

M A G A Z I N E O F T A S K F O R C E M A R N E

FROM THE FRONT

SPRING 2010

TF MARNE
PROVIDES
SUPPORT FOR IRAQI
PARLIAMENTARY
ELECTIONS, PG. 1



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On the Cover
A U.S. and Iraqi Soldier, Iraqi Policeman and Peshmerga line up for Military Operations, Urban Terrain (MOUT) training. (Contributed photo. Photo illustration by SGT Chad D. Nelson.)

On the Back Cover
Sergeant Tonya Bascom and Specialist Brittany Harmon, both with 296th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat team, 2nd Infantry Division, render a salute to a fallen servicemember Mar. 18, 2010 at Forward Operation Base Warhorse. A memorial was held in honor of Private 1st Class Erin Mclyman, who died while supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. (U.S. Army photo by SPC Ry Norris)



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TF Marne provides cover for 2010 Iraqi elections

STORY COMPILATION BY SGT JOHNATHON JOBSON
ADDITIONAL PHOTO BY SPC JESSICA ROHR
[3RD INFANTRY DIVISION PAO](#)

► For more than 30 years the Iraqi people suffered under a brutal, criminal dictator. Now, seven years later, after a grueling, deadly war, the Iraqis are optimistic about their future.

Their fate lies in their hands and, March 7, under the protection of their security forces, they chose their next leaders. They defied extremists who tried to keep them away from the polls with violence and intimidation.

Sunnis, Shias, Kurds, men and women not only voted for their politicians, but their determination was a vote for peace and stability in Iraq.

March 4 and 7, 2010, Task Force Marne Soldiers assisted their Iraqi counterparts in protecting Iraqi citizens during Iraq's second parliamentary elections.

Soldiers from the brigades that make up Task Force Marne assisted the Iraqi Army and Police, ensuring a safe and secure voting process for Iraqi citizens in multiple ways.

Across the U.S. Division-North, Soldiers and citizens from all brigades assisted the Iraqi Army and Police with security. No U.S. forces were directly securing the polls. Instead, they provided outer cordon security in an effort to keep any extremists from even getting close to the voting sites.

While Iraqi Security Forces handled security directly surrounding the polls during the elections, U.S. Soldiers played a large



Courtesy Photo
An Iraqi man proudly displays proof of his voting by displaying a finger covered in indelible ink, March 7.



Courtesy Photo
An Iraqi citizen casts his vote in the 2010 parliamentary elections, March 7. Four million Iraqis cast their votes for the leaders of their new government, which is about 60 percent of the population. TF Marne Soldiers helped ensure the safety of all Iraqi voters on election day.



Photo by SPC Jessica Rohr

Sergeant John D. Oshon and Sgt. Raymond Irizarry, Jr., of the Personal Security Detachment, HHSC, DSTB, 3rd ID, team up during a mission in support of the parliamentary elections, March 7. The Soldiers provided security support to Iraqi police in Hamadi Shahab, Iraq.

to get through, could.”

In addition to manpower and training, U.S. forces also provided barrier equipment such as concrete T-walls, jersey barriers and concertina wire to help limit access to and secure the polling sites.

“In the Tikrit area, the most visible support provided by the military was the security measures, the additional barrier material, the additional concertina wire, the additional jersey barriers,” explained Matthew Podolak, the governance lead for the Salah ad-Din Provincial Reconstruction Team. “These items were given to the Iraqi police and Army to allow them to secure the polling sites so that citizens could feel secure and safe to go and vote.”

Soldiers from 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, also assisted in ensuring the elections were being managed correctly.

“We assisted with bringing in two teams from the embassy and one from the United Nations Assistance Mission

for Iraq,” Capt. Matt Kuhlman, the commander of Battery C, 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID. “We provided transportation and security for these teams as each visited three polling sites during the elections. We could only take them as far as the outer cordon. From there, Iraqi Security Forces escorted them to the actual sites to observe the polling process and ensure legitimacy.”

By the time the polls closed in the USD-N area of operations, more than 4 million Iraqis had cast their votes for the leaders of their new government. Across the country more than 60 percent of the population voted on March 7; a day during which there were no vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attacks, mortars, indirect fire or breaches of security. On March 26, the name of Iraq's newly elected leader was announced.

part in the preparations for the elections. From providing additional training to the Iraqis to helping place barriers, U.S. Soldiers were always in the background making sure things flowed smoothly.

“We were involved in helping our Iraqi partners ensure that this is once again a successful, legitimate election for the people here in Iraq,” said Lt. Col. Michael Jason, the S3 officer in charge for 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. “It’s about being there, being on call, being able to help our Iraqi partners, but staying back and making sure it is their election, 100 percent.”

Ensuring plans were in place for any possible situation that might have come up, Soldiers from 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, put large amounts of time and manpower into making sure the elections were successful.

“The support we provided to the Iraqis

for the elections was namely security support, training support and lending them our planning expertise,” explained Maj. Michael Higgins, the brigade governance lead for 4th IBCT, 1st ID, “to ensure that they thought through all the various aspects of putting on the elections.”

Key to elections is access to the polls by the population. With the many threats that had been made against the polling sites and voters, Soldiers from TF Marne had to make sure that travel routes were open and safe for passage.

“We worked with our Iraqi partners to come up with joint route clearance patrols,” explained Lt. Col. Robert Whittle, Jr., commander of 1st Engineer Battalion, 130th Engineer Brigade. “We made sure that the main supply routes and the alternate supply routes, basically the main highways here in Iraq, were open during the elections. That any traffic that needed

54 Soldiers stay 'Army Strong'

STORY BY SPC CASSANDRA MONROE

PHOTOS BY SGT CHAD D. NELSON

135TH MOBILE PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT, 3RD INFANTRY DIVISION PAO

► Fifty-four Task Force Marne Soldiers recommitted themselves to serving in the Army during a mass re-enlistment ceremony on Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Jan. 27. Those who re-enlisted were honored by TF Marne's commanding general, Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, who administered the oath of re-enlistment, along with TF Marne's senior enlisted advisor, Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Andrews.

"This is the first re-enlistment of this size for Task Force Marne," said Sgt. Maj. Luis Rivera, the Task Force Marne command career counselor, 3rd Infantry Division.

The group of 54 Soldiers were a mixed representation of Soldiers throughout the task force.

"You all represent a commitment of more than 290 years to the United States Army," said Maj. Gen. Cucolo. "All of you are fighting the good fight with us here at Task Force Marne. We all come from 14 different major Army units, 14 different patches, 14 different unit mottos, and we're all pulling together as one."

"We're in this one together, no matter what unit patch or motto we have. We're in a combat zone, and that's when the Warrior Ethos comes into override, placing missions first, never quitting, never accepting defeat and never leaving a fallen comrade. The fact that you are re-enlisting in this difficult, complex and dangerous environment just gives me and command sergeant major even greater pride."

The ceremony was brief, but the commander made poignant comments that resonated with his audience. Staff Sergeant Richard Jadick said that he's hoping to make a statement by re-enlisting for indefinite service while at combat.

"When it came to my 14th year mark, I wanted to go indefinite and continue my service to my country and complete my 20 years," said Staff Sgt. Jadick, a military policeman, who has deployed five times, and is a squad leader with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2-3 Brigade Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

Staff Sergeant Jadick, who is stationed at Forward Operating Base Marez, re-enlisted for six more years. He said that his inspiration for re-enlisting came from the support of his wife.

"My wife wanted me to do it when I left Fort Stewart, and here, the opportunity arose with Maj. Gen. Cucolo, and I thought, 'let's do it,'" said Staff Sgt. Jadick.

Coincidentally, Staff Sgt. Jimmy Punzo also wanted to make a point with his re-enlistment.

"For me, it's a way to show Soldiers that the Army has given me a lot, and it's time to give my time back to the Army," said Staff Sgt. Punzo, a brigade schools noncommissioned officer stationed at FOB Warrior with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Fort Bliss, Texas.

"Because we're actually here in a line of combat, it means just a little bit more. We're out here making a difference, and it makes this re-enlistment a little more special also," he added.

Career counselors, who escorted Soldiers from their brigade to

the ceremony, were proud that they were able to keep in quality Soldiers. Master Sergeant Brenda Windham, the brigade career counselor with HHC, 2nd BCT, 3rd ID, attended the ceremony to support 25 Soldiers from her unit.

"It's nice to see your Soldiers dedicating a few more years of their life to serve their country," said Master Sgt. Windham.

Prior to the ceremony the re-enlisting Soldiers along with Maj.

Gen. Cucolo and Command Sgt. Maj. Andrews recorded a retention commercial. The theme for the commercial was "Team", and the 60-second message was summed up with these words from the commanding general, "Some folks go long, and keep playing no matter how tough the opposing team is or how unpredictable the game might be. Today the 3rd Infantry Division honors those key players -- those who chose to stay on the team and go long".



Major General Tony Cucolo, commanding general of 3rd ID, out of Fort Stewart, Ga., Command Sergeant Major Jesse Andrews, command sergeant major of 3rd ID and Soldiers from across U.S. Division - North sing the Army song as the 3rd ID Band plays at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, during a mass re-enlistment ceremony Jan. 27.

Envisioning new future for Iraq: Ninewa 2030

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SGT CHAD D. NELSON

ADDITIONAL PHOTOS BY SPC DARWIN SEEHUSEN

135TH MOBILE PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT, 3RD INFANTRY DIVISION PAO

■ A massively-scaled reconstruction planning effort in the Ninewa province of Iraq is underway.

The Ninewa government, with assistance from the 130th Engineer Brigade's Ninewa Reconstruction Cell, is building a plan for the future of the Iraqi province.

Instead of several small construction projects, the Ninewa provincial government is working on a vision statement. The goal of this statement is to focus on the future, long-term effects of all civil projects and ensure they benefit the province as a whole.

The planning effort, known as 'Ninewa 2030,' was conceived by the 130th Eng. Bde.'s NRC and briefed to the provincial governor, Atheel al Nujaifi. Since that time, the Government of Iraq has formed a committee which organized the Initial Planning Conference.

The IPC was held in January 2010, and a follow-on conference is scheduled for May.

The May conference will focus on the completed vision statements and identify any gaps in the province's five-year plan.

The provincial governor's liaison to U.S. forces is heading the committee for Ninewa 2030, and the NRC meets with the committee weekly to discuss plans and meeting schedules. The hope is to eventually pair a U.S. advisor with each of the nine planning groups and assist them as needed, according to Capt. Holly Grey, the engagements officer with the NRC.

Ninewa 2030 is unique in its scope



Photos by SPC Darwin Seehusen

A U.S. Soldier observes a ruined city street in Mosul while on patrol. Mosul, the largest city in the Ninewa province, will likely benefit a great deal from the effects of Ninewa 2030. The plan, which focuses on traditional city planning efforts to create a vision statement for the Ninewa province, will improve several aspects of city life by projects such as road reconstruction.

and impact for the people of the Ninewa province. In the past, the GoI would see an area that needed civic project – such as solid waste removal, a dam or sewer lines – and begin building without considering how the whole province would be affected, according to Capt. Grey. Ninewa 2030 merges the knowledge of Army Engineers with the GoI's future growth and development of the province.

"As engineers, we look primarily at the essential services (sewer, water, electricity,

trash, etc.) because the infrastructure must be capable of supporting growth and development. The best practice is to install these systems before buildings or roads or people populate the areas," Capt. Grey said.

The GoI is the entity that is looking into these essential services and examines where they are needed in neighborhoods by using traditional city planning methods. They first analyze where these services are needed, compile the projects and analyze

the list. The analysis is based on current populations, projected population growth and historical population trends. Based on these statistics, the GoI is better able to determine where projects are needed most and prioritize projects, said 1st Lt. Nathan Neuman, Co. D, 401st Civil Affairs "Team 5" leader, who is attached to the 130th Eng. Bde.

With the condition of some of the equipment currently supporting the Ninewa province, it is easy to see why these construction efforts are needed. According to reports from Iraqis working with the NRC, some areas of Ninewa are supported by water pumps that were installed by the British in the early 1900s. By replacing these outdated systems, the provincial government makes significant strides to-

ward a flourishing and thriving province; one that will continue to improve decades after the U.S. Army has withdrawn its troops.

However, merely installing and constructing new projects is not the final step in city building. Citizens must be trained on the proper use and maintenance of the equipment. The NRC realizes this and has offered their assistance in the training of Iraqi citizens.

"Education of the people in how to maintain their infrastructure and keep their cities clean and functioning is also important, so they have sustainable systems that won't fall apart in a few years," Capt. Grey said.

This is the ultimate goal of Ninewa 2030. By creating a vision statement and

outlining the focus of construction efforts throughout the province, Iraqis will be better equipped to build and maintain sustainable systems for decades to come. This will encourage future growth and development. A step in the right direction which should encourage the future citizens of Ninewa to stay in the area.

"Just as it is all over the world, young people grow up and then decide to stay or leave the places they were born, to go to a better city, get a better job, have a better life. If Ninewa wants to retain these bright young minds, it needs to be a place that young people will feel proud of, want to live and start a family in and want to further improve," said Capt. Grey. "By developing a vision statement for Ninewa 2030, they can focus their efforts and resources and create the best possible plan."



Trash stagnates on a city street in Mosul. Ninewa 2030 will address such civic needs as solid waste removal and make plans for its continued success. The most important aspect of this plan is to ensure Iraqis are trained in the equipment and procedures necessary for trash removal.



TF Marne Deputy Commanding General Support Brig. Gen. Thomas S. Vandal takes note of the conditions of the streets in Mosul.



Extreme Makeover Tomahawk Edition

STORY AND PHOTOS BY PVT ZACHARY ZUBER
3RD STRYKER BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM, 2ND INFANTRY DIVISION PAO

Classrooms in Iraq have been a bustling place during the last couple of months. The traffic is not from what most people would expect for the schools, but rather from a dedicated team of Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division.

Members of 1/23rd Inf., Tomahawks, worked with great fervor to perform a makeover modeled after the Extreme Makeover: Home Edition television program that is popular among many American families. The project, deemed the Extreme Tomahawk School Makeover, was created to refurbish two Diyala province schools that have lived through their share of strife during the past few years and to provide hope and opportunity to the children.

Soldiers worked for at least nine hours a day, with the final stretch carrying through the night, to complete their overhaul on Khalis Secondary School. They assembled new desks, painted walls, installed windows and air conditioners, and provided new textbooks and bags to the students.

"This was a huge challenge for us to get done on time," said Spc. William Chanda of Bridgeton, Maine, a forward observer for 1/23rd Inf. "I am still catching up on sleep from the last push, but it was definitely worth it."

Lack of sleep wasn't the only difficulty the Tomahawks had to overcome. They did not have all the equipment and tools they wanted; nevertheless, through perseverance, the job was completed.

"We had to make do with the few tools we had available," Spc. Chanda said. "There weren't enough hammers to go around, but everyone just passed stuff around to work with."

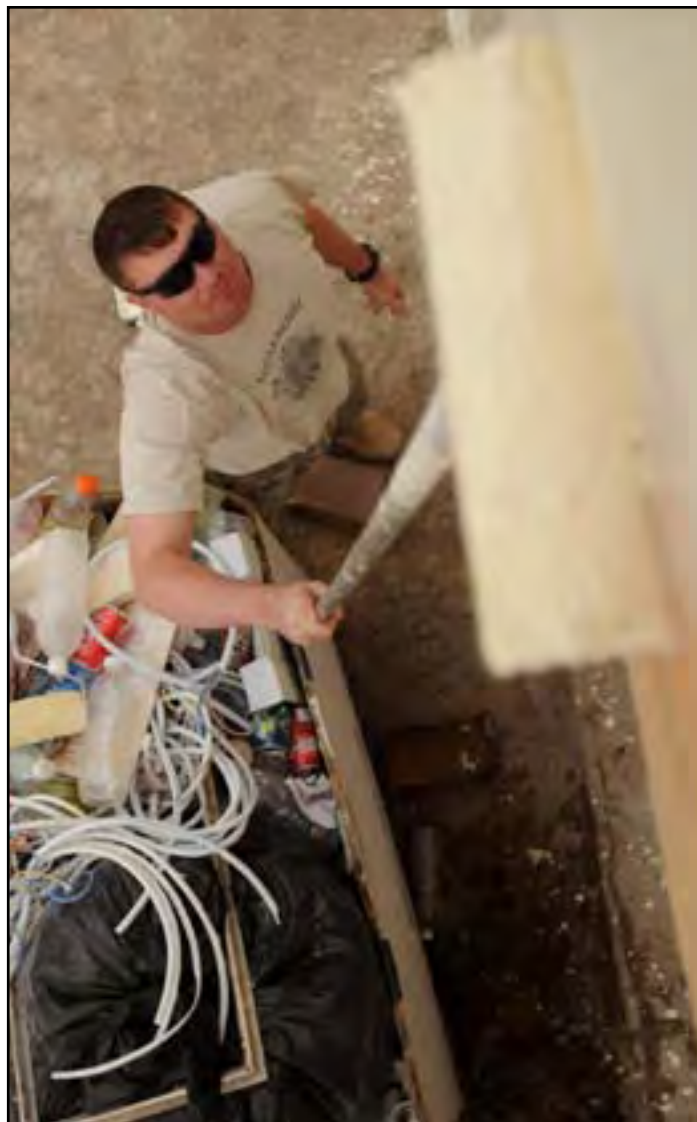
Although many of the Tomahawks, who are trained in combat arms specialties, did not have much experience in the construction of buildings, those that did stepped up to play vital roles.

"I had done framing all my life, working construction," said Pfc. Wesley Loria, an anti-sniper specialist. "With my experience, I was put in charge of all the framing in the building."

According to Pfc. Loria, another challenge was the degeneration of the existing foundations. Along with general construction, Soldiers were able to provide some basic amenities for students and teachers such as rewiring the school's electricity and providing air conditioning to keep comfortable during the warmer times of the year.

After the school was unveiled to community members by driving back one of the Tomahawk Strykers from in front of the school, students rushed in to see all of the new improvements.

"My favorite part of this is the desks and the new air conditioning," said Ausama Adel, a 15-year-old student at the school.



Staff Sergeant Cody Bryan paints the outer walls of the Al-Salaam Secondary School during the second round of renovations for the Extreme Tomahawk Makeover. Soldiers of the 1/23rd Inf., 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID, work to remodel schools in the Diyala province of Iraq for the program.

"With all these new things, it will be much easier to perform our studies."

His sentiments about the improvements seemed to radiate from his classmates through their smiles.

The school's headmaster saw it as a wonderful display of the



Soldiers of the 1/23rd Inf., 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID, place a new sign atop the entrance of the Khalis Secondary School. The sign was one of the final pieces put in place as part of their Extreme Tomahawk School Makeover project.

opportunities opened for the future.

"Every part of this school was completely damaged before the Soldiers started working here," said Qasem Mohammed Al-Qasi, school headmaster. "With all these improvements, we can really push toward hard work and a better future for our students."

Their goals are now that much closer to being achieved, and the students of the Khalis Secondary School have a fresh set of possibilities for their future. With this project finished, the Tomahawks turned their attention to a second school.

Tomahawk Soldiers began renovations to the Al-Salaam Secondary School, March 12.

"I am very satisfied with the progress we are making so far," said Pfc. Nathaniel Lawrence, a painter on the project. "This has been a great experience for me to help out the children."

The second time around is going smoother, according to the Tomahawk crew, due to the differences in the schools and the experience gained from the first makeover.

"This school is smaller, and there is not as much that needs to be done, like replacing windows," said Pvt. Howard Leonard. "The process is going much faster so far."

Though it may not be as difficult, the Soldiers are hoping for great results. The smaller school allows them to concentrate on the subtle details that make a large impact.

"Because the school is smaller, it allows us to focus more on the details, and hopefully provide an even higher quality school when we're done," said Pfc. Lawrence. "We have been doing a lot more painting for this school."

From paint to plumbing, the Tomahawks working on the project are sure to bring all their skills together to achieve their goals of a high-quality school for local students for a second time.



Showing their artistic skills, Soldiers from 1/23rd Inf., 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID, paint a mural for the walls of the Al-Salaam Secondary School in the Diyala province of Iraq.

Sheikh shares story of suffering, triumph in Iraq

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SPC RY NORRIS
[COMMAND POST SOUTH PAO](#)

► “I am responsible for this area,” said Sheikh Habib Khazal Karim, of the Al Gawalba tribe.

The people of the Al Gawalba tribe in Dojima live along the Diyala River. Since becoming the leader of the Al Gawalba tribe, Sheikh Habib’s focus has always been the people.

“One day, AQI (Al Qaeda in Iraq) came here. These men were very well equipped, just like the coalition forces. We approached them. They told us, ‘Your Shia neighbors are not Muslim. You must fight them.’ We told them, ‘But we have lived together with Shia as neighbors for a long time. We have no desire to fight them.’”

Al Qaeda extremists responded by burning houses and killing the Shia people of the village and the surrounding area. They controlled the area for the greater part of 2005 and 2006, targeting Iraqi po-

licemen, government of Iraq officials, and coalition forces.

However, the most unfathomable and unforgivable act was an attack against a bus that mainly transported women and children in Spring 2007.

Incendiary devices were planted inside the bus and detonated while the bus was in transit. “One mother burned to death while clutching her two children in her arms. The scene was too much to bear,” said Sheikh Habib. The Al Gawalba tribe believes that AQI was responsible.

The Al Gawalba tribe of Dojima, Iraq, armed themselves to push AQI out of their village. “We lost 15 of our people in the first battle in Zorganiyah,” said the Sheikh quietly. Among the 15 was Sheikh Jazil Karim, Sheikh Habib’s father. As the first-born son, Khazal Karim became the next sheikh of the Al Gawalba tribe.

Sheikh Habib decided that he would no longer tolerate acts of violence against his people. He formed a small militia to fight against AQI. The group comprised of Iraqi volunteers dedicated to pushing AQI out of the area. When U.S. forces arrived to help, the role of the militia changed. They patrolled neighborhoods and guarded check points. They became part of an organization called the “Sons of Iraq,” a group of militias formed throughout the provinces of Iraq dedicated to pushing AQI out of the area.

The Al Gawalba tribe lost around 300 of its members during battles with AQI and is continuing to recover from the ordeal. “It is important for USF and the GOI to understand and remember what the Sunni tribes of Diyala endured,” said Task Force Marne Deputy Commanding General Maneuver Brig. Gen. Patrick J. Donahue.



Sheikh Habib Khazal Karim, of the Al Gawalba, relays his concerns to TF Marne Deputy Commanding General Maneuver Brig. Gen. Patrick J. Donahue, through Abe Aljabur, an interpreter, Feb. 3. The group met during a key leadership engagement to discuss issues.



Sheikh Habib Khazal Karim, of the Al Gawalba tribe, greets the “Earthpigs,” Soldiers of Apache Company, 1/23rd Inf., 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID, at his residence in Dojima, Feb. 3. Second Platoon, Apache Company meets with Sheikh Habib every two weeks to discuss and solve any rising issues.

As the saying goes, “If you cut the head off a snake, the body will fall.” Sheikh Habib believes the turning point of the war was when AQI leader “Mullah Qasser” Ahmed Al-zouri was killed. With the leader gone, the other insurgents fled the area.

Now that AQI is no longer viewed as an unstoppable threat, Sheikh Habib has turned his focus on the immediate needs of the Al Gawalba tribe of Dojima. “My greatest concerns are schools and health clinics,” said the Sheikh.

Sheikh Habib said that the schools offer a morning and evening session to accommodate the 850 students at the primary school and 1,400 at the secondary school.

He meets with 1st Lt. Terrance Nolan, the platoon leader for the 2nd Platoon “Earthpigs,” Company Apache, 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, bi-weekly to discuss the prospects of renovating the schools and other issues in Dojima.

The 1/23rd Inf. is scheduled to begin renovation of the primary school at the beginning of April. It will be the battalion’s third extreme school makeover. U.S. forces are planning to renovate the secondary school through local contractors, creating employment and boosting economic activity in the area.

As for the health clinic, the closest one is in Khalis, which is 45 minutes from Dojima. The Sheikh said that he spoke with the director general of health in Khalis about having a clinic built in the immediate area. The construction of a health clinic in Dojima requires extensive coordination with several ministries. Sheikh Habib and the Co. A Soldiers are working on a solution to have one built as soon as possible.

“To focus on your children and the health of the people shows that you are concerned about the people and that’s the right thing,” remarked Brig. Gen. Donahue to Sheikh Habib, during a key leadership engagement held with the Sheikh.



Dragon Brigade medics teach life- saving skills to Iraqi Army

Soldiers of the 4th Iraqi Army Div. treat and prepare a fellow soldier for evacuation during a three-day medic course taught by Soldiers of Co. C, 701st BSB 4th IBCT, 1st ID.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SPC RICHARD M. COLLETTA 4TH INFANTRY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM, 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION PAO

■ Soldiers of Company C, 701st Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Support Team, 1st Infantry Division shared lifesaving techniques and procedures with their Iraqi Army medic counterparts as they hosted a three-day class for medics and soldiers in the Iraqi Army, March 15 to 17.

The class included instruction on care under fire, stopping and controlling bleeding, applying tourniquets, clearing airways, splinting fractures, patient carries and ambulance loading.

Sergeant 1st Class Chauncey Reid, evacuation platoon sergeant for Co. C, said the concept was to teach the Iraqi Army soldiers about treating casualties and how to provide critical-lifesaving care while preparing patients for evacuation.

"It [can] knock out about a 50 percent casualty rate if you just stop the bleeding and get them to a hospital," Sgt. 1st Class Reid said.

Specialist Ashley Vines, a combat medic with Co. C, said the Iraqis have really gotten into the training and that together they've been learning from each other.

"They've all been involved and very interactive. They've been teaching us Arabic, we've been teaching them English," he said.

Specialist Vines said the classes they taught were meant to mirror the training U.S. Soldiers receive themselves.

"It would be pretty much the equivalent to our Combat Lifesaver classes," he said.

Although the classes were taught with the assistance of interpreters, Soldiers were also able to demonstrate medical techniques and have the Iraqi soldiers emulate them. Specialist Vines also said he enjoyed working with the Iraqi medics and soldiers.

"It's [been] a lot [more fun] than I thought it would be and they've picked up a lot faster than I thought [they would]," he said.

The Iraqi Army soldiers and U.S. Soldiers shared a few laughs while demonstrating patient carries, as some of the Iraqi soldiers struggled with carrying one of their larger soldiers. At first they insisted they couldn't do it, but after being shown the carry techniques they were all able to carry each other.

Doctor Salah Hasan, a lieutenant colonel and the division surgeon for the 4th Iraqi Army Division said that the training was vital.

"This is an important issue. It is a matter of life saving [where you have] not more than minutes [to] save a human life," he said.

First Lieutenant Heather Holub, evacuation platoon leader for Co. C, said the intent for the course was to give a refresher to the Iraqi medics and to train Iraqi soldiers who had no medical experience.

"They're running the country. They're on the roads, they're even assisting and escorting us on convoys so they're doing everything that we used to do and they're putting [themselves] out there so they're at risk," she said.

First Lieutenant Holub said training with the Iraqis was a great experience and the Iraqi soldiers showed enthusiasm and dedication.

"It's wonderful to see them out here training and preparing themselves in case there is a situation that should arise where they actually need to use [what they learned]," 1st Lt. Holub said.

The training culminated with a review of everything the Iraqi Army soldiers had learned over the course of the three days. They received certificates for completing the training during a short ceremony, March 17, and shared their thanks with the U.S. Soldiers for the class.

"I believe now we have good knowledge and good experience. We can depend on [our soldiers] to save their lives and their friend's lives," Dr. Hasan said.



Specialist Misty Raines and Spc. Barbara Vargas, both of Co. C, 701st BSB, 4th IBCT, 1st ID, demonstrate how to properly care for a Soldier with a possible neck injury during a three-day medic course that was hosted by U.S. Soldiers for Iraqi Army medics.

Operation 'Bright Eagle' sheds light on enemy, showcases ISF skills

STORY BY TASK FORCE WINGS PUBLIC AFFAIRS

PHOTOS BY SFC TYRONE C. MARSHALL, JR.

[25TH COMBAT AVIATION BRIGADE, 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION PAO](#)

U.S. Soldiers from Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery Regiment conducted an air assault with Iraqi Police from the Emergency Response Unit, and Rapid Deployment Unit from Contingency Operating Location Danger, near Tikrit, Iraq, Feb. 25. Troopers from 3rd Battalion, 25th General Support Aviation Battalion, Task Force Hammerhead, led the air assault with aircraft from Companies Alpha and Bravo, 3/25th GSAB, and Alpha Troop, 2nd Battalion, 6th Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Diamond Head.

The partnered air assault inserted Iraqi Security Forces and U.S. forces into three objectives in Salah ad-Din province. According to Lt. Col. Robert Cain, command-

er, 2/32nd FA, the mission -- termed "Operation Bright Eagle" -- was to deny enemy networks the ability to disrupt Provincial elections by confiscating unauthorized weapons and interdicting suspected terrorists. By all accounts, Bright Eagle accomplished its objectives.

"The Iraqi Police captured 22 individuals during the Operation. Additionally, Iraqi police from the ERU and RDU worked together not only to develop their own plan, but to also execute quite a large scale operation successfully," said Lt. Col. Cain.

Although Lt. Col. Cain's Soldiers were introduced to very capable Iraqi Security Forces when 2/32nd FA arrived in theater

last year, his Soldiers' efforts teaching advanced policing techniques demonstrably improved ISF planning and execution processes.

"The Iraqi Security Forces conducted the operation well. They performed good rehearsals in preparation for the air assault and quickly cleared each objective," continued Lt. Col. Cain. "They showed that the ISF can reach outlying areas and conduct large joint operations. We [also received] excellent aviation support for our ground units."

That aviation support came from Task Forces Hammerhead and Diamond Head. They employed multiple aircraft and unmanned aerial systems and provided the lift support and aerial reconnaissance for ground forces. Their combined effort placed the ERU, RDU and U.S. forces in precise positions to accomplish mission objectives.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Owen Connors, a CH-47D Chinook helicopter pilot with Co. B, 3/25th GSAB, was one of several pilots who inserted troops into the objectives. Chief Warrant Officer 2 Owen Connors was quick to recognize the importance of the mission in furthering the partnership between U.S. and Iraqi Security Forces.

"It's extremely important for the Iraqis to provide their own security," said CW2 Connors. "Any support we can give them absolutely helps -- it helps for these elections and, in a broader sense, it helps to give them a sense of ownership."

"Again, all we did was help; we provided the lift capability and 2/32nd FA [Soldiers] showed them how [valuable the] use of helicopters can be. The actual



Iraqi Police and Soldiers from Co. B, 2/3rd FA, 4th IBCT, 1st ID, rehearse exiting a CH-47D Chinook helicopter prior to an insertion at COL Danger, near Tikrit, Iraq, Feb. 25. The aircraft belongs to 3/25th GSAB, TF Wings.

'boots on the ground' part was all Iraqis."

Captain Robert Beale, commander, Co. B, 3/25th GSAB, TF Hammerhead, elaborated on the importance of continuing to engage ISF in partnered air assaults.

"We're setting conditions for the Iraq military and Iraq police to provide their own security and enable them to further establish and develop their own democracy," said Capt. Beale. "They're definitely moving in the right direction not only with our assistance but also with help other coalition forces have provided the past couple of years. They are right on the right track."

Another testament to the improved capability of the IP was how quickly they learned to safely enter and exit aircraft. Cold-load training is often conducted with less experienced passengers when aircraft are shut down and before missions to ensure all passengers understand the elements of loading and unloading a helicopter. Ac-

cording to the pilots involved, passengers should be able to exit the aircraft and safely position themselves within 15 seconds of touching down on an objective.

"During the cold-load training portion of the mission, comparing the Iraqi Army units and the U.S. Army, they were all on and off the aircraft quickly," said Capt. Beale. "They definitely made it look like they've been doing it for a while."

"They were very fast learners," said Chief Warrant Of-

ficer 3 Scott Peterson, another CH-47D Chinook pilot who flew an aircraft during the mission.



Iraqi Police assigned to the Emergency Response and Rapid Deployment Units stand by during cold-load training in the rear of a CH-47D Chinook helicopter prior to an insertion at COL Danger, near Tikrit, Iraq, Feb. 25.



Iraqi Police from the Emergency Response Unit and Rapid Deployment Unit, and U.S. Soldiers from 2/3rd FA, board an aircraft from Co. B, 3/25th GSAB, TF Hammerhead, to conduct a partnered air assault into three objectives in Salah ad-Din province from COL Danger, near Tikrit, Iraq, Feb. 25.

Scout training aids Iraqis in becoming air mobile qualified

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MSG DUFF E. MCFADDEN

PHOTOS BY PFC GREGORY GIESKE

[2ND HEAVY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM, 3RD INFANTRY DIVISION PAO](#)

■ With the advent of the helicopter, air-borne military operations became centered around the concept of strategic mobility, or getting the maximum number of Soldiers into the area of operations in the shortest amount of time.

Over the course of five days, members of the Iraqi Army and Kurdish Peshmerga learned all about air mobile tasks, such as providing perimeter and landing zone security, loading and unloading aircraft, movement formations, and detainee operations, at Joint Security Station India, located in Al Kindi, Iraq.

The Iraqis were introduced to the U.S. Army's "crawl, walk, run" concept of training, as they took part in numerous exercises leading up to the use of an actual aircraft. First, the Iraqis observed demonstrations by the 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Scouts, with 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division. Next, they walked through where they should be lined up, each person's responsibilities, and the order for tactically entering and exiting an aircraft.

The Soldiers trained on a 9-foot by 18-foot wooden box constructed to resemble an UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, complete with passenger seats and crew chief area. The training culminated with all 22 students loading and unloading aboard actual U.S. UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters.

Through endless repetition, as well as timed drills, they learned to respect the capabilities of the U.S. Army's tactical transport helicopter. The routine quickly turned into the necessary memory needed to react to air mobile situations.

Room clearance and detainee operation scenarios were also added, but the focal point of the training – safe entry and exit of a moving aircraft – trumped everything.

"While this course involved loading and unloading helicopters and the tasks subsequent in getting onto the helicopter," said Capt. David Fierner, Head Quarters Company Commander, "it also included safety

factors, such as buckling your safety belt and ensuring you're safe on the helicopter. Beyond that, it was Americans training Iraqis to lead themselves."

"It was great seeing the progress over the five-day stretch. At first there was some hesitation, but by day five, the Iraqis were training the trainer," said 1st Lt. Andrew Higgins, scout platoon leader and a Mansfield, Ohio resident. "With Iraqis in the lead and Americans on the opposite side with the assist-and-advise mission, we were able to see them grow. And by day five, they were actually able to get in the aircraft, fly around and get out, with very little assistance from U.S. forces,"

Perhaps the biggest lesson imparted upon the Iraqis wasn't directly related to the air mobile training. It may have been how American enlisted Soldiers were leading the way in providing this training, leadership and direction, especially for an Army that's not used to seeing such instruction coming from enlisted Soldiers.

"Not only did the Iraqis learn the skills of air mobile operations, but we got to develop them as Soldiers," said Capt. Fierner. "My Soldiers also got to develop camaraderie with the Iraqis, whom they'll be working with in future operations. So, they got to develop a bond and they got to impart their knowledge of this skill onto the Iraqis."

Everyone involved agreed the biggest training improvement would have been more "hands-on" training with actual Black Hawks. There's a huge difference between simulating the placement, loading and unloading of an UH-60, and then actually doing it.

"With more seat time, they could actually jump in and see how hard it actually is to put on seat belts with and without bags loaded inside the aircraft and then flying around," said Staff Sgt. Jeremiah McLaurine, senior scout with

the HHC, 1/36th Inf., scout platoon.

As for the Iraqis, they were pleased to work alongside their American partners.

"It's a very good class," said Capt. Ahmad Talib Karim, a 10-year Iraqi Army veteran. "It's motivating for our soldiers to train with the U.S. Soldiers. This is a whole new idea, as we haven't done this before, learning how to load and unload

the aircraft. Anashalla – hopefully – we're going to prove we're very qualified for such training.

"Our soldiers are very excited to learn this and they want to learn even more, especially when it comes to flying, loading and unloading the helicopter. These soldiers are the best in their units, that's why they were picked for this class. They've all had special forces training and that's helped them to learn this training," he said.

According to Staff Sgt. McLaurine, a Lima, Ohio, resident, his scouts trained

and trained hard.

"You train the first time, so people become familiar with it. You train the second time, so you begin to see results. You then train harder, so that way, you're saving lives during combat."

For Sgt. Eduardo Castellar, scout platoon, this was his first experience in instructing the Iraqi Army.

"Actually, it was pretty fun. Having contact with soldiers from another country was a pretty good learning experience. Their language was different, so it was lit-

erally hard at times, but I did enjoy it.

"You can see their officers leading their troops, just like we do. That's pretty common for any army. We have Soldiers helping train the Iraqi Army, and they're all getting along pretty good together, helping each other out. They were showing us how they do their training and we showed how we do our training, all the while trying to improve each other," Sgt. Castellar said.

"The Iraqis got some first-hand experience with our aircraft and saw how we load and unload tactically in a combat zone," said Sgt. Vincent Arrelano, scout platoon. "Now, they're more familiar with our tactics so they can transform them into their tactics in the near future."

"Working together with the Iraqi forces showed them how to train, so they can train their soldiers to become unified and work hand-in-hand in future operations with us."

The proposal to have Iraqi Security Forces participate in on air mobile exercises was generated by the local Stability Transition Team. After working hand-in-hand with Iraqi Army officials, it was felt that such training would be of huge benefit to specialized Iraqi soldiers.

"The Stability Transition Team working with the 2nd Iraqi Army, brought this idea to 1/36," said 1st Lt. Higgins. "The scout platoon was given a task and purpose. The task was to be able to train the Iraqi Army on air mobility skills, and the purpose was a greater understanding of helicopter usage, and also when the Iraqi Army has its own helicopters, they will have these same skills to be able to train the trainer."

Thanks to the success of such programs as the one at JSS India, the Iraqis will have many more opportunities to learn alongside their American counterparts.



1st Lieutenant Larry Richardson, 1/36th Inf, 1st BCT, 1st AD, is tactically removed from a Black Hawk helicopter while role playing as a detainee being delivered to JSS India for further investigation during the last stage of the training mission.

'Golden Lions' bond along borders

STORY AND PHOTOS BY PFC JESSICA LUHRS

GRAPHIC BY SGT JOHNATHON JOBSON

1ST HEAVY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM, 1ST ARMORED DIVISION PAO

■ On an Iraqi training compound just off of Forward Operating Base Warrior, near Kirkuk, Iraq, history is in the making. A brotherhood is forming between Task Force Marne Soldiers and their counterparts of the Kirkuk Combined Security Force, who together call themselves the 'Golden Lions.'

"I feel like I am a part of history because I am a Soldier with the CSF," said Spc. Brett Mango, a native of Midlothian, Ill., and dismount team leader with Red Platoon, Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Ga.

Specialist Mango explained that the CSF, consisting of Iraqi Army and Police, Peshmerga and Task Force Marne Soldiers, is a fairly new security force and one that many people had doubts about.

"There were many people who said it would be impossible to bring the four very different cultures together but we have done it," he continued. "We have taken four different entities and made them one."

This unity is easily seen by the black sleeve embroidered with a golden lion that all of the Soldiers wear on their left arm and the 3rd ID patch that many of the Iraqi soldiers wear on their right.

These soldiers also share more than the same insignia - they also share a lot of time together.

"We are on patrol, sweat, train, sleep and eat together," Spc. Mango said. "Something most Soldiers will never have the opportunity to do."



A soldier with the Kirkuk CSF scans a hillside for suspicious activity during a patrol with Co. A, 1/30th Inf. 2nd HBCT, 3rd ID out of Fort Stewart, Ga., north of Kirkuk, March 1.



A Kirkuk CSF soldier wears a 3rd ID patch along with his 'Golden Lion' brassard during a patrol.



A Soldier of Co. A, 1/30th Inf., 2nd BCT, 3rd ID, out of Fort Stewart, Ga., wears his Combined Security Force 'Golden Lion' insignia during a patrol with his fellow Iraqi CSF soldiers

Rock out in Iraq



Photo A - Former "Bad Company" lead singer, Brian Howe, performs at Contingency Operating Base Speicher

Photo by SPC Jessica Zullig



Photo by SGT Johnathon Jobson

Photo B - Zoltan Bathory, guitarist with "Five Finger Death Punch," adorned in military patches, performs at COB Speicher.

Photo C - Charlie Wilson, one of the most distinguished voices in R&B and former lead singer of Gap Band, performs at COB Speicher.

Photo D - Thunderstruck, an all female tribute band to AC/DC, pumps up the crowd at COB Speicher.



Photo by MSG Marcia Triggs



Photo by SPC Cassandra Monroe

Raising Marne Morale



Photo by SGT. Johnathon Jobson



Photo by SGT. Chad D. Nelson



Photo by SGT. Johnathon Jobson

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael Ferrera, a network management technician with Task Force Marne, dresses like a leprechaun for TF Marne's St. Patrick's day festivities, March 17, at Contingency Operating Base Speicher.



Photo by SGT. Johnathon Jobson

Soldiers from Contingency Operating Base Speicher join together for a walk to raise awareness about sexual harassment and assault prevention. The walk, one of many events to raise awareness on the subject, was organized by the Task Force Marne Equal Opportunity Office.



Photo by SPC. Michael Adams

Melinda Lord, a human terrain systems social scientist with Task Force Marne is attacked by a military working dog as part of Groundhog Day Festivities, Feb. 2, at Contingency Operating Base Speicher.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Houston Burke, Headquarters and Headquarters Operations Company, Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division, punts a football during a punt, pass and accuracy throw competition on Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Feb. 6. The competition was part of a week-long series of events leading to the viewing of the Super Bowl.

REFLECTIONS

A CHANCE TO REMEMBER THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE.

CAPTAIN ALFORD MARCUS

1ST SQUADRON, 230TH AIR CAVALRY REGIMENT
TENNESSEE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 BILLIE GRINDER

1ST SQUADRON, 230TH AIR CAVALRY REGIMENT
TENNESSEE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

PRIVATE 1ST CLASS ERIN MCCLYMAN

296TH BRIGADE SUPPORT BATTALION
3RD STRYKER BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM, 2ND INFANTRY DIVISION

SPECIALIST STEVEN BISHOP

422ND CIVIL AFFAIRS BATTALION, 352ND CIVIL AFFAIRS COMMAND

STAFF SERGEANT RICHARD JORDAN

1ST BATTALION, 36TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
1ST HEAVY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM, 1ST ARMORED DIVISION

The above listed Soldiers died between Jan. 10, 2010 and March 15, 2010 and were part of Task Force Marne or the 3rd Infantry Division.