

# COALITION CHRONICLE

Volume 4, Issue 5

May 2009

*Iraqi Commandos  
Take to the Skies*

*MND-South  
Gets New  
Headquarters*

*154th Transportation  
Company Repositioned  
to Afghanistan*



**Pennsylvania National Guard Soldiers** from Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 111th Infantry Regiment, 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 28th Infantry Division, Multi-National Division-Baghdad, with support from the Iraqi army, search a field during a cordon-and-knock mission for possible weapons caches near Sheik Hammad Village, Iraq, April 10. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jacob H. Smith)



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Second 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) unit moves directly to Afghanistan from Iraq.



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Senior enlisted leaders serve paratroopers a barbeque-style meal following a mass re-enlistment ceremony.



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Water purification specialist injured during attack, is awarded the Purple Heart medal.

# COALITION CHRONICLE

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# *Iraqi Commandos Take to the Skies....*

Story and photos by Cpl. Meg Murray  
Multi-National Force - West PAO



**Iraqi soldiers with 1st Company**, Commando Battalion, 7th Iraqi Army Division, swiftly exit a U.S. Marine CH-53E Super Stallion transport helicopter during helicopter and air assault familiarization aboard Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, April 8.

May 2009

FEATURE UP FRONT



# ...for Air Assault Training

**AL ASAD AIR BASE**, Iraq – Different types of military operations call for specific methods of insertion. Since the advent of the helicopter-borne insertion during the Korean War nearly 60 years ago, air assault has become an extremely viable method of troop insertion.

To refine their air assault skills, Iraqi soldiers with 1st Company, Commando Battalion, 7th Iraqi Army Division, took to the skies

in the back of two Marine CH-53E Super Stallion transport helicopters as they participated in familiarization of helicopter and air assault operations.

“What we’re trying to do is get the commandos used to getting on helicopters, teach them the proper way of loading and off-loading, how to store their weapons, and how to pull security before and after they get off the helicopters,” said

Robert Wise, a special operations foreign internal defense advisor with Military Transition Team 7.

During the training, the commandos loaded into the back of the helicopters and were flown to a small objective several miles away. Upon touchdown, the soldiers quickly exited and set up security in a 360-degree perimeter around the helicopter, securing the immediate area and allowing the CH-53E to

safely lift off again.

“It was our first time as a company in the helicopter,” said Iraqi army Sgt. Qahtan Hamza, a platoon sergeant with 1st Company. “It was very interesting.”

The Commando Battalion is made up of soldiers with vastly different levels of experience and training, and Wise explained the importance of every soldier participating in the training, regardless of their proficiency.

“Some of the [Iraqi] soldiers have done this many times, but this is the first time as a group,” Wise said. “We

have them go through the training step-by-step so we can get them all on the same level.”

Though helicopter familiarization is the commandos’ final exercise before they graduate from a month-long training cycle, both Wise and the soldiers expressed confidence in the skills they have acquired.

“I think they’ve come a long way from where we started off,” said Wise. “They’re excited, they’re motivated and they’ve already been on one mission [since the training began] where they looked for insurgent activity in Anbar

province.”

Hamza said he thoroughly enjoyed the training and is confident in his abilities.

“I am very ready for [a real-world helicopter mission],” he said. “I wish we could go through helicopter training every day and fly all around the country!”



**Iraqi soldiers with 1st Company**, Commando Battalion, 7th Iraqi Army Division, prepare to board a U.S. Marine CH-53E Super Stallion transport helicopter during helicopter and air assault familiarization aboard Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, April 8.



**Iraqi soldiers with 1st Company**, Commando Battalion, 7th Iraqi Army Division, swiftly exit a U.S. Marine CH-53E Super Stallion transport helicopter during helicopter and air assault familiarization aboard Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, April 8.



# 154th Transportation Company Repositioned to Afghanistan

Story and photos by by Sgt. Alex Snyder  
3d Sustainment Command (Exp) PAO



**Soldiers of the 154th Transportation Company** load onto a C-17 aircraft for their flight to Afghanistan at Baghdad International Airport, Iraq, April 14.

Company, an active-component unit from Fort Hood, Texas, was repositioned to southern Afghanistan where it will continue its mission of transporting supplies to coalition forces, unit leadership said.

Capt. Corinne F. McClellan, the 154th Trans. Co. commander, said the move would not change her unit's mission - only its location.

"We'll go wherever we are needed," she said. "The Soldiers are ready to go."

Deployed to Iraq in January, the Soldiers of the 154th Trans. Co. operated under Fort Hood's 553rd Combat

Sustainment Support Battalion. While stationed at Camp Liberty, the unit moved supplies to camps across Iraq, although most missions were in or around Baghdad.

1st Sgt. Eric A. Moree, the company's senior noncommissioned officer, said he is proud of his unit's

performance thus far and believes they are "absolutely" ready to assume their mission in Afghanistan.

"We haven't lost a vehicle," Moree said. "We haven't lost a Soldier. We haven't lost any cargo. And in doing so we were able to provide the support to the warfighters that's needed."

Moree said the unit will face some challenges, however, and cited the narrow dirt roads and mountainous terrain of southern Afghanistan as two examples.

In preparation for the move, the unit trained on various tasks that could prove useful to the unit's mission, including weapons training and first-aid training. The unit conducted additional training on vehicles the company will use in Afghanistan.

The unit reorganized itself by creating a "gun truck" platoon - a special convoy security element for its mission in Afghanistan.

"They are fully prepared to execute that mission," Moree said. "They had months of extensive training prior to even coming to Iraq."

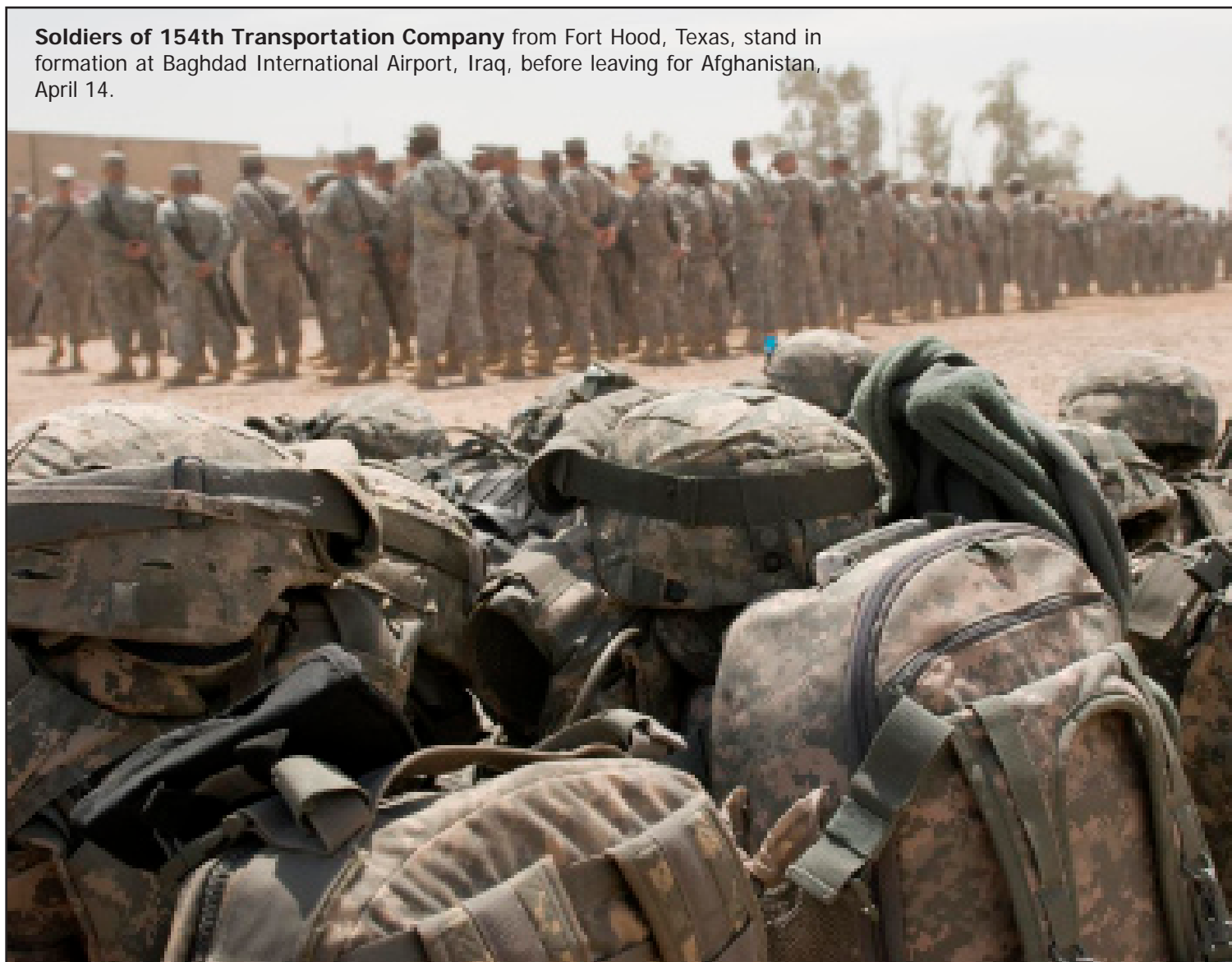
The 154th Trans. Co. drives the military's palletized load system, a vehicle designed with self-loading capabilities that reduces the need for forklifts and other equipment that may not be readily available in smaller military camps in southern Afghanistan.

According to current Department of Defense policy, the length of the 154th Trans. Co.'s deployment will not be affected by the unit's move.

**Spc. Keith E. Stoner**, a gunner with the 154th Transportation Company's newly formed gun truck platoon, waits with other unit Soldiers for his company's flight to Afghanistan at Baghdad International Airport, Iraq, April 14.

**W**hen a transportation company moved from Iraq to Afghanistan on April 14, it marked the second time in three weeks that a 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) unit was moved directly from one combat theater to another.

The 154th Transportation



**Soldiers of 154th Transportation Company** from Fort Hood, Texas, stand in formation at Baghdad International Airport, Iraq, before leaving for Afghanistan, April 14.





# PARATROOPERS REENLIST UNDER FAMED BAGHDAD LANDMARK



Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Alex Licea  
82nd Airborne Division PAO

Paratroopers assigned to the 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Multi-National Division-Baghdad recite the oath of enlistment April 23 during a ceremony at the Cross Sabers in Baghdad. The ceremony marked the squadron's accomplishment of meeting its retention goals for the year.



Command Sgt. Maj. King O. Parks, senior enlisted leader of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Multi-National Division-Baghdad, told Paratroopers assigned to the 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment how proud he was of them. "It never ceases to amaze me how much you do and how well you do. You are phenomenal," said Parks.

***"Two years ago today, nine paratroopers were killed in Al-Asad. I'm extremely proud that on the anniversary of that day, 82 paratroopers stood up to continue to serve their nation."***

Lt. Col Dave Buckingham  
Commander, 5th Squadron,  
73rd Cavalry Regiment,

Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Grippe, senior enlisted leader of Multi National Corps-Iraq, addresses Paratroopers after a re-enlistment ceremony April 23 at the Cross Sabers in Baghdad.

Eighty-two paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division's, 3rd Brigade Combat Team raised their hands in defense of their nation during a reenlistment ceremony at Baghdad's Cross Sabers, April 23.

Paratroopers assigned to the 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 3rd BCT, 82nd Abn., Multi-National Division – Baghdad took a pledge to continue serving their country in uniform in the largest ceremony during the brigade's current deployment to Iraq.

"Thank you for raising your right hand in service to your nation, you men and women are amazing," said Lt. Col. Dave Buckingham, commander of the 5th Sqdn., 73rd Cav. Regt. "The reason our squadron is so great is because of our young leaders, our great non-commissioned officers and our young officers. We owe all of our success to you." Buckingham, along with the squadron's senior enlisted leader, Command Sgt. Maj. Cory Kroll, presided over the ceremony and led the paratroopers in the oath of military service.

Each member of the "Panther



Recon" team had his or her personal reason to reenlist and all 82 paratroopers said their dedication to continue serving had a lot of meaning especially at such a historic site.

"The reason I reenlist is because I love this unit, want to continue serving my country and want to become a leader in this regiment," said Spc. Kyle Trujillo, of Sacramento, Calif. "This event is significant because the Cross Sabers is a historical site and for us to have a ceremony here is something I will remember for the rest of my life."

Other senior leaders from the 3rd BCT and Multi-National Corps – Iraq were also in attendance and

praised the paratroopers for their commitment to the United States and serving the American people.

The event was held on the two-year anniversary of one of the regiment's darkest days. On April 23, 2007, nine paratroopers were killed when a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device detonated while they were conducting combat operations in Al-Asad, Iraq.

Buckingham explained the significance of this event on a day which the regiment will never forget.

"Two years ago today, nine paratroopers were killed in Al-Asad," he said. "I'm extremely proud that on the anniversary of that day, 82 paratroopers stood up to continue to serve their nation."

The event was the center piece of a three-day event giving the combat wary paratroopers time to relax and enjoy each other's company. The festivities included a barbeque-style dinner and the amenities of Freedom Rest, the local Morale Welfare and Relaxation facility.

Lt. Col. Dave Buckingham, commander of the 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Multi-National Division-Baghdad, speaks to his Paratroopers following a re-enlistment ceremony April 23 at the Cross Sabers in Baghdad. Buckingham expressed his gratitude to the 82 Paratroopers who raised their right hand in service of their country.





# New Multi-National Division – South Headquarters Fully Equipped, Ready

by Spc. Darryl L. Montgomery  
Multi-National Division – South PAO

**CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE BASRA**, Iraq – The work on the new Multi-National Division – South headquarters building has finally concluded after six months of work.

At a cost of approximately \$26 million, the new division headquarters consist of two one-story, 30,000 square-foot buildings that opened for service members April 8.

The work began in November with airmen from the 819th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers (Red Horse) and contractors from KBR, Inc. laying concrete, constructing walls and installing wiring, said Master Sgt. Rob Schoon, G6 Division Automation Management Office noncommissioned officer in charge.

Schoon and the Soldiers from DAMO arrived in early January and started setting up the networking infrastructure. From the time they arrived to the date of completion, Schoon said they laid over 200,000 feet of wire, nearly 40 miles.

“It’s been a big task, to say the least,” said Schoon, a Marion, Iowa native. “But our Soldiers

**Capt. Douglas Ingold**, G1 Plans and Operations officer, works at his new desk inside the headquarters building, April 8. Ingold, a Pittsburgh native, said he was very impressed with the work done in the building and looked forward to working in it. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Darryl L. Montgomery)

remained highly motivated and determined to get it done in time for the division.”

Soldiers working on the new building had more input on the design of the new MND-S headquarters. Soldiers who spent time at Camp Victory were able to address issues with the old Multi-National Division - Center headquarters building and incorporate ways to avoid them.

Master Sgt. Eldred Peterson, MND-S G3 Operations NCOIC, who was in charge of the movement of equipment from Camp Victory to the new headquarters, and assisted in the procurement and installation of the building’s new furniture, said he is proud of the work that has been done on the new building.

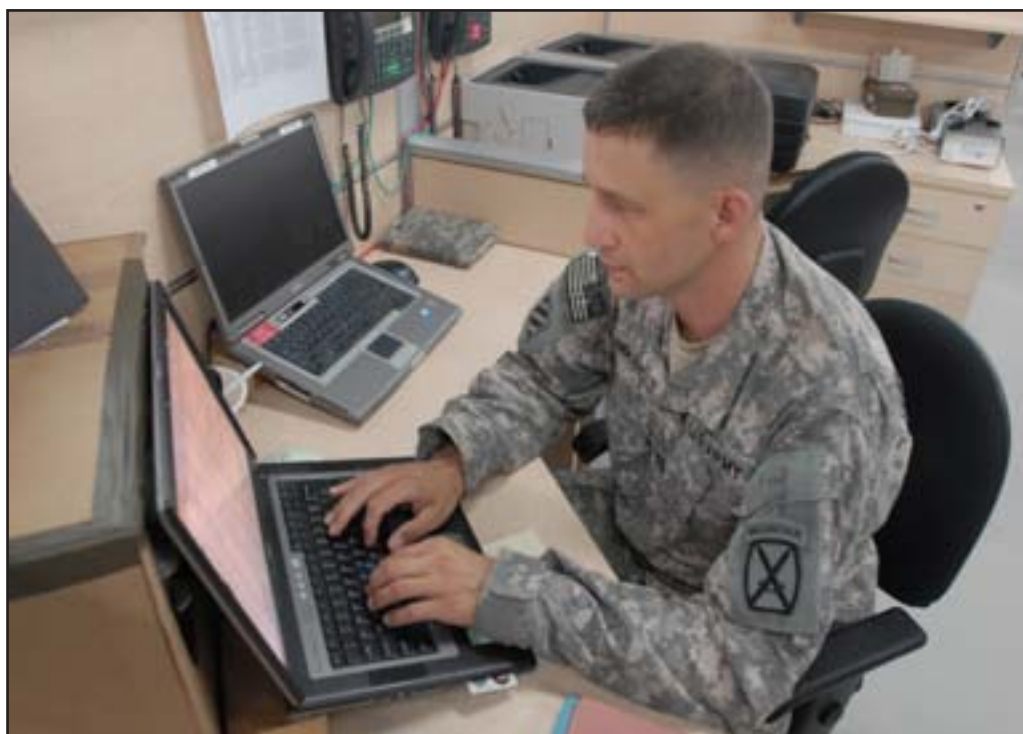
“I like the furniture of the new

offices,” said Peterson, who’s from Trenton, Tenn. “The quality of the furniture is a lot better than what we had at Camp Victory because it is all new. I think the (service members) involved did a marvelous job on the buildings. A lot of work was put into it and I like the end result.”

Besides the look and functionality of the new furniture and equipment, Peterson believes working in the new buildings will have an energizing effect on the staff by helping break up the remaining time of the deployment.

“I think Soldiers will be excited to come to a new building and environment,” he said. “People will come in and be motivated to get the work done.”

Peterson also said while the MND-C headquarters



The ‘cube farm’ in the new Multi-National Division - South headquarters prior to opening for staff, April 8. The building will accommodate approximately 1,000 personnel when it is fully occupied. (U.S. Army photo by Maj. Page Baldwin)

required continuous work and maintenance to improve the quality of its working environment at Camp Victory, this building is new, and the Soldiers who worked on it know everything about the building. He said that having Soldiers construct the workspace from scratch gives an advantage by knowing what has been done to the building.

The remaining MND-S staff arriving in Basra will be able to come to headquarters and be immediately equipped to continue the mission, said Schoon. “All the Soldiers are going to have to do is plug in their equipment and they’ll be ready to go.”



**Spc. Robert Heller**, 10th Mountain Division G6 information system analyst and operator, installs wiring, allowing connectivity within the headquarters. Heller and other Soldiers working on the new buildings on Contingency Operating Base Basra worked more than 14 hours daily in order to complete the project on time, and ran nearly 40 miles of networking wires. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Darryl L. Montgomery)

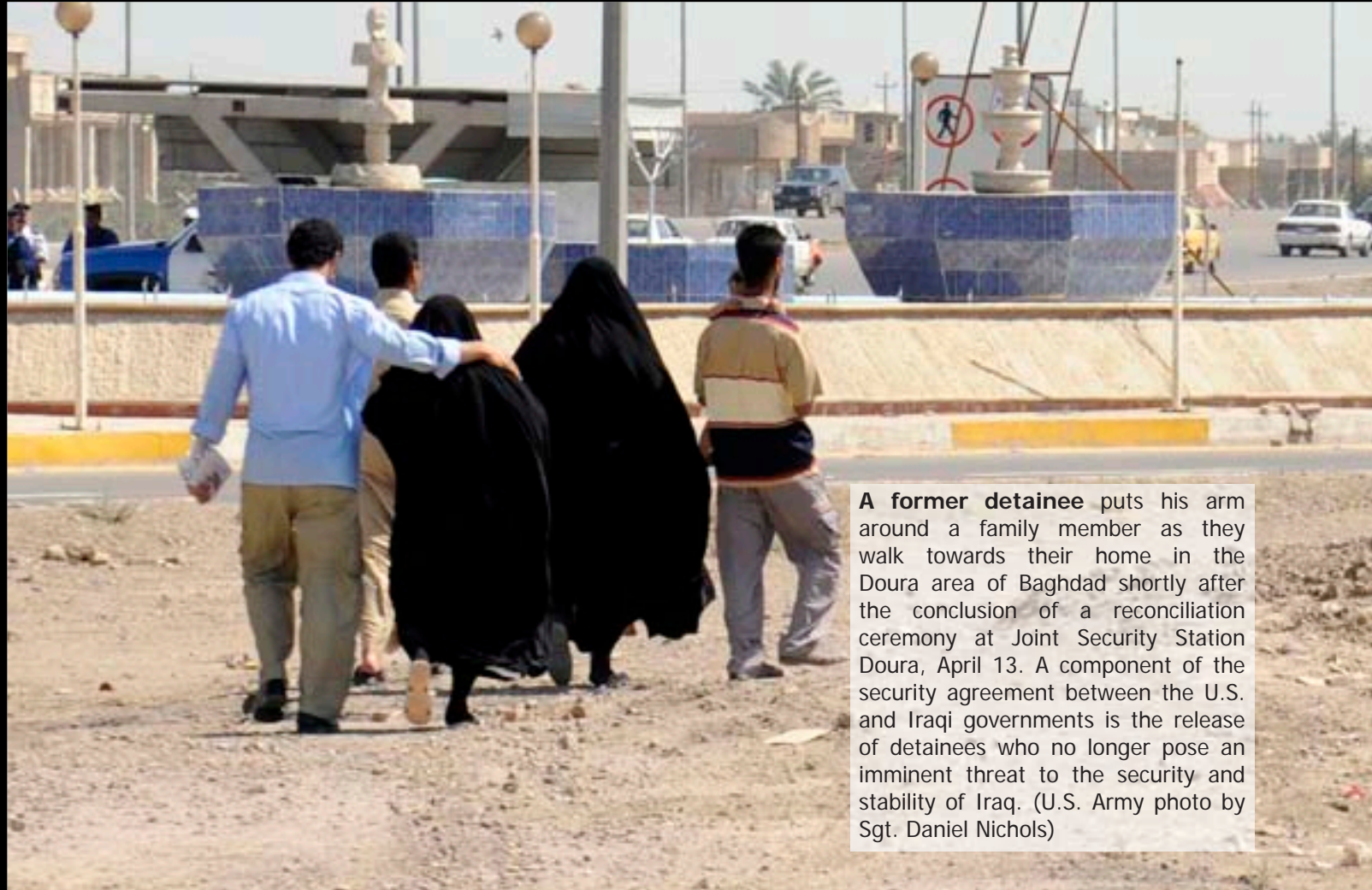


# Easter Sunrise Service at St. Elijah Monastery



Soldiers and civilian contractors gather at the St. Elijah Monastery on Forward Operating Base Marez, Mosul, Iraq, for the Easter Sunrise Service April 12. (U.S. Army photo by Daniel J. Nelson, Jr.)





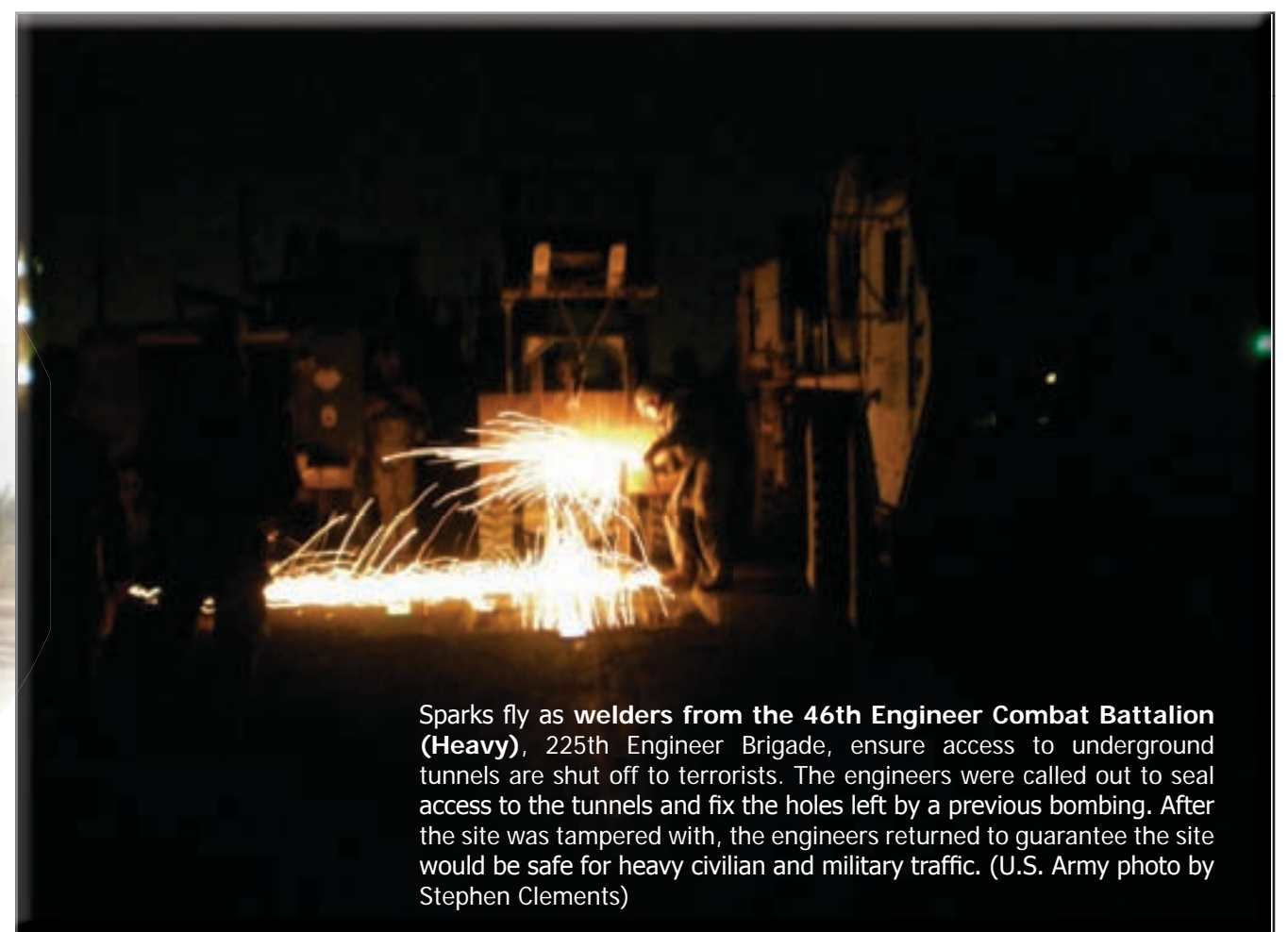
**A former detainee** puts his arm around a family member as they walk towards their home in the Doura area of Baghdad shortly after the conclusion of a reconciliation ceremony at Joint Security Station Doura, April 13. A component of the security agreement between the U.S. and Iraqi governments is the release of detainees who no longer pose an imminent threat to the security and stability of Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Daniel Nichols)



Pfc. Gbenga Ayantade, a combat medic from Chicago, Ill., assigned to the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, shares a moment with an Iraqi baby, April 9. Ayantade, who came to the U.S. in 2007 and is originally from Nigeria, helped keep the community safe by operating a checkpoint with Iraqi Security Forces during the sixth anniversary of the fall of Saddam Hussein. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Mark Burrell)



**Iraqi Police cadets** demonstrate stacking procedures prior to entering a room at the Iraqi Police Academy in Karbala, Iraq, on April 8. (U.S. Navy Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Kim Smith)



Sparks fly as **welders from the 46th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy)**, 225th Engineer Brigade, ensure access to underground tunnels are shut off to terrorists. The engineers were called out to seal access to the tunnels and fix the holes left by a previous bombing. After the site was tampered with, the engineers returned to guarantee the site would be safe for heavy civilian and military traffic. (U.S. Army photo by Stephen Clements)



**U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Joshua Hedetniemi** of East Norriton, Pa., a Pennsylvania National Guardsman assigned to Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 111th Infantry Regiment, 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 28th Infantry Division, Multi-National Division-Baghdad, tests the tactical capabilities of his new Iraqi friends' umbrella while on a patrol to Nadeem Village, Iraq, April 9. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jacob H. Smith)



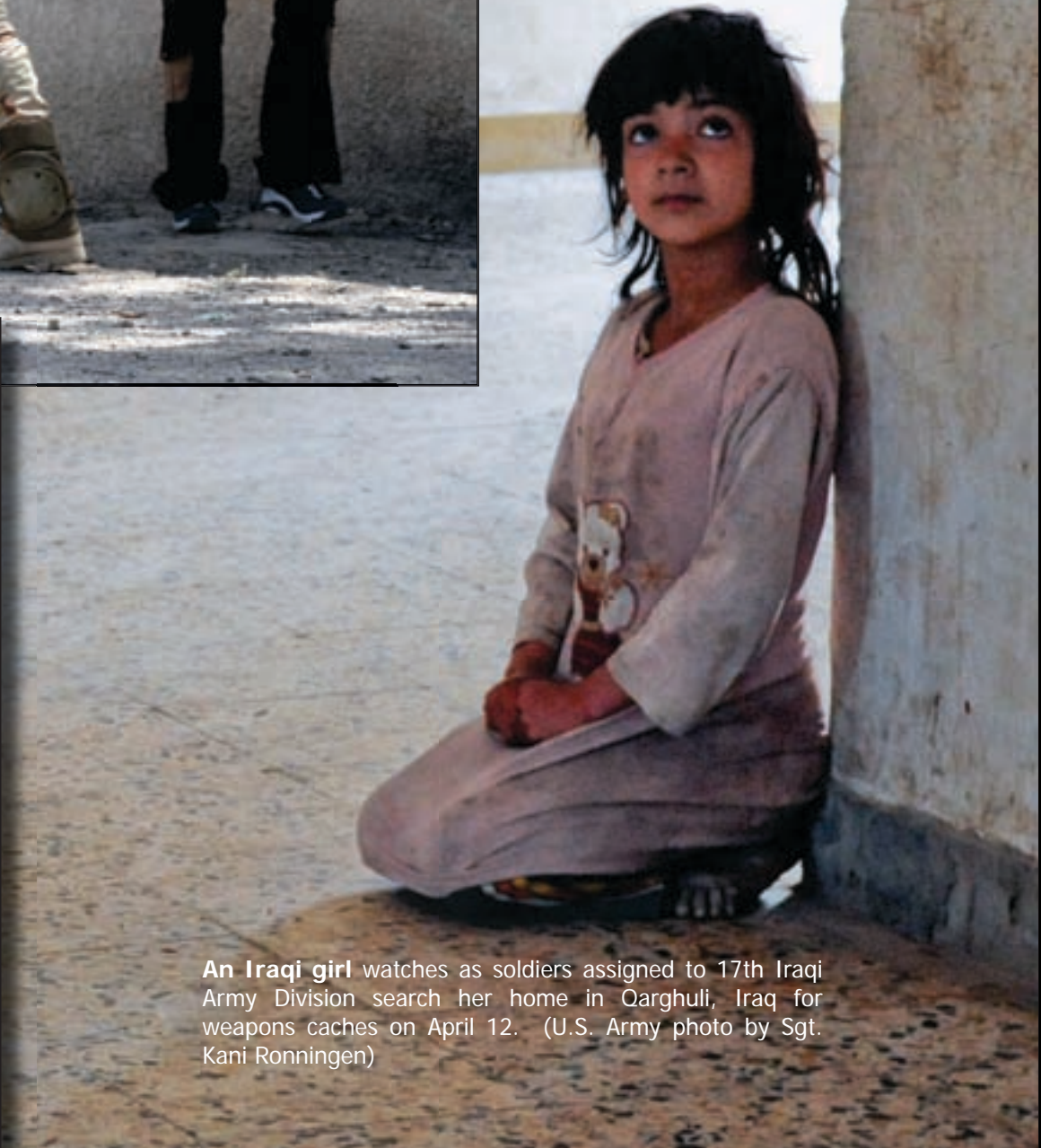
**An Iraqi soldier** patrols past an Iraqi student in Nassir Wa Salam, Iraq, on April 19. The 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, along with Iraqi soldiers patrol the Nassir Wa Salam province of Iraq looking for evidence of insurgency. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Robert Whelan)



**A member of the British Royal Air Force** takes a photograph during the official ceremony marking the transfer of Forward Operating Base Rustamayah from U.S. to Iraqi control, in eastern Baghdad, Iraq, on March 31. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. James Selesnick)



**An Iraqi girl** watches as soldiers assigned to 17th Iraqi Army Division search her home in Qarghuli, Iraq for weapons caches on April 12. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Kani Ronningen)





# Fly Away Security Team Airmen Provide Aerial, Land Protection in Iraq

Story by Staff Sgt. Zachary Wilson  
AFCENT Combat Camera Team

**JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq** - The U.S. Air Force's more than 25,000 security forces members can deploy to perform a wide variety of duties ranging from air base defense, installation law enforcement, convoy escorts, detainee guards, quick reaction force or police trainers.

For the select few security forces airmen serving as Fly Away Security Team members at Joint Base Balad, they wouldn't trade their current assignments for anything else.

"I take a lot of pride in this job," said Staff Sgt. Jason Combs, a Youngstown, Ohio native deployed from Holloman Air Force Base, N.M. "This is what I came into the Air Force to do."

FAST airmen generally work in teams and are responsible for the security of the aircraft on which they fly and any passengers being transported. Having this capability in a combat environment is critical to the mission of an expeditionary airlift squadron, such as the 777th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron based at Joint Base Balad that Combs and the other FAST airmen of the 332nd Security Forces Squadron support on a daily basis.

Tasked with providing security for aircraft operating from unsecured airfields, these airmen are the immediate first and last line of defense for the crew and passengers.

"We're threat mitigation and delay force," Combs said. "We pretty much want to hold off any threats until responding QRF [quick reaction force] teams can get to us."

On a recent mission flying to various air bases in Iraq, and his partner, Airman 1st Class Joshua Botto, a native of Charleston, S.C. who is also deployed from Holloman, were required to accompany a flight where they would be dropping off passengers at Qayyarah Airfield, known within Iraq as "Q-West," which is an unsecured airfield.

"The perimeter of the base ends at the flightline," Combs said. "We are effectively 'outside-the-wire' when we get off the plane, so that is where we are needed most."

As the C-130 landed, Combs and Botto exited and took up positions as the passengers made their way to the safety of the base. While in position, the airmen scanned for threats and kept a vigilant eye on their immediate surroundings.

Once new passengers were loaded and the crew signaled it was time to go, the FAST airmen fell back and returned to their seats as the Hercules aircraft prepared to take off for its next location.

According to Botto, the brief periods of excitement followed by long hours in the back of the plane are all part of a day's work, but he says he's proud to do his part.

"We fly every other day, often putting in 14-15 hour days -- we call it a 'turn and burn,'" he said. "But we're taking troops off of roads with (improvised explosive devices) and it makes me feel good to know I'm a part of that."

For Combs and Botto, who have both served more traditional deployments in places like Camp Bucca and JBB, Iraq, the chance to do something unique was exciting. This is especially true for Combs, who joked that he was serving his first Air Force deployment "after playing Army during my previous deployment experiences."

"Normally, we are regular security forces members - (the FAST mission) was traditionally a mission done by the 'Ravens,'" Combs said.

Air Mobility Command's Phoenix Raven program consists of teams of specially trained security forces airmen dedicated to providing security for the command's aircraft transiting high terrorist and criminal threat areas, according to the organization's fact sheet.

However, with roughly 200 certified Ravens serving in the Air Force, the requirements soon outpaced the available manning, Combs said. Security forces airmen identified to deploy as part of a FAST attend a two-week course at the Air Force Expeditionary Center at Ft. Dix, N.J., based upon many of the concepts Ravens go through for their own certification.

"We focused a lot on use of force within the aircraft without using firearms, which was a lot of hand-to-hand combat techniques," Combs said. "The most interesting part was where I got hit in the face; I guess it's important to have it happen during a training scenario so you know how you would respond. Nobody wants to get hit in the face for the first time during a real situation."

"This has been really fun for me," he added with a smile.



**U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Jason Combs**, 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, Joint Base Balad, Iraq, conducts security at an airbase in Iraq during airlift operations April 8, 2009, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. James L. Harper Jr.)



**U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Joshua Botto**, 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, Joint Base Balad, Iraq, conducts security at an airbase in Iraq during airlift operations April 8, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. James L. Harper Jr.)





A 225th Engineer Brigade Soldier gingerly holds the nation's highest military award, the Medal of Honor.

# Medal of Honor: Castle Soldiers Meet the Men Behind the Medal

Story and photos by Sgt. Rebekah Malone  
225 Engineer Brigade, MND-B PAO

With only 97 Medal of Honor holders still living, meeting a recipient of the nation's highest military decoration is not something that happens every day.

Soldiers from the 225th Engineer Brigade, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, got the chance to meet two of these heroes, retired Col. Robert Howard and retired Command Sgt. Maj. Gary Littrell, April 15 during the pair's visit to Camp Liberty.

The veterans received the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and fearlessness in action while risking their lives during the Vietnam War.

Howard and Littrell retired with 36 and 24 years of service respectfully, but their Army service didn't stop there. Now, on their sixth visit to Iraq, these best friends said they feel "called" to visit troops and show their support for what they've deemed the most professional Soldiers in the history of the American Armed Forces.

"I have a great appreciation for Americans serving this great country. It's our privilege to be here with you," said Howard. "You are very privileged to have the greatest leaders that we've had in our services, especially in the United States Army in the past 235 years, because of your level of professionalism."

Waco, Texas native, Pfc. Andrew Lundy, 515th Engineer Company, 225th Engineer Brigade, discusses the common remotely operated weapons system to Medal of Honor recipients, retired Command Sgt. Maj. Gary Littrell (center) and retired Col. Robert Howard (right), April 15 at Camp Liberty.

"But it's more than professionalism," he continued, "its dedication and love of your country or you wouldn't be here. I applaud you."

Among those meeting the American heroes was a fellow Vietnam-era veteran, Chief Warrant

**"We're not  
heroes; we're  
Soldiers  
just like you."**

Robert Howard  
COL (Retired)  
Medal of Honor Recipient

Officer Wilson Quebedeaux of Marksville, La., 225th Engineer Brigade. Quebedeaux has served in Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom and now, Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"It is always an honor to be able to visit with any retired veteran

and a distinguished Medal of Honor recipient; few people ever get to do this because most that have received this medal have died for their heroic actions and their family received the medal in their honor," Quebedeaux explained. "Any time you have an opportunity to talk to veterans of foreign wars it always brings back memories when you were there as well."

More than 200 Soldiers filled the small Engineer Chapel at Camp Liberty to listen to the living legends give advice and encouragement, but more than anything, just to be in the presence of two Americans who have displayed acts of the highest caliber of courage in defense of their nation and fellow Soldiers.

"I was humbled and honored to meet true American heroes," said Master Sgt. Lisa Bates, of Mena, Ark. "It was a privilege to get to meet them and something I will always remember. It's not every day you get to meet Soldiers like that."



**FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR**, Kirkuk, Iraq – "Let it be known that he who wears the military order of the Purple Heart has given his blood in defense of his homeland and shall forever be revered by his fellow countrymen." These are the words that were once written on the orders received when a Soldier earned a Purple Heart; and for every Purple Heart, there is a story to accompany it.

Spc. Robert Williams, a water purification specialist with 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, added his own story to the history of the Purple Heart, April 9. Williams' convoy was hit in downtown Kirkuk, Iraq, by an RKG-3, a hand-held anti-tank grenade, wounding him and other Soldiers in the vehicle.

"We stopped our vehicle and I started scanning," recalled Williams. "Then all I remember was a 'boom' that knocked me out for about eight seconds."

"After I came to, I pretty much knew what had happened," said Williams. The incident left Williams disoriented and peppered with shrapnel from the blast; fortunately the training the Soldiers in his convoy received, prepared them for

just such a situation.

His unit reacted exactly how they were supposed to, said Williams.

"My medic was on the ball, and he patched me up in record time," said Williams. "You couldn't ask for a better group."

Williams was then rushed back to Forward Operating Base Warrior's Emergency Medical Station, where he was treated for shrapnel wounds in his arm.

The following day, with his battalion commander and fellow Soldiers were present, Williams received the Purple Heart medal from Col. Ryan Gonsalves, commander of the 2nd BCT, 1st Cav. Div., "What you are doing is absolutely amazing," said Gonsalves to the gathered crowd. "3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery has done a tremendous amount of work in a short amount of time."

"This is a citation we don't like to give out, and no one likes to receive," explained Gonsalves. "This could have turned out tragically. We appreciate all of your efforts every day."

After the ceremony, Williams' coworkers gathered around to congratulate him on the medal and expressed their desire to see him back in action soon.

Col. Ryan Gonsalves, commander, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, presents Spc. Robert Williams, of the 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd BCT, 1st Cav. Div., with a Purple Heart medal, April 10, at Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq.

## Wounded Soldier Receives Purple Heart

Story and photo by Pfc. Justin Naylor  
Multi-National Division – North PAO

"I cannot wait to get him back in," said Staff Sgt. Christopher Brummer, Williams's platoon sergeant.

"He has been a great Soldier to have under me," said Brummer. "His family should be proud."

Back in the United States, Williams's wife, Melanie, had already received word of the injury.

"There is no nice way to say I got hit," said Williams. "I told her I got hit and I am in the aid station right now, but everything is OK."

Although the event came as a shock, Williams is still looking forward to hitting the streets of Kirkuk again after a little bit more time for recuperation.

"I am looking forward to going back in [Kirkuk] with them," said Williams.

The Purple Heart medal has a long history in the U.S. military and the medal bears the likeness of the first president of the United States, George Washington, who implemented the medal Aug. 7, 1782, calling it the Badge of Military Merit. The medal is awarded to service members who have been killed or wounded by an opposing force. Three members of the 2nd BCT have received the medal during this rotation in Iraq.



# MOBILE CLINIC PROVIDES MEDICAL CARE IN LUTIFTYAH



**Staff from the Lutifiyah Public Health Center** stand in front of their mobile medical clinic vehicle at Kinana School, April 8. The vehicle contains medical equipment and supplies to treat the patients from the local community.

**S**ecurity gains, along with an emerging focus on rebuilding Iraqi infrastructures, changes mission priorities for U.S. troops, as they move away from combat operations and on to what the military terms as civil capacity efforts.

Civil Military Operations Soldiers, working with 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division and members of the embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team, visited the Lutifiyah Public Health Center, April 8, to meet and assist an Iraqi mobile medical clinic.

Funded by the government of Iraq, the mobile medical clinic is an experimental project in the Mahmudiyah and Lutifiyah Qadas, south of Baghdad. Over the past month, the clinic assisted local citizens in relying less on U.S. Soldiers for medical care, and more on Iraqi doctors. The goal is to have the GoI as the primary healthcare provider for the Iraqi people.

"The mobile medical clinic belongs to the Mahmudiyah Hospital. Task Force 4-27 got in contact with the director of the hospital and coordinated for the mobile clinic to go out and do this," said Lt. Col. Anne Resty, a native of Clarinda, Iowa, and the brigade's physical therapist. "They provide everything, and we help them use their assets."

The hospital then supplies the mobile medical clinic with staff; including a doctor, two nurses, a pharmacy technician, a laboratory technician, a vaccination technician and an emergency room technician. Along with the medical staff, the hospital also provides equipment and medications for the mobile clinic.

"We provide checkups, vaccinations, lab tests, and medications to the people. Today we mainly saw cases of anemia, hypertension, worms, and we saw one case

of diabetes," said Adel, medical director and manager of the Lutifiyah Public Health Center.

The students of the Kinana School and residents from the nearby area received vaccinations, medications, and various other health services from the staff of the mobile medical clinic.

"Germs in the water being used are a big problem, along with people getting sick from the contamination," said Adel. "It's very hard for people to get clean water, so we gave water treatment pills to the people who came today,"

In addition to being a good location for treating children, the school serves as a central location for people of the nearby area.

"This was the first time I've done this and I felt very good about serving the population outside the clinic," Adel said.



**Adel** (right), medical director and manager of the Lutifiyah Public Health Center, gives care to a patient at Kinana School during a visit to the school in Lutifiyah, April 8.



# IN MEMORIAM

NAMES OF COALITION SERVICE MEMBERS WHO DIED BETWEEN APRIL 1 AND  
APRIL 30, 2009 WHILE SERVING IN OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM  
**GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS: THAT A MAN LAY  
DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS.**  
*JOHN 15:13*

**April 3**

***Lance Cpl. Stephen F. Dearmon, 21***  
***Sgt. Daniel J. Beard, 24***

**April 5**

***Spc. Israel Candelaria Mejias, 28***

**April 10**

***Staff Sgt. Gary L. Woods Jr., 24***  
***Sgt. 1st Class Bryan E. Hall, 32***  
***Sgt. Edward W. Forrest Jr., 25***  
***Cpl. Jason G. Pautsch, 20***  
***Pfc. Bryce E. Gautier, 22***

**April 12**

***Spc. Michael J. Anaya, 23***

**April 13**

***Sgt. Raul Moncada, 29***

**April 16**

***Lance Cpl. Ray A. Spencer II, 20***

**April 22**

***Cpl. Brad A. Davis, 21***  
***Cpl. William C. Comstock, 21***

**April 24**

***Command Sgt. Maj. Benjamin Moore, Jr.,***  
***43***

**April 25**

***Sgt. Leroy O. Webster, 28***





**U.S. Air Force Combat Rescue Officer Capt. Robert Wilson**, assigned to the 64th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron, Joint Base Balad, Iraq, scans for threats below during a mission April 10, 2009, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. James L. Harper Jr.)