

# The North Star

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



Volume 1, Issue 60

March 24, 2010

## Grants revitalize town market

“When we first visited the suq it was in a state of disrepair,”

*-Captain Peter Curly, assistant to PRT for economical and agricultural affairs*

**By Pfc. Adrian Muehe  
3SBCT, 2nd Inf Div PAO**

“What was once unthinkable is now a reality right before our eyes,” said Qaim’maqam Zaid, mayor of Muqdadiyah, Iraq, while standing in the middle of a once again bustling Aruba Suq, March 16.

To restore Aruba Suq to the prominent business community it used to be was a collaborative effort of

2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry Regiment and Battery B, 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery Regiment both from the 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division; the local government; the Diyala Red Crescent; and the Diyala Provincial Reconstruction Team.

A year ago, the streets of the Aruba Suq were desolate. A fierce battleground is what became of the second largest market in Diyala province.

Buildings that once flourished as successful shops now stood demolished. Their owners and shoppers fled the violence that strangled the life out of the area.

“People were afraid to open their stores, afraid to come to work,” said 1st Lt. Sean Malloy, the Commanders Emergency Relief Program project purchasing officer for 2/3 Inf., 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID. “Shops were left empty, buildings were burned and store fronts were looted.”

This project started with the Diyala PRT. After the violence had stopped, they went through the destroyed areas

and helped to repave roads and lay down new sidewalks, with hopes to bring businesses back to Aruba Suq.

“When we first visited the Suq it was in a state of disrepair,” said Capt. Peter Curly, assistant to the PRT for economical and agricultural affairs.

Shopkeepers still didn’t return after the original refurbishment. The PRT and their counterparts put their heads together and devised a plan to bring the masses back to the suq.

“The timing was right for

**See Suq, Page 2 —**



These buildings are now stores open for business, completely reconstructed and painted with vibrant colors as part of the Aruba Suq in Muqdadiyah, Iraq. Soldiers from 3SBCT, 2nd ID, along with the Diyala PRT visited the area, March 16.

Photo by Pfc. Adrian Muehe, 3SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div. PAO

# Soldiers become crime scene investigators

By Sgt. Johnathon Jobson

TF Marne PAO

**E**vidence is crucial to any court case. Approximately 30 Soldiers from various units around U.S. Division-North learned how to properly collect and catalogue evidence during a sensitive site exploitation class held at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, March 15 – 19.

The course was a train the trainer class. The Soldiers, who were chosen by their units to attend the class, will be expected to return and train Soldiers, as well as put their new skills to use anytime weapons caches are found or buildings are searched while they are out on missions.

The Soldiers here learned basic crime scene investigation, explained Joseph Morrissey, the course instructor and law enforcement professional with the Joint Expeditionary Forensics Facility at COB Speicher. “Just like you see on TV back home, photographing the scene, collecting and documenting the evidence, and drawing sketches of the scene for purposes of recreation for those who were not there themselves.”

Personnel at the JEFF lab handle all ballistics testing on weapons, DNA testing, and fingerprint analysis for items found during any mission done in the USD-N area of operations.

Delving deeper into the basic topics, the Soldiers were taught more on col-

lecting fingerprints from detainees and lifting latent fingerprints off surfaces.

They also learned the proper ways to “bag and tag” evidence, such as whether or not a specific type of evidence needs to be in a plastic or paper bag and how to fill out evidence forms.

Rule of Law was an important topic of the course because the Soldiers have to know what is and is not allowed by the Security Agreement between the

U.S. forces and the Government of Iraq.

“The Soldiers need to know that they are primarily just helping the Iraqis,” Morrissey said. “Everything has to have an Iraqi ‘face’ on it, there are no Americans going out and conducting their own SSE to bring an American application for a warrant to an investigative judge.”

The Soldiers were able to put their newly learned skills to the test in a mock SSE event, March 17. Using a mock Iraqi house as a training building at the explosive ordnance disposal range, Soldiers had to identify all of the items to be collected as evidence, lift fingerprints from various surfaces in the house, and search the site for weapons caches.

“There was no one big thing to be taken away from this course,” said Spc. Rueben Delgado, the Civil Affairs Team 11 team chief from Company B, 414th Civil Affairs Battalion. “Everything we learned is something that can help fellow Soldiers down the road if we have to go and collect evidence to find someone who has maimed, kidnapped or killed one of our brothers-in-arms.”

The sensitive site exploitation classes are held quarterly and open to any Soldier regardless of their military occupational specialty.

Task Force Marne Provost Marshal Office will notify units of the next class date and location.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Richard Gott, TF Marne G-2

**Sergeant First Class Raymond Loriaux, team chief for CAT 15, Co. B, 414th CA Bn., dusts for fingerprints at the sensitive site exploitation training house. The SSE is the military's version of crime scene investigation, and is a crucial part of obtaining a warrant for the capture of extremists.**

## Continued from Suq, Page 1

a micro-grant surge,” said Capt. Curley. “It was ripe for the picking.”

A micro-grant is a sum of money given to business owners and entrepreneurs with a set plan to jump start their shops. These grants are funded by CERP. Assisting the PRT with issuing the micro-grants was the Diyala Red Crescent, headed by Hazim Mohammed Salman.

“He was the most non-secular person we could find in the Suq,” said Capt. Cur-

ley. “His interests are based solely on restoring Diyala for everyone in Diyala.”

The grants, approved through the Red Crescent, were divided equally between Shias and Sunnis.

“They [the Red Crescent] are seen through the eyes of the Iraqis as a fair and partial organization that can help them and has been helping them,” said Capt. Curley

The Red Crescent went through the market and, along with PRT, was able to

establish anchor businesses, such as three medical clinics that are now open.

“We started by identifying these anchor businesses that will pull people in,” said Capt. Curley. “It’s like a Macy’s in a mall, you have to go to the mall to get to the Macy’s, but you’ll probably go to another store and buy something.”

The Red Crescent administered the application process for the micro-grants, as well as gave a two-day business

class to the recipients. The classes taught these entrepreneurs what they needed to know to make the most of their grants to benefit themselves, and the market.

The market originally had more than 1,700 shops. To date 750 micro-grants have been paid out to help restore the bustling business center to what it once was. When this project is complete, the PRT will have given more than 1,500 micro-grants to the area, said Capt. Curley.

# Soldiers ensure security through night missions

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

The sky was dark on the night of March 19, near Arshadia Island, Salah ad-Din province, with only distant city lights and the stars above as a light source.

However, for Soldiers with 2nd Platoon, Security Detachment, Division Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division, the night was alive with a bright green haze from their night vision goggles, allowing them to see everything in their sector.

The Soldiers were on a night over watch, presence patrol, a mission where they used their night-vision capabilities to observe a suspected enemy area and to make their presence known, just in case enemy forces were watching.

“We provided over watch of an area that usually fires indirect fire to Contingency Operating Base Speicher,” said Capt. David Bright, the security detachment’s commander. “What’s unique about the area is that it’s an island and the people that use it go to the island, launch their rockets, then leave.”

“We go out to different areas to show that we’re still around to try to [deter] any enemy activity,” said Cpl. Jeremy Obermiller, a truck driver, infantryman and team leader for 2nd Plt., Security Detachment, DSTB, 3rd ID. “We work closely with the Iraqi Police to keep them involved, so the local populace can see their own security forces out there.”

Because the team works so closely with the Iraqi Police, they routinely stop by the IP stations in Al Sequor before every mission to notify the policemen of their intentions and to ask them if they would like to join them, allowing both forces to teach and learn from each other. On this mission, two Iraqi policemen participated in the search for the possible suspects.

“All of our missions are joint presence patrols now,” said Cpl. Obermiller, a Blue Hill, Nebraska, native. “We’re not trying to take control anymore, we’re more of an over watch element. We’re letting the Iraqi Police,



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

**Corporal Jeremy Obermiller, a truck driver and infantryman with 2nd Plt. PSD, DSTB, 3rd ID, scans his sector during a night patrol, over watch mission March 19 in Salah ad-Din province.**

Army and Sons of Iraq take charge of their security, so that when we leave, it will already be in place.”

According to Cpl. Obermiller, who served his first deployment at Camp Victory in Baghdad from 2007 to 2008, this deployment is different in the way that the Iraqi forces have a larger role in the missions.

“The difference with this deployment is that it is more about letting the Iraqi people take control of their security,” he said.

Once the team, along with two Iraqi Policemen, reached the area near the island, they battled treacherous weeds and uneven terrain with deep ruts. Once the Soldiers reached their scanning point, they split up into teams to observe different areas of the Tigris River and the island on the other side.

The Soldiers rarely moved as they held a rigid stance for roughly an hour, where they scanned their sectors for potential threats in the peace of the night. Some Soldiers, like Cpl. Obermiller, prefer the night missions rather than the day ones because they have fewer distractions.

Soldiers can get out there and get

what needs to get accomplished without interference, said Cpl. Obermiller. Also, with the technology Soldiers use today, they can see up to longer distances. There aren’t any hindrances because they still have great visibility.

Part of the night-friendly tools that the Soldiers used included a Humvee equipped with special night vision tools that allow the team to see distances farther than their night vision goggles and naked eyes will allow. Before departing the fields, the Humvee was sent out toward the river to do a scan to ensure the team didn’t miss anything.

After approximately three hours out in the field, the team headed back to their base. Although no enemy suspects were found and nothing out of the ordinary was seen, Cpl. Obermiller still felt a sense of accomplishment.

“To me, the mission was a success because it was a pretty quiet night,” he said. “Granted, we didn’t find anything, but that’s not always a bad thing. That means there’s been a lull in enemy activity, and we’re doing our job so the enemy doesn’t want to come into our area of operations.”

## Task Force Marne Heroes of the North



Sergeant Eloyes Ratliff, of Temple, Texas, is with Company E, 2nd Battalion, 25th Aviation Regiment, 25th Combat Aviation Brigade, 25th Infantry Division. He consistently executes his duties on a daily basis far beyond the expectations of a team leader. He was recently handpicked because of his competence and leadership abilities to serve as a supervisor of the forward arming refueling point (FARP) at Joint Base Balad during a combined air assault. Upon hitting the ground, Sgt. Ratliff implemented significant changes to the FARP which ultimately increased aircraft refueling capabilities, mitigated risk and improved operational efficiency. Immediately after modifying the FARP and briefing his Soldiers on the new performance standards, he led them in support of the helicopter refueling operations. His team played a pivotal role in the mission's success, pumping fuel for three different airframes conducting multiple rotations through the FARP. The successful mission captured four detainees. Sergeant Ratliff is Task Force Diamond Head's "go to" noncommissioned officer for FARP operations and has well earned the distinction being today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.



Sergeant Scott Williamson, of Easton, Pa., is with Company A, 72nd Signal Battalion. He has demonstrated outstanding technical expertise while serving as Forward Operating Base Dagger's only senior transmission system operator. He ensured that the FOB's command post node was always operational in support of the 4th Iraqi Army Division's adviser team. He is responsible for all of the FOB's communication systems, including any reach-back capability to the United States. His team has committed more than 17,000 hours ensuring the upkeep, maintenance, and procurement of repair parts for all of FOB Dagger's radios, communications security equipment, surveillance systems, and satellite transport terminal system. His relentless pursuit of excellence ensured 98 percent reliable voice and data services and a 50 percent increase in communications posture. Sergeant Williamson's committed drive to live up to his personal motto, "You can talk about us, but you can't talk without us," makes him an obvious choice for today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.

## On this day, March 24, in history ...

**1603** - Queen Elizabeth I dies after 44 years of rule.

**1765** - Parliament passes the Quartering Act, putting requirements on the colonies to house British soldiers. The act enraged locals, especially in the Boston area and was a turning point to the colonies eventually declaring independence from Great Britain.

**1958** - Singer/actor Elvis Presley inducted into the Army. While stationed in Germany, he met girlfriend and future wife Priscilla.

**1976** - Football player Peyton Manning born in New Orleans to Olivia and Archie Manning. Peyton was a Super Bowl champion in 2007, becoming the game's most valuable player.

**1989** - Supertanker Exxon Valdez runs aground in Prince William Sound in Alaska. The Tanker would eventually spill an estimated 11 million gallons of oil into the water

**2002** - Actress Halle Berry and actor Denzel Washington win Academy Awards for best actor and actress, respectively. They would become the first two African-Americans to win an award for acting in the same year.

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

### Safety Thought of the Week: Summer safety

- *Consider water a tactical weapon. Cool water is the best hydration fluid, drink frequently.*
- *Eat meals and add salt to taste.*
- *Dietary supplements may lead to dehydration, use with caution.*
- *Be aware that dark yellow, infrequent urination is a sign of dehydration, when this happens, increase water intake.*
- *Perform heavy work in the cooler hours of the day.*
- *Minimize heat stress by decreasing the work pace and/or increasing rest periods.*
- *Be aware full heat acclimatization takes one to two weeks.*
- *Consider Soldiers undergoing treatment for acute or chronic medical conditions may be at a greater risk of heat injury.*

# REGIONAL HEADLINES

## Man tries 20 records in two days

United Press International

NORTH RICHLAND HILLS, Texas - A Texas man said he attempted about 20 world records, including egg smashing and speed juggling, in two days and succeeded in about half. David Slick set he set world records March 22 and 23 at the North Richland Hills library by balancing a pool cue for 2 hours and 5 minutes on his finger, using his head to smash 138 raw eggs in one minute and speed-juggling with 354 throws and catches in a single minute, the Fort Worth (Texas) Star-Telegram reported Friday. Slick, who holds two Guinness World Records for juggling, said Guinness officials still have to confirm his feats from.

"It was fun, but I'm going to take it easy for a few days," Slick said. "My neck is killing me."

## Man freed from laundry chute

United Press International

WISCONSIN FALLS, Wis. - Emergency responders in Wisconsin said they freed a 20-year-old man who became wedged in a laundry chute while attempting a dare from some children.

Police said the Wisconsin Falls family called 911 March 20 to report the man, who was not named, had been wedged in the laundry chute for about 10 minutes and was having trouble breathing due to the tightness

of his confines, Gannett Central Wisconsin Media reported March 20. Officer Roy Woyak said the man had attempted to slide down the chute feet first as a dare presented to him by some children in the house.

"I've been here over 30 years and that's my first laundry chute guy getting stuck," Woyak said. Woyak said he and a firefighter stood in the basement and supported the man's legs to relieve the pressure on his chest while other firefighters worked to expand the hole with a saw.

## 6,000 climb stairs for cancer charity

United Press International

SEATTLE - An 80-year-old woman and an 85-year-old man were among 6,000 people who scaled 69 stories of stairs in Seattle to benefit the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

Shirley Lansing, a breast cancer survivor and the oldest woman participating in the climb, said she practiced for Sunday's Big Climb charity event at the Columbia Center by climbing the 60 flights of stairs at the Seattle Municipal Tower, the Seattle Times reported Monday. "I thank God for taking me to the top," she said. "I was thankful I was able to do it. The challenge was mental, keeping a steady pace."

Anders Jacobsen, 85, was the oldest of the 6,000 climbers from 19 states and Canada, while the youngest climber to tackle the 1,311 stairs was 8

years old.

Organizers of the event said participants raised about \$1.3 million for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

## Paramedic delivers baby in taxi

United Press International

BALTIMORE - A Baltimore man said he pulled his taxicab into a fire station when it appeared his baby was going to be born in the back of the vehicle.

William Smith said he was driving Tanieka Vaughan to the hospital for the birth of their child after her water broke at about 6 a.m. Saturday, but he pulled the cab into the Engine No. 33 station at 7:30 a.m. when it became apparent the child was not going to wait, WBAL-TV, Baltimore, reported.

Smith said firefighters and paramedics initially thought he was joking when he asked for help but could not argue with the evidence in his back seat.

"So when the man came out, he saw the baby was in my drawers," Vaughan said. "The baby's head was out, with the arm hanging out."

A paramedic from the station delivered the baby, De'asia Renee Patricia Smith, in the back of the cab and the infant was transported with her mother to the University of Maryland Medical Center.

"Everything worked out for the best, though," Smith said.

### THE

## North Star

*The North Star* is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army. Contents of *The North Star* are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or the 3rd Infantry Division. All editorial content of *The North Star* is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the Task Force Marne Public Affairs Office.

4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team,  
1st Infantry Division  
2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team,  
3rd Infantry Division

3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team,  
2nd Infantry Division  
1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team,  
1st Armored Division

25th Combat Aviation Brigade,  
25th Infantry Division  
130th Engineer Brigade  
135th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

### TASK FORCE MARNE

Commanding General - Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo  
Command Sergeant Major - Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse L. Andrews Jr.

#### Task Force Marne Public Affairs Staff

TF Marne PAO - Maj. Jeff Allen  
TF Marne PA NCOIC - Master Sgt. Marcia Triggs  
TF Marne Writer- Sgt. Johnathon Jobson

#### Editorial Staff

Managing Editor - Master Sgt. Marcia Triggs  
Editor- Spc. Michael Adams