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Serving Task Force Marne

Foreign-born troops become U.S. citizens

SGT. JASMINE CHOPRA
MND-C PAO

CAMP VICTORY – Two hundred fifty-nine foreign-born U.S. troops currently serving throughout Iraq became American citizens at al-Faw Palace here April 12, in the largest naturalization ceremony to date in Iraq.

Among the newest citizens were several Soldiers who entered the United States as refugees from war-torn nations, including Spc. Simon Nbenye, an Arabic interpreter with Company D, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

Born in war-ravaged Sudan, a place where youth are sometimes snatched from their homes and forced to fight as child soldiers in a bloody civil war, Nbenye and his family faced religious and racial persecution from the Arab-Islamic government.

"The situation was terrible for my family," Nbenye said. "No jobs, no finances and too, too much violence."

Part of the Nbenye family, including Simon, moved to the Sudanese capital, while other family members stayed south in the town of Maridi. Fearing his son would be forced to become a soldier, Nbenye's father urged his son to flee Sudan.

"They go to your home, knock on your door and ask your father where you are. If he refuses to get you, they kill him, get you and put you in the army. There is no guarantee you'll ever make it back home alive and they send you down to kill your own

Congressmen visit Yusifiyah



Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback

Pennsylvania Congressman Todd Platts walks the streets of Yusifiyah with his arm around Pittsburgh native Capt. Michael Starz, commander of Company C, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), next to Massachusetts Congressman Stephen Lynch and Milwaukee native Lt. Col. Andrew Rohling, commander of 3-187th Inf., while conducting a visit to see the progress being made in Iraq April 13.

"When they granted me refugee status, it gave me so much hope. It meant for me a chance to start a new life in a safe place."

– Spc. Simon Nbenye
1-30th Inf. Regt.

people," Nbenye said. "I had friends from school who were captured, sent to fight and I have never seen them again."

Travelling illegally through several countries in Africa including the

Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and Egypt, Nbenye finally connected with the United Nations office in Cairo and gained refugee status. He entered the United States legally in 2001.

"When they granted me refugee status, it gave me so much hope," Nbenye said. "It meant for me a chance to start a new life in a safe place."

In 2006, upon hearing the Army needed Arabic speakers to help with the Global War on Terrorism, Nbenye, fluent in Arabic, enlisted.

"America did something good for my life and my family by accepting

See CITIZENS, page 2



Sgt. Jasmine Chopra

Two hundred fifty-nine foreign-born U.S. troops currently serving throughout Iraq became American citizens at al-Faw Palace on Camp Victory April 12, in the largest naturalization ceremony to date in Iraq.

CITIZENS

From previous page

me, so I decided I want to do something for the American people, to show them I am grateful," Nbenye said.

Until he came to the United States, he had never truly experienced freedom, Nbenye said. "My whole life, there is war in my country. No peace, never knowing for sure if you go out, you'll come back home. In America things are different. I feel safe."

Now that he is a citizen, Nbenye hopes to get a better job, visit his fam-

ily in Sudan and help them become American citizens too.

More than 40,000 service members are not American citizens, according to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). These foreign-born men and women have pledged commitment to the U.S. Constitution by serving in the military and many are availing themselves of a July 2002 executive order making members of the Armed Forces immediately eligible to apply for citizenship.

Nearly 5,000 service members have earned U.S. citizenship while serving abroad since 2004.

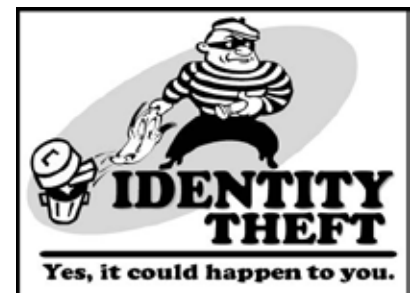
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More information about identity theft can be found at <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/microsites/idtheft/> or you can contact your servicing legal assistance office.



Web Image

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214th Fires Brigade
7th Sustainment Brigade
720th Military Police Battalion
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Sewing center opens, provides employment

STAFF SGT. CARLOS J. LAZO
214TH FB

AL-KUT – A women's sewing center officially opened in Muafiqiyah village April 10, providing both employment and training for female residents.

The center will serve as a means for local women to earn income to support their families, said Sgt. Amanda E. Timmer, head of the Women's Initiatives program for the Wasit Provincial Reconstruction Team.

The center employs 11 women from the village, one for each sewing machine. Eventually these women will take apprentices, doubling the workforce, said Timmer.

"The plan is not only to employ women, but to train them, provide them a skill," Timmer said.

Selection for the initial group was specifically aimed at single mothers whose spouses had died and who had no other means to provide for their families, said Timmer.

This is the first project in Muafiqi-

"The plan is not only to employ women, but to train them, provide them a skill."

– Sgt. Amanda E. Timmer
Wasit PRT

yah the PRT has undertaken, said Timmer, and was used to establish a relationship with the village.

The project resulted from collaboration between local leaders in the village, the PRT and the Wasit Provincial Council.

The initial assessment took place in early March, after Hadi al-Yasiri, a member of the council and a contractor the PRT had worked with before, asked the PRT to visit Muafiqiyah, his hometown.

The sewing center was nothing more than an empty building next to the mayor's office, said Lt. Col. Robert Jones, PRT deputy team leader. After the assessment, a complete refurbishment of the center was conducted over the course of ten days by al-Yasiri.

Timmer said the sewing center will be overseen and run by Ahmad Nouri Ali al-Yasiri, head of the Muafiqiyah local council. All the materials currently at the center where provided by the council and will be used by the



Staff Sgt. Carlos J. Lazo

Sgt. Amanda E. Timmer, head of the Women's Initiative for the Wasit Provincial Reconstruction Team, speaks with an Iraqi woman with the help of an interpreter at the new women's sewing center at Muafiqiyah, Iraq.

women to create clothing, she said.

The clothing produced by the women will be sold locally and - if there is a demand - at the al-Kut markets, said al-Yasiri. The council will oversee sales, with part of the profits going to maintain the center, fund operations and purchase materials.

The remaining income will be handed over to the women to support their families. In this way, Timmer said, the center not only supports the women, but allows them to contribute to the community.

Safety Thought of the Day

Why Report Accidents?

• **Army Accident:** an accident that results in injury/illness to either Army or Non-Army personnel or damage to Army or Non-Army property as a result of Army operations (caused by the Army).

• **Purpose:**

- Identify accident cause factors and

system deficiencies.

- Assess manpower and monetary losses due to accidents.
- Collect accident data to develop accident prevention measures.
- Prevention only (not to be used for litigation claims, disciplinary action or adverse administration actions).

The Investigation Determines:

What Happened? Caused Factors

- HUMAN ERROR/MISTAKE
- MATERIAL FAILURE
- ENVIRONMENTAL FACTOR



Why Did It Happen?

- SYSTEM INADEQUACY
- ROOT CAUSE



WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

- FIXES
- CONTROL MEASURES
- COUNTERMEASURES

Headline Highlights

Man eats 35 dozen oysters; 35 cent gas accidentally priced

Oy! Eating champ downs 35 dozen oysters

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Patrick “Deep Dish” Bertoletti looked down at the litter of empty oyster shells in front of him and savored the sweet taste of victory. For Crazy Legs Conti, the bitter taste of defeat could be washed away only by beer.

The Acme World Oyster Eating championship belt — leather, with a silver dish featuring an oyster on the half-shell — hung on Bertoletti’s skinny hips. The 22-year-old Chicago resident took the title Saturday by slurping 35 dozen of the big bivalves in eight minutes.

“I could probably do a couple dozen more, especially if they were char-broiled,” said Bertoletti, who holds the endurance oyster-eating record, having downed 53 1/2 dozen in 2007 before calling it quits. “Although they’re great raw.”

Conti, the defending champion, tied for third, sucking down 24 dozen.

“They’re supposed to be an aphrodisiac,” said Conti, whose real name is Crazy Legs. “But I think that’s only true for about the first three dozen. When you get up higher than that, you don’t want much activity for a while.”

Juliet Lee, 43, of Germantown, Md., formerly a Ninjing University chemistry professor, methodically polished off 31 1/2 dozen for second

place.

A dozen professional eaters who compete in Major League Eaters events year-round squared off at the French Quarter Festival on Saturday.

Major League Eating describes itself as a sports franchise that oversees all professional competitive eating events and competitive eating television specials. It puts on the annual Nathan’s Hot Dog eating contest, as well as other events, such as the World Deep-Fried Asparagus Eating Championship and the National Sweet Corn Eating Championship.

Rules for the oyster tournament forced contestants to use forks, not lift the shells to their mouth, and to finish all the oysters from a tray before starting a new one.

Officials in striped shirts stood beside each contestant and flipped a counter as each dozen was consumed.

Many of the competitors wore gloves to handle the shells; all carried several bottles of water, cold drinks or beer to help them keep their mouths and throats lubricated. Lee carried a thermos of hot water but said she didn’t feel the need for it.

“Oysters are pretty liquid,” said Lee, who weighs 105 pounds despite being on the pro-eating tour for the past year. “I didn’t need it.”

Tim “Gravy” Brown — ranked 13th in the world — was disqualified when he had what professional eaters call a “reversal of fortune.” He vomited af-

ter 14 dozen.

Scott “Scozzy Bone” Zukowski, 20, a Tulane University student from New York’s Long Island was in his first professional event. He ate 20 dozen.

“I feel good about that; my goal was 15 dozen,” Zukowski said. “I had only eaten one raw oyster in my life before this and I thought I’d vomit after it. I hate them.”

Drivers flood station for 35 cent gas

WILMINGTON, N.C. (AP) — Traffic was backed up and police were called to control the crowd after a Wilmington gas station accidentally set the pump price at 35 cents a gallon.

The Wilmington Star-News reported Friday that hundreds of drivers flooded a BP station for the cheap gas after the price dropped around 9 a.m. Thursday.

Station employee Shane Weller said the price for premium gasoline was supposed to be \$3.35 a gallon. He complained that customers paid the cheaper price all day without saying a word.

It was all the extra traffic that led station employees to the mistake around 6 p.m. They found it after calling their district manager, looking for permission to changing the price as a way of stemming the flow of customers.

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from Sudoku Easy Presented by Will Shortz

Solution to Saturday’s puzzle:

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

ARABIC QUESTION OF THE DAY

what?

shih-noo?