

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



VOLUME 1, ISSUE 26

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

APRIL 30, 2011

ISF showcases capabilities during Operation Lion's Leap

A mortar crew assigned to 47th Brigade, 12th Iraqi Army Division prepare to fire 120mm mortar smoke rounds at a simulated enemy position during Operation Lion's Leap at Mahgoor Training Site in Kirkuk province, Iraq, April 24, 2011. During Operation Lion's Leap, more than 500 soldiers from 12th IA Div. and Iraqi Special Operations Forces showcased their technical expertise and tactical prowess.



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

Spc. Andrew Ingram
USD-N Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – Top Iraqi military leaders, officials and press gathered at the Mahgoor Training Site in Kirkuk province to bear witness as Iraqi Security Forces conducted Operation Lion's Leap, a large-scale joint training exercise with the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Air Force, April 24.

During the exercise, 12th Iraqi Army Division and Iraqi Special Operation Forces soldiers showcased their technical expertise and tactical prowess.

"Today's exercise is a part of a chain of exercises that is raising the ability and readiness of the Iraqi Army," said Lt. Gen. Hussein al Douhi, deputy chief of staff for training, Iraqi Ground Forces Command. "The training operation integrated the training of all our soldiers, NCOs and offi-

cers to work in many different situations to protect the best interests of our nation."

Before the demonstration began, officers of the 12th IA Division used a sand table, a scale model of the battle space, to explain the mission's objectives to the gathered VIPs.

"This exercise will demonstrate we are ready to carry out anti-terror operations until we achieve victory," Douhi said.

To kick off the exercise, mortar teams, positioned on

a hill overlooking the training area, fired 120mm smoke rounds onto the battlefield to confuse the simulated "enemy" and conceal the arrival of members from Commando Battalion, 12th IA Div.

Commando soldiers assaulted two enemy positions using rocket propelled grenades, machine guns and assault rifles to isolate a third location nearby where hostages

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STEADFAST AND LOYAL
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WARRIOR

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IRONHORSE STRONG: Soldier of the Week

What qualities make up a Soldier who outshines the rest? How does a Soldier grow from “one of the pack” into a leader among his peers?

Spc. John Courson, an infantryman from Jamestown, N.Y., first deployed in 2008 with the 101st Airborne Division. Since then, he joined the ranks of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division for his second deployment to Iraq.

His actions during his time with HHC answer the aforementioned questions, and earned him a position in the Tactical Command Post as part of a personal security detachment.

“He’s a good kid; one of the higher producers and that’s why he was selected for the TAC – to work at that level,” said 1st Sgt. Jamie Wells, senior enlisted leader of HHC.

Courson’s dedication to the TAC’s mission ensured his battalion leaders’ ability to provide strategic reports to senior U.S. forces leadership during critical missions earlier this month, unit leaders said.

Courson does not just work for his superiors, but for his peers as well, teaching them skill-sets to advance their careers.

“He helps the other Soldiers cross train,” said Wells.

Wells said Courson consistently works long hours without complaint and can be depended to finish every mission he is assigned.

He also said Courson is a dependable self-starter and a person who can work off minimal guidance and produce maximum results.

Courson actions and demeanor demonstrate a maturity beyond his 22 years, said Staff Sgt. Anton Kiren, platoon sergeant, HHC.

A hardworking and dedicated attitude does not detract from



U.S. Army photo

Spc. John Courson, an infantryman from Jamestown, N.Y. assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, provides security for the Tactical Command Post during a mission earlier this year. Courson’s dedication and support to his unit earned him the title of “Ironhorse Strong Soldier of the Week.”

Courson’s personality, Kiren explained.

“He’s a character,” Kiren said, noting Courson’s outgoing demeanor. “We’re all a little goofy.”

Through his outstanding work ethic and exemplary track record Courson stands out from among his peers, said Kiren.

When Courson’s superiors and peers explain his selection as Ironhorse Strong: Soldier of the Week, they paint a picture of the attitude, work ethic and character that produces a leader.

Courson’s quick thinking, his attitude, ability to think under pressure, and being a problem solver, are among the qualities that earned him recognition, said Kiren.

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THE IVY LEAF

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Command Sergeant Major – Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel A. Dailey

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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

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were being held.

After assessing the situation, the Commandos called in ISOF assets to take the lead in the hostage rescue scenario.

ISOF soldiers air assaulted into the training area on Iraqi Air Force Mi-17 helicopters and quickly took the final objective, freeing the hostages.

Throughout the operation, an Iraqi Air Force unmanned aerial vehicle relayed a live-video feed of the operation from a position high above the battlefield to a screen in front of the observation stand.

The UAV was not the only one capturing video of the action—Iraqi reporters invited to the exercise used video and still cameras to document the exercise as the 12th IA Div. moved across the battlefield. Several reporters stood in front of their camera crews, providing a taped newscast with the operation taking place in the background.

Following the exercise, 12th IA Div. commander staff Brig. Gen. Sameer, held a press conference where he explained the success of the operation and fielded questions from reporters about the exercise.

“We trained well—we are prepared to take the fight to any terrorists on our own,” said Sameer, underscoring the importance of the exercise to the Iraqi people.

While U.S. military leaders observed the exercise and Soldiers from 1st Advise and Assist Task Force assisted in the preparation for the event, Iraqi soldiers conducted the entire operation on their own, said Maj. David Ward executive officer, Stability Transition Team, 1st AATF, 1st Infantry Division.

“Gen. Sameer, the 12th IA Div. Commander, wanted an Iraqi-pure operation, so we are here in just an advise, train and assist role,” said Ward, who hails from West Plains, Mo. “This is the capstone event where a lot of our efforts we’ve put in over the past seven months are coming to fruition. This is a good demonstration of what this division can do.”

The professionalism and competency displayed by the Iraqi soldiers involved in the exercise gave many American Soldiers a sense of pride in what Iraq has accomplished since 2003, said Sgt. Jose Arroyo, a mortarman with Headquarters and Headquarters



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

Iraqi Army public affairs soldiers from 12th IA Division bring Iraqi civilian media forward for a press conference following the completion of Operation Lion's Leap at the Mahgoor Training Site in Kirkuk province, Iraq, April 24, 2011. More than a dozen Iraqi local and national satellite television stations covered the exercise, providing footage for their audiences and asking questions of several soldiers and leaders following the exercise.

Company, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, attached to 1st AATF, 1st Inf. Div.

Arroyo, who made the initial push into Iraq with the 101st Airborne Division during Operation Iraqi Freedom, said Lion's Leap demonstrated the progress made by IA soldiers.

“I’ve seen a vast improvement in their professionalism since my first deployment and their leadership is really stepping up,” said Arroyo, a native of Mt. Clair, Calif. “We really haven’t had to do a whole lot

to get the Iraqi’s ready for this exercise. I think this proves that Iraq is on the right track.”

Maj. Viet Le, STT, 1st AATF, 1st Inf. Div. said he looks forward to continuing his work with the 12th IA Div. throughout Operation New Dawn.

“I am hopeful that the Iraqi Army will someday soon independently support a fully democratic nation,” Le said. “The most important thing we can pass on to them now isn’t weapons or equipment, but how we think and how we train.”



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

Iraqi Army soldiers assigned to Commando Battalion, 12th IA Division, move toward an objective during Operation Lion's Leap, at the Mahgoor Training Site in Kirkuk province, Iraq, April 24, 2011. During Operation Lion's Leap, commandos worked alongside mortar crews from the division's 47th Brigade as well as Iraqi Special Operations Forces to assault three enemy positions and rescue simulated hostages.

Wounded veterans return to Iraq to witness progress, gain closure

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – The wind whipping into the open door of the Black Hawk helicopter couldn't erase the smile from Donny Daughenbaugh's face as he took in views

of a different Iraq than the country he left years before.

A self-described personal journey more than six years in the making brought the former Marine corporal back to Iraq for the first time since being shot in the face during a vehicle search in 2004.

Daughenbaugh and seven other veterans travelled to Contingency Operating Base

Speicher, April 27, to gain closure and witness the progress paid for by their blood and service, as part of Operation Proper Exit, a program run by the Troops First Foundation.

"I left six years ago, semi-conscious, strapped to a bed," said Daughenbaugh. "This time I'm walking out on my own."

A roaring standing ovation greeted the wounded warriors as they walked into U.S. Division-North headquarters.

As the returning veterans took in the applause and greeted the current service members and contractors gathered to meet them, feelings of admiration and respect were mutual.

The eight injured troops thanked their brothers-in-arms for the positive development across the country as U.S. forces prepare to leave after more than eight years of conflict.

"This is where I bled, this is where I lost my leg, and I want to be clapping for the other Soldiers in the room," said former Army 1st Lt. Edwin Salau. "They are the ones who are standing on the ground today; they rallied and kept it."

Salau said he was glad to see Iraqis taking over security of their own streets and building the national government during Operation New Dawn.

"I've been talking to the Families of Soldiers who lost their lives, and I owe them this story," Salau said of his visit.

Despite paying a great price himself, Salau remained positive and said the visit was a priceless opportunity to see how things turned out after he left.

"Some said (the war) would cost an arm and a leg, and I got it at half price," he said lightheartedly.

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Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel Dailey, senior enlisted leader of U.S. Division-North and 4th Infantry Division, guides former Marine Cpl. Matt Bradford down a C-130 ramp at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, April 27, 2011. Bradford and seven other wounded veterans returned to Iraq as part of Operation Proper Exit, a program for injured service members to return to Iraq and leave on their own terms.



U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Carmen Daugherty, USD-N PAO

‘On-Time’ Battalion supplies Iraqi Army with advanced field artillery capability



U.S. Army photo

Iraqi Army soldiers prepare to emplace an M198 howitzer during familiarization training at Kirkush Military Training Base, Iraq, April 25, 2011. U.S. and Iraqi leaders began dedicated field artillery training at KMTB to supplement the IA's Tadreeb al Shamil initiative to train infantry units.

Sgt. David Strayer
109th MPAD
U.S. Division-North Public Affairs

KIRKUSH MILITARY TRAINING BASE – ‘On Time’ Battalion Soldiers with 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment began training Iraqi Army field artillery soldiers of Light Battery, 20th Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division on the M198 howitzer at Kirkush Military Training Base, Iraq, April 27.

Prior to receiving the 155mm weapons systems, U.S. and Iraqi forces primarily focused on infantry and mortar support tactics during Tadreeb al Shamil in an effort to modernize Iraq's military forces.

The howitzers provide a long range indirect fire capability that the IA previously lacked, which vastly changes the face of current training, said Capt. Lance Magill, field artillery training team chief for 2nd Bn., 11th FA Regt.

“The addition of a weapons system and the needed training is huge for these guys,” he said. “It will give them the capability to fire indirect fire with a large caliber weapon out to about 18 kilometers.”

Having that extra reach on the battlefield gives artillery units more flexibility and standoff, said Maj. Jackie Kaina, operations officer for 2nd Bn., 11th FA Regt.

Similar to a boxer's jab punch, standoff is the ability to engage an enemy at a safe distance while still inflicting damage.

Combining that standoff ability with a training course taught by combat-experienced U.S. instructors provides Iraqi soldiers with an excellent foundation, Kaina said.

Instructors broke down the new M198 training course down into sections; the first of which involved classroom instruction focused on theory, and then a hands-on portion which gave IA soldiers a chance to gain practical experience while familiarizing themselves with the weapon.

“They are three weeks into the training cycle and everything they have done up to this point has been computations, theory, and classroom work,” said 1st Lt. Adam Thompson, a senior M198 weapon system instructor, Battery A, 2nd Bn., 11th FA Regt. “We got the guns in on Sunday. After two straight weeks of theory and class work, they were chomping at the bit to actually work with these weapons systems.”

During the current eight-week course, the first training cycle dedicated to field artillery, U.S. and Iraqi leaders hand selected a small group of Iraqi soldiers who will be the mainstay of 5th IA Div.'s field artillery corps and act as future instructors.

“Basically it makes them a more complete army,” said Magill. “It gives them more flexibility with indirect fire assets than the 120mm mortars they have, should they encounter an external threat. That is the primary focus here—getting these guys pre-

pared to take on the conventional mission set of a modern army; protecting its country's borders and its people.”

U.S. instructors filed their students into separate gun teams and assigned each student a position in the crew, including section chief, gunner, assistant gunner and ammunition team chief. The students then began practicing pre-operations systems checks and dry runs on weapon exercises.

“Currently we are training the IA troops to fill the roles in the gun crews that our non-commissioned officers currently fill,” said Magill.

Bolstering and empowering the Iraqi NCO Corps has been a major goal of U.S. forces during Tadreeb al Shamil, Kaina said.

Building that initiative around a practical concept such as artillery training and empowering the soldiers to become experts on how to manage the weapon, fire it, and train others really helps build that confidence within those NCOs, he said.

“By making them the experts on something like a weapon system, you give them ownership of that knowledge,” said Kaina. “They can say ‘I am responsible for the knowledge of this system that was passed down to me from the Soldiers of the U.S. Army.’”

“You are giving them something tangible; something to be proud of,” he added.

See ARTILLERY, Pg. 6

Experience leads to expertise

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – From handing out pills for headaches at sick call, to stitching up wounds on the battlefield or rehabilitating an injured limb at home, the U.S. Army medical corps saves lives and insures the health and welfare of Soldiers every day.

As the brigade medical noncommissioned officer, Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey Moore, a combat medic and physical therapy technician, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, continues that tradition as he oversees the training and certification of Task Force Devil medics and advises the brigade surgeon.

“I have been in the Army 22 years both as an enlisted Soldier and as an officer, and Sgt. 1st Class Moore is probably the most professional NCO I have ever worked with,” said Capt. Joe Peabody, task force medical operations officer and Moore’s supervisor. “I come from the school that leaders are only as good as their subordinates and I lean on him for his knowledge and experience every day.”



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

In addition to his assigned tasks, Peabody described the Quanah, Texas native as a “fireman,” capable of reacting quickly to any of the emergencies or “fires” the medical shop run into.

“He is truly an asset to this shop,” said Peabody. “I don’t think we would be nearly as successful without him.”

Now in his 19th year in the Army, Moore originally enlisted into the Army Reserve as a combat medic. Within one year he switched to active duty, and by 1994 deployed to Haiti for three months.

“That deployment was a great experience for me,” said Moore. “I saw the difference in the way people lived there and I was able to utilize my training in a visible way.”

Moore said he reclassified as a physical therapy technician after returning from his first deployment because he wanted to help Soldiers recuperate after injuries.

After years of working in military hospitals at multiple duty stations throughout the U.S. and three deployments to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn, Moore said he is eager to continue serving in the Army as long as he is able.

“I have learned so much in the Army,” he said. “My advice to anyone is stay in the Army as long as they keep sending you to schools—stick around and get an education.”

Moore enforces this belief by ensuring that all medics attached to the 1st AATF remain current on training and civilian emergency medical technician certification and organizing training exercises.

“We organize some sort of emergency training at least once every three months,” he said. “On the 16th we had a bus crash scenario here on the COS which tested our emergency responders including the medics response time and skills.”

In addition to testing the medics’ skills, Moore said he used the exercise to gauge any deficiencies in his Soldiers’ response plans.

Moore said he looks forward to returning to Fort Riley upon completion of his tour, to reconnect with his family.

Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey Moore, brigade medical non-commissioned officer, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, places a brace on Chief Warrant Officer 2 Rico Bussey, brigade targeting officer, 1st AATF, 1st Inf. Div., at Contingency Operating Site Warrior Iraq, April 19, 2011. As the brigade medical NCO, Moore usually focuses on administrative work but after 18 years in the medical field the Quanah, Texas native said his passion is still working with patients.

**Cont’d from ARTILLERY,
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“They will know that M198 system better than anyone else, and that is how our NCOs operate—they know their systems and their people better than anyone else.”

While the immediate goal of the training is to field the Howitzers and train the IA soldiers on how to use them, Kaina said the ultimate purpose of the course is to build leaders who can take the training back to their own units for future success.

“We want this training to go a long way in helping to establish an Iraqi Army NCO Corps that can take this knowledge and be the keepers of it for what will hopefully be many future field artillery regiments,” said Kaina.

Instructors plan to continue the field artillery training on the M198 for the next month, culminating the class with a provincial capstone exercise that will include live fire drills using the new howitzers.

“The training is good, the U.S. training team is professional and they know their job well,” said Lt. Faisal, a field artillery platoon leader going through the training at KMTB. “The more we work with the U.S. forces, the more proficient and professional we become, we are looking forward to the live fire exercise and we will be ready.”



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. David Strayer

A field artillery student from 20th Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division, works on gunnery computations during the classroom theory portion of artillery training at Kirkush Military Training Base, Iraq, April 27, 2011.



U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Carmen Daugherty, USD-N PAO

Wounded Soldiers and Marines return to Iraq for the first time as part of Operation Proper Exit at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, April 27, 2011. The Troops First Foundation brought back the injured service members for a chance to see progress made in the country in recent years and leave on their own terms.

Cont'd from VETERANS, Pg. 5 —

U.S. Division-North and 4th Infantry Division commanding general, Maj. Gen. David Perkins, and Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel Dailey hosted a lunch and presented each of the five Soldiers and three Marines with "Ivy" Division coins and certificates of appreciation before the veterans continued their journey across Iraq.

The Soldiers and Marines then boarded a pair of helicopters to take a guided tour over northern Iraq to witness first-hand the progress made in recent years.

After an improvised explosive device forced an end to his deployment and Army career in 2006, Sgt. 1st Class Brian Mancini said returning for the tour not only helped him gain closure, but led him back to his roots as a noncommissioned officer.

"The time in the military and relationships are unique and it provides a comfort level," Mancini said. "I'm home. I'm an NCO, I take care of Soldiers and that will never leave me, it is who I am."

"The brotherhood and camaraderie we

Two Soldiers return to Iraq for the first time since being wounded in earlier deployments as part of Operation Proper Exit at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, April 27, 2011. The operation, run by the Troops First Foundation, provides veterans a chance to return to Iraq to see the progress paid for by their service and to leave the country on their own terms.

have in the military is something we all have commented on that it's good to be back with our brothers," he continued. "I want to thank everyone who had a part in this recovery journey."

For better or worse, the experience of war forever changes all those who lace up a pair of combat boots and shoulder a rifle in service to their country.

In spite of their traumatic memories of war, the eight returning veterans made the best of Operation Proper Exit and left Iraq



U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Carmen Daugherty

First Sgt. Cornell Herrington, Division Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Division, thanks former Marine Cpl. Donny Daughenbaugh for his service during a ceremony at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, April 27, 2011.

for a final time—this time on their own terms.

"It's been an up and down and emotional journey, but I wouldn't take any of it back," said Mancini. "I am a better man today than I was before the incident."

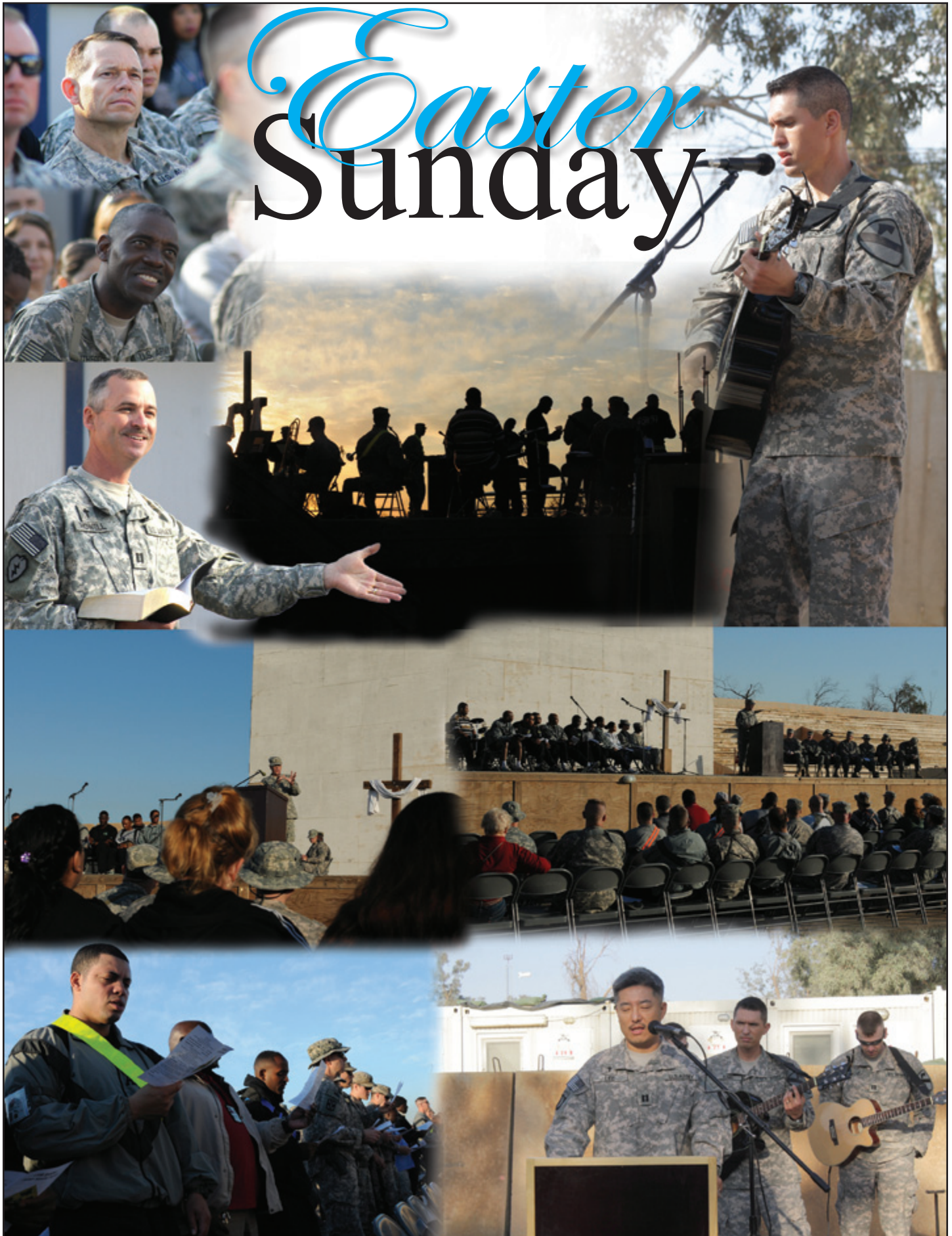
Daughenbaugh, who now provides financial aid information and family support to fellow wounded service members in the U.S., said that Operation Proper Exit gave him a chance to continue his mission and service.

"Some people wonder why the heck you would come back to a place which almost took your life," said Daughenbaugh. "My answer is, 'Why wouldn't I come back?'"

"It is something I wanted to do because I felt like I didn't finish what I came here to do," he said. "I'm walking out of here on my own and that is what matters."



U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Carmen Daugherty, USD-N PAO



'Warrior' Brigade Soldier witnesses progress over three deployments

Sgt. David Strayer
109th MPAD
U.S. Division-North PAO

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq — The war in Iraq—starting with Operation Iraqi Freedom, and now concluding with Operation New Dawn—has crossed over several calendars, requiring many Soldiers to be mobilized and deployed numerous times.

Staff Sgt. Ray Pelon, a personal security detachment team

leader currently deployed to Joint Base Balad, Iraq, has seen the war in Iraq in its three most significant stages: the invasion, the surge, and now, Operation New Dawn.

"This is my third deployment to Iraq," said Pelon, who serves with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division. "My first deployment was

in 2004, right at the beginning when everything was just starting. It was a lot different then."

After the successful invasion and dismantling of Saddam Hussein's regime in 2003, coalition forces began the task of establishing security to protect Iraq's citizens and national borders.

U.S. forces began a mentorship role which transitioned into the present advise, train and assist task of OND.

"In 2004, the operations tempo was very high, and we were always busy," said Pelon. "I didn't have a wife and child like I do now; it was a different mindset, it was all about the mission."

"On my second deployment to Iraq, which took place during the troop surge in 2007, the main push was to really start training the Iraqi Army and Police," Pelon added. "Since we were starting from scratch, we had to get Iraqi citizens to volunteer, which was an act of bravery in itself."

The "Warrior" Brigade Soldier noted that among the greatest challenges from his experiences was getting ISF leaders to understand and embrace the value of the noncommissioned officer corps and leaders at junior levels.

"For the Iraqi Army, historically, the higher pay grade officers have always been the only ones with all of the authority and responsibility," he said.

When U.S. forces displayed the amount of responsibility and authority entrusted to American NCOs and even junior enlisted team leaders, Iraqi officers were surprised, said Pelon.

"It demonstrates to them how professional an army can be when it empowers and trusts

in its leaders at all levels," he said. "Each time they see our battalion commander with the battalion command sergeant major, essentially making decisions and acting together, as one voice from two people, it sets the example."

The efforts of past years by Iraqi and U.S. forces culminated in the conclusion of Operation Iraqi Freedom and the onset of Operation New Dawn. U.S. Forces now operate in strictly support-oriented roles; advising and continuing to train and assist ISF.

"We are not kicking in doors or taking prisoners anymore; those days are over," said Capt. Paul Flemming, assistant operations officers with the 2nd Bn., 11th FA Regt., now on his second tour to Iraq. "Our whole goal now is to empower the Iraqi Army through training and guidance, setting them up for success when we leave."

"Things are a lot slower and deliberate now; we take things step by step, and all of the groundwork for our current advise, train, and assist mission has been laid by the Soldiers who have been here in the past," said Pelon, who happens to be one of those Soldiers who contributed to the foundations of New Dawn.

At this point, U.S. Soldiers help make small adjustments or refine skills when asked by Iraqi leaders, but the Iraqi troops are largely self-sufficient, he said.

Continuing to draw from his first-hand accounts of progress made in Iraq, Pelon said throughout the process of forming and training the ISF, the Iraqis who volunteered their

See WARRIOR, Pg. 12 —



U.S. Army photo

Staff Sgt. Ray Pelon, a personal security detachment team leader assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, works with one of his Soldiers on the range during marksmanship training with the M249 squad automatic weapon at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Pelon is currently serving on his third deployment to Iraq in support of Operation New Dawn, after previously deploying during the initial invasion and the troop surge.

Toby Keith

April 27, 2011

Live at COB Speicher

U.S. Army photos by Sgt. Shawn Miller





Chaplain's Corner: Help! I have a teenager!

Chaplain (Maj.) Kenneth Hurst
Deputy USD-N Chaplain

If you are a parent, you may already have some of these unique creatures at home. They didn't mysteriously emerge out of some pre-biotic soup, or suddenly land from another planet. They have been there the whole time and you have probably been to at least a few of their previous birthday parties.

Parenting teenagers is hard, and successfully parenting teenagers is even harder. As a counselor in civilian ministry before entering the Army, I always enjoyed talking with teens. It helped that my own children were also teens at the time, and I think they benefited from what I learned from other young people.

The weight of military life in today's expeditionary Army makes parenting teenagers incredibly hard. That is really an understatement! It makes it extremely taxing to be required to give so much of yourself in the service of our great country and still have something left for your young people when you get home, or get them online at the other end of Skype. Let me offer some suggestions.

Parenting teens is an extension of the relationship you began with them earlier

in their lives. Some writers and counselors advise us on handling adolescence as if it is a new child to the family.

The fourteen-year-old is the same child you cared for at age eight, except they have more responsibilities and choices. When both my children were younger, I started taking them on one-on-one dates with dad. My daughter had a favorite ice cream shop she wanted dad to take her to, and my son had his own favorite thing to do.

This one-on-one time was so important that we continued it through high school, and it was here that dad tried to listen to their ideas and concerns. It is very difficult to just listen and not inject or demand your own agenda. Teenagers usually like to talk ... sorry, I guess the current equivalent is texting. If we do not shut them down when they are younger, they are more willing to talk to us when they are older.

Appeal rather than argue. It was common for a parent to come to my office with a teenager who was locked in a battle of the wills. Sixteen year old "Johnny" had not been doing well at school and was grounded from his friends, lost television and computer privileges, lost driving privileges ... and the list goes on. The more Johnny failed, the more restrictions he earned. There was a battle of wills in progress and

it was painful for parents and teenager alike, with no decisive winner.

I suggested that Johnny's parents employ an approach used by King Solomon, a very wise man, in the Old Testament book of Proverbs. Solomon appealed to his son to make wise choices.

Many times Solomon appealed, "if you accept my words and turn your ear to wisdom ... discretion will protect you" (Proverbs 2).

When we appeal to someone we are asking them to consider something. We are reaching across the cognitive line and petitioning the emotional part of their nature.

As parents we are frequently quick to argue from our position of strength and we may be rationally right, but we lose the battle. In a battle of the wills, you are not going to win many times. Instead, appeal to the conscience and wisdom of your teen to "do the wise thing." Appealing will keep the relationship intact and the door open for future problem solving.

These are just a couple of thoughts to get us going on this topic. There will be more to follow in the weeks ahead. In the meantime, when you see me around DMAIN, please tell me how your teens are doing.

**If you would like to speak with
Chaplain (Maj.) Hurst,
please call:**

(SVOIP) 676-0011



www.facebook.com/4thID

U.S. Division-North Social Media Sites



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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.

Hey Doc: *Orange Sky: To Run or Not to Run?*

Maj. David Schnabel
USD-N Preventive Medicine Officer
USD-N Division Surgeon

"Hey Doc: With all these sandstorms and dust I'm breathing in Iraq, should I be concerned for my health?"

– Signed "Sgt. Dusty"

Dear "Sgt. Dusty,"

You've noticed it too. There's a lot more dust in the air here than back at home. In fact, U.S. Army officials have been thinking about the health risks of all of this dust for many years.

The really small dust particles called particulate matter (PM2.5) may have the most health risks and cannot be seen with the naked eye. Not surprisingly, the studies have found that there is a lot more particulate matter in the air here in Iraq, but so far, they have shown that there has been no increase in serious lung diseases such as asthma or bronchitis among service members, though mild short-term symptoms like cough are not uncommon.

There is not anything we can do to completely protect ourselves from the dust in the air, but there are a few guidelines which may help. If possible, limit your outdoor activity like PT during high dust events, though mission critical activities should



continue. If indoors, minimize dust by shutting windows, doors, and closing tent flaps. The use of scarves or handkerchiefs may help reduce irritation from some of the large dust particles (not PM2.5). If you are concerned about specific symptoms, you should always see a health care provider at your nearest Medical Treatment Facility.

The military continues to study this issue and has made some positive changes to protect our health. For instance, a ban on

the use of burn pits for facilities with more than 100 personnel greatly reduced our exposure to chemical pollutants in this particulate matter. Ultimately, if you do have any concerns, you will be able to address them with a health care provider during the Post Deployment Health Assessment.

Breathe easy, Taskforce Ironhorse! And, keep those questions coming.

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service to their country have always been eager to learn and receive training, always growing more confident in their abilities and their leadership.

Relatively few Americans enter the military in service of their country, and of those, Soldiers with multiple deployments are fewer. Pelon said he feels fortunate to be among that group.

"I really think that I am lucky—the biggest thing I take away from my experience of my three deployments is gratification," said Pelon. "I played a part in something a lot bigger

than myself, and was able to see it at all of its most crucial moments. It is gratifying to see the progress Iraq has made and know that we are about to complete our mission here."

Staff Sgt. Ray Pelon, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, provides security for a patrol in Samarra, Iraq. Pelon, who deployed in 2004 and 2007, currently serves in U.S. Division-North in support of Operation New Dawn. "I played a part in something a lot bigger than myself, and was able to see it at all of its most crucial moments," said Pelon. "It is gratifying to see the progress Iraq has made and know that we are about to complete our mission here."



U.S. Army photo