



The Expeditionary Times

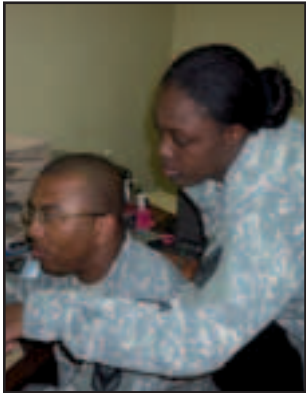
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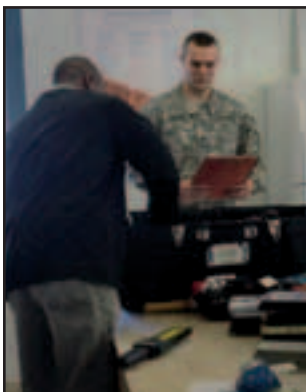
Leaders



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play crucial roles**

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advanced skill set**

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(Left to right) Lt. Richard Rodriguez Jr., contracting officer with the Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group, and a San Antonio, Texas, native; Capt. Philip Thomas, convoy support center officer-in-charge with the 224th Sust. Bde., and a San Diego native; and Sgt. 1st Class Heriberto Culebro, project team leader for CSC Adder with the 224th Sust. Bde., and an Imperial Valley, Calif., native. The three discuss the help and teamwork that have developed between the NAVELSG and the 224th Sustainment Brigade. Army units, Navy, Air Force, and civilians joined together to help build and develop CSC Adder at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq

Services work together to build CSC Adder

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SPC. MATTHEW KEELER
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

**CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE
ADDER, Iraq**— In Iraq, Soldiers typically have a mission that many complete with others from their own unit.

Rarely do Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and civilians work in conjunction on a small project, let alone a larger project. At Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq, these four different groups came together to build and establish Convoy Support Center Adder.

“The purpose of the CSC is to prepare the base for the responsible drawdown of forces,” said Capt. Philip Thomas, convoy support center officer-in-charge with the 224th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a San Diego native.

“The key component of doing that is to pull

things from Iraq through convoys ... and we are here to make it as convenient as possible.”

When Thomas and his team arrived in Iraq, they were initially stationed at COB Kalsu. Working with the units stationed there, they got a number of good ideas of how to develop a CSC in Adder.

“We took a lot of TTP [tactics, techniques, and procedures] specific to Iraq, and we saw how they work, and spun our ideas on how to make it better,” said Thomas. “Then bring them down to Adder, on behalf of the 224th Sust. Bde.”

Upon arrival at COB Adder, Thomas and his team found the area still in its very basic stages. The office that they would be working out of had no heat or air conditioning, there were issues with setting up tents for the convoy crews, and a number of other problems, he said. What the team that Thomas and his unit replaced had done was left a basic groundwork and plan.

One of the first missions of the CSC team was to establish a convoy command building.

“The buildings, we had to bring them in,” said

Master Sgt. Scott Witt, project manager for the CSC team with the 224th Sus. Bde., and a Paso Robles, Calif., native.

“There originally was talk about moving buildings, or building wooden buildings, or prefab buildings put in place. So, there was a lot of decision-making up front that had to be done.”

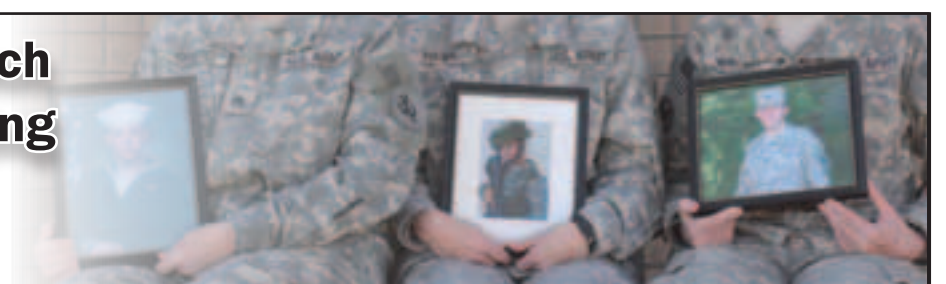
When the building was established, it was nothing but an empty shell, and so a request was sent to the 467th Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force, stationed at Victory Base Complex, Iraq, said Tech. Sgt. Quentin Ford, project lead for electrical craftsman with the 467th Prime BEEF, and a Cocoa Beach, Fla., native. “So I came down, and saw what we had on ground, and got started.”

Ford’s job as a reconnaissance element was to see what kind of work needed to be done on the command building, and then request additional support before he began the work, he said. The 467th Prime BEEF helped lay down wiring, air conditioning, and heating capabilities to the

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**Deployed Soldiers keep in touch
with sons and daughters serving
in Afghanistan**

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Al Asad Air Base:
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COB Speicher:
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Remember those around you

LT. COL. RICHARD L. PIONTKOWSKI
103RD ESC DEPUTY COMMAND CHAPLAIN



Not long ago, I found myself on a forward operating base in Iraq that had names on almost every one of its buildings. I'm not talking about descriptive names like CLINIC, or DFAC; the names on these buildings read like the phone book: The PFC Adam Abel Library, The CW3 Bonnie Boyd MWR, etc. It's not unusual for many buildings to be named after the brave men and women who have given their lives in service to their country, but one stood out for its, shall we say "uniqueness?" Now I don't remember the precise name, but I do recall the rank of the man and the facility to which it was attached, so for the sake of simplicity I'll invent a totally fictitious name. This building was the "Lieutenant General Marush Corsonski Laundry Point."

I don't know of any lieutenant generals who have died during the current hostilities, and certainly this is the first laundry point in Iraq I'd seen with a name. One wonders what Corsonski did to have his pedigree listed on such a sanitary structure. "Remember old General Corsonski? There was a Soldier with a crease in his pants!" "As a colonel, he ran a spit and polish brigade that cleaned up this area." "Ah, the smell of old sweaty socks, it's almost as if Marush is here with us."

Of course it makes it easier to remember places that have fanciful, unique or odd names, but really, is it the places that we recall or the people? Someone will say that they'll always remember Iraq, but is it Iraq they will recall or the people who they were with? I think this is true of all of us; we like to think we remember places, and we will remember some

details of the place like heat, dirt, etc., but it is really the people who we remember and associate with the place. "We had a great time in Florida." "The Family really enjoyed Disneyland." "That cruise was like our second honeymoon." Places are special because the people we experience the place with, or meet in the place, are treasured.

So what will you take away from Iraq? It's not a comfortable place for a service member. The weather is only good for a few months out of the year; the air is often like breathing dirt; the heat can make the smallest activity an exhausting chore. And this doesn't even take into account the small percentage of the population that would like to see all Americans meet their demise.

What about people? The people I work with are a professional bunch. I'm not talking about just the chaplain section. I'm speaking of all the great service members we have here in the Iraq Joint Operations Area. A more professional group I have yet to find, and some of them are characters that lighten the day with their funny stuff, whether intended or unintended. Many have gone beyond their duty in giving their time to the Iraqi orphans; there are service members who were instrumental in changing the life of another service member for the better; and there are service members serving here just because they love their country and believe this is the right thing to do.

What you will remember from Iraq is not so much the place, as the people around you who ate with you, lived with you, worked with you, laughed with you and sacrificed with you.

You may never have the honor of having a laundry point or anything else named after you, but you will have had the honor of working on a mission together and calling each other comrades



EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

103rd ESC Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Mark W. Corson

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Mission Statement: The Expeditionary Times Staff publishes a weekly newspaper with the primary mission of providing command information to all service members, partners, and Families of the 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) team and a secondary mission of providing a means for units on Joint Base Balad to disseminate command information to their audiences.

The Weekly Standard: One last note about IG

MAJ. ERIK VERHOEF
103RD ESC DEPUTY IG



The 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) mission is transitioning in Iraq, and the unit will return back to Des Moines, Iowa, to assume its continental U.S. mission again. All three inspector general members have felt it a privilege to serve you and want to leave you with a few thoughts on the IG system.

Commanders must remember that Soldiers have the right to see the IG. When a Soldier says he or she wants to see the IG, you must allow it in accordance with AR 20-1. Commanders can postpone the visit with the IG if there is a critical mission requirement, but must facilitate the visit as soon as is practical. If the unit has done all the right things, there is nothing to worry about when a Soldier goes to the IG. The IG may even be able to help with the situation by bringing a fresh perspective.

Soldiers must realize that the IG is in the business of

enforcing rules and regulations. There is nothing the IG can do just because you don't agree with what the unit is doing. Also, we do not have a magic wand to fix problems. Most problems Soldiers bring to us require us to go to the command for resolution. That being said, if you feel there is a problem, do not hesitate to call us. We will hear you out and give you advice, and take action as necessary.

Leaders must treat all with respect. Hollywood gets it wrong in the movies all the time. This is also true for leadership. Leadership is much less dramatic than you see in the movies. Yes, when bullets are flying and lives are at risk, yelling and screaming are good leadership techniques. However, in garrison a more calm and reasoned technique will achieve the results you want.

Counseling is the key. It motivates good Soldiers to become better. It helps poorly performing Soldiers to improve. A little time invested in counseling (both positive and negative) helps the leader write evaluations and awards when the time comes. It also gives leaders the necessary paperwork to take more drastic measures with the Uniform Code of Military Justice, if that is required.

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Maj. Erik Verhoef (*Deputy*)

Master Sgt. Arnett Cooper (*NCOIC*)

Adder/Tallil (224 SB):

DSN 433-2125

Speicher (103rd ESC):

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The 310th ESC is on the ground and will introduce themselves next week, and will continue to serve in support of your needs without a hitch.

Combat Stress: Welcome the 98th CSC team

CAPT. PATRICIA FRANCE
98TH COMBAT STRESS CONTROL



The 98th Medical Detachment Combat Stress Control team is pleased to join the Joint Base Balad team. We are replacing the 85th CSC team.

The CSC team has both a clinical and a prevention mission.

Clinically, we evaluate and treat individuals with behavioral health diagnosis, complete Command Directed Evaluations, perform medication management, and offer educational classes. Currently, the CSC clinic will offer three weekly classes: stress management, anger management and relationship/communication skills.

Smoking cessation will be taught every Saturday of the

month. Seating is limited, so please call to reserve your spot.

Stress Management: Tuesday at 2 p.m.

Anger Management: Wednesday at 2 p.m.

Relationship/Communication Skills: Thursday at 2 p.m.

Smoking Cessation: Saturday at 2 p.m.

Our prevention team actively travels to units to inform command teams about the services we provide and to teach classes that are requested. Classes that are offered include: suicide prevention, battle mind medic, sleep hygiene and relaxation, unit behavioral health advocate, traumatic event management, and redeployment and R&R briefings. A unit representative simply needs to call the clinic to arrange a time and date.

The 98th CSC is also fortunate to have Sgt. 1st Class

Zack, a therapy dog, as part of the team. Zack is a specially trained yellow lab who is utilized in both therapeutic interventions and unit visits. We are intimately aware that many Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen love animals, and we understand that they miss their pets. Zack offers a small piece of home, and he has the unique ability to raise both individual and unit morale with a visit. To schedule a visit with Zack, contact the clinic and his handler will schedule a date and time to visit your area of responsibility.

Our hours will remain the same (8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. on Saturdays). We are closed on Sundays. If you are interested in attending a class or need our assistance, we are still located in the Joint Medical Clinic. Seats are limited to six personnel per week for the classes, so please call the CSC clinic at 483-3385 in advance to reserve your seat.

Female Soldiers hold important leadership positions

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC. CHRISTIANA BANKOLE
15TH TRANSPORTATION COMPANY

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, IRAQ—Throughout history, women in the Army have accomplished significant achievements that have allowed the world to take notice and realize how far the Army has come by allowing women to hold important leadership positions.

Female Soldiers in leadership positions within the 15th Transportation Company, 749th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), contribute to these achievements daily.

Women in transportation companies are in the minority, and the Roadwarrior family is no exception.

Capt. Stacey N. Jelks, the company commander, and a Bloomingdale, Ill., native, has commanded the Roadwarriors since last year. Jelks, who said that her work as company commander is challenging, also expressed that the role would be demanding for either gender.

"It is a big challenge, regardless of gender," she said. "When I was a second lieutenant, I was the only female officer in a forward support company attached to an infantry battalion, so now I enjoy my position as a commander and the challenges that go along with it."

Cpl. Jermeika Rivera, the company's supply noncommissioned officer and a Tallahassee, Fla., native, has held her position since September 2010. She said being a woman in a demanding position has allowed her to become a better leader for her Soldiers.

"I would advise any female Soldier in a leadership role to not be intimidated," explained Rivera.

Staff Sgt. LaCerishia Johnson, platoon sergeant for first platoon, and a New Orleans native, has been a platoon sergeant for the last two months. Johnson, whose ultimate goal in the Army is to become a warrant officer, said acknowledging women and their accomplishments is very important.

"There was a time when the role of women in the military was restricted to being nurses," said Johnson. "Now we have come so far to where women are in charge of masses of Soldiers."

Staff Sgt. Antonia Silva-Warren, a truck master with the 15th Trans. Co., and a Chicago



Cpl. Jermeika Rivera with the 15th Transportation Company, 749th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Tallahassee, Fla., native, helps another Soldier work on spreadsheets inside the 15th Trans Co. headquarters at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

native, assisted in the operations for the Roadwarrior Family for three months.

"I encourage women to use this challenge of future leadership," said Silva-Warren. "If they turn that into a positive, it will push them to become great leaders."

The American Red Cross: Yesterday and today

PRERANA KORPE

AMERICAN RED CROSS ASSISTANT STATION MANAGER



Mention of the Red Cross is often immediately linked to images of disaster relief or blood donation. However, the founder of the American Red Cross, Clara Barton, was inspired by events of the American Civil War, twenty years before the establishment of the American Red Cross in 1881. Barton once emphatically declared, "I may be compelled to face danger, but never fear it, and while our Soldiers can stand and fight, I can stand and feed and nurse them." Emboldened by a sense of duty, Barton's service began with the U.S. military in 1861 -- feeding, clothing, and providing supplies to wounded members of the Sixth Massachusetts Infantry in Washington, D.C. -- creating the foundation for what would one day become the Service to the Armed Forces division of the American Red Cross.

One hundred and thirty years after its formation, the American Red Cross continues the legacy of Clara Barton through Service to the Armed Forces. Today there are four American Red Cross forward deployed stations throughout southwest Asia and the Middle East, with locations in Kuwait; Bagram, Afghanistan; Baghdad, Iraq; and Balad, Iraq. Each year, the Red Cross passes hundreds of thousands of emergency communication messages (597,000 in fiscal year 2010), serving as a link between service members and their Families, as well as their commands -- providing verification of emergent situations, and notification in certain cases.

Although the American Red Cross is in theater to support and serve the men and women of the U.S. military, their job

would not be complete without the support the staff receives from innumerable service members. The function of the Red Cross is interlocked with the S1's and commands of the military, and the Red Cross mission would not be successful without their collaborative spirit and cooperation.

While volunteers constitute a majority of the American Red Cross work force around the world, many of these volunteers are service members right here in theater, lending a hand during their off-duty time. Already on the front line, serving their country, numerous men and women of the armed forces are extending themselves further to assist the Red Cross in advancing its mission to provide morale and other support to members of the military.

One of the most popular morale resources at the Red Cross station in Balad is the Legacy Room. Many service members have been able to communicate with loved ones while enjoying the comfort of reclining chairs and privacy that the room has to offer. A source of pride for the Red Cross is hosting "Legacy Room Dads" -- service members who have witnessed the birth of their children directly from the Balad Red Cross station.

"[The Legacy Room] is an excellent service. I would've missed out on the birth of my first born child if it had not been for you all," shared first-time father Airman 1st Class Charles McCoy with the 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, after his wife gave birth to their baby girl.

Ms. Sherri Brown, senior vice president of American Red Cross Service to the Armed Forces, spoke of the unique relationship between the Red Cross and the military: "It is an honor to continue providing Red Cross services to today's military and their Families.

"Whether shoulder-to-shoulder in an area of conflict, providing comfort and care in a military hospital, or

educating families on first aid and CPR, you can count on the American Red Cross to be there when you need us most," added Brown.

Interaction with the Red Cross has become a daily occurrence for several service members at JBB. Spc. Bradley Polcyn with the 512th Quartermaster Company, is one such Soldier, and shared thoughts of his experience: "Having the Red Cross services available to us is a blessing -- especially in such a harsh and distant environment away from Family and friends. The warmth and friendly atmosphere is a definite boost to morale during the monotony of day-to-day life in theater."

For many, the Balad Red Cross station has become a familiar and comfortable place to come spend time -- to use the Internet and telephones, play video games, watch movies, eat fresh bread and sip on coffee, or just relax.

"The staff at the Red Cross makes you feel like you're at home, even when you're not," said Spc. Anthony Christian with the 3rd Sustainment Brigade. "They smile at you even if they don't know you at all, and can really help to brighten somebody's day -- like a long lost friend you haven't seen in a while. And after a long hard day at work and the gym, [the Red Cross is] a good place to come and hang out and see how everybody's doing."

One typical evening at the JBB Red Cross station, Senior Station Manager Jocelyn Townsend made her way down the hall, when a frequenter of the Red Cross, Pfc. Josh White with the 22nd Transportation Company, stepped out of the Legacy Room. "Hey, I didn't know you were here!" she exclaimed. "I didn't see you."

A grin formed across White's face before he turned and unambiguously replied, "What, did you think I wasn't coming home today?"

Postal workers help boost service members' morale

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. GAELLEN LOWERS
3RD SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

AL ASAD AIRBASE, Iraq— There are many things that affect morale in a unit. Some are obvious factors such as lack of food, water, shelter, or other basic necessities, but another commodity that people often overlook is mail.

Being in a deployed environment, a piece of mail carries almost magical powers to change a Soldier's attitude, said Spc. William Matthew, satellite transmitting terminal team chief with the 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Goose Creek, S.C., native.

"Just one little letter from my girlfriend will make my whole month," he added. "I can't stop smiling for the rest of the day. Everything seems to be right that day."

That is the goal of the 3rd Platoon, 678th Human Resources Company, assigned to the 22nd Human Resources Company, 3rd Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Sust. Bde.

The platoon deployed from Nashville, Tenn., to Al Asad, Iraq, in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn in June 2010. Before they left, they were unaware that they would be taking over postal operations on Al Asad, Taji, and Ramadi.

"Not all of us were postal qualified before we left, so that presented some unique challenges," said 1st Lt. Marie Maze, platoon leader and postal officer with the 3/678th HRC, and a Louisville, Ky., native. "They have all done a really good job. They were

able to jump right in and make a seamless mission transition for postal operations on three different bases here in Iraq."

The platoon deployed with 21 Soldiers, but was split between the three bases. In Al Asad the average retrograde mail—mail leaving base—reaches more than 100,000 pieces of mail, and more than 375,000 pieces of pro-grade mail (incoming mail). The platoon is efficiently conducting the mission set of two platoons, said Maj. Robert Arroyo, commander of the 22nd HRC, and a Lacey, Wash., native.

"The platoon developed and implemented a new convoy operations plan that allowed more mail traffic to be conducted from the Ramadi Soldier-operated satellite Army Post Office to the outlining FOBs [forward operating bases]," he said. "The 3/678th postal platoon's technical expertise and tireless determination was invaluable to the movement and distribution of over two million pounds of retrograde mail and 3.4 million pounds of pro-grade mail at Al Asad Airbase, Ramadi, and Camp Taji Army post offices, which generated over \$1.2 million in commerce in support of reduction of forces in Iraq."

Maze added that because of the hard work and dedication that her Soldiers in the 3/678th HRC provide, the Soldiers, Airmen and civilians at Al Asad are in better spirits due to the effect that mail has on morale.

"When the mail person comes with the mail, and puts out that list and your name is on that list, it is an exciting and exhilarating feeling," said Staff Sgt. Danyael Thomas, personnel section noncommissioned officer-in-charge with the 240th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 224th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd ESC, at Al Asad, Iraq, and



Spc. Joshua Bowsher, a postal specialist with 3rd Platoon, 678th Human Resources Company, attached to the 22nd Human Resources Company, 3rd Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and an Indiana native, observes a contracted employee as he conducts a parcel inspection and refers to the United States Central Command non-mailable policy to ensure all items are authorized to be mailed at Al-Asad, Iraq.

a Chadbourn, S.C., native. "You find yourself ripping into that package to see what you got. It's like Christmas. Every piece of mail you get out here is like Christmas."

Allied trade shop Soldiers learn dual specialty

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC. SEAN MCGUIRE
4TH SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, IRAQ—

Anyone who has been to Contingency Operating Base Adder in the last year has probably seen the work of the 632nd Maintenance Company, 749th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), allied trade specialists.

Whether it includes security gates, ovens at the Iraqi dining facilities, newly repaired engine heads, modified mine resistant ambush protected vehicles, or sight adjusters for M16A2 assault rifles, the shop has done it all.

During the platoon's tour, they have completed an estimated 1,200 fabrication and repair projects.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Clarence Anderson, the officer in charge of the shop and a Chicago native, said most jobs are created by customers simply walking in on a daily basis to make a request.

"We have supported KBR [Kellogg, Brown and Root], and various brigade combat teams as well as the entirety of Adder while here," he said. "Some of our hottest missions were welding jobs on security gates and the equipment inside the gyms. Most jobs took five to seven days to



Sgt. Justin Fritter, an allied trades specialist for the 632nd Maintenance Company, 749th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), continues work March 12 on a lathe machine.

complete.

"We have Soldiers working as welders and machinists," added Anderson, who has 16 years of service.

He said that the Army struggled for 10 to

12 years by keeping the two different military occupational specialties divided, despite their close, hand-in-hand relationship in daily operations.

In the last year, incoming Soldiers learned

both machining and welding.

Sgt. Justin Fritter, a Soldier with the 632nd Maint. Co., is new to the ATS shop, but has a machinist background. The Yuma, Ariz., native, created a knife and display for his first practice project since learning the welding aspect of the job.

"Mixing the two sides [of the job] is the best thing; they were meant to be together," he said. "I spent time as an automotive technician before joining the Army, rebuilding engines, and it was the most fun I had. It's why I decided to join this field when enlisting."

He said he intends to go back to his hometown and open his own machining and welding shop that creates parts for obsolete farm equipment.

Fritter said he'd prefer to have a small shop so he can be more hands-on and allow his customers to choose him for affordability rather than buying it new elsewhere at a steeper cost.

"Things are run by computers a lot today and this designates a person to pushing buttons on the machines and letting it do all the work," he said. "I'd want to do it myself."

Soldiers in the ATS shop have kept photos over the course of the year of their more memorable projects, including the commander's cup belt. They've also made Army rank insignias for doors, and unit emblems and logos. They've even made a three-pronged flag stand for their battalion.

"This job is certainly the more functional of the arts," said Fritter. "But there is plenty of room for creativity."

CSC cont. from page 1

building to help the Soldiers who work inside.

The work of Ford and his team created further requests to continue supporting the CSC team with another one of their projects, the rest-overnight tents, said Sgt. 1st Class Heriberto Culebro, project team leader for the CSC with the 224th Sus. Bde., and an Imperial Valley, Calif., native.

The original tent area for convoys at the CSC had neither lighting nor any type of heating or cooling, said Culebro. So a request was put out to the 467th Prime BEEF for Ford and his team who had heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) trained Airmen, to extend their time at COB Adder and help the 224th Sust. Bde.

"Most of the work is electrical, and even when you have to hook up HVAC units, you need the power to run those units," said Ford.

They also assisted with moving the Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group across post, said Thomas.

"We have the largest fuel farm in the world," said Lt. Richard Rodriguez Jr., contracting officer with the NAVELSG, and a San Antonio, Texas, native. "We were trying to manage operations from the north side [of COB Adder], which is a good 20-minute drive."

Since they run a 24-hour operation, if anything were to occur their response time would have been delayed by the travel distance.

What the NAVELSG did was solicit help from the CSC team about setting up a location on the other side of base, and they completely opened themselves up to aid us in accomplishing this, said Rodriguez.

Rodriguez went on to say that the NAVELSG has three core competencies at COB Adder: to oversee Kellogg, Brown and Root (KBR) operations and their contractual requirements; to watch the fuel shipping and distribution, and to maintain the flow of fuel as it moves from Kuwait and throughout theater.

Even though the NAVELSG's job is based more on an accounting and planning operation, it means that their day-to-day operation is extremely important to the continuing

sustainment of troops in theater.

"We are making sure that there is a warrior at the end of this fuel, that there is aircraft at the end of this fuel, a tank, a Humvee, an MRAP [mine resistant ambush protected vehicle], a truck, or an NTV [non-tactical vehicle]," said Rodriguez. "If we do not do this right, no fuel, no fight."

The 224th Sust. Bde. was not the only Army unit that contributed and continues to work at the CSC, said Culebro. "The organizations involved are the 1st Sust. Bde., special troops battalion, the 119th Task Force, 635th MCT [Movement Control Team], and the 565th Quartermaster Company under the 749th [Combat Sustainment Support Battalion]."

Each unit has its own important function to help keep the convoys flowing quickly and efficiently into the CSC.

The 1st Sust. Bde., make sure the incoming convoys have the correct direction for billeting, and for staging their vehicles. The MCT tracks the convoys. The 119th TF is primarily concerned with southern pushes and theater sustainment pushes, and the quartermaster Soldiers are in charge of resupplying food and water and the fuel farm, he said.

"There is essentially no unit that I can think of that occupies COB Adder or USD-South [United States Division-South] that we haven't worked with, and that is the beauty of this job," said Thomas. "That is why we have enjoyed it so much because we have made contact with units that we normally would not have."

For Culebro it has been a significant learning experience.

"Its unique how everyone works at a professional level, and how they depend on one another from various points of view, and they follow through and just make sure that they are someone that can be counted on and relied on, and its amazing how everyone is just working together," he said.

With the transfer-of-authority between the 224th Sus. Bde. and the 4th Sus. Bde., Thomas and his team's work at COB Adder has drawn to a close as they hand off the mission to the next team.

"I feel like I can walk away from Iraq and know that we have done our part to posture our brothers and sisters here for success in the future," he said. "I feel we have done our part to push the ball forward in Operation New Dawn."



Tech. Sgt. Quentin Ford, project lead for electrical craftsmen with the 467th Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force, and a Cocoa Beach, Fla., native, works on running electricity for lights and switches for the rest-overnight tents built for drivers and troops on convoys to rest in during their crew breaks at Convoy Support Center Adder on Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq. The RON tents will be set up with heating, ventilation, and air conditioning units to help those who might stop at the CSC to rest inside.

For Witt, the fact that the mission was accomplished ahead of schedule and against the odds was something he will remember.

The most important factor is that CSC Adder is just beginning its true mission of aiding the transition to U.S. Mission Iraq, said Thomas.

Warrant officer strives to lead Soldiers by example



Chief Warrant Officer Alfred Alexander, the battalion maintenance officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 749th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Paso Robles, Calif., native, discusses how to provide supplies to support subordinate units with Capt. Sara Alan, the battalion S4 officer-in-charge with HHC, 749th CSSB, and a Salinas, Calif., native.

STORY AND PHOTO BY
STAFF SGT. ARTUR TARADEJNA
749TH CSSB

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE

ADDER, Iraq— U.S. Army Recruiting Command doctrine states that the purpose of the warrant officer is to serve in specific positions that require greater longevity than the duration of commanders and other staff officers. The extended length of these assignments results in increased technical expertise as well as the leadership and management skills that make them so effective for the Army.

Chief Warrant Officer Alfred Alexander, the battalion maintenance officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 749th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Paso Robles, Calif., native, tries to embody the warrant officer standards as an adaptive technical expert, combat leader, trainer, and advisor to both enlisted and general commissioned officers.

“A warrant officer is a trainer and a mentor of Soldiers,” said Alexander. “If you’re willing to learn, I’m willing to teach.”

He thinks a good candidate to join the warrant officer corps is a noncommissioned officer with ten years of experience in his or her military occupational specialty with good technical ability.

“A warrant officer is a hands-on trainer,” said Alexander. “Most of us are from the enlisted side and went through the ranks, so we can relate to the Soldier on the ground.”

The decision to go warrant is the best choice he ever made, he said.

“There were three reasons I decided to go warrant,” he said. “First was the encouragement from my command. Second was to fill the need of the shortage of warrant officers in the field of maintenance. And the third was the leadership potential I saw to train Soldiers.”

Alexander began his career in the Army in 1982 after transferring from the Naval Reserves. He said the lack of opportunities in the Naval Reserves prompted him to join the Army side of the armed forces.

He began his Army career as a track vehicle mechanic. He served in a multitude of positions with artillery companies, forward support battalions and ordnance companies. This gave him the well rounded technical expertise that prepared him for the warrant officer corps.

In the year 2000, at the rank of sergeant first class, Alexander graduated from Warrant Officer Candidate School at Fort Rucker, Ala., where he became an ordnance warrant officer. Ordnance warrant officers are the Army’s premiere maintenance and logistics system experts, leaders, trainers, mentors, and advisors.

Alexander’s full-time job is as the electronics repair supervisor at Camp Roberts, Calif., where he also is the armament supervisor.

Senior leader provides employment advice for troops

STORY AND PHOTO BY
STAFF SGT. PAT CALDWELL
3-116TH CAVALRY REGIMENT

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— The moment more than 25 years of work experience flashed across Command Sgt. Maj. Bill Wyllie’s face it became evident as he stood in front of a group of Soldiers at Joint Base Balad.

The Soldiers with 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) were on hand for a specific reason: to learn how to find jobs after deployment. Wyllie was present to help them navigate through the often complex process toward employment.

Wyllie tossed out questions and sought answers as he occasionally turned back to the PowerPoint presentation on the screen behind him in the conference room of the 3rd Bn. headquarters building.

The moment when the expression changed on Wyllie’s face articulated an array of different scenes that burned in the memory of the John Day, Ore., native.

There was heartbreak triumph, grit and confidence. Confidence, because, deep down, Wyllie knows about running a business. He understands about applying for a job when the employment picture is cloudy. He knows about hiring people. But most of all, he knows about the men and women who make up his battalion.

“You work long hours, you show up on time, you guys have impressed me,” Wyllie told the Soldiers.

The briefing on employment was just one in a series of job seminars Wyllie is now offering throughout the battalion. For Wyllie, the mission is simple: to get his Soldiers thinking about the future. His multi-pronged employment plan boils down to tailoring resumes, identifying the unique skills of a particular Soldier, fashioning letters of recommendation and



Command Sgt. Maj. Bill Wyllie, with the 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), talks to a group of Soldiers during a job seminar at Joint Base Balad.

applying for a job. And apply. And apply.

“Plan now for success,” said Wyllie. “Turn in applications in July and continue until you have a job. Or apply for college. Now.”

Wyllie would be the first to admit his mission to help Soldiers find employment is not going to be easy. While the 3rd Bn. draws its Soldiers from across many western states, the core group of the unit resides in Oregon. Now, Oregon is battling a high unemployment rate and its rural counties, where many of the Oregon Soldiers reside, face an even

starker unemployment picture.

Wyllie, though, said he isn’t going to get caught up in the negative aspects of the unemployment picture. He sees his task as simple: Identify the challenge then find ways to overcome it. One way to overcome it is through his job seminars. During his recent seminar, Wyllie stressed preparation and determination.

“When you do your resumes, make sure you capture your military skills,” he said. “And remember networking. That is huge. A lot of jobs are received because of something said about someone else. Employers want to help Veterans. They want people with integrity. They want people like you.”

The job plan is crucial for the future of unemployed 3rd Bn. Soldiers, and the plan traces its origins to brainstorming sessions between Wyllie and the commander of the battalion, Lt. Col. Phil Appleton. Both men recognized the battalion had a lot of Soldiers who were unemployed before the unit deployed to Iraq.

Another critical element to Appleton and Wyllie’s plan rests not on them, but on the Soldiers. Wyllie, who manages a grocery store in civilian life back in Oregon, said he can provide the tools and present the information, but at the end of the day, the NCOs and Soldiers have to do the leg work.

“I need every one of you to help your Soldiers,” Wyllie told the NCOs at the job seminar.

That theme of NCOs stepping up to help the lower enlisted ranks find employment is a constant one throughout all of Wyllie’s job seminars across the battalion. But the Soldiers play a crucial part in the process as well.

“I’m giving you guys the start,” he said. “But I need you guys to help. It is on you guys. I can’t do it for you.”

Doing their part, Wyllie said, means Soldiers must be proactive by using the tools available. Wyllie showed them where to look for jobs on the Internet and a host of other resources valuable to the prospective job-seeker. Through it all, Wyllie’s message was clear: Get going now on finding a job.



Spc. Nathan Cummings, a mechanic assigned to Troop D, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, observes a 3rd Battalion, 11th Brigade, 3rd Iraqi Army Division Soldier checking the oil level on a troop support carrier, March 14, 2011.

Head Hunter Soldiers train Iraqi troops

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC. TERENCE EWINGS
4TH ADVISE AND ASSIST BRIGADE

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE



MAREZ, Iraq— At Ghuzlani Warrior Training Center located on Contingency Operating Site Marez, U.S. troopers work to

enhance Iraqi Security Forces' ability to perform maintenance checks and repair tactical vehicles.

Supporting Tadreeb al Shamil, Arabic for All Inclusive Training, U.S. Army mechanics of 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, conducted vehicle maintenance training with 3rd Battalion, 11th Brigade, 3rd Iraqi Army Division, March 14.

Soldiers of 1st Sqdn., 9th Cav. Regt., "Head Hunters," taught IA mechanics how to perform preventive maintenance checks and services, order replacement parts and fix deficiencies on Iraqi tactical vehicles.

"It's very important that they learn the correct way to PMCS vehicles and use the training manuals," said Sgt. Roberto Gonzalez, an instructor from Troop A, 1st Sqdn., 9th Cav. Regt.

The Iraqi mechanics, who train with the Head Hunters, are responsible for maintaining the IA's tactical vehicles at Ghuzlani Warrior Training Center.

During the month-long, battalion-level training exercise at GWTC, known as Tadreeb al Shamil, Iraqi soldiers conduct collective unit-level training with 4th AAB



Spc. Ahmed Abeulkadhem, an Iraqi soldier assigned to 3rd Battalion, 11th Brigade, 3rd Iraqi Army Division, annotates a tactical vehicle's deficiencies on a preventive maintenance checks and services worksheet during a maintenance class at Ghuzlani Warrior Training Center, March 14, 2011.

troopers as part of an Iraqi military initiative to modernize IA unit tactics and capabilities.

While Iraq's warfighters are learning how to react to enemy contact, enter and clear rooms and provide indirect fire support, IA mechanics are under the hoods of Humvees and mine resistant ambush protected vehi-

cles ensuring their fellow Soldiers have mission-ready vehicles.

"We are teaching the Iraqis how important it is for them to conduct maintenance training," said Gonzalez. "Just like we tell our Soldiers, you might not be the movie star of the cavalry division, but without the

mechanics nobody's rolling anywhere."

While vehicle maintenance is not a combat-oriented mission, the U.S. Soldiers are confident in the IA's ability to maintain their transportation assets, sustaining and supporting Iraq's warriors during battlefield operations.

"The Iraqi Army Soldiers already know how to fix their own vehicles; they're very good mechanics," said 2nd Lt. Christopher Hull, maintenance platoon leader assigned to Troop D, 1st Sqdn., 9th Cav. Regt. "But after this training they're going to have the knowledge and ability to use the training manuals, PMCS their vehicles, annotate any problems and order the parts so the vehicles can be fixed correctly."

The U.S. Soldiers service the vehicles first, teaching the Iraqis the correct way to perform each step of the PMCS before, during and after vehicle use.

After observing their U.S. counterparts, the IA soldiers use the step-by-step instructions from the training manual to discover and repair any vehicle deficiencies.

"Early in the training, we work right beside them assisting them as they service the vehicle," said Hull. "After a couple of days, we let them take the lead and we assist them only if they really need it."

After the Iraqis complete the 10-day training exercise, they will continue to work at GWTC using their enhanced technical skills to sustain their unit's tactical vehicles during the battalion's training cycle.

The Soldiers continue to conduct the all inclusive training for the IA units in Ninewa province, for the remainder of their deployment in support of Operation New Dawn.



Service members with the 394th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), hold up photos of their children who are deployed to Afghanistan while they are currently deployed to Iraq.

For some, deployment is a Family affair

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. GAELN LOWERS
3RD SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

CONTINGENCY OPERATION BASE SPEICHER,

Iraq— “Ya know, I pick on her all the time, but her being over there and us being here, it’s hard,” said a teary-eyed Staff Sgt. Robert Hawk, day shift battle captain with the 394th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Newton, Kan., native, whose daughter, Spc. Ashley Parkman, .50 caliber gunner on the convoy escort team with the 425th Transportation Company, 821st Transportation Battalion, was recently deployed to Afghanistan.

Staff Sgt. Hawk and his wife, 1st Lt. Cheryl Hawk, battalion maintenance officer with the 394th CSSB, arrived in Iraq in June 2010, but two months prior to their deployment, they watched as their youngest daughter packed up and deployed to Afghanistan.

“We were just crying as we went home, as parents,” said Cheryl Hawk. “At the same time, we looked at each other as Soldiers and knew that she was going off as a Soldier and just doing her job.”

The Hawk Family is not the only group of Soldiers who have two different sets of emotions due to dual deployments. Staff Sgt. Constance Oberg, orderly room noncommissioned officer-in-charge with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 394th CSSB, and a Fremont, Neb., native; and Sgt. 1st Class Toni Wright, equipment readiness NCO with the 394th CSSB, and a Newcastle, Neb., native, both have sons currently deployed to Afghanistan.

Oberg said that she feels mixed emotions about her son, Petty Officer 2nd Class Colin Oberg, a cryptologist with the U.S. Navy, stationed at Misawa, Japan, being deployed to a war zone.

“On one hand, I was very worried about him, but on the other hand I am very proud of him for doing what he is doing,” she said. “I am really proud of Colin for doing everything he has done. I have told him that countless times while we have been on the phone.”

She said she was shocked to hear that he was deploying to Afghanistan.

“He called me when I was at Fort Hood [Texas] mobilizing to come to Iraq,” she continued. “He said that he had something to tell me, which never comes across well. Because he knew that I was going to Iraq, an opportunity to deploy came up and he grabbed it, only to find out that they were heading to Afghanistan and not Iraq. Being in the Navy, you think of them being on a sub or a ship, and never really think of them as being in Afghanistan.”

Wright said that although her experience as a Soldier helped her understand the hardships that her son, Spc. William Wright, an ammunition stock control and accounting specialist with the 452nd Ordnance Company, a Newcastle, Neb., native, deployed to Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, would be facing, she never stopped worrying about him.

“I worry about him all the time!” she exclaimed. “I knew what was expected of my son, and I knew he could handle it. But, as a mother, you always find time to think about your children, no matter where you are.”

The three Families said that, because they are Soldiers themselves and have been on multiple deployments, they were able to prepare their children for the possible challenges that they would face in a deployed environment.

“Because I had deployed before, I knew what to push to her to get her prepared,” said 1st Cheryl Hawk, who is on her fourth deployment. “Not every kid has that option. It was pretty lucky for her to have parents with insight.”

Wright said that in addition to the benefit of being through her previous deployment, her son helped her pack her bag this time around, so he was able to have an idea of what he will do when he packed his.

“It helped him to prepare both mentally and physically because he would ask me questions about what I had to do before I deployed,” she said. “Plus, he probably remembered from my first deployment that I worked a lot of long hours. He also helped me pack my duffle bags. So I think he had some training.”

All three Families say that they have good communication with their children while they are deployed. Through updated technology, staying in touch has been easier than ever for Families, both home and abroad, to stay in touch with their loved ones.

Oberg said that she and her son use Facebook and Skype to stay in touch as much as possible.

“That is the reason we got Facebook accounts,” she said. “We can share pictures and messages easily.”

The Hawk Family used the Army’s DSN telephone lines to keep in contact with each other. Cheryl Hawk said that about twice a month, her daughter would call and they would be able to chat for about an hour or so.

Her daughter has since redeployed stateside but still reminisces of the steady communication she had with her mother while deployed.

“Her Facebook page says, ‘glad to be home, but misses phone time with mom,’” said Cheryl Hawk with a smile.

Being Soldiers themselves, the parents understood the dangers that their children would be facing while in a deployed environment.

“It wasn’t a big deal until I found out she was a gunner,” said Robert Hawk. “That kind of scared me. On my first tour I was a gunner. She said to me, ‘I want to be just like you, Dad.’”

His wife said that there was only one time during her daughter’s deployment that she was really nervous for her, and that is when the dining facility at her daughter’s base was blown up while her daughter was in it.

“I talk to her at length about her missions, and I have seen videos of her missions, and none of that bothered me because I looked at it from the Soldier perspective,” she said. “But when she told me that the chow hall had been hit and she was in it, that is when the mom side of me kicked in a bit and kind of got to me.”

The 394th CSSB is close to redeployment, with Parkman already home. Each parent expressed the joy of the thought of being reunited with their children.

Cheryl Hawk and her husband said they are excited about redeploying and being able to spend time with their four children and three grandchildren.

“I can’t wait to get home and see them all,” she said. “I miss them a lot.”

Wright said that because she gets to head home before her son does, she will be the first person there to greet him as he comes off the plane.

“I just can’t wait to see him,” she said. “I am going to be Mom waiting for her son to return from the war.”

Soldier relies on faith during wife's hardship

STORY AND PHOTO BY
STAFF SGT. PAT CALDWELL
3-116TH CAVALRY REGIMENT

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— First Lt. Nathaniel Neff is very familiar with Scripture.

As a part-time pastor at a church in his hometown of Baker City, Ore., the executive officer of Company F, 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), is well versed in the stories in the Bible of blessings, righteousness and, of course, tests of faith.

Neff said that he felt he understood his own deep devotion to God before deploying to Iraq. Now, though, he can recognize how quickly his faith can be tested in the aftermath of the news that his wife, Kristin, has cancer. And if he knows about a test of faith, he can also distinguish, more than ever, the conflict between his duty to his Soldiers and the Army, and his own personal vow of loyalty to his Family. For Neff and the men and women in F Co., the upcoming Relay for Life at Joint Base Balad March 26-27 carries special, solemn meaning.

“You don’t expect it [cancer] to invade your Family,” said Neff. “It hit me pretty hard.”

Neff, who is also a registered nurse at the St. Alphonsus Hospital in Baker City, said doctors identified a problem with his Kristin’s thyroid gland before he departed with the 3rd Bn. from Camp Shelby Miss., for Iraq in November.

Back then, though, Neff said he and his Family hoped an operation planned for February to remove Kristin’s thyroid would be successful. After her thyroid was removed, doctors discovered it was cancerous, he said.

“There was always that chance, but you always hope it won’t be you,” he added.

Neff said the diagnosis sparked a number of compelling challenges for his Family, but that his faith made a difference.

“I do start my day with prayer,” he said. “That get’s my day going. You can’t imagine how many times I’ve had to call on God throughout each day. He is my strength.”

Faith, he said, is a bond in his Family. Early on, Neff said he and Kristin talked about whether he should try to come home in the wake of the cancer diagnosis, which he said his command supported. For Neff, it was a wrenching decision and the stakes were obvious: his four children and his wife, or his company. In the end, Neff and Kristin decided it was best if he stayed on until his leave later this month.

“She supports the decision because she knows I have a desire to finish this mission,” said Neff. “We were given the option to go home, but I’m committed. She is strong, but it has been hard on her and me.”

Neff said he and Kristin are hopeful the cancer treatments will erase the risk of the disease. However, if Kristin isn’t better when he returns home on leave, Neff said he will face another set of decisions.

“There is a strong chance [that] after these treatments, she will be O.K.,” he said. “But if her condition worsens, I won’t be coming back.”

Neff said he simply could not turn his back



First Lt. Nathaniel Neff (right), executive officer of Company F, 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Baker City, Ore., native, laughs with Lt. Col. Phil Appleton, commander of 3rd Bn., during a recent meeting at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Neff relied on his faith when he learned his wife had cancer while he was deployed to Joint Base Balad.

on his company or the mission in Iraq, one he deems to be very important.

“I believe God put me here for a reason; he has me here for a purpose,” he said.

He added that he takes solace in the fact that the congregation of his church, the Lighthouse Church in Baker City, has been very compassionate toward Kristin.

“The church Family has been there for her,” he said. “She is very connected to them.”

One of the hardest issues revolved around his children, he added.

“They are having a hard time,” said Neff. “All they know of cancer is a friend of ours who died of it. It is a challenge to get them to understand Mom is not in the same boat.”

Despite the obvious hardship of being away from his wife, Neff said he remains optimistic. That confidence is rooted in his own faith.

“I know God will not put more on us than we can handle,” he said.

‘I believe God put me here for a reason; he has me here for a purpose... I know God will not put more on us [our Family] than we can handle.’

-First Lt. Nathaniel Neff

4th SB Wranglers take over for Dragonslayers

STORY AND PHOTO BY
PFC. AMY LANE
4TH SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE

ADDER, Iraq— As the 224th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), wrapped up their mission in Iraq, the 4th Sust. Bde. accepted the task of picking up where the Dragonslayers left off at a transfer-of-authority ceremony at Memorial Hall March 9.

Brig. Genn Mark Corson, commanding general of the 103rd ESC and a Maryville, Mo., native, attended the ceremony.

“Our operational strategy now is very different than when the Dragonslayers first entered this country,” he said. “We are now in the final phases before our work is placed in the hands of Iraq.”

He thanked the Dragonslayers for their service, and spoke of how both brigades have a part in writing history as they prepare for withdrawal of all U.S. troops by the end of the year.

“Wranglers, I charge you to continue providing the same level of support without missing a beat,” he said. “Your brigade [and] your Soldiers will see completion of our mission in Iraq. I know you will do your best.”

Col. Ronald Kirklin, commander of the 4th Sust. Bde., and a Killeen, Texas, native, acknowledged the hard work of the 224th Sust. Bde. and expressed his appreciation to Col. Lisa Costanza, their commander and a Long Beach, Calif. native.

“Thanks for doing a magnificent job, Dragonslayers,” he said. “You set the conditions for our success here. We are very prepared for the upcoming mission. We are already in the driver’s seat, so let’s get it started. Wranglers just get it done.”



Col. Ronald Kirklin, commander of the 4th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Killeen, Texas, native, and Command Sgt. Major Eric Frey, a Fort Hood, Texas, native, salute the flag at their transfer-of-authority ceremony March 9 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

Platoon provides logistical security on Iraqi roads

STORY BY
2ND LT. CHRIS PEROTTI
3-116TH CAVALRY REGIMENT

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— Departing the gates of their base, Soldiers with 1st Platoon, Company A, 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment

Command (Expeditionary), are greeted by local Iraqi children who wave and smile. The mission of 1st Plt. is to provide security for hundreds of logistical trucks that move up and down Iraq’s highways, keeping coali-

tion bases in Iraq well supplied.

Even though combat operations have ceased for U.S. Forces in Iraq, 1st Plt. still guards convoys that can stretch for miles. These Soldiers come from all walks of life in and around The Dalles, Ore., area, and as varied as their backgrounds are, so are the reasons why they joined the military.

For Pfc. Jonathan Neal, a Portland, Ore., native, it’s an opportunity for a better life.

“As far back as I can remember, I wanted to be a Soldier,” he said. “I grew up poor and I didn’t have any options. I wanted to become a better role model for my younger brother, so I joined. I like the group of guys I’m with. All of our missions run very smoothly.”

While most missions do run smoothly,

there are some things that can only be planned for instead of controlled. Contractor truck breakdowns, improvised explosive devices, and traffic jams can sometimes be a problem along their convoy routes.

Early in the Iraq war, many patrols and convoy escort missions were conducted in up-armored Humvees. However, with the high IED threat level, equipment has been upgraded to mitigate risks to service members who have to travel along Iraq’s roads.

All of the platoon’s missions are now conducted in mine resistant ambush protected (MRAP) vehicles, which significantly reduce chances of injury or loss.

Spc. Patrick Wilbern, a convoy escort

gunner with 1st Plt., and a native of The Dalles, Ore., knows firsthand the protective power of this new type of fighting vehicle. While escorting logistical supplies to a coalition forces base, an IED exploded.

“It shook the whole MRAP and all I saw was a flash of light,” he said.

Even after impact, the MRAP continued to move down the Iraqi highway with only minimal damage to the armor, and no one was injured in the blast.

Despite unforeseen challenges and threats, 1st Plt. Soldiers complete their missions with pride and selfless service. They feel that risks are just part of their job and that their mission in Iraq is critical to delivery of key supplies throughout Iraq.

Female learns combatives, overcomes fear of fighting

STORY BY
STAFF SGT. ARTHUR TARADEJNA AND
SGT. WHITTNEY WILLIAMS
749TH COMBAT SUSTAINMENT SUPPORT BATTALION

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, Iraq

At the sound of the bell, fists were flying, feet were dancing, heads were bobbing and the roar of the crowd proclaimed to all attendees that Fight Night had begun.

Spc. Danielle Lagunas-Valles, a human resources specialist with Headquarters Company, 749th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Watsonville, Calif., native, took center stage.

Lagunas-Valles said her strategy included anticipating initial strikes and working to transform into what her and teammates call “The Ultimate Female Fighter.”

“I was in my zone; I didn’t hear the crowd or the trainers,” she said. “It was like tunnel vision. Just my opponent and me.”

Lagunas-Valles controlled the majority of the fight despite a 15-pound weight difference.

“She had a lot of power in her punches,” she said of her opponent. “I didn’t think I was going to be able to take her down. I felt like my punches weren’t doing anything compared to hers.”

Lagunas-Valles said she overcame these difficulties by pressing on with her strategy, and after 11 minutes, she came



U.S. Army photo by 2nd Lt. Sheila Babot

Spc. Danielle Lagunas-Valles (top), readiness noncommissioned officer with Headquarters Company, 749th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Watsonville, Calif., native, escapes her opponent’s guard during Fight Night at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

away with her first amateur rules mixed martial arts victory.

“The key to winning the fight was sticking to the game plan,” said Staff Sgt. Rudolph Juarez Jr., a mechanic with the 749th CSSB, and an Antioch, Calif., native who trained Lagunas-Valles. “I think she did really well.”

Juarez has 11 years of experience in various fight styles.

Lagunas-Valles said the stressful workouts with her trainers leading up to the fight got her mind and body ready.

“We trained every day, alternating days between sparring,

conditioning and lifting weights,” she said.

She said she decided to begin combatives training to conquer a fear of fighting.

“It realistically takes six months to prepare for a fight,” said Staff Sgt. Artur L. Teradejna, a signal support systems specialist with the 749th CSSB, and a San Luis Obispo, Calif., native. “We trained with Spc. Lagunas-Valles for one month prior to her big fight and she was very dedicated. With so little time we focused only on the fundamentals.”

70's and 80's dance night draws crowd

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC. EDWIN GRAY
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— In 1971, a television production called Soul Train was written, produced and hosted by Don Cornelius. Soul Train was a nationally broadcasted dance show that aired from 1971 to 2006. With the 70's culture, music, and a dancer in the middle of two lines of people, the Soul Train quickly became a well known representation of the 70's and the 80's. With old-school termed hairstyles like afros and mullets, to feathered Ferrah Fawcett cuts, flat heels and platform shoes and phrases being said like, "Get your groove on" and "Can you dig it?" the 70's and 80's were an era of soul, funk, and pop.

Just like the 70's era wore disco clothing while playing funky music and grooving to it in a Soul Train line, service members with the 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) built morale by reenacting the 70's and 80's March 11 at an event devoted to that era at the East Morale, Welfare and Recreation center on Joint Base Balad.

The event was hosted by "Bust a Moov" Productions, a group with the 103rd ESC that included Chief Warrant Officer 2 Darlene Pittman, the plans and operations warrant officer for the G1, and a Wichita, Kan., native; Master Sgt. Darnell Jones, G6 noncommissioned officer-in-charge and a Des Moines, Iowa native; Sgt 1st Class Mayo Mitchell, safety NCOIC and a Topeka, Kan., native; Lt. Col. Charmaine Betty-Singleton,



Lt. Col. Charmaine Betty-Singleton, deputy staff judge advocate chief of administrative law with the 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Queens, N.Y., native, gets her groove on at the 103rd ESC-hosted 70's and 80's dance held March 11 at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation center on Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

deputy staff judge advocate chief of administrative law, and a Queens, N.Y., native; and Maj. Angel Wallace, chief of public affairs and a Albuquerque, N.M., native.

Though hosted by the 103rd ESC, many personnel from different units and branches of the military, as well as civilians, partici-

pated by wearing the creative disco attire.

Many service members say it turned out to be an enjoyable experience.

"It's good to let your hair down for a little while, just have some clean fun and hang out with people that you don't get a chance to see on a day-to-day basis," said Sgt. 1st Class

Rhonda Lawson, public affairs officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd ESC, and a New Orleans native. "This was a nice event for the 103rd [ESC] before they go home, being that a lot of different people from a lot of different units came out to take part in it."

For a moment during deployment, the dance attendees found different ways to let their hair down. Not only did they dance to 70's and 80's music, but some performed by singing and songs from the 70's and 80's or creatively mimicking performers like Michael Jackson, in hopes to reenact the music and feeling from that era.

"I think anytime we come together to have a good time, it's good for morale and I have a love for good music and good people," said Sgt. Lawrence Lee, a supply sergeant with the 3rd Sust. Bde., and a Florida native. "I always try to come out and support any morale-building event and I love to sing. I try to record as much as I can at home so anytime I get an opportunity to [sing] while I'm deployed is good."

The event began with a small group, but in the blink of an eye the pace picked up and the room quickly filled with people wanting to participate in the fun.

"It started off slow and I started to get a little worried because I didn't think anyone would show up," said Jones. "But the next thing you knew, we had a full house."

Due to their scheduled return home, this was the last large-scale morale-building event the 103rd ESC will host during their deployment, but it closed on a high note.

"This was the first morale type of event I have been to with the 103rd, and I think it turned out good," said Lawson.

Safety officer checks, addresses Soldiers' processes

STORY AND PHOTO BY
STAFF SGT. PAT CALDWELL
3-116TH CAVALRY REGIMENT

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— For one officer with the 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), safety is more than just another buzzword.

It is serious business for 1st Lt. Jeff Sagen.

Sagen, a Kennewick, Wash., native, and the executive officer and safety officer for Company A, 3rd Bn., said he believes safety is essential for mission success. Much of his job revolves around some tried and true concepts like proper planning and attention to detail, he said.

"You can't take away all of the risk. But you try to mitigate the things you can," he said.

Sagen's duties as a safety officer and the company executive officer keep him busy. He must manage all the pieces that go with being the executive officer and ensure his Soldiers are using proper safety measures while conducting convoy escort missions.

Sagen said he often draws on his experience as a full-time police officer at the Kennewick Police Department to help him with his safety officer responsibilities.

"As a police officer, before I even go out, I go through a routine," he said. "I put things like my weapon in the same place every time. And that is the same type of safety checks you do before a mission."

Sagen's Soldiers in A Co. spend a lot of time on the road escorting convoys. While the mission tempo can be hectic, Sagen said that a fast pace demands a high degree of aware-

ness regarding safety.

"Safety is a huge deal," he said. "Think about it in terms of how many people we lose to IEDs [improvised explosive devices] versus getting injured when an ammo can isn't tied down and hits someone in the head inside a truck."

The little things mean a lot, he added. And common sense also plays a big role.

"If you have to ask yourself if the action you are taking is safe or not, chances are it probably isn't," he said.

Sagen's routine regarding safety inside his company is based on spot checks and consistent oversight.

"With the platoons, I look for things specifically they are not looking for," he said. "Simple details. And I make sure I hit every platoon when I can. Most of the time I go out and spot check them. Tie-downs, are they storing ammo correctly, that kind of stuff."

Sagen said there is usually a different safety issue to look for every few weeks.

"Recently it has been tie-downs," he said. "So I ask certain questions like, do the crews need equipment to help them tie stuff down?"

The safety officer position is a key one within the A Co. command chain, added Sagen.

"First and foremost, I manage all the [safety] reports and counsel the commander on what the safety protocols are," he said. "I offer solutions and recommendations."

While his job as safety officer is a busy one, Sagen said the devil is in the details.

"You have to double-check Soldiers," he said. "You can control whether stuff is tied down in the vehicle or whether a weapon is on safe. Those things we can mitigate ourselves. You can't control an IED, but you can mitigate its impact. That is what a safety officer does."



First Lt. Jeff Sagen, safety officer for Company A, 3rd Battalion, 116th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Kennewick, Wash., native, watches as Pfc. Shawn Karens, a Jefferson, Ore., native checks fluids on a vehicle recently at Joint Base Balad.



Finding motivating workouts while deployed

SPC. EMILY WALTER
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



Many service members choose to use their spare time during deployment to improve their physical well-being. Whether you're looking to lose weight, gain weight, or simply maintain an adequate level of fitness, one of the most significant challenges that we all face is fighting the boredom that often comes with keeping a regular workout schedule. As my unit, the 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), prepares to depart Iraq, I will use the next couple advice columns to share some of the things that helped me stay mentally and physically motivated throughout my deployment.

If you are a runner as I am, or are looking to start running, I suggest jogging the streets around base to get a good workout. For anyone looking for that extra push, try participating in the 5K and 10K run/walks that are hosted every couple weeks. They feature an array of themes and are fun for all runners, despite their early-morning starts. Most times, the hosts of the events offer complimentary t-shirts to the first 200-400 finishers, which, for many (myself included), is enough motivation to get out of bed and slip into some running shoes.

If you struggle to make running a habit, I suggest finding a battle buddy or two who are willing to join you so you can make a fun social routine out of it. I've found that it's much more difficult to make excuses about skipping a workout if you have someone counting on you to make it. Running or doing any sort of workout with a buddy allows both participants to push and motivate each other more effectively than working out in solitude. Not to mention that the workout often goes by quickly with a little conversation.

For those who cannot or do not wish to run, the fitness facilities on JBB offer a wide variety of options. Swimming is an exceptional, low-impact workout that is effective both by itself and as a complement to other cardio activities. You can simply swim laps, partake in water aerobics, or even take swim lessons most days of the week. The outdoor pool also has two lanes set aside for lap-swimming, and it opens on April 1.

Don't feel like getting wet? That's O.K., there are many other activities to choose from. The gym in the H6 housing area currently offers spin classes Monday through Saturday. Spinning is a fantastic cardio workout, and the class welcomes all levels of fitness. Be sure to arrive early, as bikes sometimes go quickly. Once you've experienced the fast-paced instruction that is accompanied by custom-made music playlists emanating from the room's massive sound system, you'll know why the classes fill up. It's the closest to a dance club that you'll get here, but a little sweatier.

These activities merely scratch the surface of what is available here for fitness. Each gym also has free weights and weight machines sure to pique the interest of any beginning or experienced weightlifter. You can find aerobics classes, combatives instruction, cardio machines, cross-fit equipment, a track, basketball courts, P90X classes, dodgeball tournaments, and much more. You just have to check out the venues and schedules that are posted around base, including at the dining facility.

So whatever your fitness goals may be, I assure you that you'll be able to find ways to accomplish them without feeling like a hamster confined to its wheel for the months you are here. Whatever you do, just make sure you mix it up a little, even if that means stretching your comfort zone once in a while. Have fun!

Correction

An article published in the March 16 issue of the paper, about the transfer-of-authority ceremony between the 224th Sustainment Brigade and the 4th Sust. Bde., incorrectly identified the commander of the 4th Sust. Bde. His name is Col. Ron Kirklin, and he is a Killeen, Texas, native.

In the same issue, a photograph depicting a Soldier dressed as boxer Muhammad Ali, incorrectly identified the Soldier as Sgt. Willie Bullard. The Soldier is Staff Sgt. Jamian Slade, a personnel noncommissioned officer with the 13th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sust. Bde., 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Newport News, Va., native.

The Expeditionary Times staff welcomes comments, suggestions and/or complaints about errors that warrant corrections.

Please e-mail any questions or comments to expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil.

Word on the Street

What is your advice to incoming troops?



"My advice for newly deployed Soldiers is: Don't stress about anything. Do your job. Never think about trying to fix something at home when you're here, and drink water. It's too easy"

Sgt. 1st Class Ruben Vazquez, a support operations management material noncommissioned officer with the 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Puerto Rico, native



"My advice for newly deployed Soldiers is to maintain a positive attitude and be flexible. Things change constantly in the Army, so if you have a positive attitude and stay flexible, things will go as smoothly as possible."

Sgt. 1st Class Brian Jones, the support operations munitions noncommissioned officer-in-charge with the 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Miami, Fla., native



"My advice for newly deployed Soldiers is to stay in contact with your Family. Let them know how you're doing and how you're feeling. Ask them how they're doing. Keep the lines of communication open."

Staff Sgt. Jesse Hartman, support operations noncommissioned officer with the 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Unionville, Iowa, native

THEATER PERSPECTIVES

“The progress made by the MoI in police training will greatly enable the police services to provide a safe and secure Iraq for its citizens.”

Statement by State Department officials regarding the announced partnership between U.S. Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs and Iraqi law enforcement personnel

“The graduates will be able to become trainers in their respective battalions.”

Lt. Col. James Hall, an advisor with the 1st Lightning Bn., 7th Field Artillery Reg., 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div., United States Division - Center. Soldiers are working to expand the overall maintenance capability of the 1st Iraqi Federal Police Division at Joint Security Station Loyalty, Iraq

“This class is a good opportunity for the officers to extend their knowledge and exchange ideas with American leadership.”

Maj. Hatam Rashed Kalifah, Iraqi Army officer-in-charge of training at Kirkush Military Training Base. Initially taught by American officers, Iraqi and U.S. leadership agreed to transition the training efforts toward Iraqi-led classes for staff officers, in order to build confidence within their corps

“[The drawdown in Iraq is] going about as well as anybody could have hoped.”

Secretary of the Army John McHugh’s said while addressing the House Appropriations Committee regarding American forces, and retrograde of equipment back to the United States

“[We’re] doing a good job by not just focusing on security operations, but every part of life that supports the people of Iraq and their needs.”

Aruba Iraqi Police Chief, Col. Sherzad, said in connection with his station’s involvement with distributing humanitarian aid during the reopening of al Fadallah Elementary school in Kirkuk, March 14 alongside 2nd Bn., 12th Cav. Reg., attached to 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Inf. Div.

UPDATING THE PURPLE HEART

The Purple Heart Medal is an award that can be traced back to the time of George Washington and the Continental Army. It is given to U.S. service members who are wounded or killed by enemy action. Since the beginning of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Purple Heart has been awarded to more than 40,000 troops. Currently, there is discussion about whether or not to relax the criteria for the award due to more current awareness about the severity of traumatic brain injuries and what should merit the Purple Heart.

The Purple Heart Criteria

- Officials from all four services are scheduled to meet this week with Dr. Clifford Stanley, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, to discuss the recommended changes to the Purple Heart Medal criteria, according to Army Lt. Col. Steve Warren, a spokesman for Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Chiarelli, who is leading the Army’s initiative.
- Existing guidelines under Purple Heart criteria, in place since shortly after U.S. forces invaded Afghanistan in 2001, are based on the American Academy of Neurology’s definitions for mild TBI and concussions.
- The definitions are no longer clear because concussions were once thought to be less severe if the service member did not black out as a result of the head trauma.



Sudoku

The objective is to fill the 9×9 grid so each column, each row and each of the nine 3×3 boxes contains the digits from 1 to 9 only one time each.

Last week's answers

8	7	6	3	5	1	2	9	4
9	1	4	2	6	7	8	3	5
5	3	2	4	9	8	1	6	7
2	9	5	1	3	6	7	4	8
1	8	7	9	2	4	6	5	3
6	4	3	7	8	5	9	2	1
7	2	9	8	4	3	5	1	6
3	6	8	5	1	2	4	7	9
4	5	1	6	7	9	3	8	2

Level: Hard

5					3		4	
7	3			4				
6		4				9		2
		1	8	5				7
			9		1			
4				2	7	1		
9		8				2		4
				9			7	8
	5		4					9

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. What was the first human organ to be successfully transplanted?
2. How many miles of arteries, capillaries and veins are there in the adult human body?
3. What is the average lifespan of a human being's taste bud?
4. Who was the first to suggest using contact lenses to improve vision?
5. What vaccine caused more death and illness than the disease it was intended to prevent?

1. Kidney 2. 62,000 3. 7-10 days 4. Leonardo da Vinci, in 1508 5. The swine flu vaccine, in 1976

JBB Worship Services

CONTEMPORARY

Sun. 9 a.m. Provider Chapel
9:30 a.m. Gilbert Chapel
Wed. 8 p.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel

GENERAL

Sun. 9 a.m. Provider Chapel

GOSPEL

Sun. 11 a.m. MWR East Building
11 a.m. Gilbert Chapel
7 p.m. Provider Chapel

LITURGICAL

Sun. 5 p.m. Provider Chapel
5 p.m. Gilbert Chapel

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

Sat. 10 a.m. Provider Chapel

LATTERDAY SAINTS

Sun. 1 p.m. Provider Chapel
7 p.m. Gilbert Chapel

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sun. 3:30 p.m. Provider Chapel

MUSLIM PRAYER

Fri. 12 p.m. Provider Chapel

ROMAN CATHOLIC MASS

Sun. 8 a.m. Gilbert Chapel
11 a.m. Provider Chapel
12:30 p.m. Provider Chapel
12:30 p.m./5 p.m. Hospital Chapel
Tues.-Thurs. 11:30 a.m. Provider Chapel
5 p.m. Gilbert Chapel (Tues. only)
Fri. 5 p.m. Gilbert Chapel
Sat. 8 p.m. Freedom Chapel (West side)

Confessions: Sunday 8-8:30 a.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel or by appointment

JEWISH SHABBAT SERVICES

Fri. 6 p.m. Gilbert Chapel

PAGAN/WICCAN FELLOWSHIP

Thurs. 7 p.m. Provider Chapel Annex
Sat. 7 p.m. The Shack (Bldg 7556)

FOR INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL:

Warrior Support Center: 483-4108
Gilbert Chapel: 433-7703
Provider Chapel: 483-4115
Freedom Chapel: 443-6303

*Current as of March 23, 2011

JB BALAD ACTIVITIES

INDOOR POOL Swim Lessons: Mon., Wed., 6 p.m. Tue., Thu., Sat., 6:30 p.m. Aqua Training: Tue., Thu., 7:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m.	Edge Weapons & Stick Fighting Combative Training: Tue., Thur., Sat., 8-10 p.m.	Caribbean Night: Friday 8 p.m. Chess & Dominoes Tourney: Friday 8 p.m.	8 p.m. Friday 9 p.m. CC Cross Fit: Mon., Saturday 10:30 p.m. Cross Fit: Mon., Wed., Fri., 5:45 a.m., 7 a.m., 3 p.m., 6 p.m. Tue., Thu., 7 a.m., 3 p.m.	Hold'em: Mon., Fri., 2 p.m., 8:30 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Tuesday 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Ping-pong tourney: Tuesday 8:30 p.m. Spades: Wednesday 8 p.m. Salsa: Wednesday 8:30 p.m. 9-ball: Thursday 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Karaoke: Thursday 8:30 p.m. Dominos: Saturday 8:30 p.m. Darts: Saturday 8:30 p.m.	Ping-pong tourney: Tuesday 8 p.m. Foosball tourney: Tuesday 8 p.m. Jam Session: Tuesday 7:30 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Wednesday 8 p.m. Guitar Lessons: Thursday 7:30 p.m. Game tourney: Thursday 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Enlisted Poker: Friday 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Officer Poker: Saturday 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Squat Competition: Saturday 8 p.m.	7 p.m. Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Friday 7 p.m. Body by Midgett Toning Class: Tue., Thu., 7 p.m. Dodge ball Game: Tuesday 7:30 p.m. Furman's Martial Arts: Mon., Wed., Sun., 1 p.m. Gaston's Self-Defense Class: Fri., Sat. 7 p.m. Open court basketball: Thursday 7 p.m. Open court soccer: Mon., Wed., 7 p.m. Zingano Brazilian Jiu Jitsu: Tue., Thu., 8:30 p.m.	
EAST FIT- NESS CENTER Open Court Volleyball: Sunday 6 p.m. Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri., 5:30-6:30 a.m. Yoga Class: Mon., Friday, 6-7 a.m. Step Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri., 5:30 p.m. Conditioning Training Class: Mon., Wed., Fri., 7:15-8 p.m. Brazilian Jiu Jitsu: Mon., Wed., Fri., 8-9 p.m. Abs-Aerobics: Tue., Thu., 6-7 a.m., 5-6 p.m.	EAST REC- REATION CENTER 4-ball tourney: Sunday 8 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Monday 8 p.m. Karaoke: Monday 8 p.m. Swing Class: Tuesday 8 p.m. Table Tennis: Tuesday 8 p.m. Plastic Models Club: Wednesday 7 p.m. 9-ball tourney: Wednesday 8 p.m. Dungeons & Dragons: Thursday 7:30 p.m. Poetry Night: Thursday 8 p.m. 6-ball tourney: Thursday 8 p.m.	H6 FITNESS CENTER Spin: Sunday 9 a.m. Mon., Wed., Fri., 2 a.m., 8 a.m. 2 p.m., 7 p.m., 9 p.m. Tue., Thu., 5:45 a.m., 9 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Saturday 9 a.m., 7 p.m. Boxing: Sunday 4 p.m. Tue., Thu., 2 p.m. Boot Camp: Sunday 8:45 a.m. Tue., Thu., 7 p.m. Power Abs: Mon., Tue., Thu.,	H6 FITNESS CENTER Spin: Sunday 9 a.m. Mon., Wed., Fri., 2 a.m., 4:30 a.m., 4 p.m., 10 p.m. Midnight Soccer: Tue., Thu., 8 p.m. Yoga: Wednesday 8 p.m. MACP Level 1: Friday 8 p.m. 5 on 5 Basketball: Saturday 8 p.m.	H6 RECREATION CENTER Bingo: Sunday 8 p.m. Texas	WEST REC- REATION CENTER Green Bean Karaoke: Sun., Wed., 7:30pm 9-ball tourney: Monday 8 p.m. Friday	WEST FIT- NESS CENTER 3 on 3 basketball tourney: Saturday 7:30 p.m. 6 on 6 volleyball tourney: Friday	CIRCUIT GYM Floor hockey: Mon., Wed., Fri., 8-10 p.m.



UPCOMING SPORTS ON AFN



Wednesday 3/23/11

NBA: Chicago Bulls @ Atlanta Hawks, Live 3 a.m., AFN Sports
NBA: Phoenix Suns @ Los Angeles Lakers, Live 5:30 a.m., AFN Sports
MLB: Pittsburgh Pirates, Delayed 9 a.m., AFN Xtra
NHL: Washington Capitals @ Philadelphia Flyers, Delayed 10 a.m. AFN Sports
NFL: Live, 11 p.m. AFN Sports

Thursday 3/24/11

NHL: Vancouver Canucks @ Detroit Red Wings, Live 2:30 a.m. AFN Xtra
COLLEGE BB: Delayed 10 a.m., AFN Sports
NBA: Memphis Grizzlies @ Boston Celtics, Delayed 10:30 a.m. AFN Sports

Friday 3/25/11

COLLEGE BB: Men's College Basketball Tournament, Live 2:30 a.m., AFN Xtra
COLLEGE BB: Men's College Basketball Tournament, Live 4:30 p.m. AFN Sports
COLLEGE BB: Men's College Basketball Tournament, Live 5 a.m. AFN Xtra
MLB: Tampa Bay Rays, Delayed 9 a.m. AFN Xtra

Saturday 3/26/11

COLLEGE BB: Men's College Basketball Tournament, Live 2:15 a.m. AFN Sports
COLLEGE BB: Men's College Basketball Tournament, Live 4 a.m. AFN Prime Pac.
COLLEGE BB: Men's College Basketball Tournament, Live, 5 a.m. AFN Xtra

Sunday 3/27/11

NASCAR Nationwide Series @ Fontana, Live 12:30 a.m. AFN Xtra
UFC: Ortiz vs Nogueira, Live 5 a.m. AFN Xtra
SOCCER: US Men's Team vs Argentina, Delayed 7 a.m. AFN Xtra
NBA: Chicago Bulls @ Milwaukee Bucks, Delayed 4 p.m. AFN Xtra

Monday 3/28/11

NBA: Boston Celtics @ Minnesota Timberwolves, Live 2 a.m. AFN Xtra
COLLEGE BB: Live 7:30 a.m., AFN Xtra
MLB: New York Yankees, Delayed 9 a.m. AFN Xtra
UFC: Ortiz vs Nogueira, Delayed 10 a.m. AFN Xtra
NFL: Live 11 p.m. AFN Sports

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

'The Sports Lounge': Time to dance!

BY SGT. 1ST CLASS RAY CALEF
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



So it begins. On this St. Patrick's Day, the NCAA tournament "unofficially" kicks off. I say unofficially because the tournament officially started on Tuesday and Wednesday, in games dubbed "the First Four," pitting the expanded 65-68 selections against each other to "play-in" to the regular field of 64.

My personal opinion on this is that you can make the argument that the 69th team gets ripped off when you compare resumes of teams that did make it. This argument can be made if you expand the tournament to 128 teams as well, like some on the NCAA's governing board suggested prior to the season.

So let the arguing begin with Colorado and Virginia Tech, two teams slighted by the committee, undeservedly so in many people's opinions. The good thing is that the argument will be over who didn't make it, not who deserves to be number one. Thankfully, those running college basketball got it right, as opposed to college football and the side show

called the Bowl Selection Committee.

Let's look at this tournament and see what we have. The four number-one seeds are Ohio State in the East Region, Kansas in the Southwest Region, Duke in the West Region, and Pittsburgh in the Southeast Region. Those teams combined are 121-13. All but Pittsburgh look like they can win it all.

The Panthers struggled a bit down the stretch, and I am saying unequivocally that they will not make the final four. However, they are in the weakest region, I believe, so I better not be so sure.

Florida is a weak number-two seed, and BYU, the third seed, lost one of their best players. That leaves number-four seed Wisconsin, who scored all of 33 points in a first-round loss in the Big Ten tournament. So I am picking Pittsburgh—tremendous rebounders and five losses by 18 points. They will make their first Final Four.

Kansas disappointed last year with a second round flame out against Northern Iowa, so I am looking for a major bounce back from them.

The Southwest Region is a weaker region as well, and the road is paved nicely for the Jayhawks. Their toughest

test could well be against number-four seed Louisville, if the Cardinals can survive a tough opening game against Morehead State. Go with the Jayhawks to make it back to the Final Four for the first time since they won it all in 2008.

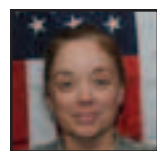
The East Regional should prove interesting. Ohio State is the clear number-one but will get stiff tests down the road, possibly in Kentucky in the third round or North Carolina. Ohio State lost twice on the road at Big Ten contenders Purdue and Wisconsin. They started 24-0, have freshman phenom Jared Sullinger, and have four players who average double digits in scoring. Pick the Buckeyes.

Out West, defending champion Duke also has a tough road. San Diego State is the number-two seed that has lost only two games all year, Connecticut is the third seed that won the Big East tournament, and Texas is the fourth seed that, while slipping at the end, still has a very talented club. I am going to roll the dice and take the hot team in UConn, which ran the table in the Big East.

That leaves us with UConn vs. Ohio State, and Kansas vs. Pittsburgh in the Final Four in Houston. Take the Buckeyes and Kansas, the two best teams, to duke it out for all the marbles, and crown Ohio State to win it all.

'King's Speech' delivers smooth plot, feel-good ending

BY STAFF SGT. CONSTANCE OBERG
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



"The Kings Speech," starring Colin Firth as Prince Albert, Duke of York soon to be King George the VI, was released in early 2011 in the United States.

The movie is initially uncomfortable, only because it is tough to watch the future king struggle as he delivers a speech in front of a crowd of thousands. Albert has a stammer that he later reveals in the movie, which occurred when he was about five years old. With no help or support from his family, he continues to stutter throughout his life, trying in vain to utilize different speech therapists.

That is until his wife, the Duchess of York, played by Helena Bonham Carter, locates an unorthodox speech therapist Lionel Logue, played by Geoffrey Rush. Logue has a very different style when helping those who come to him wishing to overcome their speech impediments. One of the

ways he finds to help his patients is to sing the words that they want to say, which the prince finds himself doing many times as he prepares to give his speech.

I think that Lionel is very well acted; he is patient with those who come to him for help. He reveals to the prince that he saw him speak early on, and that his son asked him if he would be able to help the prince with his stutter. But he is still surprised when the future queen shows up at his door requesting his help.

Prior to becoming ill, King George V gives his annual Christmas address and then wants his youngest son to speak after him. When he is not able to get the words out, his father belittles him, which only sends him over to his therapist, looking for someone to talk to. That is when he reveals details from his childhood and how he was treated by those around him.

After King George V dies, enter Prince Albert's older brother, played by Guy Pearce, a play boy of sorts who is currently dating an American divorcee socialite, Willas

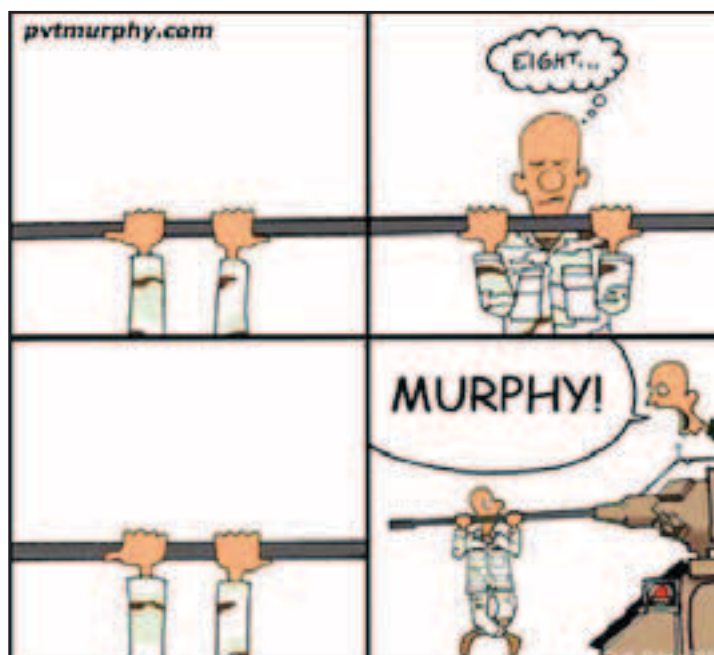
Simpson, played by Eve Best. Being the oldest, he is now the King, which does not make the citizens of England happy. No one wants a king who is married to a twice-divorced woman. He soon realizes this and steps down from the throne, giving it all up for the love of his life and leaving his younger brother to take over.

Prince Albert becomes King George VI during a challenging time as Germany is upsetting the world around him. He doubts his abilities as king, but his wife stands by his side and gives him the confidence he needs to deliver his speech.

Even though the movie had a predictably happy ending, I enjoyed watching it. For some, it may not have enough car chases or shoot-outs, but the performances by Rush and Firth were strong, and it was interesting to see the struggles that others must face while we would normally assume they live perfect lives.

I give this movie four out of five stars. It was that feel-good, overcome-challenge type of a movie that can be easily appreciated.

PVT MURPHY'S LAW



Wednesday March 23
5 p.m. Mars Needs Moms (PG)
8 p.m. No Strings Attached (R)

Thursday March 24
5 p.m. Sanctum (R)
8 p.m. Mars Needs Moms (PG)

Friday March 25
6 p.m. The Eagle (PG-13)
9 p.m. Paul (R)

Saturday March 26
2 p.m. The Eagle (PG-13)
5 p.m./Midnight: Paul (R)
8 p.m. The Roommate (PG-13)

Sunday March 27
2 p.m. Paul (R)
5 p.m. The Roommate (PG-13)
8 p.m. The Eagle (PG-13)

Monday March 28
5 p.m. The Eagle (PG-13)
8 p.m. Paul (R)



We Succeed

A convoy of fuel trucks pull into Convoy Support Center Adder during the early morning at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq. The CSC allows convoy members a chance to refuel, grab some chow, get some sleep, and relax before they have to get back onto the road.



Service members show off their costumes during the 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)-hosted 70's and 80's dance night March 11 at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation center at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.



Col. Ronald Kirklin, commander of the 4th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Killeen, Texas, native, and Command Sgt. Major Eric Frey, a Fort Hood, Texas, native, uncased their unit's colors at their transfer-of-authority ceremony March 9 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq. The unit replaced the 224th Sust. Bde.

The Expeditionary Times staff welcomes photo and story submissions.

If you have a story idea or would like to submit your own work, please contact us at:
escpao@iraq.centcom.mil