

Marne Focus

www.TaskForceMarne.com



Volume 1, Issue 27 April 10, 2008

Serving Task Force Marne and MND-Center



Health care for locals.....P. 4
Security restored.....P. 5
Honoring Old Glory.....P. 8
Remembering a hero.....P. 12



MEDEVAC unit supports fight. Page 5



Army, Air Force build up COP. Page 9



Access to clean water on the rise. Page 7



Photo courtesy of 3-1 Cav. Regt.

Third Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment Soldiers conduct an operation March 29 in Jisr Diyala, Iraq. With assistance from Coalition forces, the Jisr Diyala Iraqi Police and local members of Sons of Iraq, the 3rd Brigade, 1st National Police Division detained four criminals and recovered two rocket-propelled grenade launchers, five RPG warheads, 37 AK-47 assault rifles and 18 magazines.

CF, ISF combined operation yields results

By SGT. NATALIE ROSTEK
3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

FOB HAMMER, Iraq – Policemen from 3rd Brigade, 1st National Police Division, led by Col. Emad, organized and executed a clearing operation March 29 in Jisr Diyala, a town east of Baghdad.

With assistance from 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team's National Police Transition Team; the Jisr Diyala Iraqi Police; and local members of the Sons of Iraq, the 3/1 NP detained four criminals and recovered two rocket-propelled grenade launchers, five RPG warheads, 37 AK-47 assault rifles and 18 magazines.

"This was a planned operation that showed the NP re-establishing security in Jisr Diyala and the local government supporting security," said Capt. Chardon Hyde, from Port Angeles, Wash., assistant operations officer for 3-1 Cav. Regt.

According to Capt. Damond Davis, from Montgomery, Ala., fire support officer for 3-1 Cav. Regt., Jisr Diyala has been peaceful over the past several months allowing Coalition

forces and the Government of Iraq to conduct electricity, water, sewage and road projects improving the area.

Criminal activity increased in Jisr Diyala recently, he said. Coalition forces, ISF and Sol were engaged with direct fire multiple times in the past week.

"The operation allowed us to clear these weapons out of the area to deny the extremists the ability to conduct these types of attacks in the

"The operation allowed us to clear these weapons out of the area to deny extremists the ability to conduct these types of attacks in the future."

— Capt. Damond Davis
3-1 Cav. Regt.

future," Davis said.

According to 1st Lt. Christopher Scogin, from San Antonio, Texas, assistant information officer for 3-1 Cav. Regt., squadron leaders received reports from credible local sources indicating criminals were staging operations from Jisr Diyala.

"This operation highlights the ISF's ability to work with Coalition forces and quickly act on credible intelligence to deny extremists the ability to conduct attacks," he said.

The 3-1 Cav. Regt., 3rd HBCT, 3rd Infantry Division, from Fort Benning, Ga. has been deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom since March 2007.

Like the stories
you've seen in the
Marne Focus?

THE
MARNE
FORWARD

Search for "Marne Forward"
on www.dvidshub.net
or watch on the Pentagon
Channel every other weekend
Sat. - 1:30 p.m. (EST)



Marne 6 sends

Heroes to the left and right

Selfless service, courage up and down the ranks

Last week we commemorated the fifth anniversary of the death of SFC Paul R. Smith, an engineer who gave his life while completing the mission and taking care of his Soldiers. Paul's bravery to man a 50 caliber machine gun and kill 50 insurgents, saved the lives of at least 100 of his fellow brothers in arms.

Paul was the first Operation Iraqi Freedom Medal of Honor winner, and more importantly, he was a Dog Face Soldier.

The 3rd Infantry Division has 51 Medal of Honor recipients from Audie Murphy to Paul Smith, but every day when I see you on the battlefield, I feel blessed to

*All of the success
on this battlefield
is because of you
— you affect its
change on a daily
basis.*

command today's heroes.

To me, the definition of a hero is the Soldier who eulogizes his buddy at a memorial service. By the end, he is crying and the whole chapel is crying because we miss the Soldiers that pay the ultimate sacrifice. But at the end of the memorial or the very next day, that Soldier puts on his body armor, and goes on a mission to take the fight to the enemy. That's a true hero and our battlefield is full of them.

In the recent months, the Iraqis have stepped up to the plate. The Sons of Iraq are truly men of courage. They were sick of insurgents attacking into their neighborhoods, and despite the fear, they stood up and said, "I've had enough — I am go-



Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch
Task Force Marne Commander

ing to protect my own area." In areas such as Adwaniyah and Hawr Rajab, Al Qaeda fought back, but ultimately the Sons of Iraq prevailed and reclaimed their neighborhoods. These are truly men of courage.

In recent weeks, the Iraqi Security Forces have proven themselves the defenders of their own nation. During the increased Shia violence, Iraqi Army, Iraqi Police, and National Police preserved their way of life by taking the fight to the Shia

extremists trying to inflict violence to the relative calm. The Iraqi Security Forces quelled the violence and proved their professionalism. They rose to the challenge and handled the situation without Coalition Force help. We were poised to assist, but they didn't need us. In fact, some leaders fired subordinates who could not stand the test. The Iraqi military is growing stronger every day, and much of that is the result of our transition teams and partnering units. They learn because they watch you — they watch how you walk in formation, how you carry your weapon, and how you train to fight. They want to be like you.

The Iraqi people are also becoming our heroes. While the increase in Shia violence could have sent them back into their homes, forced them to close their markets, or propelled them to pick up their weapons and fight, many of them organized pro Government of Iraq rallies to support the Government of Iraq and their Iraqi Security Forces. They weren't scared because they have control of their areas, and know they are safe.

All of the success on this battlefield is because of you — you affect its change on a daily basis. I am proud of each of you, and humbled to serve alongside of you.

You all are my heroes.

ROCK OF THE MARNE!



Marne Focus

TASK FORCE MARNE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE
Commanding General — Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch
Command Sergeant Major — Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse L. Andrews Jr.

Task Force Marne Public Affairs Staff
TF Marne PAO — Lt. Col. Randy Martin
TF Marne PA NCOIC — Master Sgt. Marcia Triggs

Editorial Staff
Managing Editor — Master Sgt. Marcia Triggs
Editor — Sgt. Michael Connors
Layout — Sgt. Jasmine Chopra
Contributing Writers — Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback, Staff Sgt. Carlos Lazo, Sgt. Benjamin Brody, Spc. Emily J. Wilsoncroft
Graphics — Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback, Spc. Emily J. Wilsoncroft

Contributing Units
2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division
3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division
4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division
3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division
3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault)
214th Fires Brigade
7th Sustainment Brigade
720th Military Police Battalion
Mobile Unit 6 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Battalion
Task Force Liberty
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Marne Focus is an authorized publication for members of Task Force Marne and its support assets in accordance with Army Regulation 360-1. Contents of Marne Focus are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or Task Force Marne. All editorial content of Marne Focus is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the Task Force Marne Public Affairs Office. This publication can be found at www.dvidshub.net. Contact the editor, Sgt. Michael Connors, at michael.connors@iraq.centcom.mil.

MARNE HISTORY

PROVIDED BY DR. JUDITH F. BROWN
HISTORIAN, 3RD INF. DIV.

Five years ago this week, 3ID captured Baghdad in Operation Iraqi Freedom I.

The culminations of OIF I came five years ago this week in April 2003 when the Third Infantry Division captured Baghdad. Earlier, on 4 April elements of the 1st Brigade, 3ID had taken Saddam International Airport west of the city and renamed it Baghdad International Airport (BIAP). And on 5 April, in two Thunder Runs, 3ID Task Forces had entered downtown Baghdad before withdrawing to the west and linking with the 1st Brigade.

The decisive engagement of OIF I came during 7-9 April. On the 7th the 3ID's 2d Brigade advanced into central Baghdad and occupied several buildings, including Saddam's Republican Palace. The key decision made at this time was to remain in the city overnight, in spite of a devastating missile attack on the brigade's TOC, heavy fire against resupply operations, and especially heavy contact at Objective Curly on Highway 8, now more commonly called the Airport Road. Objective Curly was one of three overpasses (with Objectives Moe and Larry) at east-west intersections over the north-south Highway 8 from brigade objectives south to OBJ SAINTS. TF "China" of the 3-15 Infantry, commanded by LTC Stephen Twitty, had the mission of seizing and keeping these intersections to protect lines of communication in order to support the 2d Brigade's main effort to destroy Saddam's Medina Division. A/3-15 IN seized Objective Moe, the most northern, B/1-64 AR seized Objective Larry in the center, B/3-15 IN (-) was opcon to the Brigade, and Team Zan took Objective Curly. All the teams had to fight their way into position and quickly under intense direct and indirect fire. On OBJ Moe the Gators fired 6 danger close mortar and artillery missions, destroyed more than 60 vehicles and as many as 200 enemy infantry. On OBJ Larry Team Rage fired 2 danger close 155 artillery missions, destroyed more than 60 vehicles and 250 enemy infantry.

try.

On Objective Curly Team Zan, a pick-up team consisting of a single Mech Infantry platoon, an Engineer squad, the mortar platoon, a Scout section, and the TF Command Sergeant Major with an M88 and a HMMWV, was commanded by CPT Zan Hornbuckle. The enemy at CURLY turned out to be Jihadists, who attacked incessantly for 12-14 hours, firing small arms and RPGs from buildings, trenches, bunkers, and rubble along side the cloverleaf intersection. They charged the US positions in taxis, cars, trucks with heavy machine guns mounted, and even in motorcycles with recoilless rifles tied to the side cars. They drove cars loaded with explosives at high speed towards the US positions, hoping to take Americans with them when they exploded. Team Zan used the TF 120mm mortar platoon in direct lay mode, called for 3 danger close 155 artillery missions, destroyed dozens of vehicles and 100 enemy infantry. Had OBJ Curly been overrun, the rest of TF 3-15 IN and two armor task forces further north would have been isolated deep within the city. After 8 hours of fighting TF "China" regained control of B/3-15 and the Barbarians moved to Curly to assume control of the fight. Quick counterattacks and the surge of combat power pushed the enemy back, allowing the TF to accomplish its mission. Objectives Moe, Larry and Curly continued to be held for the next few days.

On 9 April Baghdad fell and in the most famous picture from that time, a huge statue of Saddam Hussein was pulled down from its base. This all would have happened eventually, but the tenacity of TF 3-15 at Objectives Moe, Larry and Curly abbreviated the strategic time line of the war by days, if not weeks, and showed them to be true successors to the 3ID soldiers who held the line of the Marne in World War I, stormed through the Siegfried Line in World War II, and secured Line Kansas this week in 1951 in Korea.

MARNE JUSTICE COURTS MARTIAL RESULTS

In case you thought crimes were not prosecuted just because we live and work in a combat zone, think again!

Recently concluded courts-martials of 3rd Inf. Div. Soldiers include the following:

In *United States v. Collamore*, Staff Sgt. Ryan Collamore, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Inf. Div., was convicted for violating a lawful regulation, two specifications of violating a lawful General Order, and one violation of solicitation for purchasing, consuming, and selling alcohol to his subordinates. Collamore was sentenced to be reduced to Private First Class, to be confined for four months, and to forfeit \$895 per month for two months.

In a separate court-martial of *United States v. Brindisi*, Pfc. Brindisi,

4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., was convicted of attempting to steal property, leaving his guard duty without authority, making a false official statement and three specifications of larceny.

Brindisi was sentenced to be reduced to E-1, to be confined for twenty-one months and to be dishonorably discharged.



Humanitarian aid continues in Wasit

BY STAFF SGT. CARLOS J. LAZO
214th FB PAO

AL KUT, Iraq – Coalition forces distributed food and wheelchairs in two villages around al Kut April 2.

Salvadoran Soldiers from the Cuscatlán Battalion distributed 350 bags of food, each containing a 15-day supply, to a village near Shaikh Sa'ad and the village of al Sheeb.

"We are always trying to help as much as possible," said Col. Walter M. Arévalo, commander of the Cuscatlán Battalion X rotation. Twelve wheelchairs were provided to the residents of the villages.

"You have residents with problems of mobility, who've had this problem for a while," Arévalo said. "Something as simple as providing a wheelchair can be a big difference."

The distribution comes after several days of skirmishes between Iraqi Security Forces and criminals in al Kut.

"After the recent period of tension in al Kut," Arévalo said, "the population could not go out because of the affects of the conflict, but we cannot forget about the population."

Along with the food distribution, representatives from the Cuscatlán Battalion's Civil Military Cooperation



Salvadoran Col. Walter M. Arévalo, commander of the Cuscatlán Battalion X rotation, gives supplies to a local Iraqi boy in a village near Shaikh Sa'ad, Iraq April 2. A total of 350 bags were distributed among the residents of a village near Shaikh Sa'ad and the village of al Sheeb, each containing a 15-day supply of food.

team and the Wasit Provincial Reconstruction Team discussed possible projects for the villages with local leaders.

The small village near Shaikh Sa'ad

is home to 70 families and a primary school for boys and girls. The school is used by five surrounding villages, with approximately 300 students. Future proj-



Salvadoran Col. Walter M. Arévalo, commander of the Cuscatlán Battalion X rotation, and a local leader survey the dirt road leading to a school in a village near Shaikh Sa'ad, Iraq.

ects considered include refurbishing the school, fixing the roof and paving a road from the main road directly to the school.

Abu Amer residents receive medical care

By Sgt. 1st Class Tami Hillis
4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

FOB KALSU, Iraq – Residents of Abu Amer, a small village in the Wasit province of Iraq, received medical assistance March 28 from Coalition forces during a medical civil action program designed to provide basic primary care.

Using a school as a makeshift clinic, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, attached to 1st Battalion, 76th Field Artillery, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, secured the area before announcing, via loudspeaker, the opportunity for residents to receive health care and humanitarian assistance.

Once word of the MEDCAP was broadcast, people began to pour in from the streets, forming a line just outside the school.

Maj. Howard Curlin, 703rd Brigade Support Battalion surgeon; Capt. Jacob Turnquist, 4th BCT surgeon; and Maj. Marilyn Lazarz, an Army public health nurse with Company B, 415th Civil Affairs, led the team examining, diagnosing, treating and advising the patients, along with the help of nine medics.

At the initial screening station, combat medics, assisted by translators, interviewed each patient for medical history and previous treatments and noted his or her ailment on a slip of paper.

Then the medics measured each patient's vital signs – pulse, temperature and blood pressure.

"The locals who were seen at the medical event were grateful for the medical care provided to them by the doctors, medics and nurse," said Lazarz, who has been a public health nurse for 18 years. "Coalition forces continue to build relationships with the locals and continue to make a difference in their everyday lives."

As the day continued, medical personnel saw 212 patients, ranging from infants to elderly, with various ailments. Medical issues ranged from common joint and back pain to infections and gastrointestinal disorders.

"We're only equipped with a limited supply of medications," said Turnquist, a pediatrician by trade. "We know going in there that we're potentially going to see hundreds of people."

Most of the medications



Capt. Jacob Turnquist, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division surgeon, checks out a patient during a medical civil action program in Abu Amer, a small village in the Wasit province of Iraq, March 28.

handed out were over-the-counter medicines, said the Rockford, Ill. native. Cold medicines, multivitamins, antibiotics and topical medicines for rashes were also distributed.

Each patient received an evaluation, treatment, medicine if needed and humanitarian assistance – food, soccer balls, beanie babies, candy—donated by various Soldiers in the support battalion, said Capt. Casey Woody, commander of Company C, 703rd BSB.

"We went in there assessing what the people were coming in with, what complaints they had, what their age range was and what their demographics were," Turnquist said. "That information itself is help-

"I think we're doing a lot of things, and we're working in the right direction with the ePRT (embedded Provincial Reconstruction team) and civil affairs ... We know we're not going to fix this problem in a year, but we want to get them on the right start."

— Capt. Casey Woody
Company C, 703rd BSB

ful hopefully down the road when we can provide that to the Ministry of Health to see if they can get more long-term medical support to that area."

Overall, Woody felt the MEDCAP achieved its objective.

"I'm proud of my Soldiers and how they conducted themselves," said the father of two from Plymouth, Mich. "If you can help a person, it's a good feeling. I think we're doing a lot of things, and we're working in the right direction with the ePRT (embedded Provincial Reconstruction team) and civil affairs ... We know we're not going to fix this problem in a year, but we want to get them on the right start."

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Tami Hillis



Pfc. Takeysa Washington, a medic assigned to 4th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Inf. Div. checks a baby's temperature during a medical civil action program in Abu Amer, Iraq, March 28.

IA Restoring security in Mahmudiyah

By PVT. CHRISTOPHER McKENNA
3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT)

FOB MAHMUDIYAH, Iraq – Iraqi Security Forces are taking the lead in securing the city of Mahmudiyah against Shi'a criminal groups.

Iraqi Army Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 25th Brigade, 6th IA Division are taking control of the city's neighborhoods with support from Red Knight Rakasans of 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

"At this point, it has been a very impressive operation on both the Iraqi and Coalition fronts."

— Lt. Col. William Zemp
3-320th FA

This effort, which began March 27, has already proven successful. A cordon and search resulted in the discovery of a significant weapons cache in the Qadasiya Apartments March 28.

The cache included 17 complete explosively-formed projectiles (EFP), 192 DSHKA rounds, Iraqi National Police uniforms and 18

AK-style weapons, more than 100 EFP components, a demolition charge, detonation cord, fuses and a bag of homemade explosives.

"At this point, it has been a very impressive operation on both the Iraqi and Coalition fronts," said Lt. Col. William Zemp, commander of 3-320th FA. "Reports say that the EFP IED (improvised explosive device) materials were to be moved into the city of Mahmudiyah."

The IA has detained nearly 200 individuals for questioning in an effort to curb the violence and criminal



Photo by Pvt. Christopher McKenna

Two Iraqi Army Soldiers maneuver during a firefight with a Shi'a criminal group in Mahmudiyah March 30. Iraqi Security Forces are taking the lead in securing the city of Mahmudiyah against Shi'a criminal groups. This effort, which began March 27, has already proven successful. A cordon and search resulted in the discovery of a significant weapons cache in the Qadasiya Apartments March 28.

activity.

"You have to be proud of the progress being made so far," said Col. Dominic Caraccilo, 3rd BCT, 101 Abn. Div. (AASLT) commander.

Brig Gen. Ali Jassim Muhammad Hassen Al Frejee, commander of the 25/6 IA Division said removal of criminal groups is key to the continued security of the Mahmudiyah Qada.

MEDEVAC unit supports fight south of al Hillah

Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Mills
3rd CAB, 3rd Inf. Div.

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq – Over the last week, the Multi-National Division - Center combat aviation brigade has provided valuable support to the Iraqi Security Forces who are battling Shia extremists in the al Hillah area.

More than 100 medical evacuation missions have been conducted to get ISF and civilians immediate medical care.

Capt. Michael Kelly, aero-medical evacuation helicopter team leader with Company C, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, flies MEDEVAC missions south of al Hillah and toward al Kut, in areas where fighting between ISF and criminal groups have picked up in recent days.

"We assist enemy, Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police," said Kelly of the injured people his unit flies to Coalition forces facilities. His unit is currently attached to Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division.

On a recent mission, Kelly's helicopter transported a man targeted as a high value individual by Coalition forces. The man had been seriously injured in the fighting, having been shot in the leg with the bullet

severing his femoral artery.

Within 12 minutes of being called, Kelly's helicopter landed in a soccer field south of Hillah. The pilots had been told that there were enemy still in the area, but Apache helicopters from 1st Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, 3rd CAB were circling overhead as protection. Minutes later, they had the man at the hospital, saving his life and giving military intelligence another source of information on enemy operations.

Capt. Bryon Blohm, executive officer, Co. C, 2-3rd Avn. Regt., said his MEDEVAC helicopters have been working hard to support the ISF and civilians in his unit's area of operations. Much of what they've seen has been wounds suffered because of combat, he said.

He said there is no distinction between enemy or friendly forces when it comes to his unit transporting injured people to the hospital. Everyone being flown on his birds gets the same care. His unit recently transported an extremist who had sought medical attention from the ISF.

"Things like that we see all the time," he said. "Anyone in our AO (area of operation) we support ... It's anybody and everybody."



Photo by Pfc. Monica K. Smith/3rd CAB, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

A MEDEVAC helicopter from Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, flies south of Baghdad during a mission. The Multi-National Division - Center combat aviation brigade has provided valuable support to the Iraqi Security Forces who are battling Shia extremists in the al Hillah area.

Fallen Soldier's family shows Iraqis love

By Staff Sgt. TONY M. LINDBACK
3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT)

PB YUSIFIYAH, Iraq – Whoever said violence begets more violence never met the family of Sgt. Nathan Barnes.

American Fork, Utah, native Sgt. Nathan Barnes, a Soldier with 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, was killed in Rushdi Mullah, Iraq, when his unit came under attack by small-arms fire July 17.

Rather than hold bitterness toward the people of a foreign land where their son died, Barnes' family is embracing them. Barnes often sent home photos of children in the areas he served.

His father, Kevin, said Nathan truly loved the Iraqi children.

Nathan's love for those children inspired his father and other residents of American Fork to collect enough donated items

to fill a 40-foot shipping container.

Sewing machines, book bags, newborn kits, personal hygiene items, food, toys, children and women's clothing, school supplies and even wheelchairs were donated to residents in and around Rushdi Mullah and Yusifiyah, places Barnes did most of his service in Iraq.

Rushdi Mullah, where Barnes was killed, is one of the communities

now supported by Rakkasan Soldiers of 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

The Rakkasans took on the task of distributing the items

once the shipping container arrived in Iraq.

Company C, 3-187th Inf. Regt., distributed some of the gifts at a school in Mullah Fayad, an impoverished Yusifiyah community.

Santa Barbara, Calif., native 1st Lt. Casey Zimmerman, who helped hand out the donations at the school, wanted everyone to know the source of the aid.

"I made a point at the beginning to convey who Nathan Barnes was, how he died, and what kind of loving family and country he belonged to," Zimmerman said. "I bet we saw over 1,500 men, women, and children – mostly children."

"I made a point at the beginning to convey who Nathan Barnes was, how he died, and what kind of loving family and country he belonged to."

— 1st Lt. Casey Zimmerman
Co. C, 3-187th Inf. Regt.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback

1st Lt. Casey Zimmerman of Company C, 3rd Bn., 187th Inf. Regt. hands out footballs at a school in Mullah Fayad March 27. Supplies were donated by the family and community of Sgt. Nathan Barnes, who was killed in Rushdi Mullah July 17.

Gol preparing to take lead in Arab Jabour

By Sgt. KEVIN STABINSKY
2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

FOB KALSU, Iraq – Coalition forces have laid the groundwork in Arab Jabour, making the area safer and starting new projects to help neighborhoods return to normal.

With the 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment in the last quarter of its deployment, the Government of Iraq is stepping in to claim the area.

"They've done some work renovating schools and sent in a team to do work," said Capt. Joseph Inge, commander of Company D, 1-30th Inf. Regt., 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. "Teachers are being paid by the government rather than us. It's a huge plus when they take ownership."

The GoI will take the lead in more electricity, water and veterinary projects, said Inge, a native of Richmond, Va. "We've made contact with the Ministries of Electricity and Water. Little by little, word is getting out."

In the field of healthcare, the GoI has sponsored the Nassir Clinic. Besides performing the work to restore the clinic, the doctors and staff now work for Iraq, rather than Coalition forces.

Company D, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, executive officer 1st Lt. Brent McCorkle said the Ministry of Agriculture has expressed interest in a vet clinic for the area and a civil affairs detachment assigned to the 1-30th Inf. Regt. is working with the MoA to get the project started.

All of these initiatives would have never been possible without the initial improvements in security.

Before security, schools weren't open, teachers were scared to go to work and families were afraid to leave their homes, said McCorkle, a native of Greenville, S.C. Now, families move around freely, interacting with Soldiers daily.

These Soldiers will be trading places with the Iraqi Army soon. Plans are underway to have the IA housed at Patrol Base Red in the upcoming month.

The goal is to bring an Iraqi Police battalion into the area as well, with some officers coming from local Sons of Iraq groups. An IP recruitment drive was held in Arab Jabour March 10-13. For Sol not hired, the battalion is working to create jobs.

Everyday, 1-30th Inf. Regt. Soldiers and Iraqi people are



Photo by Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

An Iraqi family offers Soldiers of 1st Platoon, Company D, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, refreshments during a visit March 25.

working on ways to make the future brighter for future generations.

Coalition forces envision area agricultural workers will come directly from the Sol as the program begins to transition. Others are participating in vocational training to learn skills for the future such as widening water canals and fix-

ing water pumps.

"We've been able to remove al-Qaeda and make the area safe," Inge said. "We can hand over a safe and secure environment and they can build upon the improvements already made."

Although the handoff may be bittersweet for some of the Soldiers and residents who have

built strong friendships with each other, McCorkle said both parties realize the importance of letting the government step in, assume responsibility, and prove to the people that the GoI has their best interests at heart.

"The locals definitely say they will miss us, but they know this is where we need to be," he said.

Water treatment facility benefits thousands

By CAPT. ALLISON FLANNIGAN
3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT)

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq –

A ribbon-cutting ceremony March 26 marked the opening of the Mushada Water Treatment Plant, north of Mahmudiyah, a facility that will benefit thousands of area residents.

Col. Muhammad, commander of 3rd Battalion, 25th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, and Col. Dominic Caracilo, commander of 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), attended the ceremony and spoke to visitors about the event.

Following the speeches, Muhammad cut the ribbon to open the plant and those present were given a guided tour of the facility, including the pumps, water tanks and administrative buildings.

The plant restoration took five weeks to complete and was paid for by Commander's Emergency Response Program funds from the Rakkasans.

More than 30 workers and 20 skilled tradesmen worked together to complete the renovations.

They replaced pumps, cleaned and sealed water tanks and fixed the electrical wiring inside the plant.



Photo by Capt. Allison Flannigan

A young boy cools off in a pool of clean water at the Mushada Water Treatment Plant March 26.

Workers restored the buildings, did landscaping and installed two 5,000-gallon fuel tanks capable of powering the entire facility for six months.

One of the buildings will provide office space for an engineer from the South Baghdad Water Department and other facility employees. Another building

will house the engineer and his family. The landscaping around the facility is designed for the family living on-site to grow their own vegetables, irrigated by the water tanks.

Capt. Gary Goodman, the project purchasing officer for 1st Squadron, 33rd Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT), and the unit's bilingual, bicultural adviser, Dean Mechael, met with the contractors, monitored progress and offered help throughout the process.

Mechael, an Iraqi-born professional engineer from Farmington Hills, Mich., said he's proud of the work done to repair the plant, adding the renovation will improve the quality of life and the health of the local citizens.

The facility is capable of producing 2.7 million gallons of potable water and 3.5 million gallons of non-potable water each day.

Before the restoration project,

Mechael said, the facility was working at only about 10 percent of its capacity.

Currently, 60,000 Iraqis are serviced by the facility. Future plans include adding a water distribution system that will provide water to 250,000 people or more.

Currently, 60,000 Iraqis are serviced by the facility. Future plans include adding a water distribution system that will provide water to 250,000 people or more.

Since the pipe construction for water distribution won't be completed for some time, Goodman, a native of Mahanoy, Penn., said part of the restoration project included adding water pipes outside the plant so people can come with jugs or water tanks and fill up for free.

Goodman said the water is safe to drink.

"They did a water test to test the hardness of the water and compared it to the water in Baghdad," Goodman said. "The water in Baghdad has an 18 percent hardness rating; this place has 2 percent, so this is actually much cleaner than the water that's in Baghdad."

Patrolling Abu Jassim, making friends



A boy in Abu Jassim, Iraq, shows off his new bike to Sgt. Brent Massey (right) and Staff Sgt. Rocky Smith, both of Company C, 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, March 29.



Photos by Sgt. Ben Brody/4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

Staff Sgt. Zebadiah Thomas (right) of Company C, 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, finds a way around a locked gate during a search of homes March 29 in Abu Jassim, Iraq.

U.S. Soldiers restore honor to Old Glory

By Sgt. 1st Class Stacy Niles
214th FB PAO

FOB DELTA, Iraq – 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 passerby 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 4 Thomas Golden of the Joint Forces Headquarters Forward, Georgia National Guard.

"This flag was being used as landscape art and a business flagging without the daily outdoor ceremony it deserved. In the end it simply was allowed to lie in the mud of the Irwin Bridge right-of-way for a week while managers, landscape personnel and employees, residents and neighbors simply ignored it lying on the ground," wrote Turner in a letter to the apartment complex, sheriff's department, judges and the editor of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

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 it 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.

Title 4, Section 8 of the U.S. Code says the flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, water or merchandise. The section goes on to say that the flag should never be fastened, displayed, used or stored in such a manner as to permit it to be easily torn, soiled or damaged.

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 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."



Photo by 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. The flag laid on the grounds of a Georgia apartment complex for almost a week in February until it was rescued by Dan Turner, a passerby, who sent it to Iraq to have its honor restored.

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 con-

sequences later.

"I find no pride in breaking the law, but there are mitigating circumstances that put me over the line," Turner said. "Allowing this flag to lie in the mud was a disgrace; however, my lack of action would have been even more disgraceful. I acted on the behalf of all those that did not, could not or would not take action."

THERE'S STRONG AND THEN THERE'S ARMY STRONG

STAY AMONG THE BEST-TRAINED, MOST DEDICATED AND MOST RESPECTED SOLDIERS
IN THE WORLD.

CHECK WITH YOUR RETENTION COUNSELOR FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Army, Air Force collaborate for new COP

By MAJ. CHRIS BYLER

703rd BSB, 4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

FOB KALSU, Iraq – In this age of joint operations, the U.S. Army and Air Force collaborated on a 32-ton airdrop March 16 to put supplies in place to build Combat Outpost Summers.

The 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, enlisted the help of the Air Force for the airdrop, known as Operation Togo, and Army aviation for a sling-load operation, known as Operation Congo.

The battalion motto “Maintain the Line!” evokes combat logistics patrols transporting fuel and supplies, but the “Maintain” battalion also leverages air power to minimize risk by taking Soldiers off the road.

Company A, 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, attached to 1st Battalion, 76th Field Artillery, 4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., secured the future site of COP Summers and prepared to receive supplies and engineers for its construction, as part of Operation Marne Rugged.

The 703rd BSB’s mission was to provide all necessary supplies and equipment to build COP Summers.

“Operation Togo was a complete success and great first step in future operations with the USAF,” said Maj. Carl Brosky, 703rd BSB executive officer.

The Plant City, Fla., native was the drop-zone safety officer for the operation and conducted on-site training for proper recovery of the parachutes.

Critical supplies were dropped from a C-17 Globemaster at 3,000 feet. All 36 chutes opened and 100 percent of the supplies were usable for the COP Summers build.

Riggers from the 824th Quartermaster Company at Balad built the container delivery system bundles and loaded the C-17.

Following the retrieval of the 36 containers from the drop zone, Soldiers of Co. A, 2-69th Armor Regt. and Co. A, 703rd BSB worked together to break down the bundles of supplies and used 100 percent of the cargo for perimeter construction and supply stocks. A total of



Photo by Sgt. Ben Brody

Soldiers from Company A, 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, prepare to sling-load a trailer onto a CH-47 Chinook helicopter at Forward Operating Base Kalsu, Iraq, March 22. The trailer is filled with supplies destined for troops at the newly-built Combat Outpost Summers.

32 tons of supplies were dropped, providing a surge of essential supplies within the first 24 hours of COP Summers’ establishment.

The 703rd BSB continued aerial operations March 22 in support of COP Summers by sling-loading two 20-foot containers with more than four tons of supplies.

The main purpose of the sling-load operation was to

reduce at least one combat logistics patrol, thus lowering risk to Marne Soldiers.

“Soldiers really exceeded all expectations and I am proud of their determination during this combat operation,” said 1st Lt. Erich Steffens, Company A executive officer from Wayland, N.Y. “The training for this operation really paid off for us.”

Love begins in the mind, not the eyes

By SGT. KEVIN STABINSKY

2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

FOB KALSU, Iraq – Her hands run across his hand, her fingers explore his features. She asks her father: Is he fat or skinny? Tall or short? She is trying to learn about the man she cannot see, the one who strives to end the mystery surrounding him and the world around her.

First Lt. Michael Kendrick, platoon leader of 2nd Platoon, Company D, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, said it is his goal to replace the mental picture young Noor Taha Najee has of her father with the actual image.

Noor, a 5-year-old girl who lives in al Buaytha, has been blind since birth, a condition caused by poorly-developed corneas, said her father Taha.

It is a problem which runs in the family. Taha’s brother, Mustafa, also suffers from the birth defect, one that

prevents the eyes from registering anything other than light sensitivity.

Although the condition is genetic, it is one that can be fixed through surgery. Kendrick, a native of Phoenix, Ariz., and his unit have been working closely with doctors to try to get something done for the family.

“To have her see her family, her brothers, to put a face to the voice, it would be a blessing,” Taha said of the opportunity to help give sight to his daughter and brother.

The Eye Defects Research Foundation, a nongovernmental organization based in Los Angeles, is already trying to schedule a surgery for the girl.

On March 14, the Soldiers took Noor and her uncle to the 86th Combat Support Hospital in Baghdad to get an evaluation done on the two, which showed a higher potential for success with Noor.



Photo by Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

Noor Taha Najee gives 1st Lt. Michael Kendrick, platoon leader, 2nd Platoon, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, a goodbye kiss near the end of a March 26 visit to her house in al Buaytha, Iraq. Noor, whose corneas are underdeveloped, has been blind since birth. The Soldiers of 1-30th Inf. Regt. are working with a nongovernmental organization in Los Angeles, the Eye Defects Research Foundation, to get Noor surgery that may provide her with sight.

See SIGHT, page 11

Aviation takes fight to criminals

3rd CAB, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq – Attack helicopters from Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division have stepped up in the fight against criminal elements south of Baghdad.

Since March 24, Apache and Kiowa helicopters have killed 36 enemy fighters in support of troops on the ground.

The recent fighting against criminals south of Baghdad and in Wasit Province has highlighted the benefit of air support to Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces, but it isn't something new, said Col. Dan Ball, commander of 3rd CAB.

"We've always taken the fight to the enemy," Ball said.

The 3rd CAB, based out of Hunter Army Airfield in Savannah, Ga., has been deployed to Baghdad International Airport since May. The 1st Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment Apaches and the 3rd Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment Kiowas support

Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces in the area stretching across the Tigris and Euphrates rivers south of Baghdad.

Earlier in the 3rd CAB's deployment, the fight was primarily against al-Qaeda in Iraq fighters south of Baghdad as they tried to feed sectarian violence in the capital.

When small groups of criminals began clashing with Iraqi Security Forces, Ball said, it was natural for his helicopters to support the fight.

"As opposed to Sunni extremists, al-Qaeda in Iraq for instance, we have Shi'a extremists we're going after (as well). We don't differentiate," he said. "This is an ISF-led fight and many of our engagements down south have been in support of ISF."

Since March 22, Multi-National Division – Center has detained more than 200 criminals, killed 40 Shi'a criminal fighters, found more than 60 weapons caches - of which 20 were turned in by Iraqis - and found and cleared nearly 30 improvised explosive devices on area roads.

PATCH-WEARER?



Wanted: Those who served with the 3rd ID or attached units. Family members and friends and supporters of the 3rd ID are also welcome!

Invitation: You're eligible to join the Society that supports 3rd ID active duty Soldiers, hosts annual reunions, and conducts regular small-unit meetings for nearly 4,000 members in 24 Outposts across the nation and Europe.

Benefits: Networking with fellow patch-wearers, receiving a copy of the bi-monthly *Watch on the Rhine* newsletter, access to Society Website, Marne Riders Motorcycle Club, and more!



Contact:
Jim Tiezzi
Dennis Noes
Dick Gallmeyer

ajimtmiezzi@aol.com
drnoes3ID@comcast.net
msg1gal@msn.com

Leave a message at 1-800-523-4715
Download application at <http://www.warfoto.com/3IDMembForm05.pdf>

IA keeps peace in Mahmudiyah, deters criminals

By SGT. 1ST CLASS KERENAS HARDY
3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT)

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq – The Iraqi Army commander in Mahmudiyah won't stand for criminal activity in his city.

To that end, Brig. Gen. Ali Jassim Muhammad Hassen Al Frejee, commander of the 25th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, and Lt. Col. William Zemp, commander of 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), worked together recently to make sure that violence seen in Basra wasn't replicated in Mahmudiyah.

Zemp, a native of Harts-ville, S.C., said one word sums up the IA successes in the area: leadership. The IA leadership at all levels – company, battalion and brigade – was involved in the mission to secure the city.

"As soon as there were indications of violence, a curfew was put into effect," Zemp said. Vehicular traffic was suspended in the city, extra checkpoints were established and 14 additional platoons were deployed after hostilities flared March 28.

"(The criminals) were expecting us to only be defending," Ali said. "That was true the first day." After that, Ali said, his Soldiers started taking offensive measures. He said his troops believe it is their duty to

pursue anyone who breaks the law.

Before the outbreak of violence, Ali said he brought in all the battalion commanders under his charge and assigned a neighborhood to each as their respective areas of operation. He said this hampered the enemy's ability to function.

"We controlled with good cooperation between the Iraqi and Coalition forces," Ali said. "I don't think they will try these things again in this sector."

Zemp agreed his IA counterparts did an outstanding job.

"The IA met its enemy and then crushed it; they defeated the special groups ... in Mahmudiyah," he said. "They did it in such a way that they took into consideration the civilian population

and political ramifications and consequences of their actions. In a nutshell, they did it right."

Rakkasan Soldiers assisted their IA partners with troop leading, logistics, artillery for terrain denials and aviation support. A platoon from 3-320th FA worked alongside each of the IA security platoons in all major engagements.

"They're definitely pretty squared away," said Pvt. Khristopher Wallace, Battery A, 3-320th FA, of the IA troops. "We're moving, typically, behind them ...



Photo by Pvt. Christopher McKenna, 3rd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. (AASLT)

First Lt. Ryan Graf, from Hawley, Penn., 3rd Platoon leader, Battery A, 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and Iraqi Army Soldiers discuss the day's mission in Mahmudiyah.

pretty much in a support role.

"They're tactically sound and keeping everything pretty simple," the Yorkville, Ill., native added. "It's just like working with another one of our units – very cohesive."

Cooperation between the battalions and Coalition troops was key to success, according to Ali.

"Things are tense but stable now," Zemp said. "The IA is clearly in control of the city as far as Mahmudiyah is con-

cerned and the local government is still able to function."

The vehicle curfew is currently in place at night but is lifted during daylight hours, allowing local citizens to run errands, go to work and receive medical care when necessary.

"I think the outcome defines his leadership," Zemp said. "Swift action, decisive and the ability to interact with the local population based on intelligence, not rumors."

SIGHT: From page 9

"We're on standby now, waiting for a doctor in L.A.," Kendrick said.

He said they are now trying to find a local Iraqi doctor who would be willing to travel with Noor and her family to California. An Iraqi doctor is needed who could be shown the necessary follow-up care.

Such a gift would seem appropriate for a girl who is described as very generous and giving by her father.

"She's different from many other kids," Taha said. "She's always sharing. She'll give you anything."

It is a personality trait which has endeared her to the 2nd Platoon Soldiers.

"We've taken a real vested interest in the people here," Kendrick said, adding his Soldiers spend a lot of time on the ground, interacting with residents. "We empathize with the people. It pays dividends winning the hearts and minds. It keeps things quiet."

Noor has developed quite an attachment to Kendrick, Taha said.

"She likes to sit by him, and is always asking me about him and loves it when I tell her stories about him," he said. "She's only like that with Kendrick."

As a father of two young girls himself – Presley, 3, and Parker, 1, – Kendrick said he knows the importance of family and providing for them.

While she may not be able to see what the Soldiers are doing for her, Taha said Noor can definitely sense the good will of Kendrick's platoon.

"Love begins in the mind, not the eyes," Taha said.

School for teens opens

Photo by Sgt. Luis Delgadillo

2nd Brigade Combat Team Soldiers help prepare classrooms for students of the newly-constructed Ben Saad Maath Secondary School in Maderiyah.

By **SGT. LUIS DELGADILLO**
2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

FOB KALSU, Iraq – Community leaders welcomed representatives from the Ministry of Education and Coalition forces for the opening of the Ben Saad Maath Secondary School in Maderiyah April 2.

Al Zerqa School, a primary school recently reconstructed by Coalition forces, was being used as temporary location for the secondary school. With the completion of the new building, adolescent students now have a facility of their own.

"The opening of this school is a great help for the kids of this area," said Atin Achani, a supervisor specialist in public education for Baghdad.

Achani said the Ministry of Education is working to increase teachers' salaries and build more schools throughout Iraq.

"The Ben Saad Maath School will give many secondary-aged students throughout the area the opportunity to receive a secondary education for the

first time," said Capt Richard Aaron, commander of Battery B, 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

Aaron, a native of Middleboro, Mass., and Soldiers of his battery are responsible for maintaining security in the area and assisting local residents in re-establishing ties with the Government of Iraq.

"When I ask the locals throughout the area what their top essential need is, what is the one thing we could help them fix most of the time they simply reply, 'fix our schools and help our children receive a good education,'" Aaron said. "The construction of the new secondary school will allow more students to attend the primary school located next door."

Though Coalition funds helped build the, Ben Saad Maath School, MoE work will keep the school's teachers paid and the facilities functional.

"With out a doubt this project proves that the MoE is positively impacting children in the area," Aaron said.

NP finds critical cache

Photo courtesy of 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment

Master Sgt. Dave Eastabrooks, 1st National Police Training Team, assists a policeman from 3rd Brigade, 1st National Police Division in packaging weapons found in a cache April 4 in Jabr al Ansari, Iraq.

Not all of our enemies are outside the FOB...

OPERATIONAL SECURITY

...some have disguised themselves as one of us. Report suspicious activities immediately.

**PVT MURPHY'S LAW**

BRAVERY UNDER FIRE:

Remembering SFC Class Paul R. Smith

By SGT. JASMINE CHOPRA
MND-C PAO

CAMP VICTORY, Iraq – He was a husband, father, Soldier and leader, but on April 4 here, Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith, the 3rd Infantry Division's 51st Medal of Honor recipient was remembered simply as a hero.

A remembrance ceremony was held in the courtyard where five years ago to the day, Smith gave his life in defense of others.

He was setting up a short-term enemy prisoner of war holding area near the Baghdad International Airport when his unit was attacked by enemy soldiers.

Outnumbered, with wounded Soldiers and damaged vehicles, Smith told his men to get back as he manned a .50 caliber machine gun from the exposed turret of an armored personnel carrier damaged by rocket-propelled grenades and mortars. He fired at the enemy and unleashed some 300 rounds allowing his other Soldiers to reorganize and mount an attack. Smith and his men defeated the enemy attack.

During the attack Smith fell mortally wounded. A disciplined, no-nonsense platoon sergeant with Company B, 11th Engineer Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Inf. Div., Smith was bestowed the highest award for bravery in 2005, the Medal of Honor.

"He was a Soldier who took care of Soldiers ... he lost his life doing it," said Brig. Gen. William Grimsley, who at the time of Smith's death was the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division commander.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason R. Krawczyk, MNC-1 PAO

More than 200 people, including commanders throughout Iraq such as Lt. Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III, commander of Multi-National Corps – Iraq (second from right) and Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch (right), commander of Multi-National Division – Center, took a pause from operations April 4 to attend the remembrance ceremony for Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith, who gave his life in defense of others. Smith was bestowed the highest award for bravery in 2005, the Medal of Honor. The remembrance ceremony took place in the courtyard where Smith died five years ago.

vision commander.

Grimsley, now the deputy commander of the 4th Infantry Division, recommended Smith for the Medal of Honor and was one of several leaders who knew Smith and took a pause from

operations today in order to attend the ceremony.

In 2003, Capt. Christopher Doerr, of Headquarters and Headquarters Operations Company, Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Inf. Div., was a 23-year-old brand-new second lieutenant.

"I'll always treasure the fact I got to serve with and know Sgt. 1st Class Smith," Doerr said.

He admired Smith's expertise, precision and dedication to mission accomplishment.

"He was an expert engineer, the best in the battalion," Doerr said. "The way he motivated his Soldiers, they didn't necessarily like him, he wasn't their friend, but he made them train to standard.

"It all makes sense now, why he pushed us, why we did the things we did. Now we are here because of that," Doerr said.

Smith had been in combat when he was a young private first class in Desert Storm. In Kuwait, just days before invading Iraq, Doerr asked Smith to tell

him what war was going to be like.

"He said, 'war is hell,' and he showed me that first hand," Doerr said. "He laid it all on the line and that was not a fluke ... he was concerned for the safety of his men and others and he put that above his own personal safety, and I think you've got to say he's a hero for that."

More than 200 people attended the remembrance ceremony, including Lt. Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III, commander of Multi-National Corps – Iraq, who in 2003 was the deputy commander for maneuver for the 3rd Infantry Division.

Large-scale pictures showed Sgt. 1st Class Smith in desert camouflage uniform days before the battle. Diagrams, mounted on an armored personnel carrier like the one Smith used, detailed his heroic action.

Visible from the courtyard was the bullet-riddled tower that the enemy had fought but failed to seize. A bugler played Taps and, after the ceremony, Soldiers walked the site and reflected on the sacrifice he had made for our country.



Photo by Sgt. Jasmine Chopra

More than 200 people took a pause from operations April 4 to attend the remembrance ceremony for Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith, a platoon sergeant with Company B, 11th Engineer Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, who gave his life in defense of others.