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ESTABLISHED IN 1917 TO HONOR THOSE WHO SERVE



AUGUST 26, 2011

Daisy and the Dukes stand watch

Spc. Andrew Ingram
USD - N Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – By 8:30 a.m., the Iraq sun is already baking the flat landscape of Contingency Operating Base Speicher as six “Duke” Soldiers of Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 4th Field Artillery Regiment, 214th Fires Brigade, conduct maintenance on their Q-36 Counter Mortar Radar system.

“The heat alone is rough on our equipment,” said Staff Sgt. Blake Sachs, section sergeant for the Dukes. “Add to that all the dust we get out here and it becomes very important for us to perform maintenance checks on these systems every day to keep them from breaking down.”

The Q-36 Counter Mortar Radar system enables the Dukes to track incoming mortar, artillery and rocket attacks, and alert COB Speicher personnel to danger before the round detonates. Maintenance and upkeep are high priorities for the safety of everyone on the COB, said Sachs, who hails from, Kansas City, Mo.

“I think we have done a pretty good job of it,” Sachs said. “We have to work long hours to get it done, but we are keeping the rest of the Soldiers here safe and that makes it all worth it.”

Sergeant Anthony Barges, a multiple launch rocket system operations and fire direction specialist, explained that Dukes spend most of their time ensuring their system is in working order and monitoring the radar from a shelter the Soldiers have nicknamed Daisy.

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

Specialist Adrian Montez, a multiple launch rocket system operations and fire direction specialist assigned to Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 4th Field Artillery Regiment, 214th Fires Brigade, sights a Q-36 Counter Mortar Radar system at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, August 20, 2011. Montez, who hails from San Diego, Calif., uses the radar to identify and track incoming mortars, rockets and artillery.

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IRONHORSE STRONG: Soldier of the Week



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

A Soldier's actual duties are not always implicit in their job title. Sometimes cooks pull guard duty or combat engineers pack shipping containers. Sometimes it means stepping up, taking initiative, and shouldering more responsibility to ensure the completion of the mission.

Private First Class Chip Williams, a wheeled vehicle mechanic from Jacksonville, Fla, exemplifies that versatility while serving in Company A, 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, in northern Iraq.

As a part of the security platoon, Williams primarily serves as a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle driver during force protection missions in and around Kirkuk City, said his squad leader, Staff Sgt. Brent Budd, who hails from El Dorado Spings, Mo.

"He's my go-to guy for just about everything," said Budd. "On mission he can do it all: drive, dismount, gunner. He is really knowledgeable and I can trust him to get the job done."

In addition to performing all the duties of a combat arms Soldier during missions, back on Contingency Operating Base Warrior, Williams uses his training as a mechanic to service and maintain his squad's vehicles.

"(Private First Class) Williams handles all the maintenance for my squad," Budd said. "He gets out there and works on the vehicles with the maintenance section because he wants to make sure it is done right. His efforts have gotten our squad the best maintenance record in the platoon."

By putting in the extra hours and maintaining a hard-charging attitude, Williams sets a good example for junior enlisted Sol-

diers in his squad, said Budd.

"He is always willing to use his time to help another Soldier out," Budd said. "He is a good example for the other guys and I am glad we have him in this squad."

For his versatility and dedication to duty, Williams is recognized as this week's "Ironhorse Strong" Soldier of the Week.

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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



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

Specialist Nicholas Badda, generator mechanic, Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 4th Field Artillery Regiment, 214th Fires Brigade, performs routine maintenance on a portable generator at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, Aug. 20, 2011. Bacca and five other members of the of the “Dukes” section operate and maintain Counter Mortar Radar system, which alerts personnel to incoming mortars, rockets and artillery fire.

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“Complacency cannot be a factor in what we do.” Barges said. “Our mission is to keep COB Speicher safe, and we cannot let anything deter us from that mission.”

While the days are long, the Dukes are motivated by a desire to keep their comrades safe, said Spc. Adrian Montez, a multiple launch rocket system operations and fire direction specialist.

“This job can be pretty boring, because we sit in front of a screen all day waiting for something to happen,” Montez said. “But when you track your first live round coming onto the FOB you start to gain a different perspective. If it wasn’t for us, we wouldn’t know (whether) rounds were incoming or where they came from. It’s a job that you can take pride in because you know that you are looking out for all of your battle buddies.”

The Dukes’ sense of responsibility is compounded by the fact they are deployed to a completely different part of the country than the rest of Battery B, said Sachs.

“One of the biggest benefits and challenges on this deployment is that we are operating on our own,” said Sachs. “I am the battery commander for these guys. I am

the first sergeant. It’s a great responsibility for all of us really. To be self-sustained out here has required a lot of discipline from all of us, and I see it as a great accomplishment that we have sustained our mission.”

The greatest challenge, becoming certified on the system, came prior to their December 2010 deployment.

“Back in the rear, they sent me to a warrant officer course designed for an entire year, and they condensed it into a four-month class so we could deploy on time,” said Sachs. “The junior guys, on the other hand, only got a two-week crash course in the system, so we did a lot of hours of training in just a few months before we deployed. We were a bit nervous when we went to get certified on the system but we passed with flying colors.”

Despite the challenges he and his Soldiers have faced, Sachs said he feels satisfaction for everything they have accomplished.

“I’ve taken a great deal of pride in this job,” Sachs said. “To know that we have tracked (each) round that has come onto this base with such limited training and experience speaks very highly of my Soldiers and all that they have done.”



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

Specialist Charles Schindler, a Radar technician from Lake Home, Fla., assigned to Battery B, 2nd Bn., 4th FA Regt., 214th Fires Bde., performs routine maintenance checks on a Q-36 Counter Mortar Radar system at COB Speicher, Iraq, Aug. 20, 2011.

Texas congressmen visit Ft. Hood troops

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE MAREZ, Iraq – U.S. Representatives John Carter and Michael Burgess, both representing Texas, visited U.S. Soldiers currently deployed in support of Operation New Dawn at Contingency Operating Base, Marez, Iraq, Aug. 13.

Carter and Burgess met with brigade, battalion and stability transition team commanders assigned to 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, from Fort Hood, Texas, to discuss the unit's mission in Ninewa province before it culminates in September.

"We had 15 combined security areas that we were responsible for," said Col. Brian Winski, commander of 4th AAB, 1st

Cav. Div. "We trained Iraqi Security Forces on multi-echelon levels, focusing on the things that would make them more effective."

"Long Knife" troopers deployed to Iraq to advise, train and assist the ISF, giving them the tools and opportunity necessary to establish better security in the region and target violent extremists.

"The ISF are effectively protecting the population in this area," Winski said to the congressmen.

Burgess and Carter have seen the improvement.

"I am surprised by how much progress has been made here," said Burgess. "You guys are doing a tremendous job. Thank you for everything you do."

Following the meeting with

"You guys are doing a tremendous job. Thank you for everything."

**-Michael Burgess
Congressman (Texas)**

Long Knife leaders, both Burgess and Carter had dinner with Soldiers from central Texas.

Soldiers had the opportunity to discuss current U.S. affairs that are affecting the nation and military.

"When it comes to the military, I don't think there will be any attack on retirement or your pay, but TRICARE may (be affected)," said Carter, in response to a Soldier's question about possible retirement cuts.

Texas border security, cohesiveness in Washington, D.C.,

and the current budget crisis were also discussed.

"You all have very intelligent questions and this speaks highly of the Army force," Carter said.

Individual Soldiers spoke with the congressmen, having greater access to elected leaders than most citizens.

"It was an enjoyable event," said Capt. Aaron Childers, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th AAB.

"I was able to get a perspective on the people who represent not just my family, but all of the troopers in D.C.," said Childers, a native of Plano, Texas.

Carter and Burgess will continue to travel to southern Iraq to visit other deployed Soldiers before the congressmen return to Washington later this month.

4th AAB, 1st Cav. Div.



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

Captain Aaron Childers, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, speaks with U.S. Representative Michael Burgess, of Texas, during the congressman's visit to the Contingency Operating Site Marez, in Ninewa province, Iraq, Aug. 13, 2011. Childers, who hails from Plano, Texas, and other constituents discussed current political and military affairs with Burgess and Representative John Carter prior to the cavalry troopers' redeployment to Fort Hood, Texas, later this summer.

A cut above the rest



Spc. Crystal Hudson
29th MPAD

USD - N Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – Taking care of people is what Spc. Brad Demers is all about. He works as a medic for Company C, 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, in support of Operation New Dawn.

Demers trained in the culinary arts before he enlisted in the Army, a skill set that he continues to use while deployed.

“He will use it occasionally to raise morale,” said Sgt. 1st Class Mike Warren, treatment platoon sergeant for Company C. “He has gone to the kitchen early in the morning and made cupcakes. He uses his own time to benefit others.”

Using a combination of supplies sent from home and basic ingredients available in the dining facility, Demers prepares familiar foods in an unfamiliar place.

“It is definitely limited, but you do what you can,” Demers said. “You make do.”

In the kitchen or at the aid station, Demers uses his skills to provide comfort to Soldiers in need.

“Home baked goods are something that make you feel comfort,” said Demers, a Southbridge, Mass., native. “I have a set of skills that allows me to do it, and if I have the resources, why not?”

Like cooking, being a medic allows Demers to help people.

“The best thing about the medical field is that people come to you when they don’t know what else to do,” Demers said. “It gives you a sense of accomplishment to be able to help in a way that no one else can.”

Demers also uses his sense of humor and compassion to put people at ease during a stressful time.

“There really wasn’t any other job that I wanted to do in the Army,” he said. “I never worked in the medical field before and I was curious about it.”

His curiosity has expanded to a possible civilian career as a medical professional. Demers’ ultimate goal is to go to medical school and become a doctor after his military service is complete.

During this deployment, Demers has

earned a reputation for being dependable and selfless.

“No matter what you need him to do, he is going to make it happen,” Warren said. “I never have to worry about Demers being the one to gripe, argue, fuss or anything that would delay a task from being completed.”

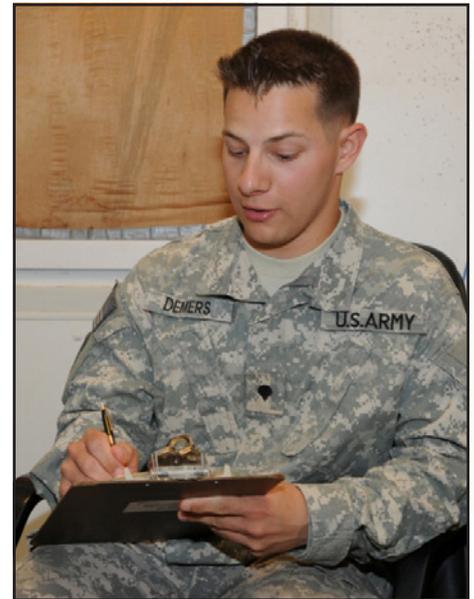
Warren said Demers consistently takes an active role with other Soldiers in his platoon.

“Whenever it comes time to do (physical training), he might not have wanted to do it, but he knew other people wanted to do it, so he jumped in there,” Warren said. “He keeps people motivated.”

Demers said he enjoys the camaraderie that his job provides.

“We are all new to this. We have really been able to come together and support each other,” Demers said. “We have been lucky to be able to do our jobs, to treat people.”

Demers is in the process of completing a flight medic packet, with hopes of continuing his medical training after the end of the deployment. His chain of command is fully supportive of his aspirations



1st AATF, 1st Inf. Div.

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Crystal Hudson, 29th MPAD

Specialist Brad Demers, a medic with Company C, 101st Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, assists a soldier during sick call at Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq, Aug. 22, 2011.

to continue to grow in his career field.

“He has done nothing but take care of others this whole tour,” said Warren. “So now it is time to take care of him.”



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Crystal Hudson, 29th MPAD

Demers checks the vital signs of a Soldier during sick call at COS Warrior, Iraq, Aug. 22, 2011.

'Black Jack' Soldiers transition KMTB

Iraqi Forces take responsibility for training post

2nd AAB, 1st Cav. Div.



U.S. Army photo by 2nd Lt. James McGregor, 2nd AAB PAO

Soldiers assigned to 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division – North, load equipment to assist with movement of equipment during the transition of Kirkush Military Training Base, in Diyala province, Iraq, Aug. 11.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Shawn Miller, USD-N PAO

A 4th Battalion, 21st Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division jundi, Arabic for soldier, sprints to his next firing position during a live fire exercise at KMTB, March 9. Iraqi instructors led the exercise as their U.S. counterparts from 1st Bn, 21st Inf. Regt., 2nd AAB, 25th Inf. Div. observed the training. U.S. forces transitioned full control of the training program to Iraqi Army leadership at the base in April. Soldiers handed over full responsibility of KMTB Aug. 21.

Sgt. Quentin Johnson
2nd AAB Public Affairs
1st Cav. Div., USD - N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE WARHORSE, Iraq – A training base, full of history between the Iraqi army and U.S. forces, transitioned Aug. 21.

Soldiers of Company A, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division – North, officially transitioned Kirkush Military Training Base, Iraq, back to the Iraqi army.

For weeks, Soldiers of Company A worked tirelessly to clean the area and conduct sensitive item sweeps to ensure the IA received the base in serviceable condition, said Capt. Jesse Harden, commander of Company A.

“We turned (the base) over with the same standards as we would expect to have received it,” said Harden a Killeen, Texas native.

The transition comes after years of training that took place on the small compound, said Harden whose company conducted Tadreeb al Shamil, or all-inclusive training.

Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, “Gimlets,” 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, were first to step back and let Iraqis lead the training at KMTB. They led training and advising the year prior to 1st Bn., 8th Cav. Regt., taking command of the base.

“We realized we were giving these guys training, but they really had nothing to sustain it after they received the training,” said Sgt. Christopher Mola, an infantryman, who was attached to Company A, 1st Bn., 21st Inf. Regt., in March 2011.

“After we leave, they’ll have the instructors here to continue the training, whether it’s here at KMTB or at their own individual units, to ensure that the soldiers retain the knowledge they gained by coming here,” said Mola months ago.

Recently, Soldiers of Company A instructed Iraqi soldiers on a variety of military tactics and standards during

each 25-day training cycle, including individual weapons qualification, platoon live-fire and company training events.

KMTB is full of training history and provided a starting point for Iraqi soldiers to become self-reliant.

“This is where it all began,” said an Iraqi training officer, describing the training grounds at KMTB. “This is where one of the first soldiers was trained to pick up a rifle and begin the steps to protect their country. This is also where we teach them to protect themselves, and protect the people of Iraq.”

The growth of the Iraqi forces and their training continued to expand with each passing month at KMTB.

“It’s very, very useful for us. We are doing the training, and we are the instructors now,” said Staff Sgt. Ayad, a 5th IA Div. instructor at KMTB.

“We know (U.S. forces) will try as much as possible to help us stand for ourselves. We’re trying to get the most important training that we’ll need to defend our people and our country,” explained Ayad.

U.S. forces continued to motivate and train Iraqi forces with great success, added Harden. The culmination of training and transition was “bittersweet” for him.

“We saw a lot of progress with unit discipline. It was refreshing to see (Iraqi soldiers’) commitment to the training and themselves,” said Harden.

First Lieutenant Kellan Sams, executive officer, Company A, agreed with Harden about the progress of the Iraqi soldiers.

“The Iraqi army soldiers are motivated and always ready to get at (the training),” explained Sams.

Additionally, the Iraqi soldiers never failed to show gratitude to Soldiers of Company A, added Harden.

“There was a lot of thanks on an individual level,” he said of the Iraqi soldiers.

Harden’s appreciation went to his Soldiers, who trained more than 1500 Iraqi soldiers within two months, and didn’t allow complacency to set in.

“(Soldiers) were more focused on the mission ... focused on the basics and took accountability everyday,” added Harden.

Staying focused was important when the advise, train and assist mission tran-



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Shawn Miller, USD-N PAO

Sergeant Stephen Miller, an infantryman assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, provides guidance to 5th Iraqi Army Division instructors prior to the start of a live fire exercise at KMTB, March 9. Following feedback provided by U.S. advisors, the Iraqi instructors took the lead role in teaching the exercise to the IA units while U.S. Soldiers observed. The 1st Bn., 21st Inf. Regt., “Gimlets,” part of the 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, transitioned full control of the 25-day training cycles, known as Tadreeb al Shamil, Arabic for All-Inclusive Training, to their Iraqi counterparts in April. Tadreeb al Shamil is an Iraqi military initiative for IA units to develop the ability to train and lead individual and collective training necessary to sustain a modern army.

sitioned, resulting in a greater need for force protection, said Sams.

In the end, Iraqi soldiers on KMTB provided security for the base as the last of U.S. forces at the Commando compound left.

“We know (U.S. forces) will try as much as possible to help us stand for ourselves. We’re trying to get the most important training that we’ll need...”

**-Staff Sgt. Ayad,
5th IA Div.**

Iraqi Army soldiers fire at targets during M-16 rifle qualifications at KMTB in Diyala province, Iraq, Jan. 5, 2011. The Soldiers of 1st Bn., 21st Inf. Regt., 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 25th Inf. Div., serve as advisors for Iraqi Army battalions cycling through KMTB.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Ricardo Branch, 2nd AAB PAO

What's your personality?

Sgt. Quentin Johnson
2nd AAB Public Affairs
1st Cav. Div., USD - N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE WARHORSE, Iraq – A “Personality Inventory” resiliency class was conducted at the Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, chapel for Soldiers of the 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division – North, to help Soldiers discover and understand their personality type and reduce miscommunication.

The class, third in a five-part resiliency class series, introduced Soldiers to four common personality types: Dominant, Influential, Supportive and Competent, said Chaplain (Maj.) Donald Ehrke, 2nd AAB chaplain.

Someone with a dominant personality is described as being task oriented and very outgoing, according to the “Understanding the Love of Your Life” study guide. This is opposed to an individual with a competent personality type, who focuses on the task in a reserved manner.

A person with the influential personality type won't focus on a specific task, but on the people associated with it. That same personality has a lot of energy and is outgoing. Much like the influential personality, the supportive type is also focused on people but in a more reserved manner.

Learning the personality types helps leaders and their Soldiers build stronger working relationships, alleviate miscommunication and increase Soldier-Family togetherness, explained Ehrke.

Building those leader-Soldier relationships is easier with deployments, said Ehrke. However, he added, when you interact with the same people everyday for an extended amount of time, personalities can clash.

Understanding someone's personality helps ensure work relationships complement each other in any circumstance, he said. Work then becomes interpersonal.

“When leaders understand subordinates, they reach out to them and put them in a job (position) that is best fit for them,” said Ehrke, adding that this will



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Quentin Johnson, 2nd AAB PAO

Chaplain (Maj.) Donald Ehrke, chaplain for 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division – North, instructs Soldiers on personality types during a “Personality Inventory” class, held in the chapel on Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, July 19, 2011.

enhance communication as well.

Leaders and their Soldiers will know how to respond to each other when dealing with issues during deployment, stated Ehrke. These issues may cause unnecessary stress on a Soldier, such as Family issues, and cannot always be handled in person because of the deployment.

Personality conflicts increase between Soldiers and their spouses or loved ones back home, he said. Understanding a Soldier's personality helps Family members acknowledge their Soldier's difficult times, while affording Soldiers an opportunity to help their family deal with issues back home.

Another benefit to conducting a personality inventory is self-awareness, explained Ehrke.

Self-awareness opens a Soldier up to discovering their weakness, he said. This is vital for any Soldier who wants to be a better person and understand what motivates others.

“If I understand what motivates me, I can understand other people better,” said Ehrke.

Pfc. Ryan Saunders, from Katy, Texas, said having an understanding of his per-

sonality type has made him more self-aware.

Saunders added, being a competent-type personality he tends to over-analyze most of what he does. Recognizing this as a hindrance to his work, Saunders can adjust, making him more proficient as a human resource specialist for the 2nd AAB.

By understanding personality differences, communication between his superiors, co-workers and himself, will improve, explained Saunders.

Everyone should attend a personality inventory class, he said. Not only was it intriguing and insightful, but understanding the different personalities other Soldiers possess encourages clearer communication and stronger relationships.

“If I understand what motivates me, I can understand other people better,”

**-Chaplain (Maj.) Donald Ehrke,
2nd AAB chaplain**

Pride and Motivation: *'Destroyer' Soldier wins battalion board*

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – Enlisted Soldiers test their knowledge and military bearing by participating in Soldier of the Month boards. Winners are normally those who are able to overcome the board's greatest obstacle: themselves.

One "Destroyer" Soldier from 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery, said confidence and knowledge allowed her to win not only her company-level board, but also her battalion board.

Private First Class Tiffany Harris, food service specialist, Company G, 1st Bn., 5th FA, said her greatest challenge since being a Soldier has been a struggle with herself and her attitude.

"I didn't think I would have been considered for (a) board because I used to have an issue with my attitude and sassiness," said the St. Louis native. "Whenever I felt something was unfair, I would just react to it. I've learned maintain my military bearing, and composure and go about the proper way of handling situations."

Harris' peers and leaders have noticed the change.

"Her disrespectful attitude left after I became her platoon sergeant... now what she shows is a pride and respect for herself," said Staff Sgt. Paul Martin, platoon sergeant, 1st Bn., 5th FA.

While the board proved to be stressful for her, Harris said she was grateful for the sergeants in her company who helped and studied with her.

"I got a lot of advice when

I was preparing for the board, and my sergeants would tell me the board members were Soldiers and people just like I was," said Harris. "I had to study a lot... but winning allowed me to accomplish something I thought I could never do."

The confidence is translating into her job performance.

"She definitely feels more secure in her position and understanding more about the Army," said Martin, a Miami native. "This deployment alone has helped her understand a lot more than just her job because all she did at garrison was cook. Now she's become more diversified with not just the board, but working outside of her job to get more experience."

Harris also attributed her success to her biggest motivation, her one-year-old daughter.

"She is my strongest motivation," Harris said. "Half the stuff I do, I wouldn't do it if I didn't have her because she makes me look beyond myself so that I can provide for her."

Since Harris deployed to Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq, in support of Operation New Dawn, Martin said she has worked at the class one yard, in operations, as a driver for guard mounts, and in the dining facility.

He said she is definitely multi-tasking, and everything she is doing will give her experience through other means than just training.

"She definitely has an edge on her peers," said Martin. "I try to tell all the Soldiers they have to continuously gain knowledge, they have to get schools and go to boards, because boards are a plus and

are helpful."

A lot of people are scared to do it, but as they continue to participate in boards, it will help develop their confidence and knowledge, even if they don't win. If they do win, it will be one thing that will set them aside from their peers, especially when being selected for certain positions and duties, he said.

While Harris said she currently plans to stay enlisted and grow through the non-commissioned officer ranks, she has also considering going to school and becoming a officer.

"I want to conquer every aspect of the Army," said Harris. "The higher I get enlisted, the more I'll do things I never thought I could do, and the more experience I will have. I want to conquer everything I possibly can, but still have the competence and experience when dealing with Soldiers to tell them I did what you did and that's why I'm here."

Harris is not the only 1st Bn., 5th FA, Soldier to win a recent board.

"Since 2009 our company has won every Soldier and NCO board," said Martin. "That shows our NCOs want our Soldiers to improve and to continue improving throughout their career. Harris can definitely do anything she wants to do and nothing can stop her."

Overall, Harris said the experiences she gained in her two years of being in the Army continually shows her growth as a person and as a Soldier.

"I need to be able to grow, to stay in the Army, to provide for my baby, and develop my career," said Harris. "The more I try to do things I don't think I can do and accomplish them, the more I feel I can do anything."

"I know the areas I need to work on, and I'm improving on them, but as far as anything else, it is mine and I'm going to take it."



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

Private First Class Tiffany Harris, food service specialist, Company G, 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery, logs information from an incoming call over the radio at Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq, Aug. 22, 2011. Harris, a St. Louis native, proved her competence and knowledge by winning her battalion's Soldier of the Month board.

The foundation of his sacrifice

Deployed Soldier honors fallen heroes

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – It's never easy to hear news of a fallen comrade.

"All I could do was stand there," said Spc. Rodolfo Moreno, recalling hearing the news his brother-in-law and close friend, Sgt. Israel Devora-Garcia, was killed in Baghdad while supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"Maybe it's different being in the military, and being around family and friends when we hear something like that, because we try to be a little stronger, but I know inside I was hurting badly," said Moreno. "I'll never forget that day. I got the call from a friend late at night on April fool's Day, but of course, nobody jokes around like that."

That was six years ago when Moreno, now a finance clerk with 4th Financial Management Company, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, received the news about Garcia.

Moreno deployed a year later to Iraq and felt it was his duty to serve and find a way to give back to the community in memory of Soldiers who sacrificed their lives while deployed.

"After he passed, I felt more obligated to be here and be with him because this is where he is now," said Moreno, who hails from El Paso, Texas.

Now on his second deployment to Iraq, Moreno had the opportunity to remember Garcia and other fallen heroes. He volunteered to help Spc. Faith

Bedwell, chaplain assistant, 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st AATF, 1st Inf. Div., and other servicemembers touch-up the names of fallen Soldiers painted on the Warrior Memorial Wall at Contingency Operating Site Warrior. The names, which have faded over the years, now include those who have given their lives in support of Operation New Dawn.

"When the decision was made to move the memorial wall to the center of COS Warrior, I felt it was our duty, as fellow Soldiers, to ensure the wall was complete, by adding the names of those fallen during Operation New Dawn," said Bedwell, a Little Rock, Ark., native.

When Bedwell asked for volunteers, Moreno was enthusiastic about helping to honor his brother-in-law.

"Unless you've been in that position, where you've lost someone on the wall, people don't really understand the sacrifices," he continued. "And for (the wall) to be there, it helps them understand... It makes you stop and think 'that could've been me or that could've been my battle buddy.'"

A lot of time and effort went into painting the wall, and Bedwell said it was their duty to not let the work go to waste.

"We are now able to hand over responsibility and bring closure to this war because of

them, our fellow brothers and sisters," Bedwell added. "If you take a look around, you will see the aftermath of the fights here, and around this area, and acknowledge that these guys were in the fight since OIF."

Moreno also remembers Garcia, who was a scout with 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, by giving back to his community through a foundation in honor of Garcia and other local fallen heroes.

Moreno said the foundation does a lot of charity events in raising money for kids to go to school, and sponsoring meals around the holidays.



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

Specialist Rodolfo Moreno, a finance specialist from the 4th Financial Management Company, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, repaints the name of his brother-in-law, Sgt. Israel Devora-Garcia, who died while deployed to Baghdad in 2005, on the Warrior Memorial Wall at Contingency Operating Site Warrior in Kirkuk province, Iraq, Aug. 6, 2011. "I am grateful for the opportunity to give a little back," Moreno said. "I just want people to know we're still here and some of our comrades are going to be here forever because this is where they gave their lives."

“People need some help every now and then,” he said.

Moreno said Garcia’s sacrifice brought a lot of patriotism in their hometown.

“We were from a small town... a farming community,” said Moreno. “We have veterans, but when Garcia (passed), we started getting more attention, military-wise, and people opened their eyes more in supporting troops.”

He said his community became more open minded to what Soldiers are doing in combat zones, being away from

their families, and taking their patriotism and commitment to their country to the next level.

“I’m proud of what I do and of his sacrifice. And not a day goes by where I don’t think about him,” said Moreno. “I just want people to know we’re still here and some of our comrades are going to be here forever because this is where they gave their lives.”

Moreno refurbishes the name of his fallen brother-in-law, Sgt. Israel Devora-Garcia, on the Warrior Memorial Wall at COS Warrior, Iraq, Aug. 6, 2011.



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

‘Red Dragon’ medics train Iraqi counterparts

2nd Lt. Josiah Metzger
2nd AAB Public Affairs
1st Cav. Div., USD - N

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Soldiers with 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division – North, trained Iraqi Army soldiers on various medical tasks to help ensure they have the knowledge and capability to take care of injured comrades.

Capt. David Marcoux, a Lancaster, Ohio, native and physician assistant for “Red Dragons,” and a team of medics traveled to 4th Battalion, 17th Iraqi Army Brigade’s compound and conducted medical training exercises.

The instruction ranged from evaluation and treatment of specific injuries, to advanced subjects such as pulmonary systems and orthopedics, he explained.

Conducting hands-on training is very important to the Iraqis since they do not have many live-action training scenarios where they can hone and practice their medical skills, Marcoux said.

Sick call provides the best training opportunity for the Iraqi medics because it is a time when sick soldiers or those with minor injuries can be treated by their medics, said Marcoux.

When U.S. medical personnel were present for IA sick call hours, they provided direct oversight, by coaching and mentoring the Iraqi doctors and medics as they treat patients, continued Marcoux.



U.S. Army photo

Soldiers assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division – North, observe and give advice to an Iraqi doctor and medics during a medical procedure near Joint Base Balad, Iraq, July 15.

Red Dragon medics also instructed Iraqis on how to best control and expedite the flow of patients during hours of operation, as well as proper documentation on a patient’s illness, injury history and prescriptions.

In addition to training their IA counterparts, the Red Dragons have also helped them outfit their clinic.

“Last deployment, this Iraqi clinic had barely anything – no chairs for the medics to work out of, no stretchers with which to load and attend patients, barely any medical equipment, and barely enough supplies to patch up

minor to moderate wounds,” said Staff Sgt. Richard Tyree, the treatment noncommissioned officer in-charge for 3rd Bn., 82nd FA Regt. “Thanks to the efforts of our battalion, and the one we replaced, the clinic is now much more operational.”

With Iraqi Security Forces firmly in the lead of combat operations, IA soldiers with the 4th Bn., 17th IA Bde., can enter the battlefield knowing their medics and doctors have trained with their U.S. counterparts, and that they have a fully functional clinic to return to if they get injured.



Chaplain's Corner: _____

Get 'em while they last

Chaplain (MAJ) Ken Hurst
Deputy USD-N Chaplain

Nothing beats a "Philly-hot-pretzel" with mustard bought from a roving street vendor in the City of Brotherly Love. We moved our family to Philadelphia in 1982 in order to attend seminary. As a result, whenever anyone asks where I am from, the short answer is always, "well, we raised our kids in Pennsylvania."

It wasn't long after our arrival that our children discovered the gourmet delicacy of Philadelphia hot pretzels. The vendors would frequent our neighborhood every Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. As our son and daughter would be playing outside, they would hear the pretzel man coming down the street, pushing his cart full of steaming hot pretzels. For a mere crisp dollar bill, I could buy six hot pretzels, with mustard, and satisfy the palates of the whole family. Given the popular demand for "Philly-hot-pretzels," the challenge was always to "get 'em while they lasted." Heaven forbid the vendor would run out of pretzels before reaching our neighborhood.

I am not expecting to hear the sound of a Philly street vendor on Contingency Operating Base Speicher yelling, "Get your hot pretzels now!" But I want to alert you to something else that you need to get while they last ... no, I'm not talking about the end of soft serve ice cream in the din-

ing facility or losing your Sniper Hill access. I am referring to making good use of our remaining Sunday's here on Speicher and attending service at Ironhorse Chapel before it closes forever.

Ironhorse Chapel will hold its final worship services, both Catholic and Protestant, Sept. 18. We will then move services to the Ivy Room in the DFAC for the remaining weeks until the end of mission.

One of the strategic missions for the Chaplain Corps during this deployment has been the sanitization and closure of dozens of chapels across Iraq – specifically 14 chapels in the U.S. Division – North area of operations. Chaplain assistants at both the brigade and battalion levels have diligently cleaned and removed equipment and religious supplies from chapels and storage rooms in order to turn over facilities. Sacred religious items have been collected from each chapel and stored in brigade containers. These containers were inspected, then shipped to Sierra Army Depot for proper disposition of religious supplies.

Each of our brigades tracked their chapel closure procedures while at the same time maintaining the ability to offer on-going religious support to their Soldiers. Expeditionary religious support is the operative term as we transition out of theater. The endstate is to leave Iraq with dignity and honor.

Get 'em while they last! Why should you consider attending chapel during the final weeks at whatever COB you reside? The most immediate answer is that worship is an aspect of spiritual resiliency. The reason the USD-N Chaplain's office moves our Catholic Chaplain around the AO is to enhance the worship of Catholic Soldiers at remote locations, and build spiritual resiliency. In the same way, we will be promoting the up-coming Jewish celebrations of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Soldiers are strengthened through the worship opportunities provided by Unit Ministry Teams across USD-N, at every phase of the mission.

A second reason to attend a chapel service in the weeks ahead is because it is a concrete encouragement to other Soldiers. Your presence, your handshake and your fellowship has a positive impact on the other folks in attendance. This is the community aspect of worship. We do not worship as individuals but as part of a sacred community. It is the effect of meeting together as a worshipping community, together seeking God's grace and mercy, that reinforces hope and peace in an environment that is uncertain. Your presence helps others.

After more than eight years of use and ministry, our chapels are going away; most have already closed. Please use the weeks ahead to attend the worship of your choice and "get 'em while they last."

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.

www.facebook.com/4thid

www.youtube.com/the4id

www.flickr.com/photos/the4id

www.slideshare.net/the4id

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