



THE Q-WEST Knight

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February 2009

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Knights battle for 'Warrior' title

By Sgt. Keith M. Anderson
16th SB Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — Two transportation Soldiers from the 233rd Transportation Co., 391st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, took home the titles at the 16th Sustainment Brigade Warrior and Warrior Leader of the Quarter board here Jan. 20.

Pfc. Christina Disano, motor transportation operator, and Staff Sgt. Fritz Sanchez, heavy wheeled vehicle operator, both from the 233rd Trans. Co., won the Warrior and Warrior Leader titles respectively.

Sanchez said the company allowed him and Disano plenty of time to prepare for the board.

"We were pulled to the side and our duties were to study for the board, that's why we were victorious," said Sanchez.

Sanchez, a 31-year-old native of Bronx, N.Y., and married father of four children, said the win didn't seem real yet.

"It hasn't quite set in, with all the studying and stress, and all the build up and anticipation," Sanchez said.

Six Soldiers and six non-commissioned officers from four battalions in northern

Superbowl Madness!!!



Photo by Keith M. Anderson

Q-west Soldiers from the 16th Sustainment Brigade Personal Security Team enjoy the two beers that were allotted for the Super Bowl in the DFAC, Feb. 2, 2009.

Iraq competed at the board. Entrants had to win a company-level and battalion-level board to advance to the brigade board. At the board Soldiers were tested on their assigned weapons, had to give a presentation on advanced weaponry, recite the Soldier's

Creed and NCO Creed, and field questions from a panel of command sergeants major.

"I was nervous; I thought I was making a lot of mistakes," said Disano, a 21-year-old native of Brattleboro, Vt. "It was very motivating to win. I **See Knight, page 5**



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HEADQUARTERS
MULTI-NATIONAL FORCE - IRAQ
BAGHDAD, IRAQ
APO AE 09342-1400

4 December 2008

To the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, and Civilians of Multi-National Force-Iraq:

Today, the Government of Iraq (GoI) approved an historic agreement establishing the foundation for a long-term, comprehensive, strategic partnership between the United States and Iraq. This important agreement, which will take effect on January 1, 2009, demonstrates the United States' continued commitment to Iraq, its people, and stability throughout the region. It also reflects a maturing relationship between two sovereign nations and a greater degree of cooperation between two partners.

Over the course of this campaign, you have shown enormous courage, unwavering determination, and boundless ingenuity, and together with our Iraqi partners, we have achieved significant progress. The new agreement is a result of our shared progress, and at the invitation of the GoI, we will continue to build upon these hard-earned gains. Not long ago, Iraq was a society burdened by a seemingly endless cycle of violence and destruction. Today, it is buoyed by a tremendous sense of hope in a bright and prosperous future. With the approval of the Security Agreement – along with the broader Strategic Framework Agreement – we will help our Iraqi partners to shape that future, not only in the security realm, but also in the areas of education, culture, economics, technology, health, and the rule of law.

As we prepare for operations under the new agreement, we do so with an understanding that our mission, objectives, and commitment to the Iraqi people remain unchanged. The new environment, though, will require a subtle shift in how we plan, coordinate, and execute missions throughout Iraq. For example, US Forces will continue to be authorized to engage in combat operations; however, under the terms of the new agreement, we will coordinate and execute those operations with the approval of the GoI, and we will conduct all operations by, with, and through the Iraqi Security Forces. Similarly, we will continue to focus on combating al-Qaeda and other extremist groups, but we must do so with respect for the Iraqi Constitution and laws, and we must continue to treat all Iraqi citizens with the utmost dignity and honor. New Rules of Engagement (ROE) will be issued, but there will not be any reduction in our fundamental ability to protect ourselves and the force. As we work with the GoI to determine specific implementation procedures in other areas, we will publish refined Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs) for operationalizing the provisions of the agreement.

Despite some adjustments to the way we conduct operations, the agreement simply reinforces transitions that are already underway, and I want to emphasize that our overarching principles remain the same. While we must remain adaptive and steadily reduce our visibility, we must also maintain our effectiveness in accomplishing our objectives. We will continue to build Iraqi capacity to exercise full sovereignty and achieve sustainable stability, and we will continue to help Iraq progress from a fragile state to one that is secure, stable, and committed to good governance and regional stability. We will implement the agreement through phased, deliberate steps that preserve security gains, and we will complete our mission with honor and success.

As we move into 2009, I am confident that you will continue to exhibit the gallantry, adaptability, and initiative that have been your hallmark throughout this campaign. You have made – and continue to make – your countrymen proud, and it remains the greatest of privileges to soldier with you in this historic time as we continue to build a secure, stable, and prosperous Iraq.

With pride and determination,

Raymond T. Odierno
General, US Army
Commanding

Iraqis take over base projects at Q-West



Photo by Keith M. Anderson

Mohammed, an Iraqi engineer, explains to an Iraqi worker how to use the vibrating nozzle to remove air bubbles in the concrete at the intersection of 8th and Main St. at Contingency Operating Base Q-West Jan. 5. An Iraqi Facility Engineer Team has taken over, at least in part, base engineering and construction projects here.

By Sgt. Keith M. Anderson
16th SB Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq – As a sign of increasing Iraqi participation in infrastructure projects, a U.S. Air Force facility engineer team has made way for an Iraqi FET to take over, at least in part, base engineering and construction projects here.

“We are transitioning to a more active role for Iraqis in infrastructure projects,” said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col David Anason, commander, FET 15, Q-West. “These projects give their engineers more experience, and allow them to train their own laborers, so that when we leave, they will be able to tackle their own problems.”

The Iraqi engineers began their first large-scale road construction project here Dec. 20. The construction, projected to last to Jan 15, 2009, will reinforce entry and exit points into the Morale, Welfare and Recre-

ation center ahead of future road construction on Main Street.

Mohammed, one of the Iraqi FET engineers who oversaw the project, said he was proud to be doing the work, and to be training other Iraqis to perform skilled labor roles.

“We have built Iraqi Army bases and police stations, and now we are working with the U.S.,” Mohammed said. “We have learned a lot from the Air Force FET, and we have trained Iraqis. We will rebuild Iraq.”

Mohammed, who initially worked as a translator for the Army in 2003, has had six friends assassinated, but said he never wavered, and that Iraq has turned a corner.

“There is no more Al Qaeda in Iraq,” Mohammed said. “We had to be patient, we had to stay, and they lost and we won.”

The 555th Engineer Brigade, headquartered at Joint Base Balad, has begun replacing military FETs with Iraqi engineers. Leaders believe this will reduce the num-

ber of military engineers required in Iraq, and free them to be used outside Q-West or possibly in other theaters, he said.

At the Department of Public Works, a quasi-official outlet of the Q-West Mayor’s Cell that oversees Iraqi laborers of the Q-West Base Company, officials said the change from Air Force engineers to Iraqi engineers is having a positive effect with the Iraqi workers.

“The Iraqi FET is actually teaching the Iraqi workers and doing quality assurance,” said Capt. Matthew Chargualaf, DPW officer in charge, 181st Brigade Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade. “We’re not going to be here forever in Iraq. This is one of the ways the Iraqis are starting to work together.”

Hamid, DPW masonry manager, said he appreciated working with the Iraqi FET.

“I get a lot of good experience from the IFET engineers,” Hamid said. “There’s some small stuff **See Project, page 7**



Greetings from Multi-National Division – North, Contingency Operating Base Q-West. We have entered 2009 staying focused, vigilant and safe in everything we do. We look forward to our redeployment and return to Germany later this year.

The Knights of the 16th Sustainment Brigade began the New Year training to operate under the direction of the new Security Agreement signed by the US and Iraqi governments. The new Agreement essentially puts the Iraqis in charge of their own security, with US forces providing backup and training to Iraqi Security Forces.

Our Soldiers will be required to attend a briefing by our Judge Advocate General (JAG), and they will see some slight changes on the supply routes as they deliver supplies and equipment to the combat units. It's possible that our convoys may have Iraqi Police escorts as they transit around some of the more built-up areas along the routes. We might also have to adjust the times that our convoys are allowed to be on the roads depending on the local government's wishes.

Unfortunate incidents, such as accidents, will also be handled differently. The Iraqi Police will be the ones investigating, and our Soldiers will need to show the Iraqi Police their document that outlines jurisdiction cooperation between the two countries, the "CHIT" card. Our Soldiers are required to carry these cards with them at all times to potentially show Iraqi authorities the terms of the Agreement. We are also preparing for the important provincial elections and post-election period.

Over the last few weeks we had the pleasure of welcoming our new MND-N divi-

sion, the 25th Infantry Division "Tropic Lightning" from Ft Lewis, Wash. Tropic Lightning replaced 1st Armored Division "Iron Soldiers," based out of Wiesbaden, Germany

Knight 7 and I attended the impressive MND-N TOA ceremony. We also formally welcomed the battle space unit in MND-N, 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry, Mosul; and the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, a subordinate of 3rd Battalion, 1st Cav. They replace the, 1st Battalion, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, which departed earlier this month. These Fort Lewis and Hood-based Soldiers bring a wealth of knowledge and fresh ideas in to our new operational environment with the Security Agreement in place.

One of our biggest challenges that we faced when we first arrived at Q-West last summer was the shortage of water for basic life support. We inherited worn-out pumps, and unfinished reservoir lakes that lost more water due to seepage and evaporation than what was being consumed by Soldiers. Additionally, the Tigris River was flowing at its lowest level in a decade, remnants of a three-year drought.

We have since lined the lakes with clay, received and installed brand new pumps; and recent rains in the past few months have increased the water level of the Tigris so that we can pull upwards of 1.5 million gallons of water daily through the pipeline and store it in the lakes.

We currently have more than 140 days worth of water stored in our lakes, which translates to over 40 million gallons. We will continue to increase that amount so that when the scorching 120-degree heat

arrives this summer, we will be able to continue to bathe daily, but we must continue to conserve — just in case! We will also implement efficient ways to provide water to the local residents outside the base.

Knight 7 and I are keeping safety, standards and leader engagement as our top priorities. We are working with our Command Teams and leaders at all levels to keep this in their forefront, daily. Historically, Soldiers at the half-way mark of their deployments fall in to a false sense of complacency. Know that we are doing everything in our power to combat this, ensuring the Knight's Pride standard takes root.

We continue to make on-the-spot corrections and watch out for lapses in discipline in order to foster a climate of attention to detail, which is key when conducting operations on the dangerous roads of Iraq as well as inside the wire. This will help to ensure all of our Knight Warriors return home at the end of their tour safe and sound.

We are excited about the challenges that lie ahead during 2009 for the 16th Sustainment Brigade team in Iraq, and we are pleased to be able to say that we will return home to Bamberg this year! As always we appreciate your continued support and prayers for our Soldiers as we do our best to support the military's mission and the people of Iraq.

In closing, I leave you with a leadership reminder: "Most important, leaders can conceive and articulate goals that lift people out of their petty preoccupations and unite them in pursuit of objectives worthy of their best efforts." John Gardner

Continued God Speed. Deeds not words, Knights Pride!

Letters to the Editor!

If you have suggestions, comments or complaints, send them to SFC Adam Shaw via e-mail at adam.shaw@iraq.centcom.mil.

Your comments and suggestions might appear in the next edition of *The Q-West Knight!*

We're always trying to improve our newsletter, and look forward to hearing your thoughts. Also, if you have any story ideas, let us know!



Photo by Keith M. Anderson

Pfc. Christina Disano, motor transportation operator, 233rd Transportation Co., 391st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Contingency Operating Site Diamondback, Mosul, Iraq; and Staff Sgt. Fritz Sanchez, heavy wheeled vehicle operator, 233rd Trans. Co., won the Warrior and Warrior Leader titles respectively at the 16th Sustainment Brigade Warrior and Warrior Leader of the Quarter board at COB Q-West, Iraq, Jan. 20. Also pictured: 5 Soldiers and 5 non-commissioned officers from four battalions in northern Iraq that competed at the board. Entrants had to win a company-level and battalion-level board to advance to the brigade board. At the board Soldiers were tested on their assigned weapons, had to give a presentation on advanced weaponry, and then recite the Soldier's Creed and NCO Creed, and field questions from a panel of command sergeants major.

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feel like I can win the next board.”

Disano, who competed in equestrian events at the College of Saint Joseph in Vermont before joining the Army, said her favorite part about competing at the board, was a bet she and Sanchez made with Sgt. 1st Class Richard Wolfe, truck master, 233rd Trans. Co.

Command Sgt. Maj. James Spencer, command sergeant major, 16th Sust. Bgd., congratulates Pfc. Christina Disano, motor transportation operator, 233rd Transportation Co., 391st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Contingency Operating Site Diamondback, Mosul, Iraq; and Staff Sgt. Fritz Sanchez, heavy wheeled vehicle operator, 233rd Trans. Co.; for winning the 16th Sustainment Brigade Warrior and Warrior Leader of the Quarter board.



Photo by Keith M. Anderson

Col. Martin B. Pitts
Commander, 16th SB

Command Sgt. Maj. James E. Spencer
Command Sergeant Major, 16th SB

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Another month has come and gone here in Multi-National Division North. The month of January brought several changes on how the Knights of this great brigade accomplish our mission.

We will make some operational adjustments, but our mission does not change. One major change was the implementation of the Security Agreement and Strategic Framework Agreement which entered into effect Jan. 1, 2009. We will continue to work with the ISF to improve their capabilities as they take the lead with sustaining the security and peace throughout Iraq.

Another change came with an updated ROE. All Soldiers will need to know the updated ROE and EOF guidelines. Ensure that your Soldiers have a copy of the latest guidelines, and are familiar with them. A minute's discussion of ROE could prevent months of unnecessary investigations.

Leaders at all levels must continue to focus on safety; we have had too many incidents across the brigade. Sports injuries continue to be one of our most common accidents, as well as vehicle and equipment accidents.

We also had a vehicle rollover this month. Fortunately, none of the Soldiers were injured; but, one of the main factors in this accident was speed. Leaders must continue to remain engaged in performing PCCs and PCIs, ensure your equipment is fully mission capable, making sure the Soldiers are getting enough rest, and maintain standards, both on and off the FOB/COB.

Mitigation strategies of suicide prevention are a topic that I ask all Leaders to focus on. The 2008 report of suicides across the Army was recently published and the numbers were higher than in 2007. Suicide affects all of us. The Combat Stress Team along with our Chaplain's Office is providing training programs to assist Leaders in identifying the early signs of stress and depression. Additionally, this training discusses coping mechanisms which will help our Soldiers work through tough situations. Leaders need to emphasize down to the lowest level that there is no stigmatism with getting help.

The Army kicked off The Year of the NCO Jan. 6 at Fort Bliss, Texas. The purpose of

the initiative was to highlight the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers in the Army and to enhance opportunities for NCOs in professional development, education, fitness and leadership.

Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth O. Preston wants us to continue to improve and expand NCO professional development, and I encourage all enlisted leaders to take advantage of the opportunities to expand and increase your knowledge and skill-sets, and to mentor junior leaders. The United States Army Noncommissioned Officers are the backbone of the Army, and an example to the world.

Our deployment comes at a historic time in Iraq, and it is more important than ever that we put our best foot forward, and operate like the most professional fighting force the world has ever seen. We have accomplished a lot in the first six months of this deployment! Be proud of what you have achieved, and continue to make this deployment one for the history books.

***Deeds not words,
Knight's Pride!***

Yearbook Pages now on Sale!

Families

Buy a quarter-page, half-page, or full page to tell your Soldier how proud you are!

Display pictures of your family or messages to your Soldier!

Show them how much you love and missed them in the 16th SB Yearbook!

Vendors:

Buy ads to support the 16th SB Deployment Yearbook!

Contact for more details:

1st Lt. Sarah Noyes at sarah.noyes@iraq.centcom.mil

Spc. Erin Smith at erin.smith@iraq.centcom.mil or armyerin@yahoo.com

Soldier spends holiday with parents in Iraq

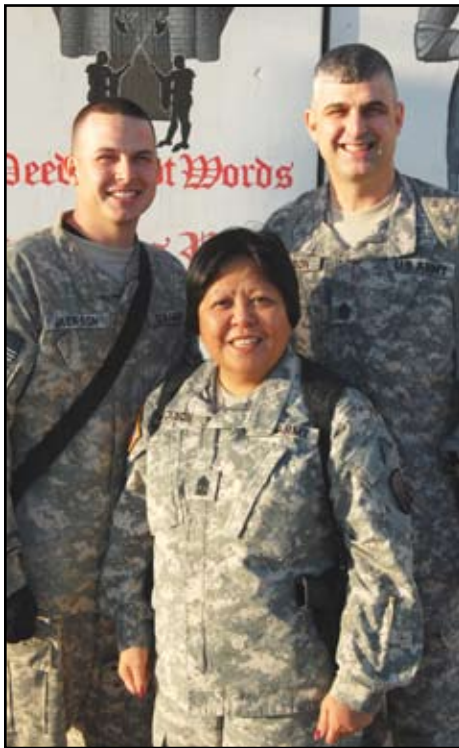


Photo by Keith M. Anderson

Spc. Christopher Jackson, petroleum supply specialist, Alpha Co., 64th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Camp Taji, Iraq, spent the holidays with his father, Sgt. Maj. Richard Jackson, supply and services sergeant major, support operations, 16th Sustainment Brigade, and his step-mother, Sgt. Maj. Eulalia Jackson, distribution sergeant major, support operations, 16th SB, at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq from Dec. 26 to Jan. 3.

By Sgt. Keith M. Anderson
16th SB Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — While some Soldiers went home to the states for Christmas or New Year's, Spc. Christopher Jackson, petroleum supply specialist, Alpha Co., 64th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Camp Taji, Iraq, spent the holidays with his parents in Iraq.

Of course, his parents are both sergeants major stationed at Q-West.

His father, Sgt. Maj. Richard Jackson, supply and services sergeant major, support operations, 16th Sustainment Brigade, and his step-mother, Sgt. Maj. Eulalia Jackson, distribution sergeant major, support operations, 16th Sust. Bde., said they hadn't seen him for two years, so they were very happy to see him.

"I was their Christmas present," said Christopher, a 24-year-old native of Goldsboro, N.C.

His father said the family spent time together conducting physical training, playing games, watching movies and going to church, but one of their favorite activities was singing.

"We brought him in and introduced him to the karaoke crowd at the dining facility," Richard Jackson said. "We sang a couple of songs together, like 'She thinks my

MRAP's sexy.'"

This isn't the first time this family has been together in Iraq.

"I promoted him to specialist in November 2004 at COB Speicher, which was a highlight for me," said Richard Jackson. They were all stationed at Speicher at the time.

Christopher said he was able to return the favor in March 2006, when he promoted his father to sergeant major in Kitzingen, Germany.

Christopher, who wants to someday be a sergeant major or chief warrant officer, said he nearly called it quits after he was injured in-between deployments.

"I'll be honest, it's been rough," Christopher said. "I didn't think I'd make it with some of the ups and downs I've had."

Christopher said it is sometimes difficult to be stationed with his parents, because of everyone's expectations.

"Everyone in Kitzingen knew who I was because of Dad," Christopher said. "It was a good thing, but also it was difficult because I had to live up to his standards."

Christopher said his father never pushed the Army on him, but he's always looked up to his father.

"Dad's been my hero ever since I was a kid," Christopher said. "No, I just called him up one day and asked, 'What can the military offer me?' He said it'll teach me discipline, make me more mature, and it's a good career and will pay off in the end."

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I've learned, like using vibrations (to remove air pockets from the concrete). I am very grateful for the training."

The father of nine from Qayyarah said he was confident in Iraq's future.

"We will be happy," he said. "We have hope for the future."

Master Sgt. Ricky Thomas, DPW non-commissioned officer in charge, 181st BSB, said it was essential that Iraqi workers take over more projects and more responsibility.

"When we leave it's going to be Iraqis doing this," Thomas said. "This is their home, their community. The whole focus is to train the laborers to journeyman level. We want to leave them with trades, skills that they can take back to their communities."



Photo by Keith M. Anderson

California Guardsmen paint the bear

Spc. Roger Jongewaard, from Garden Grove, Calif., and **Spc. Vadim Shafir**, from Los Angeles, paint the California state flag on the protective wall surrounding their unit, Easy Co., 185th Armored Battalion, California Army National Guard, at Contingency Operating Base Q-West Jan. 5. The unit assumed responsibility for operations here Nov. 22, and is expected to return to California in August, 2009. "I'm just proud to be from California," Jongewaard said.

LAW AND ORDER

War Trophies: What are they? Can I have one?

Spc. Ryan A. Frick
Paralegal, 16th STB

War trophies have been around for ages, and we all have heard stories or know of family or friends who have come back with these items in the past. Perhaps we have even received old war trophies from past generations.

Here in Iraq, there are rules and regulations that must be followed to obtain a war trophy. If these rules are not followed, adverse action can be brought against you. The following is a brief discussion of what war trophies are and how to properly obtain one.

A war trophy is any item, whether private

or public property, belonging to the enemy that is acquired by our forces here. For example, weapons, munitions (to include bullets and casings), and personal items of the enemy are war trophies.

There are procedures that must be followed for one to properly own a war trophy. Since June 28, 2004, all property that is seized by Coalition forces must be returned to the Iraqi government and then returned to the lawful owner.

Generally, Soldiers cannot keep war trophies. General Order 1 prohibits Soldiers and units from taking or retaining war trophies. In addition to GO 1, there are Department of Defense regulations that further limit what can be brought home.

However, with any rule there are exceptions. Units can attain certain so-called "war trophies" as long as they are gifts from Iraqi officials. Proper request forms must be submitted to and approved by Multi-National Corps - Iraq.

For those units who want to keep items that may be considered war trophies, there is an information paper on the Q-West portal website under Staff Judge Advocate.

UCMJ actions pending for 16th SB Soldiers on Q-West, Habur Gate, Marez, Speicher and elsewhere

- During Article 15 proceedings, a Soldier was found guilty of visiting another Soldier of the opposite gender in a CHU past visitation hours. The Soldier was given eight days extra duty.

- A Soldier was found guilty of visiting another Soldier of the opposite gender in a CHU past visitation hours. The Soldier was given five days extra duty.

- Two Soldiers were found guilty of testing positive for controlled substances during a unit urinalysis. The Soldiers were reduced to the rank of private.

- A Soldier was found guilty of violating MNC-I General Order 1 by possessing pornographic material. The Soldier was given extra duty for ten days.

- A Soldier was found guilty of violating GO 1 by consuming alcohol. The Soldier also disobeyed his commander and 1SG. The Soldier was given restriction and extra duty for 30 days, and forfeited \$1,796 for two months.

- A Soldier was found guilty of failing to go

to his appointed place of duty twice. The Soldier was reduced to the rank of private first class, which was suspended, and received restriction and extra duty for 14 days and an oral reprimand.

- A Soldier was found guilty of failing to sign out on a unit board and failing to have a battle buddy. The Soldier was given eight days extra duty.

- A Soldier was found guilty of violating GO 1 by possessing pornographic material. The Soldier forfeited \$331.

- A Soldier was found guilty of failing to report to corrective training. The Soldier was given extra duty for 14 days, reduced to private, and received a suspended forfeiture of \$314.

- A Soldier was found guilty of negligently leaving her weapon unsecured, where it was later destroyed. The Soldier was reduced to private first class, which was suspended, and received extra duty for five days.

- A Soldier was found guilty of failing to go to his appointed place of duty four times.

The Soldier was given restriction and extra duty for 14 days, and received an oral reprimand.

- A Soldier was found guilty of negligently discharging his weapon. The Soldier was given restriction for seven days, which was suspended.

- A Soldier was found guilty of violating GO 1 by viewing pornographic material on a government computer, and of speeding on post. The Soldier was reduced to private, which was suspended, forfeited \$384, and received restriction and extra duty for 14 days and a written reprimand.

- A Soldier was found guilty of violating a "battle-buddy" policy. The Soldier was given extra duty for 14 days.

Hours of Operation

**Monday-Wednesday, and
Friday-Saturday 0900-1700
Thursday 1300-1700
Sunday Closed
Closed for Lunch
1130-1300**

Country stars Laura Lynn and Lucas Hoge rock Q-West



Photo by Maj. Scott Cooley

Capt. Daniel Thoman, explosive ordnance disposal, and country music performers Lucas Hoge and drummer Nick White watch a controlled detonation on COB Q-West, Iraq, Jan. 6.

By Maj. Scott Cooley
181st Brigade Support Battalion

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — Country music performers Laura Lynn and Lucas Hoge performed for Soldiers at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation center here Jan. 6.

They performed songs by Johnny Cash, Reba McEntire, Jo Dee Messina and others. One of the highlights of the show was a solo acoustic performance by Hoge of the song “POW 369,” written by Stephen Dale Jones and made famous recently by Darryl Worley.

Toward the end of the concert, Laura called for members of the audience to join the band on-stage to help sing the ever-popular Lynyrd Skynyrd song “Sweet Home Alabama.”

Following the concert, Lynn, Hoge and members of the band stayed to sign autographs and visit with many of those in attendance.

“I thought they were very entertaining,” said 1st Lt. Alan Conway, provost marshal officer. “They played a wide variety of songs, and they were very friendly. It was a great show.”

Sgt. 1st Class Shawna Snodgrass, who works in the communication and events section of the Mayor Cell at COB Q-West, said that the band was great to work with.

“They were very excited to be out with Soldiers, and they put on a fantastic concert,” Snodgrass said.

While on COB Q-West, band members were given the chance to see some of the new Army vehicles designed to safeguard Soldiers as they escort convoys, and had the opportunity to fire several weapon systems.

They also got to watch a controlled detonation, which included various captured explosives, conducted by Capt. Daniel Thoman and his explosive ordnance team-members Staff Sgt. Eugene Pittman, and Sgt. Mark Kergan.



Photo by Maj. Scott Cooley

Country music performer Lucas Hoge performs a solo acoustic set at a free concert for Soldiers at COB Q-West, Iraq, Jan. 6. Sgt. 1st Class Shawna Snodgrass, who works in the communication and events section of the Mayor Cell at COB Q-West, said that the band was great to work with.

CAREER COUNSELOR

January Reenlistments

Sgt. 1st Class Arthur Wade
Career Counselor, Q-West

The year started with a change in Enhanced Bonuses and the unavailability of assignments due to Soldier's DEROS dates exceeding 12 months. No problem for the Warriors of the 16th SB who still raised their right hands and took the Oath of Reenlistment and reenlisted for (Option E3) ASI's, (Option E2) Stabilization and bonuses. In order for the Brigade to finish at 100%, a continued effort is needed from leadership at all levels to encourage and ensure that all of our Warriors are counseled and understand the reenlistment options available for them. We had the following Warriors from the areas throughout the Brigade Forward and Rear reenlist:

Q -West: SFC Holland, Clifton (94W), SPC Henry, Ashley (92A) SPC Hunter, Geraldine (92A), SGT Pollard, Evelyn (68W), SSG Benefeld, Marion (21N), SSG Atkinsgnehne, Jacqueline (92G). PFC Peters, Cindy, PFC Emery Nathan (), SPC Sender Nathan (), VBC: SPC Gallegos, Nicholas (45G) Rear D: SPC Orr, Angela (63J), SPC Vallessoto, Erika (92A), SSG Wanki, Nde (92A), Moller, James (52C) Remember if you are within 12 months of your DEROS date stop by and see your Career Counselor to look for possible assignment options. Call NIPR 827-6304 or email arthur.wade@iraq.centcom Thanks for all you do!

For More Information:

Web:
www.armyreenlistment.com

Location: Across from the S-1 shop of the 16th STB building.

SIPR number:
243-5092

Global:
arthur.wade@iraq.centcom.mil

HERE'S TO YOUR HEALTH

Think before you Ink

By Sgt. 1st Class Shawn Hardiek
NCOIC Surgeon Cell, Q-West

The history of tattoos date back thousands of years, but they enjoy a level of popularity today that is unrivaled in history. Tattoos are often a symbol of cultural or religious beliefs, however today most tattoos are simply a means of self-expression.

Before you decide to express yourself by getting ink done, take some time to learn about the risk associated with tattoos. The risks of getting a tattoo usually fall into one of two categories; infections and reactions to the dye or the process of injecting the dye under the skin.

The skin acts as a barrier to germs, and anytime you break the skin such as the thousands of punctures that occur with a tattoo

there is a risk for introducing infection into the body. The most common infection that can occur is when bacteria gets under the skin and produces a local infection at the site of the tattoo. This would be your typi-

“The risks of getting a tattoo usually fall into one of two categories; infections and reactions...”

cal “staph” infection of the skin.

If left untreated it can cause a fairly extensive infection of the skin and possibly other underlying structures depending on the site of the tattoo. Probably more concerning is

the risk for certain viral infections there is no cure for. The most common viral infection acquired from improper sterilization technique is Hepatitis C. However Hepatitis B and HIV can also be contracted if the needles used on an infected person are then re-used on another client.

There are several reactions that can occur in response to the tattoo process. In some cases individuals may develop an excessive scar formation to the minor trauma involved in placing a tattoo. Others may develop an allergic reaction to a component of the dye used for the tattoo, with red ink being the most common to invoke an allergic reaction. And, of course, that worst reaction of all — the painful process of having your ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend's name removed using a laser. So think before you ink and make sure you use a reputable facility.

Washington Guardsman brings 'peace' to Iraq



Photo by Maj. Scott Cooley

Sgt. Tessa Klein, a Radiant Health-trained instructor from Seattle, Wash., stretches out her yoga class at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Complex. Sgt. Klein teaches the class three days a week. "People love yoga," said Klein, Mayor Cell help desk, 181st Brigade Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade. "It's meditative, people come to relieve stress."

By Maj. Scott Cooley
181st Brigade Support Battalion

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq – In January, one Soldier took it upon herself to bring peace and tranquility to the fast-paced life of service members in Iraq.

Sgt. Tessa Klein, a Radiant Health-trained instructor, teaches a one-hour yoga class, three days a week at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Complex.

"People love yoga," said Klein, Mayor Cell help desk, 181st Brigade Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade. "It's meditative, people come to relieve stress. It's a strange phenomenon to have the peace of a yoga class here in theater."

Klein, a Seattle, Wash., native, has taught

youth classes, but this is the first time that she has taught adults.

"I saw this as an opportunity to develop my skills as a teacher," said Klein, who has practiced yoga for nearly 20 years. "Also, it's a chance for Soldiers to benefit."

Several things were apparent as the class began. First, the classroom was very quiet and peaceful. Second, the movements were intended to be smooth and focused. Specific postures are practiced with an emphasis on awareness of the whole body, to include proper breathing.

"The class is therapeutic," Staff Sgt Natasha Dumig, property book non-commissioned officer, 16th Sustainment Brigade. "It helps you identify your mental and physical boundaries, and your muscles feel rejuvenated".

Dumig, a Fox Lake, Illinois native, has been practicing the Indian discipline for nearly 15 years, and has done yoga on each of her four deployments.

"It helps keep you flexible in your day to day activities," said Dumig. "We have a lot of stress in our life, so you have to remain flexible."

Other Soldiers had less experience, but felt the benefit.

"This is the first time I have ever taken a yoga class and I have to admit that I do enjoy it," said 2nd Lt. Micah Underwood, platoon leader, Echo Co., 1st Battalion, 185th Armor. "We do a lot of stretching and concentrating on what the muscles are doing. The instructor, Sgt. Klein, talks us into some pretty challenging poses that really makes us work our muscles to maintain control."

SAFETY ALWAYS

Safety Always Means Mission Success

1st Sgt. (Ret) Jeff Buchanan
Safety Manager, Q-West

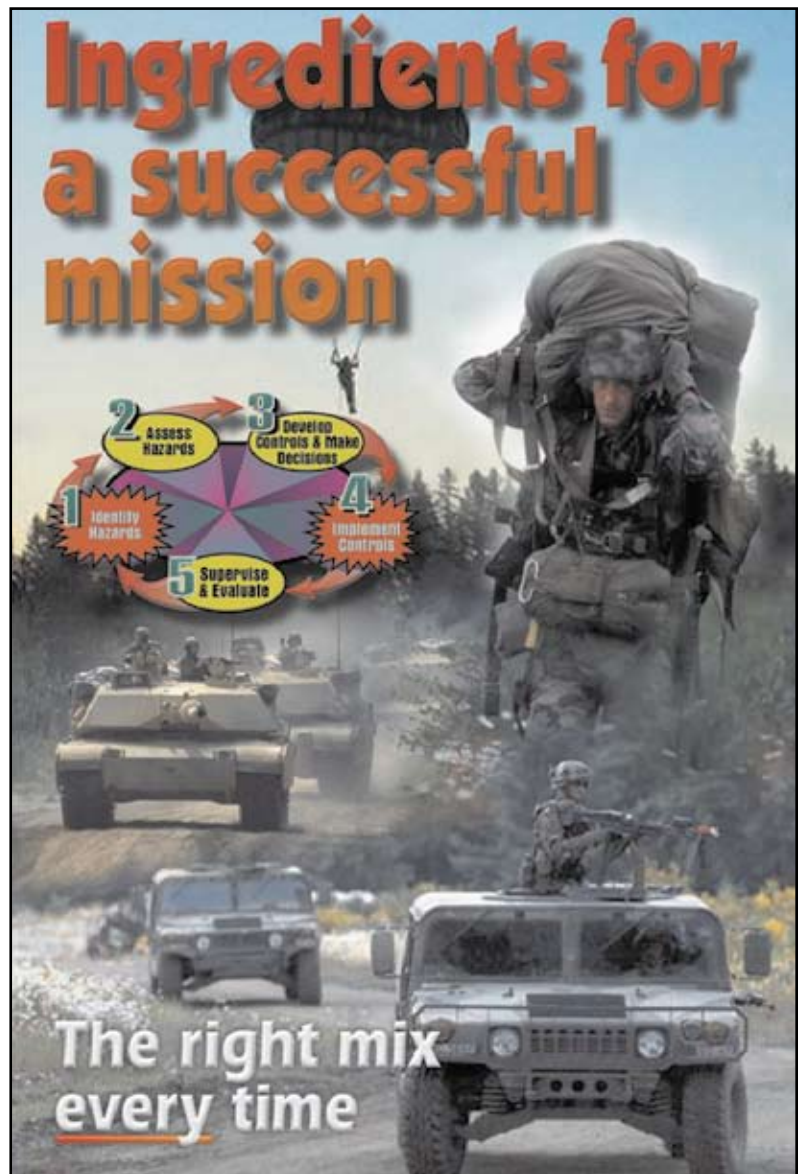
Mission success means accomplishing the mission without injuring Soldiers or destroying equipment. To do so will require teamwork of everyone within the 16th Sustainment Brigade. Everyone must incorporate all of the following four areas into his or her mission planning and daily life: leadership engagement, individual responsibility, discipline, and composite risk management.

Leadership engagement is the key element of safety. Leaders must be the subject matter experts on composite risk management, and integrate the CRM in all phases of operations from planning to completion. Leaders must set the example they want their Soldiers to follow. Leaders must ensure Soldiers are trained to the standards and enforce the standards through supervision and on the spot corrections. Leaders should never walk by a violation of standards. If you do, you have just set a new standard. Leaders must mentor their Soldiers and foster the discipline and attitude that contribute to safe behavior.

Individual responsibility means you must take responsibility for your actions. Always remember your actions may have far-reaching consequences. Always think before you act, both on and off duty.

Discipline. It is often more difficult to do the right thing when nobody is looking than it is to do the wrong thing. All Soldiers are expected to have the discipline to do the "harder right" and not the "easy wrong." Have the guts to set the example for your fellow Soldiers and do something because it's the right thing to do, not because it's the way we have always done it. If you are not sure about something, ask someone. If you know it's wrong, fix it or tell someone who can. Discipline is taking ownership of the safety program and getting involved. Everyone is a safety officer or a safety NCO. "Safety Always" means 24-hours a day, seven days a week. Safety is a 24-hour job. Safety must become second nature, a very important part of daily living, and not a paperwork drill. Know, follow, and enforce the standards. Accept nothing less.

Composite risk management is a tool to ensure all missions and operations are conducted in as safe a manner as possible. Every Soldier must understand and apply the five-step composite risk management process: Identify Hazards, Assess Hazards, Develop Control & Make Risk Decisions, Implement Controls, and Supervise & Evaluate.



ate. Everything we do has inherent risk associated with it. Whether on a mission outside the wire, or doing PT, you can apply the composite risk management process to minimize risks. Learn to anticipate conditions that can lead to an accident and take action to prevent it.

Safety can be achieved through a commitment to accident prevention, not through accident investigation. Always remember safety is everyone's business. Stay committed to the team and we will all go home together.

DEED NOT WORDS, KNIGHTS PRIDE

Army Safe, Army Strong

Washington Guardsmen conduct live fire exercise

By Capt. Jacqueline Baird
81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-West, Iraq – Washington Guardsmen followed up earlier dismounted patrol training with a live fire exercise at the explosive ordnance disposal range here Dec. 30.

“One of the biggest dangers Soldiers face during a mobilization to Iraq is complacency,” said Lt. Col. Kenneth Garrison, commander, 81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion. “After months of patrolling the same roads and villages, it is difficult to maintain the focus that is required of combat.”

The Everett, Wash.-based Soldiers of the 81st BSTB, 16th Sustainment Brigade, assumed base defense responsibilities from Task Force 113, Indiana Army National Guard, on Nov. 16, 2008. The battalion’s force protection company, the “Crushers,” regularly conduct base defense operations, counter-IED (improvised explosive device) patrols, counter-indirect fire patrols, non-lethal engagements, and QRF (quick reaction force) operations in support of base defense operations at COB Q-West.

“The Soldiers conduct regular training in order to sharpen their skills and keep their fighting edge,” said Garrison.



courtesy photo

A Washington Guardsman prepares to fire as the unit followed up earlier dismounted patrol training with a live fire exercise at the explosive ordnance disposal range here Dec. 30.

Guardsmen rehearsed several combat tasks during the exercise.

The squads reacted to a detonated IED, employed a smoke screen for dismounted movement, utilized grenades to capture

fighting positions, reacted to a mobile, vehicle-borne IED utilizing escalation of force (EOF) guidelines and destroyed a vehicle using an AT-4, said Capt. Forrest Horan, commander, Force Protection.

Puerto Rican Guardsmen earn first safety streamer

By Sgt. Keith M. Anderson
16th SB Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — The Puerto Rican Guardsmen of the 266th Ordnance Co. wrapped up their year-long deployment cycle here with a green Safety streamer for going 90 days without an accident.

“With the workload we’re doing over here, that’s hard to get,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Roy Wainscott, safety officer, 30th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade. “No one else in the battalion has gotten close yet.”

Soldiers from the 266th Ord. Co., based out of Aguadillo, P.R., ran the ammunition supply point here from April 2008 to January 2009, and supported not only the base and units

See Safety, page 14



Photo by Keith M. Anderson

Col. Martin Pitts, commander, 16th Sustainment Brigade, adds a green safety streamer to the 266th Ordnance Co. guidon during a ceremony at Contingency Operating Base Q-West Jan. 16. The streamer, the first to be awarded in the 16th Sust. Bde., recognized the company for going 90 days without an accident. Soldiers from the 266th Ord. Co., based out of Aguadillo, P.R., ran the ammunition supply point here from April 2008 to January 2009, and supported not only the base and units throughout Multi-National Division - North, but also units in Afghanistan.

Soldiers train to stay alive in vehicle rollovers

By Sgt. 1st Class Ken Mattingly
Bravo Co., 1st Bn., 184th Infantry

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — Soldiers from Bravo Co., 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry, twisted, turned, and thought their way out of disabled and damaged vehicles during a safety day vehicle egress exercise here Jan. 30.

“Rollovers can happen anywhere on the road,” said Capt. Peter Lewis, commander, Bravo Co.. “This training is important in maintaining muscle memory in exiting vehicles in stressful situations. It is a perishable skill.”

The training is designed to teach Soldiers to “egress,” that is, get out of, their tactical vehicle in the quickest and safest way possible. The training included rollovers in various scenarios, including water rollovers.

“The crews learn to work as a team,” said 1st Sgt. Steven Trester, first sergeant, Bravo Co.. “It helps them survive on the modern battle field. We need to remember that there is more than just one enemy on the battle field.”

Bravo Co. Soldiers also participated in Armored Security Vehicle (ASV) training and egress techniques for other tactical vehicles. The rollover training was conducted at the Q-West Convoy Logistic Patrol Readiness Center (CLP-RC).

“This training increases the Soldier’s survivability,” said Sgt. 1st Class Eric Hernandez, truck master, Bravo Co.. “The more a Soldier knows, the better prepared he is. He needs to be able to function in all kinds of situations. We tried to make it as realistic as possible.”



Photo by Sgt. William Gospodnetich

Soldiers from Bravo Co., 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry, 30th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, exit a Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer during safety day training at the Q-West Convoy Logistic Patrol Readiness Center (CLP-RC), Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq, Jan. 30.

Safety, from page 13

throughout Multi-National Division - North, but also units in Afghanistan.

“They have a lot of heavy items and explosives,” Wainscott said. “That’s one place you don’t want a fire.”

Col. Martin Pitts, commander, 16th Sust. Bde., added a green safety streamer to the ordnance company’s guidon during a ceremony Jan. 16. The streamer, the first to be awarded in the brigade, recognized the ordnance company for their commitment to safety.

“To be successful we must concentrate

our efforts on accomplishing the mission and do it without injuring Soldiers or destroying equipment,” said Pitts. “To do so will require the teamwork of everyone in the unit incorporating all of the following four areas: leadership, individual responsibility, discipline, and composite risk management.”

All units that fall under the 16th Sustainment Brigade are eligible for the streamer. To be considered for the award, leaders must go through their safety officers, who will notify the brigade safety manager that the unit is eligible.



Photo by Sgt. William Gospodnetich

A Soldier from Bravo Co., 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry, 30th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, exits a Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer after being turned upside down at the Q-West Convoy Logistic Patrol Readiness Center (CLP-RC), Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq, Jan. 30. The simulation creates more realistic disorientation and battlefield conditions, and improves a Soldier’s ability to exit his tactical vehicle quickly and safely. “This training increases the Soldier’s survivability,” said Sgt. 1st Class Eric Hernandez, truck master, Bravo Co.. “The more a Soldier knows, the better prepared he is. He needs to be able to function in all kinds of situations. We tried to make it as realistic as possible.”

Iraqi Family accepts Sustainers generosity

By Capt. Jonathan Roach
353rd Transportation Co., 30th CSSB

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — The soccer balls, clothes, books and candy were very different from the usual loads of heavy equipment, but the transportation Soldiers hauling the load were proud of the mission.

“Humanitarian duties are the most fulfilling to me,” said Staff Sgt. Christopher Baxter, platoon sergeant, 353rd Transportation Company, and Belle Plaine, Minn., native. “These are the memories that I carry around for the rest of my life. This is my third deployment and the second one of the three where I have been able to do some humanitarian duties. This is what it is all about.”

During a logistical mission, Soldiers from the 353rd Trans. Co., 30th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, took time to bring care packages to a Family who lives on the banks of the Tigris River Dec. 12.

Khalif, a middle-aged Iraqi man, invited several of the transportation Soldiers into his home, and introduced them to his family. After some hot, sweetened tea, the Soldiers played with several of Khalif’s six children.

Soldiers handed out boxes containing clothing, soccer balls, crayons, coloring books, candy, personal hygiene products,



Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Christopher Baxter
Staff Sgt. Christopher Baxter, platoon sergeant, 353rd Transportation Company, 30th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, shakes hands with Khalif as his children pose with their new soccer balls, coloring books, and candy that Soldiers handed out during a pump house mission in Al-Qayyarah, Iraq, Dec. 12, 2008.

paper, and other writing supplies to Khalif’s family.

They finished off their cultural adventure by showing off one of their favorite pastimes in Minnesota, by fashioning a fishing pole out of an antenna and string, and used paper clips as hooks, to attempt to catch a fish from the Tigris. While their endeavor was unsuccessful, they accomplished their mission to bring smiles to a few faces.

The 353rd Trans. Co. performs convoy sustainment operations by hauling water, fuel, and various other classes of supply in Multi-National Division North. Several missions have required the unit to provide logistical support by transporting equipment on their heavy equipment transport systems to a pump house along the Tigris River, near Al Qayyarah, Iraq.

Washington Guardsmen sharpen skills with vehicle interdiction training

By Capt. Jacqueline Baird
81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — Washington Guardsmen trained to stop and search suspicious vehicles during vehicle interdiction training here Jan. 31.

The Everett, Wash.-based Soldiers of the 81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, are responsible for force protection at the base, and regularly conduct convoys with Iraqi Security Forces in the Ninawa Province.

Because the Guardsmen regularly conduct mounted and dismounted patrols of the area surrounding the base, it is essential for them to train **See Skills, page 16**

(Right) Pfc. Coye Underwood, 81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, apprehends and searches Staff Sgt. John Bryant, 81st BSTB, during vehicle interdiction training at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Jan. 31. The Everett, Wash.-based Soldiers are responsible for force protection at the base, and regularly conduct convoys with Iraqi Security Forces in the Ninawa Province.



Transportation Soldiers train to save lives in combat

By 2nd Lt. Bradley A. Nowack
497th Transportation Co., 30th CSSB

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq – In this training scenario, Spc. Esteban Trevino, gunner, 497th Transportation Co. out of Ft. Lewis, Wash., 30th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, had only moments to save the lives of his fellow Soldiers.

The initial blast had disabled the lead vehicle in the convoy. The convoy commander dismounted to direct the recovery, but an unseen secondary device detonated, severing his left leg and inflicting other wounds from shrapnel. He was unconscious and losing blood fast. To make matters worse, the convoy was now coming under small arms fire from the enemy.

Faced with this nightmare scenario, Trevino and his partner for the simulation lane laid down suppressive fire, dragged the casualty to cover and began applying a tourniquet to the amputated leg.

Fortunately this situation was only a test, the culminating event of the combat life saver certification course held from Jan. 5 to Jan. 8, 2009.

“Playing out scenarios like this really makes you think about what could happen out there,” said Trevino after finishing his lane. “I’m really glad I would know, from training, what to do.”

In another similar battle, raging a few yards away in the gravel courtyard of the 407th Medical Detachment headquarters at Q-West, Sgt. Raffinee Adams, squad leader, 497th Trans. Co., swabbed the forearm of her simulated casualty with an alcohol pad and prepared to insert a not-simulated 18-gauge needle-catheter unit into his vein. Under the scrutiny of the instructor and the weight of her full combat load and body armor, Adams steadied her hand and made a perfect puncture on her first try.

Skills, from page 15

in many infantry tactics, techniques, and procedures, said Capt. Forrest Horan, commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 81st BSTB. Force Protection Soldiers have a critical mission on the Base.

“Squads were trained to stop vehicles,

“It’s important for the Soldiers to keep training even while deployed,” said Adams, still wearing her outer tactical vest and latex gloves. She would be wearing that armor again, on mission, in 16 hours.

From Dec. 23 to Jan. 29, the 497th Trans. Co. and the 407th Medical Detachment worked together to train or recertify 69 Soldiers from the company as combat life-savers. The class, normally a week long, had to be compressed to three days at double the hours to fit into the busy operational schedule of both units. The push was in response to a directive that all Soldiers going “outside the wire” be CLS qualified.

Medics from the detachment, who are attached to the transportation company on each convoy mission, taught the course in tactical combat casualty care or “TC3”. TC3 encompasses advanced first aid topics including opening and managing a casualty’s airway, controlling severe bleeding, treating penetrating chest trauma, and initiating a saline lock and intravenous infusion. The training was both classroom and hands-on. Each Soldier administered an IV, and no one escaped getting stuck.

CLS-qualified Soldiers are trained how and when to apply these skills in a combat environment.

“Sometimes the best thing you can do to save your buddy is kill the enemy,” explained senior instructor and medic Staff Sgt. Eddy Ellis, in his lecture.

A Combat Life Saver is a Soldier whose primary role is not that of a medic, and Soldiers are taught that the instinct to drop everything and tend to a casualty in the middle of a firefight will lead to more casualties overall, Ellis said.

In the opinion of the medics, having 100-percent of Soldiers CLS-qualified augments the effectiveness of medics rather than replacing them.

“It means a CLS Soldier can open airways,

force the enemy from their vehicle, eliminate immediate threats and search vehicles according to both Army and police SWAT (special weapons and tactics) standards.” said Horan. “The training focused on identification of suspicious vehicles, sensitive site exploitation and detainee operations.



Photo by 2nd Lt. Bradley A. Nowack
Spc. Esteban Trevino, gunner, 497th Transportation Co., 30th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, practices first aid techniques during the culminating situational exercise of a three-day course in combat life saver techniques at contingency operating base Q-West, Iraq, Jan. 8.

stop major bleeding and control the other factors that are the main causes of death before I get there and take over, because my vehicle might actually be a mile away,” said Spc. Paul Macchi, medic, 407th Med. Det.

The training will culminate in a squad live fire exercise.”

This kind of exercise keeps complacency down and offers the Force Protection Soldiers realistic training to accomplish their mission, Horan said.

ARMY VALUES



HONOR

LIVE UP TO THE ARMY VALUES

16th Sustainment Brigade Soldiers reflect Honor and live the Army Values by showing respect for tradition, maintaining military bearing, and by participating in Warrior and Warrior Leader of the Quarter boards.

Kurdish Soldiers graduate US Army combat lifesaver course

By Capt. Jonathan Roach
16th SB Public Affairs

HABUR GATE, Iraq —Iraqi-Kurdish Soldiers received certificates of completion after they became the first class to graduate from the U.S. Army combat lifesaver course on Jan. 27.

The Pesh Murga Soldiers learned how to sling an arm injury, apply tourniquets, and new techniques such as needle chest decompression for serious injuries. The Kurdish language did not have the words for many of the techniques, which the instructors overcame by describing the procedures and demonstrating them to the students.

Sustainers at Habur Gate trained the group of 10 Pesh Murga Soldiers and afforded the Kurdish Soldiers and American Soldiers the opportunity to form new friendships. The Pesh Murgas are from the Kurdish region of Iraq. Pesh Murga translated to English,



Photo by 2nd Lt. Nathan Lewis
Staff Sgt. Daniel DeLuna, guides two Kurdish "Pesh Murgas," Iraqi Army Soldiers from the Kurdish region, on proper tourniquet application at Habur Gate Aid Station Jan. 27.



Photo by 2nd Lt. Nathan Lewis

Staff Sgt. Daniel DeLuna, Habur Gate Aid Station noncommissioned officer in charge, Logistics Task Force – Alpha, 16th Sustainment Brigade; 1st Sgt. Donald Davis, first sergeant, LTF – Alpha; and 2nd Lt. Nathan Lewis, executive officer, LTF – Alpha (from left to right), stand for a group picture with the recently graduated "Pesh Murga" troops, Iraqi Army Soldiers from the Kurdish region, at the Habur Gate Aid Station Jan. 27. The Kurdish Soldiers learned how to sling an arm injury, apply tourniquets, and new techniques such as needle chest decompression for serious injuries.

means "those who face death." This small group came to Habur Gate to learn first-aid from Staff Sgt. Daniel DeLuna, Habur Gate Aid Station non-commissioned officer in charge, Logistics Task Force – Alpha, 16th Sustainment Brigade.

The aid station is only one of the many different sections that make up LTF - Alpha, which provides support to convoys that are passing through the Turkish-Iraqi border.

"I appreciate everything that you have done for my Pesh Murgas," said Iraqi Army General Bakir.

"I view you all as my brothers and I hope that we will be able to continue to learn from you in the future."

After graduating, the students will return to their units and teach their brothers in arms what they had learned from their course at Habur Gate, Bakir said.

California Reservists wrap up operations in Iraq

By Cpt. Henry J. Aguigui
18th CSSB

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE DIAMONDBACK, Iraq — California Reservists from El Monte, Calif., wrapped up a year-long deployment during a transfer of authority ceremony at the Marez-East theater January 3, 2009.

The Soldiers of the 137th Quartermaster Co., 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, pro-

vided shower and laundry support and vehicle search teams to several sites throughout Multinational Division Iraq-North.

"You have done a superb job, and we were lucky to have had you with us," said Lt. Col. Christopher Roscoe, commander, 18th CSSB.

1st Lt. Caleb Beyah, commander, 137th Quartermaster Co., who was on his second deployment to Iraq, thanked his Soldiers for their hard work. "It was challenging at times, but we were always able to make

the mission happen," said Beyah. "You've done an amazing job, made sacrifices and maintained an unwavering attitude."

Beyah and Sgt. 1st Class Edgar Robles, first sergeant, 137th QM Co., relinquished mission responsibilities to Capt. Dwight Smith, commander, and 1st Sgt. Joseph Walden, first sergeant, 506th Quartermaster Co., based out of Fort Lee, Va.

"We hope to provide excellent service to every unit in our area of operation," said Smith.

Sustainment Soldiers supervise construction of \$16 million fuel farm

by 1st Lt. Marshal R. Pearson
391st CSSB

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq — Sustainment Soldiers here completed construction of a \$16-million fuel farm, the second “steel-bolted-tank” fuel farm to be operational in theater, replacing the conventional berm fuel farm.

The project provides Speicher with a better facility to issue and receive bulk fuel. The facility will provide fuel to units in northern Iraq.

The 927th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, based out of Jacksonville, Fla., initiated the project in late 2007, though the actual construction began in March 2008, around the time the 391st CSSB assumed responsibility.

The project consisted of a total of nine steel-bolted-tanks: six tanks for JP8, a military grade diesel; two tanks for DF2, a diesel fuel; and one tank for Mogas, a military form of regular gasoline.

Master Sgt. Travell Brown, the supply and services non-commissioned officer in charge, Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 391st CSSB, 16th Sustainment Brigade, supervised the construction of this \$16 million project. Brown said that this project will help the fuel farm managers maintain and provide a more accurate accountability of a 3.5-million-gallon-capac-



courtesy photo

Contractors work on one of the diesel tanks at Contingency Operating Base Speicher Sept. 28, 2008. Sustainment Soldiers here completed construction of a \$16-million fuel farm, the second “steel-bolted-tank” fuel farm to be operational in theater, replacing the conventional berm fuel farm. The project provides Speicher with a better facility to issue and receive bulk fuel, and will enable Soldiers here to provide fuel to units throughout northern Iraq.

ity farm.

The physical construction of this project began with the prepping of the area for the building of the huge tanks, followed by building the concrete foundation, which required five months to complete.

The tank construction began with small metal slabs bolted together, eight of the nine tanks required 40,000 bolts to hold the tanks together and the ninth tank was welded together instead of being bolted.

During this time, Brown regularly monitored and captured the progress to ensure the contractors maintained the required standards.

Staff Sgt. Paula Miller, petroleum supply specialist, HHC, 391st CSSB, also visited the construction site on a daily basis to supervise its progress.

Miller said she couldn’t wait to get started.

“Because of the difficulty of the various tests and retests that are required to obtain an accurate reading on fuel in fuel bags at the current farm, I anxiously await the new farm,” she said.

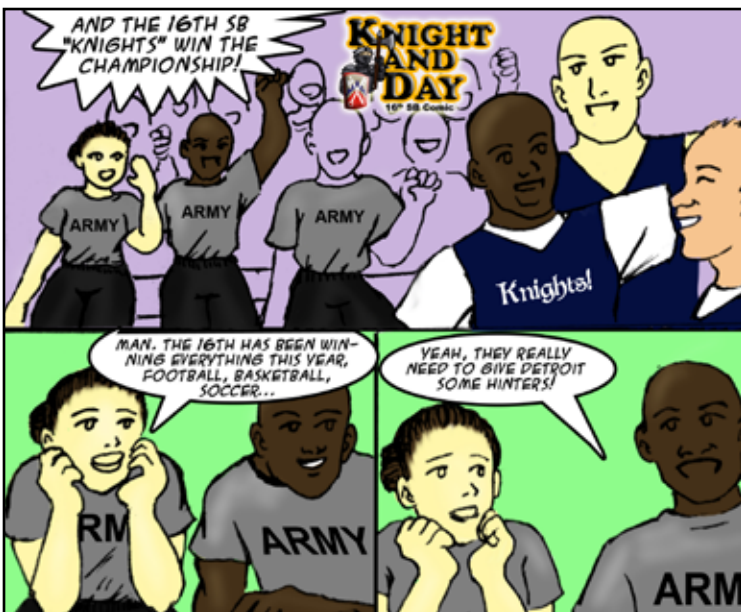
After completion of the tanks, Soldiers of the 20th Quartermaster Co., Contingency Operating Base Q-West, performed leakage tests using about 100,000 gallons of water. Water was used instead of fuel, to test the tanks, so that if leaks were detected it would not contaminate the area.

Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Harrell, the fuel responsible officer, 574th Quartermaster Co., based out of Germany, closely monitored the tests.

The tanks passed without any major leaks, and the few minor leaks that were found were easily fixed with a little tightening of a couple bolts, he said.

The fuel farm is slated to open for business in March 2009.

“This is just one of many ways that the Soldiers and leaders of the 391st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion look to the future and logistically plan for the handover to the Iraqi forces,” said Maj. Eduardo Santiago, executive officer, 391st CSSB.



Transportation Soldiers help Iraqi Police

by 1st Lt. Paul Schmidt
70th Transportation Co., 391st CSSB

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq — Germany based Soldiers from Contingency Operating Base Speicher are taking a giant leap forward in giving the Iraqi Police upgraded equipment while receiving upgrades of their own here, Jan. 6.

Soldiers of the 70th Transportation Company, 391st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, are in the process of exchanging their humvee for new Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles. The exchange serves two purposes. First, it allows the Soldiers of 70th Trans. Co. to upgrade into safer and more versatile vehicles. Second, the Iraqi Forces will inherit the humvees to enhance their mission execution.

The company commander said that he was excited about the switch because of the dual benefit from the exchange.

"This transfer will make the Iraqi Security Forces better equipped to conduct operations on their own, speeding up the transition and making the Iraqis more able to take control of their county without our help," said Seattle, Washington, native, Capt. Patrick Henrichs, commander, 70th Trans. Co., 391st CSSB.

The vehicles will also give the Soldiers of 70th Trans. Co. a leg up when conducting their mission.

"The new vehicles are a great opportunity for us. It allows us to gain experience with a new system and be much more effective,"



Photo by Sgt. Keith M. Anderson

SPC Christopher Peakes, team leader, 70th Transportation Co., 391st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, checks out one of his company's new vehicles during driver's training at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Jan. 5. Soldier's from the 70th Transportation Company, 391st CSSB on COB Speicher, rapidly trained on new vehicles in order to replace their current equipment which is to be transferred to Iraqi Forces.

said 2nd Lt. Vernell Rixner, platoon leader, 70th Trans. Co., 391st CSSB, and Atlanta, Georgia native.

In order to operate MRAP vehicles the 70th Trans. Soldiers must conduct a rigorous training program. The training takes four days, and will give them a good idea of the MRAPs capability and specifications.

"It's great to learn about new vehicles," said SPC Christopher Peakes, team leader,

70th Trans. Co., 391st CSSB. "I haven't really used MRAPs, but I am sure they are going to have a big impact on our mission and make us safer on the road."

The Frisco, Texas, native, also said knows that helping out the Iraqi Forces is a top priority.

"The Iraqi Army needs new vehicles to take charge and I understand this is our way of helping them out."

Mosul redeployment center exceeds expectations

By Capt. Matthew Joy
18th CSSB

MOSUL AIRFIELD, Iraq — Since Soldiers set up a redeployment center here in August 2008, they have pushed over 500 pieces of equipment, 200 containers and more than 1,000 personnel for redeployment.

"The Mosul Redeployment Center has exceeded expectations," said Lt. Col. Christopher Roscoe, commander, 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion.

"When we assumed the mission from our predecessor, redeployment support was not a part of our mission," said Roscoe. "But our transportation team recognized a need, and realizing we had the capability to engage a target of opportunity, they immediately executed, and it's proven for the benefit of all units in Multi-National Division - North."

Before the 18th CSSB transportation section stood up the center, Mosul had never had a military-operated redeployment ca-

pability, and the contractor facility that used to be there had shut down in 2005. Since that time, unit movement officers from units below the brigade level, who frequently lack internal deployment and redeployment expertise and the necessary computer systems, have had to travel back and forth between Mosul and the closest redeployment center, several hundred kilometers away at Joint Base Balad.

"Everything administratively regarding UMO **See Expectations, page 19**

Guardsmen form lasting friendship in Iraq

By Sgt. Samuel Curameng

Charlie Co., 1st Battalion, 185th Armor

COB SPEICHER, Iraq — Pfc. Christopher Rivera-Flores, from Torrance, Calif., and Pfc. Omar Vega-Flores, from San Diego, Calif., are not related, but they have become brothers.

The two Soldiers of 2nd Platoon, Charlie Co., 1st Battalion, 185th Armor, California Army National Guard, have come to be called “the twins” by others in the platoon.

They are both tall and slim, have black hair, and sport a constant smile with a positive attitude.

It is often said that you cannot ask one to throw a rock without the other being too far from where it lands. The twins are always together whether it is time to do some repairs on vehicles, or time for a basketball game at the gym. They play video games together and by now share the same music collection.

When asked if they considered themselves brothers, they both immediately replied, “Yeah, of course!”

“Having a ‘brother’ like him helps a lot,” said Rivera. “During difficult times I can go to him and he’ll make me laugh.”

Vega expressed the same sentiment.

Usually, friendships like this last for a lifetime. Upon return to California, both Soldiers are planning on being in the same unit so they both can drill together.

“My perspective is that warriors have always relied on each other, and that out of this reliance comes a deep personal commitment,” said Chaplain (Capt.) Jesse Vega, chaplain, 1st Bn., 185th AR. “The main example of this in the Bible is the friendship that developed between Jonathan and David in 1 Samuel.”

The chaplain also used an example from literature.



courtesy photo

Pfc. Christopher Rivera-Flores, from Torrance, Calif., and Pfc. Omar Vega-Flores, from San Diego, Calif., are not related, but they have become brothers. The two Soldiers of 2nd Platoon, Charlie Co., 1st Battalion, 185th Armor, California Army National Guard, COB Speicher, Iraq, have come to be called “the twins” by others in the platoon. “Having a ‘brother’ like him helps a lot. During difficult times I can go to him and he’ll make me laugh,” said Pfc. Christopher Rivera-Flores.

“And many centuries later Shakespeare also wrote about the bond between Soldiers,” said Vega. “In the Saint Crispin’s Day speech from Henry V, the king says ‘We few, we happy few, we band of brothers; for he today that sheds his blood with me shall be my brother.’ So relying on our ‘brothers’ and ‘sisters’ to get through deployment is an age-old tradition and I would encourage it as a healthy part of our warrior culture.”

Expectations, from page 19

operations had to be completed in Balad.” said Sgt. 1st Class Patrice Elmes, movement control specialist, and Lacey, Wash., native. “If data-loads and what-not went without issue that would still normally require at least two separate trips for the UMOs. But even units who execute thorough deployment and redeployment preparation encounter problems, so inevitably it wasn’t uncommon for UMO’s to make three or more trips.”

Elmes compared the center to a “one-stop shop.”

“Now they can do everything here,” Elmes said. “We even provide Haz-Mat (hazardous materials) certification and blocking and bracing classes, if the units need it.”

Elmes and Sgt. Guillermo Martinez, cargo specialist, and Mayaguez, P.R. native, established the fully-functional redeployment center, complete with programs like Transportation Coordinators’ Automated Information for Movements System II (TC-AIMS II) and radio frequency identification tag burning capability, for the support of all units in MND-N.

“By setting up the redeployment center, we’re not only alleviating the headaches that naturally go along with the duty, but we’re

also mitigating risk and freeing up air and ground transportation assets, by reducing unnecessary travel across the battlefield,” said Martinez.

The shipping equipment, containers and personnel is challenging, but rewarding, said Elmes.

“In the end, it’s all about helping the units,” said Elmes. “I’ve been on the other end, struggling with the load plans, the railhead, port or airfield operations, all of it, and I know how stressful it can be. Like we say in transportation, nothing gets done until something moves.”

The redeployment center will be part of his unit’s history, said Roscoe.

“Not all CSSBs have the capability to stand up such an operation,” Roscoe said. “Indeed, we were fortunate to even have the foresight to deploy with our TC-AIMS system, which, as I pointed out, wasn’t necessary for the mission we took over. However, now that the redeployment center is operational, it is difficult to imagine not having it. It is an important part of the 18th CSSB legacy, and we will work hard to ensure that it is able to endure beyond our time in Mosul.”



FAMILY READINESS

America Supports You program is seeking ambassadors

Eric Jones

FRSA, 16th Sustainment Brigade

Installations, regional locations and Army Commands/Army Service Component Commands/Direct Reporting Unit across the Army convene AFAP conferences that engage soldiers, retirees, DA civilians and family members in the business of assessing Army standards of living. For the twenty first year, grass roots delegates from the Army's Active, National Guard, and Reserve Components reviewed well-being issues of concern, submitting the most critical to CFSC for consideration at the world-wide AFAP conference.

AFAP issues from the field provide a snapshot in time, pinpointing the well-being concerns of soldiers and families and providing creative ideas that help Army standards of living keep pace with changing times. From the first focus groups, convened by Army spouses, to the conferences of today, the issues generated through AFAP reflect soldier and family concerns at installation, USAREUR and HQDA levels.

In 1984, the primary focus of AFAP issues was the family and how military life impacted their day to day living. Since then, there has been an increase in "soldier" related issues such as Management of Enlisted Soldiers and Their Assignments, Deployment Medication, and Military Savings Pay. For many years, health related concerns dominated the issues submitted to conferences;

however, for the 2005 HQDA conference (held January 2006), Force Support leads the way, with Medical/Dental and Child & Youth tied for the number two spot. In addition to issues that have a broader impact, there are concerns raised that are unique to the military lifestyle. These issues range from excessive length of deployments to parental access to military installations.

AFAP continues to improve standards of living, not just for soldiers, but for all military personnel and DoD employees, here are a few examples:

1. Military participation in the Federal Thrift Savings Plan (# 434)
2. Temporary Lodging Expense authorized for first Permanent Change of Station (#363)
3. Elimination of TRICARE Prime co-payments (#469)
4. Expansion of TRICARE Prime Remote to active duty family members (# 408)
5. Reduction of catastrophic cap for retiree health care from \$7500 to \$3000
6. TRICARE for Life for seniors over 65
7. Retiree access to retail and national mail order pharmacies (Issue # 402 has detailed information on numbers 5, 6, and 7)
8. A 55% SBP benefit for post 62 annuitants phased in over 3.5 years has been implemented (#554)
9. Authorized concurrent receipt of military retired and Veteran's Affairs disability pay (#495)

Policy changes that resulted from AFAP issues include:

- Granting dependents of full-time, local hire NAF employees equal enrollment priority with local hire APF employees at DoDDS schools (# 478)
- Authorizing Family Readiness Group newsletters to include unofficial information if it does not exceed 20% of the printed space (# 460)
- Allowing soldiers to request tour stabilization if they have a graduating high school senior (# 453)

FY 2005 provided an important benefit for Soldier/Sailors/Airmen/Marines and their families. Among the most significant was travel and transportation for family members of hospitalized Servicemembers not injured in a contingency. Service in both Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, as well as future conflicts, make this change beneficial for the well-being of Servicemembers and their families.

As we look at AFAP's history, the program results speak for themselves; 98 changes to legislation, 141 policies revised or established, and 162 programs or services improved.

All in all, the AFAP truly provides the "voice" for families to elevate their concerns, and remains the preeminent means for commanders, at all levels, to seek solutions to the concerns of their communities.

FAMILIES!

Let your Soldier see you, and get a touch of home! Send photos of families and friends, school and community events, and special occasions. Submit pictures with full names and a description of the action in the photos.

Send us Pictures!

**Contact the 16th SB Family Readiness Support Advisor,
or e-mail SPC Smith at erin.smith@iraq.centcom.mil**

Blimp Soldier has eye in the sky, mind in the rhyme

By Spc. Sean Dillard
16th SB Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — Spc. Byron Miller watches the area around Q-West through cameras mounted on an Aerostat blimp high above the base.

The 23-year-old from Washington, D.C., monitors security cameras and keeps schedules of blimp tasks to prepare updated information for the Aerostat commander. The Aerostat, a blimp that can see outside “the wire,” gives the Base Defense Operations Center commander a real-time picture of what is happening outside the base.

Miller, signal support systems specialist,

Bravo Co., 16th Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, and Aerostat assistant flight director, said the job can be stressful, so he unwinds after work by studying different cultures and military history, and to writing poetry.

“The words I speak up here become my life./ Full of struggle, pain, love, life, losses, joy and victories./ At times I struggle to find the right words to say./ Equivalent to the times I’m lost in the epic stage play of life,” wrote Miller, in his poem *Center Stage*.

Miller asked to give a shout out to his wife, Donna, and one-year-old daughter, Gabrielle.

“I just want to say to my wife Donna and

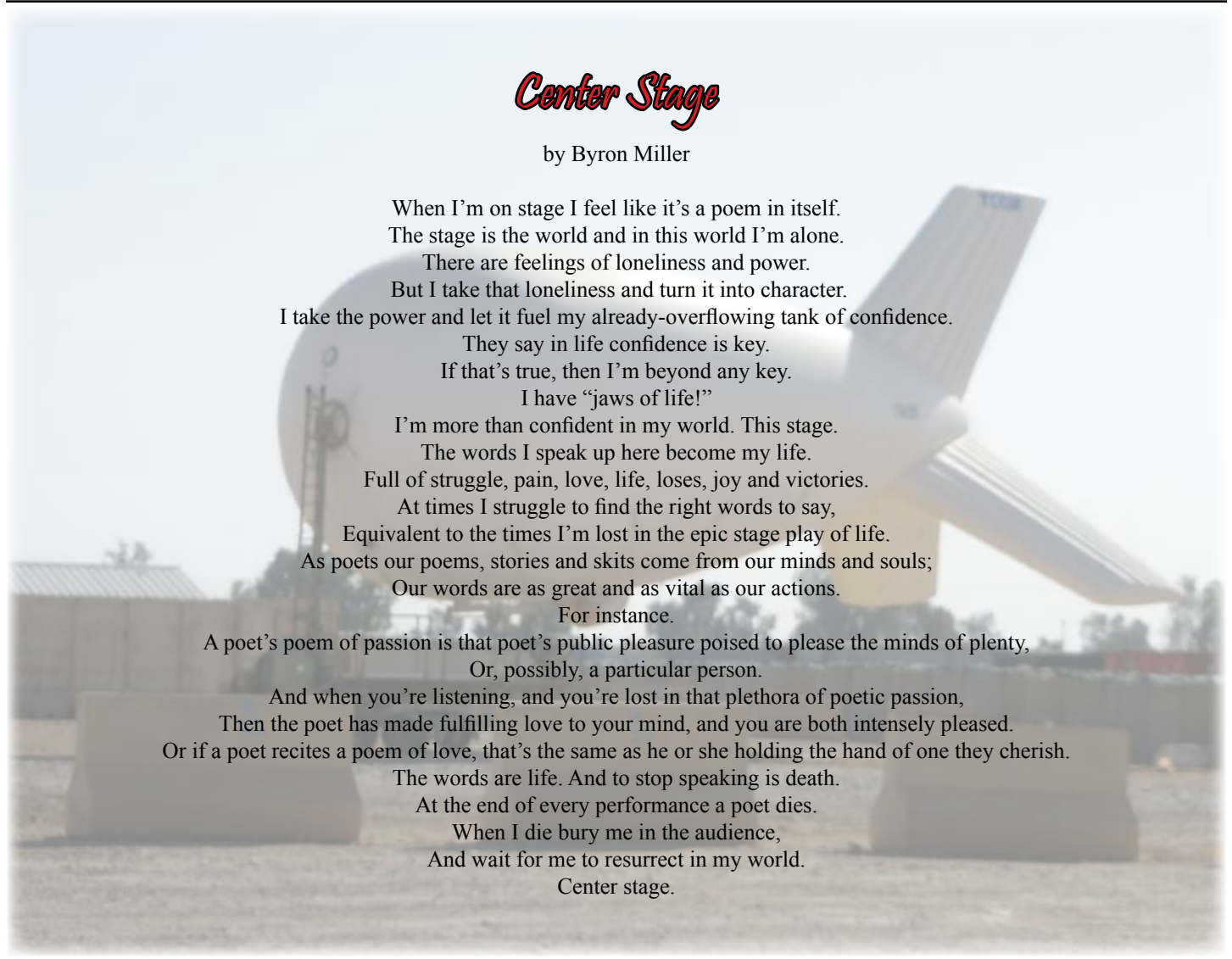
daughter Gabrielle, that I miss you both,” Miller said. “I can’t wait for us to all grow and mature as a family. I know Daddy is away from home a lot, but I just want to tell the two of you that everything I do, and what I’m capable of doing, is because of you. You two are my drive and determination in all facets of life.”

The energetic and lyrical young Soldier had a message for his parents, as well.

“To my parents Wanda White and Hurley Miller, thanks for raising me to be the man that I am today,” Miller said. “Parents don’t hear this enough, but I’m proud of you both, and I’m proud to be your son.”

Center Stage

by Byron Miller



When I’m on stage I feel like it’s a poem in itself.
The stage is the world and in this world I’m alone.
There are feelings of loneliness and power.
But I take that loneliness and turn it into character.
I take the power and let it fuel my already-overflowing tank of confidence.
They say in life confidence is key.
If that’s true, then I’m beyond any key.
I have “jaws of life!”
I’m more than confident in my world. This stage.
The words I speak up here become my life.
Full of struggle, pain, love, life, losses, joy and victories.
At times I struggle to find the right words to say,
Equivalent to the times I’m lost in the epic stage play of life.
As poets our poems, stories and skits come from our minds and souls;
Our words are as great and as vital as our actions.
For instance.
A poet’s poem of passion is that poet’s public pleasure poised to please the minds of plenty,
Or, possibly, a particular person.
And when you’re listening, and you’re lost in that plethora of poetic passion,
Then the poet has made fulfilling love to your mind, and you are both intensely pleased.
Or if a poet recites a poem of love, that’s the same as he or she holding the hand of one they cherish.
The words are life. And to stop speaking is death.
At the end of every performance a poet dies.
When I die bury me in the audience,
And wait for me to resurrect in my world.
Center stage.

16th Sustainment Brigade Sports!



Photo by Keith M. Anderson

(Right)

Soldiers from the 16th Sustainment Brigade won the base soccer championship 3-2 in December. The "Knights" defeated the previously-unbeaten 1st Battalion, 185th Armor, "Tiger Balls." Warrant Officer Thierry Castma, 16th Sust. Bde., scored two goals. The game redeemed the Knights, who had lost twice previously to the Tiger Balls. "As a group that came together with different skill levels, and never having played together before, we succeeded through team work, communication and having fun," said Pfc. Kamal Peterson, 16th Sust. Bde.



Photo by Keith M. Anderson

(Left)

16th Sustainment Brigade *Knights* won the Q-West Basketball Championship.



Photo by Keith M. Anderson

Spc. Abdur Khan, physical security team member, 16th Sustainment Brigade, intercepts a pass during the base football championship at Contingency Operating Base Q-West Jan. 27. The 16th Sust. Bde. "Dark Knights" defeated the 574th Quartermaster Co. "Warriors" 38 - 12 to win the base title. The brigade team also won the last season's football championship, but this season the sustainment brigade fielded two teams.

Q-WEST FEBRUARY 2009 FITNESS CALENDAR						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
SUPER BOWL 2009	2 Volleyball 4 on 4 coaches meeting 1900	3 Open court Volleyball 1900-2200	4 Dodge ball League 1915-2130	5 Pull up competition 1900	6 Dodge ball league 1915-2130	7 Open Court Basketball 1900-2200
Dodge Ball League 1915 -2130	9 Dodge Ball league 1915-2130	10 Volleyball league 1915-2200	11 Dodge Ball League 1915-2130	12 Volleyball league 1915-2200	13 Dodge Ball League 1930-2130	14 Volleyball league 1915-2200
Power lifting competition 1900 Dodge Ball League 2015-2230	16 Dodge Ball league 1915-2130	17 Volleyball league 1915-2200	18 Dodge Ball League 1915-2130	19 Volleyball league 1915-2200	20 Dodge Ball League 1915-2130	21 3 POINT SHOOT-OUT Competition 1930
sketball league aches meeting 1930 Dodge Ball League 1915-2130	23 Dodge Ball league 1915-2130	24 Volleyball league 1915-2200	25 Dodge Ball League 1915-2130	26 Volleyball league 1915-2200	27 Dodge Ball League Playoffs 1915-2200	28 Dodgeball league Championship game 1900-2200
VALENTINES DAY 5k RUN	Karate Class every Mon.,Wed, Fri. @ 0730 Martial Arts Class Every Sun. & Tues @ 1900		Valentine's Day	Spin class @ 0530 & 1630 YOGA Class @ 2000-2115 Mon, Wed Fri	MWR	



Col. Martin B. Pitts, commander, 16th Sustainment Brigade, hands out jerseys and soccer balls to local Iraqi children after meeting with community leaders and Iraqi military leaders during the Souq at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq, Jan. 24.

(Background)

Staff Sgt. William Wolfe, 16th Sustainment Brigade, gets a kiss from "Sgt. 1st Class Budge," a therapy dog, in the 16th Sust. Bde. tactical operations center at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq, Jan. 27. Budge, currently on a 18-month tour in Iraq, travels to different bases with his handler, Staff Sgt. Syreete Reid, prevention team non-commissioned officer in charge, 528th Combat Stress Center, Contingency Operating Base Marez, to help Soldiers deal with combat stress. Reid said Soldiers usually wait until the end of a deployment to start dealing with combat stress. "While Soldiers are going on missions and working in a fast-paced environment we rarely see them, but by the end of their deployments when they have time to think about what they've been doing, they come in," Reid said.



Khalid Hasam prepares khubz for the Souq at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Jan. 24. Hasam prepared hundreds of khubz by rolling the dough out like a pizza dough then putting it on a round rock and slapped on to the inside wall of the large round stone oven. The impact of the slapping action causes the dough to stick to the wall of the traditional oven, where it remains until it is bubbling and brown and cooked through.



Contractor Michael Gallagher splices a grounding conductor on a feeder line along Perimeter Road at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq, Jan. 23. The line will improve electrical safety around the base. Electrical fires are one of the most common preventable accidents in theater bases.



Sgt. Andres Espinoza, supply sergeant, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, eats lunch at the "Grab and Go" at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq, Jan. 23, while Pfc. Nicholas Dockum, logistics specialist, 1st Bn., 12th Cav. Reg., reads The Expeditionary Times. The "Grab and Go" is a satellite dining facility that offers a smaller selection of food, but is more conveniently located for many Soldiers.



(Left)
Spc. Victor Guenther, gunner, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 146th Field Artillery, 81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, looks on as a Sri Lankan contractor fuels his Armored Security Vehicle at the retail fuel farm at Contingency Operating Base Q-West Jan. 18.



(Left)
Spc. David Melanz, motor transportation operator, 353rd Transportation Co., 30th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, and Staff Sgt. Justine Heimer, squad leader, 353rd Transportation Co., take time out of their Sunday to run down Main Street at Contingency Operating Base Q-West Jan. 18. "I run to live," said Heimer. "I think it's important to set a good example for my troops."



(Above)
Pfc. Kristoffer Rhyne, cavalry scout, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, enjoys some down time between missions by playing a boxing video game at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation base complex at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq, Jan. 23. Spc. David Brady, gunner, 1st Bn., 12th Cav. Reg., watches the bout.



(Above)
Staff Sgt. Anthony Evans, platoon sergeant, Echo Co., 1st Battalion, 185th Infantry Regiment, 81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, is presented a "hawkeye" award for marksmanship during a unit safety stand-down day at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation base complex, Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Jan. 23. The 32-year-old from Las Vegas, Nev., said the day reinforced the importance of preparation and situational awareness in Iraq.



(left)
Sgt. Kenneth Latshaw, Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, reads a National Geographic at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation base complex at Contingency Operating Base Q-West Jan. 23. The 40-year-old from Lynnwood, Wash., works at one of the gates to the base, where he checks the badges of incoming Iraqi workers.

Around the COB...



(Above) Staff Sgt. James Mason, operations sergeant, 497th Transportation Co., 30th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, works out on the incline press at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation base complex at Contingency Operating Base Q-West Jan. 23. Mason said he is trying to get in shape.



(Left) Cpl. Adam Cross, team leader, Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, cleans the windows on one of several upgraded humvees the platoon received that day at Contingency Operating Base Q-West Jan. 18. The 26-year-old from Eaton, Colo., said the new vehicles would be much safer for the platoon's missions outside the wire in northern Iraq.

(Background) Soldiers from the 497th Transportation Co., 30th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, take advantage of some down time with an impromptu game of touch football at Contingency Operating Base Q-West Jan. 18.

(Left) Marine Lance Cpl. Eric Berlin, motor vehicle operator, 1st Battalion, 12th Marines, and Lance Cpl. Garret Burn, 1st Bn., 12th Marines, drink white chocolate mocha frappes at Green Bean Coffee at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq, Jan. 23. The Marines, based out of Camp Ramadi, Iraq, were passing through Q-West on a transportation mission.



Voices on the COB

Do you have a favorite Valentine's Day memory? Or do you have any special plans for this Valentine's Day?



"With our work schedules — (she shrugged). Well, we both have Sunday off, so maybe we'll watch a movie in our CHU."

Cpl. JoAnna Davis, HHC, 16th STB. The human resources non-commissioned officer from Detroit, Mich., married Sgt. Marcus Davis, 16th STB, in a ceremony in Kuwait in December 2008.



"We've only had one Valentine's Day together. We went to Ramstein (Ramstein Air Base, part of Kaiserslautern Military Community, Germany) to Chili's, then we went to Nieschwanstein (The Royal Castle of Neuschwanstein, Lechbruck, Germany, basis for the Sleeping Beauty Castle) and then — that was a great Valentine's Day."

Sgt. Jose Hernandez, HHC, 16th STB, 16th SB. The 28-year-old from San Juan, P.R., has been married for three years and has a 10-month-old son.



"I can't send her flowers, so I'm going to send her a card. And when I do go there, we can go to the DFAC (dining facility) together."

Spc. Michael Pelkey, Bravo Co., 16th STB. The 20-year-old from Mangillao, Guam, is dating a servicemember at another base. 70th Medium Truck Detachment, 28th Joint Logistics Task Force, 25, Fremont, Calif.



"For Valentine's Day 2007, I took my wife to the nearest Johnny Carino's, which was an hour away from Ft. Hood in Waco, TX. After we had a romantic dinner at our favorite restaurant, we went to see a movie, went home, and did things that happily married couples do on Valentine's Day." Sgt. Carlos Santiago, HHC, 16th STB. The 26-year-old from Fayetteville, N.C., has been married for three years and has two children.



"I'm never home on Valentine's Day, but my wife loves Stargazer lilies, that's her favorite flower."

Staff Sgt. Chris Yerabek, HHC, 16th STB. The 36-year-old from Seattle, Wash., has been married for three years and has a 6-month-old daughter.

Comic Ideas Wanted!

If you have an idea for a short comic strip about life out here on Q-West, please e-mail SPC Smith at erin.smith@iraq.centcom.mil



FEBRUARY 2009 RECREATION CENTER



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 SUPER BOWL 2009	2 8	3 Chess Tuesday	4 9	5 2000Hrs	6 Week 1	7 Iraqi Party 2000-2300
8 ONE NIGHT ONE BIG POKER TOURNEY 2000	9 BALL LEAGUE	10 2000Hrs	11 BALL LEAGUE	12 2000Hrs	13 Week 2 POKER LEAGUE	14 Valentines Day Party
15 Music Video Night @ 2100hrs	16	17 2000Hrs	18	19 2000Hrs	20 Week 3 Latin 2100	21 Karaoke Night @ 2100hrs
22 ONE NIGHT ONE BIG POKER TOURNEY 2000	23	24 2000Hrs	25	26 2000Hrs	27 Week 4 Latin 2100	28 Electronic Music Night