

# Victory Times



***Telling the United States Forces - Iraq story***

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## Task Force Dragon assumes battalion command function

Story and photos by  
Sgt. A.M. LaVey  
USF-I Public Affairs

Special Troops Battalion, III Corps, Fort Hood, Texas, cased its colors Feb. 4, as it passed headquarters command and control duties for United States Forces - Iraq, to Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, XVIII Airborne Corps, Fort Bragg, N.C.

Task Force Phantom has been the headquarters support element for USF-I since March 2010, straddling Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn, and as such, has provided essential supplies and services, maintained force protection, conducted personnel and property accountability and completed all required training in support of the headquarters.

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*Maj. Michael A. Douglas, acting commander, Task Force Dragon, uncases the Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, XVIII Airborne Corps colors, with the assistance of Command Sgt. Maj. Carlos Gomez, the task force's senior enlisted advisor at the transfer of authority ceremony at Camp Victory, Iraq, Feb. 4.*

## Congressional Delegates visit Camp Victory Soldiers

Story and photos by  
Spc. Charlene Mendiola  
USF-I Public Affairs

United States representatives from California, New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Utah, and Idaho visited with Soldiers from their home states at the Joint Visitors Bureau hotel on Camp Victory during a congressional delegation visit, Feb. 2.

The representatives arrived in Iraq to

conduct updates in the areas of financial management, foreign affairs, and homeland defense.

"We came out here to see how American dollars are spent, controlled and its value for the American people - particularly for the Iraqi reconstruction," said California State Rep. Darrell Issa.

"The progress here in Iraq has improved since my last visit in 2009. The Iraqi government certainly has

confidence in taking the lead in its own defense," he said. "The most important thing that we see here today, as we continue to encounter conflicts in Afghanistan, is to take the lessons learned here in Iraq and use them there."

The representatives also gave the Soldiers the opportunity to speak about issues or concerns during the visit.

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# Chaplain's Corner

## Knowing yourself will allow you to know others better

By Chaplain (Cpt.) Robert Rand  
325th MI BN Camp Slayer

I have been enlightened to a book titled "The Imitation of Christ" by Thomas a' Kempis.

If you desire to have an examination of your inner man or woman this book is for you.

According to the book,

"If you wish to learn and appreciate something worthwhile, then love to be unknown and considered as nothing. Truly to know and despise self is the best and most perfect counsel. To think of oneself as nothing, and always to think well and highly of others is the best and most perfect wisdom."

This is not a task for the self-absorbed or self-centered person or at least the person who is not willing to consider a deeper look in their heart.

Often I am guilty of seeing myself as more than I am. A' Kempis, I believe, is not saying treat yourself

with no value, but to consider others to have more value. This will allow you to see the other person, who stands before you in the best possible light.

The act of giving the other person the benefit of the doubt will help you to see them as human and open the door to a new or better relationship.

***"Truly to know and despise self is the best and most perfect counsel."***

Finding worth in other people mean letting them be themselves. I believe one of the greatest joys is when you find something to praise in another person.

What are the personality traits that you find valuable in your life? Do you look for those same traits in other people? What beauty traits do you find of worth in your appearance? Do you find those same traits in others and do you compliment or praise them?

A' Kempis writes, "Truly to know

and despise self is the best and most perfect counsel."

I believe that we all have traits in our personality that are very ugly when we allow them to come out. Maybe your ugly trait is cursing, or perhaps it is complaining. I will dare to say an ugly trait might be gossip.

Whatever that ugly trait is, despise it enough that you would want to stop or change it; especially if it erodes the value and worth of others.

I made a statement earlier in the article that I am often guilty of seeing myself as more than I am, and of course that means others are valued less. I am sure there are ugly traits that erode the value of others when I allow them to come out. I write this article as a confession because I'm human but I also write this article as a challenge and charge.

Let us all work at knowing ourselves that we might know others better.

## SARC Smarts

### Common myths regarding sexual assault:

**MYTH 1:** The rapist is usually a stranger.

**FACT:** Most victims (over 80%) know their assailants and most assaults occur in the victim's home or dorm (FBI Uniform Crime Report).

**MYTH 2:** Sexual assault affects only women.

**FACT:** While women 16-23 are particularly vulnerable- men suffer 10% of all reported sexual assault.

Call the USF-I Deployed Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (DSARC) at 485-5085 or 435-2235 for help. Army members should seek assistance with their Unit Victim Advocate (UVA) or DSARC.



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*Idaho State Rep. Raul Labrador speaks with Soldiers from the 116th Cavalry Brigade during meet-and-greet session at the Joint Visitors Bureau, Camp Victory Feb. 2.*

## Delegates, from Page 1

"I felt comfortable talking to our representative, said Staff Sgt. Raymundo Lopez from San Dimas, Calif., and a petroleum and supply specialist with the 1st Battalion, 140th Aviation Regiment. "Being in the military, it is important to speak to someone at their level so you can understand the political view on what is going on in Iraq."

Issa said their visit was also a great opportunity for representatives to visit and thank the men and women serving the U.S. while they risk their lives every day.

"This is my first visit here in Iraq and it has made a really deep impression," said Idaho State Rep. Raul Labrador. "I have never served in the military so I can't imagine the hardship from being away from family."

"It's amazing to see Labrador out here," said Staff Sgt. Breane Buckingham from Idaho and a supply sergeant with 116th Cavalry Brigade. "It is evident that he and the people back home support the troops."

"The message I want to send back to home is for Families to know that their Soldiers are working hard and doing great work," Labrador said. "They should be really proud of what they do and I am more proud of my country today."



*Soldiers listen while California State Rep. Darrell E. Issa speaks about his visit here in Iraq.*



*Massachusetts State Rep. Stephen F. Lynch introduces himself to Soldiers from his home state during a meet and greet.*



# Task Force Safe educates service members, civilians

Story by Sgt. Joseph Vine  
USF-I Public Affairs

A Soldier plugs in his laptop to charge its battery before he rushes off to work. He leaves the laptop on his bunk as he steps out the door. A few hours later that laptop starts to overheat since the sheets on his bed block the vent for the fans inside. The laptop then heats up to the point it catches the sheets on fire, the blaze growing exponentially to engulf his entire room.

This real-life scenario, represents how easily one of the most dangerous non-combative situations can occur for service members and civilians deployed to Iraq. Preventing disasters like this from repeating is the goal of Task Force Safe.

"Task Force Safe's primary mission is to make Iraq a safer place for Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and contractors," said Capt. Brian Moore, from Port O'Conner, Texas, and deputy director of TF Safe. "We currently conduct about 900 inspections per week and offer a two-day electrical and fire-awareness class every month to ensure the safety of everyone."

With more than 239,000 electrical

inspections in military and civilian facilities and 37 electrical and fire safety classes given, TF Safe continues to spread awareness in order to mitigate electrical and fire incidents throughout Iraq.

"Electrocution and electrical fires are real threats that should be everyone's concern," said Moore.

There have been 19 fatalities in Iraq as a direct result from faulty electrical wiring, overloaded circuits and improper grounding.

"It was too many people dying due to negligence," said Moore. "I hope that we get the awareness out there of some of the safety hazards we're still seeing in regards to electrical and fire safety."

"We still see three power strips daisy chained together with two refrigerators, a microwave and a TV running off of one power strip," he said. "Most of the things that we see are human error."

Since TF Safe was established in 2008, the inspection pass rate has increased 24 percent and the re-inspection pass rate is 92 percent.

In addition to inspections and classes, TF Safe has also distributed approximately 1.9 million electric adapters and 572,000 power strips across Iraq.



Courtesy photo

*The debris of a burned-down section of a tent remains visible after faulty electrical wiring shorted out.*

"We're getting the word out there and people are reporting hazards and helping to correct them," said Moore.

"We get on average three to seven reports of shocks per week and 95 percent are static electricity shocks," he said. "Someone drags their boots across the rug, grabs the doorknob and received a slight shock. In the States no one would report that, but here they do."

TF Safe will continue with its primary mission of safety in Iraq and plans to inspect facilities and conduct courses through September 2011.



Photo by Sgt. Joseph Vine

*Capt. Brian Moore, deputy director of Task Force Safe speaks to service members and civilians about electrical and fire safety on Camp Victory. TF Safe conducts monthly classes and daily inspections throughout Iraq to spread awareness of electrical and fire safety.*

# 40th MP Bn commands final detainee ops in Iraq

Story and photo by  
Staff Sgt. Edward Daileg  
USF-I Public Affairs

In a transfer of authority ceremony at Camp Stryker, Jan. 31, the 40th Military Police Battalion officially assumed command of detainee operations at Camp Cropper from the 105th MP Bn.

With this transfer, the 40th MP Bn., a Fort Leavenworth, Kansas-based interment resettlement unit, becomes the last MP battalion to command the theater interment facility before its scheduled hand-over to the government of Iraq.

"This ceremony marks the final transfer of authority between two MP battalions in support of detainee operations in Iraq," said Lt. Col. Erica Nelson, commander, 40th MP Bn. "It is an honor to be part of this history. We represent the military branches who work tirelessly before us to ensure this mission happens."

The 40th MP Bn. was established on June 11, 1945, as a headquarters and headquarters detachment with the 40th MP Service Battalion. During its existence, the battalion served overseas in China, Japan, and Thailand. The unit's deployment in Iraq marks its first mission in the country.

Maj. Gen. Nelson J. Cannon, deputy commanding general for detainee operations, United States Forces - Iraq, welcomed the new battalion and applauded the Soldiers for their efforts.

"To the 40th MP Bn., welcome aboard," Cannon said during the ceremony. "Thank you for all your efforts to prepare for this mission and bringing in your high-speed, highly-motivated and highly-qualified Soldiers. Transitions always include risks, but you have proved yourself to the tasks."

Lieutenant Col. Warren Wintrode, commander, 105th MP Bn., welcomed the incoming battalion and inspired them to face adversity and complete the mission.

"The 40th MP Bn. faces numerous challenges in the months to come," said Wintrode. "I challenge you to close out the final chapter of detention operations in Iraq and finish strong."

During Nelson's speech, she spoke of her appreciation for the efforts of the 105th MP Bn. with their transition.



*Lt. Col. Erica Nelson, commander of the 40th Military Police Battalion, and Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Wallace, 40th MP Bn., uncasing the battalion's colors during a transfer of authority ceremony at Camp Stryker, Jan. 31.*

"I thank Lieutenant Colonel Wintrode, Command Sergeant Major Caswell and your team of professionals from the 105th Military Police Battalion for passing on the knowledge and experience you have gained by doing this mission this past year," she said. "The challenges you've experienced will help us to be successful."

Nelson concluded her speech with inspiring words for her battalion.

"It is an honor that we will be the last military police battalion to perform detainee operations in Iraq," she said. "We have trained long and trained hard; we are the right unit, at the right time and with the right mission."

By the end of this year, the battalion is scheduled to do the historic hand-over of detainee operations to the Iraqi government, completing the U.S. government's role in detainee operations in Iraq.



# UNSUNG HERO



Sgt. Kourtney Little is recognized as this week's Unsung Hero and received a Certificate of Achievement from Brig. Gen. Michael X. Garrett, deputy chief of staff, United States Forces - Iraq, at Al Faw Palace, Feb. 4. Little received the certificate for his exemplary performance as the information management officer for the United States Forces - Iraq deputy commanding general-operations.

## TOA, from Page 1

TF Phantom troopers have played "a significant role in supporting the USF-I headquarters every single day and continue to make positive contributions to the ongoing success we have seen thus far in Operation New Dawn," said Lt. Col. Robert L. Menti, commander, TF Phantom. "Their personal commitment and those of their families to serving the nation are second to none."

During its tenure, TF Phantom has provided support for more than 6,600 service members and contractors - caring for their medical, logistical and security needs. That responsibility now falls to Task Force Dragon.

"Many people say a deployment rotation is a marathon, we prefer to view it as a relay race," said Menti. "In a relay, the most important part of the race is a smooth hand-off...that it exactly what Task Force Phantom and Task Force Dragon have accomplished."

TF Dragon now "has the responsibility to support USF-I in its efforts to close all operations within Iraq," said Maj. Michael A. Douglas, acting task force commander, and "we will do so with dignity, success and honor."

The HHB, XVIII Abn. Corps is expected to be the last battalion to support USF-I.



▲ *Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen, senior enlisted advisor, United States Forces - Iraq, stands with other senior leaders at the transfer of authority ceremony at Camp Victory, Iraq, Feb. 4.*

► *Lt. Col. Robert L. Menti, commander, Task Force Phantom, speaks to the service members during the transfer of authority ceremony.*



## What is the most interesting place you've seen or been to on Victory Base Complex?

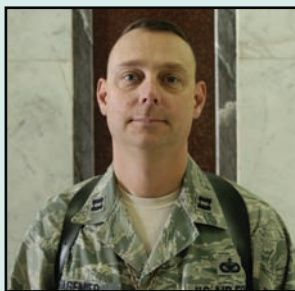


**Chief Warrant Officer 4  
Jimmy A. Coburn**

*Command Medical  
Maintenance Officer*

*Task Force 807th Med*

*"Victory Over America Palace,  
it was the palace Saddam built  
to claim victory over America."*



**Capt.  
James C. Hagemier**  
*Anti-Terrorism Officer*

*USF-I Headquarters  
5th Air Force HQ*

*"Victory Over America  
Palace, it shows the  
destruction of our attacks"*



**Master Sgt.  
Christine Schlipp**

*Actions NCO*

*USF-I Secretary of*

*Joint Staff office*

*"Victory Over America  
Palace, because of what it  
symbolizes."*



**Staff Sgt.  
David R. Metzler**

*Medical Logistics*

*Task Force 807th Med*

*"Cropper Detainment  
Facility, because I actually  
get to see the detainees."*



**Senior Airman  
Jesse R. Villegas**

*Security Forces Member*

*447th Expeditionary*

*Security Forces Squadron*

*"Al Faw Palace, because  
it's extravagant."*



**Staff Sgt.  
Andrew K. Gatewood**

*Security Forces Member*

*447th Expeditionary*

*Security Forces Squadron*

*"Al Faw Palace, because it  
is nice."*

## VBC Facility Operating Hours

### Sports Oasis DFAC

Breakfast 5:00 - 8:30 a.m.  
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.  
Dinner 5 - 8:30 p.m.  
Midnight chow 11:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.  
Sandwich Bar open 24 hours  
Sunday brunch 7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

### Education Center

8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

### Camp Liberty Post Exchange

8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

### Camp Victory Post Exchange

8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

### Paul Smith Gym

Open 24 Hours

### Victory Main Post Office

Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
Saturday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sunday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

### USF-I Unit Mail Room Customer Services/Mail Call:

Daily 3 - 6 p.m.

### Al Faw Palace Post Office

Wednesday and Sunday  
12:30 - 5:30 p.m.

### Golby TMC Sick Call

Mon, Wed, Thur, Fri  
08:30 - 10:30 & 1500 - 1700  
Tues and Sat 0830 - 1030  
Sunday - Emergency Only

### Mental Health Clinic

Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Saturday 9 a.m. - noon

### Pharmacy

Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon;  
1 - 4:30 p.m.  
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon

## Websites

### Check it out:

### USF-I Web pages

[www.usf-iraq.com](http://www.usf-iraq.com)  
[www.flickr.com/photos/  
mnfiraq](http://www.flickr.com/photos/mnfiraq)  
[www.twitter.com/  
USF\\_Iraq](http://www.twitter.com/USF_Iraq)

### Facebook -

United States Forces-Iraq  
U.S. Army III Corps  
Phantom Battalion  
III Corps Fort Hood



# Bragg jumpmaster-turned-country-music-star rocks Camp Victory

Story and photos by  
Sgt. A.M. LaVey  
USF-I Public Affairs

Many Fort Bragg-based veteran paratroopers think of themselves as superstars, but on Jan. 31 a former XVIII Airborne Corps jumpmaster-turned-country-music-star took to the Camp Victory stage as current corps members cheered from the audience.

Country musician Craig Morgan spent about on 11 years active duty as a fire-support noncommissioned officer, most of it with the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions.

"I am so fortunate to have served," Morgan said. "I jokingly used to say that I was training for the music industry because it gave me a better appreciation of how good I have it now."

After Morgan left the active-duty side of the Army he spent some time in the Army reserve, re-enlisting with a jump with the Bragg-based U.S. Army Parachute team, the Golden Knights, and serving with the Nashville-based rigger company, the 861st Quartermaster Company until 2004 "when the music business got too busy and [he] couldn't do what [he] needed to do with that unit."

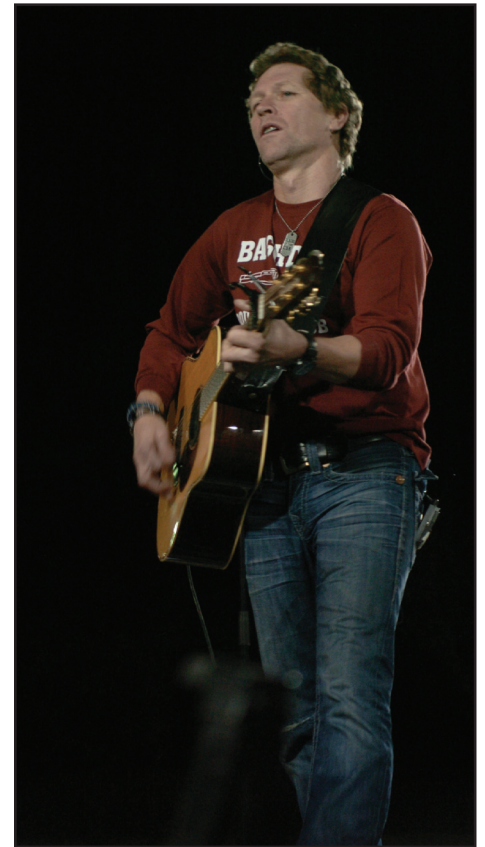
Though Morgan, a jumpmaster with more than 200 static line jumps, has left military, he has kept the military mindset, running his business like he would a military unit with the help of his road manager, who he refers to as his 'sergeant major.'

"I'm real strict," said Morgan. "I have very high standards and I'm proud of that – I'm proud of my service, and am proud that I have a group of people that respect and appreciate the military as much as I do and I think that has a lot to do with where I came from."

His time spent as a paratrooper and at Fort Bragg has definitely affected his music.

"Music is like anything you do in life, when you spend that much time doing something – I don't care who you are or what you do - it's going to affect your thought process and your decision-making process," said Morgan. "When you spend a lot of time in the military, you learn things and experience things that are going to affect the way you do business and live your life in general."

This is the country musician's ninth troop tour, tours he refers to as homecomings – even vacations, sharing old stories with old friends. He actively



*Bragg jumpmaster-turned-country-music-star, Craig Morgan, performs for service members at Camp Victory, Iraq.*

volunteers his time with the Stars for Stripes and the USO, performing for American servicemembers.

"I think it is important that we support [these organizations] so that they continue to bring back entertainers so that when [service members] start to feel low that their spirits are picked right up with a show," said Morgan. It is also important "that entertainers are provided a platform to reach the troops in ways that the command cannot – and then return home and share that with America the great things that our forces are doing over here."

Morgan played a highly interactive 90-minute set of new tunes and old favorites, meeting with service members after the show. It is easy to imagine that there were many spirits lifted by this taste of home, made even dearer knowing that the man on stage was truly one of them.



*Sgt. Tobi D. Nelson, an automated logistic specialist and her husband, Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Nelson, a senior human resources noncommissioned officer, both XVIII Airborne Corps soldiers supporting U.S. Forces - Iraq, meet with Craig Morgan, a country musician after a concert at Camp Victory, Iraq.*