

Task Force BULLETin

" S U P P O R T T O V I C T O R Y "

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199TH ASSUMES GARRISON COMMAND

After spending the past three months working alongside the 561st Regional Support Group from Omaha, Neb., the 199th Brigade Support Battalion, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, uncased its colors and assumed the position of garrison command, during a transfer of authority ceremony on Camp Liberty in Baghdad, Iraq, June 6.

Commanded by Col. James B. Waskom of Abbeville, La.; Lt. Col. Marc Kelly of Deville, La.; and Command Sgt. Maj. William Miguez of New Iberia, La., the Alexandria, La., unit learned only a few weeks before mobilizing to Camp Shelby, Miss., that they would be taking on this mission for the Victory Base Complex.

"The 199th was the obvious choice to assume the mission because of the overall make-up of the unit," said Kelly, the GC deputy commander. "The BSB staff consists of a headquarters element, which provides command and control filled with logistical warriors."

Kelly compared the new position to a state government. "The mission includes running and maintaining the VBC, which has the same complexities of a mid-sized city."

"The 199th's 'Task Force Bullet,' is composed of a variety of sections with specific jobs including a director of public works, director of logistics, director of security, plans and operations and several mayor cells to help mitigate issues and facilitate the installation as the conditions are set for the responsible reduction of U.S. Troops and equipment in Iraq," Kelly explained.

"Keeping an installation of the size of VBC operating smoothly requires a lot of coordination, cooperation and partnership among many functional and operational organizations," said 561st Commander Col. Arlan M. Deblieck, of Indianola, Iowa, as he thanked various partners

for assisting with the mission during the outgoing garrison command's tenure.

"You showed great patience as you waited for your turn to take the reins," Deblieck said to the 199th.

Waskom thanked the 561st for their guidance and assistance in assuring that the Louisiana unit was prepared for the mission long before they arrived in Iraq. "The 561st sent three of their best to Camp Shelby, Miss., to ensure we knew what we were coming into, and that was invaluable."

"These Soldiers helped rewrite the scenarios for our culminating training exercise, which we are living today," Waskom said. "I thought the scenarios they came up with were a little far-fetched until we got here, but I have seen a



Lt. Col. Marc Kelly of Deville, La., and Command Sgt. Maj. William Miguez of New Iberia, La., uncased the colors of the 199th Brigade Support Battalion, as the headquarters section assumed the mission in Iraq as the garrison command of the Victory Base Complex in Baghdad, Iraq.

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myriad of various situations in just the short few months we have been here, and I am now grateful.”

The 561st Garrison Command, “Task Force Twister,” also command by Command Sgt. Maj. Michael W. Ploeger, of Ankeny, Iowa, was composed of approximately 120 Army Reserve Soldiers from 24 states across the U.S.

Truly fitting to its name, Deblieck said the task force was mixed together in a whirlwind in hopes that a competent organization would result. “You are a dream team,” he addressed to his Troops. “I have never witnessed a more unselfish group of professionals who fought so hard to create a cohesive team.”

“In a few short days, the task force that never was, will never be again, except in our hearts and fond memories,” he said as he thanked them for working together and making their mission successful.

A second deployment for the 199th, the Alexandria, La., headquartered unit deployed in 2004 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III, as part of the 256th, and conducted full spectrum operations.

In January, approximately 3,400 Troops from Louisiana’s Tiger Brigade, and Virginia’s 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, mobilized to Camp Shelby to conduct pre-deployment training in preparation to conduct force protection and convoy security missions to help set the

conditions for the responsible draw down of U.S. Forces and equipment.

Soldiers from the 199th Brigade Support Battalion are currently spread throughout the multi-national coalition and attached to various other battalions to help ensure a successful mission. The Louisiana Soldiers are scheduled to return home around the end of the year.



Col. James B. Waskom thanks the outgoing unit during a transfer of authority ceremony held at Camp Liberty, Iraq, as, under his command, the 199th Brigade Support Battalion’s takes on the mission as the garrison command for the Victory Base Complex in Baghdad, Iraq.

TROOPS GET A “SAINTSATIONAL” VISIT

As Louisiana Guardsmen rose with the sun at Camp Victory, Iraq, to conduct their routine physical fitness training, the day started out like any other, but quickly found its own way to imprint a memory that would not be forgotten, when the Troops were joined by a little piece of home.

“Saintsations” Jennifer and Erin dressed out in the army physical fitness uniform and literally got down and dirty as they did various exercises including push-ups, crunches and flutter kicks in the Iraqi dirt, and ended it with a two-mile run with the deployed troops during their recent visit to Kuwait and Iraq.

“They were very energetic and excited about doing P.T. with the Troops,” said Sgt. Rebecca A. Farmer of Hinston, La., who was part of the group exercising with the cheerleaders.

“They had no issues hitting the dirt like the rest of us. In fact, I think they handled it better than some of the Soldiers did,” the fuel database processor joked. “It was good to see how genuine they were about bringing up the morale.”

After incorporating themselves into one of the morning exercise routines with the Soldiers, Jennifer and Erin spoke in amazement of the camaraderie in the group during their



Soldiers from Louisiana’s 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team are joined by “Saintsations” Jennifer, (center, with white hat) and Erin during their routine physical fitness training at Camp Victory. The cheerleaders dressed out in the Army physical fitness uniform to conduct physical training with Soldiers from their home state while on a tour to Iraq and Kuwait.

morning workout.

"Everyone was so supportive of each other. They were constantly encouraging each other, and checking on each other during the run, and if one person would have stopped, everyone would have," Jennifer said. "We all started and ended the run together, and that was great."

Along with conducting the physical fitness training with the Soldiers, Jennifer and Erin toured various places in Iraq and visited as many service members as time would allow while on their tour.

"It was great to be able to talk to all of the Soldiers, but particularly the troops from Louisiana who were affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita," Jennifer said.

"This tour was a huge learning experience for me. I have a newfound love and respect for people in the military," Erin stated as their visit approached its end. "I feel like I just got here, and I'm no ready to leave."

"This has been a life-changing experience. I have been truly inspired and humbled," expressed Jennifer as she gave her heartfelt appreciation of Armed Forces. "Everyone kept thanking us for coming, but we don't deserve the 'thank you,'



these guys do. Every time I heard it, I wanted to say it back a million times more."

"They were so much fun, and really brought the 'Who Dat Nation' attitude," said Saints fan, and logistics operations officer, Chief Warrant Officer Dale D. Poe of Pineville, La. "Can't wait to watch the first game of the season."

GARRISON COMMAND, BDOC EARNS COMBAT PATCH



(Above) Maj. Kevin Price, of Pineville, La., the director of security, plans and operations for the Victory Base Complex, proudly displays the 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's patch, prior to a patching ceremony at Camp Victory, Iraq.

"You've earned the right to wear a combat patch, but this doesn't make you bullet proof," Col. James B. Waskom reminded during the ceremony.



(Above) Abbeville, La., resident, Col. James B. Waskom, commander of the 199th Garrison Command, warns Soldiers to maintain awareness, even after earning a combat patch, during the patching ceremony.



Deville, La., resident, Lt. Col. Marc Kelly, deputy commander for the 199th Garrison Command, and Deridder, La., resident, Command Sgt. Maj. Patrick L. Sandel, BDOC senior enlisted advisor, place combat patches on their Soldiers during a patching ceremony.



2ND BATTALION, 156TH INFANTRY REGIMENT FALLS IN ON ADOC MISSION

Louisiana's 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment headquartered in Abbeville, La., uncased their colors, and assumed their mission as the Area Defense Operations Center of the Victory Base Complex, as Oregon's 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team's ADOC cased their colors and transferred authority during a ceremony held at Camp West Liberty, Iraq.

Before arriving to their new duty station, the battalion spent approximately two months at Camp Shelby, Miss., preparing for their position, and upon arrival, worked alongside the outgoing ADOC to transition into their role.

"From the time we were mobilized our Troops have trained very hard for this mission," Lt. Col. Eric "Clay" Rivers, commander of 2-156th said. "A lot of time and effort went into being prepared for this, and we came here ready to work and implement we have learned and trained so diligently for."

The new ADOC, also commanded by Command Sgt. Maj. Sud A. Robertson, consists of eight companies, and various missions to include manning entry control points, escorting convoys, operating the Joint Visitors Bureau and providing security for distinguished visitors.

"It is a very versatile mission, but I feel very confident that our Soldiers are trained, motivated ready to get started," the Rivers said.

Over the past 12 months, the Soldiers of "Task Force Stetson" set a standard, Col. Daniel R. Hokanson, commander of the 41st IBCT said as he spoke of the outgoing unit. "Their standard was simple and effective ... It was simply, leave it all on the table."

"The honor and pride the 1-82nd, and 1195th, put into their missions here, now falls into the very capable hands of Lt. Col. Rivers, Command Sgt. Maj. Robertson, and the Soldiers of 2-156th Infantry," Hokanson expressed. "I know in their own way, they will find room to leave even more on the table."

"We look forward to working with our Iraqi partners and other U.S. Forces as we defend Victory Base Complex from hostile threat and continue ongoing security operations," the new ADOC commander said.

Second Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, mobilized Jan. 5th, as part of the approximate 3,400 Troops of the 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team who deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom to conduct convoy escort and force protection throughout the multi-national coalition, during the responsible draw down of U.S. Forces in Iraq.



Command Sgt. Maj. Sud A. Robertson of New Iberia, La., and Lt. Col. Eric "Clay" Rivers of Zwolle, La., of 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, headquartered in Abbeville, La., uncased the battalion's colors during a transfer of authority ceremony as they assume the position of the Area Defense Operations Center of the Victory Base Complex in Iraq.

“AROUND THE VBC PERIMETER”

From running the JVB Hotel to conducting force protection, Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment have a wide array of missions throughout the Victory Base Complex in Iraq. One of those missions is to execute exterior perimeter patrols to maintain security within the installation.



Louisiana Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, check the walls that surround the Victory Base Complex for damage or holes that could allow access the compound, during an exterior perimeter patrol.



It doesn't take Iraqi children long to spot U.S. Soldiers. While you would think they may be intimidated by the gear and weapons, the children flock around as if they are meeting their favorite super-heroes.



Iraqi children salute Soldiers from the Louisiana Tiger Brigade's 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, during an exterior perimeter patrol.



The local children watch with curiosity as a U.S. Convoy rolls by during an outer perimeter patrol.

H O M E T O W N H E R O F E A T U R E

GUARDSMAN COMMITS TO CONTINUE SERVICE WHILE DEPLOYED

When a military service obligation ends, it is often a difficult choice to extend their contract and chance further deployments or simply hang up the uniform, and resume life as a civilian.

Making the decision while deployed and missing the normal luxuries of life would seem to be even more difficult for most, but for a 46-year-old Louisiana Guardsman, currently serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, extending his contract was no obligation, but a commitment to finish what he started almost 30 years ago.

“JOINING THE GUARD AGAIN GAVE ME MY LIFE BACK.”

Spc. Arthur P. Stubbs, a 14-year Veteran, who volunteered to deploy with the 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), reenlisted for six years in the Louisiana Army National Guard at a tactical operations center at Camp Liberty, Iraq, far away from his hometown of Pioneer, La.

“When I first joined the Guard in 1981, I planned to make a career of it, but ended up getting out,” said Stubbs, who enlisted as a member of C Company, 528th Engineer Battalion in Oak Grove, La., at the age of 17.

He said he was self-employed using his military skills as an interior electrician and a heavy equipment operator, but knew there was something else missing.

“Work was slow, and I needed extra money. But more than that, I missed it. Being part of the military made me feel alive ... You know how sometimes in life you find that nothing excites you, and you just feel like you’re going nowhere ...” said the soft-spoken Soldier as he tried to explain why he decided to re-join after hanging up his uniform 16 years ago. “Joining the Guard again gave me my life back.”

Reenlisting as a member of Detachment 2, 921st Engineer Company, 528th Engineer Battalion, the mobilization volunteer currently works as a security team member at an entry control point on the Victory Base Complex in Iraq with the Tiger Brigade’s 199th Brigade Support Battalion’s Headquarters and Headquarters Company of Alexandria, La.

“I am glad he volunteered to deploy with us, and very happy to have him here,” said Staff Sgt. Joseph T. Noe, a noncommissioned officer in charge of the security teams formed by the 199th BSB.



Above — Spc. Arthur P. Stubbs, raises his right hand as he is sworn in by the commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 199th Brigade Support Battalion, Capt. Christian T. Griffiths, while reenlisting into the Louisiana Army National Guard at Camp Liberty, Iraq. Stubbs, who committed to six more years of serving his country and state, is currently deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as part of Louisiana’s Tiger Brigade.

“We never have to worry about him. He is just one of those people who take initiative to do their job without being told to.”

“He will do things without complaining, and is always the first one to show up every day for his shift. In fact, I wish I had 10 more Soldiers just like him,” Noe said explaining Stubbs’s work ethic.

Stubbs said he volunteered to deploy as an engineer prior to his current tour, but there was no open slot. “Deploying with an infantry brigade is much different than my training as an engineer, but I like it, and I am proud to serve my country.”

“This time I am finishing what I started long ago. I am at least staying in until I hit the 20-year mark,” he added.

The son of Joseph L. Stubbs, also of Pioneer, and Jimmie S. Gibson of Oak Grove, La., the recently titled combat veteran has two children, 23-year old Tekela S. Stubbs, and 15-year old Arthur P. Stubbs Jr.

Stubbs said he is scheduled to return home for his two-week rest and recuperation around the end of the month, and plans to spend his time riding four-wheelers, and flying remote-controlled airplanes, and his new helicopter with his son.

Mobilized Jan. 5, Stubbs deployed with Louisiana's Tiger Brigade to conduct force protection throughout the multi-national coalition to set the conditions for the responsible reduction of U.S. Forces in Iraq.

Spc. Arthur P. Stubbs, who reenlisted for six years while deployed with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 199th Brigade Support Battalion, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, arrives at an entry control point on the Victory Base Complex in Baghdad, Iraq. Stubbs, a 14-year combat veteran, volunteered to deploy with the Tiger Brigade and works as a security team



THOUGHTS FROM THE SANDBOX



PFC Xavier A. L'Herisse

256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Special Troops Battalion

Intelligence Analyst for Base Defense Operations Center

"I miss normal luxuries of home, but this is exactly where I want to be right now."

are no monuments dedicated to me, and my name will eventually forgotten..." were a few of the thoughts that motivated me to join the Army National Guard.

Though I have no children or grandchildren, I wondered about the stories and lifetime experiences that I would be able to share with them somewhere in the future. The Army has given me the ability to change those haunting thoughts, which were merely a year and a half ago.

I feel privileged, and honored to serve my country, and be a part of a tradition that countries are built upon. I knew that joining the Army would be one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences in my life. One of those challenges was the deployment to Iraq. I graduated from AIT in Fort Huachuca, Ariz., in Nov. 2009, reported to my unit, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 256th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, for pre-mobilization training the following January.

Fear of deployment due to lack of experience, not knowing what to expect when reporting to my unit for the first time as a Soldier, saying goodbye to family and friends and ultimately just being a private, were now the newest thoughts racing through my mind. Surprisingly, those thoughts went away after stepping through the doors of my unit that first day. After being in an environment where the officers and non-commissioned officers appointed over me did not seem afraid, or nervous about the deployment, but more focused on the mission, I quickly adapted to that common mind state.

Surrounded by Soldiers in my unit who want others to succeed, and who work as a team towards a successful end state is something that I could not imagine in any organization other than the military.

"Tell your family you're in good hands, let's do this," a text message I received from Staff Sgt. Jesse Boudreaux right before deployment, is an example of the teamwork and a reassurance of success. I am 23-year-old private first class in Baghdad, Iraq, and occasionally I miss normal luxuries of home, but this is exactly where I want to be right now.

If you would like to participate in "Thoughts from the Sandbox" please contact tresa.allemang@iraq.centcom.mil

CONGRATULATIONS!





A PLEDGE TO CONTINUE

"There is no greater calling than to serve your fellow men. There is no greater contribution than to help the weak. There is no greater satisfaction than to have done it all." ~ Walter Reuther



THANK YOU



LOUISIANA'S BSTB BECOMES IRAQ'S BDOC



The Louisiana Army National Guard's Headquarters Company, Brigade Special Troops Battalion arrived in Iraq and formally assumed their role as the Base Defense Operations Center of the Victory Base Complex during a recent ceremony held at Camp Victory.

The newly-formed BDOC, commanded by Lt. Col. Stuart N. Burruss, of Carville, La., and Command Sgt. Maj. Patrick L. Sandel, of Deridder, La., uncased their colors to symbolize the transfer of authority from Oregon's 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team to Louisiana's Special Troops Battalion, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

The Plaquemine, La., unit's new mission of ensuring security within the Victory Base Complex during the orderly withdrawal of U.S. Armed

"Together we have created an environment where the Warrior, regardless of what uniform he wears, can come in out of the cold, heat and danger. He can refit, practice and rest ... He can lay his head down and know he is safe."

Forces has not been an easy task to date, according to Col. Eric C. Bush, commander of the 41st IBCT BDOC.

"VBC is not like a typical military base," he said. "With a complex that covers 35 square miles, 26 miles of perimeter wall and thousands of residents, comprised almost equally of military personnel and civilians, this base has all the trappings and complexities of running a mid-sized city."

Mobilized Jan. 5, the 256th BDOC spent approximately two months at Camp Shelby, Miss., conducting pre-deployment training to prepare for their new mission. Upon arrival to their

assist with the transition into their new role.

Between the training received at Camp Shelby, and the "right-seat" ride with counter-parts at Victory, Sandel said the Troops are trained and motivated and the morale is high. "The incoming BDOC is ready to take on the mission."

"Everyone has settled into their rooms comfortably, and will be conducting shift-work to make certain that there is enough time to rest and enjoy the amenities, to help ensure our Soldiers maintain the high morale and motivation they arrived with," Sandel said.

"The 41st has done an excellent job during their rotation here, and has quite a list of accomplishments, so there is no doubt that we have some big shoes to fill," explained Burruss. "We look forward to working with our Iraqi partners and other forces as we defend the Victory Base Complex from possible hostile threat."

Bush thanked his various partners, including the Iraqi Special Forces, and noted the pay-off for the teamwork it takes to secure such a complex area.

"Together we have created an environment where the Warrior, regardless of what uniform he wears, can come in from the heat, the cold and the danger. He can refit, practice and rest ... he can lay his head down and know he is safe."



U.S. and Iraqi Forces salute their countries flags as the U.S. National Anthem and Iraqi National Anthem are played during a transfer of authority ceremony held at Camp Victory, Iraq. The 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's Special Troops Battalion assumed the role as the Base Defense Operations Center of the Victory Base Complex from the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team from Oregon.

GUARDSMEN CHANGE MISSIONS, EARN RECOGNITION



Air Force Lt. Col. Paul E. Novello of Trenton, N.J., presents Spc. Jonathan Aldridge, of Winnsboro, La., as well as other Soldiers from the 199th Brigade Support Battalion's Headquarters and Headquarters Company with certificates for their hard work in assisting with the flow of contractor vehicles, which helped with various construction projects on the Victory Base Complex in Iraq as the U.S. prepares to draw down its forces.

For Soldiers in an ever-changing combat environment, the only consistency is change itself. "Improvise, adapt and overcome," is a common military phrase, but more than just a phrase, it is the current way of life for U.S. service members.

A group of Soldiers from the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 199th Brigade Support Battalion not only implemented that phrase after their mission changed from convoy escort to force protection, but were recognized by another branch of service for their ability to improve their operation when they assumed the security responsibility of an entry control point during their deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Air Force Lt. Col. Paul E. Novello, commander of the 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, and his Airmen were so grateful when the Louisiana Guardsmen took over an ECP on Victory Base Complex, they presented the Soldiers with certificates for helping them complete projects that would otherwise be hindered due to the demands of contractors gaining access to the base.

To ensure the safety of the multi-national coalition forces on the installation, all personnel must complete an in-depth identification and badging process before entering the complex. Since one of the gates secured by the 199th Soldiers is primarily used by third country

national contractors, the process can be very time-consuming.

According to the company's first sergeant, Scott Corley, the entrance control point for contractor convoys is only open for a pre-determined amount of time daily. Since the gate was bombarded by larger contractors with larger convoys, the smaller contractors have experienced a difficult time receiving supplies, therefore hindering the ability to complete projects as the U.S. sets the conditions for the responsible drawdown of its forces in Iraq.

"The Soldiers not only recognized the issue, but also found a way to balance the flow of traffic between the contractors, large and small, to ensure that all received enough material to continue their projects at least until the next day whenever more supplies would arrive," the Pineville, La., resident explained.

"We have many construction projects at the Air Base," added Novella, of Trenton, N.J. "These guys teamed up and worked together to find a way to help ensure that the contractors delivering the materials had everything they needed to get through the gate as quickly as possible so that we could complete the necessary projects before the drawdown."

Novello explained that because of these Soldiers' efforts, the Air Force was able to continue and complete a project that had already been delayed more than three months due to material shortages caused by the issue that the Louisiana Guardsmen were able to combat.

The company, headquartered in Alexandria, La., was assigned to conduct convoy escort missions in Al



Asad, when they were told that their mission had been changed. The new assignment was to conduct force protection at entry control points on the VBC.

"It is always difficult to accept change," said Corley. "These guys spent two months preparing to conduct convoy security and upon arrival, got hit with a force protection mission. Not only did they accept the challenge of something new, but they are excelling at it."

"It really says a lot anytime that there is inter-service recognition, but for my guys to only be on mission for about a month and to already be presented with such an honor is indicative of their hard work and ability to adapt to any given mission."

Corley explained that it takes attention to detail by the junior, and mid-grade noncommissioned officers, and the hard work of the Soldiers to make things like this happen. "It is no accident," he said.

Mobilized and deployed to Iraq with the 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, the 199th Brigade Support Battalion left home in January, and is expected to return back to Louisiana around the end of the year.



Above—Spc. Crystal R. Fontenot, Mamou, La., resident, and member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 199th Brigade Support Battalion, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, scans the retina of an Iraqi civilian who is trying to gain access to the Victory Base Complex, at an entry control point. The retina scan is among many of the precautionary measures the installation takes to ensure the security of the civilian and multi-national coalition forces on the base. Mobilized Jan. 5, the 256th deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom to conduct convoy escort and force protection missions during the responsible draw down of U.S. Forces in Iraq.



Above—West Monroe, La., resident, Spc. Phillip L. Skipper and a Ugandan contractor check credentials on personnel in vehicles approaching an entry control point on the Victory Base Complex, to ensure they meet the requirements before passing them on to the next stopping point for further investigation.

Right—Spc. Robert L. Walker, Vidalia, La., resident, stares down the barrel of a M-240 Bravo in a tower as he scans the perimeter of the Victory Base Complex for suspicious activity around the entry control point.



SIGNAL COMPANY ENHANCES COMMUNICATION ON BAGHDAD BASE

As the U.S. sets the conditions to meet the president's plan to reduce Troops in Iraq to 50,000 by September of this year, a Louisiana National Guard unit is making its mark as they work to enhance tower communication around the perimeter of the Victory Base Complex.

As part of the Base Defense Operations Center, C Company, of the 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's Special Troops Battalion, began running a land line that will increase communication time and reduce the man-power needed to operate, update and maintain radios at towers on VBC in Iraq to assist the installation in the absence of U.S. Troops.

BSTB Executive Officer Maj. Henry T. Capello explained there are many benefits to installing the land lines.

"The towers are equipped with TA-312's, better known as 'crank phones,' and SINCGAR radios," he said. "The phones literally had to be wound to make a phone call, which can be time-consuming during an emergency. The problem with the radios was that they were sometimes affected by 'jammers' around entry control points."

Capello said that the jammers are set up to scramble radio signals outside the installation so that adversaries are unable to remotely detonate explosive devices, but have also been known to affect the radio signal on towers near the



Louisiana Guardsman, Spc. Blaine M. Marusak, of St. Martinville, La., pulls phone line through one of the towers at the Victory Base Complex in Baghdad. As part of the Base Defense Operations Center, C Company, of the 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's Special Troops Battalion, began running the line to replace the existing "crank phones" and radios, which will not only increase communication time to the BDOC, but also reduce the man-power needed to operate, update and maintain radios at towers on VBC to help set the installation up for success in the absence of U.S. troops.



Dusty J. Louviere, a specialist with the Louisiana Army National Guard's C Company, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's Special Troops Battalion, pulls cable down the perimeter wall of the Victory Base Complex in Baghdad.

outer perimeter of VBC.

"With the land lines that we are installing, as soon as they pick up the phone it will automatically call the BDOC's 'battle-bridge' or operations center, where they can take the appropriate action immediately," said the officer in charge of the project, 1st Lt. Obie E. Ward of Pineville, La.

He continued by explaining that some of the towers are on the main routes in Baghdad, and that they needed a way to report incidents quickly.

With a mission of ensuring the security within the base, Capello said this was a priority for the BDOC.

"This is a project that has been discussed for several years now, but just hasn't been done yet," said the Baton Rouge, La., resident. "When we got here, we knew we had to do something, and found a way to do it. We gave our Signal Company the mission and they jumped on it."

"We are setting the installation up for our absence," Capello said. "We are making communication more practical for the Iraqi's as we hand their country back to them."

Ward said though the project is a big one, the Lafayette, La., Signal Company's goal is to be done with their part of mission by July, and noted that thanks to the hard work of the Soldiers in the company, they are ahead of their own schedule.

"We didn't think it would go as quickly as it has. It is hot and there is a lot of manual work involved, but these guys are on it," Ward added.

"I am very proud of my Soldiers," said the signal company's commander, Capt. Harold D. Roberson, Jr. "They have a 'can do' attitude and really understand the significant impact we have on Iraq's future stability."

Deployed Louisiana Guardsman, Sgt. 1st Class Henry Francis of Duson, La., pulls cable off of a spool to run it along the perimeter wall of the Victory Base Complex as his company, C Company of the 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's Special Troops Battalion, prepares the towers on the Baghdad installation for quicker, easier communication to the Base Defense Operation Center.



"As the drawdown gets closer, we are doing everything we can to ensure that the Iraqi's are successful in maintaining their security force," said Roberson, also of Baton Rouge, La.



St. Martinville, La., resident and Louisiana Guardsman, Spc. Blaine M. Marusak, prepares a phone line at an observation tower on the Victory Base Complex in Iraq.

2ND BATTALION HOLDS COOK OFF AT JVB



Deployed Louisiana Troops from 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, held a rib cook off Sunday May, 30, in an early observance of Memorial Day on a patio behind the Joint Visitor's Bureau Hotel, at Camp Victory, Iraq. The rib cook off was held to allow the infantrymen a break from daily stress, as they cooked, listened to music and spent time with friends and comrades outside of a work environment.

Though deployed Soldiers don't get the day off to honor Memorial Day, Troops from Louisiana's 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, found time to spice up their tour as they came together to hold a cook off and unwind from the daily grind of deployment, on Sunday, May 30.

The infantrymen gathered on a patio behind the Joint Visitors Bureau at Camp Victory, Iraq, and challenged each other to a "battle of the grill." Each team prepared their own version of ribs to be judged by the Tiger Brigade's leadership including commander, Col. Jonathan T. Ball of Pineville, La., and Col. James R. Waskom of Abbeville, La.

Guest judge, Spc. Kenneth D. Boyer, also of Pineville, La., who was recently injured in a roadside bomb attack, was also able to make an appearance, and help the leadership make the harsh decision on which team would become the rib champion.

"We don't get the day off tomorrow, but wanted to

take some time to honor Memorial Day and remember our fallen,” said the battalion’s senior enlisted advisor, Command Sgt. Maj. Sud A. Robertson of New Iberia, La. “We put this together because we thought it would be a good time for everyone to clear their mind, hang out with friends and have a good time.”

The nine teams presented their ribs to the panel of judges one at a time. Team four was selected as the first-place winner, and each of the three members received fishing reels.

“This is one of the more difficult things I’ve had to do as a commander,” Ball joked. “It really was difficult because they were all so good. I would have paid for any of it at a restaurant.”

The winning team members, Staff Sgt. Jeremy W. Ryals of New Iberia, La., Spc. William B. White of Denham Springs, La., and Spc. Chad M. Allen of Houma, La., from the battalion’s C company, said the winning ingredient was the “Joos Apple Juice,” they obtained from the dining facility.

The team even gave their winning recipe a name, “Acosta’s Apple Hickory Ribs,” named after their company’s commander, Cpt. Nicholas S. Acosta, of Thibodeaux, La.

“We barbeque every Friday night by our living area,” Ryals said. “We listen to ‘swamp pop,’ eat and try to get our minds off of being deployed. We all three enjoy cooking at home, so we didn’t let the desert stop us.”



Lt. Col. Eric “Clay” Rivers, of Zwolle, La., and Command Sgt. Maj. Sud A. Robertson, of New Iberia, La., leaders of 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, stand with, Spc. William B. White, of Denham Springs, La., Staff Sgt. Jeremy W. Ryals of New Iberia, La., Spc. Chad M. Allen, of Houma, La., as they proudly display their award, fishing reels, after winning first place in a rib cook off held at Camp Victory, Iraq, in observance of Memorial Day.

The smell of food cooking on the grill, Cajun music and of course Tony Sachere’s seasoning on everyone’s list of secret ingredients, no doubt helped ease the stress of deployment, Boyer said. “Leave it to a Louisiana unit to make it feel like home everywhere you go.”

As part of the 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 2-156th mobilized in January and deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom to conduct force protection and convoy security missions during the responsible draw down of U.S. troops and equipment. The Abbeville, La., headquartered battalion is scheduled to return to Louisiana around the end of the year.



Ribs are passed out to the panel of judges during a cook off held on the patio of the Joint Visitor’s Bureau at Camp Victory in Iraq.



Staff Sgt. Jeremy W. Ryals of New Iberia, La., Spc. William B. White, of Denham Springs, La., Spc. Chad M. Allen, of Houma, La., show off their secret ingredient, “Joos Apple Juice,” from a Camp Victory dining facility, after winning a rib cook off.

GUARD COMPANY GETS NEW COMMANDER

Christian T. Griffiths, New Orleans native, bid a final farewell to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 199th Brigade Support Battalion, as he was promoted to major and reassigned during a formal ceremony at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

The commander of the company for more than two years, Griffiths relinquished authority to 1st Lt. Nicole M. Campbell, of Pineville, La.

Before passing the colors to Campbell, which symbolizes the passing of responsibility as a commander, Griffiths thanked his Troops for their hard work and dedication during his tenure.

"It has been quite an opportunity to have led you as company commander for the past two years ... an opportunity that gives me great pride and satisfaction to see how, together, we have put all these key building-blocks in place," said Griffiths, who has accepted a new mission at the International Zone near downtown Baghdad.

"I have been inspired, and encouraged by so many outstanding and dedicated leaders within this company, always dreaming, always doing, always striving and always committed to being the very best."

"First Lieutenant Campbell," Griffiths said as he raised his hand to present his Troops to her, "my very best."

A Dry Prong, La., resident, Griffiths assumed command in 2008, during a very pivotal time in the unit's history, according to Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Marc Kelly of Deville, La.

"We were not too far removed from the deployment to Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom III, and were already discussing the training for deployment in support of Iraq again," Kelly said.

He explained that the state was still attempting to re-



New commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 199th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Lt. Nicole M. Campbell, of Pineville, La., addresses her company after assuming command from Christian T. Griffiths of Dry Prong, La., who was promoted and reassigned while deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

cover from the effects of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and the tumultuous times which followed those catastrophic events. He continued by explaining that retention of Soldiers in the brigade was very tough.

"Christian and his team brought a fresh, new outlook to the unit, and immediately his positive effects were evident," Kelly explained.

"Soldiers began to reenlist. They began to want to train on the hard tasks, and the esprit de corps in the unit moved to an all-time high."

Kelly acknowledged Griffiths' accomplishments and remarked, "The 199th BSB owes a debt of gratitude to you, your officers, non-commissioned officers, and Soldiers for their outstanding performance of duty."

He then addressed the new commander, "Lieutenant Campbell, welcome to the best assignment you will ever receive."

"Soldiers," Kelly said to her new company, "she is no stranger to hard work. She has excelled in every task she has been given. Her tenacity and drive for mission accomplishment, coupled with her love of Soldiers is what helped make the decision of choosing her as your new commander."

"She is the perfect officer for this assignment during a very difficult and important mission," Kelly added.

The incoming commander began her military career in 1997, when she enlisted into the active-duty Army. In 2005, she enlisted into the Louisiana Army National Guard, and earned her commission in 2007 as a second lieutenant through the Officer Candidate School in Ball, La.

"Since the day I accepted a commission, my goal was to eventually command this very company," Campbell said as she thanked the command group for their mentorship.



Christian T. Griffiths passes the Headquarters and Headquarters Company colors to 199th Brigade Support Battalion commander, Lt. Col. Mark Kelly, symbolizing his relinquishment of command over the company, during a formal ceremony held at Camp Liberty in Iraq, where HHC, 199th is currently conducting force protection. Pineville, La., resident, 1st Lt. Nicole Campbell, assumed command from Griffiths, of Dry Prong, La., when he received a promotion to the rank of major, and was reassigned to work in the International Zone as a resource manager.

"It has been a pleasure to work alongside you for the past couple of years," she addressed her company. "To now have the opportunity to serve as your commander means more to me than I can ever express. I look forward to the upcoming challenges we will overcome together."

The mother of two, Synciere, 8, and Aleianna, 7, Campbell will soon earn her bachelor's degree in psychology from Northwestern State University.

Campbell has served in a variety of positions, including her most recent as the director of information management for the Garrison Command on the Victory Base Complex in Iraq, before being selected to take on the mission as a company commander.

"Iraq will test the mettle of the most seasoned leaders and I assure you will be tested, lieutenant," Kelly stressed. "Remember the core values that you've displayed leading up to this day. Rely on your first sergeant, empower your NCO's, lead your Soldiers by example, and you will excel," he encouraged.

The Alexandria, La., company, as part of the 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, is currently deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom to conduct force

protection to set the conditions for the responsible draw down of U.S. Troops and equipment. Mobilized Jan. 5, the Tiger Brigade is expected to return to Louisiana around the end of the year.



New commander, 1st Lt. Nicole M. Campbell, of Pineville, La., passes the colors of the 199th Brigade Support Battalion's Headquarters and Headquarters Company, to 1st Sgt. Scott Corley, after accepting them from the battalion's commander, Lt. Col. Marc Kelly, of Deville, La., during a ceremony held at Camp Liberty, Iraq, where the company is currently conducting force protection missions. The passing of the colors symbolizes the passing of command authority.

Message from the Chaplain

THE URGENT VERSUS THE IMPORTANT

Of all the wisdom I have gained, the most important is the knowledge that time and health are two precious assets that we rarely recognize or appreciate until they are gone. As with health, time is the raw material of life. You can use it wisely, waste it or even kill it.

Each human being now living has exactly 168 hours per week. Scientists can't invent new minutes, and even the wealthy can't buy more hours. Queen Elizabeth the First of England, the richest, the most powerful woman on earth of her era, whispered these final words as she lay dying: "all my possessions for a moment of time!"

We worry about the things we want to do, but can't, instead of doing the things we can do, but don't. How often have you said to yourself, "Where did the day go?" or "I can't remember what I did yesterday." That time is gone and you can't get it back.

Even so, time is amazingly fair and forgiving. No matter how much time you have wasted in the past, you still have an entire today. If you've deleted an hour procrastinating, you will still be given the next hour to start on priorities. Time management contains one great paradox; the problem is separating the urgent from the important.

To live a rich, balanced life we need to be in conscious control of our habits and lifestyles. Actualized individuals have a regular exercise routine. They pay attention to nutrition. They relax through musical, cultural, artistic and family activities. They get sufficient sleep and rest to meet the next day renewed and invigorated. With your material, time and energy resources allocated well, you should be able to use your innovative powers to focus on goal achievement. Effective priority management creates freedom. Freedom provides opportunity to make decisions. We make our decisions, and our decisions, over time, make us.

Freedom from urgency, that's what will allow us to live a rich and rewarding life. You may have thought your problem was "time starvation," when in truth, it was in the way you assigned priorities in your decision-making process. Have you allowed the urgent to crowd out the important?

You see, it's the easiest things in the world to neglect the important and give in to the urgent. One of the greatest skills you can ever develop in your life is not only to tell the two apart, but to be able to assign the correct amount of time to each.

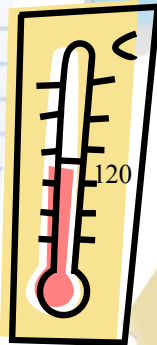
Beginning now, and throughout the rest of your life, you must ask yourself this question: "Is what I'm doing at this moment important to my health, well-being and mission in life, and for my loved ones?" Your affirmative answer will free you from the power of the urgent.

CAPTAIN PAUL POLK

BULLETIN POSTS

It's hot,
Drink
water!

Garrison Chaplain
Captain Paul Polk
318-485-3068
Paul.polk@iraq.centcom.mil
Paul.polk@us.army.mil



Re-register in
July at the
billeting office

Support Group
Meetings on
Tuesdays @
1900 - Hope
Chapel

MWR SCHEDULE

Saloonatics - 14
June @ 1900 -
Striker Mayor
Cell

Bikes over
Baghdad - 17
June @ -
Division DFAC
Pad - near "Z"-
Lake

The Spin Doc-
tors - 24 June @
1930 - Victory
MWR Stage

POC: CPT
Anissa Johnson

Bulletin Quotes

- **Try to look unimportant; they may be low on ammo.**
- Infantry Journal
- **You, you, and you: Panic. The rest of you, come with me.**
- US Marine Corp Gunnery Sgt
- **Tracers work both ways.**
- US Army Ordnance
- **Teamwork is essential; it gives the enemy someone else to shoot at.**
- **No combat ready unit has ever passed inspection.**
- Joe Gay
- **Incoming fire has the right of way.**
- **I think we consider too much the good luck of the early bird and not enough the bad luck of the early worm.**
- Franklin D. Roosevelt

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMAND

199th BSB, TF Bullet has now officially taken over the Victory Base Complex Garrison Command mission. Although undermanned, our Soldiers have embraced this mission and are on the road to success.

Like the 199th BSB organizational units, the 199th Battalion Headquarters with augmen-tees from around the 256th IBCT are adapting and conducting these non-standard missions with great success and admiration.

We've now entered month 6 of our 12 month mobilization/deployment. For those of you who deployed with the 256th IBCT in 2004/2005, we were just leaving Fort Hood. With roughly 6 months left on our deployment, we must keep our Soldiers focused on the job at hand, whether its convoy security, maintenance operations, or mayor cell operations.

This is not the time to get complacent, but a time to remain engaged in our mission. As we move into the summer months and the weather is taking a toll on our Soldiers and equip-ment, leaders must implement hot weather safety mitigation in every aspect of what we do.

For both our Garrison Command mission and our units on the road, I expect our NCOs to see to this and maintain our units with little to no heat injuries.

199th Garrison Command
CSM William Miguez

Welcome to the first edition of "Task Force Bulletin!" If you haven't figured it out already, the Bulletin is an attempt at catchy word play, and named after the 199th Garrison Command's Task Force Bullet.

This newsletter will be a monthly product, and I strongly encourage the participation of all units so that we can highlight the efforts of our Soldiers and their hard work, and document as much of our tour as possible.

This edition will be the biggest since we have been here for a few months. The attempt was made to catch as many promotions, awards and reenlist-ments as possible, but can't be done without your help.

Any photos taken can be submitted to tresa.allemang@iraq.centcom.mil, where one will be chosen as the photo of the month.

Please feel free to submit any suggestions or ideas.