

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

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ESTABLISHED IN 1917 TO HONOR THOSE WHO SERVE



JULY 8, 2011



## Maintenance Soldiers keep USD-N mission ready



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

**Sergeant Timothy Kuster, a light-wheeled vehicle mechanic with Headquarters Support Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Division, adjusts armor plating on a Humvee at the DSTB motor pool on Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, July 5, 2011.**

Spc. Andrew Ingram  
USD-N Public Affairs

**CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq** – In a tactical environment, equipment goes through a lot of wear and tear on a daily basis. Sometimes Humvee axles

crack, sometimes radio equipment breaks down, and occasionally, a generator needs to be replaced.

Maintenance Soldiers assigned to Headquarters Support Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Division, deployed to

Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, keep the Humvees rolling, the power on, and the troops of U.S. Division – North, ready for any challenge.

The maintenance Soldiers of HSC came together to form a cohesive, efficient team ca-

pable of keeping the Soldiers of DSTB and COB Speicher on the road with working equipment, said Sgt. 1st Class Samuel Rodriguez, platoon sergeant, Maintenance Platoon, HSC.

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STEADFAST AND LOYAL  
IRONHORSE  
FIT FOR ANY TEST  
DEVIL  
LONGKNIFE  
BLACK JACK

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# IRONHORSE STRONG:

## Soldier of the Week

When deployed, even a seemingly simple task such as clearing brush around a base enhances security and increases protection for troops operating in the area.

Sergeant Cody Stevens, a heavy equipment operator assigned to Company C, Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, earned the title of “Ironhorse Strong” Soldier of the Week for clearing out areas obscured by overgrown brush around Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, June 18 - 22.

Stevens, a native of Salem, Ore., used a flamethrower known as a terra-torch to conduct terrain denial operations around COB Warhorse and expand visibility on areas outside the perimeter.

“He burned all the dead space around Warhorse to give the towers higher visibility if hostiles try and approach the (Contingency Operating Base),” said 1st Sgt. Walter Rogers, senior enlisted advisor with Company C.

The operation required Stevens, while wearing protective gear, to endure daily temperatures in excess of 110 degrees, which increased to 130 degrees while using the torching system, as he cleared five kilometers of vegetation, preventing possible enemy infiltration.

“Now, no one can come within 100 meters of the base without being seen,” said Rogers, who calls Lawton, Okla., home. “If (enemies) can’t get close, then they can’t launch attacks ... or gather intelligence.”

Stevens’ actions directly resulted in improved fields of fire for perimeter guards, as well as giving quick reactionary forces a greater operating range.

“This benefits everyone on the COB,” said Rogers, about the



U.S. Army photo

**Sergeant Cody Stevens, a heavy equipment operator assigned to Company C, Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, uses a flamethrower to clear away brush around Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, June 20, 2011. Clearing brush around the base increases force protection capabilities and visibility for guards. For his efforts, Stevens earned recognition as the U.S. Division – North “Ironhorse Strong” Soldier of the Week.**

brush burning. “It gives (force protection) more time to react, less places for us to be attacked from.”

Stevens also stands out as a “jack-of-all-trades” Soldier, doing other jobs in addition to his regular duties as a heavy equipment operator, Rogers said.

“He’s an outstanding NCO, and a great team leader,” said Rogers. “He does route clearance, force protection, as well as terrain removal. He does it all.”

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## THE IVY LEAF

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**1st Advise and  
Assist Task Force  
1st Infantry Division**

**2nd Advise and  
Assist Brigade  
1st Cavalry Division**

**4th Advise and  
Assist Brigade  
1st Cavalry Division**



**READY, cont'd from Pg. 1**

"There was a lot of work to be done with this platoon when I got to the unit," said Rodriguez, who hails from Bayamon, Puerto Rico.

"The teamwork was there from the beginning, but we had a long way to go to get everybody on the right track," he said. "Now we are all pulling together and I'm sure we are going to develop a strong group of noncommissioned officers out of this deployment."

A constant workload brings the maintenance Soldiers a high

level of experience and proficiency, said Pfc. Jared Cannon, a generator mechanic assigned to HSC, and a native of Kirbyville, Texas.

"Things just break down faster in Iraq. The heat and the dust get into everything, and we have had a lot of work to do," Cannon said as he replaced parts on a 400-hertz generator. "We are out here getting the job done, and I think we should be proud of the fact that we have been able to keep everything running out here."

Rodriguez said the maintenance mission supporting

Operation New Dawn is drastically different from previous deployments when he supported units in combat operations.

"During the past eight or nine years, we have accumulated a lot of stuff here at the COBs in Iraq," he explained. "Some of it is so old that nobody even uses it anymore, so this deployment we have had the unique challenge of getting accountability for all of this equipment and turning it in."

Sergeant Paul Sowu, a load list clerk responsible for ordering and accounting for replacement parts, said the reduction

of forces presents a challenge because while equipment gets packed and returned to the U.S., operations are still ongoing and U.S. Division – North must stay mission ready.

"We are basically doing two missions," said Sowu, who calls Atlanta home. "We are turning equipment in, but we are also making sure all of our vehicles run and radios work properly, and we are doing this with fewer people than we had on previous deployments."

"We accomplish the mission through pure determination," he added. "We are a great team, we are like a Family and we will put in a 100 percent to get the job done."

Many of the junior maintenance Soldiers stepped up and took responsibilities above their pay grade to accomplish these missions, said Spc. Nick Walter, battalion electronic warfare officer, HSC.

"Some of us were thrust into leadership positions that we didn't know or didn't think we could handle, but we pulled together and made it work," said Walter, who hails from Killeen, Texas.

"It was difficult, but we learned a lot and it put us in a better position for advancement in the future."

Rodriguez said he has every confidence that his team will continue to keep Soldiers of DSTB fit to fight until the last boots set ground back on U.S. soil.

**Specialist Wyatt Flack**, a generator mechanic assigned to Headquarters Support Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Division, works on the motor of a malfunctioning 400-hertz generator at the DSTB motor pool on Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, July 5, 2011. Flack, who hails from Chisholm, Minn., and other motor pool Soldiers deployed in support of Operation New Dawn, are responsible for vehicle upkeep and equipment maintenance for U.S. Division – North.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Andrew Ingram



# An Oath of Allegiance

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – Swearing the oath to support, defend and serve the United States was not quite enough for one Soldier deployed to Iraq with 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division.

Specialist Angie Schaefer, a petroleum supply specialist serving with Company A, 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st AATF, raised her hand and swore another oath she had wanted to take since high school – the oath which made her an American citizen during a naturalization ceremony at Al Faw Palace in Baghdad, July 4.

Born in Colombia, Schaefer said she came from a very close-knit, traditional Family and attended private school.

“It was definitely a different experience after I came to the states,” said Schaefer.

At the age of seven, Schaefer and her grandparents moved to Miami, where she was able to get a free education, instead of the paying for a private education in Colombia.

“I knew I wanted to join the Army since taking (Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps) in high school,” said Schaefer.

She enlisted without being a citizen based on her permanent resident status in the U.S.

Two years after solemnly swearing to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, Schaefer found herself in Iraq with U.S. Division – North supporting Operation New Dawn.

“She’s always working with a smile on her face,” said 1st Lt. Jesse Dean Swanzy, a quartermaster officer and Schaefer’s platoon leader. “Specialist Schaefer constantly contributes by volunteering to go on missions to supply our outlying forward operating bases. She leaves her mark on OND by helping her country through literally supplying the advise, train, assist mission.”

Schaefer joined 1st Platoon “Road Warriors” immediately after arriving in theater. She currently drives supply trucks to bases around Contingency Operating Site Warrior.

Fellow Soldiers helped prepare Schaefer for the naturalization test, said Swanzy, a Bellville, Texas native. The unit really supports Soldiers and their goals in becoming U.S. citizens, he added.

“I’m excited,” said Schaefer. “Becoming a citizen makes me feel accomplished, because I will be the first one in my Family to become a citizen – not just a permanent



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

**Specialist Angie Schaefer, right, a petroleum supply specialist serving with Company A, 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, listens to a pre-mission brief at Contingency Operating Site Warrior, June 13, 2011. Schaefer, a native of Colombia who now calls Miami home, is slated to take the naturalization test and Oath of Allegiance in Baghdad, July 4.**

resident – and I will have a more stability in everything I am doing and plan to do.”

Schaefer said now that she is a citizen, she wants to attain her security clearance and go to college through the Green to Gold Program, an Army program that allows Soldiers to go to college and become officers through Reserve Officer Training Corps.

“I know it will be a challenge,” said Schaefer, “but I know I can do it and I welcome whatever the future holds for me.”

Schaefer joined 44 other service members, including 16 from U.S. Division - North, who swore in as American citizens during the last naturalization scheduled to take place in Iraq.

**Specialist Angie Schaefer, a petroleum supply specialist serving with Company A, 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, accepts a U.S. flag from U.S. Ambassador to Iraq James Jeffrey during a naturalization ceremony at Al Faw Palace in Baghdad, July 4, 2011. Schaefer, a native of Colombia who now lives in Miami, said she plans to go to college and become an officer. “I’m excited,” she said. “Becoming a citizen makes me feel accomplished because I will be the first one in my Family to become a citizen.”**



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Daniel Stoutamire, 2nd AAB PAO, 1st Inf. Div.



# 'Ghost' medic supports troops behind lines, in field

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

**CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ, Iraq** – Since deploying to U.S. Division – North last fall, Soldiers from 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, assumed responsibility for the mission of advising, training and assisting Iraqi Security Forces in support of Operation New Dawn.

At Patrol Base 8, Spc. Ghislain Nfonga, a combat medic from Killeen, Texas, assigned to 2nd Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 4th AAB, is responsible for teaching Iraqi Army soldiers combat lifesaving techniques.

"I enjoy working with the ISF soldiers and teaching them first aid skills that can potentially save a life," said Nfonga.

Originally from Cameroon, Nfonga enlisted in the U.S. Army after attending the University of Buea, where he earned a bachelor's degree in microbiology.

"I wanted to be able to use my medical background, and also discover what the U.S. Army was all about," said Nfonga.

Currently on his first deployment, the combat medic also works in the tactical operations center at Patrol Base 8, where he assists fellow troopers with planning and coordinating the unit's mission.

Recently recognized as the "Long Knife Strong" Soldier of the Week, Nfonga not only coordinates the medical training at the remote joint installation, but also fulfills his duties as a medic by supporting his fellow troopers on the base, as well as during daily patrols.

"I was surprised to receive the recognition I did with this



U.S. Army photo

award," said Nfonga. "It's not easy being a combat medic, but I love what I do. I'm happy people outside of our patrol base understand how hard we work here."

Along with his duties at the patrol base, Nfonga also finds time off duty to read books and

research medical techniques he can use to enhance his health care specialty skills.

"Nfonga is a hard worker, and is always 100% committed to accomplishing the mission here," said Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Casto, platoon sergeant for 1st Platoon, Troop C, 2nd

Specialist Ghislain Nfonga, a combat medic assigned to 2nd Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, conducts a combat lifesaver class for Iraqi Security Forces at Patrol Base 8, Iraq, Oct. 27, 2010. In addition to instructing the medical classes at the remote installation, Nfonga, originally from Cameroon, supports his fellow soldiers during patrols, and is one of the combat medics responsible for manning the patrol base's aid station.

Sqdn., 7th Cav. Regt.

Casto said he recommended Nfonga for the weekly 4th AAB award because of Nfonga's drive and dedication to the unit's mission.

"(Nfonga) built the aid station here," said Casto. "He goes on daily joint dismounted patrols with the ISF soldiers and he also helps out around the TOC. He's not just a combat medic, he's a well-rounded Soldier."



U.S. Army photo

Specialist Ghislain Nfonga, a combat medic assigned to 2nd Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division – North, demonstrates how to bandage a chest wound during a combat lifesaver class for Iraqi Security Forces at Patrol Base 8, Iraq, Oct. 27, 2010. Nfonga, originally from Cameroon, is responsible for teaching Iraqi soldiers tactical field care techniques.

4th AAB, 1st Cav. Div.



# 'Long Knife' Soldiers celebrate Independence Day in Iraq

Spc. Angel Turner  
4th AAB Public Affairs  
1st Cav. Div., USD-N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ, Iraq – Deployed in support of Operation New Dawn, "Long Knife" Soldiers assigned to 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, celebrated America's 235th birthday while serving together in Iraq.

Soldiers assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th AAB, participated in a pre-Independence Day cook-off, July 1, to allow troopers to take time out of their schedules for fun and competition.

"The cook-off was to recognize the hard work the staff of HHC has been doing this

year ensuring our Iraqi partners have the best possible training," said Capt. Aaron Childers, commander, HHC, 4th AAB.

Serving in Iraq on Independence Day is an opportunity to share a holiday with people who have the same beliefs and patriotic duty that we Soldiers have in common, said Childers, a native of Plano, Texas.

"This isn't just about completing the mission," said Childers.

Serving during Operation New Dawn is about completing the mission more than 4000 service members gave their lives for, Childers said.

For 16 Soldiers of Long Knife Brigade, the Fourth of July became more than just a celebration of the nation's birthday, as they

**See SOLDIERS, Pg. 7**



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

Lieutenant Colonel Phillip Gage, operations officer assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, bites into a slab of ribs during a pre-Independence Day cook-off at Contingency Operating Site Marez, Iraq, July 1, 2011. Gage, a native of Diboll, Texas, helped judge Soldiers' cooking abilities to see who had the best barbecue on base.



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

Colonel Brian Winski, commander of 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, re-enlists Sgt. Jessie Wilson, an infantryman assigned to Company B, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, attached to 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, during a ceremony at Contingency Operating Site Warrior, July 4, 2011. Wilson, a native of Bronx, N.Y., is currently on his second deployment to Iraq.





U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Caleb Barrieau; U.S. Forces-Iraq

**General Lloyd J. Austin III, commanding general, U.S. Forces-Iraq, speaks to service members during a naturalization ceremony at Al Faw Palace in Baghdad, July 4, 2011. Forty five service members swore in as American citizens while deployed in support of Operation New Dawn.**

## **SOLDIERS, cont'd from Pg. 6**

raised their right hands and became America's newest citizens during a naturalization ceremony at Al Faw Palace in Baghdad.

Specialist Patrick Wells, a military justice paralegal assigned to HHC, said he enlisted in the U.S. Army because he felt like it was the right thing to do.

A veteran of two years, Wells celebrated his first Independence Day as a U.S. citizen after becoming naturalized earlier this year.

"It makes me feel like I'm making a difference serving my country," said Wells, a native of Regensburg, Germany. "I'm enabling people to have the freedom to support whatever they choose. I am proud to be able to be a part of maintaining freedom."

Many Soldiers worked as if the day was like any other, but Independence Day in Iraq proved something different.

Some Soldiers earned recognition for their contributions to their units during the deployment, while others raised their right hand and extended their time in service by reenlisting.

Sergeant Jessie Wilson, an infantryman assigned to Company B, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, attached to 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, re-enlisted, making this Indepen-

dence Day a little more memorable than others.

A native of Bronx, N.Y., Wilson said he joined the Army to better his life and his future. Currently on his second deployment, Wilson said serving in Iraq is an eye opener for him.

"I see how people live and the kids with no shoes on their feet, and I see the privileges we have at home," said Wilson.

"Today is a day to appreciate our freedoms and the people who sacrificed their lives so we can have the privileges we have," he said.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Caleb Barrieau; U.S. Forces-Iraq

**General Lloyd J. Austin III, commanding general, U.S. Forces-Iraq, addresses 45 service members who became the newest American citizens during an Independence Day naturalization ceremony at Al Faw Palace in Baghdad, July 4, 2011. Sixteen Soldiers of 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, swore the oath of citizenship.**



# Deployed Soldiers stay in touch with children

Sgt. Justin Naylor  
2nd AAB Public Affairs  
1st Cav. Div., USD-N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE WARHORSE, Iraq – Staying in touch with loved ones can be one the biggest challenges for service members deployed around the world.

For Soldiers at Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, connecting with Families has gotten a little bit easier thanks to a program that allows Soldiers to record videos of themselves reading books and sending the recordings to their children.

The program began earlier this month and will continue as long the unit has the capability to record and send videos, explained Staff Sgt. Gabriel Garcia, Sr., a native of Houston, and a chaplain's assistant with 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division – North.

"It's a good way to stay in contact," said

Garcia, who sends videos to his 6-year-old daughter, Symara. "My daughter loves seeing videos of me. She gets a kick out of it."

Soldiers may choose from a wide selection of children's books, and are given extra time during their recording to add a personal message.

"It's one thing to call home, it's another to have them see your face," said Maj. Bryan Price, a Sea Girt, N.J., native, and a key leader engagement manager for 2nd AAB.

At the beginning of the deployment, on his way to Iraq, Price stopped at a base in Kuwait where he recorded himself reading a book and sent the video to his daughter, Samantha, 2.

"My wife sent me a video of my daughter's response," said Price. "She was completely enamored – so much so that she was actually talking back to the TV."

Sergeant Robert Doak, a mechanic with 2nd AAB, is serving on his first deployment

since his daughter, Koraleigh, was born.

Doak said this deployment is the most difficult of his three tours because of not being with his new Family.

"Next month is her birthday, she will be 2," said Doak, a Richmond, Va., native. "It's good to feel like I'm able to connect with her."

"I know my daughter will really appreciate seeing a video of me," he added. "Whenever I get on my webcam, she gets very excited."

The book reading program does not just benefit children.

"It makes me feel like I'm still with her there," said Garcia. "It lets her know that daddy is still thinking about her, even when daddy is not there."

Though videos of the book reading may not be the same as being home with Family, Soldiers said the program allows them to remain a part of their children's lives while serving overseas.

2nd AAB, 1st Cav. Div.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Justin Naylor, 2nd AAB PAO

Major Bryan Price, a Sea Girt, N.J., native, and a key leader engagement manager for 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division – North, wears a tie his daughter gave him while recording himself reading a book at Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, June 3, 2011. Price recorded the reading session as part of a program that allows Soldiers to send the videos to their children.



# New York MP trains Iraqi policemen



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

Spc. Angel Turner  
4th AAB Public Affairs  
1st Cav. Div., USD-N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ, Iraq – Sergeant James Quatro enlisted in the 105th Military Police Company, New York Army National Guard, to be a part of something greater than himself.

Answering the call of duty, the military policeman recently deployed to Iraq, attached to Task Force Shield, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, in support of Operation New Dawn.

His mission involves advising and training Iraqi Security Forces in U.S. Division – North, helping to make the ISF a sustainable force for their country.

“Since I was little, I always wanted to be a Soldier,” said Quatro, a native of Rochester, N.Y. “My grandfather served in Korea, and I wanted to honor him.”

Quatro trains his Iraqi counterparts on tactics to increase their overall proficiency as policemen, to include counter-improvised explosive device procedures and rifle fundamentals.

“Weapons have always been my strong point, and I enjoy teaching,” said Quatro, who said he is knowledgeable on a wide variety of weapon systems.

Since arriving in Iraq, Quatro conducted two iterations of AK47 training to help

Iraqi emergency response battalions become proficient on their rifles.

“We build our relationship with ISF through this training,” said 1st Lt. Joshua Bode, a platoon leader assigned to 105th MP Company.

Serving as a team leader,

Sergeant James Quatro, left, a military policeman assigned to 105th Military Police Company, guides Cpl. Patrick West during a demonstration of proper stance for firing an AK47 rifle during training at the Provincial Directorate of Police Headquarters in Mosul, Iraq, June 29, 2011. Quatro, a native of Rochester, N.Y., taught Iraqi policemen how to increase proficiency on the weapon. The 105th MP Company, part of the New York Army National Guard, is attached to Task Force Shield, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, in support of Operation New Dawn.

Quatro is the primary instructor in his squad and is an asset to the company, Bode added.

“Sergeant Quatro is an outstanding Soldier and a well-disciplined (noncommissioned officer),” said Bode, a native of Buffalo, N.Y. “It’s great to be able to watch how well (Iraqi policemen) respond to his training, and you can see how well they implement what he trains when they conduct their range.”



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

Sergeant James Quatro, right, a military policeman assigned to 105th Military Police Company, a New York Army National Guard unit attached to Task Force Shield, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, instructs Iraqi Policemen assigned to the 2nd and 4th Emergency Response Battalions, how to stand properly when firing their AK47 rifles. Quatro, a native of Rochester, N.Y., also trained the policemen on how to properly assemble and disassemble the weapon, and basic rifle marksmanship.



# 'Thunderhorse' Soldiers prepare new MRAPs

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, added new Maxx Pro Plus armored vehicles to their fleet at Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq, June 27.

Maj. Christopher Rozhon, Brigade Logistic Support Team chief, 1st AATF, said "Thunderhorse" Soldiers of 2nd Bn., 12th Cav. Regt., turned in their Maxx Pro vehicles and prepared the Maxx Pro Plus after conducting inventory and stripping down what they needed from the older models.

The major difference between the two models, Rozhon said, is that the Maxx Pro Plus provides the best level of force pro-

tection available from the Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected family of vehicles.

"The Maxx Pro Plus was designed to offer better protection to the Soldiers," said Rozhon, a native of Fox River Grove, Ill. "Protecting our Soldiers is our highest priority."

Having a fleet of the same vehicle will also help ease the maintenance required, said Cpt. Scott Hastings, fire support officer, 2nd Bn., 12th Cav. Regt.

"The reason we were tasked to do this job was because we have very capable mechanics that can get the job done quickly and efficiently while continuing our mission here in Kirkuk," said Hastings, a native of Palmyra, Mo.

Before turning in their old vehicles, Thunderhorse mechanics ensured various systems operated properly and that the vehicles were equally equipped with the

equipment necessary to continue protecting Soldiers.

As property manager for the vehicles, Hastings conducted a thorough check of all the vehicles prior to them leaving the yard and being staged in the unit's motorpool.

"It's important that the inventories are thorough because (mechanics) account for and track all the items," said Hastings. "It helps me keep a firm grasp on which items are installed on specific vehicles so there is no lost property as we transfer the equipment to the next unit."

Although the Thunderhorse still have several more months before redeploying to the U.S., Hastings said it is important to begin the process now to guarantee the Soldiers have enough time to complete the transfer of equipment from the older to the newer models, and to make sure the vehicles are all in top running condition.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Kandi Huggins, 1st AATF PAO

"Thunderhorse" Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, attached to 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, turn in Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected Maxx Pro vehicles on Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq, June 27, 2011. After turning in the old vehicles, the unit signed for MRAP Maxx Pro Plus vehicles to prepare them for use in support of Operation New Dawn.



# Company D Soldiers provide security for COB Speicher



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

**Specialist Eric South, an infantryman with Company D, Division Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Division, mans an M2 .50-caliber machine gun at an entry control point on Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, July 1, 2011. South and fellow Company D Soldiers assigned to the ECP ensure the safety of COB Speicher personnel by inspecting vehicles and personnel entering and exiting the base.**

Spc. Andrew Ingram  
USD-N Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – Hot wind gusted through the entry control point, hurling a cloud of dust into the faces of U.S. Soldiers as they scanned surrounding windows and rooftops for threats.

“Just another beautiful day in Iraq,” said Spc. Eric South, after the dust cleared, a cheerful smile on his face as he manned his .50-caliber machine gun.

South and other “Reaper” Soldiers of Company D, Division Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Division, deployed

to Salah ad Din province, Iraq, in support of Operation New Dawn, ensure the security of service members and civilians living and working at Contingency Operating Base Speicher.

The Reapers assigned to the ECP work in eight-hour shifts in temperatures that can reach well above 100 degrees during the day, searching every vehicle and all personnel entering and exiting the COB for contraband and weapons.

“We are here to protect COB Speicher from militant activity, and so far we are doing an effective job,” said South, an infantryman currently on his third deployment to Iraq. “We

have to be very thorough. There have been no major issues so far this deployment, and we have been able to handle all the small ones.”

Soldiers of Company D have set the standard as an efficient and thorough ECP team, said Staff Sgt. Michael Mima, a cavalry scout assigned to Company D, who supervises ECP operations during his shift.

“We have accomplished a lot out here in the past eight or nine months,” said Mima. “No weapons or explosives have made it onto the COB. We have been able to catch a lot of contraband and none of our Soldiers have been hurt, so I think

we have had a very successful mission so far.”

Reapers put vehicles and personnel entering and exiting the COB through a series of gamma-ray examinations using the Mobile Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System, and metal detector searches, explained Mima.

“There have been a lot of improvements here,” said Mima. “For the most part, people comply with our rules. We can tell the Iraqi people want to work with us and our success today is based off their desire to be an effective nation.”

In addition to checking for contraband, the Reapers also conduct a background check on everyone who enters the base using the Handheld Interagency Identity Detection Equipment system, which allows Soldiers to discover if an individual has a history of suspicious activity.

After being searched and scanned into the HIIDE system, civilians entering the COB are given a security badge and escorted onto the base.

“Getting people into the system is really important, because we can track if someone is a wanted criminal or if they have ever been told to leave a U.S. base in the past,” said Spc. Glen Poor, a supply specialist responsible for issuing temporary badges to local civilians entering COB Speicher.

Specialist Joe Gehmie said he attributes the success of the security mission at COB Speicher to the experience and accomplishments many of the Company D Soldiers gained during previous deployments.

“I don’t think I can boast about anything we have done here,” said Gehmie, who calls North Dakota home. “We are building on the foundation of what other people have already done.”



# Hey Doc: *'Are my troops at risk for fever?'*

Maj. David Schnabel  
Preventive Medicine  
USD-N Surgeon

*"Hey Doc, one of our interpreters said a local farmer died at a hospital with fever, diarrhea, vomiting, and bleeding from the gums – something about Crimean Congo Hemorrhagic Fever. That sounds like something from a scary movie! Are my troops at risk?"*

*-Signed, Concerned*

Dear *Concerned*, the good news is that Crimean Congo Hemorrhagic Fever is very rare. Your troops are not at high risk, and there are common sense measures to help protect your personnel.

CCHF is caused by a virus and spread by tick bites or contact with infected animal or human body fluids. Tick bites are of the most concern,

and the Department of Defense Insect Repellent System provides great protection. This system has three components: a permethrin treated uniform, N-Diethyl-meta-toluamide insect repellent – commonly known as DEET – applied to exposed skin, and a properly worn uniform.

Fortunately, Flame-Retardant Army Combat Uniforms are pre-treated with permethrin, which saves you some work.

You are at increased risk of CCHF if you have close contact with pack animals or working dogs, or if you patrol on foot in high grasses. If you find a tick on your body, remove it promptly, taking care to not crush it since the tick could carry the virus.

Scientists have researched the best way to remove a tick. They recommend you use

tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin surface as possible and pull straight up, gently but firmly, using steady pressure. If you do not have tweezers, a paper or cloth to protect the fingers can be used.

Disinfect your skin after removal. If some of the tick mouthparts remain in the skin, leave them alone and they will fall out on their own. This works better than petroleum jelly, fingernail polish, isopropyl alcohol, or a hot match.

Only about one in six people who become infected with CCHF have bleeding (hemorrhagic) symptoms. Of those with bleeding symptoms, death ranges from rates as low as one person in 50 to as high as one in two.

Symptoms of infection include fever, malaise, weakness, irritability, headache, and severe pain. Bleeding symp-

toms range from a rash of fine red spots and severe bruising to bleeding from the gums, eyes, nose, lung, uterus, or intestines.

It is impossible for a medic or a battalion surgeon to identify the exact cause, but anyone this ill must be immediately sent to a higher level of care.

With CCHF, all body fluids are infectious, so it is important to use universal precautions, such as gloves, eye protection, and a mask.

Clinics or hospitals with suspected CCHF patients should place those persons in an isolation room with negative air pressure.

Although some Soldiers are at higher risk in Iraq, most have only a small chance of encountering this disease. Stop watching scary movies, and keep those Task Force Ironhorse questions coming!

## MP supply sergeant key leader in turn-in process

Spc. Angel Turner  
4th AAB Public Affairs  
1st Cav. Div., USD-N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ, Iraq – As Soldiers of 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, prepare to decrease the size of the brigade's footprint in Iraq under Operation New Dawn, some troopers are increasing work hours transitioning equipment and supplies.

Brigade leadership regularly chooses

Soldiers who put forth extra effort as "Long Knife Transition Soldier of the Week," recognizing the troops for dedication to the mission in U.S. Division – North.

Staff Sergeant Amanda Wheeler, a supply sergeant assigned to 105th Military Police Company, Task Force Shield, 4th AAB, turned in more than \$8.6 million dollars worth of theater-provided equipment since arriving in country several months ago.

A native of Buffalo, N.Y., Wheeler spends the majority of her days in Iraq turning in non-essential equipment left behind by the unit her company replaced.

Currently an activated Guardsman, Wheeler said she takes pride in completing required turn-ins before the deadline.

"Much of the equipment we turn in is

time-sensitive," said Wheeler. "To ensure there is enough room for the equipment we brought, we have to step it up just to get the items turned in on time."

Wheeler relies a great deal on her supply specialist, as well as armor and maintenance Soldiers, to help complete the mission successfully, and attributes much of the equipment turn-ins to them.

"I was nominated because I'm the head person in supply, but really it's the Soldiers I work with who deserve the recognition," said Wheeler.

Besides turning in excess non-essential property, Wheeler manages two property books that keep track of all of the equipment assigned to the 105th MP Company.

"She does a fantastic job and is very diligent in the work she does," said 1st Sgt. Shera-Lea Synder, senior enlisted Soldier of 105th MP Company. "When given the job to provide what Soldiers need, she goes above and beyond to accomplish the mission."



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Angel Turner

**Staff Sergeant Amanda Wheeler, a supply sergeant assigned to 105th Military Police Company, Task Force Shield, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, counts smoke rounds during an inventory at Contingency Operating Site Marez, Iraq, July 6, 2011.**