

# BUILDING A LEGACY

By Spc. Samuel Soza  
 367th MPAD



COB BASRA – Soldiers attended a series of dedication ceremonies at several prominent buildings at Contingency Operating Base Basra, Dec. 31 to commemorate the achievements and sacrifices of five 34th Infantry Division Soldiers.

Speakers recounted the lives and accomplishments of the Soldiers and unveiled special plaques at the headquarters building, the band hall, the combined gym and USO, the troop medical clinic and the Post Exchange.

The first ceremony was held at the headquarters building and began with the singing of the national anthem by Sgt. Jennifer MacDonald, of the 34th Inf. Div. band.

Maj. Gen. Rick Nash, 34th Inf. Div. commander, spoke at the dedication of the headquarters building that was renamed “The General John W. Vessey Headquarters Building.”

The retired Vessey served with the 34th Inf. Div. – also known as the “Red Bulls” – in World War II and is a former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Nash also spoke regarding four fallen Soldiers.

“From this day forward,” he said, “As you enter the ‘Major Steven Hutchison Memorial Band Hall, the Specialist Daniel P. Drevnick Memorial Gym and USO, the Specialist Carlos E. Wilcox Memorial Troop Medical Clinic, or the Specialist James D. Wertish Memorial Post Exchange – remember with gratitude those who gave their last full measure of devotion to a cause much greater than themselves.”

The Division flag was folded to be presented to Vessey upon the “Red Bulls” return to their home state of Minnesota. Vessey served as the 10th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and had the distinction of being the only person to

*“We’re going to miss you guys, You’ll never be forgotten; you’ll always be in our hearts.”*

~ Robert McGrane  
 1st Platoon, 34th MP Co.



Photo by Spc. Samuel Soza

Specialist Brandon Hempel, driver and gunner with the 34th MPCo., a native of Spring Grove, Minn., bows his head in a moment of silence for his fallen comrade, Spc. Daniel Drevnick, of Woodbury, Minn., during a dedication ceremony in the combined gym and USO at COB Basra, Dec. 31.

obtain every rank in the Army, enlisted and officer.

The final three ceremonies, in honor of Drevnick, Wilcox, and Wertish drew a large crowd from the fallen Soldiers’ own 34th Military Police Company.

Robert McGrane, of Spring Valley, Wis., who works law and order with 1st platoon, 34th MP Co., said he was glad his friends were being recognized during the ceremonies.

“It means a lot, not just to me, but my whole platoon,” he said, “It means these guys are getting honored – their memory’s going to be there throughout the whole deployment for other Soldiers who are here.”

# Transition to USF-I marks significant step

By MSG David Bennett  
367 MPAD



COB BASRA – Though the name has changed, the aim remains the same.

On Jan. 1, all United States command groups merge into United States Forces-Iraq. While the new configuration is significant for headquarters elements, the transition to a full-fledged Iraqi force remains the goal.

As part of the reconfiguration, Multi-National Force-Iraq, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, Joint Area Support Group-Central, Task Force 134 – which oversees detainee operations, and the Gulf Region Division will be rolled into USF-I.

The merger is more than a name change. It reflects the first solid step to a responsible drawdown of U.S. troops in Iraq. According to projections, the U.S. will reduce the number of troops in the country to 50,000 by Aug. 31, 2010, from a current level of 115,000.

Comparably, Iraqi Security Forces have grown to more than 600,000.

To comply with the Security Agreement with Iraq, US forces are exchanging combat operations for stability, advisory and assistance assignments.

Lt. Col. Christopher Larrabee, deputy chief of plans for the 34th Infantry Division, now commanding United States Division South – formerly Multi-National



Photo by Samuel Soza

Brig. Gen. Gerald Lang, deputy commanding general for 34th Inf. Div. and USD-S – formerly MND-S – takes a meal with Iraqi Air Force Brig. Gen. Sami Saeed and Maj. Gen. Hamed Al Maliki, at the Iraqi dining facility at Contingency Operating Base Basra, Dec. 28. Even with the change in name, the focus on transition to full Iraqi-based security in the country continues.

Division South – said the transition will ultimately mean a 40-percent reduction in headquarters personnel.

As Brigade Combat Teams decrease in strength, the headquarters and command-and-control functions are streamlining nationwide. Nevertheless, the security and solidity of Iraq remains the top priority, Larrabee said.

“We’ll continue with the mission we’ve embarked on, which is to provide aid and assistance to the Iraqi forces,” he said.

U.S.-run Provincial Reconstruction Teams maintain a vital role in Iraq’s provinces and still depend on the presence and dispersion of U.S. forces to function.

The new U.S. forces headquarters still help connect the provinces and the central government, aiding the Iraqi government.

Overseeing the new organization is Gen. Raymond Odierno, head of MNF-I, who takes on the mantle of USF-I commander.

Likewise, when MNC-I cases its colors Jan. 1, Lt. Gen. Charles Jacoby Jr., MNC-I commander, will become deputy commanding general of USF-I. Officials said that in the following months, the second phase of the drawdown will continue until target goals are met.

For more of Master Sgt. Bennett’s stories, visit: [www.TheRedBulls.org/Bennett](http://www.TheRedBulls.org/Bennett)

## THE RED BULL REPORT

34th Red Bull Infantry Division  
Public Affairs Office



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- 12th Combat Aviation Brigade
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# Red Bulls caught with their hands in the cookie jar

By Spc. Stephanie Cassinos  
MND-S



COB BASRA – Soldiers on Contingency Operating Base Basra were delighted and eager to tear open buckets of Sweet Martha's cookies and dunk them in fresh milk, all courtesy of a joint-effort with the Blue Star Mothers of America and the Exchange Clubs of Minnesota to send the classic holiday treat to those deployed during the holidays.

## A taste of home

Eyes lit up as Soldiers of the 34th "Red Bull" Infantry Division popped the lids off of the familiar buckets and told their counterparts who had never had a Sweet Martha about the famous cookies, and how a trip to the Minnesota State Fair just isn't the same without them.

Since many Soldiers were deployed to Iraq during the fair this year, they were grateful to sink their teeth into something unique to Minnesota and to share that experience with others.

Chief Warrant Officer Krystal Jancze, a Portland, Ore. native, initially turned down a box of cookies. When she realized they were from Sweet Martha's Cookie Jar, a wide grin spread across her face and she quickly



Photos by Pfc. J. Princeville Lawrence

changed her mind.

"She was really ecstatic about the cookies," said Sgt. 1st Class Angela Amundson. "She even warmed them up and had lots of milk."

## "Real milk?"

After living so long without fresh milk, the concept really surprised most Sol-

diers, who stared in disbelief. "Is it still good?" they wondered. But after sipping on freshly poured cups of ice-cold milk, the general consensus was "Mmm .... I haven't tasted real milk for so long!"

Thanks to Kwik Trip and Carbonic Continental Ice of Burnsville, who had donat-

ed and packaged 300 gallons in dry ice, Soldiers were able to drink "real milk" in Iraq.

During the holidays, when it is harder to be so far away from home, it feels like a luxury to dunk a Sweet Martha cookie into a glass of real milk.

For more of Spc. Cassinos' stories, visit:  
[www.TheRedBulls.org/Cassinoss](http://www.TheRedBulls.org/Cassinoss)



## HOMETOWN HIGHLIGHT



Francis W. Pettygrove of Portland, Maine and Asa Lovejoy of Boston, Massachusetts each wished to name this city after his respective home town; this was decided with a coin toss, which Pettygrove won in a series of two out of three tosses. The coin used for this decision, now known as the Portland Penny, is on display in the headquarters of the Oregon Historical Society.



Photos by Spc. Samuel Soza

A plaque honoring retired Gen. John Vessey, of Minneapolis, Minn., is revealed by Maj. Gen. Rick Nash, 34th Inf. Div. commander, during a dedication ceremony in the headquarters building at COB Basra, Dec. 31. The retired Vessey served with the 34th Inf. Div. in World War II and is a former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.



Soldiers with the 34th MP Co. unveil the plaque honoring their fallen comrade, Spc. James Wertish, of Olivia, Minn., during a dedication ceremony at the Post Exchange at Contingency Operating Base Basra, Dec. 31.



Soldiers bow their heads in a moment of silence for their fallen comrade, medic Spc. Carlos Wilcox, of Cottage Grove, Minn., during a dedication ceremony at the Troop Medical Clinic at COB Basra, Dec. 31.



Soldiers look at the plaque for Maj. Steven Hutchison, of Scottsdale, Ariz., during a dedication ceremony in the band hall at COB Basra, Dec. 31. Hutchison, a 60 year-old veteran of the Vietnam War, was the oldest combat fatality in Iraq.

## From Page 1 LEGACY

Spc. Brandon Hempel, of Spring Grove, Minn., a driver and gunner with the 34th MP Co., agreed.

"It shows that everyone here really did care about what happened that night," he said. "A lot of it just shows respect."

During the ceremony at the USO and gym, Soldiers nodded their heads in agreement when Drevnick's "lighthearted" nature was revisited.

The TMC was dedicated to Wilcox, a medic, for his commitment to improving his medical knowledge, which Hempel said was accurate.

"Wilcox always had

books," he said, "Any time we were in the truck he'd throw out medical things, and we'd say, 'What?'"

The PX, a source of many Soldiers' sports equipment purchases, reflected Wertish's inclinations toward spending much time outside.

During the ceremony there, a story was told about Wertish breaking his collar bone while riding on a snow mobile right before his deployment to Iraq.

His leaders commented on how his sense of duty showed in his concerned and apologetic response to the accident.

Finding a way to commemorate Soldiers is very

important, said Hempel.

"I don't want their memory to go unknown," he said, "The PX was named after Spc. Wertish, TMC after Spc. Wilcox, and the USO after Drevnick, [and] it shows that they were here, something happened, their memory's not forgotten, it's with us."

The three MPs were killed by a rocket attack on COB Basra on July 16, 2009.

Hutchison was killed in action in Basrah, May 10, 2009.

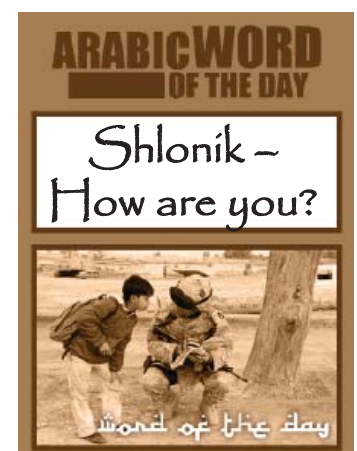
Hutchison, a 60 year-old veteran of the Vietnam War, was the oldest combat fatality in Iraq.

With the new year often being a time of reflection for many, McGrane said he

will be thinking back on his friends.

"We're going to miss you guys," he said, "You'll never be forgotten; you'll always be in our hearts."

For more of Spc. Soza's stories, visit:  
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# Job Searching Strategy Sessions



*All sessions are in the Sandstorm Conference Room*

## **Session 1**

***"Seeking New Careers and Job Opportunities"***

***DEC 30, 1000-1200***

***JAN 1, 1800-2000***

## **Session 2**

***"Effective Resume Writing"***

***JAN 4, 1000-1130 or 1700-1830***

## **Session 3**

***"Interview Techniques and Preparation"***

***JAN 6, 1000-1130 or 1730-1900***

## **Session 4**

***"One on One Practical Interviews"***

***JAN 7-18***

***Schedule an Appointment with CW2 Yu***

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# Red Bull Flea Market & Charity Collection



## Sunday, January 17, 2010

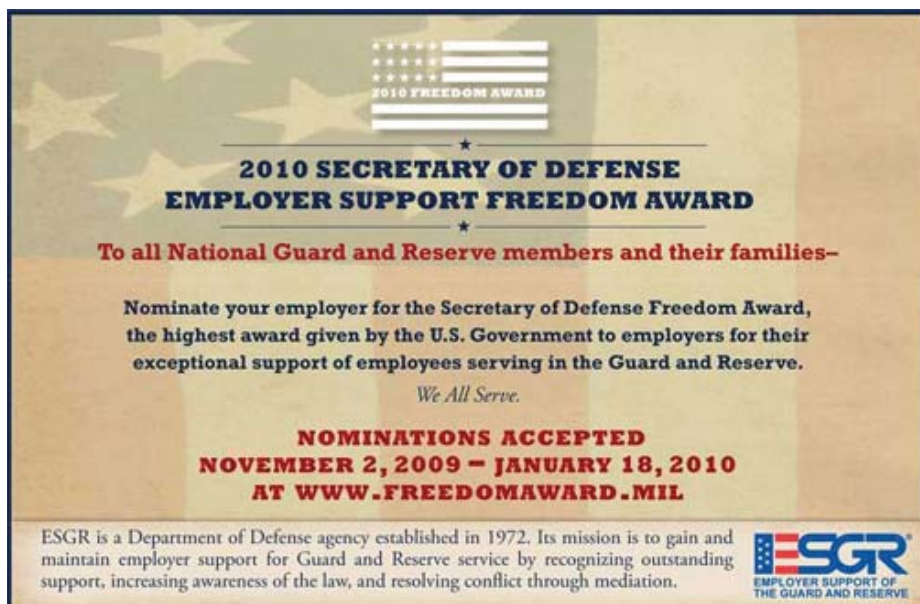
at the Red Bull LSA Volleyball courts from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**This is an opportunity to sell your items privately, from service member to service member or to donate items to charity! Provide your own display, and set your own prices. Pick up bags to store donations\* prior to Jan. 17 at the Red Bull MWR tent.**

**\*SUGGESTED ITEMS** - clean towels and bed linens, useable running shoes, civilian clothes, etc.

**\*PROHIBITED ITEMS** - uniform clothing items, undergarments, any military equipment, any item with an NSN, and weapons.





## Recognize employers for support [www.FreedomAward.mil](http://www.FreedomAward.mil)

Time is running out for members of the National Guard and Reserve and their families to nominate employers for the 15th Anniversary Freedom Award, the highest recognition given by the U.S. Government to employers for their support of employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

The award was created to publicly recognize employers who provide exceptional support to their National Guard and Reserve employees. It is the highest in a series of employer recognition awards given by the Department of Defense and is presented annually by the Secretary of Defense.

Service members are encouraged to visit [www.FreedomAward.mil](http://www.FreedomAward.mil) through January 18, 2010 to nominate employers. Award nominees will be recognized by the Department of Defense and announced in March 2010. The 15 award recipients will be announced in early summer.

Almost one-half of the U.S. military is comprised of the National Guard and Reserve and the Department of Defense shares these citizen warriors with their civilian employers, many of whom provide significant support to their employees serving in the National Guard and Reserve.

The National Committee of Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) sponsored awards program is designed to recognize employers for policies and practices that are supportive of their employees' participation in National Guard and Reserve service. All employer recognition and awards originate from nominations by individual Reserve component members.

## Employer awards include:

**Patriot Award Certificate of Appreciation.** ESGR awards this certificate and a Patriot lapel pin on behalf of the Department of Defense. All members of the National Guard and Reserve forces are eligible to nominate their employers for the Patriot Award certificate. A certificate will be given to all employers that are nominated. This nomination is subsequently used by the local ESGR Committee as the basis for consideration to receive higher level awards.

**Above and Beyond Award.** It is given in limited numbers by state and territory ESGR committees. It recognizes employers at the state and local level who go above the legal requirements for granting leave and providing support for their employees.

**Pro Patria Award.** It is presented to those employers who demonstrate exceptional support for our national defense by adopting personnel policies that make it easier for employees to participate in the National Guard and Reserve. Each committee may give only one annually.

**Employer Support Freedom Awards.** The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is the U.S. Government's highest recognition awarded employers for their support of Guard and Reserve service.

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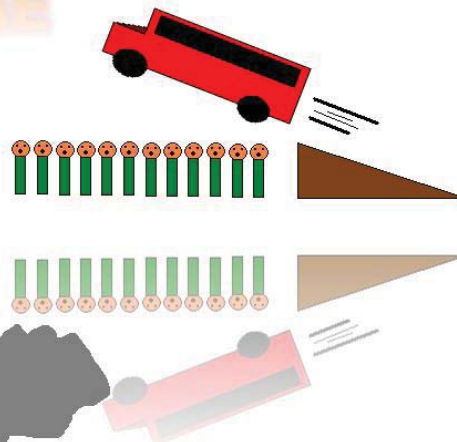
By Capt. Daniel Cape

NEW YEARS EVE

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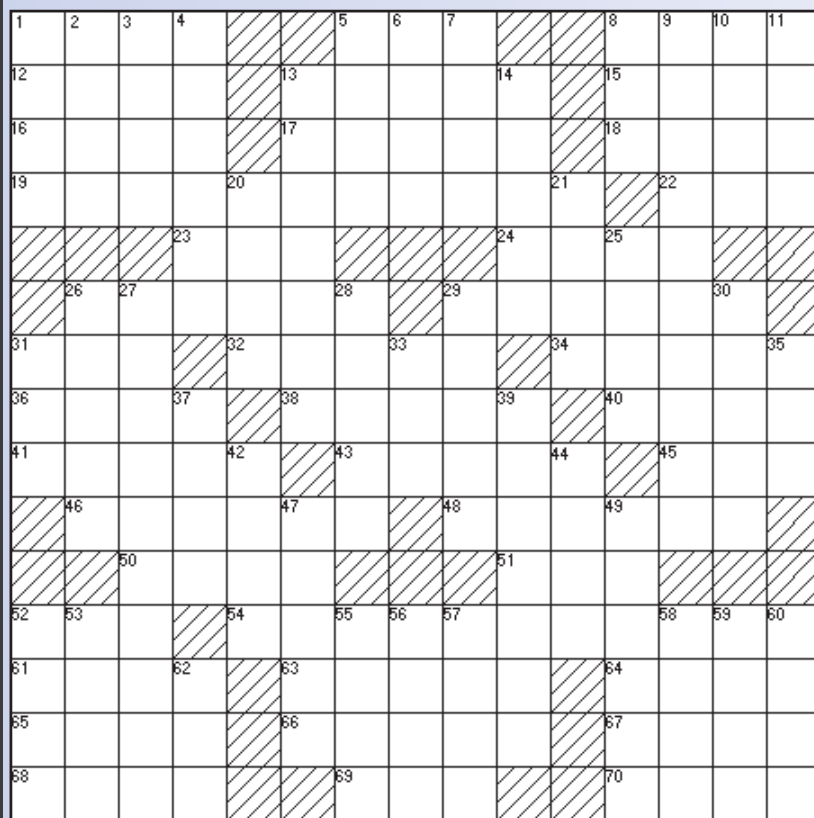
1 BUS  
80 STAFF OFFICERS  
1 NIGHT ONLY

THE STUNT  
OF A  
LIFETIME



COB BASRA, IRAQ

## Crossword



1. A very trouble-some child  
5. Fold over and sew together  
8. Historical periods  
12. Entice  
13. Ways  
15. Inflammation of the big toe  
16. \_\_\_-friendly  
17. Overweight  
18. Expert  
19. Extremely conservative  
22. Arrest  
23. S

24. Morally admirable  
26. Roof of the mouth  
29. Medieval  
31. Pale  
32. Majestic  
34. Android  
36. Picnic insects  
38. Handrail post  
40. Disolute man  
41. Motionless  
43. Move stealthily  
45. Anagram of "Sue"  
46. Spurt

### Down

1. Obscure  
2. Feint  
3. Territory  
4. Male hawk  
5. Vagabond  
6. Biblical garden  
7. Tableland  
8. It comes from a hen  
9. Traffic circle (British)  
10. Distinctive atmosphere  
11. Counterfoil  
13. Wet  
14. Twilled fabric

20. Russian emperor  
21. Not our  
25. Smell  
26. Trousers  
27. Obsolete  
28. Discharge  
29. Armada  
30. Really bad  
31. Is, formerly  
33. Barley bristle  
35. Golf ball support  
37. Aspersion  
39. Biggest  
42. Fifty-three in Roman numerals  
44. Avid

48. Accord  
50. Murres  
51. Obtain  
52. By way of  
54. Neglect  
61. Exploits  
63. Pandemonium  
64. Feudal worker  
65. Leak slowly  
66. Serf  
67. Killed  
68. Swirl  
69. Encountered  
70. Exam

47. Livestock farm  
49. Swear  
52. Arrangement holder  
53. Chilled  
55. Throat-clearing sound  
56. Story  
57. Honk  
58. Part of an archipelago  
59. 1 1 1 1  
60. Semiaquatic salamander  
62. Secret agent

For puzzle solutions visit: [www.TheRedBulls.org/puzzlesolutions](http://www.TheRedBulls.org/puzzlesolutions)



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## Around the world in 34 seconds



**KABUL** - Insurgents intensified their campaign against military targets and U.S.-led forces in Afghanistan, killing eight U.S. CIA agents at a base and four Canadian servicemen on patrol and a journalist accompanying them. U.S. officials said the dead Americans -- killed in a suicide bombing on a military base in southeastern Khost province on Wednesday -- were CIA agents. It was one of the highest foreign non-military death tolls in the eight-year war against the Islamist Taliban. The four Canadians and the journalist from the Calgary Herald were killed when their armored vehicle was hit by a bomb in southern Kandahar province on Wednesday, the Canadian Defense Ministry said. The base in Khost province, Forward Operating Base Chapman, was engaged in reconstruction projects, a key part of U.S. President Barack Obama's strategy to stabilize the country. Some people were wounded in the explosion, defense officials said, but no U.S. or NATO troops were among them. Asked whether the suicide blast occurred inside the base, one official said: "That's my understanding." Another senior official confirmed the attack involved an explosive vest.



**NEW YORK** - A plan to protect New Year's Eve revelers in Times Square is a template for how New York City will secure Manhattan during the trials of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and other suspected September 11 plotters, police say. Critics have accused the U.S. Justice Department of endangering America's most populous city by choosing to try Mohammed, the suspected mastermind of the September 11 attacks on the United States, and four others in a lower Manhattan court. Tens of thousands of people pack Times Square and nearby streets every year to celebrate New Year's Eve, making the party a potential target. Security has been particularly tight at the celebrations since the 2001 attacks that killed nearly 3,000 people. "You have similar elements protecting Times Square that would be employed protecting the prison. We're concerned about similar things," police spokesman Paul Browne said.



**LOS ANGELES** - Hopes of salvaging the hotly anticipated fight between Manny Pacquiao and American Floyd Mayweather Jr. were dealt another blow on Wednesday when the Filipino filed a lawsuit against his opponent. Pacquiao has sued Mayweather, the American's father Floyd Sr., his uncle Roger and Golden Boy Promotions for falsely accusing him of using performance-enhancing drugs. The suit, filed in a federal court in Las Vegas, asks for damages in excess of \$75,000, plus punitive damages. Oscar De La Hoya and Richard Shaefer, who operate Golden Boy Promotions and are promoting Mayweather, were also named as defendants. "Mr. Pacquiao simply could not allow these false, reckless and malicious statements to go unanswered," said Pacquiao's attorney Daniel Petrocelli. "He had no choice but to file this law suit to protect his good name and reputation which has been earned after years and years of hard work. "Whether or not the fight goes forward, whoever he fights next, he's not going to sit by and let people publicly accuse him of being a cheater. There is absolutely no basis for such statements to be made about him."



**LONDON** - An escaped British prisoner is taunting police and attracting a growing Internet fan base from his Facebook profile, mocking authorities for failing to find him and openly musing about moving across the Atlantic. But police say the convicted burglar's antics on the popular social networking site haven't gone unnoticed and have appealed to his more than 3,800 Facebook friends to help track him down. Craig "Lazie" Lynch, 28, escaped from the minimum-security Hollesley Bay Prison near the village of Woodbridge in southern England three months ago. Since then, he's been regularly updating his Facebook page with ungrammatical digs at police, as well as pictures showing him holding a "wanted" sign or making obscene gestures at the camera. Police said that Lynch had been serving a seven-year sentence for committing a burglary with a weapon, but did not go into detail.