

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

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ESTABLISHED IN 1917 TO HONOR THOSE WHO SERVE



AUGUST 19, 2011



## Engineers conduct explosives training

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE  
WARRIOR, Iraq – ‘Chaos’ Soldiers,  
Company C, 1st Special Troops Battalion,  
1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st In-  
fantry Division, conducted Engineer Core  
Demolition Task Training at an explosives  
range outside of Contingency Operating  
Site Warrior, Iraq, August 11.

The training allowed Soldiers to main-

tain monthly certification requirements  
by using explosives to remove obstacles,  
destroy fortifications, and breach doors.

“The range validates the training  
through live demolitions,” said 1st Sgt.  
Harold Cole, Jr., senior enlisted Soldier,  
Company C.

Although the company’s primary mis-  
sion is conducting route clearance patrols,  
the training ensures Soldiers remain pro-  
ficient in engineer core training, designed  
for conventional war tasks.

The exercise is designed to ensure

squads understand their roles as combat  
engineers, said Cole, a 21-year veteran  
from Dixon, Mo.

“They learn to pick different demo  
to cause different end states,” said Cole.  
“End states are like deciding which explo-  
sives to use in order to yield the effect that  
you want.”

Explosives used by the combat en-  
gineers, like C-4, can be used to “cut”  
through metal, force trees to fall in a  
desired direction, or clear mines.

**See CHAOS pg. 3**



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

Soldiers from ‘Chaos’ Company C, 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, conduct room breaching drills by detonating C-4 plastic explosive to breach a door during Engineer Core Demolition Task Training near Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq, Aug. 11, 2011. They also learned to remove obstacles and destroy fortifications using the explosives.

STEADFAST AND LOYAL  
IRONHORSE  
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DEVIL  
LONGKNIFE  
BLACK JACK

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U.S. Army photo

**Private First Class Jordan Coster, a Combat Medic Assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, demonstrates a buddy drag during a casualty evacuation procedure drill prior to a roving patrol at Contingency Operating Base Warrior, Iraq, Aug. 17, 2011.**

Initiative and sacrifice can make a young Soldier stand out among his peers as a potential noncommissioned officer and leader in the military.

Private First Class Jordan Coster, a combat medic assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, displayed both of those virtues when

he volunteered to replace another medic for a five-hour-mission even though he had just come off a 12-hour-mission of his own, Aug. 8.

Koster's supervisor Sgt. Larry Freeman, combat medic, HHB, said the medic from Portage, Mich., continually surprises his leaders with his professionalism and dedication to getting the job done.

"Koster might be a (private first class),

but he is walking around like an NCO," Freeman said. "When he found out the other medic wasn't going to be able to go on that mission, he didn't come and find me, or try to get somebody else to go in his place. He handled the problem. As far as I'm concerned he embodies the warrior ethos."

In addition to being a hard-charging young Soldier, Koster's effectiveness as a combat medic speaks to a level of expertise above what his rank or experience would normally reflect, said Freeman.

"Koster knows what he is doing," Freeman said. "You never have to second guess him. If we find out there is an issue, one of our soldiers gets sick or hurt, chances are he is already on top of it before I even get there. Koster is easily one of the best soldiers I have ever had."

Sergeant First Class Kevin Wall, Koster's platoon sergeant, said he is excited to see Koster grow as a Soldier and leader of others.

"He is a natural leader," Wall said. "Just one of those guys that are super dependable and you can tell that all the young soldiers already follow his lead. I think he is on the fast track to advancement and I really want to see progression in the Army."

For his outstanding dedication to duty in support of his unit's mission, Koster earned recognition as this week's "Ironhorse Strong" Soldier of the Week.

'DARKHORSE' TROOPS PROVIDE  
HUMANITARIAN AID

Page 4

USD - N SOLDIERS COMPLETE  
EO LEADERS COURSE

Page 5

'LONG KNIFE' SOLDIERS  
PARTICIPATE IN BOXING SMOKER

Page 8

MP CORPORAL SETS  
EXAMPLE

Page 9

## THE IVY LEAF

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## TASK FORCE IRONHORSE

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### TASK FORCE IRONHORSE PUBLIC AFFAIRS

TF Ironhorse PAO – Lt. Col. Steve Wollman  
TF Ironhorse PA NCOIC – Master Sgt. Craig Zentkovich  
*The Ivy Leaf* Editor – Sgt. 1st Class Rob Barker  
*The Ivy Leaf* Layout & Design – Spc. Andrew Ingram

**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**



## CHAOS Cont'd from Pg. 1



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

**Iraq – Specialist Michael Chiumiento, a combat engineer from Winthrop, Mass., assigned to ‘Chaos’ Company C, 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, links together a C-4 plastic explosive block at a blast range outside of Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq, Aug. 11, 2011.**

“Even at his skill level, he should learn how to prime a charge and set up the firing systems,” said Cole, as he gestured toward Spc. Michael Chiumiento, a combat engineer with less than two years of service.

“We’re refreshing our skills with C-4,” said Chiumiento, who hails from Winthrop, Mass. “We learned this coming into the Army, but out here we really don’t use it. That’s why I like the range. We do our jobs.”

During the training, Soldiers, including military police troops, practiced quick room entry, halting enemy vehicles, and destroying weapons using explosives.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st STB, 1st AATF, Soldiers often use explosives training as a way to safely dispose of confiscated enemy weapons.

“Typically, after a case in Kirkuk is closed, we’re left

with having to destroy the weapons used as evidence,” said Staff Sgt. Leo Guzman, an MP from Swannanoa, N.C., currently assigned to the 1st STB.

“I’m here to have them destroy some weapons, and these ranges make it easier on us,” said Guzman. “Attaching a block of C-4 to anything is a sure-fire way to destroy it.”

After moving a safe distance away from the explosives, Guzman and Chaos Soldiers watched as Chiumiento, carrying the spool of detonation cord, handed it over to another Soldier who rigged it to a detonator.

Pulling the detonator caused a huge explosion that sent weapons parts, burning wood splints and a thunderous, bright-orange fire-ball high into the air.

“If anyone wants to know why I became a combat engineer, that’s why,” screamed Chiumiento, in excitement.



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

**Soldiers from ‘Chaos’ Company C, 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, maintain perimeter security at a safe distance during Engineer Core Demolition Task Training at a demolitions range outside of Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq, Aug. 11, 2011. During the training the unit used the explosives to remove obstacles, destroy fortifications, and breach doors.**

# 'Dark Horse' troops provide humanitarian aid

2nd AAB, 1st Cav. Div.



U.S. Army photo by 2nd Lt. Randy Warren, 2nd AAB PAO

Soldiers with 4th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division – North, and local Iraqis load various commercial products onto a truck at Contingency Operating Base Cobra, Iraq, July 2011. The supplies were part of a combined humanitarian aid project to support local Iraqi families in the villages surrounding Cobra in support of Operation New Dawn.

2nd Lt. Randy Warren  
2nd AAB Public Affairs  
1st Cav. Div., USD - N

**CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE COBRA, Iraq** – In anticipation of the Ramadan holiday, U.S. Soldiers provided Iraqis in Northeastern Diyala province with humanitarian aid products throughout July 2011.

Soldiers from 4th Squadron, 9th U.S. Cavalry Regiment, “Dark Horse,” 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division – North, assisted in providing products to Iraqis living in villages surrounding Contingency Operating Base Cobra, Iraq.

Dark Horse Soldiers spent weeks preparing and sorting more than 3,000 items for distribution, including dried foods, shoes, clothing, shoes and soccer balls, said Capt. William Hoover, civil affairs officer for Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 4th Sqdn., 9th Cav. Regt.

“Countless hours of preparation, and a partnership between the Provincial Reconstruction Team, Dark Horse Squadron, and local Iraqi city council members, went in to coordinating the aid project,” said Hoover.

On several occasions, all parties involved met on COS Cobra to discuss product transportation, distribution timelines and security measures.

All products were thoroughly inspected to ensure they were edible or in serviceable condition before being sent to local distribution points, Hoover explained. The process guaranteed every

product available was used and that non was wasted.

U.S. Soldiers and local Iraqis loaded the products onto trucks on COS Cobra. The products were then sent to distribution points in the communities and made available for local residents.

The Iraqi army provided security from COS Cobra to the distribution points, explained Hoover.

The success of the aid project not only helped local Iraqi families in need, but allowed U.S. Soldiers to interact and make a difference within the local populace, said Sgt. Joshua Schuettenhelm, chaplain’s assistant for Dark-horse.

All the Soldiers involved enjoyed the opportunity to do humanitarian work, and see their actions make a difference in the surrounding communities, said Schuettenhelm.

“This was a great opportunity to leave a positive impression on the people of Iraq,” he said.

**“This was a great opportunity to leave a positive impression on the people of Iraq.”**

-Sgt. Josh Schuettenhelm  
4th Sqdn., 9th Cav. Regt.



# USD – N Soldiers complete EO Leaders Course

Spc. Andrew Ingram  
USD - N Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – Twenty-five Soldiers, deployed to Iraq as part of U.S. Division – North, graduated from an Equal Opportunity Leaders Course at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Aug. 10, 2011.

During the six-day course, noncommissioned officers studied the skills needed to guard against discrimination amidst the rank and file, the procedures for the EO complaint process, and the best ways to advise their commanders on all equal opportunity issues pertaining to the rights of their Soldiers.

In addition to their everyday tasks and duties, these new EO leaders now shoulder the responsibility for setting the equal opportunity standards for their companies and battalions. Also, they ensure every Soldier is treated without prejudice, said Sgt. 1st Class Demetrius Smith, equal opportunity advisor, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, one of the course instructors.

“The good thing about having them down at company level is that they know the climate; they can make a good



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

**Master Sergeant Bobby Estrada, senior equal opportunity advisor, U.S. Division – North, presents a certificate of completion to Sgt. 1st Class Henry Reyna, noncommissioned officer in charge, Contingency Operating Base Speicher Education Center, during a graduation ceremony culminating an Equal Opportunity Leaders Course at COB Speicher, Iraq, Aug. 10, 2011.**

assessment of what is going on with their Soldiers,” said Smith, who hails from Philadelphia. “Sometimes they have been working and training with the

same team for (a while). It is very beneficial to have someone who can engage Soldiers on the ground to recognize problems and correct them on the spot.”

Smith said his students took to the subject matter quickly, recognizing the importance of the subject, and dedicating themselves to learning it from the beginning.

“This class has definitely meshed together a lot quicker than some of my other classes,” said Smith. “When new students come into this class, they are often uncomfortable with the subject, but this class became a very friendly environment very quickly. They bonded right from the beginning and started participating and working together even before the first day was complete.”

Before participating in the class and seeing the need for professionals dedicated to fair treatment of their comrades, some of students thought of equal opportunity as trivial, said Staff Sgt. Donald Bell, information technology specialist, Company A, 62nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion, after receiving his certificate of completion.

**See EO page 12**



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

**Twenty-five Soldiers, deployed as a part of U.S. Division – North, completed Equal Opportunity Leaders Course at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, Aug. 10, 2011. During the course, the noncommissioned officers studied the skills needed to guard against discrimination amidst the rank and file, the procedures for the EO complaint process, and the best ways to advise their commanders on all issues pertaining to the rights of their Soldiers.**





U.S. Army photo by Spc. Crystal Hudson, USD - N PAO

Staff Sgt. Joshua Moody, from Killeen, Texas, and a squad leader with Company B, 1st Battalion, 5th Calvary Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Calvary Division, trains an Iraqi soldier on marksmanship techniques at an Iraqi military post near Contingency Operating Base, Speicher, Iraq, Aug. 16. The Iraqi soldiers learned marksmanship techniques and how to enter and clear a room in an urban environment.



# Infantry Soldiers share skills with Iraqi soldiers

## Iraqi soldiers complete marksmanship training

Spc. Crystal Hudson  
29th MPAD  
USD-N Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – Soldiers from Company B, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, trained 25 Iraqi Army soldiers in basic, advanced and close-quarters marksmanship skills at an Iraqi military post near Contingency Operating Base, Speicher, August 14-18, in support of Operation New Dawn.

The five-day training culminated with students conducting “battle drill six,” which simulated entering and clearing a room.

“The main focus coming out here was to train the Iraqis,” said Staff Sgt. John Walker Murphy, squad leader with Company B from Dallas. “We are making sure that these guys have a good basis and foundation... so that they can go take that back to their units and utilize what we have taught them.”

Three Iraqi units participated in the class, which included soldiers from the 4th IA Commando Battalion, the Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Division, and the Field Engineer Regiment.

“Thank God for everything that they are doing for us. It is very useful for our soldiers,” said Iraqi Army 2nd Lt. Hathem Hamid Khalaf, platoon leader for the 4th IA Commando Battalion.

The Iraqi leadership took an active role in training their soldiers along with the infantrymen.

“The Iraqi Army wants to learn. They want to train,” said 1st Lt. Christian White, platoon leader with Company B. “They don’t always have the (ability) to do so, which seems to be the biggest issue. We are able to provide that for them, good quality training that they can take back to their units. The hope is that they continue to train.”

Soldiers used their training to teach the Iraqi soldiers how to use their issued weapon, the AK-47.

“The guys have a base understanding of how to zero and qualify. It has just been a long time since they have been able to get the ammunition to do so,” said White, a native of Newington, Conn.

Once the training is complete, the soldiers will be certified as marksmanship trainers.

“The 4th Iraqi Army Division has the mission of securing a lot of the pipelines in Salah ad-Din province. A lot of their (soldiers) are dedicated to fixed site security,” said Lt. Col. Barry Daniels, 1st Bn., 5th Cav. Regt. commander and Palmyra, Pa., native.

All of the training was important and necessary, including entering and clearing a room in an urban environment, he added.

“We are training them on the tasks that they will need to conduct those missions if they have to go in an urban area and assault an urban objective and apprehend (violent extremists),” said Daniels.

The Iraqi soldiers culminated their week of marksmanship and close-quarters training with a graduation ceremony.

“Overall, I think (the training) increases their capability, and anytime we



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Crystal Hudson, USD - N PAO

**Iraqi 1st Lt. Hardan Khalil Mohmed, 4th Iraqi Army Commando company commander, congratulates a graduating soldier during a graduation ceremony following a week of basic and advanced marksmanship training at an Iraqi military post near Contingency Operating Base, Speicher, Iraq, Aug. 18.**

can better partner with our Iraqi partners helps us all in the future in creating an enduring relationship with the nation of Iraq,” Daniels said.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Crystal Hudson, USD - N PAO

**Private First Class David Westbury, an infantryman with Company B, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, and a Northbridge, Mass., native, watches over Iraqi soldiers zeroing their weapons at an Iraqi military post near Contingency Operating Base, Speicher, Iraq, Aug. 16., during marksmanship training.**



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

Specialist Angel Turner, right, a print journalist assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, punches her opponent during a boxing match at Contingency Operating Site Marez, Iraq, Aug. 6, 2011. "I viewed this event as a challenge; one final, lasting memory prior to us going home," said Turner. The "Boxing Smoker" was held as a morale booster by the 5th Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 4th AAB, 1st Cav. Div., for "Long Knife" Soldiers before they return to Fort Hood, Texas, this summer.

## 'Long Knife' Troopers finish deployment with a punch

Spc. Justine McCoy  
4th AAB Public Affairs,  
1st Cav. Div., USD - N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ, Iraq – With faces clenched, hands ready, and gloves on, the Soldiers stepped into the ring and prepared to fight. For the next six minutes, they'll trade punches in hopes of emerging victorious.

Soldiers assigned to 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, fought for pride and bragging rights during a Boxing Smoker at Contingency Operating Site Marez, Iraq, August 6, to mark the culmination of their deployment in support of Operation New Dawn.

The event, organized by Command Sgt. Maj. Calvin Coler, senior enlisted advisor assigned to 5th Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 4th AAB, 1st Cav. Div., and a native of New Orleans, provided Soldiers with an opportunity to boost their morale, challenge themselves physically, and enjoy some camaraderie in keeping with the Warrior Spirit.

"This event is going to make everyone on COS Marez come out of their (Containerized Housing Units) to either participate or be a spectator," said Master Sgt. Keith Hemenway, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the smoker, prior to the event.

In order to make it a success, Coler tasked "Black Dragon" Soldiers to provide everything from the boxing ring to refreshments for spectators.

Three Soldiers constructed the ring, which took more than three weeks to build and 24 hours to set up. Tables, signs, and other visual aids turned the base's gym into an actual boxing arena.

"Building a boxing ring and holding an event of this magnitude shows that the Black Dragons can and will accomplish any task given to us," said Hemenway, a native of Boston.

Soldiers and civilians assigned to COS Marez filled the seats around the ring, eagerly waiting for the competitors to enter and battle through three, two-minute rounds.

Twenty eight fighters, both male and fe-

male, with weight classes ranging from featherweight to heavy weight squared off during the tournament; some drew blood and others scored full-fledged or technical knockouts.

As each round progressed, the audience watched and cheered.

"It felt amazing to be in the ring and have my battle buddies cheer when I was fighting," said Spc. Cole Kampsen, a track mechanic in Forward Support Company G, 5th Bn, 82nd, FA Reg.

For the Soldiers who were not victorious in their bouts, all was not lost.

"Even though I didn't win my fight, I just wanted a chance to show my battery I had the courage to try something new," said Spc. Chris Pelayo, a tactical data systems specialist assigned to Battery B, 5th Bn, 82nd, FA Reg.

Win or lose, the Soldiers' courage to jump in the ring and fight in front of their peers was rewarded with recognition from Col. Brian Winski, commander, 4th AAB, 1st Cav. Div. and applause of audience members.



# MP corporal sets example

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq—  
“Growing up, I always strived and progressed to be a leader.”

Cpl. Matthew Odom, a military policeman, “Punisher” platoon, Provincial Police Transition Team, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, said he joined the military to follow in his father and grandfather’s footsteps.

The four-year veteran and Stonewall, Miss., native, said he also joined to make something of himself.

“It was a good thing, for me, to see my dad in the military,” said Odom. “When I was younger, I would put on my dad’s uniforms and I remember how proud I was of my father for being a part of something great.”

He said he always had a fondness for law enforcement and, through the influence of

**“You have to be your own type of leader.”**

—Cpl. Matthew Odom  
PPTT, 1st AATF

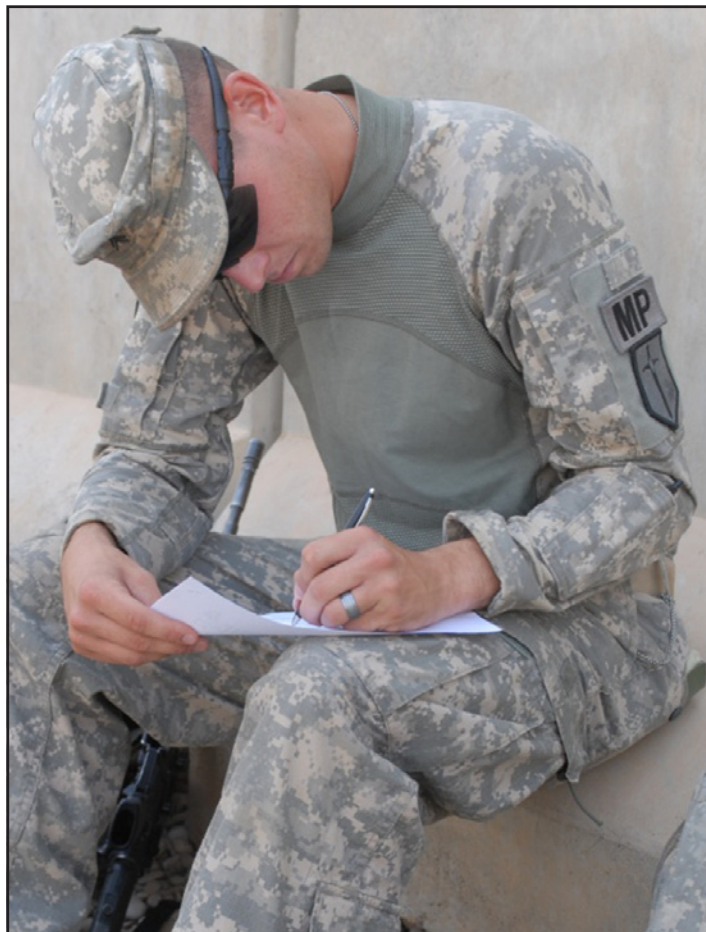
MP friends he had growing up, he enlisted as an MP.

Gaining experience from his first two years with the 615th MP Company, Germany, Odom said he leads through that experience.

“His demeanor, attitude and knowledge is on a level above that of his peers,” said Sgt. Eric Muessel, a team member in Odom’s squad. “He always wants to learn and find the best way to go about a situation.”

“As a leader, he is competent, motivated, resilient and mature,” continued Muessel, a Houston native, “and that’s why the Soldiers in the squad look up to him.”

For Odom, a noncommissioned officer and leader is someone who is in charge and



Cpl. Matthew Odom, a military police team leader assigned to ‘Punisher’ Platoon, Provincial Police Transition Team, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, checks his notes before a mission at Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq, Aug. 9, 2011.

takes the initiative to get the mission accomplished no matter what. Although he has not been in the military for a long time, he said he has a lot of experience that his peers and subordinates can acknowledge.

“You have to be your own type of leader,” said Odom. “You can pull from everybody else, but you shouldn’t be like anybody else.”

Odom’s peers say he is a great leader.

“If I had to describe Odom, I would say he is dedicated, and anything less than standard is not good enough,” Muessel said. “He is an awesome leader and a great NCO.”

Muessel said, as a unit supporting Operation New Dawn, the MPs facilitate the maneuvers of other law enforcement professionals as they assist

various Iraqi Police stations and talk with their IP counterparts.

Muessel said Odom, being a team leader, helps with the mission planning and execution.

“He’s his truck commander; he helps with security and coordination with the dismounts while we’re conducting missions,” continued Muessel, “and he looks out for the Soldier’s overall welfare.”

As his career progresses, he hopes to take the experience and knowledge he gained being an NCO with him in future endeavors.

“I plan to retire in the Army, and I know having experience in the military as an NCO will make me more disciplined and knowledgeable, and will help me advance,” said Odom.



Sgt. Eric Muessel, right, and Cpl. Matthew Odom, military policemen assigned to the Provincial Police Transition Team, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, secure an area outside of the Adallah Iraqi Police station in downtown Kirkuk, Iraq, Aug. 9, 2011.



# All good things come to an end

## *MTC transfer a combined effort*

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

MANILA TRAINING CENTER, Iraq – Soldiers from the 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, transferred base operations and training responsibilities at the Manila Training Center near Chamchamal, Iraq, to the Kurdish Regional Guard, Aug. 4.

Lieutenant Colonel Tom McCardell and Lt. Col. Phil Royce of the Stability Transition Team, 1st AATF, met with Brig. Gen. Sardar Rasol Qader Baban, MTC commander, to facilitate the transition of what Sardar called one of the KRG's best training locations.

"The training base has been important to us," said Sardar. "We are thankful and appreciative for all the U.S.

forces have done. Much has gone into this training base since February."

The "Golden Dragons" of 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, established the training center in February 2011. Soldiers of "Hamilton's Own," 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery Regiment assumed the training mission at MTC following the redeployment of the "Golden Dragons."

Hamilton's Own Soldiers concentrated their efforts on building a cadre of KRG soldiers who could train future KRG units on their own.

To this end, the 1st AATF conducted several iterations of basic soldier skills courses and staff officer classes for the KRG brigades, explained Royce, senior advisor to the MTC.

"(KRG) will be in charge



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

**Specialist Richard Hardyan, artilleryman, Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, packs a storage container in preparation for his unit's departure from Manila Training Center, Iraq, Aug. 4, 2011.**

completely by this fall," said Royce, a Springfield, Va., native. "Their cadre is fully capable of giving the same training to future classes and I'm comfortable knowing we gave them the best training we could offer."

The MTC is an example

of a Task Force at work, explained Royce, with several units assigned different tasks for the accomplishment of a single purpose.

Hamilton's Own Soldiers provided a company to conduct the training and train the KRG.

The Stability Transition Team created the classroom syllabus and taught officer courses, while the 101st Brigade Support Battalion supplied food, fuel and equipment for the duration of the training. The KRG headquarters evaluated student progress.

With their mission complete at MTC, U.S. forces withdrew personnel and equipment to focus on future missions.

"You can only imagine the coordination and effort that was put into the setup of this operation," said McCardell, MTC command operations officer, and a native of Kirkwood, Pa. "Leaving is going to require just as much time and cooperation."



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

**Soldiers of 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, leave Manila Training Center after removing equipment and excess supplies during the base's transfer of authority to the Kurdish Regional Guard near Chamchamal, Iraq, Aug. 4, 2011. "Coordination between many different agencies was essential, but it's what we do. We're the heartbeat of all logistic movement," said Sgt. 1st Class Ronald Alexander, noncommissioned officer in charge, vehicle movement, 101st BSB.**



# Hey Doc: I'm in a rut...

Lt. Col. Mary V. Krueger  
USD - N Division Surgeon

We are at a historic time in U.S. Division – North: We are transitioning U.S. forces from Iraq back to the states. While our mission is coming to a close, there is still much to do and we must fight against complacency in the final days in order to finish with dignity and honor. Optimism, or seeing and believing in the good in the world around you, is one characteristic that is proven to help maintain resilience and improve performance in times just like these.

Optimistic people tend to be healthier, more satisfied with their lives, and have better relationships. They work effectively in tough situations and maintain energy and motivation during chronic adversity. These traits are desirable in normal work environments and are especially beneficial during deployments.

So, are you naturally optimistic or pessimistic? One way to answer this question is to divide a piece of paper in two columns and write all the positive words that come to mind on the left side, and all the negative words that come to mind on the right side. Add up each column and see which one has more words. For most Americans, the right side, or negative column, is longer.

Why is this? To find the answer, we must examine how people survived over

the ages. Our ancestors had to worry about daily survival, ensuring they were the hunter and not the hunted. In this environment, it was more important to recognize the saber tooth tiger (negative) over the bunny rabbit (positive). If we continue to see primarily the negative in the world around us, we will miss opportunities to build upon the positive.

Scientific studies have found that those who are more optimistic are better at solving a problem when they get it wrong the first time. They continue searching for a solution, while the pessimists are more likely to just give up. This is very important to us as Soldiers since we face tough problems every day that must be solved before we can successfully complete the mission.

Is optimism something you are born with or can it be developed? Behavioral health research concludes that you can develop optimism through specific actions. The Department of Positive Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania developed an activity called "Hunt the Good Stuff."

You only need 10 minutes of focused attention per day, or approximately 0.8% of your waking hours, to complete this activity. This exercise will increase your optimism and ability to notice more of the "good" that takes place in the world around you. This will improve your ability to solve problems, particularly those that require "out of

the box solutions." If you perform this exercise, writing down your observations (or typing them if you want to be higher tech) every day for 2 weeks, your optimism will increase, along with all of the associated benefits.

To conduct the Hunt the Good Stuff exercise, write down three good things that happen to you each day. These can be big, earth shattering events (birth of a child, wedding, promotion) or very simple things (real toilet paper in the latrine, receiving a package in the mail, a kind word that was unexpected). Next to each positive event, write a reflection (at least one sentence) about:

Why this good thing happened?

What does this good thing mean to you?

What can you do tomorrow to enable more of this good thing?

What are the ways that you or others contributed to this good thing?

The last question is particularly important, as it can help build a second positive attribute – gratitude. Being grateful for the contributions of others to our happiness helps build a sense of community and improves relationships. These stronger relationships not only make for a better day to day existence, but are also key when you work with others to solve the big problems that require combined expertise, experience and effort to get the job done.

Give this exercise a try and you'll find hunting the good stuff will lead to increased morale and a happier, healthier, and more successful you. Stay optimistic, Taskforce Ironhorse, and continue hunting the good stuff.

## USD-N Social Media

To read more stories and see the photos that go with them, as well as some videos, check out the links below. Read and share what you see and pass along the Soldiers' stories.

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[www.youtube.com/the4id](http://www.youtube.com/the4id)

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

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# Chaplain's Corner: \_\_\_\_\_

## How do you finish well?

Chaplain (CPT) Scott Ingram  
DSTB, 4th Inf. Div.

In Dan Allender's book, *Leading with a Limp*, he makes an insightful observation that is especially meaningful in today's current economic situation, dealing with the issue of counting the cost of leadership.

Why are we so reluctant to lead? Why do so many leaders quit? Or if they continue in their positions, why do so many then lead with far less passion and joy than when they began? This is true whether you are a pastor, president, or parent; janitor, factory worker, or farmer; youth leader, worship leader, or Bible study leader. Every leader must count the cost of leadership. This includes six realities: crisis, complexity, betrayal, loneliness, weariness, and glory. No one escapes these twists and turns in the valley.

Without a doubt, leadership has its challenges. As Allender puts it, we will all experience these [six] realities. The question is whether or not the cost to be paid is worth weathering the storms that accompany.

You might be saying, "But Chaplain, I'm not a leader?" Are you not? What is a leader? Is it not someone who exerts influence over others? You don't have to necessarily be a commander, first sergeant, platoon leader or

in any kind of formal position. You can see or observe leadership whether you are "at work" or not. The next time you see some friends walking, or the next time you are in a group, take note of who seems to lead the pack to where you go to eat, spend free time, make plans, etc.

I would venture to say leadership begins at the most basic, personal level of who we are as individuals. It's not necessarily the highest ranking, or the person who is the section leader. So many times, we see things from a limited perspective. Leadership is more who you are as a person than about maintaining a "followership" of other people. True leadership attracts others and, inevitably, followers.

If you are an active-duty Soldier, you are the target audience for this reflection and will most likely understand this illustration of paying the price. There are a number of people who enjoy the idea of being a Soldier, but are they willing to pay the price associated with raising their right hand and getting sworn in? They want the benefits (and they are many), but are they willing to pay the price of exertion, sweat, discipline, long deployments, and, yes, even blood to be a part of such an elite force? There is a price that has to be paid by everyone who wants to be a part.

"Suppose one of you wants to build a

tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, 'This fellow began to build and was not able to finish.'" (Luke 14:28-30)

In the above Scripture passage, Jesus encouraged his disciples to count the cost. On that day, Jesus was teaching those crowds that following someone – specifically him – was not for the weak. More to the point: Jesus was saying those crowds needed to resolve, within their heart and soul, whether they were willing to follow him no matter the personal cost. To put this into modern language, it's one thing to trust your GPS to get you to the right address, but if you don't pay the bill, your GPS will not function, much less direct you to the correct address. It all comes down to paying the price. We all struggle with this in different areas of our lives and in varying degrees.

Linking this discussion with our walk of faith is the next step. Both counting and paying the costs associated with what we truly believe is right will affect how we live our lives and lead others. We have only a few months left until we finish this deployment. What will it cost you to finish it well?

### EO cont'd from page 5 —

"To be honest, I'm not even sure I really understood what EO was before taking this class," said Bell, a Washington D.C. native. "But coming out of this training, my eyes are open to a lot of the problems we still have in the military. To sum it up in the most basic terms, equal opportunity is in place so that everyone has a fair chance. As equal opportunity leaders we are here to prevent discrimination."

Bell said one of the best things about military service is the knowledge that, no matter who you are, you have the same opportunities as every other Soldier.

"I want the Soldiers to know that no matter what race you are, cultural ethnicity or sex that the Army is fair," he said. "We have this program in place to make sure that everyone has a chance to advance. If growing up you weren't given a chance, in the Army you have a chance to succeed at life. And if you feel ... you are not getting that chance, you should go talk to your EO leader."

The requirement for every unit to have certified EO leaders represents a vast improvement in the approach to equal opportunity, said Master Sgt. Jennifer Lane, Operations NCO, Company C, Division Special Troops

Battalion, 4th Infantry Division.

"Coming up as a private, back in 1995, I heard a lot of sexual jokes and innuendo," said Lane. "We didn't have a very big focus on subjects like the prevention of sexual assault or sexual harass-

ment. It has changed a lot since then. We have a much better focus now and we are trying to push it down to the lower levels. Things definitely have changed and they have changed for the better."



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

**Master Sergeant Bobby Estrada, senior EO advisor, U.S. Division - North, tells students to ensure fair treatment of every Soldier in their units, during EO leaders training at COB Speicher, Iraq, Aug. 10, 2011.**