

BATTLE SIGHT



August 2009

30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team

Issue 11

combat patch
marks the spot
photo essay

13

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Public Affairs Guidance for dealing with the media in the field:

- Always check media ID and credentials. If none, suggest they contact 30th Brigade PAO, Capt. Richard Scoggins
- Never discuss troop locations and current or future plans.
- Everything you say is always on the RECORD with the media.
- Only discuss what you know and never speculate. Stay in your lane. If you do not know, say you do not know. NEVER lie to the media.
- Notify chain of command of media presence
- Be prepared by knowing three things you can say about yourself and three things you can say about your job.
- You do not have speak, grant interviews or answer all questions if you do not wish to and you can always end an interview.

Remember, if we do not tell the story, the media will be forced to write it on their own. We can be proud of what we are doing and the sacrifices our families are making. Let the world know that you are making a stand and what you are willing to defend.

We Want Your Point of View

If you would like to show off your talents in photography, story writing, artwork or even a good poem. Send your stuff to Sgt Wayne Haley at waine.d.haley@us.army.mil

Photos need to be in JPEG format.

Stories and poems need to be in a word document.

Show us what'cha got.

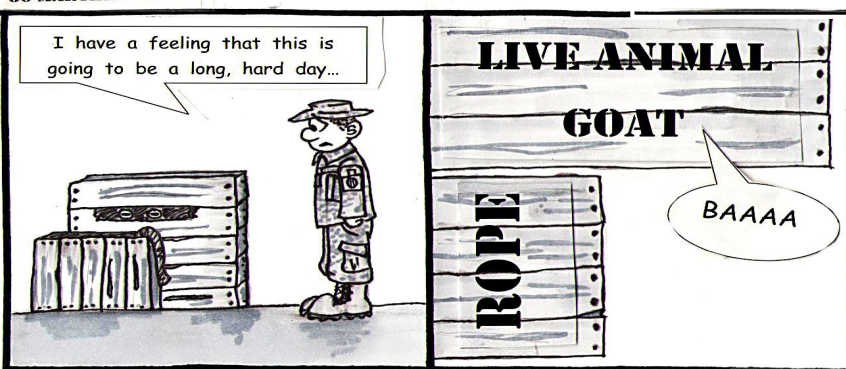
Combat Patch cover photo by Sgt. Mary Phillips

Featured Artist of the Month



The cartoonist is a self-taught digital artist working in a staff office at Forward Operating Base Falcon. She enlisted in the National Guard out of high school. In civilian life she works as security guard.

GO MARCHING ALONG



GOAT ROPE

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
30th HEAVY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM
101 ARMORY ROAD
CLINTON, NORTH CAROLINA 28328

20 August 2009



TO THE SOLDIERS OF THE 30TH HBCT

Since June 30th we have changed our focus from more of an offensive posture to that of a support role. We have been able to continue to sustain a positive relationship with both our Iraqi Security Force (ISF) partners and the communities in our area of operations.

This was an important month for Muslims, as it marked the Islamic holy month of Sha'ban. During Sha'ban, Shi'a Muslims celebrated the birth of the 12th Imam, which is also called the Shabaniyah Festival. The festival attracted Shi'a's from all over the world to pilgrimage to the holy city of Karbala, which is approximately 50 miles south of our operational area.

The pilgrimage draws a lot of attention and is sometimes marked by violence from Sunni extremists. A great many pilgrims travel along ASR Jackson to get to Karbala and we will support the Iraqi Army by protecting the pilgrims as they travel these routes.

This month also marked the beginning of Ramadan, a holy fasting celebration for Muslims lasting from 22 August to 19 September. Muslims do not eat, drink, or smoke from sunrise to sunset as it teaches patience, modesty and spirituality. We will continue to support the values of the Islamic people through the remainder of our time here, but we must recognize the importance of this month especially.

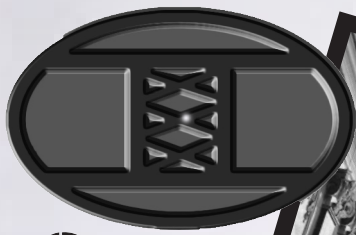
As our operational tempo has changed, our focus too, must change. We will continue to sustain security levels in order to create favorable conditions for Iraqi Provincial/Local political and economic progress. We will accomplish these goals by preventing the resurgence of enemy networks and disrupt enemy supply lines.

The ISF continues to make strides forward, and we must support those strides. With our ISF partners, we will target high profile elements and build on ISF capabilities. We will inform and influence the population about strides being made by the government as we partner with them to increase agricultural and business capacity of the region. We must also continue to set conditions for reducing our presence in our operational environment through the closure or transfer of bases.

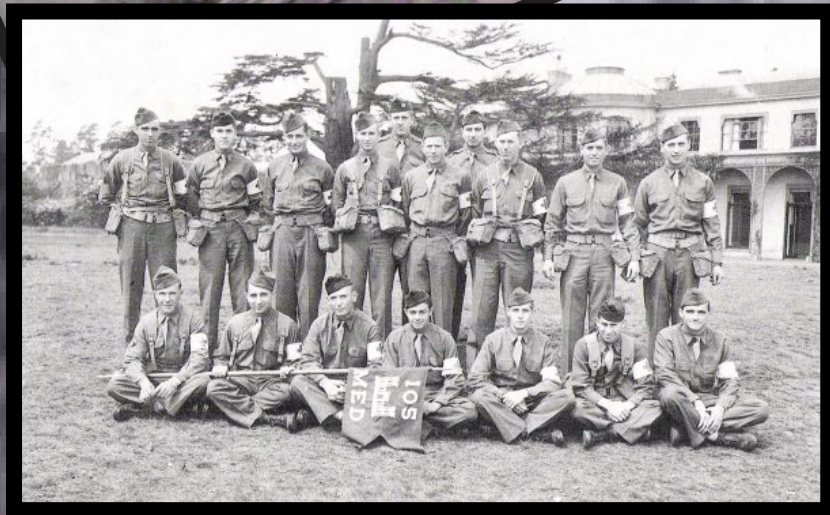
Reducing our footprint sends the message that we are responsibly withdrawing in compliance with Security Agreement. Finally, we must continue to be polite, professional, prepared to assist, prepared to kill, if needed, be partnered with the ISF, and be positive in all we do. Our tour here can only be successful if the Iraqis themselves are successful.

As always, your continued hard work and dedication rises above the high standards that the past generations of "Old Hickory" Soldiers have set for us. You are all true professionals and warriors.

OLD HICKORY!
GREGORY A. LUSK
COL, IN
Commanding
"Always Ready—Stay and Fight"



30TH INFANTRY DIVISION



LETTER FROM HANK STAIRS HQ 1st BN 117th INF, 30th DIV

It was mid August 1944, I had been in a Replacement Pool for the last six weeks following the D-Day invasion of Normandy when the word arrived that several of us were going to be assigned to a combat division. I recall, through the haze of a fuzzy memory that I wanted to be assigned to one of three divisions who had been in the fight long enough to establish a good reputation, the 29th, the 1st, or the 30th infantry divisions. My wish came true, I reported to 30th. I learned later that it was a National Guard unit from the Carolinas and Tennessee called "Old Hickory" in honor of Andrew Jackson. From August 4, 1944 to May 8, 1945 I shared the foxholes, the snow, K rations, and looted wine with my fellow GIs of "Old Hickory". There were funny things, scary times, laughter and tears.

Now, every year, we meet in an annual reunion to celebrate the bonds that were forged by those days. "Old Hickorymen", their wives and other family members converge on the reunion site from every part of the nation. Activity centers around the "Hospitality Room" where the bar is manned by volunteers of the re-enactors from the Old Hickory Association, in their WWII uniforms Not only do they man the bar, they Post the Colors for our meetings and, they set up the display of pictures, books, weapons and other memorabilia of WW II. We share funny memories and warm small talk about waistlines, gray hair, hobbies, and complaints of aging. Also a gutsy handshake as well as a hug are permissible. Of course, the snacks and liquid refreshments do whatever their supposed to do, in moderation.

Finally, there is the memorial service where the sound of "Taps" echos through the halls in everlasting salute to those comrades who have fallen before us.

We look forward to, the August 2010 Raleigh reunion when the troops from the Brigade will be home to join in a Masterful Celebration.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP AND PAYMENT OF ANNUAL DUES

Mail To: Norman Walls
30th Infantry Division Association
Membership Chairman Forward
Building 1203
FOB Falcon, IRAQ

Date _____

___ I am inclosing Membership/Annual Dues of \$15.00* please indicate which year.

___ I am including \$125* for a Life Membership.

*I am also enclosing a donation of \$_____ to the General Fund to help subsidize the printing and postage for our less fortunate members. (Donations are Tax Deductible.)

Please send my 30th Division News to: (Please Print Legible)

Name: _____ Spouse's Name _____

**Street: _____ City: _____ State _____ ZipCode _____

**Phone _____ Email _____

Former 30th Wartime Unit BN _____ CO _____ PLT/SECTION _____

Please make checks payable to the "30th IDA".

*You can pay MAJ Norman Walls in cash or check made out to 30th IDA, be aware due to snail mail delays checks are not always cashed on a timely basis.

** No addresses or phone numbers are given out to any outside sources.

U.S., IRAQI SOLDIERS COMPETE IN MARKSMANSHIP COMPETITION

Story and Photos by Sgt. Mary Phillips

"Old Hickory" Soldiers

with the 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team and Iraqi federal police with the 1st Mechanized Brigade, competed in a marksmanship competition Aug. 17, south of Baghdad.

Three teams, Team Hickory, the federal police Transition Team, and the 1st Mechanized Brigade team, containing five shooters each, went head to head using AK-47 assault rifles from varying distances and positions; including, sitting, standing, kneeling and even while standing in the back of a pickup truck.

Staff Sgt. Tony Bean, of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 30th HBC, scored 249 points, more than anyone else at the match. He had earlier predicted his top spot, despite the fact that he doesn't typically shoot an AK-47.

This was the first time that Bean, of Aberdeen, N.C., and most of the other

30th Brigade soldiers, had ever fired the iconic rifle.

"I think it is great," said Bean. "It shows that these guys are open to learning new things, and teaching us some new things about their weapons."

All the Soldiers and federal police had a good time at the friendly competition, including Sgt. Jason Newman, of Company B, 30th Brigade Special Troops Battalion.

"I had a lot of fun," said Newman, of Galax, Va. "I am thankful for the opportunity to shoot with the Iraqis, and I had a good time."

Lt. Col. Barry Hull, battalion commander for the 30th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, said part of his intent for this competition was to "break down the walls" between the American Soldiers and the federal police officers.

"A lot of the Soldiers who come over here don't interact with our Iraqi counterparts that much," said Hull, of Whispering Pines, N.C. "But when

you get rid of the misconceptions, they're just like us. They're here to do a mission and they are doing the best they can."

Battalion Command Sgt. Maj. Bill Wyrick also thought that the competition helped the Soldiers and the Iraqi officers form a closer bond.

"When [federal police] started competing, they started joking, and they started taking pictures," said Wyrick, of Rockwell, N.C., "It made [the U.S. Soldiers] realize that they are not much different than we are."

"There is a mutual respect there that wasn't there before," he said.

And when the tournament drew to a close, the Americans took first, but not by much. Team Hickory placed first with 1,146 points, the 1st Mech. Brigade, placed second with 1,109 points, and the training team came in third with 1,106 points.

A plan for a volleyball tournament between the groups is already in the works.



An Iraqi federal police officer, with 1st Mechanized Brigade, Iraqi federal police, fires an AK-47 assault rifle from the back of a pickup truck, 50 meters away from the target during a marksmanship competition at the Iraqi brigade headquarters Aug. 17. The match was between federal police officers, the federal police Transition Team, and 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team Soldiers.

JOINT SECURITY STATION ZUBAIDA RETURNED TO IRAQI OWNERS

Story and Photos by Sgt. Mary Phillips

The U.S. portion of Joint Security Station Zubaida was turned over to its original Iraqi landowners Aug. 10, during a ceremony at the small base south of Baghdad.

Capt. Brian Grey, commander of Battery B, 1st Battalion, 113th Field Artillery Regiment, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, and Samir al-Hadad, the chief of staff from the office of the Iraqi prime minister, signed transfer documents releasing the few acres from the government of Iraq back to the land owners.

Two homes and the surrounding property have been used by U.S. forces for at least a year, with the battery taking over operations at the base in late May 2009. The Iraqi part of the station will remain under government control.

The Soldiers of Battery B have spent the past few week, taking down barriers, removing trailers and cleaning up the house in preparation for its return.

"This is both a good day and a sad day for us," said Grey. "This symbolizes that security in this area is very good, and that the Iraqi

army, as a professional force, is capable of providing for this area."

"It is a sad day because we've become brothers with the Iraqi army and we've been living on this base side by side with them," he said.

Grey went on to say that although they are pulling back to their base in Adwaniyah, Soldiers will still come by on a regular basis to train and patrol with the Iraqis.

Many of the battery's Soldiers, including Sgt. 1st Class Harold Tyson, also expressed that they will miss their Iraqi neighbors, but have confidence in the Iraqi army's capabilities.

"This is a bittersweet moment for me as I made a lot of friends with my IA counterparts," said Tyson of Monroe, N.C., "but I feel comfortable that they've got everything under control."

Al-Hadad, the chief of staff

from the office of the prime minister, was also at the ceremony.

He agreed that this shows that the IA can handle security in the area now, and the importance of giving the people of Iraq their property back.

Today is a special one," said al-Hadad, "because we have the owner of the house here who is really happy to have his house back."



Samir al-Hadad, (left), chief of staff from the office of the Iraqi prime minister, and Capt. Brian Grey, Battery B commander, 1st Battalion, 113th Field Artillery Regiment, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team.



A backhoe tears a hole through the perimeter wall at Joint Security Station Zubaida, July 22 as Battery B, 1st Battalion, 113th Field Artillery Regiment start the process of closing the American side of the JSS. The property was handed back over to the land owners Aug. 10.

Pro golfers chip in for 30th HBCT Soldiers



Specialist Cassie Lemacas of Southern Pines, a personal security detail Soldier with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, chipped a hole in one at a 6-inch target nearly 20 yards away during 'Fairways to Greens'.



Becky Lucidi, (right) a LPGA pro, gives pointers to many Soldiers of the 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team about new golf rules and clubs coming out next year on tour during a morale visit of golf professionals at Forward Operating Base Falcon, Aug. 19. "This is the best golf trip I have ever taken, I would give anything to be with the troops," said Lucidi.

U.S. Army Photos by Staff Sgt. Robert Jordan,
30th HBCT PAO, MMD-B



November 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 <small>DST Ends</small>	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11 <small>Veteran's Day</small>	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 <small>Thanksgiving Day</small>	27	28
29	30					

SOLDIERS AND IRAQI SECURITY FORCES TEAM UP FOR SUCCESS

Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. Robert Jordan

Four Iraqis stand outside the door to a 10 square foot room, knowing there are two American Soldiers inside. On a silent signal they storm the room with AK-47 assault rifles at the ready. The first two scan the room and in less than a second, level rifles at the Americans.

The American Soldiers applaud, saying "much better" to the smiling Iraqi army soldiers.

With drills like these as their focus, Soldiers of Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 120th Combined Arms Battalion, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, located in Wilmington, N.C., trained Iraqi army soldiers of the 25th Brigade, 17th Iraqi Army Division, in marksmanship and room clearing at Joint Security Station Deason, south of Baghdad, June 22.

The Soldiers instruct local Iraqi soldiers, who will then train fellow Iraqis. "There is an old saying, 'more training, less blood,'" said Iraqi army Lt. A-Hasan from Baghdad.

"They are eager to train and they are getting more relaxed," said Staff Sgt. Michael Wilson of

Wilmington, N.C.

During marksmanship training, the Iraqi soldiers lie down behind a row of sandbags parallel to human shaped targets 50 yards away. First, the American Soldiers check the firing position of the Iraqis, correcting the placement of a foot for one, adjusting the sandbag of another.

offer suggestions on how to improve firing.

Some students' targets have three holes that could be covered with a quarter coin. Instructors congratulate the soldiers' accuracy shaking their hands as other Iraqi soldiers gather cheering.

"At first they were all over the target, now most are in the center," said



An Iraqi training officer issues his soldiers ammo in long curved magazines. Eagerly the soldiers lock the magazine in the rifle and begin shooting.

"They are soldiers, they love to shoot," said Wilson.

After cease fire all the soldiers move downrange. Graders circle the holes in the targets and

Wilson.

Other Iraqi soldiers practice how to clear a room. A team of four soldiers line up outside the 'shoot house', a plywood house with no roof so observers can look at training without interfering.

The American Soldiers demonstrate as one man kicks in the door and the others stream in, each covering a section of room. The four Soldiers

clear the room in a matter of seconds.

The Iraqi soldiers run through the drill again and again, their own officers giving guidance. Quickly the soldiers' confidence and technique improves. "This training helps a lot in a real fight," said a-Hasan. "With American support our training gets better."

During breaks there is a jovial atmosphere.

One American Soldier shows photos of his family to several fellow Iraqi soldiers. Questions erupt; the Iraqis ask "how many kids," "how old" and smile as only fathers and husbands can.

One Iraqi challenges an American Soldier to arm wrestling Iraqi style. They face each other standing, grasping the other's hand and try to pull the other to the ground. The contest, a struggle for both, ends in a draw to the cheers of the other Soldiers.

Once the break is over training returns with seriousness, officers guide their men to the next training area, sergeants line up the men to clear the room again.

"We need to train, especially when there are civilians involved. Terrorists have no rules," said A-Hasan. "We are the protectors of Iraq."



(above) Sgt. Jamie Glover of Wilson, N.C., a sniper section sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 120th Combined Arms Battalion, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, located in Wilmington, N.C., observes the shooting stance of Sgt. Alah, a Soldier with the 25th Brigade, 17th Iraqi Army Division, during training at Joint Security Station Deason, south of Baghdad, July 22.

(below) Spc. Michael Kornegay (left) of Clinton, N.C., a gunner with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 120th Combined Arms Battalion, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team located in Wilmington, N.C., watches a room clearing exercise by Pvt. Salah and Pvt. Deraa, both with 25th Brigade, 17th Iraqi Army Division, at Joint Security Station Deason, south of Baghdad, July 22.



Spc. James Terpenning of Wilmington, N.C., a sniper spotter with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 120th Combined Arms Battalion, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team located in Wilmington, N.C., familiarizes Spc. Zen al-Abdeen of Karbala, a soldier with the 25th Brigade, 17th Iraqi Army Division, with a U.S. sniper rifle at Joint Security Station Deason, south of Baghdad, July 22

THE VERDICT

“legal news you can use”

EML TRAVELS

Environmental Morale Leave (EML) is a time during a deployment that every soldier looks forward to. A time spent with your families and loved ones. From a legal, as well as practical perspective, here are a few tips to assist you on your journey:

- 1) Pack Light. If you can get away with one carryon bag, your travels will be easier. Although blankets are provided at Camp Stryker, they are not provided in Kuwait.
- 2) You will go through U.S. Customs in Kuwait. Therefore, do not bring knives, weapons, ammo, explosives, pornography or any other contraband with you. Ensure your medicine is labeled with your prescription (do not mix your pills). The Custom agents will thoroughly check your bags. Trouble found may result in both Federal and UCMJ violations.
- 3) Be flexible. Waiting is required. Be prepared for a 2-3 day layover each way. Do not worry—You will get your 15 days of leave.
- 4) During EML, have responsible fun. You are still in the Army and subject to the UCMJ and General Order #1. The only exception is that Soldiers over 21 may drink alcohol while on EML, but not during travel to and from CONUS. However, any trouble with the law at home could have UCMJ consequences in addition to any state consequences.
- 5) Be safe. If you get behind the wheel, remember, a few months has passed since you have driven a vehicle or ridden a motorcycle. Therefore, please be extra careful. You are an asset to the Army and your fellow soldiers are counting on you returning.
- 6) Do not miss your return time back to Theater. If you do, you may be AWOL, which carries UCMJ consequences.

Overall, EML is a program that soldiers deserve. You have each earned this privilege. Be Responsible, Be Safe, and Have Fun!

John B. Gupton
CPT, JA
Operational Law Attorney

Fighting Father Phil *Change of Pace*



I don't like change. I like to establish a good battle rhythm and get into the swing of things. Of course, the enemy gets a vote in what we do and military planners always have to adjust. Change is the name of the game.

There's a lot of adjusting going on right now. You may have noticed a change since the new security agreement was instituted on 30 June. For some, there's been more down time between missions, for others the focus has shifted as our footprint adjusts to new realities. Soldiers can be stuck with not enough to do or too much.

Change is stressful. Whether it's good change or bad change, it all causes stress. Going home on leave and coming back. Both cause stress. Moving to a new FOB, even one with better living conditions, causes stress, too. Both, going to war and returning home from war cause stress.

There's no one magic bullet, there's a few things you can do to make things easier on yourselves. Buddy up. Stress is easier to deal with when you can talk to someone who's going through the same thing. Stay flexible. Information changes and so do plans. You are born flexible and you die rigid, so it pays to stay loose. Pray. Prayer puts things into perspective. It reminds us who's really in charge and provides us with rich spiritual resources to combat stress.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” (Philippians 4:6)

Phillip Glick
Brigade Chaplain

Combat Patch Marks the Spot

150th Armored Reconnaissance Squadron, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, Follows the tradition of the 30th Infantry Division with combat patches for everyone serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom VI.



Soldiers of 150th Armored Reconnaissance Squadron salute during of "The Star-Spangled Banner" during a combat patch ceremony July 22, at Camp Stryker here. The Soldiers were awarded the Old Hickory patch from the 30th Heavy Combat Team Commander in recognition of their wartime service. The squadron is based out of Bluefield, W. Va., and its history dates back to the Revolutionary War.

U.S. Army Photos by Spc. Ruth McClary, 30th HBCT PAO, MND-B



Commander, Lt. Col. Robby Scarberry, (top photo) and Command Sgt. Maj. James Allen (bottom photo) 150th Armored Reconnaissance Squadron proudly displays their combat patches (right sleeve) as they shake hands and playfully slap patches on Troops sleeves, July 22. Troops received the patches during a ceremony at Camp Stryker, in recognition of their wartime service. Scarberry, of Milton, W. Va., personally thanked each of the Troops for their service.



Application for 30th IDA Membership And Payment of Annual Dues

Mail To: Norman Walls
Date _____
30th Infantry Division Association
Membership Chairman Forward
Building 1203
FOB Falcon, IRAQ

I am inclosing Membership/Annual Dues of \$15.00* please indicate which year.

I am including \$125* for a Life Membership.

*I am also enclosing a donation of \$_____ to the General Fund to help subsidize the printing and postage for our less fortunate members. (Donations are Tax Deductible.)

Please send my 30th Division News to: (Please Print Legible)

Name: _____ Spouse's Name _____

**Street: _____ City: _____ State _____ ZipCode _____

**Phone _____ Email _____

Former 30th Wartime Unit BN _____ CO _____ PLT/SECTION _____

SUPPLIED BY DEMAND

photo and story by Spc. Ruth McClary, 30th HBCT PAO, MND-B

Soldiers of the 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team's Headquarters and Headquarters Company may not have the convenience of a large department store in Iraq, but the supply section on Forward Operating Base Falcon covers their basic needs.

The supply section is responsible for inventory of all equipment issued to Soldiers, including weapons, uniforms and boots, according to Company supply sergeant Staff Sgt. Frederick Murray.

"Each Soldier is issued up to \$5,000 worth of equipment and clothing for deployment," said Murray, of Rose Hill, N.C. "We keep records on everything issued to them."

Soldiers also receive a \$125 monthly clothing allowance to replace worn out items, and Murray has to approve each request.

Murray also stocks everyday items such as sunscreen, foot powder, hand sanitizer and office supplies for the company's nearly 260 Soldiers, many of whom who come to the office for

things other than supplies.

On a recent day, Staff Sgt. Vernon Hayes, of Lexington, N.C., entered the supply office carrying a wood two-by-four, looking for an electric saw. Murray helped him cut the wood to the correct measurements and completed the project when Hayes left to go out on a mission.

"I don't mind helping people with projects," said Murray. "I attached the wooden pieces to the base of the desk. It took about 30-minutes to knock it out." Helping with projects is not on the duty roster in supply; Murray does that out of the kindness of his heart. That attitude led to an addition

to his team.

"I had to get something from supply and he [Murray] was a nice guy so I asked to work with him," said supply clerk Sgt. Mariano Rosa, of Medellin, Colombia.

Rosa does several tasks for the brigade, apart from his regular duties of transporting supplies and securing weapons.

"I feel like the brigade's horse," said Rosa. "It's okay though, I don't mind doing what I can for others."

The brigade's supply sergeant left in June 2008 and Murray, who received a full-time North Carolina Army National Guard supply sergeant's position a month later, was the obvious replacement.

"I knew this position would be challenging, but I enjoy it," said Murray. "I'm learning a lot, and the other brigade supply sergeants help guide me along."

Spc. Julia Clark, of Fayetteville, N.C., was a supply specialist on active duty for nine years and Murray said she is the backbone of the section.

"THERE IS A NEW ADVENTURE IN SUPPLY EVERY DAY," SAID CLARK.



Staff Sgt. Frederick Murray, of Rose Hill N.C., and Staff Sgt. Vernon Hayes, of Lexington, N.C., mark measurements to cut support braces for a desk in the logistics office on Forward Operating Base Falcon, July 13. Murray, the headquarters supply sergeant of 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, helps Soldiers with projects when he isn't ordering, picking up supplies or completing daily reports. The brigade is based out of Clinton, N.C.



From left - Staff Sgt. Frederick Murray of Rose Hill, N.C., Spc. Julia Clark, of Fayetteville, N.C.; and Spc. Mariano Rosa, of Medellin, Colombia, make up the headquarters supply section of 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team. Their office is standing room only, full of essential supplies for the Soldiers at Forward Operating Base Falcon. Murray is on his third deployment and is a native of Philadelphia, Pa.; Clark is the mother of six on her first deployment; and Rosa is a native of Caguas, Puerto Rico on his first deployment.

Iraqi Women's Initiatives Quarterly Conference

Soldiers and civilians of 30th Heavy Brigade

Combat Team attended the Iraqi Women's Initiatives Quarterly Conference on Camp Victory, June 27.

The seminar, a forum in which the challenges facing Iraqi women can be openly discussed, was hosted by Multi-National Corps – Iraq and attended by representatives from its divisions, public reconstruction team leaders and three members of the Iraqi government.

About 100 people, mainly women, attended the conference.

"I believe that if the divisions work as partners, mapping everything, we can focus on the issues important to the Iraqi women," said Lt. Col. Lucia Searcy, the women's initiative coordinator, for Multi-National Corps - Iraq.

The seminar included briefings from three members of the Iraqi government: Ms. Azhar al-Sharbat, legal advisor for the minister of State Public Affairs; Dr. Sallama al-Khafajii, advisor for Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih; and Dr. Sameerah al-Mosawi, a member of the Council of Representatives for Women, Family and Children.

Each of them spoke on empowering the women of Iraq, issues challenging women and Iraqi governmental initiatives to implement change.

"A woman feels proud when she has something of her own, it gives her a sense of accomplishment," said Dr. al-Mosawi. "Self confidence is important for the empowerment of women."

Specific topics addressed by Iraqi

photo and story by Spc. Ruth McClary, 30th HBCT PAO, MND-B

government officials were breast cancer awareness, the addition of nursery and kindergarten facilities and vocational centers for the disabled and safe havens for battered women.

The 30th Brigade Soldiers and civilians were led by Lt. Col. Kelly Jackson, of Fuquay-Varina, N.C., who discussed sustainable projects for the women in the brigade's area of operation with other division team leaders during roundtable discussions.

the brigade bilingual cultural advisor and a southern Baghdad area public reconstruction team representative.

Sustaining the Daughters of Iraq program through the Iraqi government, establishing a water purification plant, developing medical and self-examination classes and family centers with computer classes, job placement and pre-school education are some initiatives up for further discussion by the brigade.

Second Lt. Michelle Layton, the brigade medical planner, probed deeper to gain information from one of the one of

the Iraqi council members on women's health concerns, hospital and clinic assets.

"We want to see what kind of issues the Iraqi women have with hospitals, clinics and whether they have enough doctors male or female in their areas,"

said Layton, of Athens, Ga.

"We want to learn more about existing birthing facilities and the need for equipment."

There is a 10 percent death rate for women and babies in the southern Baghdad region because of inadequate hospital transportation, said Mohammed.

According to Searcy, attendance at these quarterly seminars has doubled since the last meeting held in February, and Iraqi women's concerns and initiatives are developing into sustainable projects.

"It will be hard for the Iraqi women to sit back and do nothing now, maybe before when they didn't know any better," said Mohammed. "I see them getting stronger and stronger every day."



Attendees of the Women's Initiative Quarterly Conference took a group photo after discussing Iraqi women's issues and challenges at Camp Victory Complex, June 27. Lt. Col. Lucia Searcy, front row, 4th from the right, is the coordinator of the event and was pleased that the attendance almost doubled from the last meeting in Feb.

"The conference gave us a starting point to target sustainable projects for Iraqi women in our area of operation," said Jackson. "The discussions brought many good ideas to the forefront for us to consider."

Employment was noted as the main issue of concern for the Iraqi women in the brigade's area of operations, and addressing women's health care, female illiteracy and the needs of widows could lead to employment opportunities in their area.

"Opening a women's center is a sustainable project for the women because it will help with education, job placement and a daycare needs in one place," said Parween Omer Mohammed, of Kansas City, Mo.,

You'll be Missed



Sgt. 1st Class Felicia Hill was honored and remembered during a memorial ceremony held at Forward Operating Base Falcon, Aug. 20.

Hill died unexpectedly in the United States Aug. 13, while on her way home for leave. A native of Raleigh, N.C., she served with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 30th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, in Iraq. Hill enlisted in the Army in March 1983 and was on active duty for three years. In April 1986 she joined the North Carolina Army National Guard, then entered the Active Guard/Reserve force in October 1998. During her time as an active Guardsman, Hill held numerous full-time positions throughout the Joint Force Headquarters, North Carolina Army National Guard, in Raleigh. Her last assignment was as the Battalion Human Resources Non-Commissioned Officer-in-Charge, 30th Special Troops Battalion, in Durham, N.C.

Hill was remembered as a dedicated Soldier who never let her career get in the way of her family.

"She was a disciplined worker, one of the most disciplined I have ever seen," said Brigade Command Sgt. Maj. John Swart.

She is survived by her husband, Kelly Carter, and her daughter Elicia.