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March 23, 2009

IA mechanics learn to fix generators



Photo by Sgt. Allison Churchill

An Iraqi Army mechanic assists in disassembling a generator so he and six other mechanics can learn to put it back together and conduct maintenance services. The Iraqis attended a class taught by Soldiers in Co. B, 589th BSB's ground support equipment shop in the company's motor pool on FOB Delta March 12-16.

SGT. ALLISON CHURCHILL
41ST FB



FOB DELTA – Seven Iraqi Soldiers are learning how to repair generators in preparation for the handover of the joint security stations in Wasit Province.

Generator mechanics from the ground support equipment section, Company B, 589th Brigade Support Battalion, 41st Fires Brigade are teaching the class in the company's motor pool.

"They've absorbed six months of training in a few days," said Sgt. 1st Class Vernon Watson, GSE noncommissioned officer-in-charge.

The training began on March 12 with classroom-style courses. The Iraqis quickly moved to hands-on training using several inoperable control boxes and generator parts in the shop.

"Once you tear a piece of equipment apart you get to see how it operates," said Watson, of Brookhaven, Miss.

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IP, U.S. Soldiers deliver humanitarian aid in Babil



Photo by Sgt. Christina Brink

IP officers unload sleeping mats and distribute them to local villagers during a humanitarian assistance mission recently in a small village of rural Jawadia, located in the Babil Province.



Photo by Sgt. Christina Brink

IP officers unload humanitarian aid supplies and distribute them to local citizens during a mission recently in a small village of rural Jawadia, located in the Babil Province.

1ST LT. MATTHEW PIERCE
2ND BCT, 4TH INF. DIV.



CSC SCANIA – The residents of a small village in rural Jawadia in the Babil Province received an unexpected surprise recently.

In the early morning hours under a hazy, sand-induced overcast sky, local villagers awoke to find Iraqi Police of the Al Furat Police Station and Soldiers from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, pulling into their village with a railcar shipping container in tow.

When the smiling IP officers cracked open the container, a plethora of supplies ranging from blankets and pillows to water purifiers and generators, poured out to exclamations of astonished gratitude from the local citizens.

"They don't teach you this in Basic Training or Artillery School," said Staff Sgt. Travanti Andrews of 2nd Platoon, Battery A, 3rd Battalion, 16th Field Artillery Regiment, and Greenwood, Miss. resident. "This type of mission is what we look forward to because we see a difference on the spot. The locals are extremely grateful and we are grateful to have the opportunity to help out. Everybody wins."

The field artillery battery has spent the past four months working jointly with the local

IP to bring much-needed training to their Security Forces.

In addition to this training, they have found time to provide humanitarian assistance to the surrounding communities.

Coordination between the battery commander and IP chief resulted in 340 people from 42 families in the area receiving provisions that greatly improved their quality of life.

"(Iraqi Police chief) Maj. Rahman and his Police team did an outstanding job ensuring every family got equal rations. Not one person went home empty handed today," said Maj. Scott Perry, the civil affairs team leader working with 3-16 FA Regt.

This humanitarian assistance mission is one of many that will continue to be a part of 3rd Bn., 16 FA Regt.'s battle rhythm as they conduct operations in the Babil Province.

Many of the battalion's Soldiers said they attribute the ever-increasing stability in the communities throughout the area to the local IP and Iraqi Army units.

Improvements in the security environment have allowed the Iraqi Security Forces to focus on building trust within the communities they patrol.

These types of missions are building a foundation for a relationship between law enforcement and the citizens they protect.

THE Mountain View

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2nd BCT, 4th Infantry Division
4th BCT, 1st Cavalry Division
41st Fires Brigade
343th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
793rd Military Police Battalion
Division Special Troops Battalion, 10th Mtn. Div.
Task Force 449



Delta Education Center brings Soldiers closer to goals

SGT. ALLISON CHURCHILL
41ST FB



FOB DELTA – Thirty-two Soldiers took advantage of the first Functional Academic Skills Training Class on FOB Delta since its start Feb. 16.

The FAST Class focuses on arithmetic reasoning, word knowledge and paragraph comprehension which combine for the general technical score of the Armed Forces Classification Test.

Soldiers who boost their scores will have more career opportunities, said Master Sgt. Quintine Wert, Education Center noncommissioned officer-in-charge.

One student, Spc. Saul Martinez, gunner, Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 20th Field Artillery Regiment, 41st Fires Bde., said his math skills were already strong and commended his instructor for teaching vocabulary and comprehension in a practical way.

"It's not boring," he said of FAST Class English instructor Chief Petty Officer Ryan Hamilton's teaching skills. "He helps out a lot, puts it in perspective."

Hamilton, of Bend, Ore., said he noticed many students didn't recognize words when they read them in test questions, so he read a lot of words aloud and used them in sentences.

"It gets them to remember how they'd heard it before," said Hamilton, an electronic warfare instructor.

Soldiers also benefited from another dedicated teacher.

"I usually show them more than one

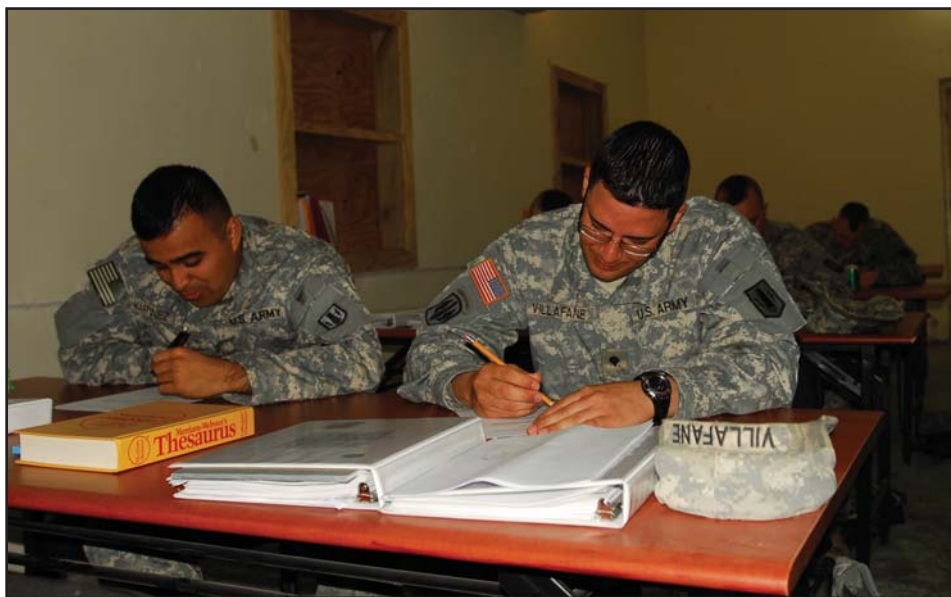


Photo by Sgt. Allison Churchill

Spc. Saul Martinez, Btry. B, 2-20 FA, and Spc. Luis Villafane, Co. B, 589th BSB, take a quiz evaluating their verbal skills March 4 at the FOB Delta Education Center. Both Soldiers enrolled in the FOB's first FAST Class.

way to solve a problem," said Staff Sgt. Danielle Kuehn, 41st Fires Brigade ammunitions noncommissioned officer. The Ganado, Texas resident taught the math portion of the class.

"She should really be a teacher," said Spc. Phongeune Sourivanh, combat engineer, 515th Engineer Company and Orange County, Calif. resident. "We worked out every problem on the board, and she took her personal time to help us at night."

All the instructors are volunteers, but they must have a bachelor's degree and be certified through Central Texas College to teach the class, said Wert, a

Richmond, Va. resident. The students took several GT score predictor tests throughout the course and the final predictor test showed increases ranging from two to 21 points.

"I'd recommend it to everyone," said Martinez. "It's really good for someone who's been out of school for a while."

The FAST Class lasts four hours a day, five days a week, for three weeks, with two classes offered daily.

For more information, or information on civilian education opportunities, visit the education center in Building 12 on the former Salvadoran compound.

GENERATORS

From page 1

"We were able to show them on actual generators where wires go," said Watson. They also learned how to troubleshoot, perform preventative maintenance checks and services and perform voltage checks.

"Instead of us telling them a battery is bad, they can use the battery load tester," said Watson.

The Iraqis picked up the fine details

of the generators so quickly, Watson expanded the class to other services the GSE shop provides, such as vehicle air conditioning repair and welding.

"They were willing to learn, very excited about it, and asked a lot of questions," said Spc. Daniel Britton, a ground support engineer and air conditioner technician from Fort Worth, Texas.

"We got good information about generators and we are having fun with this class," said Sub-sergeant Yasim of 3rd

Battalion, 32nd Iraqi Army Brigade.

The Co. B Soldiers are also working with the 8th Motorized Transportation Regiment to ensure the new generators going to the JSSs will have back-up parts when maintenance becomes necessary, said Capt. Jarod Shelton, Co. B commander.

The Ashland, Mo., native also said the lesson plans will be available to Soldiers at the JSSs so they can teach their Iraqi partners if they can't come to FOB Delta for the class.

Staff Section Round-up

EO Corner: Did you get the Signal? – Sex Signals Tour



Photo by LTC Vance McLeod

Brig. Gen. Jeffery Buchanan, MND-C DCG-O, presents Amber Kelly and Kyle Terry with a token of appreciation following a show at the Hope Chapel on March 11, 2009.

The Dept. of the Army sponsored "Sex Signals" tour came here recently in support of the U.S. Army's I A.M. Strong campaign. The campaign aims to eradicate sexual assault and sexual harassment by engaging Soldiers with a provocative and realistic look at the issues surrounding dating, sex, and ultimately, acquaintance rape.

The two-person show explored how mixed messages, gender role stereotypes and unrealistic fantasies contribute to misunderstandings between the sexes, and can lead even well-meaning people into situations where sexual assault is likely to occur.

This comedically-themed play with a serious message has been performed at colleges and universities across the United States and Canada, and was chosen by the Department of Defense to help educate servicemembers on how to prevent sexual assault and to drive home the message that sexual harassment is never appropriate.

The I A.M. Strong campaign's eventual goal is to initiate a cultural change such that, much like drunken driving, sexually inappropriate behavior becomes socially unacceptable, driving others to take action to prevent sexual assault.

The actors, Amber Kelly and Kyle Terry, performed nine 90-minute shows for a total audience of approximately 2,400 personnel in venues on Victory Base Complex, including two shows for Multi National Division - Central. Catharsis Productions has agreed to perform several hundred more shows for U.S. military audiences in the continental United States and abroad. If you get the opportunity to see one, do it.

—Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Schell, of the MND-C EO office

The CG wants YOUR input about a new blog!

Go to the Mountain Sound Off Blog at

www.taskforcemountain.com

The CG wants to set up another blog in addition to The Mountain Sound-Off, with the topics and discussion on the new blog driven by YOU - the Soldiers, Family members and community partners.

We'd like your thoughts on how you want this new blog to work: How do we choose topics for discussion? How often should we update the topic? Do we limit participation? Do we limit topics to just military matters? What do we call it? Etc.

To let the CG and others know, go to the Mountain Sound Off Blog at

www.taskforcemountain.com

Headline Round-up

World News:

THE HAGUE, Netherlands - The severed head of King Badu Bonsu II is going home to Ghana, around 170 years after it was hacked off in retaliation for the slayings of two Dutch emissaries whose skulls were hung from the tribal leader's throne. Bonsu's head was discovered last year in a jar of formaldehyde at the Leiden University Medical Center's anatomical collection by a Dutch author. Ghana immediately asked for it to be returned and the Dutch government asked the hospital to cooperate. "It will go back to Ghana, where we assume it will be buried," Dutch Education, Culture and Science Minister Ronald Plasterk told The Associated Press.

U.S. News:

MOBILE, Ala. - A jobless shrimper who killed four young children by throwing them off an 80-foot-high Alabama bridge was sentenced to death by a jury Friday. The jury deliberated for about an hour before recommending that Lam Luong be executed. He was convicted Thursday of capital murder, which is the only charge in Alabama in which a death sentence is possible.

Odd News:

CYPRESS, Calif. - A 15-year-old in Southern California who hopes to become a firefighter saved his English teacher's life with the Heimlich maneuver when she was choking on an almond. Judy Rader said she popped a few of the nuts into her mouth at the start of Wednesday's third period class at Cypress High School. Freshman Sam Barrera sprang into action after she started hopping up and down and gasping. The teen wrapped his arms around her from behind and squeezed hard, dislodging the nut. He learned the lifesaving technique in an online health course.

Science News:

The lightest material on Earth now packs a powerful punch. Scientists from Texas and around the world have created a material that, by density, is lighter than air yet, when electrified, instantly and powerfully contracts. Their work is detailed in this week's issue of the journal Science. "These artificial muscles are very lightweight and can do wonderful things," said Ray Baughman, the study's author from the University of Texas at Dallas.

Quote of the Day

"Once we have a war there is only one thing to do. It must be won. For defeat brings worse things than any that can ever happen in war." - Ernest Miller Hemmingway

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



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AROUND THE COMMUNITY

Fishbowl Gym

March 27

Relay for Life HOPE Ceremony
@ 8 p.m.

March 28

Cancer awareness 5K/10K walk
run. Free t-shirt and
continental breakfast. Race
begins @ 7 a.m.

April 11

Pirate's Cove Run 5K/10K.

Registration begins @ 7 a.m.,
race begins @ 8 a.m.
T-shirts awarded to top
finishers.

Freedom Chapel

Sundays

Protestant (Traditional) @ 10
a.m.

Roman Catholic Mass @ 12 p.m.

LDS service @ 2 p.m.

Eastern Orthodox @ 4 p.m.

Protestant (Contemporary) @ 12
p.m.

Mondays

A History of Christianity @
7 p.m.

Tuesdays

God & the Military @ 6:30 p.m.

Wednesdays

Guitar Lessons @ 7 p.m.

Thursdays

Catholic Choir practice @ 5:30
p.m.

Fridays

Catholic hour @ 6:30 p.m.