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March 28, 2009

10th IA graduates first civil affairs class



Photo by Spc. Creighton Holub

Lt. Col. Charles Anderson, 304th Civil Affairs Brigade deputy operations officer, congratulates Iraqi Sgt. Maj. Muhammad Aneed, a newly certified civil affairs specialist with 2nd Battalion, 38th Iraqi Army Brigade, during the 10th IA Division civil affairs graduation ceremony at Camp Dhi Qar recently. The five-day course was conducted by a mobile training team from 304th Civil Affairs Bde., stationed in Taji.

SPC. CREIGHTON HOLUB
4TH BCT, 1ST CAV. DIV.



COB ADDER – The Iraqi Army 10th Division graduated 21 students from its first civil affairs course at Camp Dhi Qar recently.

The class is normally taught at Camp Taji, just north of Baghdad, but military leaders realized it would be easier to mobilize a group of instructors from the civil affairs academy than it would be to send the 21-man class north.

While the five-day class was short compared to other courses, the IA civil affairs specialists learned techniques on how to deliver important and fundamental needs to the country's citizens.

"We learned how to treat people and how to help those in need," said Iraqi Sgt. Maj. Muhammad Favel, a graduate of the course. "We will build the relationship between us and the civilian community."

However, these freshly-trained troops have a difficult

path ahead of them, according to one of their instructors' senior leaders.

"We work with one of the hardest parts of war," said Lt. Col. Kelly Thrasher, 304th Civil Affairs Brigade deputy of civilian-information management. "We work with people. If we don't win the hearts and minds of the people, the people will follow someone else."

Getting Iraq's citizenry involved in securing their own homeland has been the 4th Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division's focus since they assumed responsibility of the southern Iraqi tri-province region last June.

"Civil-military operations help secure the victory," said Lt. Col. Charles Anderson, 304th Civil Affairs Bde. deputy operations officer.

His unit's instructors reinforced the concept that through caring for the local community and grassroots efforts, Iraqi citizens will reciprocate by getting involved with restoring their country.

"Now I can share my knowledge with my (fellow soldiers)," said Iraqi Sgt. Maj. Muhammad Aneed, one of the graduates. "We will build a good relationship between the Iraqi Army and the citizens. We've helped people in the May-san province with the Americans' assistance."

The graduates are set to return to their units to share their recently acquired knowledge with fellow soldiers.



Photo by Spc. Creighton Holub

The 10th Iraqi Army Division's 21 newest civil affairs specialists, along with Iraqi military leaders and 304th Civil Affairs Bde. leaders, participate in a civil affairs course graduation ceremony at Camp Dhi Qar officer dining facility recently.

Conditions to expect upon arrival in Basra

SPC. DARRYL LEE MONTGOMERY
MND - C



CAMP VICTORY, Iraq – As 10th Mountain Division Soldiers prepare to relocate to Basra to create Multi-National Division-South, many questions linger about what living conditions will be like when they arrive.

“We are setting up a new Contingency Operating Base and bringing more people to it than it was meant for,” said Staff Sgt. John Simms, facilities manager for the Mayor’s Cell, Special Troops Battalion, 10th Mtn. Div. “Space is going to be tight for a little while.”

Teams are currently working on a food court and a Morale, Recreation and Welfare building, said Simms, a New Boston, N.H., native.

The current PX is a little bigger than

the one on Camp Victory South and will have a little more to offer, Simms said. There is also a small PX housed in a trailer.

Dining facility number three is re-opening after getting an Americanized update, he added. The food and the environment will be suited more toward American Soldiers. Also, the DFACs will have areas designated as smaller MWRs with phones and free internet access.

There are currently no AT&T calling centers there, he continued, and there is no internet access in living quarters, which are currently under construction but are not expected to be complete in time for 10th Mtn. Div. to occupy.

“Soldiers will be living in any open, available buildings, tents and, if lucky, three-man containerized housing units,” Simms added. “Nothing is com-

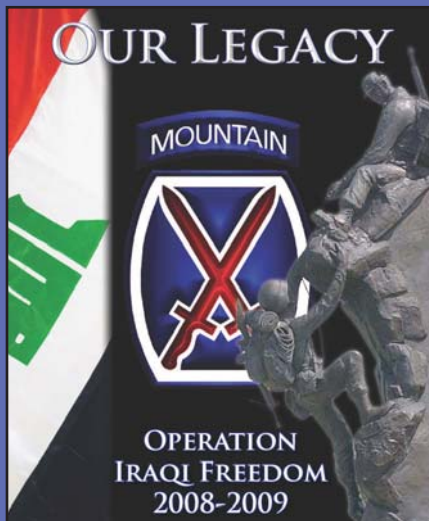
fortable in Basra right now, and won’t be until we are done building.”

Soldiers can expect to take combat showers and use portable potties as much as possible as there aren’t enough latrines to accommodate the number of Soldiers coming in from Baghdad, he continued.

Simms added that although living conditions do not compare favorably to those at Camp Victory, the division headquarters and DSTB offices and furnishings are all brand-new. The DSTB office space is scheduled to open March 27.

Although Soldiers won’t be arriving in facilities like those at Victory Base Complex, Simms said, it is better than nothing. Soldiers should arrive in Basra thinking about their mission first.

“Get here and accomplish the mission,” he added. “Do the Army thing.”



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THE Mountain View

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



Soldiers support Wounded Warriors, make “reel” difference

SGT. FRANK VAUGHN
MND - C



CAMP VICTORY – Many Soldiers have risked life and limb in support of the Global War on Terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan; some have been seriously wounded.

Army Bass Anglers, a professional fishing organization founded by Maj. Cody Roberson, 10th Mountain Division Surgeon Chief of Ongoing Operations, is dedicated to giving back to those who have been wounded as a result of their service in these ongoing operations.

“We have a 3-part mission statement,” the Cibolo, Texas native said. “Support, Defend, Fish’ is what we live by.”

The organization directly supports Returning Heroes Home, a program located at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. It oversees the Warrior and Family Assistance Center near Brooke Army Medical Center, which provides services to Soldiers who have sustained injuries as a result of combat service.



Photo by Sgt. Frank Vaughn

Maj. Cody Roberson, 10th Mtn. Div. Surgeon Chief of Current Operations, fishes in a Camp Victory Canal recently. The Cibolo, Texas native is a founding member of Army Bass Anglers, a professional fishing organization that supports Returning Heroes Home, a program that provides rehabilitative services to wounded combat veterans at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Roberson said Army Bass Anglers raises money for Returning Heroes Home with donations made through their website and proceeds from raffles held at their shows.

“So far we have been able to raise around \$20,000 at our shows and over \$260,000 through our website,” he said.

ABA also directly supports wounded warriors by offering to take them fishing.

“We call it ‘Fishing For Freedom’,” said Roberson. “These fishing trips with wounded soldiers aren’t about us and our love for fishing, it’s about our love and support for them. Often, we put our poles down and spend this time helping them to fish. Sometimes their disabilities prevent them from doing it on their own.”

Wounded veterans aren’t the only ones who can fish with ABA.

“Our third support effort involves taking any veteran fishing,” Roberson said. “We want to show our appreciation for all service members.”

As for the ‘Defend’ portion of their mission statement?

“All of our members are either current or former military members,” said Staff Sgt. Mike Garrett, a battle captain with 4th Brigade, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division and resident of Temple, Texas. “My fishing partner, Staff Sgt. Brent Holman, was wounded himself by an (improvised explosive device) in Iraq.”

Roberson said the whole idea is for military personnel and veterans to take care of their own.

The efforts of the Anglers to fulfill this mission statement have been noticed by some big players in the fishing world. The group was recently invited to take part in the annual Bassmasters Classic sponsored by ESPN. The Classic, according to Roberson, is like the Super Bowl of professional fishing.

“They gave us the opportunity to serve as the ceremonial launch boats for the event,” said Roberson. “We had nine ‘skeeter’ boats decorated in a Returning Heroes Home theme at the event.”

Garrett said they were able to continue a military tradition, if in a non-traditional way.

“We did a missing-wing formation with the boats,” he said. “We started out together, and one boat would peel off from the group to honor those who have given their lives in service to their country.”

While Roberson and Garrett were proud of Army Bass Anglers for being honored in this way, the event was bitter-sweet for them.

“We’re deployed, so we weren’t able to be there,” said Roberson. “It’s tough to work for three and a half years to get our group to this point and not be able to be there. It’s kind of like making the Pro Bowl in football and being unable to play due to injury or something.”

The Anglers are already in talks with ESPN to partner in other endeavors, however, according to Roberson.

“I’m scheduled to shoot an Army Bass Anglers commercial for ESPN and Disney (their parent company) in July,” he said. “I can’t wait for that opportunity!”

In the meantime, Army Bass Anglers continues to work in support of wounded warriors and other veterans as Roberson and Garrett look forward to the day they can return home and resume their mission with the group.

New GI Bill increases servicemember benefits

PFC. JASMINE N. WALTHALL
TF 449



CAMP VICTORY – The Post-9/11 GI Bill, effective Aug. 1, 2009, introduces numerous benefits to active duty servicemembers, Reservists, National Guardsmen and Veterans.

Military personnel who have served more than 90 consecutive days on active duty on or after Sept. 11, 2001, are eligible for at least some of the available benefits. Individuals discharged from the military with a service-related disability after 30 days of service and individuals with an honorable discharge post-9/11 are also eligible.

These benefits may be used for a maximum of 36 months for any degree or certificate program, flight training, apprenticeships, on-the-job training and correspondence courses.

"The new GI Bill is giving more credit to Guardsmen and Reservists that are spending a large portion of their career deployed," said Staff Sgt. Melodie A. Hunt, Task Force 449 Retention noncommissioned officer. "Now they have the opportunity to receive some benefits in exchange for their service."

Among the benefits is an increased allowance for tuition and fees to be paid directly to the school. This increase in money allows for students attending both public and private

schools to have a majority of their education paid for. The cap is based on the most expensive public school in the state the eligible servicemember's school is located.

A monthly housing allowance based on the military Basic Allowance for Housing for the rank of E-5 with dependents has also been added to the bill, along with an annual stipend of \$1,000 for books and supplies. However, the housing allowance will not be available for servicemembers who are still on active duty, and the book stipend is not allowed for students taking all distance learning or online classes.

"The BAH will allow Soldiers to offset the cost of going to school full time," said Hunt. "It will also give them incentive to finish their degree."

The benefits, prorated based on a servicemember's time of service on active duty, start at 40% for 90 days of active duty time and increases 10% for every six months served up to 36 months.

Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits are available to eligible servicemembers for up to 15 years after separation from the military. There is also no enrollment fee for the Post-9/11 GI Bill, whereas previous programs required a \$1,200 pay-in.

Individuals will still have the option to begin or continue to receive GI Bill benefits under the previous program rather than use the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

For more information visit www.gibill2008.org.

Combat Communications Soldiers receive Bronze Star



Photos by Pfc. Tyler Maulding
(Left) Chief Warrant Officer Gale Forde, a Communications and Electronics Maintainer for Multi-National Division – Center Combat Communications and a Brooklyn, N.Y. native, stands at parade rest in formation after being awarded the Bronze Star Medal during an end-of-tour award ceremony here March 25. (Right) Sgt. 1st Class Jason Sepulveda, Platoon Sergeant of Multi-National Division - Center Combat Communications Maintenance and Support Platoon and a Los Angeles native, is awarded the Bronze Star Medal during an end-of-tour award ceremony.



Headline Round-up

World News:

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates - Be warned: Spitting here could get you deported. We're not talking just any kind of spit. In this case, it's the red-tinted juice of a popular Asian leaf, the betel plant, that's causing the fuss as Dubai tries to buff the image of its less-posh districts. The crackdown — announced this week amid a broader effort to stem behavior deemed offensive — has stirred an unusual Arab-Asian culture clash in the city. The tradition of chewing the leaves, a mild stimulant common from Pakistan to Southeast Asia, is so ingrained in some countries that it's been mentioned in works as varied as Hindu's sacred Vedas and the musical "South Pacific." "It's like telling an Italian not to have an espresso," said Pakistani security guard Munir Ahmed.

U.S. News:

WASHINGTON - The global market meltdown has created broad consensus that tough new rules are needed to prevent anything like this from happening again. But as Congress and the White House begin getting down to details, that's pretty much as far as the consensus goes. The scope of the undertaking came into clearer focus this week as Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner unveiled a long list of broad principles that the administration says should guide the proposed changes. Geithner told the House Financial Services Committee, "To address this will require comprehensive reform. Not modest repairs at the margin, but new rules of the game." On top of Geithner's wish list is an expansion of the government's power to rein in financial companies that get so big they pose a "systemic risk" to the entire financial system. The Obama administration also wants broader powers to clean up the financial mess created when one of those firms fails and better protection for consumers against abusive lending practices by mortgage lenders and credit card companies.

Odd News:

HUNTINGTON BEACH, Calif. - Police are seeking a woman they said used a false identity to get breast implants and liposuction, then skipped town. Huntington Beach police said Monday that a 30-year-old woman opened a line of credit in someone else's name in September and had the procedures, worth more than \$12,000, performed at the Pacific Center For Plastic Surgery. Employees said she never returned for follow-up visits. Police said the woman faces charges of commercial burglary, grand theft and identity theft.

Quote of the Day

"How much easier it is to be critical than to be correct."
- Benjamin Disraeli (1804 - 1881)

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



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AROUND THE COMMUNITY

Lion's Den

Salsa Class @ 8 p.m.

Salsa Dance @ 9 p.m.

Fishbowl Gym

April 11

Pirate's Cove Run 5K/10K.

Registration begins @ 7 a.m.,

race begins @ 8 a.m.

T-shirts awarded to top
finishers.

Babylon Theater

March 28

Twilight @ 4 p.m.

Eagle Eye @ 7 p.m.

Boy with stripped pajamas @
9:30 p.m.

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.

Solution Saturday

Saturday, March 21

Monday, March 23

Tuesday, March 24



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Wednesday, March 25

Thursday, March 26

Friday, March 27



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