

Returning a neighborhood

By Spc. Dustin Roberts

2nd HBCT PAO, 1st Inf. Div., MND-B

BAGHDAD — As per a recently signed security agreement, Multi-National Division — Baghdad Soldiers and Iraqi Security Forces made another necessary step toward total Iraqi control in securing northwest Baghdad.

In a transfer ceremony, Soldiers from the 1st Combined Arms Battalion “Vanguard,” 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, handed over the keys to Joint Security Station Shulla to the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division March 2 at the Shulla Neighborhood Advisor Council Hall.

The “Vanguard” Soldiers invited Iraqi and western media to witness the transfer ceremony, as well as walk the streets in order to highlight recent security and infrastructure improvements in Shulla.

During the visit, reporters from outlets such as al-Hurra Television, Agency French Press, Reuters, the Associated Press and the British Broadcasting Company, witnessed the transition of Joint Security Station Shulla and had lunch at a newly rebuilt chicken restaurant; destroyed by a vehicle-borne explosive device in December 2008.

“The event was a testimony to the astonishing progress we see on a daily basis in northwest Baghdad,” said Lt. Col. John Vermeesch, a native of Marshall, Mich., commander of the “Vanguard” battalion. “The security situation in Shulla has not been this good in a long time. Because of that, the citizens of Shulla are experiencing a better standard of living and infrastructure improvement that they have not seen in years.”

During the walk the visitors saw kids



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BAGHDAD — Kim Gamel (left foreground), of the Associated Press, interviews Lt. Col. John Vermeesch, a native of Marshall, Mich., commander, 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division — Baghdad, March 2 about working with the 6th Iraqi Army Division to secure the population of the Shulla neighborhood of northwest Baghdad in a media walk-through of the neighborhood. Gamel, along with numerous Arabic and western media, also glimpsed a rebuilt and refurbished chicken restaurant, which was heavily damaged in an insurgent attack in late December 2008.

waving Iraqi flags, busy sidewalks and flourishing shops.

“They were excited to see how secure the area is; it was very natural and normal,” said Mona Joesif, an Arabic media coordinator for 2nd HBCT, from San Diego. “Women and children were walking around and everything seemed to be okay.”

Joesif also said why it was important for the residents of Shulla to be informed of news in their neighborhood.

“For me, as an Iraqi person, it’s important to know what’s going on with the security agreement between Coalition Forces and the Iraqi Government,” she said. “When it’s time for the Americans to leave, it’s important to know if the Iraq Security Forces will be standing on their feet.”

Vermeesch said the transfer of JSS Shulla to the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Brigade,

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ISF gaining confidence daily, taking steps to permanent success

NEIGHBORHOOD, *From Pg 1*

6th Iraqi Army Division confirmed that the ISF are not only standing on their feet, but gaining confidence daily while taking the required steps toward permanent success.

“As part as our endeavor to support the ISF and in accordance with the security agreement between our two countries, we continue to turn the security of Iraq back over to the Iraqis,” said Vermeesch. “The transition of JSS Shulla from American control to Iraqi control is just one more step in this process.”

“This is an historic time for Shulla, for Baghdad and for all of Iraq. The “Vanguard” battalion is proud to be a part of Baghdad’s future.”



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Mike Sergeant (blue vest), of the British Broadcasting Company, speaks into his voice recorder during the Sullia Media Day, March 2, hosted by the 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division.



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Brig. Gen. Frederick Rudesheim (left), deputy commanding general for support, Multi-National Division — Baghdad, speaks with Ambassador John Bennett, Embedded Provisional Reconstruction Team, in the Shulla neighborhood of northwest Baghdad March 2. The two attended the transfer ceremony of Joint Security Station Shulla before taking Iraqi and western journalists on a walking tour of the neighborhood.

MND-B officer realizes dream of citizenship

By Staff Sgt. Jon Cupp
MND-B PAO

VICTORY BASE COMPLEX, Iraq — A flood of memories and waves of emotion rushed through the mind of 2nd Lt. Memorina Edwin Barnes, executive officer, Headquarters Service Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, Multi-National Division — Baghdad, as she reflected on the sacrifices it took to achieve her dream of becoming an American citizen.

Along with 250 other service members — Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines — who share that same dream and have also sacrificed to realize it, Barnes recited the Oath of U.S. Citizenship to become a naturalized citizen during the Multi-Na-

tional Corps-Iraq Naturalization Ceremony held March 3 at al-Faw Palace here.

Amid a sea of service members who represented many different countries and cultures, Barnes, a native of Pohnpei, an island which is part of the Federated States of Micronesia, also received a U.S. flag and her certificate of citizenship at the ceremony.

“I was overwhelmed and felt a surge of pride,” said Barnes of the ceremony. “When I was presented the flag, a million things were floating through my head, so many memories about growing up and getting to where I am today. I couldn’t believe this moment was actually here.”

“I was trying hard not to cry, and wished my family could have been here to see

this,” Barnes added. “I could finally say, ‘I’m fighting for ‘my’ country.’”

Despite the fact that her husband, Houston native 1st Sgt. Wayne Barnes, senior-most noncommissioned officer for the 181st Chemical Company at Fort Hood, Texas; her four-year-old son, Darren, and her two-year-old daughter Olivia could not take part in the ceremony, Barnes said they were there in spirit and that she leaned on support from her unit.

“Although my real family [husband and kids] are [in Killeen, Texas], I am surrounded by people here who I call family,” said Barnes. “Everyone has been very supportive and almost my entire unit was there

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American dream promised more freedom, better opportunities for family

CITIZENSHIP, From Pg 2

for the ceremony.”

“I called my husband and he wished me the best. He’s very proud and wishes he could have been here for the ceremony,” she added.

The significance of getting her citizenship in Iraq was not lost on Barnes.

“I’m going to give 20 years of service to the U.S. Army and I would give my life so my kids can be citizens of a free country,” Barnes said. “This reinforces the reasons I’m here in Iraq in the first place.”

“I’m doing my part for our country by being here, but it’s not just me, I’m just a small part of this,” she added. “Every Soldier who received their citizenship today took steps long before this to get their citizenship and we all served our nation even before we could call it home.”

Many years prior to her service in the Army, the roots of Barnes seeking the American dream first surfaced during her difficult early years as a child on Pohnpei.

“Life in Micronesia was hard. We went to school but not every day and we always wore hand-me-down clothes, but half the time we didn’t have shoes,” said Barnes. “We always had to share and food came in very small portions.”

“There was no running water, we bathed by a creek,” she added. “We had to live off the land — growing vegetables — and there was no money most of the time.”

Along with this, Barnes walked three miles to school over rough terrain where there were no paved roads.

With all the hardships of living on the island, Barnes said her family saw something special in the U.S. and wanted to be part of it.

“My grandfather was always a great admirer of the U.S. and always spoke very highly of it,” Barnes said. “He’d be really proud of me if he were still alive.”

“Even before I was a U.S. citizen, every time I heard the U.S. national anthem, it would always give me a chill up my spine and I knew I wanted to be a part of this nation,” she added.

When she was 13, Barnes and her family left Pohnpei in 1988 for Kaneohe, Hawaii, where she spent her teenage years and first tasted the American dream — a dream that promised more freedom and better opportunities for her family.



By Staff Sgt. Jon Cupp, MND-B PAO

Amid a sea of other service members also taking the oath of citizenship, 2nd Lt. Memorina Edwin Barnes (center), executive officer, Headquarters Service Battery, Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, Multi-National Division-Baghdad, takes the last major step toward becoming a U.S. citizen March 3 at al-Faw Palace. Barnes who is a native of Pohnpei, an island which is part of the Federated States of Micronesia, claims Kaneohe, Hawaii as her hometown.

Through the years as an immigrant in Hawaii, Barnes said she overcame prejudice and unfair, false and negative stereotypes.

“A lot of people don’t understand that it’s not money [immigrants] are seeking but rather the opportunity to better themselves,” said Barnes. “The majority of immigrants [who come to the U.S.] are hard-working people, willing to make sacrifices for the freedoms they don’t have in their own country.”

Barnes, who has 15 years of military service under her belt, said she worked hard throughout high school, pursuing the American dream, and then entered the Army at the age of 19 as a private.

“I worked my way up [through the ranks], and I did a lot of the jobs no one else wanted to do,” said Barnes. “I didn’t have a plush job and just had to keep Soldiering on.”

By the time Barnes reached 13 years of service in the Army, she achieved the rank of Sergeant First Class, completed a bachelor’s degree and turned in a packet to become an officer.

In 2007, Barnes received her commission as a second lieutenant in the Army’s chemical branch.

According to Lt. Col. Matthew Karres,

commanding officer, Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, Multi-National Division-Baghdad, Barnes exudes the spirit of an American patriot and is someone who definitely deserves to be a U.S. citizen, especially when looking at all her hard work and the sacrifices she has made over the years through her service to the country.

“As a second generation American who is a grandson of immigrants, I think this is awesome,” said Karres, reflecting on Barnes receiving her citizenship. “We’re all really proud of her. She’s also getting promoted this month, so March is a big month for her.”

Along with having pride in being an American citizen, Barnes will also never forget her Pohnpeian culture and will pass that down to her children.

With both her children being native-born U.S. citizens, she will also remind them of the sacrifices immigrants and others have made for them to have their freedom—a freedom that many people living in other countries around the world might never experience.

“I’ll definitely tell them to never take the country they live in for granted and to be proud of and loyal to the [United States],” concluded Barnes.

On This Day In Military History

On this day, March 5, in military history, an Army officer's courageous actions on the battlefield in Vietnam earned him the Medal of Honor.

Second Lt. Robert John Hibbs of Iowa was serving in the 28th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division, in Don Dien Lo Ke in Vietnam on March 5, 1966, when his patrol spotted a Viet Cong force approaching the 2nd Battalion's position. Lt. Hibbs prepared his men to fight the company-sized Viet Cong element by placing two antipersonnel mines. When the enemy insurgents were within 20 feet of the patrol's position, Lt. Hibbs fired the mines, killing or wounding half the enemy force.



Lt. Robert Hibbs

Lt. Hibbs and his patrol then encountered a rear element of another Viet Cong company, and directed a charge against the enemy fighters. Now caught between two Viet Cong companies, Lt. Hibbs and a sergeant ran through withering fire to drag a wounded Soldier to safety. Armed with only his rifle and a pistol, Lt. Hibbs charged two enemy machine gun positions. Lt. Hibbs was mortally wounded by gunfire, but still managed to destroy the starlight telescopic sight on his rifle to prevent its capture by the Viet Cong.

Arabic Phrase of the Day:

The honor is ours.

Defined:

wilna ish-sharaf

David Letterman's Top Ten Question Received By The Chapstick Hotline

10. "Hi, is this the chopstick hotline?"
9. "Okay, I removed the cap. Now what?"
8. "Can I use it to highlight passages in books?"
7. "Is it safe for my kitt's lips?"
6. "Is it true that the Chinese use these instead of forks?"
5. "I like to dress the tubes in tiny little clothes I make? Is this illegal?"
4. "Is it available in a spray?"
3. "I wrote a 22-page poem about Chap Stick. Where do I send it?"
2. "I lost my Chap Stick — did anyone turn it on?"
1. "Is Wilford Brimley there?"

Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today
66° F | 50° F



Tomorrow
69° F | 51° F



Saturday
68° F | 48° F

SFC Paul R. Smith Memorial Run

Pre-registration for the Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith Memorial Run will be held through March 31. The run will be held on April 5, in remembrance of the sixth anniversary of his Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith's death. The 11.46 km race will be held at the Paul R. Smith Courtyard. Send names to michael.stinnett@mnd-b.army.mil.

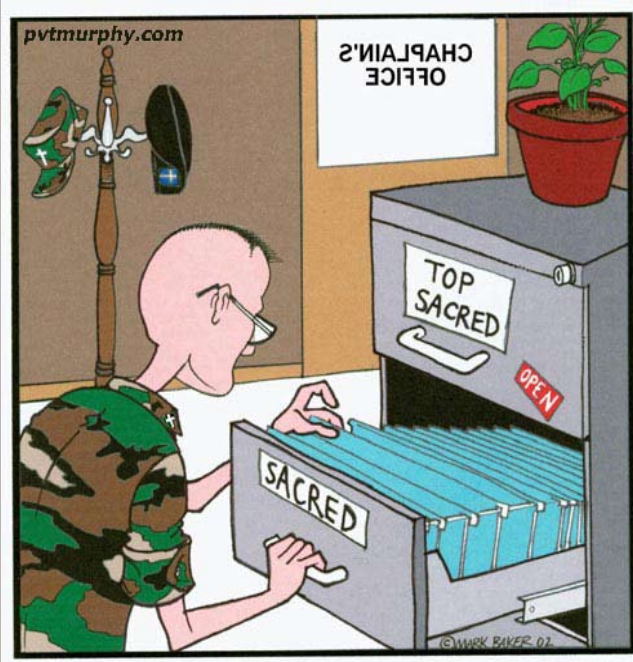
Sergeant 1st Class Smith won the Medal of Honor for his actions on April 4, 2003.

Treat every weapon as if it is loaded.
Handle every weapon with care.
Identify the target before you fire.
Never point the muzzle at anything you don't intend to shoot.
Keep the weapon on safe and your finger off the trigger until you intend to fire.

WEAPONS SAFETY!

Pvt. Murphy

by Mark Baker



Quote For Today

"Life affords no higher pleasure than that of surrounding difficulties, passing from one step of success to another, forming new wishes and seeing them gratified."

— Samuel Johnson, 1709-1784

British author, journalist who wrote the "Dictionary of the English Language" in 1755

PEGASUS OASIS DFAC HOURS

BREAKFAST 0530 TO 0830

LUNCH 1130 TO 1330

DINNER 1700 TO 2000

MIDNIGHT CHOW 2300 TO 0100

SUNDAY ONLY

BRUNCH 0730 to 1330

DINNER 1700 to 2000

MIDNIGHT CHOW 2300 to 0100

Trigger's Teasers

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

The objective of the game is to fill all the blank squares in a game with the correct numbers. There are three very simple constraints to follow: **Every row of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order. Every column of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order. Every 3 by 3 subsection of the 9 by 9 square must include all digits 1 through 9.**

Every Sudoku game begins with a number of squares already filled in, and the difficulty of each game is largely a function of how many squares are filled in. The more squares that are known, the easier it is to figure out which numbers go in the open squares. As you fill in squares correctly, options for the remaining squares are narrowed and it becomes easier to fill them in.

Yesterday's Answers

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



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