

# The North Star

Serving Task Force Marne  
U. S. Division- North, Iraq



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## Scouts train Iraqis for air mobility

By Master Sgt. Duff McFadden  
2BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

With the advent of the helicopter, airborne military operations became centered around the concept of strategic mobility, or getting the maximum number of Soldiers into an area in the shortest amount of time.

Over the course of five days, members of the Iraqi Army and Kurdish Peshmerga learned all about air mobile tasks, such as providing perimeter and landing zone security, loading and unloading aircraft, movement formations, and detainee operations, at Joint Security Station India, located in Al Kindi, Iraq.

The Iraqis were introduced to the U.S. Army's "crawl, walk, run" concept of training, as they took part in numerous exercises leading up to the use of an actual aircraft. First, the Iraqis observed demonstrations by the 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division. Next, they walked through where they should be lined up, given each person's responsibilities, and the order for tactically entering and exiting.

The Soldiers trained on a 9-foot by 18-foot wooden box constructed to resemble a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, complete with passenger seats and crew chief area. The training culminated with all 22 students loading and unloading aboard actual UH-60 Black Hawk.

Through endless repetition, as well as timed drills,

they learned to respect the capabilities of the U.S. Army's tactical transport helicopter.

The routine quickly turned into the necessary memory needed to react to air mobile situations.

Room-clearing and detainee-operation scenarios were also added, but the focal point of the training – safe entry and exit of

a moving aircraft – trumped everything.

"While this course involved loading and unloading helicopters and the tasks subsequent in getting onto the helicopter," said Capt. David Fierner, Head Quarters Company Commander, "it also included safety factors, such as

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Photo by Pfc. Gregory Gieske, 2BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO  
*First Lieutenant Larry Richardson, 1/36th Inf. Regt., 1BCT, 1st AD, roleplays as a detainee being delivered for further interrogation to JSS India, while being tactically removed from a Black Hawk helicopter during the last stage of a training mission, near Al Kinidi, Iraq.*



# School opening shows signs of success

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

After joint efforts from both U.S. Army and Iraqi officials, a school officially opened during a ceremony, Mar. 2, in the village of Al Khanik, Iraq.

The school, which has been under construction for four months, was built with the village's future in mind and to house the students in the growing community.

"The old school had only three classrooms, said Arif Jabbar Mutar, the chairman of Tikrit City Council. "It's not enough to absorb all students from the village."

With six classrooms, working latrines and two rooms for the teachers, this school will pave the way toward education. The new school has enough room to house 200, 6-to-12-year-old students and their teachers.

"We are so happy because we're going to lead these kids to their right future," said Khaled Hamad Yassin, the school's headmaster. "We have to build their future. Education is very important for every single student over here. They have to understand, they have to learn, and they have to read. At this school, we can provide a better education and better future for the students. The success will have a higher percentage here than the old school."

The ceremony included U.S. Army guests Lt. Col. Nora Marcos and Command Sgt. Maj. Byron Loyd, the Division Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division commander and command sergeant major.

The ceremony began with a formal ribbon cutting, signaling the school's grand opening, which was eagerly met with joyous applause. Guests then moved back to their seats and listened as the 3ID Band played Iraq's National Anthem, while school children raised the Iraqi flag.

Following the raising of the flag, children performed various forms of entertainment, such as poems, songs and religious prayers, all met with great applause from the crowd.

Yassin, the headmaster, stood in front of the crowd and spoke words of



Photo by Spc. Cassandra Monroe, 135th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

**Children rush toward the new Al Khanik school building before the school-opening ceremony, March 2, in the village of Al Khanik, Iraq.**

encouragement for a brighter future for the children and for Iraq.

"The future will be very bright," he said. "If the kids can have an education, the country will be very educated and have a much better future."

Lieutenant Colonel Marcos echoed the headmaster.

"I just want to say what an honor it is to be here with you at the opening of this school," she said. "Congratulations to the engineers and builders, who created this wonderful place, and I thank the provincial government for their support in this project."

After the ceremony, Lt. Col. Marcos took some time to make her way around the courtyard, speaking to guests and school children. Along with a crowd of eager children, she made her way around the new school to see the new classrooms.

As soon as the children saw their new desks, coloring books and crayons they rushed toward them. Taking their seats for the first time in their new classrooms, Lt. Col. Marcos joined the children at their desks and posed for a few photos.

"As the inspectors came during the

building process, they said they've never seen something built so well, so quickly," said Lt. Col. Marcos.

The last stop on the tour included a room where some of the women and their children congregated.

"It really bridges a gap with these kids to see Soldiers here, giving and being a part of this," she said. "It's these ladies, who are teachers, seeing Soldiers helping and seeing a female involved ... makes a difference."

For Lt. Col. Marcos though, this ceremony is a revisit to a book, she read when she first arrived here in Iraq.

"It's about a guy who helped build schools in Pakistan and how the construction of schools and the education of children bridged cultural and religious gaps," she said. She relates the book to the current situation here in Iraq and at the ceremony.

"That's what we did here and will continue to do with every project and most importantly, every partnering opportunity we have with the Iraqis. We're allowing the Iraqis to take the lead and develop some answers to their issues and put them forward where they should be."

# Wheaton alumni reunite on Speicher

By Capt. Rebecca Walsh  
4IBCT, 1st Inf. Div. PAO

An unlikely reunion occurred on Contingency Operating Base Speicher for seven Wheaton College Army Reserve Officer Training Corps alumni who discovered they were all deployed to the same location despite serving in different units.

According to Capt. Timothy Erickson, an attorney with the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division out of Fort Riley, Kan., the group of alumni found out that they would be deployed together through an interconnected network of friends.

"The raw probability of seven people from the same school of 2,400 students to end up at the same base, at the same time is remarkable," said the Grand Rapids, Mich., native.

The officers earned their commissions from 1998-2008 and range in rank from first lieutenant to major.

"I was pleasantly surprised and wanted to meet [other alumni] since I only knew of one of them," said Maj. Luke Wilder of South Bend, Ind., who is currently deployed with the 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Ga.

Despite being a small liberal arts college, Wheaton College commissions approximately 20 "Rolling Thunder Battalion" cadets

each year.

All seven alumni credit Wheaton ROTC for developing them as leaders.

"The goal at Wheaton is to make the classes that follow you better than your own," said Capt. Erickson. "Success is not measured in your individual performance, but in how you made underclassmen better than yourself. I have a meaningful relationship with Paily [Eapen], Brendan [Bell], and Dusty [Marlette], who were two years ahead of me, because they put the time in to [develop] me as a leader."

For the "Wheaton 7," the mentorship provided by their ROTC cadre is treasured.

"The example of our cadre was developmental

to our attitudes of service as an Army officer. The example that they set for us as young, impressionable cadets stays with us to this day," said Capt. Paily Eapen, projects manager for the "Dragon" brigade.

Retired Lt. Col. Scott Buhmann, Professor of Military Science at Wheaton College from 1999-2006 has fond memories of his former cadets.

"My favorite memories of them and their classmates all revolve around their character and commitment to their job and to each other. They were a very, very tight knit group, and continue to be so," Buhmann said.

According to 1st Lt. Brett Latsha, who is currently deployed with the 25th

Combat Aviation Brigade, Wheaton College was about getting a balanced education.

"It's not just a liberal arts education, but being involved in other activities which have been instrumental in developing leadership," he said.

It is the bonds that they built as cadets which have allowed the "Wheaton 7" to maintain lasting friendships, making the deployment a little bit easier.

"I was thrilled to know that some old friends would be stationed with me during my deployment. We have had so many laughs here and many moments when we're together that I feel like I'm back at home," said Capt. Brendan Bell, a general dentist with the 502nd Dental Company.

"The people you work with now you will work with again later," 1st Lt. Nathan Williams, an Olathe, Kan., native concluded.

For current Wheaton ROTC cadets, these combat veterans have some words of encouragement about leadership and leadership.

"Invest in your fellow cadets," Capt. Eapen said. "They are friends that you will keep for the long haul."



Photo by Capt. Rebecca Walsh, 4IBCT, 1st Inf. Div. PAO

**Wheaton College Army ROTC alumni, Capt. Pailey Eapen, Capt. Timothy Erickson, Capt. Dustin Marlette, Capt. Brendan Bell, 1st Lt. Brett Latsha, and 1st Lt. Nathan Williams meet together on COB Speicher, Feb. 28. Not pictured: Maj. Luke Wilder.**

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buckling your safety belt and ensuring you're safe on the helicopter. Beyond that, it was Americans training Iraqis to lead themselves."

"It was great seeing the progress over the five-day stretch. At first there

was some hesitation, but by day five, the Iraqis were training the trainer," said 1st Lt. Andrew Higgins, scout platoon leader and a Mansfield, Ohio, resident. "With Iraqis in the lead and Americans on the opposite side with

the assist-and-advise mission, we were able to see them grow.

And by day five, they were actually able to get in the aircraft, fly around and get out, with very little assistance from U.S. forces,"



### Task Force Marne Heroes of the North



Specialist Jason Ipp, of Naples, Fla., is a signal support systems specialist and communications security custodian for 2nd Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment, 25th Combat Aviation Brigade, 25th Infantry Division. Over the last four months, Specialist Ipp has demonstrated his technical proficiency by maintaining all primary and redundant radio systems for the tactical operations center without fail. Most recently, Specialist Ipp configured the radio system used on the AC-208 "Caravan," an airplane used by the Iraqi Air Force. This reconfiguration enabled the Iraqi Air Force to communicate with Army aviation assets and facilitated the establishment of a common air operations net for air operations at Contingency Operating Site Warrior. His hard work and dedication linked U.S. and Iraqi aviation, enhanced partnership efforts and increased airfield safety and situational awareness. For his untiring efforts and continuous contributions to the mission Specialist Ipp is selected as the Task Force Marne Hero of the North.



Jay Fett, of Clinton, Iowa, has supported the Distributed Common Ground Station Army (DCGS-A) and the Digital Topographic Support System (DTSS) operations and intelligence collection since November 2009 and continues to provide excellent support to the task force. Fett ensured that four DCGS-A server suites, 71 Basic Analysis Laptops (BALs) and four DTSS-Light systems supporting the United States Division – North area of responsibility remained fully operational during his tenure. Fett has provided outstanding support to the task force's intelligence sections, terrain teams and the task force Fusion Cell, he often worked well past normal work hours to ensure system functionality and mission success. His complete dedication to the task force's mission reflects great credit upon him and the L3 C2S2 team and make him a natural choice for this week's Task Force Marne Service Provider of the Week.

## WOMEN'S HISTORY QUIZ ANSWERS

1. In 1955 she swam the English Channel, England to France, in 13 hours 55 minutes, a record for women and men. Who is she? Florence May Chadwick
2. She was born in 1894 and died in 1937. She called herself the Empress of Blues - others called her the greatest female blues singer. Who is she? Bessie Smith
3. She wrote about contemporary problems such as women's suffrage, temperance, prison reform and child labor. She is best known for her book, Little Women. Who is she? Louisa May Alcott
4. Best known as the founder of the American Red Cross, she had a number of other careers in her life. She taught school for 18 years, then became the first, full-time clerk in the U.S. Patent Office. During the Civil War she became a legend as the "Angel of the Battlefield." Who is she? Clara Harlowe Barton
5. In 1932 she was the first woman to fly alone across the Atlantic Ocean. Five years later she disappeared while attempting what was to be an around-the-world flight. Who is she? Amelia Earhardt
6. Her first novel was "Uncle Tom's Cabin." It aroused great feelings against slavery. Who is she? Harriet Beecher Stowe
7. She was the founder of Christian Science, the first woman to establish a major religion. Who is she? Mary Baker Eddy
8. Who was the first American woman astronaut to go into space? Sally Ride
9. She was appointed Secretary of Labor in 1933, the first female cabinet member. Legislation during her time included Unemployment Insurance and Social Security. Who is she? Frances Perkins
10. Who was the first woman to qualify and drive the entire Indianapolis Speedway 500 race in 1978? Janet Gunthrie

# REGIONAL HEADLINES

## Sheep rescued from Bothell barn fire

[www.heraldnet.com](http://www.heraldnet.com)

BOTHELL, Wash.- Two sheep were rescued March 3 from an early morning barn fire near Bothell.

A neighbor called 911 to summon help at about 3:40 a.m. The blaze on 49th Avenue SE, Snohomish County Fire District 7 spokeswoman Autumn Waite said.

Flames were leaping from the roof of the barn when firefighters arrived, she said. Crews rescued the two farm animals and then were able to knock down the fire.

No one was hurt.

The Snohomish County Fire Marshal's Office is investigating. Initial damage estimates are \$26,000.

## Wichita shop engraves 'about anything'

[The Associated Press](http://The Associated Press)

WICHITA, Kan. - One side of his sign advises that it's time to order Cub Scout pinewood derby and Arrow of Light trophies, but Pete Lungwitz says his business is definitely not a "trophy shop."

Oh, he sells trophies.

But they're a small part of Lee Reed Engraving, which is celebrating its 50th year.

"We engrave about anything," Lungwitz said. "That is the business."

"Anything" includes name tags, commemorative bricks, aircraft parts, memorial plates, safety awards,

Golden Apple awards and custom creations, for a start.

Lungwitz, 53, has owned the company for 17 years and has been part of it for about 25. His father, Ken, bought the company from Reed, its founder, "and then he asked me if I wanted to come in." His father has since died.

The business has grown steadily through the years. "This last year was the exception," he said, in part because identification engraving for aircraft parts manufacturers makes up a chunk of his business, and when their business is down, so is his.

But "they trust us. We don't lose customers," he said. "They come back."

Lee Reed Engraving is a small company — Lungwitz works with his wife, Sherry, and a part-timer. "We don't have salespeople of any type," he said. "Everything is by word of mouth."

As a small-business owner, overhead is his greatest challenge and customer relationships his greatest joy. "You build relationships in a small business that you don't have in the corporate world."

Lungwitz had three engraving machines; he has sold two but keeps one for odd-shaped projects, such as mugs. "It's kind of a lost art," he said. Everything else is done by computer now. "We had the first computerized engraving machine in the city."

His strangest engraving job? "When people make up their own stuff. We've done toilet seats, things I can't tell

you."

His toughest? Memorial plates, such as those that might be attached to a building or park bench. "Those are hard to deal with," he said, though he does at least one a week.

Lungwitz has two sons who've shown no interest in the business to date.

That's OK — he's in no rush to retire and loves what he's doing.

"I've got to work with my wife. I got to work with my dad. I got to work with my mom. It's been a good ride. It really has."

## Bobcat Found In Houston Garage

[Click2Houston.com](http://Click2Houston.com)

HOUSTON - A bobcat was captured in downtown Houston March 2, KPRC Local 2 reported.

The bobcat was spotted roaming around in an underground parking garage on Rusk Street at about noon.

Animal control officials shot tranquilizers into the bobcat, which weighs about 25 pounds, so they could capture it.

However, they used tranquilizers for a dog or cat, which were not strong enough. A more powerful tranquilizer was then used.

Officials said they don't know where the bobcat came from or how it got into the parking garage.

The bobcat was taken to the Bureau of Animal Regulation and Care before it was released into the wild at Brazos Bend State Park in Fort Bend County.

## THE North Star

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