

The North Star

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



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Germany-based unit covers 2HBCT Soldiers

By Spc. Dustin Gautney,
2BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

A cool wind breezes past the face of a U.S. Army Soldier as he gestures his hand forward, letting the other team members know it's time to press forward, as the squad moves silently through the night.

The team leader's heart begins to race as the Soldiers pass alleyways and homes. The sound of men speaking a foreign dialect seems to surround them.

Suddenly, a crackle on the tactical radio breaks the night's silence, as a voice on the other end says, "Ground element, eyes are on the target, proceeding two clicks in your direction."

Those heartbeats are suddenly replaced by the roaring of two AH-64 Apaches overhead, easing the Soldiers nerves, knowing there are friendly eyes in the sky.

The eyes in the sky that provide constant intelligence reports and cover for the 2nd "Spartan" Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division Soldiers are Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade, from Illesheim Army Airfield, Germany.

"The coordination and



Photo by Capt. Daniel J. McGurk

Soldiers from the 3/7th Cav. Regt., 2nd HBCT, 3rd ID, rescue a helicopter pilot during a joint training exercise with Soldiers from the 2/159th Avn. Regt., 12th CAB, from Illesheim Army Airfield, Germany, near COS Marez.

joint efforts of the 2nd HBCT, 3rd ID and the 2/159th Avn. Regt. are key for mission success in the area of operations for both units," said Capt. Andrew Upshaw, 2/159th Avn. Regt. "With the 2nd HBCT having the boots on the ground, we supply the eyes in the air, which provides ground troops intelligence on enemy movements during combat operations."

Since the 159th Avn. Regt. joined the Spartan Brigade, they have logged more flight

time in support of combat operations than any aviation regiment currently deployed in Iraq or Afghanistan over the past month.

"It's been pretty busy around here since moving up to Mosul, Iraq, from Balad Air Base," said Sgt. 1st Class Richard Wilusz, 2/159th Avn. Regt. "Being located right next to the ground units we support, we have been able to quickly respond and provide immediate information for those troops."

Captain Upshaw said since arriving on COS Marez/Diamondback, being able to meet and talk with the Spartan Brigade's battalion commanders face-to-face has allowed greater support opportunities for the aviation regiment.

"Every day, both elements from the aviation regiment and the Spartan Brigade's battalions brief each other, not just over a phone line,

See FLIGHT, Page 2 –

Danger bonds combat engineers like brothers

By Pfc. Jessica Luhrs,
1BCT, 1st AD PAO

Combat engineers, have one of the more hazardous jobs in the U.S. Army. It is their job to go out in the middle of the night and search for improvised explosive devices and suspicious activity, along the roads their fellow Soldiers travel down on a daily basis.

Completing this mission for 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Fort Bliss, Texas, are their combat engineers from Co. C, 1-1 Special Troops Battalion.

Their day begins as the sun goes down and other Soldiers are getting into bed, according to Spc.

Adron Scarbrough, a native of Hughesville, Penn., and a combat engineer with 3rd Platoon, Co. C.

The Soldiers of Co. C don't mind the late nights, according to Spc. Joseph McWhirter, a Brownwood, Texas, native, and Huskey operator with 1st Plt., Co. C.

Anything beats sitting in the office all day, he said.

"It also, builds up the morale of the Soldiers in Charlie knowing we are out there making the roads safe," Spc. McWhirter said..

Specialist Scarbrough added, "There is nothing better than going out and finding something; it makes it all worth it."

Since deploying to Forward Operating Base

Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, Co. C Soldiers have discovered several homemade explosive devices, detained multiple suspected terrorists and cleared the roads of Kirkuk on a nightly basis.

Because they have been so successful, insurgents have even begun planting hoax IED's to see the Charlie Soldiers reaction, according to Spc. Scarbrough.

"They want to mimic our battle drills, so we just change things up as needed," he continued, "either we find them or they find us, and we're going to find them."

The danger that is associated with this job makes these Soldiers very proud of their work and brings them

even closer together.

"We're a tight band of brothers and no matter what unit a combat engineer is in, he is welcomed with open arms," said Spc. Scarbrough.



Photo by Pfc. Jessica Luhrs,
1BCT, 1st AD PAO

Combat engineers with Co. C, 1-1 STB, 1st BCT, 1st AD, out of Fort Bliss, Texas, use shovels and metal detectors to assist in the search of a weapons cache in Kirkuk, Iraq, March 27.

Continued from FLIGHT, Page 1

but often in person, because we are so close to each other," said Capt. Upshaw. "This has allowed us to constantly keep each other updated on what intelligence on enemy movements we are



Photo by Capt. Daniel J. McGurk

A Soldier from the 2/159th Avn. Regt., 12th CAB, works on a rotor of a UH-60 Black Hawk during combat operations at COS Marez.

seeing, whether it is from the ground or the air."

Sergeant First Class Wilusz agrees having the constant support from an air unit is an essential combat multiplier for the troops on the ground.

"Originally coming from a ground combat unit, I can tell you from experience just knowing the air support for combat operations is there, is a huge confidence builder for the troops on the ground," said Sgt. 1st Class Wilusz. "Whether you are in a convoy or dismounted, it is huge to know that someone is watching your back."

With the ability to cover terrain not accessible by ground elements, the 2/159th Avn. Regt. often flies ahead of 2nd HBCT convoys to provide route surveillance about potential dangers prior to the convoys reaching them.

"As an aviation regiment, if we are not getting the information we see from the skies to the battalions on the ground, then we are not doing our job," said Capt. Upshaw.

Along with providing key air surveillance, the 2/159th Avn. Regt. also provides counter-indirect fire for COS Marez/Diamondback. They recently conducted joint training with the 2nd

HBCT, which serves to sharpen the skills of both the Soldiers on the ground and the Soldiers in the air.

During a recent joint training effort, elements from the 2/159th Avn. Regt. and the 2nd HBCT's 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment conducted a downed aircraft scenario on COS Marez.

"For an air unit, a downed aircraft is our greatest threat," said Sgt. 1st Class Wilusz. "With the chance to work with the 3/7th Cav.'s quick response team on the exercise, we can be confident everyone knows what to expect in case that kind of incident would ever happen."

After recently arriving at COS Marez/Diamondback, members of the 2/159th Avn. Regt. feel they are not just an attached unit to the 2HBCT, but an integral part of the unit and the Spartan team.

"I do not really think about us as two different units, we see members of the 2nd HBCT's battalions every day, whether it is in intelligence briefings or even going to the chow hall; it does not matter who is from Germany or who is from Fort Stewart, we are one unit and that helps transcend us into a highly effective combat element," said Sgt. 1st Class Wilusz.

Soldiers receive realistic defense training

By Sgt. Jessica Rohr
135th Mobile PA Det.

Soldiers at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, received realistic defense training as they began a 14-day Combatives Level 1 class at the main Morale, Welfare and Recreation center, May 3.

Staff Sergeant Lonnie A. Kincaid, a technical inspector for the 1st Engineer Battalion, 130th Engineer Brigade and Modern Army Combatives Level 1 instructor taught the course with the help of five assistant instructors.

Most untrained fighters when faced with an opponent will most likely pummel each other with their fists until one is no longer able to fight back effectively. This is considered the "Universal Fight Plan," according to the Combatives Level 1 student handbook.

The tactics taught in MAC are designed to break the laws of that plan by closing the distance and grabbing the opponent so they can't effectively strike. Then

taking them to the ground, and gaining the dominate position and finishing the fight.

The training Soldiers received from MAC may help them while deployed.

"The Army teaches combatives to Soldiers to give them some realistic training that will actually work in defense and sometimes offense," said Staff Sgt. Kincaid.

"It is a very realistic training that you can receive because it can actually be applied in real life.

"With the Army's rules of engagement, you can't just shoot," he explained. "You have to use escalations of force. You may reach contact before you hit that point where you need to actually fire your weapon. When you get that contact, you will be prepared."

Within Combatives Level 1, Soldiers learn basic submission moves that lay the ground work for future moves in higher level courses. These moves include arm bars, and one or two



Photos by Sgt. Jessica Rohr, 135th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Combatives Level 1 instructor, Staff Sgt. Lonnie A. Kincaid, a technical inspector with the 1st Eng. Bn., 130th Eng. Bde., demonstrates the Full Mount with his assistant instructor, Sgt. 1st Class Walter A. Lee, a maintenance control sergeant with the 1st Eng. Bn., 130th Eng. Bde., during the first class of a 14-day Combatives Level 1 training course.

choking techniques.

For the first day of the course, Soldiers received a handbook, a history lesson on grappling and their safety lecture before stepping foot on the mat. The evening's training started with a warm-up along with some basic combative drills.

Students also learned the "Stand up in Base" - the proper way for a fighter to get up - and some dominant body positions, such as the "Full Mount" or "Half Mount," along with moves on how to "Escape the Mount" to gain the dominant position.

Soldiers of all skill levels are able to learn something new from the Combatives Level 1 course.

"I am getting more practice out of this course," said Spc. Patricia E. Lauderdale, a truck driver for the 1836th Transportation Company. "I can wrestle, and I can hold my own ground. I just

don't know any technique. That's how I always get beat. I wanted to learn more techniques."

Outside of the combatives training, there are many appealing reasons for a Soldier to attend this course.

A certifiable course is worth promotion points, can help increase agility, promotes camaraderie, and is a great motivator.

Once trained, Soldiers can incorporate combatives into their physical fitness routine or have unit competitions to see who is the best.

"This is a very educational course that every Soldier should take," said Spc. Jesse L. Bornhauser, a generator mechanic for the 317th Military Police Battalion, 49th Military Police Brigade. "It helps keep up their fitness level, their speed, and their agility - things that they need as a Soldier."



Captain Milena I. Williams, executive officer for HHC, 1st Eng. Bn., 130th Eng. Bde., practices "Pass the Guard" with her husband 2nd Lt. Joe M. Williams, maintenance platoon leader with FSC, 1st Eng. Bn., 130th Eng. Bde., during a Combatives Level 1 class at the main MWR center at COB Speicher, Iraq, May 3.

Task Force Marne Heroes of the North



Sergeant Joshua Williams, of Montgomery, Ala., is with 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division. He has distinguished himself by developing and teaching a class on Mine Resisted Ambush Protected Vehicle recovery to every member of his company. Sergeant William's class consisted of hands-on training in recovering MRAPs using both tow straps and a tow bar, as well as talking through and demonstrating techniques for several possible situations, including recovering a vehicle in a combat situation and recovering a vehicle in restricted terrain. The hard work that Sgt. Williams put into the class allowed each member of his unit to know and understand the capabilities of the self-recovery systems at the individual platoon level, as well as gain valuable insight and confidence in each Soldier's ability to assist in the recovery of a downed vehicle, should the need arise. For these reasons, he is being selected as today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.



Coley Harmon, of Dover, Del., has been a dedicated food service professional for more than 40 years. He honed his skills for many years as an Army food service Soldier until retiring from active duty. He achieved the rank of first sergeant during his 25 years of faithful and committed service. Harmon brought his food service knowledge and leadership to Kellogg Brown and Root in October 2006 and continues to serve. He is a true professional and patient trainer who genuinely cares about what he does. Harmon has done a superb and unparalleled job providing support for Task Force Marne personnel, serving more than 12,000 meals daily. While he makes that daunting task seem effortless, those who know the food service business understand he is accomplishing an incredible task. For his ability to make the most difficult look mundane, Harmon is an excellent choice for this week's Task Force Marne Service Provider of the Week.

Crossword Puzzle

Across

1. Resembling or characteristic of a fox
4. Grains used for food and animal fodder
7. The swiftest mammal
9. Large African antelope
10. Bird shelter
11. Male goose
13. Hound with short legs and long ears
14. Young of domestic cattle
17. Venomous snake of northeastern Australia
18. Small biting insect
21. Nocturnal bird
22. Deciduous horns of a deer
23. Colony insects
24. Cats

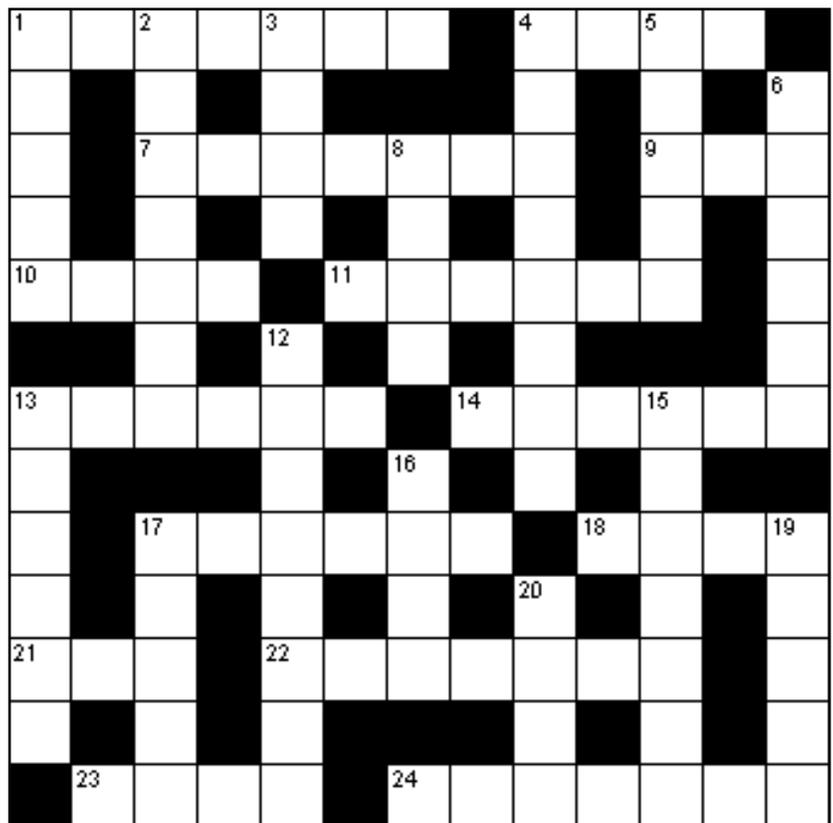
6. Small donkeys used as pack animals
8. Short-necked river duck
12. Large long-winged warm-water seabirds
13. Large monkey with doglike muzzle
15. Deer meat
16. Male red deer
17. Claw
19. Tailless stout-bodied amphibians
20. Marine mammal



Down

1. Female fox
2. Migratory grasshoppers
3. Wild mountain goat
4. Snake or serpent
5. Large endangered forest animal

Answers will be printed in Monday's edition of the North Star



REGIONAL HEADLINES

Gospel musicians charged in church break-ins

Associated Press

ATLANTA — Two gospel singers face multiple counts of burglary and theft after authorities say the pair played uplifting music for several middle Georgia churches, then stole some \$100,000 worth of speakers, microphones, keyboards and other musical equipment.

Washington County Sheriff Thomas H. Smith said May 11 that 28-year-old Deshawn Rico Thomas, of Augusta, and 28-year-old Rico Pionegro Blackshear from Dublin each are charged with nine counts of theft by taking and nine counts of burglary.

Smith said the men are being held in Washington County. Charges are pending in Johnson, Laurens, Twiggs, Bleckley and Jefferson counties, where authorities believe they may be linked to several more break-ins.

Thomas said the men are cooperating with police. Neither man had a listed phone number and The Associated Press was unable to find phone numbers for band mates.

“They played with a gospel group and while churches were having revivals, they would volunteer to play,” Smith said. “They would scope the church out, and then several days later, come back and steal all the equipment. That’s pretty bad.”

He said the men told authorities they used a screwdriver to pry open church doors.

Authorities investigating a string of nine break-ins at churches across the county between February and April got a tip last week that the men might be involved, Smith said.

Working with law officers from two other counties, Smith said authorities executed a search warrant on Blackshear’s Dublin home on May 6.

He said they found musical equipment in buildings on his property. The same day, Smith said, investigators tracked Thomas to Sandersville, where they found him driving a white Ford Explorer full of equipment they believe belonged to various churches.

“They had a band, a church band, and they were using equipment for the church band,” Thomas said the men told him.

More arrests are expected.

Trophies stolen from gymnastics club

Honolulu Advertiser

HONOLULU - Three trophies designed by artist Kim Taylor Reece, each of which depicts a woman dancing hula, were stolen from the Island Tumblers Gymnastics facility in Waipi’o last weekend, and the gymnasts are asking for help in getting them back.

The trophies were believed stolen May 8, when the facility was open. Island Tumblers co-owner and head coach Kari Schaap thinks someone just walked in and snatched them.

“They’re displayed right when you

walk in,” Schaap said. She said one Reece-designed statue trophy was left behind in the center’s open trophy case.

The foot-high, bronze-finished statues retail for upward of \$140.

But Schaap said it’s their “sentimental value” that’s most important.

“These kids work all year to go in and win,” she said, adding the gymnastics facility isn’t looking to press charges. “We want them back, no questions asked.”

Nothing else was taken, Schaap said.

Winners of the Mother’s Day Four-Day Passes:

What’s the hidden message:

-Sgt. Keenya Lawrence
2101st Transportation Company, 541st
Combat Sustainment Support Battalion
-Sgt. Maeyoung Stone
Task Force Marne Visitor’s Bureau

Name the famous mom:

-Pfc. Virginia Burton
Headquarters and Headquarters Com-
pany, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team,
1st Infantry Division

Anti-Kidnapping tip:

Maintain operational security. Do not discuss personal information with strangers or local populace. Don’t give hostiles the opportunity or information to find you later.

THE North Star

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

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

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