



Vol. III, Issue 3
March 2010



In The
Zone

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On the Cover and above:

Whitney Duncan performs for Soldiers on Camp Prosperity. Photo by
Texas Army National Guard 1st Lt. Darryl Frost

in the ZONE



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Support Group-Central Public
Affairs Office*

JASG-C Commander:
Col. Mark Campsey

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

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

In The Zone editor:
Sgt. Melissa Shaw

Headshots contributed by PAO Staff

Content Contributors

1st Lt. Darryl Frost
Sgt. Melissa Shaw
1st Lt. Olivia Cobiskey
Maj. August Murray
Capt. Christopher Parker
Leo Shane III-Stars and Stripes
Department of Defense Staff
Sam Freeman

Graphic Contributor:
Staff Sgt. Marcus Taylor

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From the Top JASG-C Commander

Starting off, I want to congratulate our Iraqi partners. Their hard work prior to the March 7th parliamentary elections paid off with a large voter turnout.

During the elections, only three of the nearly 8,000 polling sites were closed temporarily due to violence, and these reopened very quickly.

With the Iraqi Army and Police out in force, there were no breaches of the security perimeters around the polling sites. Overall, this was great news for Iraq as it allowed the voices of Iraq to be heard on a historic day.

However, it's not over yet. In the coming months, there's still an elevated risk for violence as the new Iraqi government is formed. The seating of the government takes time, so continued vigilance is essential to this election's success.

Here in the IZ, our service members will continue to support, advise, and assist the Iraqi Army. We will also drive forward with our piece of the drawdown, turning over the remaining properties to the Iraqi government and gradually reducing our presence in local security.

There's hard work ahead. Our challenge now is to redesign our support functions and capabilities in the IZ as we transition to a smaller force. Our brothers in arms, diplomats and contracted civilians are all part of this effort. Only by working together will we accomplish the task before us.

Locally, on FOB Prosperity, changes are still taking place. During March, we've done a lot to enhance safety with the improved clearance of walkways, the trimming of trees and the constant improvement of security measures.



Col. Mark Campsey
Commander
Joint Area Support Group—Central

However, nothing takes the place of maintaining situational awareness.

I'd ask each of you to commit to watching out for your buddy. We owe it to our families to watch out for one another, always reinforcing right over wrong and never allowing a buddy in trouble to go without needed support. Together we are stronger.

Looking ahead, there's still more to accomplish. I know you'll continue to do great things. I appreciate all your efforts so far.



Rods and reels donated by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation to the children that live in the International Zone are tested in the ponds located around the As-Salaam Palace.

Photo by Texas Army National Guard 1st Lt. Darryl Frost.

JASG-C Command Sergeant Major

March brought higher temperatures, an increase in dust storms, the Iraqi National Elections and a steady stream of new faces into the IZ as many forward bases continue to close down in keeping with the drawdown schedule.

For those of us that have been here for a while, it would be easy to fall into a rut, reducing our situational awareness because we do the same things, walk the same routes, see the same people and eat the same food day in day out.

Now is when you need to be encouraging your buddies to break up the monotony and join in some of the events the MWR has set up around the FOB. There's a little something for everyone, whether you like sports, singing or even just a good bowl of Texas chili.

MWR isn't the only game in town though, in fact, leadership here has done a great job developing and implemented several opportunities for soldiers to continue on their path to professional and personal growth on the FOB and elsewhere around the IZ.

For those wishing to develop their public speaking ability, there is a weekly meeting of Toastmasters each

Saturday on the NEC. Trying your hand in this group will enable you to present your plans and ideas in a clear and concise manner.

For something a little closer to home, the Soldier's Tool-Box (STB) is a monthly program hosted on Prosperity by a group of senior NCOs and officers in the 72nd JASG.

The STB is designed to provide Soldiers with essential information and techniques that will assist them in their decision making processes for planning and achieving their personal and career goals. They address a variety of topics including financial preparedness, the importance physical fitness to a long and healthy life and a combination of military and civilian career options.

In keeping with that, for soldiers in the Reserves and the National Guard, be sure to stay in contact with your employers back home. Maintaining a good relationship with them while you are gone will help ensure a smooth transition upon our return.

Communication, with family, friends and colleagues, should be among everyone's top priorities when away from home. Make sure to allot time each day to use email or hand-write a



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

letter, even if it's just a note to say you are safe.

Our families back home deserve to have us come home safe and with honor, so while you are here, watch out for each other and notice change in each other's demeanor. Don't hesitate to ask your buddy if they need help. Have the courage to ask them to open up, it can really make a difference.

Staying safe and out of trouble goes hand in hand with maintaining situational awareness, for you and your buddy. For your sake and theirs, be your brother's keeper.

Making this responsibility fun is the "Where's your buddy at?" program designed to get you and your buddy out of your CHU and open up interaction with others on the FOB.

For individuals going on leave this month, be safe. Relax and enjoy time with your family and friends, but you are always a Soldier and that means living the Army Values.

Remember that no matter where you are or what you are doing; you always need to conduct yourself with Honor.

"Return with Honor"

ANZIO 9

The IZ at night.

*Photo by Texas Army
National Guard Sgt.
Melissa Shaw*



FOB Prosperity 411

Common Access Cards

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

TMC

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

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

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

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

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

Dining facility

The Prosperity dining facility across from the Palace (Bldg. 100) offers four meals a day with Grab-n-go options between meal hours. Meal hours are:

Breakfast: 0600 to 0830

Grab-n-go: 0830 to 1100

Lunch: 1130 to 1330

Grab-n-go: 1330 to 1700

Dinner: 1730 to 2000

Grab-n-go: 2000 to 2230

Midnight Meal: 2230 to 0100

Grab-n-go: 0100 to 0530

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

Breakfast: 0530 to 0800

Lunch: 1130 to 1330

Dinner: 1730 to 2000

Midnight meal: 2330 to 0100

Gym/MWR

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

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

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

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

Post office

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

Items forbidden to be shipped include weapons items, drugs, alcohol, and perishable material. For a complete list of items, consult CENTCOM AR 25-200 or HRSC Policy 07-26.

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

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

Laundry

Since dirty laundry is serious business, FOB Prosperity now has two drop off points.

Locations and Hours:

A-Pod Trailer-

7 days a week 0700-2000

Facility in front of DFAC

7 days a week 24-hours a day

Things to Remember

- Pick it up where you drop it off.
- Both locations have a limit of 20 pieces per laundry bag.
- Blankets and comforters must be separated from clothing or uniform items.



Finance

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

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

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

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

Where's Your Buddy At?

*Photos and story by
Texas Army National Guard Sgt. Melissa Shaw*

As numbers go, 344 doesn't seem that bad until it is set at the front of the following sentence; "military service members committed suicide in 2009."

Behind this number, 344, are the names and faces of countless others affected by a permanent solution to a temporary problem; families, friends, unit leaders and professional colleagues.

Whether they were pushed to their decision by the stresses of increased deployment cycles, decreased down time or a deadly combination of both factors, all levels of our American military forces have committed to reducing the numbers for 2010.

"Army leaders are fully aware that repeated deployments have led to increased distress and anxiety for both soldiers and their families," former Secretary of the Army Pete Geren said. "This stress on the force is validated by recent studies of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans reporting symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder or major depression."

Fighting this tragic situation calls for using all the weapons in the Army's arsenal. Becoming effective means thinking outside the box to reach out and display true caring to those most vulnerable.

This translates into creating new and relatable public service announcements for TV and radio. Developing training programs to help soldiers recognize the signs in their friends and co-workers, as well as presenting ways to help diffuse dangerous situations and removing the stigma associated with depression counseling and promoting its benefits.

"I have seen the price of not getting involved in a routine or letting the mission get you so far down you forget about everything else,"

said Capt. Edward Perez.

In addition, Army leadership has encouraged the development of programs specifically designed to enhance social interaction among the troops. These programs and events are being used as a way to reduce the sense of loneliness that can develop when separated from family and friends.

One such program, dubbed "Where's Your Buddy At?" (WYBA) by its developers, recently hosted a big spring event for the men and women that live and work within the IZ on Camp Prosperity.

WYBA was conceived by an ambitious group of soldiers with the 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, currently serving as the Joint Area Support Group (JASG) in Baghdad, as a way to get people out of their containerized housing units (CHUs) and talking to one another.

They rose to the occasion after Prosperity lost one of its soldiers to an incident that is still under investigation earlier in the year, highlighting the fact that it can happen anywhere, to anyone.

Program developers include Houston natives, Staff Sgt. Marcus Taylor, billeting non-commissioned officer in charge (NCOIC), Spc. Gabriela Vaca, help desk technician, and Master Sgt. Norris Bryant, directorate of information management NCOIC.

Sgt. Marcus Martinez, information operations help desk technician for the 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, DJed during the "Where's Your Buddy At?" event on Camp Prosperity, Baghdad, March 20th.



This event is the first of its kind since the arrival of the 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team members in December.

"Of course it has a number of purposes. One of the most important to our leadership and meaningful to our soldiers is to provide an opportunity for interaction between

Baghdad in 2003 and in 2007.

"We were reminiscing about then and how much better it is now. We were also saying how glad we are for the progress made by the Iraqis because, you got to understand, in 03-07 bombs, mortars and rockets were the norm. Now they are the exception."

"When times are hard, and you are miles and miles away from home, all anyone wants is to have an exciting event where everyone can come together and have an enjoyable time. It's as simple as that," said Vaca.

"In the end, it is up to us to take care of one another. Our flesh and blood family may be back in the states, but the people we meet and the friends we make here, our unit families, are just as important," said Vaca.



(left) Soldiers take time to practice their serves prior to the WYBA volleyball tournament held on the As-Salam Palace grounds.

(below) Karaoke brings enlisted soldiers and officers together for a little harmonizing. Currently MWR hosts the events every Wednesday.



those men and women just arriving and those who have been here long enough to stop caring about what happens around them," said Taylor.

Studies have shown a significant decrease in the feelings of depression and hopelessness when individuals are provided opportunities to connect with others in similar situations.

By all accounts, the March event was successful. Between the early afternoon volleyball and late-night karaoke, new relationships

were formed and old ones rediscovered and cemented.

Occasionally, service-members would bump into team-mates from previous deployments. For San Antonio native, Capt. Edward Perez, JASG security directorate, that was Maj. Thomas Nagel, stationed in

"And the program (WYBA) is invaluable. I have seen the price of not getting involved in a routine or letting the mission get you so far down you forget about everything else."

"There is an old saying 'Combat is 99% boredom and 1% Terror.' Too many times the soldiers let the boredom or mission monotony take over their thought process. So they are complacent when it comes time to be attentive because of the monotony. This program gets them not only to relax, but to also connect with others and see that soldiers all around are facing the same problems," said Perez, a unit commander for the 72nd IBCT back in the U.S.

Vaca, the most junior member of the WYBA team, is also on her first deployment. "I was asked a couple weeks ago and am excited to create something for us by us."

(below) American or Australian, civilian or service members, depression can affect each and everyone of us.



Iraqi Police Learn River Patrol Basics on Tigris



(above and right) Students learn the skills necessary to maintain and use the river patrol boats at the IZ-based Baghdad River Patrol Training Center.

Photos by Texas Army National Guard Sgt. Melissa Shaw

*By Texas Army National Guard
First Lt. Darryl Frost*

The summer heat is not far off, but a cool breeze is blowing on the banks of the Tigris River as Iraqi Police attended classes at the Baghdad River Patrol Training Center (BRPTC) near the Fourteenth of July Bridge in the International Zone.

The patrolling center serves at a collective training point for Iraqi Police to learn all skills associated with river patrol operations, which include search and rescue actions and patrolling of the river, all in an effort to protect Iraq's citizens and support military operations.

Much like U.S. military troop schools, the BRPTC courses deal with basics to advanced-level tasks associated each area of instruction.

Patrolling Classes

Class sizes differ. However, generally the number is below 20 students per class. Most of the students are enlisted members of the police department, but Iraqi lower-level officers, up to the rank of captain, attend the course for training in river patrolling operations.

"Anyone with an aptitude can come," said Lt. Laith Muia'ad Abass Daud al-Taie, chief instructor at the BRPTC. "For the first time our history, we have all [Iraqi] provinces joined in."

"Our problem now is not enough classroom space," said Laith. "My hope is someday our course[s] are not limited to 20 persons [per classroom]."

From across Iraq, police departments send their candidates to the BRPTC to learn outboard motor maintenance, diving techniques and river patrolling operations.

Through these three main courses, the BRPTC offers the basic framework the police will need to run river security and safety operations working with the local civilian population and the Iraqi Army.

Two-months long, the outboard motor maintenance course provides Iraqi Police with a thorough grounding in basic repairs. When students graduate, they understand how to totally

Continued on page 9



(upper and lower left)
The skills needed to run and maintain the water craft used by the Iraqi River Patrol are learned on the banks of the Tigris.

*Photos by Texas Army
National Guard Sgt.
Melissa Shaw*



(upper right and middle left)
Students listen attentively during a lecture on first-aid from one of the instructors at the BRPTC. First-Aid is one of several basic classes given to individual enrollees of the Training Center.

*Photos by Texas Army
National Guard Sgt.
Melissa Shaw*



elements of search and rescue.

The waterborne patrol course is another class offered. First aid is the starting point for the course. Once students demonstrate their first aid knowledge, they extensively study river geography and the advantages and disadvantages of different river boat types.

Rarely do students take more than one course. To take additional classes, the Iraqi police officers must return to their units and reapply to take part in another course.

Training the Trainers

In 2004, the primary instructors spent two months on Naval Small Craft Instruction and Technical Training School in Stennis, Mississippi, where they learned river patrol operations techniques.

Leveraging the training there, the BRPTC primary instructors have built a distinctly Iraqi curriculum applicable to the local waters.

Currently, three U.S. advisors are also involved with training, advising and mentoring Iraqis at the school. One is responsible for teaching waterborne operations, how to pilot the boats and how to use the boats to conduct operations.

Another advisor is a highly skilled and qualified instructor responsible for the dive training. All together, these advisors have teaching certifications required to conduct operations

Continued on page 10

rebuild a boat engine from the ground up.

They begin by identifying all the parts of a boat engine. Once they understand all the pieces, they will break down and reassemble a boat motor to understand the inner workings to solve future problems.

The diver course is three-months long. When student arrive for this course, they must have basic swimming skills and be very comfortable in the open water.

Using this as a foundation, the Iraqi instructors teach the students according to international diving standards. They learn basic and advanced scuba diving techniques, open water operations and the





(Left and Right) Instructors and students take a hands-on approach during the outboard motor repair classes at the IZ-based Baghdad River Patrol Training Center

Photos by Texas Army National Guard Sgt. Melissa Shaw



Here, primary scuba instructors receive certification from U.S. advisors at Camp Prosperity

Photos by Texas Army National Guard 1st Lt. Darryl Frost

in search and rescue, safety patrols and counter smuggling.

Referring to the Iraqi BRPTC primary instructors, a U.S. advisor said, "These guys are squared away. They will be an asset."

Iraqi Textbooks

Over the past several years, the school has been refining its technical teaching manuals, which were originally derived from U.S. materials.

Now their manuals have largely replaced photos of U.S. service members with photos of Iraqis, which gives the Iraqi Police more of a sense of pride, according to the staff.

In the new manuals, the diagrams have also been changed from American-designed boats to watercraft Iraqis identify with locally.

Back to Work

When the Iraqi Police graduate from the course, they are released back to locations all along the

Tigris River where they will serve the civilian population by securing the waterway for government and business facilities.

Also, by serving as life guards, the Iraqi Police help people on the river. Recently, at the Fourteenth of July Bridge checkpoint, the patrol team jumped into action when a civilian accident resulted in a vehicle's fall from the bridge into the water.

The patrolling Iraqis immediately sped their boats to the victims, saved their lives and later recovered the vehicle, showing how vital the river patrol is to everyday life in Iraq

Iraqi Police, serving as part of river patrol operations, will perform military maneuvers on the water; both independent and combined efforts can be accomplished working in conjunction with the Iraqi Army when necessary.

After graduating from BRPTC, the Iraqi Police have vast knowledge

of weapons associated with the patrol boats, which will serve as check points on the river. They can also perform special operations to include any military maneuvers supporting the Iraqi Army.

Looking Forward

In the future, the BRPTC looks to add more courses that focus on advanced GPS navigation, underwater search and recovery and crime scene fundamentals, such as evidence collection techniques.

For now, Lt. Laith, the school's chief instructor, is proud BRPTC is a representation of Iraq's future as Sunnis, Shia, Kurds, Christians and Muslims are working together for the common good.

"We are one country under one flag," said Laith, referred to the school's unity. "Our goal is to protect the Iraqi people and build the new Iraq."

Small contribution from Maj. Bob Owen.

Keeping an eye in the sky at the NEC



The Perinin Construction Company continues to work putting up the overhead protective cover for the containerized housing units on the new embassy complex in the International Zone

Photos by Texas Army National Guard Sgt. Melissa Shaw



Making the C.O.O.L Choice

By JASG PAO Staff

The men and women in today's Armed forces are finding that a college degree or certificate of completion is often listed as necessary equipment, right along with a full complement of battle armor, when it comes to promotion. What is more, being a career soldier no longer means just hanging in there and passing the physical fitness test twice a year and maintaining weapons marksmanship.

This new military force is better trained, better equipped with greater technology and is better prepared to be able to cope with the stresses of the modern battle field. This all creates a package that is becoming increasingly marketable once the service-member completes their enlistment period or retires.

But advanced training and specialized, marketable skill training comes at a price to the Armed forces, there has been a noticeable trend in the increased number of soldiers opting out of reenlistment.

For some, it is no longer fear of repeat deployment or death in battle that prevents them from extending their contracts beyond their first term—it is the pressure to complete a minimum number of college hours to be considered eligible for promotion.

Some just don't feel they are college material and have no interest in continuing their education, joining the military for service to country only. For others, the intimidation comes from the almost limitless choices one must make when starting down the path to higher education.

Soldier face questions, such as: "Should I pursue a two-year associates or the much longer four-year bachelor's degree? Is my best course of action to jump right into a college or university or should you knock out the basics

first at community college using transferrable classes?" Other questions arise also: "What about funding my school choice, even with the latest and greatest educational benefits offered in exchange of military service? Can I afford to go full-time or will you need to work and take classes part-time?"

"Do I even need to go to school and get a degree or can I make the salary I want with the skills I would receive in a technical college?"

This overabundance of options can often distract from the end goal of self improvement, professional development or just plain old promotion points and the chooser can become overwhelmed.

So what is the way forward? How can service-members shake off the "I can't's and move toward greater academic achievements, which, in turn, can benefit both their military and civilian careers?"

Sometimes, recognizing your experiences and validating previous training serves as the spring board needed to get you moving in the right direction.

In the civilian job market, job seekers regularly catalog their skills for future employers by creating and maintaining a resume of past experiences and achievements.

The Army and Navy are using this basic premise to assist service-members using the Internet to reach a wider demographic.

COOL, credentialing opportunities on-line, provides information on how soldiers can fulfill the requirements for civilian certifications and civilian licenses that are equivalent to military jobs or ratings currently being performed by the service-member.

Both services worked closely with the Department of Labor to align the greatest number of job specialties with certifications to aid all service-members achieve more when their contractual obligations are completed.

For more information, visit www.cool.army.mil and www.cool.navy.mil and make a reservation to review your options with your closest education counselor.



Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Kenneth Tate checks the Navy COOL Web-site for updates. Photo by PAO staff

Camp Victory
Education Office
Robena Tomlinson
Guidance Counselor
318-485-5318

University of
Maryland University
College
Beth Hornick
Field Representative
318-485-6027

Camp Prosperity
Education Office
SSG Daigle-Hutchins
318-239-1104

If you have questions about your personal eligibility or need more assistance, please call the VA at 1-888-GIBILL-1 or visit the VA's GI Bill Web site at www.GIBILL.VA.gov.

Choosing a Degree Plan: Finding Your Start Point

By Major August Murray, B.S., MBA, Ed.S.
JASG-C Unit Education Officer

Armed forces personnel interested in studies often ask themselves, "What degree is right for me?" The following are some considerations:

- Am I ready and disciplined enough to make a big commitment of time and energy?
- Do I have the time and the support of my unit or section to pursue studies?
- Have I found a field that interests me and, will it keep my interest over time?
- Do I have the required technology and Internet access?
- How will I pay for my studies over the duration?

Associate degrees are generally considered an entry-level post-secondary degree, with specialization in a single field of learning. A typical associate degree will require about 60 credit-hours of study over a two-year period. Most college courses are three or four credit hours each. For example, a Respiratory Therapist may pursue an associate degree to gain medical credentialing and



Staff Sgt.
Paula Daigle-
Hutchins,
education
NCOIC for
the JASG
and all 72nd
IBCT Soldiers.
Photo by PAO
staff

licensure to work in the health field. Associates have fewer electives with a more focused, lean curriculum on that one subject.

Bachelor degrees typically require 120 or more credit hours of undergraduate studies over four years. A bachelor's is required for most appointments as a commissioned officer in the Armed Forces, and becomes mandatory for almost all officers beyond the rank of Lieutenant. Bachelor degrees are usually well-rounded in arts or science, often with an option for a minor related field of study. For example, a bachelor of arts in communication often includes a heavier load of language and English studies. A bachelor of science in communication may carry a larger load of technical classes.

For those of you trying to decide whether to pursue an associate or bachelor degree, consider the following important points:

- If you stay continuously enrolled, you can complete degrees sooner.
- You can earn credits for military service and life experience which you can apply toward a degree. The Army American Council on Education Registry Transcript System (AARTS) is one such service, at <https://aartstranscript.army.mil>
- When applying and transferring academic and military credit toward a degree, you will likely be awarded more elective credits toward a bachelor's than an associates.

Master degrees are graduate degrees and establish advanced expertise in a field of study after earning a baccalaureate. Most master degree admissions require a strong GPA; some require a graduate admissions exam. These degrees can typically be completed in two years and can require 30 to 45 credit hours. Often, a master's is desired in order to obtain licensure or credentialing. Remember to apply your military tuition assistance first, save your GI Bill benefits until you have exhausted other sources.

School Accreditation is critical in order to utilize military and Veteran's benefits. When pursuing any type of degree, ensure the college or university is fully accredited. The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Postsecondary Education maintains a database of all accredited colleges and universities in the United States: <http://www.ope.ed.gov/accreditation>

Drugs Sex Alcohol & General Order #1

*By 1Lt. Dana Collins
JASG Deputy Judge Advocate General*

General Order Number 1 (GO-1) is often misunderstood because its sole purpose is to ban activities that otherwise would be legal back home. This article highlights the purpose of GO-1, to whom it applies and some prohibited activities.

The purpose of GO-1 is to restrict certain activities in order to maintain good order and discipline and to foster US/host nation relationships.

The United States Forces – Iraq (USF-I) General Order Number 1 (GO-1), dated 1 January 2010, applies to all U.S. military personnel and certain civilians within the Iraq Joint Operations Area (IJOA).

There are limited exceptions for uniquely tasked U.S. military personnel or civilians.

Anyone who violates USF-I GO-1 could face adverse administrative action, nonjudicial punishment (an Article 15) or court-martial under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ).

In addition, civilians serving with, employed by or accompanying US forces may face criminal prosecution, adverse administrative action, and termination of employment or redeployment for violating GO-1.

Alcohol

GO-1 prohibits the purchase, transfer, manufacture or consumption of any alcoholic beverages. This prohibition does not apply, however, to the use of alcohol for authorized religious services.

While traveling on R&R, you are prohibited from consuming alcohol, but once you reach your final destination and are outside the IJOA, the GO-1 prohibitions do not apply.

You can still be punished for violating USCENTCOM policies that prohibit drinking while traveling.

Additionally, there are general prohibitions against drinking in public while in uniform and any misconduct while on leave (i.e. DUI's, disorderly conduct, etc.) are punishable under the UCMJ.

Drugs

The purchase, possession, transfer, sale or consumption of any controlled substance including medication without a valid current prescription is against GO-1.

Additionally, consuming, inhaling, ingesting, sniffing or otherwise taking into the body any substance that could prove harmful and is not used for its intended purpose (i.e. "huffing") is prohibited.

Pornography

Introducing, purchasing, possessing, transferring, selling, creating or displaying any pornographic or sexually explicit material is against GO-1.

This includes electronic media and Internet content, but does not apply to American Forces Radio & Television Service Broadcasts or items distributed and/or displayed through AAFES.

Sexual Contact

Sexual contact of any kind with Iraqi nationals or foreign nationals is prohibited. Cohabitation, residing or spending the night in living quarters with a member of the opposite sex is also prohibited.

An exception may be granted for lawfully married spouses or by military necessity.

Lesser Known Restrictions

Taking a piece of the palace rubble or other Iraqi national treasures is a violation of GO-1. Photographing military installation security measures or detainees is also prohibited.

GO-1 dictates that firearms must be visible at all times and that blouses will not conceal pistols worn on the belt.

To prevent dangerous "quick draw" games, GO-1 prohibits intentionally pointing any firearm, weapon system, loaded or unloaded, at another individual except as required in the execution of official duties.

It is the responsibility of each person to know and understand the prohibitions in GO-1. The best way to accomplish this is to read the entire GO-1.

Electronic copies are available on the USF-I Policy Letters Web site or



Standing on the Absentee Ballot Box

*By Texas Army National Guard
Sgt. Melissa Shaw*

While the Iraqi national elections pushed forward this spring, the American troops stationed in and around the country received training and information that would allow them to cast their own ballots in elections back home.

In 1986, Congress enacted the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act to permit military voters to register to vote and vote by absentee ballot in all elections for Federal office, in deference to their semi-permanent transient state.

Helping to facilitate this process is the unit level Voting Assistance Officer (VAO) whose main responsibility is to inform and educate U.S. citizens of their right to vote.

"We are watching the Iraqi people vote in their national elections, yet so many in our own country don't participate by casting their vote. Most people think that their vote doesn't matter, but in state and city elections, which are happening this year, the individual can have a more direct impact on the immediate community surrounding him or her," said Capt. Jennifer Zavaglia, VOA for the 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT).

The VOAs are charged with many responsibilities, including ensuring eligible voters are provided all necessary voting information, including voting age, election dates and Federal officers to be elected, for example.

Sometimes, even with the best of intentions, the information does not reach the service-member in time.

"I missed the March 2nd elections. So I made sure I was registered and able to vote in the major election coming up in November, and set a calendar reminder letting me know when to request the ballot so I don't miss the next one," said 1st Lt. Sean Trobaugh, the International Zone Transition and Transfer Team assistant officer in charge (OIC), with the 72nd IBCT.

The absentee voting process permits citizens covered by the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, who will be away from their local polling places on Election Day, to register, request a ballot



and vote through the mail or an alternative method if allowed by the State.

Individuals covered under UOCAVA include active duty members of the American forces, American forces family members, members of the Merchant Marine, Merchant Marine family members and civilians residing outside the United States.

To educate all service-members of their options, Capt. Zavaglia has taken great pains to recruit and train assistants.

As these men and women are tasked with getting the word out about voting while overseas. Much of the materials distributed includes advice on how to effectively advertise to reach the greatest number of voters.

Getting the individuals trained to accomplish this herculean task has been a challenge the JASG has met head on. The end state is to reach individuals peer to peer and having a deployed brigade ready and equipped to vote regardless of their overseas location

While deployed, many individuals find themselves going above and beyond the call of duty. For the individuals chosen to act as a voting assistant, the consensus is that this is an honor and a privilege and, in fact, an extension of what they are already doing in Iraq.

"One of the reasons I am here in Iraq, miles away from my family and friends, in the middle of a war zone, is to help protect these people's rights to vote. I look at it as a step toward protecting my right to vote at home," said Trobaugh, a long-time Katy, Texas resident.

Contacts for Camp Prosperity:

VOA - Capt. Jennifer Zavaglia
jennifer.zavaglia@iraq.centcom.mil

VOA Assistants:

SFC Gerald Collier, SSG Paula Daigle-Hutchins,
Sgt. Annika Chambers, Sgt. Melissa Shaw,
1LT George Myers, CWO James Cambron

News you can use

Spouse Tuition Aid up-date

By Department of Defense Staff Writer

The Pentagon will resume the stalled My Career Advancement Accounts spouse education benefit program as of noon Saturday, restoring tuition benefits to 136,583 military spouses who had applied for and been enrolled in the program.

However, the MyCAA program will not accept new applicants at this point, Pentagon spokesman Marine Corps Col. Dave Lapan said Thursday. "This is the first step of how the department is going to address this program."

Whether new applicants will be accepted at some point "remains to be seen," Lapan said, adding that the Pentagon comptroller "is working hard to fund this program."

The program provides up to \$6,000 in tuition assistance to spouses for a variety of educational programs. Tuition payments were abruptly halted Feb. 16 "due to overwhelming demand," Lapan said.

Military spouses found out about the shutdown just as they tried to request funding for classes that were to start within a month. They could not request payment for classes for which they had already registered

Overseas military will have to register again to get ballots this year

*By Leo Shane III
Stars and Stripes*

WASHINGTON — Military members serving overseas will have to resubmit their voter registration this year if they hope to cast a ballot in the November midterm elections.

Veterans, military dependents and other U.S. civilians living overseas will have to as well. Changes in federal law mandate that voters must request a new absentee ballot each year in order to participate in state and federal elections, instead of the previous practice of requiring new applications only every few years.

"The message is for military voters to send in that (federal postcard application) as soon as possible, because they won't be able to vote without it," said Bob Carey, director of the Federal Voting Assistance Program. "You need to submit a new postcard every year, and every time you change duty stations, and every time you move."

States can opt to extend that application period further out, but aren't obligated to do so, Carey said. The federal law guarantees that any voters who resubmit their paperwork every year will be provided ballots. Because of questions over whether states will change or challenge deadlines, Carey said the FVAP is pushing for all overseas voters to update their paperwork.

The changes came as part of the recently passed Military and Overseas Voting Empowerment Act, which also requires military bases to establish more voting assistance facilities and local election officials to mail out absentee ballots at least 45 days before an election.

But Carey said even with those changes military voters in Iraq, Afghanistan or other overseas locations won't be able to receive a ballot unless they send in their current address information to their local election offices early this year.

On Thursday the FVAP held a midterm election kickoff event to highlight the need for military units and individual troops to be thinking about the primary and general elections right away. Twenty-five states have primary elections scheduled before July 1 this year, including a March 3 primary in Texas and a Feb. 2 one in Illinois.

More than half of overseas voters who tried to get an absentee ballot for the 2008 presidential election didn't receive one in time for November's election, according to statistics from the Overseas Vote Foundation. Election officials at Thursday's event said a major reason for that was outdated and inaccurate addresses for military voters.

"We will do everything we can to get these ballots out, but help us help you," said Rokey Suleman, executive director of the Washington, D.C. board of elections. "The more information we have on you the better."

Carey said the FVAP has already sent out thousands of the postcard applications to units heading into Iraq and Afghanistan on scheduled rotations, and is working with U.S. Central Command officials on ways to clarify and simplify the process.

In addition, the FVAP hopes to have a new slate of online registration and voting tools — including an online ballot completion form for each state — in place by the November general election.

Celebrating the Women in our History

“This evening encouraged us to look back at the contribution the women in our lives made to make it easier for us,” said Yasmine Bahrani, a cultural advisor for the U.S. Army,

*By 1st Lt. Olivia Cobiskey
318th PAOC*

Capt. Patricia Keilberg held up a black and white picture of her mother’s cousin Yu Kwan-Sun.

“It’s because of this woman that I’m able to stand before you today,” Keilberg told the crowd of nearly 50 people gathered for a Women History month’s celebration, “Writing Women Back into History” on March 21 in the International Zone.

Warrior

Yu, often called the ‘Korean Joan of Arc,’ contributed significantly to gaining sovereignty for her country from Japan, Keilberg said. She planned the nonviolent protest of 1919 and later planned another one in her hometown of Ch’onan after the governor-general closed the schools in Seoul because of the unrest.

“She personally lit the torch and carried it to the mountaintop, the signal for the demonstration to start,” Keilberg said. “Many people were killed, among them her parents. She was arrested, sentenced to three years in prison and, after being severely torture, she died.”

“She was 16 years old,” Keilberg said to the silent crowd.

Although, Yu was only one of 75,000 people to die in demonstrations that year, the ripple effect of her choice can be seen today, she said.

“My mother told me that story and because of it, she promised herself, her daughter would have every opportunity,” Keilberg said.

Air Force Maj. Gary Warren said he was moved by all the women’s stories at the Woman’s History celebration; however, Yu’s story touched him the most. Like many people, Warren said he thought the Korean independence fighter was in her 20s or 30s.

“When she said the

girl died at 16, it made me think of my own 14-year-old daughter,” said Warren, who is stationed at Ft. Meade, Md. “It lets you know you are never too old, too young, too big [or] too small to bring about change.”

Survivor

Judith Kenney, a physician at the Iraqi International Academy, said her “Aunt Hazel” is a survivor and an inspiration to her.

Hazel left her abusive husband, put herself through nursing school as a single parent and battled breast cancer.

“Breast cancer is the fifth leading

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Sgt. Nadia Vallejo, information management NCOIC for the Joint Area Support Group-Central and an Afghanistan and Iraq veteran enjoys the 2010 Super Bowl celebration held in Baghdad. Photos by Texas Army National Guard Sgt. Melissa Shaw



Enriching the soul in a barren land

Chaplain's Corner



By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) John Laing
JASG Chaplain

Every Spring, Christians recognize the holy season of Easter. It is the celebration of Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead; his coming to life after being wrongly convicted and executed by the Roman government of first century Palestine.

For Christians, the resurrection is the culmination of a theme found throughout the Bible: the theme of rebirth, new life, a fresh start.

Biblically, resurrection is a repudiation of the negative and destructive power of decay, sin, and ultimately, death. Death is not seen as a good thing or something to be embraced, but rather is depicted as unnatural; an intruder in God's creation.

A corollary to this is the proclamation of the goodness of life. In fact, the doctrine of the resurrection validates the goodness of the creation, for it will be redeemed as well (Isaiah 14; Romans 8; Revelation 22).

As the Bible says, "God saw all that He had created, and it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). These truths lead to the conclusion that embodied existence is good and physical pleasures are not, by nature, bad.

Of course, many of these concepts of second chances, rebirth/renewal, and redemption are found in other religions and ideologies too, and they are especially prominent this time of year. For example, Judaism observes the Passover around this time.

It is the celebration of the Israelite exodus (escape) from Egypt when the destroying angel struck down the first born

and renewal; animals come out of hibernation, trees gain new growth, and babies are born.

In pointing to similarities, I am not suggesting that all religions are the same, for they clearly are not, but the ideas of new beginnings, rebirth and cleansing are common to humanity.

Psychologists and anthropologists have long noted that humans seem to have an innate need for concept of redemption and renewal.

Steps to overcome difficult patches in marriage while deployed:

- (1) Remember that the deployed situation is not normal.
- (2) Talk about how you feel about the relationship (note: focus on your feelings; do not accuse the other about what he or she did/failed to do)
- (3) Think about why you initially fell in love (what was it about your spouse that endeared you to him/her?)
- (4) Have to be willing to forgive (no matter what; otherwise, anger will remain)
- (5) Consider seeking professional help (military One Source can provide or pay for counseling)

of each household, except those with lamb's blood on the doorposts/doorframes.

This event represents God's deliverance from slavery for the Jews, but it also depicts new life and a fresh start as they made their way to the Promised Land.

Pagan religions have also celebrated similar concepts at this time as well. Spring is the traditional season of rebirth

These truths are particularly relevant to deployed soldiers and their families.

First, the conquering of the power of death inspires confidence and courage in those who deploy to a combat zone and face potential dangers.

We know that this life is not all there is; that death is not the end of our stories. Families of deployed service members can find solace in these truths.

By the grace of God, things are relatively calm in Iraq, but even if they weren't, we could still have a sense of peace about our mission and security, and even more importantly, our futures.

Second, the theme of new beginnings inspires hope in spite of difficulties or errors

When we make mistakes, there is still hope. We can start fresh, we can try again. Our

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Palm Sunday: The Beginning of Holy Week

Palm Sunday is the sixth Sunday of Lent and the last Sunday before Easter. It is also known as Passion Sunday, Willow Sunday and Flower Sunday.

Palm Sunday commemorates the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, where he would be crucified five days later. According to the Gospels, Jesus rode into town on a donkey as exuberant crowds hailed him as the Messiah and spread out palm branches and cloaks in his path.

The event commemorated on Palm Sunday is told in all four gospels (Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19, John 12). The Matthew narrative, the one most commonly read in services on Palm Sunday, tells the story this way:

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, tell him that the Lord needs them and he will send them right away.

The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. They brought the donkey and the colt, placed their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them. A very large

crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?" the crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee." (Matthew 21:1-3, 6-11)

The celebration of Palm Sunday probably originated in the churches of Jerusalem, sometime before the third or fourth century AD.

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of Holy Week, an especially solemn and important week in the Christian calendar that focuses on the last days of Jesus' life and anticipates Easter, the most important holiday in Christianity.

Common Palm Sunday observances include processions with palm branches, the blessing of palms (which will be burned and used on Ash Wednesday the following year) and the construction of small palm crosses. Bible readings for the "Liturgy of the Palms" usually include Matthew 21:1-11 and Psalm 118:19-29.



Chaplain's Corner: Continued from page 18

soldiers are the best trained fighting force in the world, but errors can still occur.

The military is not known as a forgiving work environment (certainly, my drill sergeant was not!). Still, though, every failure is an opportunity for learning and improvement. The message of renewal is that failures are not insurmountable.

Third, the message of the resurrection (rebirth and fresh starts) includes forgiveness. We all need forgiveness for something. Deployments can be particularly difficult on relationships. We lose a valuable aspect of our relationships due to the physical separation because we don't interact with one another on a face-to-face basis.

Yet, experts tell us that 75% of communication comes from nonverbal aspects (body language, facial expressions, etc.), so it is not surprising that mistakes are sometimes made, miscommunication sometimes occurs and feelings are sometimes hurt. But, forgiveness and healing are possible, no matter what the problem or transgression.



Chaplain (Lt. Col.) John Laing, 72nd IBCT, reads scripture during Palm Sunday Service.

Photo by Texas Army National Guard Sgt. Melissa Shaw

Baghdad PRT Continues to Aid and Assist

Civil Defence Officers Training Center

*Story and Photos by
Texas Army National Guard Sgt. Melissa Shaw*

The annual spring cleaning of the Camp Prosperity Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) offices revealed more than the usual large amount of dust and broken equipment. In fact, Staff Sgt. David Norris discovered several outdated computer processing units complete with monitors, even if they didn't have the sparkle of 1080 dpi, as well as a number of dusty keyboards.

After taking a quick inventory of what was available, Norris saw the potential to turn what could be a pile of plastic trash into a treasure trove of technological paraphernalia, ready for use by the Iraqi Civil Defense Directorate (ICDD) trainers and instructors.

Working daily with the Iraqis there and seeing how little they have in the way of technological training aids helped Norris, civilian liaison team NCOIC, envision a different scenario for the discarded remains of the outdated equipment.

The PRT initiative is a civil-military effort that is becoming the primary interface between U.S. government or Coalition agencies and provincial

governments throughout Iraq, leading towards self-reliance.

The PRT program was designed to assist Iraqi provincial governments with developing a transparent and sustained capability to govern. To accomplish this goal, some individuals with the team from Prosperity spend a substantial amount of time with the ICDD Fire Station and Baghdad Fire Academy (BFA).

After researching the regulations governing the dispersal of outdated equipment and getting the proper approval, Norris pulled some of the PRT members together to properly clean the equipment, perform a memory wipe and prepare the computers for use.

Air Force Tech. Sgt. George Carrington, information management office, Army Sgt. Eric Titus, knowledge management officer, and Department of State contractor Ricky Hunt, network administrator, first performed a basic diagnostic to determine which of the 'found' CPUs could be repaired and which would be cannibalized for spare parts.

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(above) Lt. Nijah, the Baghdad Fire Station (BFS) assistant chief of staff, demonstrates how he plans to use the computers donated by the Baghdad PRT.



(right) The Baghdad PRT delivers several computers to the BFS.

They then formed an assembly line to meticulously check the mother-boards, chips and sockets, testing each several times. Final inspections included turning the machines on and leaving them running for several hours to ensure their repairs would hold.

In the end, seven not-so-new computers were ready for duty, soon to be handed over to the Baghdad Fire Academy staff.

The computers have immediate-use capabilities for the trainers, allowing them to create lesson plans and maintain training videos and records. They are also Internet-ready, even if the academy does not yet have that option. This will allow additional training opportunities in the future, adding an element of sustainability to what the computers can be used for.

The computers were delivered with the help of Spc. Michael Burris, from Fayetteville, N. C. and Petty Officer 2nd Class Ruben Rodriguez, with the 414th Civil Affairs Battalion, both firefighters back home. These two men work hand in hand with the Iraqis enrolled in and teaching at the BFA to assist in training.

Common practices for PR teams include providing missing and much needed equipment, aiding in assisting in the repair of what is already there and providing guidance on how to improve the current standards the students, instructors and firemen work under.

"This is a great thing they are doing. We now complete and store our essential paperwork and training photographs electronically," said Lt. Nijah, the Baghdad Fire Station assistant chief of staff. "There is a lot of work we can do on them administratively as well as having the instructors use them for training purposes."

Lt. Nijah, the Baghdad Fire Station assistant chief of staff demonstrates how he plans to use the computers donated by the Baghdad PRT.



(above) From left to right, Civilian Contractor Ricky Hunt, Chief Petty Officer Tim Malis, PO2 Rodrigues, Staff Sgt. David Norris, Spc. Michael Burris and Tech Sgt. Carrington



(right) Lt. Nijah, the BFS assistant chief-of-staff and PRT member, Petty Officer 2nd Class Ruben Rodriguez, trade hats for the day in celebration of the deliver of the computer delivery day.



Tech Sgt. George Carrington cleans and repairs several computers prior to delivering them to the BFS.

killer of women in America,” Kenney told the crowd at FOB Prosperity’s dining facility conference room. “40,000 died last year.”

Aunt Hazel survived and has been cancer free for 15 years. She married her best friend and then lost him to a heart attack.

“Hold it together,” was her aunt’s mantra, Kenny said, it was just another challenge for her to overcome and she would survive this too.

Sgt. Annika Chambers, of Houston, Texas is also a survivor of abuse.

“I was in the same situation from 18 to 23,” Chambers said.

Now 24, Chambers said she has never looked back and is embracing life, which is reflected in her singing and song writing.

“This evening encouraged us to look back at the contribution the women in our lives made to make it easier for us,” said Yasmine Bahrani, a cultural advisor for the U.S. Army, who moved to the U.S. when she was 12. “We have it easy compared to our mothers and grandmothers.”

Equality

However, Iraqi women still have a long way ahead of them, said Maj. Noor al-Berakhdar, an Iraqi Army dentist.

Berakhdar joined the military in 2004 for the same reason many people do in America – educational benefits and a bonus.

Recently, during Iraq’s special election on March 4th for military, police and medical personnel, Berakhdar was swarmed by women outside a polling center and asked if she was in the military.

“They are not used to seeing women in the Army,” said Berakhdar, who visited Iraqis with special needs in their homes to check both their dental and general health.

“Hopefully, this opens the door to younger women and more females will have the ambition for military service.”

Berakhdar would like to see more roles for women in the military, politics and economics. And, she may get her wish.

“I’m so impressed with her. I’ve never seen a female officer before,” said Saba Mohammed, 24, of Baghdad. “I look at my country’s future; it will be different if we have more women like her.”

Mohammed, a cultural adviser for the U.S. Army, said she’s thought about joining the U.S. Army, but never the Iraqi Army.

“Women in Iraqi don’t have an rights, joining the Iraqi Army, it’s a challenge culturally,” Mohammed said. “She’s a good example.”



Sgt. Annika Chambers, mail room NCOIC for the JASG, sings for the audience attending a Women’s History event on Camp Prosperity.
Photo by 1st Lt. Olivia Cobiskey.

Joint Area Support Group Central Commander Col. Mark Campsey presents the keynote speaker, Col. Peggy Combs, with an Iraqi carpet souvenir after her speech for the Women History Month’s celebration, “Writing Women Back into History”. *Photo by 1st Lt. Olivia Cobiskey.*



Revolutionary War

Deborah Sampson dressed as a man, enlisted and was wounded twice during battles with British forces. After the war, Sampson was given a \$4 annual pension.

World War II

300,000 women volunteered for service; nearly 1,000 women became pilots and flew more than 60 million miles in every type of aircraft. These women were denied benefits until 1977 and awarded the Congressional Gold Medal for their wartime service.

Today

Women are critical to the war effort, serving in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody became the Army’s first female four-star general, two-years ago.

Spc. Monica Lin Brown saved the lives of five Soldiers in 2007 after they were wounded in an ambush in Afghanistan. She was awarded the Silver Star for her selfless actions.

FOB Prosperity 300 Challenge

Program began March 6 and will continue for 90 days

7 Apr——1st mo. weigh in/pics

7 May——2nd mo. weigh in/pics

7 June——3rd mo weigh in and 300 Challenge

Contact Info

andrew.barnes@iraq.centcom.mil

august.murray@iraq.centcom.mil



The 2010 St. Patrick's Day 5K Fun-Run, sponsored by the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Program, brought out a variety of runners, from those who love its stress relieving qualities to those who just want the T-Shirt.



Maj Sean P. Ibargüen

JASG-C Inspector General

For Soldiers throughout the 72 JASG-C with an interest in attending either the US Army Warrant Officer Candidate School (WOCS) or US Army Officer Candidate School (OCS), this month's newsletter provides general information related to both.

March Topic

Warrant Officer Candidate School (WOCS) & Officer Candidate School (OCS)

WOCS prepares Soldiers to become technically and tactically proficient individuals vital to all commands within the Army. Warrant officers possess a high degree of specialization in a particular field, in contrast to the more general assignment pattern of other commissioned officers. Warrant officers command aircraft, maritime vessels, special units, and task organized operational elements. In a wide variety of units and headquarters specialties, warrants provide quality advice, counsel, and solutions to support their unit or organization. They operate, maintain, administer, and manage the Army's equipment, support activities, and technical systems. Their extensive professional experience and technical knowledge qualifies warrant officers as invaluable role models and mentors for junior officers and NCOs (FM 6-22, p. 3-12).

The mission of OCS is to train, educate and commission officers in order to provide the Army with leaders of character who live by the "Warrior Ethos" and "Army Values" (OCS website). The end product of OCS is a highly motivated commissioned officer (Second Lieutenant) who has attained a leadership foundation that will grow with the introduction of more military schooling and experience. OCS graduates have the opportunity to pursue many diverse duty options throughout the Army. Many of the Army branches available can be viewed on the following Human Resources Command website;
<http://www.hrc.army.mil/site/protect/branches/officer/index.htm>.

Both WOCS and OCS have Active Army (resident) and state programs. The Active Army WOCS is located at Fort Rucker, Alabama and may be a combination of distance learning or 100% resident training. Phase I resident of WOCS is two weeks long and Phase II is five weeks long. The Active Army OCS program is executed at Fort Benning, Georgia and is a 12-week resident course.

If you are a US Army National Guard Soldier currently serving on Title 10, check with your state Recruiting and/or Regional Training Institute office for availability of these programs in your state. State-related information below will focus on options within the Texas Army National Guard.

WOCS:

- Active Army WOCS administrative requirements include; US citizenship (no waivers), general technical (GT) score of 110 or higher (no waivers), high school graduate or a GED (no waivers), secret security clearance (interim secret is acceptable to apply, except for WO MOS 882A), pass the standard three-event Army APFT and meet height/weight standards, pass the appointment physical for technicians or the Class 1 flight physical for Aviators and applicants must have 12 months or more remaining on their enlistment contract.
- Other services can apply for Active Army WOCS. A joint service agreement allows service members who are selected for this program to be discharged from their component and enlisted in the Army. More info located at <http://www.usarec.army.mil/hq/warrant/WOoverview.html#AFast%20Locations>
- TXARNG WOCS includes approximately 5 weekend drills (mixture of MUTA 4 & 5) along with one two-week training period. Administrative requirements are similar to federal WOCS; additional details can be found at <http://www.txarng.com/warrant-officers>.
- For additional information concerning the overall aspects of WOCS, please contact CW3 Juan Medrano (72nd JASG-C Human Resources Technician) at juan.medrano@iraq.centcom.mil or 318-239-1758.

OCS:

- Active Army OCS candidates must meet requirements specified in AR 350-51. Army Reserve candidates must meet requirements specified in AR 140-50. Upon arrival, candidates must meet height and weight standards IAW AR 600-9 and be able to pass the APFT. More information is at <https://www.benning.army.mil/ocs/index.htm>.
- TXARNG OCS includes a minimum of 15 drill periods (MUTA 5) along with two separate annual training periods. An accelerated program is available. More information may be found at <http://www.txarng.com/ocs>. For detailed information contact a TXARNG OCS recruiter at ngtx-rr-ocs@tx.ngb.army.mil.

Note: Completing WOCS or OCS is just the beginning. More mandatory training follows to include associated basic branch schools. This point is important for planning purposes, especially with the current operational tempo.

For more information, contact the IG, MAJ Sean P. Ibargüen, on FOB Prosperity at Building 78. He may also be reached at sean.ibarguen@iraq.centcom.mil or at 318-239-7902.

The Desert Dilemma Got Water?

Story and photos by Texas
Army National Guard Sgt.
Melissa Shaw

The men and women serving in Iraq, civilian and military, are dependent on many things from outside sources, but none are more vital to their survival in the harsh environment they find themselves than an easily locatable and potable water source.

In addition to being a primary part of physical survival, there is significant evidence that soldiers benefit psychologically from the comfort of being able to step into a hot shower after a long day on foot-patrol or officework.

What few people understand, though, is how we get that life-giving substance so far from home and where we get it from.

In 2005, KBR installed a reverse osmosis water processing unit (ROWPU) on Camp Prosperity as part of a government contract. The intent was to use local



Water passes through these tubes, which are filled with membranes designed to remove particulate matter, as part of the reverse osmosis process.



Throughout military history, the vast majority of casualties in war have been from disease and non-battle injury. This loss of manpower can be drastically reduced by ensuring that soldiers have adequate supplies of potable water.

— Field Manual 10–52

Water Supply in Theaters of Operations

water from the Tigris as a way to reduce the strain on military security personnel needed for its transportation from Kuwait and the added expense from the logistics involved.

The ROWPU system's primary purpose is to extract bulk water from almost any source, purify it using a series of media separator filters and chemical cleaners and dispense it for consumption.

The water running from the faucets in the bathrooms may originate from the Tigris River, deep in the heart of Iraq, but by the time it reaches consumer hands, it is transformed into something you would find in Everytown, USA.

As Phillip Barry, from Goodwater, Al., puts it, "Quality means something to us, and I mean we give you the best possible product available anywhere, not just here."

"The water comes into the plant and goes through three

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Potable

- Drinking
- Heat treatment (cold water/ice)
- Personal hygiene
- Food preparation
- Medical equipment cleaning
- Hospital medical treatment

different processes to get it ready for use,” explains Barry, five-year veteran of KBR’s Prosperity ROWPU.

Several pumps pull the water from the reservoir on the camp and push it through a series of filters.

The size of particulate matter removed is successively reduced until it is smaller, going from 5 microns (smaller than a human hair) to 50 microns (smaller than bacteria).

Once the filtration is completed it is treated chemically to strict Food and Drug Administration guidelines.

The treatment of water is necessary to prevent various waterborne diseases, such as typhoid and dysentery. The processes are in place to ensure certain chemical and physical characteristics of water, such as hardness or the reduction of unpleasant taste.

The function of a water treatment facility is not to simply make water safe for consumption, or even increase palatability and make it ‘good to the last drop’. There is also the need to prevent scale from forming, which can clog lines in Prosperity’s pipe system and increase maintenance issues. This makes it suitable for additional uses, for example the new laundry facilities being constructed here.

The water, once filtered, treated and put through the reverse osmosis process is then pumped into large 50,000 gallon storage tanks.

The 24-hour operation pushes out about 90 trucks a day, filling the 210 storage tanks that dot the FOB for use in everything from the DFAC to the latrines and shower trailers.

Money and space aside, the processing plant exists for the people that live and work here every day. “We work hard to make every drop count,” said one of Barry’s fellow KBR contractor, Idriz Matoshi.

David Johnson, Camp Prosperity’s deputy project manager of operations for KBR, addressed the question of how the drawdown of American troops will affect the usage of the ROWPU in this location.

“The drawdown means a consolidation of assets, not the total removal. Eventually this FOB will be turned over to the Iraqis but until then we still have an obligation to provide the best quality product and the ROWPU does just that.”

Non-potable

- Centralized hygiene (showering)
- Laundering
- Preparation of human remains equipment
- Nuclear, biological and chemical decontamination
- Vehicle maintenance
- Aircraft washing



(above and right)
Water trucks
transport water
between the
ROWPU and the
storage tanks
around Camp
Prosperity on a
24-hour basis.



Phillip Barry, KBR contractor, has been a part of the reverse osmosis processing plant team on Camp Prosperity for the last 5 years. “This water is just like what you drink from a hose in your back-yard at home,” said the Goodwater, Alabama, resident.

Military Occupational Specialty Corner

Warrant Officer

350F - All Sources Intelligence Technician

"Warrant officers possess a high degree of specialization in a particular field in contrast to the more general assignment pattern of other commissioned officers. Their extensive professional experience and technical knowledge qualifies warrant officers as invaluable role models and mentors for junior officers and NCOs."

(Fm 6-22, p. 3-12)

WOs must be technically and tactically focused and able to perform the primary duties of technical leader, advisor, and commander. They serve as critical advisors to commanders in conducting organizational training. (FM 7-0, p. 4-22)

Chief Cambron uses maps (right) and electronic surveillance (below) to complete the intelligence picture for the area.

Duties:

- Acts as the chief or the officer in charge of a platoon, section, or analytical cell or team.
- Performing tactical to strategic all source intelligence products through the fusion of all data accumulated from a variety of sources concerning enemy, non-hostile and friendly elements to include identification, disposition, personalities, combat efficiency and history within an Area of Operation.
- Provides reliability assessments on available information received through comparison with previously evaluated information on hand.
- Maintains close liaison with all staff elements and specialized intelligence activities to include counterintelligence, imagery interpretation, interrogation and language interpretation units.
- Ensures compliance with computer interface and operating procedures, concepts, and principles as applied to ADP in the development and maintenance of intelligence data base and within the Distributed Common Ground System – Army (DCGS-A) .
- Develops and maintains the Common Operating Picture to provide complete and accurate intelligence information in of support commander's decisions.
- Develops and prepares enemy vulnerability studies and evaluates their significance for use in predicting probable enemy courses of action in terms of disposition, capabilities and intentions.
- Supervises the intelligence production requirements as well as validates the intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance synchronization functions within brigade to echelons above Corps (EAC) units.

Taking that information and putting into practical terms is what Chief Warrant Officer James Cambron does best.

"Our section publishes the Intelligence Information for the Joint Area Support Group-Central, which is provided in three classification levels to provide relevant threat information and assessment related to the IZ and USF forces in the area of Baghdad.

So we do a lot of research of reporting and editing to provide this material to our Commander, a variety of coalition representatives, as well as adjacent units, and higher echelons.

Additionally, I have been tasked as the operational security officer for the JASG-C, which means I will be ensuring all sections are in compliance prior to evaluations."

Gathering human intel is key in maintaining the most up-to-date information.

مدي بساطي .. واعلني نكوتي
 وأنسى العتاب، فقد نسيت صباي
 عينك يا بغداد، منذ طفولتي
 شمسان تلمعان في أهالي
 لا تنكري وجهي .. فقلت حبيني
 وورود ملكتي، وكأس شرابي
 بغداد .. جنتك كالسفينه متجا
 أخفي جراحتي وراء ثيابي
 ورميت رأسي فوق صدر أميري
 وتلاقت الشفتان بعد غياب
 أنا ذلك البحار أفق صوره
 في البحث عن حب .. وعن أحباب
 بغداد .. طرت على حريز عباة
 وعلى ضفائر زينب ورباب
 ودببت كالصفور بفصد حبه
 والفجر عرس مائن وقباب

حيث التفت ، أرى ماتمح موطني
 وأشم في هذا التراب ترابي
 لم أخرب أبداً .. فكل سحابه
 زرقاء .. فيها كبرياء سحابي
 .. إن النجوم الساكنات هضابكم
 .. ذات النجوم الساكنات هضابي
 بغداد حشت الحسن في أواله
 لكن حسنه، لم يكن بحسابي
 ماذا ساكنك حثك في كتب الهوى
 فهو لك لا يكفيه ألف كتب
 بخائلي شعري .
 كنت حبيني
 .. وحبيني تبقي بعد ذهلي

Baghdad

*Anonymous Author
 Translated by Sam Freeman*

Roll out your rug and fill my cups.
 Forget the blame and forget my blame and yours.
 Oh Baghdad your eyes are like two suns sleeping in me.
 Don't deny my face for you are my love.
 And the flowers on my table and the glass of my drink.
 Baghdad, I came to you, tired, like a ship.
 And hiding my wounds behind my clothes.
 I threw my head over the chest of my princess.
 And the lips met after long absence.
 I am that sailor who spent his life looking for love.
 I flew on the silk of a shroud and the braids of women.
 I landed like a sparrow which meant his nest.
 And the dawn prayers sounds like a wedding.
 I saw a jewel which rests between the palm and grape groves.
 I turned and saw the features of my land .
 And I smell in the soil my home.
 I never felt homesick and in every blue cloud
 There's dignity in its clouds.
 The stars living at your hills are the same ones living in our hills.
 Baghdad I lived in bliss with all its colors
 But your bliss was something I never counted.
 What will I write about you in the books of love ?
 A thousand books will never be sufficient.
 You were by love, you are and will always be.
 After I'm gone Baghdad.

"If you are going to judge, judge in all fairness"
وَإِذَا حُكِمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فَادْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ

Iraq Culture Corner



This room can be found in the Iraqi High Council Building in the International Zone of Baghdad. It is famous around the world being the place where Saddam Hussein was tried, convicted and sentenced to death by hanging in 2006 for crimes against humanity.

Did you know...

The country's idol Madeeha Hasan Odhaib, a former seamstress, was named one of "Time" magazine's 2008 100 Most Influential People in the world. In the last years, she backed up a host of women and children in the Arab nation. "Iraq is suffering one of the worst humanitarian crises we have ever seen.

While Madeeha rightly makes Time's list, women like her are found throughout Iraq, sewing hope one stitch at a time. Through Madeeha we celebrate all of Iraq's courageous women, whose resilience and resourcefulness hold the promise of a new dawn", said Rania, Queen of Jordan, of Madeeha.

Do you know...

The Angle behind using Arabic Numerals-

It really is all about angles!
If one writes the numbers down on a piece of paper in their older forms, one quickly sees why.

#1 has one angle.
#2 has two angles.
#3 has three angles.
"O" has no angles etc...

Arabic Phrases for Fun

Show me the money
Gimme my money
I Have No Idea.
What do you want
I want more

Show off knee el floose
Inteene floosi
Ma a ruff
Shit reed
Areed Bad



The Al Asad Bath House on Camp Prosperity

Photo by Texas Army National Guard Sgt. Melissa Shaw

Symbolism and the American Flag Folding ceremony



Joint Area Support Group
Personal Security Detail
during retreat on Camp
Prosperity, Baghdad

As found at www.ushistory.org

The flag folding ceremony, described by the Uniformed Services, is a dramatic and uplifting way to honor the flag on special days, like Memorial Day or Veterans Day, and is sometimes used at retirement ceremonies.

The flag folding ceremony represents the same religious principles on which our country was originally founded. The portion of the flag denoting honor is the canton of blue containing the stars representing the states our veterans served in uniform. The canton field of blue dresses from left to right and is inverted when draped as a pall on a casket of a veteran who has served our country in uniform.

In the Armed Forces of the United States, at the ceremony of retreat the flag is lowered, folded in a triangle

fold and kept under watch throughout the night as a tribute to our nation's honored dead. The next morning it is brought out and, at the ceremony of reveille, run aloft as a symbol of our belief in the resurrection of the body.

The first fold of our flag is a symbol of life.

The second fold is a symbol of our belief in the eternal life.

The third fold is made in honor and

The flag folding ceremony represents the same religious principles on which our country was originally founded.

remembrance of the veteran departing our ranks who gave a portion of life for the defense of our country to attain a peace throughout the world.

The fourth fold represents our weaker nature, for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in times of war for His divine guidance.

The fifth fold is a tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right; but it is still our country, right or wrong."

The sixth fold is for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The seventh fold is a tribute to our

Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that we protect our country and our flag against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.

The eighth fold is a tribute to the one who entered in to the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and to honor mother, for whom it flies on Mother's Day.

The ninth fold is a tribute to womanhood; for it has been through their faith, love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great have been molded.

The tenth fold is a tribute to father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since they were first born.

The eleventh fold, in the eyes of a Hebrew citizen, represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon, and glorifies, in their eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The twelfth fold, in the eyes of a Christian citizen, represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost.

When the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost, reminding us of our national motto, "In God we Trust."

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington and the sailors and marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones, who were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the Armed Forces of the United States, preserving for us the rights, privileges, and freedoms we enjoy today.



Joint Area Support Group Personal
Security Detail during retreat on Camp
Prosperity, Baghdad

The Whitney Duncan Band



Camp Prosperity "Skinny Dippin" fans turn out for Whitney Duncan March 26th.



Paul Eckberg, drummer for the Whitney Duncan Band.



Maj. Kevin Smith escorts Whitney Duncan and band mates around Camp Prosperity .

By Capt. Christopher Parker

Whitney Duncan, a country music singer-songwriter from Nashville, Tennessee, paid a visit to troops in Iraq last week. Duncan performed at FOB Prosperity for a crowd of U.S. troops as well as a group of around fifty local Iraqi artists, scholars, and musicians as part of a cultural exchange program through the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad.

Duncan's performance was part of a Morale, Welfare, and Recreation tour that took her to Prosperity and to the Victory Base Complex. Duncan says that for her, this trip was an opportunity of a lifetime. "My agent asked if I had any interest in going to Iraq...and I didn't think twice about it" said Duncan. "It's really the least we can do for all that ya'll are over here doing for us."

Army Staff Sgt. Phillip Boyer, one of several country music fans who was already familiar with Whitney Duncan's music, said he was pleased with the performance. "I had a really good time. She put on a great concert. She interacted with the crowd and made us all feel like a part of the show."

After the performance, Duncan shook hands with several of the servicemembers in the crowd, and also made herself available for photos.

Duncan's show was part of a two week, five show tour in Iraq.



The Whitney Duncan Band performs in front of the Al Salaam Palace March 26th



Whitney Duncan presents a signed guitar to 1st Lt. Sean Trobaugh after performing a concert March 26th.

Army Values: A Soldier's Point of View

Personal Courage

Honor

Loyalty

Integrity

Respect:

Duty

to promote dignity, consideration of others, fairness and equal opportunity.



"Respecting my fellow soldiers means laying down my life if the need arose."

Sgt. Loretta Yeverino,
Camp Prosperity,
Support NCOIC,
HHC 72nd IBCT,
Houston, Tx

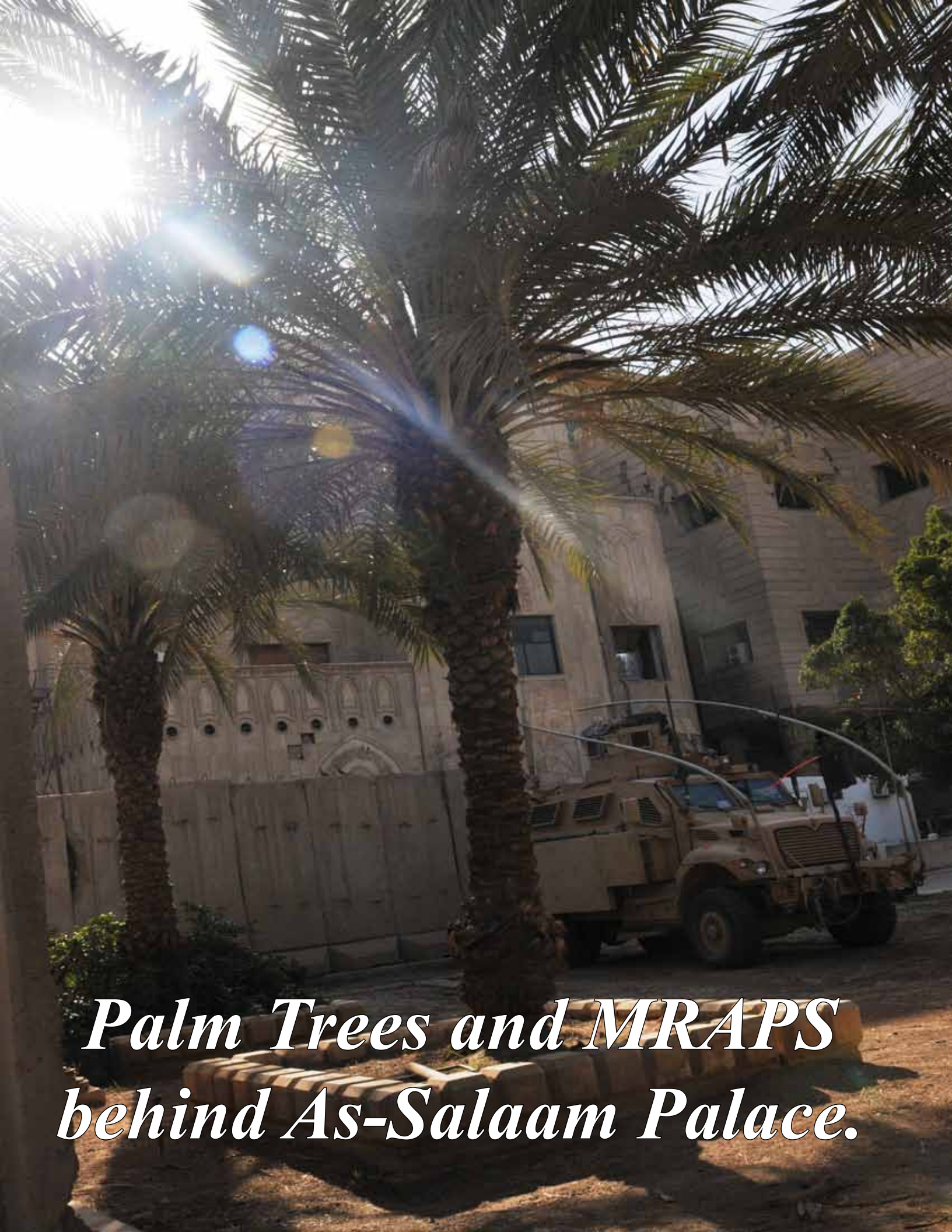


"In Army it is a matter of helping regardless of rank, duty or title."

Spc. Samuel Jackson,
Camp Prosperity,
Mayor Cell Representative
HHC 72nd IBCT,
Houston, Tx



Spc. John Ojeda
Camp Prosperity,
Help Desk Technician,
HHC 72nd IBCT,
Houston, Tx



*Palm Trees and MRAPS
behind As-Salaam Palace.*