

Victory Times



Telling the United States Forces - Iraq story

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Photo by Lee Craker

XVIII Airborne drops in

Lt. Gen. Frank G. Helmick, XVIII Airborne Corps commander, shakes hands with Lt. Gen Bob Cone, United States Forces – Iraq deputy commanding general of operations and III Corps commander, as Command Sgt. Maj. Earl L. Rice, USF-I deputy commanding general for operations senior enlisted advisor and XVIII Abn. Corps command sergeant major applauds, during the transfer-of-authority ceremony for XVIII Abn. Corps in Al Faw Palace, Camp Victory, Feb. 8. Helmick replaced Cone as the USF-I deputy commanding general for operations, as XVIII Abn. Corps becomes the core component of USF-I. (See story on page 4)

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Chaplain's Corner

Overcome problems with spirit, hope, faith

By Chaplain (Cpt.) Charles Poore
USF-I HHC 151 ESB

What feeds my spirit? Or maybe an even better question is what makes me spiritual? Every one of us, at one time or another, has to reach out to that something beyond ourselves to accomplish the unattainable.

The Army has had chaplains in its ranks since before the American Revolution. We have always taken a stand for "all peoples and all causes," sometimes to our own demise. One of our early examples, and the first Black or African American chaplain, was Henry V. Plummer.

A short biographical history reads like this:

It is recorded that Plummer was born a slave on June 30, 1844, in Maryland. In 1862, during the Civil War, he escaped and hid until making his way to Washington, D.C.

From 1862 to 1864, Plummer enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served

on the USS Coeur de Lion, a paddle-wheel steamer. After the war, he located and re-united with his sister who, as a slave, had been sold two years before Plummer's escape. He later enrolled at Wayland Seminary and graduated in 1876.

After several years serving as a pastor, Plummer applied and become an Army chaplain on July 8, 1884. He was assigned to minister to the 9th U.S. Cavalry, the famous Buffalo Soldiers, in Kansas, Wyoming, and Nebraska.

In addition to chaplain duties, Plummer also served as the superintendent of post schools, while working to address issues to bring about social reforms. It is speculated that because of this work, he was court-martialed on "trumped up" charges and dismissed from the Army in 1894, for conduct unbecoming to an officer.

For many this slight would be devastating, but Plummer was a man of faith; he followed his principles and

did not waver. After the trial, he returned to serve his community as a pastor until his death in 1905. Justice prevailed in 2004, when the governor of Maryland overturned his court-martial.

Reading Plummer's story, we see that, like all of us, some parts are good, some are bad. We aren't the first to have problems, and we won't be the last. But I think that what enables everyone of us to overcome, is finding that spirit, hope, force, and faith in the principles we hold dear that will always get us through to the end.

As we journey throughout the streets and walkways of VBC, may we walk alongside those who went before us and use their dreams as tools for our own success. For me, prayer and readings are essential; for others it may be just quiet times or some specific rituals. No matter what you do, realize we are not alone and we don't have to do this alone.

SARC Smarts

Common myths 3 and 4 regarding sexual assault:



MYTH 3: Only the young and attractive are assaulted.

FACT: Everyone, regardless of age or physical attractiveness, is a potential victim of sexual assault.

MYTH 4: Sexual assault happens only to people who are "asking for it" by being provocative

FACT: Nobody asks to be sexually assaulted, even those who dress or act provocatively- some victims may appear vulnerable or be intoxicated, too young, or lack mental, physical, emotional ability to resist or fight back.

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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Soldiers receive vital drivers training

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

Soldiers from Victory Base Complex trained on the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle at the Regional Support Activity-Central on Camp Liberty, Jan 5-9.

The MRAP operator new equipment training gave the Soldiers up-to-date information on the vehicle designed to provide protection against mines and improvised explosive devices.

Anthony Weathers, an OPNET MRAP instructor with RSA-Central, said the course provides the Soldiers in-depth information about the MRAP and what information they need to operate and maintain the vehicle.

During the four-day course, Soldiers completed classroom and hands-on training, then finished with two and a half hours of daytime and nighttime familiarization driving.

"The classroom instructions gave me the knowledge about the MRAP, and the hands-on training helped me understand and feel what it takes to operate the vehicle," said Pfc. Wesley Brown, a combat medic with Company C, 299th Brigade



Anthony Weathers points out parts of the MRAP control panel to Pfc. Cecilia Nicols, a combat medic and Pfc. Dennis Millering, a truck driver, both with 299th BSB, 2nd Bde., 1st Inf. Div.

Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division.

The hands-on experience of operating the vehicle gives the Soldiers a realistic idea of the capabilities it has in different driving conditions Weathers said.

Soldiers in the training said familiarization and teamwork are key factors in successfully maneuvering the MRAP in the different driving conditions they face in theater.

"Driving the MRAP requires hands-on experience and everyone inside the vehicle needs to be aware of what is going on," said Spc. Jasmine Jones, petroleum supply specialist with 163rd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division.

"Night driving is difficult when you're driving the MRAP," said Spc. Keith Larson, unit armor with the 163rd AAB, 1st Inf. Div. "It's slower because of limited visibility and requires more teamwork and situational awareness from everyone inside."

The MRAP's purpose in support of their missions emphasized the importance of the training to the Soldiers.

"Transporting Soldiers safely in a timely manner is considered a success," said Larson. "With this training each and every one of us is now capable of operating the vehicle, making our team versatile to complete our mission."

In Iraq and Afghanistan, IEDs remain the enemy's weapon of choice against U.S. forces. MRAPs have been one of the best defenses against such attacks.

Training to maintain and properly operate them is a vital key in keeping service members safe.



Anthony Weathers shows Soldiers the brake chamber on the axle of an MRAP during their familiarization training on Camp Victory, Jan 5.



Photo by Sgt. Joseph Vine

Gen. Lloyd T. Austin III, commanding general, United States Forces – Iraq, speaks to those in attendance during the transfer-of-authority ceremony in Al Faw Palace, Camp Victory, Feb. 8. The ceremony marks the beginning of XVIII Abn. Corps' deployment as the core component of USF-I.

XVIII Airborne drops into Operation New Dawn

Story by Sgt. Joseph Vine
USF-I Public Affairs

The XVIII Airborne Corps, from Fort Bragg, N.C., become the core component of United States Forces – Iraq and took control of day-to-day operations from III Corps, of Fort Hood, Texas, in a transfer-of-authority ceremony in the Al Faw Palace, Feb. 8.

As Fort Bragg's Sky Dragons begin their deployment, Lt. Gen. Frank G. Helmick, USF-I deputy commanding general for operations, and commanding general for the XVIII Airborne Corps, said they are ready to join the USF-I team and accomplish the mission before them.

"During this next year, we will partner with the Iraqi security forces to ensure we continue to build the capacity, credibility and professional character of the Iraqi security

forces," Helmick said, "so that they remain the standard by which soldiers and police are measured throughout the region.

"The Iraqi security forces will continue to strengthen as they mature their planning, training, intelligence and logistical capabilities," he said.

Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III, USF-I commanding general, said that Helmick, Command Sgt. Maj. Earl L. Rice, the senior enlisted advisor to USF-I deputy commanding general for operations and XVIII Abn. Corps, and the Sky Dragon Soldiers will have their work cut out for them as they bring closure to a decade-long war and continue to advise, assist and train Iraqi forces for the coming months.

"Our time is limited, our work is demanding, and our troops are still very much engaged in the mission," said Austin, "and as we continue to strengthen the Iraqi security forces, we must also closely



Photo by Sgt. Joseph Vine

Lt. Gen. Frank G. Helmick, United States Forces - Iraq deputy commanding general for operations, and commanding general for the XVIII Abn. Corps, speaks to those in attendance at the transfer-of-authority ceremony for XVIII Abn. Corps in Al Faw Palace, Camp Victory, Feb. 8.

► *Sgt. Tobi Nelson, an automated logistics sergeant with Headquarters Headquarters Battalion, XVIII Abn. Corps, holds the corps' colors during the transfer-of-authority ceremony.*

partner with the embassy as we transform our mission over the next several months.

"The XVIII Airborne Corps is joining our team at an extremely important time in Iraq's history," he said. "What you do over the next several months will have an enormous impact on Iraq and the region for years to come."

During the ceremony, Helmick also addressed Iraqi leaders, reassuring them the United States' commitment to the Iraqi people will continue and will not falter.

"This is a historic time in Iraq," said Helmick. "I want to thank the Iraqi leaders for your continued commitment; that security of the Iraqi people and our security remains a top priority, and for your dedication to support Iraq's continued development as a sovereign, stable and reliable partner with the United States.

"I look forward to continuing the personal relationships with my Iraqi brothers that we have developed over the years," he said. "My commitment to all of you is that we will do our very best to make a difference for this great country as we move through 2011.



Photo by Lee Craker



Photo by Lee Craker

Al Faw Palace is one of Saddam Hussein's former palaces on Victory Base Complex. Since 2004, the landmark structure, also known as the "water palace," has been used as the headquarters for United States Forces - Iraq.

Have the Courage to Help a Buddy

"One suicide is one too many."

Kenneth O. Preston
Sergeant Major of the Army

**Talk to your Chaplain or a
Behavioral Health Professional or
call Military OneSource
1-800-342-9647**

www.militaryonesource.com

USACHPPM

What is your reason for celebrating Valentine's Day?



**Private 1st Class
Wilburn Turner**

*Food Operations Specialist
Headquarters Support Command,
XVIII Abn. Corps*

*"To celebrate the time of
the year that brings people
together other than Christmas."*



**Sgt. 1st Class
Larry Rives**

*USF-I Command Group
Commandant*

*HSC, XVIII Abn. Corps
"It is one day to really
say what we mean to our
wives or girlfriends."*



**Private 1st Class
Ashton Kammenga**

*Driver
40th Expeditionary
Support Battalion*

*"Celebrating for my girl
back home."*



**Capt.
Dave Ritter**

*Cyber Investigator
Air Component Coordination
Element-Iraq*

*"It's an opportunity to
reflect on the care you've
given others every day."*



**Specialist
Marc Gordon**

*Actions NCO
40th Expeditionary
Support Battalion*

*"Show love to family and
friends in the states"*



**Colonel
Robert H. Risberg**

*Chief of Staff
USF-I J9*

*"I will celebrate it while
on R and R, spending time
with the kids and the
entire family."*

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
www.flickr.com/photos/mnfiraq
www.twitter.com/USF_Iraq

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

Sports Oasis entertains Super Bowl fans

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



More than 200 service members gathered to watch Super Bowl XLV live as the Green Bay Packers took on the Pittsburgh Steelers in the Sports Oasis Dining Facility at Camp Victory, Feb. 7.

The Dining Facility hosted this event from 2 a.m. to 6 a.m., serving various "finger food" dishes such as buffalo wings, french fries, mozzarella sticks, jalapeno poppers, and pizza contributed by supporters in the U.S..

"The pizza served tonight was donated by Gino's Pizza through the Pizza for Patriots program," said Sgt. 1st Class Alfred E. Johnson, food operations noncommissioned officer-in-charge with Headquarters Support

Company, XVIII Airborne Corps. "They sent 46 cases of pizza which we will continue to dish out until it is all gone."

During the game, the troops also were treated to a variety of beverages, including two beers of their choice.

Several first sergeants from different units throughout Camp Victory were on hand to ensure that the two-beer limit was enforced. Identification cards were verified and each service member was marked to show that they received their beverages.

"This is a large crowd tonight," said Johnson. "It is an opportunity for service members to enjoy themselves while out here in Iraq."

"I don't think it could have been set

up better," said Spc. Jordan Raiff, a unit administrator with the 40th Expeditionary Support Battalion. "They had some delicious football snacks, plenty of seating and the two beers were just enough to really make the game feel like home."

"This was a great opportunity to release the stressors and enjoy a game that only happens once a year," said Petty Officer 2nd Class William Miranda, a culinary specialist with the Command Group Secretary of Joint Staff, United States Forces - Iraq. "The best part was watching the Packers beat the Steelers."

"It's the simple things like this that really help the time fly by," Raiff said.



Service members enjoy the food and beverages during the Super Bowl pre-game show at the Sports Oasis Dining Facility on Camp Victory, Feb. 7.