

The North Star

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“Doctor Martin Luther King is famous throughout the world - not just in the United States - and this event brought his great work and efforts to everyone’s memories. ... The signs of reunion and unity between the people of Iraq are emerging little by little. ... You will see in the coming years that this nation is great in every aspect.”

-Ali Salih Hussien, president,
Tikrit University



Photo Spc. Cassandra Monroe, 135th MPAD

Guests at the TF Marne Martin Luther King Jr. breakfast listen to a musical selection from the Spirit of the Rock gospel choir. The breakfast was hosted by the TF Marne EO Office. It was held on COB Speicher to remember Martin Luther King Jr. and his ideas about strength through unity and diversity.

TF Marne honors Dr. King

By Spc. Cassandra Monroe
135th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

More than 50 servicemembers and senior U.S. and Iraqi civilian leaders throughout the base filed into the Contingency Operating Base Speicher Main Dining Facility to honor and remember the work of the late Doctor Martin Luther King Jr. during a prayer breakfast, Jan. 18.

Doctor King’s purpose in life as a preacher, and social activist and family man was to bring people together, said

Lt. Col. Shatrece W.B. Buchanan, the Equal Opportunity Program Manager and Deployed Sexual Assault Response Coordinator for the 3rd Infantry Division, Division Special Troops Battalion.

The event began with a biography of Dr. King’s life, then a prayer introduction from Capt. Luis Cardoza, a chaplain with the 166th Regional Support Group.

During the breakfast, Soldiers with the Spirit of the Rock Choir sang an accapella version of “Is My Living In

Vain,” following a video feature of Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech.

Iraqi guests also came to experience how the Americans honor their historical figures.

“In Iraq, we hold the same kind of events to honor our historical figures,” said Ali Salih Hussien, the president of Tikrit University.

“Doctor Martin Luther King Jr. is famous throughout the whole world

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Coloring books aid IP ComRel efforts

By Pvt. Zachary Zuber
3SBCT, 2nd Inf Div PAO

There are many challenges that face U.S. and Iraqi forces as they work together to increase security and build communities in Iraq. Earning the support and trust of the people is the foundation of success for both sides.

In a step to increase good relations with the neighborhood of As'Sadiyah, members of the 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, along with members of the Iraqi Army and local police went to the As'Sadiyah Primary School to speak with the children about the job and responsibilities of an Iraqi Police Officer.

To increase the students' understanding of the things the police do, the 1/14th Cav. brought coloring books depicting the IP's job for the kids to color. The 1/14th Cav. will return later with T-shirts and other prizes to award the children for completing the books.

"When you work with the kids they will become closer to the army and the police," said Capt. Fallah Hassan, As'Sadiyah Police commander. "They also better understand our job which is to help and protect them from enemies."

"The kids seemed a little reserved at first," said Bob Story, a law enforcement advisor for Charlie Troop, 1/14th Cav., "but they were very happy we were there and they opened up."

As Soldiers visited different classes with members of the lo-

cal police and Iraqi Army, they were greeted by chants from students with bright, beaming smiles at each stop. In every room, Capt. Hassan talked to the students briefly to explain the nature of the visit and the duties of the police.

"We rely on the cooperation of the kids and their parents to help us do our job," said Capt. Hassan. "If they can interact with the students monthly or weekly, it produces a positive influence about the Iraqi Police," said Mr. Story. "In places where there may only be, say 10 police, they are extending their eyes to 100 or so people that live in that neighborhood."

As the police work to establish better relationships with members of the area, they will receive better informa-

tion and cooperation from everyone that lives there. Children can be a valuable resource to the police for the information they can provide.

"You have to connect with the neighborhood as police," Mr. Story said. "Kids know more about who belongs in a neighborhood than anyone else because they see everything. So with this connection they will be more likely to report things."

This operation does not just build better relationships with the people, but also between U.S. and Iraqi forces.

"We want to thank the U.S. Army for providing the books and for their cooperation, and we look forward to being able to work more closely with them in the future," said Capt. Hassan.



Photo by Pvt. Zachary Zuber, 3SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div. PAO

Soldiers of the 1/14th Cav., 3SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div., along with Iraqi Army and Police forces, visit with students at the As'Sadiyah Primary School, Jan. 14.

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- not only in the United States - and this event brought his great work and efforts to everyone's memories."

Excerpts from Dr. King's Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech were read by division chaplains, and were followed by personal thoughts by Capt. Jason Gordon, the Task Force Marne Staff Judge Advocate and Master Sgt. Raney Young, with the Task Force Marne Inspector General's office, that reflected Dr. King's life and his ideas

about violence and oppression, peace and faith.

"The signs of reunion and unity between the people of Iraq are emerging little by little, and we are sure that what happened does not represent the history of Iraq," said Hussien. "We are one nation and one country you will see in the coming years that this nation is great in every aspect."

"We must pursue peace through nonviolence by using peace and har-

mony, just as King did himself," said Lt. Col Buchanan. "Let the military serve as a model for showing unity, strength and diversity by bridging the cultural gaps of the United States forces with Iraqi forces."

"Finally, we do have unity today," said Spc. Jeremy Jackson, a member of the choir and a Soldier with the 1083rd Transportation Company. "We just need to take it step by step and we'll come together as one."

IA medical officer learns how to keep water sanitary

By Spc. Shantelle Campbell
4IBCT, 1st Inf. Div. PAO

U.S. Soldiers are doing more than working alongside Iraqi Soldiers to provide a secure and stable Iraq, they are also working with their Iraqi partners to improve health and sanitation in the nation.

Soldiers of Company C, 701st Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division out of Fort Riley, Kan., welcomed and showed 1st Lt. Hazam Hashim Muhammed, a Medical Service Corps officer with the 48th Iraqi Army Battalion, 4th Iraqi Division ways to maintain the health of his Soldiers, Jan. 14 at Contingency Operating Base Speicher's Troop Medical Center.

"I was tasked with showing 1st Lt. Hazam with how the U.S. Army makes an effort to make the water and living situations safe and sanitary for Soldiers," said Spc. Carlos A. Warfield, of California City, Calif., a preventive medicine technician with Co. C, 701st

BSB.

"We showed him different ways to check for bacteria that's in drinking water [and] what the U.S. Army's standards are for different levels of pH and chlorine levels – the things that are important for the bacteriological analyst of water. We [also] showed him how to abate some vector control issues about insects."

The visit made the 48th IA medical officer aware of the alternatives he had when providing water to his Soldiers.

"He can integrate [what he learned] by watching the water and being mindful of the different sources of water," said Warfield. "To be able to test the pH of the water, we were able to supply him with some testing strips ... so he would be able to ensure that the water is safe for his people."



Photo by 2nd Lt. Robert White, 701st BSB, 4IBCT, 1st Inf. Div.
Specialist Carlos A. Warfield, of California City, Calif., a preventive medicine technician with Co. C, 701st BSB, 4IBCT, 1st Inf. Div. out of Fort Riley, Kan., explains how to properly use pH test strips to 1st Lt. Hazam Hasim Muhammed, a Medical Service Corps officer with the 48th IA Bn., 4th Iraqi Div., Jan. 14 during a visit to COB Speicher's TMC.

According to 2nd Lt. Robert White, an environmental science officer with Co. C, 701st BSB, the visit was part of larger plan to help Iraqis within the region to improve their general sanitation.

Individual mindsets have to change to prevent Soldier suicides

By J.D. Leipold
Army News Service

The Army's director of behavioral health proponent said until the service changes many policies that perpetuate stigma, potentially suicidal Soldiers will avoid seeking help.

Speaking at the departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs Suicide Prevention Conference, Col. Elspeth C. Ritchie explained that stigma continues to keep Soldiers from asking for help, the service is not there yet.

Despite the Army's efforts to cease suicides and tackle the issues that cause Soldiers to take their lives, Col. Ritchie said in the first eight days of this month, the Army lost eight active-duty Soldiers and that suicide numbers were increasing.

"We talk so much about reducing stigma, but I don't think we're going to get there until we actually change policies," she said. The data to support her claim was drawn from Fort Carson, Colo., but was "amazingly consistent"

Working to Eliminate the Stigma of Seeking Help



"We are also working very, very hard in the Army to eliminate the stigma long associated with seeking and receiving help. This is a matter of life and death, and it is absolutely unacceptable to have individuals suffering in silence because they're afraid their peers or superiors will make fun of them or, worse, it will adversely affect their careers."

"As a part of our efforts to improve the health and wellness of the entire force, we are educating soldiers about risky behavior, from the most benign things, such as poor diet and sleep deprivation, to more serious behaviors, such as substance abuse, aggression and recklessness."

GEN Peter W. Chiarelli, VCSA, 17 November 2009

with what she had seen first-hand at forts Stewart and Bliss as well as in Iraq, she added.

Colonel Ritchie explained while she and her team were in Iraq conducting a study of suicides in theater, when Soldiers in the focus group were asked how they sought help, the answers she received ranged from, "I'm not going to talk to anybody," to "I'm not going to Combat Stress Control."

She also said that older Soldiers care about their careers while younger Soldiers care what their buddies will

think about them, so troubled Soldiers simply don't ask or seek help. Colonel Ritchie is also questioning the true worth of getting Soldiers to treatment.

"Unfortunately, our Soldiers who go to get treatment are still committing suicide," she said. "Now about 50 percent of Soldiers who commit suicide have been seen by behavioral health in the year before their deaths and about half of those or 25 percent have been seen in the month before their deaths, so just getting them to treatment isn't making the difference."

Task Force Marne Heroes of the North



Navy Petty Officer First Class (EOD1) Dewayne Cheatham, of Greenville, Ala., is an explosive ordnance disposal technician with, 2nd Platoon, 3rd Company, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 12. He has preformed superbly as lead petty officer and team leader for Task Force Troy - North's Patrol Base Love EOD Team. Since his arrival to Salah ad-Din province three months ago, he has led his team in the elimination of around 850 captured ordnance items, greatly contributing to the security of the citizens of Samarra. He has executed more than 20 Qualified Reaction Force/ EOD responses as team leader, eliminating the deadly threat of live IEDs and recovering components to support future exploitation. His team's expert evaluation of IED responses in Samarra has led to evidence collected to support warrant packages and ultimately enforce Iraqi Rule of Law. His steadfast devotion to duty and unrelenting perseverance reflect highly upon himself, making Petty Officer Cheatham the embodiment of the highest standards of the United States Navy and highly deserving of the honor of being today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.



Specialist Jonathan Kelley, of Pryor, Okla., is with 4-1 Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division. He demonstrated outstanding technical expertise while serving as Forward Operating Base Dagger's Sustainability Transition Team's only generator mechanic. He single-handedly ensured the FOB's living service area had the power necessary for successful operations in support of the 4th Iraqi Army Division. Specialist Kelley is responsible for the FOB's power supply, including a generator that supplies 45 percent of the 4th IA's power. Specialist Kelley's ingenuity has prevented sustained power outages. He once used a paper clip to secure a hose in lieu of a back-ordered hose clamp. Specialist Kelley's dedication to duty and 'can do' attitude have earned him recognition as the battalion's hero of the week and make him an obvious choice for today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.

Iraqi views of marriage beginning to change

Cultural Tidbit Special to the North Star

Arranged marriages were common in Iraq. This practice is becoming more rare, and a law was passed that gave authority to a state-appointed judge to overrule the wishes of the father in the event of an early marriage.

The Muslim majority traditionally views marriage as a contract between

two families, as the family's needs are considered most important. In urban settings, women and men have more options in choosing their spouses, though the proposed spouse still must have parental approval.

Partners often come from the same kin group, and though marriage between different ethnic groups is accepted, it is not too common.

With current economic hard-ships,

families tend to live with extended households. The extended family unit consists of the older couple, sons, their wives and families, and unmarried daughters.

Divorce is also accepted, but usually is left solely as a decision of the husband. If the husband wishes to be divorced, it is normally without question or problem, while it is close to impossible for a woman to initiate a divorce proceeding.

Traditionally in Iraq, women have tended to marry in their 20s at the latest. But now, according to government officials, difficult economic conditions as a result of a decade of international sanctions have forced a change in marriage patterns.

In Iraq, there are now said to be one million women over the age of 35 who are not married. In the corridors of a Baghdad University, many women students say they want a decent career before they will consider marriage.

Safety Thought of the Week: Laser pointers

- *Three primary hazards involved with lasers are: distractions, spot or flash blindness and permanent eye damage.*
- *Victims will not know there has been eye damage until they begin to lose fields of vision.*
- *Distractions can cause accidents.*
- *Never look into the beam of any laser.*
- *Take all lasers seriously – Eliminate horseplay.*
- *Never point a laser toward anyone's eyes!*

REGIONAL HEADLINES

Washington women may take dog dispute to court

Kitsapsun.com

KITSAP COUNTY, Wash. - Kitsap County sheriff's deputies were asked on Jan. 17 to intervene in a dispute over a dog's ownership. But they eventually concluded that a court may have to resolve the matter.

The incident began when a 25-year-old Bremerton woman volunteered to care for a dog that her boss had found running loose. The idea was that she would keep the dog until it could be turned over to the Kitsap County Humane Society, which was closed at the time.

The woman posted information about the dog on Craigslist and distributed fliers in the area of Tacoma where the dog had been found. Meanwhile, she said the animal appeared to have health issues, so she took it to a veterinarian. The vet confirmed that the dog had rotten teeth, according to a report from sheriff's deputies.

The woman asked the vet to take care of the problem, so the dog's teeth were cleaned.

Meanwhile, the possible owner of the dog, a 44-year-old Tacoma woman, showed up and asked to take the animal. But she refused to pay the vet bill, which amounted to more than \$300.

The 25-year-old told deputies Jan. 17 that the older woman didn't have proof that she owned the dog.

Although the animal was said to be 9 years old, it had never been licensed or implanted with an ID chip.

"I then asked her why she refused to pay the vet bill if the dog was hers," the deputy wrote in his report, "and she said that because there was nothing wrong with the dog." The woman told him she had the paperwork from her vet to prove it.

Well, the deputy told her, that would tend to confirm that this dog was not the same animal as the one she owned. Later, the woman acknowledged that her dog had dental problems, and she agreed to pay the vet bill.

The 25-year-old said she still questions whether this woman owns the dog, and she still has concerns about the overall health of the animal. While the 44-year-old had pictures of the dog, the deputy said that is not proof of ownership.

After conferring with his sergeant, the two officers agreed that this is a civil matter best settled in court.

Group to build home for wounded soldier

Hillsboro Star-Journal

MARION, Kan.- The program may not be familiar to local residents but the cause is a common one.

The organization, Homes for Our Troops, is planning to construct a new home in Marion for the Ryan and Carrie Newell family, but they will need help to do it.

With the philosophy of building homes not only with their hands but also with their hearts, Larry Archer, the Build Brigade Construction

Manager for the organization, was in Marion Jan. 11-12, lining up businesses and individuals to help with the project.

"It takes a lot of volunteers to make this happen," Archer said.

Army Sgt. Ryan Newell was injured a year ago when the Humvee in which he was riding was destroyed by a homemade bomb in Afghanistan. Both of Newell's legs were amputated.

His wife, Carrie, is a 1997 Marion High School graduate. Her parents, Tom and Shawn Wunderlick, also live in Marion.

The organization has completed 40 homes and there are 33 homes across the U.S. in progress of being built. Homes for Our Troops recently purchased a lot in Country Club Heights in Marion. The City of Marion will waive utility tap fees and building permit costs. The remainder of the costs come from donations.

The construction of the home will be supervised by the organization with local and area volunteers providing labor.

Plans are to have the majority of the home constructed in three days. Local contractors and professionals will be used, which Archer said was important to the process.

"You can never serve your country enough," he said.

THE North Star

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2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team,
3rd Infantry Division

3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team,
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