

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

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APRIL 9, 2011



## *Iraqi youth receive aid, give smiles*

Sgt. Coltin Heller  
109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment  
United States Division-North Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – “I’m very thankful for all the clothes and blankets,” said Saife, an Iraqi teen who received several blankets and a new pair of shoes handed out by Iraqi jinood assigned to 2nd Battalion, 48th Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division, at a humanitarian aid distribution event in Tikrit, Iraq, April 7.

U.S. Division-North Soldiers assigned to Company B, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, supplied the varied garments to 4th IA Div. jinood, who transported and distributed the belongings to less fortunate children at a police station in Tikrit.

Civil affairs serves as a bridge between Iraqi civilians and U.S. forces, informing commanders on the status of local populations, as well as assisting those populations by coordinating infrastructure renewal projects and delivering supplies and aid, such as clothing and blankets, said Staff Sgt. Bobby Ogan, civil affairs noncommissioned officer, assigned to Company A, Division Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Division.

4th Inf. Div. Civil Affairs section bought the supplies for local IA units to distribute, said Ogan.

“We purchased \$350,000 worth of supplies, from clothing and jackets to blankets and shoes,” said Ogan. “After the stuff was ordered, I tracked it and distributed it to the brigades to support the IA.”

The 2nd AAB, one of the brigades in U.S. Division-North to receive the supplies in January, began planning the event with Soldiers of 1st Bn., 27th Inf. Regt. “Wolfhound” Soldiers and their Iraqi counterparts.

“I met with (Soldiers) several times and they totally supported the idea of the IA being in the lead,” said Ogan, a native of Days Creek, Ore.

“The IA did all the planning, we just furnished the supplies,” he added.

Wolfhound Soldiers linked up with the jinood outside of Contingency Operating Base Speicher, transferring the seasonal wear and blankets to two large IA vehicles to be taken to the police station.

“Even though the humanitarian aid was from

division, we can use it to generate support from the area,” said Aebischer, who hails from Barnegat, N.J.

“If the people see the IA bring the aide, the people can identify with that and it empowers the IA.”

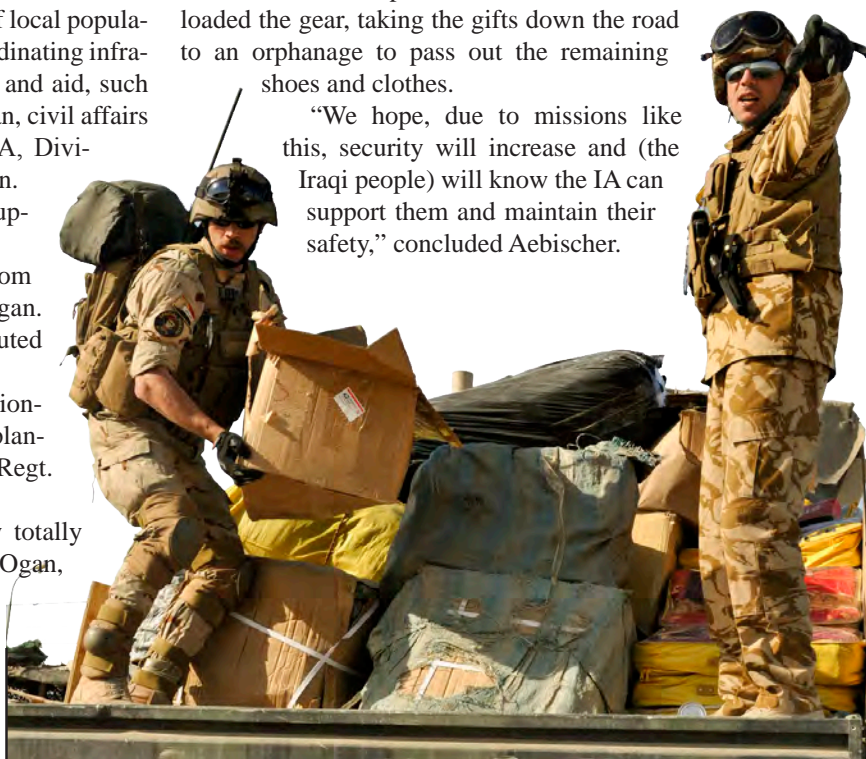
It’s a good thing that the people see (the IA) bring the supplies, as this shows the people that their forces can help the local communities, said Aebischer.

Fifty Iraqi children gathered around as the IA soldiers unloaded brightly colored blankets and brand-new shoes. The soldiers then passed the goods out to the children, who toted their gifts away beaming from ear to ear.

“We hoped for over 100 kids, but this was still a good turn out,” said Aebischer. “I’m confident all this stuff is going to a good place.”

A large portion of the aid remained after the event as fewer children than anticipated showed. IA soldiers reloaded the gear, taking the gifts down the road to an orphanage to pass out the remaining shoes and clothes.

“We hope, due to missions like this, security will increase and (the Iraqi people) will know the IA can support them and maintain their safety,” concluded Aebischer.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Coltin Heller, 109th MPAD, USD-N PAO

**Two Iraqi jinood, Arabic for soldiers, assigned to 2nd Battalion, 48th Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division, load clothes, blankets and shoes onto their truck in preparation to deliver the varied goods during a humanitarian aid distribution event in Tikrit, Iraq, April 7, 2011.**

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LONGKNIFE  
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# IRONHORSE STRONG: Soldier of the Week

Planning for any military mission involves a great deal of coordination for leaders, particularly when conducting operations such as U.S. forces' mission to advise, train and assist Iraqi Security Forces during Operation New Dawn.

Sgt. 1st Class Herman George, mortar section leader assigned to Troop A, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, earned recognition as the U.S. Division-North "Ironhorse Strong" Soldier of the Week for his hard work and expertise in planning and executing training events for 3rd Iraqi Army Division.

"There are a number of moving pieces in the live fire itself, but where Sgt. 1st Class George excelled is that he was able to take a complex task and train the Iraqis to an American standard," said Capt. Ben Jackman, commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Sqdn., 9th Cav. Regt. "By the time we reached the live fire events, (Iraqi soldiers) executed the drills and maneuvers we asked them to, and their leadership was able to develop standard operating procedures for their units."

George, a native of Temple, Texas, coordinated training for a mortar company with a combined arms live fire exercise, which integrated Iraqi mortar crews with counter fire, close air support, scout weapons teams and 155 mm artillery teams.

Between exercises, George not only keeps the Iraqi mortar crews sharp, but maintains his own Soldiers' skills as well, said Sgt. Daniel Mascher.

"He prepares us, as the trainers, to know what our jobs will be, what lanes we'll cover and how to teach the Iraqis effectively," said Mascher, a native of Pittsburgh, Pa. "He makes it enjoyable to come to work."



U.S. Army photo

Sgt. 1st Class Herman George, right, mortar section leader assigned to Troop A, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, mentors an Iraqi noncommissioned officer during a live fire exercise at Destiny Range Dec. 6, 2010. George, a native of Temple, Texas, earned a recognition as U.S. Division-North "Ironhorse Strong" Soldier of the Week for his hard work and dedication to his unit's advise, train, and assist mission, supporting Tadreeb al Shamil, an Iraqi Army training program designed to provide individual and collective infantry training for Iraq's ground forces.

"He is able to coach, teach, and mentor everyone he comes in contact with, including the young Soldiers who say, 'That's the (noncommissioned officer) I want to be,'" said Jackman, a Copperas Cove, Texas, native. "There is not an NCO out there that I'd rather work with, or have more trust and confidence in, than Sgt. 1st Class George."

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FOR FUTURE OPERATIONS

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## 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





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

## Secretary of Defense visits U.S. Division-North troops

U.S. Division-North  
Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates finished a three-day visit to Iraq, meeting with troops deployed to U.S. Division-North, April 8.

In what Gates said will likely be his final visit to Iraq, the Pentagon's top official thanked U.S. Soldiers of 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, based out of Contingency Operating Site Marez, for their continued role in the advise, train and assist mission during Operation New Dawn.

Gates fielded questions from Soldiers ranging from the possibility of extending the U.S. military's presence in Iraq past

2011 to the current budget deliberations in Washington, D.C.

As ongoing budget negotiations and implications on military pay dominated news headlines, Gates reassured the Soldiers that he would do his best to support their needs.

"It's been my responsibility to make sure you have whatever you need to complete your mission successfully and come

home safely," Gates said.

A U.S. military presence could remain in Iraq past the current Dec. 31, 2011 deadline in accordance with the security forces agreement if the Iraqi government requests U.S. assistance, Gates said.

Gates noted as U.S. forces transition home from Iraq and Afghanistan, Soldiers will be afforded more time at home as deployments become less frequent.

The additional time spent at home stations will also allow the U.S. Army to reset and transition back to conventional warfighting roles from the advise and assist mission throughout Iraq and Afghanistan, he said.

Gates offered his personal gratitude to the Soldiers and their Families for the continued dedication to the mission in Iraq.

"I've really just come here to thank you," Gates said. "Thank you for your service, for what you've accomplished over the last number of years; and through you, thank your Families."

Gates sat for lunch with the Soldiers before travelling to United Arab Emirates to continue meetings with Middle East leaders and discuss developments in the region.

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U.S. Army photo by Spc. Terence Ewings, 4th AAB PAO



# ROC Drill prepares leaders for future operations

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – Before the days of slide presentations and desktop computers, military tacticians around the world used maps and models to organize troops and plan future operations. Whether hastily drawn in the dirt or built through the course of several weeks of planning, military leaders use “sand tables” to visualize a concept of when, where and how operations should be conducted.

***“You can talk about an operation all day long, but looking at it visually is so much more effective.”***

– Staff Sgt. Bruce Harrell

Using a sand table, a three-dimensional terrain map, leaders from Contingency Operating Site Warrior and U.S. Division-North discussed plans for transitioning troops out of COS Warrior during a rehearsal of concept drill, March 30.

Representatives of units and agencies at the base met with senior leaders to outline a strategy for transferring U.S. bases to Iraqi government control following the withdrawal of U.S.

forces deployed in support of Operation New Dawn.

“We conduct drills like this so we can better understand and plan for the mission we have set out to accomplish,” said Maj. Joel Gleason, logistics officer, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division. “Everyone here today has their own piece of the mission to accomplish, and this drill will help us better understand how our small piece contributes to the whole.”

During the ROC drill, junior leaders took turns demonstrating and explaining planned courses of action using the terrain map as a visual aid to allow senior leaders to collectively conceptualize the planning process and mitigate any conflicts or overlapping lines of effort, said Lt. Col. Scott Nolan, executive officer, 1st AATF, 1st Inf. Div.

“ROC drills are meant to get everyone on the same page; they keep us in our own lane,” said Nolan. “We could do all of this during a slide show presentation, but the bottom line is this gives us a more accurate understanding of future plans, because you can walk the model and get a visual for what is going to happen.”

Soldiers stood amidst the model’s moving pieces around the massive map board to explain their plans; while senior leaders, including Brig. Gen. James F. Pasqualette, deputy commanding general-support, U.S. Division-North and 4th Infantry Division, and Col. Benjamin Solum, deputy brigade commander, 1st AATF, 1st Inf. Div., interjected with questions, ideas and directives.

Every organization at COS Warrior placed models on the sand table. The U.S. Air Force units added model airplanes and a landing strip replicated by Christmas tree lights. Fire extinguishers adorned the map symbolizing the fire departments, and matchbox cars served as construction equipment and tactical vehicles.

“That’s one of the best things about a ROC drill,” said Staff Sgt. Bruce Harrell, an armor crewmember assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st

AATF, 1st Inf. Div., who helped construct the sand table. “I may have started the map, but everybody can add their own pieces to make it more accurate, or even just fun.”

Harrell, a native of San Bernardino, Calif., said he started building sand tables in 2002.

Harrell said ROC drills are one of the most effective methods for Soldiers to discuss and refine a plan.

“You can talk about an operation all day long, but looking at it visually is so much more effective,” he said. “It just makes it easier to grasp the overall vision of a plan when you can see it with your eyes.”



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

Lt. Col. Scott Nolan, executive officer, 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, briefs the locations of facilities and units located on Contingency Operating Site Warrior during a rehearsal of concept drill, March 30, 2011. U.S. Division-North leaders used the three-dimensional maps, known as “sand tables,” to gain a visual understanding of future operations, while planning and rehearsing missions in support of Operation New Dawn.

# Senior leaders contribute personal time for betterment of troops

Spc. Andrew Ingram  
USD-N Public Affairs

**CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq** – Eager to seek better opportunities and self-improvement, Soldiers stationed at Contingency Operating Site Warrior enrolled in preparatory classes to improve their performance on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery.

U.S. Division-North Soldiers volunteering as instructors focused on raising the scores of students trying to qualify for officer candidate school, warrant officer training or reclassification into a different enlisted career field.

“This class is all about helping Soldiers succeed,” said Sgt. 1st Class Tanisha Diggs, a career counselor assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division. “A lot of these Soldiers will do really well in their new career paths; we just want to help them get there.”

Diggs, from Fort Hood, Texas, said she volunteered to teach the course after she realized many of the Soldiers need to improve their ASVAB scores to reach their military career goals.

“My goal is to provide them with the opportunity to improve themselves,” Diggs said. “It makes me feel good to bring them options.”

More important than simply studying the material covered on the exam, Diggs



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

**U.S. Division-North Soldiers deployed to Contingency Operating Site Warrior take a basic math and vocabulary quiz in preparation for the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery during a preparatory class, March 25, 2011. Although every service member takes the ASVAB prior to joining the military, many Soldiers retake the ASVAB to boost their scores as they attempt to transfer to another career field or officer candidacy.**

said one of the best things Soldiers can do to improve their scores is learn more efficient test taking techniques.

“We are not just teaching them the right answers because we don’t know what questions are on the test,” she said. “They are learning what types of questions they will have to answer and strategies to figure out the right answer quickly.”

Although most of the students already have a grasp on the material, taking the class allows the Soldiers to develop their knowledge and skills, said Sgt. 1st Class Kells Gillespie, network manager, HHC, 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st AATF, 1st Inf. Div.

“We aren’t here to teach anything new,” said Gillespie, who calls Boone’s Mill, Va. home. “Everything on the test they probably learned in high school; Sgt. 1st Class Diggs and I are just here to reiterate what they have learned in the past.”

Gillespie said he volunteered as an instructor so more Soldiers from throughout COS Warrior could take part in the class.

“These guys need some help, so we volunteered,” he said. “I’m a noncommissioned officer and that is what we do—we

help Soldiers.”

The students appreciate the dedication Diggs and Gillespie display during the class, said Spc. John Wistrom, combat engineer, Company C, Brigade Support Battalion, 1st AATF.

“It isn’t like this is their job,” said Wistrom, who hails from Sartell, Minn. “I’ve really got a lot of respect for what they are doing.”

The instructors volunteer hours of their personal outside of assigned duties teaching classes and grading papers, he added.

Wistrom said he wants to improve his ASVAB score to reclassify as an interrogator.

“I’ve done my time outside the wire, and I love being a combat engineer, but I want to plan for the future,” Wistrom explained. “I’m really interested in going into law enforcement when I get out of the military, and I think being an interrogator would be a good place for me to get training.”

The next preparatory class is slated to begin April 18. COS Warrior Soldiers interested in attending the class should notify their chain of command.



## *Snapshots of Tadreeb al Shamil*

— U.S. Division-North Soldiers train Iraqi soldiers assigned to Iraqi Ground Forces Command at Ghuzlani Warrior Training Center and Kirkush Military Training Base, providing them with modern, up-to-date battalion level combat tactics and ground maneuvering techniques in an effort to bolster Iraqi Army capabilities to provide internal and external security for the Iraqi people.

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





# 'Wolfhound' Soldiers help bring water purification system to Iraqi community



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Coltin Heller, 109th MPAD, USD-N PAO

**Capt. Andrew Gardner, commander, Company A, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, celebrates with Iraqi children during the re-opening of a water purification and distribution center in al Alam Nahiya, April 3, 2011. U.S. Division-North Soldiers provided funding, while Iraqi contractors completed the water station, which provides the children with drinkable water.**

Sgt. Coltin Heller  
109th MPAD  
USD-N Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – Iraqi families from al Alam Nahiya gathered to celebrate the opening of a refurbished water purification and distribution center in the Salah ad Din province of northern Iraq, April 3.

U.S. Division-North Soldiers assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, attended the ceremony to inspect the facility and interact with Iraqi community leaders, families and local children.

A failing pump, sputtering generator and ruined transformer rendered the station all but useless, producing a minimal amount of drinkable water to the village before completion of the project, said Khala Jassim, council chairman for al

Alam Nahiya, during the opening.

"This is a great project, as it fixed the old station, to what you see here," said Jassim. "This facility will be able to deliver potable water to 4,000 families in the area."

Capt. Andrew Gardner, commander, Company A, 1st Bn., 27th Inf. Regt., and his Soldiers attended the ceremony at the invitation of council members.

"The project builds positive relationships between the U.S. forces and the Iraqi people, but shows them they can do things like this themselves," said Gardner, who calls Charlestown, R.I. home.

The project to refit the water station, a main concern for the village council members, took just under two months to complete.

"Thanks to our U.S. friends, the people can now have clean water to drink," said Jassim.

Jassim and other coun-

cil members regularly toured the station during its stages of completion, ensuring quality in the work.

"I went several times and saw everything," he said. "The

transformer, the pump, the generator all looks good."

In addition to receiving fresh water, the village also benefitted from the project as the contractor gave the old machines previously used in the station to the village to do with as they pleased.

"This was a generous act, as we are able to sell the old equipment and use the money to uplift the village," Jassim said.

Although pleased with the renovated station, Jassim expressed his concern for the pipes that feed the village.

The station is fixed and able to supply water, but the pipes in the water network are old, and there have been problems with them rusting through or breaking and needing repair, added Jassim.

The council hopes to have the pipe network repaired soon,

**See WATER, pg. 9**



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Coltin Heller, 109th MPAD, USD-N PAO

**First Lt. Will Alsfelder, executive officer, and 1st Lt. Dan Murdough, first platoon leader and project purchasing officer, both assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, speak with an al Alam Nahiya council member during a ceremony celebrating the re-opening of the local water purification and distribution station, April 3, 2011. The newly renovated station, a project planned and completed by the al Alam Nahiya council, provides potable water for 4,000 local Iraqi families.**



# *U.S. Soldiers learn leadership skills at Kirkush Military Training Base*

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

FORWARD OPERATING BASE NORMANDY, Iraq – As U.S. and Iraqi forces train battalions of Iraqi Army soldiers during Tadreeb al Shamil, the students taking the classes are not the only ones learning new skills and gaining valuable knowledge.

For junior U.S. Soldiers serving in Iraq, the opportunity to impart wisdom on their Iraqi counterparts during Operation New Dawn builds leadership traits as well as practical experience in the field, said Spc. Paul Swerda, Company A, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment.

Serving on his first deployment, Swerda, an infantryman from Tucson, Ariz., works as an instructor and advisor, training Iraqi troops during 25-day rotations at Kirkush Military Training Base and Forward Operating Base Normandy.

Swerda's platoon from 1st Bn., 27th Inf. Regt., part of the 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, serves attached to their sister battalion, the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, who oversees the training at KMTB and FOB Normandy.

After working closely with IA battalions for several months as part of the Tadreeb al Shamil program, Swerda and fellow Soldiers transitioned control of their classes to Iraqi cadre, and now act in a supervisory capacity.

As Iraqi instructors led classes during a three-day exercise at FOB Normandy, Swerda took charge of emplacing simulated Improvised Explosive Device pyrotechnics to add a bit of realism to training scenarios.

Far different from the traditional role of a deployed infantryman, Swerda's responsibility as a trainer and observer now allows him to see the other side of military operations, he said.

During a pre-deployment rotation to the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif.—similar to the training rotation he teaches now—Swerda said he never had the opportunity to act as a trainer, as senior



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

Iraqi soldiers advance on line to their objective while their instructor watches from behind during a platoon-level training class at Forward Operating Base Normandy, Iraq, March 22, 2011. Iraqi instructors assumed control of training their own soldiers after graduating from a prior course taught by U.S. Soldiers assigned to 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division. During the 25-day Tadreeb al Shamil training programs, junior enlisted U.S. Soldiers gain practical knowledge by assisting Iraqi forces with the training program. Teaching Iraqis to build their capabilities also sharpened the skills of the U.S. trainers, said Spc. Paul Swerda, an infantryman assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 2nd AAB, and a native of Tucson, Ariz. "It's going to make me a better leader," said Swerda.

instructors typically perform those responsibilities.

Now, with the roles reversed, Swerda said he has received that chance to mentor others as a young specialist looking forward to soon becoming an NCO.

"It's going to make me a better leader," he said of the course.

Swerda's platoon leader, 1st Lt. Stuard Stegall, said the Tadreeb al Shamil courses offer a great way for his junior enlisted Soldiers to develop as leaders.

"Normally they're being taught these classes by NCOs, but now they're part of the instructor team, and they're actually having roles in teaching these classes," said Stegall. "They're already doing NCO tasks with teaching basic classes, correcting mistakes and knowing what to look for when they correct those mistakes. I think that is going to pay off."

For the NCOs of the platoon already well-versed in training their own Soldiers,

both deployed and at home, advising the IA battalions has other benefits.

Sgt. Jeremy Mingle, a squad leader assigned to Company A, and native of Cortland, N.Y., said training Iraqi troops on fundamental infantry tasks helps keep NCOs sharp on the basics.

Previously deployed to Iraq in 2007, Mingle said the change from infantryman in Operation Iraqi Freedom to teacher in Operation New Dawn helped him build patience and respect with the Iraqi soldiers he trained.

"I have a lot of respect for those guys for wanting to step up to the plate to do their job and help defend their country," he said.

Beyond helping the Iraqi Army achieve its goal, Mingle noted the personal pride he and other NCOs take in educating others.

"You can train your guys, but not everyone can say that they've trained other soldiers from a different country," he said.



# Beyond the call of duty

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – “I went in the living room and couldn’t see anything; it was all black and thick,” said Spc. Shane Darst, describing a house fire. “I got down on my knees and crawled into the living room. There was only about an inch between the carpet and smoke where you could see clear across to the kitchen, but you could see the fire ripping the kitchen apart.”

Darst, an armor crewmember serving with Company D, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, “Thunderhorse,” attached to 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, received a recommendation for the Department of Defense Soldier’s Medal for saving a neighbor’s life in his hometown of Marengo, Ohio while he was home for environmental morale leave in December 2010.

Darst said he and his wife just arrived home when he heard something that sounded like fireworks about two houses down. Realizing the sound was a transformer exploding, Darst said he ran to the house and entered after learning someone was still inside.

Darst said he began yelling for his neighbor to make some type of noise if

they could hear his voice.

“I heard something fall over and inside my head I said please God let that be (her),” said Darst.

After finding a girl inside, Darst dragged her out the front door to safety.

Upon returning to COS Warrior, Darst received a ‘Devil Brigade’ coin and a Certificate of Achievement for his act of courage.

Spc. Tyler Shuell, Darst’s best friend, also serving with Company D, said he thinks Darst receiving the Soldier’s Medal is well deserved.

“When I heard about it, I was proud of him,” said Shuell, who hails from Portland, Ore. “He’s definitely the type of guy who will go out of his way for you.”

“The thing that made me do it was that girl’s scream,” said Darst. “I kept thinking, if that was my daughter, if that was me in there, I’d want somebody to come get me. I never thought I’d be able to do something like that but whenever it happens, it’s like, either you do it or you don’t.”

Everyone was happy, he said, and although they lost belongings, he was glad to be a part of them having a merry Christmas by allowing them to have the gift of each other.

Darst is scheduled to receive the Soldier’s Medal during an upcoming awards ceremony hosted by Thunderhorse Battalion.

Continued from WATER, pg. 7 —

Jassim added.

Jassim and al Alam Nahiya council members received funding and guidance for the project from 1st. Bn. 27th Inf. Regt. “Wolfhound” Soldiers, a process which began in late summer 2010.

In the past, U.S. Soldiers provided the means for projects like the water station to be completed. With the onset of Operation New Dawn, U.S. forces endeavored to empower Iraqi leaders to take a greater degree of control of projects benefitting them.

“We began the project to improve Iraqi communities back in August,” said Gardner. “We presented the local communities in Salad ah Din with a project presentation, and asked them what projects they wanted to do.”

Wolfhound Soldiers also encouraged local Iraqi leaders to identify the projects, bid out and choose the contractors to complete the work, added Gardner.

While U.S. Soldiers attended the ceremony, they played a minimal role, only advising their Iraqi partners during the project and assisting the council members with properly developing and implementing plans for various projects.

The Iraqi council independently handled the completion of the project as Wolfhound Soldiers attended the re-opening ceremony at the invitation of the council, said Gardner.

While U.S. forces provided project funding, the inspiration and driving force behind the water system and other projects came from the Iraqi citizens, said Gardner.

“Instead of us saying, ‘We’re building you a school because we think you need one,’ they found something they needed and improved it on their own,” Gardner said.

Gardner went on to say projects like this build not only the confidence of the Iraqi people, but also the confidence the U.S. Soldiers have in the citizens to complete difficult projects and stand on their own.

Iraqi civilians, both adults and children alike, expressed their gratitude and lined up outside the fence after the re-opening ceremony of the water station to shake hands with U.S. Division-North Soldiers and pose with them for photos to commemorate the moment.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Robert DeDeaux, 1st AATF PAO, 1st Inf. Div., USD-N

Spc. Shane Darst, an armor crewmember serving with Company D, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, attached to 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, shakes hands with a young child at a checkpoint near Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq, April 3, 2011.



# Stability Transition Team completes mission with Iraqi commando brigade

Spc. Andrew Ingram  
USD-N Public Affairs

**CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR**, Iraq – Lt. Col. Marcel Schneider, 15th Brigade Sustainment Transition Team, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, and Soldiers assigned to Company C, 1st Squadron, 14th Infantry Regiment conducted their last scheduled training mission in support of 15th Brigade, 12th Iraqi Army Division in Kirkuk province, Iraq, April 4.

Company C Soldiers, part of the 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, reviewed basic marksmanship skills with the 15th Bde.'s Commando Company before coaching the Iraqi soldiers as the soldiers zeroed their M16 rifles at the range.

"Working with the 15th Bde. during the last 10 months has been a uniquely rewarding experience for me," said Schneider. "As Operation New Dawn continues and the U.S. military's role in Iraq becomes smaller, we finish a chapter in the history of Iraq. This chapter is finished, but we are starting a new chapter, one in which I



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

Lt. Col. Marcel Schneider, 15th Brigade Sustainment Transition Team, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, presents a plaque to staff Brig. Gen. Abdulla Amir, 15th Brigade, 12th Iraqi Army Division, during a farewell ceremony at the 15th Bde. headquarters in Kirkuk province, Iraq, April 4, 2011. Schneider presented the plaque as a token of appreciation for the relationship Amir and his soldiers shared with Soldiers of 1st AATF.

U.S. Soldiers also benefitted from the cooperative training.

"Since we've been in Iraq our unit has made it a priority to have junior leaders like me take a large part in training the Iraqis," said Lamb. "It sharpens our skills and prepares us to train our own soldiers when we return to the States."

Though many of the Iraqi soldiers wish they could continue training with U.S. forces, the soldiers are confident that they now have the skills to succeed on their own, said Hussein.

In the afternoon, staff Brig. Gen. Abdulla Amir, commander of 15th Bde., 12th IA Div., hosted a farewell ceremony to show his appreciation for Schneider, who worked closely with brigade leadership as an advisor, teacher and liaison, and to U.S. Soldiers who worked to train the commando unit.

Amir said although he will personally miss Schneider both as a friend and a trusted mentor, he looks forward to the challenge of managing his troops without U.S. assistance.

"I am excited that Iraq is beginning to stand alone," Amir said. "I look forward to the day when Iraq is strong on its own and our two countries move forward as partners."

hope our relationship will continue as our two great nations continue to work together."

Cpl. Brandon Lamb, an infantryman assigned to Company C, lead the commandos though the four marksmanship fundamentals: steady body position, sight picture, breathing and trigger squeeze; while his platoon mates observed the Iraqi soldiers practice.

"This was one of the most disciplined groups of Iraqi soldiers I have worked with so far," said Lamb, a native of

St. Robert, Mo., "They seem to have grasped a pretty good working knowledge of what we have been teaching them. Now it's up to them to take this knowledge and run with it."

Many of the commandos trained with their new weapons for the first time during the classes, said Pvt. Amar Abdul Hussein, a Commando Company soldier.

"We are not experts with the M16 yet – for some of us it is the first time we have trained with our personal weapons," said Hussein. "The U.S. Soldiers have done a good job of showing us the basics, such as the four fundamentals."

Lamb said he and fellow

**U.S. Army Cpl. Brandon Lamb, an infantryman assigned to Company C, 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, coaches Iraqi Army Soldiers while Pvt. Amar Abdul Hussein, Commando Company, 15th Brigade, 12th Iraqi Army Division, demonstrates the techniques during marksmanship training at the 15th Bde. headquarters in Kirkuk province, Iraq, April 4, 2011.**



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





# Chaplain's At Ease!... Rest!

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

I often forget the importance of putting rest into my battle rhythm.

I just came back from Environmental Morale Leave. Although I had a great time, I feel like I need a vacation.

Vince Lombardi was quoted as saying, "Fatigue makes cowards of us all." If that's true, then we desperately need to put rest into our battle rhythm. We not only need rest and sleep, we need to slow down sometimes, too.

As Americans, we talk fast, walk fast and eat fast. We use words like "time crunch," "fast food," "rush hour," "frequent flyer," "expressway" and "rapid transit."

Dr. Richard Swenson noted most Americans hate to kill time doing nothing, but the irony is that our use of time is killing us.

Dr. Swenson said that our

fatigue is attributed to our frenzied "American Way of Life."

So, there it is. We are caught between the body's need for rest and society's need to keep us busy.

But, when does faster become too fast? Is there a speed limit to life? Should there be? I think so.

I believe that God made our bodies capable of doing tremendous things, but I also believe that He designed us with certain limits. Even God rested on the seventh day, but not because He was exhausted.

Rather, it was a rest of achievement and enjoyment in what He had made. If resting is important to God, I don't think it's a sign of weakness or laziness. Rather, it's a sign of His wisdom and holiness. He knew that if we neglected rest, we would pay the price.

In the Old Testament, the penalty for breaking the Sabbath was death by stoning. Archibald Hart said the truth "is that even today the penalty for

not taking time to slow down and give our bodies adequate rest is still death ... only it is a slow, self-inflicted death, caused by too much stress."

Just as the archer and the violinist both unstringing their bows, we need to remember that leisure time is not lost time; it is time invested. The old saying is true—"You'll break the bow if you always keep it bent."

What are the consequences of not slowing down? Author John Ortberg said that the most serious sign of hurry sickness is the diminished capacity to love.

Ortberg said that love and hurry are fundamentally incompatible. Love always takes time, and time is one thing hurried people do not have.

What lies behind much of the anger and frustration we experience, according to Ortberg? "Hurry."

The truth is, as much as we complain about it, we are drawn to hurry. It makes us feel important. It means we don't have to look too closely at our lives.

I acknowledge that it is very hard to slow down. We are very busy in the military; it's just part of the job. But if we don't take steps to slow down our personal lives, we will end up regretting what we've missed along the way.

Do you struggle with any of this? What can you do? As a starting point, take five minutes each day for the next week to spend in solitude.

Maybe get an extra half hour of sleep each night. You and I have to remind ourselves that we're not Jack Bauer. Unlike him, we are quite human, and there is a serious limit to what you and I can achieve in one day.

God knows that almost everything of substantial value in life comes out of an unhurried spirit. He knows that a still heart is the prerequisite for a pure heart.

It was Augustine who said, "Our souls are restless until they find their rest in Thee."

"Come to me, all of you who labor and are heavy burdened, and I will give you rest," Matthew 11:28.

## U.S. Division-North Social Media Sites



On the U.S. Division-North social media sites, you can find stories, photos and videos of U.S. Soldiers deployed in support of Operation New Dawn.



[www.facebook.com/4thID](http://www.facebook.com/4thID)

[www.twitter/4thInfDiv](http://www.twitter/4thInfDiv)



[www.Slideshare.net/the4id](http://www.Slideshare.net/the4id)

[www.flickr.com/photos/the4id](http://www.flickr.com/photos/the4id)

[youtube.com/The4ID](http://youtube.com/The4ID)



# Cavalry logistician recognized for role in Operation New Dawn

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ, Iraq – As U.S. forces transfer bases to Iraqi control as part of their mission in support of Operation New Dawn, supply specialists and logisticians serve in a seldom seen role of returning and restocking large amounts of supplies from those installations.

U.S. Division-North and 4th Infantry Division Deputy Commanding General-Support Brig. Gen. James F. Pasquarette recently recognized Sgt. 1st Class Gregory Brown, logistician for 6th Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, for his hard work and expertise as a supply sergeant working to support the advise, train and assist mission.

“Sgt. 1st Class Gregory Brown has been instrumental in transitioning responsibility (for Joint Security Station Heider) over to the Iraqi government,” said Pasquarette.

Prior to the transfer ceremony of JSS Heider, Pasquarette awarded the supply sergeant with an Army Commendation Medal for the logistics work Brown contributed to the squadron.

“Brown and the other 6th Sqdn., 8th Cav. Regt. troopers have done a great job setting the conditions so the Iraqi Security Forces can be successful in the future,” said Pasquarette.

Upon arrival to Iraq in summer 2010, Brown coordinated and supervised the movement of the squadron’s Soldiers and equipment to Contingency Operating Site Sykes and five other remote combat outposts.

During the past year, Brown assisted in transferring three of the five outposts to the Iraqi government; most recently JSS Heider.

“It feels really good to see logisticians recognized for the hard work we put in behind the scenes,” said Brown, a native of Luling, La. “This isn’t a combat-specific military occupation, so it’s nice to be known for doing what I do best.”



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

U.S. Division-North and 4th Infantry Division Deputy Commanding General-Support Brig. Gen. James F. Pasquarette presents Sgt. 1st Class Gregory Brown an Army Commendation Medal during a ceremony at Joint Security Station Heider, April 1, 2011.

## Hey Doc: *Help!* *My water tastes funny*

Maj. George Deguzman  
Environmental Science and Engineering Officer  
U.S. Division-North

“Hey Doc: *It’s been getting a lot warmer so I started using my water hydration system. I want to stay hydrated so I don’t become a heat casualty. I just don’t understand why the water doesn’t taste right?*” – Signed “Yuck.”

Dear “Yuck,”

This is a very timely question. Because bottled water is so readily available in theater, most Soldiers go for long periods of time without ever using their hydration system. It may have been sitting at the bottom of a duffel bag for the last several months since its last use. It’s important to thoroughly clean and sanitize any hydration system you use regularly, both before its initial use and regularly thereafter. Failure to do so places you at risk for ingesting harmful contaminants such as bacteria and mold.

Cleaning and sanitizing your hydration system is a very simple process. You should clean it with soap and water while gently scrubbing the inside with a bottle brush. Then you should thoroughly rinse it with water and let it air dry. If there is a residual odor after cleaning, fill the reservoir with water and add two teaspoons of baking soda. Mix the solution well and let it sit overnight. Then rinse it thoroughly and let it air dry.

Sanitizing your hydration system is an easy process as well. First, fill the reservoir with water and add two teaspoons of liquid bleach. Mix well and run some of the sanitizing solution through the delivery tube. Wait for thirty minutes, rinse thoroughly and air dry. Most Soldiers were issued an additional bladder with cleaning tablets. The cleaning tablets also sanitize effectively, but are more expensive than bleach.

You also need to clean the bit valve frequently. This is the part of the hydration system constantly in contact with your mouth, making it a good place for bacteria to grow. First, pull the valve off, grasp the rib at the valve’s face, and roll it backwards. Next, pull the core off of the ribbed post and clean the valve parts with a small brush using soap and water. Rinse the parts thoroughly and reposition the valve core on the center post of the valve body. Lastly, roll the outer sleeve forward and you’re done.

I hope this answers your question. Cleaning and sanitizing your hydration system regularly will keep you from getting sick and your water won’t taste funny.

Enjoy your water, Yuck, and Taskforce Ironhorse keep those questions coming!

