



Vol. III, Issue 1
January 2010

in the
ZONE

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With oversight from the U.S. military, an Iraqi construction company has been building the Al Salam Secondary School for Boys in the International Zone.

Photo by Sgt. Melissa Shaw

On the Cover:

Al Asad Palace at sunset. *Photo by Sgt. Melissa Shaw*

in the ZONE



*Produced by the Joint Area
Support Group-Central Public
Affairs Office*

JASG-C Commander:
Col. Mark Campsey

JASG-C CSM:
Command Sgt. Maj. Alfred Cordova

JASG-C Public Affairs Officer:
1Lt. Darryl Frost

In The Zone editor:
Sgt. Melissa Shaw

Contributors
Lindsay Wise--Houston Chronicle
Army Reserve Spc. Joshua Horneck

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From the Top

JASG-C Commander

Welcome to Baghdad. After all our training over the past year, I have high expectations for our Texas Soldiers who are just making themselves known in the International Zone.

We've had a great transition of authority with the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team. Now, it's time to get to work.

Every day there is change occurring in preparation for the upcoming elections and for the ongoing transfer of properties and security missions to the Iraqi people. Don't expect things to slow down.

In response, we're

changing the way we do business. We must not forget we're in the heart of a country that is in a rapid state of flux. It's a historic and potentially dangerous time to be here in Baghdad.

However, I have high confidence in our team in place.

In the upcoming months, I look forward to supporting the legitimate national elections and working closely with the local leadership that are such a crucial part of Iraq's future.

We won't be here long. So, in the short time we have, we must ensure the Iraq we leave is better than the Iraq



Col. Mark Campsey
Commander
Joint Area Support Group—Central

we received. I'm proud of the work this team has done to get us here.

As you await the day you'll see your friends and family again, let's continue the work that will make them and the United States proud.



Col. Mark Campsey,
72nd Infantry
Brigade Combat
Team, and Com-
mand Sgt. Maj.
Alfred Cordova
unfurl the Brigade
colors during their
transfer of author-
ity ceremony
January 7, 2010.

Photo by Sgt. Melissa Shaw

JASG-C Command Sergeant Major

Finally the Texas Army National Guard's "Ready-Team" has arrived in Baghdad, Iraq.

It is through months of training, weeks of travel and innumerable hours of mandatory briefings that we stand here prepared to be exactly where we are today.

I am proud of what we, as a brigade, have accomplished in getting here and look forward to the challenges ahead we will overcome.

I know that at all times my role as leader is to guide, resource and equip those in my command for success, but here, in a country so far from home, this will be especially important.

I have made it one of my personal goals to ensure that each and every one of you completes this deployment with honor and arrives home a better soldier. We

will accomplish this through professional and personal development classes and devoting significant time to mentorship.

This will be my legacy to you along with additional commitment to continuing to emphasize the Army values of Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity and Personal Courage.

Being able to incorporate these basic principles into our daily lives will lead each of us to success in the Army, regardless of whether you are active duty, Reserve or National Guard.

I feel humbled by the wealth of experience in the soldiers of the 72nd and I count myself lucky to be with you here today.

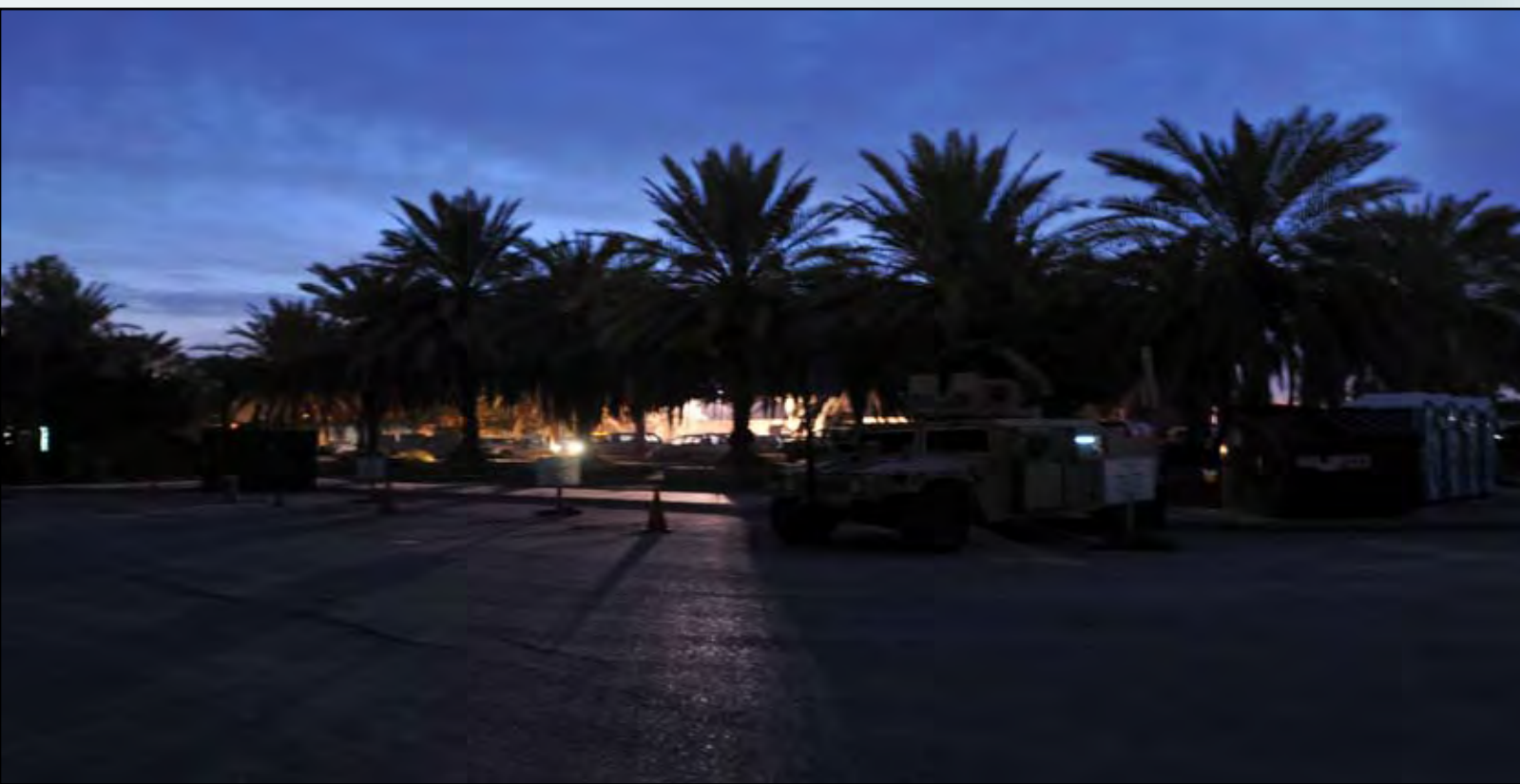
This is a historical time to be in Iraq and I know that our mission here in the



Command Sgt. Maj. Alfred Cordova
Command Sergeant Major
Joint Area Support Group—Central

International Zone is unique; one you can be proud that you're a part of.

Whether this is your first tour or your third, I charge you to stay safe by always maintaining situational awareness; never let yourself become complacent and stay focused on returning home with honor to your friends and family.



A view of MRAP parking at FOB Prosperity. Photo by Sgt. Melissa Shaw

Know where to go *Life on the FOBs*

Common Access Cards

The IZ Common Access Card (CAC) office is in Room 110 on the first floor of the Palace (Bldg. 100) at FOB Prosperity, Monday through Saturday from 0800 to 1700. For questions, call DSN 312-239-1765 or e-mail: jasg-chrm@iraq.centcom.mil

TMC

Those eligible for care at Troop Medical Clinics include active-duty U.S. and Coalition Forces, retired U.S. military and Department of Defense federal government employees.

Routine immunizations and Post Deployment Health Assessments are available for individuals during sick-call hours. For groups of 10 or more and immunizations call the TMC to schedule an appointment.

Ortiz Consolidated Medical Clinic is located in Bldg. 87, behind the fuel point. Sick-call hours for walk-ins are Monday through Friday from 0800 to 1000 and 1300 to 1500. Medical staff is present 24/7 in case of emergency. The clinic is closed on Saturdays and Sundays. Services now available include primary care, dental, combat stress control, laboratory, radiology and pharmacy.

The Union III TMC relocated to the west side of Bldg. 5. Sick-call hours for walk-ins are Monday through Friday from 0800 to 1045 and 1300 to 1500, 0800 to 1045 Saturdays.

Audiology services are now located at Phipps TMC in Balad; optometry and dermatology are located at Camp Liberty's Witmer TMC.

Dining facility

The Prosperity dining facility across from the Palace (Bldg. 100) offers four

meals a day with Grab-n-go options between meal hours. Meal hours are:

Breakfast: 0600 to 0830

Grab-n-go: 0830 to 1100

Lunch: 1130 to 1330

Grab-n-go: 1330 to 1700

Dinner: 1730 to 2000

Grab-n-go: 2000 to 2230

Midnight Meal: 2230 to 0100

Grab-n-go: 0100 to 0530

The Union III DFAC across from the Bldg. 1 parking lot offers four meals a day. Meal hours are:

Breakfast: 0530 to 0800

Lunch: 1130 to 1330

Dinner: 1730 to 2000

Midnight meal: 2330 to 0100

Gym/MWR

The Prosperity gym is located on the first floor of the Palace and is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The MWR center, in rooms 122, 125 and 127, are also open 24/7 and offer a large-screen television, DVDs, books, boardgames, and other fun activities.

The Union III gym is located in Bldg. 5 and is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The MWR center, next to the gym, is also open 24/7 and offers a large-screen television, DVDs, books, boardgames, Xbox, and other fun activities.

Post office

Free mail, limited to 13 ounces, still exists for the letter home. If you are mailing pictures, a small souvenir in an envelope or packages, then you must go to the post office. Packages will be inspected and limited to three items per visit. A military ID card is required for the transaction. Civilians need two forms of identification to conduct postal transactions.

Items forbidden to be shipped include weapons items, drugs, alcohol, and perishable material. For a com-

plete list of items, consult CENTCOM AR 25-200 or HRSC Policy 07-26.

FOB Prosperity: Located at the west entrance of the Palace. The hours are **0900 to 1700 Monday through Friday.**

FOB Union III: A mailbox is located in front of Bldg. 6. The post office is located in Bldg. 5. The hours are 0800 to 1730 daily.

Laundry

Since dirty laundry is serious business, the FOBs have a seven-day-a-week laundry service that at a maximum takes three days to complete. Individuals using the service can only have 20 pieces of laundry in each bag. Blankets and comforters must be separated from clothing or uniform items.

FOB Prosperity: 0700 to 2000 daily

FOB Union III: 0700 to 1900 daily



Finance

Finance operations include check cashing, Eagle Cash Card transactions, military pay issues, collection and review of travel vouchers and other military pay-related documents, and more.

Eagle Cash Card (ECC) applications are available. The service member must provide a current bank statement or LES to verify bank routing and account numbers. As a reminder, you can load up to \$350 per day to your card. You can get cash back up to \$200 per month. Checks can also be cashed for up to \$200 per month.

Prosperity finance operations are in Room 108 on the first floor of the Palace. Hours are from 0900 to 1600 Saturday through Thursday.

Union III finance operations are in Bldg. 6, A-Wing, room 2A from 0900 to 1600 Saturday through Thursday.

Viejo Lake Pump House

Making the old new again



Viejo Lake Pump House Photo by Sgt. Melissa Shaw

By Sgt. Melissa Shaw

The sounds of the vehicles rumbling by almost completely masks the water falling into Viejo Lake from two huge inlet pipes as Army National Guard Maj. Jon Lee, the department of public works manager on Forward Operating Base Prosperity, completed the final inspection for the re-commissioning of the pump house that supplies the pipes.

Accompanying him on this final walk-through were two of the civilian contractors, an interpreter and individuals from the DPW that have invested a significant amount of time in completing this project.

"This will be my third pump station project since 2004, and it is being completed just days before I re-deploy," said Chief Petty Officer Ronald Wark, of the Naval Mobile Construction Battalion, Port Hueneme, Calif.

Wark, a DPW project manager NCOIC and recent recipient of the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, is responsible for much of the improved conditions in the properties Lee and his unit now oversee and has managed construction projects across the IZ since the arrival of his unit in November of 2009.

"Completion of this part of the project really is something to celebrate; the Iraqi contractors we have been working with are very excited, they really like showing me their pictures of the running water when we have our weekly meetings," said Lee, before

stepping across the road to point out four inlet pipes peeking through the river bank before slipping below the surface of the Tigris.

Lee, a College Station, Texas resident, belongs to Headquarters Company of the 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

The HHC 72nd IBCT assumed leadership of the Joint Area Support Group Central in Baghdad, Iraq,



Piles of cut water reeds on the river of the Tigris River

Photo by Sgt. Melissa Shaw

“We just had to trust the contractors would find what we needed.”

in early January.

The JASG-C has an overall mission to support the Iraqi Government as they work toward a safer, more secure environment where all Iraqis can live together peacefully. Part of this includes using resources available through the DPW to coordinate the repair and rebuilding of key infrastructure, such as the pump house project.

When the project was first started, it was discovered that the Tigris River was actually a huge contributor to the breakdown of the pump house system. Specifically, the problem was the water reeds. These native plants grow in the riverbed and block the inlet pipes to the pump house.

To mitigate the problem, industrial

mowers were brought in to “harvest” and stack the cut plants. Looking along the river bed, haystack shapes twenty feet tall can be seen dotting the bank both up and down the river.

Simultaneous to the overgrowth removal, large pieces of concrete, known as T-walls and primarily used as a force protection measure, were sunk in the area just in front of the pipes to slow the re-growth of the invasive plant. This is a part of the maintenance plan the military has created to keep

the pump house functioning once the U.S. military drawdown is complete.

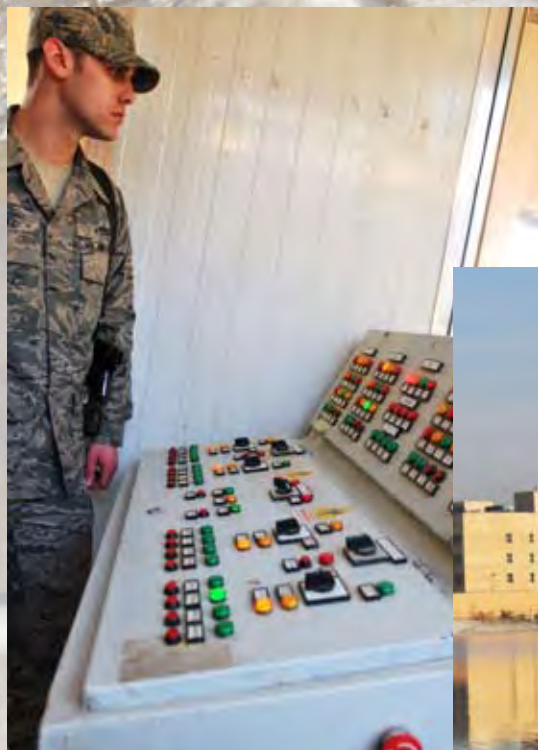
“The pump house is intended to operate on a 24-hour basis driving several millions of gallons a day from the Tigris River into Viejo Lake, the exact amount moved daily varies depending on the level on the river,” said Air Force Tech. Sgt. Russell Brown, DPW utilities system engineer contracting officer representative (COR).

The pump house is not a new addition to the riverside landscape. It was installed to maintain the lake

Continued on page 18



Air Force Tech. Sgt. Russell Brown, the Utilities System Engineering Contracting Officer Representative, and Staff Sgt. Justin Kuntze, Electrical Systems COR stand with Ali Allami and Wisam Saad, site engineers for the Viejo Lake Pump House project. All photos on this page by Sgt. Melissa Shaw.



Air Force Staff Sgt. Justin Kountze looks out over switchboard of the Viejo Lake Pump House



The New Embassy Complex as seen from the far side of Viejo Lake.

2010 Iraq Elections

Basics

1. When Iraqis go to the polls, will they vote for parties or candidates?

The Iraqi Parliamentary Election is based on an open-list electoral system, and voters may choose either a party, or a candidate and the party of that candidate. To the voters, the system will appear similar to that used for the provincial elections held in January 2009.

2. Who will administer the election?

The 2010 national parliamentary election will be led, funded and managed by the Government of Iraq. Iraq's Independent High Electoral Commission (IHEC) is the central institution tasked with administering the elections. IHEC was established by the Contract Officer Repres in 2007.

IHEC receives technical assistance from the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and USAID implementing partner International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES). Together UNAMI and IFES work to ensure that Iraq's elections meet international standards.

3. What is the role of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) in the 2010 elections?

The United States supports UNAMI's efforts to assist the Independent High Electoral Commission and the Government of Iraq in the development of processes towards Iraqi national parliamentary elections in 2010. For more information about UNAMI's work, and its mandate under UNSCR 1883 (2009), please see: <http://www.uniraq.org>

4. What is the U.S. role in Iraq's parliamentary elections?

The U.S. does not play a direct role in Iraq's elections operations, but we are supporting the Government of Iraq when requested. U.S. partners are working closely with the GOI to provide technical advice to IHEC, as well as political party training and voter education. Embassy Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) engage with government officials, NGOs and political parties to assess election preparations. United States Forces in Iraq will advise, train and assist Iraqi security forces in support of the parliamentary election and in compliance with the Security Agreement.

5. Will the U.S. monitor Iraq's elections?

The United States will organize and support election monitor teams in March in selected locations. More importantly, Iraqi domestic election observers will play a key role on election day, as they will be active in every polling center in Iraq. The United States will join the UN and others in training some 200,000 domestic election observers from NGOs and political parties across Iraq.

Making history for the future

Al Salam school closer to completion



Iraqi workers continue construction on the Al Salam Secondary School for Boys Jan., 2010. U.S. service members have been overseeing the construction done by Iraqi workers. All photos on this page by Sgt. Melissa Shaw



Contract Officer Representatives from Camp Prosperity inspect progress made on the Al Salam Secondary School for Boys Jan. 11. Construction began after a ground-breaking ceremony held April 2009.

72nd Infantry Brigade

Combat Team Takes Charge

another chapter begins

By 1Lt. Darryl Frost

The Texas Army National Guard's 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), based out of Houston, is the new Joint Area Support Group –Central (JASG-C) with responsibility for the administration and security of the International Zone (IZ) in Iraq.

Commanded by Colonel Mark N. Campsey, the 72nd JASG-C will continue the IZ's transition to the Government of Iraq.

In a ceremony on January 7th, the 72nd IBCT formally recognized the transfer of authority (TOA) that had begun more than a week earlier as soldiers from both units began sharing work areas to learn the mission together.

"Soldiers of the 72nd welcome," said Colonel Steven Bensend, the



outgoing commander from the 32nd IBCT, based in Wisconsin. "You will find many new challenges and rewards [here]. You will write a new chapter."

Since May 2009, the 32nd "Red Arrow" Brigade has had the JASG mission, which includes efforts to continue the turnover of properties to the Government of Iraq.

The incoming commander, Colonel Campsey, made his own formal remarks to the formations of both units assembled. The 72nd IBCT is one of the combat brigades assigned to the 36th Infantry Division, headquartered in Austin, Texas.

"I know that the 36th Infantry Division and the State of Texas are proud of you," said Campsey as he scanned the Texas soldiers.

"Let's go to work."

After the ceremony, members of both National Guard units shook hands and wished each other well. The "Ready Team" Brigade from Texas had formally taken over.

72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team took command of the Joint Area Support Group-Central, during a transfer of authority ceremony, Jan. 7, 2009. Photos by Sgt. Melissa Shaw



Changing Command in Iraq



Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Weedon and Lt. Col. Scott Macleod of the 1st of the 141st Infantry, 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, unfurl the battalion flag during the transfer of authority ceremony held on Camp Cropper, Baghdad, Jan. 9, 2010. Audience members included Col. Mark Campsey, 72nd IBCT brigade commander and head of Joint Area Support Group in Baghdad, Col. John Huey, United States Central Command brigade commander and Iraq Army Capt. Omar Humadi, Cropper Theater Interment Facility warden, and Lt. Ziad Ibrahim, deputy warden. *Photos by Sgt. Melissa Shaw.*

paving the way ahead...

Capt. Daniel Nabb accepted command of the 571st Military Police Company during a transfer of authority ceremony held on Camp Prosperity, Baghdad, Jan. 15, 2010. Outgoing commander Capt. Walter Chalkley gave some advice for dealing with future adversaries--don't trust the first reports; let the leaders develop the situation and before acting, talk with the 1st Sgt and JAG. *Photos by 1Lt. Darryl Frost*



Education Goals Reached While Fulfilling Military Obligations

By Sgt. Melissa Shaw

Finding ways to fill your day with activities while on deployment is not difficult. Some communicate with loved ones, some participate in after hour sports and some hone their gaming skills.

However, many currently and soon-to-be-deployed soldiers, plan to use their deployment downtime to earn college degrees online.

"I am ready to be more than a high-school graduate," said Sgt. First Class Karen Perry.

Perry, a member of Headquarters Company, 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, currently serves in Baghdad, Iraq, as the paralegal non-commissioned officer for the Joint Area Support Group.

"Before I start any classes, either online or face-to-face classes, I am going to spend time with the education guidance counselor to determine the best course of action in getting my associate's degree," Perry said after attending a recent

briefing detailing the education benefits available to servicemembers.

More troops are taking online classes with schools such as University of Phoenix, University of Maryland University College,

Kaplan University and American Intercontinental University from military bases in Iraq and Afghanistan.

A meta-analysis release by the Department of Education in June 2009 shows that students who took all or part of their classes online did better, on average, than those who experienced only face-to-face instruction, making the options available for the men and women deployed far away from a brick and mortar school even more attractive.

The increased earning potential with a degree is the push many needed to make the move to higher education. For those on active duty, this will help after they complete their contracts but, for those in the Reserves and Guard, it translates to instant earnings in their civilian careers. "Did you know the average person will earn a 25 percent greater income with a four year degree," says Maj. August Murray, Joint Area Support Group education officer.

"And that is on top of earning promotion points and with each promotion, of course, comes a pay raise so you are basically getting two raises in one."



Soldiers today have many options and can build a plan that fits their needs. Many turn to online university help-sites when trying to determine which school to attend, how to take the classes and what degree plan to follow.

For those wanting a more hands on approach, every major theater (or base) has an education office staffed by counselors and university staff that provide many valu-

"The average person will earn a 25 percent greater income with a four year degree," Maj. August Murray.

able services.

"We are proud to offer counseling, enrollment and registration assistance and text books to the members of the U.S. armed forces, who give of their time and safety to protect our nation," says Beth Hornick, UMUC field representative at Victory Base Camp in Iraq. "We look forward to helping thousands more achieve brighter futures."



Soldiers with the 72nd IBCT take part in an art project in Kuwait during the transit phase of their Iraq deployment.
All photos on this page by Sgt. Melissa Shaw

Armed Forces Education Benefits Programs

The Armed Forces offer several programs to support your education goals including the GI Bill, loan repayment, advanced education programs and tuition assistance.

If you need help in paying for your education the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard, along with their affiliated aid organizations, offer you and your dependents college programs, loans, grants and college scholarship programs. These education assistance programs were created to ensure motivated individuals like you are given every opportunity to pursue your education goals.

Visit military.com for quicklinks to service specific information

The following table is a quick reference to the programs each service has to offer:

Programs	Army	Navy	Air Force	Marines	Coast Guard
MGIB Kicker	Army College Fund	Navy College Fund	N/A	Marine Corps College Fund	N/A
Tuition Assistance (TA)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Student Loan Repayment *	Yes Up to \$65K	Yes Up to \$65K	Yes Up to \$10K	N/A	N/A
Service Member College Opportunities	SOCAD eARMYU	SOCNAV NCPACE	SOC CCAF	SOCMAR NCPACE	SOCCOAST (Afloat)
Loans, Grants and Scholarships	AER	NMCRS	AFAS	NMCRS	CGMA
Dependant Education Programs	TA - Spouse (EAP) SOCAD	TA - Spouse (STAP) SOCNAV	TA - Spouse (STAP) SOC	TA - Spouse (STAP) SOCMAR	Exams SOCCOAST (SEG)
Enlisted Military Specialty related College programs		CASH			ACET
Officer Post-Grad Programs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Camp Prosperity
Education Office

Camp Victory
Education Office

University of
Maryland University
College

YN1 Kenneth Tate
318-239-1764

Robena Tomlinson
Guidance Counselor
318-485-5318

Beth Hornick
Field Representative
318-485-6027

SSG Daigle-Hutchins
318-239-1104

The Servicemembers Civil Relief Act: Guardsmens Best Friend

By 1Lt. Dana Collins

Being a deployed servicemember entails a certain amount of sacrifices from you and your family. Fortunately, the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) provides you with many legal protections. Below are some of the protections that you may have overlooked in the rush to prepare yourself and your family for deployment.

Leases and Contracts

In most cases, if you have signed certain types of contracts before you came on active duty, you're allowed to terminate the contract without penalties. This applies to residential leases, car leases and school tuition contracts. In order to cancel a residential lease, you must give a copy of your military orders and provide written notice to your landlord.

You are then responsible for paying the remainder of the current month as well as the next month's rent. Additionally, if a

landlord, debt collector, bank or other financial institution has been given notice you are on active duty orders, they may not evict you, repossess your vehicle or bar you from the premises without obtaining a court order.

Court Proceedings

The SCRA allows you to submit to the court and automatically receive a 90-day stay of any court proceedings which are not criminal cases. The courts recognize that you will need to be present in order to handle your case and will put the case on hold so that you can appear either during a leave period or after the deployment.

6 Percent Cap on Interest Rates

Debts that you incurred PRIOR to being activated such as automobile loans, home loans and credit cards are required to be reduced to an interest rate of 6 percent. Additionally, the difference in the interest rate must be forgiven by the loan agency. This protection



does not apply to Federal student loans.

Fight for your Rights

There are civil and criminal penalties for knowingly violating a service member's rights under the SCRA. If you have any questions about your rights under the SCRA, contact your local legal assistance office.

The legal assistance office for the International Zone is located in building 78 on FOB Prosperity. For more answers on SCRA, contact 1LT Dana Collins at usf-ijasg.leg-al.assistance@iraq.centcom.mil or 318-239-1708.

JAG Services

BLDG 78 Walk in Hours 0900-1100/1300-1630

usf-ijasg.leg-al.assistance@iraq.centcom.mil or 318-239-1708.

Special/General Power of Attorney

Will

Notaries

Consultations are available for the following:

Divorce

Credit Guidance

Debtor Issues

Taxes

Separations

Child Custody

Family Financial Support

Emigration

Military Personnel Actions

From bench to battle zone and back

By LINDSAY WISE and BRIAN ROGERS
Republished from the HOUSTON CHRONICLE

---He hopes

Lt. Col David Farr is running for a Harris County judgeship, but you won't find so much as a campaign button inside the cramped, fluorescent-lit office he shares with three others at Camp Prosperity.

Here in Baghdad's Green Zone there will be no bumper stickers or yard signs, no fundraising galas or radio spots.

Farr, a 40-year-old lieutenant colonel from Meyerland, is the judge advocate general for the 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, a Houston-based Texas Army National Guard unit deployed to Iraq.

He is prohibited from campaigning because of military regulations that ban political activity by service members on active duty.

"I knew that I wouldn't be able to campaign, but I can be listed on the ballot with permission from the Department of the Army," Farr said.

Farr got the Army's consent, scrounged up the filing fee and went to the Republican Party office on Richmond when he was home on a four-day pass for Thanksgiving, his final break from training before he left for a nine-month mission in Iraq.

He's been checking the online filing records from Baghdad. So far so good. The deadline is today, and no other Republican has come forward to challenge him in the primary for the judgeship of the 312th Family Court. The incumbent Democrat in that seat — Farr's potential opponent in November — is Judge Robert Hinojosa.

"That was a bit of a calculated risk on my part because I knew that if somebody decided to run against me in the primary that I wouldn't be able to do anything," Farr said. "I'd just have to wait."

Woodfill: 'To be admired'

Farr recognizes his predicament is part of the reality of life as a citizen-soldier.

Jared Woodfill, chairman of the Harris County Republican Party,

"I knew that I wouldn't be able to campaign, but I can be listed on the ballot with permission from the Department of the Army," Farr said.

said he does not expect Farr to draw a primary opponent before Jan. 4th's filing deadline. Woodfill said Farr's story has been featured in a Harris County's Republican newsletter and e-mail.

"We want people to rally behind him and what he's doing overseas and to rally behind him in November," he said. "He's out there defending our liberties while at the same time running for office, and that's unique and something to be admired."

Hinojosa has been on the bench since he ousted Farr in November 2008 in an election to fill an unexpired term.

A trial lawyer for more than 36 years, Hinojosa earned a Bronze Star and spent three years as a prosecutor in the Air Force during Vietnam.

He said he was of a mixed mind



Photo by Sgt. Melissa Shaw

about Farr's campaign.

"I would never attack anyone, certainly not my opponent, for being patriotic, for serving his country," Hinojosa said. "The difference is David is very much of the military mind-set. I think he really is a military person, and that's where he really wants to be. That's where his heart is, much more than doing these cases

here."

This is Farr's third overseas deployment. He served in Bosnia in 2000 and Kosovo in 2006. He and his wife, Betsy, have three children: Megan, 10, Kathryn, 7, and Jack, 18 months.

Farr earned his undergraduate degree at Texas A&M University on a Reserve Officer Training Corps scholarship and went to law school at Texas Southern University.

After his graduation from TSU, the Army sent him into the National Guard as a JAG officer. Farr began his civilian career working on family law cases at a Houston firm. Before long, he landed a job prosecuting child-support offenders with the Harris County Domestic Relations Office.

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Enriching the soul in a barren land

Chaplain's Corner

By Chaplain (Lt. Col) John Laing

At the time of this writing, the 72nd has been in charge of the support operations within the International Zone (or "Green Zone") for only a week. Many of us soldiers are still settling into our new positions of responsibility—getting to know the people we need to engage to make things happen, discovering ways to improve our processes and work spaces, and even still familiarizing ourselves with our surroundings. There is a lot of new information to take in. Many of us do not yet have a good weekly routine (what we affectionately call, "Battle Rhythm") nailed down. It is easy for us to forget (at least at the level of experience) that we have been away from home for approximately four months already. By contrast, for many family members, it seems like it has been eight or more! Their routines have remained the same, except for the fact

that we are not there to carry our share of the load. The discrepancy in perception of the time has the potential to lead to problems in communication.

This time in the deployment is good to look at how things are different and to recognize how we are all being affected by the separation. Landing in Baghdad somehow made our separation from one another seem more real. Even though we were apart while at Camp McGregor (Fort Bliss) and in Kuwait, the reality of being in Iraq drove home the distance we now have between us and our loved ones. Don't get me wrong—it's not as though we didn't miss our family members before, and it's not as though the scenery was drastically different in Iraq from Kuwait (or the New Mexico desert for that matter!), but it was just mental; knowing we are now in Iraq—that changed many of our perceptions of our separation. So we are all affected by separation; we all experience varying levels of separation anxiety.



Photo by Sgt. Melissa Shaw

***18 When I said, "My foot is slipping,"
your love, O LORD, supported me.***

***19 When anxiety was great within me,
your consolation brought joy to my soul.***

-Psalm 94:18-19

Family can be frustrated due to the soldier's absence. The service member can get frustrated because he/she can't do anything about issues at home, or it is much more difficult to resolve issues that come up. Perhaps a personal story will help clarify. My wife recently copied me on an e-mail that she sent around to some co-workers at the institution for which we both work. In it, she asked for prayer for our daughter Sophia (who is 2 ½ years old). Apparently, she had had a bad day, and cried hysterically when taken to preschool, saying, "I want my Daddy! I want my Daddy!" When I read the e-mail, I was upset, but also a little irritated. I was upset because I felt helpless to really do anything about the situation and because I

felt guilt at being the cause of my daughter's sadness. I was irritated because I felt that my wife had told me about this when she *knew* I can't do anything about it, almost like she wanted me to experience some of the pain of the home front.

All of these feelings (and even others) are normal, though they are not necessarily correct. Obviously, my irritation was misguided; my wife did not intend for me to feel guilt or pain at all. She just wanted to keep me in the loop about things at home. It is normal for family members to miss their soldier/service member, and these feelings can manifest themselves in a variety of ways. In young children/toddlers, it can be crying, misbehaving, or regression in potty training, table manners, or other life skills. In older children, apathy or

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Making the Green Zone greener

Project shows security risks, logistical problems

By LINDSAY WISE

Republished from the Houston Chronicle

Wedding Island is a dusty, debris-strewn tract of land on the banks of the Tigris River that once hosted lavish marriage celebrations of Baghdad's elite amid leafy palm trees and blooming flowers.

It's almost unrecognizable now, after seven years of war. Most recently it was a staging site for construction materials used to build the massive U.S. Embassy nearby.

But if 1st Lt. Sean Trobaugh squints hard enough at these desolate 42 acres in the far southwestern corner of Baghdad's Green Zone, he can see the piles of gravel and scrap metal replaced by the lush grass of a golf course.

The 41-year-old Texas National Guardsman from Katy and a group of soldiers from Houston's 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team are overseeing the cleanup of Wedding Island before the property is transferred to the government of Iraq later this month. They've been told it will go to Iraq's Ministry of Tourism, which plans to transform the area into a golf course and public gardens.

Trobaugh's team is slated to transfer four Green Zone properties, including a military base, to the Iraqi government and will assist in turning over a dozen others during the nine-month mission. The goal is to shrink the size of the U.S.-controlled Green Zone from the original 2,228 acres to 329 acres by the time the brigade's deployment ends in August.

On his better days, Trobaugh can imagine returning to Wedding Island someday to play a few holes or picnic by the water — as a tourist, not a soldier.

"If the security situation has improved, yes," Trobaugh said. "I would like to take my family here and have a look around. I mean, this is the birthplace of civilization."

On his bad days — environmental hazards and contractor problems have delayed the handover of Wedding Island for almost four months — he wonders if the golf course will ever exist.

The 72nd's symbolic and politically sensitive project



1Lt. Sean Trobaugh and Master Sgt. Hansen speak with the owner of the company in charge of clean up of Wedding Island through an interpreter. Photo by Sgt. Melissa Shaw

reveals the security risks and logistical challenges that accompany the drawdown of U.S. troops in Iraq from 111,000 last month to 50,000 by the end of the summer.

"This is really an amazing time for Iraq, for us to be here," Trobaugh said, comparing the historic moment to the reconstruction of Germany and Japan after World War II. "We're going to be moving from an occupying force to a supporting force. ... We blasted Iraq up, and now we're going to fix it."

Iraqis control entry

Baghdad's Green Zone was established after the 2003 invasion as the headquarters of the U.S. presence in Iraq. It is barricaded by blast walls and concertina wire.

According to the terms of the U.S.-Iraqi security agreement, a significant chunk of the Green Zone is already controlled by the Iraqi government, which monitors most entry points now.

The changes come with risk. Two main arteries through the Green Zone were supposed to be reopened to traffic last year, but remain closed after a series of bombings of government facilities.

Col. Mark Campsey, commander of the 72nd, said the Green Zone will remain a target as long as insurgents believe they can destabilize the Iraqi government through bloodshed.

"It's not necessarily what we're doing in the Green Zone that's keeping the Green Zone safe," Campsey said. "It's what we're doing in the

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The FOB Prosperity 300 Challenge

28 Feb——Intro/weigh in and Movie

1 Mar——It Begins —3 mo program

1 Apr——1 st mo. weigh in/pics

1 May——2nd mo. weigh in/pics

31 May——3rd mo weigh in
300 Challenge

Contact Info

andrew.barnes@iraq.centcom.mil

august.murray@iraq.centcom.mil

Pump House; Continued from page 7

Saddam Hussein had created for his family, affording them the opportunity to enjoy the leisurely pursuits of swimming, sunbathing and water sports.

To get the pump house restored to its full capacity was a long process, relying heavily on cooperation between military leadership and contractors using the skilled and unskilled laborers found in the surrounding community.

"Working on this project has had some unique challenges, and I don't mean the usual language barriers," said Air Force Staff Sgt. Justin Kuntz, DPW electrical systems COR.

"In the States, you know which companies are the most reliable manufacturers for the different electrical components, but here we are unfamiliar with both the suppliers and the standards the manufacturers follow," said Kuntz.

"We just had to trust the contractors would find what we needed."

"At one point I found myself printing a picture off Google, showing it to my interpreter, and asking them to find something as close as possible, but it worked," Kuntz said, as he checked on the flickering lights of the pump-house control panel he helped install a few days earlier.

The faith that Kuntz and the rest of the DPW team had in their contractor counterparts paid off and the evidence of their cooperation can now be seen spouting into Viejo Lake.

Looking across the landscape in the mid-morning sunlight, the reflections of the New Embassy Complex and the palace on Union III in Viejo Lake are vivid reminders of the beauty and splendor to be found across Iraq.

To some, it's ironic that what was once a vivid illustration of the conspicuous consumption of the previous Iraqi government has now become part of the life support system for the people of this land.

Making the Most of Long Distance Love

Long distance relationships are no longer unusual in today's society. In fact, they're almost the norm.

One Internet dating, military deployments, career relocation and higher education needs have created a worldwide singles scene. These days, it's possible your girlfriend or boyfriend lives across the country - or even across the world.

Unfortunately, maintaining a long distance relationship isn't always easy. The lack of private time together - coupled with different environments and experiences - can stress even the most loving of relationships. Fortunately, there are some easy ways to keep the spark alive when your lover is miles away.

Use technology

E-mail, text messages and instant messaging are simple ways to "touch base." A quick note to tell your lover what you're thinking can be enough to keep the fires burning.

Go old-fashioned

Sure, technology is easy and convenient. But there's nothing like an old-fashioned letter to really touch the heart of the one you love. Since you have plenty of time to think about the words you want to say, your letter should be both heartfelt and meaningful. Use elegant stationery to make it even more special.

Send a gift

Skip the ubiquitous bouquet of flowers and, instead, send something personal and unique. If she's a bookworm, send a first edition copy of her favorite book. If he's a music lover, create a CD mix of his favorite songs. You'll send the message that you're thoughtful and creative.

Make a date

Do you both enjoy the same TV show? Are you both horror movie fans? Make a telephone date to watch a show or film together. Even though you aren't in the same room, you still get the closeness that comes from a shared experience.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: Inspiring Americans Across the Globe

By Army Sgt. Melissa Shaw

Resounding applause filled the Camp Prosperity Morale Welfare and Recreation Theater on Jan. 18 in appreciation of the vocal performance of "I want Jesus to walk with me," by Sgt's First Class Patricia Ruth and Kelvin Richardson.

Their song was a fitting end to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania-based

Trawick.

"And don't think that Dr. King fought for just black men. He was fighting for the rights men and women, of all colors."

"I remember there was a time when a woman, white or black, was in charge of no more than a broom and a frying pan." Dr.

Trawick went on to describe how women of today's generation are now branch managers, CEO's and Generals because of the great things Dr. King started.

Dr. Trawick's speech itself can

be counted among the things envisioned by Dr. King so long ago.

This is quite possibly the future he imagined not so long ago, where a nation celebrates the life and death of a great man, regardless of color, with speeches, works of community



Dr. Leonon Trawick speaks at a MLK remembrance celebration.

Photo by Sgt. Melissa Shaw

service and quiet reflection.

After Dr. Trawick had completed his remarks, the audience watched the speech Dr. King gave in Washington D.C. in August of 1958, during the largest civil rights demonstration in history. It's often referred to as the "I have dream" speech.

Before the end of the night, volunteers from the audience took their place behind the podium to recite a favorite poem or quote commemorating Dr. King's teachings as a

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336th Military Police Battalion's, celebration on the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, a Nobel Peace Prize winner and father of the Civil Rights movement.

Guest speaker Dr. Leonon Trawick, of Philadelphia, deputy chief of the Joint Visitors Cell on Union III, held the room enthralled as he described the effects Dr. King still has on today's society.

"You know, we are all here because of something that occurred over forty years ago, because of something that happened before many of you were even born," said Dr.



Sgt. Major John Sampa, JASG-C, 72nd IBCT.

Photo by Sgt. Melissa Shaw



withdrawal can surface. Adults tend to find their tempers to be shorter, the patience less available.

The keys to dealing with all of these issues:

(1) Communicate with loved ones about how we feel. Do not keep it to yourself in an effort to spare one another's feelings. Instead, communicate your feelings; just do so in a non-threatening way. Present it in terms of how you feel and don't make it an accusation against the other.

(2) Recognize that the way others deal with the separation may not be the way you deal with it. I have offered some examples here, but others could be given. Try to be understanding of others, most importantly and especially your loved ones. Offer clear expressions of love and acceptance of children in order to create a sense of security for them.

(3) Use wisdom when making decisions. Follow your faith and upbringing; remain true to who you are. Seek out advice from those whose opinions you respect or people you admire. When it comes to finances, try to stay within your income and do not use credit cards unless you can pay the full balance at the end of the month. If you need emergency cash, look for other options—cutting out some regular expenses, garage/craig's list sale, Army Emergency Relief, or even a short-term bank loan.

Most importantly, do not make any permanent life decisions based on the temporary conditions of a deployment! While things can get difficult or out of sorts during deployment, they typically also return to normal within a relatively

of normalcy has returned to the house and the desire to make the change remains, then think seriously about it.

Until then, hang on! Go into maintenance mode and see how you feel after this is all over.

***⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.
⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
-Philippians 4:6-7***

(4) Find a way of dealing with the stress and anxiety of the deployment. There are many ways to deal with stress. Exercise is tried and true.

Some find help in hobbies or participation in civic activities and organizations. Prayer and Scripture (see below) can also provide comfort and strength for difficult days.

Not only does it provide some psychological healing, but I also believe that God can supernaturally enable us to deal/cope with the stresses of separation.

short time of return. So don't make any life-altering decisions—change/quit job, adoption, new house, divorce, etc.—because things have changed since the deployment began. If three months after the soldier/service member returns and some sense

Sunday Service at the Al Asad Chapel on FOB Prosperity. Photo by Sgt. Melissa Shaw



Army Reserve Lt. Gen. Jack Stultz

By Army Spc. Joshua
Horneck, 318th PAOC

visits Camp Stryker

The highest Army Reserve officer, Chief, Army Reserve Lt. Gen. Jack Stultz visited Reserve Soldiers of the 844th Engineer Battalion from Knoxville, Tenn. Dec. 24, 2009, at Camp Stryker, Iraq, fielding questions from the Soldiers.

"You are a national treasure," Stultz said. "Thanks for what you're doing; serving your country."

Sgt. Andrew Wilhelm, a native of Clarksburg, W. Va., received personal recognition from Stultz for his outstanding service in support of the 844th mission.

Assigned to the Forward Support Company of the 844th, Wilhelm has personally traveled more

than 5,000 miles in 11 of Iraq's 18 provinces supporting the distribution of supplies to units

within the battalion. In addition, Wilhelm serves as his company's physical training non-commissioned officer.

Stultz reminded Wilhelm and the Soldiers, "Young men and women in America raise their hands and say, 'I am willing to support and defend.' In this day and age, knowing they will be going into harm's way."

It was a great opportunity for Soldiers to realize Army leadership was thinking about them and appreciated what they did, especially around Christmas, said Sgt. Jordan Barger, stationed at Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 844th Engineer Battalion.

The visit shows junior enlisted Soldiers their concerns are being heard and individual needs are being met even at the highest level, said Wilhelm.

Soldiers at the meeting said they understood by signing up, they were volunteering to serve their country wherever needed. The difficulty, they said, is not the deployments themselves, but the unpredictability of the deployments,

We understood by signing up, they we were volunteering to serve our country wherever needed. The difficulty is not the deployments themselves, but the unpredictability of the deployments, and how it affects our civilian careers.

and how it affects their civilian careers.

Stultz explained he began setting up meetings and forums with civilian employers across America two years ago to figure out what employers were looking for. Employers responded by giving Stultz a short list of requirements to work well with Reserve Soldiers.



Sgt. Andrew Wilhelm of Clarksburg, W. Va. receives a coin from Lt. Gen. Jack Stultz during a recent visit to Camp Stryker. Photo by Joshua Horneck

Stultz took the employers' input back to Army leadership to improve relations with the civilian workforce. Shortly thereafter, the Army Reserve began partnering with several organizations nationwide, Stultz said.

Instead of paying for applicant background checks, paying medical fees for physical exams and sending employees to school to learn specific job-related skills, the Army does it all for them. Army Reserve Soldiers are drug free, physically and mentally fit and are trained on specific skill sets prior to showing up for the interview, Stultz said.

Employer partnership programs are still beginning, but much has been accomplished in the past two years to aid both Soldiers and employers, Stultz assured. Engineers with the 844th Engineer Battalion have a definite edge over other job applicants as a direct result of their Reserve service and training.

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Maj. Sean Ibarguen

JASG-C Inspector General

One of my key tasks throughout this deployment is to provide pertinent teaching and training information in order to better support the leaders, service members and civilians that execute within the structures of the 72nd JASG-C.

January Topic : Family Support

A Leader and Soldier Guide

Supporting your family is a requirement while you are in the U.S. Army. AR 608-99. Family Support, Child Custody and Paternity, dated 29 Oct 03, is the regulation that sets forth Army Policy on financial support of family members, paternity and child custody.

What commanders need to know:

- All active duty US Army personnel, including USARNG and USAR on active duty for 30 days or more must comply with this regulation.
- AR 608-99 prescribes the commander's responsibilities in detail, specifically Chapters 1 and 3.
- Commander's actions when presented with a request for family include but are not limited to, reviewing the inquiry, counseling the soldier and responding to the complaint within 14 days in writing.
- For repeat family support violators, the unit's next higher commander will be contacted.

Inspector General actions:

- IGs receives complaint from spouses claiming a soldier is not providing support to his or her dependents.
- The IG verifies complaintant's status, locates the soldier and sends a request to the unit commander to conduct an inquiry and take appropriate action.
- IG ensures the commander is notified of allegation, complies with the regulation and verifies soldier the soldier has complied with the regulation.

I've been told I'm in violation now what:

- Do not think that since you are deployed to Iraq that you are exempt from family support responsibilities at home.
- Follow the guidance the command provides you. **Ask questions** if you are not 100% sure what you are supposed to do.
- Determining the amount of support you will pay depends on many factors and can be very complicated. See your legal advisor to accurately determine your financial obligation.
- AR 609-99 HAS PUNITIVE ACTIONS. You are subject to possible punishment under the UCMJ as well as adverse administrative actions.

•**Bottom line: DO THE RIGHT THING**

http://www.apd.army.mil/pdf/r608_99.pdf



For more information contact the IG:

Maj. Sean P. Ibarguen
FOB Prosperity Bldg 78
sean.ibarguen@iraq.centcom.mil
318-239-7902

Judgeship; Continued from page 15



President Barack Obama's election.

"Just wasn't a good day," Farr said.

Instead of settling into private practice, Farr decided to fight his way back to the bench.

In 2002, "at the ripe old age of 32," Farr was appointed to a vacancy for associate judge in Harris County's 257th Family Court.

JAG role gives perspective

In 2007, the governor appointed him to the 312th Family Court when the previous judge stepped down to run for Congress.

Farr served in the 312th until he lost his seat in 2008. He was one of many Republican judges swept out of office in the Democratic tide that accompanied

"Being a family court judge really became what I wanted to do," Farr said. "I really felt like I was doing something valuable on a daily basis. You're making decisions about children in CPS care, divorce situations, custody cases and visitation rights."

His role as JAG is dramatically different, but it gives him the same sense of purpose.

In Iraq, he provides legal assistance to individual soldiers, briefs the troops on rules of engagement and use of force, advises the

Stultz visit; Continued from page 22

Soldiers left the meetings encouraged they were not forgotten. Soldiers of the 844th Engineer Battalion appreciated Stultz coming to visit them for the holidays because it showed their work was appreciated.

Spc. Stephen DeLance, engineer with the 844th Engineer Battalion, 808th Engineer Company out of Houston, Texas said, to see Stultz take time away from his own family to be with them for Christmas showed he cared for the Soldiers and was willing to do what we do for a while.

brigade's commanders on fiscal and administrative law, and helps with investigations and military justice.

"It gives you some perspective, I'll tell you that much," Farr said. "You get over the judge complex very quickly. The soldiers will call me 'judge' kind of playfully, but they don't care. That will ground you."

Reporter Brian Rogers contributed to this report from Houston.

MLK; Continued from page 12



tribute to the influence he has had on their lives.

Some were original, created especially for this occasion, while others were straight from King's more famous speeches. Regardless of the origin, they words were carefully chosen and spoken from the heart.

"It is our job to lead the way just as Dr. King led the way, not down the easy path but down the right path," said Sgt. Maj. John Sampa, Installations non-commissioned officer in charge for the Joint Area Support Group-Central."

At the end of the night, each Soldier walked away with a greater sense of the man King was. It was a time of reflection that would not soon be forgotten.



city — the constant pressure on the networks that are constructing (improvised explosive devices) or stockpiling rockets and mortars.”

Campsey said Iraqi security forces — partnered with U.S. investigators — prevent 50 percent of IED attacks. Raids across central Iraq on Tuesday, for example, netted hundreds of pounds of explosives and 25 suspects accused of plotting attacks against civilians and officials.

Scrap metal remains

On Jan. 6, Trobaugh visited Wedding Island with four other soldiers to talk to the Iraqi and Sudanese contractors working on the cleanup.

The soldiers were supposed to be attending a handover ceremony that day with Iraqi officials, but a site inspection in the morning had revealed a hazmat problem in the form of an oil pit. The contractors had since burned off most of the oil, but they still hadn't carried off the scrap metal Trobaugh had asked them to remove.

The contractors complained they didn't have the proper paperwork for their trucks.

Trobaugh and his team suspected the contractors were just stalling so they could sell as much gravel and dirt as possible before the turnover, but their contract is with an Iraqi company, not the U.S. military, so the soldiers didn't have much leverage.

“There's no threatening we can do,” said Master Sgt. Edward Hansen, 46, of Houston. “All we can do is make recommendations.”

At home, Hansen manages an A/C wholesaler. He deals with contractors all the time, but his experience in Iraq has been much more frustrating.

“Of course in the U.S. we hold our contractors to a higher standard,” he said. “As a consumer you have a way of checking on them by going to the Better Business Bureau, but here they don't have a way of doing that. Hopefully they'll have that, too, eventually.”



Clean up continues on Wedding Island, the military working daily in conjunction with local contracting companies responsible for taking away the scrap metal remnants, piles of brick and removing the debris. Photo by Sgt. Melissa Shaw

Military Occupational Specialty Corner Chaplain Assistant Army 56M -- Navy RP--Air Force 5R0X1

Chaplain Assistants provide much-needed support to the Chaplains during missions and everyday activities. A Chaplain Assistant primarily provides support for the Unit Ministry Team programs and worship services.

The duties performed by your CA's are many and vital to the UMT :

JASG-C

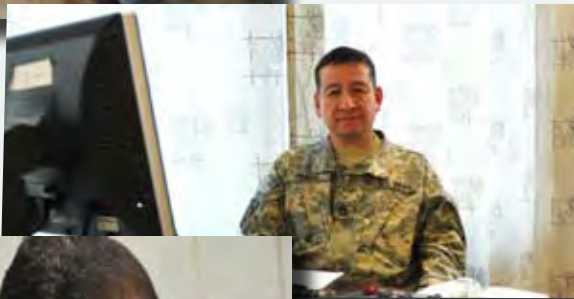
Chaplain Assistant Sgt. First Class Manuel Perez, 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team. SFC Perez lives in Seguin, Texas with his wife of 19 years. He has been a chaplain assistant for 15 out of the 24 years he has been in the service. Prior to deploying with the 72nd IBCT, SFC Perez worked for a utilities company as a "make-ready" supervisor. Dedication to his duty led

- Synchronize religious support in the contemporary operating environment.
- Integrate the Unit Ministry Team into a tactical element.
- Coordinate force protection for religious support operations.
- Monitor situational awareness for the Unit Ministry Team.
- Coordinate the circulation of the Unit Ministry Team in the contemporary operating environment.
- Operate a tactical wheeled vehicle platform and organic armaments.
- Operate communication equipment and digital reporting systems.
- Assist in planning religious support operations and deployments. Maintain reports, files, and administrative data for religious operations.
- Coordinate religious support in the absence of the chaplain.
- Apply technology to religious operations.
- Integrate religious operations with Civil Military Operations.
- Research religious information to answer Commander's Critical Information Requirements.
- Prepare religious area analysis.
- Provide coordination, security and analysis support to indigenous religious leader liaison operations.
- Safeguard privileged communications.
- Perform crisis intervention. Coordinate Traumatic Event Management.
- Conduct specialized peer counseling for combat stress casualties.
- Provide emergency religious ministrations.
- Assess unit morale for targeted religious support.
- Manage religious support resources to include property, ecclesiastical equipment, section material/supplies and non-appropriated funds.
- Manage multi-purpose worship facilities and programs. Coordinate religious support for all faith groups.

him volunteering for this deployment on the heels of his previous assignment in Afghanistan and is part and parcel of his devotion to the ministry. Photo by Sgt. Melissa Shaw

RP1 Robert Buxton, Catholic Ministry Team. For 14 years, Buxton has worked in expeditionary settings all over the world as part of the Navy's Religious Program as well traditional

hardened locations like military hospitals. With his wife of 10 years and son providing support along the way from their home in the states, Buxton has safeguarded innumerable chaplains and provided much needed services along the way. Photo by Sgt. Melissa Shaw



Iraq Culture Corner

Home to a proud people with a long history, Iraq should be a place we are all in wonder to find ourselves. Each month we will include a bit of that history and some useful phrases to incorporate into our daily dealings with each other as well as our friends and counterparts here in Iraq.

Trivia

- The garden of Eden was in Iraq
- Mesopotamia, which is now Iraq, was the cradle of civilization
- Noah built the ark in Iraq
- Iraq, in its present form, was not created until 1920

Conversation Pieces:

English

Hi!
Good morning!
Good evening!
Welcome!
How are you?
I'm fine, thanks!
And you?
Good/ So-So.

Arabic

Salam!
Sabah el kheer
Masaa el kheer
Marhaban
Kaifa haloka/ haloki
Ana bekhair, shokran!
Wa ant? / Wa anti?
Jayed/ 'aadee

English

Thank you (very much)!
You're welcome! (response)
I missed you so much!
What's new?
Nothing much
Good night!
See you later!
Good bye!

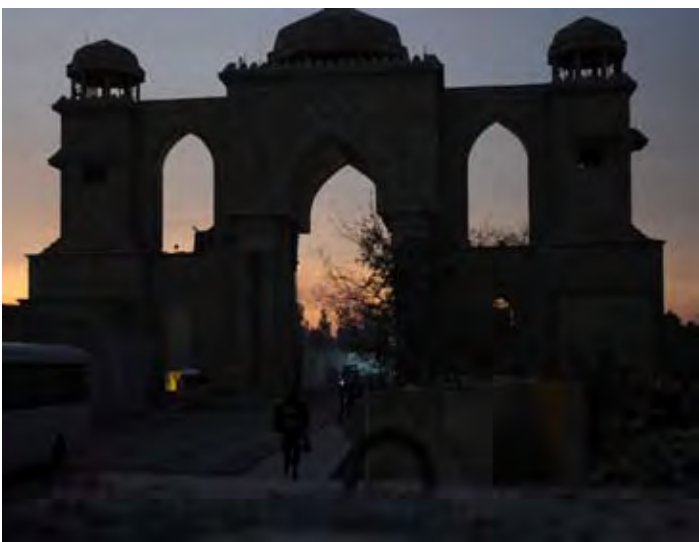
Arabic

Shokran (jazeelan)
Al'afw
Eshtaqt elaiika/
Maljadeed?
Lashai jadeed
Tosbeho'ala khair
Araka/ Araki fi ma ba'd
Ma'a salama

To the right is the famous landmark "the Crossed Swords of Baghdad". While it has fallen into great disrepair, it still boasts two 140 foot high swords, held in place by a pair of massive hands. Adding to the already controversial aspects of the sculpture, there are 2,500 helmets held in metal netting at the base of the hands. These symbolize the number of Iranian soldiers killed during the Iran-Iraq war that ending in 1988. Additional helmets are buried in the concrete road surface in front of the monument, like small speed bumps so they can be continually "trampled" by vehicle and pedestrian traffic. *Photo by Sgt. Melissa Shaw*



Winter
Sunrise on
FOB
Prosperity
*Photo by Sgt.
Melissa Shaw*



The New Guys in Town

A brief history of the 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team

Arriving in late December, 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team soldiers bring with them with them a proud history to the IZ.

No stranger to foreign shores, 72nd IBCT soldiers now serve as the Joint Area Support Group –Central, with the responsibility of administering and securing the Green Zone.

Diving into the past, the lineage and honors of the 72nd IBCT traces back to the creation of the 36th Infantry Division on 18 July 1917.

In October of 1918, the 72nd Brigade participated in one of the great chapters in its combat history, the Meuse-Argonne Campaign, in which the 72nd joined the offensive surge that helped end the war.

In September 1943, the 36th Infantry Division and regiments from the 72nd Infantry Brigade led the first amphibious assault on the European continent near Salerno, Italy.

Despite intense fighting on the beach and heavy casualties, the Texans overcame the Axis forces, gained the high ground, and forced the Germans to abandon their position.

In May 1944, Fifth Army was deadlocked around the Anzio landing sites. The Texans again hit the beaches and were immediately placed on the line.

On May 22, 1944, regiments of the 72nd Brigade began a daring

assault along the ridgeline near the town of Velletri, piercing the “Ceasar” Line, forcing a full-scale Axis withdrawal and the rapid liberation of Rome.

Three months later the “T-Patchers” landed in southern France, drove through determined German resistance, and reached the German-Austrian border at the end of the war, earning a total of seven campaign streamers.

In the past decade, elements of the 72nd Brigade have been deployed to Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

The 72nd IBCT has also served in many disaster response operations, deploying

across Texas in response to the Space Shuttle Columbia tragedy and numerous hurricane response missions giving the 72nd the nickname ‘the Hurricane Brigade.’

This year starts another great chapter for the 72nd. And for a brief time, Iraq will now know why we Texans are called “The Ready Team”.

“The new members of the Joint Area Support Group –Central, are charged with the responsibility of administering and securing the Green Zone.”



Army Values: A Soldier's Point of View

Honor Personal Courage Duty
Respect Loyalty Integrity

Bear true faith and allegiance to the US constitution, the Army and other soldiers.
Be loyal to the nation and its heritage.



"Loyalty is when you remain focused on the intent despite your opinions along the way."

*Sgt. Maj. John Sampa
Installations NCOIC Camp
Prosperity, 72nd IBCT,
TXARNG*



"Loyalty is my way of showing my devotion to my country and those with whom I serve."

*Sgt. Nadia Vallejo,
Camp Prosperity Help
Desk Team Leader, 72nd
IBCT, TXARNG*

"Loyalty to me means to have fidelity towards my beautiful country, allegiance to my unit and to be faithful to all soldiers."

*Sgt. Loretta Yeverino,
Camp Prosperity Support
NCOIC, 72nd IBCT,
TXARNG*





Baghdad at Dawn.

Photo by Sgt. Melissa Shaw