN/sports; replay 11:00 a.m. AFN/sports
Utah Jazz @ Seattle Supersonics live 6:00 a.m. AFN/sports
Wisconsin @ Indiana replay 4:00 a.m. AFN/sports
San Antonio Spurs @ Cleveland Cavaliers replay 10:00 p.m. AFN/sports

Friday 2/15/08

North Carolina State @ Boston College live 3:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
Miami Heat @ Chicago Bulls live

4:15 a.m. AFN/sports
NASCAR Sprint Cup: Gatorade Duel replay 5:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
Dallas Mavericks @ Phoenix Suns live 6:30 a.m. AFN/sports
Stanford @ Arizona State replay 12:00 p.m. AFN/sports
Michigan @ Iowa replay 5:00 p.m. AFN/sports

Saturday 2/16/08

Atlanta Thrashers @ New Jersey Devils live 3:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
2008 NBA Celebrity Game live 3:00 a.m. AFN/sports
Columbus Blue Jackets @ Detroit Red Wings live 3:30 a.m. AFN/prime
Pittsburgh @ Marquette live 5:00 a.m. AFN/sports
Dallas Stars @ Anaheim Ducks live 6:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
Georgetown @ Syracuse live 8:00 p.m. AFN/prime
Virginia Tech @ North Carolina live 9:00 p.m. AFN/sports
NASCAR Nationwide Series: Orbitz 300 live 9:15 p.m. AFN/xtra
Louisville @ Providence live 10:00 p.m. AFN/prime

Sunday 2/17/08

Arkansas @ Mississippi State live 12:00 a.m. AFN/prime
Auburn @ Mississippi live 1:00

a.m. AFN/xtra
Texas @ Baylor live 2:00 a.m. AFN/prime
Alabama @ South Carolina live 3:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
Washington State @ Oregon live 5:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
Michigan State @ Indiana live 5:00 a.m. AFN/prime
Minnesota @ Wisconsin replay 7:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
Tennessee @ Georgia replay 9:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
Florida @ Vanderbilt replay 11:00

a.m. AFN/xtra
Oklahoma State @ Texas A&M replay 2:00 p.m. AFN/xtra
Stanford @ Arizona replay 4:30 p.m. AFN/xtra
Detroit Red Wings @ Dallas Stars live 9:00 p.m. AFN/xtra
Ohio State @ Michigan live 9:00 p.m. AFN/prime
NASCAR Sprint Series: Daytona 500 live 11:00 p.m. AFN/sports
PGA Tour: Northern Trust Open live 11:00 p.m. AFN/prime



Web Image

SUSTAINER REEL TIME THEATER

(Schedule is subject to change)

Wednesday, Feb. 13
5 p.m. Walk Hard: Dewey Cox (R)
8 p.m. Untraceable (R)

Thursday, Feb. 14
5 p.m. Untraceable (R)
8 p.m. National Treasure II

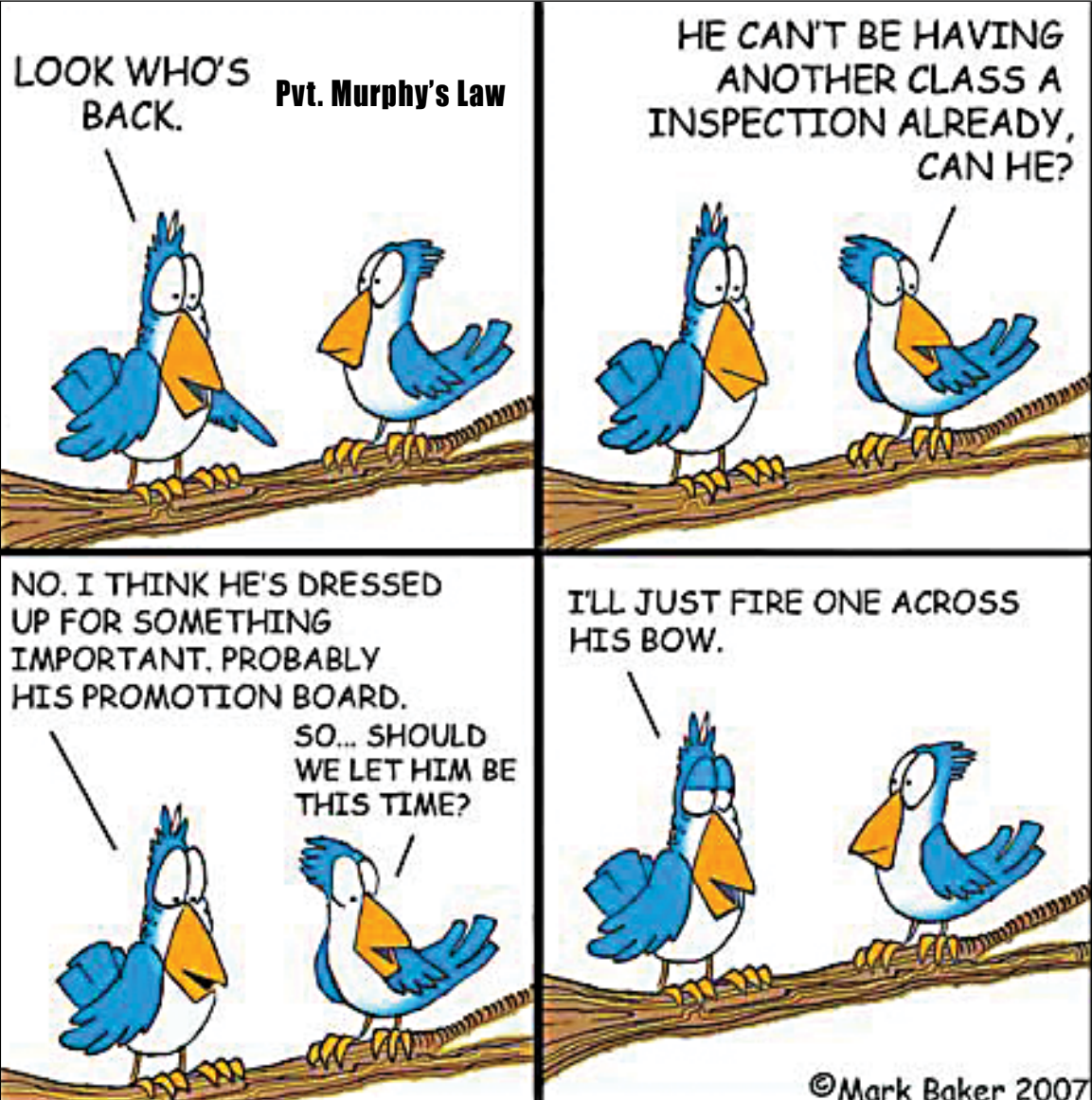
Friday, Feb. 15
2 p.m. The Waterhorse (PG)
5 p.m. One Missed Call (PG-13)
8:30 p.m. Fool's Gold (PG-13)

Saturday, Feb. 16
2 p.m. One Missed Call (PG-13)
5 p.m. Fool's Gold (PG-13)
8 p.m. The Waterhorse (PG)

Sunday, Feb. 17
2 p.m. Fool's Gold (PG-13)
5 p.m. The Waterhorse (PG)
8 p.m. One Missed Call (PG-13)

Monday, Feb. 18
5 p.m. Fool's Gold (PG-13)
8 p.m. One Missed Call (PG-13)

Tuesday, Feb. 19
5 p.m. The Waterhorse (PG)
8 p.m. Fool's Gold (PG-13)



ANACONDA ACTIVITIES

EAST FITNESS CENTER

Basketball League: Monday-Friday – 7 p.m.

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu: Monday, Wednesday, Friday – 8 p.m.

Kyu Kyu Kempo: Sunday- 2 p.m.

Modern Army combatives: Tuesday and Thursday- 8:30 p.m.

Open court volleyball: Sunday- 6 p.m.

Step Aerobics: Monday, Wednesday, Friday – 5:30 p.m.

Wrestling & physical fitness class: Tuesday- 6 p.m. and Saturday- 7 p.m.

Swing dance: Sunday- 7:30 p.m.

CIRCUIT GYM

Floor hockey: Monday, Wednesday, Friday – 8 p.m.

EAST RECREATION CENTER

8-ball tourney: Monday- 3 p.m. and 8 p.m.

9-ball tournament: Wednesday- 3 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Game Console Tourney: Thursday- 8 p.m.

Country Dance Class: Thursday- 7 p.m.

Dominoes: Friday- 8 p.m.

Karaoke: Monday- 8 p.m.

Model building: Sunday- 1 p.m.

Poetry/ open mic: Sunday- 7:30 p.m.

Poker tourney: Sunday- 6 p.m.

Salsa dance class: Saturday- 8:30 p.m.

Swing dance: Tuesday- 7 p.m.

WEST RECREATION CENTER

8-ball tourney: Wednesday- 1 p.m. and 8 p.m.

9-ball tournament: Monday- 1 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Dungeons & Dragons: Saturday- 8 p.m.

Friday nights in Balad: Friday- 8 p.m.

Karaoke: Wednesday - 8 p.m.

Hip-Hop Dance Class: Saturday- 9 p.m.

Ice Ball Tourney: Thursday- 4 p.m.

Jam Session: Tuesday, Thursday- 7:30 p.m.

Open Mic Night: Sunday- 8 p.m.

Ping pong/Foosball: Tuesday- 1 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Spades, Chess and Dominoes: Friday – 1 & 8 p.m.

Texas hold 'em: Saturday- 8 p.m.

Game Counsel Tourney: Thursday- 1 p.m. and 8 p.m.

USO, from Page 12

Multinational Force-Iraq commander.

"We are of course gathered here to celebrate the opening of the first USO facility here in Iraq, and it is a terrific one," said Petraeus. "I'm confident that the troopers located here at Balad Air Base and LSA Anaconda will flock to this facility to feel a little touch of home and to be in touch with home."

Petraeus praised the efforts of the USO staff, as well as all of the volunteers who made the opening of the facility possible.

"This facility truly is a remarkable achievement and all those involved in its construction and establishment should be very proud of it," said Petraeus. "This does indeed demonstrate that the USO is now expeditionary just as are America's forces."

In closing Powell reiterated to the hundreds of servicemembers in attendance the commitment the USO has held as a standard for the last 66 years. "It is our ongoing and enduring commitment to you that we will be here as long as you are."

ATTACK, from Page 10

Wanki saw their Iraqi counterpart was slipping even further into distress. With barely a glance, the doctor dismissed the man's condition as an apparent hang-over, said Wanki, who knew the Iraqi soldier personally and had knowledge that the man did not drink.

"The doctor said the Iraqi soldier needed time to rest. He had too much to drink; he would be fine," said Wanki.

Mutinda and Wanki urged the Doctor to give the Iraqi soldier an echocardiogram, to which the doctor reluctantly agreed.

When the results came back the doctor smugly reiterated his initial assessment.

The Iraqi soldier must be faking illness because the test results were normal.

But then something no one expected happened.

The interpreter stepped forward to look at the results of the EKG and immediately noticed a problem.

"This man is having a heart attack," said the interpreter, who also happened to be a medical student.

Mutinda and Wanki

immediately obtained the signatures needed to have the man transported to a local hospital where he received the care he needed. As it turns out, the doctor at the dispensary was actually a veterinarian.

Thanks to the persistence of two concerned Soldiers, their Iraqi counterpart is alive and well and back at work after several weeks of rest and recovery.

Recognize heart attack warning signs which include:

Chest discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts for more than a few minutes, or goes away and comes back. The discomfort can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain.

Discomfort in other areas of the upper body. Can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach.

Shortness of breath. Often comes along with chest discomfort. But it also can occur before chest discomfort.

Other symptoms may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or lightheadedness.

Army likely to meet 2008 recruiting goals

C. Todd Lopez

Army News Service

WASHINGTON- The Army is on track to meet its fiscal 2008 recruiting goal of 80,000 new active-duty Soldiers, said the U.S. Army Recruiting Command's top officer.

During testimony this morning before the Senate Armed Services Committee's military personnel subcommittee, Maj. Gen. Thomas P. Bostick, USAREC commander, told lawmakers his command is also working to help the Army Reserve meet its number.

"We are slightly behind established monthly objectives for the Army Reserve," he said. "But we are aggressively working with the Army leadership to develop the way ahead to achieve our Army Reserve mission for this year."

This year, the Army Reserve hopes to meet a recruiting goal of 26,500

new Soldiers. Maj. Gen. Bostick said one of the difficulties in meeting recruiting goals is the "incredibly challenging" recruiting environment.

"Less than three out of 10 of our nation's youth are fully qualified for service in the Army due to disqualifying medical conditions, criminal records, lack of education credentials or low aptitude test scores," he said.

Likely exacerbating the issue: the war in Afghanistan and Iraq and its affect on "influencers" of potential recruits.

"Today, parents and influencers are less likely to encourage their family members and other young adults to join the military," the general said. "Propensity -- the desire to enlist in the armed forces -- is at its lowest point in two decades."

Nevertheless, last year some 170,000 Americans stepped forward to enlist in

the Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve. Additionally, the general

said, Soldiers -- even those who are serving in or have served in combat -- are re-

enlisting.

See **RECRUIT**, Page 15



Photo by Sgt. Mary Flynn

Vice Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Richard Cody swears in new Army recruits in a ceremony at the Jefferson Memorial in Washington. On the far right, new Soldiers Paul Stuart of Fairfax, Va., and Erika Hanberry of Virginia Beach, Va., represent the Army National Guard.

Iraqi troops prepare for counter-terrorism operations



Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Joe Kane

Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Force Soldiers conduct rope training from a tower in Baghdad, Jan. 22. The training is part of an ongoing effort to prepare ICTF for counter-terrorism operations in Iraq.



Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Joe Kane

An Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Force Soldier gives trainees instructions on proper exiting of an aircraft during rope training in Baghdad, Jan. 22.



Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Joe Kane

The crew of a V22 Osprey refuels prior to flying a nighttime mission in central Iraq, February 2.

RECRUIT, from pg. 14

“Our volunteer Soldiers are re-enlisting because they believe in their nation; they believe in their flag and they believe in each other,” he told senators.

The Army has transformed the recruiting command, restructuring its 41 recruiting battalions and modifying their respective areas of responsibility.

The restructuring reduced the size of larger battalions, while increasing the size of some of the smaller ones. This corrected imbalances in mission responsibilities, Bostick said.

The restructuring also included the formation of two brigades: a special missions brigade to handle administrative functions, logistics and special missions for subordinate brigades; and a medical brigade to provide command and control for the five medical recruiting battalions.

In the medical community, the

Army is now ahead by 122 accessions this year compared to last year, the general said, indicating that changes made to the medical recruiting structure have been positive.

“This effort will ensure we have the right levels of emphasis and expertise working this critically important mission,” he said. “This remains one of our most challenging areas, but we are making significant progress.”

The Army follows Department of Defense guidelines about the quality of civilians that can be recruited into the Army.

For instance, at least 90 percent of recruits must have a high school diploma, 60 percent of recruits must score in the I-III A category or better on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery and no more than 4 percent can score category IV on the enlistment test.

In fiscal 2007, the Army fell short of the goal of ensuring that

90 percent of its recruits had a high school diploma. Instead, in fiscal 2007, only about 79 percent of recruits held diplomas. Nevertheless, the general said, the Army is recruiting quality Soldiers.

“All Soldiers in our Army are qualified to serve,” he said. “And field commanders are very pleased with the men and women now serving in their formations -- some of whom are not high school diploma graduates or may have received a waiver to serve in our Army.”

The general pointed out that about 90 percent of Soldiers in the Army have a high school diploma, compared to a national average of between 70 and 80 percent. In some areas, he said, that number is less than 50 percent.

Despite the difficult recruiting environment, Bostick told senators he believed Army recruiters could meet the challenge of

maintaining a quality volunteer Army and asked lawmakers for their continued support.

“I am confident our recruiters will maximize the resources you have given them in order to achieve our mission,” he said. “While public support for our Soldiers remains strong, we need more Americans to step forward and serve our nation -- a nation at war. I thank you for your commitment to assist Army recruiting, and ask for your continued support to encourage Americans to answer our nation’s call to duty.”



Soldiers take it to the floor with hockey



Photos by Spc. Jennifer Sierra

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq- (Above), A Soldier quickly takes a shot at the hockey ball headed in his direction in an attempt to score against the opposing team during a recent floor hockey game held at the Circuit Gym here.

(Below), The goalie for the “Belts” team attempts to stop the ball from entering the goal, but to no avail. Floor hockey is a fun, no holds barred way to get your cardiovascular work out, build some competitive camaraderie and have some fun.



Photo by Spc. Jennifer Sierra

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq- The goalie for the “No Belts” team stands ready to defend his team’s goal as the opposing team plays offense in hopes to win the game.



Photo by Photo by Spc. Jennifer Sierra
LSA ANACONDA, Iraq- Players vie for control of the hockey ball during a floor hockey game here.



Photo by Spc. Jennifer Sierra

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq- A goalie and a fellow “Belts” team member check out the opposing team before the start of a hockey game held at the Circuit Gym here Feb. 6. Anaconda residents are welcomed to play floor hockey at 8 p.m. every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at the Circuit Gym here.

