

The Ivy Leaf

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VOL. 1, NO. 17 MULTI-NATIONAL DIVISION – BAGHDAD “STEADFAST AND LOYAL” SEPTEMBER 3, 2006

MND-B’s Operation Together Forward presses on, drives terrorists out

Page 3

Working together
Apaches secure site for MEDEVAC mission

Page 5

CENTCOM sends top enlisted leader to visit MND-B troops

Page 12

WELCOME TO BAGHDAD

2nd BCT, 1st Armor Division, arrives in Baghdad to support MND-B operations



CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Sgt. Christopher Miller (left) of Service Battery, 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, along with Spc. Alex Stringer, Battery C, 4th Bn. (center), and Spc. Charles Mahon, Service Battery, help organize personal equipment for 2nd BCT Soldiers, who arrived in Iraq July 28.

Story and photo by Spc. Joshua Ramey
2nd BCT PAO, 1st Arm. Div.

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq –
Soldiers of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, attached to Multi-National Division – Baghdad, arrived in Baghdad during the last week of July in sup-

port of Operation Together Forward.

The 2nd BCT, based out of Baumholder, Germany, served as the theater reserve at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, for eight months prior to moving into Iraq.

The brigade will focus on building a close rela-

SEE 2-1 AD, PG. 7

This Week

Movie show times	17	MWR Calendars	17
Cartoon Corner	22	Religious Services	20
Faces & Places	24	Sports Round Up	23

NEWS FROM THE FRONT

MND-B Soldiers evacuate mother, infant during security operations in Baghdad

BAGHDAD – Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers attempted to save the life of a newborn child during security operations in southern Baghdad Aug. 10.

Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, attached to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, and medical personnel from the 414th Civil Affairs Battalion, rendered the life-saving care after determining a baby was suffering from respiratory problems, said Maj. Gregory Brewer, senior medical advisor, 414th CA Bn.

“A call was made over the radio that an Iraqi infant child needed immediate assistance,” Brewer said. “Our guys were able to render the correct care for the child, almost instantly improving its heart rate and ability to breathe,” he said.

The child was motionless and blue when the team arrived on the scene, as Soldiers worked tirelessly to resuscitate the newborn baby girl, said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Christopher Hall, civil affairs medical team chief, 414th CA Bn. Once the infant’s breathing improved, the mother, father and child were medically evacuated to the 10th Combat Support Hospital in the International Zone in central Baghdad.

(Courtesy of 4th BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.)

Rustamiyah tower improvements stop rocket debris

FOB RUSTAMIYAH, Iraq – The hard work by the 801st Brigade Support Battalion to strengthen defenses at the gates of Forward Operating Base Rustamiyah paid off Aug. 5 when a rocket impacted near the gate but produced no casualties.

The improvements on the gate were made from August 1-5; the gate was attacked by a rocket

August 5.

“It was roughly about 60 ft. away where it hit,” said Capt. Ryan Schwankhart, commander, Company B, 801st BSB, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad.

Before the improvement, there was nothing but a piece of Plexiglas to protect the Soldiers inside, said 1st Sgt. Brian Pirtle, Company B.

Prior to this, it was necessary for guards to remain low in the tower if they wanted to be safe from enemy sniper fire. Now, with the additional protection, it is possible for these guards to maintain a maximum field of

vision even during times when the enemy threat is high.

“A lot of times in a maintenance company, we work behind the scenes,” said Schwankhart.

After the rocket impacted and word came that the troops inside the tower were uninjured, the troops who worked to make the improvements felt a sense of pride, he added.

(Courtesy of 4th BCT PAO, 101st Abn. Div.)

ISF, MND-B Soldiers bring positive change to Baghdad with Operation Together Forward

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Security

and Coalition Forces continue working together in support of Operation Together Forward in Baghdad and are already witnessing the positive results of their efforts to quell the threat of terrorist death squads, improvised-explosive devices, kidnappings and murders.

Since the operation began July 9 and through Aug. 18, the combined forces have killed 97 and detained 501 terrorists associated with death squads and seized more than 59 weapons and munitions caches in the process.

A combined force of more than 30,000 security personnel have completed more than 49,564 combat patrols in response to

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki’s directive to immediately secure the Baghdad area.

While security operations aimed at ending violence are still ongoing, Iraqi and Coalition Force leaders have set the stage for permanent changes in Iraq’s capital city by planning civil operations that will coincide with security operations.

Operation Together Forward has fused Iraqi army, Iraqi police and Coalition Force security operations, economic incentives, civic action projects and the control of illegal weapons to bring stability and opportunity back to Baghdad.

(Courtesy of MND – B PAO)



U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Martin Anton Edgill, COMCAM, attached to MND-B

Pulling security

GHAZALIYAH, Iraq – Soldiers from 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, pull tight security while conducting cordon and search missions here Aug. 14 in support of Operation Together Forward.

The Ivy Leaf

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The Ivy Leaf is produced by the
363rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment,
United States Army Reserve
Contributing Units
1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

2nd BCT, 4th Inf. Div.
2nd BCT, 101st Airborne Div.
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INPs take lead in making Abu T'Shir safe

Stryker brigade Soldiers provide cordon security for Operation Together Forward combined mission

Story by Staff Sgt. Kevin Lovel
363rd MPAD

BAGHDAD – Working together to disrupt terrorists and death squad activity in the Baghdad neighborhood of Abu T'Shir, Iraqi National Police and Soldiers from Multi-National Division – Baghdad's Company C, 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, attached to 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, conducted a combined clearance operation here Aug. 5 during a mission in support of Operation Together Forward.

The operation, which began in the early morning

hours and continued through mid-day, consisted of the INPs taking the lead on all house searches, with assistance from Co. C Soldiers, who provided a tight cordon to prevent anyone from entering or exiting the target clearance area, said Capt. Kevin Hutcheson, executive officer, Co. C.

"They're (INPs) searching for caches or terrorist suspects who have 'holed' themselves up into the community," said Sgt. Jonathan Hammond, combat medic, Co. C, whose hometown is Buffalo, N.Y.

Soldiers from Co. C, commented favorably on the ability of the INPs. "The INPs are doing a good job," said Sgt. 1st Class Roger Hunceker, infantryman, Co. C,

who hails from San Jose, Calif. "We're trying to use them in the front. We build their confidence and the public's confidence in them.

"I think it (operation) went really well. The INPs are a lot better trained than the last time I was here," he continued, commenting specifically on the growth he observed in professionalism, confidence and knowledge that INPs demonstrated during the operation.

The joint clearance operation netted several unauthorized weapons, a fake improvised-explosive device, and at least one terrorist suspect, who was in possession of several weapons and fake identification card-making materials, added Hunceker.

Stryker brigade Soldiers seize weapons, munitions during Operation Together Forward

BAGHDAD – Soldiers from 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, detained two suspected terrorists and seized a large weapons cache in a warehouse during a search of Nur and Ghazalyia Aug. 18 in support of Operation Together Forward.

The weapons and munitions seized included 272 120mm mortar rounds, 212 82mm mortar rounds, 99 60mm mortar rounds, 33,800 14.5mm rounds, 5,000 7.62 rounds, 90 5.56 rounds, 165 19mm rounds, 104 rocket-propelled grenades, 240 23mm rockets, 200 60mm primers, 22 107mm rockets, nine 069B rockets, 11 RPG rounds, two landmines, a .30caliber shape charge, a crater charge, 11 fragmentation grenades, a machine gun, two AK-47s, a PKC machinegun, an RPK machine gun, two 14mm machine guns, 20 full AK-47 magazines, ammunition drums, various loose ammunition, 5,000 feet of detonation cord, three bayonets, five 82mm tubes, four 60mm tubes, three 60mm mortar bipods, four 81mm mortar bipods, two 60mm mortar bases, an 81mm base, two land mines, an 81mm mortar base, an aiming circle, two aiming poles, 54 rocket motors and various bomb-making materials.

The suspected terrorists were detained for questioning. All munitions and weapons were confiscated for destruction. Five hundred buildings were searched during the operation.

Operations have taken place in Doura, Shula, Ghazaliyah and Ameriyah from Aug. 7-16. During this time, Iraqi army, Iraqi police and MND-B Soldiers have cleared more than 23,000 buildings, 21 mosques, detained 54 suspected terrorists, seized 326 weapons, registered 341 weapons, found 10 weapons and munitions caches and removed 900 tons of trash.

(Courtesy of MND – B PAO)

MND-B Soldiers strive to keep terrorists out of neighborhood in southern Baghdad



BAGHDAD – Sgt. Peter Schmitt, team leader, Company B, 704th Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, pulls security as his Soldiers emplace road barriers in the Doura neighborhood in southern Baghdad Aug. 11.

Story and photo by Spc. Jason Dangel
4th BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

DOURA, Iraq –

Scores of Iraqi citizens watched as Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers and local Iraqi contractors unloaded dozens of concrete barriers around their homes in an attempt to keep terrorists out of the Doura neighborhood in southern Baghdad Aug. 11.

The emplacement of barriers is the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division's newest approach to keeping the residents of Al-Doura safe and the terrorists out; the work is being done by local Iraqi contractors.

All vehicles leaving or entering the neighborhood are stopped at designated checkpoints manned by Iraqi police looking for known terrorists, bomb-making materials and illegal weapons.

The new security method was implemented as part of Operation Together Forward, the ongoing security plan to curb

terrorism and sectarian violence in the Iraqi capital.

"We are in a conjoined effort with the Iraqi Security Forces to block off certain roads in Doura to better establish security of the neighborhood and give the citizens there a sense of security in their government's effort to build this country," said Master Sgt. Ronald Loebel, brigade engineer noncommissioned officer-in-charge, 4th BCT.

The neighborhood has become increasingly violent since U.S. forces liberated Iraq in 2003, where roadside bombs, murders and terrorist attacks on Iraqi civilians happen daily, explained Loebel. The new project, with the increased presence of ISF in the area, will help mitigate violence in Al-Doura, he said.

"On average we were finding about 25 improvised-explosive devices a week in and around Doura before we started this operation," explained Loebel, a native of Killeen, Texas. "So far this week, there

has only been four IEDs in the area. We have been very successful up to this point."

Murders, car bombs and sectarian violence have also decreased exponentially due to the increased security operations as ISF and Coalition Forces continue to root out the perpetrators responsible for violence in the region, he said.

The neighborhood is not being sealed off as a result of attacks on Coalition Forces but because it is being used by terrorists to incite sectarian tension between Sunni and Shiite Muslims living in Al-Doura, said 1st Lt. Casey Newell, platoon leader, Company B, 704th Support Battalion, of Salem, Ill.

The 4th BCT and its ISF counterparts are attempting to halt attacks directed mainly at Iraqi civilians living in the area, he said.

"We want these people to feel safe by employing a means of control of who goes

SEE SECURITY, PG. 5

Patrol Base Courage Soldiers help Soldiers

Story and photo by Sgt. 1st Class Brent Hunt
1st BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

CAMP TAJI, Iraq –

Nestled on the outskirts of Baghdad lies a tiny U.S. Army camp dubbed Patrol Base Courage, where many Soldiers of 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, call home. As the 1st BCT Soldiers move into their ninth month of a year-long deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, they often visit the base to get their trucks fixed, some hot food and cool liquids, take a shower or just get a much needed break from the 12-hour patrols they conduct in the stifling August heat of Iraq.

To help out the "Regulars" of 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, a group of Soldiers from Company E, 4th Support Bn., attached to 1st Bn., 22nd Inf. Regt., make life a little easier for the infantrymen while they are at the base.

"We come out here for a week at a time and then another team comes out here for a week to replace us," said Sgt. Jennifer Hartman, a three-year Army veteran who finds her self running the dining facility. "We feed more than 350 Soldiers a day, and we can sit about 80 at a time in the dining area."

In a field setting, a dining facility normally serves two hot meals a day with a Meal Ready to Eat for lunch. Soldiers usually have to stand while eating their meals because there is no formal dining area, but Hartman believes everyone deserves a decent place to eat.

"Some of these guys who do the 12-hour patrols only come in here once a day. We serve three hot meals a day so everyone has a chance to get one while they are here. They deserve it."

If a hot meal is not enough, Soldiers can jump in the shower to cool off and clean up at the base, which uses a Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Unit to pump water into the shower trailer. "We are the only ones who come and do this," said Sgt. Pedro Jauregui, water purification specialist, Co. A, 4th Support Bn., attached to Co. E. "This system is capable of producing 600 gallons an hour, although we only go through about 6,000 gallons a day. We use about 4,000 gallons for the showers and 2,000 for the dining facility daily."

The water purification system pumps water from a local stream and takes it through a series of three filters before it is chlorinated.

"I'm going to stay out here for the duration of the deployment just in case something goes wrong with the ROWPU," Jauregui added. "If this thing breaks down, there are no showers for the Soldiers and the DFAC has to go to bottled water to clean their pots and pans."

In addition to serving Soldiers with hot chow and showers, the Soldiers move tons of supplies out to remote bases such as Patrol Base Courage. They take supplies out to Soldiers who patrol the area so they spend less time driving back and forth to Camp Liberty and more time keeping Baghdad safe.

"We are out here every day, resupplying bases like this," said Staff Sgt. Mark Overturf, convoy commander of one the logistical package convoys who is on his third OIF tour. "Today, for instance, I thought we were going to have to come here, go to another patrol base, supply

them and then come back here again.

"Instead, we decided to combine supplies on one truck and put a disabled vehicle, which we were going to have to come back for, on the empty truck," Overturf added. "This will save us a lot of time and it will be a whole lot less dangerous because we don't have to be out on the road as much today."

When it comes to being on the road, there is probably nothing worse than a broken-down vehicle, especially in Iraq. To help Soldiers out with keeping their patrols rolling, mechanics from Co. E are on the base in case a vehicle needs a little tender loving care.

"Whenever one of the 1-22 vehicles breaks down, we can fix it here," said Sgt. Ross Rutledge, a Bradley Fighting Vehicle mechanic. "We get about two or three vehicles a day in here."



CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Sgt. Mark Sanchez, truck driver, Company E, 4th Battalion, attached to 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, straps down a truck to a wrecker on Patrol Base Courage Aug. 20.

Iraqi government, MND-B Soldiers provide humanitarian aid to Zafaraniya



Photo courtesy of 4th Bn., 320th FA Regt., 4th BCT, 101st Abn. Div.

ZAFARANIYA, Iraq – Soldiers from the 801st Brigade Support Battalion; 4th Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division; 1st Brigade, 2nd Battalion, 1st Iraqi National Police Division; The Zafaraniya Neighborhood Advisory Council and tribal leaders, unload humanitarian aid items at the Zafaraniya Government Center Aug. 22.

Story by
1st Lt. Georginia Bradshaw
4th BCT PAO, 101st Abn. Div.

BAGHDAD –

Soldiers from 4th Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, and 801st Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, implemented its consequence management plan Aug. 22 to provide humanitarian aid to displaced citizens in Zafaraniya in response to the recent bombing and gas explosions in the area.

To accomplish this, Soldiers from the 4th BCT provided rice, beans, cooking oil, canned fish, blankets, vegetables, assorted condiments, cooking utensils and stoves for Iraqis affected by the bomb.

"It was a lot of fun being with the Soldiers and helping the people," said Sgt. Mark Faulkner, a native of Oklahoma City, team leader, 801st BSB, 506th RCT, 101st Abn. Div. "We downloaded the humanitarian

packets by hand. We formed a chain with the Iraqi soldiers to download the items which felt like there was a lot of teamwork which built camaraderie."

The items were delivered at the Zafaraniya Government Center. The Soldiers were aided by policemen from 2nd Battalion, 1st Iraqi National Police Division, Neighborhood Advisory Council and tribal leaders, who assisted with the download and distribution of the items to the local citizens.

"Coalition Forces assisting Iraqi Security Forces and local government leaders in humanitarian aid help the local citizens to realize our combined presence is one of growth and facilitation of an emerging government for all of Iraq. The inclusion and participation in this endeavor by all religious and ethnic groups contributes to a more stable and prosperous Iraq," said Sgt. 1st Class Richard Powell, master gunner, 4th Bn., 320th FA Regt., 4th BCT, 101st Abn. Div.

No village too far away

Iraqi army, Coalition Forces reach out to Subak Sur, remote village in Taji's Rashidiya region

Story by Spc. C. Terrell Turner
4th Inf. Div. PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Iraqi army soldiers from the 1st Mechanized Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army Division, along with soldiers from the Macedonian Special Forces Platoon and Psychological Operations Detachment 1120, 303rd Psyop Company, an Army Reserve unit attached to the 1st Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, conducted an assessment patrol in the remote town of Subak Sur Aug. 8.

Several different missions came to fruition as the patrol moved through the city near the Rashidiya region; the Macedonians, who are attached to the 1st Bn., 66th Armor Regiment, 1st BCT, sought to instruct the Iraqi army soldiers on how to conduct patrols in urban environments while the Psyop team conducted a village assessment.

"During an assessment, we go into a village and talk to

people and local vendors to find out what the people are feeling," said Sgt. Josh Cuddy, Psyop team chief, Det. 1120. "We come out to hear what issues they have, what's going on with them, their feelings about the Coalition, the Iraqi government and military."

The town of Subak Sur is predominantly Shia and sits within the area of responsibility of all three units. The mission functioned as a way to not only show support from the Coalition Forces but also an opportunity for the Iraqi army to touch base with the remote town.

"Some of the people here said they haven't seen Coalition Forces for a long time, but they were still friendly to us," said Cuddy. "We want the people to support the Iraqi Security Forces and help 1st Brigade see where the people stand."

The Macedonian army contingent is new to Iraq. In its second month in theater, the soldiers continue to add to

their growing number of missions each day.

"Our mission is to help train the Iraqi army," said Capt. Zoran Ivanov, commander, Macedonian Special Forces Platoon. "We provided security and did our own assessment of the town while the Iraqi army also provided security."

Zoran said he sees progress in the Iraqis that he works with daily.

"The Iraqi army soldiers are motivated, and they are getting better and better every day."

As the Iraqi army takes the lead, it has to deal with unique problems while Coalition Forces support their operations.

"Things have been going good. We have a few militia problems, but that's it," said 1st Lt. Haider Rustem, intelligence officer, 1st Mech. Bde., 9th IAD. "The Macedonians are good at what they do."

IA, Stryker brigade Soldiers help make Ghazaliya safe



Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Kevin Lovel
363rd MPAD

BAGHDAD – As part of Operation Together Forward, Iraqi army soldiers and Soldiers from Multi-National Division – Baghdad's Company C, 4th Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, mounted a combined operation and conducted a cordon and search mission Aug. 20 in the Baghdad neighborhood of Ghazaliya in an effort to decrease terrorist activity and protect law-abiding residents.

Starting before dawn and continuing through the early afternoon, the Soldiers systematically searched houses along neighborhood blocks, taking care to respect Iraqi customs and property along the way.

"Unfortunately, we have to enter each home whether it's empty or not," said Capt. Matthew Mousseau, platoon leader, 1st Platoon, Co. C, 4th Bn.

Many of the residents were at home and were present as each room of their residence was searched. However, some homes appeared to be recently abandoned because all furniture and household items were absent.

In previous searches Co. C has conducted, Soldiers found notes threatening homeowners to leave, and sometimes the notes had a bullet attached, said Mousseau.

It is threats and violence such as these that the IA and MND-B Soldiers hope to end with Operation Together Forward.

"People are very interested (and respond) well to what we are doing, giving us information and displaying a positive attitude towards us," said Sgt. Shane Weaver, infantryman, 1st Plt., Co. C. "They seem happy to see us on the ground."

"It's great to have the IA along," added 2nd Lt. Michael Williams, platoon leader, 2nd Plt., Co. C. "They do a good job and the residents like to see them out here as well."

"We're making the area safe from terrorists," said Habib, an Iraqi army soldier, through the aid of an interpreter.

He said he has a vested interest in eliminating the criminal element in the area, which is "taking some convicted terrorists to prison that had hurt my family."

BAGHDAD – Sgt. 1st Class Robert Thigpen, infantryman, Company C, 4th Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, who hails from Pascagoula, Miss., shows a photo of a man to Ghazaliya residents Aug. 20 in an attempt to obtain positive identification on an individual suspected of being a member of a death squad.

SECURITY.

CONTINUED FROM PG. 3

in and out of Doura. We want to catch the terrorists before they can hurt the citizens," he said.

Working through the night in the cover of darkness, Newell and his platoon are responsible for escorting transportation elements from Co. A, 704th Spt. Bn., and Iraqi contractors from a local construction company, as they collectively work together to emplace barriers around the

Doura community.

The nightly missions have not come easily for the members of the platoon, who up to this point have been constantly targeted by small-arms fire as their convoys roll into the neighborhood, said Sgt. Peter Schmitt, gun truck team leader, Co. B, 704th Spt. Bn.

Citizens still object to the roadblocks despite the added security the new barriers will provide.

Saad Qadr, a local shop owner, insisted that the barriers will cause problems for

the people traveling around the neighborhood but agrees that it will offer additional security for the citizens.

The Doura barrier project is one of many operations taking place as part of Operation Together Forward.

Since Aug. 7, Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, attached to the 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., and working with Iraqi National Police, have cleared illegal weapons and munitions from approximately 3,100 homes and 5,300 huts,

shacks and various other structures in Doura.

At the same time, Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, have begun operations in the southern portion of the neighborhood known as Abu T'schir, an area suspected to be the home of terrorists and death squads.

To date, more than 250 homes have been cleared in Abu T'schir as Soldiers and Iraqi National Police continue to

Pilots, crew chiefs provide integrations training to Taji's newest residents

Story by

Sgt. 1st Class Reginald Rogers

CAB PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

CAMP TAJI, Iraq –

A team of pilots from 1st and 2nd Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, conducted multiple air integration training sessions with the Soldiers of two Stryker Battalions now stationed at Camp Taji.

An HH-60 Medical Evacuation helicopter crew chief assigned to Company C, 2nd Bn., 4th Avn. Regt., and one of the unit's pilots, demonstrated the proper way to load a patient onto the aircraft for Soldiers of the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Multi-National Division – Baghdad.

Pilots from Co. A, 1st Bn., 4th Avn. Regt., explained the capabilities of the CAB's AH-64D Longbow Apache helicopter to approximately 600 Soldiers.

The training is important for both the Aviation and Stryker Soldiers because it allows the ground troops to familiarize with the pilots who provide battlefield protection and an added asset to their units, said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Corey Swetz, Co. A, 1st Bn., 4th Avn. Regt.

"It allows them to know our capabilities as well as giving them a face-to-face with the people they'll be actually talking to in the air," he said. "It lets us tell them what they can expect from us. They've got a ground perspective. We're just trying to let them understand what it is to deal with the air crews and the importance or painting the picture properly so that we can give them the best support possible."

According to Sgt. 1st Class Chad Walker, platoon sergeant, 2nd platoon, Co. C, 1st Bn., 17th Infantry Regiment, 172nd SBCT, the unit never utilized the services of the HH-60, while serving in Mosul.

"We primarily used the Strykers as a form of casualty evacuation," he explained. "The Combat Support Hospital was close enough that anytime we got hit with anything, we could truck them on down to the CSH. It was a lot quicker than using air support."

It was important for his unit to receive the training because a lot of its younger Soldiers had never seen any of the aircraft before, said Walker.



Photo by Spc. Creighton Holub, CAB PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Chief Warrant Officer 2 Cory Albrecht, a Longbow Apache helicopter pilot assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, teaches Soldiers assigned to the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team about the capabilities of the CAB's attack helicopter during air integration training held here Aug. 8.

Since the unit will be operating in a theater different from the Mosul area, having attack and support aviation is critical to its success.

"It's important that we get the aviation integration training so that our guys are at least a little more fluent with operations that are going on here," said Walker, who leads a platoon of 38 Soldiers.

Staff Sgt. Kristopher Barnette, 172nd SBCT, said he, too, was pleased with the way the CAB presented the training and he was enlightened by the amount of information provided by the flight crews.

"I think the aviation crew had everything put together really well. They told us everything we needed to know as far as extracting the pilots and anything we may need to get out or take care, as far as not letting anything get into enemy hands.

Barnette pointed out that his unit had worked with aviation before but not with

a unit with as many aviation assets as the CAB.

"Every day that we were out, we would work with the aviation elements," he said. Barnette, who is a native of Blacksburg, S.C. "I think this training will be very, very beneficial. I just look forward to working with these guys."

According to 1st Lt. Nicholas Sykes, the training is a valuable tool for his Soldiers as they learn about new aircraft and what the CAB can provide for troops on the ground.

"So far the training has been good," said Sykes, platoon leader, 2nd platoon, Co. C.

"I had never seen an HH-60 model. I got to see a new bird today, and I learned a little bit more about the Apaches from the guys in the skies. That always benefits us on the ground."

He said he thinks the air integration

training will be beneficial for his unit because it provides them a valuable lesson about several key assets in the fight.

"Any training we can get, when we've got a little down time, like we have right now, is awesome for the guys," he explained. "It keeps them from getting too bored, and it gives us infantry guys something to learn."

Sykes added the intent of his unit's mission in Mosul was very similar to what they're asked to do in Baghdad.

"We were there to help pacify the city and create a safe and secure environment for the local nationals there," Sykes said.

The Combat Aviation Brigade, along with the two battalions from the 172nd Stryker Brigade, will continue to patrol the skies and streets of Baghdad as part of MND-B's effort in support of the government of Iraq to decrease violence and end terrorist operations.

MND-B Soldiers help citizens of southwest Baghdad with humanitarian-assistance

Story by Sgt. 1st Class David Dockett
2nd BCT PAO, 1st Arm. Div.

BAGHDAD – Soldiers from Company B, 47th Forward Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, delivered five tons of humanitarian-assistance supplies to the Neighborhood Advisory Council building in the southwestern Baghdad neighborhood of Ameriyah Aug. 15.

The Soldiers of 1st Armored Division have been performing operations in this southwest section of Baghdad since Aug. 13. Vehicle traffic has been temporarily halted, and the area was closed off so 6,000 buildings could be searched for weapons and terrorist suspects.

Another key area during the operation is helping pro-

vide for the needs of the local residents.

"The supplies are meant to aid families displaced by sectarian violence in Baghdad," said Capt. Stacy Bear, Company A, 412th Civil Affairs Battalion, attached to the 2nd BCT.

The Neighborhood Advisory Committee in Ameriyah, a local leaders group for the area, estimate that 500 families in the area have arrived from other places in Baghdad with little more than the possessions they could carry.

Many local residents have accepted the displaced people into their homes and neighborhoods and voiced concern about getting the necessary items to help sustain them until they are able to return to their homes.

The supplies the NAC will be distributing include

canned meats, dried pasta, rice, flour, baby food, cheese, instant milk, blankets and large bags of dried peas and beans. Blankets, pots, and kitchen utensils were also available.

"It's good to help out the Iraqi people this way, delivering food and supplies to the (Neighborhood Advisory Council) so they can distribute it to those who need it," said Capt. Franklin Scherra, commander, HHC, 2nd BCT, 1st AD.

It was hard work for Soldiers unloading the supplies in 115 degree heat, but Soldiers said the cause was worthwhile to the members of HHC, 2nd Brigade.

"It's a lot of work to unload everything, but it's a great thing to do for the Iraqi people," said Spc. Timothy O'Connor, a unit supply specialist with HHC, 2nd BCT.

Soldiers bring medical care to Tahrir

Story and photo by Pfc. Paul Harris
3rd HBCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

TAHRIR, Iraq – An Iraqi girl reacts to receiving a shot from a Coalition Forces medic that will clear up her upper respiratory infection with tears welling up in her eyes. While pain is minimal, the after-effects will provide her with a more healthy start in her young life, said Medics from the from 4th Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division and Soldiers from 1-68 Combined Arms Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers.

The child's medical treatment was courtesy of the Soldiers, who jointly conducted a Medical Civil Action Project in the town of Tahrir; a town that has no readily available medical care.

On Aug. 12, a building in the town was converted into a waiting room, pharmacy and doctor's offices. One Iraqi doctor, Capt. Farhan from 2nd Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division, and one American, Maj. Jeremy Beauchamp, battalion surgeon, 1-68 CAB, prepared to see patients as word of the MEDCAP was broadcast over humvee loudspeakers that joint forces were ready to see patients.

Shortly after the announcement, people began to pour in from the surrounding neighborhood.

"It's one way to make the Iraqi people see the Iraqi army and the U.S. as good people," said 1st Lt. Edmond Jackson, operations officer for the Military Transition Team, 1-68 CAB.

Often, the local people hear information about Coalition Forces and the Iraqi army that has been distorted by the enemy, Jackson said as he was about to be overrun by a squad of 6-year-olds, who desperately wanted the Beanie Babies in his hands. While the medics were treating Iraqis, Jackson and his Soldiers were handing out toys, pencils and notebooks to the kids.

One Iraqi father bought his son to be examined. The boy had been shot by an AK-47 and still has the bullet lodged in his head. An x-ray his father brought to the clinic indicated the bullet had barely missed the child's spinal cord. Surprisingly, according to his father, the boy has experienced few complications from the bullet, but he will eventually require surgery.

"It is disheartening," said Spc. Kimberly Smoot, a healthcare specialist with Company C, 64th Brigade Support Battalion, on loan to 1-68 CAB for the mission. "There is not a whole lot we can do for something that would be easy to fix



TAHRIR, Iraq – An x-ray of a local Iraqi boy shows a bullet still lodged in his brain. The boy will eventually need surgery. Unfortunately there are no hospitals in his hometown of Tahrir, Iraq, that can perform such an operation, said Maj. Jeremy Beauchamp, native of Wales, Wis., battalion surgeon, 1-68 CAB, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, during a Medical Civil Action Project Aug. 12.

in America ... (yet is) impossible here." Smoot referred the man to Baghdad

General Hospital, adding that she would like to take every severely injured or ill patient she sees back to the United States but knows that is not practical or possible.

Part of the reason for the MEDCAP exercise was to get the Iraqi people comfortable with coming to a clinic that will eventually be run by their own government, Jackson said.

One Iraqi man who came to the MED-

CAP to seek treatment for an ulcer expressed pleasure at seeing an Iraqi doctor present. The man said, through an interpreter, that he felt more comfortable seeing an Iraqi physician because he is from the same country, speaks the same language and knows more about the common health issues of the people here. The man added that he was happy to see the continued U.S. involvement and cooperation with the Iraqi army and

believes it has made the Iraqi army stronger.

Dr. (Capt.) Farhan said that a great many of the medical issues faced by locals is due to the lack of iron (mineral) incorporated in their daily diet. He made it a point to hand out pink iron supplement pills to almost every patient he treated.

Three or so hours into the MEDCAP, with the last patient of the day finally seen, Beauchamp said he was happy with the way the clinic experience had turned out.

"(The MEDCAP) shows (the Iraqi) people a different side to the American and the Iraqi army – instead of riding down the street in their armored vehicles (with) their guns pointing outwards. It fosters good will between all of us," Beauchamp said. "We are here on the ground with smiles — there is more of a personal face to both the Americans and the Iraqi army."

"(The MEDCAP) shows (the Iraqi) people a different side to the Americans and the Iraqi army -- instead of riding down the street in their armored vehicles (with) their guns pointing outwards."

Maj. Jeremy Beauchamp
battalion surgeon
1-68 CAB,
3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team,
4th Infantry Division

2-1 AD,

CONTINUED FROM PG. 1

tionship with the Iraqi army and the Iraqi police.

"Our Soldiers are well trained, disciplined and prepared for operations in Baghdad.

"We have transitioned from Kuwait to Iraq safely and are now focused on our mission to enhance the Iraqi Security Forces, ensure the safety of the Iraqi people, and facilitate the success of Iraq's unity government," said Col. Robert Scurlock, commander, 2nd BCT.

The possibility of movement into Iraqi combat areas has been an integral part of the training cycle since the brigade deployed to Kuwait in November.

Since then, two task forces, originally assigned to the 2nd BCT, moved to support operations in Ramadi and a task force moved to Baghdad earlier this year.

"The 2nd BCT underwent an extensive train-up in Kuwait and back at our home station. We have made adjustments to enemy tactics and continue to do so. Our Soldiers are motivated and great Americans and are ready to do their part of the mission with drive and determina-

tion," said Sgt. Maj. Tyrone Barlow, operations, 2nd BCT.

2nd BCT Soldiers arriving in Baghdad have been in the area for less than a month and are getting accustomed to their new surroundings.

"Living conditions here are excellent. All of us have a positive attitude, and we're looking forward to doing whatever needs to be done to complete this mission in a timely manner. I have confidence in the chain of command and in the equipment available to us — I'm ready to go," said Spc. Evan Morris of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 40th Engineer Battalion, 2nd BCT, 1st Arm. Div.

Team assesses Baghdad factories

MND-B, Coalition Forces, Iraqi government assist factories to improve Iraqi industry, stability

Story and photo by
SpC. Rodney Foliente
4th Inf. Div. PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq –
A group of Soldiers and civilians cautiously walked past broken hulks and dormant sentinels and perhaps felt uncomfortable disturbing the deep silence within the factory building that seemed to hold its breath. For a moment, one's imagination re-animated a bustle of swarming workers and the hums, rattles and hisses of machinery at work. Imagination faded back to the present, and the quiet stillness seemed eerie and out of place – like a muted ghost of a once-gloried past.

Suddenly, a manager shattered the silence and caused a Soldier to flinch as she told the group that a competitive import market, a lack of inexpensive raw materials, spare parts and modern equipment, caused the building and others like it to shut down, causing the plant to operate at low production levels and employment rates.

Plant after plant, from one industry to another, the visiting group heard much of the same from directors, managers and workers.

Which is why the Multi-National Division – Baghdad assessment team conducted a three-day visit of seven state-owned factories in east-central Baghdad July 19 in a continuing effort, coordinated with Coalition Forces and the government of Iraq, to help improve local industry.

The goal of the operation is to increase the factories' productivity, which will hopefully lead to an increase in employment, stimulation of the local economies and stability in the local neighborhoods.

"The Iraqi government has been very supportive of our efforts," said Cmdr. Jeff Hensley, public administration team leader, with Naval Cooperation and Guidance of Shipping out of Great Lakes Naval Station, Chicago, who is attached to MND-B's civil military operations, and leader of the assessment team.

"Through our cooperation with the Iraqi Reconstruction Management Office, we have asked and received permission from the Ministry of Industry and Minerals to conduct assessments of their companies. They appear very enthusiastic about the prospect of seeing economic development take hold in Iraq and appreciate our assistance."

The assessment and security team was led by CMO and included Soldiers and engineers from 414th Civil Affairs Battalion, based out of Utica, N.Y., and 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, based out of Riverdale Park, Md.; both units are attached to MND-B.

In June, the CMO assessment team also visited four other state-owned factories in and around northern Baghdad and plans to continue visiting production plants throughout the MND-B area of operations.

"We're trying to develop an engagement plan specifically tailored to each state-owned production plant," said Air Force Capt. William Deitch, judge advo-



BAGHDAD – During the container-making process, empty cans for vegetable oil roll around a rollercoaster track while a factory worker performs quality control and ensures everything rolls smoothly at State Company for Vegetable Oils in eastern-central Baghdad July 19.

cate general, 18th Wing, Kadena Air Base, Japan, attached to CMO.

Tahseen, a factory manager for the State Company for Vegetable Oils, expressed his excitement and eagerness to work with MND-B towards improving the factory, the local area and the economy.

There are many forms of assistance CMO can bring to the table, said Hensley. Training in management, marketing, finance and other essential business skills is something that can be facilitated by organic MND-B assets and outside organizations.

"In some cases, we can help identify sources of funding for broken or outdated equipment necessary to restart production lines," said Hensley. Additionally, they can assist with getting an SOE onto a list of approved contractors, allowing them to compete for CF or GoI contracts.

SOEs are the largest industries in the country and have the greatest capacity for production and employment, added Deitch.

There are also other economic advantages that arise from increasing the productivity of these SOEs, said Hensley.

"Many of these companies are anchors in a micro-economy – one frequently plagued by violence and unrest,"

explained Hensley.

"The economic multiplier effect of additional wages being funneled into the surrounding communities is potentially huge."

Smaller businesses are likely to benefit, generating more business and employment.

"Additionally, many of the SOEs are either suppliers or customers of other SOEs. When one begins producing, others are

likely to feel the impact. The potential for improved security stretches well beyond assisting a single state-owned company."

That is one of the overall goals: to improve security, emphasized Hensley. He said CMO is working to achieve that goal in areas commonly vulnerable to the terrorist message.

"We focus on the troubled areas of Baghdad in hopes that an increase in

employment will improve the areas' security," added Deitch. Supporting employment and boosting the economy helps strengthen and rebuild the infrastructure, he said.

"When a young man is without a job and struggling to feed his family, he's not likely to have a lot of confidence in the current government of Iraq," Hensley said.

"If that same young man can be gainfully employed in an honorable trade, he is much more likely to turn against those who threaten the country's stability – like the (terrorists). He becomes part of the solution to this country's problems instead of part of the problem."

MND-B's role is not just limited to Baghdad, concluded Hensley.

"Several of the SOEs we've targeted for assistance have facilities throughout the country," he said. "The rehabilitation of one, benefits all. In the end, economic development crosses military AOs."

Hensley added that the assessment team's role is a relatively small one in the grand scheme.

"My team and I are simply trying to get the ball rolling," he said. "It will be the managers and the employees of these SOEs that will play the key role in Iraq's economic development; they are highly motivated to succeed."

"When a young man is without a job and struggling to feed his family, he's not likely to have a lot of confidence in the current government of Iraq."

Air Force Capt. William Deitch
Judge advocate general,
18th Wing, attached to Civil Military
Operations assessment team,
Multi-National Division – Baghdad



Photo courtesy of 4th Bn., 320th FA Regt., 4th BCT, 101st Abn. Div.

BAGHDAD – Firefighters put out a fire and save an Iraqi family's home with new equipment provided by 4th Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad.

Fires battalion helps rebuild Baghdad fire station

Story by
Sgt. 1st Class Richard Powell
4th BCT PAO, 101st Abn. Div.

FOB LOYALTY, Iraq –

Baghdad has a fire department that does more than fight fires – it fights terrorism. Built with the help of 4th Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, the department is staffed with Iraqis who are taking charge of their own safety.

New to the emerging government, but not new to fire-fighting, Col. Laith, director for the Iraqi Civil Defense Headquarters and Control Center, has overseen the building of the Baghdad Fire Department. The Soldiers of 4th Bn., 320th FA Regt., have provided materials and expertise; Laith has provided the motivation and the men.

The result is a “command and control” headquarters much like the American 911 system. Firefighters respond to a number of emergencies, including fires, explosions and terrorist’s attacks. The firefighters also take on extra responsibilities in a combat zone, responding to discoveries of unexploded ordnance. They must ensure proper disposal of these dangerous pieces of artillery and other weapons that did not explode when fired.

By containing fires that may have otherwise spread across the city, their efforts have prevented millions of dollars in damage. Local citizens, including families whose houses have been saved from destruction, are praising the firemen for their courage.

Khadim Mansour is a Baghdad resident who said his family is grateful. On a hot July afternoon, an electrical fire started in his home in a neighborhood in the eastern part of the city.

The chief of the local fire station, Abbas Asfir Namah, responded with his men. The firefighters charged up the stairs toward the second-story fire and extinguished it in time to save the home.

The 4th Bn., 320th FA Regt., has supplied water, phone lines and security to help the fire department in addition to installing barriers to improve security at the ICDC compound.

The fire department building has been renovated, with new living space for firefighters and a well system to maintain water. A pit for unexploded mortars has been built outside the station, and MND-B has assisted in helping clear more than 10,000 hazardous rounds from the pit.

No fire department would be complete without a truck, and the Baghdad firefighters now have a new one to carry water. With a combination of their own bravery and MND-B aid, the ICDC will be protecting the residents of Baghdad from both the forces of nature and the forces of terrorism for years to come, said Lt. Col. Kevin Milton, commander, 4th Bn., 320th FA Regt.

In addition to saving houses, the Iraqis provide benefits that are harder to put a price on. Their service has brought confidence, strength and unity to the community,



Photo courtesy of 4th Bn., 320th FA Regt., 4th BCT, 101st Abn. Div.

BAGHDAD – Lt. Col. Kevin Milton (center), battalion commander, 4th Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, and Col. Laith (center right) director, Iraqi Civil Defense Center and Control Center, gather with Iraqi firefighters in front of their new fire truck in east Baghdad.

Union returns to Diyara

Agricultural union gives Diyara region farmers reason for hope, prosperity, normality

Story and photo by Cpl. Michael Molinaro
2nd BCT PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

FOB KALSU, Iraq –
The Diyara Agricultural Union held its first elections in the history of the program at the Diyara secondary school Aug. 12. Farmers from the region voted for seven members to sit on the board of directors that will be depended upon to lead the union and its members into the future.

“They will decide the direction of the union and resource allocations in Diyara,” said Capt. Ben Simms, commander, Company D, 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division.

The union is a means of resource for the more than 1,200 farmers in the southern Baghdad/northern Babil provincial region. It’s a program that enables them to buy seeds, tools, insecticides and other items at subsidized prices and earn profits previously not seen before, Simms said. They will also be able to make equipment trades with other farmers, making it a group effort to succeed.

The union was run by the Iraqi government during the Saddam regime. Things were handled by the Ministry of Agriculture, sometimes leaving the smaller individual farmer’s needs out in the cold as they tended to cater to those that would help stock markets in Baghdad, Saleh said. After the fall of the regime, the unions closed up.

“We had to rely on the government before,” said Saleh, a lifelong resident of Diyara. “Sometimes we would get things, sometimes we didn’t. There was no board to get our voice heard. The union allows all of us to work with each other and more importantly buy what we need much cheaper than before.”

Soldiers from 2-8 Inf. saw the union as a way of getting the farmers back on their feet and being able to conduct business for themselves. Agriculture is the primary means of business in this part of Iraq and more than 4,000 people from the region depend on it to keep fed and clothed. By using a more democratic approach, the union will run more like a business than a government subsidy, Simms said.

Soldiers from 2-8 Inf. donated fertilizer and other con-



FOB KALSU, Iraq – A representative from the Ministry of Agriculture validates the results of elections held Aug. 12 in Diyara. The elections were held to select seven individuals to the board of the Diyara Agricultural Union, functioning again for the first time since the fall of Saddam.

sumables to the union so the farmers had something to work with, “start-up cash,” as Simms described it. After that, it will be up to those elected to set the prices for the farmers to buy their items and get things rolling at the union.

“We will be there to help them run it in the beginning, make sure the bookkeeping is kept straight and help with projects to give them a better office and storage space to work out of,” Simms remarked. “We’ll oversee the initial meetings, but over time we will be less and less a part of it.”

A Sunni was elected president and three Shia’s were voted to the other top positions, defining the diversity of the board and representing the demographics of the region. The board will be tasked to keep the union solvent and with a high voter turnout and the enthusiasm witnessed in the faces of the farmers, hope is prevalent in the area.

“We love what we do and are good farmers,” one resident said moments after voting. “Now we will rely on each other to give our families better lives and make this area what it once was.”

Iraqi, MND-B leaders hold press conference on progress of Operation Together Forward

Story by Spc. Joshua Ramey
2nd BCT PAO, 1st Arm. Div.

BAGHDAD – Brig. Gen. Abdul Jaleel Kahlaiaf, commander, 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, along with Col. Robert Scurlock Jr., commander of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, discussed operations in support of Operation Together Forward in the southwestern Baghdad neighborhood of Ameriyah Aug. 16.

Operation Together Forward began Aug. 13 for the brigade and continues to improve the lives of Iraqis in the Baghdad area.

Jaleel said he was optimistic of the recent successes of the Iraqi army in Baghdad resulting in the reduction of violence. “Together, we have reduced the number of acts of terrorism which ... is a victory for all Iraqi people,” said Jaleel, through an interpreter. He also emphasized the importance of the Iraqi citizens working together with Coalition Forces to bring those responsible for violence to justice because the operation is “symbolic in Iraq’s fight against terrorism.”

Scurlock emphasized the importance of

the combined partnership with the 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division.

“As a result of the increased violence in Iraq,” he said, “the government of Iraq requested additional forces to come to Baghdad to help stem the violence ... we’ve had the honor to work with the 1st brigade, 6th Division, as well as the 3rd Brigade, 6th Division.”

Iraqi and Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers searched every building in Ameriyah, totaling about 6,000 structures, with the focus on clearing the area of weapons and interacting with the local population. Operation Together Forward also served to clean the debris and trash, and to demonstrate to the people of Ameriyah that they can have a better life.

“Additionally,” said Col. Scurlock, “we took surveys, did a census, registered weapons and registered cars.”

The combined forces are working closely with the citizens of Ameriyah and local government officials to identify and resource local needs and set conditions for future growth.

“With unity and security, (the people of Ameriyah) can have prosperity,” added Scurlock.



Photo by Master Sgt. Eric Lobsinger, 4th Inf. Div. PAO
BAGHDAD – Brig. Gen. Abdul Jaleel Kahlaiaf, the commander of 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, and Col. Robert Scurlock Jr., the commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, discuss ongoing security operations in support of Operation Together Forward Aug. 16 at the Ameriyah Neighborhood Advisory Council in Baghdad.



Photo by Spc. George Welcome, 2nd BCT PAO, 101st Abn. Div.

MAHMUDIYAH, Iraq – Iraqi army soldiers from 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, perform a demonstration of their battle field tactics during a Transfer of Authority ceremony held here August 14.

Iraqi Army ‘Takes the Lead’ in Mahmudiyah

Story by Maj. Jose Garcia
2nd BCT PAO, 101st Abn. Div.

FOB MAHMUDIYAH, Iraq — The 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, officially assumed responsibility for security in parts of Mahmudiyah, Yusufiyah and Lutufiyah, during a Transfer of Authority ceremony Aug. 14.

During the ceremony held at the Iraqi army Compound in Mahmudiyah, the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, transferred absolute responsibility for security of a region to the Iraqi Brigade known as the “Desert Lion” that includes roughly 322 square kilometers in South Baghdad and is referred to by many as the “Triangle of Death.”

Local sheiks, community leaders and senior military leaders that 4th Bde., 6th IAD, worked closely with throughout the past 11 months were also in attendance during the hour-long ceremony, which included a pass and review of the Iraqi troops and a demonstration of combat tactics by the Iraqi soldiers.

Lt. Col. Eric Conrad, commander, 2nd Brigade Troops Battalion, 2nd BCT, 101st Abn. Div., who also serves as the Military Transition Team chief for the 4th Bde., 6th IAD, worked closely with the leader and soldiers of the brigade and was proud to see the progress they have made in the past 11 months.

“I am very proud of the Soldiers of this unit. They have demonstrated they are ready to move forward to the next level and take responsibility for security of this area,” said Conrad.

In addition to security provided by the



Photo by Spc. George Welcome, 2nd BCT PAO, 101st Abn. Div.

MAHMUDIYAH, Iraq – Iraqi army soldiers from 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, stand proudly with the colors of their country held high during a Transfer of Authority ceremony held here Aug. 14.

Iraqi army in this area, soldiers from 4th Bde., 6th IAD, often are directly engaged with many humanitarian and other local civic actions. The unit has provided security for many essential service construction projects. It has physically helped repair local schools, and it has actively improved local area appearance and pride in the community.

“In addition to fighting well and ensuring the security of Iraqis in key areas of South Baghdad, the 4th Brigade, 6th IAD, has done a great job in working to improve essential services and quality of life in the area,” said Col. Todd Ebel,

Commander 2nd BCT. “The brigade’s soldiers have helped repair several local schools and other facilities long neglected; many have simply selflessly served their people and are committed to make their communities better.”

Ebel expressed his full confidence in the soldiers and leadership of the Iraqi soldiers. “Col. Ali is a true patriot. I have watched him and his brave soldiers continue to excel and keep up the fight against terrorists and other insurgents,” said Ebel. “I do not make this statement lightly. For many reasons, the fight in South Baghdad is unlike other areas; it is

arguably the most complex and most lethal area in all of Iraq. To operate here and to be effective in balancing lethal and non-lethal counterinsurgency tasks takes raw courage, patience and a strong will to persevere under the harshest conditions.” Ebel continued. “Daily, Col. Ali and his men do just that and they have been phenomenal. I am very proud of them.”

Ebel pointed out that the security of the area does not reside only with the Iraqi army and other Coalition Security Forces.

“The future of Iraq and its security does not lie with Iraqi Security Forces alone,” said Ebel. “It is the people that must choose peace, freedom and prosperity — and cooperate to achieve it. It is only by working together can Iraqis move forward in their desire for a peaceful and prosperous future.”

The 1st Battalion, 4th Brigade, 6th IAD, assumed responsibility of the Lutufiyah area, the southern part of the triangle, from 1st Bn., 502nd Inf. Regt., June 15.

A month later, the 2nd Battalion, 4th Brigade, 6th IAD, assumed responsibility for the city of Mahmudiyah and the surrounding countryside from 1st Bn., 502nd Inf. Regt.

The 4th Bde., 6th IAD, has demonstrated that its Soldiers are well prepared for their task of security in southern Baghdad and have moved together forward to meet this challenge.

“I am proud to have served and trained with such a great group of soldiers. They are a superb unit and ready to assume this important task of security for south Baghdad.” said Conrad.

CENTCOM CSM vis



Photo by Spc. Karl Johnson, 363rd MPAD

BAGHDAD – Command Chief Master Sgt. Curtis Brownhill, United States Central Command, talks with Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 66th Armored Regiment, in Mushadda Aug. 14. Brownhill visited Soldiers throughout Iraq to pass along words of encouragement and to gather feedback from Soldiers.

Story by Master Sgt. Eric Lobsinger
MND – B PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq –
It was a typical day in central Iraq Aug. 14 when Air Force Command Chief Master Sgt. Curtis Brownhill, the command sergeant major for Central Command, came to visit the Soldiers of Multi-National Division – Baghdad.

The sun was baking the ground at a steady 115 degrees Fahrenheit and Soldiers were in full battle rattle conveying throughout the area in humvees, Abrams tanks, Bradleys and Stryker Combat Vehicles as others plied the airways in Aviation Brigade helicopters.

What was perhaps not so typical was his opportunity to witness first-hand as MND-B Soldiers spotted an improvised-explosive device and immediately stopped the convoy he was riding in to take care of the dangerous obstacle implanted beneath the very road he was traveling on.

Brownhill, who is the first Air Force command chief master sergeant to serve as the Central Command's top enlisted leader, a position he has held for two years, said his visit with the Soldiers was important because it provided him an opportunity to represent Gen. John Abizaid, the commanding general of Central Command, and to be able to provide Abizaid's guidance down to the Soldiers themselves. The visit also provided him with an opportunity to bring issues back up from the field, which allows the leaders an opportunity to work to resolve the issues through the echelons of command.

Central Command is based out of MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Fla.

"The biggest thing for me is just to be with those Soldiers," said Brownhill. "Our country should be so proud – the mothers and the fathers, the sisters, the brothers, the rest of the families, the neighborhoods," he said. "It's the schools they came from, their communities have much to be proud of for these men and women who are out here doing

this hard work.

Brownhill joined MND-B's Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald Riling for a short tour of the division's headquarters before boarding a helicopter for the flight up to Camp Taji, where he was whisked away in a humvee convoy headed for Taramiya to visit the Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 66th Armored Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division.

While en route to the patrol base, alert personnel security detachment Soldiers in the lead vehicle noticed wires sticking out of a hole in the side of the road at the site of a previous roadside bomb attack. There was perhaps a sense of déjà vu for Brownhill and his fellow travelers, whose convoy had been hit by another roadside bomb merely two days prior while traveling from Fallujah to Baghdad.

The Soldiers quickly brought the convoy to a stop, established a security perimeter and investigated the area. Once it was determined the area was safe, the convoy continued on to Taramiya.

"I think he was able to see our professional Soldiers in action, and he realized these guys know what they are doing. We don't find every IED, but today we were successful twice in finding IEDs. No one got unjured today so that's a great thing ... here you are rolling into the town of Tarmiya and an hour and a half later you're rolling out and you have new wire put into the same hole -- and it was rigged for the second time. I think he has a good perception of what's going on the battlefield."

Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald Riling
4th Infantry Division

Upon his arrival at the patrol base, he immediately commenced to introduce himself to the Soldiers and was briefed by Sgt. 1st Class Howard Moffett, a platoon sergeant with Company E, 1-66 AR.

"We've been here for about two months working with the Iraqi police," said Moffett. "We were working with the Iraqi army before, but they are now supporting operations in Baghdad. Things are getting better one step at a time."

Moffett's point was a key one for Brownhill.

"The hardest thing we have to deal with is not getting such an appetite," said Brownhill, "as to think we can do it all in one day. It takes time."

The patrol base is one of the brigade's success stories, added Command Sgt. Maj. Ricky Young, 1-66 AR.

"Getting into the outlying areas has been very important," said Young. "We're doing a lot of work with the IPs and things are really coming along."

"It's important for the Soldiers to see the CENTCOM



BAGHDAD – Command Chief Master Sgt. Curtis Brownhill, United States Central Command, talks with Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 66th Armored Regiment, in Mushadda Aug. 14. Brownhill visited Soldiers throughout Iraq to pass along words of encouragement and to gather feedback from Soldiers.

chief," said Riling. "It gives them a chance to see who he is and it provides him a chance to explain what he does. Plus, it's important for him as the CENTCOM command chief master sergeant to see what our Soldiers are doing out on the battlefield every day.

After the briefing, Brownhill went around and met with each of the Soldiers and shook their hands.

"How are you doing? Where are you from? What are you doing? How are you doing?" he asked each of the Soldiers he came to while leaning up against a wall with them or sitting down and chatting for a few minutes and thanking them for what they do.

"Thanks for coming in here and spending time with us," he told the troops. "It takes a lot to lead in this environment – leading Soldiers in combat – it is an awesome responsibility."

Afterward, he took advantage of an opportunity to go on the roof of the building to get a birds-eye view of the surrounding city before heading back to his convoy en route to Mashadda Patrol Base to visit with more 1-66 AR Soldiers.

"We follow the three Ps here when we deal with the local populace: be Polite, be Professional and be Prepared," explained Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Seaman, Special Troops Battalion, who is currently the acting 1st BCT command sergeant major. "The thing about the insurgency is

visits MND-B Soldiers



Photo by Spc. Karl Johnson, 363rd MPAD

ll, United States Central Command, and Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald Riling, 4th Infantry Division, listens to a convoy brief-
rea Aug. 12.

you never know what is going to happen.”

Following some heartfelt farewells, Browning turned and headed back toward the convoy to hit the road again. In fact, convoying is second nature to him since he travels throughout Central Command’s area of operations.

After leaving the city of Taramiya, alert Soldiers once again spotted a potential roadside bomb and immediately brought the convoy to a stop – at the same site the previous IED was believed to have been emplaced. The Soldiers noticed a new set of wires sticking out of the same hole the convoy had stopped at on its way in. Gun crews opened fire with crew-served weapons into the wood line in an attempt to take out the triggerman.

Following an initial inspection, Soldiers believed there was no bomb. However, upon closer inspection, the Soldiers noticed a second set of wires, these leading down to a 120mm round, and called in an Explosive Ordnance Disposal team, which blew up the bomb in place.

Although the incident put the visit well behind schedule, Riling said he felt the experience was beneficial, particularly since Brownhill was able to witness the professionalism of the 4th Inf. Div. Soldiers as they alertly discovered the roadside bomb and dealt with it.

“I think he was able to see our professional Soldiers in action, and he realized these guys know what they are

doing,” said Riling. “We don’t find every IED, but today we were successful twice in finding IEDs. No one got injured today so that’s a great thing.”

Riling said the visit also offered Brownhill an opportunity to see firsthand how complex the fight really is.

“Here you are rolling into the town of Taramiya and an hour and a half later you’re rolling out and you have new wire put into the same hole – and it was rigged for the second time. I think he has a good perception of what’s going on the battlefield. He sees how serious these guys take this and what a great job they’re doing.

“He told me ‘Hey I’m real proud of the Soldiers – they are doing a real good job out here.’ I’m glad he was able to come out and visit Soldiers in the 4th Infantry Division. He’s a Soldier’s Soldier – that’s what I like about him.”

The remainder of the convoy went without incident as it rolled into Patrol Base Mushadda to meet with the Soldiers of dismount platoon, Co. B, 1-66 AR.

Once again, Browning quickly made the rounds visiting with the Soldiers and sat down to have lunch with them.

“Have I shaken your hand yet? he asked a Soldier. “I’ve been on a hand-shaking frenzy. You guys are some pretty important folks. Thanks a lot for what you are doing.”

His relaxed style seemed to make Soldiers instantly relax and they were quick to open up to him. After lunch, he sat

Words from Command Chief Master Sgt. Curtis Brownhill

“Clearly, the United States Central Command is very busy right now. We look at this as a regional issue. Today, with the Global War on Terror, we’re really battling. What we’re battling is the openness verses the closed and darkness – and for the people of the region it’s really a struggle between moderation and extremism.

Everything that we do in this region that provides stability to this region is beneficial and important to the entire world. We have a lot of actors in this region. Iraq and Afghanistan are given, but we have other tough customers like Iran, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Lebanon. So Gen. Abizaid has quite a bit on his plate, but the work that we do in Iraq and Afghanistan is significant:

- o The building of that confidence and capacity, the training of security forces that can take on the requirements of their country:

- o Helping them develop and enroot a representative government, building the institutions that come in the form of the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Defense.

That provides stability – and that is being looked at by other countries in the region in a positive light that gives them the confidence and capacity to move with their own forms and reforms with representative governments. The good work that we do in Iraq and Afghanistan has a strategic effect across this region.”

“I think that we need to keep in perspective future deployments. What does that mean? We have always said that our ability to reduce forces and to reduce our force footprint over here, hinges on the Iraqi Security Forces being trained – being able to plan and execute independent operations and hold battle space. They’re doing very, very well. I think what you’ll see in the future is an obvious decline in forces because they’ll be able to do those things. But I will tell you that we will also partner with the Iraqi forces for many years to come, and I think that’s important to recognize.

The nature of the enemy that we fight today is more of an extremist ideology that comes in the form of a network, not a nation state that we fight. You could use countries like Germany and Japan in the past that were sworn enemies of the United States and, once defeated, we helped them rebuild in their capacity and partnered with them for many, many years.

Today, those countries that were former foes are now some of our greatest allies. We see that for the Iraqi people as well. The numbers will come down obviously because the conditions are set for that to happen – but I think you’ll find us partnering in this region with the Iraqis for many years to come – as we should.”

on the ground, leaning up against the wall and chatted with Pvt. Mitchell Hullman, who hails from Minnesota.

“I spend time with Soldiers, Airmen, Marines, Sailors and a lot of civilians as well. My style is such that I want to know the person,” said Brownhill. “I want to know the human. I want to know who the Soldier is and learn a little bit about him, and when he’s comfortable talking, we’ll talk about what he’s been doing or what she’s been doing in their contribution to the nation.”

6th IAD takes charge

Iraqi motorized transportation regiment goes solo after successful training with Coalition Forces

Story and photo by
Spc. Amanda Solitario
210th MPAD

Camp Taji, Iraq –
When the U.S. Army's Sustainment Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, arrived here in October, the Iraqi 6th Motorized Transportation Regiment had to walk side-by-side with Coalition Forces on all missions. Today, the Iraqi unit is on its own. The 6th Iraqi Army Division took charge of the 6th MTR during an Aug. 3 ceremony, officially transferring it from U.S. control.

After a harmonious Arabic prayer opened the ceremony, key leaders within the 6th MTR and the 6th Iraqi Army

Division took turns addressing the soldiers in their native language. The officers commented on how far the troops have come and how hard they have worked.

The commander of the regiment told his soldiers to be proud of what they have accomplished and asked God to protect them. The stage was lined with a mix of Iraqi and American officers, symbolizing the unity of the two armies and the respect they have for one another.

"We have learned much from you," said Col. Gustavo Perma, commander of the Sust. Bde. "Because of our relationship, we as Soldiers and as leaders will be better on both sides."

Perma said he has enjoyed watching the Iraqi unit during its transition. "It has

been my pleasure over the last 11 months to have worked with these fine soldiers and leaders, to watch their unit grow and to witness their great success," Perma said.

"The discipline and professionalism in this unit is second to none."

The transfer of the regiment is extremely important for the overall success of the Iraqi army, said Lt. Col. William Schiek, commander of the Brigade Troops Battalion, Sust. Bde.

One of the responsibilities of the Iraqi unit is to disseminate supplies and equipment to its troops. "If this regiment was incapable of doing their mission, there would be a greater price to pay in the rest of the army," he said.

Perma said the support the unit provides

has stimulated the growth of the Iraqi army and has enhanced the morale of the entire organization.

Since the beginning of their deployments, the BTB and a Military Transition Team have been coaching the 6th MTR on how to function as a unit, Schiek said, noting that "it has been a training process that has taken a little bit of time."

The embedded transition team spent many long, grueling hours over the months showing the soldiers basic combat skills, convoy protection, equipment maintenance, and logistical management, said Maj. Roger Glenn, force protection officer with the MITT.

Schiek said the BTB was arranging and leading all the missions for the regiment at the beginning. However, the training has paid off. For the last three months, the regiment has conducted more than 40 missions on its own without losing a soldier.

The 6th MTR conducts a wide range of transportation missions ranging from supply movements to convoy security, he said. Everything is now planned and executed solely by the Iraqis.

The Coalition Forces now remain in the rear and monitor from a distance, Schiek said, adding that the Sustainment Brigade will stay on the sidelines to provide assistance if the unit needs it. "We will do that until we are told not to," he said.

Schiek said the regiment's operations have taken them all over the country, and they are an extremely successful unit.

The Iraqi transportation regiment is the second to stand on its own, and more will follow, Schiek said. The unit will be the model for all other Iraqi units working hard to operate independently.

As the blistering sun shined down upon their faces, the ceremony closed with a pass and review of all the companies. Following the troops was a parade of the unit's vehicles, giving the audience a taste of the regiment's capabilities.

After the last truck rolled past, Brig. Gen. Rebecca Halstead, commander of the 3rd Corps Support Command, officially relinquished authority to the 6th Iraqi Division.



An Iraqi Soldier with the 6th Motor Truck Regiment salutes his commander as his vehicle parades around the field during a transfer of authority at Camp Taji on August 3. For the last 11 months, the unit trained with coalition forces in order to support the Iraqi Army Division.

Cavalry regiment distributes humanitarian-aid to Arab Jabur residents

Story by Staff Sgt. Kevin Lovel
363rd MPAD

ARAB JABUR, Iraq – Soldiers from Multi-National Division – Baghdad's Troop B, 1st Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, provided local residents with humanitarian-aid July 27 as part of Operation River Falcon near the Tigris River.

"The purpose of the mission was to get the atmospherics of Arab Jabur so that we can get a feel for the area, develop a continued presence and distribute humanitarian-aid to the residents," said 2nd Lt. David Bowers, fire support officer, Troop

B, 1st Sqdn., 10th Cav. Regt.

Bowers led a dismounted patrol into the residential and farming areas of Arab Jabur, stopping by several residences and farms to get a feel for the attitudes and needs of the local residents.

"Basically, most of the people we talked with today said they like having U.S. and Iraqi army forces here," he said. "They want to help us stop (terrorists) and be able to turn over the country to the Iraqi army and Iraqi police. That is exactly why we are here. We want to get better control of the area so we can establish check points and help keep the area safe from terrorists," said Bowers.

"The objective of the mission was to get into the sector and get good public relations with the locals," added Sgt. Joseph McShan, forward observer, Troop B, 1st Sqdn., 10th Cav. Regt. McShan served as a navigator and helped ensure routes were secure during the mission.

McShan said he thought the mission was successful.

"We showed a positive force by giving out food and taking down their issues, such as getting clean water and reliable electricity sources. We showed the people of Arab Jabur that we care," he said.

McShan is serving his second tour in Iraq and expressed why he likes being a

Soldier.

"The opportunities and experiences you get everyday are invaluable. Sometimes things may seem unbearable, but they make you stronger and it builds character," he said.

McShan compared his current tour to his previous tour in Iraq.

"There's a lot more progress and structure here in Iraq now," he said.

"We need to get a lot of good public relations out there so that the people will trust us, help us get rid of the terrorists and begin building the Iraqi government so that they can take care of themselves," concluded McShan.

IED doesn't stop barrier removal mission

Story by Spc. Allison Churchill
Fires Bde. PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – A roadside bomb explosion couldn't keep Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers from removing more than 594 tons of concrete from around Abu Ghraib prison complex Aug. 13 and 14.

As part of Operation Safe Haven, Soldiers from 589th Brigade Support Battalion, Fires Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, and 62nd Engineer Battalion, 16th Engineer Brigade, MND-B, as well as civilians from Kellogg, Brown and Root, and the Iraqi Transportation Company, removed 257 Jersey barriers and 24 Texan barriers from Main Supply Route Michigan under the protection of Soldiers from 1st Squadron, 75th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division.

The goal of the operation was to remove the military presence from the Abu Ghraib prison complex so it can be handed back to the Iraqi government. This also enabled Soldiers to reuse the barriers at other checkpoints throughout Baghdad for other missions, said Capt.

Jeffery Strauss, commander, Company A, 589th BSB, who also served as the mission commander.

The blast happened close to the complex where the Soldiers were hard at work.

"When it blew, I noticed a flash of light – it was like daylight for a split second," said Spc. Mark Wiecezorek, heavy equipment operator, Headquarters Support Company, 62nd Eng. Bn.

Wiecezorek was sitting closest to the explosion in an M920 tractor trailer. He said the truck and the hydraulic excavator it was carrying both sustained damage. The trailer's rear window was blown out, a tire was flattened, a mirror was lost, and some cargo and trailer lights in addition to the HyEx's blown out windows.

Despite the damage, the vehicle and its operators were still mission capable.

"I had to dust the broken glass off the seat," said Wiecezorek, a native of Brockport, N.Y.

Wiecezorek recovered from the blast and went on to support a different mission the next day.

The success of the mission highlights the Army's protective measures, said Strauss, a native of Alden, N.Y.

"The Soldiers responded as they were trained, and the equipment protected like it was supposed to," said Strauss.

The Soldiers in Team B, which escorted 13 ITC trucks to the barrier removal site, watched tracer rounds as 1-75 Cav. took small-arms fire, said 1st Lt. David Paterson, executive officer, Co. B, 589th BSB, and commander of Team B.

In spite of the attacks, the Soldiers were back inside the wire and completed the mission by 7 a.m. Aug. 14. Both Soldiers and leaders called the mission a success.

"Joint operations are complex but also very rewarding," said Strauss. "That this went so well speaks highly of the teamwork between all the units."

"Nothing ever goes as expected, but this mission went extremely well," added Sgt. Philip Daniels, recovery noncommissioned officer-in-charge, Co. B, who is a resident of Fort Hood and veteran of numerous convoys.

IA soldiers get behind wheel with help from 16th Eng. Bde. motor pool section

Story and photo by
Sgt. 1st Class Tracy Ballog
16th Eng. Bde. PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Soldiers from the 6th Iraqi Army Division gained critical maintenance and maneuverability experience during driver's training classes conducted throughout August by their Shadow program partners in Multi-National Division – Baghdad's 16th Engineer Brigade.

Nearly 80 IA soldiers attended one of four three-day classes created and taught by the brigade's motor pool section, which provides them an opportunity to gain experience in maintaining and operating M1025 and M1026 humvees, which will eventually be fielded to the Iraqi army units.

The program is an on-going partnership between the 16th Eng. Bde. and the 6th IAD, designed to further train and integrate the IA soldiers while paving the way for future combined missions. The driver's training is just one of many training events and joint projects included in the program, which commenced in July and runs through September 2006.

"The class was a familiarization course rather than a traditional licensing course as nearly 30 percent of the IA Soldiers going through the classes had no prior driving experience in any type of vehicle," explained Master Sgt. David Slusher, the brigade's maintenance operations Sergeant and a native of Mason, Ohio.

The training itself consisted of basic vehicle operation, such as starting the vehicle, turning on headlights, using seat belts, and conducting Preventative Maintenance Checks and Services training. The IA students also received instruction in ground-guide procedures, changing tires, towing a disabled vehicle with a tow bar and approximately four hours of actual driving time per soldier.

"There were a few challenges – mainly the language barrier," said Slusher. "These issues required us to make the training as hands-on as possible."

To help overcome the challenges, Sgt. Carol Phillips, 16th Eng. Bde., who is a native of Westchester, Ohio, created a



Camp Liberty, Iraq – Pfc. Tronie Dotson, administrative specialist, 16th Engineer Brigade, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, who hails from Bowling Green, Ohio, guides 6th Iraqi Army Division soldiers through correct preventive maintenance checks and services on a humvee during a driver's training class.

video of the instructors performing each of the training tasks.

"The video was great and really helped the IA students grasp the material, and it cancelled out the language differences," said Slusher.

Safety was the most critical aspect emphasized by the instructors, who emphasized that by using seat belts, correct ground guide procedures and safety gear, such as gloves and eye protection, the soldiers could greatly reduce the number of soldiers lost to injury.

"PMCS is important also to help them realize its better to find and correct their vehicle faults before they leave their Forward Operating Base as no one wants to change a flat tire in downtown Baghdad," Slusher said. "Once they understood that safety and proper maintenance keeps more soldiers in the fight,

they were all for it."

The IA soldiers were enthused by the confidence and training they gained during the course and they look forward to receiving the humvees in the future, said Capt. Luis Gonzales, 6th IAD Military Transition Team member.

"Driver's training was a very critical part and the starting point of a rigorous thirty-day training to prepare the Iraqi soldiers to conduct independent operations in Baghdad," he said. "Most of these IAs had never driven a car before and here we are showing them how to operate a humvee. After completion of the training, they felt prepared to conduct their mission in an armored humvee platform."

The students indicated the driver's training prepared them for future success in many ways.

"The driver's training was very good.

Now when I drive the streets in Iraq, I'll know how to do it safely," said an IA student.

"This training is something new for the Iraqi army and reflects how far our soldiers and military have come," added a fellow soldier. "The humvees are new to us but the changes are definitely better and the training will help."

The safety focus and maintenance training helps prepare the soldiers for future operations, said Capt. Mohammed, ordnance disposal officer, 6th IAD.

"The humvees are good vehicles and now that we can safely operate them, we're looking forward to having them," he said. "The vehicles and the training will make our missions easier because when our soldiers get in them, they now know how to take care of them and will be much safer."



Corps of Engineers, key leaders work to improve competitive business practices in Iraq

Story by Tom Clarkson
Gulf Region Division
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

BAGHDAD — Iraq Prime Minister Maliki set the stage with his warmly-received remarks to the U.S. Congress in July when he said, "There needs to be a greater reliance on Iraqis and Iraqi companies, with foreign aid and assistance, to help rebuild Iraq."

On Aug. 12, the warm reception turned to hot — both temperately and topically — when this subject was presented in the country's capital. Outside, the day was hot, whereas inside, air-conditioning did temper the blistering Iraqi summer. However enthusiasm for the subject of Iraq's business future obviously burned within those in attendance. With the exception of subtle touches of Arabic design ambiance, the site and subject of the seminar could well have been that of any in the United States.

Located in the International Zone not far from the ancient Tigris River in Baghdad, with nearly 80 attendees, the event was conducted at the Al Rasheed Hotel.

The "Business Opportunities Seminar for Iraqi Business Women," was jointly sponsored by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Division/Project and Contracting Office, and the Joint Contracting Command — Iraq & Afghanistan, with active participation by representative Azzah Humadi of USACE-GRD/PCO from the Multi-National Forces—Iraq.

The participants heard several presentations and were



Photo by Spc. Rodney Foliente, 4th Inf. Div. PAO
BAGHDAD — A man empties a container of loose tobacco into a rolling machine at State Company for Tobacco and Cigarettes in eastern-central Baghdad July 19.

given related hand-out materials, which were provided both in English and Arabic. Credit for the great attention to detail in preparation for the conference was given to Humadi, the GRD/PCO Women's Advocate Initiative project manager. "Events such these are a 'must' for my countrywomen," said Humadi, "as women will play an extremely vital role in the successful rebuilding this country."

Following welcoming remarks by the GRD/PCO

Director of Reconstruction Programs, Chris Hinton-Lee, a variety of topics were presented, including a talk by the JCC-I on contracting issues. For a country still working on a cash basis, one subject that generated considerable interest was the role of banking — now and in the future. The presenter, a managing director of one of the country's new banks, discussed Iraq's monetary challenges and opportunities. He emphasized, to the budding capitalist entrepreneurs, the vital importance to a business of cash flow and the need for the country to move into electronic banking.

MNFI-I presenters told the participants the procedure for issuing proper bids and proposals and explained the purpose of Iraqi First Program: "To promote and develop the capacity of the Iraqi economy through greater utilization of Iraqi vendors in fulfilling Coalition requirements." Humadi noted "the goal of MNFI-I's program is a great one — to assist Iraq to transition to a vibrant self-sustaining free market economy."

"The benefits for my country are multifold. This shifts work directly to Iraqi firms and positively impacts our country's economy by dealing with firms owned by Iraqis who have direct participation in the contract performance and who are employing other Iraqis," Humadi said

In the mid-afternoon — with the seminar completed — small groups of Iraqis, excited by what they had heard at the conference, remained in the room to talk and discuss the future.

Reconstruction tough challenge in Baghdad's 'Triangle of Death'

Story by Norris Jones
Gulf Region Central District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

BAGHDAD — "We're making a difference, one project at a time," said Chief Brian Cissell, U.S. Navy Boatswain's Mate, finishing a six-month tour deployed to one of Iraq's most dangerous areas. "I'm proud of what we were able to accomplish as we worked side-by-side with some truly remarkable and courageous Iraqi people."

Cissell was responsible for overseeing 55 projects in an area of south Baghdad Province referred to by many as the "Triangle of Death." He was involved in four separate improvised-explosive device detonations. For one of those engagements, he earned an Army Combat Action Badge and has been nominated for a Navy Combat Action Ribbon for his actions during a firefight with insurgents.

According to Cissell, despite the constant insurgent threat, he felt it was essential to get out and visit community leaders and residents on virtually a daily basis in neighborhoods like Mahmudiyah, Yusufiyah and Lutifiyah.

"I opened the one-person Gulf Region Corps office at Mahmudiyah Forward Operating Base in March. The conditions were spartan, but the opportunity to positively impact the lives of families in nearby neighborhoods was awesome."

Working with five GRC Iraqi engi-

neers, Cissell helped upgrade hospitals, schools, police stations and council buildings, but his top priority was getting water and sewer plants functioning and electrical distribution networks back on line, he said. Among those projects, the Yusufiyah Water Treatment Plant was his "pet project."

The \$211,800 Commander's

Emergency Response Program-funded project upgraded a dilapidated plant constructed in 1972 and was completed in June. All of the components of the water treatment plant were rebuilt, including the pumps, generator, treatment tanks, chemical injection system and electrical control system. The plant is now capable of producing 1,000 cubic meters of fresh, potable water per hour — enough to meet the needs of 100,000 residents in the area.

"This (Yusufiyah) wasn't a quick-fix project ... it addressed the long-term needs of the community," Cissell said.

"Unfortunately," Cissell observed, "militias and anti-iraqi forces continue to target basic essential services throughout

that area as they try to discourage residents and force them to leave. Those local families look to us for assistance, and I'm very pleased we've been able to help. We're getting them more electrical power each day; sewage is being pumped out of the streets. We've completed a couple of new schools, a number of water treatment plants and the drainage canals have been cleaned out.

"Millions of dollars have been invested in those neglected towns and the people appreciate the effort. And it's not just the big-ticket items where we've been able to reach out."

Chief Boatswain's Mate Brian Cissell
U.S. Navy

"Millions of dollars have been invested in those neglected towns and the people appreciate the effort. And it's not just the big-ticket items where we've been able to reach out."

Cissell recalled one small village

area where insurgents had blown-up water mains. "The townspeople said they had no equipment to repair them. We purchased some shovels and pipe and the people went to work on their own. Several days later, fresh water was again reaching their homes. I talk to community leaders almost every day. They call me on my cell phone when problems occur. I have mixed feelings about leaving here. It's hard to walk away because we still have unfinished business."

"Leadership has no boundaries," said Cissell. "We were successful because of daily interaction among a variety of U.S. and Iraqi personnel — the 1st and 2nd Brigade's infantry units, PSYOPS and civil affairs teams, S2-Intelligence and S3-Operations, as well as our Iraqi engineers, Iraqi army units, Iraqi police, and the Iraqi people. Communication was the key.

"I'm convinced that now that the government is up and running and the local mayors and councils have a voice in where the reconstruction dollars are being invested, this process will help legitimize the government. Once that happens the Iraqis will start trusting the system and things will get better."

Cissell and his wife, Tammy, who is also in the Navy, have four children and reside in Bremerton, Wash. He is assigned to the USS Abraham Lincoln.

"I volunteered for Iraq because I wanted to see it on the front line. I wanted to interact with the people here. I wanted to help improve their lives. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers offered me an opportunity to make that happen. As I return to the aircraft carrier, I'll be telling my shipmates about duty here ... that we all worked hard to ensure that democracy in Iraq 'shall not perish' ... those last three words is our ship's motto and are words spoken by Abraham Lincoln himself," concluded Cissell

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**Camp Slayer
Babylon
Movie Theater**
Show Times:
Monday thru
Friday:
4 p.m., 7 p.m.,
and 9:30 p.m.

**Saturday and
Sunday:**
10 a.m., 1 p.m.,
4 p.m., 7 p.m.,
and 9:30 p.m.

Stop by the Camp
Slayer MWR for weekly
movie listings

September Division MWR Calendar

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
					1 R&B Night @ 9 p.m.	2 5 on 5 Basketball Tourney (TBA)
3 Closest to the Pin @ 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. Reggae Night @ 9 p.m.	4 Dominoes Tourney @ 8 p.m. Texas Hold'em Night @ 8 p.m.	5 Chess Tourney @ 8 p.m. Ping Pong Tourney @ 8:30 p.m.	6 Karaoke Night @ 8 p.m.	7 Dodgeball Captain's Mtg. @ 6:30 p.m. Salsa Night @ 8 p.m.	8 R&B Night @ 9 p.m.	9 Dodgeball Tourney (TBA)
10 Pre 9/11 5K Run Check-in @ 5:30 a.m. Reggae Night @ 9 p.m.	11 Spades Tourney @ 8 p.m. Texas Hold'em @ 8 p.m.	12 Chess Tourney @ 8 p.m. Pool Tourney @ 8:30 p.m.	13 Karaoke Night @ 8 p.m.	14 Salsa Night @ 8:30 p.m.	15 R&B Night @ 9 p.m.	16 DC Party Night @ 9 p.m.
17 Closest to the Pin @ 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. Reggae Night @ 9 p.m.	18 Dominoes Tourney @ 8 p.m. Texas Hold'em Night @ 8 p.m.	19 Chess Tourney @ 8 p.m. Ping Pong Tourney @ 8:30 p.m.	20 Karaoke Night @ 8 p.m.	21 Flag Football Mtg. @ 6:30 p.m. Salsa Night @ 8 p.m.	22 R&B Night @ 9 p.m.	23 Flag Football Tourney (TBA)

GUIDANCE

Take action against migraines

Do you have frequent headaches? If so, you're not alone. A recent study from Madigan Army Medical Center suggests that Soldiers deployed to Iraq are up to five times as likely to suffer from migraine headaches as adults in the general U.S. population. According to this new study, more than one-third of troops deployed here may experience recurrent migraine headaches, and these headaches may continue to occur frequently for several months after redeployment. The study also points out that most of these Soldiers are not diagnosed as having migraines, and therefore do not receive prescriptions for the best medications used to prevent or treat this type of headache. Without optimal medical management, Soldiers will suffer needlessly, and their headaches can significantly impair operational effectiveness and safety.

What are Migraine Headaches?

According to the World Health Organization, migraine headaches are one of the most disabling medical condi-



By Lt. Col. Mitch Meyers, Preventive medicine officer, 4th Inf. Div.

tions known to mankind. Although most migraine attacks only last between four and 72 hours, they can be so severe that the sufferer is almost totally incapacitated from the pain and side-effects. This year, at least four Soldiers from our division thus far have had to be evacuated from theater due to the severity of migraines.

There are many types of migraines, but the two major classes are migraines with auras and migraines without auras. Auras are sensory warning signs of an approaching headache and include visual changes such as flashing lights or blind spots, auditory changes, tingling sensations, or muscle weakness that usually occurs on only one side of the body.

Migraines without auras are typically felt on just one side of the head, have a pulsating or throbbing quality, are of moderate to severe intensity lasting from four to 72 hours, and are made worse by strenuous exercise. After the headache starts, migraine sufferers experience a painful sensitivity to light, sound or nausea with or without vomiting.

“The trick to preventing migraines is to avoid migraine triggers when possible, and to begin treatment as soon as possible when the aura or headache starts. People with frequent migraines may be placed on daily medications to help prevent or minimize the frequency and severity of the headaches.”

tions around the face and sinuses, many people who think they have frequent sinus headaches actually suffer from migraines.

Risk factors and triggers for migraines include a family history of migraines, female gender, oral contraceptive use, physical and psychological stress, sleep deprivation or changes in sleep patterns, dehydration, skipping meals, intense physical exertion and numerous other factors. Prolonged wearing of helmets may also be a trigger.

Most migraine sufferers manage their episodes with self-treatment measures such as applying pressure or ice packs to the side of the head that hurts the most, going into a dark quiet room and taking over-the-counter pain medications such as Tylenol or aspirin, or one of the many classes of prescription medications

that are available.

One class of prescription medications is the Triptans, which include Sumatriptan (Imitrex) and Zolmitriptan (Zomig). These medications may be taken as pills, nasal sprays or an injection, and will effectively alleviate about 70-80 percent of migraine attacks if taken soon after the start of symptoms.

For more severe episodes, treatment in an acute care setting can quickly put an end to the headache and related side effects such as nausea and vomiting, through the use of intravenous fluids and medications that help the patient fall asleep. For most migraine sufferers a good nap is often all that is needed to break the headache.

Prevention is always better than treatment, but a tough sell to some of our hard-core combat veterans with a ‘macho’ mentality and a confirmed and unshakable ‘suck it up and drive-on’ attitude. The trick to preventing migraines is to avoid migraine triggers when possible and to begin treatment as soon as possible when the aura or headache starts. People with frequent migraines may be placed on daily medications to help prevent or minimize the frequency and severity of the headaches.

Patient knowledge of migraine triggers and treatments is especially important for prevention and management. If you suffer from frequent headaches and think they may be migraines, seek medical evaluation and consultation. If you have migraines, your physician can prescribe some very effective medications like Triptans and save you a lot of pain and suffering.

For more information on migraine headaches, visit the Mayo Clinic website at: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/migraine-headache/DS00120>.



Zomig is a 2nd generation Triptan that is very effective at treating migraines.

Migraines with typical auras have premonitory neurological changes that herald the onset of a migraine headache. These neurological changes can start several hours before the headache pain occurs but usually starts about 15-30 minutes before the onset of headache.

Common aura sensations include visual disturbances, ‘pins and needle’ sensations, numbness or weakness on one side of the body, and difficulty speaking.

Sinus symptoms often occur with both types of migraine headaches due to stimulation of the trigeminal nerve that branches out across the face. Since sinus infections may trigger migraines, and migraines can lead to painful sensa-

Veterans Affairs: Free counseling available to servicemembers suffering from Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

Reprinted from Military.com, benefits resources page

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder can occur following a life-threatening event like military combat, natural disasters, terrorist incidents, serious accidents or violent personal assaults like rape. Most survivors of trauma return to normal given a little time. However, some peo-

ple have stress reactions that don't go away on their own or may even get worse over time. These individuals may develop PTSD.

People who suffer from PTSD often suffer from nightmares, flashbacks, difficulty sleeping and feeling emotionally numb. These symptoms can significantly impair a person's daily life.

PTSD is marked by clear physical and psychological symptoms. It often has symptoms like depression, substance abuse, problems of memory and cognition, and other physical and mental health problems.

The disorder is also associated with difficulties in social or family life, including occupational instability, mari-

tal problems, family discord and difficulties in parenting.

Each military branch has programs for its servicemembers, and the Department of Veterans Affairs offers free counseling sessions. For more information on PTSD or VA assistance, go to the National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder website.

Culture Experts

Ramadan Karim! – Part I

Of all of the many Islamic holidays, commemorations, festivals, feasts and other occasions, Ramadan is perhaps the most important of all to Muslims. It is certainly the longest – it lasts an entire month.

The holy month of Ramadan is the month in which Muslims believe that God revealed the first verses of the Qur'an to the Prophet Muhammad through the angel Gabriel. Ramadan is the holiest of all months to Muslims.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. The current year, according to the Islamic calendar, is 1427. The Islamic calendar dates from the year of the emigration of the early Muslims from Mecca to Madinah (modern-day Saudi Arabia) 1,427 years ago. Both Shiites and Sunnis observe the month of Ramadan.

The first day of Ramadan is determined by the visual sighting of the new crescent moon.

Muslim scholars and clergymen generally do not acknowledge astronomical calculations to determine the beginning of lunar months but depend on the detection of the crescent by visual means. This makes the calendar somewhat unpredictable. There is no way to accurately predict the Gregorian date of the first day of Ramadan.

To further complicate the matter, not only do scholars from different countries disagree with each other, so do scholars from different sects within the country. Last year, even different scholars within the same sect in Iraq were at odds regarding the beginning and end of Ramadan: those who follow Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr celebrated the end of Ramadan one day before the followers of Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. This year, it is most likely to fall on or around September 24th.

During Ramadan, Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset every day. This fast requires every Muslim to abstain from

drinking, eating, smoking, sex and any other type of indulgence and sin, including obscene words. Indulging in any of these prohibited acts between sunrise and sunset means that the fast has been broken unjustifiably – an act that cannot be adequately made up for in this life.

Jake Lester
Cultural and Political Expert



Jake Lester's term with Multi-National Division-Baghdad officially ended on Aug. 31. He will continue to contribute to the Ivy Leaf until TOA. To send questions to Jake, contact the Ivy Leaf's editor at mary.mott@mndb.army.mil.

Muslims take fasting very seriously. Many Muslims who do not pray, or who do not follow all of the rules set in the Qur'an, have been known to become very pious during Ramadan, in a belief that observing Ramadan perfectly will erase their past sins. Many will stay up all night in prayer and reading the Qur'an, sometimes in groups.

Fasting may be broken only for compelling reasons, such as injury, illness, old age, long-distance travel, female menstruation, childbirth (for the mother only), and active engagement in direct combat (not to be confused with regular active-duty service, such as manning a dangerous checkpoint).

The two important meals in Ramadan are Iftar (Breaking of the Fast), which takes place after the sunset call to prayer, and Suhur, which takes place shortly before sunrise. An hour and a half to one hour before the sunset prayers begin, the streets will be completely jammed. A few minutes before the call for sunset prayers, the streets will be virtually deserted.

Traffic starts again at around 60 to 90 minutes after Iftar and socializing and visits to the mosque begin.

The month of Ramadan is a month of far less work and many celebrations occur throughout the month. It is not uncommon for Muslims to take Iftar with company every night of the month. Muslims around the world spend more on food during the month of Ramadan than at any other month of the year. During Ramadan, Muslim families cook the very best dishes with the most expensive ingredients in honor of the month.

Daytime in Ramadan is a very somber



Photo courtesy of wikipedia.org

Lantern, or fanoos in Arabic, is one of the major Ramadan celebration decorations. Muslims celebrate the holy month of Ramadan to commemorate the month God was believed to have revealed the first verses of the Qur'an to the Prophet Muhammad through the angel Gabriel.

time. In the daytime, our troops would be well-advised to avoid open and loud displays of mirth. Ramadan evenings, however, are traditionally joyous and festive.

During the last ten days of the month, considered to be the holiest days of Ramadan, prayer and piety generally increase. "Laylat al-Qadr" (the Night of Destiny) is believed by all Muslims to fall within the last ten days of the month (Sunnis believe that it falls on the eve of the 27th of Ramadan, while Shiites believe that it falls on the 23rd).

Laylat al-Qadr is believed to be the night on which the angel Gabriel first vis-

ited Muhammad with the first revelation of the Qur'an.

At the end of the month, the sighting of the crescent signals the beginning of the month of Shawwal, and the beginning of the three-day 'Id-al-Fitr (holiday of the breaking of the fast). This holiday is a joyous occasion during which Muslims enjoy being able to eat and drink during the day. Most business comes to a complete halt during these three days.

To greet a Muslim during Ramadan, say "Ramadan Karim." It means "have a generous, dignified Ramadan."

Next Issue: Ramadan Karim, Part II



WATCH YOUR BUDDY!

SYMPTOMS OF A HEAT CASUALTY INCLUDE:

- HEAT CRAMPS IN ARMS, LEGS OR ABDOMEN.
- SWEATING PROFUSELY.
- HOT, RED, FLUSHED SKIN
- WEAKNESS, DIZZINESS AND/OR NAUSEASNESS.
- UNCONSCIOUSNESS



GUIDANCE

Chaplain's Corner: What if I get extended?

I am one of the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team Soldiers that have been extended in our Operation Iraqi Freedom rotation in Iraq for an additional 120 days. A number of Soldiers have talked to me about this, questioning, "what if I get extended too?" For those of us who already been extended, we, too, sometimes ask ourselves the proverbial "what if" questions.

Many of us that did get extended were initially in shock. There were the usual "grief" phases – denial, anger, bargaining, depression and then, finally, acceptance.

Someone reminded of the movie "The Memphis Bell." The Memphis Bell was a B-17 Bomber during World War II. When an airman had completed 25 missions, he was then allowed to go home. In the movie, the crew of the Memphis Bell was on their final mission. They had to fly through a hail storm of anti-aircraft fire,



Chaplain (Maj.)
Robert Nay
172nd Stryker
Brigade Combat
Team Chaplain

only to find that the target was clouded over so they could not drop the bombs. Several crew members wanted to opt for just dropping the bombs, regardless of where they landed, so they could go home. But the aircraft's commander knew that innocent people would die if they did that and he made a decision to fly around and go through the anti-aircraft fire a second time because he knew it was the right thing to do. He told the crew "We will return, with honor."

On the second run, the clouds cleared, they bombed the target and they did, indeed, return with honor.

Many 172nd Soldiers have expressed to me their conviction that the 172d Stryker Brigade had completed its mission. However,

we were called upon, like the crew of the Memphis Bell more than 60 years ago, to "go through the fire," one more time. I realize that Soldiers will inevitably feel that the next casualty would not have happened "if we had been sent home on time."

If you want to play the "what if" scenario, one could say that perhaps a life is saved because we are here. It is a fact that a number of Soldiers upon redeployment are killed in motorcycle accidents and driving while intoxicated. We would have returned to Alaska when there was 22 hours of day light. Soldiers would have been tempted to drink and drive at all hours of the day and night. Now that we will return when there is only four

hours of day light and zero degrees outside, most Soldiers who drink will just stay home and imbibe; thus they won't be out on the roads drunk.

Of course, Soldiers will contend that the chances are greater here in Iraq than back in the States for getting hurt –

but, again, no one knows for sure. Back during Desert Storm, a Soldier at Fort Sill, Okla., did everything he could to get out of the deployment because he said that he did not want to die. He succeeded and while his entire section went to the desert, he remained home on rear detachment.

One weekend he went to South Carolina to see his son play in a college game and on the way home he was killed in a automobile accident. His unit returned from the desert, alive and with honor. No creature on this earth knows the hour nor the day, but we are told to number our days.

Only God knows the hour and the day of our passing. We need to live each day always before the face of God, and to love our neighbor.

In the famous painting of the signers of the U.S. Declaration of Independence, artist John Trumbull depicted the feet of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams virtually on top of each other. The artist's point was to illustrate that the two men did not get along with one another during their political careers.

Later in life they began to write to one another and a strong bond grew between them. Thomas Jefferson died the morning of July 4th, 1826, at his home in Virginia and that afternoon John Adams died in his home at Boston, Mass. On their death beds, they mentioned one another's name. They still cared about each other and they had peace.

Jonathan Edwards, an American theologian during the 1700's, once said that knowing that God is in control of our lives will create stability in our hearts, minds, and souls.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES, AA MEETINGS, AND MANDATORY R&R BRIEFINGS

DIVISION CHAPEL

Sunday	Wednesday
9 a.m. Contemp. Protestant Worship	6 p.m. EML Chaplain's Brief
10:30 a.m. Roman Catholic Mass	7 p.m. Bible Study
1 p.m. Episcopal Worship Service	8 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous
3 p.m. Gospel Worship	Thursday
8 p.m. Collective Protestant Worship	7:30 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal
Monday	Friday
6 p.m. EML Chaplain's Briefing	6 p.m. EML Chaplain's Briefing
Tuesday	7 p.m. Bible Study
7 p.m. Bible Study	Saturday
	8 p.m. Contemporary Protestant Praise Band Rehearsal

CAMP STRIKER CHAPEL

Sunday	Wednesday
9 a.m. Catholic Mass	6 p.m. LDS Bible Study
10 a.m. Contemporary Protestant	7 p.m. Prayer/Bible Study
10:30 a.m. Protestant (Pad 6, Tent 410)	7:30 p.m. Prayer/Bible Study (Pad 6, Tent 410)
Thursday	Thursday
11:15 a.m. Traditional Protestant	5 p.m. Purpose Driven Life
4:30 p.m. Protestant	7 p.m. Praise Choir Practice
6 p.m. LDS	Friday
7 p.m. Praise Service (Gospel)	9 a.m. Catholic Mass
7:30 p.m. Praise and Testimony (Pad 6, Tent 410)	11:15 a.m. Catholic Mass (TOC Conference room)
Monday	Saturday
9 a.m. Catholic Mass	6:45 p.m. Catholic Mass (Pad 6, Tent 410)
Wednesday	Daily 6:30 a.m. TOC Prayer Service (TOC Conference room)
9 a.m. Catholic Mass	

CAMP VICTORY CHAPEL, BLDG 2

Sunday	Thursday
9 a.m. Orthodox Liturgy	4 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass
Monday	7 p.m. Spanish Bible Study
4 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass	Friday
7 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous	4 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass
Tuesday	6:30 p.m. Shabbat Service
4 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass	8 p.m. Women's Gospel Bible Study
Wednesday	Saturday
4 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass	5 p.m. Orthodox Vespers
7 p.m. Men's Gospel Fellowship	11 a.m. Seventh Day Adventist

WARRIOR CHAPEL

Sunday	Christian
10:30 a.m. Contemporary Protestant	Wednesday
12:30 p.m. Gospel Protestant	7 p.m. Gospel Prayer
4 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass	Thursday
5 p.m. Latter Day Saints	7 p.m. General Protestant
7 p.m. Non-Denominational	Friday
	6:30 p.m. Wicca Circle Meeting

ENGINEER CHAPEL

Sunday	7 p.m. Catholic Thel. Education
8 a.m. Roman Catholic Mass	Tuesday
10 a.m. Traditional Protestant	7 p.m. Bible Study
11:30 a.m. Lutheran Worship	Wednesday
1 p.m. Latter Day Saints	7 p.m. LDS Bible Study
4 p.m. Gospel Service	Thursday
7 p.m. Traditional Protestant	7 p.m. Bible Study
Monday	Friday
	7 p.m. Gospel Bible Study

VICTORY CHAPEL SERVICES

Sunday	8:30 p.m. Protestant Music Rehearsal
7 a.m. and 8:45 a.m. Traditional Protestant Worship	Thursday
10:30 a.m. Roman Catholic Mass	6 p.m. Roman Catholic Music Rehearsal
noon Gospel Protestant Service	6:45 p.m. Men's 'Purity' Bible Study
2 p.m. Mormon Worship	Friday
4 p.m. Episcopal/Lutheran Worship	1 p.m. Jumu'ah (Islamic Prayer)
6 p.m. Contemporary Protestant Service	5 p.m. Prayer Gathering Service
Monday	6:30 p.m. Contemporary Worship Music Rehearsal
10 a.m. SGM's Meeting	8:30 p.m. Protestant Music Rehearsal
1:30 p.m. Protestant Gospel Prayer Meeting	Saturday
3 p.m. R&R -- Reunion and Suicide Intervention Briefs	9 a.m. Seventh-Day Adventist Music Practice
7 p.m. Gospel Protestant Bible Study	11 a.m. Seventh Day Adventist
Tuesday	3 p.m. R&R -- Reunion and Suicide Intervention Briefs
7 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal	4 p.m. Gospel Choir Rehearsal
Wednesday	7 p.m. Roman Catholic Music Rehearsal
9:30 a.m. R&R -- Reunion and Suicide Intervention Briefs	8 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass
7 p.m. Korean Bible Study	

For more information on religious services contact Sgt. 1st Class Billy Arnold, Chaplain's plans and operations non-commissioned officer, by email at billy.arnold@mnd-b.army.mil

Reporting identity theft

Deployed Soldier shares experience with identity theft, gives tips on prevention, future protection

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Mary Mott
363rd MPAD

I recently returned to my hometown, Saint Louis, Mo., for environmental morale leave. Waiting for me was an exceptionally unpleasant surprise – a box of accumulated bills from companies I had never heard of, for accounts I had not opened. Then the phone calls began – from collection agencies for those companies wanting to know why I had not paid anything on “my” account. As you might suspect, it went downhill from there.

So, much of my leave was spent on the phone, writing letters, etc., to try and counter the disastrous effects of identity theft.

What I can tell you about identity theft is that it is one of the most disheartening, discouraging and maddening things that can happen to you. There is no easy way to fix the damage that can be done by someone impersonating you.

The method for opening new accounts has become much too simple for many companies; it can be done online and very little information is needed: just your name, home address and telephone number and social security number. There are companies – as I found out to my dismay – that will apparently open an account with no more information than this. They apparently don’t even require your birth date, mother’s maiden name, employment verification, driver’s license number or anything else that remotely resembles positive proof that you are who you say you are online.

Ironically, the better your credit rating, the easier it is for someone to open bogus accounts in your name.

What steps can you take to prevent identity theft? One major step that all mobilized members of the Armed Forces can take – which I found out about too late – is calling all three of the major credit reporting bureaus and putting a one-year alert on your account (available only to military members) so that no credit can be established in your name unless positive proof is submitted that you are who you say you are. This can be inconvenient in some ways – for instance, if you want to open an account on-line yourself. But, the inconvenience of not being able to open an account online is nothing compared to the inconvenience of having someone steal your identity and open multiple fraudulent accounts.

I was surprised to hear one credit card company representative tell me that she thought it was easier for persons in the military to become victims. A testament to this is the experience of a friend of mine who is a lieutenant colonel and a provost marshal for the Military Police. His information was obtained by a disgruntled troop from a noncommissioned officer evaluation report he wrote.

Routinely in the military, our social security number is requested – far more frequently than it would be in a civilian job. We take it on faith and faith alone that it will not be misused. Therefore, extra precautions, like putting alerts in place, are not only a good idea – but probably necessary.

Not all of the credit reporting agencies will treat you the same. I found that of the “big three,” only Equifax seemed genuinely interested in my situation. The representative I spoke with was incredibly thorough and made me feel confident that they not only believed me but would actively pursue getting my credit file straightened out with their agency.

Fraud Alerts:
There are two basic types of fraud alerts: an initial alert and an extended alert.

An initial alert stays on your credit report for at least 90 days (although, for military members only, you can request a third type of fraud alert, which lasts for one year). You may ask that an initial fraud alert be placed on your credit report if you suspect you have been, or are about to be, a victim of identity theft. An initial alert is appropriate if your wallet has been

stolen or if you’ve been taken in by a “phishing” scam. When you place an initial fraud alert on your credit report, you’re entitled to one free credit report from each of the three nationwide consumer reporting companies.

An extended alert stays on your credit report for seven years. You can have an extended alert placed on your credit report if you’ve been a victim of identity theft and you provide the consumer reporting company with an “identity theft report.” When you place an extended alert on your credit report, you’re entitled to two free credit reports within twelve months from each of the three nationwide consumer reporting companies.

In addition, the consumer reporting companies will remove your name from marketing lists for pre-screened credit offers for five years unless you ask them to put your name back on the list before then.

To place either of these alerts on your credit report, or to have them removed, you will be required to provide appropriate proof of your identity: that may include your SSN, name, address and other personal information requested by the consumer reporting company.

When a business sees the alert on your credit report, it must verify your identity before issuing you credit. As part of this verification process, the business may try to contact you directly. This may cause some delays if you’re trying to obtain credit. To compensate for possible delays, you may wish to include a cell phone number, where you can be reached easily, in your alert. Remember to keep all contact information in your alert current.

The ‘big three’ credit reporting agencies are:

Equifax: www.equifax.com
Experian: <https://www.experian.com>
TransUnion: www.transunion.com

Here are some websites to go to for help if you discover you are a victim of identity fraud:

Official Federal Trade Commission site: <http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft/> ;
http://www.idtheftcenter.org/ind_ex.shtml (not-for-profit);
<http://www.privacyrights.org/> (not-for-profit).

Veterans Affairs Website provides information on benefits, talking to children about war

Information courtesy of military.com

1. What is needed for me to obtain eligibility for health care benefits from the Department of Veterans’ Affairs?

A veteran may apply for enrollment at any time and generally must enroll with the Veterans Affairs. The application for enrollment is called the VA Form 10-10EZ. An important aspect of enrollment is for the veteran to identify which VA location he/she will choose for medical care. This can be at any VA location-hospital, clinic or medical center and will be considered the veteran’s preferred facility for patient care. Call your nearest health-care facility or the Health Benefits Service Center at 1-877-222-8387 to obtain the latest information concerning changes to health care benefits.

2. How can I obtain financial benefits from the Department of Veterans’ Affairs?

Monetary benefits, called disability compensation, are paid to veterans who are disabled by injury or disease incurred or aggravated during active military service. The service of the veteran must have been terminated through separation or discharge under conditions that were other than dishonorable. Disability compensation varies with the degree of disability and the number of dependents, and is paid monthly. The benefits are not subject to federal

or state income tax. For more information, veterans and beneficiaries should call VA’s toll-free Helpline at 1-877-838-2778, Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Central Standard Time.

3. What can I do to obtain pension benefits from the Department of Veterans’ Affairs?

A veteran must enroll by completing the VA Form 10-EZ application at any Veterans’ Affairs location in their area. Additional information on enrollment, including enrollment forms and on-line applications, can be found at: <http://www.va.gov/health/elig/>.

4. How can I talk to my children about war?

The following two organizations have websites with information on talking to your child about war:

National Mental Health Association; National Center for Children Exposed to Violence.

Go to Military.com to answer additional questions, such as:

How do I obtain the Montgomery GI education benefits?

What is involved with enrollment?

How do I obtain a VA Home Loan?

What is involved to obtain a headstone/burial benefits?

Where can I obtain assistance to acquire Military Funeral Honors for a deceased veteran?

Is there any assistance from the Department of Veterans’ Affairs for Homeless Veterans?

Additional Resources:

VA Benefits - 1-800-827-1000.

Health Benefits - 1-877-222-8387.

Education Benefits - 1-888-442-4551.

Life Insurance - 1-800-669-8477.

Debt Management - 1-800-827-0648.

Mammography Hotline - 1-888-492-7844.

Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) - 1-800-829-4833.

CHAMPVA - 1-800-733-8387.

Headstones and Markers - 1-800-697-6947.

Gulf War Helpline - 1-800-749-8387.

Health Eligibility Center - 1-800-929-8387.

The VA Federal Benefits booklet and other VA information is available on the VA’s Home Page.

VA also has a toll-free bulletin board, called VA ONLINE, which can be reached at 1-800-871-8387.

Veterans can find information regarding civilian employment opportunities with the Federal government at the following Office of Personnel Management websites:

www.usajobs.opm.gov
www.opm.gov/veterans.

ENTERTAINMENT



CARTOON CORNER





Sports Roundup

with guest columnist Spc. Karl Johnson
363rd MPAD

Where have all the baseball fans gone?

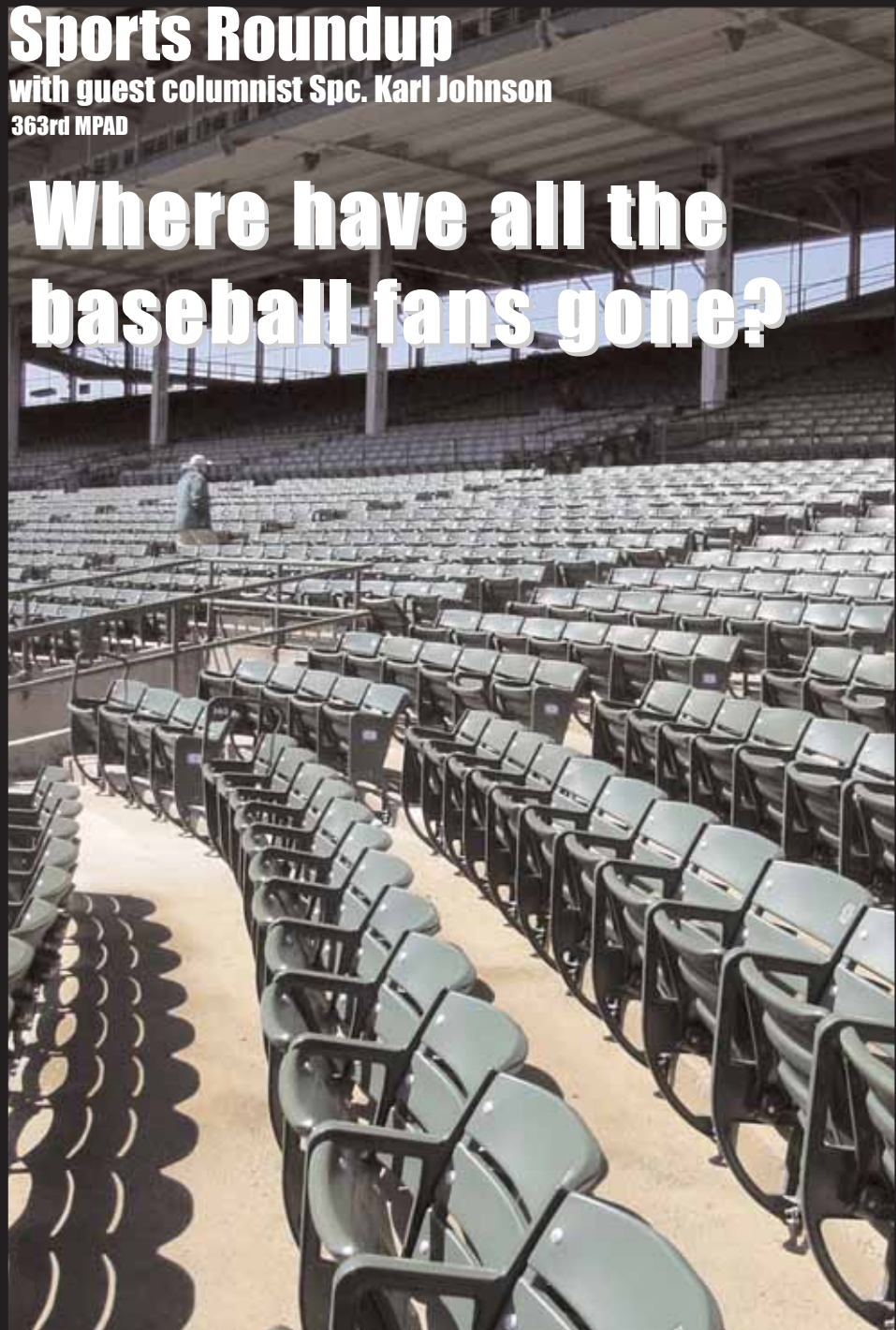


Photo courtesy of Andrew Figgins

Someone please answer a question for me. If baseball is America's pastime, then why, during the height of the play-off chase are fans turning attention so easily to the beginning of a new football season? I'll tell you why. It's because even just the beginning of a new football season now overshadows the highlight of the baseball season.

But please, don't misunderstand my take on America's traditional favorite past-time. It's not that I don't like the sport – in fact, I believe that in its purest form, baseball is still the best ticket selling.

There's nothing like getting together with family and going to the ballpark to watch your favorite team. If you arrive early, as any real fan does, you can walk the concourse taking in the sights, sounds and smells of the baseball diamond while your favorite players warm up and take batting practice so close they can hear your cheers of encouragement.

Baseball has thrived on this atmosphere for well over a century now, seamlessly blending its rich history with an ever-changing group of stars.

Baseball fans have always been able to draw almost limitless comparisons between the stars of the past and the stars of today, allowing for endless debate over who is the better player. But, perhaps more importantly, that same "past and future" contemplation has allowed fans to connect with their own past – most often remembered in a positive light. Herein lies the problem as I see it.

Without putting up much of a fight, baseball has allowed its players to cut those historical ties. And now you have to ask yourself, how do you compare the players of the past with the players of today, when the current "stars" play by a completely different set of steroid-diluted standards?

By allowing the current "Super Human" era of baseball to even begin, the game of baseball took away from itself the best thing it had going – its legitimacy.

But, don't feel sorry for baseball. Even while staring its obvious dilemma squarely in the face, it took a Congressional investigation into drug abuse in professional sports to motivate the sport to seriously change its drug policy. In the wake of Major League Baseball's mis-step, the National

Football League stepped in, glad to oblige.

The NFL, which long ago faced up to its own drug abuse problems, moved to fill the void of legitimacy left by baseball's 'big muscle blunder.'

Not that baseball is the only culprit in this performance-enhanced era of sports.

Everywhere you look it seems that so-called professional athletes are looking for a shortcut to stardom. Whether it's Marion Jones, the world class sprinter, or Floyd Landis, the most recent Tour de France winner – drug abuse seems to follow, or possibly even go hand-in-hand with, athletic success.

That's why I say ... TGIF. No, not the day of the week, and most certainly not the restaurant. Thank God Its Football ... where the big story is, what rookie will make an impact, not what rookie will be suspended for steroids.

And that is why the NFL is America's new favorite pastime.

FACES AND PLACES



Photo by John Simpson

ABOVE: GHAZALIYAH, Iraq – A Shia sheik in Ghazaliya pleads for more electrical power to his neighborhood Aug. 20. Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, worked closely with the 412th Civil Affairs Battalion in cleaning up the neighborhood to ensure force protection. “By clearing out the trash, we eliminate areas where insurgents can plant IEDs and EFPs ...,” explained Capt. Ray McQuire, 412th Civil Affairs. “Not only do we employ Iraqis and clean up the neighborhoods, we protect our own guys too,” he added.

BELOW LEFT: BAGHDAD – Iraqi and Western media listen to Iraqi Security Forces and Multi-National Division – Baghdad leaders during a combined press conference Wednesday at Camp Liberty, Iraq. The military leaders took advantage of the opportunity to focus on the many successes of Operation Together Forward.

BELOW RIGHT: BAGHDAD – Soldiers from Multi-National Division – Baghdad’s Company C, 4th Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, climb a steep staircase while they inspect a building during a cordon and search operation Sunday in the Ghazaliya neighborhood Aug. 20. The mission is part of Operation Together Forward, a joint effort by MND-B Soldiers and Iraqi Security Forces to eliminate the terrorist threat to innocent Iraqi civilians.



Photo by Spc. Karl Johnson, 363rd MPAD



Photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin Lovel, 363rd MPAD