

# THE *Ivy* LEAF

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ESTABLISHED IN 1917 TO HONOR THOSE WHO SERVE



SEPTEMBER 3, 2011



## Muslim Soldiers celebrate end of Ramadan Eid al-Fitr holiday marks end of 30-day fast

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE  
SPEICHER, Iraq – Muslim Soldiers  
and civilians came together during early  
morning hours to celebrate the Eid

al-Fitr at Contingency Operating Base  
Speicher, Iraq, Aug. 30.

Eid al-Fitr is the culmination of 30  
days of fasting and marks the end of the  
Islamic holy month of Ramadan.

“It is basically like Christmas in our  
country,” said Dr. Alaa Abdelazim, cul-  
tural advisor for the 4th Infantry Divi-

sion commanding general.

During Ramadan, Muslims abstain  
from eating and drinking from sunrise  
to sunset for 30 days. “The fasting is not  
only fasting of the food and water,” Ab-  
delazim said, “it is actually fasting from  
all sin.”

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Muslim Soldiers and civilians read from the Quran during Eid al-Fitr morning prayers at COB Speicher, Iraq, Aug. 30, 2011. The celebration marks the end of 30 days of fasting during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan. Fasting during the month allows Muslims to understand how it feels to be poor and hungry, said Dr. Alaa Abdelazim, cultural advisor for the 4th Infantry Division commanding general.

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Crystal Hudson, 29th MPAD, USD-N PAO

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# IRONHORSE S'TRONG:

## Soldier of the Week **SECOND LIEUTENANT AMANDA FONK**



U.S. Army photo

With the start of Operation New Dawn, U.S. forces' mission shifted from combat to preparing the Iraqi military to take responsibility of their country's security mission.

"Advise, train and assist," became the mantra of Soldiers deployed to Iraq in 2010 and 2011.

Second Lieutenant Amanda Fonk, a maintenance platoon leader assigned to Company G (Forward Support Company), 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, contributed to this mission by building an innovative partnership with maintenance officers of the 17th Iraqi Army Brigade, said Capt. Crystal Chatman, commander, Company G.

"We conducted a key leader engagement with the Iraqis to identify their training needs," said Chatman. "We took a look at their vehicles and realized they could use our help in that area. (Fonk) and her platoon started working with the Iraqi maintenance soldiers and have vastly improved the way they operate."

A native of Milwaukee, Fonk and her Soldiers worked with the Iraqi maintainers

to improve their technical knowledge and skills, which enabled the 17th IA Bde. to better serve and protect the people in their region.

"She is what I like to call a cog in the machine," Chatman said. "She has integrated herself into the unit very well, and it would not run properly without her."

In addition to furthering the mission by training and mentoring her Iraqi counterparts, Fonk set herself apart through the ability to handle large responsibilities with minimum oversight, exemplified during the ramp up for the battalion's M109A6 Howitzer training, said Chatman.

Fonk streamlined the procurement of the 155 mm projectiles and developed a delivery schedule to ensure the unimpeded supply of ammunition for "Red Dragons" of 3rd Bn., 82nd FA Regt.

"She has the ability to handle huge logistical challenges," said Chatman. "She has a very firm grasp on what needs to be done and how to do it. I could see her truly excelling in the logistics field."

For her dedication to her unit's mission, Fonk is 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**



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Ramadan allows Muslims to understand how it feels to be poor and hungry, Abdelazim said, and added "We share their agony and unfortunate life."

Ramadan has a unifying effect by allowing all Muslims to have a shared experience while fasting.

"We get to know each other. We share the same feelings," said Abdelazim. "We will feel it together. We make peace with each other, and we will be closer than we could ever imagine."

Abdelazim, who lives in Killeen, Texas, said at the beginning of Ramadan, not all Muslims on COB Speicher knew each other, but by the end of the month, everyone became friends and felt like a Family. Ramadan also brought the fasting Soldiers and civilians closer to their co-workers from other cultures and faiths.

"We have a lot of support from our units and the people who we work with," said Spc. Bashar Ameen, a linguist with 4th Inf. Div., from San Diego. "Without the unit, I wouldn't



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Crystal Hudson, 29th MPAD, USD-N PAO

**Dr. Alaa Abdelazim, cultural advisor for the 4th Infantry Division commanding general, shares encouraging words with Muslim Soldiers and civilians during the Eid al-Fitr morning prayers at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, Aug. 30, 2011. Fasting during the month allows Muslims to understand how it feels to be poor and hungry, said Abdelazim, who lives in Killeen, Texas.**

have been able to do it."

It was Ameen's second time fasting since being deployed for almost 18 months at COB Speicher. During Ramadan, Muslim Soldiers had the option to change their work schedules from day to night.

"(My leadership) support-

ed me and made me feel like I could do it," Ameen, who had deployment orders for 12 months, but volunteered to extend, said. "You feel them there, always trying to protect you."

Abdelazim said he has never seen such a high level of

support like what the leadership of the 4th Inf. Div. provided during Ramadan.

"Helping us to perform not only our jobs, but even our beliefs, it gives (me) a big sense of happiness, and gives us the morale we need to perform our jobs," said Abdelazim.

## COB Speicher Suicide prevention 48-hour event



**Come help raise awareness of Suicide Prevention by participating in the COB Speicher 48 Hour Event Marathon Sept. 9-10.**

**Partner up and choose from running, spin classes, ruck march, P90X and other events to equal a marathon or more. For more information contact Spc. Katy Palis, [katy.m.palis@us.army.mil](mailto:katy.m.palis@us.army.mil).**



# Preventive medicine specialists maintain healthy environment

2nd Lt. Alyson Randall  
2nd AAB Public Affairs  
1st Cav. Div., USD - N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE WARHORSE, Iraq – While combat operations in Iraq have given way to the advise, train and assist mission, Soldiers still encounter many challenges while deployed,

including threats of disease and other environmental hazards.

Specialists Amanda Rose and Eddy Luengas, both preventive medicine specialists with Company C, 15th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division – North, ensure deployed Soldiers work and live in a healthy environment at Contingen-

cy Operating Base Warhorse in support of Operation New Dawn.

Working at Teal Medical Clinic at COB Warhorse, Rose and Luengas mitigate health and environmental issues by conducting inspections around the COB.

“We do routine health inspections at the places Soldiers use on a daily basis, like the gym, barber shop, and dining facility,” said Rose, from Flint, Mich.

The team also inspects water sources on the COB, explained Luengas, adding that clean drinking water is vital to maintaining the force.

“We test the levels of minerals in the water, since too much hardness could cause kidney stones in humans,” said Luengas, a native of Santa Ana, Calif.

Additionally, the team goes to the source of the problem, regardless of what type of infection or disease it is, added Luengas. Animals and insects are two factors that commonly cause issues on the COB.

“For instance, an armadillo carries a strain of leprosy,” said Luengas, “or (service members) might not realize how harmful a stray dog really can be.”

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**“We can educate everyone on such a wide range of topics that affect their health.”**

—SpC. Amanda Rose  
Company C, 15th BSB

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Most Soldiers do not realize how many diseases can be transferred from animals and insects, he added.

The most important part of the team’s job is to educate Soldiers by making them aware of the diseases and how to stop them from spreading, said Rose.

“We can educate everyone on such a wide range of topics that affect their health,” she said.

The preventive medicine team continues to work diligently so Soldiers can focus on the mission instead of threats to their health, said Rose.



U.S. Army photo by 2nd Lt. Alyson Randall 2nd AAB PAO

Specialists Amanda Rose and Eddy Luengas, conduct routine water testing at Teal Medical Clinic, Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, July 29, 2011. Rose, from Flint, Mich., and Luengas, from Santa Ana, Calif., serve as preventive medicine specialists with 15th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division – North.



# Cavalry troopers learn skills to succeed

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE WARHORSE, Iraq – There are many ways to improve yourself while deployed. A group of Soldiers and Airmen worked on self-development during a resiliency class at Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, Aug. 2.

The goal of the class was to help participants learn which habits will help them to be more effective in their careers and personal lives, explained Chaplain (Capt.) Alfred Matthews, chaplain for 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division – North, and a Houston native.

The beginning of the class focused on improving personal habits, such as being proactive, making plans, and organizing goals to make them easier to accomplish. Matthews related some personal anecdotes that helped the participants connect with the subjects.

Before a recent trip to a major Family theme park, Matthews said he conducted hours of research about the best days to visit certain areas of the park, which restaurants were busiest at certain times of the day, and how to avoid long lines.

By spending time preparing before he went to the park, his Family maximized the amount of time they could spend having fun there, he explained.

Matthews said service members should try to do this in their day-to-day lives by

spending time planning and building a blueprint for how they want their life to look; decide what is important to them and focus on accomplishing what matters to them and thus become more resilient.

“This will help the Soldiers be better able to handle any situation, civilian or military,” said Matthews, as he talked about developing good habits at work.

In the military, individuals cannot think about putting themselves first, they have to strive for team success, he said. Service members must also work to better understand their teammates, and take the feelings of those they work with into account.

It will help their team function better as a whole, he continued. Servicemembers also need to think about their own strengths and weaknesses, as well as those of their teammates, when they are making plans. By planning around personal strengths, teams can better combine their efforts.

For the service members participating in the class, it was a chance to learn new ways to improve themselves personally and professionally.

“This class showed me how to effectively use my time to become a more professional, and all around better, Soldier,” said Spc. Thomas Donahue, a mechanic with 2nd AAB, 1st Cav. Div., and a Boston native.

“I can apply the habits we talked about here directly to my life, and they will help me be a better teammate as well,” he added.

Donahue said the class was refreshing because it was a chance to step back from work and focus on developing himself as an individual. If Soldiers are going to be in Iraq, why would they not use some time to improve themselves, he said.

The class was the third course the chaplains of 2nd AAB, 1st Cav. Div., have hosted, all of which have focused on improving resiliency.

“Learning new skills and habits and building our personal resiliencies, is what helps us get through the tough times in life, such as during a deployment,” said Matthews. “Resiliency is just being comfortable with who we are, and the mission we have.”

Another resiliency class has already been planned and will focus on helping service members manage personal finances.

“Resiliency training is about how to be successful not just as a Soldier, but as a person,” he said.



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

Specialist Thomas Donahue, a mechanic with 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division – North, and a Boston native, writes down a personal mission statement during a resiliency class at Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, Aug. 2, 2011.



# Soldiers celebrate women's equality

Spc. Andrew Ingram  
USD - N Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – Soldiers and civilians deployed to northern Iraq, in support of Operation New Dawn, paid homage to women's struggle for equal rights during the Women's Equality Day celebration at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, Aug. 26.

During the celebration, sponsored by the U.S. Division – North Equal Opportunity Office, participants honored women who paved the way for female service members. Participants shared poetry and highlighted the importance of men and women working together as equals.

Keynote speaker, Lt. Col. Mary Krueger, division surgeon, U.S. Division – North and 4th Infantry Division, said the differences between men and women should be recognized as strengths meant to complement each other.

"When we talk about equality, we ask the question, 'Are men and women the same?'" Krueger said. "I say, 'Thank goodness no!' We are equally valuable, but we are wonderfully unique."

Men and women alike should be looked at for their individual strengths and proficiencies instead of their gender, said Krueger.

"Match the skill set to the task," Krueger said. "Don't look at the gender of a person to decide whether they can do it or not. Look at their skills, and then assign the right person to the task."

The event highlighted the progress women have made in gaining equal rights and acceptance over the course of history, said Staff Sgt. Vanessa Kennedy, medical logistics specialist, Company B, Division Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Division.

"Women's Equality Day is just a reminder of how much women have persevered," said Kennedy, who hails from Baltimore. "Because of our persistence, we will continue to gain momentum in our society, and to fight for the things that we want."

Kennedy said she is proud of the strides women in the military have made overcoming stereotypes and prejudices to be-

come valuable assets in the defense of their country.

"I'm proud that I am a woman in the military," she said. "We are (deployed) every day, brothers and sisters in arms, side by side to protect the Constitution and the American way of life."

Events like the Women's Equality Day ceremony bring service members closer together, building a stronger fighting force and closing the gaps that can grow between Soldiers of different genders, races or backgrounds, said Master Sgt. Jennifer Lane,

operations noncommissioned officer, Division Signal section, Company C, DSTB, 4th Inf. Div.

"For some people, I think the presentation really opened their eyes to what women have achieved in the military and in the work force," said Lane. "I think the more we know about each other, the better our workforce becomes. Yes, we have come a long way, and I think we will continue to battle. Women have to prove themselves where men do not, but ... we have come a long way."



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Josh Tverberg, USD - N PAO

**First Sergeant Deirdre Neeley, senior enlisted Soldier, Company C, 62nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11th Signal Brigade, from Clarksville, Texas, shares a poem she wrote during the Women's Equality Day celebration at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, Aug. 26, 2011. During the event, participants celebrated the history of the Women's Rights Movement.**

# 'Long Knife' commander conducts press brief



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

Colonel Brian Winski, commander of 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, answers questions during a live Pentagon Press Brief via remote satellite uplink at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, Sept. 1, 2011. During the press conference, Winski discussed the "Long Knife" Brigade's mission as an advise and assist brigade deployed to northern Iraq in support of Operation New Dawn. During its yearlong deployment, the 4th AAB advised Iraqi Security Forces, Kurdish security forces and Iraqi Police on combined patrols, assisting at combined checkpoints, and trained the Iraqi Army, police and Federal Police on tactics.

Sgt. 1st Class Brent Williams  
USD – N PAO

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – Colonel Brian Winski, commander of 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, hosted a live Pentagon Press Brief via remote satellite uplink at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, Sept. 1.

During the press conference, Winski discussed the mission of "Long Knife" Brigade and its Soldiers, who are scheduled to redeploy to Fort Hood, Texas, having completed a 12-month deployment in support of Operation New Dawn.

"Our mission since arrival here a year ago has been to advise, train and assist the 60,000 Iraqi Security Forces that we're partnered with," he explained to a pool of reporters through the

satellite feed.

Winski noted the 4th AAB was the first advise and assist brigade to deploy in support of Operation New Dawn, and one of the six advise and assist brigades to serve in Iraq from 2010 to 2011.

He also outlined the efforts of U.S. Soldiers in implementing organized training and preparing Iraqi troops to train their forces as the U.S. withdraws from Iraq at the end of the year.

"The Iraqi Security Forces in Ninewa are quite capable," Winski noted, "and the focus of our training and advisory efforts have been to assist them with internal security efforts, counterterrorism operations, (and) basic police functions."

Approximately 3,000 Soldiers of the 4th AAB, deployed as part of U.S. Division – North, assumed responsibility for the

mission to lead, train and mentor Iraqi Security Forces in the Dohuk, Arbil and Ninewa provinces of northern Iraq in September of 2010.

Employing the full extent of their collective training and experience, Long Knife Soldiers worked from remote operating bases and combined checkpoints throughout northern Iraq to prepare ISF to take full responsibility for defending their country, said Winski.

The Long Knife Soldiers partnered with Iraqi Army jinood, Arabic for soldiers, to conduct individual and collective training, teaching core competencies and common tasks necessary to protect the Iraqi borders and its people.

U.S. Army Soldiers also planned, prepared and conducted organized tactical military training from the enduring

Iraqi training site, the Ghuzlani Warrior Training Center, located at Contingency Operating Site Marez, where IA units learned to conduct coordinated attacks, organize defenses, and employ combined arms.

"In addition to advising and training the army and police forces, and assisting our Iraqi Security Force counterparts across the province, we supported (the U.S. Department of State) as they developed governance and civil capacity across the province as well," said Winski, a native of Milwaukee.

Winski also discussed his brigade's role in working with Kurdish security forces, partnering with Iraqi forces, as part of a combined security mechanism, conducting trilateral security operations to ensure stability in the northern provinces.

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

First Lieutenant Dustin Vincent, (center), mission commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Gabriel Espinosa, senior enlisted Soldier of 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, ask Emergency Services Unit Maj. Ahmad Mohammad, combined check point commander, about CCP operations during a validation inspection conducted at a checkpoint in Kirkuk, Iraq, Aug.

## Verify and Secure: *Field Artillery Soldiers aid Kirkuk through checkpoint validations*

Staff Sgt. Robert DeDeaux  
1st Advise and Assist Task Force  
1st Inf. Div., USD - N

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – Soldiers of Battery A, 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, assessed the security of the main routes into Kirkuk during a combined checkpoint validation patrol conducted at CCPs throughout Kirkuk, Aug. 30.

The Soldiers conducted the validation checks as a force protection operation designed to monitor and verify the progress of the Combined Security Forces and Emergency Services Units.

Soldiers ensure the Iraqis are using the correct tactics, techniques and procedures at the CCPs.

The validation also verifies the Iraqi Security Forces are capable of maintaining an enduring checkpoint presence after U.S. forces withdraw from Contingency Operating Site Warrior.

“These CCPs ensure Violent Extremist Networks targeting U.S. forces and Iraqi Security Forces can’t use the main roads to smuggle illegal weapons through the city,” said Capt. Gregory Arrowsmith, chief of operations, 1st Bn., 5th FA Regt. “The protection of Kirkuk and COS Warrior hinges on the security of the ... routes into the city.”

U.S. forces, partnered with other ISF elements, maintained the checkpoints earlier this year, said Gregory, a field artillery officer from Livonia, Mich. Currently, the Combined Security Force, an integrated unit of Iraqi Police, Iraqi Army and Kurdish Security Forces, man the checkpoints. An entire battery from 1st Bn., 5th FA Regt., was assigned to ensure the CCPs have what they need and report any shortfalls the ISF may have.

The transfer of authority of the CCPs to ISF control was a goal of Operation New Dawn and the advise, train, and assist mission conducted by the 1st AATF after their arrival to northern Iraq.

“We normally cycle different platoons

through the CCPs at different times of day to get fresh eyes on any changes that might affect force protection,” said Gregory.

“The Iraqi Security Forces, comprised of the CSF and the ESU, man the CCPs 24 hours-a-day,” said 1st Lt. Dustin Vincent, a platoon leader and mission commander for Battery A. “We go out to each checkpoint ... to assist their operations, monitor progress, and go over the questions on the checklist. It is also an opportunity to improve their CCP operations (and make their) force protection methods more efficient.”

The checklist is a two page list of questions and reminders that must be validated by both the U.S. officer in charge and the Chief of the CCP covering areas such as ammo, current personnel and supply concerns.

“We normally spend an hour or more at each location. We have a validation process we go by with our counterparts,” said Vincent, who hails from Dallas.

The progress of the ISF has enabled U.S. Soldiers to conduct considerably fewer checks over the past year, said Vincent.



# 'Outlaws' keep peace in Kirkuk

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – Every day, Soldiers assigned to 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, provide patrols in the area surrounding Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq.

During these counter improvised rocket assisted munitions missions, “Outlaw” Soldiers spend 12 hours a day roaming the streets of Kirkuk City, gathering information about possible threats and providing a visible presence in an effort to deter violence against U.S. forces and the people of Kirkuk province.

“This is not like any other deployment,” said 1st Lt. Dustin Vincent, platoon leader with 1st Bn., 5th FA Regt., and Dallas native, explaining that many of his noncommissioned officers spent previous deployments during Operation Iraqi Freedom actively pursuing insurgent activity, and needed to adjust focus for the U.S. mission in support of Operation New Dawn.

Every day, Soldiers of “Outlaw” platoon patrol, investigate suspicious activity,



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

**Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 5th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, conduct an interview with an Iraqi citizen during a patrol of Kirkuk, Iraq, Aug. 26, 2011. The artillery Soldiers spend 12 hours patrolling the areas outside of Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq.**

document changes and interview civilians.

“Our mission is to deter IRAM attacks by our presence,” said Cpl. Cory Bell, artilleryman with 1st Bn., 5th FA Regt., and Amarillo, Texas native.

Bell added that there are challenges to having such a repetitive mission. Knowing the impact of their job keeps the platoon focused, he said.

The Soldiers work hard to balance their mission requirements, but often have little or no time to get haircuts, turn

in laundry or eat at the dining facility due to the long hours, Vincent said.

When not actively patrolling the streets of Kirkuk, the Soldiers of 1st Bn., 5th FA Regt., set up observation posts overlooking the city, Vincent said.

The Soldiers have an intimate knowledge of the areas they patrol; a new hole in the ground or change in the landscape is easily noticed as a potential IED because of all the time they’ve spent in this environment, he added.

Just outside the gate, the artillerymen spotted suspicious holes on the side of the road while on patrol August 26. The platoon dismounted in order to talk to people digging the holes and discerned that they were contracted to put signs up on the side of the road.

Since the Outlaws took over the IRAM mission in July, there have been no rocket attacks in their patrol area, according to Vincent, who concluded, “The fear of getting caught stops a lot of people from acting.”

## BRIEF cont'd from pg. 7

“We have since transitioned, and now have a long-term sustainable security solution implemented in all those areas where the Iraqis and the Kurds are securing bilaterally now ... and are doing so quite effectively,” he added.

Following his opening remarks, the Long Knife commander opened the session to questions from the reporters gathered in Washington, D.C.

Courtney Kube of NBC News asked Winski if U.S. forces remaining in northern Iraq will leave by Dec. 31, or will the units replacing 4th AAB be required “to maintain some sort of presence to help train?”

As Long Knife Soldiers return to their Families awaiting their arrival at Fort Hood, Texas, Winski said U.S. forces will continue their mission to transition U.S. bases to Iraqi control and support the ISF, providing assistance and over watch if requested.

“We are proceeding with all the parameters of the security agreement, and our successors are proceeding with a number of base transitions and some of the training transitions ..., but again,” he explained, “the security agreement parameters are clear, and everything is proceeding to comply with the parameters of the security agreement, barring a decision at the Iraqi government and U.S. government-level.”



# 1st AATF hosts partnership dinner

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

CONTINGENCY OPERATING SITE WARRIOR, Iraq – The 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, and Kirkuk Provincial Reconstruction Team welcomed government, military, and religious leaders to the 8th Annual Partnership Dinner at Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq, Aug. 24.

The dinner provided an opportunity to enhance civic relationships and cooperation among U.S. forces, and the administrative and political leadership of Kirkuk province.

“Our support for the city of Kirkuk goes beyond military operations,” said Col. Michael Pappal, 1st AATF commander and host of the event. “Many military, political and religious leaders representing the diverse culture of the province have all gathered here to pro-

mote cooperation and unity.”

The key leaders hoped to mingle with everyone without the pressures of a structured forum. The dinner provided an opportunity for attendees to speak with each other about progress in Kirkuk province, continued Pappal, a native of Creekside, Pa.

Dr. Najmaldin Karim, Provincial Governor of Kirkuk, was one of the first to arrive to help set the tone and purpose of the evening.

“I feel good to be at the site of such a wondrous gathering,” said Najmaldin. “A social dinner like this will help make the guests feel more at ease.”

These dinners have been fruitful in the past in promoting goodwill between the various ethnicities and political groups in Kirkuk, said Najmaldin. “The results of cooperation between us and the American forces will continue to be seen in the following



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

**Colonel Michael Pappal, commander, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, welcomes Mullah Mustafa Hussein, director of the Sunni Endowment in Kirkuk, to the 8th Annual Partnership Dinner hosted at Contingency Operating Site Warrior, Iraq, Aug. 24, 2011. The dinner provided an opportunity for attendees to enhance civic relationships and cooperation among U.S. forces and the administrative and political leadership of Kirkuk province.**

years.”

Other key leaders of the Kirkuk province, included: Imad Yochanna, Chief of the Christian Democratic Party;

Mohammad Korsheed, deputy chairman of the Kurdish Democratic Party; Tahsen Kehaya, member of the Provincial Council and the Shia/Turcoman Political Party and Mullah Mustafa Hussein, provincial director of the Sunni Endowment and Imam in Kirkuk.

“The Kirkuk people have had no problems getting along with one another,” said Mullah Mustafa. “We have been living like this for many years. It is groups outside of our province that want us to fight with each other.”

The dinner is the eighth time the leaders have met like this, continued Mustafa.

“The terrorists hate when we work together,” said Mustafa. “I hope this isn’t the last time we have one of these (partnership dinners). Many of us are here in heart, not just in person, and we want to continue to make Kirkuk wonderful.”



U.S. Army Photo by Spc. Sara Wakai, 1st AATF PAO

**Provincial Governor of Kirkuk Dr. Najmaldin Karim, center, speaks with other political and military leaders during the 8th Annual Partnership Dinner hosted by the 1st AATF at COB Warrior, Iraq, Aug. 24, 2011. “The relaxed atmosphere of a social dinner was conducive for many organizations within the province,” said Najmaldin. “It is wonderful to see so many different groups socialize together and smile.”**



# Hey Doc: I am worried about my battle buddy ...

Maj. Samuel Preston and  
Spc. Katy Palis  
USD - N Division Behavioral  
Health Section

"My battle buddy has isolated himself in the past week, seems more depressed than usual, and keeps talking about 'after he is gone.'"

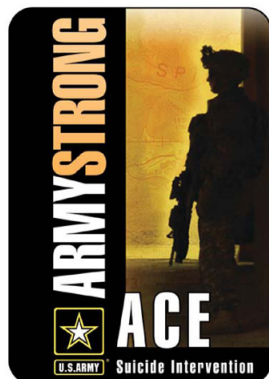
-Signed, Concerned Soldier

Dear "Concerned Soldier,"

It's good you know your battle buddy well enough to notice a change in his behavior, and you want to help him. The immediate and most important thing to do is talk to your battle buddy. Let him know that he is not alone. Tell him you noticed the recent changes, are concerned about him, and willing to help get him to the right person for support.

Investigations following suicides reveal individuals give subtle hints that they are losing the interest to live. Indications someone could be thinking about suicide include giving away important possessions, acting anxious or agitated, feeling hopeless, withdrawing from friends and family,

talking about death, "not caring," or loss of interest in activities that use to bring joy like sporting events, games, friends.



We all have ACE cards; these items are not a waste of trees, ink, and space in our wallets. They are a constant reminder of what to do when it looks like someone is at risk for suicide.

A.C.E.: Ask, Care, and Escort:

1. Don't be afraid. **ASK** the person if they are having thoughts of suicide.

2. Show **CARE** (compassion) for him or her. Listen for cues, prompting you to get them to the command or emergency services. Remove dangerous objects (weapons) if there is concern about safety.

3. **ESCORT** them safely to the chain of command, to medical personnel, or a chaplain ASAP. If the Soldier is unwilling to seek help, recruit others to contact the chain of command. **DO NOT** leave a Soldier alone if you think he or she is having thoughts of hurting himself or herself or someone else.

The VA suicide hotline is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days-a-year. The number is 809-463-3376. After the dial tone, key in 1-800-273-TALK, or while in Iraq, dial 1-2-3 on a DSN phone. This service is for Soldiers, battle buddies, or Family members who are concerned about suicide and want to do something about it.

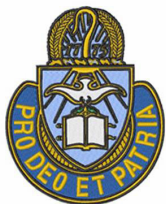
September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. There will be a variety of events occurring all month to help raise awareness and build relationships necessary to eliminate suicide from our ranks. Suicide prevention vigilance is not just for September alone, but every day. We owe it to ourselves and our fellow Soldiers to take an interest and show support. Keep those Taksforce Ironhorse questions coming.

## 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](http://www.facebook.com/4thid)  
[www.youtube.com/the4id](http://www.youtube.com/the4id)  
[www.flickr.com/photos/the4id](http://www.flickr.com/photos/the4id)  
[www.slideshare.net/the4id](http://www.slideshare.net/the4id)  
[www.twitter.com/4thInfDiv](http://www.twitter.com/4thInfDiv)





# Chaplain's Corner: —————

## What Do you See?

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Keith Goode  
USD - N Chaplain



What do you see in this picture? Is there a cup or perhaps two faces? Which one do you see first? Can you even tell the difference?

In part, perception can be described as what our mind “sees,” regardless the facts that are before us. We expect to see the things we do because that is what we have always seen, or it is what we have hoped to see, or it is what we have been told we’ll see. Our past experiences, through training, education, expectations, relationships, etc., shape us for good or bad, to deal with the daily details of our lives.

All things considered, a strong, healthy perception of

life is a very good thing. It would be a miserable thing, if every morning, we had to learn all over again how to tie shoelaces on a pair of combat boots or if we found ourselves wandering around looking for the dining facility because it was moved every night. Being able to settle into a routine is part of what keeps us resilient and helps us manage the other stressors that we face in our duties each day. At this point in the deployment, though, it would be good to take stock of our perceptions and how changes in the routine might affect our lives. Failure to do so may catch us by surprise and ruin our perception, leaving

us very disappointed.

So let’s think – what have we gotten used to while here in Iraq? Laundry? Gatorade? Sniperhill? Mail? Containerized Housing Unit? Gym?

What have we gotten used to being without? Family? Finances? Restaurants? Responsibility?

What is going to happen to your perspective when things change or when responsibilities return? When the heart, mind, and body are distracted by ruined expectations, the opportunity for disappointment is very real. When perceptions of life are jumbled and confused, it is possible to become disappointed with life itself. Look again at your life and ask, “Is my perception of life realistic enough to adjust to the changes that are certainly coming, or am I doomed to despair?”

We read in the Bible this verse from First Timothy 6:6-8: “But Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.”

When perceptions are altered, the secret to living a non-frustrated life is contentment with God and with what God has given.

When we spend our days focusing on our relationship with the Almighty, we develop an eternal perspective that naturally affects daily expectations. A life of faith in God wonderfully shapes those expectations we depend on to make sense of daily experi-

ences. It strengthens the perception of what is important, yet makes sure that our outlook is not so rigid that it cannot bend when stress and change demands it.

There we find contentment for our spirit, minds and bodies. We are enabled to live in peace regardless of what happens in our daily lives, because we clearly see that God is in control. With this perception, it is not the end of the world when the Internet in the CHU is turned off, the redeployment date is delayed, or the relationship at home is strained. In our personal and professional lives, faith informs us and we know to be thankful for what we are given today, and we trust the Lord will provide what is best tomorrow – contentment.

Does that mean we will experience no pain or disappointment? No, but we will be empowered to react to those difficulties with a realistic expectation that sees beyond the trouble and looks to the Lord for the solution. We look through the difficulties with the perspective of hope.

So the goal is to keep the proper perspective in your life; that is, making sure you are “seeing” what is really there. Already, there have been too many among us lose perspective, and that has led some to make choices that have resulted in greater pain and loss. As we come to the last pages of the final chapter, don’t let that be you! Look closely – what do you see?