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Serving Task Force Marne

Three-day camp teaches kids basketball

STAFF SGT. TONY M. LINDBACK
3RD BCT, 101ST ABN. DIV. (AASLT)

PATROL BASE LION'S DEN – Radwaniyah area children were treated to something a little out of the ordinary when U.S. Soldiers at Patrol Base Lion's Den held a basketball camp March 20-22.

Holding a basketball camp where Soldiers could teach lessons in teamwork, discipline and hard work, resulted from Staff Sgt. Christopher Dickerson and his company commander, Capt. Sean Morrow, putting their heads together.

Dickerson and Morrow wanted Company B, 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, give back to the community and get the kids in the area together. Their idea captured the support of many company Soldiers, some of whom, like Sgt. Dwight Williams, added ideas and manpower to make the camp a hit.

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Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback

Pfc. Brandon Reischer, an infantryman with Company B, 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, does push-ups with one of the children on the last day of a three-day basketball camp at Patrol Base Lion's Den March 20-22.

Adwaniyah opens middle school, health clinic

SGT. JASON STADEL
2ND BCT, 3RD INF. DIV.

FOB KALSU – Adwaniyah citizens who were once afraid to leave their homes because of al-Qaeda in Iraq, freely gathered March 26 to celebrate the grand opening of a middle school and health clinic.

Much of the work was done using Commander's Emergency Response Program funds. Coalition forces assisted in rebuilding the school and clinic but the Government of Iraq was key to the projects' success.

The GoI has recognized the school and clinic and will keep teachers and medical professionals working at each

location.

One Soldier at Patrol Base Dolby, near Adwaniyah, is pleased to see the Iraqis taking charge of their community and said educating Iraq's children is essential to rebuilding Iraq.

"They will eventually inherit this country," said 2nd Lt. Steven Kim, a platoon leader in Troop B, 6th Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. "Giving the kids an education will help them learn how to make their country better."

A Ministry of Health doctor said the clinic will offer Adwaniyah residents basic medical care such as preventive medicine, vaccinations and maternal

care and treat minor dental problems and basic illnesses.

"We all want to do what we can to address some of the medical needs in Adwaniyah," Dr. Saud Abdullah said. "This clinic will help Adwaniyah."

For major surgeries and traumas, residents will still need to go to hospitals in Mahmudiyah and Baghdad.

Happiness at improving their city was apparent as citizens smiled and shook hands with U.S. and Iraqi Soldiers and GoI officials.

Kim said it was a good day for the troops. "You get to know the people," said the Los Angeles native. "I'm happy for them; it's good to see their community improve."

CAMP: *Children learn teamwork, discipline and hard work*

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Williams, originally from Birmingham, Ala., has a brother who holds a basketball camp at home every summer. Williams said he tries to make it to the camp to help each year, but donates \$500 to sponsor five children when he can't be there.

"Being over here this time, I got to work with the Iraqi kids and I felt just like I was back at home," Williams said. "I was able to give back to the community."

Giving back to Radwaniyah has involved more than just teaching basketball. One sheikh said the security the Americans had established was the first gift to the community.

"Thanks to God, the Iraqi Army and the Coalition forces, the security is very good," said Sheikh Hameed Shalal Al-Tharib, a local leader in Radwaniyah. "That makes a good situation where our kids can play soccer, or come here and learn basketball."

Teaching the children basketball, an American game, instead of soccer - a much more common game in Iraq - had its purpose. The Soldiers wanted to share American culture, but they also wanted to get everyone on common ground, starting off as beginners. They brought in Iraqi Army Soldiers and sheikhs to give the youth figures to look to for learning.

"We wanted to bring them in and have the IA with us so they could serve as good role models," said Atlanta native, 1st Lt. Trivius Caldwell, 3rd Platoon leader for Co. B, 2-69th Armor Regt. "We wanted to teach them basic elements of life - teamwork, discipline, hard work - things of that nature. I think we accom-

plished that."

Williams said he felt the Iraqi children may have had a misunderstanding of why Americans are in Iraq and the basketball camp was one way to show them what kind of people Americans really are.

"The kids really enjoyed it because they had heard about Americans," Williams said. "But there's a big difference between hearing about us and standing there with us and shaking our hands. I think they really enjoyed that more than the basketball camp - getting to interact with us."

Eighteen children showed up for the first day of the three-day camp, 27 came on the second day and there were 47 by the last day.

"It's just like spreading the word back home; if one kid likes it, he's going to tell a friend and then he'll tell a friend," Williams said. "We were just glad to have so many kids come out."

The children formed teams and played a championship game at the culmination of camp, allowing them to show off what they had learned. They were then treated to a cookout and given awards. Twenty-five children got one more thing, something they held dearly as they walked away



Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback

With the ball, Spc. Cortez Cox, a water purification specialist, and Staff Sgt. Howard Benjamin, a section leader, both with Company B, 2-69th Armor Regt., 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT), teach Radwaniyah children how to defend and take the ball away during day two of a three-day basketball camp at Patrol Base Lion's Den.

- their very own Quran.

"In my brother's camp (in Birmingham) we give out Bibles," Williams said. "Here, a lot of families don't have Qurans, so we gave out Qurans ... Giving out a Quran is letting them know, 'I respect your religion, just like I respect mine.'"

Local sheikhs happily brought the Qurans in at the request of Morrow.

"It's a great thing to give the Quran to the children at the end of the basketball camp," Sheikh Al-Tharib said. "We want to teach our kids about more than sports ... Since the people here are poor, it's good that each kid can now have his own Quran - something his family maybe didn't have before."

THE Dog Face Daily

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4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division
3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division
214th Fires Brigade
7th Sustainment Brigade
720th Military Police Battalion
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

U.S. Soldiers restore honor to Old Glory

SGT. 1ST CLASS STACY NILES
214TH FB

FOB DELTA – More than 150 U.S. Soldiers and civilians restored honor to a U.S. flag that lay lonely and forgotten on the grounds of a Georgia apartment complex for almost a week in February.

The flag was retrieved by a passer-by who could not stand seeing the flag treated in such a manner.

Having passed the discarded flag twice, Dan Turner took the flag the third time he saw it lying on the ground and sent it to his friend Chief Warrant Officer Thomas Golden of the Joint Forces Headquarters Forward, Georgia National Guard.

After taking the flag, Turner e-mailed Golden and asked if he would fly the flag at Forward Operating Base Delta, Iraq. Turner cleaned the flag and shipped it to Golden who was more than happy to restore the flag's honor before returning it to Turner.

"The U.S. flag for me is more than just a piece of cloth to be flown or displayed as a matter of convenient patriotism or decoration. It is the one true symbolic representation of what our nation and her principles stand for," Golden said. "Also, many great men and women have served in uniform, and in many cases, died for advancing freedom and democracy as well as the preservation and perpetuation of our freedom, liberty and way of life we enjoy every day which our flag symbolizes.

"It's our flag, and people don't always pay the respect it's due," he said.

Turner and Golden, who have been friends for more than 16 years, share a strong sense of patriotism which is shown annually on Memorial Day weekend when they drive to Marietta National Cemetery to place wreaths on

the graves of Turner's father and brother. Turner's father fought in World War II and his brother died in Vietnam at the Battle of Hue. Turner's mother served in the U.S. Marine Corps during World War II.

After placing the wreaths on the graves, Golden and Turner walk the entire cemetery to pick up and replace any flags that may have fallen after being placed by Boy Scouts.

"Dan and I feel as though no flag, no matter how small or great, can be left upon the ground if we have the ability to take action and correct the situation," Golden said, "which is exactly what Dan did by 'rescuing' the current flag.

"Unfortunately, our society has come to take for granted the sacrifices that have been made throughout our history to ensure our way of life will survive and endure no matter the source or location of the threat. It is for these and many other reasons I feel so strongly that our flag should never be allowed to be desecrated in any form or fashion," he said.

To restore the flag's honor, Golden and Soldiers from 214th Fires Brigade organized a flag-raising ceremony March 22 attended by Soldiers and civilians.

"I'm really thankful that a lot of folks came out," Golden said. "What made it even better was its simplicity. People came because they wanted to and they came out of respect."

The ceremony offered a way for those who believe in the flag to be united, said Chap. (Maj.) Michael Hoffman, the 214th FB chaplain.

"I appreciated this citizen taking the time to remember and act on what the flag stands for," Hoffman said. "Being a part of the ceremony and restoring honor is just a way for us to be included



Sgt. 1st Class Stacy Niles

More than 150 U.S. Soldiers and civilians attended a flag-raising ceremony at Forward Operating Base Delta, Iraq, March 22.

with him in honoring both the flag and our nation.

"I wonder what people were thinking, but I am grateful for this man taking the time to do something. I am inspired by him taking the initiative to do something," said Hoffman of those who allowed the flag to remain on the ground. "You can say how you feel about this country, but this guy proved it by what he did."

Turner was charged with theft for taking the flag, but he expresses no regrets in doing what he did.

"I wanted to make this issue a statement and I'm willing to bear the consequence of my actions to the sheriff as directed by the judge or the property owner," said Turner in his letter. "There is no excuse for common theft, yet I felt compelled to take action now and worry about the consequences later.

Safety Thought of the Day

Humvee Hot Weather Operation Tips

- Wear gloves when handling metal surfaces or steering wheels exposed to long durations of direct sunlight.
- Ensure battery and radiator fluids are properly serviced.
- Clean air filters and radiator fins daily when operating under extreme temperatures.
- Keep air conditioner fins free from dirt and sand.
- Censure tires are serviceable and inflated to correct psi.
- Humvee grills must remain clear of items to help prevent the vehicle from overheating.
- Allow engine to idle prior to shut down to allow cool down time with extreme heat.

Headline Highlights

Grave used for stress relief; lack of ammo; runaway SUV

Vicar offers grave stress relief

BERLIN (Reuters) - A vicar in Germany who had the novel idea of helping parishioners escape the stresses and strains of daily life by letting them lie in an open grave was upset when intrusive journalists spoiled the atmosphere.

"I meant it as a meditative exercise," pastor Thorsten Nolting told Reuters. "I wanted people to think about what weighs on them down in the darkness and gather the energy to resist it."

Nolting, from the western German city of Duesseldorf, said his plan went "horribly wrong" when journalists' persistent questioning as parishioners were "laid to rest" earlier this week ruined the serenity of the occasion.

"It wasn't silent, as it should have been. They ruined it. (They) would not go away, even when I asked them," he said.

Extraverts who could cope with the incessant questioning were happy to climb down into the two meter long hole, and then rave about their "resurrection," Nolting said.

But a local newspaper said one man was still shaking, 20 minutes after his seven-minute spell in the dank grave ended.

Marksmen with no ammo threaten Olympics boycott

MUMBAI, India (Reuters) - India's marksmen are threatening to boycott the Beijing Olympics unless the govern-

ment steps in to help alleviate a shortage of ammunition for training.

The nation's leading medal prospects for the August Games are in shooting, with Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore fancied to bring home a gold medal after winning a double trap silver four years ago in Athens.

However, the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) secretary Baljit Singh Sethi said a shortage of ammunition for air weapon competitors was hampering preparations.

On Friday, Sethi was quoted in the local media as saying the government provided the NRAI with all ammunition for 23 years but stopped doing so two and a half years ago.

"I don't think it will be worthwhile sending the shooters to the Olympics. The damage has been done. I will take the issue up in our next general body meeting next month," Sethi said.

"It's a pity that the shooters were the best medal hopes and they are treated so shabbily."

Over the years, the NRAI depended on the sports ministry for equipment but recently, the government instructed the federation to import ammunition itself.

"They informed us on December 13 that we have to apply for the import license," Sethi said.

A shooting official told Reuters on Friday they were unaware of the correct procedure for the import of ammunition and the cost was also a restrictive factor. Despite being the world's second-

most populous nation, India has only won four individual medals in Olympic history since they sent their first team to the Summer Games in 1928.

Runaway contractor SUV knocks man off his toilet

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) - A New Zealand man got the fright of his life when a runaway SUV crashed into his house and knocked him off the toilet, a newspaper reported Friday.

The vehicle had been parked with its emergency brake only half on, and rolled backward down a 32 foot bank into the house Thursday in the southern city of Christchurch, "The Press" newspaper reported.

Police said a building contractor working next door had parked the vehicle at the top of the bank minutes earlier.

"He came back to his vehicle and found it next door, basically," Christchurch police Sgt. Kim Reid was quoted as saying.

The paper said that when the homeowner was asked how the builder might be feeling, he said: "What about me? I got knocked off the toilet. I got a hell of a fright."

The man asked not to be named because he is selling the house and did not want the incident to interfere with the sale.

Police said no charges would be filed because the incident occurred on private property.

Sudoku

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

from Sudoku Easy Presented by Will Shortz

Solution to yesterday's puzzle:

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

ARABIC WORD OF THE DAY

bomb

kun-boo-leh