

# The Expeditionary Times

*Proudly serving the finest Expeditionary service members throughout Iraq*

Vol. 3 Issue 7

January 6, 2010

<http://www.hood.army.mil/13sce/>

## Move out



Washington, Tennessee  
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grade equipment in theater

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## Team work



Joint effort increases  
efficiency of equipment  
drawdown

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## New leaders



Strategic bridge  
companies transfer  
authority

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U.S. Army photo by Capt. Murray Shugars

## 3rd Medical Command VIPs visit JBB to improve command support

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
1ST LT. HERBERT KARG  
15TH SUST. BDE.

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq  
— Maj. Gen. Dean Sienko and Command Sgt. Maj. James Lambert, the commander and senior non-commissioned officer of the 3rd Medical Command respectively, visited Soldiers with the 716th Quartermaster Company Dec. 17 at the Joint Base Balad, Iraq, amnesty yard

The 716th QM Co., 80th Ordnance Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) amnesty yard serves as a recycling and redistribution point for northern Iraq. Units can drop off excess equipment at the yard on designated amnesty days or make an appointment.

Soldiers then sort through the equipment and separate it by serviceability.

If the items are serviceable, they will be put back into the Army system, which ultimately saves the Army money, said Capt. James Beck, the commander of the 716th QM Co. and a Butler, Pa., native.

“The amnesty yard has the highest concentration of our Soldiers working there, and they like what they do,” he said. “They know they are making a difference.”

Sienko and Lambert, both members of the U.S. Army Reserve, said they wanted to meet with Reserve Soldiers to find out how the command could better serve them. They asked questions regarding yellow ribbon events, rear detachment involvement, family readiness and other topics.

“I am a close friend of the (chief of the Army Reserve) and  
**SEE VISIT ON PAGE 4**



Maj. Gen. Dean Sienko, commander of the 3rd Medical Command in Forest Park, Ga., visits with Soldiers from the 716th Quartermaster Company Dec. 17 at the Joint Base Balad, Iraq, amnesty yard.



## Balad Blotter

### December 23 - December 29

#### ATTEMPTED IDENTITY FRAUD/THEFT

A complainant walked in to the law enforcement desk and reported he was a victim of attempted identity fraud/theft. The complainant said via Air Force Form 1168/Statement of Complainant Dec. 16 at roughly 2:45 p.m., he was notified by a personal financial security company that a subject had applied for a loan in his name. The complainant said he telephoned the company and spoke to a representative who verified the subject had attempted to apply for a loan in the complainant's name. The complainant further said the company would cancel the application and told him to report the incident to local authorities. The complainant said he has been deployed since February 2009 and since that time has not applied for a loan. The complainant was issued a Department of Defense Form 2701/Victim and Witness of Crime.

#### MAJOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT:

A complainant telephoned the law enforcement desk and reported he had heard a vehicle accident. Patrols were briefed, dispatched and arrived on the scene and determined the accident to be a major vehicle accident. Operator one said, while traveling southbound on Pennsylvania Avenue, he sideswiped operator two on the left side of vehicle two. Operator one then tried to gain control of vehicle one and swerved to miss the barriers that are adjacent to Pennsylvania Avenue. Operator one lost control of vehicle one as it rolled over on its left side. Operator two said, as he was traveling northbound on Pennsylvania Avenue, he sideswiped operator one on the left side of vehicle one. Operator two gained control of vehicle two before it rolled over. Medical personnel arrived on the scene and transported three personnel to the Air Force Theater Hospital. The personnel were released from the AFTH with minor scratches and bruises. Alert Photo arrived on the scene and took 45 photos. Damage to vehicle one consisted of a dismantled entire left side. Damage to vehicle two consisted of a dismantled entire left side as well.

#### VEHICLE FIRE:

A complainant called 911 and said there was a vehicle on fire near the Main KBR, Inc. laundry facility. A patrol was briefed, dispatched and arrived on the scene to block off traffic on east and west Victory Loop. Fire and medical personnel arrived on the scene to assess the situation. The patrol said the fire had been put out, there were no injuries and the cause of the fire was unknown at this time. The fire chief terminated the response.

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# Mental Health: topple the pillars of mental health stigma

BY NAVY CAPT. STEVE BRASINGTON  
COMBAT STRESS CONTROL PSYCHIATRIST



Stigma wobbles atop uneven pillars of misguided beliefs.

The first pillar tells you that folks with behavioral health problems do not get better.

A second suggests their problems might rub off on you. So, if you try to pull a mental patient up, he might just pull you down into the same mess.

That pillar encourages you to mark the psychologically unsound, keep a safe distance from them and avoid the places they frequent – including combat stress control, where the professionals evaluate them for help.

What is the point of getting involved with them, if they cannot get better? Can professionals really help men and women with psychological distress?

Perhaps an evaluation by the combat stress team is just a way to flag people's career. What if going for help does more harm than good? Specifically, what if having a mental health entry in your military treatment record follows you for the rest of your career? That is bad, right? After all, the problem is probably temporary, but the documentation of mental health contact follows you and potentially limits you, right?

Questions like these cast doubt on prospects for recovery and diminish hope for normalcy.

The majority of Soldiers who come to combat stress do so with conditions that respond very well to treatment.

Anxiety and depression improve with psychotherapy.

When appropriate, medication can speed the healing process and can be stopped when no longer needed.

The military population is so healthy that even notoriously intractable substance abuse problems can be managed successfully. For instance, nicotine is highly addictive and multiple failed attempts to quit smoking are commonly reported to us by smokers seeking help. Nonetheless, a majority of Soldiers who come for smoking cessation assistance stop smoking earlier than they thought possible and continue to abstain from tobacco afterward.

Soldiers with anxiety, depression and substance related disorders do get better and continue to accomplish the mission.

Untreated depression or anxiety can decrease job performance. Decreased work quality can rub off on others, but emotional disorders are not contagious like the flu. Talking to a co-worker will not make them worse and you will not get sick from them in the same way you catch a cold. When someone does have a cough and fever, they should stay home to avoid making others sick. In contrast, a person with depression or anxiety does not need to leave the workplace. Sure, the supervisor may need to adjust duties but only temporarily.

Be prepared for the combat stress patient to work to the full extent of his or her training after he or she has responded to treatment.

To be sure, the workplace can be contaminated by negative attitudes and disrespect. Emotional problems are not spread by germs and those patients are not placed into medical quarantine.

However, stigma does socially quarantine people, by placing an invisible bubble around them. Labeling a person as crazy or psycho advises others to stay away or risk guilt by association.

Fear of scorn or ridicule brings us to the third pillar supporting stigma – it is called pride. Pride is the opposite of humility. Pride engenders arrogance. Pride makes others boastful. Pride leads us to claim behavioral health problems do not happen in this platoon or our unit. Pride whispers that it will never happen to me.

Without pride, the other pillars of stigma topple. Pride is a hindrance. Pride should not be confused with honor. Yes, honor your parents, honor your teammates and honor your unit. Serve honorably and walk humbly. Place service before self and, if you need to recharge both emotionally and mentally, seek help so you may continue to serve with honor.

If you have benefitted from combat stress services, make it clear to your chain of command that you got better and you overcame the stigma.

Every time you topple the pillars of stigma, you are building a healthier life for everyone.

Thank you for your devoted service and commitment to the welfare of others.

The Combat Stress Team exists to keep you resilient and mission ready. Be courageous and knock down pillars of arrogance and ignorance around you.

## EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

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Expeditionary Times is a command information newspaper in accordance with Army Regulation 360-1 and reviewed by the ESC G2 for security purposes.

Expeditionary Times is published weekly by the Stars and Stripes central office, with a circulation of 5,000 papers.

The Public Affairs Office is located on New Jersey Ave. Building 7508, DSN 318-433-2154. Expeditionary Times, HHC 13th ESC, APO AE 09391. Web site at [www.dvidshub.net](http://www.dvidshub.net)

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### 13th ESC Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz

**Mission Statement:** The Expeditionary Times Staff publishes a weekly newspaper with the primary mission of providing command information to all service members, partners, and Families of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) team and a secondary mission of providing a means for units on Joint Base Balad to disseminate command information to their audiences.

# The Weekly Standard: physical training uniform

By MAJ. CHRIS MINOR  
13TH ESC DEPUTY INSPECTOR GENERAL



The physical training uniform is the primary uniform worn by personnel during off-duty hours and while conducting physical training.

United States Force – Iraq has developed policy to ensure personnel understand how to properly wear the PT uniform.

According to USF-I Uniform Policy, dated July 2009, authorized clothing includes branch appropriate PT uniform, organizational T-shirts of current

unit of assignment/attachment, event recognition T-shirts and tan T-shirts during PT, but not as casual wear.

Boots or overshoes can be worn to and from fitness centers during inclement weather.

Sleeves may not be rolled; shirts must be tucked in; and shorts may not be rolled or worn below the hips.

Colored socks or socks that do not cover ankles are not authorized.

Civilians may not wear any military PT uniform.

The major points of the policy are:

1. All military personnel conducting physical training may wear only the prescribed PT uniform or service duty

uniform. Only above the ankle white socks, without logos, are authorized with the PT uniform.

2. The use of any type of personal music listening system is prohibited in uniform unless inside a fitness center or during Morale, Welfare and Recreation-sponsored running events with secured and controlled routes.

3. Reflective belts or vests must be with PT uniforms at all times. Reflective belts must be worn around the waist with long or short sleeve T-shirts or diagonally when wearing the wind-breaker jacket.

The USF-I policy requires leaders at all levels to enforce the standard.

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Lt. Col. Paul Bird

## Sexual Assault Response Coordinator

From the Joint Base Balad sexual assault response coordinator team: Be "SARC Smart," don't assume your partner will get the message without you having to say what you are feeling. Tell him or her how far you want to go, what you want and don't want to do, and when you want to stop. Be especially careful to communicate your limits and intentions clearly in such situations.

In all relationships, you have the right to set limits, feel safe and get support. You also have responsibility to trust your instincts and model respectful behaviors. Every person has the right to say no and change his or her mind. Call the JBB SARC at 443-7272 or contact via pager 443-9001, 159 for help. Army members should seek assistance with their unit victim advocate or deployed-SARC; you may also call 433-7272 or 443-9001, 122/135 for assistance.

## Corrections

In the Dec. 30 edition of the Expeditionary Times, the article, "Service members go face to face at holiday bash" should have said, "Capt. Griselda Cavazos." The Expeditionary Times regrets this error.

# Federal Reserve bans most bank overdraft fees

By 1ST LT. MELVIN RAINES II  
CHIEF, LEGAL ASSISTANCE  
13TH ESC JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL



Most of us have done it, paid almost \$30 for that one cup of coffee because we overdraw our bank account.

Banks bring in roughly \$25 billion to \$38 billion a year when customers overdraw their accounts. However, the Federal Reserve implemented rules Nov. 12 that will make it difficult for banks to charge fees when customers overdraw their accounts.

Beginning July 1, the Federal Reserve will require customers to opt into overdraft protection programs, for which customers must agree to pay a fee any time they overdraw their accounts at ATMs or when using a debit card.

In the event the customer does not agree, the withdrawal or debit will be rejected. Additionally, the Federal Reserve will preclude banks from charging higher

fees to customers who decline overdraft protection.

The Federal Reserve exempted returned check fees from its new rule.

It also did not establish any limits on how many times each day customers can be charged.

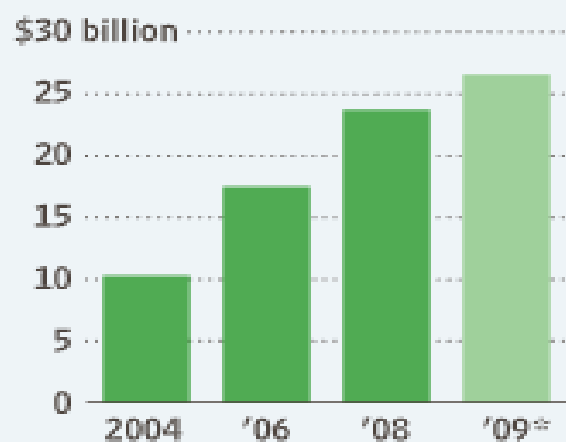
Overdraft fees have come under intense scrutiny in the past year because some banks that received bailout money embellished their balance sheets with such fees. Bank of America Corp. and J.P. Morgan Chase & Co. announced they would offer overdraft protection only to those customers who requested it. Moreover, both banks will limit the amount of times each day customers could be hit with these fees.

Ed Yingling, chief executive of the American Bankers Association, said, "This new rule addresses the primary concerns that have been raised by consumers and policy makers and will help bring consistency and clarity to overdraft programs. Our goal is to have a system that works well for banks and customers and keeps the payment system running efficiently."

Information from this article was obtained from <http://www.wsj.com>.

## Rising Fast

Amount of overdraft fees for banks and credit unions



\*Projected

Source: Center for Responsible Lending

# SHOUT OUT!!!

Contact the Expeditionary Times for more information.

E-mail: [expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil)



# Army Reserves evaluate Soldiers' concerns

## VISIT FROM PAGE 1

he is a good man," said Sienko at a luncheon Dec 17. "He is all about helping Soldiers and their families.

The command team planned to meet with five Army Reserve units at JBB.

Sienko and Lambert will report the information they gather back to Lt. Gen. Jack Stultz, chief of the Army Re-

serve, taking with them the comments and concerns of the Reserve Soldiers they met.

"We were happy to receive the general and the command sergeant major," said Beck. "I think they were able to do what they came here to do and I'm proud to say that our unit was a part of that."



# Washington, Tennessee Soldiers convoy to retrograde equipment in theater

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. MATTHEW C. COOLEY  
15TH SUST. BDE. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – Soldiers from two transportation companies conducted a convoy mission Dec. 28, from Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, to Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq, to turn in part of the units' excess equipment.

The 40th and 1174th Transportation companies, 395th Combat Service Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) out of Fort Lewis, Wash., and Memphis, Tenn., respectively, worked to turn in equipment, a part of the drawdown of U.S. forces in Iraq.

This is typically done with 13th ESC support, but the 395th CSSB, out of New Haven, Conn., began transporting the equipment themselves to save time, said Maj. David Ryan, the 395th's executive officer.

"By moving our own equipment, we save approximately seven to 10 days waiting for the (transportation



Staff Sgt. Aroon Revilla, the supply noncommissioned officer in charge with the 40th Transportation Company and a Bangkok native, participates in pre-combat checks and inspections before going on a convoy mission Dec. 28 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, to turn in excess equipment at Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq.

movement request) to be validated and supported by the 13th ESC," said Ryan, a New York native.

The equipment turned in was no longer needed and may benefit other units in theater, said Ryan.

"(The) equipment ... might very well wind up in Afghanistan to support our fellow Soldiers there," he said.

Weapons, night vision equipment, communications equipment, a car-

go truck, and Humvee trailers were turned in, a total of 86 items from the two companies, said Capt. Juan Villatoro, 40th Trans. Co. commander and Capt. Chris Kirkman, 1174th Trans. Co. commander.

"There's a lot of coordination that's involved," said Kirkman, a Memphis, Tenn., native.

The units' supply noncommissioned officers were primarily responsible for preparing the equipment for turn in, ensuring the paperwork was completed correctly and coordinating operations between the organizations involved, the commanders said.

The units planned to turn in all equipment within seven days of receiving the order to do so, they said.

"(We are) trying to be a step ahead of the game, like Operation Clean Sweep, and avoid a chokepoint," said Villatoro, a Los Angeles native.

Kirkman said the drawdown of equipment was phased, allowing for a more gradual turn in.

"If we waited till the end, it would be a huge bottleneck of equipment to turn in at the last second," he said. "As unit commanders, we need to be as lean as possible and still be able to continue our wartime mission."

**Telling the Providers Story from all across Iraq**



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# New locks on female facilities designed to help prevent sexual assault

By SPC. LISA A. COPE  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – KBR, Inc. employees began installing cipher locks on female latrines and shower facilities in December – female residents may obtain the codes from their housing office.

The locks are a security measure to prevent sexual assault following incidences of males entering those facilities while in use by females, said Sgt. 1st Class Johnnie M. Mitchell, the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) equal opportunity adviser and deployed sexual assault response coordinator.

Mitchell said no one was hurt during those incidents, and the males' intentions have not been determined. The locks are being installed as a preventive measure

as they arrive, so installation dates are approximate, she said.

"We try to put the best preventive measures in place to keep risks down and keep everyone safe, male or female," she said.

Mitchell, a Sylvania, Ga., native, said she is working to get peep holes installed in the doors to the containerized housing units on base as another safety precaution, but deliberations are ongoing.

As an additional safety measure, Mitchell said she hands out whistles and flashlights for use at night or in the event of an attack.

Fastening the chain lock in CHUs, carrying a flashlight and whistle at night, and attending a self-defense course are all ways service members and civilians can protect themselves against sexual assault, she said.

Air Force Staff Sgt. Michael R. Morris, a flyaway security team leader with

the 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, has been an instructor for four self-defense courses during his deployment and is scheduled to teach his last class Jan. 7 before he redeploys.

Morris, a San Diego native, said the course is open to anyone but is geared more toward women. The class teaches students how to escape attacks, use pressure points and may soon include a lesson on fighting stances, he said.

"We started (teaching the class) because we thought it would be a good idea for the local base populous females to have a way to defend themselves in case of a situation ... knowing that the area is more prone to assaults than state-side," he said.

Mitchell said knowing how to help stop sexual assault is the key.

"Sexual assault has no place in our Army or our ranks," she said. "It degrades the mission, it destroys everything the

military stands for. That victim could be your mother, your sister, your brother, it could be somebody you love and care for. ... Some people just do not understand (what it means) to be a victim of sexual assault."

Tips to help guard against sexual assault:

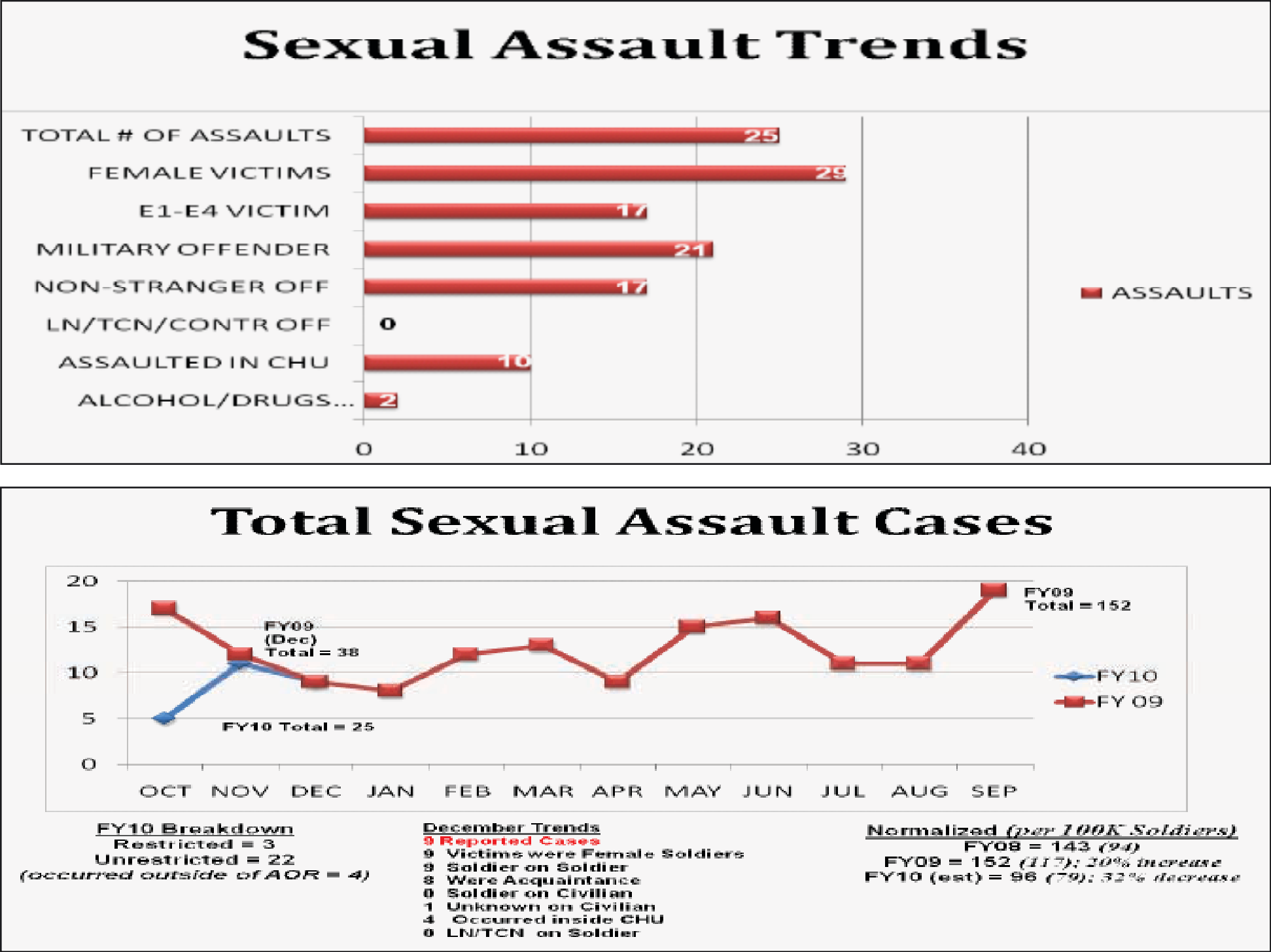
-Always travel with a battle buddy

-Carry a flashlight at night

-Fasten the chain lock in your room

-Attend a self-defense course – the next one is Jan. 7

-If you are ever attacked, be vocal, yell or blow a whistle



# 15th Sustainment Brigade hosts personnel conference

BY STAFF SGT. ROB STRAIN  
15TH SUST. BDE. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq –

The 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) personnel section hosted a day-long conference Dec. 19 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

The conference, which included 45 adjutant general officers, noncommissioned officers and junior enlisted Soldiers from throughout the brigade, served as a way to gather everyone together for a joint training session, said Maj. Vic Herbin, the 15th Sust. Bde.'s personnel officer.

"We wanted to make sure everyone is on the same page, make sure they know what is required, so nothing is lost in the upcoming mission," said Herbin, a San Diego native.

The conference was broken down into interactive sessions, covering topics such as personnel support, training to streamline processes, and tactics, techniques and procedures for success, he said.

The interactive sessions allowed feedback and questions to flow, rather than a traditional class setting in which the instructor speaks to the class, said Capt. Elaina Hill, the 15th Sust. Bde. adjutant and former battalion personnel officer.

"It was a joint effort," said Hill, a Fairbanks, Alaska, native. "A lot of questions were answered. (We) got a better understanding of the processes."

The conference also helped the brigade gather its personnel Soldiers so they could meet and network, said Herbin.

"We do so much over the Internet," he said. "It was a good opportunity to meet and exchange ideas."

For Hill, who does not work in a personnel office, the conference was a



Courtesy photo

**The 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) personnel junior enlisted, noncommissioned officers and officers gather for a group photo Dec. 19 at the dining facility at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.**

good refresher on the skills she needs to be successful when she returns to that job.

"It really helped, getting the feedback from those with experience," she said.

Hill said it is important for the per-

sonnel section to keep their skills sharp, as units rely on them for new Soldiers, mail and proper pay.

The brigade plans to hold the conference quarterly, incorporating new units and procedures each time, Herbin said.

## Soldiers use video teleconference to connect with home

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
STAFF SGT. OSHAWNA TACKETT  
96TH SUST. BDE. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – During the holiday months in a deployed environment, video teleconferences made it possible for Soldiers to communicate with home.

Maj. Jeffrey Cutler, the combat service support automations officer and Freedom Calls Center manager, with the 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Salt Lake City native, said the unit has conducted 11 video teleconferences since October, with schools, community groups, a church and families.

"These VTCs were definitely morale builders for both the Soldiers and for the remote audience," Cutler said. "How can you not feel good when an auditorium full of supporters are praising and cheering you and calling you a hero?"

The Freedom Calls Center hosted a VTC with fifth graders from Greenvale Elementary in Upper Brookville, N.Y., Dec. 17.

Roughly 50 students were on one end and four Soldiers were on the other end of the VTC.

The Soldiers brought a Sprite can with English and Arabic writing, to show the



**During a video teleconference Dec. 17 at the Freedom Calls Center, Soldiers with the 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), spoke with fifth-grade students from Greenvale Elementary School in Upper Brookville, N.Y. After the question and answer session, the Soldiers showed them items with Arabic writing and demonstrated what was in a Meal, Ready-to-Eat and explained how to eat one.**

children some of the similarities and differences between the two cultures.

"They always get a kick out of that," said Kathryn D. Harlow, the director of development with the Freedom Calls Foundation and a Morristown, N.J., native.

The children asked about life as a Soldier deployed to Iraq and what those Soldiers do for fun.

Pfc. Demetrius Buchanan, a finance

maintenance specialist with the 113th Financial Management Company, 96th Special Troops Battalion and a Mt. Airy, N.C., native, told them he played video games in his spare time.

"The most memorable part of the experience was when I told the students that I played Call of Duty: Modern Warfare – and they cheered," Buchanan said.

Cutler said the Soldiers who participat-

ed in the VTCs were happy and enjoyed the love and attention they received.

"Soldiers often volunteer again for additional VTCs," he said.

Cpl. Deirdre Ethington, the 1161st Transportation Company's administrative specialist and a Richland, Wash., native, said the VTC was a nice reminder that Soldiers have continuous support from stateside communities.

"I felt like a superhero to these kids ... I thought the students had put a lot of thought into their questions and they were so eager to ask them, it was cute," she said. "I hope that the children were able to see that Soldiers come from all different backgrounds and can be female too."

The students were eager to see the M16 assault rifle with the attached M203 grenade launcher, and the M9 Beretta the Soldiers had with them.

Kathryn Harlow, who has a son at the Greenvale school, praised the service members who participated.

"The Soldiers were amazing at the conference," Harlow said. "The kids will never forget the experience and I hope (the Soldiers) will walk away with pride. They have directly affected young children who will know more about what it takes to be in the military. The kids can't stop talking about (the VTC). I don't want to sound mushy, but seeing those men and women made me proud to be American because of the hard work they put in."

**TELL YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS HOW MUCH YOU MISS THEM**  
E-mail: [expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil)



# 509th Movement Control Team works to improve travel at Speicher

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. KEITH S. VAN KLOMPENBERG  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

**CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION SPEICHER, Iraq** – Although military travel is not known for its comfort, a group of Airmen at Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq, work

hard to make it a positive experience.

The 509th Movement Control Team with the 49th Transportation Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade is a team of “green suits,” or Airmen who deploy under Army units. The team is made up of Airmen from bases throughout the United States, Germany and Japan.

“We’re like a pick-up basketball team,” said Air Force 1st Lt. Jason C. Henry, commander of the 509th MCT and a Reading, Penn., native.

Instead of coming together for sport, Henry said the men and women on his team came together to manage air travel coming in and out of COL Speicher and try to make the process easier on service members and civilians.

Perhaps the biggest accomplishment



Service members and civilians wait to board their flight outside the new passenger terminal at Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq.

the team has made in this regard was finishing the new passenger terminal, which had been in the planning stages since 2007, said Henry.

The \$2 million project, which was completed in early November, brought travelers out of a tent and put them in a brand new hardened shelter with a few extra comforts. Henry said the 49th Trans. Bn. paid for flat-screen televisions in the terminal so travelers could enjoy movies while they wait, as well as receive up-to-date flight information on the new arrival and departure displays.

The terminal will soon have free

wireless Internet as well, said Henry.

“It’s all about quality of life,” he said. “How can we make it easier on (service members)?”

Other projects in the works include a new parking lot and an improved baggage system that will shorten the walk travelers make to palletize gear, he said.

The main goal of these improvements is to separate the passenger terminal from the heavy equipment used in the area, said Henry.

“We’re trying to figure out the best way to make it safe,” he said.

The 509th works to improve more

than the aesthetics of the travel facilities.

“When we first got here, customer service was lacking,” said Senior Airman Salome Douglas, a passenger terminal representative and Germantown, Md., native.

Douglas said the new facilities have improved morale among travelers, but the most important contribution the unit made upon its arrival in August was to make customer service the main priority.

“Everybody is a priority and everybody is going somewhere,” said Henry.

Henry said his team has gathered information from movement control teams throughout Iraq to improve operations and create a facility that rivals the terminal at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

“That’s the vision,” he said. “We’re just trying to get there in the next 45 days.”

The 509th MCT is scheduled to re-deploy in February, but Henry said his unit will put together a plan so the team replacing them can continue to improve travel in the area.

“This is what we are doing here,” said Henry. “Now build upon it.”

# 138th Quartermaster Co. heads home for holidays

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
STAFF SGT. KIMBERLY CALKINS  
96TH SUST. BDE.

**AL ASAD AIR BASE, Iraq** – The 138th Quartermaster Support Company out of Brazil, Ind., with the 751st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, headed home from Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, Dec. 20, just in time for the holidays.

The unit’s celebration began as Soldiers watched two video productions prepared by Sgt. Jay Burgo-Ramirez, the company’s video producer and a Terre Haute, Ind., native, and Spc. Andrew Brewer, the assistant video producer and a Bain Bridge, Ind., native. The ceremony concluded with an end-of-tour awards ceremony.

The celebration continued after the ceremony with cakes provided by the Ripper Dining Facility artisans, under the direction of Sgt. Sue Piper, the Ripper Dining Facility administration noncommissioned officer and a Brazil, Ind., native.

“There is nothing more rewarding than watching these Soldiers who have worked so hard and done miraculous work, enjoy each other and be

rewarded for their accomplishments,” said Capt. Laura Pratt, the 138th QM Spt. Co. commander. “We are so proud.”

As the 138th prepares to leave Iraq, the stateside rear detachment prepares for the unit’s homecoming, said Pratt, a Wheaton, Ill., native.

“With the support of the 519th CSSB and the Family Readiness Group, all measures to provide a quality homecoming for the Soldiers is being organized,” she said. “Soldiers will have the opportunity to meet with family and friends upon departure from the plane, before they arrive at Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center to complete the demobilization process.”

Pratt said Camp Atterbury personnel understand the urgency the



Lt. Col. Jody Dew, the 751st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Chet Welch (far right), present the 138th Quartermaster Support Company with a token of their appreciation during the 138th’s end-of-tour awards ceremony at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq. Accepting the award on behalf of the company was Capt. Laura Pratt, company commander and a Wheaton, Ill., native, and 1st Sgt. William Stough, a Brazil, Ind., native. The 138th is supported by the 751st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

138th Soldiers felt as Christmas approached.

“With the new mobilization facilities at Camp Atterbury, the process has become more efficient as Soldiers transform back into civilians,” she said. “We cannot thank Camp Atterbury enough for their professionalism

and extenuating efforts in support of our Soldier and family teams.”

First Sgt. William Stough, a Brazil, Ind., native, said the transition for this National Guard unit will be smooth, thanks to the Yellow Ribbon Program designed by the Army National Guard. Soldiers will return in 30, 60 and 90 day increments for briefings and evaluations of how they are acclimating to their civilian lives.

“Topics covered will be health care and employment opportunities, and counseling sessions will be available for families,” he said. “I believe the state of Indiana, starting with Maj. Gen. Martin Umbarger, the Adjutant General for the Indiana National Guard and Command Sergeant Major of Indiana, Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel Rhoades, have done a great job implementing the J9 – family readiness program. They have all the right personnel in place to support our Soldiers returning from deployment.”

Although the flight dates changed repeatedly since the awards ceremony, Sgt. Jamie Raulston, assistant supply sergeant and a Cory, Ind., native, said her anticipation has not been dampened.

“The sooner we get on the plane, the sooner I can see my family,” said Raulston.



# 49th Transportation Battalion raises more than \$27,000 for charity

By SGT. RYAN TWIST  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – A Soldier with the 49th Transportation Battalion helped raise \$27,242.15 for the Combined Federal Campaign – Overseas, which promotes and supports charitable organizations through philanthropy by federal employees.

First Lt. Anshwa L. Pennington, the adjutant officer with the 49th Trans. Bns. out of Fort Hood, Texas, 90th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), was nominated for the CFC Hero award by Sgt. 1st Class Karen Stokes, a battalion senior human resource sergeant with the 49th Trans. Bn., for organizing the campaign which ran from Oct. 5 to Dec. 13.

The CFC Hero Award recognizes those unsung heroes who made extraordinary contributions to the campaign through their creativity, dedication and leadership, according to the CFC's Web site.

Stokes, a Virginia Beach, Va., native, said she nominated Pennington because she put in endless hours of preparation to start the campaign and keep it moving toward success.

"I feel she deserves this honor," she said. "She put in a lot of off hours and restless nights. She reported weekly updates on the increase of financial support for the battalion and she was an integral part of the battalion exceeding its initial CFC goal. It was a great experience to see her in action."

With Pennington's help, the 49th raised \$7,998 through the CFC Fund Run Oct. 3, said Stokes, who helped with the coordination of supplies, volunteer support and T-Shirts for the event.

Pennington, a Houston native, said donations from subordinate units totaled more than \$19,200.

"Our units truly took ownership of

the campaign and, as a result, three units were awarded the Platinum Award from CFC, two were awarded the gold, and one awarded the Bronze Award," she said.

Pennington said the battalion and the 15th Sustainment Brigade will receive the Silver Award – the highest level attained in the 13th ESC.

As the appointed battalion CFC representative, Pennington organized fundraising opportunities to publicize the purpose of the CFC.

"I was personally responsible for coming up with all events the battalion hosted," she said.

The Joint Base Balad, Iraq, community needed to understand the CFC before the campaign began, said Pennington, so she and Stokes conducted a conference call for all 20 unit representatives. During that conference, she offered suggestions for fundraisers at their level.

The campaign succeeded, not because it raised money, but because it raised the awareness of the CFC throughout Iraq, she said.

Stokes, the alternate battalion CFC representative, said she assisted in the monitoring and managing of the campaign, but Pennington was the mastermind behind the CFC Fund Run. Stokes said Pennington taught her how to devise a plan, think it through, write it out and follow up on each action.

If she applies what she learned from Pennington, Stokes said events she helps coordinate in the future could be as successful as this CFC.

"Two months before the campaign began, she spearheaded her team in devising a plan to execute a battalion sponsored Joint Base Balad, Iraq, Fund Run as the CFC kickoff event," she said. "This run served as a catalyst and afforded participants on Joint Base Balad (the opportunity) to support the cause and run simultaneously. With her leadership, her team of seven Soldiers sacri-

ficed countless hours in preparing, planning and coordinating this significant event."

The team created and posted hundreds of flyers throughout JBB, working to advertise the event to the widest audience possible, said Stokes. This made the 49th Trans. Bn. CFC Fund Run the most publicized event at JBB, she said.

Pennington said they were successful because of the efforts of the Soldiers in her personnel section, who carried the vision for the run, briefed and managed all the volunteers, answered questions, coordinated efforts with Force Protection and medics, and conducted the ceremonial portion of the event.

A cyber auction was held within the battalion, during which members of the battalion bid on donated items from the United Services Organization and the JBB community, said Pennington.

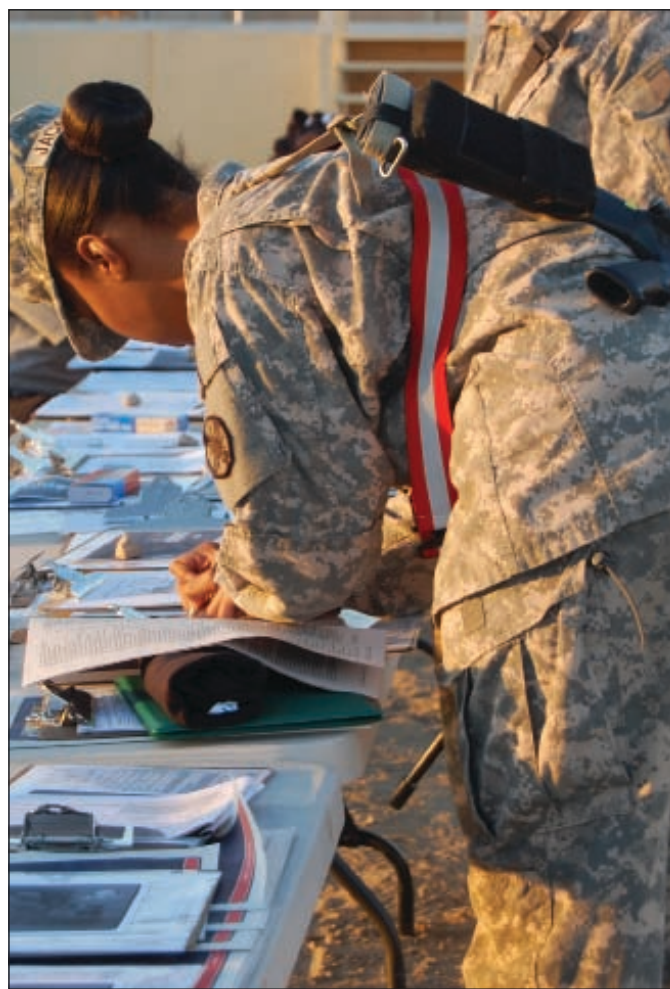
"It's a cyber auction because all of our units are ... at 17 different locations and it is difficult to promote donations when we are so spread out," she said.

The CFC team also hosted an ice cream social for the green tab huddle, which is part of a leadership development program that took place during the fundraiser, said Pennington.

"I've only been in the Army 18 months, so this is my first time participating in a CFC," she said. "I did not expect the level of success we attained during the run. I set a goal for \$2,000. I now have high expectations for future CFC campaigns."

Pennington said she was honored and humbled by the recognition she received for her success.

"I was appointed this duty having known nothing about CFC and, at the end of the campaign, I could brief anyone on its importance and the various donation options," she said. "Now I can see the other side to why I can go



Courtesy photo

**Service members raised \$7,998 at the 49th Transportation Battalion-sponsored Combined Federal Campaign – Overseas Fund Run Oct. 3 at Holt Stadium at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.**

to the Dallas Airport USO and enjoy free snacks, a movie and Internet service – all made possible by those who donate to charities (or) non-profits through programs like the CFC.

"Because I was appointed as the representative, I wanted to ensure we met our commander's intent of raising \$10,000. We far exceeded this goal."

The 427th Mobile Control Team out of Norristown, Pa., at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, received the Gold Award.

The Platinum Award was given to the 601st Mobile Control Team out of Santa Fe, N.M., currently stationed at Basra and Kalsu, Iraq; the 622nd Mobile Control Team out of Fort Eustis, Va., currently stationed at Al Taqqadum, Iraq; the 969th Mobile Control Team out of Edinburg, In., currently stationed at Joint Base Balad, Iraq; and Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 49th Transportation Battalion out of Fort Hood, Texas, currently stationed at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

The Gold Award was given to the 509th Mobile Control Team out of Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, currently stationed at Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq.

The Bronze Award was given to the 612th Mobile Control Team out of Fort Lee, Va., currently stationed at Contingency Operating Location Adder, Iraq.



Courtesy photo

**The 49th Transportation Battalion out of Fort Hood, Texas, sponsored a Combined Federal Campaign – Overseas Fund Run Oct. 3 at Holt Stadium at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The event had more than 600 participants and raised \$7,998 for the campaign.**



# Joint effort increases efficiency of equipment drawdown

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. KEITH S. VAN KLOMPENBERG  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION SPEICHER, Iraq – As the responsible drawdown of troops and equipment in Iraq draws near, the Corps Distribution Center at Contingency Operating Location

Speicher, Iraq, has become a hub in the effort to move excess equipment out of Iraq.

The CDC, run by the 611th Seaport Operations Company, 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), is responsible for processing excess cargo, containers and vehicles coming out of locations around northern Iraq, and preparing them to be moved to Contingency Operating Location Marez, Iraq, Joint Base Balad, Iraq, or locations in Kuwait.

“We’ve been getting a higher volume of equipment lately,” said 1st Lt. Jonathan Ackley, the officer in charge of the CDC.

As the drawdown from Iraq begins, his yards will likely get busier, but his team works to increase efficiency and decrease



Spc. Russell Patrick, a cargo specialist with the 611th Seaport Operations Company and a Brooklyn, N.Y., native, separates cargo in the Joint Distribution Center at Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq.

the time it takes to move equipment, said Ackley, a Columbus, Ohio, native.

The biggest increase in workload and efficiency has been at the Joint Distribution Center, said Sgt. Alger Warthen, a cargo specialist and the noncommissioned officer in charge of the JDC.

“This is one of the most important

yards in the CDC,” he said. “We process all loose cargo that comes in from northern Iraq.”

Warthen, a Jacksonville, Fla., native, said his team primarily separates cargo to be convoyed south, but recently started working with Airmen to palletize cargo that would move faster by air.

Two Airmen from the 509th Movement Control Team joined the JDC in November to assist in the movement of retrograde material, said Air Force 1st Lt. Jason C. Henry, commander of the 509th MCT and a Reading, Penn., native.

Henry said his Airmen inspect the yard looking for equipment that meets Air Force requirements, provide a pre-joint inspection, and palletize the equipment to be flown south by the 332nd Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron, saving the Army from making unnecessary convoys and allowing some equipment to be flown to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

“If I can move that for you faster, I’d think you’d want that,” he said. “We (have to) help each other.”

In addition to sorting and palletizing cargo, the Airmen also train Soldiers in the JDC to process paperwork according to Air Force requirements.

“They are down here to show me how to do the paperwork, what to bill and how to process it,” said Warthen.

Henry said he and his unit are proud to be part of a joint effort assisting the 264th CSSB in the drawdown process.

“I try to do everything I can to help the 264th,” he said. “The relationship is great.”



## JOINT BASE BALAD

### Presents

#### Martin Luther King, Jr. Day ESSAY CONTEST

#### Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday



- Open to all at JBB
- 12 point font size, double space, 2 pages or less
- Must pertain to the national theme: “Remember! Celebrate! Act! A Day On, Not A Day Off!”
- Please submit all essays by COB  
**January 15, 2010**

**Send essays to:**

Johnnie.mitchell@iraq.centcom.mil

Janice.Taylor@blab.afcent.af.mil

• Prizes for the top three essays will be presented at the **Martin Luther King Jr. Day Observance Luncheon**

• **January 22, 2010 at 11:30 a.m. at MWR east**

POC: SFC Johnnie Mitchell EO Advisor 13th ESC at 433-2527,  
MSgt Janice Taylor, EO Director 332 AEW at 443-8459



# Strategic bridge companies transfer authority

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
1ST LT. MEGHAN E. KEEFE  
37TH ENG. BN.

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The 50th Multi Role Bridge Company transferred authority to the 739th Multi Role Bridge Company Dec. 15 to continue bridge operations in Iraq.

After receiving its end-of-tour awards, the 50th MRBC, out of Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., cased its flag as the 739th MRBC, a National Guard unit out of Illinois, unveiled its guidon, signifying the official transfer of control of the bridging mission in northern Iraq.

During his speech, Lt. Col. Paul Huszar, the 37th Engineer Battalion – Joint task Force Eagle commander, thanked and praised the 50th MRBC.

"Thank you on behalf of all the multitude of units you have served so well, in addition to the Iraqi population that certainly owes you all a debt of gratitude for your tremendous service," he said. "You should be extremely proud



The 739th Multi Role Bridge Company command team, 1st Sgt. James Wrigley and 1st Lt. Joshua Stroot, uncase the 739th company guidon.

and we, in Joint Task Force Eagle, salute you and wish you a very happy and joyous reunion with your friends and family back home."

The 50th MRBC proved to be an asset to not only the 37th Eng. Bn., but also to the Iraqi Army as they helped establish the country's own Strategic

Bridge Company, he said.

Huszar continued by addressing the newest members of JTF Eagle, the 739th MRBC, with engineers from National Guard units throughout the United States.

"We are excited to have you on our team and are equally excited to watch as your capacity builds exponentially to the point where during your deployment, you will be the only remaining MRBC in Iraq, operating throughout the entire country and, by necessity, exceeding the capacity of any other bridge unit that has preceded you to date," he said.

First Lt. Joshua Stroot, 739th MRBC commander and a Mahomet, Ill., native, said the company anticipated the challenge.

"It's an honor to be the successors of the 50th MRBC, and I hope to continue their legacy," he said. "We look forward to serving with the 37th Engineer Battalion – Joint Task Force Eagle, and doing our best to support and maintain the bridges in Iraq and the relationship with our Iraqi partners."

# Air Force medics partner with Iraqi Ministry of Defence hospital

BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS ALLISON M. BOEHM  
332ND AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Members of the Air Force Theater Hospital took the first step in partnering with members of Iraq's Ministry of Defence Hospital Dec. 22, to form the American-Iraqi Air Medical Evacuation and Medical Provider Training Course.

The first installment of training allowed the Iraqis to study burn care as well as practice proper medical evacuation techniques when transporting patients. Classes are scheduled for every two weeks, and topics will vary to achieve the goal of helping the Ministry of Defence establish a stronger medical program.

"We had to come up with a program that would meet the Ministry of Defence surgeon general's expectations," said Capt. Elizabeth Hoettels, 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group civil-military operations officer. "Each installment of training will give the Iraqis an opportunity to work with a progressively more complicated patient, with the ultimate goal of them being able to take care of a trauma patient from (the) point of impact."

The two-day course began at al-Muthana Military Hospital, where four Iraqi medical evacuation technicians loaded a patient with a simulated fractured femur. As the group of medical professionals traveled to the hospital here, the technicians began their training on how to care for a patient in transit.

At JBB's hospital, the Iraqis received educational briefings and took part in hands-on training.

The attendees saw real burn victims and watched as an occupational therapist demonstrated how to properly splint a burn fracture.

"This training is important because we don't see too many cases in our hospital," said the chief of surgery at al-Muthana's hospital. "It is continuous education for us to be able to see these patients and



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Brittany Y. Bateman

Members of the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group unload a patient from an Iraqi helicopter during medical evacuation training for the Iraqi Air Force Dec. 21 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The purpose of the training is to help the Ministry of Defence strengthen its health care system for Iraqi troops.

learn how to manage these cases. We really want to increase our learning, our experience, and learn from our American colleagues."

Although this course taught 11 Iraqi medical personnel, it is not limited to just the medical evacuation personnel.

"We are attempting to maximize the training opportunity for all Ministry of Defence medical personnel, so we created a dual focus," said Hoettels. "The ultimate goal of this military-military medical capacity-building program is to help establish an Iraqi military air medical evacuation program with

trained flight surgeons, flight nurses, and medevac technicians."

The training program, as requested by the Iraqi Ministry of Defence surgeon general, also supports the overall effort to responsibly draw down U.S. forces in the country.




"The goal of this program is to allow the Iraqis to get medical sovereignty," said Col. Andy Marchiano, 332nd Aerospace Medicine Squadron commander. "They will be able to take the information they learn here and carry it on once we leave. Hopefully, this will become a model system for the Iraqis."



THERE WAS A TIME WHEN THE BATTLEFIELD WAS EVEN...  
THAT TIME HAS PASSED.

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SUSTAINMENT COMMAND (EXPEDITIONARY)  
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FROM PROVIDER PICTURES and PHANTOM SUPPORT PRODUCTIONS

   **R** RESTRICTED  
No one under 17  
should see this movie



# Q-West quick reaction fo

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
CAPT. MURRAY SHUGARS  
2/198TH COMBINED ARMS

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – Members of a Mississippi Army National Guard unit conducted a routine presence patrol Dec. 15 around Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, demonstrating their strategies for combating complacency.

Soldiers with 1st Platoon, A Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, a mechanized infantry unit out of Hernando, Miss., serving as COL Q-West's force protection company, conducted the mounted patrol as part of their daily battle rhythm.

"The biggest risk we face is complacency," said Staff Sgt. Stephen S. Poff, first squad leader and an Ashland, Miss., native. "This mission is the same thing, over and over. We look for ways to keep it fresh. We conduct battle drills for events like indirect fire or vehicle recovery. We vary our route."

Poff said each platoon in the company spends two weeks as the quick reaction force, which conducts presence patrols, then spends two weeks performing battle space missions, such as supporting operation and maintenance missions to the pump house or securing convoys as needed.

"The platoon rotates QRF duty every 48 hours between the squads," he said. "A squad makes up to three two-hour patrols every 24 hours. Then another squad rotates in, and the one rotating out conducts vehicle maintenance and, when possible, gets a day off."

Sgt. Patrick A. Martin, a truck commander, said uneventful patrols and a repetitious battle rhythm contribute to the risk of complacency.

"Not much happens on this mission, so we vary our routes to stay fresh," said Martin, a Southaven, Miss., native. "Once, we found an unexploded mortar round but, otherwise, the weather is our biggest challenge, rain and fog. Mostly, we encounter dogs, dust and fog. Lately, the winter rain makes the desert muddy and it can get very foggy at night."

Spc. Timothy D. Millican, a gunner and a Southaven, Miss., native, agreed the mission has been peaceful.

"QRF is probably the least exciting thing we do," said Millican. "When we're not on a perimeter patrol, we pretty much sit and wait for something to happen, and this has been a quiet area of Iraq."

Sgt. Jeremy L. Sapp, a truck commander and a Blue Springs, Miss., native, uses patrols to share experienc-



es he gained during the unit's previous deployment in 2005.

"During patrols, I try to use some of the stuff I learned in the last deployment to teach the younger guys who haven't deployed before," said Sapp. "I tell them about things that could happen in different situations. Those things haven't happened, but they could, and these younger guys need to keep that in mind."

Spc. Chance W. Jeffress, II, Sapp's gunner, said these stories were educational and kept him alert.

"I like listening to Sgt. Sapp's stories," said Jeffress, a Horn Lake, Miss., native. "When we're on a patrol, he will point out situations that we're going through and talk about how they dealt with them during the last deployment. Those stories are interesting and give me a better perspective on our mission."

The vehicles' internal communications – the intercom system to which all crew members are connected with headphones – helps Soldiers stay focused, said Spc. William B. Waldrop, a gun truck driver.

"Talking to each other is a big part of patrolling," said Waldrop, a Senatobia, Miss., native. "We constantly talk about everything we're seeing and that keeps my mind on the mission."

Millican said the

**Squad and team leaders with the quick reaction force confer before a presence patrol Dec. 15 at the Base Defense Operations Center at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq. The Soldiers serve with A Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, 155th Brigade Combat Team out of Hernando, Miss.**



presence patrols help maintain cordial relations with the local Iraqis.

"I like the presence patrols because they give us a chance to experience the local community," he said. "We get to know the people who live in the local villages."

When interacting with the local population, the QRF members take care to follow the U.S.-Iraq Status of Forces Agreement, said Sapp.

"We adhere to the Status of Forces Agreement and don't go through populated areas, but we pass near some small villages," he said. "The people know us and they often come out to greet us, especially the children. We share water and sometimes give the kids candy."

Sgt. Jeffrey J. Jackson, platoon medic, said it was important for the local community to see the presence patrol.

"These patrols help us maintain good relations with the local community, that's true," said Jackson, a Hernando, Miss., native. "The patrols let the locals know we are here and we're engaged. If a base stopped guarding outside the wire, hostile forces might show up. The locals would be vulnerable and the base might start receiving mortars and rockets."

The perimeter patrol conducts a reconnaissance of abandoned villages in the vicinity of Q-West, said Sapp.

"When we first got here, we cleared a number of abandoned villages and we still check them out occasionally," he said.

The relative peacefulness of sustainment operations required a significant adjustment for veterans of previous deployments who grew used to full spectrum operations, said Poff.

"I enjoy this deployment more than the last one; it's a lot quieter," he said. "But some of the older guys feel different."

Jackson said he had trouble getting used to the difference in missions.

"Comparing this deployment to the last one, there is no comparison," he said. "In 2005, it was kicking in doors ... but now we are doing a totally different mission. That's tough for some of us who deployed last time to get used to."

Jackson said he found it difficult to reconcile conducting operations in a combat zone and living on a post that operates like a peace-time garrison.



# Force stays sharp on patrol



Gun trucks with a force protection company round a corner of the perimeter fence of Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, Dec. 15 during a presence patrol. The Soldiers serve with the Mississippi Army National Guard's A Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, 155th Brigade Combat Team out of Hernando, Miss.

"We leave the wire and might face combat, especially during battle space missions when we could receive mortar or rocket fire, or get hit by an improvised explosive device," he said. "When we get back, we are living in garrison conditions."

Capt. Drew Clark, commander of A Company, said he understands the dilemma.

"They're infantry Soldiers," said Clark, a Madison, Miss., native. "It's what they do. As far as interacting with the local citizens, the senior noncommissioned officers who've been here before know how to conduct themselves with Iraqis."

Clark said he is confident in the adaptability of his Soldiers.

"When we first got here, I went on several presence patrols, but my Soldiers have a good handle on that mission," he said. "They are doing an outstanding job. We haven't had a single breach of physical security since we arrived. They've helped keep the base secure."



(Above) Patrick A. Martin, a force protection company truck commander and a Southaven, Miss., native, reconnoiters buildings Dec. 15 in an abandoned village near Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, during a presence patrol. Martin serves with the Mississippi Army National Guard's A Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, 155th Brigade Combat Team out of Hernando, Miss. During the patrol, the Soldiers demonstrated their strategies for combating complacency, such as practicing battle drills, alternating routes and meeting with local Iraqis.



(Left) A force protection company conducts a presence patrol through an abandoned village Dec. 15 near Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq. The Soldiers serve with the Mississippi Army National Guard's A Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, 155th Brigade Combat Team out of Hernando, Miss.



# Air Force nurses welcome Iraqi colleagues, share skills

BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS ALLISON M. BOEHM  
332ND AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Seventeen Iraqi medical care providers attended the December installment of the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group's Iraqi Nursing Partnership Program.

As the responsible drawdown of U.S. forces from Iraq continues, the program is intended to further the medical capabilities of local care providers.

"I really believe this program will improve the nursing care in Iraq," said Col. Vennessa Hagan, 332nd EMDG chief nurse. "Some of the nurses who have attended told me they've benefited from the program and have been sharing the knowledge with other nurses in their community."

By enlisting the help of a local nursing instructor, the staff determined the needs of the local community and developed its course structure.

Rather than giving away consumable supplies, the Airmen focused on providing education for both local nursing students and Iraqis who have already obtained their nursing degree.

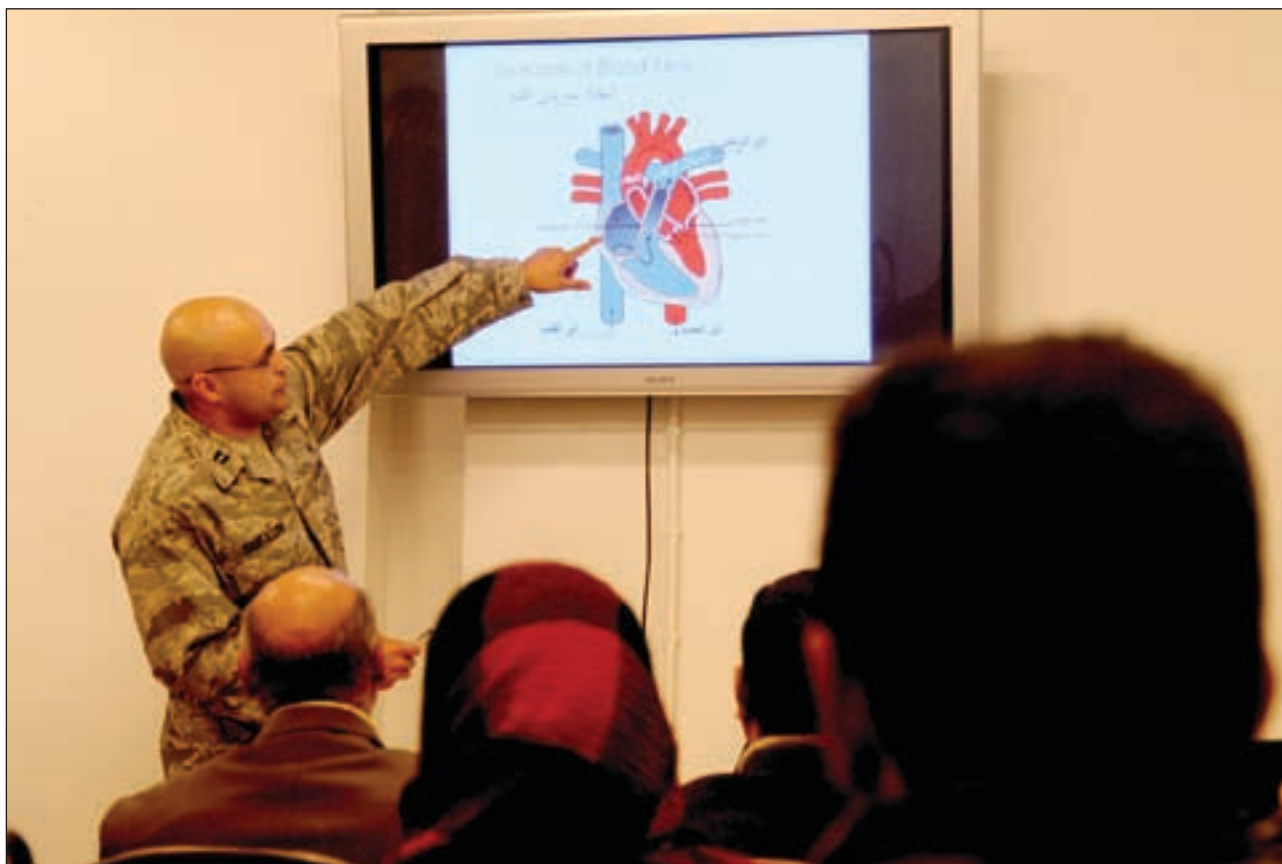
The Iraqi students learned about infection control, burn care, labor and delivery, cardiopulmonary, gastrointestinal and genitourinary systems, as well as pediatrics.

To supplement the verbal instruction, the class also included a series of hands-on learning stations. The Iraqi students practiced proper hand-washing, donning gowns and gloves, measuring vital signs, giving injections, dressing burn wounds, and performing intravenous therapy.

One of the attendees, a local midwife, stressed the importance of absorbing knowledge from her American counterparts.

"We need this support," she said. "We want to learn how to handle different medical issues. This class allows us to learn more and progress in our careers. This class is so helpful, so useful."

Although the instructors and attendees had to overcome a cultural barrier, Hagan said she noticed sociable relationships forming between the medical colleagues.



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Brittany Y. Bateman

**Capt. Fredrick Santillan, 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group registered nurse, explains the cardiopulmonary system to Iraqi nurses and nursing students Dec. 9, at the Air Force Theater Hospital at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The class was part of the Iraqi Nursing Partnership Program, aimed to teach Iraqis modern medical techniques once a month. The students begin each class with a lecture covering the day's primary topic and then complete a hands-on portion, when they put those teachings into practice.**

"Education is a core competency of nursing, and the relationships we're building here enhance both teaching and learning," she said.

The AFTH staff and the Iraqi nurses both acknowledged their common goal to further the overall education of local medical professionals.

"We care about the people of Iraq," said Capt. Elizabeth Hoettels, 332nd EMDG civil-military operations officer. "We've taken care of many of the Iraqi people in our hospital, and we want to give the nurses in the community the knowledge and skills required to provide excellent nursing care when

we are no longer here. With continued education, patients can be transferred from the AFTH to local medical facilities for continued and follow-up care once the acute phase of their illness or injury is resolved."

Although more than 50 hours are put forth to provide each class, the instructors said they know their efforts can have far-reaching and long-term benefits.

"I am proud to receive this certificate," said one of the Iraqi nurses. "And I will tell my clinic what I have learned."

# Providers celebrate holidays with Santa

BY 1ST LT. MARIA SCHMITZ  
15TH SUST. BDE.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION SPEICHER, Iraq –

The Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion out of Fort Bragg, N.C., celebrated the holiday season with a guest appearance from Santa Claus at Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq.

Pvt. Edward Shaw, a radio transmitter operator and a San Francisco native, dressed up as Santa and made an appearance in the battalion headquarters on Christmas Eve so Soldiers could take pictures with him to send back to family and friends.

"Shaw added his own twist on Santa

Claus and added to the morale of the unit," said Pfc. Lee Phillips, a human resource specialist and a Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., native.

Lt. Col. Steven Debusk, the 264th CSSB commander, handed out gifts sent from his hometown of Elkton, Md.

Stockings were delivered to each Soldier from family and friends in St. Louis, stuffed with everything from hygiene items to candy.

"Even though we are away from our families, we can still enjoy the holidays with our co-workers," said Spc. Brittney Sanlin, a human resource specialist and a Belleville, Ill., native. "Getting the stockings made me see how much the people we work with, and their families back home, care about me. It really meant a lot."

The company ended the celebration with a holiday dinner.



U.S. Army photo by Airman Capt. Myron Johnson

**The 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion logistics office (from left to right): Capt. Darsharee Saik, a Jackson, Miss., native, Staff Sgt. Rebecca Brown, a Meridian, Miss., native, Sgt. Sheila Boettcher, a Springfield, Mass., native, Spc. Cheng Xiong, a Coon Rapids, Minn., native, and Sgt. Darren Williams, a Hooper, Co., native.**



# Transportation Soldiers revamp company area

BY 1ST LT. ANTHONY LATHAM  
96TH SUST. BDE.

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Soldiers with the 1161st Transportation Company out of Ephrata, Wash., have taken on the task of making their unit's area one for recreation as well as work.

The project, which began several months ago, started with the simple task of relieving the overcrowding in a small gazebo, said Sgt. 1st Class Charles Garcia, 2nd Platoon sergeant with the 1161st Trans. Co., 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Moses Lake, Wash., native.

Staff Sgt. Paul Tackett, a 2nd Plt. squad leader and a Lakewood, Wash., native, said he took the lead on the planning, resourcing and oversight of the project.

"It started out as just a suggestion – so I started planning," he said. "I thought it would be a good opportunity for the Soldiers to learn how to build and use tools. Being military, I was taught that you leave areas in better shape than you found them in, so we have."

Garcia said Tackett created a layout to make a much larger gazebo.

"I think it has brought the platoon closer together as a whole," he said. "It gives the Soldiers a place to gather that reminds them of home and they enjoy that."

First Lt. Clayton Erickson, the platoon leader and a Hunters, Wash., native, said the platoon was fortunate to have Tackett on the project.

"Tackett, a carpenter on the civilian side, created some plans to change the small gazebo which was already here when we arrived," Erickson said. "He decided to add on to create a bigger gazebo with a walkway that connected with the smaller one. His knowledge, skills and help from 2nd Plt. Soldiers allowed him to complete the task by the end of October."

Cpl. Karl Lee, a heavy truck operator and a Tacoma, Wash., native, praised the gazebo's spaciousness.

"I like it because it's peaceful," Lee said. "You can go to one area of the gazebo and be alone if you want. It's a five star smoking area and place for people to hang out. It's like a pub without the beer."

The platoon also added a horseshoe pit, a volleyball court and a remote control car track.

"The horseshoe pit has become a great holiday barbeque tradition that Soldiers from the whole company have found to be fun and relaxing," said Erickson.

The company christened the completion of the projects with a Halloween bash in October, which included a horseshoe tournament, craziest-hat contest and a game of volleyball, he said.

Garcia said the RC car track was an-



U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Juan Cabello

**Staff Sgt. Paul Tackett, a squad leader with the 1161st Transportation Company, 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Lakewood, Wash., native, measures a piece of plywood for the gazebo he designed for the company area.**

other of Tackett's creations, open to anyone at Taji.

"The company currently has nine Soldiers with a total of 13 cars that run on the track when it isn't raining," he said. "It is in a common area on post next to the 1161st (Trans. Co.'s) motor pool."

Pfc. Raymond Sicking, a heavy vehicle operator in the company and a Grand Coulee, Wash., native, said rac-

ing his car on the RC track is a great way to relieve stress and occupy spare time.

First Sgt. David Luther, a West Richland, Wash., native, said the Soldiers' work was "top notch."

"Second platoon's beautification project, led by Staff Sgt. Tackett, has given the unit Soldiers an excellent common area within the company to hang out," he said.

# Service members run into new decade at JBB

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
PFC. LISA A. COPE  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The 90th Sustainment Brigade sponsored a Ring in the New Year 5K race starting 10 minutes before midnight Dec. 31, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, to celebrate the new decade.

Staff Sgt. Anthony W. Sadler, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Morale, Welfare and Recreation center, with the 90th Sust. Bde. out of Little Rock, Ark., organized the race.

Sadler, a White Lake, Mich., native, said the run served as a morale booster and helped give Soldiers a good start to the new year and their New Year's resolutions.

"Unlike any other run, I think it gives a lot of Soldiers, a lot of service members, extra motivation, to know that you are going to start the race in the old years and run into the new year," he said.

Sadler said his New Year's resolution is to be healthier and he hopes the 5K inspires others to do the same.

"Normally people celebrate (New Year's) by drinking and partying, but doing something like this is a healthier way



**Service members at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, begin the Ring in the New Year 5K run on New Year's Eve.**

to bring in the new year and a safe way," he said Sadler.

Staff Sgt. Jeffrey L. Erickson, the general supply operation NCOIC with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), was the first to finish the 3.1-

mile run, with a time of 17 minutes, 42 seconds.

Erickson, a Eureka, Ill., native, said he would have preferred to be at home with his friends and family for New Year's but, because he is in Iraq, the

run was a nice alternative.

"I like to run; it makes me feel good," he said. "I used to race a lot back home, so this helps me feel at home."

Erickson said his New Year's resolution is to make it home safe to his son.



# Junior enlisted troops celebrate holidays at Operation Toy Soldiers

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SPC. MICHAEL V. CAMACHO  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – More than 400 service members attended Operation Toy Soldiers to celebrate the holiday season with gifts, games, music and food, on Christmas Day at Morale, Welfare and Recreation center east at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

The Joint Program Office for Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles, 402nd Army Field Support Brigade hosted the event, which was open to all service members at JBB.

Operation Toy Soldiers was designed to bring the spirit of the season to the troops who are deployed overseas, said Jaime Hollis, operations adviser with the Scientific Application International Corporation and JPO MRAP, and a Lake Charles, La., native. Most junior enlisted Soldiers are serving their first deployment overseas for the holidays, he said.

The team wanted to show its appreciation for these Soldiers by organizing an event focused on them, said Robbie Thomas, an engineer with JPO MRAP.

Thomas, a Sterling Heights, Mich., native, said Operation Toy Soldiers received support from the JBB community in a variety of ways.

The 332nd Expeditionary Force Support Squadron donated food and drinks, said Thomas, and noncom-

missioned officers from other units throughout JBB volunteered their time to help with the event, which included games such as “Jeopardy,” “Are you smarter than a 5th grader?” and “Family Feud,” with prizes for the winning teams.

“Everybody had fun, had some laughs, had a little bit of competition between branches and a good time,” said Thomas.

Troops received stockings stuffed with donated candy and letters of thanks from citizens in the United States, she said.

Being away from home during the holidays is difficult for anyone but, for the younger service members, it can be harder, said Lt. Col. Andrew Simpson, a government lead for JPO MRAP in Iraq.

Operation Toy Soldiers served as a reminder to service members to look at the bright side and make good memories of their deployment, he said.

“For many Soldiers, it can be the first time they’re away from home on Christmas,” said Simpson, a West Alexander, Penn., native. “(Operation Toy Soldiers) was a great way to thank them for their service and make the day special for them.”

Thomas said the event also featured Santa Claus. While not posing for photos, Santa passed out gifts to service members who correctly answered trivia questions, she said.

Simpson said being Santa and passing out gifts to the junior enlisted Soldiers added to his experience.



**Santa, played by Lt. Col. Andrew Simpson, a government lead for Joint Program Office for Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles, 402nd Army Field Support Brigade and a West Alexander, Penn., native, and Jaime Hollis, operations adviser with the Scientific Application International Corporation and JPO MRAP, and a Lake Charles, La., native, ask a group of junior enlisted Soldiers trivia questions at Operation Toy Soldiers at Morale, Welfare and Recreation center east Dec. 25 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.**

“They really seemed to enjoy it,” he said.

The activities and competitions built camaraderie between battle buddies and members of other services, said Spc. Ernesto Acosta, a cargo specialist with the 159th Seaport Operations Company, 80th Ordnance Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

“I like the way they put these events

together to build morale for the troops and everybody else that isn’t home for the holidays,” said Acosta, a Santa Cruz, Calif., native. “It’s a good way to pass the time and enjoy yourself without being around family, but amongst friends.”

Hollis said, with the success of Operation Toy Soldiers, JPO MRAP looks forward to sponsoring future events to support the troops at JBB.

# Movement control team helps distribution center

BY SPC. MICHAEL V. CAMACHO  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – An operations unit at the Joint Distribution Center at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, implemented a new transportation standard Dec. 11 to decrease the wait time required to ship sustainment supply cargo throughout Iraq.

The 969th Movement Control Team, 49th Transportation Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), took control of the JDC from the 56th Logistics Readiness Squadron Dec. 4.

“The mission of the JDC is to process multiclass cargo that needs to be pushed out to different (contingency operating locations) in Iraq,” said Capt. Scott Poznanski, the operations officer with the 969th MCT.

Under the 56th LGRS, cargo waited five to 10 days on average before it was moved out via the standard transportation movement request system, said Poznanski, a Madison, Wis., native.

After roughly a week of operation at the JDC, the 969th MCT began to use sustainment transportation movement requests to reduce the overall time for cargo movement, he said.

Subsequently, the 15th, 96th and 90th sustainment brigades transitioned to using sustainment TMRs for missions with the JDC throughout northern Iraq, said Poznanski.

He said the sustainment TMRs significantly reduce their paperwork load, and greatly increase the JDC’s efficiency at pushing out mission-related supplies and cargo to units on outlying COLs.

The 969th MCT’s end goal is to reduce the window from 10 days, to 48 to 72 hours to reach its designated location, he said.

Poznanski said the JDC at JBB is one of the largest in Iraq and constantly pushes out cargo to sustainment supply depots throughout the country.

The JDC does not process property book items and equipment like a central receiving and shipping point would, said Poznanski. The JDC ensures the proper movement of mission-related supplies and cargo, especially repair parts for property book items, he said.

The JDC at JBB also processes a majority of the supplies pushed north from the Theater Distribution Center in Kuwait, Poznanski said.

Movement and quality control of land cargo is traditionally an Army mission, and fell under the 969th MCT’s command when the 56th LGRS left theater, said Staff Sgt. William Chase, the noncommissioned officer in charge of JDC operations with 969th.

Chase said the centralized location of JBB and its onsite assets allows it to serve

as a major logistical hub in Iraq.

The JDC is also responsible for the quality control of cargo pushed to the outlying COLs, he said.

“The Joint Distribution Center monitors all the cargo moving up north, to down south, east or west,” said Chase.

Cargo going through the JDC is kept in the yard until it has been properly processed and loaded on an outbound convoy, said Poznanski.


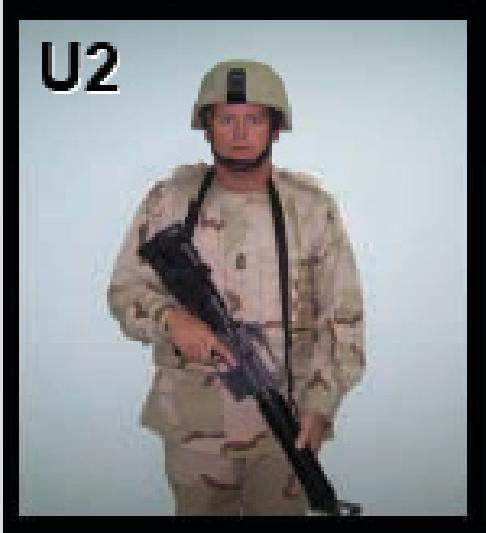


The JDC also plays a role in the transportation of retrograde materials from the COLs, and the sustainment TMRs have sped up this process as well, said Chase. With the TMR number, the cargo can be tracked and its location verified, he said.

“If you have retrograde cargo and it needs to go back to Arifjan; it’ll come through here,” he said. “We TMR it, we process it and ship it out.”

Chase said the JDC mission will increase as the drawdown of U.S. forces and equipment progresses.



# Force protection uniform postures

	IBA	Kevlar	Uniform	Conduct PT
<div>U1</div> 	Accessible within 10 minutes.	Accessible within 10 minutes.	DCU/ACU/ service equivalent. PT uniform allowed for PT or off duty and can be worn in DFAC/PX.	No restrictions.
<div>U2</div> 	Worn when outdoors for specified time or event.	Worn when outdoors for specified time or event.	DCU/ACU/ service equivalent. PT uniform allowed for PT only and cannot be worn in DFAC/PX.	Restriction: PT only in hardened facilities. Can run with IBA and Kevlar.
<div>U3</div> 	Worn outside hardened facility.	Worn outside hardened facility.	Same as U2. DCU/ACU/ service equivalent. PT uniform allowed for PT only and cannot be worn in DFAC/PX.	Restriction: PT only in hardened facilities. Can run with IBA and Kevlar.
<div>U4</div> 	Worn.	Worn.	Same as U3, but with ballistic goggles and combat earplugs.	Not authorized.



# Q-West service members, civilians celebrate holidays

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
PFC. JOHN G. KING  
15TH SUST. BDE. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – Soldiers and civilians were treated to a holiday meal, decorations and performances during lunch on Christmas Day, at the main dining facility at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, operated by 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

Soldiers and civilians volunteered to create the decorations and entertain the dining facility's patrons to help boost morale during service members' and civilians' time away from home.

"No one wants to be away from their family (during the Holidays), but being here is like having a second family," said Capt. Mariam Sewell, the 15th Sust. Bde. deputy supply officer and a Chester, Pa., native.

The meal included prime rib, turkey, dressing, Cornish hens, ham, cookies, cakes, sparkling grape juice and eggnog.

Soldiers dressed as reindeer and elves danced to country, hip-hop and Latin music. Those dressed as reindeer wore antlers and matching T-shirts, each bearing one of the nine reindeer names, including Rudolph, who also wore a flashing red nose.

The building was also adorned with winter and Christmas decorations. Hundreds of handmade paper snowflakes hung from the ceiling, a full-sized sleigh with reindeer flying over a house



Soldiers with the 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), dressed as reindeer and elves, line dance to "Copperhead Road" during a holiday lunch at the dining facility Christmas Day at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

was on display, and decorative cakes sat in a neat row near the entrance.

Utpal D. Costa, a dining facility salad chef and a Dhaka, Bangladesh, native, created a nativity scene and decorations for a Christmas tree out of aluminum foil, a donkey stuffed with newspapers, a large paper flower, and large decorative paper balls for the celebration.

Costa said he has made decorations from recycled material since he was a boy and has continued to make large pieces for special occasions at Q-West.

"God always helped me," he said. "(I am) God gifted."

Sixto Jimenez, head baker with the dining facility and a San Jose Del Monte, Philippines, native, made decorative cakes and a large gingerbread village with the help of the baking staff as well as civilians and Army dining facility workers.

Pfc. Daniel Rivera, a 15th Sust. Bde. cook and an Apple Valley, Calif., native, carved an entire train out of blocks of ice, which was displayed near the front entrance of the dining facility.

"You have fun, plenty of food to eat (and can) still be in the Christmas spirit," said Sewell.

Do you  
have a  
story  
idea?

Contact  
us at:

expeditionarytimes@  
iraq.centcom.mil

## Soldiers celebrate holidays courtesy of Oregon community

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SPC. ANITA VANDERMOLEN  
41ST IBCT

VICTORY BASE COMPLEX, BAGHDAD – Santa traded his sleigh this year for a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle, decked out with lights and decorations and stuffed with presents for Soldiers with A Company, Special Troops Battalion, Convoy Security Team 2.

The Soldiers, with 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry, Task Force Stetson, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) celebrated the holidays together Christmas eve at Victory Base Complex, Baghdad.

Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Sieber, a McMinnville, Ore., native, drove the MRAP, normally used for convoy missions, and delivered presents as Santa Sieber, with help from Sgt. Victor Gomness.

"When the MRAP opened, I thought 'Oh, look at that, Santa's here,'" said Sgt. Peter Lee, gunner and truck commander and a Bend, Ore., native.

The MRAP, with decorations provided by Sieber's

wife and brother, was full of gifts from Oregon families and businesses, which helped fill the boxes and provided postage.

"My wife started alone, then got the local radio station involved," Sieber said.

Trina Arnott, the family readiness coordinator for the unit, had the donations brought to the Clackamas, Ore., armory for packaging and mailing. Families were encouraged to bring personal items to put in the boxes as well.

"Mine was packed by my wife and kids," said Spc. J.C. Karrantza, a gunner and a Portland, Ore., native. "There were letters and cards from my family. I was surprised. They also packed boxes for eight other Soldiers."

"It was nice that everyone got something," said 1st Lt. Matthew Harrison, convoy commander and a Portland, Ore., native.

The families and businesses made 135 boxes total, Sieber said.

"I was amazed at the time and effort that was put forward," said Spc. Justin Bowman, a driver and a Gresham, Ore., native. "It showed a lot of love for the troops."



A decorated Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle driven by Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Sieber and guided by Santa's helper Sgt. Victor Gomness, was Santa's sleigh during a visit to the Soldiers with A Company, Special Troops Battalion, 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team Dec. 24 at Victory Base Complex, Baghdad.



# Sudoku

The objective is to fill the 9×9 grid so each column, each row and each of the nine 3×3 boxes contains the digits from 1 to 9 only one time each.

Last week's answers

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

Level: Hard

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

# TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. What marked the first time since the Revolution that the U.S. accepted direct financial aid to fight a war?
2. What U.S. president was born William Jefferson Blythe IV?
3. What future president was the only U.S. senator from a Confederate state to remain in Congress after secession?
4. How many U.S. states took part in the development or manufacture of the B-2 bomber?
5. What type of ads were banned in 1971, costing TV networks \$200 million?

1. The Persian Gulf War 2. Bill Clinton 3. Andrew Johnson 4. Fifty 5. Cigarette ads

# JB BALAD WORSHIP SERVICES

TRADITIONAL - Sunday

0200 Air Force Hospital Chapel	0930 Provider Chapel
1030 Freedom Chapel (West side)	1100 Castle Heights (Bldg. 7562)
1400 Air Force Hospital Chapel	1730 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

GOSPEL - Sunday

1100 MWR East Building	1200 Freedom Chapel (West Side)
1230 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)	

1900 Provider Chapel

CONTEMPORARY - Sunday

0900 Chapel- Next Iraq/MWR East	
1030 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)	
1400 Castle Heights (Bldg. 7562)	1900 Freedom Chapel (West Side)

Wednesday 2000 Gilbert Memorial Chapel

LITURGICAL (Episcopal, Anglican, Presbyterian) - Sunday

1700 Provider Chapel

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST - Saturday

1000 Provider Chapel

CHURCH OF CHRIST - Sunday

1530 Castle Heights (Bldg. 7562)

LATTER DAY SAINTS (MORMON)- Sunday

1300 Provider Chapel	1530 Freedom Chapel (West side)
1900 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)	

MASS - Saturday

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)	
2000 Freedom Chapel (West Side)	

Sunday 0830 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

1100 Provider Chapel 1100 Air Force Hospital

Thursday 1100 Air Force Hospital

Mon., Wed., Fri. 1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

Monday-Friday 1130 555th Engineer Bde. (Bldg. 7200)

JEWISH SHABBAT SERVICES- Friday

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

Saturday 0930 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

ISLAMIC PRAYER - Friday

1230 Provider Chapel

PAGAN/WICCAN FELLOWSHIP - Thursday

1900 The Shack

Saturday 1900 The Shack

GREEK ORTHODOX - Sunday

0900 Provider Annex

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL:

Gilbert Chapel: 443-7703

Provider Chapel: 433-2430

Freedom Chapel: 443-6303

# JB BALAD ACTIVITIES

INDOOR POOL

Swim Lessons: Mon., Wed., - 6 p.m.

AquaTraining: Tue., Thu., - 7:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m.

EAST FIT-NESS CENTER

Open Court Volleyball: Sunday- 6 p.m.

Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri.- 5:30-6:30 a.m.

Yoga Class: Mon., Fri.- 6-7 a.m.

Step Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri.- 5:30 p.m.

Conditioning Training Class: Mon., Wed., Fri.- 7:15-8 p.m.

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu: Mon., Wed., Fri.- 8-9 p.m.

Abs-Aerobics: Tue., Thu., 6-7

a.m., 5-6 p.m.

Edge Weapons & Stick Fighting Training: Tue., Thur., Sat., - 8-10 p.m.

Salsa Class: Saturday- 8:30 p.m.

Poker: Saturday- 7:30 p.m.

4-ball tourney: Sunday- 8 p.m.

Karaoke: Monday- 8 p.m.

Swing Class: Tuesday- 8 p.m.

Table Tennis: Tuesday- 8 p.m.

Plastic Models Club: Wednesday 7 p.m.

9-ball tourney: Wednesday- 8 p.m.

Dungeons & Dragons: Thursday- 7:30 p.m.

Poetry Night: Thursday- 8 p.m.

6-ball tourney: Thursday- 8

p.m.

Caribbean Night: Friday- 8 p.m.

Chess & Dominoes Tourney: Friday- 8 p.m.

Salsa Class: Saturday- 8:30 p.m.

Poker: Saturday- 7:30 p.m.

4-ball tourney: Sunday- 8 p.m.

Karaoke: Monday- 8 p.m.

Swing Class: Tuesday- 8 p.m.

Table Tennis: Tuesday- 8 p.m.

Plastic Models Club: Wednesday 7 p.m.

9-ball tourney: Wednesday- 8 p.m.

Dungeons & Dragons: Thursday- 7:30 p.m.

Poetry Night: Thursday- 8 p.m.

6-ball tourney: Thursday- 8

CC Cross Fit:

Monday- Saturday- 10:30 p.m.

Cross Fit: Mon., Wed., Fri., - 5:45 a.m., 7 a.m., 3 p.m.

Poker: Tue., Thu., - 7 a.m., 3 p.m.

4-ball tourney: Sunday- 5:45 a.m., 3 p.m.

Karaoke: Monday- Saturday- 4:30 a.m., 4 p.m., 10 p.m.

Soccer: Tue., Thu., - 8 p.m.

Yoga: Wednesday- 8 p.m.

MACP Level 1: Friday- 8 p.m.

5 on 5 Basketball: Saturday- 8 p.m.

H6 RECREATION CENTER

Bingo: Sunday- 8 p.m.

Texas

Hold'em:

Mon., Fri., - 2 p.m., 8:30 p.m.

8-ball tourney: Tuesday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m.

Ping-pong tourney: Tuesday- 8:30 p.m.

Spades: Wednesday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m.

Salsa: Wednesday- 9-ball: Thursday- 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m.

Karaoke: Thursday- 8:30 p.m.

Dominoes: Saturday- 8:30 p.m.

Darts: Saturday- 8:30 p.m.

WEST REC-NESS CENTER

Green Bean Karaoke: Sun., Wed., 7:30pm

9-ball tourney: Monday- 8 p.m.

Ping-pong

tourney: Tuesday- 8 p.m.

Foosball tourney: Tuesday- 8 p.m.

Jam Session: Tuesday- 7:30 p.m.

8-ball tourney: Wednesday- 8 p.m.

Guitar Lessons: Thursday- 7:30 p.m.

Game tourney: Thursday- 1 p.m., 8 p.m.

Enlisted Poker: Friday- 1 p.m., 8 p.m.

Officer Poker: Saturday- 1 p.m., 8 p.m.

Squat Competition: Saturday- 8 p.m.

WEST FIT-NESS CENTER

3 on 3 basketball tourney: Saturday- 7:30 p.m.

6 on 6 volleyball tourney:

Friday- 7 p.m.

Aerobics: Monday, Wednesday, Friday- 7 p.m.

Body by Midgett Toning Class: Tue., Thu., - 7 p.m.

Dodge ball Game: Tuesday- 7:30 p.m.

Furman's Martial Arts: Mon., Wed., Sun., - 1 p.m.

Gaston's Self-Defense Class: Fri., Sat.- 7 p.m.

Open court basketball: Thursday- 7 p.m.

Open court soccer: Mon., Wed., - 7 p.m.

Zingano Brazilian Jui Jitsu: Tue., Thu., - 8:30 p.m.

CIRCUIT GYM

Floor hockey: Mon., Wed., Fri., - 8-10 p.m.

Monday 01/11/09

NFL Wild Card Weekend: Teams TBD, Live 12:30 a.m. AFN/sports  
Anaheim Ducks @ Chicago Blackhawks, Live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra  
NBA Special Edition: Cleveland Cavaliers @ Portland Trail Blazers, Live 5 a.m. AFN/sports  
Milwaukee Bucks @ Los Angeles Lakers, Live 5:30 a.m. AFN/ xtra

Tuesday 01/12/09

Big Monday: Villinova @ Louisville, Live 3 a.m. AFN/sports  
UFC Fight Night Live: Maynard vs Diaz, Live 5 a.m. AFN/xtra  
Big Monday: Oklahoma State @ Oklahoma, Live 5 a.m. AFN/sports  
Cleveland Cavaliers @ Golden State Warriors, Live 7 a.m. AFN/ xtra

Wednesday 01/13/09

Super Tuesday: Ohio State @ Purdue, Live 3 a.m. AFN/ sports  
NHL on VERSUS: New Jersey Devils @ New York Rangers, Live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra  
Super Tuesday: Kentucky @ Florida, Live 5 a.m. AFN/ sports

# UPCOMING SPORTS ON AFN

Thursday 01/07/09

2010 GMAC Bowl: Central Michigan vs. Troy, Live 3 a.m. AFN/sports  
Duke @ Iowa State, Live 5 a.m. AFN/xtra  
NBA Wednesday: Los Angeles Lakers @ Los Angeles Clippers, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN/sports  
Big East Conference Basketball: Memphis @ Syracuse, Tape Delayed 11 a.m. AFN/ sports

Friday 01/08/09

Charlotte Bobcats @ New York Knicks, Live 3:30 a.m. AFN/xtra  
2010 Citi BCS National Championship Game: Texas vs. Alabama, Live 4:30 a.m. AFN/sports  
Phoenix Coyotes @ Vancouver Canucks, Live 6 a.m. AFN/xtra  
Big Ten Conference Basketball: Michigan @ Penn State, Tape Delayed 11 a.m. AFN/sports

Saturday 01/09/09

Colorado Avalanche @ Carolina Hurricanes, Live 3 a.m. AFN/xtra  
NBA Friday: Boston Celtics @ Atlanta Hawks, Live 4 a.m. AFN/sports  
Columbus Blue Jackets @ Calagry Flames, Live 5 a.m. AFN/ prime pacific  
Sacramento Kings @ Golden State Warriors, Live 6:30 a.m. AFN/ xtra

Sunday 01/10/09

Nebraska @ Texas A&M, Live 12 a.m. AFN/xtra  
Georgia @ Kentucky, Live 12 a.m. AFN/prime atlantic  
Wake Forest @ Miami (FL), Live 2 a.m. AFN/xtra  
Minnesota Timberwolves @ Chicago Bulls, Live 4 a.m. AFN/ sports  
West Virginia @ Norte Dame, Live 4 a.m. AFN/ prime atlantic

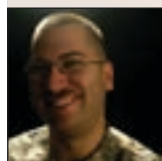




# Arts & Entertainment

## NBA 2K10, 2K Sports throws up a brick

BY STAFF SGT. JOEL F. GIBSON  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



I love sports video games and 2K Sports has been doing a superb job with most of them since the beginning of the century. On the surface, NBA 2K10 is no different, providing excellent game play, gorgeous presentation and a bevy of deeply engrossing game modes.

Unfortunately, the developers tried to do too much this time. After beating the brains out of the NBA Live franchise for years, 2K Sports released an unfinished product.

Setting up plays, looking for the right shot, working on matchups is all pointless. For the PlayStation 3 version, the

circle button sets up the pick and roll, use it and you will score just about every time on every difficulty level.

One of the highly touted features of the latest iteration of NBA 2K is My Player mode, wherein you create an undrafted basketball player and try to play for an NBA team.

Because this is a new feature, I expected some problems, but was blown away by the apparent lack of concern quality control had with this mode.

In My Player mode, quarter length cannot be adjusted. Your created player will play basketball games with 5-minute quarters for the duration of his career. Never mind the havoc this plays with the minutes per game statistic, just imagine a fast break team like the Phoenix Suns putting up 60 points per game regularly.

One of the oddest problems with the

game comes from the 2K Insider feature in My Player mode. The 2K Insider is an animated character whose job is to perpetually annoy anybody playing the game by overusing quotes about past players and admonishing rookie shooting guards for allowing Kobe Bryant to score four points in a game. I thought limiting one of the best shooters in the history of the game to four points in 16 minutes was good.

The game also doesn't seem to realize that not everybody has Internet access because it constantly checks for the presence of an Ethernet cable and informs me eight to 10 times every hour that there is no Ethernet cable detected. I turned off all of the automatic updates, so I have no idea why it would even look for an Ethernet cable.

Presentation, through commentators

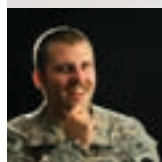
and in-game graphic overlays, has been a difficult hurdle for sports games since the genre was introduced. The biggest problem NBA 2K10 has in this department is that the graphic overlays sometimes cover 50 percent of the screen while the ball is in play, which makes for some pretty easy scoring by the computer.

Oddly enough, despite all these problems, the game is still moderately enjoyable, and from what I've read online, fairly well corrected by downloadable patches. If you own a basketball game you enjoy, don't bother with this one, but if you don't have one, give it a shot.

For all the glitches and issues, I rate NBA 2K10 a 4.5i out of 10. The little i is for incomplete – out of the box, this game is an unfinished product rushed to meet a deadline.

## 'Avatar': hype is justified, see this film

BY SGT. JAYSON A. HOFFMAN  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



James Cameron's ("Titanic") "Avatar" is an epic sci-fi environmental allegory that's basically a rewrite of America's troubled history with Native Americans.

This movie has everything moviegoers want to see, backed with a strong emotional core.

I wanted "Inglorious Basterds" to be my movie of the year, but "Avatar" definitely came in the ninth inning and hit a grand slam.

The film takes place on a moon called Pandora, where a company is trying to

mine for a metal known as unobtainium. The only problem is the natives, known as the Na'vi, who live on the highest density of the precious metal. Jake Sully (Sam Worthington), a former Marine, is called upon to take over his dead brother's avatar, a biologically created Na'vi body that humans can control by placing their consciousness in the body. His job is to befriend the Na'vi and convince them to leave. He eventually falls in love with the people and becomes their greatest hope to defend their land.

The special effects in this movie were top-notch. It has been a long while since audiences have seen effects this impressive. The "Transformers" sequel showed us the perils of heavy special effects in a movie, whereas "Avatar" shows ev-

eryone the wonderful payoff effects can have on film.

The motion capture effects were great. Cameron perfected in one attempt a technique that Robert Zemeckis has been trying to perfect for years, including in his latest attempt, "A Christmas Carol." There were times I simply found myself wondering if it was an effect or a person in a very realistic suit.

The acting and direction were great. The Marines in this film were very similar to the ones from Cameron's action classic "Aliens," over-the-top Vietnam-era clichés – except this time you want the aliens to win.

When the first encounter between the Na'vi and the Marines ends in tragedy, you truly feel the pain of the Na'vi peo-

ple. This particular scene actually had a very 9/11 feel to it, making it that much more emotional.

Film goers may struggle with Cameron's political beliefs laced throughout the film, environmentalism and anti-war sentiments in particular, but they're coated with such good story-telling that most people won't even notice them.

A select few movies have made me forget I was in Iraq for a couple of hours: "Funny People," "Inglorious Basterds" and "District 9," but this one transformed me to another world completely. I had goose bumps for most of the film and I immediately wanted to watch it again as soon as it was finished.

Do yourself a favor and see this movie.

## CLASSIC PVT MURPHY



### Sustainer Reel Time Theater

#### Wednesday, Jan. 6

5 p.m. Pirate Radio  
8 p.m. 2012

#### Thursday, Jan. 7

5 p.m. Sherlock Holmes  
8 p.m. Alvin and Chipmunk: The Squeakquel

#### Friday, Jan. 8

2 p.m. The Fourth Kind  
5 p.m. Old Dogs  
8:30 p.m. The Twilight Saga: New Moon

#### Saturday, Jan. 9

2 p.m. The Men Who Stare At Goats  
5 p.m. The Twilight Saga: New Moon  
8 p.m. 2012

#### Sunday, Jan. 10

2 p.m. The Box  
5 p.m. Old Dogs  
8 p.m. The Twilight Saga: New Moon

#### Monday, Jan. 11

5 p.m. Amelia  
8 p.m. Old Dogs

#### Tuesday, Jan. 12

5 p.m. The Fourth Kind  
8 p.m. The Twilight Saga: New Moon

#### Wednesday, Jan. 13

5 p.m. The Twilight Saga: New Moon  
8 p.m. 2012





# PHOTOS AROUND IRAQ

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Ernest E. Sivia III



An Iraqi Soldier, assigned to the 10th Iraqi Army Division, adjusts the angle on a mortar tube Dec. 21 at Camp Ur, Dhi Qar, Iraq. Iraqi Soldiers are taught about improvised explosive device components and actions to take when encountering an IED.



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Ali Hargis

Sgt. 1st Class Mark Manthorne, demonstrates a rear naked choke hold on a member of the 3rd Iraqi Federal Police Division, during Personal Security Detail training Dec. 22 at Spear Base, near Mosul, Iraq. The training consisted of combatives, as well as mounted and dismounted patrols.



A reflection of the sun glimmers off the side of a Humvee in the early morning hours after heavy rainfall Dec. 17 at Contingency Operating Location Speicher, Iraq.

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Caraan Radcliffe

An Iraqi Soldier raises the Iraqi flag Dec. 15 during the withdrawal of State Department workers from Hilla, Iraqi offices. The withdrawal is part of a plan to reduce the number of U.S. officials in the country.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Garfield Bar-Tzur

A local Iraqi cleans as U.S. Soldiers search around the former ammunition factory Dec. 20 in Nassir Factory, Iraq. The U.S. Soldiers were searching for improvised explosive devices and other explosives.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. David C. Innes Jr.



# NEWS AROUND IRAQ

## Army engineers visit schools, hospitals, give to Iraqi children

**BAGHDAD** – Because of the generosity of individuals and groups in the U.S., the Gulf Region District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq is doing more than just brick and mortar reconstruction projects – they are touching lives and bringing smiles to Iraqi children.

A GRD team, headed by Col. Dan Anninos, commander, visited schools, hospitals and several neighborhoods in December to hand-out school supplies, soccer balls, blankets and toys to children around Baghdad.

“The primary purpose of the visit was to see how well these facilities were being maintained and operated,” said Anninos.

Several of these locations were the sites of initial reconstruction projects GRD either built or renovated and turned over to the Iraqis.

“It was a great opportunity to take some of our employees to these sites and deliver gifts to the Iraqi children,” said Anninos.

Lindsey Beck, a Department of the Army civilian and a facilities manager from Raleigh, N.C., serving her second tour in Iraq, said going out into the community to distribute school supplies and toys to the Iraqi children is the best gift she could receive during this holiday season.

“It touches your heart when you see their smiles and how much they appreciated something as small as a stuffed animal or pencils,” said Beck. “I am so proud to be a part of the district team and all the tremendous reconstruction efforts (we) are doing. ... To visit the children is truly a memorable event. The future is for the children.”

Earlier this year, GRD received more than 40,000 pencils from the Arlington Independent School District in Texas.

Veronica Sopher, the director of public information for AISD, said the school district wanted to do something for the children of Iraq and decided to participate in the Marking History pencil drive.

“The response was tremendous,” said Sopher in an e-mail. “In two weeks time, students, teachers, administrators and principals came together and donated over 40,000 pencils.”

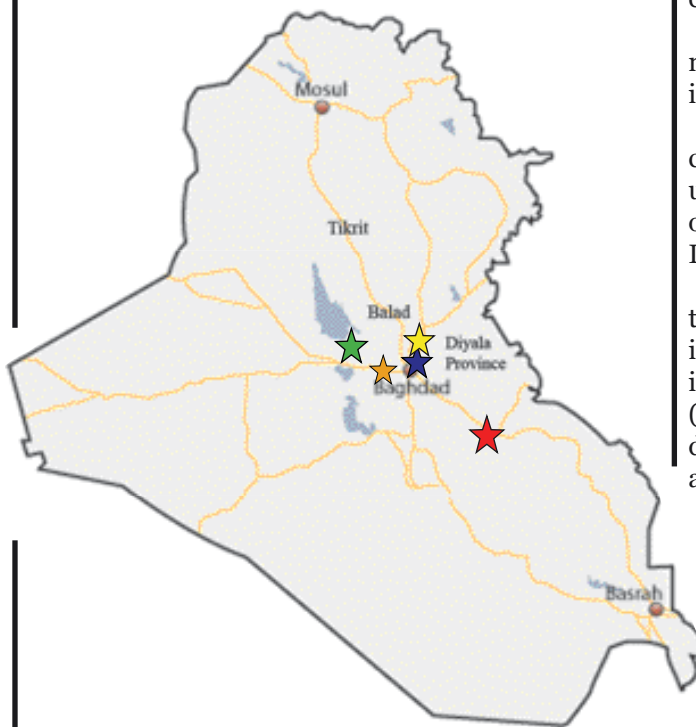
Shipping costs were covered by several local companies and by a local law firm, said Sopher.

The Corps of Engineers has put the hard work and generosity of the Texas school district and other organizations throughout the U.S. to use by making an impact on the hearts and minds of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children in schools, hospitals, orphanages and neighborhoods throughout Iraq.

There are 38 school projects ongoing country-wide. Since the reconstruction effort began in 2003, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers has completed more than 1,130 school projects.

“These relatively inexpensive projects represent an absolute investment in the future of Iraq,” said Anninos.

In addition to the schools, USACE has completed more than 4,500 projects focused on rebuilding vital infrastructure, such as water supply systems, sewage treatment centers, electrical power plants,



hospitals and health clinics, housing and transportation networks, while simultaneously developing the capacity of Iraqis to operate and maintain these facilities long after U.S. forces leave Iraq.

## Iraqi crime scene investigation course graduates 40

**AN NUMANIYAH, Iraq** – Forty Iraqi Soldiers from 13 Iraqi Army divisions completed advanced training in crime scene investigation techniques and procedures Dec. 15 at An Numaniyah, Iraq.

The 10-day course consisted of classroom and hands-on training in crime scene preservation, managing an investigation, forensic evidence, fingerprints, rape investigation and investigating hostage situations.

In addition to the criminal investigations coursework, the Soldiers completed a physical training program as part of a curriculum that emphasized military values as a core component. Students concluded each day with lessons that reinforced the values of respect, loyalty, integrity, duty, bravery, selfless service and honor.

In his speech at the graduation ceremony Lt. Col. Bashar, academy commandant, stressed the importance of the skills the students learned and implored them to apply their expertise at their home units.

## Marine squadron leaves Iraq after 6 years

**AL ASAD AIR BASE, Iraq** – Marines from Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 269 gathered at their headquarters building Dec. 15 at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, for a bittersweet ending to their six-year presence in Iraq.

“For more than half a decade, HMLA-269 has made Iraq a second home,” said Lt. Col. Jon Hack-

ett, commanding officer of the unit. “This marks the end of an era.”

Since 2004, elements of the HMLA-269 Gunrunners conducted operations in the Al Anbar province.

As part of their end-of-mission ceremony, the commanding officer and sergeant major cased their unit’s flag for the final time, symbolizing the last of the Marine Corps offensive air support assets in Iraq.

“After this unit’s six years of deployment in Iraq, they have lived up to their motto of ‘protecting the innocent and punishing the guilty,’” said Cmdr. Kevin Anderson, chaplain for Marine Aircraft Group 26 (Reinforced). “These Marines and those who have deployed before have worked hard toward the peace and stability of this country.”

During the squadron’s final rotation at Al Asad, the Gunrunners conducted 1,963 missions to include 71 medical evacuations. On two occasions, HMLA-269 gave its support to troops engaged with enemy forces.

“As we close out, we do so knowing we did all that we could to support the mission,” said Hackett. “We started this six years ago, and we are finishing it now. We are now part of that legacy of pride and mission accomplishment. We are 269, the first and the finest.”

## 39 Iraqis graduate seven-week comprehensive training course

**TAJI, Iraq** – Dozens of senior noncommissioned officers received validation of their training during a graduation ceremony Dec. 22 at Taji, Iraq.

Thirty-nine senior noncommissioned officers from the Presidential Brigade, Iraqi Special Operation Force, Iraqi Army, Air Force, Navy, National Police and Special Forces graduated from the Senior Noncommissioned Officer Course at the Regional Training Centre.

During the seven-week course, students enhanced their knowledge of firing ranges, military leadership, military law, information technologies, map reading, operations, physical training, staff procedures and service support operations.

“Though you have seen hardship and struggle during your training, you must prepare yourself to shoulder the burden of responsibility for the security and welfare of your nation,” said Maj. Gen. Giuseppe Antonio Spinelli, deputy commander of the NATO Training Mission in Iraq, in his speech to the new graduates.

Maj. Gen. Sameer Mahdi Basha, chief of the basic tactical training department of Iraqi Ministry of Defence, emphasized the growing importance of the NCO corps in Iraqi forces.

“On behalf of Ministry of Defence I would like to express gratitude to NATO for the huge efforts they invested in the development of Iraqi Forces,” Basha said.

During the official ceremony, Spinelli recognized the top three NCOs of the class with certificates of appreciation.




The course was designed and supported by NATO Training Mission – Iraq in cooperation with United States Forces – Iraq to strengthen the NCO corps of Iraqi Security Forces.

This was the fourth SNCO course taught by Iraqi instructors.

NATO has trained Iraqi Security Forces since 2004 and remains committed to supporting the government of Iraq's efforts to resume its important place in the international community.

## Infantrymen build canine facility for Iraqi police brigade

 CAMP CROPPER, Iraq – Soldiers and Sailors with the 89th Military Police Brigade and 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry built a new kennel facility for Iraqi corrections officers' dogs at the Iraqi National Correctional Training Center Dec. 6 through Dec. 11.

The kennel houses six of the nine canines the ICOs received from the Military Professional Resources Incorporation to conduct training.

"The Iraqis were given and provided dogs so that they could have a force protection and anti-terrorism program that included bomb dogs that could also search for contraband," said Maj. Kevin Comfort, 89th MP Bde. fusion cell officer in charge.

Every member of the fusion cell had a hand in the project.

"All of the folks in the fusion cell used the contacts they know to provide the material and then all of us pitched in the labor," Comfort said. "Some of the folks said it was some of the most fun they've had because it was something different. It was something we didn't do every day."

Half of the kennel is devoted to supply storage and in the other half of the building each dog has its own living area connected to a covered running lane outside.

The MPRI will assist in training the ICOs to use the dogs properly.

"They will be training the ICOs on how to use the dogs, the verbal commands and the hand commands," said Senior Chief Petty Officer Randy Lugenbell, with the Naval Provisional Battalion for detainees builder senior chief. "They are showing them how the dogs are there to help them."


"We have some great trainers out there," Lugenbell said. "A lot of these people have been working with canines for many years. Back home they work in law enforcement, as dog handlers or have been military policemen."

This new training facility will also help strengthen the overall safety for Iraqi operations once the U.S. withdraws completely from Iraq.

"They'll be able to find things that they would have never been able to see," Lugenbell said. "It's going to greatly enhance their security because the dogs will be a great asset to them."

The Iraqi Corrections Training Center was transferred from United States Forces Iraq to the Iraqi Minister of Justice at a transfer ceremony Dec. 15.

## Iraqi Artillery School does 'cannoneer hop'

 ABU GHRAIB, Iraq – The Iraqi Army Artillery School supervised 534 Soldiers from five Iraqi Army divisions as they conducted 120mm gun-line drills on a training field at the Iraqi school Dec. 12 in Abu Ghraib, Iraq.

Disciplined crew drills allow units to practice delivering timely and accurate fires upon a target. These gun-line close-order drills are more commonly known as the "cannoneer hop."


In the cannoneer hop, the orchestrated movements begin with the gun crew dashing to the gun line, adjusting their weapons' settings, preparing the ammunition and loading the weapon.

The crew then fires the weapon after the command "gunners ready for orders."

"The Iraqi artillery obviously has branded its own style of 'cannoneer hop' procedures and have validated its effectiveness during live-fire operations," said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Thomas K. Dye, artillery school trainer and adviser.

Each gun section must continually practice this squad-level drill to maintain its proficiency in gun-line operations.

## Personal security detail graduates specialized training

 AN NUMANIYAH, Iraq – The Military Police School at An Numaniyah concluded personal security detail training Dec. 15.

For 45 Soldiers from seven Iraqi Army divisions, this ceremony marked the end of a 10-day course designed to provide each Iraqi Army division with the critical capability of protecting key officials and visiting dignitaries.

"Each Soldier was hand-picked by their division for this specialized program," said Lt. Col. John F. K. Jones, senior adviser.

The instruction emphasized the tactics and techniques to guard a VIP during daily activities and during travel throughout Iraq.

The PSD course consists of classroom and hands-on training in detaining suspects, handcuffing techniques, determining protective detail requirements, and two days of VIP escort-specific training.


"The Soldiers chosen for this course are responsible for protecting the highest echelons of IA leadership," said Jones.

The PSD course is designed to provide realistic training scenarios which validate techniques to guard in vehicles, in urban locations, and on the helicopter landing zones.

Advisers and trainers act as an opposing force and create a stressful and unpredictable situation that the PSD must overcome. This training enables graduates to return to their unit and take the lead in security detail planning and execution of security detail operations.

Lt. Col. Bashar, academy commandant, thanked the Soldiers at the graduation ceremony for their efforts before releasing them to their home units.

## Operation Proper Exit helps injured combat Vets heal emotional wounds

 BAGHDAD – "Alive Day" is a term used by injured combat Veterans to describe the day they escaped death.

Some were left with scrapes and bruises, others lost their limbs, and

some carry emotional wounds they may struggle with for the rest of their lives.

Five combat Veterans returned to Iraq Dec. 28 as part of the "Operation Proper Exit" program, to tell their story and revisit the places they were injured in hopes of finding emotional closure.

This is the third time this year OPE, sponsored by the Troops First Foundation, brought troops to Iraq to participate in the week-long event.

The five Soldiers come from different backgrounds, hold various ranks and have unique stories to tell.

What they share is an understanding of living life as a wounded combat Veteran.

Sgt. Bill Congleton joined the Marine Corps in October 1998 and gave the Corps 10 years before joining the Army in October 2003.

Originally from Sutherlin, Ore., Congleton served with the Oregon National Guard and deployed to Iraq in 2004.

He was two miles outside Camp Taji when he was injured June 23, 2004.

He suffered a below-the-knee amputation of his right leg and a spinal cord injury.

His left foot was salvaged after multiple surgeries and he retired from the Army in June 2006.

Sgt. 1st Class Mike Schlitz, an Army Ranger, joined the service in March 1996.

The Moline, Ill., native was on his first tour, serving with Fort Drum's 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, when he was struck by an improvised explosive device, Feb. 27, 2007.

Schlitz suffered burns covering 85 percent of his body, lost both hands, suffers vision loss and has a limited range of motion.

First Lt. Jim Kirchner, now retired, joined the Army in 1986.

He was serving his first tour to Iraq when his Contingency Operating Location in Mahmoudiyah was hit by mortars.

The Douglasville, Ga., native suffered injuries to his right arm, back and had internal organ damage.

Capt. Sam Brown was commissioned in the Army in March 2006 after graduating from West Point. Brown, a San Antonio native, was serving with Fort Hood's 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, in Kandahar, Afghanistan, when he was struck by an IED in September 2008.

He suffered third-degree burns to 30 percent of his body, including his face.

Although Brown was serving in Afghanistan when he was injured, he came to Iraq because his wife, Capt. Robin Brown, is serving with the 47th Combat Support Hospital out of Fort Lewis, Wash., and because, he said, he wants to speak to others about his experiences.

Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Olson first came to Iraq as a part of OPE in October of this year.

He is returning as a military mentor for his fellow Soldiers.

Olson, of Spokane, Wash., joined the Army in November 1997.

He was on his first tour in Tel a Far when he was injured, Oct. 27, 2003, by a rocket-propelled grenade blast.

His right leg was amputated at the hip.

He continues to serve with the United States Marksmanship Unit at Fort Benning, Ga.

The Soldiers will spend the next six days traveling throughout Iraq with United States Force – Iraq Command Sgt. Maj. Lawrence Wilson, visiting the locations where most of them sustained their injuries.

"We welcome these heroes," Wilson said. "They are here to heal, and we are here to help them do that."



# Phantom Support



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Oshawna Tackett

Spc. Rebecca Buck, the 96th Sustainment Brigade's strength management specialist and a Roy, Utah, native, helped clear boxes out as they became empty at the "yard sale," put on by the 96th Sust. Bde., 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), where everything was free Dec. 19 at the Camp Taji, Iraq, Mudhouse.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Naveed Ali Shah

(Right) Command Sgt. Maj. Nathaniel Bartee, the senior noncommissioned officer with the 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), leads the brigade colors, carried by Sgt. Hesper Lowell, the brigade's command secretary, and members of the brigade's personal security detachment during a Christmas morning 5K run at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Rob Strain



U.S. Army photo by Capt. Murray Shugars

Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth E. Guess, a provost marshal from Nettleton, Miss., clocks a toy car speeding 22 miles per hour Dec. 24 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West. Guess issued a warning to Capt. Christopher Wilton, a communications officer and an Olive Branch, Miss., native, that the maximum speed limit was 15 miles per hour. Both Soldiers serve with Headquarters, and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, out of Senatobia, Miss.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Nayara Torres

Staff Sgt. Shawn Kerr, a loadmaster for 1st Platoon of the Iraqi Truck Company with the 445th Transportation Company, 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Coralville, Iowa, native, fired the M249 semi automatic weapon's range in December. Kerr got extra hands-on experience, practicing with the weapons used on the ITC missions.