

THE RAIDER

Tribe

December 2009

Vol. 1, Issue 3



"To The Objective!"

RAIDER 6

COLONEL JOHN NORRIS

4th SBCT COMMANDER



Fellow Raiders, Families, and Friends of the Raider Brigade,

Our tribe, the Raider Tribe, has experienced some major achievements and some heart-breaking losses over the last month. Our Soldiers and Iraqi partners continue to grow and work together to make Iraq a more secure and prosperous place.

We celebrated Thanksgiving, sharing our culture with our partners and making it the best we could while away from our families. The Raider Inn dining facility and our Forge Warriors all across our brigade area of operations went all out creating chocolate turkeys, ice sculptures, a life-size Raider warrior made out of butter, and a massive replica Stryker. Raiders around the brigade played football games, built bonfires, and were visited by generals. It was a good day, and we were able to enjoy fellowship with the team, while still maintaining our partnership and security requirements.

In early December, we were sadly reminded of the dangers our men and women in uniform face on a daily basis, whether police, Soldiers, or firemen. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Lakewood community and the families of our fallen police officers as they recover from the senseless and tragic loss. Lakewood Sergeant Mark Renninger, Officer Ronald Owens, Officer Tina Griswold, and

Officer Greg Richards helped protect our community and participated in and mentored young Soldiers as a part of our Lakewood Ride along program. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families of these officers and they will be greatly missed from our community.

Our Iraqi partners have felt loss as well. Two sets of bombings have affected many people in Baghdad; however, the Iraqi Army is not deterred. They are committed to defeating the enemy and protecting the people from these terrorists. They are determined to stop these heinous terrorist attacks and, with Raider partnership, are committed to doing their jobs better and learning ways to collect evidence and to identify and prosecute terrorists.

This is evident in the recently created combined exploitation task force (Raider CSI). This force consists of U.S. EOD, Iraqi EOD, police trainers, and Iraqi security forces who respond to the scene of an event to help collect the evidence. This simple initiative has already proven itself to be a combat multiplier and just recently was successful in getting its first arrest with an Iraqi arrest warrant for crimes committed.

These visible steps forward are critical to the success of the mission and the inevitable responsible reduction of forces that we will face after the election. The Raiders, Iraqi Army and Police forces know the incredible challenges we face ahead. We need



to prevent the infiltration of terrorist bombers, and set the conditions for the upcoming elections so that the Iraqi people can turn the page to the next chapter, moving further away from their bloodied history. The seat of the government resides in western Baghdad, making Raider Soldiers, along with our partners, the main effort of the country. We sit at the center of gravity for Iraq; there is no greater responsibility and no greater purpose than what our Raiders are now doing.

As we approach the New Year, let us remember the sacrifices all of us had made, the success of both our Soldiers and the Iraqi people, and the friendships that continue to grow with our Iraqi partners.

Raider 6
"To the Objective!"

RAIDER 7

CSM JEFFREY HUGGINS

4th SBCT COMMAND SERGEANT MA-



Raiders,

As we enter into the New Year, your hard work and commitment to the mission have not gone unnoticed. You continue to set the standard and the example for all others to follow. However, many challenges still lie in store for us in the future.

The world is an ever changing place, and as our brothers continue to fight in Afghanistan, we must remain just as vigilant and prepared in Iraq. Continue to train and remain vigilant- we are still at war and the enemy is still very much alive.

This past month we have also seen the brigade's operational environment grow.

As other units redeploy, part of the drawdown of U.S. forces, we must be ready to step up and take their place.

The expansion of our OE will require us to do more in different ways, to pursue the enemy into new areas and foster new relationships with our Iraqi partners.

We must continue to improvise, learn, and adapt to our new areas and their challenges. We must be prepared for all contingencies. I am confident that you will be successful in these endeavors.

The coming elections will be a true test of our Iraqi partners. We will continue to work with and support them as

they support the Iraqi people.

Continue to be vigilant, do all the small things right and look out for your Raider buddy.

I am incredibly proud of all that you have accomplished thus far, and know that your commitment to the mission will continue as we move into 2010.

Always remember:

BE SAFE

BE SMART

And when required...BE LETHAL!

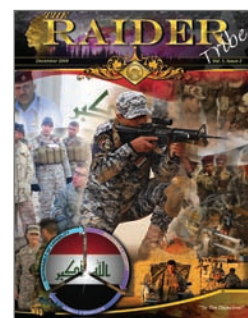


Raider 7

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On the cover:

Photos by 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div. and Capt. David Franklin, 2nd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment unit public affairs representative
Photo illustration by Damon Godinet





Photo by Spc. Luisito Brooks, 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

BAGHDAD – Soldiers with the 1434th Engineer Company hold a piece of wood while an Iraqi Army engineer Soldier saws the wood during the construction of a joint operation center at Forward Operating Base Constitution, Dec. 8.

Combined facility lays strong foundation

**Story by Spc. Luisito Brooks
4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.**

BAGHDAD – American and Iraqi engineers raised the frame work on the nearly completed Joint Operation Center, here, bringing under one roof the resources of the Iraqi Army, Iraqi police forces and the U.S. Soldiers of the 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division.

The new JOC will provide more room and equipment for the Iraqi and U.S. forces and will offer a direct avenue for faster coordination of personnel for operations.

“If an incident occurs in our (operating environment), the Iraqi Army can track it and request support directly

from Iraqi police forces or [U.S.] Soldiers,” said Capt. Reed Markham, the JOC battle captain from Shreveport, La. “There will be representatives from each organization inside the JOC to facilitate that request.”

Soldiers from the 1434th Engineer Company, based out of Michigan, and the Iraqi Army are working hand in hand to construct the 2,500 square-foot building.

“We like to participate in all projects with [American] Soldiers because it gives us more experience with our jobs and we like to exchange new ideas about things,” said Mustafa, a 6th Division Iraqi Army electrician and carpenter. “I like to use my hand

to build things with my friend, the U.S. Army, because it lets me know that I really am working on something that will improve my country.”

Personnel that work at the current JOC are glad about the extra elbow room that they will have at the new facility.

“In (the new) building, we will have more room for all the different organizations and equipment needed for information gathering and planning operations,” said Markham. “We are basically working out of a small office right now, so this will help in such a big way.”

See FOUNDATION, page 31

Zaidon Bridge reopens as result of stable security

Story by Pfc. Kimberly Hackbarth
4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

BAGHDAD – Iraqi officials reopened Zaidon Bridge, Nov. 30, once again linking Zaidon and Khandary and proving that area security has improved immensely since 2005 when the bridge was first closed.

U.S. forces closed the bridge because it provided strategic access to the area for al-Qaeda in Iraq and insurgent forces.

Gen. Abud Kanbar Hashim Al Maliki, commander of Baghdad Operational Command, along with local leaders from all over Abu Ghraib and surrounding areas, participated in the reopening of the bridge.

At the reopening ceremony, local children released 20 doves that flew overhead as Abud cut the ribbon, officially restoring access to the bridge.

The general, along with the local leaders, then led a walk across the bridge.

Once everyone crossed the bridge, the realization that this new transportation route was secure and would benefit the people of the surrounding areas manifested.

“We’re reconnecting, reopening, rebuilding and reconstructing,” said Abud. “This indicates that we are making progress.”

Soldiers with 38th Engineer Company, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division assisted engineers with 6th Iraqi Army Division by providing equipment such as dump trucks and excavators for debris removal. The 4th SBCT Soldiers also helped move the barriers that blocked traffic from entering the bridge.

The Iraqi engineers really impressed the 38th Eng. Soldiers with their professionalism and willingness to work with U.S. forces, said Capt. Evan Timmens, a native of



Photo by Pfc. Kimberly Hackbarth, 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

BAGHDAD – Col. John Norris (far right), commander, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, attends a ceremony with his 6th Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police counterparts in celebration of a bridge, linking Zaidon to Khandary, reopening Nov. 30, after being closed since 2005. Following the ceremony Gen. Abud Kanbar Hashim Al Maliki, commander of Baghdad Operational Command, cut the ribbon, officially opening the bridge for public use.

San Antonio, Texas, now the company commander of 38th Eng. Co., 4th SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div.

“Overall, the reopening of the bridge shows that the Iraqi Army cares about the local population,” said Timmens.

Not only does the IA care about the local populace, but about the future of Zaidon and the areas surrounding it.

“The bridge is part of the legacy that we put upon ourselves,” said Abud.

Like the Zaidon Bridge that connects two areas, the legacy Abud referred to the connections Iraqis and U.S. forces share working together to accomplish great things for the future of Iraq through an expanding partnership.



RAIDERS
“TO THE OBJECTIVE”
OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM
‘09-’10



Raider Brigade's

Raider Soldiers celebrate all



Photo by Spc. Luisito Brooks, 4th SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div.

(Left) CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – After nearly a week of getting his hands sticky and standing in a sub-zero freezer, Spc. Christian Colon, a Killeen, Texas native, puts on the finishing touches on a six-foot-tall Raider statue made of butter, Nov. 26, for display during the Thanksgiving Day meal at the Raider Inn dining facility .



Photo by Pfc. Kimberly Hackbarth, 4th SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div.

(Above) CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Staff Sgt. Felix Delgado (right), a platoon sergeant, and Capt. Omarrio Almada, a company commander, both with Company A, 702nd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, drink sparkling cider out of specially made Raider Brigade glasses during a Thanksgiving meal at the Raider Inn dining facility, Nov. 26.

(Below) CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – A display cake depicting the 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division's battalion and brigade shields is displayed during a Thanksgiving meal at the Raider Inn dining facility, Nov. 26.



Photo by Pfc. Kimberly Hackbarth, 4th SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div.

Thanksgiving '09

across western Baghdad Nov. 26

(Right) BAGHDAD – Leaders with 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division serve a Thanksgiving meal to their Soldiers at Joint Security Station Justice, Nov. 26. The Soldiers chose from a variety of Thanksgiving foods on the chow line.

(Below) CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Col. John Norris, the 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division commander, and other members of the 4th SBCT command group raise their glasses in celebration of the Thanksgiving holiday, Nov. 26 at the Raider Inn dining facility.



Photo by Spc. Luisito Brooks, 4th SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div.



Photo by Pfc. Kimberly Hackbarth, 4th SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div.



Photo by Spc. Luisito Brooks, 4th SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div.

BAGHDAD – Using a toothpick and a steady hand, Staff Sgt. Angelene Davis, a Kailua, Hawaii native, makes the feathers for a chocolate turkey, Nov. 26, for the display at the Thanksgiving Day meal at the Raider Inn dining facility on Camp Liberty.



MANCHU 6

Lt. Col. Mark Bieger

4th Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment Commander



To the Warriors and families of the Manchu Battalion,

The Manchus continue to make significant progress with our Allies, the 24th Iraqi Army Brigade, in securing the population of western Abu Ghraib.

We have made a good impression with the local populace and leaders and have reinforced the efforts of the Government of Iraq in this area.

Our Soldiers make the incredible look routine and they do it day and night, without fail – and with strength, discipline and honor.

The battalion as a whole is achieving some unbelievable results here in Iraq.

Collectively, we are accomplishing what we thought was near impossible just nine months ago.

As a team, we are conducting operations at a remarkable level.

We have overcome significant challenges and obstacles over the past year to get to this point.

The reason this is even remotely possible is due to the fact that we are surrounded by leaders of the highest caliber.

In the Manchu Battalion, we serve with and for a group of leaders who are truly our nation's finest.

Leaders such as Staff Sgt. Jon Graham, Staff Sgt. Christian Garcia, Staff Sgt. Hector Valadez and Staff Sgt. Marco Amezcua.

These four represent the best lead-

ers our Army, our nation, can produce - period.

Their example is the epitome of courage. Their leadership is an inspiration to those they lead and those they come into contact with. Their strength is solid, unmoving and without fail. Their dedication is to the mission and their Soldiers.

These four men are what the infantry is all about. They are trusted with a responsibility like no other.

They take a group of young men, train them, turn them in to Soldiers – and then lead them in harm's way to face of our nation's enemies.

At the end of the day – those young

“The battalion as a whole is achieving some unbelievable results here in Iraq.”

-Lt. Col. Mark Bieger

Soldiers want nothing more in the world than to be like their squad leader.

They will spend the rest of their career working to attain that standard and be that kind of role model for the young Soldiers who soon will follow them.

They will return home and tell their families and friends stories of the heroism and the things that they were



taught.

For the rest of their lives, they will remember the image of their squad leader-the strength of his voice and the steel in his eyes- and they will mature and develop in his example.

We have a lot to be thankful for this holiday season - our continued health, our incredible families back home and each other. And we need to be thankful for leaders like the four above and the others who stand beside them with honor.

They are heroes.

They are the kind of men that books should be written about and they are the reason that the Manchus are strong.

I am thankful and privileged to serve with these men – and I am extremely proud to call myself a Manchu.

Manchu 6
“Keep Up the Fire.”



Air assault training at JSS Aqur Quf

Story by Pfc. Kimberly Hackbarth
4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

BAGHDAD – Like something right out of an Army recruitment commercial, a helicopter landed in the center of an open sandy space, kicking up dust in every direction as Soldiers in full body armor jumped out and dropped flat on their stomachs with heads low and weapons aimed.

These Soldiers, however, were not in a commercial. They are members of 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division practicing loading onto and off of a UH-60 Blackhawk during air assault training here, Dec.4.

The platoon leader, 1st Lt. Mark Hamilton signed up his Soldiers for the training to meet the battalion's objective of having every Soldier be familiar with air assault tactics.

"As a Stryker Brigade, there are places the vehicles that we use can't



Photo by Pfc. Kimberly Hackbarth, 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

JOINT SECURITY STATION AQUR QUF, Iraq – Spc. Josh Millwee (far left), a Stryker driver, Spc. John Bailo, a vehicle commander, Pvt. Edgar Garcia, a grenadier, all with 2nd Platoon, Company A, 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, jump off a UH-60 Blackhawk onto the ground and dive onto their stomachs while aiming at an imaginary, distant target during air assault training here, Dec.4.

go because of their size and weight," said Hamilton. "It's always good to have platoons capable of doing a

quick air mission, so when the time comes to do an air assault mis-

See AIR ASSAULT, page 14

Medical teams gain experience from MASCAL exercise

Story by Pfc. Kimberly Hackbarth
4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Pfc. Tessa Marsh, a combat medic, arrived on the scene where she found five people "injured" from a simulated mortar attack during a mass



Photo by Pfc. Kimberly Hackbarth, 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Soldiers with 702nd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division evaluate a "patient" before treating him during a mass casualty exercise, here, Dec. 14.

casualty exercise here, Dec.14.

After checking with a combat life saver-qualified Soldier who had already assessed the wounded, Marsh treated the most critically injured person by quickly placing a tourniquet on a

man's severed arm, simultaneously explaining to a fellow Soldier how to tourniquet the man's leg.

As she aided the injured man, Marsh had two things on her mind: her medical skills and communication with those around her.

Because of the limited number of medical staff on site, she worked to do what was best for the patients while communicating with others on scene, in order to provide aid the most seriously injured, explained Marsh, a Lacrosse, Wisc. native, with the 702nd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division.

Marsh's team evacuated casualties to Riva Ridge Troop Medical Center where Staff Sgt. Charles Ensminger, the medical evacuation platoon sergeant acted as the triage officer, sorting incoming patients into medical categories before sending them to treatment.

See MASCAL, page 19



All clear at clearing barrel

Photo by Spc. Luisito Brooks, 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

Story by Spc. Luisito Brooks
4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

BAGHDAD – Soldiers of the 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division take weapon clearing procedures very seriously, as if their battle buddy's life depended on it: Because it does.

"The very moment you take the weapon clearing procedures lightly is the moment where a Soldier could get seriously injured or maybe killed," said Staff Sgt. John Moore, from Dresden, Germany.

Clearing a weapon isn't a one-time thing or done just when you feel like it.

"When we go out on missions, we lock and load all of our weapons to protect ourselves from the enemy," said 1st Lt. Brandon Pasko, a Cin-

cinnati native. "So when we return it's our responsibility, as leaders, to protect ourselves, from ourselves, by conducting and checking for the proper weapon clearing procedures."

They explained that there are several reasons why weapon clearing procedures are so important, and why it is necessary to be aware of what to do when you are standing in front of the clearing barrel.

"By ensuring that my Soldiers know the steps (to clearing a weapon) and can perform it every time, I can ensure my Soldiers aren't carrying a loaded weapon back to their room," said Moore. "I am also implementing discipline into each Soldier."

Soldiers in the unit said they understand the purpose for the constant

performing of the weapon clearing procedures.

"When I become that leader of a couple Soldiers, it will be my responsibility to teach them the procedures and the reason why we do it," said Spc. Joshua Winslow, a Raleigh, N.C. native. "After I teach my Soldiers and [when] they get Soldiers, they will teach them."

It may seem like a simple thing to remember, but the Soldiers said that they are aware of the importance of the procedure and know that complacency kills.

"It's the small details and routine things that can be the most important," said Pasko. "We are constantly in a fight against fratricide, and this is just one of our tools."





ASSAULT 6

Capt. Johnny Fry

Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 12th Field Artillery Regiment Commander



Rock Soldiers, families, and friends,

BAGHDAD – Assault Battery, 2nd Battalion, 12th Field Artillery Regiment has mastered the art of making something seemingly complex look easy.

The Italians have a word which explains this sentiment: “Sprezzatura”.

Although it’s a word that does not have a direct English translation, the spirit of what it means can be applied to anything.

Assault Battery is made up of artillerymen, but you won’t find a howitzer on our joint security station.

Although most Soldiers would rather be loading rounds into an M777, for the time being, Assault Soldiers are infantrymen, something not foreign to most of our Soldiers which were deployed with 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division during the “surge” in 2007.

Since deploying to Baghdad, Iraq in September 2009, Assault Battery, under the leadership of Capt. Fry and 1st Sgt. Lyter, has undergone multiple changes.

From a new platoon sergeant, new executive officer, and two new platoon leaders, Assault Battery has continued to accomplish the mission without breaking stride.

Like most of 4th SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div., our mission set has been changing in order to accommodate the transition of power to the Government of Iraq.

With this transition comes flexibility. Assault Battery recognizes this flexibility and thrives upon it.

Stationed at JSS Muthana as the land-owning unit, in partnership with the 1st Battalion, 54th Brigade, 6th Iraq Army Division, Assault Battery has contributed to the fight in a plethora of ways.

Assault Battery has conducted five complex operations in partnership with the IA. Two successful missions involved the clearances of Muhalla’s in search of weapons caches.

Another mission involved the security of military working dogs patrolling the Baghdad EXPO in Mansour.

One platoon teamed up with an IA special forces unit for training and the next day pulled guard around our JSS.

At the same time, their sister platoon was transferring detainees and conducting “time sensitive missions” with our IA counterparts.

To finish, both platoons constantly assist the first sergeant in various base defense operations.

From the installation of a new AEROSTAT surveillance platform to the most mundane task of filling sand bags and painting walls, every Assault Soldier is contributing their part to complete this non-standard mission.

Thus, in recognition of this hard work, Assault Battery has promoted six Soldiers and NCOs and, at the same time, reenlisted three Soldiers



to continue serving our country for years to come.

All these accomplishments, promotions, and reenlistments have occurred in only the first three months of our deployment. Assault Battery doesn’t anticipate things slowing down anytime soon.

By definition, Assault Battery, in the simplest of terms, is meant to put steel on target. However, this is not our mission!

Good units complete non-standard missions to standard. Superb units do the same but make it look effortless and seamless. The 4th SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div. does this, 2nd Bn., 12th FAR does this, and most importantly, Assault Battery, through its Soldiers, embodies this “Sprezzatura”, the art of making the difficult look easy!

**Assault 6
“Vikings!”**

Army cooks keep Soldiers fed

Story by Spc. Luisito Brooks
4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

BAGHDAD – While most military dining facilities are run by contracted employees, at a few remote locations, it's the U.S. Soldiers that still provide the meals.

At Joint Security Station Justice, on Baghdad's west side, Soldiers from the 702nd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division are in charge of the running the DFAC that serves approximately 2,000 meals every day.

"In Iraq, we don't often get a chance to cook for our Soldiers because most DFACs are much larger and so contractors are hired to run those facilities," said Staff Sgt. Herbert Perry, the JSS Justice DFAC's non-commissioned officer-in-charge.



Photo by Spc. Luisito Brooks, 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

JOINT SECURITY STATION JUSTICE, Iraq – Spc. Jeremy Bollinger, a cook with 702nd Brigade Support Battalion, grills T-bone steaks here, Nov. 24.

Smaller bases don't have the luxury of being able to contract out food services, so Army cooks step in to do the job they were trained to do.

Because they are serving their own, the Soldiers that manage the JSS Justice dining facility said they take pride in the opportunity to cook for Soldiers.

"It is our responsibility to care for the health and well-being of every person that eats here," said Spc. Jeremy Bollinger, one of the cooks; adding that it's not just U.S. Soldiers but also contractors, translators, local and international visitors who eat at their DFAC.

With such a variety of guests eating the DFAC, it's important to take into considerations that many come from different religious and cultural backgrounds.

"We prepare each day for the different diets and appetites that come through here, said Perry, a native of Alexandria, La. "We try to accommodate every type of diet by adding a vegetarian area, no pork items and things like that."

Soldiers that have eaten there say it is a good thing to see that Soldiers are still providing the food.

"The DFAC has gotten a lot better than it used to be because now there are more choices," said Spc. Joshua Wilson, a Raleigh, N.C. native.

For the cooks, each meal represents a chance to hone their skills and fill hungry stomachs.

"We prepare hours and hours every day to ensure that every Soldier gets to eat," said Perry, "Our motto is that we will never leave a Soldier hungry."

...AIR ASSAULT from page 10

his first time taking part in this type of training. The Mount Vernon, Ill. native said he enjoyed jumping out of the Blackhawk onto the ground.

But while he had fun during the training, Flanagan knew that the training was important to the mission of the brigade.

"It shows that they want us to be on top of the game and know what we're doing in different situations," said Flanagan. "If we need to do something a Stryker can't do, it shows the brigade is ready to do it, even if we are not in our normal vehicles."

The training included a night assault that had the Soldiers apply the same skills after the sun went down that they learned during the daytime.

By the end of the training day, the Soldiers, covered in dirt from their numerous exits from the Blackhawks, learned the basic skills needed to execute an air assault mission and looked forward to learning even more in future training sessions.



Photo by Pfc. Kimberly Hackbarth, 4th SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div.

JOINT SECURITY STATION AQUR QUF, Iraq – Pfc. Nicholas Newcomb (left), a Stryker driver with Company A, 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, shuts the door of a UH-60 Blackhawk as Pvt. Edgar Garcia, a grenadier with 2nd Plt., assists, here, Dec. 4.



Preventive Medicine

Keyboards and infectious disease

**Story by 1st Lt. Karin Osborne-Frey, preventive medicine officer
702nd Brigade Support Battalion**

In a day and age when we are so educated about washing our hands before we enter the dining facility and when we leave the latrines – why is that we overlook one of the filthiest surfaces in our environment?

The truth is, our computer keyboard, a fixture in our modern, daily life, is - studies prove - dirtier than our toilet seats.

Most of us touch more than a few every day. We have our personal computer, our office computers, and then...worst of all, the shared computers.

The most villainous of these are the “community” computers found at smaller joint security stations, where they provide the only communication line to family and friends.

Everyone touches them throughout the day. No attempts are made to keep them clean and no one seems to realize that they need to be.

Studies on the bacterial load our keyboards carry are frightening.

In 2002, the University of Arizona did bacteria count comparisons between office toilet seats and office computer keyboards. The keyboards were found to have 21,000 germs per square inch and the toilet seats had only 49 per square inch.

In 2005, studies from Chicago’s Northwestern Memorial Hospital found that several pathogenic strains of bacteria, including the dreaded methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), survive quite happily on the surfaces of computer keyboards. Add to that any number of infectious organisms, including cold and flu viruses, and the potential for disease is staggering. After all, 80% of the infectious illness we get as human beings is transmitted to us through the objects in our daily environments.

The behaviors that bring these numbers so far up are the same ones that we fight by requiring Soldiers to wash their hands before dinner.

Eating at the computer, coughing or sneezing without covering the mouth, and having poor hand washing habits bring disease to the keyboard. Because keyboards are relatively delicate electronic items – our reluctance to keep them clean is understandable, but not excusable. We all can wash our hands before and after using a ‘communal’ keyboard.

Other simple solutions include not eating at the computer, or, if we must, wiping down the key surfaces with sanitary wipes, and generally keeping the areas around these computers dust free and clean. Computer keyboard covers are also effective in mitigating the problems of cleaning keyboards and electronic damage, but most people tend not to like them. Canned air helps remove crumbs stuck between keys. Also, turning over the keyboard and giving it a shake will help relieve it of some of its extra mass.

So, regardless of our need for them, it is wise to remember that computer keyboards are as potentially capable of transmitting disease to us as dirty water, poor food quality or unsanitary latrines.

As we sit down to use them, we must be aware that others have done exactly the same before us.

We must treat them with the same care as any other unhealthy surface, even though our associations with them are strongly positive (communicating with family, friends and fellow Soldiers in the battle space).

Keep them clean and keep illness away!

*This one time
at an Army
camp...*



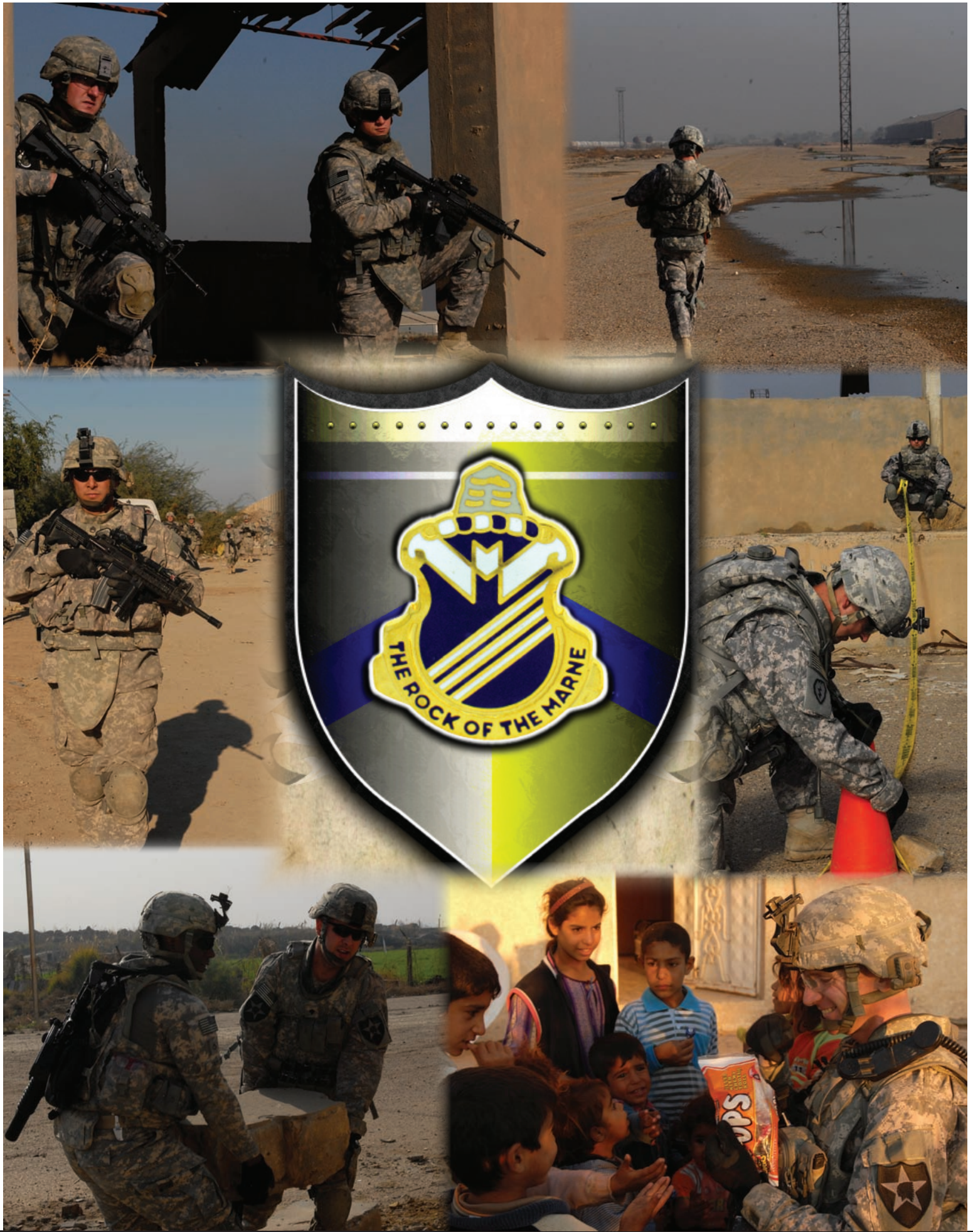
Courtesy photo

(Fig. 1) At left: A unsanitary computer keyboard, in a joint security station morale, welfare, recreation computer room. The computer is dusty and the keys gray from use.



Courtesy photo

(Fig.2) Another keyboard and computer system with a food wrapper next to it.



ROCK 6

Lt. Col. John Leffers

1st Battalion, 38th Infantry Regiment Commander



Rock Soldiers, families, and friends,

It has been another very busy, but successful, month for the "Rock of the Marne." The Rock Soldiers have adjusted well to the constant demands of patrolling, working with both their Iraqi Army and Police Partners, and assisting the local Government of Iraq in providing a better quality of life and standards of living for the citizens in Abu Ghraib.

Attack Company has been diligently focusing their efforts to improve potable water distribution throughout their operational environment. In conjunction with the local government and Iraqi Army, they have made it their number one priority. This success will help establish further legitimacy for the local government.

"...The Rock Battalion is making a significant difference with our Iraqi Partners and with the citizens of Abu Ghraib."

-Lt. Col. John Leffers

Bayonet Company and the Scout Platoon continue to strengthen their partnership with the Iraqi Police and various key tribal sheikhs and village elders. Their line of effort is centralized on improving the overall quality of life in the northern OE.

Chaos Company continues to leverage micro grants as an economic stimulus. The micro grants aid local business owners in becoming more established and help to increase local prosperity.

Hunter Company continues to improve the standards of living for the Rock Soldiers. Their hard work has result-

ed in several improvements to the battalion Morale, Welfare, Recreation tent, further enhancements to the battalion headquarters and several other small projects in and around the Rock foot print.

R&R leave is fully underway. Many of you have spent time with your loved one(s) or are anticipating their arrival. I sincerely hope your time together was enjoyable.

As November came to a close, the battalion had several promotions that took place.

Master Sgt. Stephen Robinson was laterally promoted to first sergeant and took over for B Co.; therefore, moving 1st Sgt. Arnett to Company H where he conducted a change of responsibility with 1st Sgt. Wilson who subsequently became the new first sergeant for the brigade Headquarters and Headquarters Company.

Additionally, four second lieutenants were promoted to first lieutenant; 1st Lt. Meier (A Co), 1st Lt. Howard (B Co), 1st Lt. Byers (C Co) and 1st Lt. Markley (HHC).

As we continue to move through December, the Rock Battalion is making a significant difference with our Iraqi Partners and with the citizens of Abu Ghraib.

In closing, I want to wish everyone Happy Holidays!

Thank you for your continued support of all the Rock Soldiers and their families.



Rock 6
"Rock of the Marne!"

Attack Company, 1st Bn., 38th Inf. Regt. ‘Rock’ on

**Story by Capt. Daniel Krupa
A Co., 1st Bn., 38th Inf. Regt.**

After two successful months, Attack Company, 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry Regiment is continuing to partner with 2nd Company, 4th Battalion, 24th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division in the vicinity of Abu Ghraib to secure the local area and build the legitimacy of the Government of Iraq. When A Co. first arrived, 2nd Co. was in the middle of a transitional period. However, 2nd Co. immediately welcomed A Co. and expressed a strong desire to partner together to improve their operational environment.

Since that time, the companies have been conducting almost daily, bilateral patrols, military training, and force protection improvements to improve the security of the local area and increase the capabilities of 2nd Co.

After working together and sharing intelligence, 2nd Co. and A Co. partnered together to identify specific target areas and individuals to exploit,



Courtesy photo by U.S. Army

BAGHDAD -- The platoon leader for 3rd Platoon, A Company, 1-38 IN, 1st Lt. Liam O’ Brien (left), coordinates a patrol with Iraqi Army Capt. Abbas, the company commander for 2nd Company, 4th Battalion, 24th Brigade, 6th IA Division.



Courtesy photo by U.S. Army

BAGHDAD -- Staff Sgt. Michael Wall, a platoon sergeant and Pvt. Joel Kreusel, a grenadier, both with 2nd Platoon, A Company, 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry Regiment, 4th Stryker Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, help an Iraqi Army Soldier push a stalled car through an IA checkpoint. The platoon trained IA Soldiers on checkpoint tactics, techniques, and procedures.

disrupt, and neutralize. The A Co.

“Each company brings its own strengths to the table by working together. Second Company has a great understanding of the history, people, and patterns of life in Abu Ghraib and adds a new dimension to our own intelligence and experience,” said Capt. Dan Krupa, commander, and native of Fairport, N.Y.

The companies have been using the products of this teamwork to conduct bilateral patrols together in the southern Abu Ghraib area.

“These bilateral patrols have been highly effective in not only improving the security in the southern Abu Ghraib area, but also the security of the Victory Base Complex,” said Krupa. “There have been zero indirect fire attacks against United States Forces from 2nd Company’s sector since these bilateral patrols started.”

Additionally, there have been zero local national, Iraqi security force, or U.S. forces casualties from attacks in 2nd Co.’s operating environment since the bilateral patrols started.

Iraqi Army Soldiers have also been learning techniques, tactics, and procedures from the American forces as they have patrolled together.

A more formal learning process has manifested itself through various military training events that are also contributing to the success of 2nd Company and Attack Company

American Soldiers taught classes on combat lifesaving techniques and skills, map reading, room clearing, force protection, bunker building, checkpoint operations, and personnel and vehicle searches.

The 2nd Co. Soldiers have enthusias-

See ATTACK, page 30

Using the DIME method, Ensminger separated the patients into four medical categories: delayed, immediate, minimal, and expectant.

‘Delayed’ patients can wait more than two hours for treatment without compromising his or her health, while ‘immediate’ patients require assistance within two hours to preserve life, limb or eyesight. Patients categorized as ‘minimum’ are walking wounded and do not usually require hospital admission or the services of operating room, and ‘expectant’ patients are those severely injured and not expected to survive even with treatment.

Ensminger knew that even with outlined standard operating procedures, not everything flows perfectly in stressful environments, especially with his profession.

“With medicine, the book answer is not always the correct answer, sometimes it’s just situational,” said Ensminger, a Port St. Lucie, Fla. native.

Head trauma, shrapnel injuries, burns and severed limbs were among the many medical situations thrown at the staff during the exercise.

Medical providers and medics treated each patient accordingly and used available assets such X-ray machines and intravenous therapy.

Capt. Christopher Staley, a physician with 702nd BSB, said he believed that the exercise was an overall success because of everything the training offered.

“It gets you mentally prepared to deal with a chaotic event such as a mass casualty,” said Staley, a Salem, Ore. native. “It helps you to identify areas that might be weak

in the system, areas that need improvement, and areas that are done well.”

After aiding more than ten injured Soldiers and civilians with the cooperation of more than 100 civilian firefighters, paramedics, and military medical Soldiers, the exercise ended with an enlightening after action review.

“As [a lower enlisted] medic, I only get to do what’s in my lane,” said Marsh.

“Seeing the big picture and what everyone had to say was educational.”

Marsh ended her day by evacuating a real-life patient, who wasn’t involved in the training, to the casualty cache where she had taken the exercise patients earlier in the day. While it was not as hectic of a trip, she was reminded that if it was, she could handle it, thanks to the practice and training of the day.



Photo by Pfc. Kimberly Hackbarth, 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.
CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Staff Sgt. Charles Ensminger (right), the medical evacuation platoon sergeant, assists Lt. Col. Chris Soltis (center background), a physician, unload a “patient” during a mass casualty exercise, here, Dec. 14.

MILITARY TRANSITION TEAM



Photo by Spc. Daniel Schneider, MND-B PAO
ing, Dec. 9, at Contingency Operating Location Constitution, here. Soldiers with the Military Transition Team here taught the training over a two- day time period.

BAGHDAD – Sgt. Luis Pratts (right), a Brooklyn, N.Y. native, helps an Iraqi Soldier improve his form during Army combatives train-

BAGHDAD – A military policeman (right) from the 6th Iraqi Army Division tries to fend off blows from 1st Lt. Nick Salinas using his newly

acquired combatives skills, Dec. 9, at Contingency Operating Location Constitution, here. Salinas, a Torrance, Calif., native, is the officer in charge of the Military Transition Team tasked to give the Iraqi soldiers a two-day block of instruction on Army combatives.



Photo by Spc. Daniel Schneider, MND-B PAO



BLACKHAWK 6

Lt. Col. Richard Heyward

2nd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment Commander



Troopers, families, and friends of the Blackhawks,

Command Sgt. Maj. Griffin and I are extraordinarily proud of everything the Blackhawk Troopers have accomplished since our arrival and I know your families and friends share the same feelings of pride and accomplishment.

We continue to assist and mentor the Iraqi Army and Police as they become more independent in their ability to protect the local population and move toward a peaceful security situation that will not be reversed.

In everything they do, Blackhawk Troopers do it with professionalism and dedication.

In November, we conducted Operation Blackhawk Fall Harvest with our IA and IP partners to rid the area of enemy weapons caches. This successful operation demonstrated the ever-improving skills of the IA and the IP and removed enemy weapons and ammunition from the area.

As part of Operation Blackhawk Guardian, we conducted numerous combined patrols with the Iraqi Security Forces that maintained a constant presence and provided an additional measure of needed security to the Zaidon area. Continuous engagements with influential personalities, Sheikhs, and those in the local government, further contributed to the security situation for our partnered ISF and the Blackhawk Team.

We also continue to help the local Iraqi population through projects designed to improve the local economy and education.

The Blackhawks were instrumental in opening a new road into the Zaidon market that gave the local community greater and easier access to market goods and immediately stimulated the local economy. We also processed 20 micro grants that assisted local farm and business improvements and help further diversify the local economy.

Elements of the Squadron delivered supplies to two schools and the children were very happy to receive new books and backpacks. We also finalized plans to build three new schools that will allow local children an opportunity to attend school in a safe and secure environment. These are big wins not just for the Blackhawks, but for the Iraqis in Zaidon whose focus is on providing a more stable and secure environment that allows a better life for their families.

As many of you already know we will soon be moving the Squadron to Camp Taji, just north of Baghdad. The team is excited to face new challenges and will focus our assistance with our new Iraqi partners in support of the pending elections and subsequent seating of the government. We will take the many lessons learned in Zaidon and apply them to our new area where I know the Blackhawks will continue to excel. The new environment will be a pleasant and interesting change as we take some time to



establish our new base of operations, train, and familiarize our troopers with the new area we will operate in.

CSM Griffin and I hope the Blackhawk families back home had a wonderful Thanksgiving. Though we could not be there with you, our team celebrated with plenty of tasty food from the mess hall and conducted our traditional Turkey Bowl flag football tournament. Congratulations to Darkhorse Troop on their superb win! As we officially enter the holiday season and Christmas, the CSM and I want to extend our best wishes and sincerest thanks to each Blackhawk Soldier and all of our incredible families for your selfless service in support of each other and our nation.

Blackhawk 6
"Out Front, Blackhawks!"





Lakewood remembers fallen officers

On Sunday, November 29, 2009, the Raider Tribe lost four Lakewood Police officers, murdered at a coffee shop in Parkland. This is a tragic loss to the Raiders and the community of Lakewood. A few days later the man responsible for these murders was gunned down by a Seattle policeman. Lakewood Mayor Doug Richardson said in a statement:

“To echo the words of Police Chief Bret Farrar, this only closes one chapter of what will be a long and difficult road for families, police, and citizens in Lakewood and the region. We must now focus on memorializing our fallen officers, continuing to take care of their families, and healing all those who knew and loved our officers.”

The memorial for the officers was held at the Tacoma Dome. Local newspaper, the Tacoma News Tribune described the scene that day:

From the high seats in the Dome, the mass gathering of officers looked like a patchwork quilt spread out below, with rectangles of various shades of blue, green, gray and brown uniforms delineating units from around the United

States and Canada.

The Canadian contingent, about 1,000 strong and wearing the classic dress uniform of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, turned a large swath of the north side of the Dome scarlet.

Across the floor, soldiers from Fort Lewis in camouflage fatigues painted a streak of desert brown.

At the ceremony, those who spoke tried to comfort and put into words their feelings.

“We owe the children of these officers – all nine of

“We’re going to strap our gear on and we’re going to go back out there. We have no fear.”

*-Chief Bret Farrar
Lakewood police chief*



Mike Siegel/ The Seattle Times

LAKEWOOD, Wash. – A Lakewood police officer pauses outside the Lakewood Police Department to honor the four officers who were killed.

them – a future that is safe and secure,” said Gov. Chris Gregoire, who spoke at the Tacoma Dome ceremony. “It is our duty, inherited from those who fell to protect us.

“We will continue the cause of justice,” Gregoire said, “and if in another time and another place we meet those who leave us today, we’ll be proud to tell them we kept our promise.”

Lakewood Police Chief Bret Farrar put it more directly.

“We’re going to strap our gear on and we’re going to go back out there,” he told the amassed officers. “We have no fear.”

Please remember these officers and keep their families in your thoughts and prayers as we move forward from this tragic event.



AP photo



AP photo



AP Photo/ Ellen M. Banner/ The Seattle Times



Photo by Joe Barrentine/ The News Tribune

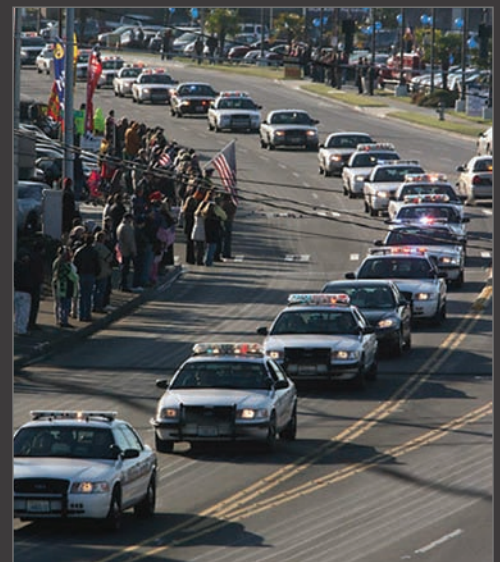


Photo by Ellen M. Banner, The Seattle Times



BLACKFOOT 36

1st Lt. Christopher Sandoval

3rd Platoon, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment Leader



Tomahawk Soldiers, families, and friends,

Soldiers from Blackfoot Company, 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment assisted other elements from 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division "Raider Brigade" in supporting the Iraqi Army during a recent cordon and search operation in the Shulla district area located northwest of Baghdad.

During this operation, 2nd and 3rd platoon of Blackfoot Company established blocking positions in the eastern edge of the Shulla area.

Dismounted from their Stryker vehicles, these Blackfoot Soldiers worked directly with their Iraqi Army counterparts by visiting homes located within their operational environment.

The local population welcomed the Blackfoot platoons into their homes and in more than one instance, offered Blackfoot Soldiers chai tea and bread.

Throughout the day, Blackfoot Soldiers became more familiar with this operational area and were able to learn about the daily issues affecting this particularly gracious community.

Iraqi children flocked the platoons' Stryker vehicles

as Blackfoot Soldiers passed out candy, cold, bottled water, and meals ready-to-eat.

As the two Blackfoot platoons departed the area at the end of the day, the Iraqi children chanted "Carl-e", the name of a Blackfoot Soldier who made an extra effort to befriend them.

This combined Iraqi Army and Raider operation was a positive experience for all the Soldiers involved.

In the end, success was not solely defined by a strengthened partnership with the Iraqi Army, but also a strengthened friendship with the Iraqi people in the Shulla community of Northwest Baghdad.



"...success was not solely defined by a strengthened partnership with the Iraqi Army, but also a strengthened friendship with the Iraqi people in the Shulla community of Northwest Baghdad."

-1st Lt. Christopher Sandoval

**Blackfoot 36
"Tomahawks!"**



The Army's Warrant Officer Corps, comprised of 25,000 men and women, operates, maintains, administers, and manages the equipment, support activities, and technical systems. Our warrant officers are competent and confident warriors, innovative integrators of emerging technologies, dynamic teachers, and developers of specialized teams of Soldiers.

FORGE 7

CSM Julie Walter

702nd Brigade Support Battalion Command Sergeant Major



Friends of the Forge battalion,

Our Forge Soldiers, noncommissioned officers, warrant officers and officers continue to do an exceptional job supporting the Raider Brigade and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Over the past month, our food service Soldiers, Highlander, supported the much anticipated Thanksgiving day meal which was prepared and served to Raider Soldiers all over the operational environment. They did an outstanding job and received many accolades from the Raider Tribe. Our Atlas Soldiers continued to push the many classes of supply to our joint security stations with great success. Our Crusader Soldiers are in partnership with our Iraqi medical counterparts and continue to provide first class medical support. Our maintenance Soldiers, Blacksmith, have far exceeded Army maintenance standards by achieving the highest vehicle operational rate since our arrival. Our Forge Soldiers are absolutely dedicated to our mission and excellence, job well done!

This month I would like to recognize 14 of our most technically proficient group of FORGE Soldiers, our Warrant Officer Corps!

CW4 Bernard Milyo

CW2 Marlon Ligon

CW2 Jeffrey Wargo

WO1 Willie Daniels

CW3 Harold Peck

CW2 Carlos Terrones

WO1 Christopher Chilton

CW3 Jeffery Heil

CW2 Joey Espanola

CW2 Keu Ya

WO1 Matthew Ratliff

CW2 Eric Ward

WO1 Carlos Cruz

CW2 Chad Bartlett

Our warrant officers' extensive professional experience and technical knowledge qualifies them as invaluable role models and mentors for our junior officers and noncommissioned officers. Our Forge warrant officers are no exception. They are truly one of most valuable assets to the success of our Battalion and the entire Raider Brigade.

Currently, we have 14 outstanding warrant officers deployed in the Forge Battalion, whose expertise range from food service, ammunition, automation, supply and maintenance.

Collectively, our Forge warrant officers have more than 205 years of active Army service. Each of our warrant officers has at least two years of college and obtained the rank of sergeant.

Our warrant officers have a total of 16 years deployed in support of operations to countries such as Bosnia, Haiti, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Yugoslavia. Some of their overseas assignments include Korea, Germany, and Belgium. One of our warrant officers is on his fifth operational deployment with the first dating back to Desert Shield/Desert Storm in 1990-1991.

We have warrant officers who have been awarded the Parachutist Badge, Air Assault Badge, Drill Sergeant Badge, and inducted into the prestigious Sergeant Audie Murphy Club.

Together, our warrant officers have been recognized for their outstanding duty performance during wartime with 10 Bronze Star Medals. Our warrant officers are family men and collectively have 30 children among them.

In closing, I could not be more proud to serve along side of our Forge Warrant Officer Corps! They are true professionals and their combined dedicated efforts ensure the wartime success of our battalion!



Forge 7
"Raider Support!"





Sapper 6

Capt. Evan Timmens

38th Engineer Company Commander



Greetings to the Raider Team!

I'm Capt. Evan Timmens, commander of the 38th Engineers; 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division's best (and only) engineer company.

For those unfamiliar, the 38th Engineer Company is a very unique organization and occupies a distinctive position as the sole provider of organic engineer support across the Raider Brigade.

A separate company, the 38th is comprised of three Stryker Sapper platoons and one Mobility Support/Engineer Equipment platoon.

Doctrinally, the Stryker Engineer Company is equipped and organized to provide mobility, counter mobility, survivability and general engineering support to the brigade and subordinate units.

In the current fight, the role of the Engineer Company is broader in scope and changes according to the needs of the brigade.

U.S. Army engineers have historically filled a "utility" position within the Army's team, and the 38th Engineer Company is no different.

As a testament to our versatility, Raider Sappers are trained and equipped to perform basic and advanced demolitions, launch and retrieve bridge systems, emplace mines, perform basic construction, execute route reconnaissance / clearance oper-

ations, breach conventional and urban obstacles, clear mines/ unexploded ordnances and perform earthmoving operations, among many other tasks. In regards to organic and TPE equipment, the Engineer tools maintained by the 38th are both numerous and diverse and include Engineer Stryker Variants, Platoon Carpenter's Tool Kits, Rapidly Emplaced Bridge Systems, Mine Detectors, High Mobility Engineer Excavator, D7 Dozer, Mine Clearing Line Charges, Dump Trucks, Buffalos, Huskys, RGs, Gasoline Micro Air Vehicles and 3-Man Boats.

Since arrival in theater, the company's main effort has been to clear routes in order to hinder improvised



To date, Raider Sappers have found five IEDs. Two have found us.

The 38th also supports battalion and brigade missions, and has done so through cache search and UXO removal efforts, by performing numerous bridge and route reconnaissance missions and by providing engineer equipment to improve life support and force protection measures for the Iraqi Army and USF.

Challenging as it may be for a company to support a brigade, the Sappers do our best and make the most of what we have, embodying the spirit of the Engineer motto, "Let Us Try!"

As always, Raider Sappers stand ready to support any mission.

Sapper 6

"Essays and To the Objective!!"

"As always, Raider Sappers stand ready to support any mission."

-Capt. Evan Timmens

explosive device activity and to facilitate freedom of movement for maneuver units and logistics patrols.

Combined, the 1st Platoon "Hellhounds", 2nd Platoon "House of Pain", 3rd Platoon "Never Tire" and Mobility Support Platoon "Black-sheep" clear, on average, 1200 kms per week on routes across the brigade's operating environment.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Seasons Greetings!

I love the Christmas season. It is a time of reflection, anticipation, and great cheer. Even the most mature person looks forward to the glistening presents and mountains of goodies.

As a child, I fondly remember Christmas break, and the countless hours I spent dreaming of the presents I might receive.

Now that I am older, the things that I dream of do not necessarily fit under a Christmas tree and for many, it seems that the excitement of this time of the year has lost its meaning.

Some people in the adult world seem to focus on day-to-day survival. At the present time, it is hard for them to put on a happy face as days run together and family time gets squeezed out. Have no fear! Though often forgotten, the Christmas spirit endures. Through our busyness and concerns it shines like a star on a cloudless night.

Christmas is more than what we buy, wear, or eat. It is our opportunity to celebrate over the life God has given us. It is a time to love one another and a time to give without reservations. Scripture says that the joy of the Lord is our strength.

So, let's love and listen to each other, laugh out loud and let our joy strengthen all who come near us.

With this said, I would like to take this opportunity to thank each one of you for your hard work and dedication as members of the Raiders family.

May this season be a time of refreshing for you and yours and may we all carry the spirit of this Season in our hearts today and always.

Have happiest holidays! And may the New Year bring the amazing beginnings and never ending joy!

**Chaplain (Maj.) Terrell Jones,
4th SBCT Chaplain**

...ATTACK from page 18

tically participated in the classes and have been quick learners. One area where 2nd Co. has been able to put these classes into action has been force protection. When A Co. first arrived, the 2nd Co. headquarters was surrounded by completely empty and ineffective Hesco barriers. While these barriers are normally filled with earth to provide a solid wall of protection, 2nd Co.'s walls were empty.

After coordinating with the 225th Engineer section, Attack Company was able to facilitate the filling of all Hesco barriers.

As a result, 2nd Company's headquarters is significantly safer and well fortified.

When the two companies have

not been training or patrolling, they have shared meals together and participated together in reenlistment and promotion ceremonies.

It is because of partnership like this that A Co.'s Fourth platoon leader, 1st Lt. Jonathan Meier of Delaware is looking forward to future partnering with 2nd Company.

"There is still a lot of good that can be done here in Southern Abu Ghraib. I'm excited to see what else we can accomplish together," said Meier.

Through these coordinated efforts, A



BAGHDAD – Soldiers from 4th Platoon, A Company, 1st Battalion, 38 Infantry Regiment, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division and 2nd Company, 4th Battalion, 24th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division conduct a bilateral patrol to search for a historical

Co. is helping 2nd Co. transition into a fully operational and self-sufficient Iraqi Army company.

This new JOC will also provide a strong foundation to strengthen relationships and build communication.

“We are setting the Iraqi Army up for success with this new JOC by building the relationship between not only IAs and U.S. Soldiers, but the IPs and Federal Iraqi Police,” said Master Sgt. Julio Armas, the operations non-commissioned officer in charge from Los Angeles. “It is a mutual relationship, we help them with training, resource and equipment and they help will intelligence gathering. We are always communicating with each other.”

The \$80,000 project is slated to be fully operational in early 2010.

“The transition to the new JOC will be smooth,” said Markham. “We are laying the foundation for the future operation here in Iraq, and the unit that will eventually take our place will be able to jump right in and be able assist the IA with operations.”



Photo by Sgt. Bryce S. Dubee, 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

BAGHDAD — U.S. and Iraq Army Soldiers assist one another in the construction of a new joint operation center on Dec. 9. Soldiers with 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division are slated to occupy the building once it is finished.



Photo by Sgt. Samantha Beuterbaugh, MND-B PAO

Raiders meet locals

BAGHDAD — Sgt. Christopher McNear, an infantryman from Rialto, Calif., with 1st Battalion, 38th Regiment, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, plays peek-a-boo with local children in northwestern Baghdad, Nov. 29.

On the back cover:

A sculpture of a “Raider” Native American made out of butter stands tall inside the Raider Inn dining facility here, Nov. 26. Spc. Colon, a cook with 702nd Brigade Support Battalion spent two weeks creating it for a Thanksgiving celebration.

Photo by Pfc. Kimberly Hackbarth, 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.



STRYKER BRIGADE...

...TO THE OBJECTIVE!!!

