

## Iraqi born Soldier becomes American citizen

By Lt. Col. Pat Simon  
225th Eng. Bde. PAO

BAGHDAD — We all know the colors associated with American independence: good old red, white and blue.

But this year, we can add another color: brown, as in Spc. “Brown,” an interpreter with the 225th Engineer Brigade, currently serving in Iraq.

Brown joined 236 other Service members this July 4 at Al Faw palace here, who raised their right hand and recited the oath of citizenship as new Americans.

Vice President Joe Biden and Multi-National Force-Iraq Commander Gen. Raymond Odierno were also in attendance at the ceremony. Biden commended the newly sworn-in citizens for their service and their decision to become Americans.

“You represent what America always stood for: strength, freedom, and resolve ... also remarkable diversity,” said Biden.

“It is an amazing feeling,” said Brown, soon after shaking the hands of both the vice president and Gen. Odierno. “I was shaking, nervous,” he said.

The name “Brown” is not really his birth name but a nickname given to him by an Army officer. He kept the name to protect the lives of his family members who are living in Baghdad.

Brown recalled growing up and living under the brutal

dictatorship of Saddam Hussein.

“As a student, I remembered that we had to stay behind the wall to stay safe from the former baath Party,” said Brown. “You could not talk about politics. Those that did disappeared.”

Brown received his education in civil engineering and got a job in Baghdad as a supervisor for the U.S. Corps of Engineers. He would find out quickly that his daily commute to Tikrit to check on water, sewer and electrical projects would become a frightening trek.

“The security was very bad. There were many sectarian problems over here. It was not easy moving from area to area,” said Brown. “It was very dangerous.”

If that was not enough, he became emotionally scarred by the way fellow citizens treated him at the time because of his tenure with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

“Many of them thought I was a traitor,” Brown said. “They called us very bad names.

They did not realize that when we did our jobs, we did them for the Iraqi people.”

Brown felt there was no longer a future for him in his war-torn country. He had to leave his father, brother, and two sisters behind and set a new course for freedom and opportunity—America.

Brown applied for and was

granted a special immigrant visa. His first stop was Denver, Colo. to live with his uncle. Brown tried to find a job in engineering, but he found nothing.

He remembered a friend that was a former associate of his in Iraq. He called her and within a few days, Brown and his wife were in St. Louis, Mo. staying with this friend. She then suggested that he apply for a program that would change his life, and unbeknownst to him at the time, it would put him right back on the soil of his homeland.

Within weeks, Brown was not only at U.S. Army Basic Training as a new recruit, he was a qualified interpreter who was on the fast pace to deployment to Iraq.

The program also expedited his ability to receive his U.S. citizenship.

“It’s truly amazing to have this new opportunity,” said Brown.

Just four months ago, Brown was attached to the 225th Eng. Bde. He found himself right in the middle of history engaging in conversations between military leaders from both countries.

As a military engineer interpreter, Brown has literally bridged the gap between two worlds, and he has finally come to grips with his own world: his past and future.

“It’s a big responsibility,” said Brown. “I know I am making a difference. This is important for me.”



Photo by Lt. Col. Pat Simon, 225th Eng. Bde. PAO

Iraqi-born U.S. Soldier turned American citizen, Spc. “Brown”, an interpreter attached to the 225th Eng. Bde., shakes hands with Vice President Joe Biden during a naturalization ceremony at Camp Liberty, Iraq July 4. Brown joined 236 other service members from over 50 countries to take the U.S. oath of citizenship on Independence Day.

By the end of the year, Brown, a new American citizen, will once again have to leave behind his beloved birthplace, but the circumstances are different this time.

“My old life is over for me here, but I would like to return and visit one day as an American citizen,” he said.

# Former Sons of Iraq assume new role

BAGHDAD — Coalition forces, in coordination with the Ministry of Electricity, are giving former Sons of Iraq the opportunity to find employment outside of manning checkpoints.

In implementation of this plan, thirty students graduated from an electrical line refurbishment course in the Nasir Wa Salam district here, June 25.

Though the students recently graduated the six-month program, they have been working in the area for quite some time, already providing the services they have

been training for, according to 1st Lt. Justin Casey, from Ogdensburg, N.Y., assigned to the Joint Projects Management Office, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division.

“The program provides a system in place to improve the electricity of the Nasir Wa Salam area,” said Casey. “Residents can call a hotline to notify the Ministry of Electricity of any electrical problems and these guys go out and fix it.”

Locals already use the services provided by the electrical line refurbishment team,

either calling in or showing up personally to inform the team of problems they are having. The team then goes out to inspect and fix it. “They have two hotlines running that people can call,” Casey said. “They are available all day, from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.”

The program is funded by Coalition forces, but everything else is taken care of by the Iraqis, according to Casey. “We’re the middleman,” he said. “We fund it and provide the equipment but the Ministry of Electricity provides everything else.”

The team received tool

belts and a number of vehicles from Coalition forces to carry out their duties.

It is the intent now that the students have graduated the course and are now certified in their field, that the Ministry of Electricity will hire them full time, Casey added.

With programs such as the electrical line refurbishment course, former Sons of Iraq will transition into new jobs that will assist the Government of Iraq and their neighborhood with getting the country to a state of normalcy that will no longer require the aid of the Coalition forces.

## 1st ACB supports Iraqi liaison in control tower

**By Spc. Alun Thomas**  
1st ACB PAO

TAJI, Iraq — Communication between an air traffic control tower and the aircraft must be concise and clear or the consequences could be deadly.

To alleviate some of the communication problems between American forces in the

tower and Iraqi pilots, a request was made by the Iraqi Air Force, to place a liaison in the control tower located on Camp Taji, Iraq, a base north of Baghdad.

The request was made during a meeting between the leadership of the 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad and leadership of the Iraqi Air Force on June 6. One month after the meeting, that request is being fulfilled.

Being an ATC (air traffic control) operator can be a stressful job; the operators on Camp Taji are responsible for the air space within a five-mile diameter around Taji and deal with a great amount of helicopter traffic. They are the voice the aviators trust to keep the airspace safe.

Having a commanding view of the flight line and up to date information are vital tools to help controllers like Spc. Brian Kelly, from Stillwater, Okla., in Company F, 2nd Battalion, 1st ACB, do their job.

“We sequence and de-conflict aircraft to get them safely to the ground. We keep metal from scraping metal,” said Kelly.

“As a liaison (the Iraqi ATC) might help because he can understand (Iraqi pilots) better,” said Kelly. “They have different rules over there compared to what we have, so he will be able to bridge that gap and explain the situation.”

Lt. Col. Mohammed Sami’r Abraheem ALsaady graduated in 1991 from the Iraqi Air Force college; in 1994 he completed his ATC training in Jordan and has gained experience from multiple airfields across Iraq, he said.

Working as an ATC controller is something he loves to do and coming to work with the American forces, he feels that the controllers are now his new brothers, said Sami’r.

The Iraqi pilots are anxiously waiting for the sound of his voice over the radio and the information that he will be able to provide from his new experiences working with the U.S. ATC Soldiers, he said.

Having a positive attitude on the situation, Capt. Stephen Schmidt, a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter pilot and commander of Co. F, 2nd Battalion, 1st ACB, was impressed at how his Soldiers reacted to the enthusiasm of the liaison.

“Once these guys saw that Sami’r wanted to get into the job and learn how things operated up here, they became very enthusiastic in being a part of it,” said Schmidt.

The air traffic controllers want to ensure nothing gets lost in transition, he said.

“We have some difficulties communicating with the Iraqi pilots – it was just the language barrier that was hurting us,” said Schmidt. “Having Lieutenant Colonel Sami’r in the tower is a great way to help the Iraqi pilots understand exactly what the tower wants the aircrew to do and when to do it – not when the aircrews feel like doing it.”

Having Sami’r in the tower is one-step in a newly formed and continuing relationship between the Iraqi air force and the 1st Air Cav. Bde.



Photo by Sgt. Travis Zielinski, 1st ACB PAO

Capt. Stephen Schmidt, a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter pilot and commander of Co. F, 2nd Bn., 1st ACB, 1st Cav. Div., explains the credentials necessary for Lt. Col. Mohammed Sami’r Abraheem ALsaady of the Iraqi Air Force, to work in the air traffic control tower as a liaison, Camp Taji, north of Baghdad, July 2.

# Soldiers honor holiday with patch ceremony

By Spc. Alun Thomas  
1st ACB PAO

TAJI, Iraq — For many Soldiers of the 1st Air Cavalry Brigade it was a day of firsts.

Not only was it their first Independence Day in a combat zone and their first spent away from their families, but most importantly, on the 233rd anniversary of the United States, their first combat patch.

Patch ceremonies for the 1st ACB took place on a dust swept morning, July 4, at the headquarters of the various battalions within the brigade on Camp Taji, Iraq, north of Baghdad, as first time deployers with the 1st ACB had the storied 1st Cavalry Division patch placed on their right shoulder as a permanent reminder of their service.

During the patch ceremony for the 615th Aviation Support Brigade, 1st ACB, Col. Douglas Gabram, from Cleveland, Ohio, commander, 1st ACB, 1st Cav. Div., Multi-National Division – Baghdad, said the ceremony could have taken place a month earlier, but decided to wait.

“We could have thrown the patch on the right shoulder 30 days ago, but we waited until today because we’re old fashioned in the Air Cav,” Gabram said. “It’s a special day, the 4th of July and this combat patch linked to you, nobody can take it away.”

Gabram said, the significance of the patch might not be apparent now to younger Soldiers, but will take on extra meaning in the coming years.

“Many of you are putting the patch on for the first time and when you’re retired you will remember this day and be proud of this patch on your

right shoulder,” Gabram said. “You may not see it now, but you will.”

Gabram thanked the 615th ASB for their sacrifices and to use events like the patch ceremony to stay positive.

“Many of you have lost friends over here and when you sit today and reflect about the 4th of July and what it means, think about that and how special it is to wear the First Team combat patch.”

Lt. Col. Harold Keck, from Edmond, Okla., commander, 615th ASB, also explained the importance of the patch ceremony, describing it as historic for ‘Cold Steel.’

“This patch has a proud and lengthy history with an extremely courageous and ferocious lineage,” Keck said. “You now join the many Soldiers who went before you.”

Keck said the first time he saw the 1st Cav. Div. patch was as a nine-year-old when he saw the film “Apocalypse Now” with his father, something that stayed with him in later years.

“When I joined the Army as a young private, never in my wildest dreams did I ever think I would be standing before a formation of proud professionals wearing this patch,” Keck said.

The proudest day of his military career was the day he had the 1st Cav. Div. patch placed on his right sleeve and hoped in later years Soldiers of the 615th would feel the same way, he said.

“The boss (Col. Gabram) said it, but I want to reiterate it; in 30 years time, maybe 50 or 60, I want you to remember this day and time,” Keck said. “There’s nothing better than having a 1st Cav sandwich,” in reference to wearing the 1st Cav. patch on both



Photo by Sgt. Nathan Hoskins, 1st ACB PAO

Capt. Andrew Kuen (right), of Montville, N.J., the commander of HHC, 1st ACB, 1st Cav. Div., places a First Team combat patch on the shoulder of Capt. Chuck Dickhart, of Wayne, Penn., a battle captain for the 1st ACB, during a July 4 combat patch ceremony at Camp Taji.

shoulders.

Receiving his first combat patch was Spc. Travis Lee, from Memphis, Tenn., paralegal, 1st ACB, who said he had waited a long time to wear the 1st Cav. Div. patch.

“On our last deployment I didn’t get a chance to deploy with the Air Cav (due to) injury, so it feels great,” Lee said following the ceremony.

Having the patch ceremony on Independence Day added extra meaning to the occasion, Lee said, a suitable reminder of the sacrifices of Soldiers past and present.

“We have to make sure people understand that we don’t take freedom for granted,” Lee said. “What we are doing over here is very important and the primary mission is to get back home safe.”

Having the First Team patch, in particular, means more to Lee than just the material it is made of.

“For me this patch means the honor and tradition of serving in the 1st Cavalry Division,” Lee said.

“I knew when I was com-

ing to the division I was always going to be a part of something special,” he said proudly.



Photo by Sgt. Nathan Hoskins, 1st ACB PAO

Lt. Col. Dean Keck, of Edmond, Okla., commander of 615th ASB, 1st ACB, 1st Cav. Div., stands before his battalion and battalion colors as they fly in the hot wind over Camp Taji, Iraq, July 4, during a combat patch ceremony.

## On This Day In Military History

1941 — The neutral United States moves closer to war with Germany when U.S. forces land on Iceland to take over its garrisoning from the British. From thereon, the U.S. Navy had the responsibility of protecting convoys in the nearby sea routes from attack by German submarines. With Iceland and its nearby sea routes under U.S. protection, the British Royal Navy was more free to defend its embattled Mediterranean positions. The occupation of Iceland came less than a month after President Franklin D. Roosevelt froze all German and Italian assets in the United States and expelled the countries' diplomats in response to the German torpedoing of the American destroyer Robin Moor. Much of the North Atlantic was now in the American sphere, and U.S. warships patrolled the area for German submarines, notifying London of all enemy activity. The United States officially entered World War II after Japan attacked the Pearl Harbor naval base in Hawaii in December 1941.



ROOSEVELT

## MND-B Pic of the day!



Photo by Maj. Annmarie Daneker, MND-B PAO

BAGHDAD — Spc. Laura Johnson, a photojournalist with the 211th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, is interviewed by NFL head coach Jeff Fisher of the Tennessee Titans at Camp Liberty here, July 4. Coach Fisher picked Johnson, a native of East Orange, N.J., for an interview because her younger brother, Kenny Britt, is a rookie wide receiver with the Titans. In her interview, Johnson had some words of wisdom for her brother. "Don't drop any passes", she said. Fisher was at Camp Liberty visiting U.S. troops as part of the USO-sponsored NFL Coaches Tour.

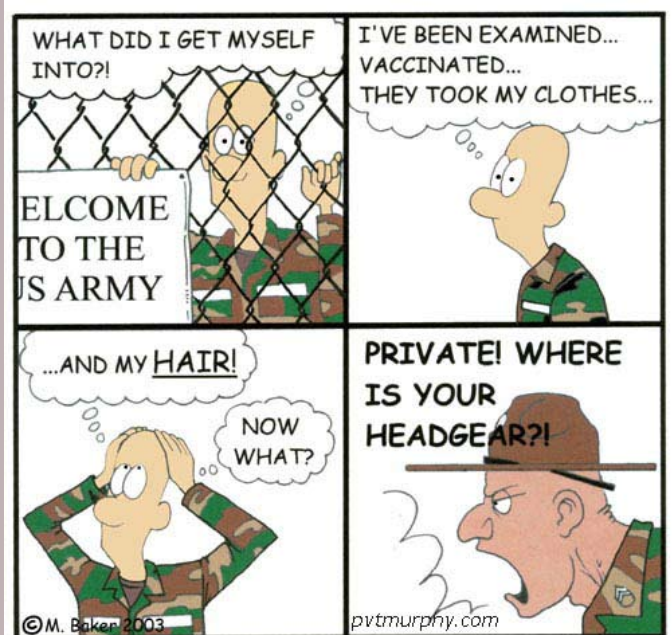
## FAMOUS FEATS OF CHUCK NORRIS



### DID YOU KNOW?

Chuck Norris can drink an entire gallon of milk in 37 seconds.

## Pvt. Murphy by Mark Baker



# ATTENTION!!

## CI Notice for all of MND-B:

A defect has been found in some bottled water caps. There is the possibility of contamination. Bottles that are not fully sealed should not be consumed.



If you have pallets of water with this problem, contact 1LT MEGHAN WINZEN 620TH CSSB SPO Service and Support OIC, DSN 318-485-3678/SVOIP 243-4586

## Quote For Today

“Freedom makes a huge requirement of every human being. For the person who is unwilling to grow up, the person who does not want to carry his own weight, this is a frightening prospect.”

– Eleanor Roosevelt, 1884-1962  
American Firstlady, Stateswoman

### Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



**Today**  
107° F | 80° F



**Tomorrow**  
104° F | 82° F



**Wednesday**  
105° F | 86° F

## Trigger's Teasers

6		8		7	2			
	3	4						
8	1			6	9			
			7		1	5		
		3	8					
9	6		2					
	3	2			5	4		
				1	2			
7	5			6				8

The objective of the game is to fill all the blank squares in a game with the correct numbers. There are three very simple constraints to follow: **Every row of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order. Every column of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order. Every 3 by 3 subsection of the 9 by 9 square must include all digits 1 through 9.**

Every Sudoku game begins with a number of squares already filled in, and the difficulty of each game is largely a function of how many squares are filled in. The more squares that are known, the easier it is to figure out which numbers go in the open squares. As you fill in squares correctly, options for the remaining squares are narrowed and it becomes easier to fill them in.

### Yesterday's Answers

6	8	3	1	2	5	7	9	4
2	4	7	3	9	8	6	1	5
1	5	9	6	7	4	3	8	2
5	3	2	9	1	7	8	4	6
7	1	8	2	4	6	9	5	3
9	6	4	5	8	3	1	2	7
3	9	6	8	5	2	4	7	1
4	2	1	7	3	9	5	6	8
8	7	5	4	6	1	2	3	9



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