

# THE *Ivy* U.S. DIVISION-NORTH LEAF



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★★★★★ ESTABLISHED IN 1917 TO HONOR THOSE WHO SERVE ★★★★★

MARCH 18, 2011

## ‘Head Hunters’ train IA support Soldiers to sustain Tadreeb al Shamil operations



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Terence Ewings, 4th AAB PAO, 1st Cav. Div., USD-N

**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 Bde., 3rd Iraqi Army Div., soldier checking the oil-level on a troop support carrier, March 14, 2011.**

Spc. Terence Ewings  
4th AAB Public Affairs  
1st Cav. Div., USD-N

CONTINGENCY OPERAT-  
ING 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 per-  
form maintenance checks and  
repair tactical vehicles.  
Supporting Tadreeb al

Shamil, Arabic for All Inclu-  
sive Training. U.S. Army me-  
chanics of 1st Squadron, 9th  
Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise  
and Assist Brigade, 1st Caval-  
ry 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,”

**See SUPPORT, pg. 3 —**

STEADFAST AND LOYAL  
IRONHORSE  
LONGKNIFE  
DEVIL  
FIT FOR ANY TEST  
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# IRONHORSE STRONG: Soldier of the Week

Signal support requires competent Soldiers who are able to design, install, maintain and manage communications systems regardless of the mission or location.

Sgt. Michael Altman earned recognition as the “Ironhorse Strong” Soldier of the Week for providing communications support to the Regional Guard Brigade training compound at a remote combined security forces base in northern Iraq.

Altman took a difficult mission with a short timeline and succeeded where lesser noncommissioned officers would have failed, said Capt. Jerrami Patterson, commander, Company B, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division.

While serving as battalion command post node team chief, Altman, a multi-channel transmission systems specialist from New Castle, Pa., Company B, BSTB, received orders to hand over his equipment and responsibilities at Contingency Operating Site Warrior, and deploy on short notice with a support team to Contingency Operating Location Manilla.

“Sgt. Altman epitomizes what we expect of a ‘Signaleer’ NCO,” said Patterson. “He is technically and tactically proficient and always willing to support communications missions whenever he is called upon.”

“Altman’s actions are a credit to our company and to the signal community of the (1st AATF),” he said.

Altman quickly integrated into the 101st Brigade Support Battalion and inventoried and inspected the CPN system, before transporting the unit’s equipment to the remote operating location.

Upon arriving at COL Manilla, Altman worked tirelessly to fix multiple hardware failures, quickly establishing communications



U.S. Army photo

**“Ironhorse Strong” Soldier Sgt. Michael Altman, a multi-channel transmission systems specialist from New Castle, Pa., assigned to Company B, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, configures a satellite transportable terminal at Contingency Operating Location Manilla, Feb. 11, 2011.**

for 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 1st AATF, 1st Inf. Div., the unit responsible for the RGB training mission.

Altman continued to troubleshoot the communication system after initial installation and continuously worked to improve the quality of service for 1st Bn., 14th Inf. Regt.

“Ironhorse Strong” Altman is an NCO who never asks his Soldiers to do anything that he would not do himself, and for that he is respected by seniors and peers alike, said 1st Sgt. Ruth Anderson, first sergeant, Company B, BSTB, 1st AATF, Inf. Div.

These qualities, with an outstanding work ethic and a solid performance, make Altman “Ironhorse Strong” Soldier of the Week.

U.S. FORCES BRING TAS TO  
DIVISION STAFF

Page 4

IRAQI SOLDIERS COMPETE AT  
KMTB OBSTACLE COURSE

Page 6

SQUADS COMPETE TO BE BEST  
IN ‘WARRIOR’ BRIGADE

Page 7

SOLDIER’S PERSONAL SKILL-SET  
PROVIDES UNIQUE BENEFIT TO  
UNIT’S ATA MISSION

Page 10

## THE IVY LEAF

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1st Advise and  
Assist Task Force  
1st Infantry Division

2nd Advise and  
Assist Brigade  
25th Infantry Division

4th Advise and  
Assist Brigade  
1st Cavalry Division



Continued from SUPPORT, pg. 1

**Spc. Alex Buchanan**, a mechanic assigned to Troop D, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, reviews an equipment inspection and maintenance worksheet during a maintenance class at Ghuzlani Warrior Training Center, March 14, 2011. Buchanan, a native of Newnan, Ga., trained the Iraqi soldiers on how to properly perform preventive maintenance checks and services on tactical vehicles, documenting deficiencies noted on a PMCS worksheet, as part of Tadreeb al Shamil, Arabic for All Inclusive Training, an Iraqi military initiative to modernize Iraq's ground forces.

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 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 vehicles 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."

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 ve-



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Terence Ewings, 4th AAB PAO, 1st Cav. Div., USD-N

hicle," 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 tac-

tical vehicles during the battalion's training cycle.

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



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Terence Ewings, 4th AAB PAO, 1st Cav. Div., USD-N

**Pfc. Ahmed Abeulkadhem**, 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. Abeulkadhem, a native of Najaf, Iraq, uses his experience and skills as a driver to mentor other Iraqi soldiers during the 10-day maintenance training class taught by U.S. Soldiers assigned to 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division.

# *U.S. forces bring TaS to division staff*

Sgt. Shawn Miller  
109th MPAD  
USD-N Public Affairs

**KURKUSH MILITARY TRAINING BASE, Iraq** — Beyond simply teaching ground combat soldiers to succeed on the battlefield, U.S. and Iraqi leaders at Kirkush Military Training Base took Tadreeb al Shamil, All Inclusive Training, to the upper echelons of the 5th Iraqi Army Division, March 12.

For the first time at KMTB, Iraqi officers took the lead in training 5th IA Div. staff officers on the planning efforts happening behind the missions.

"This class is a good opportunity for the officers to extend their knowledge and exchange ideas with American leadership," said Maj. Hatam Rashed Kalifah, IA officer in charge of training at KMTB.

Initially taught by American officers, Iraqi and U.S. leader-

ship agreed to transition training efforts toward Iraqi-led classes for staff officers, in order to build confidence within the officer corps, Hatam explained.

Hatam led his officers through a series of classes on the proper way to plan and issue operation orders that make the missions run smoothly for noncommissioned officers and soldiers within the ranks.

"I'm very proud to teach the young officers to become leaders," said Hatam, who has instructed officers for more than 20 years. "It's very important for them to understand how to deal with it, how to issue it and how to execute it."

Hatam worked through slide presentations and handouts, while his students busily took notes on the various types of orders, as well as the purposes and applications for each.

There are three types of

orders used in the IA, Hatam explained, general, urgent and movement—with urgent being the most important.

"As leaders, they have to understand and know the standards," he said.

U.S. Army Maj. Edward Worthington, Stability Transition Team advisor, explained while American officers develop plans and direct NCOs to execute those plans, the Iraqi Army places much more attention and responsibility on their officers.

"The officers are directly responsible for planning, more so in the Iraqi Army than in ours," said Worthington. "All the planning and execution starts and ends with the officer corps in the Iraqi Army."

Hatam, a veteran of the Iran-Iraq War, now leads a group of much younger staff officers toward a future of autonomous operations following the with-

drawal of U.S. forces at the end of Operation New Dawn.

Hatam said he hopes the young officers will adapt to changing strategies and see the benefits of past and present cooperation with U.S. forces.

After the IA began rebuilding in 2003, the Iraqi-led Tadreeb al Shamil initiative now seeks to complete the process and present the army as a modernized, independent force capable of national defense, noted Worthington.

Having Iraqi officers as instructors leading their own classes for fellow staff members helps meet that goal, he said.

"It's a huge accomplishment," Worthington explained. "All of our time and effort, along with their commitment, is what is going to endure here ... keep the country safe and ensure their democracy."



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Shawn Miller, 109th MPAD, USD-N PAO

Iraqi Army Maj. Hatam Rashed Kalifah, IA officer in charge of training at Kirkush Military Training Base, center, explains an IA operation order to U.S. Army Maj. Edward Worthington, left, during a staff officer training class at KMTB, March 12, 2011.



# 12th Iraqi Army Signal Regiment completes communications training at COL K1

1st Infantry Division



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Kandi Huggins, 1st AATF PAO, 1st Inf. Div., USD-N

**Staff Sgt. Thomas Harrelson, a communications specialist from Brigham, Utah, assigned to Company B, 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, from Fort Riley, Kan., helps Iraqi Army soldiers disassemble a radio operations system during a communications class, March 10, 2011, at Contingency Operating Location K1 in Iraq.**

Spc. Kandi Huggins  
1st AATF Public Affairs  
1st Inf. Div., U.S. Division-North

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION K1, Iraq – Soldiers of Signal Regiment, 12th Iraqi Army Division concluded a nine-week communications training course with a radio-telephone operator class at Contingency Operating Location K1, Kirkuk, March 10.

The class, supervised by Staff Sgt. Thomas Harrelson, communication specialist and assistant advisor to the Signal Regiment, reviewed the steps to operate a telephone switch board.

“Once the system is done with all its start-up tests, it will ask you for a password, and after that, it’ll ask you for an ID number which is the operator number,” explained Harrelson to the class.

After finishing the start-up tests, Harrelson explained the steps to enter the phone’s

information into the system, testing the phone functions, then deleting the information and disassembling the operating system.

Harrelson, a Brigham, Utah native, assigned to Company B, 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, from Fort Riley, Kan., said the course provided Iraqi Army soldiers of the Signal Regiment with an understanding of how to use their radio and telephone systems.

The nine-week course introduced the Iraqi soldiers to principles of radio theory, where the trainees learned about radio waves and usage of line-of-sight communications.

The Iraqi signal soldiers learned to operate various radio systems during the class.

The familiarization training improved the student’s knowledge of both their equipment and their jobs, said Harrelson.

The Iraqi soldiers must be able to pro-

vide technical assistance and training for their telecommunications systems, signal communications and electronic equipment at their respective units, he said.

U.S. Soldiers are also training the Iraqi soldiers to lead the next iteration of classes, he said.

“We taught (the Iraqi soldiers) how to troubleshoot radios, understand them, put them together, take them apart and program them—any and everything that can be done with a radio, we taught them,” said Sgt. Andrew Terwilliger, information systems operator, Company B, 1st BSTB, 1st AATF, 1st Inf. Div.

After Harrelson finished the review of the telephone operation switchboard, the students took turns operating the system.

The classmates assisted each other, reinforcing learning and building class participation, said Harrelson.



# Iraqi Soldiers Compete at KMTB Obstacle Course

Sgt. Shawn Miller  
109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment  
U.S. Division-North Public Affairs

**KIRKUSH MILITARY TRAINING BASE, Iraq** — Iraqi Army soldiers assigned to 4th Battalion, 21st Brigade, 5th Iraq Army Division competed against each other during an obstacle course race led by U.S. Soldiers at Kirkush Military Training Base, March 12, 2011.

The 5th IA Division soldiers negotiated a series of physical challenges ranging from monkey bars, an incline ladder and racing through concrete pipes, before crossing the finish line.

U.S. Soldiers of Company A, "Gators," 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division supervised the race, teaching IA soldiers fundamentals of physical fitness while offering a break from day-to-day classes during the 25-day training rotation, known as Tadreeb al Shamil. Arabic for All Inclusive Training, Tadreeb al Shamil is an Iraqi military initiative to create a self-sustaining ground force with Iraqi soldiers capable of maintaining autonomous operations.

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. William Lucas, Company A, 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, supervises an obstacle course race at Kirkush Military Training Base, Iraq, March 12, 2011. The Iraqi soldiers learned good physical fitness techniques while taking a break from the daily grind of day-to-day classes, said Lucas, a resident of Ewa Beach, Hawaii.

U.S. Army photos by Sgt. Shawn Miller, 109th MPAD, USD-N PAO





# Squads compete to be best in 'Warrior' Brigade

Cpl. Robert England  
2nd AAB Public Affairs  
25th Inf. Div., U.S. Division-North

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE WARHORSE, Iraq — Squads from five battalions of 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, "Warriors," 25th Infantry Division, competed in the Warrior Brigade Best Squad competition at Contingency Operating Base Warhorse.

The contest pitted two squads from each battalion in a battle to the finish line, competing in 10 events designed to test the tactical, technical and physical skills of the Warrior Brigade's best Soldiers.

Each squad, comprised of eight to 12 Soldiers, began the competition with an Army Physical Fitness Test consisting of two minutes of push-ups and sit-ups, and a timed two-mile run around COB Warhorse. Upon completing the APFT, squads rested and rehydrated while donning their full combat loads.

Sgt. Patrick Jenkins, armament noncommissioned officer in charge of Company B, 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 2nd AAB, 25th Inf. Div., said the average weight of a Soldier's gear exceeded 100 pounds, which the Soldier carried for the remainder of the competition.

"The Improved Outer Tactical Vest itself can weigh from 75 to 100-plus pounds depending on the attached gear, the size of the



**Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, "Warriors," 25th Infantry Division, foot march to the next station during the Warrior Brigade Best Squad competition at Contingency Operating Base Warhorse in the Diyala province of Iraq March 8, 2011.**

armor and anything else the Soldier carries. The ruck was roughly 40 to 50 pounds," Jenkins said. "It was just the basic load one would go on patrol with plus the rucksack."

With vests on their chests and rucksacks on their backs, the squads began the rigorous trek between stations scattered around COB Warhorse.

Once at the various training sites, squads competed to establish communication capabilities via tactical satellite, received coordinates for the next station and trekked by foot using grid coordinates plugged into a handheld GPS.

After reaching their destination, each squad foot marched to the next station, where they performed preventive maintenance checks and services on a mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicle, inspecting the vehicle for deficiencies.

The next station tested each squad's physical endurance as well as their ability to perform under pressure. Soldiers arrived at the aftermath of a simulated battle finding several Soldiers on the ground with simulated injuries. The squads assessed and treated each "casualty's" wounds and litter carried the Soldiers to a casualty evacuation site hundreds of meters away.

This station turned out to be one of the most exhausting portions of the competition, said Jenkins.

With the simulated casualties safely

**Soldiers of Troop C, 2nd Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, "Warriors," 25th Infantry Division, assemble various weapons against the clock during the Warrior Brigade Best Squad competition, March 10, 2011, at Contingency Operating Base Warhorse.**



delivered to the evacuation site, Soldiers traveled across the base, picking up a box along the way. The squads toted the box to the next station, where they demonstrated their knowledge of several weapon systems through timed assembly and functions checks for the M240B machine gun, the M249 squad automatic weapon and the M9 pistol.

Completing the weapons assembly station, squads moved to the "Non-Tactical Vehicle Push," testing their physical strength and endurance late in the competition by forcing each squad to push a stationary vehicle approximately 100 meters.

The competition concluded with a weapon qualification at the range on COB Warhorse. Squad members executed 50 push-ups and a series of sprints before firing their weapons at paper targets.

Each squad then traversed the length of the base for the final push to the finish line.

With such a physically demanding course, Jenkins said hydration factored into the preparation process as much as strength and endurance training to safely and successfully compete in the challenge.

"Our main focus was not only refreshing basic Soldier skills such as land navigation, first aid and marksmanship, but to prevent any heat or dehydration-related issues within the squad, by hydrating 72 hours out and making sure Soldiers consumed plenty of healthy food," he said.

The competition focused on bringing Soldiers together to test their knowledge of basic Soldier skills while exhibiting pride

See SQUAD, pg. 8

# *U.S. Division-North Sustainment Hero clears excess equipment in record time*

Pfc. Alyxandra McChesney  
1st AATF Public Affairs  
1st Inf. Div., USD-N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – Sgt. Renea Rivers, support operations help desk noncommissioned officer, Company C, 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, earned special recognition for her ability to organize, manage and multi-task during an awards presentation at Contingency Operating Site Warrior in Kirkuk, March 12.

Deputy Commanding General-Support Brig. Gen. James F. Pasquarette, U.S. Division-North and 4th Infantry Division, presented Rivers with the Army Achievement Medal to acknowledge her efforts in sup-

port of Operation New Dawn.

Rivers' dedication and drive contributed to her ability to successfully turn-in more than \$1 million worth of equipment.

Rivers earned the award for managing and organizing the turn-in of excess equipment located at four U.S. operating locations in two days, said Staff Sgt. David Patterson, support operations NCO, Company C, 101st BSB, 1st Inf. Div., 1st AATF.

"She made sure everything was in order, allowing an expected 10-day turn-in to be accomplished in two days," he said.

Rivers, a Sumter, S.C. native, displays an eagerness to learn everything she needs to do to accomplish the brigade's missions, explained Patterson.

"She is willing to learn;

she's willing to grow and that is an outstanding quality in a leader," said Patterson.

Rivers moved from her primary career field as a medical lab specialist, and joined the Support Operations team in December 2010 to assist the battalion supply with the equipment turn-in.

"I was happy about receiving the award," said Rivers. "We do a lot of work tracking, processing and shipping the unit's equipment."

After reading the award, Rivers remained humble, crediting her accomplishments to the many efforts of the SPO team.

"I have to share this award with all the Soldiers who helped make this mission successful," said Rivers.

Continued from  
SQUAD, pg. 7

for their respective units, said Jenkins.

"We set a goal to complete this challenge in less than four and a half hours, and we did it," he said. "I'm proud of the Soldiers and so are the other NCOs that took part in this."

Sgt. 1st Class Jim Clanton, noncommissioned officer in charge of the competition planned, set up and supervised the stations.

"I coordinated with all the supporting units, and after I received the sergeant major's intent for what he wanted to see in the competition, I set up the lanes to meet his intent and coordinated with those supporting units to ensure they understood the intent," he said. "I conducted numerous walkthroughs with the chain of command to ensure everything was how they wanted it."

Prior to the brigade-level competition, squads competed at the battalion level, Clanton said. The battalions then selected the two best squads to advance for the opportunity to compete for the title of Best Squad of the Warrior Brigade.

During the competition, squad scoring differed at each event depending on the task provided. NCOs at each station awarded and deducted points based on time allotments and the proficiency with which each squad completed the task, Clanton said.

Too many deductions accrued at any station caused the squad to add a sandbag to their equipment, which they carried to the finish line.

Once all scores were finalized, the squad representing Company B, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 2nd AAB, 25th Inf. Div., emerged victorious with 1,013 total points out of 1,100 points possible.



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Alyxandra McChesney, 1st AATF PAO, 1st Inf. Div., USD-N

Deputy Commanding General-Support Brig. Gen. James F. Pasquarette, U.S. Division-North and 4th Infantry Division, commends Sgt. Renea Rivers, support operations help desk noncommissioned officer, Company C, 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, the first recipient of the U.S. Division-North Sustainment Hero award, during an awards presentation at Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq, March 12, 2011. Rivers earned special recognition for successfully managing the turn-in of more than \$1 million in excess equipment in two days.



# Female comedians bring comic relief for troops stationed at COS Marez

1st Cavalry Division



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Terence Ewings, 4th AAB PAO, 1st Cav. Div., USD-N

**Soldiers assigned to 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, share a laugh during the "It's Not That Time of the Month" All Female Comedy tour at Joint Security Station India, March 12, 2011. Soldiers at JSS India advise, train and assist 3rd Iraqi Army Division units conducting Operation Lion Leader Forge, a "train the trainer" program designed to enhance Iraqi soldiers' tactical capabilities and leadership skills.**

Spc. Terence Ewings  
4th AAB Public Affairs  
1st Cav. Div., USD-N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ, Iraq - Soldiers assigned to 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, delighted in comedic performances from entertainers of the "It's Not That Time of the Month" All Female Comedy tour, March 12.

The comedienues visited Joint Security Station India and Al Kisik to provide comic relief to deployed troopers.

"I've always wanted to use

my gift to give back to people, and it warms my heart to be able to come overseas and make these Soldiers laugh and smile," said Carmen Barton, a comedienne from St. Louis.

Soldiers of Troop B, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 4th AAB, based out of Al Kisik, were happy to see the group of female entertainers.

Currently 1st Sqdn., 9th Cav. Regt. Soldiers are conducting Tadreeb al Shamil, Arabic for All Inclusive Training, with the 3rd Iraqi Army Division to enhance Iraqi soldiers' offensive and defensive capabilities at

the squad, platoon and battalion levels.

During the hour-long performance, U.S. Soldiers took a break from advising, training and assisting their Iraqi Security Forces partners and enjoyed their first Morale, Welfare and Recreation sponsored-event at the remote base.

"It was good to see my guys be able to relax and take a small break from the training we do out here," said Capt. John Nimmons, a native of Temple, Texas, and commander of Troop B.

The comedy tour also traveled to JSS India bringing

laughter to 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment Soldiers, who also work with Iraqi soldiers in support of Operation New Dawn.

Soldiers at JSS India are responsible for advising 3rd IA Division soldiers participating in Operation Lion Leader Forge, a "train the trainer" program designed to enhance the Iraqis' tactical capabilities and leadership skills.

"It's always nice to have visitors that appreciate and support the work we do over here," said Sgt. James Huffman, a metal worker, from Fort Hood, Texas, assigned to Company E, 2nd Bn., 7th Cav. Regt.

The "It's Not That Time of the Month" All Female Comedy tour is scheduled to travel to different military bases in Kuwait and Iraq celebrating Women's History Month.

"The events and performances we do for our men and women overseas are the most rewarding shows we take part in," said April Macie, who hails from Los Angeles.

At the end of the comedy tour performances, the women close-out the event by thanking the Soldiers "for everything they do".

Afterwards Dionna Nichelle, the vocalist that tours with the comedienues, sang "Wind Beneath My Wings" by Bette Midler as a special tribute to all the U.S. service members currently deployed overseas.

"We enjoyed coming out here, spending time with the Soldiers and making them laugh for however long we were on stage," said Nichelle. "We wish them well and hope they'll all come home soon."



# *Soldier's personal skill-set provides unique benefit to unit's advise and assist mission*



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Andrew Ingram, USD-N PAO

**Pfc. Tyler Moore, infantryman, Company A, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, pulls security during counter indirect fire operations, in Kirkuk province, Iraq March 11, 2011. During Counter IDF missions, Moore, who hails from Athens, Tenn., and his platoon search for violent extremists to prevent mortar and rocket attacks on U.S. Soldiers and Iraqi civilians.**

Spc. Andrew Ingram  
U.S. Division-North Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION MCHENRY, Iraq – Pfc. Tarik Elkhatib scanned the horizon for threats as a cool spring wind blew through the northern Iraqi field.

“I don’t think our vehicles will be able to get in here,” said the Dallas native, his eyes still searching behind the tinted lenses of his ballistic eyewear. “This is a great place to set up too—oh well.”

Elkhatib, an infantryman assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, and his platoon mates conducted a counter indirect fire mission south of Contingency Operating Location McHenry in Kirkuk province, Iraq, March 11.

On command from Sgt. 1st Class Lenny Diaz, the “Reaper” Company A platoon sergeant, Elkhatib and his squad headed down the narrow dirt road to their vehicles, two Stryker Fighting Vehicles and two Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles, de-

parting to continue their mission to search out extremists.

After a few minutes of travel, the armored vehicles pulled off the road into another field. Each took up a position at the north, south, east or west sides of the location and the Reapers monitored the area using a Common Remotely Operated Weapons System, a system which provides the Soldiers long range visibility to identify any potential threats.

Elkhatib, or “Elky” to his platoon mates, said the Soldiers usually discover nothing, but the unit’s hours of vigilance pays off if they catch only one team of extremists, which could save the lives of Soldiers or Iraqi civilians in the area.

His father from Jerusalem and mother from Texas, Elkhatib grew up living in both Palestine and the United States, eventually deciding to join the U.S. Army as an

**Pfc. Tarik Elkhatib, infantryman, Company A, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, scans the horizon for violent extremists during a counter indirect fire mission near Contingency Operating Location McHenry, in the Kirkuk province of Iraq, March 11, 2011.**

infantryman to continue a Family tradition of service to the nation.

“I’m the fifth generation on my mother’s side to join the military,” Elkhatib said. “My grandfather even lied on his enlistment paperwork so he could join when he was 17. I’m proud of my grandfather; he left a great example for me.”

After scanning the area around COL McHenry for more than an hour, the Reapers moved to the village of Doul Al Salo to interview the local population about extremist activities in the area.

Due to his unique background, Elkhatib brings a useful skill set to his company, said his platoon sergeant, Diaz.

“Elky, pay attention to their conversations,” said Diaz as the Soldiers approached the Iraqi villagers. “Let me know if the interpreter misses anything.”

Company A had a civilian interpreter assigned to them on the morning of March 11, but Elkhatib explained sometimes it is beneficial to have an extra set of ears to pick up on idle conversation.

Elkhatib explained most Iraqis assume that U.S. Soldiers only speak English, but due to his unique upbringing he has spoken fluent Arabic since childhood.

**See SKILLS, Pg. 12**



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Andrew Ingram, USD-N PAO





# Chaplain's 'Take some time, follow the finger prints'

Maj. Kenneth Hurst  
Deputy Chaplain  
U.S. Division-North

Finger prints—we all have them. Finger prints can be extremely useful in solving the eternal dilemma, “Who stole the baby powder?”

As youngsters, our children loved to play with baby powder. It was not uncommon for the baby powder container to come up missing. This was always followed by a “white baby powder snow storm” in some part of the house, with fine white powder gently covering every surface.

Okay, who did it? Which child could not resist the inward compulsion? Obviously, the evidence provided a clear track to the truth. Our baby powder culprit was easily discerned by checking their hands for residual powder. Fingerprints do not lie.

As a U.S. Army Chaplain for the past 14 years, discussions about the existence of God are fair game. I appreciate the Title 10 responsibility I have in this pluralistic environment to ensure the free exercise of religion for all our Soldiers and authorized civilians. This means views and beliefs about God are rich and varied. Soldiers will ask meaningful questions and a few may even debate in the free exchange of ideas about their beliefs of God.

I believe that God has given us indelible finger prints that undeniably point to His existence and identity. Here are just a

few of the prints.

The majesty and power of our Creator is evidenced by what He has made. The ancient Psalmist, King David, beautifully wrote in Psalm 19:1-2, “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech and night to night reveals knowledge.”

Look up at the sky on a clear dark night—you have to be outside the influence of bright city lights. You will see an incredible sight—the majesty of the starry sky. It has a unique voice and beauty. The skies “speak” and “proclaim” the existence of God. What has been made testifies to its Maker.

This leads directly to the second fingerprint: the universe had a beginning. One of the great scientific discoveries of the past century is that the universe had a definite beginning.

Even Einstein tried to fudge the numbers in his earlier theory of relativity because the equations pointed to a cosmic beginning. His preconception was a steady state universe which did not have a knowable origin. Einstein inserted a number that he called the cosmological constant in order to avoid his equations pointing to a universe that had a finite age.

Philosopher William Lane Craig formulates the argument as follows: whatever begins to exist has a cause; the universe began to exist; therefore, the universe has a cause.

Only a Creator outside of space and

time can be great enough to bring the universe into existence.

The final fingerprint that grabs our attention concerns the incredible fine tuning of the universe for life, both in microscopic biological systems and immense forces that hold the universe in place.

In the book, “Darwin’s Black Box,” Biochemist Dr. Michael Behe argues that some biochemical systems are irreducibly complex and cannot be reduced to functional proto-systems.

In other words, some systems cannot be accounted for by simply combining previously existing chemistry. Irreducibly complex systems must come into existence through intelligent agency. This same power of design and fine tuning is also crucial to how the larger stars and galaxies operate across the universe.

Physical laws for gravity, the age of the universe, the mass of stars, the incredible design of our own solar system and many more parameters are absolutely critical for the fine tuning of life in the universe.

I hope you are still with me—we are looking at fingerprints pointing to God’s existence. This small article is intended to generate some thought and consideration in your heart and mind.

The above topics are huge and whole books have been written about a single paragraph above. The bottom line is that God’s existence is not the world’s best kept secret but one which is displayed loudly across all that he has made. Take some time to follow the fingerprints.

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# Hey Doc: *How Can I make my teeth whiter?*

Maj. Kendall Mower  
Speicher Dental Clinic OIC  
U.S. Division-North

*"Hey Doc: I'm looking for that 'Hollywood smile' and am wondering how I can make my teeth whiter? Can you help?" – Signed "Smiley"*

Dear "Smiley," there are two types of stains that affect tooth color. The first is extrinsic stains, which accumulate on the surface of teeth. The most frequent culprits are nicotine, coffee, and plaque. The second is intrinsic stains, which are found inside the tooth.

Intrinsic stains can be caused by abnormal fluoride levels, medications that were

taken when our teeth were developing, and trauma to the teeth. Additionally, our natural tooth color may not be white.

Extrinsic stains are easy to take care of. The first thing to do is brush your teeth. It's not uncommon for someone to come to me and say they want whiter teeth, and I see chunks of last week's lunch still stuck in their mouth. If you are not going to brush your teeth regularly—don't even worry about them being whiter. No one will want to be close enough to you to care.

Whitening toothpastes containing abrasives can remove minimal stains. When you brush, these abrasive agents help remove some stains. The

best way to remove extrinsic stains is to see your dentist for a cleaning.

Intrinsic stains are a little harder to remove. Because the stain or discoloration is located inside the tooth, a chemical process must be used to lift it out.

Over-the-counter whitening strips or other products work well. They contain oxidizing agents that can penetrate into the teeth and lighten the teeth. The darker the stain, the longer it will take to come out. The bleaching process can take anywhere between a few weeks to a few months.

Bleaching trays from your dentist work most effectively. Because they are custom fit to

your teeth, the bleaching material will be right where it needs to be for longer periods of time. After you have initially bleached your teeth, additional "touch up" bleaching will work more quickly.

The biggest side effect of bleaching teeth is increased sensitivity to cold. If this occurs, simply stretch out the time in between bleaching sessions. Things will return to normal quickly.

Fillings and crowns already have in your mouth will not change color, so these may need to be redone if the color of your teeth changes a lot.

Work on your smile, Smiley, and Taskforce Ironhorse keep those questions coming!

Continued from SKILLS, pg. 10

"A lot of the time the Iraqis will talk amongst themselves while the interpreter is busy," Elkhatib said. "I can understand them though, and that can give us important information."

When Company A arrived in Iraq to support Operation Iraqi Freedom and later Operation New Dawn, Elkhatib began working with the 1st Bn., 14th Inf. Regt. military intelligence section as a translator, then as security for his company commander, finally joining his platoon in February.

"I'm glad to be out on the line," he said. "What I was doing with the intelligence guys was important, and I brought a lot of understanding about the region to (my) platoon, but I prefer going out every day and doing the mission."

"Infantry is what I joined the Army to do," Elkhatib added.

After speaking with the villagers, the Reapers returned to COL McHenry to grab a hot meal, refuel, and then resumed their mission, this time to cover the countryside north of COL McHenry.

Counter IDF missions only make up a third of the Reapers' workload, said Diaz, from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

Each of the three Infantry platoons at COL McHenry also advise, train and assist the 46th Brigade, 12th Iraqi Army Division during Stability Transition Team missions, and take turns providing security for the company commander as he conducts operations with their Iraqi counterparts.

"We take turns doing each," said Diaz. "Changing up the missions keeps us sharp, so no one gets complacent."

Diaz said eight months deployed to Iraq in support of Operation New Dawn has strengthened his Soldiers and brought them together.

"This is probably the strongest platoon I have ever been a part of," he said. "Everyone carries their own weight, and I honestly

believe the reason we haven't lost anyone this deployment is because everyone is sharp, no one is complacent and as this deployment has progressed, our bonds as a unit have only gotten tighter."



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Andrew Ingram, USD-N PAO

Sgt. 1st Class Lenny Diaz, platoon sergeant, Company A, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, asks Iraqi citizens from Dou Al Salo in the Kirkuk, Iraq, for information about violent extremists responsible for rocket attacks on Contingency Operating Site McHenry, March 11, 2011.