

VANGUARD VOICE

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NEW DAWN

**Troops continue to advise,
assist Iraqi Security Forces**



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Read more articles about the 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division.
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On the Cover



Staff Sgt. Brendan Carey, a military police Soldier assigned to the 442nd Military Police Company, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, advises his Iraqi Police counterpart on defensive driving tactics, Oct. 30. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas)



COMMAND TEAM MESSAGE

Vanguard Team,

Thank you for all that you do for our country, our Army, and our Families. There is no more appropriate time to be grateful for those (Soldiers and Families) in service to our Nation than when their volunteer duty takes them away from those they love during the special times of the holidays. Many of us have memories of holiday times spent apart while on duty, training, or deployed. It is during these times the sacrifices we make have a personal way of highlighting our commitment to what we do, and why we do it.

Since my early days in the Army, during holidays away from home, I would think to the reasons I chose to serve. It was easy for me to put into context how my personal sacrifice during those times, allowed so many others to be able to enjoy their holidays in a secure and safe country at home. I also think about the sacrifices my family makes by supporting me while away, enabling me to serve. It is truly a family commitment and one the citizens of our country recognize and are grateful.

I don't have to tell you that it is worth it. We are making our time deployed count as we continue to accomplish our Nation's important mission in Iraq. As you look through the pages of our Vanguard Voice, I hope that it's easy to see the great impact we are having in accomplishing our mission. Daily, the Soldier's of this great brigade work hard to secure Iraq's, and in part, our own future peace. We consistently assist Iraqi Security Forces' improve their governmental capacity so that a renewed and prosperous ally stands ready to reject those that mean us harm. It is often hard work that shows small improvement that is difficult to see on a daily basis. But it is helping them, and helping us.

During our time apart this holiday season, I ask you to consider your and your Family's place in the great history of our Nation. From the snow covered Christmas of our first Army during the Revolution, to the winter defense of the "bulge" in WWII, to the desert nights in Iraq, our service is part of a long line of sacrifice that makes America a nation like no other. CSM Altman and I thank you personally for what you do, and the incredible manner in which you accomplish our mission.

VANGUARD—OUT FRONT!



COL LOU LARTIGUE
COMMANDER



CSM JOSEPH ALTMAN
COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR



Infantry Soldiers support IP-led humanitarian assistance event

Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas
4/3 AAB Public Affairs

RAMADI, Iraq—Iraqi Police officers in Anbar province, with support from the Ramadi Widows Outreach Assistance Program, distributed care packages to Iraqis in need Aug. 29 at the Anbar Business Center in an effort to build a more stable and self-sustaining country.

“The Iraqi Police (put) much needed food into the hands of needy Iraqis,” said 1st Sgt. Chad Brown, first sergeant of Company D, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, whose team of 25 Soldiers supported the IP-led humanitarian assistance mission. “But the long term effect that we’re looking for is (they’re building) trust in the Iraqi government (which is responsible for) today’s event.”

“The Iraqi Police are stepping up and taking the lead in almost all operations.”

1st Sgt. Chad Brown
D Co., 3-15 Inf. Regt.

About 20 members of the Ramadi City District Police coordinated the humanitarian assistance operation that provided about 500 residents, mostly widows, with packages containing rice, flour, sugar, powdered milk and cooking oil. In addition, the Iraqi Police provided security around the business center, ensuring the safety of those in attendance.

“They asked us to be there just as an outside force, but most of the work they did themselves,” Brown said. “The Iraqi Police are stepping up and taking the lead in almost all operations.”

Brown, a four-time combat veteran and Kingsley, Mich., native, said much has changed since he first deployed to Iraq with the 3rd Inf. Div. during the 2003 invasion.

“With the invasion, there was the excitement of coming in and liberating Iraq,” he said. “Every deployment since then has (resulted in) a marginal increase in the (improvement) of this country. For me, it went from ‘Can it really work; can we really get out of Iraq?’ to ‘Oh, absolutely.’”

Continued next page

LEFT: Anbar Iraqi Police and members of the Anbar Business Center hand out bags of food to approximately 500 Ramadi residents Aug. 29.

RIGHT: An Iraqi widow leaves the Anbar Business Center with a bag containing rice, flour, sugar, powdered milk and cooking oil Aug. 29. (U.S. Army photos by Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas)





TOP: First Sergeant Chad Brown, with Co. D, 3-15 Inf. Regt., hands out candy to children during a combined humanitarian assistance mission at the Anbar Business Center, Aug. 29. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas)

BOTTOM: An Iraqi child leaves the Anbar Business Center with meal for her family and a smile on her face, Aug. 29.

in his battalion plan to support more IP-led events like this in the future.

“Even though our mission now is to (advise and assist) the Iraqi government, of course, as an American Soldier, I like to get out and see the good order of effects that we can bring,” he said. “It’s always a good feeling to just interact with the local culture. There will be a lot of people tonight, when they break (their) fast (for the Muslim holy month of Ramadan), enjoying some of the food that was handed out today.”

Second Lt. Dan Smith, fire support officer for 3rd Bn., 15th Inf. Regt., said the Aug. 29 IP-led event helped give the local population confidence in the Iraqi Security Forces and the Government of Iraq.

“The event was conducted smoothly and efficiently and illustrated the Iraqi Police’s ability to adapt to different security environments and to conduct a well-organized mission,” Smith said.

Brown said this was the second humanitarian assistance mission 3rd Bn., 15th Inf. Regt. has supported since their arrival in Anbar Province in July. Soldiers

Maintaining partnership

703rd BSB Soldiers train Iraqi mechanics

Some of those 50,000 Soldiers who’ve stayed behind in Iraq are busy now helping Iraqis learn valuable skills, such as auto repair.

Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas
4/3 AAB Public Affairs

HABANIYA, Iraq— Mechanics with the 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, are helping to improve the readiness of Iraqi Security Forces by instructing vehicle maintenance classes at Iraqi Army Camp Habaniya.

These weekly classes are part of 4/3 AAB’s effort to help build ISF capabilities as the U.S. continues to move more troops out of Iraq, and the ISF continues to take the lead in securing a stable and sovereign Iraq.

Spc. Henry Moss, a Greenville, S.C., native, and Spc. Edwin Perez, a Long Beach, Calif., native, both mechanics with the 703rd BSB, teach troubleshooting tactics to Iraqi mechanics responsible for maintaining all Iraqi Army vehicles in Anbar Province.

“Every time we come out here, we try to give them the best knowledge we have on the vehicle that they are



Spc. Henry Moss, an mechanic with Company B, 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th AAB, discusses repair of a humvee engine with mechanics with the Iraqi Ministry of Defense Sept. 15 at Camp Habaniya, Iraq. (U.S. Army photos by Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas)

working on,” Moss said. “Normally, we try to teach classes that pertain to current issues they are having.”

Moss said he and Perez teach the values of preventive maintenance checks and services to the Iraqi mechanics, and that a lack of proper PMCS is the most common reason for vehicle-breakdowns. Perez said the vehicles require extra attention here because of the extreme heat in Iraq.

Iraqi Army vehicles differ greatly from U.S. military vehicles, but the differences do not deter the 703rd BSB Soldiers from helping their counterparts, Perez said.

“We educate ourselves so that we can further educate them,” he said.

“The good thing about mechanics is that it all pretty much works the same.”

Moss, who was deployed in 2007 to Camp Ramadi, Iraq, said much has changed over the past three years.

“The (ISF) are progressing very well,” he said. “You can tell that this country is improving.”

Moss said he has noticed vast improvements

among the Iraqi mechanics he has personally trained.

Perez shared similar sentiments.

“When we first got here, they would just replace any problematic (vehicle component),” Moss said. “Now, they are actually troubleshooting the equipment instead of spending thousands of dollars on replacing it. Maintaining these skills is very important. If they don’t have these skills, then they cannot defend against the people who are trying to attack them.”

Perez agrees.

“We’re here making a difference,” he said. “It makes you feel good to be able to do something for their country.”



An Iraqi Army doctor examines an child Sept. 7 during an Iraqi Security Forces-led combined medical engagement and humanitarian aid mission. U.S. forces partnered with the ISF to host the event. (U.S. Army photos by Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas)

Iraqi Security Forces prove capabilities

*Vanguard Soldiers
support free medical
clinic in Karmah*

Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas
4/3 AAB Public Affairs

KARMAH, Iraq—Hundreds of Karmah, Iraq, residents received free medical care Sept. 7, during a combined medical engagement between Iraqi and U.S. forces.

Soldiers with 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division – Center, joined counterparts assigned to the 1st Iraqi Army Division and Karmah Police Department who hosted the event that afforded some citizens their first trip to the doctor’s office.

“About a good 10 percent of the families said that they have never

seen a health care provider before,” said Lt. Col. Jonathan Leong, surgeon with 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment. “The people we saw today left with a lot of smiles on their faces.”

Leong and Pfc. Charity Weldon, a medic with C Company, 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, provided medical assessments for women and children while Iraqi Army doctors treated male patients and organized a pharmacy at the free clinic. In addition, Iraqi Army Soldiers and Iraqi Police officers distributed 500 food packages containing rice, flour, sugar, powdered milk and cooking oil, as well as school supplies and soccer balls, to

those who attended.

Leong said with the change in the Iraqi government in transition, events like the ISF-led medical engagement in Karmah help gain Iraqi citizens’ trust.

“This was an opportunity for the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police—as representatives of the central government—to be seen and for the local population to realize that they were actually there to help,” he said. “It’s a new concept for them, but it’s a very important one.”

“They provided tremendous security; it was very well organized and the patient flow was great,” Leong said. “I’m really impressed. The ISF are doing great work.”

Weldon said she agreed with Leong and shared similar sentiments.

“Today I was amazed,” she said. “I wasn’t really sure what to expect, but we saw hundreds of people, so it was a great turnout. I know these people have never really received care like this before; some of them have never even gone to a doctor before. This is probably their first experience being able to come to a medical facility, receive medications that they’ve never been able to have—just simple things that we take for granted.”

Pfc. Charity Weldon, a medic with C Company, 703rd BSB, 4th AAB, checks vitals of a Karmah, Iraq, resident Sept. 7 during a combined medical engagement between U.S. forces and Iraq Security Forces.



New Dawn ushers in Secretary of Defense to Camp Ramadi

Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas
4/3 AAB Public Affairs

CAMP RAMADI, Iraq—The U.S. combat mission in Iraq officially ended Aug. 31 and Soldiers with 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division – Center, began Operation New Dawn with one of the nation’s top leaders. U.S. Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates—who announced Iraq’s operational name change in February—visited Iraq Sept. 1 and, on one stop, met with the Vanguard Brigade Soldiers at Camp Ramadi, Iraq.

“My main purpose in coming here is simply to thank you for your service and to thank your Families for their support in your service,” Gates said while speaking to about 300 4th AAB Soldiers at the Ramadi Event Center.

Gates said his visit to Ramadi was especially meaningful to him, as he knew troops and fellow friends who were casualties while serving in Anbar province in 2005.

“We have very personal and enduring connections to this city and this province,” he said. “Because of their sacrifices and the sacrifices that so many others have made who have served here, a remarkable transformation has taken place.”

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RIGHT: U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates speaks to about 300 Soldiers with 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, at the Ramadi Event Center Sept. 1 during his visit to Camp Ramadi, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Gary Silverman)





ABOVE: U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates thanks Capt. Bradley Winn, after a short briefing held at Camp Ramadi, Iraq, Sept. 1. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas)



RIGHT: Col. Lou Lartigue, commander of the 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, welcomes U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates Sept. 1 at Camp Ramadi, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas)

RIGHT: U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates signs a 4th Advise and Assist Brigade poster Sept. 1 during his visit to Camp Ramadi, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas)



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Gates said he remembers arriving at Al Asad Air Base almost three years ago and that it was clear to him then that the new strategy of Americans partnering with Iraqis in Anbar was the decisive turning point in this conflict.

“Since then, you and those before you nurtured this partnership and produced dramatic changes here and throughout Iraq,” he said. “In many ways, it is the model of the new advise and assist mission here in Anbar Province. Even as combat operations come to an end in Iraq, and our attention increasingly shifts to Afghanistan, you should know that your work is still

critical to the ultimate success of our efforts here and appreciated by the American people. Never forget the (service members) whose blood was spilled here to afford a better future for the Iraqi people and preserve our security at home.”

Gates personally thanked each Soldier in attendance and gave them each a coin he considered a “small token of (his) appreciation.” He also presented Spc. Shawn Mason, a military police Soldier with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th AAB, with a Purple Heart. Mason was wounded Aug. 9 when his vehicle was hit by an RKG-3 grenade.

BELOW: U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates thanks Capt. Tara Dawe, commander of the 442nd Military Police Company, during his visit to Camp Ramadi, Iraq, Sept. 1. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas)



ABOVE: About 300 Soldiers with 4th AAB, 3rd ID, listen to U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates Sept. 1 at the Ramadi Event Center. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Gary Silverman)

“Even as combat operations come to an end in Iraq... you should know that your work is still critical to the ultimate success of our efforts here and appreciated by the American people.”

Robert M. Gates
U.S. Secretary of Defense

Secretary of Defense awards Sentinel Soldier



the Purple Heart

ABOVE: U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates (right) pins the Purple Heart on Spc. Shawn M. Mason, a military police officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, and a Harrisburg, Pa., native, Sept. 1 at Camp Ramadi, Iraq. Mason was awarded the Purple Heart for injuries he suffered when his vehicle was struck by a RKG-3 grenade Aug. 9 near Fallujah, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Gary Silverman)

Sgt. Kimberly Johnson
196th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP RAMADI, Iraq— U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates presented the Purple Heart to Spc. Shawn M. Mason on Sept. 1 during a ceremony at Camp Ramadi, Iraq.

Mason, a Harrisburg, Pa., native, and a member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division – Center, received the Purple Heart for injuries he suffered from an RKG-3 grenade attack Aug. 9 near Fallujah, Iraq.

Mason said his squad was returning from an advising mission with key leaders at an Iraqi Police district headquarters near Fallujah, when he noticed a man walking, and then running, toward the convoy with what Mason said appeared to be an orange bag in his hand. By the time he radioed to the machine-gunner to cover the man, it was too late. The man threw an RKG-3 that, upon explosion, shredded the right, front side of the armored vehicle. Mason, the driver, took shrapnel through his jaw.

“Everything went into slow motion,” Mason said. “There was a loud boom, then a flash and a lot of smoke. My instincts told me to keep driving. It felt like we drove about a half-mile, when actually, we only drove about 100 meters.”

Mason said once the area was cleared, he and other members of his truck were evacuated to nearby Camp Fallujah, before returning to Camp Ramadi by convoy.

“I am very happy the situation wasn’t worse than it was,” he said.

“I am still here today, along with the rest of the people in my truck. It’s great knowing no one was seriously hurt or injured.”

Sgt. 1st Class Tracy Felts, the platoon sergeant of

Mason’s platoon in HHC, and a Tampa, Fla., native, is also a Purple Heart recipient.

“(Mason and I) share some of the same metal from being down range,” Felts said. “We have both been wounded in combat and we will always have that in common.”

Felts said he notices a difference in the members of the squad who were attacked that day in August.

“They understand the realization of where they are now,” Felts said. “They always knew they were in Iraq, but when they were engaged by the enemy, it all changed. They know now what’s at stake.”

Mason has 10 more months in Iraq, likely going on many more missions outside the wire to train, advise and assist Iraqi Security Forces so they can provide a safer, more stable country for Iraqi citizens.

He said he learned some new tips from the attack that will help him and his unit remain prepared on future missions.

“I’m a lot more aware of things I didn’t know before the attack,” Mason said. “The attacker had on tennis shoes and Iraqis generally do not wear tennis shoes because of the heat. Also, there was a man filming the attack on video that ended up on the Internet. The city was desolate, the IP checkpoints were abandoned. Those are all clues something is not right.”

Now the attack is a memory,

a teaching point and a bonding opportunity.

Mason said he will reflect positively on his Purple Heart.

“When I see the (Purple Heart), the memories are definitely going to be about how proud I am to serve my country,” he said.

“I’m proud of what I am doing (in the Army) and proud that I’m here serving in Iraq. It is hard when I am out on mission to put something like (the attack) in the back of my mind, it having been done to me first hand. But I still feel focused. This is what I signed up to do. I’m here for the long haul.”



The Purple Heart hangs on Spc. Shawn M. Mason’s uniform Sept. 1 for wounds Mason suffered when his vehicle was struck by a RKG-3 grenade Aug. 9 near Fallujah, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Kimberly Johnson)



Iraqi Police officers help a team member don a bomb disposal suit before a training exercise Sept. 20 during an explosive ordnance disposal refresher course taught by members of the 731st EOD Company, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division. (Photos by Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas)

Troops teach IPs counter-IED

Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas
4/3 AAB Public Affairs

RAMADI, Iraq - A team of Soldiers with the 731st Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, taught Iraqi Police officers counter-improvised explosive device techniques and procedures during a week-long class, which began Sept. 19 at the Ramadi Training Center.

The class offered six recent Iraqi Counter Explosives Team course graduates a refresher course on EOD fundamentals, to include demolition procedures, how to protect buildings from blasts and

fragmentation, and how to move objects with ropes.

"We're going over the basics," said Spc. Tyler Wend, a Soldier assigned to the 731st EOD Co., and a Turlock, Calif., native.

"This is important because they need to be able to sustain their country on their own and learn how to (counter IEDs) without us being there."

The class, which began with instruction on how to properly tie knots, offered the Iraqi Police a condensed version of the U.S. Army EOD course. Training became more complex and comprehensive on the second day, as the Iraqi team practiced countering

simulated IEDs.

"This is somewhat a 'down and dirty' version of (the yearlong U.S. Army EOD class), Wend said. "We're teaching the same principles."

The sergeant major with the Ramadi EOD said the class was challenging and allowed his team to make mistakes during training so that they do not make mistakes when the scenarios become real.

"We'll learn from our mistakes and continue to train," he said, as he thanked the 731st EOD team for hosting the class. "We need this information. It's very beneficial."

First Lt. Karl Wagner, a platoon leader with the 731st EOD Co.,



TOP: Staff Sgt. James Shoemaker, member of the 731st Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, teaches Ramadi Iraqi Police EOD members knot tying techniques Sept. 19 at the Ramadi Training Center.

BOTTOM: An Iraqi Police officer practices explosive ordnance disposal techniques Sept. 19 during an EOD refresher course at the Ramadi Training Center.

tactics

and a Hearne, Texas, native, said training was especially important to him on a personal level and that the Iraqi Police are members of the Army team.

"I feel that they are part of our EOD family," he said. "They should have the same information (about countering IEDs) that we have so that whenever we leave (Iraq), they can still keep doing their job and keep this country safe. This course is designed to help them protect their lives in the future."

Editor's Note: The name of the Iraqi Police EOD sergeant major is withheld for security purposes.

New career counselors exceed retention goals

Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas
4/3 AAB Public Affairs

CAMP RAMADI, Iraq - Five new Army career counselors with the 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division were recognized for helping the brigade exceed its retention objectives for fiscal year 2010--as 528 Soldiers extended their enlistment contracts over the past year--during a formal ceremony Sept. 30 at Camp Ramadi, Iraq.

"I'm very proud of all of them," said Master Sgt. Michael Redmon, senior career counselor with the 4th AAB, 3rd Inf. Div., and a Nokesville, Va., native. "They really impressed me. These guys are just hard chargers."

Redmon said his team accomplished its mission four months early and that it was uncommon for a group of recent schoolhouse graduates to achieve a 133 percent retention rate, especially as the brigade prepared for its third deployment to Iraq.

"They didn't have the tax-free bonus option to offer Soldiers and they couldn't offer many duty assignments as reenlistment incentives while we prepared to deploy," he said.

Redmon has helped the 4th AAB surpass its retention goals every year since he has joined the unit at Fort Stewart, Ga., in 2006.

"They were limited on what they could do to help keep Soldiers in (the Army), and these guys still met and exceeded the objective."

Maj. Gen. Anthony Cucolo, commander of the 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division-North, presented awards to the retention team during a visit he said could be his last with the Vanguard Brigade before he redeploys to Fort Stewart.

"You have all done an absolutely outstanding job," he said to the 4th AAB career counselors and to the Soldiers who stood before him during a ceremony. "Reenlistment is about making a choice. It's about making a choice to stay. Thank you for choosing to be in uniform at this time. You chose to either enter the Army or stay in the Army at a time of frequent deployments ... You have my deepest respect, admiration and gratitude for that."

Redmon said it was an honor for his team to be recognized by their division commander this year, and expressed high hopes for the years to follow.

"They executed flawlessly over the past year," he said. "I honestly believe this team has a really good shot at reenlisting the most Soldiers in the (3rd Infantry) Division during Fiscal Year 2011."

Footsteps

following in his father's

USF-I CSM welcomes deployed son into time-honored corps

Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas
4/3 AAB Public Affairs

CAMP RAMADI, Iraq - The top enlisted Soldier in Iraq visited Camp Ramadi to take part in a promotion that hit a little closer to home than most.

"Growing up, my father was always there for me," said Sgt. Jamaal Allen, who was inducted into the noncommissioned officer corps by his father -- Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Allen, command sergeant major of United States Forces - Iraq -- during a promotion ceremony, Oct. 1.

Jamaal, a logistics supply specialist with Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, and a Fayetteville, N.C., native, now serves alongside his father in the Army's time-honored corps.

"My father was assigned to Multi-National Corps- Iraq, while I was deployed to (Forward Operating Base) Kalsu with the 4th Brigade Combat

Team, (3rd Inf. Div.) in 2007-2008," he said. "I guess I'm kind of the abnormal Soldier. It makes me feel really good to be able to have my dad here."

Jamaal said he considers his father his hero, and that joining the Army was a decision he made to follow in his father's footsteps.

"As a child, I saw my dad touch the lives of a lot of people," he said. "He helped out a lot of people, and I always wanted a job where I could help others."

The 27-year-old junior leader said he appreciates the life lessons his father taught him as they directly relate to Army Values he embodies today.

Jamaal said he plans to use his father's guidance from the past to help him lead his Soldiers in the future.

"Since I take my dad's advice, I will offer the same advice to my Soldiers," he said. "Some Soldiers don't have a father figure, or a mother figure at that, so I think that I could provide them with the good advice that my dad gave me. I just want to be the one who can help my Soldiers, and like my dad, put my Soldiers first."

The newly promoted NCO said he is proud of his father's military accomplishments; especially his father's recent tenure as the senior enlisted leader in Iraq.

"I'm very proud of him," Jamaal said. "I can only hope and wish that whatever I do in the future, I can amount to what he has done."

"My dad is really busy," he said.

"I know that he has a lot of stuff going on and for him to take time out and have his schedule revised to come out and pin me (to the rank of sergeant) means a lot to me. He didn't have to do it, but he did, and I love him for that."



LEFT: Command Sergeant Major Joseph Allen, senior enlisted advisor of United States Forces-Iraq, pins sergeant rank on his son, Jamaal Allen, a logistics supply specialist with Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, and Fayetteville, N.C., native, Oct. 1 at Camp Ramadi. (Photos by Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas)

ABOVE: Sgt. Jamaal Allen, a logistics supply specialist with Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, meets with his father, Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Allen, command sergeant major of USF-I, Oct. 1, at Camp Ramadi after a ceremony in which Jamaal was promoted to the rank of sergeant.

USF-I commander revisits Marne Division

Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas
4/3 AAB Public Affairs

CAMP RAMADI, Iraq - Gen. Lloyd J. Austin, commanding general of United States Forces-Iraq, revisited his 3rd Infantry Division roots Oct. 16 during a trip to Camp Ramadi, Iraq.

During the visit, Austin presented the Purple Heart to Sgt. Justin Hughes and Pvt. Phillip Verner, both with Company E, 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, attached to the 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, who were wounded Sept. 2 when their vehicle was hit by an RKG-3 grenade.

“There’s some great lineage here,” said Austin, as he spoke to a crowd of 4th AAB Soldiers who attended the Purple Heart ceremony. “The 3rd Infantry Division is a storied division with a lot of great history.”

Austin’s first military assignment was as a rifle platoon leader with Company A, 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Inf. Div. More than 20 years later, he helped spearhead the Marne Division’s invasion of Iraq in 2003 as the assistant division commander of maneuver with 3rd Inf. Div.

The former “Dog Face Soldier” said he is proud of the efforts Soldiers have made since the invasion to help create a more sovereign, stable and self-reliant Iraq.

“About eight years ago, a bunch of 3rd Inf. Div. Soldiers were down in Kuwait, getting ready to head north, and some of you guys were part of that (invasion), and are still serving (today)--and that’s amazing,” Austin said.

Austin also said it was a great honor to recognize heroes like Hughes and Verner.

“You’re going to get a lot of awards and recognition for the rest of the time that you’re in the Army,” said Austin, “but no recognition will feel as good as it feels right now because you are being recognized for going above and beyond by your peers in a combat zone.”

Hughes, a Havelock, N.C. native, said he was honored to have the Purple Heart placed on his uniform by the top commander in Iraq.

“He actually took the time out of his busy schedule to do this; it’s an honor,” he said.

Austin said the citizens of Iraq are also applauding the U.S. forces’ efforts to help them achieve success.

“In their minds, you are still the best force that has walked the face of the Earth ... and they’re right,” he said. “I want to thank you for doing a great job. I want to encourage each and every one of you to continue to work hard.”

“Once we leave, we want to look back behind us and see a country that’s growing and thriving,” Austin continued. “We have a lot of teammates who have invested in this. I feel very confident, based upon the folks that are standing in our ranks that this (last) part of it is going to go well.”



TOP: Gen. Lloyd J. Austin, commanding general of USF-I, visits with Soldiers and leaders assigned to the 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, Oct. 16. Wearing his 3rd Infantry Division “combat patch,” Austin reconnected with the division in which he’s twice served by meeting with the troops at Camp Ramadi.

BOTTOM LEFT: Gen. Lloyd J. Austin, commanding general of USF-I, presents the Purple Heart to Pvt. Phillip Verner, with Company E, 703rd BSB, 4/3 AAB, Oct. 16 at Camp Ramadi Iraq. Verner was wounded Sept. 2 when his vehicle was hit by a RKG-3 grenade.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Gen. Lloyd J. Austin, commanding general of USF-I, presents the Purple Heart to Sgt. Justin Hughes, with Company E, 703rd BSB, 4/3 AAB, Oct. 16 at Camp Ramadi Iraq. Hughes was wounded Sept. 2 when his vehicle was hit by a RKG-3 grenade.



Shoulder To Shoulder

I WILL NEVER QUIT ON LIFE



Prevent Army Suicides
Reach Out ★ Talk ★ Listen

*Talk to your Chain of Command, Chaplain or Behavioral Health Professional
or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273 TALK (8255)*

Keeping the Edge:

Forward observers train ISF at Syrian Border

Commentary by:
2nd Lt. J.D. McElroy
Troop B, 6-8 Cav. Regt.

is more comfortable lying in the mud of an Observation Post than in his own bed, this is a chance to exercise those skills.

"Contact! Distance two-thousand, direction zero six eight zero" the sergeant whispers into the radio.

The radio gurgles to life: "Roger November-one, what have you got?"

"Two dismounts, in the open. Heading east toward Known Point four, over." The Forward Observer answers.

Several stories above the tallest building in the city, two "13 Foxes" lay quietly, far above the unsuspecting population below. With the senses heightened, the gentle glow of the stars paint the city with light, and the unobtrusive flap of a bat's wing becomes loud as thunder. The top of the abandoned building becomes their lair, and the fields below their hunting ground.

But thousands of miles from the nearest artillery tube, these Soldiers are not out for the kill. They are putting their specialized skills to use in their newest mission - advise and assist.

"Roger, we have Iraqi Security Forces in route to location, continue to monitor, over."

A mile from the observer's location, information is passed to the Iraqi commanders. The place is on the border. The Edge of Iraqi land. The first line of defense against foreign fighters and lethal aid - a literal and figurative line in the sand. But with ISF now leading the way in Iraq's defense, American forces have been finding new ways to capitalize on their Soldiers' skills. For a forward observer, who

Back on the rooftop, laying right at the edge of a multi-story drop, the observers continue to scan. Using all the equipment at their disposal, these predators use their technological edge to assist the Iraqis in protecting their country.

They guide specialized cameras onto the target, whose footage can be used later as evidence in court. All of this requires a degree of competency in the Forward Observer craft. Map reading, terrain association, radio skills, target plotting - all muscles being flexed after months of being unused. The only thing absent is the lethal aspect of their work. Instead of guiding in artillery rounds, they are guiding in justice.

And, in a place where illegal border crossings are always a possibility, there is plenty for these FISTERS to do.

Not only is it a chance to positively affect their area of operation, but also allows them to maintain their technical proficiency and their tactical Edge. In a place where Soldiers often operate out of their military occupational specialty, this opportunity is golden.

"ISF called back; sounds like they were unable to locate." If I could call for fire, these guys would have never known what hit them' the sergeant thinks to himself. He copies down the location for future reference, wondering who the person who just got away could have been. A cigarette smuggler? An arms dealer? Maybe a potential suicide bomber. He clears his head of his thoughts, resets his range finder, and continues to scan his border.

Soldiers assigned to the 6th Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division are stationed throughout the Ninewah Province, enabling their Iraqi Security Forces counterparts to help create a more sovereign, stable and secure Iraq.

“Some of the chapters in our lives are defined by honor, some by fear, some by comedy and some by tragedy. Today we honor two Soldiers who had just begun to fill the pages of their stories.”

Capt. Steven Pierce
Commander, HHC 3-15 Infantry



Honoring the Fallen

Ceremony commemorates lives of two Vanguard Brigade Soldiers

Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas
4/3 AAB Public Affairs

CAMP RAMADI, Iraq - Hundreds of Soldiers came together to commemorate the lives of two fallen comrades Oct. 2 during a memorial service in their honor.

Spc. John Carrillo Jr. and Pfc. Gebrah Noonan died of injuries suffered from a non-combat related incident Sept. 23 at Camp Fallujah, Iraq. Both Soldiers were assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division and were deployed in support of Operation New Dawn.

“Some of the chapters in our lives are defined by honor, some by fear, some by comedy and some by tragedy,” said Capt. Steven Pierce, commander of HHC, 3-15 Inf. “Today we honor two Soldiers who had just begun to fill the pages of their stories.”

Carrillo, a Stockton, Calif., native, entered the Army March 3, 2008, and served with HHC, 4th AAB, after completing advanced individual training and graduating as a signal support systems specialist. He joined the 3-15th Inf. Regt. in May 2010.

Sgt Keith Conrade, a communications noncommissioned officer with 3-15 Inf., met the 20-year-old Soldier before the brigade began its final mission rehearsal at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif, before deploying to Iraq.

“His excitement was contagious and often times I would find myself with just a little more energy from his positive nature,” Conrade said of Carrillo. “I am going to miss him very much and I am thankful that I got the chance to know him and enjoy the person who he was.”

Carrillo is survived by his wife Desiree, and their two children.

Noonan, a Watertown, Conn., native, joined the Army Oct. 26, 2009 and trained as an infantryman at Fort Benning, Ga.

“He always wanted to go to Ranger School and then go to Afghanistan and do high-speed infantry things,” said Spc. Shawnell Lattimore, a Soldier assigned to HHC, 3-15 and a friend to Noonan. “We got along well because we had a lot in common. He was always quick to help fellow Soldiers when they needed something, and he had a wonderful sense of humor and personality.”

Noonan is survived by his mother and father.

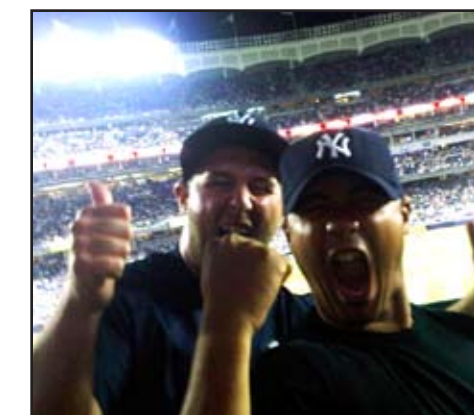
“He was a great friend and battle buddy,” Lattimore said of the 26-year-old fallen Soldier. “I will truly miss him.”

Soldiers paid their final respects to Carrillo and Noonan, rendering one last salute to the troops.

“They were honorable, noble, selfless (and) dedicated patriots,” said Lt. Col. Jeffrey Shoemaker, commander of the 3-15 Inf. Regt. “These Soldiers were our brothers and our friends; let us mourn them.”



Spc. John Carrillo Jr.
Oct. 24, 1989 -Sept. 23, 2010



Pfc. Gebrah Noonan
May 31, 1984 -Sept. 23, 2010

TOP LEFT: First Sergeant Thomas Price, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, pays his final respects to his fallen Soldiers - Spc. John Carrillo Jr. and Pfc. Gebrah Noonan - during a memorial service at Camp Ramadi, Iraq, Oct. 2. (Photos by Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas) **BOTTOM LEFT:** Soldiers render a final salute to Spc. John Carrillo Jr. and Pfc. Gebrah Noonan, both Soldiers assigned to HHC, 3-15 Inf., who died in a non-combat related incident Sept. 23 at Camp Fallujah, Iraq. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Captain Drew Turner, chaplain with 3/15 Inf., 4th AAB, comforts Spc. Shawnell Lattimore, HHC, 3-15, as he looks at the memorial built in honor of Spc. John Carrillo Jr. and Pfc. Gebrah Noonan, Oct. 2.

Family Readiness

Traci Wheeler
4/3 AAB Family Readiness Senior Advisor

Hello Vanguard Families. It is hard to believe we are on month five of our deployment. Remember to please keep in contact with your Family Readiness Groups. Our mission is to keep you all informed throughout the deployment. If you have changed telephone numbers or your e-mail address, please update your FRG Leader. They are a wonderful asset to our units and will keep you linked to current and upcoming events. If you need assistance, or are not receiving any information from the unit, please contact your Battalion or Squadron FRSA.

3-7 Infantry	Staff Sgt. Richard Buckholz	767-9236/0742
3-15 Infantry	Johnny Robinson	767-7498
6-8 Cavalry	Lisa Partington	767-0143
1-76 Field Artillery	Kimberly Walker	767-4304
4-3 BSTB	Christi Kisko	767-5370
703rd BSB	Talesha Nelson	767-8853
4 IBCT FRSA	Traci Wheeler	767-9310/271-9962

Upcoming events

Tree Dedication Ceremony	Nov. 18	Hinesville Christmas in the Park	Dec. 7
Liberty County Thanksgiving Break	Nov. 22-26	Hinesville Christmas Parade-Downtown	Dec. 10
Fort Stewart Tree Lighting Ceremony	Dec. 2	Wreaths for Warrior's Walk- Cottrell Field	Dec. 11

Are you ready for some football?

Flag football has kicked into action at Fort Stewart. For more information, contact your Family Readiness Group Leader.



3-15 IN



4-3 BSTB



703RD BSB



1-76 FA

DESERT SAFETY

ON OCTOBER 15, THE VANGUARD BRIGADE PASSED THE 90-DAY-MARK IN THEATER, AND IT'S TIME FOR A LOOK AT HOW WE ARE DOING IN THE SAFETY ARENA.

Anthony Woodard
4/3 AAB Safety Officer

During our first quarter, Vanguard experienced 10 recordable accidents, 12 non-recordable accidents and 4 negligent discharges, compared to 12 recordable accidents, 4 non-recordable and 3 negligent discharges during Operation Iraqi Freedom V. This only represents a 1 percent reduction in our accident rate. We as Vanguard Soldiers and leaders need to get better engaged in the effort of reducing accidents in Vanguard Brigade. We can do better, and we must never become complacent where safety is concerned.

Physical Fitness (Weight Lifting):

Be sure to always integrate warm-ups, stretching, and cooling-down into your program. This will reduce your risk of injury by increasing your blood flow and prepping your muscles for the work they are about to do. Using the proper lifting form is important not only to work your muscles correctly, but also to prevent injury. Always do your exercises through a full range of motion in a slow, and controlled manner.

Slip, Trip and Fall:

The following housekeeping procedures and safe work practices must be followed to prevent accidents associated with slip, trip and fall hazards:

- Avoid running or walking too fast, especially in high risk areas.
- Avoid carrying items that will obstruct one's view of his or her walking pathway.
- Avoid walking through potential slip, trip and fall hazards.
- Clean up spills immediately. For greasy liquids, use suitable cleaning agents.

Personal injuries continue to be the number one cause of accidents. Our current trends for non-battle injuries indicate the areas listed below to be major threats to Vanguards Soldiers:

Remember - Strong leadership and active supervision is critical for reducing the quantity and severity of accidents in the future. Leaders are charged with the responsibility to ensure signs of complacency are identified and eliminated.

As we continue our mission as an Advise and Assist Brigade, we must also continue to guard against needless accidents. Leaders, stay engaged on both fronts.



Chaplain's Corner

Chaplain (Maj.) Dave Cromeenes
4/3 AAB Chaplain

"Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me." We have experienced some trials this month that have created opportunities for renewed faith and trust in God. When we endure difficult times and yes, even traumatic events of life, a natural reaction may be to pull away from faith and Family we once trusted and depended upon.

The opposite affect is actually true as well. The trials we experienced this month have created opportunities for you and your Soldier to pull together, encourage each other, and reach out with love and affection.

When I traveled to Camp Fallujah several weeks ago, I was struck with the reality of how amazing the impact of love of brotherhood and friendship is when the chips are down. I also want to thank you for taking care of each other at home this month as well. I am aware of the overwhelming love and care you have provided for Families experiencing hard times. Well done Vanguard Families.

Take time today to reflect on the value of your faith, friends and Family. As you reflect on how important your relationships are to the health and happiness of your lives, ask the God of your faith to "create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me." Your Unit Ministry Teams continue to provide incredible religious support and ministry of presence for your Soldiers.

Be blessed Vanguard Families, thank you for your prayers, letters and e-mails.



Check out the
Vanguard Brigade on
the Web
Log on to

www.stewart.army.mil/4thBrigade

[www.facebook.com/4th-Brigade-3rd-
Infantry-Division](https://www.facebook.com/4th-Brigade-3rd-Infantry-Division)

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Gary Silverman