

Soldiers visit windmills in al-Zatir and Hollandia

Spc. Justin Snyder
2ND BCT, 1ST ARMD. DIV.

FOB HAMMER – U.S. troops visited windmills in al-Zatir and Hollandia, Iraq, on a quality analysis and control trip May 5.

The Soldiers with 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, the 489th Civil Affairs Battalion, and 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, made the trip to check on progress made on windmills over the past eight months.

Major Michael Blankenship, from Jonesborough, Tenn., 489th CA Bn., oversees the project and said he makes these trips weekly to ensure progress goes as planned and workers are following instructions.

The convoy made its first stop at al-Zatir and met with Haider, a local Iraqi contractor and son of Samir Muhammad, who owns al-Janoob Company, the lead contractor unit on the project.

Haider showed the Soldiers the windmill, which provides water for irrigation and drinking. He also showed off the newly revamped solar panels, which provide energy to purify water.

Taleb Hamid, a spokesperson for the local villages, said the water is much better now that they have the purifying system.

"The people were hesitant towards the water at first," Hamid said. "Now they are very happy to have clean water for drinking and laundry use."

Soldiers also visited a windmill in Hollandia, which provides water for irrigation and will eventually be equipped with the same purifying system as the one in al-Zatir. Blankenship believes the windmill in al-Zatir is the first of its kind.

"These people should be very proud of what they have done here," said Col. Ryan J. Kuhn, from Clarks, Neb., 3rd HBCT deputy commander.



Spc. Justin Snyder

Colonel Ryan Kuhn, deputy commander of 3rd HBCT, speaks with local Iraqi contractors about the windmill in al-Zatir, Iraq.

"They have done something that no other Iraqi ever has. History is being made in this village."

Kuhn was a part of the original planning and took part in the visits Monday. He said the Iraqi contractors have made significant progress on the windmills over time.

"These people have done a great

job," Kuhn said. "Now, when children come walking by on their way home from school, they will be able to ... drink clean water."

Kuhn said they are providing more than just clean water, but the security to enjoy it as well.

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3rd Combat Aviation Brigade welder is one-of-a-kind

MASTER SGT. STEVE OPET
3RD CAB, 3RD INF. DIV.

CAMP STRIKER – Sergeant Stephen Hammontree exemplifies both the current Army motto, “Army Strong,” and its former slogan, “Army of One.”

He is an Army of One as the only certified aviation welder in the 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, and Army Strong, because of the welds – which are stronger than the surrounding metal – he makes on the CAB helicopters to keep them flying.

“Most of our welding is on helicopter exhaust systems, which are the parts most affected by the vibration from flying and the extreme heat,” said the 35-year-old native of Dalton, Ga., member of Company B, 603rd Aviation Support Battalion.

His supervisor, Sgt. Mark White, a machinist, said Hammontree makes his job a lot easier.

“He’s a great welder, but he also does basic machining which helps me with maintenance turn-around,” White said.

Even though he is the only certified aviation welder here, Hammontree has a partner, Spc. JasVincent Lizama, also a member of Company B, from Malojloj, Guam, a metal worker with 18 months of service, who shares the shipping container converted into a welding shop.

Both Soldiers are highly skilled in working with the aluminum, stainless steel, titanium and regular steel found on the brigade’s aircraft. Hammontree said he and Lizama do not work on aircraft structure, only parts, especially the exhaust systems of the Apache, Kiowa, Blackhawk and Chinook helicop-



Sgt. 1st Class Steve Opet

Sergeant Stephen Hammontree, a metal worker with Co. B, 603rd ASB, lays out a T-bar handle before welding it in his shop at the flight line near Camp Striker, Baghdad.

ters that undergo heavy stress from flying in the harsh environment of Iraq.

“We were really busy during the summer months when the hot weather added to the heat of the exhaust systems, making them more prone to crack,” Hammontree said.

Each type of helicopter is scheduled for routine overhaul after a specific number of hours flying.

Hammontree routinely works with the ultra-thin metals used on the primary and exhaust nozzles, and their

support structure.

“Aluminum is the toughest metal to work with,” Hammontree said.

“Exhaust systems get extremely dirty, and aluminum has to be really clean before you can weld it to specification,” he added.

A high-speed sander is good at removing the dirt, but sometimes it also removes too much of the already thin metal, so elbow grease and wire brushes are used more often, Hammontree said.

Hammontree attended welding school at the Cherry Point Naval Depot in North Carolina, which is one of only two military schools that teach aviation welding. He has taken courses there three times: once for certification and twice for recertification.

These two Soldiers’ skills aren’t limited to welding; although, “when it comes to welding steel these guys are very, very good,” White said.

They also repair special tools, make tow bars and fulfill any other unit need.

The 10-year veteran has been with the 603rd ASB since joining the Army to “spend more time with my family.” That sounds ironic coming from a Soldier who is 12 months deep into a 15-month deployment in Iraq with Task Force Marne.

“I made good money working for a carpet mill in the ‘Carpet Capitol of the World’ back in Georgia, but I was working 60 to 80 hours a week, and I wanted to spend more time with my family, and overall I have,” said Hammontree who has three sons, Brett, Brock, and Braydon.

“My wife, Joy, doesn’t like me being gone, but overall she’s happy with the choice we made,” he said.

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2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division

3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division

3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Abn. Division (Assault)

4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division

3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division

214th Fires Brigade

7th Sustainment Brigade

720th Military Police Battalion

354th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Military Spouses Day proclaimed by President

A Proclamation by the President of the United States of America

Military spouses embody the courage, nobility of duty, and love of country that inspire every American. On Military Spouse Day, we pay tribute to the husbands and wives who support their spouses in America's Armed Forces during times of war and peace.

The legacy of military spouses began when colonial Americans were fighting for independence. Martha Washington boosted the morale of her husband's troops by visiting battlefields and tending to the wounded. Since then, members of our Armed Forces have served our Nation accompanied by the steadfast love and support of their spouses and families.

While our men and women in uniform are protecting our country's founding ideals of liberty, democracy, and justice, their spouses live with un-



common challenges, endure sleepless nights, and spend long periods raising children alone.

Many military spouses are also committed volunteers, serving other military families and local communities. Our Nation benefits from the sacrifices of our military families, and we are inspired by their courage, strength, and leadership.

On Military Spouse Day and throughout the year, we honor the commitment spouses have made to freedom's cause.

To learn about ways to support our troops and their spouses and families, I encourage all Americans to visit www.america-supportsyou.mil.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 9, 2008, as Military Spouse Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities and by expressing their gratitude to the husbands and wives of those serving in the United States Armed Forces.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

GEORGE W. BUSH

WINDMILL: *Trips made for quality analysis and control*

From page 1

"Water is expensive for these people," he said. "We are defeating the insurgents by not allowing them to control the prices of water and by providing free water."

Blankenship said the overall project has been a huge success. He hopes that the success will carry over to 2nd BCT, 1st Armd. Div., as they take over

command in the Mada'in Qada.

Lieutenant Colonel Matthew F. McKenna, from Pittsburgh, 2nd BCT deputy commander, will be taking over the windmill project when the 3rd HBCT leaves Iraq.

"We want to get the director general for water in Iraq to look at these windmills," McKenna said. "Hopefully they like the idea and we can expand the windmill program through

the Government of Iraq."

The 2nd BCT, 1st Armd. Div., from Baumholder, Germany, is replacing the 3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div., in the Mada'in Qada.

The 489th CA Bn., from Knoxville, Tenn., is attached to the 3rd HBCT. The 3rd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div., from Fort Benning, Ga., has been deployed in support of Operation Iraq Freedom since March 2007.

Safety Thought of the Day

Grounding – Reducing Electrical Hazards

- Grounding of electrical equipment is the primary method of reducing electrical hazards:
 - Equipment such as communication receivers and transmitters, generators, CHU's, and electrical equipment operated with over 150 volts must be grounded
- Bonding, connecting two pieces of equipment by a wire or cable conductor, equalizes any potential for static or sparking.
 - Bonding allows for a low resistance path to the ground.
- Bonding and grounding together are used for electrical systems.
- Earth grounding conductors (ground wire or cable):
 - Conductor must be as large as possible: at least # 6 AWG (American Wire Gauge).
 - The conductor should be copper or copper clad aluminum.
 - The conductor should be continuous between the equipment and earth grounding electrode; do not splice.
 - Ensure conductor is not damaged or heavily corroded.
 - Run the conductor as straight and short as possible.
 - Minimize any twists, loops, or sharp bends. This will increase the conductors impedance.

Headline Highlights

Potato frenzy; women recognize robber; dump truck theft

Swiss government says Euro 2008 football fans can have their potato chips

BERNE, Switzerland (Reuters) – The Swiss government has agreed to ease restrictions on the importation of potatoes following fears that Euro 2008 football fans could face a shortage of French fries next month.

A spokesman for the country's department of agriculture told national radio on Wednesday that the government would allow an additional 5,000 tonnes of potatoes to be brought in.

The decision follows a request by Swiss potato industry association Swisspatat who warned that supplies were already running low in the buildup to the June tournament.

The association has estimated that 3,000 additional tonnes will be needed to make chips for foreign supporters, with the remaining 2,000 used for other forms of potato.

Switzerland has already been fretting over dwindling supplies of its beloved 'cervelat' sausage following a European Union ban on the Brazilian cows' intestines traditionally used to encase the meat.

Economics minister Doris Leuthard, who is also responsible for agriculture, told the national parliament in March there were enough cervelats in reserve to last at least through Euro 2008.

The tournament runs from June 7 to 29 and will be co-hosted by Swit-

zerland and neighbouring Austria.

Pa. women robbed of purses show police suspect's photo

BENSALEM, Pa. (AP) – Police had no trouble tracking down a suspect in the robbery of three women at a Bucks County convenience store, because the women had taken the man's picture a short time earlier at a bar.

The suspect, Andre Smith, struck up a conversation with a group of women at a bachelorette party at the Bensalem Township taproom early Sunday morning, said the township's public safety director, Fred Haran.

The women were taking photos of each other when Smith jumped in front of the camera, Haran said.

Smith later was ejected from the bar for allegedly harassing customers.

When two women in the group left the bar to go to a nearby convenience store, Smith robbed them of their pocketbooks, Haran said.

The women recognized Smith – who apparently didn't recognize them – and gave investigators a copy of their photo, Haran said.

Later Sunday, a detective went around to local apartment complexes looking for Smith and spotted him, Haran said.

Smith was arrested on robbery and theft charges and is being held on \$50,000 bail.

Electronic court records do not list

an attorney for him.

Building boom drives construction vehicle thefts

MOSCOW (Reuters) – Forget the luxury cars that cram Moscow's streets: Russian thieves are after dump trucks, cranes and asphalt pavers to feed a booming construction sector.

Thieves have removed 40 Russian-made Kamaz trucks and 13 cranes, cement-mixers and other pieces of heavy machinery from the capital's construction sites in the last three months, local media said on Wednesday.

"Just recently an asphalt-paver was carried away in broad daylight, right off the street," Igor Agapkin, head of the Moscow police's stolen-car investigation department, told the Izvestia newspaper.

A construction boom in Moscow and large cities across Russia is fueling demand for construction equipment that cannot be met by domestic supply. Long-term projects make leasing expensive, and police said finding stolen items was "very rare."

"Theft of a crane, for example, is a difficult undertaking. They have to get past police posts, get to the 'chop-shop', completely change the vehicle's appearance, licence plates, repaint," said Agapkin.

"Professionals of the highest order are involved."

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	7	8		3	5			1
					7			4

from Sudoku Easy Presented by Will Shortz

Solution to yesterday's puzzle:

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

ARABIC QUESTION OF THE DAY

Do they have guns?

AAed hoom es-lih-ah?