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Newly renovated Musayyib city hall reopens

BY SGT. 1ST CLASS TAMI HILLIS
4TH BCT, 3RD INF. DIV.



FOB ISKAN – Provincial and local government representatives, Iraqi Security Forces and Coalition forces celebrated the grand opening of the renovated Musayyib City Hall Nov. 5.

“We worked hard to get this project done ... with the help from the Iraqi Security Forces, Coalition forces, and all of you here today, you have all come together to make this project possible,” said Jabber, council chairman.

The Iraqi Commander Emergency Response Program funded the \$85,000 project.

The ceremony opened with verses from the Quran followed by speeches from Jabber, Mayor Ali, Ken Hillas of the Provincial Reconstruction Team and the assistant governor.

“For a local government to work well, a community must believe in its future and in the capacity and determination of its citizens to participate in self rule,” said Hillas. “Democracy is not easy ... the strength and effectiveness of the democratic government that this structure houses rests with you, the people of Musayyib. I am sure you will take advantage of its privileges and not allow that to slip away.

“The biggest danger is always apathy and indifference.” Hillas said. “If your community is to be well and wisely governed, the citizens must be involved. Every woman and man has duties as well as rights in a democracy.”

The renovated city hall reflects the transformation of the city of Musayyib. “The building has a new look, and now it’s more qualified for the members to work better and get our people in Musayyib all kinds of help,” said Ali.

The grand opening shows how far



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Tami Hillis

Local IP stands guard on top of the new Musayyib City Hall during the grand opening ceremony Nov. 5.

the local government and security forces have come over the past year.

“God willing, it will inspire others to continue striving to build a better community ... and may it be a lasting monument for the faith in the future and the power of democracy,” said Hillas. “I want you to know that you are not alone in this endeavor. The U.S. government...is proud to support the efforts of the government of Iraq in meeting the essential needs of the Iraqi people. You may be assured that our partnership will continue as we build on the gains achieved over the last year.”

(Right) Provincial and local government representatives, ISF and CF celebrate the grand opening of the Musayyib City Hall Nov. 5.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Tami Hillis

Green suits grow fond of Green Beans

By **STAFF SGT. MICHEL SAURET**
MND-C



CAMP VICTORY – Every major city in the world has its hotspots. The places people go to set aside work and spend a few good hours with friends.

Military leaders work to ensure the deployed environment isn't void of these comforts. One popular place for relaxing on the majority of military bases in Iraq is the Green Beans Coffee Worldcafé. The drinks are nonalcoholic, but the caffeine is enough to recharge the mood and spirit of service members – just like home.

"I'm a Green Beans freak," said Sgt. Brandon Bresson, of Minneota, Minn., who is typically stationed at the Talil Air Force Base in southern Iraq.

Green Beans, which is how Soldiers refer to it, is the staple of coffee for deployed Soldiers, and typically a sign that a military base has been up and running for a good while in Iraq. The most recent Green Beans to open its doors was in Contingency Operating Base Adder late in October.

Walking into Green Beans is like walking into the heartbeat of a deployed installation. There is a pair of Airmen playing chess; a small group of Sailors huddled over their Bibles for a study of scripture; a few Marines joking and laughing; Soldiers conducting a work meeting to break the monotony of the office.

"It's our hangout. It's our spot. We love the atmosphere. Every Friday we come here," said 2nd Lt. Clifton Williams, of Bennettsville, S.C., while celebrating a birthday party at Green Beans with fellow Soldiers from the 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade.

A group of lieutenant colonels meets every Sunday at the location on Camp Victory in what they call the "O-5 over



Photo by Spc. Justin Snyder

Air Force Lt. Col. Doug Dixon, Multi-National Corps - Iraq, C-3 Air and a native of Haverhill, Mass., talks with a colleague over a cup of coffee at the Green Beans Coffee Worldcafé on Camp Victory Nov. 9.

50" club. Most of them are reservists from different parts of the country and share a table and some caffeine as a way of networking for future military opportunities.

Each of them has his own favorite drink.

"Iced tea," said Lt. Col. Greg Henning of his drink of choice, holding one up in emphasis. "They ran out of iced tea a couple of months ago, and I thought it was time to go home. I know this is Iraq, this is war, but (if there is) no iced tea, I'm going home," he joked.

Henning is from a town called Northeast, Pa., near Erie. He is a high school teacher in his civilian life but a member of Multi-National Security Transition Com-

mand - Iraq while deployed, helping to professionalize Iraqi Security Forces.

Henning and a fellow lieutenant colonel both agreed there is a vast difference between life in Iraq and life back home, but having a coffeehouse helps keep their lives grounded.

"(I can) kind of see Iraq as the oasis of peaceful time," Henning said in reflection to the coffee house. "It's a nice place to hang out. The staff, they're good people. They know their customers and work really hard. We tease them we'll have to bring them back home when we leave ... They're like a bartender who knows drinks of a

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THE Mountain View

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4th BCT, 1st Cavalry Division
4th BCT, 3rd Infantry Division
7th Sustainment Brigade
41st Fires Brigade
354th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
793rd Military Police Battalion
Division Special Troops Battalion, 10th Mtn. Div.
Task Force 49



COFFEE

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customer."

Henning said that in 2004 this coffee house was nothing but a small trailer, much like the new ones opening in bases throughout Iraq. Now, it has grown to a full-size hangout with couches, wooden coffee tables and chairs placed all around the central island.

"It's more like (a coffeehouse back) home," said Lt. Col. Tony Heltsley, of Bowling Green, Ky., also a member of the O-5 club.

"It gives you a chance to withdraw and act a little bit more normal - decompress a little bit," he added.

Every rank, from private to general officer, comes to drink coffee here, whether to start off the morning strong with an espresso, or head into a night shift with an iced latte. In fact, it's not only U.S. Soldiers who enjoy the drinks, but other members of the Coalition as well.

Two members of the Australian Air Force sat in the far corner, one holding a vanilla smoothie, the other with a

warm latte.

"We were both well aware how you guys deploy in style," said Squadron Leader Scott Geeves. "We consider ourselves very lucky. If we deployed (as an Australian force), we wouldn't have the same comforts."

Geeves and Squadron Leader Jason Collyer both said drinking at Green Beans is like going to any coffeehouse in Australia.

Of course, Green Beans can't offer everything people might see on a typical coffeehouse menu in the U.S. or even Australia—such as an "espresso con panna" or any of the cold drinks with whipped cream.

But as Staff Sgt. Jason Molteni said, "It's Iraq. I'll take what I can get." Molteni is a native of San Jose, Calif., and a member of the 445th Civil Affairs Battalion.

Today, Green Beans serves military personnel in more than 50 locations across Afghanistan, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Kuwait, Qatar, Uzbekistan and Djibouti, Africa. Green Beans' name comes from its commitment to green suiters, but also by its effort to supply and brew organic coffee and teas.



Photo by Staff Spc. Justin Snyder

Marine Col. Todd Hixson, Multi-National Corps - Iraq special staff officer and a native of Huntington, Va., enjoys a cup of coffee while reading the paper at the Green Beans Coffee Worldcafe Nov. 9.

Green Beans Throughout MND-C



Photo by Spc. Creighton Holub

Colonel Philip Battaglia, the Long Knife Brigade commander, grabs two cups of coffee at the new Green Beans Coffee shop on COB Adder Oct. 29.



Photo by Spc. Sophia R. Lopez

Sergeant Allen Bason, of Johnston, Pa., a truck commander, Spc. Nooruddeen Alexander, of Baltimore, a gunner, Sgt. Andrew Baptiste, of Wareham, Mass., a TC, and Spc. Robert Moore, of Whiteville, N.C., a gunner, all with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. enjoy an afternoon at the FOB Kalsu Green Beans Nov. 7. (Background) A Soldier holds a cup of coffee at the Camp Victory Green Beans.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Michel Sauret

Stars unite to honor Warrior Brigade



Members of the Multi-National Division - Center command group, as well as their MND-North counterparts, join the crowd in saluting during the Iraqi National Anthem at the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division transfer of responsibility ceremony Nov. 6. The 1st BCT recently deployed from Forward Operating Base Warrior in Kirkuk, where they served under the 1st Armored Division in MND-N.

Photo by Spc. Josh LeCopp plain

Staff Section Round-up

G-1 Corner: Promotions

On Nov. 4, the Chief of Staff of the Army approved moving the convene date for fiscal year 2009 Army Competitive Category Major Army Promotion Board forward from April 2009 to January 2009. This decision included his approval to lower the promotion pin-on-point to captain by one month.

These measures take advantage of the effect that numerous operational deployments and hard-earned combat experience have had on the development of junior officers. Advancing the major board will allow the Army to reduce average pin-on-time to major from nine years and five months of commissioned service to approximately nine years. It will also result in the selection of about 1,930 officers to major in time for summer 2009 assignments.

In order to be eligible for consideration by the board, all mandatory or optional evaluations must be received, error free, in the evaluation report branch, U.S. Army Human Resources Command, Alexandria, Va., no later than Jan. 7, 2009. Officers should ensure evaluations are submitted to HRC through Army Knowledge Online forms.

Access to My Board File for eligible Captains opens

Nov. 25 and closes Jan. 16, 2009. Officers must update their file during that time. Further details on board preparation can be found in the MILPER message at <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=691974&lang=en-US>

This is one of many steps to help alleviate our shortages of majors including: captain retention measures, high promotion rates, increased accessions to lieutenant, inter-service transfers and calls to active duty from the Reserve Components. These measures will help to alleviate the deficiency, which is expected to reach its peak in the summer of 2009.

Although growing and balancing the Army is a challenge and there are "tough years ahead," fiscal year 2008 and 2009 lieutenant, captain and major retention to date is better than fiscal years 2000 through 2007's averages - proving that our junior officers are answering the call to continue to serve. Leadership and our Soldiers will always be the strength of our Army.

For questions please contact the Army G1, Military Personnel Officer Division at SIPR (703) 695-6681.

Headline Round-up

US News:

Democratic congressional leaders want the Bush administration to include US automakers in the \$700 billion financial industry bailout. "A healthy automobile manufacturing sector is essential to the restoration of financial market stability, the overall health of our economy, and the livelihood of the automobile sector's work force," they wrote. "The economic downturn and the crisis in our financial markets further imperiled our domestic automobile industry and its work force."

Sport News:

In college football news, Texas Tech routed Oklahoma State 56-20 over the weekend. Proving that their win over the University of Texas was no fluke, and they deserve a chance at the Bowl Championship Series title game. Also, Alabama beat Louisiana State University 27-21 in overtime to clinch the number one spot in college football over the weekend.

Entertainment News:

On Veteran's Day, Sen. John McCain will make his first post election TV appearance on the "Tonight" show with Jay Leno. McCain choosing the "Tonight" show instead of David Letterman's "Late Show" may have its roots from his campaign for President. Letterman consistently roasted McCain for cancelling a September appearance because of the economic crisis before relenting and going on the show in October.

Odd News:

A flight crew aboard United Airlines Flight 645 from Puerto Rico to Chicago duct taped Maria Esther Castillo, 45, of Oswego, N.Y. to her seat after she slapped a crewmember on the buttocks and pulled a blind passenger's hair. Castillo is charged with resisting arrest and interfering with the operations of a flight crew. Ankle cuffs kept slipping off Castillo, so the flight crew and two passengers were forced to use duct tape to keep her in her seat, the complaint states. Castillo was seen having drinks at an airport bar before boarding and bought another drink on the plane, where flight attendants stopped serving her alcohol because of her behavior.

Quote of the Day

"Parents can only give good advice or put them on the right paths, but the final forming of a person's character lies in their own hands."
- Anne Frank

WHICH VETERAN
IN YOUR LIFE HAS
INFLUENCED YOU TO
JOIN THE SERVICE?



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michel Sauret

"I could easily say my father who has served 25 years in the Marine Corps," said Sgt. Randal Spencer, of Jacksonville, N.C., member of the 44th Expeditionary Signal Battalion.



Photo by Spc. Tiffany Evans

"My father and grandfather. My father because he is a veteran of Vietnam, and my grandfather who is a veteran of World War II," said Spc. Michael Easterling, of Angleton, Texas, member of the 44th Expeditionary Signal Battalion.

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For the answer to
today's puzzle, go to:



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ARABIC QUESTION OF THE DAY

Are you related to him?

in-teh tig-rab-leh?