

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



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

MAY 13, 2011

1st AATF Soldiers aid in weapons recovery



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

An Iraqi Policeman of the Kirkuk Emergency Services Unit Raid Platoon, assisted by Company B, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, scans a Kirkuk resident into the Handheld Interagency Identity Detection Equipment after finding suspicious items in the resident's home, May 4, 2011. The HIIDE is a biometric identification system that allows the user to accurately verify a person's identity after being enrolled in a database.

Staff Sgt. Robert DeDeaux
1st AATF Public Affairs
1st Inf. Div., USD-N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – The Kirkuk Emergency Services Unit Raid Platoon, assisted by Soldiers of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry

Regiment, attached to 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, conducted an early morning raid on a home used in the construction of rocket rails during Operation Lion Claw, May 4.

Operation Lion Claw is an ongoing series of Iraqi-led missions designed to restrict

enemy movement, disrupt possible indirect fire locations, collect intelligence and apprehend suspected violent extremists to better secure Kirkuk and Contingency Operating Site Warrior.

In the crew compartment of a dimly lit Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle,

Staff Sgt. Garin Knutson, an infantryman and tactical site exploitation coordinator with Company B, detailed the many elements that make Operation Lion Claw successful.

“The ESU has taken lead on this mission,” said Knut-

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STEADFAST AND LOYAL
IRONHORSE
FIT FOR ANY TEST
DEVIL
LONGKNIFE
WARRIOR

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DEVIL
LONGKNIFE
WARRIOR





U.S. Army photo

IRONHORSE STRONG:

Soldier of the Week

Spc. Charles O'Dowd, a cavalry scout assigned to Troop B, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, pulls security during a mission in Ninewa province. O'Dowd, a native of Omaha, Neb., serves as an instructor with partnered Iraqi Army and Kurdish Security Forces soldiers at Combined Checkpoint 11, near Zumar, Iraq. O'Dowd's professionalism during training operations earned him the title of "Ironhorse Strong" Soldier of the Week.

Cavalry scouts assigned to Troop B, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, utilize a wealth of combat and reconnaissance experience to teach Iraqi Security Forces across U.S. Division-North in support of Operation New Dawn.

Spc. Charles O'Dowd, a cavalry scout assigned to Troop B, exemplified professionalism during mission essential capability operations conducted with Iraqi Army and Kurdish Security Forces at Combined Checkpoint 11 near Zumar, Iraq, April 27, earning

him recognition as "Ironhorse Strong" Soldier of the Week.

During the training, O'Dowd, a native of Omaha, Neb., instructed partnered security forces soldiers on tactical skills such as map reading, land navigation, mission preparation, patrolling, and basic and advanced rifle marksmanship.

"O'Dowd is just great guy to work with," said Staff Sgt. Daniel Northington, platoon sergeant assigned to 2nd Plt., Troop B. "His willingness to drive on and accomplish the mission sets him apart from my other Soldiers."

Cavalry scouts of Troop B live with and work beside their Iraqi counterparts daily at the security area in Ninewa province.

Northington said O'Dowd also takes initiative to coordinate additional combat training and mentor Iraqi soldiers who may have challenges understanding the techniques during training sessions at the checkpoint.

Training Iraqi troops on scout skills is a good experience, O'Dowd said.

"This deployment we are training the Iraqis to protect their people and improve their security," said O'Dowd, currently serving on his second deployment with the 4th AAB. "It allows me to better my leadership by teaching the Iraqi soldiers."

O'Dowd said he already had some experience conducting partnered operations with Iraqi soldiers following a 2008 deployment to southern Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"He does an outstanding job working with the Iraqis," said Northington, a native of Dallas, Texas. "Only a few junior enlisted Soldiers possess the knowledge and leadership skills O'Dowd has. He's just a good Soldier."

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THE IVY LEAF

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2nd Advise and
Assist Brigade
25th Infantry Division

4th Advise and
Assist Brigade
1st Cavalry Division

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

Staff Sgt. Garin Knutson, an infantryman from Company B, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, and a native of Hesperia, Calif., begins an initial inspection of evidence found at an objective during Operation Lion Claw in Kirkuk, Iraq, May 4, 2011.

son, a Hesperia, Calif. native. "They're the ones actually entering the objectives. We have provided some intelligence to help them along the way, but they're basically the ones doing the raid. We're just pulling outer security for them."

Lion Claw required combined efforts and coordination between the ESU, who performed the actual raids, U.S. forces who provided intelligence and outer security, and Iraqi Police who escorted the convoy to the objective.

"The ESU is local Iraqi Security Forces in the area composed of Kurds, Turkomen and Arabs partnered together," explained Knutson. "They are responsible for securing the area in and around Kirkuk City."

The Kirkuk ESU Raid Platoon has trained with several U.S. Army units since the onset of Operation New Dawn.

"This is the bread and butter of dynamic entry teams," said Knutson. "These guys are not to be taken lightly."

After conducting a step by

step mission brief, the ESU, IP and U.S. Soldiers quickly mounted their vehicles and moved to the objective under the cover of darkness.

The mission turned out to be a success because of weapons and evidence found at the objective, said Chief Warrant Officer Shakhawan Fateh, ground commander of the ESU Raid Platoon.

Shakhawan said the ESU did not capture the main suspect, but the individual had apparently used the house as a cache for weapons, ammunition and rocket-making material.

While searching the house, one of the ESU soldiers found instructional DVDs demonstrating how to build rocket

rails, how to assemble and fire rocket propelled grenades, and how to use improvised explosive devices. The soldier brought the videos to the main room and placed them next to the evidence found by other team members, which included cell phones and SIM cards.

The ESU will catch the suspect, said Shakhawan with an ear-to-ear grin, staring at the mounting heap of evidence.

Shakhawan's mission advi-

sor, Capt. Matthew Makaryk, commander, Company B, 2nd Bn., 12th Cav. Regt., considered the mission a success.

Makaryk reflected on the success of Operation Lion Claw, which took place the day after the death of Osama bin Laden.

"Following the events that have happened in the world, for them to go on mission and find something like this vindicates our efforts here," said Makaryk, a Plainfield, Wis., native. "To go on mission and find some 'no-kidding' items on an objective, they are excited and look forward to the next one."

Company B Soldiers have seen noticeable growth in their Iraqi military counterparts, he said.

"They are all from Kirkuk; they all want Kirkuk to be successful," said Makaryk of the ESU.

"I take the advise, train and assist mission very seriously," he said. "The ESU has continued to advance since we have been here, but the only way to know if they are truly successful is to see what Kirkuk looks like in 10 years. If they continue to build on the efforts we've made and the time that we've spent, then we will know if we have been successful."



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

IA soldiers train on mechanized vehicles

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

KIRKUSH MILITARY TRAINING BASE, Iraq – Iraqi Army soldiers selected from four brigades of 5th IA Division conducted operator training on the M113 Armored Personnel Carrier vehicle with assistance from U.S. Soldiers of 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, April 27.

During the M113 training cycle, at Kirkush Military Training Base, Iraq, U.S. Soldiers train the IA on becoming master drivers and vehicle maintenance specialists, teaching basic operating procedures and vehicle maneuvering skills, as well as troubleshooting vehicle malfunctions.

“The M113 course lasts ten days, so there is a good amount of information to fit into that time period,” said Maj. Rasheed Muwwakkil, a logistics advisor to the Iraqi Security Forces. “All of the IA attending the course are extremely motivated to learn and take an active part in the class, especially when it comes to anything hands-on and getting a familiarity with the vehicle.”

The M113 is one of the most widely used infantry vehicles in military history. Introduced in 1962, it was the primary armored vehicle used by American forces during the Vietnam War.

M2 and M3 Bradley fighting vehicles replaced the M113 as a front-line combat vehicle in the U.S. Army, but the M113 is still used by U.S. Soldiers in support roles in many of its variations, such as mortar carriers and armored ambulances.

“This training course, like many of the training courses here at KMTB, has a purpose outside simple instruction,” said Muwwakkil. “This 10-day course is actually meant to be a train-the-trainer course. We want these guys to be able to take the training that we provide to them and be able to retrain soldiers in their own units later.”

While the 10-day M113 APC driver and maintenance course is aimed at successfully producing Iraqi Army soldiers who can be called subject matter experts on operating and conducting user-level maintenance, that is not the course’s only purpose, said Muwwakkil.

“This is the fourth M113 course we have done, and it seems this way across the board, but the IA soldiers that come through really are getting better and better with each passing rota-

tion,” said Sgt. William Swift, an instructor for M113 driver and maintenance training with Company B, Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd AAB, 25th Inf. Div.

“Since this is a train-the-trainer course, we have left all the logistics for the course to the IA, so they are troubleshooting all of their own problems and arranging for fuel, food, and parts if something were to happen to a vehicle,” said Swift. “They are essentially facilitating their own training.”

Iraqi military leaders chose the 5th IA Division to become one of the first divisions to be mechanized. All of the training and advising with IA units at KMTB has been to prepare soldiers for the new mission they will take on once U.S. forces transition out of Iraq later this year, Muwwakkil explained.

“This is all about getting them ready to take on the conventional mission set of a nation’s army—things like border defense and protecting the people,” he added. “That’s why this division has been selected to become modernized and mechanized.”

“All of the training here at KMTB is slowly coming together; the end product will be a modernized, well-trained division that is prepared to defend its nation,” Muwwakkil said. “Things like the M113 APC training is just one step closer to that end goal.”



A vehicle crew of Iraqi Army soldiers negotiates an apex obstacle in an M113 Armored Personnel Carrier at the driver instruction obstacle course at Kirkush Military Training Base, Iraq, April 27, 2011. The M113 APC training is a 10-day course that provides IA soldiers instruction on vehicle operations, operator level maintenance, and troubleshooting problems. At the end of the course, several IA soldiers will be selected to remain at KMTB as instructors to train with other Iraqi Army units.

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. David Strayer, 109th MPAD, USD-N PAO

Mortar training provides IA more firepower



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. David Strayer, 109th MPAD, USD-N PAO

Sgt. David Strayer
109th MPAD
USD-N Public Affairs

KIRKUSH MILITARY TRAINING BASE, Iraq – Following four months of successful training with 60mm and 81mm mortar systems, instructors at Kirkush Military Training Base are preparing to add more firepower for Iraqi soldiers during Tadreeb al Shamil, the Iraqi Army's all inclusive training program.

U.S. instructors from 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division plan to phase in training on 120mm

mortar systems during the current training cycle at KMTB to provide 5th IA Division soldiers with broader experience using the larger mortar systems.

"This is the first training cycle that we have included training on the larger 120mm mortar system," said 1st Lt. David Real, Fire Support Officer, Company A, 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division. "(The students) are looking forward to receiving the training. Not only will it enhance their indirect fire capability, but it will help them be able to take the fight to the

enemy with more firepower."

While IA soldiers who go through training cycles at KMTB are already trained on basic infantry skills, most have little to no experience with mortar systems prior to the course, said Staff Sgt. Syllas Carter, a mortar section leader and non-commissioned officer in charge of mortar instruction, Company A, 1st Bn., 21st Inf. Regt., 2nd AAB.

"When they come to us on a rotation, they really don't know anything about mortars, not even how to set the things up," Carter said. "We go from zero knowledge to a guaranteed hit

An Iraqi Army mortar crew conducts an assembly drill at full, or "combat," speed at Kirkush Military Training Base, Diyala province, Iraq, May 7, 2011.

on the target. These guys don't accept failure; they learn on the fly and pick things up really quickly."

Infantry and mortar training classes during Tadreeb al Shamil focus on developing and modernizing IA battalions' capability to train as cohesive units and take on the mission set of a conventional standing army—protection of the nation's people, borders and infrastructure.

"In the past, the majority of the Iraqi Army, including the 5th Division, were rifleman," said Carter. "The training that they are getting here, like the 120mm mortars and ... field artillery training, is all part of their modernization."

"We are trying to get these guys into the combined arms fight," Carter continued. "For the last several years these guys have functioned as a counter-insurgency army, but any high-intensity conflict requires a modern army and modern training. That is what they are getting here."

While much of the mortar training will be devoted to classroom instruction and hands-on exercises with the new 120mm system, U.S. forces still plan to devote equal amounts of time for training blocks on the 60mm and 81mm mortar systems that have been trained in the past.

"The 120mm is a brigade level asset; the 81 and 60mm are battalion and company level assets, respectively," said Carter. "This ensures that each level of command has their own indirect fire assets, especially if things like howitzers are tied

See MORTAR, Pg. 6

Cameras strengthen force protection at combined security checkpoints

25th Infantry Division

1st Lt. Kyle Miller
2nd Sqdn., 14th Cav. Regt.
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25th Inf. Div., USD-N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE COBRA, Iraq – From trip wire flares to seismic and acoustic sensors, U.S. Army scout platoons use a range of high-tech equipment and low-tech guile to compensate for smaller organization size and enhance survivability on the ground during operations.

Scouts at the Diyala combined checkpoints recently emplaced several Rapid Deployment Integrated Surveillance Systems cameras which are normally reserved for much larger bases.

“The RDISS provides the checkpoints with an additional set of eyes and enhances the force protection of our Soldiers operating there,” said Lt. Col. Joel Miller, executive officer, 2nd Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division.

The RDISS consists of durable outdoor cameras that are similar to commercially available versions often employed in malls and businesses.

Equipping the checkpoints with RDISS helps protect Soldiers and their Iraqi counterparts by increasing their overall situational awareness, Miller said.

Like any fielded technology, setup became more complicated in an austere checkpoint environment.

Jeff Bowling, a field support representa-

Spc. Michael Hubbard, Troop A, 2nd Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, constructs mounting brackets to support the emplacement of the Rapid Deployment Integrated Surveillance System at Contingency Operating Site Cobra, Diyala province, Iraq, April 16, 2011.

tive and former Army cavalry scout from Radcliffe, Ky., coordinated with unit platoon leaders to construct and emplace camera mounts from available materials.

Filling sand bags and building wooden structures for the past ten months, Soldiers from Troop A, “Ace High,” are no strangers to the important yet tedious work involved in force protection. As some Soldiers worked extra security shifts, others picked up saws and drills to help the FSRs emplace the RDISS.

Bowling said the RDISS camera system is simple to use, comparing its interface with those of modern video games.

Sitting in front of two flat-screen monitors, Staff Sgt. Nicholas Lemay, a Troop A scout from Ojai, Calif., navigated the controls. A twist of the joystick zoomed the camera in while a few mouse clicks brought up the “Burn CD” feature.

“It complements our other force protection improvements,” said Lemay. “If someone is outside our new gate, an operator can check the system and realize, it’s one of us and let him in.”

First Lt. Noah Switzer, a platoon leader from Summerville, Tenn., commented on



U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Kyle Miller

the advanced force protection assets at his outpost.

“At this point, our platoon checkpoint has just as many force protection assets as a (larger base) in Iraq,” Switzer said. “You name it, we’ve got it; and we’re putting it to good use.”

“The squadron command is completely dedicated to improving the force protection and security of each one of the checkpoints,” Miller said. “Nothing is more important than the safety of our Soldiers.”

Cont’d from MORTAR, Pg. 5



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. David Strayer

up with a higher priority target, there are still (indirect fire) assets available to them and it brings more guns to the fight.”

Three Iraqi Army soldiers watch as Spc. Christopher Klenclo, a mortar team instructor from Company A, 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, demonstrates the proper procedures for setting up an 81mm mortar system at Kirkush Military Training Base, Diyala province, Iraq, May 7, 2011.

While fundamental skills remain the same from system to system, tactical employment of the different size mortars varies in difficulty, Carter said.

Each system has its own role in combat, he said, and familiarizing the Iraqi soldiers with these roles makes the IA a well-rounded, modern army.

The end of May, and the fifth training cycle at KMTB, will mark the onset of Operation Iron Lion—a provincial cap-

stone event designed to coordinate full-spectrum operations between Iraqi Security Forces agencies.

“Not only will the capstone event showcase the skills, technical, and tactical proficiencies that these guys have picked up over the last five training rotations here, it will show their capacity to function as an organized, professional national security force,” said Real.

‘Warrior’ Brigade Soldiers advise Iraqi Army on logistics operations at KMTB



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. David Strayer, 109th MPAD, USD-N PAO

Iraqi Army soldiers of 5th Iraqi Army Division conduct preventive maintenance checks and services on a humvee as part of a vehicle maintenance training course at Kirkush Military Training Base, Diyala province, Iraq, May 9, 2011. The 5th IA Div. soldiers bring their humvees to the Tadreeb al Shamil rotation and learn how to properly conduct PMCS, catalog vehicle defaults and request replacement parts.

Sgt. David Strayer
109th MPAD
USD-N Public Affairs

KIRKUSH MILITARY TRAINING BASE, Iraq – Soldiers of 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division assisted 5th Iraqi Army Division and Iraqi Ministry of Defense members in the improvement of logistics systems at Kirkush Military Training Base, in the Diyala province of Iraq, May 7.

U.S. forces started a vehicle training initiative with Iraqi soldiers in February as a way to test logistical skills with practical exercises during Tadreeb al Shamil, an Iraqi Army initiative focused on collective unit training and modernizing Iraq's ground forces.

During Tadreeb al Shamil, Arabic for All Inclusive Training, instructors provide training on infantry and critical support skills during month-long train-

ing cycles.

"The main reason that we started the Tadreeb al Shamil sustainment training, like the vehicle maintenance course, was essentially to troubleshoot the Iraqi Army logistics system when it comes to getting things like replacement parts," said Maj. Rasheed Muwwakkil, Iraqi Security Forces logistics advisor, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd AAB, 25th Inf. Div.

Muwwakkil said instructors chose the High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle because of the relative abundance of vehicles within Iraqi units, and immediate benefits maintenance training could have.

The training serves to evaluate Iraqi logistical systems for requesting and receiving replacement vehicle parts, and educates the IA soldiers on improving maintenance on vehicle fleets.

Sgt. 1st Class Shawn Wus-

sow, 2nd AAB Master Gunner and member of the Kirkush Transition Team, said the drivers and maintenance class is a recent addition to the Tadreeb al Shamil course at KMTB.

All the Iraqi soldiers who conduct vehicle operator training will also learn basic maintenance skills to diversify skills, Wussow said.

Iraqi Security Forces began widespread use of the humvee after working alongside U.S. forces during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn.

"Now we require every unit that comes to KMTB for a training rotation to bring all of their humvees with them," said Muwwakkil. "It doesn't matter whether they are running or not; whether they have to push or pull them to the training center, we require that they bring them all."

Bringing vehicles that actually need maintenance and new

parts serves the practical purpose of the course, he added.

Iraqi soldiers conducting the vehicle maintenance course learn all levels of operator-level maintenance, including preventive maintenance checks and services, and recognizing and cataloging vehicle defaults.

"After a PMCS by the manual, which includes listing any vehicle defaults, we have the second and third-level maintenance guys come in and verify the faults," said Muwwakkil. "That's when we start to be able to get into the logistics piece of the equation."

The Iraqi Army currently uses a manual system of submitting paper forms and getting stamped approval for replacement parts requisition and distribution.

U.S. forces are assisting the IA to transition to an online, automated system that is more accessible and efficient.

"In the past, a request form for something like replacement humvee parts could sit on a desk for a month awaiting an approval stamp," said Muwwakkil. "The automated system allows the parts request to be input on a computer and transferred to the approval authorities at the MOD with a thumb-drive. It simplifies the process."

Muwwakkil added that from rotation to rotation there has been a drastic improvement in each new group's ability to provide their own logistical support to IA soldiers.

Logistical expertise gleaned from training at KMTB will be put to the test later this year during Operation Iron Lion, a provincial capstone event showcasing the ISF's capabilities.

101st Brigade Support Battalion leads in safety

1st Infantry Division

Staff Sgt. Robert DeDeaux
1st AATF Public Affairs
1st Inf. Div., USD-N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – Soldiers of 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division from Fort Riley, Kan., were awarded the Safety Excellence streamer during a presentation ceremony at Contingency Operating Site Warrior, May 7.

The 101st BSB is currently the only battalion in U.S. Division-North and the first battalion in 1st Inf. Div. to win the streamer since the award's establishment in June 2009, said Mr. Rusty Gaither, safety and occupational health manager, 1st AATF.

"This is a big honor for the battalion to receive this recognition," said Lt. Col. Brandon Grubbs, 101st BSB commander. "The credit goes fully to the Soldiers and leaders who have remained focused on safety and have spent long hours conducting online Composite Risk Management training as well as assessing risks for every mission."

"Guardians" Battalion Soldiers earned the award after recently completing 12 consecutive months without experiencing a serious Soldier or unit incident. Additionally, every Soldier in the unit completed CRM



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Robert DeDeaux, 1st AATF PAO

training, along with the Army Readiness Assessment Program, to remain current within the program's annual requirements.

"Receiving this recognition is incredible and an honor for all of us," said Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Adams, 101st BSB's senior enlisted advisor, and a native of Dumas, Texas. "I believe that setting the example and enforcing strict discipline and standards by all leaders made the difference."

Grubbs said upon taking command and learning about the ARAP, he knew it would require a strong effort by his unit to achieve the honor.

"There are so many different programs out there, but this one gave me a good picture as to what our strengths and weaknesses were," said Grubbs, a native of Bakersfield, Calif. "I would be remiss if I didn't give thanks to our brigade safety officer,

Spc. Daniel Juliao, a water treatment specialist assigned to 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, gauges fuel levels atop his vehicle while wearing his protective equipment to ensure safety prior to a mission at Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq, May 7, 2011. Soldiers of 101st BSB received the Safety Excellence award for continuously maintaining safety while deployed to U.S. Division-North in support of Operation New Dawn.

Mr. Rusty Gaither, who has done a fantastic job."

Safety officers work full time with brigades to ensure commanders remain current on programs like ARAP and guarantee units meet safety standards.

"The Guardians award represents more than just meeting the eligibility requirements to receive it," said Gaither, a Porum, Okla. native. "It is proof that their entire unit leadership has engaged their Soldiers and stressed and enforced the importance of safety standards. The streamer is also evidence that a safety culture exists in that unit. It is proof of personal 'buy-in' of the Army Safety Program by every single Soldier in that unit."

Guardians Soldiers continued demonstrating good safety practices and adhered to battalion safety standards after the ceremony ended and Soldiers returned to their duties.

Spc. Daniel Juliao, a water treatment specialist from Katy, Texas, assigned to Company A, 101st BSB, proceeded to one of the unit's many motor pools in order to prepare his vehicle for a mission.

Before entering the staging area, Juliao donned his safety gear: a helmet, gloves, reflective belt and eye protection.

"We all have been practicing using proper protective procedures," said Juliao. "Safety means everyone comes home. We're all in a rush to go home, and if that means slowing down would make sure everyone leaves safely, then we will do that."

Col. Michael Pappal, commander of 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, attaches the Safety Excellence streamer to the 101st Brigade Support Battalion guidon during the battalion's award ceremony at Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq, May 7, 2011. The 101st BSB is the only battalion in U.S. Division-North and the first battalion in 1st Inf. Div. history to receive the Safety Streamer.



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

Medevac crew braves harsh conditions of dust storm to assist fellow Soldier

1st Lt. Kyle Miller
2nd Sqdn, 14th Cav. Regt.
2nd AAB Public Affairs
25th Inf. Div., USD-N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE COBRA, Iraq – Despite fierce 50-knot winds and blowing dust, an HH-60M Medevac helicopter crew circled Contingency Operating Site Cobra, focused on the importance of their mission—evacuating an injured Soldier to medical care.

After a Soldier from 2nd Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division suffered serious injuries, April 4, medics at the COS Cobra Aid Station quickly realized the dust storm raging outside would turn a routine medevac mission into an extraordinary flight.

As with any other day, air ambulance crews from Company C, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment waited for calls.

“The initial call was just like running (civilian emergency medical services); you’re always on call waiting for the phone to go off saying someone needs help somewhere,” said Staff Sgt. Richard Maye, a crew medic from Moriah, N.Y.

The medevac crew serves in the Vermont National Guard, and many work in civilian careers related to rotary wing aircraft.

“I’m an oddity in the guard,” Maye joked. “During the (drill) weekend and deployment I’m a medic, but during the week I’m a federal technician. I turn wrenches on the birds.”

One of the two crew chiefs, Staff Sgt. Clinton Wilson of Fairhaven, Mass., is a federal



U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Kyle Miller, 2nd Sqdn., 14th Cav. Regt., 2nd AAB, 25th Inf. Div.

An HH-60M medevac helicopter lifts off as the crew evacuates an injured Soldier from Contingency Operating Site Cobra, Iraq, April 4, 2011. The medevac crew faced low visibility and blowing dust as they flew through a storm to evacuate the Soldier.

helicopter technician while the other chief, Sgt. Ron Irwin, is a toolmaker for General Electric aircraft engines.

The pilot in command, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Carlton Fuller, from Barre, Vt., is a civil engineer. Co-pilot Chief Warrant Officer 4 Philip Small, who hails from Burlington, Vt., works as a full-time guardsman.

Fuller’s crew and other members of Medevac Platoon, Company C are currently stationed at remote COS Cobra after moving from Joint Base Balad, April 15, to help provide rapid assistance in the event of an emergency.

When medics at COS Cobra called in the medevac request, the team immediately jumped

into action.

“It was dusty,” Fuller said with a wry laugh.

“If it had been any worse that day, we wouldn’t have been legally allowed to take off,” said Wilson.

Less than 15 minutes after the call, the crew lifted off into the brown skies over northern Iraq and battled the winds as they headed for COS Cobra.

“We were all happy to be on the ground, but at that point we were concentrating on getting the patient on board,” said Wilson after the landing.

Once the patient was loaded, Fuller and Small lifted the helicopter into the storm once again.

“It got a little exciting until we leveled off,” said Wilson.

After safely transporting the patient to the JBB hospital, the crew members said they were proud to brave the storm to help a fellow Soldier.

The injured Soldier subsequently returned to the U.S. and is currently recovering.

“It’s a common feeling in the Medevac community,” explained Wilson. “It’s nice to do the mission that you train for; you look forward to doing them, but at the same time it means someone else is hurt. When you actually do the mission, it’s fulfilling.”

Maye said even when the weather goes bad, medevac crews still fulfill their duties.

“We did our job. When people are hurt, we go get them,” he said.

'On Time' Battalion assists in development of Iraqi Army's first Field Artillery Corps

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

KIRKUSH MILITARY TRAINING BASE, Iraq – Iraqi Army soldiers assigned to 5th IA Division's newly formed 105th Field Artillery Regiment practiced crew drills on their M198 155mm howitzers at Kirkush Military Training Base, Diyala province, Iraq, May 9.

U.S. Soldiers from "On Time," 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division instructed the Iraqi soldiers during a dedicated field artillery training course at KMTB as the gun crews become the foundation of the growing IA Field Artillery Corps.

"This is their training; these are their guns," said Staff Sgt. Nicholas Hellen, an instructor from Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Bn., 11th FA Regt. "It's up to them and they seem ready to take that responsibility."

Throughout the crew drills, Iraqi soldiers practiced the fundamentals of emplacing, loading, aiming and firing the howitzers as they prepare for a live fire exercise later this month.

First Lt. Adam Thompson, a senior M198 weapon system instructor, said the goal of the program goes beyond simply training Iraqi soldiers on new equipment.

"The end state of all this is to see a fully functional, self-sustaining field artillery team that can return to their units and begin training others and help their Field Artil-

lery Corps grow," said Thompson.

Thompson said the students are motivated and willing to learn the new skills.

U.S. and Iraqi instructors at KMTB currently provide infantry units going through Tadreeb al Shamil rotations extensive training on mortar systems such as 60mm, 81mm, and 120mm mortars.

Prior to the current training cycle at KMTB, Iraqi soldiers had little to no field artillery training or assets.

"There are several of these guys that have had experience with mortars," said Hellen. "It gives them a grasp on some of the principles of indirect fire; but field artillery is a whole new ballgame for most of them."

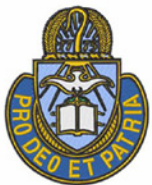
"They understand how important this

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U.S. Army photo by Sgt. David Strayer, 109th MPAD, USD-N PAO

An M198 155mm howitzer crew from 105th Field Artillery Regiment, 5th Iraqi Army Division practice proper firing procedures during a dry fire exercise at Kirkush Military Training Base, Diyala province, Iraq, May 9, 2011. U.S. advisors from 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division started a dedicated field artillery class for IA soldiers at KMTB in April.



Chaplain's Corner: ————— A prayer for Mothers

Chaplain (Maj.) Paul Foreman
Division Life Family Chaplain
U.S. Division-North

Father in Heaven,

We just concluded another Mother's Day. Obviously words and expressions on one day are hardly sufficient, but we are very much aware of the blessings you have given, with mothers who have given us birth, loved us, served us, and shaped and molded us into the people we are today.

Others thank mothers not in the physical sense, but know what it was like to have older women who came alongside us and nurtured us emotionally and spiritually.

As a husband, son and a father, I thank you for those women who have cared not only for me but for those I care so significantly about.

We come to you with many different feelings in our heart and life even right now, and we entrust those feelings to you. For some of us it's gratitude. With others, its grief, and still others, possibly regret.

I think of those for whom this past Mother's Day was a hard day.

Some are watching their mothers get older, weaker and frailer. Others have recently lost a mother and are walking through the grief process. And some are possibly grieving because, perhaps, they never knew their biological mother. We pray that you would comfort them.

We think of those who have empty arms that long to be filled and wombs that have never carried. You know the longings of their heart and we entrust those longings to you.

Some come with huge holes in their hearts because of the loss of a precious little one or little ones through the pain of miscarriage.

Others might be burdened for mothers that right now are far from us either physically or estranged from us emotionally, making Mother's Day too painful to even think about because of what this day represents in their lives.

We pray for all those mothers who right now face the task of parenting, whether they have children in the home or children who are now out of the home, but still have a mother's heart.

We pray for your grace, wisdom and for your power in this incredibly difficult

and important task of being a mother.

We think of those mothers here in Iraq who find themselves trying to balance the demands of being deployed and trying to pour love into their children back at home. May you give them the encouragement that they are doing good work for your glory.

I pray for my personal heroes—single mothers who are raising children all alone and living at the very edge of the energy and encouragement, often without anyone to come alongside and be that support. Give them the strength they need each day.

Give strength as well to mothers who have adopted children and know all the blessings and challenges that adoption can bring.

Finally Lord, we pray for the joy of motherhood. We pray you would give each of them a little sparkle of the celebration that comes from knowing they have brought another life into the world and they've tended, cared and given the love that is so desperately needed by every living creature. Lord thank you for Moms.

For your glory and our good. Amen.



www.facebook.com/4thID

U.S. Division-North Social Media Sites



www.twitter/4thInfDiv



www.Slideshare.net/the4id



youtube.com/The4ID



www.flickr.com/photos/the4id

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: *When medications become dangerous*

Lt. Col. Mark Krueger
Pharmacy Consultant
USD-N Surgeon Section

Hey Doc: I read that a Hollywood star recently died from a prescription drug overdose. I'm now afraid to take my medication because I don't want to get hooked.

-Signed "Just Say No"

Dear "No,"

Many Americans take prescription drugs for the treatment of common medical conditions, including behavioral health problems. As a society, we have worked hard to remove the stigma of seeking treatment.

However, when drugs are misused or not used for their intended purpose, they become dangerous and sometimes deadly.

As in the rest of America, reports of medication misuse and abuse in the military are

troubling. Medications may be used incorrectly either deliberately or accidentally.

The Partnership for a Drug-Free America defines prescription medicine abuse as using medication to create an altered mental state or to get high.

People who abuse prescription medications often think those drugs are safer than "street" drugs since they are regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and prescribed by a health care provider.

However, doctor prescribed medicines are only safe for the people for whom they are prescribed and when taken in the right dose.

According to a 2008 government survey on substance abuse, more than 70 percent of prescription drugs that are abused are originally intended for friends or the family of the abuser. Only four percent were bought from a drug dealer.

Transferring a controlled

prescription medicine to another person breaks federal law, and penalties are very severe.

The U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration reports that six million Americans abuse prescription medicines—more than the number of people who abuse cocaine, hallucinogens, ecstasy, inhalants and heroin combined.

The bottom line of all these statistics and facts is that the abuse of prescription drugs can be a problem, and it is correct for you to be cautious.

Because people's bodies are different, the same medicine which works well for one person's pain may be very dangerous, or even deadly, for someone else.

Mixing medications with other substances like alcohol can be an extremely dangerous cocktail. Nationally, emergency room visits for prescription and nonprescription drug abuse have more than doubled in the past five years.

So what can you do if you have been prescribed a medication?

Medicines, when used in the right way, can be absolutely essential to good recovery and/or quality of life; but it's important to pay close attention to your health care providers' and pharmacists' instructions.

Changing how often and how much medication to take can lead to overdosing.

Share any concerns about being hooked on any medications with your health care provider.

As long as you carefully follow directions, true addiction is rare. Remember that if you or your battle buddy are at risk, be sure to seek urgent medical help.

Ask questions and be involved, after all it's your body.

Take care of your self and others, "Just Say No," and Taskforce Ironhorse, keep those questions coming!

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training cycle is not only to them, but to the rest of the Iraqi Army, essentially, and they are really taking it seriously," Hellen said.

Instructors hope to groom the first class of artillery graduates into proficient teachers capable of extending the artillery courses to fellow soldiers once the students return to their respective bases, Hellen added.

Class leaders broke down the Iraqi unit into gun crews, and throughout the course of the training rotation, team members from each crew separated into roles as gun crew members, fire direction operators or forward observers.

"These guys actually have a huge responsibility; they are the backbone, the foundation for what will eventually become the Iraqi Army's Field Artillery Corps," said Hellen. "We really want to get them proficient enough to take this back to their unit and be able to start training more soldiers and become force multipliers."

All of the preparation and training will

pay off when the crews demonstrate their skills, said Thompson, noting the upcoming Operation Iron Lion.

Operation Iron Lion is a provincial capstone exercise intended to showcase the ISF's capability to conduct independent operations, scheduled for later this year.

"These guys are going to display how much of an asset they are to their army," said Thompson. "This particular group will have the knowledge and the pride to be able to say they were the first ones trained by the U.S., the first ones on these guns, and the ones that stood up the Iraqi Army's Field Artillery Corps."

Iraqi field artillery crew members from 105th Field Artillery Regiment, 5th Iraqi Army Division, establish a firing position for their M198 155mm howitzer at Kirkush Military Training Base, Diyala province, Iraq, May 9, 2011. During the course of the field artillery training cycle, instructors provided training on proper techniques to serve as a gun crew member, fire direction operator or forward observer.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. David Strayer, 109th MPAD