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

MAY 27, 2011

Iraqi FA crews prepare for live fire exercise



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

An M198 155mm howitzer crew with 105th Field Artillery Regiment, 5th Iraqi Army Division loads a training round into the breach during a dry-fire crew drill at Kirkush Military Training Base, Diyala province, Iraq, May 19, 2011. Iraqi field artillery soldiers of 105th FA Regt. conducted the crew drills to hone their skills prior to an upcoming live fire exercise scheduled for later this month.

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

KIRKUSH MILITARY TRAINING BASE, Iraq – Soldiers of 105th Field Artillery Regiment, 5th Iraqi Army Division conducted dry-fire crew drill exercises at Kirkush Military

Training Base in the Diyala province of Iraq, May 19.

Iraqi Army soldiers conducted the full speed drills to practice for an upcoming live fire exercise prior to a provincial capstone exercise demonstrating capabilities and cooperative operations between various Iraqi Security Forces

agencies.

Iraqi forward observers, fire direction operators and gun crews synced for the first time at full speed during the integrated dry fire crew drills.

“There were several purposes to this training exercise,” said Capt. Lance Magill, field artillery training chief, Head-

quarters and Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division. “It gave them the opportunity to field this new artillery equipment, and employ the M198 weapon system at full speed.”

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STEADFAST AND LOYAL
IRONHORSE
FIT FOR ANY TEST
DEVIL
LONGKNIFE
WARRIOR

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WARRIOR





U.S. Army photo

IRONHORSE STRONG:

Soldier of the Week

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mikel Smith, a scout pilot with Troop A, 6th Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Saber, 40th Combat Aviation Brigade, prepares his Kiowa helicopter for a mission near Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq, May 24, 2011. Smith earned the title of “Ironhorse Strong” Soldier of the Week for his actions in finding and disabling several rockets aimed at COS Warrior, May 18.

Security for service members deployed in support of Operation New Dawn requires constant vigilance against threats designed to impair missions and harm U.S. or Iraqi soldiers.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Mikel Smith, a scout pilot with Troop A, 6th Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Saber, 40th Combat Aviation Brigade, earned the title of “Ironhorse Strong” Soldier of the Week for his actions during counter-indirect fire operations near Contingency Operating Site Warrior, May 18.

While ground forces conducted area security operations near COS Warrior, several rocket attacks hit the COS. Smith and a scout weapons team immediately reacted, flying to the origin of the attacks, locating multiple rocket launching platforms and an Improvised Explosive Device.

“Mr. Smith and his team located a platform used to launch rockets,” said Capt. Phillip Vaughn, commander of Troop A, 6th Sqdn., 17th Cav. Regt. “At this time he and his team performed over watch, securing the scene for Iraqi Security Forces on the ground.”

After ISF soldiers secured the first scene, Smith and his team flew farther up the river, scanning for more possible rocket launching platforms. The scout team found two more locations, one of which had a rocket still on the launch rail.

“After finding the second and third platforms, (Smith) was able to walk the ground forces to each position within minutes,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Dave Rosser, Kiowa maintenance test pilot with Troop A. “He also noticed an IED near the base of one of the platforms, which went off, but no one was injured.”

After identifying and securing all the sites, ISF ground forces took control of each site, destroying the launching systems and investigating the area.

Smith’s actions directly resulted in the destruction of enemy threats and ensured the security of all personnel at COS Warrior, exemplifying what it means to be a cavalryman, unit leaders said.

“He’s a motivated Soldier,” said Vaughn. “Give him a task you want done and he does not let you down.”

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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

Cont'd from CREW, Pg. 1

During the dry fire drills, Iraqi forward observers identified targets while the fire direction center computed and sent firing data to the gun crews in preparation for upcoming live fire exercises.

Throughout several weeks of artillery training with Iraqi students, U.S. instructors also seek to transform some of the students into instructors capable of taking the training regimen back to their respective units, Magill said.

"One of the biggest pieces here is our train-the-trainer efforts," said Magill. "Field artillery is a perishable skill. We have selected and have been training IA soldiers that will go back to their units and sustain and perpetuate this training for their soldiers. That is what is going to make these guys keep getting better and more professional."

The dry fire exercises are instrumental for artillery teams to learn teamwork, Magill said.

"Integration is essential for this to work," said Magill. "The forward observers and the fire direction (soldiers) can know their job in and out indepen-



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

Iraqi field artillery forward observers with 105th Field Artillery Regiment, 5th Iraqi Army Division call in the location of a target during a dry-fire crew drill at Kirkush Military Training Base, in the Diyala province, of northern Iraq, May 19, 2011.

dently, but they have to know how their pieces fit together to be able to accomplish the mission."

The M198 howitzer crew drills, and the capstone scheduled to follow later this month, attracted several different Iraqi

news media outlets from across northern and central Iraq to document and broadcast the new indirect firing capability of 5th IA Div.

"We all came here to cover this training and how they will use this weapon and how they

will be a better army because of it," said Munjid, a journalist with the Iraqi Media News network. "We will also be here to cover the capstone; it is a very significant event that will show the improvements in security and bring peace of mind to the Iraqi people."

Even after the live fire exercise and the Iron Lion capstone event, Magill said partnered efforts between U.S. and Iraqi forces will bring long lasting benefits to the Iraqi Army.

"This equipment translates into more capability; it makes them more viable on a linear battlefield," said Magill. "It's a huge piece in their modernization, and essentially, it makes a more complete army for Iraq."

An Iraqi M198 155mm howitzer crew member with 105th Field Artillery Regiment, 5th Iraqi Army Division uses a collimator to sight his crew's howitzer during a fully synced dry-fire crew drill at Kirkush Military Training Base, Diyala province, Iraq, May 19, 2011.



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

Iraqi officers assess training, plan for success

SpC. Angel Turner
4th AAB Public Affairs
1st Cav. Div., U.S. Division-North

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ, Iraq – Iraqi staff officers assigned to 2nd Battalion, 9th Brigade, 3rd Iraqi Army Division studied operations orders and troop leading procedures during training at Ghuzlani Warrior Training Center, May 18.

U.S. Soldiers of 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division mentored the Iraqi officers in preparation for an upcoming battalion live fire exercise—the culmination of the month-long Tadreeb al Shamil course at GWTC.

Arabic for All Inclusive Training, Tadreeb al Shamil is an Iraqi Ground Forces Command initiative focused on training soldiers in cohesive units and modernizing combat effectiveness and capabilities.

Now on the fifth Tadreeb al Shamil cycle, Lt. Col. Clint McWhorter, primary staff trainer assigned to Task Force Sword, 4th AAB, 1st Cav. Div., worked with Iraqi staff officers to build the officers' knowledge on troop leading procedures and improve the way they plan for operations against potential threats.

Unit leaders and noncommissioned officers use troop leading procedures to issue orders and then plan and complete mission preparation.

Once staff officers or unit leaders issue an initial warning order for a mission, intermediate leaders, such as company officers or NCOs, begin making plans with soldiers, start necessary movement, reconnoiter, complete plans, and issue actual orders as the officers supervise and refine the operation plan.

"Most of the staff officers have not attended staff school where they learn what it takes to plan, prepare and execute operations," said McWhorter, a native of Overland Park, Kan. "The training I give them introduces a simple process where they can think through the actions of what it takes to plan for an operation."

The small staff of Iraqi officers spends most of their training days drawing diagrams of possible courses of action to counteract different attacks by opposition forces at the training center and learn how to work together to successfully execute



U.S. Army photo by SpC. Angel Turner, 4th AAB PAO

missions.

"(Our goal) is for them to understand how to plan and prepare for the operation and to be able to conduct it on their own with little U.S. supervision or involvement," said McWhorter, a veteran of 23 years.

As Iraqi soldiers progress from squad and platoon-level training to company-level operations, the staff officers continuously examine the terrain around the opera-

Capt. Ghassam Hussain, an operations officer assigned to 2nd Battalion, 9th Brigade, 3rd Iraqi Army Division, reviews possible enemy courses of action during training at Ghuzlani Warrior Training Center, May 18, 2011.

tions lanes at GWTC to see how the units should secure the area and defend against attacks.

After a month of partnered training classes with 4th AAB Soldiers, battalion staff members are now capable of handling all operational details, said staff Col. Tawfek Kalaf, commander, 2nd Bn., 9th Bde., 3rd IA Div.

"Before (these officers) arrived here, they didn't have any experience on how to prepare an operation order," said Kalaf. "Now they can plan for battalion missions and issue operation orders."

Nearly complete with the training iteration at GWTC, battalion staff officers now have knowledge that can improve the way they conduct battalion operations, improving the overall effectiveness of the Iraqi Army, said Kalaf.

Staff officers now look to plan operations and coordinate their battalion's live fire exercise scheduled for later this month as U.S. advisors assess the Iraqi soldiers' progress.



U.S. Army photo by SpC. Angel Turner, 4th AAB PAO, 1st Cav. Div., USD-N

Lt. Col. Clint McWhorter, right, primary staff trainer assigned to Task Force Sword, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, reviews an operation plan on a terrain model with Capt. Ghassam Hussain during training at Ghuzlani Warrior Training Center, May 18, 2011.

GWTC

'Long Knife' Soldiers give to Jedallah Village

1st Cavalry Division



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

Spc. Albert Yao, a civil affairs specialist assigned to 414th Civil Affairs Battalion, attached to 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, hands out stuffed animals to children during a humanitarian aid drop in Jedallah, Iraq, May 22, 2011. Soldiers delivered clothing, school supplies and other items on behalf of American citizens who mailed the supplies.

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ, Iraq – During the last eight years, U.S. Soldiers and American citizens provided ongoing humanitarian support to residents of Jedallah, Iraq.

“Long Knife” Soldiers of 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division delivered care packages sent from American citizens in Barrington, R.I., May 22, as part of the Adopt-a-Village program.

In 2003, Victoria Belmont and Barrington residents read about the support program started by the 101st Airborne Division, and began sending donations to Jedallah.

Barrington residents continued to send care packages to the village after the initial efforts of the 101st Airborne Div., during

Operation Iraqi Freedom, and into Operation New Dawn

“Having a chance to interact with the villagers and delivering supplies that they need and will use was a great experience,” said Spc. Albert Yao, a civil affairs specialist assigned to 414th Civil Affairs Battalion, attached to 4th AAB.

Yao and fellow civil affairs Soldiers worked with 4th AAB troopers to transport and deliver the care packages to the villagers in Ninewa province.

“Being able to reach out and have a direct effect on the Iraqi people here was a unique feeling,” said Yao, a native of Troy, Mich. “I’m happy I was able to take part in this mission.”

Soon after the American citizens adopted the Iraqi village, they began mailing clothing, school supplies to local U.S. military bases so the goods could be delivered to Jedallah.

Lt. Col. Paul Reese, deputy

commander of 4th AAB, said the donation program offers mutual benefits for the villagers and his Soldiers.

“The Soldiers were able to see the benefits of what they do,” said Reese, a native of St. Louis. “These kind of missions really allow them to see the fruits of their labor. They get to see the smiles of the families, the smiles on the kids, and they get to see their actions directly contribute to improving the lives of the Iraqi people.”

In addition to handing out clothes and toys to the local children, Long Knife Soldiers also took the time to thank the villagers for their partnership during the past several years.

Dr. Mohammed Ismail Ahmed, who runs the village clinic, served as an advisor to U.S. forces since the Adopt-a-Village partnership began in 2003.

An attack on the village in

2008 resulted in Mohammed losing both his legs. Shortly thereafter, U.S. forces provided medical support and prosthetics to the doctor.

“The experiences he has gone through are a testament to his dedication to improve the lives of the Iraqis not only in his village, but the surrounding villages as well,” said Reese.

After touring the medical clinic, Mohammed escorted Reese to his office, where the two looked at memorabilia collected from U.S. forces who assisted the village in the past.

“This was a rewarding experience,” said Sgt. 1st Class John Globlek, a civil affairs specialist from Columbus, Ohio, assigned to the 412th Civil Affairs Battalion, attached to 4th AAB. “Being able to give these good people items that they really needed was worth it all—one of the best missions I’ve had so far.”

Immortalize veterans by listening to history

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – Just before deploying last fall, I had the opportunity to cover a story on a group of World War II veterans visiting the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C.

As Memorial Day approaches, I find myself thinking about one particular veteran I met that day and how a few simple words can make such a permanent impression.

With a tear in his eye and a bear-like grip that belied his age, the former Soldier shook my hand and said, “Thank you for serving.”

This is a man who had his B-17 bomber shot out of the sky over Europe and spent more than a year in a German prisoner of war camp. This is a man who took the time to thank me.

There is a quiet modesty expressed by these service members of the “Greatest Generation.” Though humble, they ask only to not be forgotten.

As America honors her fallen service

members this weekend, take a moment to thank those aging veterans before they join the ranks of their forgone brothers and sisters in arms.

Though we have Veteran’s Day every November to honor our living Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen, hundreds of World War II and Korean War veterans quietly pass away in the days between May and November.

February 27 marked the loss of the last “Doughboy” and America’s last link to World War I, as Frank Buckles slipped into history at 110 years old.

Richard Winters, the commander of Easy Company immortalized by author Stephen Ambrose in “Band of Brothers,” passed away in January at his small farm nestled in the countryside near Hershey, Pa.

Their stories are widely told, but Winters and Buckles are far from the only veterans with intriguing histories. All our deceased heroes deserve to be remembered by more than an etching on a headstone, fond memories and annual memorial services.

This Memorial Day, pay respect to your local veterans, living and dead, by keeping their stories and history alive, and more important, archived for future generations.

It could be my journalistic preoccupation with hearing stories, but taking the time to listen to a veteran’s chronicles of bygone times always struck me as one of the best ways to honor their service and sacrifice.

This does not apply only to veterans of World War II or Korea. Veterans of all conflicts, past and present, deserve to be heard; because we never know when the moment will come when fate will take those stories away from us before having a chance to be told.

Although he rarely spoke of the war, I still regret not listening to my grandfather more often before he passed away. As a child, I did not realize the importance of perpetuating those memories, and now all that is left are a few photo albums and an empty spot in my Family history where those tales should be.

If you have relatives who served, take the time to not only thank them, but sit and talk with them. Grab a notebook, too, if you are so inclined. If an older generation veteran stops you to talk for a minute, lend an ear. You may be the only link to keeping their history going.

This Memorial Day, we pay homage to America’s finest sons and daughters—to those service members who went before us and made it possible for current generations to live freely.

For those of you currently supporting Operation New Dawn, Operation Enduring Freedom, or serving across the world, take a few moments out of your duties May 30 to pause and pay your own respect to the thousands of men and women who paid for progress with their lives. While they may be gone, their stories will never be lost so long as you are willing to keep telling them.

And if an old bomber crewman stops to thank you, return the gratitude and give him a few minutes of your time. It will be an experience you won’t forget.

Marvin Russell, a World War II veteran from Loganville, Ga., recounts his experiences with Sgt. 1st Class Edwin Gonzalez, as they rest in front of the National World War II Memorial Freedom Wall in Washington, D.C. Russell served as a flight engineer and gunner on a B-17 bomber in the Army Air Corps during World War II. Russell was shot down over Europe and spent 13 months as a prisoner of war before returning home.



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

Chaplain assistant finds fulfillment helping Soldiers

Spc. Kandi Huggins
1st AATF Public Affairs
1st Inf. Div., USD-N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – Soldiers have many personal reasons for choosing to serve. Some say a strong inner urge or calling prompted them to select their current vocation.

It may not always offer tangible rewards, but following a path of conviction offers a great sense of self-fulfillment, said Spc. Faith Bedwell, a chaplain assistant assigned to 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division.

Bedwell, a native of Chatom, Ala., said she enjoys helping out and providing Soldiers with resources necessary to help themselves.

"I receive my reward after a Soldier gets help and comes back with a smile and says 'thank you,'" she explained.

Serving in U.S. Division-North in support of Operation New Dawn, Bedwell said many people do not realize what her job entails as a chaplain assistant.

Assistants perform all the same duties as chaplains except for preaching and performing marriages and burials, she said.

"I go around with the chaplain and check Soldiers' morale, peer to peer counseling, and suicide intervention," said Bedwell. "I let them know if they need anything or anyone, they can find the chaplain or chaplain assistant, and we'll help in any way we can."

Bedwell's day-to-day duties change often, and she rises to meet daily challenges, said Staff Sgt. Timothy Seppala, Bedwell's supervisor and 1st AATF chaplain noncommissioned officer in charge.

"Every day is different and



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

Spc. Faith Bedwell, a chaplain assistant assigned to Company C, 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, prepares the pulpit at Freedom Chapel, Contingency Operating Site Warrior, May 19, 2011, during her daily upkeep of the chapel. "I don't see myself as a great person, but I believe, spiritually speaking, we're all supposed to help people in need," said the Chatom, Ala., native. "Love your neighbor as yourself, take care of those who need help, hug someone who's crying, and laugh with those who laugh."

often we simply react to events and situations as they occur," said Seppala, a native of Hayti, S.D.

Bedwell embodies compassion for fellow Soldiers and everyone she meets, a characteristic critical to success as a chaplain assistant, said Seppala.

"Her biggest strength is her personal courage," said Seppala. "She goes to whatever lengths she must to help others and shows she genuinely cares about Soldiers."

Seppala recalled an event several years ago when Bedwell coordinated, organized and publicized a food drive for Soldiers during the holidays.

She came up with the idea

for service members to help one another by donating food and other items for their families, said Seppala.

Inspired by her nephews and following the legacy of her father and uncle in the military, Bedwell said she remains grateful to service members who have given their lives as she continues her own Family military tradition.

When thinking of a Soldier, Bedwell said her uncle comes to mind.

"He is my hero," she said. "Vietnam was over by the time I came along, of course, but he always made me feel very safe and he was very protective."

"I remember the day he received his three Purple Hearts.

I was about 20 at the time and he was so proud they finally honored him," Bedwell said. "Then, I didn't care what he did to deserve them, but he must have done something really heroic to be awarded them; and I wish he was still here so he can pass on his skills and training."

Bedwell recalled the chaplain mission to nurture the living, care for the wounded and honor the dead, as she recollected an event which shaped her future as a chaplain assistant.

"I just thought about how personally I take my job," said Bedwell as she wiped away a tear. "I wasn't prepared for what I saw. I was an (environmental morale leave) trainee, working night shift at San Antonio when they brought in 20-25 Soldiers recently injured. As they rolled the Soldiers in, I didn't know what to do. I wanted to salute them, give them hugs and applaud them."

"That was the closest I'd come to seeing Soldiers wounded, and it touched my heart," she said. "I couldn't go to bed that night. I had to see the Soldiers and their Families and make sure they had everything they needed. There wasn't anything I felt like I couldn't do for them, and I'll never forget any of the Soldiers I talked to that night."

Just as others made a difference in her life, Bedwell said knowing she can make a difference in someone's life keeps her in the Chaplains Corps.

"I don't see myself as a great person, but I believe, spiritually speaking, we're all supposed to help people in need," Bedwell said humbly. "Love your neighbor as yourself, take care of those who need help, hug someone who's crying, and laugh with those who laugh."

'Incoming! Incoming! Incoming!'

'Long Knife' Brigade trains to treat and evacuate mass casualties at operating sites in northern Iraq

Spc. Angel Turner
4th AAB Public Affairs
1st Cav. Div., U.S. Division-North

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ, Iraq – "Incoming, incoming, incoming!" Sirens blared at Contingency Operating Site Marez after receiving simulated indirect fire.

Soldiers assigned to 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division moved quickly across the base attending to "wounded" comrades during a mass casualty exercise, May 23.

Combat medics and certified combat lifesavers put their skills to the test, treating simulated abrasions, chest injuries and extremity wounds.

"We want to make sure we train (our Soldiers) and practice, so if the worst should happen, we will be able to evacuate our casualties in a timely manner with the proper treatment administered along the way," said Sgt. 1st Class Eldred Brinson, 4th AAB Medical Operations noncommissioned officer in charge.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Angel Turner, 4th AAB PAO



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

Soldiers assigned to Company C, 27th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, treat Sgt. Lydia Davis, a supply sergeant in the company, who sustained "wounds" during a simulated mass casualty exercise at Contingency Operating Site Marez, May 23, 2011. Davis, a native of Dallas, portrayed a casualty suffering from shrapnel to her left leg and abrasions to her right leg.

Brinson, a native of Camilla, Ga., coordinated the training and made the scenario as realistic as possible.

"This was the culminating training event for medical providers of Task Force Long Knife," said Brinson.

Brinson said MASCAL exercises help Soldiers find the fastest and most effective way to treat and transport wounded Soldiers if a similar event ever caused actual casualties at COS Marez or COS Diamond-back.

The injuries varied from minor shrapnel wounds to head wounds, said Brinson.

"I tried to cover the full array of things that a medic or combat lifesaver might see in a combat environment," said Brinson.

Each of 4th AAB's battalions participated in the event, treating and evacuating casualties as the exercise progressed and attacks hit COS Marez and COS Diamond-back every 10 minutes.

Spc. Antwan Robertson, assigned to 5th Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, treats injuries sustained during a simulated indirect fire attack at Contingency Operating Site Marez, May 23, 2011. Soldiers of 4th AAB participated in a mass casualty exercise where they practiced treating minor to severe injuries and evacuated patients to the proper level of care.

Medical attendants raced to the wounded and quickly examined the casualties.

Medics brought necessary first aid supplies to treat the injuries on the scene and proceeded to evacuate the casualties to higher levels of care.

Soldiers with minor injuries travelled to the Battalion Aid Station, while medics evacuated severely injured Soldiers to the Combat Support Hospital.

The MASCAL is an important part of training, said Spc. Tina Hills, a combat medic assigned to Company C, 27th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th AAB.

Beyond streamlining emergency procedures, such exercises help medics and combat lifesavers stay sharp on critical skills, Hills said.

Hills, a native of Rushford, Minn., monitored vital signs of four patients while en route to the CSH, ensuring patients remained stable until the next level of care could be provided.

"In a deployed environment, you have to be ready at all times for anything that can happen," said Hills, currently serving her first deployment with the 4th AAB. "The MASCAL helps us prepare for whatever might come our way. Any training I can do is always helpful."

Support Soldiers assist Iraqi maintenance crews with weapon repair techniques



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

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Matthew Everly, brigade armament technician, Company B, 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, demonstrates proper procedures to dismantle a machine gun during training with maintenance soldiers assigned to 12th Iraqi Army Division in Kirkuk province, Iraq, May 22, 2011.

Spc. Andrew Ingram
USD-N Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION K1, Iraq – Iraqi army maintenance soldiers assigned to 12th Iraqi Army Division studied the proper procedures to evaluate damaged rifles and machine guns, provide necessary repairs and reassemble the weapons.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Matthew Everly, brigade armament technician, Company B, 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, led the training course at 12th IA Div. Headquarters in Kirkuk province, Iraq, May 22.

By working with Iraqi sol-

diers to improve skills and abilities, U.S. Soldiers provide Iraqi forces with the confidence to take responsibility for their nation's security, said Everly, who hails from Chanute, Kan.

"This training is really just a confidence builder for these maintenance guys," Everly said. "It all ties into the broader scope of the Iraqi people taking responsibility for their own security."

Now that Iraqi soldiers worked with and put hands on the weapons, the students can take what they learned, build on it, and pass the lessons onto fellow soldiers, said Everly.

During the training, Everly gathered the IA maintenance teams around one of the ma-

chine guns and offered a hands-on approach to describe the proper method to disassemble the weapon, identify problems and fix the deficiencies.

"They are training to identify a fault, remove the fault and put a new piece back in," explained Everly, as the students practiced in teams of two,

An Iraqi Soldier reassembles a machine gun during a weapons repair course with U.S. Soldiers of Company B, 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division at 12th Iraqi Army Division Headquarters in Kirkuk province, Iraq, May 22, 2011. "This training is very important for the future of Iraq," said Sgt. Ackmed, 12th IA Div. "It's important for all of us to understand how to properly take care of our equipment."

disassembling and reassembling weapons.

When it comes to weapons, hands-on training helps students more than lectures and slide presentations, Everly said.

Sgt. Ackmed, a maintenance soldier with 12th IA Div., said he agrees with Everly's method of teaching.

"Nothing man-made is too complex for us," said Ackmed. "With the tools we have been given and hands-on training, we can learn how to fix even the most complex machines."

Everly worked with the Iraqi teams for three days, introducing them to new weapons, including the M4 carbine, M16 rifle and the Russian DShK machine gun, commonly known as the "Dishka."

"The Dishka is a Russian weapon, but we found an English manual, and with some practice, we figured out how to maintain it ourselves," said Everly.

Ackmed said he plans to pass on his new skills to his soldiers in the future.

"This training is very important for the future of Iraq," said Ackmed. "It's important for all of us to understand how to take care of our equipment."



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Andrew Ingram

'Spartan' Battalion welcomes new NCOs

Spc. Terence Ewings
4th AAB Public Affairs
1st Cav. Div., U.S. Division-North

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ, Iraq – Newly promoted corporals and sergeants joined the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers during an induction ceremony at Contingency Operating Site Marez, Iraq, May 21.

"Spartan" NCOs of 4th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division vocally recited the Creed of the Noncommissioned Officer and became part of "The Backbone of the Army" during the time-honored tradition.

"Soldiers are stepping up and taking on the responsibility of becoming a leader," said Command Sgt. Maj. Cassandra Redd, senior enlisted leader of 4th BSTB.

During the ceremony, Redd and several other senior enlisted NCOs assigned to 4th AAB vocally delivered the NCO's Charge and NCO Creed to the new inductees.

"I feel like a proud parent who is finally letting her children out in the world," said Redd, a native of Oklahoma City. "These NCOs are going to branch out and do great things for the Army."

Upon hearing their names announced, the Spartan NCOs stood before unit leadership before crossing the time-honored line signifying a milestone in their military careers as the inductees entered the NCO Corps.



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

Sgt. Randy Hummelgaard, right, a mechanic assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, prepares to cross the time-honored line signifying entry into the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers during an induction ceremony, May 21, 2011.

The newly inducted corporals and sergeants now return to their respective units as the first line of leadership charged with mentoring and developing young Soldiers.

Command Sgt. Maj. Antoine Overstreet, 4th AAB command sergeant major, and guest speaker for the induction ceremony, shared words of wisdom with the young enlisted leaders and asked that they live the NCO Creed.

"It was definitely great to have the brigade leadership here to welcome us into the Corps," said Sgt. Randy Hummelgaard, a mechanic assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th BSTB.

Hummelgaard said his favorite part of the ceremony was the lighting of the red, white and blue candles, which represented the three paragraphs of the NCO Creed.

"Seeing the candles lit and hearing the NCO Creed was very memorable for me," said Hummelgaard, a native of Kansas City, Mo.

"Joining the ranks and having a ceremony to acknowledge you as leader makes everything feel surreal."

Spartan Battalion deployed to U.S. Division-North in the summer of 2010 to support 4th AAB's advise, train and assist mission with Iraqi Security Forces in support of Operation New Dawn.

Red, white and blue candles burn behind the Noncommissioned Officer plaque during an NCO induction ceremony hosted by 4th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division at Contingency Operating Site Marez, Iraq, May 21, 2011. The candles represent valor, purity and honor, values instilled within each of the "Spartan" Battalion NCOs.



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



Chaplain's Corner: What do you do when the best is still a failure?

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

There's a verse in the Bible, James 3:2, that says, "We all stumble in many ways."

I want you to think about the implications of the words "all" and "many."

What does "all" mean? It means that if you decided it was time to begin searching for a spouse, you decided it could not be just anybody. So you set out interviewing 200 prospective candidates, put them through a battery of psychological tests and winnowed it down to say, the top 20 finalists.

Have friends and Family members interview them, do more screening, and get it down to maybe three finalists. Then spend two weeks with each one getting to know them really well.

If you believe Scripture, even at the end of the exhaustive effort, when you make your choice, you will still end up with somebody who—what does the Bible say? "...Stumbles in many ways."

Yeah, they are probably different ways than you expected, but "many ways" nonetheless. And this points to the inherent difficulty of marriage. It is not an easy relationship, yet I'm amazed at how often I seem so surprised when my marriage proves difficult. Maybe you can relate.

Author Gary Thomas put it this way, "If marriage is the union of one person who stumbles in many ways married to another person who stumbles in many ways, occasionally having sex and making little people who stumble in many ways, why are so many people surprised when they discover how difficult marriage can be?"

But here's the hope. God can do something wonderful even in the process of us being married to someone who stumbles in many ways. He can shape us into the people He wants us to be.

This past week was the Kentucky Derby, and the winner was a horse named Animal Kingdom. I was reading an article in Stars and Stripes a few days ago about the trainer of the horse, Graham Mo-

tion. The article spoke very highly of his honesty and integrity as a trainer. It got me thinking about how, in many ways, all of us are like thoroughbred horses.

As you probably know, the most important race for any thoroughbred is the Kentucky Derby. Most trainers will tell you that if they can only win one race in their career, they would want to win the Kentucky Derby.

Now, of course, a thoroughbred does not know the Kentucky Derby is coming up. That horse has no idea that its legacy, its place in history, will be determined on that one day—but the trainer knows.

And maybe the trainer knows he is dealing with a horse that has the strength and endurance but he lacks the speed. So the trainer will put that horse through the agonizing workouts to build its speed so it can win the race.

Or maybe the horse has plenty of speed, but the trainer is afraid that it might not have the endurance. Knowing this, the trainer might put that horse through the grueling workouts to build up the endurance of the horse.

In the same way, spiritually, we also have a trainer. Our God knows what race or races we are going to face in this life. We don't.

We don't know all the challenges that lie ahead, but our God does; our trainer does. And we have to trust that sometimes He will bring people, circumstances and trials into our lives that we don't always understand—that we don't always like—to grow and shape us into the people He wants us to become.

Could it be that the person who drives you crazy at work might be the very person God is using to teach what it means to love? Could it be that your tiredness and lack of sleep is the trainer's way of showing you that you need to slow down and take care of yourself? Could it be that the failing of your spouse is being used by God to build patience, kindness or selflessness in your own life?

The reality is that we all stumble in many ways to include our relationships. But the wonderful thing is that God, our trainer, can use those times of stumbling

to teach us our need not only to grow as a person, but our need for His strength and wisdom. God is shaping us. He's preparing us for the race ahead. What is your trainer seeking to do in your life?

Continuing each Friday night, we are offering weekly training opportunities for you to grow in your relationships, marriage and parenting. Think of it as a preventive maintenance check and services. for your relationships.

Dinner and a Video: Relationships, Marriage and Parenting

***Friday nights at 7:05 p.m. in
the North DFAC side room***

Explore difficult subjects of relationships, marriage and parenting while you eat. Learn to respond to your loved ones with the compassion and wisdom they deserve, how these subjects help as we look forward to redeploying and reintegrating with Family and friends.

3 June - Making Marriage Last

10 June - Love and Respect (Crazy Cycle)

17 June - Love and Respect (Energizing Cycle)

24 June - 7 Principles to Making a Relationship Work

July 1 - How Children Raise Parents

8 July - Embracing Our Insignificance as Parents

15 July - The Science of Love (Building a safe haven)

22 July - Fathers and Spiritual Leadership in the Home

Hey Doc: ‘Is it normal to be so stressed out?’

Maj. Sam Preston
Psychiatry Consultant
Surgeon, USD-N

“Hey Doc, I am fed up with my supervisors. My subordinates are slow to move and even slower to correct errors. I am tired and angry all the time and have low motivation. This is my third deployment and I never felt like this on other deployments. Do I need to talk to behavioral health?”

—Signed “Staff Sgt. I.M. Downe”

Dear “Staff Sgt. Downe,”

Behavioral health, chaplains and unit behavioral health advocates are all here to support you; however, before you try to “fix” yourself, make sure there is something broken. Many units are in the middle of the deployment cycle. This period is filled with mental landmines that can exhaust and frustrate even the most resilient Soldier.

As Soldiers, we are exposed to many abnormal circumstances. Deployment, in general, is not a normal part of the American culture.

Staff Sgt. Downe, the symptoms you are describing

are normal reactions to this abnormal environment. These reactions include irritability (short fuse), resentment (offended easily), anxiety (worrying about the future), sleeplessness (can’t relax), and decreased energy. These symptoms are referred to as Combat Operational Stress Reaction.

As an example, do you feel the same at the 1.5-mile mark of a physical fitness test as you did at the start? Certainly not.

The exhaustion, muscle tension, and shortness of breath you feel during the last part of a PT test are not a surprise; it is expected. It is a normal response to a normal situation.

In the same way, the changes that many of us are noticing in our behaviors and energy are similar to those experienced by the runner. These symptoms are easily treated, but you, your supervisor or your battle buddy must identify these symptoms before they can be treated.

The most common symptoms of COSR include those already mentioned, as well as poor concentration, low morale, tearfulness and sleep disturbance either too much or not enough sleep. COSR

does not require medication or even long term therapy. The treatment of COSR is rest with expectation for return to duty.

Remember the acronym BICEPS:

Brevity: One to three days of rest from mission, with rapid return to mission once rest period is completed.

Immediacy: Initiate COSR mitigation measures once they are identified; do not hesitate.

Contact: The unit remains regularly and actively engaged with the Soldier during recuperation.

Expectancy: The Soldier is reminded that stress reactions are normal and the intent is to return to full duty after recuperation.

Proximity: The Soldier is to remain as far forward as possible, near the unit for rapid return to mission operations once recuperation is accomplished.

Simplicity: Focus on universal needs: sleep routine, nutrition, hydration, safety, and unit support. Complex recuperation programs confuse or distract from the Soldier’s rest.

All leaders should be familiar with Field Manual 6-22.5: Combat and Operational

Stress Manual for Leaders and Soldiers. This doctrine outlines simple, sound ways that every Soldier can improve mission readiness, even when morale is down and tempers are high.

U.S. Division-North has a designated recuperation center on Contingency Operating Base Speicher. The Ironhorse Strong program is a four day program—including travel—designed to provide Soldiers with COSR an opportunity to rejuvenate and return to the fight.

There are several ways to enroll in the program, including talking to your supervisor, doctor or chaplain. This program is designed to recharge motivated but tired Soldiers and return them to the mission.

For more information, please contact the U.S. Division-North retention sergeant major.

Staff Sgt. Downe, it sounds to me like you need some “down time.” Call the sergeant major and talk with your supervisor. We will coordinate to get you on a helicopter and get you back in the fight!

Stay mentally healthy and Taskforce Ironhorse keep those questions coming!



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