



(Photo by Chief Warrant Officer 4 Daniel McClinton 1st ACB)

Safe skies

An AH-64D Apache helicopter flies in the skies over Baghdad during an aerial reconnaissance mission. The Apache is from Company B, 1st Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division.

"Torch" lighting the way for Mansour security

1st Lt. Charles Bloomfield
2-32 Field Artillery Regiment

BAGHDAD-Construction of Joint Security Station "Torch" was completed and it was officially opened Apr. 21, in the Mansour district of the capital city.

Planning and securing such a location does not come quickly or without proper preparation. In March, members of the Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC) and the Iraqi Army began nominating locations for the station.

Iraqi Army troops and Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, conducted a recon of the area April 12, and plans for construction

began in earnest. A concept brief took place the following day and a final synchronization meeting with all the elements involved from the 2nd "Dagger" Brigade ensued a couple days later.

Plans were made for barrier emplacement, concertina wire, sandbags, over watch positions, checkpoints, waste removal, and many other logistical details. Pieces began to fall into place for building, securing and making the site habitable.

The construction operations began as scheduled, but that was not the only mission Soldiers from the 2nd "Proud Americans" Battalion, 32nd FA, had in mind.

JSS Torch is located on the corner of a city block and would definitely have an impact on the local residents of the com-

munity. On the first day of construction, the 'Good Neighbor Plan' went into effect and Capt. Jose Henderson, Capt. Brian McCall, and Capt. Jayson Morgan visited each of the houses surrounding the newly-acquired property.

They introduced themselves and offered a gift, including candy, a picture of the battalion commander, Lt. Col. Gregory Gadson, Col. Ali, the 2nd Bn., 5th Bde, 6th Iraqi Army commander, and Lt. Col. Rahim, the 3rd Bn., 5th Bde, 6th Iraqi Army commander. They also hand-delivered a letter to introduce and explain the

Troops move into joint security station Torch

Torch

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current project.

Soldiers placed the first barrier of JSS Torch into place on the morning of April 16. Soldiers throughout the Proud American Battalion, as well as those from 9th Engineer, 20th Engineer, and 299th Forward Support battalions, worked tirelessly day and night to complete the project on time, keep it secure, and to get it fully operational. Construction was completed on April 19.

JSS Torch officially opened for business the morning of April 21. Iraqi security force liaisons occupied the building that morning and the JSS became a center for combined forces.

Later in the day, Maj. Gen. Abdul Al-Ameer, commander of the 6th Iraqi Army Division, arrived for a brief on the JSS, a tour, an awards ceremony and a traditional Iraqi lunch. After the awards ceremony, Ameer



(Photo by Staff Sgt. Benny Corbett 2-1 Inf.)

Col. J.B. Burton (left), commander of 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div. and Maj. Gen. Abdul Al-Ameer, commander of the 6th IA Div., stand outside the front doors to Joint Security Station "Torch" during an awards ceremony honoring Iraqi Army troops and Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery Regiment.

addressed everyone and specifically reminded the Soldiers of their duties.

"Be good to the citizens and they will trust you," he said. "Remember that your loyalty is to Iraq; not for the

party, not for the tribe, not for sect or religion. The party will go away; the tribe will go away; the religion might go away, but Iraq will stay."




Gadson echoed the Iraqi Army general's remarks, and

told the Iraqi and U.S. troops assembled why he had chosen the name "Torch" for the JSS. He said it not only honored the Proud American's combat experience in 1942, but this JSS and Iraqi Army represent "the light in the future of the Mansour district."

With the formalities over, the first southeast Mansour security meeting, representing the real work of the JSS, occurred the next day. The meeting outlined ideas to conduct coordinated combined operations with Iraqi security forces and coalition forces.

Future goals include building a common operating picture for the combined forces to work with and to secure support for the civil authorities. Through this way ahead, Iraqi security forces will eventually take control of security and the civil leaders will be empowered to improve the living conditions within their neighborhoods.



Iraq 3-Day Weather Report			
	Today	Tomorrow	Wednesday
High: 92 Low: 68	High: 90 Low: 66	High: 91 Low: 66	

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(Photo by Cpl. John Androski, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment)

An Iraqi soldier from 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, exits a Bradley Fighting Vehicle during a joint raid with members of 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, which operates in Baghdad attached to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division.

Practice makes perfect

1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment

BAGHDAD-Multi-National Division-Baghdad troops rehearse for a raid with an Iraqi Army battalion. These rehearsals make the soldiers feel much better about the missions they conduct.

Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, arrived at the Joint Operations Center at Forward Operating Base Hawk and prepared to conduct a joint raid of a target house in the Ameriyah District of the Iraqi capital.

"Joint planning and the rehearsal process is nothing new to the Soldiers of Co. A, who have been doing this sort of joint operation for the past six months they have been in Baghdad," said 1st Lt. Jay Ireland.

Iraqi Army Lt. Hussein worked with

his American counterparts through an interpreter. They discussed battle drills and different actions on contact once they get to the objective.

This type of joint planning and execution pays large dividends during the missions as the Iraqi Army troops are better rehearsed and understand the mission that needs to be conducted, Ireland said.

With rehearsals complete, it was time for the raid.

During this April 15 operation, the joint Iraqi and U.S. force uncovered two AK-47 assault rifles, one rocket-propelled grenade launcher and two RPG rockets. The weapons were confiscated.

The Iraqi Army troops also detained eight insurgent suspects, disrupting insurgent activity in the Ameriyah District.

Baghdad in Brief

Cavalry foils insurgent attack at Tarmiyah Huda Girls' School

CAMP TAJI, Iraq - Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers foiled an insurgent attack comprised of numerous improvised explosive devices targeting an all-girls' school north of Baghdad April 28.

Soldiers with 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, discovered a command wire leading from the school's outer perimeter to one of the rooms at the Huda Girls' School, in Tarmiyah, Iraqi.

Inside the room, the cavalry troops discovered five artillery shell explosives.

The insurgent's planned attack, in opposition of the construction of the school, also included two large explosive-filled propane tanks buried underneath the school's floor and numerous projectiles emplaced underneath electrical conduits in front of each classroom.

The unit believes Al Qaeda extremists, operating in the area, are responsible for the emplacement of the explosives in an effort to thwart the progress the local government has made to improve the lives of the people of Tarmiyah.

The reconstructed school, a project led by the local Tarmiyah government, was scheduled to open in the coming weeks.

This is the second time this month explosives have been found in the facility.

"This is a testimony of how little the Al-Qaeda of Iraq truly care about the citizens of Iraq," said Lt. Col. Scott Efflandt, commander of 2-8th Cavalry.

An explosive ordnance disposal team transported all of the explosive rounds from the school for disposal.

IA, MiTT return to Hadid for supply giveaway

By Spc. Ryan Stroud
3-1 Cav. Public Affairs

BAQOUBA, Iraq -- One day after flowing through the streets of Hadid, Iraq, on a cordon and knock mission, the 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army and members of the 3rd "Grey Wolf" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, comprising the 1-2-5 Military Transition Team, headed back into Hadid to hand out rice and school supplies to the local children and their families.

The IA and MiTT traveled to a heavily populated school in the heart of Hadid for the giveaway in hope to show the city the IA's mission wasn't to bring terror to the city but rather to help Hadid remove terrorist groups living in the area.

"Today's mission was to show the community that (the IA and Coalition Forces) are not out to get everybody; we are here to help them make a better town for them to live in and for their children to grow up in," said Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Gage, a native of Fort Wayne, Ind., and a member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-12 Combined



(Photo by Spc. Ryan Stroud 3-1 Cav. Public Affairs)

Spc. Stephen Tapia, a member of HHC, 1-12 Combined Arms Battalion, 3rd BCT, 1st Cav. Div., hands a bag of rice to a school shop employee while the 1st Bn., 2nd Bde., 5th IA and 1-2-5 MiTT traveled to Hadid, Iraq, one day after conducting a cordon and knock mission through the city.

Arms Battalion.

"As a token or a sign of our commitment to the city, we brought some things they may need," he continued. "We wanted to let them know we're not here to bring you harm, we really do want to help you out."

Convoys traveled into the town just as the school's day was beginning. The presence of IA and Coalition Forces brought huge smiles to many of the faces of the children.

The IA truck parked outside the grounds and soldiers began unloading their vehicles, pulling giant bags of rice on their back and carrying them into the school.

"The IA does that to help out the town," said Capt. Brian Slotnick, a native of Tom's River, N.J., and a member of the 215th Brigade Support Battalion.

"Getting rations into the town is sometimes very difficult," he continued. "We try to encourage the IA to help with that aspect. It also helps gain trust of the people so they can see ... we want to help. If these people see we want to help, they might give us some information."

After the IA had completed bringing in the goods to be handed out, they decided to

turn the supplies over to the school instead of directly handing it out to the children. After they were finished, many school children gathered around before class, and asked questions and posed for pictures with the IA soldiers, bringing smiles to everyone's faces.

"What we decided to do was let the teachers decide who got what," said Maj. Dominique Dionne, a native of Harker Heights, Texas, and the MiTT leader, since they know which families are more in need.

Though the IA and Coalition quickly moved out of the school to carry on with other missions, they hoped their presence was felt and families enjoyed their gifts.

The mission is important because it helps the people gain trust in their security forces, who are often viewed as sectarian, said Dionne. As the soldiers interact with the population, they are able to build trust and bonds.

"These missions are always great," said Gage. "They help out the town, the villagers see they can trust their Iraqi Army and see that they want to help the villagers just as much as we want to help them. It builds a good foundation of trust."



A 1st Bn., 2nd Bde., 5th Iraqi Army soldier carries a bag of rice to the headmasters of the school in Hadid, Iraq, to be handed out to the school children and their families.

Long distance reenlistment between father and son

By Sgt, 1st Class Nicholas Conner
15th SUS BDE, PAO

Camp Taji, Iraq - When the time came for Sgt. Brennen Carter to re-enlist for six more years of Army service, he needed an officer to conduct the oath.

The Heavy Equipment Transport driver from Chillicothe, Mo. chose a man whose leadership and guidance he's been following since birth; his father, Lt. Col. Bryan Carter.

"My dad has been my hero; I look up to him," said Sgt. Carter. "If anybody was going to re-enlist me, it would be my father."

Being separated by one country, two mountain ranges, and more than 1500 miles didn't stop either man from making the ceremony. Thanks to video teleconferencing, Sgt. Carter, stationed on Camp Eggers in Kabul, Afghanistan, and Lt. Col. Carter, on Camp Taji, Iraq, stood face to face.

"I'm very proud of him," said the elder Carter. "He's continuing a family tradition that started with his great-grandfather, back in the trenches of World War I."

Four generations of the Carter family have volunteered for service to the nation. Lt. Col. Carter's father served in Korea, his siblings have worn the uniform, and he now serves as the personnel officer for the 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

The younger Carter joined the Missouri



(U.S. Army Photo)

Sgt. Brennen Carter, with Batt. B, 129th FA, takes the oath of re-enlistment from Camp Eggers in Kabul, Afghanistan. A video teleconference with his father, Lt. Col. Bryan Carter, linked the two men together from opposite sides of the war. He volunteered for six more years of Army service.

National Guard his junior year of high school and completed his basic training over the summer before his senior year. Lt. Col. Carter recalled joining the guard just three days after his graduation from the same high school in

Milan, Mo.

"I was scared to death," he laughed. "I can only imagine what he felt ... especially since he went split-option."

For Sgt. Carter, deployment to Afghanistan is his first time overseas. Growing up an Army brat, he lived life watching his father pack to leave. Now, he has a better understanding of what his dad has done.

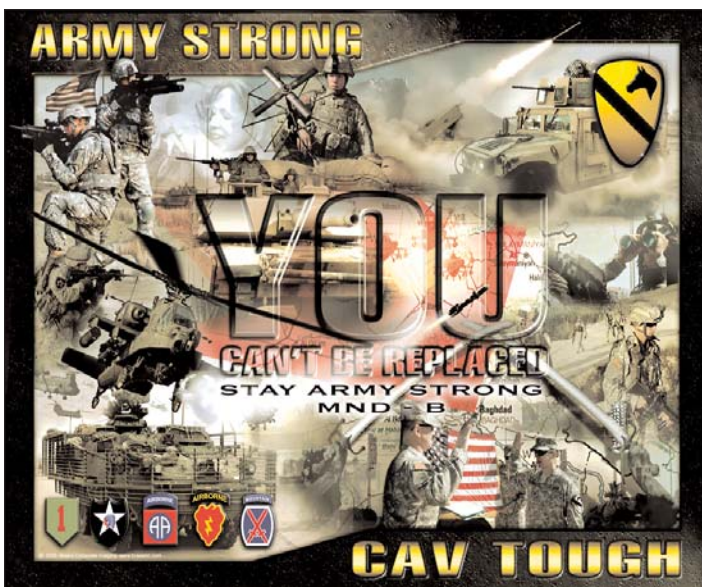
"There have been a lot of times I couldn't see him," he said. "It's been great to be able to share this with my dad."

Dad couldn't be prouder. He said his son is a huge spokesperson for the Missouri National Guard and the military in general. Even at a young age, he said, he has been an outstanding supporter. With his passion and drive, his influence prompted 20 to 30 others to join.

"I wanted to serve my country longer," said Sgt. Carter on his six-year commitment. "I love being in the Army and the National Guard."

The two talked and joked together, each watching the other from opposite sides of the war. When the elder Carter teased his son about needing half of his re-enlistment bonus, the younger countered with the pay difference between sergeant and officer.

"But if he needs it," he grinned, "He can have it."



OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

BEWARE OF DEEPWATER

High water can hide holes and ditches. The rainy season produces flood conditions which present abnormal hazards. Use extreme caution when walking or driving in flooded areas.

STAY ALERT --- STAY ALIVE