

The North Star

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Photo by Spc. Robert England, 2nd AAB, 25th ID PAO

Staff Sergeant Joseph Burdulinski, a Chicago, Ill., native, and Soldier with Co. B, 1/21st Inf., 2nd AAB, 25th ID, shouts an order for movement during a tactical demonstration Sept. 30 at a palm grove near Ba'qubah in Diyala province, Iraq. The demonstration was performed for senior Iraqi Army officers to showcase the skills their Soldiers will be learning during rural training exercises slated for October.

U.S. platoon shows tactics to IA officers

Article by
Spc. Robert England,
2nd AAB, 25th ID PAO

Clouds of thick green smoke completely obstructed the view through the densely vegetated forest. Commands were shouted back and forth across the palm grove as four U.S. Soldiers emerged through the wall of concealment in a full sprint to their next covered

position. The Soldiers took up their ready positions and provided cover fire, allowing the next team to advance toward the objective.

Aside from the crowd of Iraqi Army officers and Soldiers observing from a footpath beside the rows of trees and trenches, blank firing adapters were the only indication that the event unfolding before their eyes was a training demonstration.

Soldiers from Company B, 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment "Gimlets," 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, provided a demonstration of platoon movement techniques in a woodland environment Sept. 30 at the request of senior ranking IA officers in Diyala province. The purpose of the demonstration was to show the IA officers the training

their Soldiers will receive in October.

"The purpose of the demonstration is to give our IA counterparts an introduction into what training we'll be providing them in the next month, specifically the 5th IA Commando Battalion," said Capt. Rustin Jessup, a Benton, Ark., native, and the company

See TACTICS, Page 3

Mothers of fallen Soldiers travel to Iraq

Article By

SpC. Jennifer Montagna
CP-North Public Affairs

Nine Gold Star Mothers traveled to the Sulaymania Arts Center Sept. 26th, for a three-day conference.

The Gold Star Mothers Organization was created to provide emotional support to U.S. women who have lost a son or daughter in the line of duty. For these nine mothers it was a chance to see the outcome of a war that claimed their children's lives, and what their loved ones were fighting for.

The conference began with speeches from the First Lady of Iraq, Hero Talabani, the Iraqi Martyrs Office, and Task Force Marne Deputy Commanding General Support, Brig. Gen. Tom Vandal.

"It's an honor to participate in today's events to recognize the sacrifices made by the Gold Star Mothers and to thank them for the sacrifices of their loved ones," said, Brig. Gen. Vandal. "As revered members of our military community, your love and devotion to the families of the armed services gives all of us strength and confidence knowing that you stand with us honoring those who have made the ultimate sacrifice," he said.

Among those attending the conference were Iraqi women who had lost loved ones in the line of duty while working to make their country a better place.

"Regardless of differences in culture, we can all agree on the importance of family and the sense of belonging to something bigger than ourselves. It is obvious as we see the fruits of their sacrifices that Iraq is on its way



Photo by SpC. Jennifer Montagna, CP-North Public Affairs

Iraq's First Lady Hero Talabani (center) spoke at the Gold Star Mothers event held Sept. 26 at the Sulaymania Arts Center in Sulaymania, Iraq. First Lady Talabani welcomed the Gold Star Mothers and thanked them for their sacrifices and the sacrifices of their children.

toward improved security and economic development. Those men and women, who died for a noble cause in Iraq, would be proud of what we see today in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region and Sulaymania," said Brig. Gen. Vandal.

First Lady Talabani also spoke of her gratitude for U.S. and Iraqi forces working together to change the lives of her people.

"Your sons came and liberated Iraq," she said to the U.S. mothers.

"They managed to take down dictators of destruction, we are honored to meet you here today, and we will never forget what your kids, your sons and your daughters did for us. Terrorist could never stop the progress of our nation and with the help of the U.S. we've rid Iraq of Saddam forever," added First Lady Talabani.

A documentary film was played to show the Gold Star Mothers what their sons and daughters had lib-

erated the Iraqi people from. It was an emotional event, where mothers connected with each other regardless of which country they were from.

"We stand for families united for universal respect, we are sowing the seeds of friendship and we feel as though we have much in common," said Joan Betros on behalf of the Gold Star Mothers. Joan Betros is the co-founder of FUTURE and helped to organize the conference.

The Gold Star Mothers met with Iraqi Martyrs to share their stories of pride and loss, mingling before the event. Emily Shields of Columbia, S.C., spoke highly of her son 1st Lt. Andrew C. Shields, who was killed in an apache helicopter accident near the city of Mosul, Iraq, in 2004.

"My child did what he could to help the people of this country and now I feel like I have the chance to do the same by coming here and connecting with oth-

ers who have been through what I have," said Shields.

"We've been treated very nicely and welcomed so kindly by the Iraqi Martyrs and everyone else involved in this event," she said.

Hugs were a big gesture and given out in abundance at the conference as part of the program Hugs for Healing.

"We don't get a chance to hug the uniform very much anymore now that our children are gone, so it's nice not only to be over here, but to see Soldiers again," said Shields who embraced Capt. Susan Downing, Command Post – North Engagements officer.

The bond between the Iraqi Martyrs and Gold Star Mothers was evident and the opportunity to meet each other was appreciated on both sides. Along with camaraderie the Gold Star Mothers brought humanitarian aid supplies such as baby blankets and bottles with them for those who were in need.

Soldiers participate in Iron Warrior Competition

By **Spc. Cassandra Monroe**
135th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Enter the Task Force Marne Headquarters building at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq, and the noticeable sounds of typing, hurried steps and multiple conversations fill the hallways.

But on the night of Oct. 2, the building was silent. Instead, the noise was present in the back compound of the headquarters, where cheers and claps, paired with adrenaline pumping music, filled the area.

Soldiers gathered at the compound for the Rocky Elite Iron Warrior Competition, a competition that tested the endurance of both males and females in a three-series weight lifting event. The events included the squat, bench press and dead-lift.

"Basically, these events will test your overall strength," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Christopher Hoo,

the 3rd Infantry Division Unmanned Aircraft System standardization and safety officer. "It's a morale booster for guys and girls who lift all the time and don't get any recognition for it. We're going to do something for those guys. Now, here's [an event] for the weight lifters and power lifters."

The event was the idea of the 1,000 Pound Club's avid 3rd Infantry Division weight lifters.

"I'm always in the gym lifting, and I listen to the Soldiers, and they're always saying, 'why don't we put something together, they put other events on for other things, so why don't we do something?'" said CW2 Hoo. "So, I basically just took the Soldiers' ideas and ran with it."

With each event, competitors had

See WEIGHT LIFT, Page 5



Photo by Spc. Cassandra Monroe, 135th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Staff Sergeant Tammy Patch, a frequency manager with 3rd Sig. Co. DSTB, 3rd ID, participates in the squat event during the Rocky Elite Iron Warrior Competition, Oct. 2, at COB Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq.

TACTICS, Continued from Page 1

commander for Co. B, 1-21 Inf. Regt.

The demonstration began with an introduction and then a field expedient terrain model was constructed from bricks and other natural elements to depict a rudimentary map of the palm grove and surrounding landmarks. Plastic, color-coded toy Soldiers were used to illustrate U.S. and Iraqi troop locations in relation to simulated enemy forces. The mission was assault the enemy stronghold within the densely vegetated orchard.

"We're showing the IA commanders how to effectively conduct an operation order using a terrain model as a graphic structure," said Sgt. 1st Class Randy Robertson, a Sacramento, Calif., native, and a platoon sergeant for Co. B, 1/21 Inf. Regt.

The core of the training will consist of basic mili-

tary fundamentals such as the importance of constant situational awareness, communication, and how to maintain individual sectors of fire. These simple skills are imperative in mastering the more advanced tactical movements that will also be taught.

"Once we make contact we'll do a basic react to contact drill," Sgt. 1st Class Robertson said. "We'll send one squad in to support by fire while another squad flanks across the objective. The support-by-fire squad will then sweep toward the objective, completing the exercise."

The Gimlet platoon hopes to instill in their IA counterparts the confidence that each Soldier will perform his duties as required when he is called upon to do so.

"We're going to incorporate a couple simulated casualties as well to teach them to take care of their

wounded and not just leave them on the battlefield," Sgt. 1st Class Robertson said. The training site that will be used is an orchard that will be transformed into a simulated battlefield to assist in the IA's next step toward self-reliance in full-spectrum security operations.

"The IA has been conducting palm grove clearance operations the whole month of September," Sgt. 1st Class Robertson said. "They believe insurgents or al-Qaida in Iraq have set up operations inside the palm groves."

The necessity for training in a rural environment spawned from a recent IA clearance mission in a palm grove in which IA Soldiers suffered the losses of several officers while assaulting a smaller force of insurgents. The operation caused IA commanders to reassess their approach from urban to rural environments.

"Iraqi Army forces were pinned down by a small group of insurgents and it took them like six days to get the palm grove cleared," said Sgt. 1st Class Robertson. "So this is like the repercussions of that because they needed better training on how to clear palm groves."

This new training is necessitated by a drastic change in environment. The IA troops have recently pushed the majority of insurgent forces beyond city boundaries, causing them to take refuge in secluded wooded areas like the palm groves.

"This training contributes a lot to the independence of Iraq because most of the fights now have come out of the cities and into smaller villages and palm groves like these," said Spc. Owen Sablan, a Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, native, and a radio-telephone operator with HHC 1/21 Inf. Regt.

Task Force Marne Heroes of the North



Specialist Abigail Waldrop, a broadcast journalist with Headquarters and Headquarters Operations Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division, and a St. Augustine, Fla., native, has done an extraordinary job giving Task Force Marne international visibility. As a 3rd ID broadcaster, her news packages are ubiquitous. They frequently air on Marne TV, and are often seen on Armed Forces Network (AFN) or the Pentagon Channel. Her steadfast efforts keep Family Members at Fort Stewart, Ga., and the military community aware of Task Force Marne's many accomplishments during a time of decreased media coverage in Iraq. It is because of the dogged determination and intense drive of Soldiers like Spc. Waldrop that the story of American Soldiers, Sailors, and Airmen serving in northern Iraq is still told. Her production and editing skills are simply outstanding and her professionalism sets her apart. Specialist Waldrop's undaunted commitment to excellence makes her a critical member of the Task Force Marne Public Affairs team and a most deserving choice for the Task Force Marne Hero of the North.



Specialist Zebulan R. Alford, a Panama City Beach, Fla., native with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, is an outstanding Soldier and a great asset to his company. Over a recent six-day period, he demonstrated an unmatched level of effort in support of his company's operations. Specialist Alford worked tirelessly to ensure 11 awards were properly prepared and forwarded to the approving authority. He made a significant contribution to the planning, preparation, and execution of two ceremonies to honor fallen comrades. His military bearing and tireless work ethic is simply outstanding and marks him as a true professional. Specialist Alford routinely works extra hours to ensure all work is completed to the highest standards of timeliness and accuracy. Specialist Alford has unlimited potential and will soon be an incredible asset to the corps of non-commissioned officers. His dedication to duty, total mission focus and high level of care for his fellow Soldiers make him the perfect selection as the Task Force Marne Hero of the North.

Prince of Physicians provides influence on medicine

Cultural Tidbit Special to the North Star

Abu Ali al-Husayn ibn Abd Allah ibn Sina, known in the West as Avicenna, is considered by many to be the father of medicine.

Avicenna was a polymath whose contributions to physical medicine, chemistry, psychology, mathematics, and much more are as relevant and illuminating as they were nearly 1,000 years ago. Though Avicenna wrote hundreds of treaties, he is best known for *The Book of Healing* and *The Canon of Medicine*. Avicenna was born around 980 CE in Afshana, an area in present-day Uzbekistan. As a child prodigy, he memorized the Quran and was practicing medicine by the age of 18.

In addition to bringing together the then available knowledge, the Canon is filled with the author's original contributions. His important original contribution includes such advances as

recognition of the contagious nature of phthisis and tuberculosis; distribution of diseases by water and soil, and interaction between psychology and health. In addition to describing pharmacological methods, the Canon describes 760 drugs and became the most authentic medical reference of the era. He was also the first to describe meningitis and made rich contributions to anatomy, gynecology and child health.

Avicenna, or Ibn Sina as he was known, was an accomplished physician by the age of 21 and had published many of his greatest works before he was 40. Ibn Sina died at the age of 58 from severe colic. He recognized his symptoms and knew that the regimen required to starve off the disease and would be all-consuming. He let the disease take its course. He knew he was going to die and when friends urged him to pursue the complicated and painful steps to push the disease back he remarked, "I prefer a

short life with width to a narrow one with length."

Though Ibn Senna is best known for his influence upon medicine, his writing on philosophy, psychology and metaphysics were equally influential throughout the Middle Age centuries that followed his death. Avicenna's philosophical contributions earned him the title "Second Teacher" (after Aristotle) among Arabs and *Principes Philosophorum*—"The Great Master"—among Western Scholastics. His *Book of Healing* or *Shifā*, exerted a strong influence on Muslims, Jews, and Christians alike and led to the revival of interest in Aristotle in the Middle Ages. The work of Avicenna heavily influenced western medicine and philosophy, guiding the work of Thomas Aquinas, Albertus Magnus, and many others over the centuries.

This report is a product of Florinda Lucero, Analyst with the Human Terrain Analysis Cell.

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WEIGHT LIFT, Continued from Page 3



Photo by Spc. Cassandra Monroe, 135th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Master Sergeant Edward Wright, the Division Inspector General's noncommissioned officer in charge, 3rd ID, participates in the dead-lift event during the Rocky Elite Iron Warrior Competition, Oct. 2, at COB Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq. Master Sergeant Wright took first place for the male's competition with 1,385 total pounds lifted.

three chances to get their highest weight lift, ensuring optimal opportunities to get their highest score. Competitors had to have a combined score of 1,000 pounds for males and 500 pounds for females, in all three events. Only the top three male and female competitors will be recognized, but the event served as a great break for Soldiers who participated, as well as those who observed.

"It's a morale booster, just to get

[Soldiers'] minds off of work," said Spc. Tommy Thornton, a targeting analyst with Headquarters and Headquarters Operations Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 3rd ID. "It can be a stressful job out here in Iraq, being deployed. [This competition] is something to release stress and working out to get away," said Spc. Thornton.

"Most people came out there to see what we can do," said Spc. Thornton. "We've been out here for a year now

... everybody takes the time to lift weights during that year, for fun, but more so just to see where they're at."

Sergeant First Class Shonn Loftin, a G-3 airspace management noncommissioned officer with 3rd Infantry Division, also believes that events like these help sustain deployments.

It gives Soldiers something else to think about or concentrate on while being deployed, said Sgt. 1st Class Loftin, a Wilmington, N.C., native. It [also] gives Soldiers a physical fitness goal to work toward. For some Soldiers in the competition, placing in the top three wasn't the only goal they wanted to achieve. Some Soldiers wanted to participate so they could gauge their physical fitness strengths. This event is to motivate younger Soldiers and to inspire younger soldiers to continue physical fitness. The winners for the event will be awarded a Commanding General's coin, and a Certificate of Achievement. Promotion points would have been awarded to junior enlisted Soldiers who would have placed in the top three slots.

Taking the top titles for the male competitors are Master Sgt. Edward Wright, Inspector General's Office, with 1,385 pounds; Sgt. 1st Class Loftin, G-3 Air, with 1,300 pounds; Capt. Todd Schwartz, 21st Combat Surgical Hospital, with 1,275 pounds. For the female competitors, Sgt. 1st Class Cleopatra Griggs-Adams, G-6, with 665 pounds; Capt. Melissa Johnson, G-2, with 625 pounds; Capt. Shaquella Whitt, CBRN-E, with 580 pounds.

THE

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