

**Happy
St. Patrick's
Day!**



Lightning Weekly



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MAR 16, 2009

Immigrants From Opposite Sides of War-torn Country Work, Become U.S. Citizens Together



Col. Walter Piatt (far left), commander, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, recognizes five of ten 3IBCT Soldiers who became naturalized U.S. citizens in March. From left: Sgt. Delfino Martinez, cannon crew member, 3rd Battalion, 7th Field Artillery; Pfc. Dennis Berrei David, cannon crew member, Btry. B, 3rd Bn., 7th FA; Pfc. Angel Ciimaco, supply specialist, Headquarters and Headquarters Btry., 3rd Bn., 7th FA; Spc. Magdi Ahmed, interpreter / translator, Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 3 IBCT; and Spc. Marlesh Mbory, interpreter / translator, Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 3 IBCT.

STORY and PHOTO BY
Staff Sgt. Tim Meyer
3rd IBCT, 25th ID Public Affairs Office

**CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE
SPEICHER, TIKRIT, Iraq** – The two men – one a Christian from the south, the other a Muslim from the north – have nothing against each other, despite the past which tore their homeland of Sudan apart for more than 20 years during a savage civil war.

Today they are deployed together in Iraq with the U.S. Army, where they work with the same unit as interpreters. Despite Sudan's violent, the two men share a bright future – both became naturalized U.S. citizens in a ceremony at Al Faw Palace, Baghdad, March 3.

"I love my job, and I love my new country," said Spc. Marlesh Mbory, an assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division. "I'm grateful to be American."

Now married with two children, Mbory moved to the United States in 2003 and settled in Lincoln, Nebraska, where thousands of former southern Sudanese citizens call home. However, his path was far from easy.

At the age of 18, Mbory's step brother and uncle were killed in the second Sudanese Civil War. He fled from Sudan to the Congo where he lived for several months, and then to the Central African Republic for five years before finally immigrating to the U.S.

Mbory learned the French, Swahili, Arabic, Nigala, Sango and Moro languages in Africa. Upon arriving to America, Mbory's 8-year-old daughter Lidia helped him learn English in Nebraska. He hesitated joining the U.S. Army because he didn't want to leave Grace, his then-pregnant wife, alone at home. She persuaded him to go, and Munyo, their son, was born when Mbory was in initial entry training.

"I want to see the world peaceful in the future – that is my hope," he said.

Mbory's father, four brothers, and two sisters are still in Sudan; he is thinking of returning to visit them one day. After this deployment, he plans to work as a recruiter in Lincoln, to tell other Sudanese there of the positive advantages of joining the U.S. Army.

"I moved to the U.S. for freedom, for better opportunities, for a better life," said Spc. Magdi Ahmed, assigned to the same unit. "Joining the Army gave me the opportunity to fix things that I saw with my eyes, but I couldn't do anything about."

Ahmed's parents were from Sudan, but he was born in Saudi Arabia. After working at a railway station for nearly 20 years, Ahmed's father was forcibly retired by the government and replaced by an employee who received less pay.

The family moved to Dongla, the capital of northern Sudan, where they lived for six years during the war. Although his parents were Sudanese, they were considered foreigners because they had lived in Saudi Arabia.

"I didn't feel like an equal in Saudi Arabia or in Sudan," he says. Even though he had Sudanese citizenship and was a resident there, he had to pay more for college, according to Ahmed, because he was born in Saudi Arabia, a rich country.

The college faculty intentionally gave him failing grades, because he didn't agree with the government, according to Ahmed. In Sudan, although he suffered negative experiences – unfairness, discrimination, and corruption – Ahmed thinks of these things as

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Extreme Makeover, Mosul Edition

STORY and PHOTO BY

Pfc. Sharla Perrin

3rd HBCT, 1st CAV Public Affairs Office

MOSUL, Iraq — Mosul has often been referred to as the last haven of insurgent activity in Iraq, but lately the city has had fewer doors bashed in and more tender loving care.

Col. Greg Maxton, the deputy commanding officer of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, has been sitting "shotgun" with the residential, military and government leaders of Mosul since mid-February coordinating projects to clean the city's streets of trash. Although Maxton oversees all non-lethal operations in Ninewah province, there are other bricks in the pathway to success in the area.

Executed at the lowest possible level, companies, batteries and troops within 3rd BCT have worked with local Iraqi leaders to establish the clean-up projects to turn what were once neighborhoods laden with the weight of their filth into communities thriving with physical and emotional potential.

After agreements are made and meetings are adjourned, the junior officers that command these lowest-level units watch the ideals go into action in the Mosul neighborhoods.

"The work that they're doing is spectacular," Maxton said. "We just have to keep our minds open; anything is possible." When contemplating projects Maxton poses the question — "What does it take to promote a better environment for the people who live there?"

"Some of the companies may not realize the foundation of what they're doing, but really, everything hinges on it, and they're doing a great job," said Maxton.

7 Nissan is a neighborhood in northern Mosul that is supervised by Battery B., 2nd Bn., 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd BCT.

A month ago, the neighborhood's empty lots and curbside gutters were riddled with an assortment of garbage from plastic grocery bags to broken-down cars. On March 7, Capt. Derrick Burden, the battery's commander, circulated the area and saw clean sidewalks, freshly swept streets and



Spc. Marlesh Mbory (center), an interpreter / translator assigned to HHC, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th ID, interprets as Sgt. Brittney Sokol, a combat medic assigned to the same unit, explains to Iraqis how to use the medicine she has given them, Dec. 1, 2008.

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moving to the United States.

"The U.S. was the only place you could go for justice. I couldn't get justice from my own country. The struggle I felt in Saudi Arabia and in Sudan made me feel like the U.S. would be a better place to live," said Ahmed.

Ahmed moved back to Saudi Arabia in 2005, and immigrated to the U.S. one year later. In Wisconsin a friend of his uncle's helped Ahmed start a new life, and after one month, he had his own apartment and job.

Ahmed's parents, five brothers and one sister live in Saudi Arabia, and other relatives of his still live in Sudan, where his uncle died during the war. Southern Sudan will become a separate country in 2011, and Mbory adds, "God is watching."

Ten of the 251 Soldiers who became naturalized U.S. citizens in a ceremony at Al Faw Palace, Baghdad, March 3, serve with the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division based at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

They are:

- Sgt. Alfredo Floresreyes, team leader, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment
- Sgt. Delfino Martinez, cannon crew member, Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 7th Field

Artillery

- Spc. Magdi Ahmed, interpreter / translator, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team.
- Spc. Michael Eluang, cavalry scout, 3rd Squadron, 4th U.S. Cavalry Regiment.
- Spc. Marlesh Mbory, interpreter / translator, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team.
- Spc. Dana Noori, interpreter, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Brigade Special Troops Battalion.
- Pfc. Dennis Berrei David, cannon crew member, Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 7th Field Artillery.
- Pfc. Angel Climaco, supply specialist, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 7th Field Artillery.
- Pfc. Leiry Elisa Dominguez Vargas, automated logistics specialist, D Troop, 3rd Squadron, 4th U.S. Cavalry Regiment.
- Pfc. Allan Macaraeg, rifleman, Company D, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment.



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local residents spending their Saturday afternoon picking up trash and spreading gravel.

"My greatest achievement in this mission is watching hired residents come to work at seven in the morning every day," Burden said. "The people of 7 Nissan talk about how the government is doing a good job of hiring people within the neighborhood to work."

The work Burden and his battery have done is the solution to more than just aesthetic value and employment. In the past, unemployed men in Mosul were becoming puppets for the insurgent force as a means to provide for their families. As these same men have been provided a legitimate source of income, the illicit organizations for which they used to work will no longer be a source of strength. The efforts of 3rd BCT will ultimately drive insurgents away.

If Iraq were a dense forest, these projects are rays of light reaching to infant saplings struggling to grow amidst the undergrowth.

Holding a job and providing for their families gives the men of 7 Nissan special pride in themselves and a starts at a return to normalcy. The city has been oppressed by the war and its effects for upwards of six years, and for some, that has meant six years since the shop that was their main source of income was destroyed in a suicide bomber incident.

What used to be a job designated for the lowest rung on the social ladder is now widely accepted, as most of Mosul has been reduced to abject poverty since the start of the war.

"Having a job and a legitimate way to earn an income is very important," Maxton was told by one worker. "Honestly, I'm doing it in my own neighborhood. These are my brothers that are next to me picking up trash."

"I think that's the great part about keeping it within the neighborhoods," Maxton said. "They are taking ownership and pride in the work they are accomplishing."



Several Soldiers with B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division walk along an urban street in 7 Nissan, a neighborhood in northern Mosul.



A group of men that live in 7 Nissan, a neighborhood located in northern Mosul, shovel the trash that has accumulated in empty lots and along curbsides. 7 Nissan is only one of the many Mosul neighborhoods that are taking part of in a series of projects devoted to cleaning the city's streets and public areas, and providing employment and other essential service for its residents.

A small herd of sheep graze peacefully in an empty lot in 7 Nissan, a neighborhood under the supervision of B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.



The 25th Infantry Division Association



TROPIC LIGHTNING



For more information go to:
<http://www.25thida.org>

The 25th Infantry Division Association was officially chartered in 1950 as a result of initial groundwork done by Col. William Dick and other former Division leaders during the previous year. The first annual reunion took place in July of that year, and was attended by 253 members and their guests. The first issue of Tropic Lightning **FLASHES**, the Association newsletter, was published in October 1950 and was distributed to 2,300 former members of the Division; later editions were only circulated to Association members. In that first year, membership stood at 442, though membership drives in future years would bring that number to its current level of 4,100.

The earliest recorded chapter of the Association is the Cacti Chapter (35th Infantry Regiment), formed in Korea on April 18, 1953. Other chapters were formed in Division Artillery, Special Troops and other commands, as well as Ft. Knox, Ft. Ord, Ft. Meade, Ft. Benning and other posts where large contingents of 25th members were located. These early active duty chapters existed for varying periods of time, and then disappeared. The only current active duty chapter is the Schofield Barracks Chapter, which was formed December 7, 1973, when the Division returned from Vietnam.

In the ensuing decades the Association would face challenges in keeping alive such programs as scholarships, **FLASHES**, and the annual reunion, due to deficiencies in membership levels and funds. Early attempts to gain tax-exempt status for the Association failed, adding to the financial problems. Steps were taken to correct these problems, including raising membership dues, reducing newsletter costs by temporarily cutting back on the number of issues, and setting goals for attracting new members.

A change in Association leadership in 1978 brought about consistent, forceful action to deal with these long-standing issues. Membership dues were adjusted again to a level that could sustain the Association's programs. Tax-exempt status was finally achieved in 1982, after 20 years of effort, and a steady rise in membership by Vietnam veterans began at the National Vietnam Veterans Salute in Washington, D.C. in 1983.

Further steps were taken in 1989 to ensure long-range viability for the Association. An accounting firm was hired to

prepare properly formed financial reports and assist in budget preparation. Five years later an investment advisor was retained to reinvest the Association's funds, further strengthening our economic base. Special funds were also established at that time for the perpetuation of the scholarship program. These funds ensure that money is earned each year to fund the annual scholarship awards. A former Association President, William Hazlett left a sizable portion of his estate to the Scholarship Fund when he passed away in the late 1990s. Thanks in large part to this donation and the significant donations of chapters and individuals, the Scholarship Fund has grown to the point that we have been able to award over \$30,000 in scholarship each of the past several years.

In 1995 the Association entered into an agreement with the George C. Marshall Foundation to establish an Archive collection at the Foundation's Museum and Library on the campus of Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Virginia. Since that time members have donated hundreds of articles to the Archive collection including maps, reports, letters, books, photographs, uniforms and other memorabilia of service with the Tropic Lightning Division. The Association has donated funds each year to the Marshall Foundation to underwrite the cost of care and preservation of our collection. In 1999 the Association began publishing an annual calendar featuring photographs drawn from the Archive collection. Funds raised by this calendar have been set aside in a special fund to support the Archive.

Association members have been deeply involved in other veterans' activities. Two former 27th Regiment members became prime movers in establishing the Korea War Veterans Association (KWVA) in July of 1982, and 7 of the 39 charter members of the KWVA were also members of the 25th Infantry Division Association. In 1989 the 25th IDA pledged \$5,000 to the Korean War Memorial, which broke ground in 1992. Several busloads of Association members attended the Memorial's dedication, which coincided with the 1995 annual reunion in Alexandria, Virginia. In 2000 Association officials met with Sen. Bob Dole and presented him with a check for \$10,000 towards the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C.

The year 2001 marked another significant

period for the Association. The annual reunion was scheduled for the first week in October, some three weeks following the dastardly attack on our Nation. Over 420 members and guests were registered for the reunion in Hawaii. After September 11th, some predicted that members would withdraw support for the reunion and it would be cancelled. In fact, twenty cancellations were received, as were thirty new registrations. For the first time in Association history, veterans revisited their former post at Schofield Barracks in time of war. The officers and Soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division (Light) gave the Association a wonderful reception and the veterans and their guests thanked hundreds of soldiers they met for their service to the nation. Handshakes and pats shoulders were the order of the day as Veterans and Soldiers bonded in camaraderie.

Also at the 52nd annual reunion, the Association voted to adopt new by-laws that created a position of Executive Director. A By-laws Committee, under the leadership of Dave Garrod and including Rev. Dennis Roe and former-President Jerry Headley, labored several years to reorganize the Association and make it more efficient and effective in addressing the goals of the Association. Former President Butch Sincok was appointed as the Association's first Executive Director.

As the Association moves into the 21st century, it finds its organization built on a firm foundation through good, solid leadership, sound financial management, a centralized administration and a commitment to continue to expand through maintaining and building membership. The Association is pledged to continue its many programs including the Scholarship program, the Archives collection, support of the Tropic Lightning Museum at Schofield Barracks, support of selected memorial projects, publication of Tropic Lightning **FLASHES** quarterly, and reunions that are entertaining, enlightening and enjoyable. In addition, the Association is firmly committed to support our Armed Forces, especially the men and women of the 25th Infantry Division, in this time of war. The 25th Infantry Division Association will continue to be a leader in the area of veterans' non-profit organizations.

This Week In Tropic Lightning History

TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS

MARCH 17, 1969 – CU CHI, VIETNAM

Infantrymen of the 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 5th Infantry, made a wholesale disruption of one NVA unit's plans.

Near midday of a long sweep near the southeast corner of the Hobo Woods, men of Bravo Company's third platoon spotted three men wearing NVA uniforms. Air strikes and gunships covered the area with fire power as Bobcat companies Alpha and Bravo joined, readying themselves for contact.

The advancing Fire Brigade soldiers began to maneuver into a superior tactical position. In the process a nearby hedgerow suddenly came alive with enemy soldiers firing RPGs and AK-47s.

One armored personnel carrier driver, Specialist 4 Percy J. Jennings, a native of Starksborough, Vt., from Bravo Company's third platoon was practically on top of the action.

Jennings said, "I was 30 meters from the hedgerow when I saw a flash coming toward me."

Jennings jumped clear of an RPG aimed directly at him, receiving only minor shrapnel wounds in the leg, but nothing else.

As darkness moved in, enemy fire had been silenced. The two companies set up a

night laager with the aid of concertina wire and extra ammo dropped by a Chinook.

Early the next morning aided by Charlie Company of the Tropic Lightning, soldiers swept through the area tabulating the score of the previous day's battle as they advanced. Twenty-two NVA bodies were found, and other blood trails indicated that the Bobcats had seriously damaged the NVA unit. Aside from the body count, the three companies discovered several caches.

Staff Sergeant Richard L. Hautekeete, Grinnel, Iowa, Bravo Company second platoon sergeant, in leading his platoon through the burned-out area noticed an unnatural depression near a tree. Further detailed examination only proved to verify Hautekeete's suspicion. A wooden trap door hastily camouflaged pointed the way to a large tunnel full of small arms ammunition - 23,400 rounds.

Sergeant Lonnie Cruise, Fair Oaks, Calif. discovered a camouflaged hole filled with 82mm mortar rounds, 60mm mortar rounds, recoilless rifle rounds and small arms ammunition.

In yet another tunnel, Private First Class Roger D. Champion Birmingham, Ala., pulled an outgoing bag of NVA mail. Not to be left out of the spoils were the men of Charlie Company who detained one suspect.

At the end of the day, the 2nd Brigade soldiers had captured 84 82mm rounds, 48 fuzes, two mortar sights, one 82mm mortar tube, four 60mm mortar rounds, nine 57mm recoilless rifle rounds, three 75mm recoilless rifle rounds, three RPG-2 rounds, one RPG-7 round, one RPG launcher, three AK-47s and several documents.



SCATTER, AND QUICKLY! Tropic Lightning soldiers of the 1st Brigade charge out of their choppers into the hot landing zone, even as the Hueys are on their way out. (PHOTO BY PFC RALPH NOVAK)



PAST TROPIC LIGHTNING COMMANDING GENERALS

LTG JAMES M. DUBIK
25th ID CG – 2000 - 2002

LTG Dubik began his Army career by being commissioned a second lieutenant of infantry from Gannon University as a Distinguished Military Graduate in 1971.

After his commissioning he held numerous leadership and command positions with airborne, ranger, light and mechanized infantry units around the world.

He served with the 82nd Airborne Division; 2nd Battalion, 75th Infantry (Ranger); 5th Battalion, 14th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division (Light); 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division and 1st Cavalry Division, as well as commanding I Corps.

He commanded the U.S. and Multinational forces in northern Haiti during Operation Uphold Democracy and served as Deputy Commanding General TASK FORCE EAGLE and Multinational Division (North) Operation Joint Forge, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In 2000 he assumed command of the 25th Infantry Division, a post he held until 2002.

LTG Dubik assumed command Multi National Security Transition Command-Iraq on 10 June 2007.

LTG Dubik retired from active duty on 1 September 2008 and currently serves as the first Senior Fellow for the Institute for the Study of War.

25th Infantry Division Did You Know?

- In Oliver Stone's 1986 Vietnam War film *Platoon*, the fictional military unit is depicted by its shoulder patches as being part of the 25th ID.

- The 25th ID's shoulder patch, a lightning bolt superimposed on a taro leaf, was formally adopted in late 1943.

- The taro leaf of the shoulder patch is reminiscent of the birth of the 25th ID from elements of the famous Hawaiian Division, and suggestive of the pacific region where the 25th ID was established and where it had fought so well. The native taro plant further signifies the Division's birthplace with its often brilliantly colored, arrow-shaped leaves.

- The bolt of lightning symbolized speed and aggressive spirit - a trait the 25th ID continually displayed during its battles in the Pacific. The colors of red and gold were those of the late Hawaiian monarchy.

NEWS FROM THE HOME FRONT

HAWAII

KAUA'I - Kaua'i firefighters today suspended the search for a missing surfer after a three-day search.

The surfer was identified as 34-year-old Aaron Lamson of Molokai, who lost his surfboard at around 1:41 Friday afternoon at a spot called "Crack 14" and has not been seen since.

"Anyone with new information about the missing surfer is urged to call us," said Kaua'i Fire Chief Robert Westerman. "We are prepared to immediately switch from passive to active mode and resume the search."

Firefighters and rescue specialists had been searching the shoreline from "Crack 14" to Kapa'a swimming pool as lifeguards searched on jet watercraft and the Air-1 helicopter searched from the air.

Additionally, Coast Guard personnel assisted with searches via helicopter as well as a C-130 plane, covering approximately 200 square miles of ocean.

ALASKA

FAIRBANKS — One of the smallest Alaska Nanooks scored the biggest goal of the season Sunday on what he called "not a very good pass."

Freshman Ron Meyers flung a puck from behind the Ohio State net that deflected off goalie Dustin Carlson and into the net with 50 seconds remaining, giving the Nanooks an exhilarating 1-0 win and keeping their season alive.

"I kinda threw one there toward the net and just kinda got lucky," said Meyers, a 5-foot-8, 175-pound right wing on the team's third line. "The hockey gods were there with me tonight."

That stroke of fortune — on a night when the Nanooks were outplayed for two periods — clinched the best-of-three Central Collegiate Hockey Association quarterfinal series.

"I guess we're going to the Joe," Nanooks head coach Dallas Ferguson deadpanned to raucous applause as he opened a media conference with hundreds of fans in attendance.

The Nanooks next travel to the Joe Louis Arena in Detroit where they will meet Michigan in a CCHA semifinal on Friday.

With the game seemingly destined for sudden-death overtime, Meyers helped extend the season by taking a pass from freshman defenseman Joe Sova and zipping around Ohio State's Chris Reed.

"I knew I had a little more speed, so I thought I'd tip it by (Reed) and beat him to the corner," Meyers said.

Once behind the net's right side, Meyers saw left wing Ryan Hohl skating down the slot. When he threw the puck toward the

net, however, the only players anywhere near the goal were three Buckeyes and netminder Carlson.

"I tried to make a pass, and it wasn't a very good pass and hit the goalie," Meyers said to laughter from the crowd.

While Meyers — who scored just three goals in 34 games heading into Saturday — was an unlikely hero, Ferguson let the crowd in on a little-known fact.

"For those of you that don't know, Ronnie Meyers is famous for scoring a big goal," Ferguson said.

Then Meyers told how in 2005-06 he tallied the championship game-winner for the Prince Albert (Saskatchewan) Minors in the third overtime of the Canadian Midget nationals.

Meyers' score Sunday sent the Carlson Center crowd into a frenzy after they had little to cheer in the first two periods as the Nanooks were outshot 33-15; only goalie Chad Johnson's heroics kept Alaska from falling behind.

"I went blank there for a bit," Meyers said, describing the aftermath of his score. "I just had a bunch of guys jumping on me...it's an awesome feeling to be able to do that for the seniors and the team and for the fans and community."

Meyers, who found a niche with sophomore linemates Kevin Petovello and Derek Klassen around Christmas, has worked his tail off for the Nanooks all season, Ferguson said.

"He's just kind of relentless. He doesn't stop working, and guys get rewarded for working hard and doing things the right way," Ferguson said.

Johnson, a senior who has carried the low-scoring Nanooks this season and finished with 43 saves Sunday, also never quit working to stymie the attacking Buckeyes.

"When you have the best goalie in the country on your team ..." Ferguson said, not even attempting to finish the sentence because it generated 20 seconds of cheering in the Pioneer Room followed by a song for Johnson from a young group of jubilant supporters.

The Nanooks' work is not done as they head to the CCHA Championships against favored Michigan, followed possibly by a chance for a first ever conference title.

"I know our work ethic is going to be there. We gotta go down there and get a win," Ferguson said, before tacking on two words after a pause. "Two wins."

TEXAS

KILLEEN — Killeen police solved 100 percent of the city's homicides in 2008, a feat accomplished for the first time since 2005, and one that will allow detectives to shift

focus to previous unsolved cases.

While Killeen's homicide total in 2008 was the second highest since 2000, it shouldn't be a cause for fear among residents, spokeswoman Carroll Smith said.

Most of the murders involved people who knew each other and/or involved alcohol or illegal activities, including drugs. Most were not random acts of violence, Smith said. Murders are sometimes unpredictable because what starts as a simple fist fight can escalate in the heat of the moment into a stabbing or shooting.

Killeen's murder total declined from 12 in 2007 to 10 in 2008, but remained in double digits. KPD was inundated with more calls per service and cases yet the department was still able to close all 10 homicides.

Clearance rates tend to be fickle indicators. One unsolved case can equal a 10 percent decrease in clearance rate since Killeen's totals typically fall in single digits.

With all 2008 homicide cases cleared, detectives will continue trying to close two double homicides in 2007.

The Dollar General double homicide took the lives of two mothers, Gricelda P. Ramos, 28, and Sheila Reed, 40, on July 4, 2007.

Darius Treymane Westbrook, 30, and Natasha Williams Brannum, 36, were killed in a double murder on April 28, 2007. Smith said detectives are still investigating leads in these cases, but so far have not made arrests.

Killeen Police Chief Dennis Baldwin was unavailable to comment for this article while undergoing out-of-town training.

NEW YORK

OGDENSBURG — The Ogdensburg Chamber of Commerce has started planning for the first festival in the county to bring locally produced wine, food and beer together, according to chamber Executive Director Sandra M. Porter.

The North Country Wine, Beer, Food Festival is planned for Aug. 8 and 9, and city officials expect it will bring a crowd to the city this summer.

"We've always wanted to do a significant event in the summertime to highlight or focus on the Lockwood Center and visitors center, and this fit the bill," Mrs. Porter said.

All vendors for the two-day festival will be from within the state, while all food will come from St. Lawrence County farmers. Many of the vendors are involved in the Ogdensburg Greenmarket, held weekly in the city during the summer, and are producers for several county restaurants such as the 1844 House in Potsdam, Mrs. Porter said.

The event will bring together local artisans for demonstrations such as canoe carving and sculpting as well, Mrs. Porter added.

LIGHTNING HERO OF THE WEEK

SPC Merlin Collins
A CO, 3rd STB, 3rd HBCT, 1st CAV
Huffman, Texas

SPC Collins, a Human Intelligence Collector, recently participated in a two-Soldier mission to the 2nd Iraqi Army Division Headquarters at Al-Kindi Army Base in northeastern Mosul. While there SPC Collins identified shortfalls in the Iraqi intelligence system used by the 2IA DIV and developed a plan to correct the issues. While there he also conducted Source Operations, which has added immensely to the improving security in Ninewah Province. He has personally developed multiple tracking tools that have been implemented by his team.



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CHAPLAIN'S CORNER





North Korea lets stranded South Koreans cross border

SEOUL, South Korea (CNN) -- North Korea partly reopened its border Monday and allowed hundreds of South Koreans to return home, South Korean officials said.

Nearly 300 South Koreans returned, said South Korea Unification Ministry spokesman Kim Ho-Nyun. They had been stranded in the North because the communist country shut its border at the start of U.S.-South Korea military exercises March 9.

Monday's actions marked at least the second time that the North had allowed South Koreans to return home since the border's closing.

Many of the South Koreans work at an industrial complex in the North Korean border town of Kaesong. The complex is a joint project of North and South Korea.

Kim said the South Korean companies involved in the industrial complex decided that, because the North was not allowing South Koreans into the North, they needed to keep more of their workers in the North. So as of Monday, there were at least 441 South Koreans still in North Korea. Kim was unclear about what he expected to happen Tuesday.

The communist nation shut its border March 9 and cut the last remaining communications channel between North and South, calling the 12-day U.S.-South Korean military exercises a threat to its safety.

"We have said several times that the U.S.-South Korean military exercises are annual defensive exercises," Kim said last week.

The North also has threatened to retaliate if a "satellite" launch from its northeastern coast were intercepted, saying interference would "mean a war."

U.S. and South Korean officials have said that North Korea appears to be preparing to test-fire its long-range missile, the Taepodong-2, under the guise of launching a satellite into space.

The missile is thought to have an intended range of about 4,200 miles (6,700 kilometers), which – if true – could give it the capability of striking Alaska or Hawaii.



SPORTING NEWS

Phoenix hangs NBA-best 154 on woeful Warriors

OAKLAND, Calif. – Now that the runnin' Phoenix Suns are making a playoff push, Shaq is wondering what took them so long.

Jason Richardson scored 31 points against his former team, Shaquille O'Neal added 26, and the Suns rang up the highest point total in the NBA this season in a 154-130 victory over the Golden State Warriors on Sunday night.

"I don't want to use the word disappointing but coming in we thought we would be one of the teams," O'Neal said. "It's still special and if we stay focused anything can happen."

The Suns are within four games of the Dallas Mavericks for the eighth playoff spot with 15 games to play.

"It's big for us to make up two games in two days," Richardson said. "It gives us a lot of energy and the mindset that we can still do this."

Matt Barnes, another former Warriors player, added 20 points and a career-high 11 assists as the Suns ended a five-game losing streak on the road and a four-game skid at Golden State. Leandro Barbosa added 21 points and Jared Dudley and Steve Nash each had 11.

"This is the game we needed to get us going," Richardson said. "We just need to take care of business and let things fall where they may."

Monta Ellis scored 26 points and Corey Maggette added 21 for the Warriors, who had won their last two at home. Kelenna Azubuike scored 18 and Jamal Crawford had 17 as Golden State was officially eliminated from playoff contention.

"That was a tough loss, especially on national television," Crawford said. "It's embarrassing to lose like that, to give up that many points."

The teams combined for an NBA best 284 points and the Suns scored 56 fast-break points, the most since 1997, when the league began to track the stat.

Richardson scored 18 of his points in the third quarter, when the Suns netted 46, a season best for any period, aided by a series of free throws following technical fouls on the Warriors' Stephen Jackson and coach Don Nelson. They took a 120-97 advantage into the final quarter.

"It was great to have a game like that, especially against a former team and guys you know well," Richardson said. "This is how we what to play, go up and down the

court."

Jackson picked up his second technical foul of the game with 3:54 remaining in the third quarter and was ejected from the contest. Nelson followed his star guard into the locker room 11 seconds later after getting his second technical foul.

"It was bad, man, we can't hide that," Azubuike said. "There's no excuse for that kind of performance on defense. We've got to get better."

The Suns shot 62.1 percent for the game, the best against Golden State since the Utah Jazz shot 63 percent in November of 2007.

Less than 24 hours after scoring 18 points in the first quarter of their victory over Oklahoma City, the Suns produced a season best for the first period with 42 against the Warriors.

The Warriors ended the second quarter on a 19-7 run over the final five minutes, but the Suns took a 74-72 lead into halftime.

League,"

Boxer Oscar Diaz released from hospital 7 months after coma

SAN ANTONIO – Boxer Oscar Diaz has been released from a hospital seven months after being beaten into a coma during a nationally televised fight.

University Hospital in San Antonio said Monday the 26-year-old welterweight fighter was discharged Thursday. Diaz had remained hospitalized since awakening from the coma in September.

Dr. David Jimenez, the boxer's chief neurosurgeon, told the *San Antonio Express-News* that Diaz entered a local rehabilitation facility. He said Diaz can sit up in a chair, respond to commands and smiles when someone tells a joke.

The doctor said he was optimistic that Diaz would be able to walk and talk again. Diaz collapsed in his corner before the 11th round of his fight July 16 with Delvin Rodriguez.

TASK FORCE LIGHTNING



TASK FORCE LIGHTNING - THROUGH THE LENS



A local Sharqat man speaks to Spc. Erik Arreola, Co. B, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, and has his personal information verified by a 4th Iraqi Army Division soldier at the Joint Security Station in Ash Sharqat, Iraq, March 2 as he registers for the Sons of Iraq.



Non-commissioned officers with 25th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, pose for pictures after a ceremony to formally recognize the new non commissioned officers into the Non-commissioned Officer Corps while at Forward Operating Base Warhorse in the Diyala province of Iraq, March 8.



From left), Hamad Hamoud Shakti, the outgoing governor of Salah ad-Din province, and Rasheed Ahmed Ossman, outgoing SaD Provincial Council chairman, listen as Col. Walter Piatt, brigade commander, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division addresses an informal meeting of outgoing and newly elected SaD council members in Tikrit, March 1.



Spc. Nicholas Mossburger, driver, Scorpion Platoon, 5th Squadron, 1st U.S. Cavalry, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, prepares his mine resistant ambush protected vehicle for convoy while at Forward Operating Base Warhorse in the Diyala province of Iraq, March 6.

HEROES OF THE 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION



- Corporal John Walton Collier
- Company C, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division
- Born: 3 April 1929, Worthington, KY
- Entered Service: Worthington, KY, 1950
- Place of Action: Near Chindong-ni, Korea
- Date of Action: 19 September 1950



Corp. John W. Collier

Medal of Honor Citation:

Cpl. Collier, Company C, distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty in action. While engaged in an assault on a strategic ridge strongly defended by a fanatical enemy, the leading elements of his company encountered intense automatic weapons and grenade fire. Cpl. Collier and 3 comrades volunteered and moved forward to neutralize an enemy machine gun position which was hampering the company's advance, but they were twice repulsed. On the third attempt, Cpl. Collier, despite heavy enemy fire and grenade barrages, moved to an exposed position ahead of his comrades, assaulted and destroyed the machine gun nest, killing at least 4 enemy soldiers. As he returned down the rocky, fire-swept hill and joined his squad, an enemy grenade landed in their midst. Shouting a warning to his comrades, he, selflessly and unhesitatingly, threw himself upon the grenade and smothered its explosion with his body. This intrepid action saved his comrades from death or injury. Cpl. Collier's supreme, personal bravery, consummate gallantry, and noble self-sacrifice reflect untold glory upon himself and uphold the honored traditions of the military service.

Messages From Home



*Patrick C. Cornett -
We miss you
very much!!
Come back safely!!
Love,
Lyberti and Cassie*

**Go
Army,
Beat
Navy!**

**Sending
our Love
to all the
Dads!**

