

# Victory Times



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

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## Military police target speeding violators on VBC



*Spc. Brandon Waltemath, a military policeman with the 192nd MP Det. from Nebraska City, Neb., uses a radar speed gun to ensure vehicles are following the appropriate speed limit signs when driving on the road.*

Story and photo by Spc. Paul Holston  
USF-I Public Affairs

Speeding in a vehicle greatly increases the risk of injury and death in an accident. Service members, civilians and local nationals are at times in a hurry to get to where they're going, ignoring speed limit signs and rushing to get to their destinations without concern for their safety or for the safety of others.

On Victory Base Complex, speeding is one of the main issues with drivers on the road. As a result, military police on base are ensuring that traffic laws are being enforced.

"We deal with different types of drivers, nationalities and vehicles on the road," said Sgt. 1st Class Jennifer Luhr, the traffic management noncommissioned officer-in-charge for the 192nd Military Police Detachment

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## Army stabilizes manpower, alters retention control points

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

Effective June 1, Soldiers serving on active duty, whether in the regular Army or Army Reserve and National Guard components, will encounter various changes within the Army Retention

Control Points program.

The RCP program was designed to stabilize the Army's manpower. The new rules will significantly reduce the time staff sergeants and below can stay in service without being promoted.

This ruling, known as the "High Year of Tenure," will affect nearly 400,000 enlisted Soldiers governed by Title 10 of

the U.S. Code.

"The Army is focusing on reverting back to the right size," said Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Thomas, a career counselor with USF-I retention office. "This is a process in which the Army emphasizes the alignment of forces to sustain its needs."

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# Chaplain's Corner

## *The Pastor's Cat*

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Dave Tish  
116th Garrison Command

Many stories circulate around the internet; some are worth repeating.

All of us in our faith journey have asked God, no matter how we address him, to either remove something or give us something. This is a story about both and maybe just a hint that God has a sense of humor too.

Dwight Nelson recently told a true story about the pastor of his church. He had a kitten that climbed up a tree in his backyard and then was afraid to come down. The pastor coaxed, offered warm milk, etc.

The kitty would not come down. The tree was not sturdy enough to climb, so the pastor decided that if he tied a rope to his car and pulled it until the tree bent down, he could then reach up and get the kitten.

That's what he did, all the while checking his progress from the car. He then figured if he went just a little bit further, the tree would be bent sufficiently for him to reach the kitten. But as he moved the car a little further forward, the rope broke.

The tree went "booing!" and the kitten instantly sailed through the air - out of sight.

The pastor felt terrible. He walked all over the

neighborhood asking people if they'd seen a little kitten. No. Nobody had seen a stray kitten. So he prayed, "Lord, I just commit this kitten to your keeping," and went on about his business.

A few days later he was at the grocery store, and met one of his church members. He happened to look into her shopping cart and was amazed to see cat food. This woman was a cat hater and everyone knew it, so he asked her, "Why are you buying cat food when you hate cats so much?"

She replied, "You won't believe this," and then told him how her little girl had been begging her for a cat, but she kept refusing. Then a few days before, the child had begged again, so the Mom finally told her little girl, "Well, if God gives you a cat, I'll let you keep it." She told the pastor, "I watched my child go out in the yard, get on her knees, and ask God for a cat. And really, Pastor, you won't believe this, but I saw it with my own eyes. A kitten suddenly came flying out of the blue sky, with its paws outspread, and landed right in front of her."

In all of our good intentions do we become a help/hope or are we a hindrance? Maybe this week we can choose a different avenue of our actions and prayers.

Oh, and never underestimate the power of God and His unique sense of humor.

## *SAPR Spotlight*



### **BE AWARE- Watch For Signs That Trouble May Be Coming:**

- The other person won't stop when you say "No!"
- He or she threatens to hurt you.
- He or she physically restrains you.
- The person threatens to or uses a weapon.
- He or she tries to have sex with you when you are too drunk or medicated to say "No!"
- The person suggests something bad may happen if you don't give in.

**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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*Spc. Kevin Milligan, a nodal network systems operator-maintainer with Co. C, Task Force Dragon, USF-I, watches as Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Thomas, a career counselor with USF-I retention office, points out signature blocks on the enlistment contract during his reenlistment process on Camp Victory, Mar. 2.*

## Retention, from page 1

"We are moving from a building-a-force mentality to shaping-a-force mentality" said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Anderson an Army Reserve career counselor with the Army Reserve Affairs Division.

Official Army guidance was released on Jan. 28, directing new changes to the RCP program. These changes only affect Soldiers in the ranks of private to staff sergeant. Privates through privates first class can retain enlistment for up to eight years. Specialists and corporals are allowed 12 years, while promotable specialists and corporals can stay in for up to 15 years. Sergeants are allowed 15 years, promotable sergeants, 20 years, and staff sergeants are authorized 23 years.

Every Soldier must meet and maintain the standards set by the Army. They must progress as fast as the Army progresses, Thomas said.

"We want to keep the best Soldiers in the Army," Thomas

said. "The memorandum is released as an eye-opener for Soldiers to push harder for progression and achieving success."

"It is a drive for Soldiers to reenlist and will also force them to work harder towards progression in the Army," said Sgt. Maj. Mark Mayo, the USF-I command group career counselor.

Active-duty Soldiers who are subject to separation because of the RCP change are provided other opportunities to continue their military career, such as serving in the Army Reserve or Army National Guard.

"Take a good hard look at yourself and ask if you have done everything you need to change," Mayo said. "If you want to stay in the Army, you have to advance."

Career counselors on Victory Base Complex highly encourage Soldiers to utilize their services for assistance towards career progression and reenlistment information.

"We are here for the Soldiers," Thomas said. "The assistance and services are readily available for them."

**"This is a process in which the Army emphasizes the alignment of forces to sustain its needs."**



## Speeding, from page 1

from Nebraska City, Neb. “We have a variety of traffic controls, such as stop signs, yield signs and speed limit signs that are set all across the base for the safety of everyone.”

The military police station on Camp Victory covers all of VBC, including Camps Slayer and Stryker and Sather Air Base.

Roads such as Red Fox and the Baghdad International Airport area are the biggest locations where speeding occurs. The distance between stop signs and the width of the roads are contributing factors, said Luhr.

“These roads get busiest in the mornings when people go to work,” said Spc. Brandon Waltemath, a military policeman with the 192nd MP Det. “It’s been better in the last six months, but we still see some that don’t know or are unaware of the speed limits on base.”

The provost marshal’s office uses a point system to track traffic violations and each specific offense accumulates a certain amount of points. For speeding, a driver receives two points for driving one to nine miles over the speed limit, four points for going 10 to 14 miles over and an automatic six points for anything over 15 miles over the limit.

If a driver accumulates six points within a 12-month period, he or she loses their driving privileges for a year, said Waltemath.

“Our whole goal is to keep everyone safe, we don’t want any more traffic accidents while being here,” said Spc. Robert Bell, a military policeman, also with the 192nd MP Det.

Bell said that the policemen give drivers plenty of warnings based on the terrain of the roads that are used. He added that problems such as potholes, gravel, dirt, weather and bad road conditions are the main reasons why there are specific speed limits.

Waltemath said all speed limits on base are maximum speed for every type of vehicle. The majority of speeding violations, he said, are due to drivers

not paying attention to the speed limits. Speeders go from five to as much as 20 miles per hour over the designated speed limit.

Patrol officers are on duty throughout the day and night and use either a radar speed gun or a stationary radar mounted in their vehicles to track driver’s speed.

If drivers follow all appropriate street signs and do not rush where they are

going, said Waltemath, road safety can improve not only for the base, but for the drivers and passengers as well.

It is important to stay vigilant and have situational awareness while driving to help reduce traffic violations to include speeding.

Losing the ability to drive will not only affect you, but also the mission readiness of your unit.

# SPEED LIMIT

## The consequences of speeding on VBC

By Sgt. A.M LaVey  
USF-I Public Affairs

One of the things that incoming service members hear at the Camp Victory welcome brief is that combat driving, including speeding is not allowed anywhere on Victory Base Complex.

There are different speed limits for different parts of VBC, and those limits are posted at varying intervals on most roads. Where there are no posted speed limits, VBC traffic regulations stipulate going no more than 30 mph on paved roads and 25 mph on unpaved roads. The only exception is parking lots, where the limit is 5 mph.

Speeding on VBC can incur serious consequences.

The garrison provost marshal’s office uses a point system to track traffic violations. There are six speeding violations which accrue points, ranging from driving too slow, which is a safety hazard, to racing other drivers.

Getting caught driving one to nine miles over the speed limit will garner you two points, 10 to 14 miles over gets you four points and anything over 15 miles over the limit will get you an automatic six points. Acquiring six points within a 12-month period effectively terminates your driving privileges on VBC and that translates to a theater-wide ban from operating any sort of vehicle.

Losing the ability to drive during deployment might not immediately impact your mission, but it will most definitely affect your unit’s readiness in the long run.

# 804th Medical Brigade assumes command of Task Force Med

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

The 804th Medical Brigade became the 10th command medical unit for United States Forces – Iraq during a transfer-of-authority ceremony with Task Force 807th Medical Command, at the Al Faw Palace on Camp Victory, Mar. 4.

After more than eight years since their last deployment in Kuwait, supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom, the 804th Med. Bde. once again put its boots in the sand to provide medical support for service members deployed in Iraq.

The unit, based out of Fort Devens, Mass., assumed command and control of the 24 medical units from the 807th.

As the new medical command, 804th will continue the three-part medical mission in Iraq: saving lives, keeping the force healthy and maximizing the return on each of our service members.

During the ceremony, the importance of the medical brigade's mission was emphasized by Maj. Gen. Edward Cardon, deputy commanding general for support, USF-I and keynote speaker for the ceremony.

Task Force - Med provides the basis of the medical capability in Iraq, he said. "Every member of USF-I is within one hour of resuscitative care - what we term as 'expeditionary medical capability' is the envy of many countries around the world."

"Joining USF-I in the most critical period in this history, you will oversee the many significant medical support transitions during the historic withdrawal of forces from Iraq," Cardon said to the incoming medical brigade. "This task, while daunting, will be handled with ease under the tremendous leadership of Col. Jim Snyder."

"The days and weeks ahead will no doubt bring many challenges and also will bring many opportunities of rewarding moments as you and your team continue to care for the larger USF-I team and set the conditions for the transition to the United States mission Iraq."

Snyder, commander of the 804th Med. Bde., encouraged his Soldiers to support the USF-I mission during Operation New Dawn.

"The time has come that we go to work and meet our mission requirements and serve the medical needs of our Soldiers in theatre," said Snyder. "The 804th Task Force - Med



*Col. Jim Snyder, commander of the 804th Medical Brigade and Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Maldonado, 804th Med. Bde., uncasing the battalion's colors during a transfer of authority ceremony at Camp Victory, Mar. 4, symbolizing the 804th Med. Bde. assuming authority from the 807th Med. Cmd.*

is ready to support you and the Soldiers in this theatre by providing the most outstanding medical care ever."

Col. Michael O'Guinn, commander of the 807th Med. Cmd, while providing words of encouragement to the incoming medical brigade, applauded his Soldiers for a job well done.

"You and your team deployed with the aggressive attitude and professional skills necessary to ensure success of this task force through the end of this operation," said O'Guinn.

"During this past year of your life, you executed five significant achievements I believe set you apart from every other medical task force to date. You skillfully succeeded in these unique missions while carrying on the day-to-day missions required to manage this task force," said O'Guinn to his departing unit. "Through the lens of these accomplishments and your every day mission successes - I do indeed hope you had the time of your life."

"The 807th has without a doubt set the standard. The legacy of Task Force 804th Med will be to execute all missions in a seamless manner while maintaining flexibility," Snyder said. "Our brigade has greatly benefited from our predecessors. Their efforts and hard work has made this transition a smooth process."

The ceremony concluded with Snyder and Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Maldonado, command sergeant major, 804th Med. Bde., uncasing their colors and marking the official start of day-to-day operations in Iraq.

# UNSUNG HERO



Staff Sgt. Matthew Bell 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, Mar. 4.

Bell received the certificate for his exemplary performance as the company operations sergeant for the Operations Company, Task Force Dragon, USF-I.

## VICTORY VOICES

What type of Morale, Welfare and Recreation events would you like to see on Camp Victory?



*"More concerts and comedy shows, preferably on Sundays."*

**Spc.  
David Hanson**

Gunner  
Co. B, 145th  
Brigade Support Battalion



*"Comedy shows and poetry nights. It continues to build morale for service members."*

**Sgt. 1st Class  
Ezequiel Guillen**

Intensive Care Unit  
noncommissioned officer-in-charge  
86th Combat Support Hospital



*"More Omaha poker tournaments. They are fun for poker players."*

**Sgt.  
Patrick Williams**

Information Management Officer  
J2  
Joint Intelligence



*"Concerts, sports action tours, cheerleaders and celebrity meet and greets."*

**Spc.  
Kenneth Ramsay**

Military Police Officer  
192nd Military  
Police Detachment



# Safety matters

By Jesse Martin  
USF-I Safety Office

Many of us are combat veterans and have deployed numerous times. Sometimes it may feel like we never left Camp Victory. Naturally, complacency might set in once you become acclimated to the environment and situation.

The dictionary defines complacency as contented to a fault; self-satisfied and unconcerned. This can be risky because you might lose a small part of your awareness for the small things that may become a danger to us all. Many incidents occur because people do not pay attention to what is going on around them. This endangers you and others around you.

Accidents can occur at anytime, anyplace. Too often individuals become over confident and complacent when it comes to safety. Leaders and supervisors often fall into the same trap - they become distracted by other pressing issues, focused on getting the job done than getting it done safely. They stop paying attention to the importance of safety and become blind to the fact that unsafe performance will affect the whole organization in the long run. It often takes a very serious injury or death to cause everyone to focus on safety. Don't let this happen in your organization.

Here are a few things you can do to avoid this potentially deadly situation.

1. Make safety a top priority in the organization
2. Report all unsafe conditions
3. Have safety meetings and focus on reducing risk
4. Conduct walk-through inspections of all areas and fix only problems that you might find.
5. Create opportunities for anyone to contribute ideas and information that will lead to greater safety awareness
6. Make on-the-spot corrections and prevent unsafe acts before it happens
7. Recognize and reward personnel for safety enforcement

## 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.  
8:30 - 10:30 & 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.  
Tues. and Sat. 830 - 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  
XVIII Airborne Corps  
Fort Bragg



## Check CHUsday

Each Tuesday Check The Following In Your CHU

- ☒ Power strips are free of debris and clothing
- ☒ Electrical devices not in use are unplugged
- ☒ Power strips and outlets are not overloaded
- ☒ Smoke detector is operational
- ☒ Fire extinguisher is serviceable (in the green)
- ☒ Room is neat and orderly

If you experience a fire or shock contact TF SAFE at 318-485-7143 or Your Mayor Cell.



*Sailors and Marines from throughout the Victory Base Complex gather at the Al Faw Palace ballroom during the leadership symposium hosted by the Baghdad Petty Officer Association at Camp Victory, Feb. 25.*

# Petty officers host career information seminar

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

During deployment in Iraq, many Sailors working in a joint forces environment serve an important but non-traditional role that is often outside a Sailor's typical occupational experience.

The Navy's Baghdad Petty Officer Association with United States Forces – Iraq hosted a leadership symposium to re-unite Sailors throughout Iraq at Al Faw Palace on Camp Victory, Feb. 25.

The career information seminar presented by the Navy's senior enlisted leaders in Baghdad informed Navy and Marine personnel on up-to-date Navy news and provided a chance for Sailors in-theater to interact with each other.

"The symposium provides Sailors and Marines on Victory Base Complex and throughout the Iraqi joint operations area to experience the Navy culture and leadership they are missing from their fleet while deployed," said Petty Officer 1st Class Katherine Savant, a yeoman with Joint Chief of Staff Command Group, United States Forces – Iraq.

"A lot of Sailors in Baghdad don't have Navy in their command. By going to this event it gives them an opportunity to meet other Sailors, petty officers, chiefs and senior leadership to provide guidance while serving in a joint forces environment," said Savant.

Rear Adm. Hank Bond, director of J6, USF-I, the keynote speaker for the event,

emphasized the importance of attending the symposium.

"Here in a joint forces environment it is important for personnel from various military branches to remember their service culture," said Bond.

"In an Army-centric area, this is foreign ground for Navy personnel. It's important to draw some time aside and remember our core values."

During the seminar, the Sailors and Marines had a chance to talk about topics like advancements, commissioning programs, selection boards and evaluation writing.

"The seminar helped me understand what resources I have out here to advance in my career," said Petty Officer 1st Class Ferdinand Lagasca, a personnel specialist with Navy Central Command Forward-Iraq.

"No matter how much you know, you will not know everything," said Lagasca. "Events like this allow you to meet people who can guide you towards your career advancement."

The "sand Sailors" enjoyed a little taste of the Navy life as they were reunited with other Sailors

on VBC.

Petty Officer 2nd Class William Miranda, a culinary specialist with Joint Chief of Staff Command Group, USF-I said, he enjoys events like this to get a family like atmosphere during his deployment.

"It feels good to be reunited with our Navy family out here," said Miranda. "We can talk about common things we can relate to as Sailors and help out each other to progress in our careers while deployed"

Petty Officer 1st Class Pearl Amoako, president of the NBPOA, said one of the association's goals is to continue the bi-annual event to make deployments more enjoyable for Sailors in Iraq.

The BPOA is scheduled to have the next leadership symposium this fall.



*Rear Adm. Hank Bond, director of J6, USF-I, and keynote speaker for the event presents his coin of excellence to outgoing BPOA president Petty Officer 1st Class Katherine Savant and BPOA vice president Petty Officer 2nd Class William Miranda.*