



## Engineers attend JOC opening

Story by Spc. Brian Johnson

1434th Eng. Co., 16th Eng. Bde., USD-C

**BAGHDAD**—As leaders from 6th Iraqi Army Division and the U.S. Army 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, celebrated the grand opening of a new joint operations center at Contingency Operating Location Constitution March 15, leaders from 16th Engineer Bde. and 101st Eng. Battalion celebrated getting them to this day.

“This structure provides the ability for our IA partners to work side-by-side with our 4-2 SBCT brothers and train them how a tactical operations center should function,” said Brig. Gen. Glenn Hammond, III, commander of 16th Eng. Bde.

According to Hammond, the JOC provides a picture of the current battlefield to both forces, allowing Iraqi forces better command and control across their battle space while providing American forces an opportunity to see the effectiveness of their supporting role.

“This is exactly what our mission is here in Iraq; enable the Iraqi Army to protect their nation and eliminate the threats,” explained Hammond.

Planning for construction of the new JOC took over a month to complete. Engineers from both nations worked on construction of the JOC, the U.S. engineers assisted members of 6th IA Field Eng. Regiment to hone their construction skills, said Lt. Col. Charles Cody, commander of 101st Eng. Bn.

The U.S. engineers, from 101st, 621st Survey and Design Team and 1434th Eng. Co., worked alongside their Iraqi counterparts another two months after the planning phase to finish the project.

“This joint operations center will be a shining example of the continued partnership between our nations and militaries,” said Cody.

Leaders from the U.S. engineers said they were very proud of the effective partnership—the proof was in the building.

Hammond said that when it is time for the U.S. engineers to go home soon, their indelible mark upon this land will be demonstrated in more than just the tracks they have laid in the sand. ▲



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

**U.S. and Iraqi military leaders walk through a display of recently seized weapons after a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new Joint Operations Center March 15 at Contingency Operating Location Constitution.**

## 6th IA, 4-2 SBCT open new JOC

Story by Sgt. Bryce Dubee & Spc. Luisito Brooks

4th SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div., PAO, USD-C

**BAGHDAD**—After months of planning and construction, the 6th Iraqi Army Division and the 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division held a ribbon-cutting for the recently completed Joint Operations Center at Contingency Operating Location Constitution March 15.

“This JOC will prove to be an invaluable asset in the effort to provide security to the Iraqi people,” said Lt. Col. Darron Wright, deputy commanding officer of 4th Bde., 2nd Inf. Div.

While the new facility, designed to be the central node for the sharing of information between U.S. and Iraqi forces in western Baghdad, had been in operation since before the March 7 Iraqi National Elections, the ceremony represented the official opening of the operations center.

With a quick snip of a pair of gold-handled scissors, Lt. Gen. Ahmed Hashim Aouadi, commanding general of the Baghdad Operations Command, cut the ribbon on the state-of-the-art center, which brings the intelligence, surveillance

and reconnaissance capabilities of the U.S. and Iraqi militaries under one roof.

These combined assets were put on display for the guests and media present at the ceremony in the form of a simulated operation which showed U.S. and Iraqi service members working in the JOC, coordinating operations with troops on the ground.

Watching aerial surveillance footage of U.S. and Iraqi troops approaching an objective, a U.S. Soldier working in the JOC communicated directly to the troops on the ground, sharing the latest intelligence with them and providing updates to other staff members in the command center.

One row ahead of him, an IA officer relayed updates to his fellow Iraqi Soldiers as they detained two men and prepared to assault a building. Upon completing his communication to the field, he too provided an update to the rest of the JOC.

The demonstration showed the close level of side-by-side coordination the facility is capable of, and its use in combining efforts on the battlefield.

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# March: Brain Injury Awareness Month

Story by Sgt. Teri Hansen  
366th MPAD, USD-C

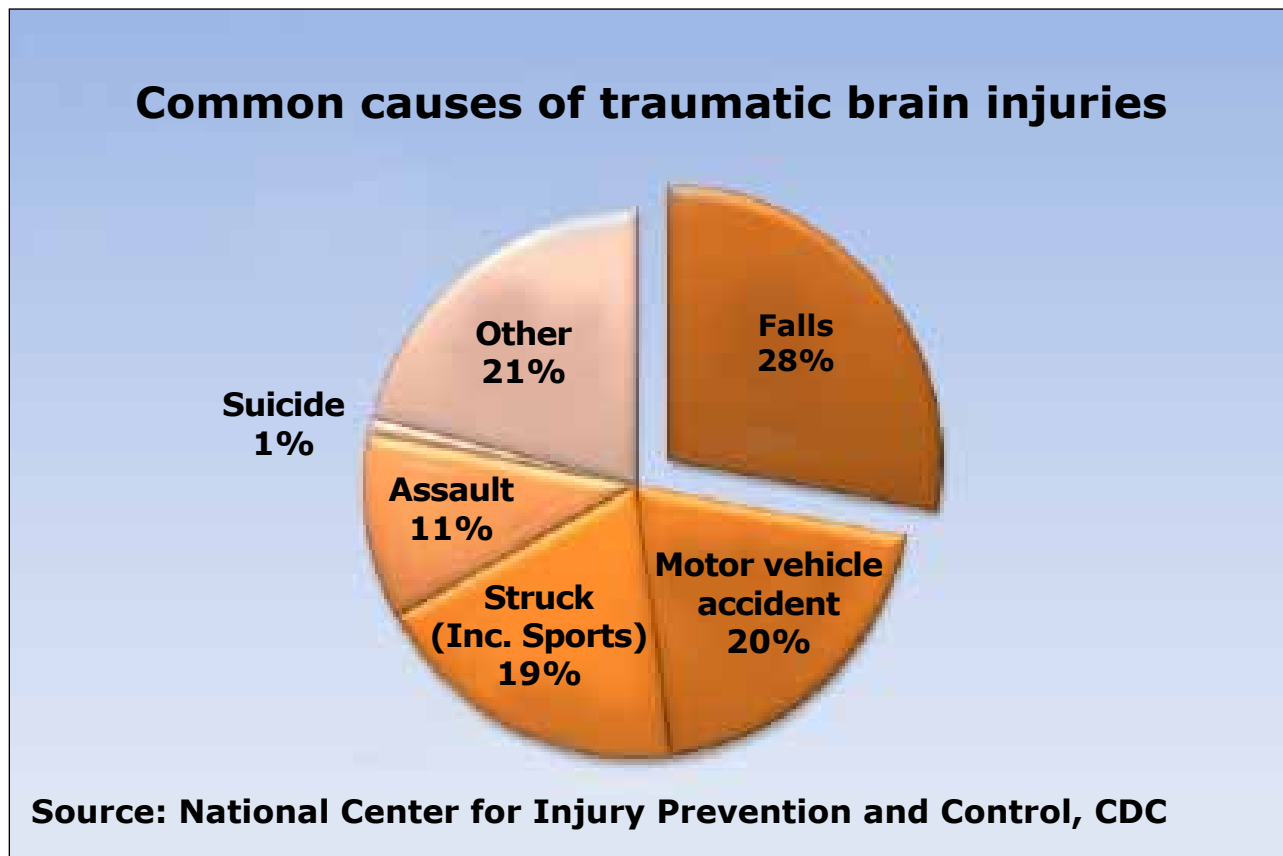
**BAGHDAD** – Even when every safety precaution is taken, injuries can still happen and they can result in head trauma. To ensure people know the risks, signs and symptoms of brain injuries, March is annually recognized and promoted as Brain Injury Awareness Month by the Brain Injury Association of America.

This year's theme is: "A concussion is a brain injury. Get the facts." March 17 was designated as Brain Injury Awareness Day. This day marked the launching of a yearlong campaign that will include public service announcements, distribution of awareness kits, special events and other promotional events in an effort to educate people about brain injuries and encouraging them to seek help for them.

The Department of Defense has classified traumatic brain injuries as "signature injuries" of the current conflicts in both Iraq and Afghanistan. The DoD defines a TBI as a blow or jolt to the head or a penetrating injury that disrupts the function of the brain. In 2009, military service members sustained 20,199 TBIs and not all of them were combat related. Many of these were sustained during motor vehicle accidents, physical training, sports and falls.

"A TBI can happen just by smacking your head on a generator or taking a hard hit in a game of football," said Capt. Mason Sawyer who is assigned to 1st Armored Division and is the U.S. Division – Center senior physician assistant. "The most important thing for a Soldier to do is seek evaluation after a head injury."

Signs and symptoms of a concussion vary and may not be noticeable until days after



the event. Soldiers should use the acronym HEADS (Headaches that were not present before the injury; Ears are ringing; Altered consciousness; Double vision or dizziness; Something is just not right) when looking for a TBI, explained Sawyer.

According to the DoD, the severity of TBIs can range anywhere from mild to severe; the majority of head injuries tend to fall in the mild category – generally concussions. The severity of the injury will determine a course of action and treatment.

A single concussion can be easily treated in most cases and the person will be fine, but a Soldier can suffer long-term, even life-

long, effects if they suffer multiple TBIs, said Sawyer.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates 2 percent of the U.S. pop-

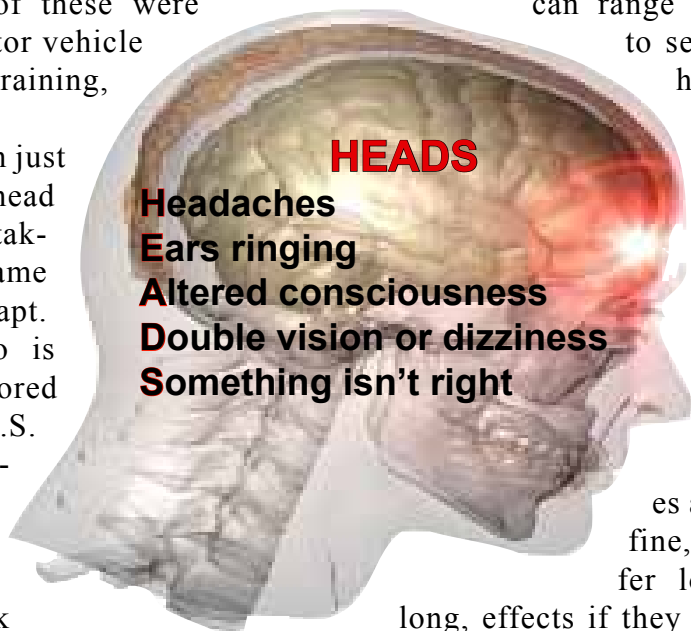
ulation suffers long-term effects and needs help performing day-to-day activities due to multiple TBIs.

A person does not have to hit his or her head in a blast to sustain a brain injury. The blast wave can cause damage without a solid impact to the head, said Sawyer. There are studies being conducted to determine exactly how blast waves work and the safety measures that can be taken to combat them.

Current policy dictates anyone in a vehicle blast or within 50 meters of a blast must be evaluated for a TBI as soon as possible. If a brain injury is suspected the Soldier will rest and recuperate for 24 hours and then be re-evaluated by a physician. If a TBI is confirmed, depending on the severity, the Soldier will continue evaluations and not be returned to full duty status until they are fully recovered, which can take several weeks. All efforts will be taken to keep a second such injury from occurring.

Not all head injuries lead to brain injuries, but the DoD recommends Soldiers be evaluated after a head injury.

"Don't try to 'suck it up,'" advised Sawyer. "Get help." 🚑



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# New non-classified networks policy

Story by Sgt. Teri Hansen  
366th MPAD, USD-C

**BAGHDAD** – The Department of Defense released a policy Feb. 27 addressing the use of social networking services and other Internet capabilities on non-classified DoD networks.

The memorandum titled “Responsible and effective use of Internet-based capabilities,” states that, effective immediately, DoD non-classified networks will be configured to allow access to certain Internet-based capabilities.

Plans are being developed to implement the directive, said Maj. Jacob Skugrud, deputy of general staff section communications and electronics who is assigned to the 146th Signal Company, U.S. Division – Center.

A lot has to happen before these Web sites can be allowed on the USD-C non-classified network. Quality of service and bandwidth analysis must be conducted and that could take time, the Fountain City, Wis., native said.

Examples of Internet-based capabilities autho-

rized by the directive include, but are not limited to, social media sites such as Facebook, image and video hosting Web sites like YouTube and blogs.

Research by DoD has shown that the Internet has changed the way the military communicates internally and with the public. Social media is already being utilized by DoD components such as public affairs and recruiting. Studies also showed social media Web sites to be integral in personal communication among service members, therefore affecting morale and welfare. As a result of this study DoD determined that “Access to Internet-based capabilities is a critical functionality that must be preserved, despite some associated risks.”

To combat these risks the directive includes guidance of use of Internet-based capabilities.

Official public affairs activities conducted on non-DoD sites have to receive approval from the appropriate officials for the operation of their site, to include registering on the external official presence list. The site will clearly identify that DoD provides the content for the site and include command seals, logos and links to the organization’s

official public Web site. The site will be subject to monitoring and evaluation to ensure compliance with security requirements.

Any official use of Internet-based capabilities not related to public affairs will follow the same guidelines with a few added regulations. Information posted on the sites must be relevant and accurate and shouldn’t include personal identification data. When posting personal opinions or views, a disclaimer must be included stating that the views do not reflect the views of DoD.

Commanders at all levels are directed to continue defending against malicious Internet activity and continue to deny unauthorized Internet activity such as gambling, pornography and hate-crimes. Commanders must take immediate action to maintain operational security and are authorized to temporarily limit the use of the Internet or limit bandwidth for security purposes.

“This directive recognizes the importance of balancing appropriate security measures while maximizing the capabilities afforded by 21st Century Internet tools,” said Deputy Secretary of Defense, William Lynn, III. 🚩

# New uniforms for troops in Afghanistan

Story by Sgt. Teri Hansen  
366th MPAD, USD-C

**BAGHDAD** – Soldiers deploying to Afghanistan will receive a new combat uniform starting in July, announced the Department of Defense. Soldiers already in Afghanistan are scheduled to receive the new uniforms in the fall.

Last year Congress passed a War Supplemental Bill that included a clause requiring the Army to re-evaluate its current uniform and decide if it is conducive to the terrain in Afghanistan.

“Afghanistan is a unique camouflage challenge because it’s such a terrain diverse country,” explained Col. William Cole, project manager for Soldier protection and individual equipment at the Program Executive Office Soldier, Fort Belvoir, Va.

The new pattern for the uniform known as MultiCam is cut in the same fashion as the current Army Combat Uniform and is made out of the same flame resistant material, but includes several different upgrades. The seat of the trousers is reinforced; buttons have replaced the fastening tabs on the cargo pocket and the uniform comes with new mountain combat boots. The MultiCam pattern, patented by Crye Precision, LLC in Brooklyn, N.Y., is a combination of seven different shades of green, brown and beige. The mixture of colors is designed to be effective in a multitude of



Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army

**A Soldier crouches next to a tree demonstrating the concealment capabilities of the new MultiCam uniforms that will be issued to troops deploying to Afghanistan.**

regions.

“Troops like the fact that it helps them blend in to different terrain types,” said Cole.

A lot of thought, planning and field-testing went into the decision to use MultiCam. PEO

Soldier went through three phases of development since being given the directive in September 2009.

The first phase of development involved field-testing the MultiCam against the standard issue ACU along with six other patterns. One of those patterns was the Universal Camouflage Pattern – Delta, which is the current ACU pattern with “coyote brown” added to the mix. The testing showed MultiCam and UCP-D as the top choices of Soldiers based on concealment capabilities.

A team of specialists from various organizations conducted the second phase. The team consisted of representatives from U.S. Army Infantry Center, PEO Soldier, Natick Labs, Asymmetric Warfare Group, Army Special Operations Command and U.S. Naval Research Center. The team went to Afghanistan and studied the effectiveness of the different patterns in eight regions.

The third phase was completed with the help of 750 Soldiers who wore the uniforms during the field-testing. The Soldiers completed a survey and ranked the uniforms, MultiCam ranked as the best performer in all categories.

After the first three phases were completed, it was decided MultiCam would be used by troops in Afghanistan. The final phase has begun; an extensive evaluation of long-term uniform camouflage options to determine which uniform meets the needs of Soldiers.

“Anything we can do to give our Soldiers an edge, we want to do,” said Cole. 🚩



# Progress in Iraq



Photo by Spc. Jared Eastman, 1st BCT-A, 3rd Inf. Div., USD-C

**BAGHDAD** – Iraqi workers enjoy employment in a poultry plant opened Feb. 22. Soldiers with 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division began the plant project before their redeployment. Soldiers assigned to 1st Bde. Combat Team – Augmented, 3rd Inf. Div., picked up where they left off and finished the project.



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

**TAJI, Iraq** – A smiling Iraqi boy receives a bag of school supplies from an Iraqi Army Soldier during a joint humanitarian aid mission at an elementary school in Um Najim, Feb. 22 with Company C, 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division.



Photo by Spc. Jared Eastman, 1st BCT-A, 3rd Inf. Div., USD-C

**BAGHDAD** – Spc. Carrie Goshorn, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade Combat Team-Augmented, wraps a poultry plant worker's hand Feb. 22.



Photo by Sgt. Samantha Beuterbaugh, 366th MPAD, USD-C

**BAGHDAD** – Spc. Michael Burris, a Houston native with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 414th Civil Affairs Battalion, 1st Armored Division, U.S. Division – Center, helps Iraqi firefighters offload supplies March 1 at the Iraqi Civil Defense Directorate in the International Zone. The Soldiers collected training aids from different locations for the Baghdad Fire Academy, such as biohazard bags, firefighting foam and medical supplies.



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

**TAJI, Iraq** – Pfc. Joel Hummer, a mortarman with Company C, 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, helps an Iraqi Army Soldier carry a box of humanitarian aid supplies to an Iraqi Army humvee at a joint security station near Camp Taji Feb. 22. Hummer, a native of Phillipsburg, N.J., is currently serving with 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division.



Photo by Sgt. Samantha Beuterbaugh, 366th MPAD, USD-C

**BAGHDAD** – Iraqi firefighters organize various supplies received from 414th Civil Affairs Battalion, 1st Armored Division, U.S. Division – Center, at the Iraqi Civil Defense Directorate in the International Zone March 1.



# Soldier brings civil assistance from behind the scenes

Story & photo by Spc. Daniel Schneider  
366th MPAD, USD-C

**BAGHDAD** – Civil affairs units provide a bridge between the U.S. military and the Government of Iraq in order to supply people with a better standard of living through capacity building projects.

One civil affairs Soldier stands out above many when performing this mission, assisting hundreds of Iraqis with various projects sponsored by brigades in the U.S. Division – Center operational environment.

Sgt. Audrey Knapp, the Commander's Emergency Response Program noncommissioned officer in charge, helps 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, and the 1st Advise and Assist Bde., 82nd Airborne Div., to make certain that CERP paperwork for humanitarian projects is completed properly, therefore ensuring the projects get completed.

Knapp, who is assigned to Headquarters Company, 414th Civil Affairs Battalion, 1st Armored Div., USD-C, says she has assisted with more than 712 projects amounting to \$69-plus million. These projects have helped provide infrastructure, education, agriculture and other civil capacity aid to the people of Iraq.

"These projects provide legitimacy to the Government of Iraq by letting citizens see the improvements provided by teaming up with our forces here," said Knapp. "On the large scale, we're helping to give Iraqi communities a base to grow from."

Knapp said the civil improvements she supports provide lasting effects for the people of Iraq.

"Another example of how these projects benefit the local people of Iraq is in the Mada'in area," Knapp said. "The civil affairs units provided projects to clean up the streets of trash and rubble. The people in that area now have much more pride in their homes and take a vested interest in keeping their villages clean and healthy."

Her performance has even won her recognition by the chief of staff and commanding general of



**Sgt. Audrey Knapp, the Commander's Emergency Response Program noncommissioned officer in charge assigned to Headquarters Company, 414th Civil Affairs Battalion, 1st Armored Division, reads through a document regarding CERP projects for her area of operations within 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, March 13 at Camp Liberty. The Grand Rapids, Mich., native has been involved with 712 projects providing over \$69 million in civil capacity projects to help Iraq maintain stability.**

USD-C.

"We started participating in the U.S. forces J-9 briefing with Maj. Gen. [Terry] Wolff present," said Knapp. "During one meeting,

the chief of staff had questions about the projects we were currently tracking. I had the paperwork to answer his inquiries

ready on the spot. By the end of the meeting, he seemed relaxed and even smiled, thanking me in front of the general in the meeting."

"The recognition given to her by the chief of staff is well-deserved," expressed Navy Lt. Mark Berglund, a CERP project coordinator with 414th CA Bn. "She's

*"I love helping the Soldiers out there on the forward bases to get the chance to participate in helping Iraq, and giving them stories to tell to their families back home about how they made a difference in Iraq."*

– Sgt. Audrey Knapp

a top-notch Soldier whose concern with her [brigade combat teams] clearly shows."

The Soldiers of 2nd Bde., 10th

Mtn. Div., have given numerous verbal approvals to Sgt. Knapp, according to Berglund, a Yulee, Fla., native. "They are very impressed with her work and how

she helps them out, and I'm sure all the other BCTs she supports feel the same way."

Knapp said one of her joys is helping other Soldiers who work directly with Iraqis to improve their lives, and encouraging others to do the same.

"I just hope that even as we draw down, more Soldiers will have the opportunity to assist in some aspect of these programs," said Knapp, who is a Grand Rapids, Mich., native. "I love helping the Soldiers out there on the forward bases to get the chance to participate in helping Iraq, and giving them stories to tell to their families back home about how they made a difference in Iraq."

The project she has the fondest memories of is when she helped provide a micro-grant to a local Iraqi widow.

"It was a grant allowing a woman in 2-10's operational environment ... to start a sewing business. The thing that stuck out to me was she intended to hire other widows to provide them with jobs to help them support their families," said Knapp. "Another aspect ... was the product this woman was making. She planned on producing blankets to provide to the Ministry of Health. So, in essence, this one woman was going to help herself, widowed women, the Ministry of Health, and the economy with one activity; and it only required a grant of \$5,000."

Knapp's motivation stems from an opportunity she once received to spend Thanksgiving with a German World War II survivor.

"He said that he has loved Americans his entire life because during the war, an American Soldier gave him a chocolate bar when he was just a child years ago," Knapp reminisced. "That small gesture more than 60 years ago still affects him today, changing his life and his entire way of seeing Americans."

"I wonder how many Iraqi kids, when they grow up, will have an American over for Thanksgiving dinner and say the same thing about an American Soldier giving him or her a pack of pencils or a soccer ball?"

## U.S. paratroopers, Iraqi Soldiers, train on mobile operations

Story by 1st Lt. Edwin Pope  
1st AAB, 82nd Abn. Div., USD-C

**CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq** – Signal troops with a U.S. Army advise and assist brigade and Iraqi Army Soldiers rehearsed setting up mobile operations centers Feb. 10 as part of sustained training.

Company C, 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Bde., 82nd Airborne Division, partnered with 1st IA Div., Signal Co. to review a mobile tactical operations center rehearsal, also known as a “jump TOC” at the 1st IA Div. headquarters.

The Iraqis beat their 90-minute standard by 50 minutes, impressing the Americans, said Capt. Jason Gardel, the Co. C commander.

“Your men used great safety precautions and teamwork,” Lt. Col. Douglas Stitt, commander of 1st BSTB, told Lt. Col. Fallah, commander of the Iraqi Signal Co. “The soldiers utilized the [primary, alternate, contingency and emergency] communications plan in an effective manner to provide secure communications to your division.”

The Iraqis conducted the rehearsal at full speed with a convoy rolling up to the rehearsal site with every piece of equipment needed in jump operations.

For the rehearsal, two jump sites were set up, each with a tent and two radios. In addition to establishing command posts in the tents, the Iraqis brought two modified armored trucks that contained full-operations cells.

Men jumped from their vehicles as they skidded to a halt and began moving equipment at a break-neck pace. Forty minutes later, they were done.

Gardel concluded the Iraqi Signal Co. Soldiers are fully capable of establishing remote command posts without any support from U.S. forces. He said the partnership between the Iraqis and U.S. forces will now shift to post-setup training and rehearsals for potential operations. ▲



Photo courtesy of U.S. Army

**Soldiers of Signal Company, 1st Iraqi Army Division erect a mobile tactical operations center during a partnered rehearsal with U.S. forces Feb. 10 at Camp Fallujah.**



Photo by Master Sgt. Gilbert Nail, 17th Military Transition Team, USD-C

**Soldiers from the 17th Iraqi Army Noncommissioned Officer Academy, cut a piece of sheet metal March 9 at Contingency Operating Location Deason. The 17th IA Soldiers, under the watchful eye of a trainer from 1434th Engineer Company, properly cut and attach sheet metal to roofs of the military academy there.**

## Iron castle Soldiers train Iraqi NCOs at COL Deason

Story by Spc. Brian Johnson  
1434th Eng. Co., 16th Eng. Bde., USD-C

**BAGHDAD** – U.S. Soldiers training their Iraqi counterparts is a common occurrence in Iraq. However, the opportunity for Iraqi Soldiers to learn construction skills from U.S. Army engineer units doesn’t come along often.

On March 9, the Soldiers of 1434th Engineer Company, 16th Eng. Brigade had an unexpected opportunity to make a difference for 17th Iraqi Army Division at Contingency Operating Location Deason.

COL Deason is home to the 17th IA’s Noncommissioned Officer Academy. Future NCO leaders from 17th IA learn skills to make them more effective leaders for Iraqi Security Forces.

When the Iraqi Soldiers come to COL Deason for training at the NCO Academy, they stay in buildings that serve as both their living quarters and their classroom. The roofs on many of these combination buildings are made solely of plywood. Because of this, during the rainy months in Iraq, the roofs leak into the classrooms, training areas and sleeping areas.

The 17th Military Transition Team works closely with 17th IA at COL Deason. To solve the problem of the leaky roof and provide a special training opportunity, the 17th MiTT did not have to go far.

Not far from the NCO Academy, carpenters, plumbers and electricians from the 1434th Eng. Co., were working diligently on

another construction project and were able to take some time to train the Iraqi Soldiers on how to fix the roof themselves.

Staff Sgt. Joseph Baker from Bellair, Mich., assigned to 1434th Eng. Co., helped to supervise the training. Baker said that in just a few hours, the Iraqi Sergeants were able to do all of the building themselves.

“We taught them how to cut the sheet metal, place purling, and fasten the metal to the roof,” said Baker. “After almost two hours, the Iraqi’s were taking charge and we moved back to more of a supervisory role.”

At the end of one day of training, the combined effort of the U.S. and Iraqi Soldiers had sheeted 44 feet of roof on one building.

“The Engineers were only available for one day,” said Master Sgt. Gilbert Nail from Clayton, Okla., a member of 17th MiTT. “The next day, without any additional guidance, the Iraqi NCOs continued the construction work on their own.”

According to Nail, the training not only provided the Iraqi Soldiers with additional skills but also the confidence to do it themselves.

Although there wasn’t enough material to upgrade all of the plywood roofing, there was enough material to complete about half.

“Once they got past the initial training, you could see the Iraqi Soldiers taking pride in their work,” Baker explained. “They were using great care to make sure that they got everything cut and placed right.”

“The more we can do to help the Iraqi Army out,” said Nail, “the stronger they will be when we leave.” ▲



# U.S. forces advise, assist Iraqi Highway Patrol in Anbar

Story & photo by staff

1st AAB, 82 Abn. Div., PAO, USD-C

**RAMADI, Iraq** – U.S. forces in Ramadi are partnering with Iraqi Highway Patrol to conduct nightly route clearance patrols in the highest-threat zone in Anbar province.

Engineers from Company A, 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Bde., 82nd Airborne Division, conduct routine street-level engagements with the IHP.

Third Platoon is responsible for route clearance operations in east Anbar province. The platoon has conducted 80 combat route-clearance patrols in Anbar province, and has cleared 10,000 kilometers of route. They have conducted 70 street-level engagements with IHP forces along the routes. The platoon is the company's main effort for the counter improvised-explosive-device fight in east Anbar.

During these patrols, platoon leader 2nd Lt. Andrew Berreth cultivates relationships with the IHP manning static checkpoints along the main and alternate supply routes frequently travelled by U.S. forces.

His first mission involved identifying where these checkpoints existed and developing a database on basic facts about the checkpoints, he said.

"Initially, there was little information on the disposition, composition

and strength of these checkpoints," said Berreth. "For far too long, coalition convoys had just passed right on by without a second thought to who was manning these points and what their mission was."

Berreth quickly took ownership and integrated nightly engagements with IHP occupying 32 different checkpoints along the routes. What he discovered varied by area, but one thing remained constant: the IHP officers manning these checkpoints were dedicated and personable, he said.

What started as a mission to chart the unknown, quickly developed into building strong relationships with the security forces on the ground.

Not only has Berreth documented a wealth of knowledge of day-to-day operations of these checkpoints, but he has also built a conduit of information sharing between U.S. forces and the IHP, according to his company commander, Capt. Kurt Zortman.

"By now the IHP know 2nd Lt. Berreth by name at all 32 check points," said Zortman. "He is a welcomed presence and has found a group of IHP that are proud to be part of the Iraqi Security Forces, and are genuinely concerned about the welfare of their nation."

Berreth has found that the IHP provides a wide range of mission sets, from providing over watch from static positions, security to key infrastruc-



**Second Lt. Andrew Berreth, a platoon leader assigned to Company A, 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Bde., 82nd Airborne Division, meets with Iraqi Highway Patrol at a checkpoint along a supply route in Anbar province Iraq, Feb. 16. The platoon of engineers has conducted 80 combat route-clearance patrols in Anbar province, and has cleared 10,000 kilometers of road.**

ture and actively searching vehicles as they travel from one part of Iraq to another, he said.

Occasionally, the visits are more social and involve a glass of chai and a good conversation about recent events in the area. Berreth provides advice on how to better fortify their positions for the most relevant threat in the area and exchange different vehicle-search techniques with the IHP. He reminds the IHP that they are integral to the counter IED fight by providing eyes on the routes well after his platoon has

cleared them.

"The IHP manning these checkpoints are the unspoken heroes of the counter IED fight in Anbar," said Zortman. "They endure some of the least desirable working conditions in some of the most austere areas of the province."

"Their tenacity and dedication to the cause has helped lead to the stability that has been achieved," he said, "and their efforts will endure long after coalition forces are retrograded from the area." ▲

# U.S. begins transfer of detainees to Government of Iraq

Story by 1st Lt. Maria Mengrone  
USF-I, PAO

**TAJI, Iraq** – U.S. forces assigned to Camp Taji Theater Internment Facility Reconciliation Center relinquished full control of the facility and its detainees to the Government of Iraq, March 15.

By August, a complete detainee operations handover to Iraqi control is expected to be completed with the transfer of Camp Cropper, located at Victory Base Complex. Camp Cropper is the last U.S. run internment facility in theater.

"Approximately 3,000 detainees are being transferred to Iraq, that's roughly 60 percent of the U.S. controlled detainee popula-

tion," said Lt. Col. Daniel Deadrich, the Camp Taji TIFRC commander and 705th Military Police Battalion commander, based out of Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

The handover is part of the U.S. drawdown playing out across Iraq as stated in the Security Agreement, ending with the complete withdrawal of U.S. forces by December 2011.

"The Security Agreement says that in order for detainees to be transferred to the Government of Iraq, detainees must have an arrest warrant, detention order or conviction," said Deadrich.

"We took all detainees and started to release those without sufficient evidence to prosecute or those that did not pose a significant threat," he continued. "We averaged roughly 700 to 1,000

monthly releases. This shows that we are abiding by the Security Agreement."

Along with the transfer of detainees, the Iraqi government will also assume responsibility of the recently-built, multi-million dollar Taji Internment Facility and all its property.

"This facility will increase Iraq's capacity to be successful," said Deadrich. "As Iraq works out its budgetary issues we will continue to provide support in the form of maintenance and fuel contracts, feeding the detainee population [and] maintaining supplies so that the facility will continue to work. After August, this support will become Iraq's sole responsibility."

Engineering projects are on track to connect the Taji facility

to the locally-existing electrical and water grid lines in an attempt to alleviate the cost of importing generator fuel and water to the center.

The handover also symbolizes the change from detainees to inmate status within the Iraqi corrections system.

"Our ultimate goal for this Taji prison is that it will serve as a model facility as how to provide proper care and custody for the Iraqi inmate population," said Deadrich.

For several months, hundreds of U.S. Army and Navy personnel have been working side-by-side with Iraqi corrections officers tackling cultural and language barriers to properly train and ready guards for the historical transition. ▲



# 'Sons of Anarchy' salute Air Cav Soldiers with visit

*Photos by Sgt. Travis Zielinski,  
1st Air Cav. Bde., 1st Cav. Div., USD-C*



TAJI, Iraq – During a town hall meeting with Soldiers from 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cav. Division, U.S. Division – Center, March 15, Mark Boone Jr., an actor in the television show "Sons of Anarchy," borrows a first sergeant's Stetson to pose for a picture.



While sitting in an AH-64D Apache attack helicopter March 15, Kim Coates, lead actor in the television show, "Sons of Anarchy" talks with Chief Warrant Officer 3 Rolando Sanchez, an Apache maintenance test pilot in Company C, 1st Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment about some of the various controls and functions of the aircraft.



Riding in a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, Command Sgt. Maj. Glen Vela, from Dallas, the command sergeant major of 3rd Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cav. Division, U.S. Division – Center, and Dayton Callie, an actor in the television show "Sons of Anarchy," laugh. Four actors from the TV show visited, offering Soldiers an opportunity to talk with the actors over lunch and a town hall meeting.



Actor Theo Rossi (white shirt), a lead actor in the hit TV show "Sons of Anarchy," looks at an Iraqi Army motorcycle March 15 with Soldiers from 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cav. Division, U.S. Division – Center.



# SOLDIERS HOST 'BAD COMPANY'

*Photos by Sgt. Teri Hansen,  
366th MPAD, USD-C*



**BAGHDAD –** The members of the classic rock band “Bad Company” sign autographs for Soldiers March 11 at 1st Armored Division Headquarters. The band performed their first concert at Camp Victory Stage March 12. The band was scheduled to tour Iraq and Kuwait for 12 days in support of the troops.

Featured lead singer Brian Howe of the classic rock band “Bad Company” enters 1st Armored Division Headquarters upon arrival into Iraq March 11.



The members of the classic rock band “Bad Company” pose for a photo at 1st Armored Division Headquarters March 11 with Pfc. Adrian Rushing, a Soldier who works in plans and operations and is assigned to Company B, Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Armd. Div. The band toured the division headquarters, met Soldiers and signed autographs the day prior to their first concert in Iraq, at Camp Victory Stage March 12.



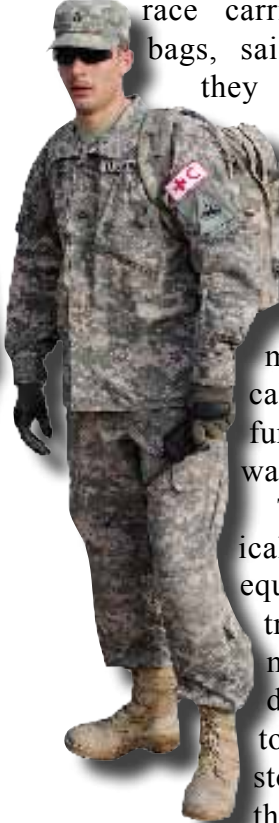
# Iron medics on front line

Story & photos by Sgt. Samantha Beuterbaugh  
366th MPAD, USD-C

**BAGHDAD** – Two combat medics monitored their radios near an ambulance while their comrades grabbed trauma bags and disappeared into the crowd of runners and walkers.

That was the scenario March 6 when Company B, Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Armored Division, held a 10-kilometer run sponsored by the American Red Cross at Camp Liberty.

The run required Co. B combat medics to become fully engaged. Sgt. 1st Class Arthur James and Spc. John Powell manned the vehicle during the event while Staff Sgt. Delroy Barnett and Pfc. Josiah



Portukalian ran the 10 kilometers with medical gear.

“We stayed with the crowd to have more spread-out medical coverage instead of all remaining by the truck,” said Portukalian, a native of Salem, Ind.

“We were there to ensure that any minor injuries were taken care

of quickly,” said James, a combat medic supervisor and native of Los Angeles.

The medics at the vehicle were ready to serve as an emergency response team if needed. They were prepared to provide oxygen or treat runners for trauma. They monitored the people crossing the finish line, ensuring their heads stayed above their hearts, said James.

The two medics running the race carried their aid bags, said James. If they saw someone who needed medical attention, they would treat the individual immediately and call their team if further treatment was needed.

The medical bags were equipped with trauma treatment bandages, dressings and tourniquets to stop or slow the blood of a patient. Barnett, a native of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., carried an automated external defibrillator in the event that something major went wrong. The AED is a portable device used to prevent cardiac arrest through electric shock, enabling the heart to return to a normal

rhythm.

“If anything were to happen, we would have been ready,” said Portukalian.

Portukalian said he enjoyed the opportunity to complete the race with the runners because it gave people a chance to see medics in action. “I think usually people just see us on the sidelines, waiting,” he added.

As the medics ran past the finish line the first time to start their final lap, they heard people shouting, “Iron Medics, hooah!” This fired them up, making the run both an enjoyable and prideful experience, said Portukalian.

The medics were faced with a few minor injuries such as muscle cramping, a sprained ankle and an unsteady kneecap. There was nothing the highly trained medics



**Combat medic Spc. John Powell with Company B, Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Armored Division, wraps a Soldier's kneecap to prevent it from popping out of place so he could finish a 10-kilometer race March 6 as part of the American Red Cross Month at Camp Liberty. Powell, a native of Lincoln, Ill., was one of two medics who remained near the finish line at the ambulance to treat any minor injuries.**



**Staff Sgt. Delroy Barnett (left) and Pfc. Josiah Portukalian trail behind a group of joggers in the American Red Cross run. Barnett and Portukalian, assigned to Company B, carried medical aid bags and remained close to the rear of the group in the event of a fall out to render immediate medical treatment.**

couldn't handle.

“When they see the cross,” James also said, referring to the giant cross on his ambulance, “it [compels] them to continue because when [the runners] finish, they get help if they really need it.”

Once the run was complete, the medics continued to play a vital role, ensuring that people kept moving to avoid minor injuries such as muscle cramping as well as major injuries such as hypothermia.

“Keep your head up ... keep moving,” James encouraged.

Thanks to the competent Co. B medics, everybody finished the race and there were no serious injuries.

“When we're not busy,” said James, “it's a good thing.”



# Soldier brings international medical expertise to USD-C

Story & photos by Spc. Daniel Schneider  
366th MPAD, USD-C

**BAGHDAD** – Travelling the world, seeing many different cultures, influencing societal changes that can potentially save thousands of lives — seem like a dream life?

For Capt. Joseph Woodring, it's a natural part of his.

The Radnor, Pa., native who works for the U.S. Division – Center surgeon's office, Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Armored Division, as the preventative medicine physician has enjoyed a very unique life.

Woodring attended Boston University, one of only three schools at the time offering a public health program that emphasized tropical medicine. During his sophomore year, he traveled to Calcutta, India, to work directly with Mother Theresa. He said that experience determined the future field of study that would lead him to where he is today.

He said he recalled thinking at the time, "Wow! This is something I really want to do."

Woodring received the opportunity to again travel, this time to South Africa for three months, where he studied ways to prevent and treat plasmodium falciparum; considered the single most deadly strain of malaria which is responsible for 90 percent of all malaria-related deaths.

"Being in public health, we learn how to see the birds-eye view of diseases, which allows us to work upstream of the problem to find the



**A native of Radnor, Pa., Capt. Joseph Woodring, the preventive medicine physician for the Division Surgeon's office, 1st Armored Div., assists a Soldier with a leg stretch at Camp Liberty March 10. Woodring is a doctor of osteopathy, which specializes in acute treatment with his hands without the use of medicine and expensive equipment.**

bigger issue and a solution," Woodring said.

In South Africa, 1-3 million children die every year of malaria. While he was there, they were able to provide vaccines that have had a 60 to 70 percent success rate among the local villagers.

"To American standards, a 60 to 70-percent success rate is frowned upon, but to the people we were helping, it was worth it," Woodring explained. "If you can save that percentage of kids, that's a lot of lives that would be lost otherwise."

During his Army career, he has been able to go to Kenya, where he researched a malaria epidemic and Thailand, where he studied infectious diseases found in seafood.

His international experience and knowledge of harmful diseases is now paying off in Iraq.

"As a preventative medicine physician, I have the unique ability to apply statistics, which can change policy to help hundreds of Soldiers remain healthy," said Woodring. "By providing Soldiers with vaccines and guidance, I can help keep them safe in environments they're not used to."

During his time in Iraq, Woodring has focused on long-term effects of burn barrel exposure, malaria and animal-related diseases, such as rabies.

He urges Soldiers going on leave outside of the United States to see the division surgeon's office to learn of possible health issues in the countries they expect to go to, and to receive medications which will keep them safe.

"A Soldier died in December from malaria after a mission to Nigeria," Woodring said. "That would be horrendous if a similar occurrence happened to one of ours. If we can prevent one Soldier from dying, it's worth it." ▲



**Capt. Joseph Woodring examines the vertebrae of a Soldier while twisting him to determine the motion of the spine during the examination. He came to Iraq with knowledge from previous international experiences.**



**Capt. Joseph Woodring helps a Soldier pop his back during an examination. Woodring has traveled to several nations, gaining useful knowledge on many different ailments that can keep Soldiers healthy.**



# Engineers improve quality of life for Soldiers

Story & photo by Spc. Brian Johnson  
1434th Eng. Co., 16th Eng. Bde., USD-C

**BAGHDAD** – Soldiers of 1434th Engineer Company, 16th Eng. Brigade have been working hard to complete construction on a new building at Contingency Operating Location Deason. The new facility is expected to improve the quality of life for Soldiers of 17th Military Transition Team.

The new construction will provide additional space for Soldiers to use the internet, call home and hold religious services.

“The current area where Soldiers can go to call home or get online is extremely limited,” said Warrant Officer Summers, a Soldier with 1434th Eng. Co., from Grayling, Mich. “It is a small building with a handful of computers and phones that does not have enough space to adequately meet the needs of all of the Soldiers here.”

Additionally, according to Summers, the design of the new facility will provide increased privacy for Soldiers

to check e-mail or call loved ones back home. Currently, the phones and Internet are in a small cramped building.

“The new building will allow for twice as much space for Soldiers to be able to get online, and separate the phone area from the Internet area,” said Summers.

Common practice for the engineers is to pre-fabricate pieces of buildings prior to arriving on-site. In this case, the pre-fabrication allowed the construction to proceed smoothly, the majority was completed in just under two weeks.

According to Spc. Joshua Gapske, a member of 1434th Eng. Co., from Alpena, Mich., Soldiers at COL Deason are excited about the new facility.

“As the building has gone up, many of the Soldiers stationed on the base have come in and checked out the new building. As they are looking at the construction, you can see an excitement on their faces,” said Gapske.

The new facility includes a space for COL Deason’s chapel services, adjacent to the phone and Internet area.

“The Chaplain did not know that he



**With their supplies loaded up, the Soldiers of the 1434th Engineer Company finish up the construction of a new combination building at Contingency Operating Location Deason, March 10. The new building will house an area for religious services and a larger area for Soldiers to use the telephones and Internet.**

was getting a new chapel,” said Summers. “During one of his recent visits, when he found out that he was getting a new area to conduct religious services, he was extremely excited.”

With construction nearly complete, the Soldiers of the 1434th have begun

to turn their eyes to their next construction project at COL Deason, which will begin later this month. The Soldiers will conduct a joint construction project with the 17th Iraqi Army Division, building a new combined division operations center. 🇺🇸

# Working to restore Iraq’s past for the future

Story & photo by Spc. Brian Johnson  
1434th Eng. Co., 16th Eng. Bde., USD-C

**BAGHDAD** – Soldiers from the 16th Engineer Brigade survey and design team conducted a site assessment on several buildings at a historic site in Aqar Quf, 20 miles west of Baghdad to assess and verify the electrical needs of renovating two modern structures at the base of an ancient ziggurat there.

The ziggurat, a stepped, temple tower, is the Mesopotamian equivalent of the Egyptian pyramids. Aqar Quf’s ziggurat, rising 180 feet above the desert floor, was considered to be built more than three and a half millennia ago.

Recently, the Iraqi Ministry of Antiquities approached 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, for help with restoring some modern structures at the temple in order to attract visitors to the site which would revitalize the economy and preserve the temple.

The modern structures at the base of the ziggurat, built in the 1960s, functioned as a museum and administrative building throughout the second half of the 20th century. However, after years

of war, the site is not what it once was.

“The administrative buildings have been degraded and looted,” said Sgt. 1st Class Kyle Markel, from Chillicothe, Ohio, a member of the survey and design team.

According to Markel, the ziggurat and temple areas have suffered no damage but the modern buildings are in need of restoration work. The restoration, still in the planning stages, will eventually be completed by local Iraqi contractors.

“We came to the site to look at the electrical installation and to validate the existing scope of work for the electrical project,” said Markel.

“The museum had nothing electrical left in it; no lights, no switches, and wires have been literally pulled out of the walls,” said Spc. David Robbins from Cincinnati, Ohio, a member of the team, also sent to assess the site.

According to Robbins, even the electrical panels were removed from the museum and administrative buildings at some point, leaving holes in the walls.

“This was a functioning facility,” said Markel. “It’s now not functioning at all.”



**The ziggurat at Aqar Quf rises 180 feet above the desert west of Baghdad. Soldiers of the 16th Engineer Brigade’s survey and design team traveled to an ancient ziggurat in Aqar Quf March 11 to assess and verify the electrical needs of two modern structures on the site. The 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, and Iraq’s Ministry of Antiquities are seeking to restore the modern buildings around the site in an attempt to revitalize tourism in the area.**

During their visit to Aqar Quf, Robbins and Markel had the opportunity to explore the ruins. They said the experience deepened their understanding of the significance of the museum and administrative buildings.

They were awe struck after exploring the ancient ruins.

“When I climbed the steps and was able to see the monument up close and

the fine details about how it was constructed; it’s impressive to think that 3,500 years ago someone had constructed this,” said Markel. “It’s an engineering feat because it is still standing after all these years.”

Both Robbins and Markel said they hope their work will help reopen this historical site someday and bring tourists back to the area; including them. 🇺🇸



# 1192nd Engineers improve security

*Photos by Spc. Brian Johnson,  
1434th Eng. Co., 16th Eng. Bde., USD-C*



BAGHDAD – Sgt. Kenny Mumfrey, from Cincinnati, assigned to 1192nd Engineer Company, 16th Eng. Brigade maneuvers a pallet of sandbags into place with a crane at Victory Base Complex March 19.



Staff Sgt. Brad Wilson, from Sandusky, Ohio, a member of 1192nd Engineer Company, places a sandbag on top of a culvert at Victory Base Complex March 19.



Sgt. Nicholas Adamson, from Struthers, Ohio, a member of 1192nd Engineer Company, hooks a pallet of sandbags to a crane at Victory Base Complex March 19.



# Iron Castle Soldiers conduct



After treatment, Chaplain (Capt.) Paul Barnett, of Wareham, Mass., 101st Engineer Battalion, 16th Eng. Brigade comforts and supports Sgt. Richard Hill, Dayton, Ohio, 1192nd Engineer Company. The battalion conducted a mass casualty exercise at Camp Liberty to cover multiple different components of responding to such an event, to include casualty care, response time, accountability and designated teams, as well as timely reporting procedures.



First Lt. Andrew Kaplan, the 101st Engineer Battalion physician assistant, of Dracut, Mass., examines Sgt. Richard Hill, of Dayton, Ohio, 1192nd Eng. Co., who poses as a casualty at the battalion aid station during a mass casualty training event.

Story & photos by Staff Sgt. April Mota

101st Eng. Bn., 16th Eng. Bde., USD-C

Several different units pooled resources together to validate and refine standing operating procedures for responding to a mass casualty training event March 1 at Camp Liberty.

Soldiers who usually turn wrenches and fasten bolts found themselves turning tourniquets and fastening neck braces on to their fellow Soldiers after a simulated mortar round hit the living area.

Casualties lay on the ground with everything from head injuries to abdominal wounds. Combat lifesaver-trained Soldiers arrived within seconds to provide first aid. As medical treatment was administered, aid and litter teams began sweeping the pad to provide help and transportation to ambulances.

Once the medics got there, Soldiers were assessed for severity of injuries and loaded into an ambulance. The Soldiers were then transported to the proper facilities based upon the extent of their injuries.

First Lt. Andrew Kaplan, of Dracut, Mass., the 101st Engineer Battalion, 16th Eng. Bde. physician assistant, praised the battalion aid station for how it responded during the exercise. He said he was pleased with everyone staying with the tasks assigned to them, which helped keep order and maintain a high degree of professionalism.

*"The caregivers a  
care of the wound  
some help proce  
after everyone h  
and they get som*

— S



Spc. Heather Todd, of Lisbon, Ohio, and with 1192nd Engineer Company, arrives on site Camp Liberty March 1. The event was created to help units validate or refine their curre



# mass casualty training event

"This was more than medical training," Kaplan said. "These exercises help us determine if there are any changes needed to make our ability to respond in a coordinated fashion better."

Kaplan said these exercises allow everyone to evaluate each component of the training which can be used to refine and perfect procedures so Soldiers will perform more efficiently if real situation were to arise.

While the medics treated the casualties, Sgt. John Potenza, of Lynne, Mass., the 101st Eng. Bn., battle noncommissioned officer, worked on gathering accountability information from each unit's command post. He then reported all the information, including known injuries to the battalion commander.

"This was a pretty thorough exercise," said Potenza. "We did more than just casualty treatment. We looked at response time, proper use of casualty collection points, accountability, and use of designated teams, like the aid and litter team."

*are so busy taking care of the injured, they may need help processing everything after everyone has been treated and they get some down time."*

**Spc. Lisa Prochnow**

Once all the casualties had gotten proper medical treatment and each Soldier was accounted for, the unit ministry team arrived to provide emotional and spiritual guidance to both the injured and bystanders.

"We are on site to provide comfort to the injured Soldiers, and for those who are caring for them," said Spc. Lisa Prochnow, Hubbardston, Mass., the 101st Eng. Bn., chaplain assistant. "The caregivers are so busy taking care of the wounded, they may need some help processing everything after everyone has been treated and they get some down time." ▲



During a mass casualty training exercise, Sgt. Brian Daisy (left), of Niles, Ohio, and 1st Lt. Brian Gallagher (right), of Beaver Falls, Pa., provide first aid to Staff Sgt. Trevor Harlow, Huron, Ohio, a simulated casualty. All three are members of 1192nd Engineer Company.



first and applies a tourniquet to a simulated casualty during a mass casualty exercise at ant standard operating procedures.



Spc. Brian Posey, of Geneva, Ohio, Spc. Robert Landsberger, of New Waterford, Ohio, Pfc. Jonathan Bell, of Jackson, Ohio, and Spc. Kenneth Bradley, of Wichita, Kan. all assigned to 1192nd Engineer Company bring a mock casualty from the point of impact to an ambulance.



## 2-23 'Tomahawks' bond through organizational day

*Photos by Pfc. Kimberly Hackbarth,  
4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div., USD-C*



TAJI, Iraq – Spc. John Campos, a Shelton, Wash., native, and M240 B gunner with Company C, 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, pulls a pallet topped with ammunition canisters Feb. 22 during a Strong Man Competition.



First Lt. Nick Lorusso, a Rocky Point, N.Y., native, and the Headquarters and Headquarters Company executive officer heaves over the designated "puke box" after competing in the Strong Man Competition during Tomahawk Organizational Day.



Sgt. Carl Holm, a Nebraska City, Neb., native, and a senior land manager assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, gets bombarded by a multitude of volleyballs during a dodge ball tournament.



Pfc. Mark Varteresian, a Longmeadow, Mass. native, and automatic rifleman with Company A, throws a tomahawk at a target during a tomahawk-throwing competition at the Tomahawk Organizational Day held by the battalion to boost Soldiers' morale and take a break from daily patrols.



Pfc. Marshal Michael (right), a personal security detachment Soldier and native of Paso Robles, Calif., runs with a football as 1st Lt. John Yanikov (center), a platoon leader and native of York, Pa., and Sgt. 1st Class Erroll Hooker, a platoon sergeant and native of New Orleans, trail close behind during a football game.



Elections ~ From Pg. 1

For Staff Sgt. Brad Mateski, a network and systems administrator assigned to 472nd Signal Co., 4th Bde., 2nd Inf. Div., the JOC opening represents the end of months of work and planning, as well as the start of work in a new location.

"The new facility has greatly improved network capabilities," he said, explaining that the structure not only has more space but is more secure as well, providing a complete voice and data network.

Mateski, who worked with members of 16th Engineer Bde. during the planning and construction of the JOC to advise where to run data lines and place power conduits, said the process has been fun.

"It's kind of like building your own house," he said. "You get to say, 'This goes here, and this goes here.'"

Because the old JOC was literally right next door, transitioning



Photo by Sgt. Bryce Dubee, 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div., USD-C

**During the Joint Operations Center opening ceremony, Lt. Col. Darron Wright, deputy commanding officer of 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, praises the efforts of all involved in constructing the new facility.**

to the new facility was merely a matter of unplugging things, moving them, and plugging them back in, he added.

Overall, Mateski said he's looking forward to working in the new JOC and continuing his relationship with his Iraqi partners.

"They treat us like family over here," he said. "I've had a real

good experience working with them."

The key to the completion of the new battlefield assets has been the partnership trail that runs straight to its front steps, he said.

"With this new JOC complete, it will symbolize the great cooperation between Federal Police, 6th Iraqi Army, Iraqi Police and

the Raider Brigade," said Lt. Hassin, an officer with 6th IA Div. "It will ensure that the communication between the both sides is good."

Pfc. Chris Bozarth, a Soldier with 4th Bde., 2nd Inf. Div., commented that the new JOC is a big improvement from the old one.

"Try to imagine a sardine can, and that was what the old JOC was like," laughed the Bowie, Texas native who had worked inside the old JOC since being deployed to Iraq last fall. "(Our job) is to support the IA's mission. If they need our support, we coordinate assets to whatever sector they need."

"Now there is a centralized location in which information is gathered and shared."

During his speech at the ceremony, Wright summarized the purpose of bringing everyone together under one roof. "Together, the Iraqi Army, the Iraqi Police and the Federal Police forces will be able to ensure the security of Iraq's future more efficiently." ▲

## U.S. forces compensate Iraqi citizens for land use

Story & photos by Sgt. Bryce Dubee  
4th SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div., PAO, USD-C

**BAGHDAD** – As U.S. forces proceed on course with the responsible drawdown of forces in Iraq, Soldiers of the 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division legal office are working hard to set things right and tie up loose ends among Iraqi citizens who are owed compensation from the U.S. government.

The Army has programs in place designed to address any claims filed by Iraqi citizens, including property damage, injury or loss of life, and even paying landowners lease payments for land used by the U.S. military.

For example, if a 20-ton Stryker accidentally backs into an Iraqi citizen's car, the drivers can't exactly exchange information and let the insurance companies take care of it.

Instead, the citizen can file a claim with the military, which is then processed and paid out by military legal professionals.

On March 10, members of the 4th SBCT legal team travelled to

Abu Ghraib near Camp Liberty to pay claims they had received and pick up new claims that had been filed.

That day, the legal Soldiers were especially excited because, in addition to regular claims payments, they had a chance to do something that hadn't been done in a while.

"We've gone out on numerous claims missions," said Sgt. 1st Class Phillip Neal, the brigade legal office non-commissioned officer in charge. "What makes this one special is that this is the first time we've actually gotten to pay a lease claim for land that we've occupied and have a lease for, for the time period that we've occupied it."

When U.S. forces launched the 2007 "Surge" offensive, aimed at rooting out insurgents across Iraq, the increase in forces and expanded U.S. presence meant the Soldiers had to set up combat outposts and joint security stations in new areas, oftentimes taking over homes and property owned by Iraqis with the agreement that they would reimburse the property owner at a later date.

"We have the ability to help others," said Capt. Alex Arca, the brigade claims, contract and fiscal law attorney, who explained that the average damage claim takes about two to four weeks to process, while claims for land leases can take more than a year.

This was the first time in several years that the Army has paid out land lease claims to Iraqi landowners, with the 4th SBCT legal team paying out roughly \$225,000 out to claimants. And while some of the lease claimants expressed frustration in the length of the process, most appeared happy to finally be receiving payment and left with a smile on their face.

"It's a great accomplishment for us personally to actually be able to pay these people out," said Sgt. Corbin Reiff, the claims NCOIC. "Us – the legal office of 4-2, was able to get something done that no one had been able to get done before, which is something that makes you feel real proud."

The legal office set a goal of trying to process about 25 claims a month, not an easy task when they are responsible for nearly all of western Baghdad to Fallujah,

and north past the city of Taji.

"We are the largest intake point and the largest purveyor of money when it comes to claims," said Reiff proudly. "No one's bigger than 4-2 SBCT."

Securing funding to pay for the leases was the most time consuming part of the entire process, said Scott Mason, the acting chief of real estate for the U.S. Forces – Iraq J-7, who also travelled out to Abu Ghraib to assist in processing the lease claims.

Mason praised the 4th SBCT legal office and said he was truly impressed by their hard work and dedication to processing the lease claims.

"Everyone said it would take six to eight months, but Sgt. 1st Class Neal and his guys did it in a little over a month," he said. "Whoever follows behind me need to see this is how it should be done."

Neal took the praise in stride, saying that even though his shop may have the largest claims mission in Iraq; it is all part of the job.

"It is quite the workload," he said with a smile. "But that's what we're here for." ▲



# Air Cav air traffic controller wins high accolade

Story by Sgt. Alun Thomas  
1st ACB, 1st Cav. Div., USD-C

**TAJI, Iraq** – The job of an air traffic controller requires great diligence, especially when dealing with weather and the constant flow of aircraft on the flight line.

For Sgt. Joseph Mann, of 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, performing these duties is an everyday task and one he has successfully risen above his peers in.

Mann, from Philadelphia, an ATC for Company F, 2nd Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st ACB, 1st Cav. Division, U.S. Division – Center, was recently selected as the Army Aviation Association of America ATC of the year, beating out controllers Army-wide in the contest.

“It was for all the ratings that I’ve mastered at all the airfields I’ve worked at,” Mann said. “I had to know all the ins and outs of my airspace, how to organize the flights effectively without any conflicts and I had to watch for unsafe acts and keep everything in working order.”

Mann was rated by Sgt. 1st Class Ruben Gutierrez, a senior ATC in Co. F, who was impressed by Mann’s efforts and entered him in the competition in October last year.

Winning was not something Mann expected, making his victory a pleasant surprise.

“Usually they give the award to people who handle emergencies, but the ratings I acquired over a



Photo by Sgt. Travis Zielinski, 1st ACB, 1st Cav. Div., PAO  
**Sgt. Joseph Mann, from Philadelphia, an air traffic controller for Company F, 2nd Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cav. Division, U.S. Division – Center, directs traffic at the Taji airfield, March 10. Mann recently won the Army Aviation Association of America ATC of the year award.**

one-year period was the reason I won,” Mann said. “I didn’t think I had a chance, but I really love doing this job and it felt great to win.”

Mann’s win came as no surprise to Staff Sgt. Wilfredo Rivera, from Fort Knox, Ky., facility chief for Co. F, said Mann is a highly competent control-

ler.

“He’s a very smart controller ... he knows techniques and he knows how to apply the rules,” Rivera said about Mann’s abilities. “He sequences and separates aircraft the way they’re supposed to be. He’s very passionate about his job and loves doing what he does.”

Rivera said Mann has been given the opportunity to succeed, something he has embraced with tremendous motivation.

“Every time we give him a challenge as an ATC he has succeeded and that’s why he won,” Rivera said. “He was successfully rated at five facilities in a 12-month period, which isn’t easy to do.”

Mann’s willingness to teach the job to younger Soldiers is another trait which added to his success, Rivera continued.

“He makes us all better as a team and the best thing about him is he’s teaching the newer controllers to be where he was. He’s a good trainer.”

Mann said any of the controllers in his tower could have won the award and was pleased they all were recognized in the competition.

“We also won the facility of the year here at the Taji tower for all the [air traffic controlling] this unit has done,” Mann said. “It’s been great during the deployment ... sometimes it’s been challenging training everyone here and at Kalsu, but it’s been very productive.”

“There’ve been no major incidents and we’ve done everything we had to do,” he said. ▲





# Air Cav UAV hub reaches 20,000 flight hours

Story & photos by Sgt. Travis Zielinski  
1st ACB, 1st Cav. Div., USD-C

**TAJI, Iraq** – Multiple units operating out of a single hub have provided ground commanders around Baghdad with 20,000 hours worth of aerial coverage, hitting the milestone March 7.

Unmanned aerial vehicle operators and maintainers from 10th Mountain Division, 3rd Infantry Div. and 2nd Inf. Div. come together under the roof of Company G, 2nd Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cav. Div., U.S. Division – Center, to act as the center of operations for all launches, landings and maintenance required to keep the Shadow UAVs in the air.

“There is melding of the maneuver battalions, the aviation battalions and the different tactics from each – all together in one spot,” said Warrant Officer Dave Phaneuf, an unmanned aircraft systems technician in 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Bde. Combat Team, 10th Mnt. Div.

At any given time within the 24-hour day, Co. G has multiple UAVs in the air supporting ground operations throughout the Baghdad area. Maintaining the aircraft in order to meet the operational demands of the ground commanders requires care and attention to detail.

“It all starts with the smallest of inspections and [the UAV maintainers] are doing it repetitively – 12 to 15 times a day,” said Phaneuf. “If they are not doing the smallest thing right, then they can’t get the big things right.”

“Everyone here has the same zero-defect men-



**The UAV operators and maintainers of Company G, 2nd Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division launch multiple aircraft numerous times a day. The Shadow launch site, is comprised of Soldiers from 10th Mountain Div., 3rd Infantry Div. and 2nd Inf. Div., all of whom are attached to 1st ACB, and are the main hub for UAV operations for their respective units. This busy hub recently reached 20,000 flight hours in 10 months.**

talities,” he said.

Under garrison conditions, a UAV unit will fly an average 200 hours in a year. The UAVs maintained by the Soldiers under Co. G have reached 20,000 hours in a 10-month span.

“The 1 ACB has kept the same op-tempo and the same hours flying with what they did with five platoons here – now they are doing it with three,” said Phaneuf. “We properly mitigated the risks and are using the Shadow at its potential. Knowing what the limits of the aircraft are has actually increased its usage in pushing it out to those forward units.”

Once the aircraft are launched from Camp Taji, a forward unit will take control of the vehicle for the remainder of the operation, handing control back to Co. G for landing when the mission is complete.

Between missions is when a large portion of Co. G’s work is completed, ensuring the aircraft stay on a flight worthy status.

“We work non-stop from when we get here to the time we leave for the day; it is pretty fast paced, but it makes your day go by faster,” said Richard Klitz, from Fort Lewis, Wash., a UAV maintainer with 2nd Bn., 1st Cav. Regt., 4th BCT, 2nd Inf. Div.

For all the work involved in keeping the aircraft going, reaching 20,000 hours is a milestone the maintenance technicians pride themselves on, said Klitz.

The operators and maintainers sustain their tempo, knowing the importance of the UAVs to the ground commanders, even though they rarely see or hear about the end result.

“The guys here, they don’t get to see a lot of

what happens, so when I get reports or video of things that happen, I will bring them in so they can read it and see that their day-to-day work here is actually paying off,” said Phaneuf.

“When they finally do get the feedback, they say, ‘Alright, I got a little job satisfaction now.’”



**After completing a post-flight inspection of a Shadow UAV, Spc. Richard Klitz, from Fort Lewis, Wash. and a UAV maintainer with 2nd Battalion, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division puts the nose cover back onto the aircraft March 7.**



**Ensuring the Shadow UAV is ready for the next flight, Spc. Ben Hughes from Fort Drum, N.Y., and a Shadow maintainer assigned to 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Bde. Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, refills the aircraft’s oil reservoir March 7.**



# Company B 'Maddogs' maintenance company; Department of the Army award semifinalist

Story by Chief Warrant Officer 3  
Jason Kovatchitch  
1st AAB, 82 Abn. Div., USD-C

**ALASAD AIR BASE, Iraq** – An advise and assist maintenance company that deployed to Iraq was selected Jan. 25 as a semifinalist to represent the Department of the Army in an annual military maintenance competition.

The Company B "Maddogs" of 307th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Bde., 82nd Airborne Division, will compete against three other units across the Army for the coveted 2009 Army Award for Maintenance Excellence.

The "Maddogs" will compete in the Small Category for maintenance shops with fewer than 100 personnel. Also selected as a finalist was Co. G, also from 307th BSB.

The leaders of 307th BSB nominated the "Maddogs" in November 2009 for their efforts in supporting the maintenance requirements of 1-82 AAB in garrison as well as during their deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 2009-10.

In 2009, the company was respon-

sible for field maintenance, both internal and external for the 307th BSB, including recovery operations, scheduled services and unscheduled repairs for more than approximately 10,000 pieces of equipment.

The operations Co. B worked on consisted of automotive, electronic, communication, armament, allied trades and ground support equipment belonging to six battalions.

During its current deployment, the Maddogs have provided maintenance support to 1-82 AAB and other Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force units throughout Anbar province.

In addition to its conventional mission, the company has conducted countless partnership operations with Iraqi Army units in the province.

If selected by the DA, the "Maddogs" will represent the Army's best against those from the other services in the 2010 Secretary of Defense Maintenance Awards competition.

Being selected as a semifinalist is the first phase of the selection process. Phase two includes an on-site inspection of all the company maintenance operations. This inspection is scheduled to take place in early April at the company motorpool located in Iraq.



U.S. Army courtesy photo

**Spc. Ryan Decker, a radio and communications security repairer with Company B, 307th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, conducts repairs on communications and electronic equipment at Al Asad Airbase, Iraq, Sept. 20, 2009. Decker is a native of Newmarket, N.H.**

Inspectors will interview the company's command team and section leaders to develop a better idea of how the "Maddogs" conduct maintenance operations in a deployed environment while still being capable of executing so many IA partnership training operations.

They will also observe the mechanics performing maintenance, and confirm that the "Maddogs" follow proper safety and technical proce-

dures.

If they win, the "Maddogs" will compete for the Phoenix Award, a trophy recognizing small unit maintenance excellence throughout the entire military.

The Phoenix Award will be presented to the winner of the competition during the 2010 DoD Maintenance Symposium and Exhibition in Tampa, Fla., which takes place Nov. 15-18. ▲

## U.S. military convoy escorts install off-road lights

Story by 1st Lt. Kristen Nadeau  
1st AAB, 82nd Abn. Div., USD-C

**AL ASAD AIR BASE, Iraq** – U.S. paratroopers here recently installed newly-donated off-road lights on their convoy escort vehicles.

Paratroopers from Company A, 307th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, installed the lights, donated by Off-Road Adventures Magazine, on 15 of their Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles.

Mechanics from a sister company helped to install the lights on mine roller-equipped MRAPs and convoy commander vehicles. Co. A received 60 of the new lights through a sponsored program called Operation Light Sabre.

Operation Light Sabre began when the staff at Off-Road Adventures Magazine decided they would help



U.S. Army courtesy photo

**A Soldier with 307th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, installs off-road lights at Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, donated by Off-Road Adventures Magazine. The magazine donates the lights through a program called Operation Light Sabre, which collects donations and ships vehicle accessories to U.S. Army and Marine units.**

the military in Iraq and Afghanistan however they could.

The magazine solicits donations and with the proceeds, buys and ships vehicle equipment to deployed Army and Marine Corps units. One of their most popular donations has been the off-road lights because of the nature of the battlefield and the high quality of the lights.

Because U.S. convoys must share the road with Iraqis, the platoon often conducts the majority of its missions during late night hours when there is less traffic.

However, traveling at night also reduces visibility, making insurgents and improvised explosive devices more difficult to spot. Additionally, there is a greater likelihood a vehicle could drift off course, run into an obstruction, or fail to notice other vehicles.

The off-road lights are a welcome addition to Soldier's missions. ▲



# Anbar security chief: March 4 voting a success

Story & photo by Sgt. Michael MacLeod

1st AAB, 82nd Abn. Div., USD-C

**CAMP MEJID, Iraq** – Not a drop of blood was spilled in Anbar province during the special elections March 4, said the head of Iraqi Security Forces in Anbar at a security conference the following day.

Staff Lt. Gen. Abd Al-Aziz Muhammad Jasim Ahmad Al-Mufriji, commanding general of Anbar Operations Command, told over a half-dozen Anbar mayors, Iraqi Police chiefs, Iraqi Army brigade commanders and U.S. forces commanders that safe polling centers were the results of months of planning, preparation and teamwork by ISF, along with community involvement.

“We seized three car bombs in Anbar province yesterday; our anti-explosive department was able to defuse a big truck laden with 11,000 pounds of explosives that was targeting the Jazeera Bridge,” said Aziz.

“In the same day, our forces defused three [improvised explosive devices] in different areas of the province,” he added. “We are so pleased, because the day of the special voting went well, without any attacks.”

Nationwide, security for the special elections was conducted jointly between IA and IP. Their cooperation with local communities was responsible for the lack of violence in Anbar, said Aziz, noting that the days of criminal and insurgent activity being observed but unreported by citizenry are largely over.

The March 4 special elections were reserved primarily for ISF prior to Sunday’s national parliamentary elections.

In a further nod to the public’s role in its own security, Aziz said, “The Iraqi Security Forces will act firmly against inaccurate information and propaganda while holding liars accountable. Liars are worse



**Col. Mark Stammer, commander of 1st Advise and Assist Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, talks to members of Anbar province’s Iraqi Security Forces community March 5 at Camp Mejid. Stammer expressed how proud he is to be a part of the team that kept violence away from the polls the day prior during the special elections held for security force members and others who would not be able to vote in the national elections March 7.**

than terrorists,” he said.

To ensure the inclusion of all of Anbar’s citizens, Aziz also mentioned that vehicles were provided to those who live far from the election centers, and female inspectors were available to search female electors before they enter election centers.

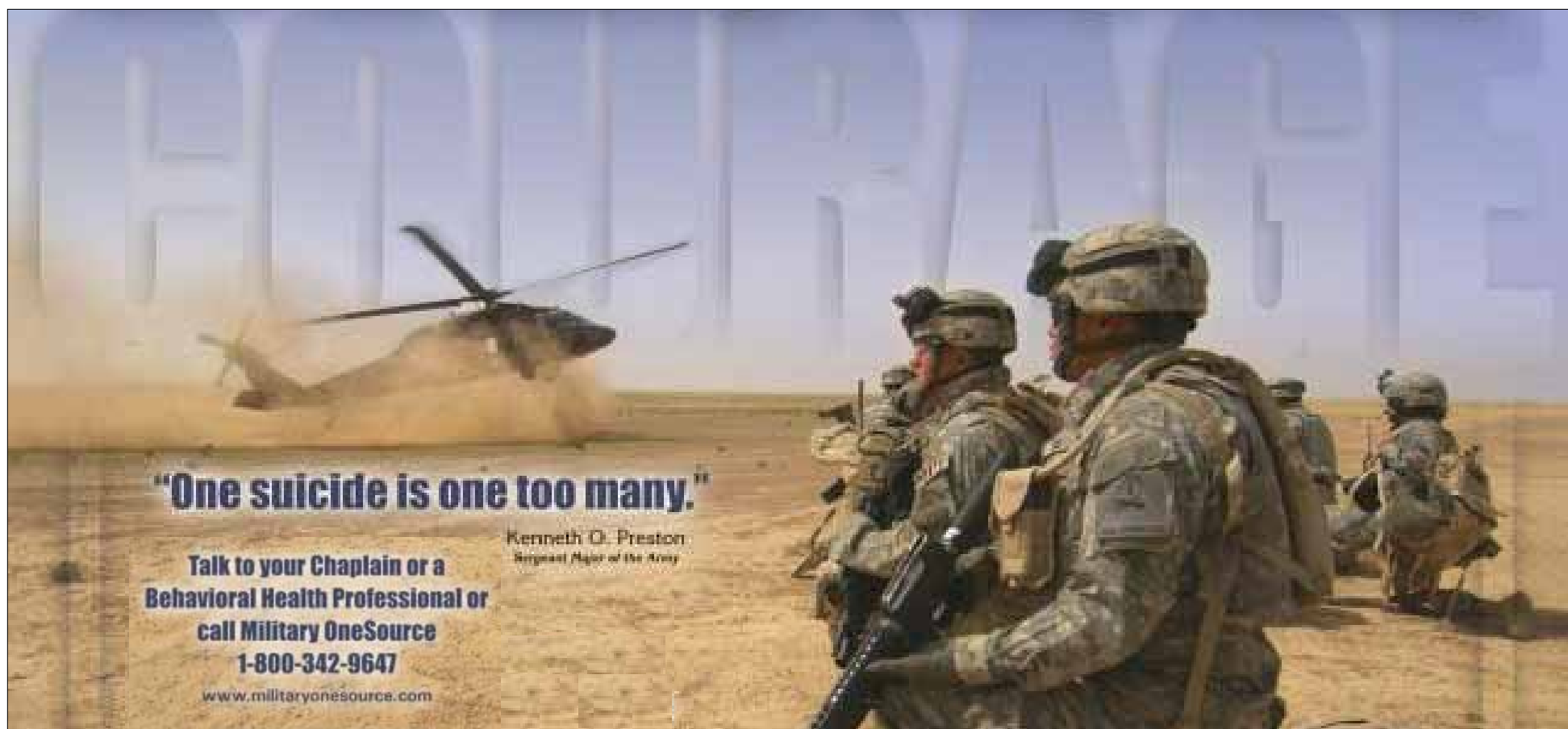
Aziz reported that support from U.S. forces was excellent.

Iraqi law prohibited U.S. forces from being within 200 feet of any polling site on election days. However, prior to the elections, U.S. forces have contributed

material, labor and engineering to beef up defenses around some polling centers.

“We are left in need of nothing because of all the support from [U.S. forces],” said Aziz.

Col. Mark Stammer, commander of U.S. ground maneuver element in Anbar, 1st Advise and Assist Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, said, “We’re very proud to be associated with such great partners in the 7th and 1st IA Divisions. Their diligence and determination is the reason why this electoral process is as successful as it is today.”





# USD-C honors women in military history

Story by Sgt. Teri Hansen  
366th MPAD, USD-C

**BAGHDAD** – “American women have stood resolute in the face of adversity and overcome obstacles to realize their full measure of success,” said President Barack Obama March 2 during his presidential proclamation on Women’s History Month. “Women’s History Month is an opportunity for us to recognize the contributions women have made to our nation and to honor those who blazed trails for women’s empowerment and equality.”

The 1st Armored Division Equal Opportunity office sponsored a Women’s History Month observance at the 1st Armd. Div. Chapel March 20. Maj. Sabrina Baker, the equal opportunity and sexual assault program manager

for 1st Armd. Div., organized the event.

In honor of this year’s theme for Women’s History Month, “Writing women back into history,” they will highlight the many contributions of women throughout history who have served in the military, according to Baker.

The event began with a historical walk-through of women throughout history conducted by Maj. Paul Davis, officer in charge of the Logistics Civilian Augmentation Program for 1st Armd. Div. The presentation featured the roles of women in the military or supporting the military as far back as 1775 when the Army was formed.

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jeanne Pace, personnel executive officer for U.S. Forces – Iraq, spoke at the event. She served in the Women’s Army Corps. WAC was



**Gen. Ann Dunwoody, commanding general of Army Materiel Command and the first female to earn four stars in the U.S. military, is greeted upon arriving at the 1st Armored Division Chapel to attend the U.S. Division – Center Women’s History Month observance March 20.**

created May 14, 1942, as an auxiliary unit that allowed women to serve for the first time in the U.S. Army in positions other than nursing.

Pace graduated as an honor graduate from WAC Basic Training at Fort McClellan, Ala., in 1972. After graduation, she was assigned to the 14th Army WAC Band, the only Army band at that time allowing women in and also the only band to be made up entirely of women.

Pace served with the 14th until 1977, one year before the WAC was disbanded.

Pace spoke on her career in the Army, emphasizing the differences between today’s Army and the Army in 1972. Women were issued purses to be worn on the forearm or carried by hand. It was never to be adjusted or worn on the shoulder because that was considered too formal, she explained.

“We actually had makeup classes in basic training. We were taught the appropriate way to apply makeup,” she said.

After her speech, Lt. Col. Lane Turner, commander of Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Armd. Div., presented Pace with

a Women’s History Month plaque as a token of the division’s appreciation for speaking at the event.

Maj. Gen. Terry Wolff, commanding general for 1st Armd. Div., and commander of U.S. Division-Center, briefly spoke at the event, thanking distinguished guest Gen. Ann Dunwoody for her attendance, and all women for their service.

Dunwoody is the commanding general of Army Materiel Command and

is the first female four-star grade officer in the U.S. military. She presented Pace with her coin and thanked Pace for her service and for sharing her experience.

Both women were then surrounded by attendees wanting to thank them both for being role models to women in the military. Dunwoody and Pace hugged, laughed and took pictures with the audience, expressing appreciation for their service as well.

“It is an honor to serve with the women and men who are here in Iraq today,” said Dunwoody. “While Chief Pace and myself are seen as the trailblazers of our time, the men and women in the military today will be remembered in the same way.”



**Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Mellinger, the command sergeant major of Army Materiel Command, thanks Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jeanne Pace, personnel executive officer for U.S. Forces – Iraq for sharing her story during the U.S. Division-Center Women’s History Month.**



## Senior military leaders of Hungary, Serbia meet with Ohio NG leaders

Story by Dr. Mark Wayda

Ohio National Guard Vice Chief of Staff

**DUBLIN, Ohio** — Since the early 1990s state National Guards have been responding to an evolving international affairs mission. The State Partnership Program, matching state National Guards with the militaries of countries around the world, now consists of 62 partnerships. The Ohio National Guard has been partnered with Hungary since 1993 and Serbia since 2006.

February 26, Hungarian Chief of Defense Gen. László Tömböl and Serbian Chief of the Armed Forces General Staff Lt. Gen. Miloje Miletić arrived in Ohio for trilateral discussions with their partner, Maj. Gen. Gregory Wayt, Ohio adjutant general for the Ohio National Guard.

Both men addressed several hundred of Ohio National Guard senior officers and noncommissioned officers at the annual Joint Commanders' Call. The call is an opportunity for the senior leadership of Ohio's Army and Air National Guards to come together to achieve a common understanding of many important issues, Wayt said.

"I cannot thank enough Gen. Tömböl and Lt. Gen. Miletić for being here to share their perspectives on our partnerships with Ohio's most senior leaders," said Wayt.

## Apache unit arrives at Fort Drum

Story by Staff

Fort Drum, Public Affairs Office

**FORT DRUM, N.Y.** — A ceremony to welcome the 1st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment to Fort Drum was held Feb. 5, at Wheeler-Sack Army Airfield.

The "Tigershark" battalion, consisting of AH-64D Apache helicopters, uncased their unit colors signifying their relocation from Hunter Army Airfield in Savannah, Ga. to Fort Drum. This is the first Apache unit ever to be stationed at Fort Drum.

The battalion is commanded by Lt. Col. Michael Slocum. Command Sgt. Maj. Rigoberto Hernandez is the battalion's command sergeant major.

The Tigersharks were previously designated as 3rd Bn., 3rd Aviation Regt. assigned to the 3rd Infantry Division. The unit reflagged to become 1-10 ATK in August 2008 and assigned to the 10th Combat Avn. Brigade, 10th Mountain Div. The battalion recently deployed with the 10th CAB in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom to Northern Iraq.

## Fort Stewart kicks off AER campaign

Story by Staff

Fort Stewart, Public Affairs Office

**FORT STEWART, Ga.** — The Army Emergency Relief announced the kickoff of the 68th annual AER Campaign, March 1. The campaign, which runs from March 1 through May 15, began at Fort Stewart-Hunter Army Airfield with a small, early morning ceremony at the Fort Stewart Army Community Service building.

Opening remarks were given by Fort Stewart-Hunter Army Airfield Garrison Commander Col. Kevin Milton, followed by his signing of a DA Form 4908 to officially begin the 2010 AER Campaign.

AER is a private, nonprofit organization founded in 1942 that is dedicated solely to "Helping the Army Take Care of its Own" by providing financial assistance to Soldiers and their families in time of emergency financial need. The program offers grants and interest free-loans to active duty and retired Soldiers, activated Reservist and their eligible family members. AER also offers scholarships for children and spouses of Soldiers on federal active duty, retirees, or deceased active or retired Soldiers.

"This program is vital to the success and livelihood of Soldiers and Families," Milton said. "This is about Soldiers helping Soldiers."

## Westcott Hills housing opens at JBLM McChord Field

Story by Staff

Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Public Affairs Office

**JOINT BASE LEWIS-MCCHORD, Wash.** — Army and Air Force Leaders at Joint Base Lewis-McChord celebrated the beginning of privatized housing on JBLM McChord Field during a ribbon cutting ceremony held at Westcott Hills housing area March 9.

The ribbon cutting ceremony showcased the completion of the first eight homes of the 32-unit Westcott Hills housing area; the remaining three and four bedroom field grade officer homes will be completed by June 2010.

Ground has already been broken at JBLM McChord Field for the 62-unit Cascade Village housing area, along with the renovation of 268 existing homes in the Carter Lake housing area. Plans call for an additional 250 new homes to be constructed on JBLM McChord Field.

Privatized housing on JBLM McChord Field is being built and managed by Equity Residential/Lewis-McChord Communities, LLC, the same company responsible for building and renovating housing on JBLM Lewis Main and Lewis North for more than seven years. There have been 729 new homes built and 2,478 homes renovated on JBLM Lewis Main and Lewis North under the Residential Communities Initiative to date.

## Robotics team ready for competition

Story by Karl Weisel

U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden, Public Affairs Office

**WIESBADEN, Germany** — Future engineers were hard at it Feb. 19 making last minute adjustments before crating and shipping this year's entry in the 2010 First Robotics Competition.

Members of RoboWarriors team at Wiesbaden High School have been working on Frau POW! V2, the second generation robot's name is a tribute to one of the school's teachers.

This year's challenge required students to build a robot capable of competing in a contest known as Breakaway, navigating through a tunnel, over an obstacle course, hanging from a platform, all while attempting to score soccer goals. Students have been diligently working to ready the robot for the competition. Teams were given six weeks from January to plan and build the robot.

Aiming to put their own personal stamp on a team coming from Germany for the stateside event, the instructor added that students will be wearing their own team colors, lederhosen T-shirts and German "dirndl" dresses.

## Soldier's quick thinking saves life

Story by Reginald Rogers

Fort Bragg Public Affairs Office

**FORT BRAGG, N.C.** — When Spc. Daniel Conrad saw Sgt. William Mortenson struggling on a treadmill at the Iron Mike Physical Fitness Center, he knew something was wrong.

Conrad, a trained combat lifesaver, assigned to the 1st Squadron, 7th Air Defense Artillery Battalion's Rear Detachment, was on assignment to the facility as a temporary gym assistant.

Conrad said that in between fainting spells, Mortenson, assigned to the Warrior Transition Battalion, managed to tell him that he had a prior neck injury and that his neck and back were hurting. At that time Conrad said he noticed Mortenson's body temperature was hot, but he was not sweating.

"After we stabilized him and I held his neck to make sure he didn't move around too much ... I had someone go get a medic and he came and someone called 9-1-1 and we kept him stable until they arrived," said Conrad.

Conrad attributes the quick response of the post's first responders and his combat lifesaver's training to Mortenson's well being. He said the emergency medical technicians arrived within five minutes of the call for help being placed.



# Drawdown continues as Colorado guard leaves Ramadi

Story & photos by Sgt. Michael MacLeod  
1st AAB, 82nd Abn. Div., USD-C

**CAMP RAMADI, Iraq** – A Colorado National Guard battalion cased its colors March 19, the latest unit to end its mission in the once-restive Anbar province, as U.S. forces continue their responsible drawdown in Iraq.

Lt. Col. Al Morris, commander of 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery, addressed soldiers of 1st Advise and Assist Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, under whom his unit fell, the Al Anbar Provincial Reconstruction Team, the commander of 1st Iraqi Quick Response Force Bde., and the soldiers of his battalion, who were packed and ready to leave by helicopter once the ceremony concluded.

“Like many others during this time of transition, we performed a different mission than artillery for which many of us have spent our careers training,” said Morris, in a speech.



The 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery, from the Colorado National Guard, stands in formation at a color-casing ceremony marking the end of their deployment to Ramadi, Iraq, March 19. The primary role of the battalion during its deployment to Iraq's Anbar province was to provide security for a number of groups traveling in and around Ramadi.

“While we didn't trade in our swords for ploughshares, it allowed our efforts to be directed toward the reconstruction of this great nation and sending our countrymen and

women home as we leave knowing we have done our part during the War on Terror,” said Morris.

During their deployment, 3-157th FA conducted more than 400 escort

missions, 2,000 base patrols, operated Camp Ramadi's gates and housing and oversaw its defense. Soldiers drove more than 41,000 miles on missions.

Morris said he appreciated 1/82 AAB commander Col. Mark Stammer's hands-off approach that gave the battalion great freedom to accomplish their mission, and for the outpouring of support when the battalion's only casualty was wounded by sniper fire during fall 2009.

“The outpouring of support from you and the 82nd Association back in the States for Sgt. [Martin] May and his family as he recovered at Brooke Army Medical Center was just outstanding,” said Morris.

May was shot below his right eye while providing security for a provincial reconstruction team in Ramadi.

The Colorado guard unit traces its lineage back to the Civil War and was part of the division that saw the most days of combat of any division in World War II. ▲

## Troops prepare for responsible drawdown, closure team assists

Story by Sgt. Samantha Beuterbaugh  
366th MPAD, USD-C

**BAGHDAD** – A group of Soldiers from the 1st Armored Division Site Closure Assistance Team, U.S. Division – Center, provided technical aid to officers at Joint Security Stations Four Corners and Salie March 9 in preparation for their handing everything over to the Iraqi Security Forces.

Since 1st Armd. Div. arrived in Iraq late December 2009, five locations have been turned over so far, with more to follow.

“Bases are closing all over USD-C's footprint,” said Maj. John Dang, a Houston native and the 1st Armd. Div. officer in charge of supply services.

Known as SCAT, the group is comprised of engineer and logistic specialists who assist in the closure or return of U.S.-controlled sites back to the Iraqis, said Dang.

A major step in turning land and property over to the Iraqis is determining whether the property is excess.

“We can't just give the property to them,” said Dang.

Property can be either real or personal. Real property is considered a fixed structure, or real estate; while personal property includes things like air conditioner units, furniture, and Morale, Welfare and Recreation equipment.

Once the existing real and personal property is visually verified and amounts are annotated, the team uses a process called Foreign Excess of Personal Property to determine the actual excess. They visit each site at

least two to three times, usually at the beginning, middle and end of the process to ensure no issues are left unresolved.

“It was beneficial to have [the SCAT] walk us through [the process] to clarify some gray areas,” said 1st Lt. Mike Schulman, the fire support officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron, 89th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team,

10th Mountain Div.

It was helpful for them to get a better understanding of real property versus personal property as well as taking a streamline approach to enable the actual transfer to run smoothly for their Iraqi counterparts, said Schulman.

Any unresolved issues could actually delay Soldiers' redeployments, keeping them from their family members longer, said Dang.

*“We have to make sure that [the Soldiers] are taken care of first.”*



Maj. John Dang

that will help the Iraqi people survive,” said Dang. “It's not Army equipment, radios, computers or military vehicles.”

Once personal property is identified as excess by the unit, the unit submits a request for it to be transferred to the Iraqis through the FEPP process, Dang said.

The requested excess list is scrubbed to ensure no other company or U.S. operation needs the

items in the USD-C area.

If no USD-C shortages are documented, Dang will recommend the items remain on the Iraqi compound. The items in question will then be offered on a broader scope to any U.S. military and government operation. The entire process takes about 60 days.

“We have to make sure that [the Soldiers] are taken care of first,” said Dang.

After it's determined that no other unit in theater is in need of the items, they are then turned over to the Iraqis, said Dang.

If the unit is having transportation problems, Dang said his crew will get assets to assist them in relocating equipment in order to prevent any delays. And when it comes time for the base closure ceremony, Iraq's Receiver-ship Secretariat officially signs all real and personal property that has been approved over to Iraq.

Though the process can be long and tedious, said Schulman, the end result is well worth the effort. “Guys like the SCAT can help us meet requirements to ensure that in the end, we get out of here on time.” ▲



# U.S. service members pursue education in Iraq

Story & photo by Sgt. Samantha Beuterbaugh  
366th MPAD, USD-C

**BAGHDAD** – “If I can make time then anyone can make time.”

Staff Sgt. Keyona Davis chuckled at what she had just said. Here she sat, in a hostile zone, not a lot of free time, reflecting on how people think it's essential to make time for things that will improve morale and occupy the mind.

“MWR functions are great, but if you can invest your time in something that's going to pay off later, then why not?” said Davis.

Her investment is in education, something that also keeps people out of mischief, said Davis, a Washington native and platoon sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Armored Div.

As a platoon sergeant, Davis is tasked with numerous duties, but she also maintains physical fitness standards, sings in the choir and studies for classes.

“I'm a candidate for pretty much any job that comes out,” said Davis.

Davis is currently on her third deployment in only six years of active duty.

One of her previous deployments required her to work 18-hour shifts every day for six months, so school wasn't an option.

“Now, I'm only pulling a 12-hour shift, so that's six extra hours I have to myself,” said Davis.

Although time-management can be a challenge, an education is something Davis feels she needs.

Davis is one of 16 grandchildren in her family to achieve a high school diploma.

“I'm one out of four who graduated high school,” said Davis, “and I want to be the first one in my fam-

ily to get a college degree.”

School doesn't always excite her, but she said the outcome after completing a class is very rewarding.

She hopes to tackle nine credit hours per semester, which would allow her to accomplish 36 hours by the end of her deployment.

“For me, the face-to-face classes are better than online classes,” Davis said.

She likes interacting on a personal level with the instructor. And being around other motivated people motivates her, she said. The classes are also usually in the evening, which is very accommodating for her.

However, what might work for some, might not work for others.

Air Force Tech. Sgt. Willmont Griffin achieved two degrees online, he said, because fitting class attendance into his schedule was a bit of an obstacle.

The Jersey City, N.J., native and liquid fuel systems maintenance technician assigned to 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineers Squadron didn't start college until his 50s.

Griffin has progressed by completing both an associate's and a bachelor's degree, and he is currently seeking another degree that he expects to complete in May. His current classes are face-to-face because they seem to work best with his deployment schedule, he said.

Griffin could be considered proof that age is no barrier to seeking an education. Still, he admits to harboring a few regrets about waiting so long to pursue college. But the regrets don't stay long: “The important thing is that I'm doing it now.”

He is a busy construction inspector in Manhattan, and Griffin said his reason for going back to school is a matter of personal pride. “I just wanted to see if I could do it.”

The online environment was the only way that he



Staff Sgt. Keyona Davis, a Washington native, studies in her office after duty hours. At the end of Davis' busy days as platoon sergeant for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Armored Division, she packs what little bit of free time she has with schoolwork.

could get an education and maintain a career. Griffin said online courses are difficult, but he finds the benefits of getting an education worth it.

He's currently enrolled in face-to-face courses, and like Davis, has found the one on one interaction beneficial.

Davis and Griffin admittedly don't have much leisure time because of their busy work schedules, but they say pursuing an education worth the sacrifice.

“You can always make time for something that matters,” Davis said, “and education matters!”

## Marriage Enrichment Study Tuesdays 1900-2000 Spiritual Fitness Center (Bldg 1822)

April - Financial Peace University

### Upcoming studies

May - Laugh Your Way to Better Marriage

June - Love and Respect

July - LINKS

August - Financial Peace University

September - Baby Makes Three

October - Five Power Tools for Marriage

November - Grab Bag

For more information please contact the 1st Armored Division Chaplain's Office at DSN 847-2738.

## OPSEC Poster competition

**Tired of all those old  
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Staff Sgt. Christopher Perry  
christopher.w.perry@mnd-b.army.mil



# Soldiers, teachers give school supplies to local children

Story & photos by Pfc. Kimberly Hackbarth  
4th SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div., PAO, USD-C

**CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION NASIR WA SALAM, Iraq** – Their backpacks were torn and frayed, the flaps hanging open with books peeking out from broken zippers; they were the lucky ones.

The rest of the children clumsily carried everything in their arms and against their chests as they ran inside the gates of the small school in Khandari, a rural area northwest of Baghdad.

With a delivery of new backpacks to hand out, Soldiers from 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion and the 4th Bn., 9th Infantry Regiment “Manchus,” followed closely behind the children as they filed into their school March 17.

Children packed together in line, eagerly waiting as the local contractors heaved large bags stuffed with backpacks through the gate.

The first group of schoolchildren was wary upon first seeing the American Soldiers led by 1st Lt. James Hester, a civil affairs team leader with Company B, 422nd CA Bn.

“The headmaster brought (the children) out and said, ‘We’re going to bring the first graders out because they’re scared of Americans,’” said Hester, a Tybee Island, Ga. native.



First Lt. James Hester (center), a civil affairs team leader with Company B, 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion, and workers at a primary school in Khandari, northwest of Baghdad, hand out new backpacks containing school supplies for children March 17.

After seeing that the uniformed visitors were there to help, the children smiled and gladly accepted the gifts without any concern about whether they were from Americans or Iraqis.

A Nahia council member, alongside school workers and Hester, pitched in to distribute 600 backpacks to the children.

The backpacks, purchased with Commanders Emergency Relief Program funds, contained notebooks, pens, pencils, rulers, crayons and markers.

“We donate school equipment to students so they can function at a higher level (in) school,” said Hester.

Even though the school year was ending soon for the students, the backpack and school supply donation helps set them up for their futures and to encourage them to continue learning, he explained.

Watching from behind a gate at the entrance of the school, Spc. Jared Bower, a 4th Bn., 9th Inf. Regt., team leader escorting the civil affairs Soldiers was among the few Soldiers on the ground at the backpack donation

site and said he saw smiles on both students’ and teachers’ faces.

“[The children] probably don’t have supplies,” said the Louisville, Ohio native. “Now teachers won’t have to worry about what [their students] are going to write on or write with.”

Bower and several other 4th Bn., Soldiers regularly provide security and assist through humanitarian aid drops with 422nd.

Hester praised the Manchus for their support of 422nd in being able to continue providing Iraqis what they need and said he believes they are leaving a lasting impression on the local people.

“It’s a long lasting reminder of the Manchu Battalion and the things they’ve done in the area to try to promote a better sense of government,” said Hester.

Hester explained that when the Government of Iraq and U.S. forces do projects that improve civil capacity, such as opening a water treatment facility, it might not always be noticed by the children. Whereas humanitarian aid for children helps show them their government cares even for them.

“Today, they saw someone doing something good for them specifically,” said Hester.

With their new backpacks hanging from their backs, apprehension gone, the school children smiled as they headed back to class. 🌈

## Requisitions shop provides support to 1AD, DSTB

Story by Spc. Daniel Schneider  
366th MPAD, USD-C

**BAGHDAD** – In the Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Armored Division motorpool, there are many parts that work together to keep a mission running smoothly.

The requisitions shop at the DSTB motorpool serves an important behind-the-scenes role, providing the necessary materials and dispatches that allow Soldiers to continue ground missions without delay.

“We make sure vehicles are mission-capable, ordering and providing the parts mechanics need to keep vehicles capable of dispatching,” said Sgt. Maurice Atwood, the Army Maintenance Management Systems

noncommissioned officer in charge assigned to Company B, DSTB and a native of El Paso, Texas.

This group of individuals provides status updates and reports, which empowers division leadership with the knowledge necessary to gauge mission capability.

“It’s all about readiness,” said Sgt. Matthew Berg, an automated logistical specialist with Co. B. “We provide parts and reports on readiness for communication devices, vehicles, small arms, and radar to division and also to the Department of the Army.”

They track status reports of the different mechanics within the motorpool, and the status and priorities of maintenance projects, said Berg, a native of Mobile, Ala. This ensures deadlined vehicles receive

priority to get them back in service.

Apart from their regular day-to-day duties, the office also helps out Soldiers in other ways.

The shop has put up pull-up bars in the Iron Gym during their downtime to give Soldiers more options during their physical training regime, said Sgt. Ja’Corey Isom, also an automated logistical specialist assigned to Co. B.

Their newest accomplishment has been tracking and ordering 400 of the upgraded M-16 magazines, which prevent jamming, for each of the six companies they support directly, said Berg.

Another extra job this office has performed for the 1st Armd. Div. this tour was being in charge of issuing driving permits for the entire division, said Isom, who is a native

of Houston. “It was a big task which took a long time to handle,” he said.

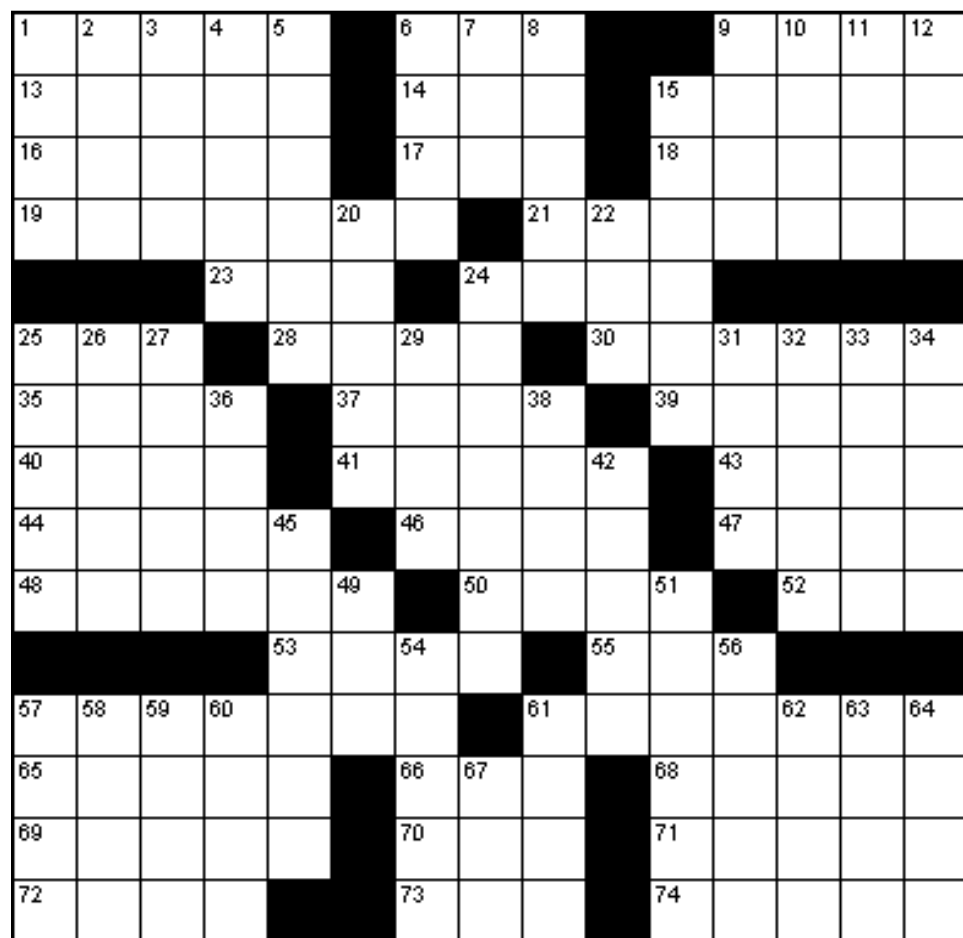
“During the first month of our deployment, we were each doing 20 licenses a day,” said Spc. Jason Curry, another automated logistical specialist assigned to Co. B.

The members of the requisition team had to lead individuals in the process needed to obtain their licenses, including taking an Accident Avoidance Course, filling out forms, and having an active civilian driver’s license, said Curry. After all of these tasks are complete, each license takes about 10 minutes to process.

Where mechanics are the muscle of maintenance, the requisitions office serves as the nerve center allowing mechanics to perform their job efficiently, said Isom. 🌈



# CROSSWORD



## Across

1. Actress, \_\_\_ Berry
6. Prod
9. Golf club
13. Movie starring Sigourney Weaver
14. Nocturnal creature
15. Ambit
16. Wanderer
17. Body of water
18. Relative
19. Push down
21. Wrongdoing
23. Forty winks
24. Used as fuel
25. Man or boy
28. Small stream
30. Nuance
35. Part of the eye
37. Burden
39. Oddity
40. Solitary

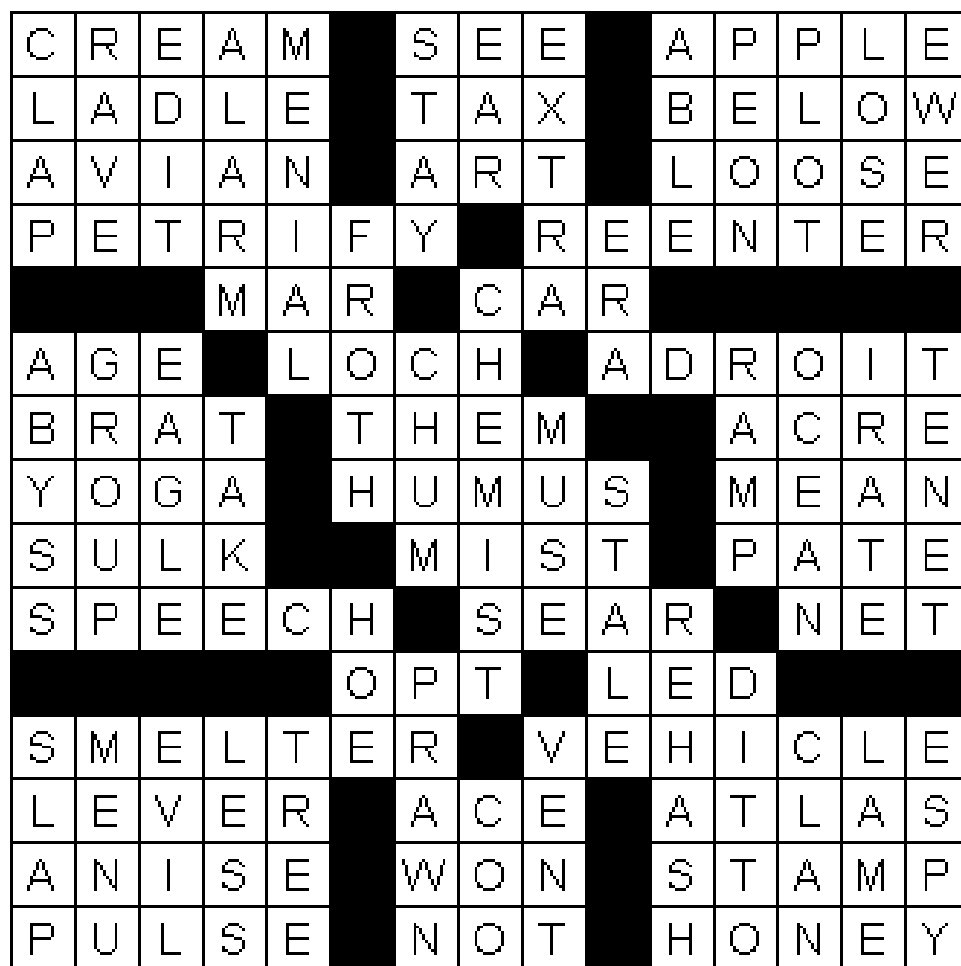
41. Coherent
43. Secret agent, James
44. Remedy
46. Used to calculate net weight
47. Rim
48. Consortium
50. Rip
52. Long fish
53. Peel
55. Be seated
57. Monolithic
61. Enchant
65. Obviate
66. Fish eggs
68. Empower
69. Circumvent
70. By way of
71. Rhonchus
72. Actor, \_\_\_ McGregor
73. Tree
74. Surname of actress who played Arwen in The Lord of the Rings

## Down

1. Part of a clock
2. Succulent, \_\_\_ vera
3. Hobble
4. Gain knowledge
5. Make attractive or lovable
6. Chinese god
7. Wonder
8. Incrimination
9. Magician's baton
10. One time only
11. Stare at
12. Action
15. Pastoral
20. Tumble
22. First name of actor who played Gandalf in The Lord of the Rings
24. Notice
25. Fragrant plant
26. Perfume
27. Buffet car

29. Oaf
31. Regular hexahedron
32. Wear away
33. Undertone
34. Alpine call
36. Transported
38. Desperate
42. Impenetrable
45. Mock
49. First name of actress in 74 across
51. Compilation
54. Effrontery
56. Large marine food
57. Manufactured
58. Affirm
59. Soft drink
60. Part of the zodiac
61. Ray
62. Object of worship
63. Traditional knowledge
64. Pitcher
67. Fuel

## Mar. 15 solution



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Vietnam

## On this date in American military history

### Battle of Khe Sanh

On March 30, 1968 the operational environment of Khe Sanh, Republic of Vietnam, was handed over to the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile). This hand-off initiated what became known as Operation Pegasus. Operation Pegasus was an overland relief expedition launched by Marines, U.S. Army and elements of the South Vietnamese army. The objective was to relieve the siege of Khe Sanh.

1st Cav. Div. attacked with a combination of air and ground assaults along Highway 9 leading into Khe Sanh. The air assault leapfrogged within five miles of Khe Sanh. During this time their Marine counterparts moved along the road, clearing it of any additional enemy troops. At the same time engineer companies were repairing the road.

The operation continued in this fashion for seven days. On the eighth day the relief of Khe Sanh Combat Base was accomplished. The 1st Cav. Div.'s 3rd Brigade airlifted its command post into the base and assumed the mission of securing the position. By this time it was apparent that the enemy had chosen to flee rather than face a high-mobility force. Vast amounts of new equipment was abandoned by the North Vietnamese as they retreated.

Operation Pegasus officially ended April 15, 1968. The Khe Sanh Combat Base continued to be occupied by U.S. forces until June 16, 1968 when Operation Charlie commenced, which was the evacuation and destruction of the base.

The explanation for the operation was that the enemy had changed their tactics and reduced its forces to a point that Khe Sanh was no longer a tactical advantage.



VIETNAM 1965-1972