

# IRON STRONG DAILY

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## IP armed with combat life saving skills

**Story and photos by  
Spc. Opal Vaughn  
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**S**aving a life takes courage. Combat medics are trained to do just that. They utilize the training they receive in Advance Individual Training and ensure the health and well-being of patients.

Medics with Brigade Support Medical Company, 25th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, venture outside the wire on a weekly basis taking the skills they have learned and teach local Iraqi Police to do the same as part of an ongoing mission, BSB Diamond.

Callas, Iraq is just one stop on the long list of Iraqi Police operational posts in the Diyala province of Iraq.

"We teach different classes - bleeding control, shock, airway, burns, moving patients around safely and quickly, preventative medicine and field sanitation," said Sgt. Monique Raymundo, a medic



**Sgt. Monique Raymundo supervises, while Spc. Shaun Grigsby assists, both medics with Brigade Support Medical Company, 25th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, local Iraqi Police in how to properly seat carry a patient to safety without injury to themselves or to the patient during a combat life saving class at Callas, Iraq.**

with BSMC, 25th BSB, 1st SBCT, 25th ID.

"It was a little difficult for me because it was my first time teaching this class with an interpreter," Raymundo said. "But the IP seemed pretty receptive to what I was teaching them."

According to Raymundo, for the BSMC Soldiers, teaching is not something new for them. "We usually teach the [Combat Lifesaving Course] classes to our Soldiers in the rear all the time. That is how we learn to teach and dually train as well. And during missions, we have a different medic come out to teach each time so that everyone can get the experience of teaching," Raymundo said.

Spreading the knowledge of combat life saving techniques is not just for one IP station though. Medics with BSMC try to get out to as many IP operational posts as possible, said Capt. Gabriel Medley, BSMC, 25th BSB, 1st SBCT, 25th ID company commander.

"These classes are essential to ease the transitioning process when we're dealing with the IPs and Provincial Iraqi control," Medley said. "It can be difficult because of the language barriers but we have several interpreters on hand to mediate the language between the IPs and us."

"In order to have a smooth transition we have a team of three that usually teach with a hard copy of the training for that day, translated in Arabic so the IPs can follow along. Plus, all of our classes are on digits so that we can make as many copies possible, which the IPs can keep," Medley said.

In support of the BSMC medics and the transitioning process, the 202nd Military Police Company, was also at Callas district headquarters to help.

"Our mission is to escort the reconstruction team for medical training,



**Sgt. Monique Raymundo and Spc. Shaun Grigsby, both medics with Brigade Support Medical Company, 25th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, supervise local Iraqi Police as they practice combat life saving skills by practicing the fireman carry technique during a combat life saving class at Callas, Iraq.**

generator mechanical repairs and additional security reinforcement equipment," said Staff Sgt. David Mickem, 202nd MP Co. non-commissioned officer in charge.

"But we also advise IP operations, training in police techniques and working with our IP counterparts to ensure they are appropriating all of the training and policies, Mickem stated. "We do this to help stabilize all of the IP operations in the area so that we can utilize the Iraqi army forces in other areas."

"Law and order and security in the area are essential," Mickem said.

Even when the BSMC Soldiers aren't out and about teaching the local IPs CLS classes, they're back at the FOB providing medical support.

"We provide medical aerial support for the FOB and we also send a lot of our medics out on missions with the personal security detachment and the combat logistic patrols," Medley said.

"Our medics are at every echelon of the battlefield," said Medley. "They're doing a great job in this transition process."



# 326th Engineer Battalion Reflects on Tour

**Story by Spc. Ryan Elliott  
14th Public Affairs Detachment**

As the 326th Engineer Battalion's deployment draws to a close, Soldiers from the Distribution Platoon reflect on their units accomplishments in Iraq.

The 326th has a long distinguished history of service that stretches back to July 1918 when it was constituted in the National Army. Its role has grown and evolved over the course of time to rise and meet the challenges the modern battle field pose to it.

When the unit originally deployed to Iraq many of the junior troops were

green and eager to learn their jobs.

"Given the fact that 80% of the Distribution Platoon had no experience with Combat Logistic Patrols outside of the pre-deployment training they received, it took tremendous courage to conduct patrols outside the wire," said Sgt. Laura Latson, 326th Engineer Battalion, CLP Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge.

The 326th has proven to be a very effective unit always accomplishing the mission.

"The Distribution Platoon has executed more than 225 Combat Logistic Patrols transporting more than 45 new Route Clearance vehicles supporting the Battalion's objective of providing the safest vehicles for Route Assurance personnel," said Sgt Matthew Boatman, Lead Vehicle Commander 326th Engineer Battalion.

Today the battalion plays an essential role in Operation Iraqi Freedom, transporting much needed equipment across northern Iraq.

"The Platoon received, transported, and delivered more than 100,000 rounds of small-arms and crew-served ammunition, and 20,000 pounds of demolition charges to four Route Clearance companies," said Boatman.

One of the main goals of the Distribution Platoon has been to help

stabilize Northern Iraq.

"The Distribution Platoon supported the progress and stabilization of Iraq by transporting Route Clearance vehicles, Engineer equipment, repair parts, and personnel throughout Multi-National Division North," said Sgt. 1st Class Jesse Isaac Platoon Sergeant, 326th Engineer Battalion.

Now with their mission accomplished the Soldiers of the 326th are getting ready to redeploy back home to their loved ones.

"The Soldiers are eager to return home and reunite with their families who have provided tremendous support from the rear allowing Soldiers to stay focus and in the fight," said Baldwin.

"They stand ready to pass on lessons learned to incoming members of Forward Support Company, 326TH Engineer Battalion (Air Assault) while preparing for the next mission," said Baldwin.



Photo by Spc. Opal Vaughn, 14th PAD

**Spc. Jon Staib, a route clearance driver and gunner with the 58th Combat Engineers Company, 326th Engineers Battalion, 18th Engineer Brigade, trains several Iraqi army soldiers how to operate a husky vehicle to get closer to a mock improvised explosive device without setting it off in a training exercise at Contingency Operating Base Speicher located in Tikrit, Iraq.**



Photo by Spc. Karla P. Elliott, 11th PAD

**Secretary of the Army, Honorable Pete Geren, hands out coins to the Soldiers of 2nd Platoon, 158th Combat Engineer Company, 326th Engineer Battalion (Air Assault) during his visit to Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq. There, the Soldiers had an opportunity to talk to Geren about their jobs and the different vehicles**

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**HEALTH NEWS**

**(Reuters)** Here's another reason not to smoke, if you're a woman: PMS.

Women 27 to 44 years old who smoke are twice as likely to develop premenstrual syndrome over the next two to four years, especially hormonally-related symptoms like backaches, bloating, breast tenderness, and acne, Dr. Elizabeth R. Bertone-Johnson of the University of Massachusetts in Amherst and her colleagues found.

"Our findings lend further support to the idea that smoking increases the risk of moderate to severe

PMS, and provides another reason for women, especially adolescents and young women, not to smoke," Bertone-Johnson told Reuters Health via E-mail

Up to 20% of women have PMS severe enough to affect their relationships and interfere with their normal activities, Bertone-Johnson and her team note in the American Journal of Epidemiology. Smoking has been shown to affect levels of several different hormones, and the handful of studies looking into PMS and smoking have suggested that women with the syndrome are more likely to be smokers, the researchers add.

To investigate the relationship further, they analyzed data from the Nurses' Health Study II, which has been following 116,678 US registered nurses since 1989. The researchers looked at a subset of women who were PMS-free during the first two years of the study, comparing 1,057 who did go on to develop PMS to 1,968 who did not.

The women who were current smokers were 2.1 times as likely as non-smokers to report PMS within the next two to four years, the researchers found. The risk increased with the amount they smoked, and women who had picked up the habit in adolescence

or young adulthood were at even greater risk; those who had begun smoking before their 15th birthday, for example, were 2.53 times as likely to develop PMS.

"Our findings do not suggest that this is entirely due to the fact that women who start smoking at younger ages smoke for more years than those starting when they are older. Additional research on the impact of smoking at different times in women's lives is needed," Bertone-Johnson said.

She continued: "Previous studies suggest that smoking may alter levels of estrogen, progesterone, testosterone, and other hormones, many of which may be involved in the development of PMS. Some studies have found that smokers have shorter and more irregular menstrual cycles than non-smokers. Smoking may also lower levels of vitamin D in the body, which also may increase a woman's risk of developing PMS."

A 2005 study found that 26% of female 12th-graders had smoked on at least one of the previous 30 days, Bertone-Johnson and her team note in their report. "Given the high prevalence of this behavior in young women," they say, "these findings may provide additional incentive for young women to avoid cigarette smoking."

**CALIFORNIA**

**(AP)** Fire officials say wind of "near hurricane force" has grounded some of their water-dropping aircraft as they battle a wildfire that has burned at least 10 homes and forced thousands of people to evacuate in northern Los Angeles.

The California Highway Patrol has shut a second freeway in the area.

CHP officer Patrick Kimball says a section of Interstate 5 near Sylmar was shut early Saturday as flames spread west toward the freeway.

About 5,000 residents have been evacuated since the fire started late Friday, and authorities say more evacuations are under way. Patients at one hospital were evacuated when the blaze knocked out power.

A separate fire in the Santa Barbara community of Montecito had forced evacuation of more than 5,400 homes since it started Thursday.





## GOLF

**(AP)** Angela Stanford shot a 6-under 66 on Friday in the second round of the Lorena Ochoa Invitational to take a two-stroke lead over LPGA Championship winner Yani Tseng.

Stanford had a 10-under 134 total on the Guadalajara Country Club course. Tseng, No. 2 in the world behind Ochoa, shot her second straight 68. Ochoa followed her opening 73 with a 71 on her home course, leaving her 10 strokes back.

Meena Lee (69) was 6 under, and Karen Stupples (71) was 5 under. Annika Sorenstam (72), leaving the tour at the end of the season, was 4 under in group that included Juli Inkster (69) and Seon Hwa Lee (72).

Stanford won the Bell Micro LPGA Classic in September and has finished in the top five in each of her last four tournaments. The Texan had seven birdies for the second straight day at the Guadalajara Country Club.

"I felt really comfortable all day," Stanford said. "I feel really good about my swing thoughts and I feel comfortable on the golf course. I feel like I'm rolling my putts really well, so I'm having a lot of fun."

Tseng got off to a fast start with a 25-foot birdie on No. 1 and a wedge to 7 feet on No. 7 to gain another stroke. She missed a 6-foot par putt on the par-5 ninth, but added three birdies on the back nine.

"I think I really played smart today," Tseng said. "Just pick some holes I have to make birdie and some holes I just need to save par. Some holes I play aggressive and some holes I play safe."

Ochoa bogeyed the final two holes.

"It was a tough finish," she said. "Hopefully tomorrow is a better day."

Ochoa has two victories — the 2006 and 2008 Corona Championship — in nine LPGA Tour starts in Mexico. She has seven victories in 20 tour starts this year and leads the money list with \$2,738,888.

"I'm a little bit out of rhythm," Ochoa said. "I'm a little bit quick with my hands. I think that's why I'm losing the control of the ball, and I'm not having any easy birdie chances."

Sorenstam bogeyed three of her last four holes.

"The good part is that I'm still

near the top, and we still have two rounds left to play. This is a great course, and you can have big days, so I'm not worried," said Sorenstam, who has three LPGA Tour victories this season.



## TENNIS

**(AFP)** Britain's Andy Murray said he's looking to deliver the knock-out blow to ailing Masters Cup champion Roger Federer, whose bid for a fifth title has been hit by an untimely stomach complaint.

Murray, 21, said he was gunning to send Federer crashing out with a fourth career win -- and the second in a month -- against the former world number one.

"You try and win. I'm not going to try and lose to Federer," he said ahead of their Red Group clash on Friday.

"I've beaten him three times. I'd like to make it four."

Murray is at a career-high fourth ranking and his confidence was lifted further by a straight-sets dismissal of French threat Gilles Simon to reach the semi-finals.

"To beat a couple of top-10 players back-to-back is great. The Masters Cup is obviously a huge, huge competition for all the top players. I've got a chance of winning it now," he said.

An out-of-sorts Federer meanwhile ground out a victory over Czech alternate Radek Stepanek, who was called up at the last minute after Andy Roddick rolled an ankle in

training.

Murray, widely tipped to end Britain's 76-year Grand Slam drought, is already through to the semi-finals but said he wouldn't hold back against the two-time defending champion.

"I don't try and find a balance. I try and beat Federer. Ideally I'd like to knock him out of the competition if I can," he said.

"I'd rather not have to play him twice in one week. He's the best player ever."

The in-form Murray beat Roddick in his opening match and is now arguable favourite for the title. Federer, who is recovering from a back injury, lost to Simon in his first match before being hit by the stomach bug.

Looking pale and unsteady after playing Stepanek, he said he spent all of Tuesday holed up in his hotel room and claimed it would take a "miracle" to reach the semis.

"Woke up in the morning and I was feeling terrible. Really upset stomach and couldn't even practice. Didn't go out of the room. Just sort of trying to get over things," Federer said.

"At the end of the day I still have a chance. I hope with a day of recovery, I'll make a miracle happen here and get through into the semis."

Federer almost pulled off a miracle in 2005 when he struggled through the tournament with an ankle injury before losing an epic final to David Nalbandian.

The 27-year-old is bidding to become only the third player to win five year-end titles after Ivan Lendl and Pete Sampras. Lendl completed the last hat-trick in 1987.



## ENGLAND

**(AP)** A virtual affair is ending a real-life marriage in southwest England.

Amy Taylor filed for divorce when she discovered her husband cheating in Second Life — an online community where players adopt personas called avatars, mingle with others and teleport themselves into a series of artificial worlds.

"I caught him cuddling a woman on a sofa in the game," Taylor told the South West News Service press agency. "It looked really affectionate. He confessed he'd been talking to this woman player in America for one or two weeks, and said our marriage was over and he didn't love me any more."

The online drama shows how emotionally invested some people have become in their virtual identities, said Ellen Helsper, a researcher at the Oxford Internet Institute who has studied the impact of the Web on relationships.

"For a while there was this impression that as long as it's online, it doesn't matter. But research has shown it's not a separate world," she said, adding that infidelity was "just as painful, whether it's electronic or physical."

Taylor, 28, moved in with her husband Dave Pollard, 40, in Newquay, about 280 miles (450

kilometers) west of London, after the pair met in a chat room in 2003, according to the press agency's account. Both are disabled, Taylor said.

Both of them created personalities in Second Life, the three-dimensional virtual world with millions of users.

Taylor — represented in the game by a slim, dark-haired young woman with a penchant for cowboy outfits — first wed her beloved in a virtual ceremony held in an exotic tropical setting. She and Pollard — whose Second Life avatar was sharp-suited, long-haired muscleman — then married in real life at a registry office.

The svelte images of their avatars stand in contrast to their real wedding photo, which shows a plump couple — him balding with glasses and a red boutonniere; her in a flower patterned shirt instead of a dress.

Their marriage started to fall apart after Taylor allegedly caught her husband's avatar having cyber sex with a virtual prostitute last year. She said she had fallen asleep and when she woke up and spotted the pair cavorting on the computer screen.

She gave him a second chance but then discovered he allegedly strayed again in April. It was unclear how she learned of the

couch encounter.

The case shows an increasingly tenuous line separating virtual relationships from the real people behind them.

In Britain last month, a truck driver was sentenced to 14 years in prison for the murder of his estranged wife who he killed after he found out she changed her Facebook status to "single" only days after they split up. Facebook is an online social network although users tend to post real pictures of themselves.

In the United States, a woman was charged in Delaware in August with plotting the real-life abduction of a boyfriend she met through the Second Life.

And in Japan, police said last month that a user of the country's popular "Maple Story" Web site — an online adventure game — was so infuriated by her sudden virtual divorce from her online husband that she logged on with his password and killed his digital persona.

The woman was jailed on suspicion of illegally accessing a computer and manipulating electronic data.

Attempts to contact Pollard — both over the phone and through his avatar — were unsuccessful.

But Taylor, reached by telephone on Friday, confirmed that she was getting a divorce next week.

She refused to go into detail, saying South West News has prohibited her from talking to reporters. The news service confirmed that Taylor was under contract.

Despite their breakup, both Pollard and Taylor appear to be committed to scouring the Web for love.

Taylor reportedly found a new man in an alternative cyber-universe, World of Warcraft.

Pollard's Second Life profile, meanwhile, says he is virtually engaged again and can't wait to marry his new fiancée "in rl."

That's short for "real life."

Linden Lab, the maker of Second Life, did not immediately respond to a request for comment late Friday.

