

Lightning Strikes

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LZ named after
fallen commander

Iraqi Police learn
advanced CSI
techniques

Soldiers promote sexual assault awareness
with “Take Back the Night” rally

Bunker strikes in South Balad Ruz





U.S. ARMY

I.A.M. STRONGSM

INTERVENE ★ ACT ★ MOTIVATE

Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Prevention

INTERVENE

When I recognize a threat to my fellow Soldiers, I will have the personal courage to **INTERVENE** and prevent Sexual Assault. I will condemn acts of Sexual Harassment. I will not abide obscene gestures, language or behavior. I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I will **INTERVENE**.

ACT

You are my brother, my sister, my fellow Soldier. It is my duty to stand up for you, no matter the time or place. I will take **ACTION**. I will do what's right. I will prevent Sexual Harassment and Assault. I will not tolerate sexually offensive behavior. I will **ACT**.

MOTIVATE

We are American Soldiers, **MOTIVATED** to keep our fellow Soldiers safe. It is our mission to prevent Sexual Harassment and Assault. We will denounce sexual misconduct. As Soldiers, we are all **MOTIVATED** to take action. We are strongest...together.

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Cover Photo by Pfc. Jesus J. Aranda, Task Force Lightning Public Affairs

Sgt. Dawn Cloukey, a signals systems specialist with the Brigade Troop Battalion, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, tests the functionality of a communication device during a brief stop at Forward Operating Base Normandy, March 27.

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As I continue to visit units throughout Multi-National Division – North, I never cease to be amazed by the dedication, professionalism, and discipline of the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines whom I encounter. The members of the U.S. military, proudly representing their respective services and the Nation as a whole, are some of the finest examples of what America itself represents.

Putting on the uniform each and every morning reinforces the commitment to country, service, and our military brothers and sisters, we all vowed to hold paramount in our ideals. This should never change. From the day we first raised our hands before the stars and stripes, pledging our commitment to serve, to the day we transition from servicemembers to proud citizens, we must always reinforce the discipline in our service which serves as a safeguard to the duty and honor we owe to those we serve and support.

There should be no occasion where a servicemember lacks the moral fiber and personal and professional values to the extent that he or she commits sexual assault. Sexual assault, harassment and persecution runs so counter to the values which our five branches of service foster in their servicemembers and employees that the fact that even one offense of this nature can occur hurts the integrity of our services deeply.

Leaders must ensure that all Soldiers, regardless of grade, know and understand that sexual assault and harassment is not tolerable. Make a conscious and continuous effort to be a role model for those around you. Stand up tall and squash harassment in all of its forms. Inspire your Soldiers to combat misconduct in the same manner.

Care enough to confront those who violate the personal comfort of others. Even if the violator is your battle buddy, you owe it to that Soldier to correct inappropriate behavior. There should be no consideration to rank or position when it comes to doing the right thing. There should be no fear of retaliation or reprisals for reporting wrongdoing; you will be protected. The foremost thoughts in the minds of those who make an effort to halt misconduct should be: Intervene, Act and Motivate (I.A.M).

You can do this by intervening when you witness an act of sexual assault or harassment by taking action, you can motivate others to do the same. Create a working environment in which your Soldiers feel safe from all forms of harassment. Demonstrate that you have the personal comfort of each of your Soldiers in mind by showing that any inappropriate conduct or dialogue is not welcome and fiercely rebuked.

All leaders should strive to develop a strong personal relationship with their Soldiers, in addition to a strong professional relationship. 70% of sexual harassment and assault cases aren't reported to the proper chain of command due to the victims not having the trust or confidence in their direct leadership. Let there be no doubt about the stance that you, as a military leader and a responsible individual, take on the subject. It's the responsibility of all military personnel to live by the standards, but it is the immediate duty of our leaders to enforce the standards.

Small unit leaders throughout the military are directly influential to the mental and physical well-being of their Soldiers. Leaders can best influence the safety of their Soldiers through education.

The education of all military personnel in the necessity of sexual assault prevention and awareness is being reinforced Army-wide through the Sexual Harassment, Assault, Response Prevention (SHARP) program, which empowers all Soldiers with the duty to intervene with proactive measures to prevent these incidents from occurring.

Each and every Soldier has the power to enforce these ideals, but not every Soldier knows it. It's up to every Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine and Coast Guardsman to educate each other.

You are America's sons and daughters who we call servicemembers. We are the greatest fighting force in the world with the greatest assets assisting in the defense of our country.

Tropic Lightning!
Maj. Gen. Robert L. Caslen Jr.
Commanding General
Task Force Lightning
Multi-National Division - North



We have been entrusted as leaders serving in Multi-National Division-North and Task Force Lightning with the responsibility of taking care of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen. We must set the example to ensure all of our servicemembers are afforded the best leadership. We do this through coaching, teaching, and mentoring with dedicated leadership while upholding our values.

Values hold a squad, company, and organization together; without values you may have little or no trust, faith, confidence, or productivity. We have values for all services and these values are all interconnected and mutually supportive. Values are the foundation and fiber of one's character.

As professionals, we must continue to hold one another accountable; we have values which have been instilled in each one of us. We must ensure our subordinates and peers have the full trust, faith, and confidence that we will always do the right thing, on or off duty. We are a very capable force that protects our nation's interest at home and abroad with the values of our military.

America has entrusted every leader, with the honor and privilege of leading America's greatest assets, their sons and daughters. We must never take this responsibility lightly or for granted. We should never compromise the trust which America has given us as commissioned officers and noncommissioned officers.

There should never be any doubt by a subordinate, peer or superior that these values have been compromised. We must identify issues and hold the moral high ground, understanding the ramifications of what we do or fail to do and how our actions will affect other people.

Some might say that leaders are held to a higher standard and that might be true, but we are simply held to THE standard and, as leaders, we must demonstrate it every day through our actions.

All servicemembers are the same; they respond to rewards and their superior's approval; not through fear, threats, or intimidation. We cannot tolerate leaders who feel, because they are in a position of authority, they can berate, humiliate or intimidate their subordinates through verbal abuse, intemperate language, or liberal sarcasm. Treat your Soldiers with respect and dignity in all that you do and you will be much more successful in the long run.

Equality must encompass everyone, as it is inclusive not exclusive. We must ensure that all service members are treated fairly, with dignity and respect, and genuine care. Equality matters.

As we continue to partner with the Iraqi Security Forces and show them the tactical and operational side of our jobs, we must also ensure we show the ethical and moral side as well.

We must show that ethics are a strong part of our professional military and that we are a values-based organization, which treats everyone with dignity and respect. In doing so, we will plant a seed which will allow ethics to grow.

TROPIC LIGHTNING!

Command Sgt. Maj. Frank M. Leota
Command Sergeant Major
Task Force Lightning
Multi-National Division - North

Command Sgt. Maj. Update



LZ renamed to honor fallen commander



A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter begins to depart from the “Derby LZ” landing zone on Forward Operating Base Marez, in Mosul, Iraq. The landing zone was renamed in honor of Lt. Col. Gary Derby and four members of his personal security detail who were lost to a suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device in February, while traveling to a combat outpost in Mosul. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Daniel Nelson, Task Force Lightning Public Affairs)



Command Sgt. Major James Pippin uses his combat knife to cut the ribbon, revealing a sign with the new name of a landing zone on Forward Operating Base Marez, in Mosul, Iraq, March 20. The landing zone was renamed in honor of Lt. Col. Gary Derby and four members of his personal security detail who were lost to a suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device in February. (U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Jared Sollars, 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs.)

By Sgt. Christopher Kozloski
3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs

Prop wash from a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter christened the official renaming of a landing zone on Forward Operating Base Marez, in Mosul, Iraq, March 20.

The landing zone was renamed to honor the memory of Lt. Col. Gary Derby, former commander of 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, and four members of his personal security detail, who were lost to a suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device in February. They were en route to a combat outpost in Mosul to conduct a combined-operations patrol with Iraqi Security Forces.

Col. Gary J. Volesky, commander of 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, gathered with fellow Soldiers to memorialize Derby and his team’s dedication to the preservation of freedom both at home and abroad.

“We will never forget our fallen Soldiers,” Volesky said. “They were great Americans, who fought for the freedom of others.”

Command Sgt. Maj. James Pippin was asked to cut the ribbon to reveal a new sign designating the landing zone as “Derby LZ.” Pippin bypassed the proverbial scissors and sliced through the ribbon with a combat knife, a gesture he felt that Derby would deem appropriate. The sign itself was erected as a reminder that fallen Soldiers should never be forgotten.

“This will be a standing memorial that shows we will never forget our Soldiers,” said Volesky.

Derby, 43, of Whitehall, Mont., is survived by his wife, Brenda and their three children Jennifer, Matthew and Benjamin.

Soldiers from opposite sides of war-torn country work, become U.S. citizens together

By Staff Sgt. Tim Meyer
3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division Public Affairs

The two men—one a Christian from the south, the other a Muslim from the north—have nothing against each other, despite the past which tore their homeland of Sudan apart for more than 20 years during a civil war.

Today they are deployed together in Iraq in the U.S. Army, where they work in the same unit as interpreter/translators. In addition to Sudan's dark past, they also share a bright future – they both became naturalized U.S. citizens in a ceremony at Al Faw Palace in Baghdad, March 3.

"I love my job, and I love my (new) country," said Spc. Marlesh Mborny, who is assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division. "I'm grateful to be American."

Now married with two children, Mborny moved to the United States in 2003 and settled in Lincoln, Neb., where thousands of southern Sudanese call home. But his path was far from easy.

When he was 18, his step brother and uncle were killed in the Second Sudanese Civil War. He fled from Sudan to Congo where he lived for several months, and then to the Central African Republic for five years before immigrating to the U.S.

Mborny learned French, Swahili, Arabic, Nigala, Sango and Moro languages in Africa. When he came to America, his 8-year-old daughter Lidia helped him learn English in Nebraska. He hesitated to join the U.S. Army because he didn't want to leave Grace, his then-pregnant wife, alone at home. She persuaded him to go, and Munyo, their son, was born when Mborny was in initial entry training.

"I want to see the world peaceful in the future—that is my hope," he said.

His father, four brothers and two sisters are still in Sudan; he is thinking of returning to visit them one day. After this deployment, he plans to work as a recruiter in Lincoln, to tell other Sudanese about the positive advantages of joining the U.S. Army.

"I moved to the U.S. for freedom, for better opportunities, for a better life," said Spc. Magdi Ahmed, who is in the same unit. "Joining the Army gave me the opportunity to fix things that I saw with my eyes but I couldn't do anything about."

Ahmed's parents were from Sudan but he was born in Saudi Arabia. After working at a railway station there for almost 20 years, Ahmed's father was forcibly retired by the government and replaced by an employee.

The family moved to Dongla, the capital of northern Sudan, where they lived for six years during the war. Although his parents were Sudanese, they were considered foreigners because they had lived in Saudi Arabia.

"I didn't feel like an equal in Saudi Arabia (or) in Sudan," he says. Even though he had Sudanese citizenship and was a resident there, he had to pay more for college, according to Ahmed, because he was born in Saudi Arabia, a rich country.

Then the college faculty intentionally gave him failing grades, because he didn't agree with the government, according to



Col. Walter Piatt (far left), commander, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, recognizes 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team Soldiers who became naturalized U.S. citizens March 3. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Tim Meyer.)

Ahmed. In Sudan, although he experienced negative things – unfairness, discrimination, corruption – he thinks of these things as positive now because they prepared him to move to the United States.

"The U.S. was the only place you could go for justice. I couldn't get justice from my own country. The struggle I felt in Saudi Arabia and in Sudan made me feel like the U.S. would be a better place to live," said Ahmed.

He moved back to Saudi Arabia in 2005 and immigrated to the U.S. one year later. In Wisconsin a friend of his uncle helped him start a new life. After one month he had his own apartment and job.

Ahmed's parents, five brothers and one sister live in Saudi Arabia. He still has other relatives in Sudan, where his uncle died during the war.

The ten Soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division Soldiers who became naturalized U.S. Citizens are:

Spc. Marlesh Mborny, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team; Spc. Magdi Ahmed, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team; Pfc. Dennis Berrei David, Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 7th Field Artillery; Pfc. Angel Climaco, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 7th Field Artillery; Pfc. Leiry Elisa Dominguez Vargas, D Troop, 3rd Squadron, 4th U.S. Cavalry Regiment; Sgt. Alfredo Floresreyes, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment; Pfc. Allan Macaraeg, Company D, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment; Sgt. Delfino Martinez, Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 7th Field Artillery; Spc. Dana Noori, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Brigade Special Troops Battalion; Spc. Michael Eluang, 3rd Squadron, 4th U.S. Cavalry Regiment

STAY SAFE WHILE DEPLOYED

Safety Tips

Treat every
weapon as if
it is loaded

Handle every
weapon
with care.

Identify the target
before you shoot.

Never point
the muzzle
at anything
you do not intend to
shoot.

Keep the
weapon
on safe
and your finger off
the trigger until you
intend to shoot.

T.H.I.N.K.

“And I didn’t think it was loaded...”

Everyone has the responsibility for safety.

Individuals must learn and do the right thing.

Supervisors must ensure safety standards are in place and enforced.

Leaders should influence others through safe behavior, enforcement and example.

Leaders and Supervisors must:

- Apply Composite Risk Management
- Ensure Soldiers are trained on all weapons within the unit
- Be involved and engaged in oversight of safety
 - Identify and control risks and/or risky behaviors
 - Set the example for safe handling of weapons
- Ensure weapons discipline is maintained
- Refrain from trading safety for shortcuts
- Ensure controls are in place and understood to mitigate hazards
- Train Soldiers to recognize weapon status
- Spot check Soldiers for compliance with standards
- Ask questions and have Soldiers “back brief”
- Ensure weapon PMCS are conducted regularly
- Loading/Unloading procedures
- Proper Clearing procedures
- Conduct periodic re-enforcement training
- Ensure Soldiers are qualified and proficient with weapons
 - Range qualification does not necessarily indicate proficiency
- Establish Standing Operating Procedures for weapons clearing
- Remember T.H.I.N.K.

4 levels of Weapon Status

Black - Magazine loaded, round in chamber, weapon on fire

Red - Magazine loaded, round in chamber, weapon on safe

Amber - Magazine loaded, empty chamber on safe.

Green - Weapon cleared and on safe.

Light shines through hospital windows

By 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs

Coalition forces, through coordination with Iraqi provincial leadership, visited the Alsalam Hospital, in Mosul, to review an ongoing window-replacement project March 17.

Lt. Col. Kirk Fernitz, the deputy chief of the Mosul Reconstruction Operations Center, and Soldiers of Company C, 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division worked with provincial director generals to replace the hospital's windows and improve the health-care environment for its surrounding community.

"Unfortunately, the Alsalam Hospital in Mosul was damaged by the blast and concussion of nearby [improvised-explosive devices]," Fernitz said. "Assisting the hospital with structural repairs and improving its appearance is important in enticing patients to seek treatment there, which keeps the hospital in business and attracts future health care applicants."

Fernitz said projects like this show the citizens of Mosul that the government is interested in improving the health and welfare of its citizens.

Besides overseeing local reconstruction projects, the MROC helps the development of the province's respective director generals through a process called Civil Capacity Building.

"The key to civil capacity building is for the Iraqi leadership to develop the capacity to coordinate and to independently work out their issues," said Fernitz. "Once the Iraqis are consistent with the process and can 'catch their own fish,' we consider our job done."

The Coalition forces that inhabit the Ninewah province also coordinate with the director generals and the MROC. Units who operate in Ninewa nominate projects, which the MROC presents to the director generals for approval. Then, members of the MROC provide assets to the director generals, such as engineers, to execute the projects.



Soldiers of C Company, 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division maneuver a staircase in the Alsalam Hospital in Mosul, Iraq. The windows of the hospital were damaged in an improvised explosive device detonation and are being replaced by C Co., the Mosul Reconstruction Operations Center and the director generals of the Ninewah province. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Sharla Perrin, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs)



Soldiers of 3rd Platoon, Company C, 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division are seen through the freshly replaced windows of the Alsalam Hospital entrance in Mosul, Iraq. The company coordinated with the Mosul Reconstruction Operations Center and the director generals of Ninewah province to have the windows replaced after they were damaged from an improvised explosive device concussion. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Sharla Perrin, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs)



Pfc. Spencer Smoot, the medic for 3rd Platoon, Company C, 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, is reflected in the cracked glass of a window in the Alsalam Hospital in Mosul, Iraq. The company along with the Mosul Reconstruction Operations Center work with the director generals in the Ninewah province to fund and support reconstruction projects in the area. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Sharla Perrin, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs)

Retention begins with leadership

By Command Sgt. Maj. Frank M. Leota
Task Force Lightning Command Sergeant Major

I have often been asked what has kept me in the Army. It doesn't seem long ago I had thought about enlisting into the Army. Frankly, it was not for patriotism, honor, or country. It was about seeking an opportunity for a safe environment and financial opportunity. I did not know what to expect of the Army as no one in my family had served in it. My first duty station was in the Republic of Panama as a private earning \$395 per month with jump pay.

I was assigned to Company A, 3rd Battalion, 5th Infantry "Motengaters" and it was the only airborne company in the battalion. It was a great duty station and assignment. The noncommissioned officers were rigid. The leadership, senior NCOs and most of the squad leaders were Vietnam veterans. The platoon sergeant was Staff Sgt. Joe S. Johnson and my platoon leader was Lt. Chuck Wagner, hard as nails and smarter than heck.

I was immediately made the platoon's radio telephone operator—not because of my wit or proficiency—I was the new guy. There is nothing like carrying a PRC 77 and Vincent device through triple-canopy jungle with every "wait-a-minute vine" introducing itself to my face. Simple things make life better in a jungle environment, like how to make a hot meal by mixing your C-ration peanut butter and "bug juice" (insect repellent) to make a sterno for heating up your serving of "beef and shrapnel" (three slices of compressed meat and potatoes covered in a nice film of orange grease).

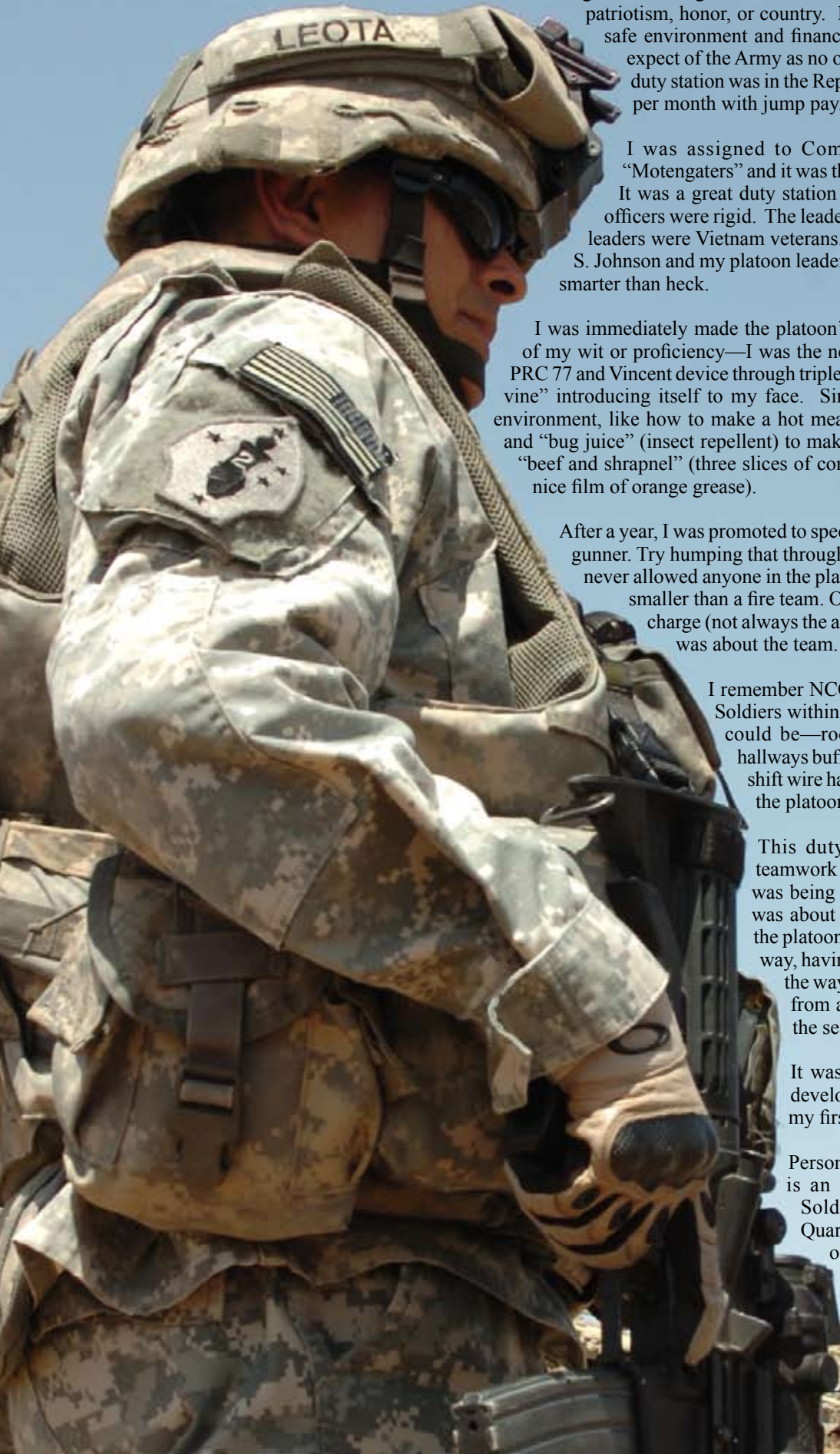
After a year, I was promoted to specialist and became a 90 mm recoilless rifle gunner. Try humping that through the Mojinga swamp! The platoon's SOP never allowed anyone in the platoon to conduct any activity on or off post smaller than a fire team. Our team leader was always present and in charge (not always the adult supervision you wanted). Everything was about the team.

I remember NCOs teaching, coaching, and mentoring all Soldiers within the fire team to be the best Soldiers they could be—rooms were inspected each morning, the hallways buffed with melted-down car wax and a make-shift wire handle, and latrines were cleaned along with the platoon area around the company.

This duty station instilled in me the value of teamwork and made me realize that being a Soldier was being part of something larger than myself. It was about the organization. I often wondered if all the platoons in the Army were structured in the same way, having your team leader with you every step of the way. The team leader ensured your transition from a civilian and basic Soldier morphed into the seasoned Soldiers needed for the fire team.

It was this personal interest in leadership and development that inspired me to re-enlist after my first term.

Personal time and effort with young Soldiers is an investment for a leader. Seeing your Soldier selected for Soldier of the Month, Quarter, or Year or promoted into the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers is a great feeling. Your investments will pay off and continue in the future. They too will develop their Soldiers and invest their time and efforts as you did.





Iraqi Army Lt. Col. Khalil Malik Ahmed, commander of 3rd Battalion, 20th IA Brigade, and Capt. Matthew Caprari, commander of Apache Company, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, sign the paperwork officially transferring control of Combat Outpost Ayres to the Iraqi Army. (U.S. Army photos by Spc. Anthony Jones, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division Public Affairs)



Soldiers of Apache Company serve cake to members of the Iraqi Army following the ceremony.



Lt. Col. James R. DeMoss and Iraqi Army Lt. Col. Khalil Malik Ahmed shake hands following a ceremony transferring control of Combat Outpost Ayres.

Iraqi Army assumes control of Combat Outpost Ayres

**By Spc. Anthony Jones
1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division Public Affairs**

The Iraqi Army assumed command of 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Stryker Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division’s Combat Outpost Ayres during a ceremony March 19.

Apache Company, 3-21 Infantry is the unit that had operational control of the COP in Diyala province. Apache Company commander, Capt. Matthew Caprari, and Iraqi Army Lt. Col. Khalil Malik Ahmed, commander 3rd Battalion, 20th Brigade, signed the documents handing the COP over to IA control after a brief ceremony presided over by Ahmed and Lt. Col. James R. DeMoss, the 3-21 Inf. battalion commander.

DeMoss said the ceremony was less about a piece of land than it was about the future path of the partnership between Iraq and the United States.

“Today is a significant day for the Iraqi – U.S. partnership,” said DeMoss addressing both Iraqi and American troops. “It marks the recognition that the Iraqi Army, specifically, 3rd

Battalion of the 20th IA Brigade, improves and proves that they are increasingly ready to handle more and more security responsibilities.”

With the aid of an interpreter, Ahmed spoke to his soldiers and American Soldiers as well.

“Speaking for myself and all my officers,” said Ahmed, “we are very thankful to the Coalition Forces for all their efforts and giving us the opportunity to secure the area. Today we received this COP; it will be a good start for the Iraqi Army to get ready to secure this area and our country.”

Ahmed said there are still obstacles in the way, but with the help of Coalition forces the Iraqi Army will be able to solve their problems. He also said that every day he sees the country getting better, and credits coordination between the Iraqi Army, Iraqi Police and Coalition forces.

“For us,” said Ahmed. “We will continue this partnership by training and supporting; for democracy and for the new Iraq.

Bunker strikes disrupt insurge

By Sgt. Jeremy Pitcher

1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division Public Affairs

Coalition forces began a series of tactical strikes March 17 against bunkers utilized by Al-Qaeda in Iraq, in the South Balad Ruz area and killed at least 23 members of the organization in this remote area of Diyala province.

After review and clearance from Iraqi Security Forces, the strikes were conducted by air assets from the U.S. Army, Marines and Air Force, which used credible intelligence to identify the targets, and then used air delivered munitions to attack the dug-in enemy force.

The multi-day operation led to the destruction of more than 10 bunkers along with eight vehicles in an area largely abandoned by locals. One member of Al Qaeda was found wounded and taken to a medical facility for treatment.

After the initial air strikes, members of the Iraqi Army and 1st

Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division entered the area and checked the destroyed bunkers. While searching the area, Soldiers found weaponry and improvised explosive device material being prepared for use.

An explosive ordnance disposal team destroyed the weapons and munitions following the discovery.

No civilian or Coalition forces were injured or killed during the operation.

“This comprehensive use of air and ground assets was an outstanding success,” said 1st SBCT, 25th ID spokesman Maj. Chris Hyde. “Not only did we remove a significant threat to the people of the province, we have also sent an emphatic message to those who would do more harm – watch out.”



Soldiers from Recon platoon, 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, stand by to be picked up by helicopters south of Balad Ruz, Iraq March 22. (U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Walter J. Pels)

nt activities in Diyala province



U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Jared Naegele, of Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit One, prepares an explosive charge to destroy an enemy bunker found next to a canal south of Balad Ruz, Iraq on March 22. (U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Walter J. Pels)

Take Back the Night rally brings sexual assault into the spotlight

By Spc. Jazz Burney
3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division Public Affairs

In a unified effort, nearly 500 Service members and civilians participated in a 1.8 mile walk and a rally designed to bring awareness and promote a stand against sexual assault by “breaking the silence” at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq, during the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division’s Take Back the Night April 11.

“If you are not willing to speak up for wrongdoing, then you are willing to put up with anything and shouldn’t complain,” said Staff Sgt. Leah Sutherland, a Soldier participating in the event. “We all have to at times do things that are uncomfortable -- we have to stand up to stop what is going on,” she continued.

The walk was followed by a video presentation about sexual assault, from which participants learned that one in six women will be sexually assaulted in her lifetime, and one in 33 men. The finale was a 12-scene dramatization put on by Soldiers depicting various situations that lead to sexual assaults. The scenes included basic training, physical training, a company orderly room, a fraternity

party, barracks, female Soldiers who had been sexually assaulted, and a man who considers suicide when he is confronted by other men about his sexual orientation.

“We are here to make a difference and to bring awareness to the invisible wounds and scars of victims of sexual assault on COB Speicher,” said Sgt. 1st Class Keith Walker, the Brigade’s equal opportunity advisor. “There are many Soldiers here on COB Speicher who are more afraid of walking to the bathrooms at night than going outside the wire to face the enemy—this is sad. It is our goal tonight to ensure that Soldiers are trained and leaders are aware of the problems that we face,” he continued.

Among the many Soldiers of the brigade present for the training, battalion commanders and senior noncommissioned officers were also in attendance to listen and participate.

“When improvised explosive devices took over [Multi National Division - North] last year, we asked our nation for help, they sent billions of dollars and put mine-resistant ambush protection vehicles



Soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division participate in a 1.8 mile walk to bring awareness and promote a stand against sexual assault during a Take Back the Night rally April 11. (U.S. Army photo by Chief Warrant Officer Tracy H...)

everywhere to protect our Soldiers,” said Col. Walter Piatt, the brigade commander.

“We created concrete factories to make T-walls at a greater rate than we could move them; we secured a land that could not be secured; we defeated an enemy that everyone said would not be defeated -- yet we cannot protect our Soldiers from ourselves,” said Piatt, referring to Soldiers who sexually assault other Soldiers and challenging everyone to prevent such attacks. “We have to learn how to be that friend, that Soldier that will be there for our comrades in need,” he continued.

According to the website www.takebackthenight.org, the event’s roots may lie in 1877 when women protested the fear and violence they experienced at night in London, England. Others believe that the first rally occurred in 1976 when women attending the International Tribunal on Crimes Against Women lit candles and took to streets of Belgium to denounce violence against women. The event made its way stateside in 1978 when protesters in San Francisco invoked the slogan following an anti-pornography conference.

“Take Back the Night creates an atmosphere of zero tolerance of sexual violence by serving as a collective voice to increase community awareness thru education, and providing leadership the tools to make a better environment for all who serve,” said Piatt.



Soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division participate in a 1.8 mile walk to bring awareness and promote a stand against sexual assault during a Take Back the Night rally April 11. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jazz Burney, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division Public Affairs)



25th Infantry Division form a ribbon symbolizing unity and empowerment to note a stand against sexual assault by "breaking the silence" April 11. (Sgt. Jason Douglas/US Army photo by Sgt. Robert Hobbs.)

Women's History Month: Iraqi-American woman's perspective

By Staff Sgt. Jason Douglas
2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs

Seldom do historical figures realize their contributions to history. What makes them memorable is that, under different circumstances, they would not otherwise be memorable. Rosa Parks probably had no idea her small act of rebellion would inspire so many others to fight injustice. Likewise, the anonymous "Tank Man" who stared down a platoon of tanks during the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre became an iconic symbol of peaceful defiance.

This year's Women's History Month theme is "Generations of Women Moving History Forward", which recognizes the struggle for equality and contributions women have made throughout history.

Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, participated in a ceremony hosted by the 15th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd BCT, at Forward Operating Base Warrior's dining facility March 12.

One of the most memorable speakers was an Iraqi-born American translator, who for security reasons will be called "Mary".

Mary spoke of the unique relationship between her parents. "My family was very unusual in that my father and mother are great friends as well as husband and wife," Mary said. "My mom speaks her mind and my father listens."

According to Mary, most Iraqi women are not so lucky. For them, she said, any freedom they have is in secret without the support of their families.

Growing up all I could do as a young woman was go to school and play with my siblings, Mary explained. The violence that followed the insurgency took the lives of many of my friends and destroyed many homes in and around my neighborhood.

"What I want to share with you today more than anything else," she explained. "Is how a woman can see more evil than anybody should have to see and still come out strong and with a clear vision of her future."

At a young age, Mary began working for a jointly-owned Iraqi-American company in Iraq and eventually worked her way into a position as a translator, which she did well despite the dangers of working for a foreign company.

"After all I've seen, the threat of violence is just not worth being afraid of; being afraid means giving up my freedom," Mary explained.

Mary continues to work based on her desire to be free.

"I am not the first woman who has had a difficult life, and I definitely won't be the last, but I am proud to say that I feel that I have only added to the history of women who were determined to make theirs a better life," Mary said.

Mary's comments came on the heels of a conference held in Narwooz Hall in Kirkuk city, Iraq, March 12 to discuss women's rights.

The conference is the third of a scheduled four conferences designed to combat negative attitudes and stereotypes toward women in Iraq and to embolden women to participate in the political process.

Care enough to confront"

Be truly concerned for every member of Task Force Lightning

B Be Army Strong and Live Army values

E Educate yourself and your troops on risk reduction and prevention

I Have the courage and concern to intervene

A Act—The I. A.M. Strong campaign and theme is about taking action

V Visualize Victory—Be committed to culture change and victory against sexual assault

E Energize others in this endeavor—Everyone must "Care enough to confront"



MND-N HEROES DEMONSTRATE ARMY VALUES



SPC (P) Alexis Juarez, 2/C/3-21 IN/1-25 IN
Los Angeles, California

SPC Juarez correctly used the EOF procedures against a man traveling fast on a motor bike towards his dismounted patrol. Juarez shouted then shot a non-lethal shot with his M203. The man stopped immediately. Juarez saved our credibility and demonstrated that American forces are here to support Iraqi civilians and government.



SPC James A. Burt, A 1-5 INF, 1st SBCT, 25th ID
Conrow, Texas

Before the start of a mortar instructor course to members of the IA, SPC Burt stepped up when the primary instructor was medically evacuated. With minimal time to prepare, he quickly became comfortable with the techniques and methods to teach the IA. His professionalism and overall knowledge set the standard for the rest of the battalion.



PFC Benjamin Snyder, BSMC, 25th BSB
Eagle River, Arkansas

PFC Snyder managed an ambulance crew that picked up an IA Soldier with severe bleeding. He administered aid utilizing combat gauze to reduce the bleeding until the patient arrived at the Teal medical clinic. His actions helped stabilize the patient within minutes, and directly impacted the IA Soldier's life.



SPC Kenneth Wogoman, 4 PLT, 1-5 INF
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

SPC Wogoman displayed great competence as a MRAP gunner while providing security for the Embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team. His knowledge of the MRAP and its capabilities aided his unit's ability to maneuver throughout Baquabah without incident. SPC Wogoman's dedication to the mission reflects great credit upon himself. 1st BN 5th IN REGT, Task Force Lightning and MND-North.



SPC Robert Rasmussen, HHC/3-10 GSAB
Eatonville, Washington

SPC Rasmussen, an intelligence analyst, demonstrated bravery, professionalism and quick thinking when he secured the site of a UXO later assessed to be a 122mm rocket. Upon ensuring the area was secure, he ran to inform the Battle Captain then returned to direct EOD to the rocket. His quick reaction time and outstanding performance greatly contributed to the safety of his unit and other personnel.



SSG Christopher Hume, HHT Medics, 3-4 CAV
Colorado Springs, Colorado

SSG Hume, a medic and the FOB Paliwoda Aid Station NCOIC, has conducted three medical training sessions with the neighboring IA and JCC staff. He has given lectures and conducted hands-on training with the IA and JCC, focusing on emergency response procedures, tourniquets, burn care and treatment for shock. SSG Hume's dedication has helped the IA and prepared them as first line emergency responders.



PFC Tabatha Trussler, HHT, 3HBCT, 1CD
Beecher, Illinois

With the utmost professionalism, dedication to duty and research capability, PFC Trussler played a key role in the development of the most extensive and complex network analysis diagrams used in Iraq. It is known as the "Mother of All Networks." She also continuously updates and tracks insurgent networks for the entire Ninewa province and develops five weekly intelligence reports.



SPC Kerrilee Fowler, 84th EN BN, 18th EN BDE
Stigler, Oklahoma

While traveling across uneven terrain, SPC Fowler's vehicle struck an unknown object in the road, which blew out one of the tires. Her situational awareness and attention to detail made it possible for her to maintain complete control of the vehicle. SPC Fowler's ability to stay calm allowed her to make quick, level-headed decisions and avoided a potentially deadly accident.



SPC Arthur L. Fisher, TOC/HHC/3-21 IN
Fairbanks, Alaska

SPC Fisher, a radio transmitter operator, works tirelessly and always goes above and beyond the call of duty. He has improved drastically since first becoming the battalion RTO. He handles over 560 radio transmissions for over 140 combat missions each week on FM radio nets. SPC Fisher is a motivated team player and his work ethic reflects great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.



PV2 James R. Pyle, 1/C/5-1 CAV, 1SBCT, 25th ID
Coos Bay, Oregon

PV2 Pyle distinguished himself after two IED's hit two military vehicles. After the injured were taken to the hospital, he assessed an ISF Major, who suffered severe damage to his right arm and leg. He noticed no tourniquets were applied and the major was in shock. He took the initiative and coordinated the MEDEVAC.



PV2 Walter L. Roquemore, 215 BSB, 3HBCT, 1CB
Goldsboro, North Carolina

PV2 Roquemore was at a phone center when he saw a Soldier collapse. He rushed to the Soldier's aid. PV2 Roquemore used his combat lifesaver skills to begin stabilizing the Soldier while waiting for the medics. Because of his rapid and his diligence, PV2 Roquemore contributed to saving a Soldier's life.



SPC Merlin Collins, A Co., 3BSTB, 3HBCT, 1CD
Huffman, Texas

SPC Collins, a human intelligence collector, participated in a mission to the 2nd Iraqi Army Division's headquarters. He conducted an assessment of the division's intelligence collection capabilities and reporting procedures. He identified shortfalls in the Iraqi intelligence system and developed a tentative plan to help correct the issues.

MND-N HEROES DEMONSTRATE ARMY VALUES



SPC Kyle B. Lange, 1/C/1-24 IN, 1SBCT, 25ID
Oak Harbor, Washington

During Centurion Pursuit XXII, SPC Lange, with a fire team from the IA, found two suspected IED's. These items were well camouflaged in the bushes along with other trash in the area. It was later verified by the US Army Engineers and the MP working dog to be true IED's. His actions reflects great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.



SGT Jeffery Mitchell, B/3-21, TF 2-8
Evansville, Indiana

SGT Mitchell, an infantryman, performs his duties within his platoon to make sure his team is ready for combat operations. He will always go the extra mile for his soldiers. Recently he discovered three hidden caches. These finds will lead to great intelligence and potentially save the lives of other Soldiers.



SPC Thomas Hardisty, 4/C/3021 IN, 1SBCT
Santa Clarita, California

SPC Hardisty noticed two individuals emplacing command wire on Feb. 17. After notifying his team leader, he helped chase down and detain the two suspects. SPC Hardisty's attention to his surroundings and his ability to coordinate with his team helped apprehend the two suspects who were intentionally targeting SPC Hardisty's fellow Soldiers.



SGT Erik Stoker, TF 2-82 FA, 3HBCT, 1CD
North Richland Hills, Texas

During a small arms fire attack, SGT Stoker dragged a wounded Soldier to safety and performed tactical critical combat care on him inside an MRAP while enroute to the FOB Diamondback CSH. His drive and focus while conducting first aid to his fellow Soldier under fire exemplifies the Warrior Ethos.



SGT Vincent Todd, C/15th BSB
Fort Worth, Texas

SGT Todd, a combat medic, recently distinguished himself during a two-week training venture assisting the IA in training Soldiers in emergency medical procedures. He was selected for this assignment because of his combat experience and outstanding medical skills. SGT Todd has proven time and again to be a Soldier who is dedicated to the highest standards of compassionate and competent care.



SSgt Robert G. Butler, 332 ECES/EOD
Sterling, Colorado

SSgt Butler, an EOD team leader, led his team through the discovery of a phased emplacement of an IED using a FAB-250 Air-to-Ground Bomb. The bomb had a net explosive weight of 229 lbs. SSgt Butler and his team utilized protective works and eliminated the hazard on scene without causing any damage to the local infrastructure. His attention to detail allowed for a completed mission.



SPC Ronald Florey, B Bat/3-82 FA, 2BCT
Westerville, Ohio

SPC Florey demonstrates his willingness to take on any mission and is a model Soldier for his peers and subordinates to emulate. He serves as the platoon's heavy weapons squad leader and ensures the crew-served weapons are always mission ready. SPC Florey's primary position is lead gunner where he has demonstrated selfless service by teaching three other Soldiers in his truck about the M2 Browning .50 Cal.



SPC Joshua Coronado, 1/C/3-21, 1SBCT, 25ID
Cave Junction, Oregon

SPC Coronado, while dining with fellow Soldiers, performed the Heimlich maneuver on another Soldier, who was choking. He quickly responded using first responder training he learned with his platoon and while serving as a firefighter in regon. His work ethic and commitment to his unit reflects great credit upon himself and the United States Army.



SFC Daniel J. Little, 511 Sapper Co, 65th EN BN
Des Arc, Missouri

SFC Little, a platoon sergeant with the 511th EN CO whose primary mission is to conduct route clearance operations, was on a mission when his platoon was hit by a grenade attack thrown from a crowd. SFC Little was able to accurately identify the attacker who was attempting to blend in with a crowd. They detained three individuals and turned them over to the QRF.



SGT David Monteiro, 749 ORD CO (EOD)
Columbus, Ohio

SGT Monterio's diligence in ensuring his team vehicles, equipment, weapon systems and expendables are always fully mission capable was instrumental to his team's success. His team performed five back-to-back incidents to include a three IED Post Blast Investigations, one VBIED Post Blast Investigation and one IED, all within a four-hour period.



SrA Christopher Gensing, 506th EOD Flight
Duluth, Minnesota

SrA Gensing, while operating a Talon robot, removed a magnetically attached IED with unmatched skills. Despite working in tight quarters, on an elevated carport and around a building, he was able to maneuver around pillars, gain access and disassemble the MAIED located directly underneath a vehicle.



PV2 John King, B/1-12 CAV, 1CD
Wallinford, Connecticut

During a rocket attack, PV2 King was manning a tower. Although it was his first kinetic engagement, he demonstrated his training and competence by giving timely and accurate reports that aided the company commander with his battlefield assessment. PV2 King's actions proved that he is always ready to accomplish any mission.

HEY DOC?

Answers on life, love and the wound that never healed



Lt. Col. John Smyrski is a board certified Family Medicine and Aerospace Medicine physician, with specialty training in Public Health, a former Army Aviator, and the Task Force Lightning and Multi-National Division-North Surgeon.

Q: Hey Doc! I promised myself I would cut a few extra pounds during this deployment. I see the weight loss pills at the PX. Do they work? F.A.; Warhorse.

A: Great question. As we all know, weight loss can be a tricky and frustrating thing. The allure of a quick solution is hard to pass up, but there's no magic concoction for losing weight. Most supplements have far too many side effects and are PROVEN to have very low LONG-TERM effectiveness. Long-term medical effects such as high blood pressure, irregular heartbeats, stomach problems, strokes and even death are just a few of the possible side effects of these products. Please keep in mind, nutritional supplements are not regulated by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), meaning these products are not subject to the same standards as regular over-the-counter medications. They can be marketed with limited proof of safety or effectiveness. I'm probably telling you something you already know: the most effective way to lose weight and keep it off is through lifestyle changes. Eat healthy, low-calorie foods, watch portion sizes, and engage in regular physical activity. Just like your checking account, if you spend more than you earn, your balance will drop! Do yourself a favor; keep the money in your wallet and look for more natural ways to cut the weight. You'll feel better in the end.

Q: My friend is on a high-protein diet. He said it helps him pack on the pounds and makes him a beast in the weight room. What's the deal with the high protein diets? B.B.; Warrior.

A: Ah, the golden question. I knew someone would ask. Personally I don't see how people do it. Can you imagine eating only meats the rest of your life without bread, pasta, or rice? In my experience, it's a very unrealistic diet. Sure people get short-term results, but often find themselves even heavier in the end. Currently the American Dietetic Association, the U.S. Surgeon General and the American Medical Association all encourage people to eat a diet centered on the Food Guide Pyramid and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Excess fat and protein can be very harmful to the "interior of your body". Remember eating more protein usually means eating more fat as well! Eating fat while limiting carbohydrate increases blood fats which can build up to harmful levels. A high fat diet has also been closely linked in many studies to a high incidence of heart disease and many cancers, such as prostate and colon. A protein intake above 25% is not recommended based on current research. High protein intakes stress your kidneys and do not result in greater muscle gain. A high protein diet can cause the body to lose calcium, which can lead to development of osteoporosis resulting in broken bones. Increasing your protein level slightly (less than 5%) has been shown to cut down on calories and help build lean muscle mass, but large amounts have only shown to be very harmful to your body. Remember, carbohydrates are the fuel for your brain. I don't know about you, but I need all the fuel I can get.

Q: My platoon sergeant is always pushing water on us. He makes us drink until we're sick. I understand the need for water, but is all that drinking really necessary? A.T.; Caldwell.

A: Welcome to the desert. Hydration is a must in this environment. Losing just 2 liters of water will decrease strength, speed, endurance, and concentration ability. This loss can occur from just 45 minutes of light sweating. Current recommendations for hydration in all environments can be found in AR 40-25 (Nutrition Education and Standards). It recommends 8 eight ounce glasses of water per day for someone not in a harsh climate or conducting physically demanding work/PT. Recommendations for soldiers in harsh climates such as ours need an additional 1-3 cups of water for every hour. More fluids are needed as physical work, temperatures, and sweating rates increase. Even some of the more rigorous drinking schedules can fail to meet the requirements. It's extremely important to pay attention to your body. If you are feeling dizziness, fatigue, upset stomach, or dry mouth, check the color of your urine. After your first urination of the day, your urine should remain colorless and odorless for the remainder of the day. This assumes that you have normal functioning kidneys and are not dehydrated. If your urine is dark and has a strong odor, you are probably dehydrated. Also, don't forget to eat balanced meals and consider Gatorade® or other electrolyte containing drink to replace the salts you are losing. Stay well hydrated while you're here, your body will thank you.



If you have a question you'd like to ask the Doc, e-mail heydoc@id25.army.smil.mil or heydoc@25id.ds.army.mil. Hey Doc is not intended for emergency situations. If you are experiencing an emergency, seek care immediately at your supporting medical treatment facility.

Iraqi medical conference brings new knowledge to district

By Cpt. Daniel Sem
3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division

The content of the medical lecture might have seemed standard fare to a normal American medical student, but to the Iraqi physicians, nurses and midwives, who starve for modern medical training, it was the cutting edge.

“For three years I have had this equipment in my [Operating Room],” said Dr. Hussein, the director of Balad General Hospital in Salah ah-Din province, Iraq, in reference to items used to start a central venous line in the femoral artery. “But until today I did not know how to use it.”

Hussein’s comments underscored the importance that the small conference had in continuing the Coalition efforts in Iraq to modernize the healthcare system after decades of decay under Saddam’s regime. The 3rd Squadron, 4th U.S. Cavalry Regiment of the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division hosted the conference on Forward Operating Base Paliwoda.

This conference was the first time Iraqi medical staff had come to the base for an educational lecture, and set the foundation for a series of future educational initiatives meant to bring once-inaccessible medical training to the Balad health district. For the three Iraqi physicians and five nurses and midwives, the training was the first step in a growing partnership between Coalition and Iraqi doctors.

Dr. Mahdi, a pediatrician from Balad, said that this kind of training is exactly what the Balad area Iraqi medical staff desire.

“This is a lot of information that we take from here,” Mahdi said. “And I need more, especially me, I need more and more.”

The training does not come without inherent personal risk, however, especially in a district once torn by sectarian fighting and insurgent activity.

“I was kidnapped before... because of cooperation with Coalition forces,” Mrs. Mahmood, one of the nurses, said. She added that despite the danger, she could not pass up the opportunity to learn modern medical practices.

“When [the Americans] came, you extended your arm to cooperate and help us grow, so I must accept,” Mahmood said. “Under all circumstances I must get your science, your technology and help.”

Maj. Brent Lechner, the chief physician for 3rd Sqdn., 4th U.S. Cav. Regt. gave a lecture on rare kidney diseases and said the feedback from the Iraqis was beyond what he expected.

“I was very impressed with the knowledge base and clinical skills [of the Iraqis],” Lechner said.

First Lt. Andrew Michaelson, the medical operations officer for the squadron said that a month of planning and coordination with the Iraqis culminated in the small, but successful, medical conference. Michaelson said that the positive response from the Iraqis further emphasizes the need to continue these conferences.

“The engagement and dialogue with the doctors and nurses [that was] created was excellent,” Michaelson said. “One of the first things Dr. Hussein said emerging out of the conference room was that he wanted to do it again and again.”

Michaelson said that the intent of these conferences is not only to help educate the Iraqi medical staff with modern techniques, but ultimately to have the Iraqi doctors teach the nurses and other medical staff in order to bring them together as one team and

transition the training to be primarily Iraqi-led.

Mahmood agreed this was one of the key issues confronting the Iraqi healthcare system.

“The problem here is that the main focus is on doctor staff,” Mahmood said. “I think this is wrong as the nurse is the pillar of the medical system. Outside Iraq, they bow to nurses.”

Michaelson said that the unit plans to continue the training at least once or twice a month to accomplish this task, with the help of the Iraqis to bring medical staff onto the base.

“They make great efforts to meet us in the middle,” Michaelson said.



Iraqi nurses practice intubation of a patient on a manikin head during a medical conference hosted by the 3rd Sqdn, 4th U.S. Cav. Regt. of the 3rd Inf. Bde. Combat Team, 25th Inf. Div. at Forward Operating Base Paliwoda, near Balad, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Daniel Sem, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division)



Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Hoae'ae-Lewis, signals intelligence non-commissioned officer-in-charge, Information and Security Company, 25th Special Troops Battalion, 25th Infantry Division, leads Soldiers in a moment of silence, during a remembrance ceremony for fallen Soldiers, Sgt. Amanda N. Pinson and Spc. Carlos M. Gonzalez, held at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq, March 16. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Jesus J. Aranda, Task Force Lightning Public Affairs)

Fallen heroes live on in memories of fellow Soldiers

By Pfc. Jesus J. Aranda
Task Force Lightning Public Affairs

Spc. Amanda N. Pinson and Pfc. Carlos M. Gonzalez were victims of a rocket attack on Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tikrit, Iraq March 16, 2006.

The two Soldiers lost their lives as a result of the impact and were honored by the military intelligence Soldiers serving at the site three years later.

The deaths of Pinson and Gonzalez, both Soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division, weighed heavy on the emotions of all who knew them and became personal for the 101st Division. As their time in theater expired, the duty to bring the man responsible for the attack was passed on to the 25th Infantry Division, who assumed command of COB Speicher.

This duty was accomplished during 25th Inf. Div.'s last rotation, as "Task Force Lightning" Soldiers captured the man responsible for the attack. One Soldier, who was present at COB Speicher to bring the man off of the truck, recalls the sense

of justice felt that day.

"The sight of this cowering, weak man—scared to death of us—shows what kind of person would do something like this," said Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Hoae'ae-Lewis, signals intelligence non-commissioned officer-in-charge, Information and Security Company, 25th Special Troops Battalion, 25th Inf. Div.

The headquarters building, as noted by Hoae'ae-Lewis, still shows the scars inflicted by the rocket attack on that day. Debris from the battered wall remains scattered across the gravel below, as if time stood still.

Time, however, can only move forward for the Soldiers who still support the conflict which claimed the lives of Sgt. Pinson and Spc. Gonzalez.

Pinson was the first female signal cryptologist to lose her life during Operation Iraqi Freedom. The building which serves as the office for intelligence

operations and the building, where Sgt. Pinson worked, was renamed "Pinson Hall" to honor her memory.

Recognizing their sacrifices as a part of their history and military heritage, on this day, I and S Company leadership urged Soldiers to never forget.

"These Soldiers gave the ultimate sacrifice," said Sgt. Maj. John Garrison, G-2 sgt. maj., Information and Security Company, 25th Special Troops Battalion, 25th Inf. Div., to an audience of Soldiers gathered in remembrance. "Take time out to remember history and to think about what matters."

"We're still in contact with the 101st Soldiers who lost them," said Hoae'ae-Lewis. "We share that justice together."

Through death, the bravery and loss of heroes, such as Sgt. Pinson and Spc. Gonzalez, will extend their lives indefinitely through the hearts and minds of those whose lives they touched.

Iraqi EOD police learn advanced CSI techniques



Iraqi Police Sgt. Maj. Omar Salim, sergeant major of the Salah ad-Din Iraqi Police EOD team, shows a fellow policeman how to collect and remove evidence from a supervised blast site. IP's applied advanced crime scene investigation techniques they learned from Coalition forces EOD during a series of training exercises March 18. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jazz Burney, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division Public Affairs.)

**By Spc. Jazz Burney
3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division Public Affairs**

A thunderous boom resounded across the desert as debris and truck remains fell to the earth followed by Iraqi policemen rushing to the blast scene. Fortunately, this was not the scene of a crowded marketplace, but instead, a training range where IPs specializing in explosive ordnance disposal spent the day honing their skills in crime scene investigation in the aftermath of a detonated improvised explosive device, March 18.

The policemen learned advanced post-blast analysis techniques in the classroom, and then applied the knowledge in a series of Coalition-led training exercises. In the final exercise, explosives experts rigged a truck with a 40 pound bomb and safely detonated it so the investigators could examine a fresh, large crime scene.

"Thanks to the training that we've received during the past four months, we are actually growing closer in being at a level where we specialize in conducting safe and efficient explosive ordnance disposal operations," said Lt. Col. Abdul al-Hadi, the IP EOD commander. "We have learned so much in this particular area that we are confident that we will be able to provide the necessary security measures for the Salah ad-Din province," he said.

The training consisted of hands-on exercises designed to familiarize police with the proper tactics and procedures in conducting and handling dangerous explosive elements. The training also emphasized the correct ways to approach, investigate and collect evidence from crime scenes.

"Today, we detonated a small magnetically attached improvised explosive device first to introduce the Iraqi policemen to the procedures of safely clearing and collecting evidence of a crime scene dealing with small explosives," said Navy Commander Eric Wirstrom, commander, Task Force Troy – North and Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Mobile Unit One.

"In the second iteration," said Wirstrom, "we used a larger forum for applying the techniques we taught the Iraqi policemen—we used a large vehicle-borne improvised explosive device so that the policemen would become well-rounded in dealing with complex situations."

The police say the training gives them experience to draw on as they work in Salah ad-Din, and awareness of how they can unknowingly damage crime scenes by moving objects or destroying evidence that could help track down guilty perpetrators.

"We have learned so much that we didn't have an idea about before—we have learned not to touch or collect any evidence of a crime scene without using gloves, because we know that our fingerprints will damage the important objects of the scene," said Sgt. Maj. Omar Salim, Hadi's assistant. "We also learned how to identify and collect the useful things that will help piece together the crime scene, and not just pick up everything," he added.

Wirstrom said the willingness of Iraqi Police to train and learn, and the continued support of Coalition forces, should give the people of Salah ad-Din comfort in knowing the bravery of their policemen is matched by a capability to handle security operations in the province.



An Iraqi policeman, specialized in explosive ordnance disposal, scans and collects remaining evidence from a vehicle that was rigged with explosives and detonated during training, March 18. The IP's are learning advanced crime scene investigation techniques taught by Coalition forces EOD on a demolition range at Contingency Operation Base Speicher, Tikrit, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jazz Burney, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division Public Affairs.)

Rapid Adaptation Initiative: You are the eyes and ears

By Cpt. Andre McCoy
1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division

A new program in the U.S. Army's arsenal, Rapid Adaptation Initiative saves lives by using a process of sharing messages and ideas through information technology.

RAI's origins derive from the Multi-National Division - North Deputy Commanding General – Support, Brig. Gen. Robert Brown and his previous experience as the commanding officer of the 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

"Soldiers were lost...when various signs or signals could have been passed on and disseminated quickly, if there was a flattened communication platform," said Brown.

Brown recently began to implement this initiative throughout MND-N, using the division's Web site as a platform.

The Center for Army Lessons Learned, based at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, has a four-Soldier team supporting this program for the 25th Inf. Div.

RAI is an ever evolving process: it is an institutional shift in how concepts, observations, recommendations and general ideas are propagated. Currently, it has two main Web site based parts: "Soldiers Idea Blog" and "TFL (Task Force Lightning) Best Practices" which are operated by the division's Knowledge management officer Maj. Will Brooks.

Lt. Col. Paul Fischer, the division's G-6, explains "RAI capitalizes on the knowledge of all Soldiers and personnel assigned to MND-N, institutional Army and corporate/academia to solicit and gather the 'golden nuggets.' In some cases, pieces or parts which alone may not create a viable solution but together form a solid solution or new Tactic, Technique or Procedure."

This program and tool is predicated on leveraging social networking and the internet generation which is a culture of texting, Twitter, blogs, and peer-to-peer networks. It is available to and from all ranks from the lowest enlisted Soldier to the most senior general officer.

TFL Best Practices is a little more involved. It is basically a collaborative SharePoint site on the 25th Inf. Div.'s SIPR web site. Any current practice a Soldier thinks is effective is eligible for upload to the portal. Microsoft Word documents, PowerPoint slides, pictures, video and folders can be uploaded to transfer your message and lessons learned for instant dissemination. Some will be selected to win the BEST Practice and will be highlighted on the site.

The division's G-6 section keeps the information super highway running and has added the Wiki page. When a topic has an over abundance of information or has increased in priority, a separate Wiki site is created. For example, the site's RKG-3 Wiki page is the one of the most visited. It is a page which is easily editable and gives you quick access and provides a wealth of fast information.

Another aspect of the site added by the 25th Inf. Div.'s communications directorate is quick-key access to the internet search engine, "Google Search". This allows the Soldier lightning-fast results when looking for a specific subject, term, or file while online, and using the site.

Continuing to evolve, the RAI process has recently added another layer called RFI-K, an acronym that stands for Request for Information-Knowledge.

RFI-K is used to request information for a specialized topic area, usually research intensive (e.g. what is the current status of Kurd-Arab relations). Division level working groups (i.e. governance, Iraqi security forces, etc) and two research teams have been established to work submitted requests through this program. The reach back research teams are in "direct support" of working groups which consist of 2 analysts at Ft Leavenworth, Kansas and 2 analysts at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

Maj. Bounyasith Mitthivong, who also works in the 25th Inf. Div.'s G-6, or communications section, was instrumental in building trust between the division's web presence and the brigade's websites. This technical link would allow a freer flow of messages without multiple usernames and logins.

Ultimately, it will come down to the specialists, sergeants, civilians and lieutenants to gradually improve the program by reading and contributing thoughts and ideas.

Col. Robert Forrester, Combined Arms Center Director, is observing the larger implications. This initiative could have far reaching effects expanding to other multi-national divisions or other theaters like Afghanistan. It is foreseeable that this program may eventually evolve as an information source for the Army's training centers and schools.

"This is a Platoon and Company fight," said Sellin. "It is there where we will measure our success."



If only he knew what you know....



Do you know something your command doesn't know? Maybe you have seen an enemy pattern which your platoon sergeant or squad leader hasn't. Or maybe you have an idea on how to defeat emerging enemy tactics.

Tropic Lightning Soldiers serving Operation Iraqi Freedom face an adaptive enemy, which constantly evolves to challenge our strengths. Our success, the success of a free Iraq, and the lives of your battle buddies, relies on the open sharing of plans, thoughts and procedures from all Soldiers-- all the way down to the squad level.

Participation in Task Force Lightning's **Rapid Adaptation Initiative (RAI)**, affords units and individual Soldiers the opportunity to rapidly share their best practices and creative solutions for improved combat efficiency.

Your ideas could earn you rewards including: **COMMANDER'S COINS, CERTIFICATES OF ACHIEVEMENT, AWARDS** such as; **ARCOMs** and **AAMs**, and **4-DAY PASSES**.

To get involved:

Log onto the Task Force Lightning SIPR portal at: <http://taskforcelightning.id25.army.smil.mil>

Enter the "**Soldiers IdeaBlog**" and begin sharing your thoughts.

Or:

Contact the Division Knowledge Management Officer at **SVOIP: 770-0027** or william.brooks@25id.army.smil.mil or your battalion Knowledge Management Officer.



Soldiers IdeaBlog
Your ideas **CAN** save lives.



THE COMMANDING VOICE OF HHC

25TH INFANTRY HHC WELCOMES A NEW C.O.

By Task Force Lightning Public Affairs

The pace of operations in Multi-National Division – North has proven to be productive and steady. The efforts of Soldiers on the ground, working to support their Iraqi hosts, have added to the continuing progression toward a prosperous and free Iraq in the area of responsibility.

An integral factor in the operations for the division, Headquarters and Headquarters Operations Company, 25th Infantry Division, accomplishes its duty by supporting the Soldiers directly supporting “Task Force Lightning.”

On March 28, the command of the company was changed from Capt. Christopher M. Stauder to Capt. Erica J. Tye.

Tye was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the aviation branch during May of 2002. During her military career, Tye has gained a wealth of knowledge and experience in the field of aviation and Soldiering by completing a wide variety of military schools and career courses.

Tye assumes command of a company of more than 350 Soldiers.

Do you see any potential challenges as the new commander?

HHC DIV is a unique company in that not only do I have a battalion-sized company but that my company consists of the command group and mostly field-grade officers, all which run the primary staff sections in the Division. As the commander it is my



Capt. Erica J. Tye, incoming commander for Headquarters and Headquarters Operations, 25th Special Troops Battalion, 25th Infantry Division, takes possession of the unit's guidon from Lt. Col. Eric J. Angeli, commander, 25th STB, 25th Inf. Div., during a change of command ceremony at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, near Tirkit, Iraq, March 28. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Jesus J. Aranda, Task Force Lightning Public Affairs)

job to ensure that the Soldiers and officers have the resources they need to complete their missions, but also to ensure that they are trained and qualified to complete those missions. Meaning that they all have warrior tasks to complete. My challenge is to get those Officers and staff members to understand those requirements and want to complete them instead of me ordering them to execute.

Is this your first assignment as a Commander?

Yes, it is my first command; I am a 2002 year group and have been to the Advanced Course to help get me prepared as a Senior Captain. Mentally, I prepared myself by reading some well-known leadership books and mostly from observation of other commanders. Some good some bad, but all have helped me decide what kind of leader I want to be. I understand that to be a good leader you must first learn how to follow, sounds cliché but so true. You can't make decisions if you have never been on the other end.

How long will you be in Command?

I should be in command up until the summer when we get back. Usually command is 12-18 months.

What advice you can give to any current or future leaders?

You cannot please everyone, you can try, and aim for 100% just know that sometimes you will have to make that hard decision and say no. I have learned from other commanders and NCOs that if you care for Soldiers and truly have their best interests in mind then they will respect that and work for you, for mission success.

Who are your role models?

Col. Sally D. Murphy, the Army's first female helicopter pilot. This year marks the 35th anniversary of Murphy's graduation from the Army Aviation school at Fort Rucker, Ala., when she became the Army's first female helicopter pilot. She joined the Army's Women Army Corps in 1972, and entered the aviation school when women were first allowed in. Because of (Murphy), women make up 15 percent of the Army, and are present in 91 percent of the Army's occupations.

What you look forward to the most as the HHC Ops C.O.?

I look forward to hopefully making a difference somehow, whether it be helping a Soldier, or helping the mission to succeed. Working on staff there isn't a lot for me to do that will influence or teach anyone, I am hoping to be able to do something fulfilling, and maybe make an impact on the mission. I am always looking forward to learning new things and new people.



The CH-47 Chinooks of Company B., 3rd General Support Aviation Battalion, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade air-assaulted more than 150 Iraqi Army and U.S. troops Feb. 21 in support of Operation Automatic Pursuit II. With six Chinooks, three UH-60 Blackhawks and two AH-64 Apaches, it was the largest air-assault mission the 10th CAB has flown since arriving in country last October. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Stephanie van Geete, Task Force Falcon Public Affairs)

Aviation battalion uses Chinooks during air assault movements for Iraqi, Coalition troops

By Sgt. Stephanie van Geete
Task Force Falcon Public Affairs

Aircrews of 3rd General Support Aviation Battalion, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade conducted the largest air-assault mission the 10th CAB has flown since arriving in country last October.

The unit flew six CH-47 Chinooks, accompanied by three UH-60 Blackhawks and two AH-64 Apaches, to insert more than 150 Iraqi Army and Coalition troops to conduct deliberate operations Feb. 21 during Operation Automatic Pursuit II.

“The air assault was a combination of the Iraqi Army and U.S. forces,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Benjamin Degroot, CH-47 pilot and mission planner with Bravo Company, 3-10 GSAB. “The whole point of it was a show of force, and also to do a clearing operation, looking for caches and helping to create an environment where there is no safe haven for terrorist insurgents.”

Although the planning for such a large operation was challenging, Degroot said the pilots and crews flying the mission carried it off without a hitch.

“We had to plan for airspace de-confliction with all these aircraft, all these moving parts,” Degroot said. “This was without question the largest air-assault mission we’ve done in country.”

“It was actually pretty normal,” said Sgt. Keith Loftin, Bravo Company flight engineer. “Obviously we had a lot of aircraft in

the air – you have to keep your airspace surveillance up, and be aware of where the other aircraft are – but we’ve all trained on this stuff before, so we are pretty well versed on how to handle it.”

What wasn’t as normal for Bravo Company was moving so many Iraqi troops – a sign of the increasing strength of the Iraqi Army, said Maj. Dan Kern, 3-10 GSAB operations officer and one of the pilots who flew the mission.

“Where I would say our air-assault portion of the mission is successful is if we just get the right people to the right place at the right time. I think it’s even more successful when I look back and see that it’s Iraqi forces I’m putting in,” he said.

Kern pointed out that while it was noteworthy that the unit flew such a large air-assault mission, even more significant was the fact that it took so many aircraft to move the Iraqi forces.

“Our whole intent here is to enable them and their government to be able stand on their own without us,” Kern explained. “The more I see Iraqis riding in the back of our helicopters, the more proud I am of the job I’m doing here. If we can use more aircraft to move more Iraqis, it just says that we’re doing our job, and accomplishing our mission of handing things off to a capable and competent force who can bring peace and security to their people.”



A letter from the Chaplain



Have you ever eaten cold pizza? I know that many of you have. And you probably love it. After a Friday night at the pizza parlor, I enjoy eating leftover pizza the next day for breakfast. Pizza Hut thin crust pepperoni lovers is one of my favorites. Digging my teeth into cold cheese, pepperoni, and tomato sauce hits the spot.

As a matter of fact, I have sold my boys on this early Saturday morning ritual. It is one of those traditions which families should not lose. However, this is not a good practice when it comes to our faith, but it is a common occurrence among many of us. The Scriptures tell us in Matthew 6:11, “give us this day our daily bread.” The question is how do we make it our practice to get our daily spiritual bread?

First of all: keep it fresh. If you live on leftovers, two things can happen: one, there are no longer any leftovers after a significant amount of time (For those of you who are frugal enough to eat



*By Chaplain (Maj.) Michael Burgess
3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team,
25th Infantry Division*

leftovers from your fridge. That is not me.) Two, the leftovers become inedible. This is when science experiments come from refrigerator amnesia. This is why our spirituality can't live in the past. Spirituality must be renewed daily. Either we lose what we got or what we got rots. Neither option is a good choice. Living on

daily bread is the only acceptable practice. It is fresh and ready to go!

Desire spirituality. When you are hungry you get something to eat like pizza. Your body tells you to fulfill this desire. Spiritual hunger is also a need but one that we often neglect. When you begin to feel spiritually hungry it is time to feed your spirit with spiritual bread. The bread is God's Word.

Ordering pizza is easy when a restaurant makes it possible via the phone and delivery workers. God can supply your spiritual nourishment on a daily basis. He is a treasure of riches to meet our every need. Philippians 4:19 says, “And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”

After all the asking for “daily bread” is from the Lord's Prayer. It is a daily rehearsal to solicit what you need to face a new day. Simply ask God, he is waiting.

So as you face this day, face it with your daily spiritual bread. Leave the Pizza for breakfast.

Who is the most influential woman in your life?



Spc. Lavenia Achu, Hamden, Conn.; 2nd Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, 10th Mountain Division

“My grandma because she's my 'lifeline.' She always has the right answers for any questions I have.”



Spc. Jaime Hunter, Houston, Texas; Human Resources Specialist, 211th Regional Support Group

“My step-mom is the most influential female to me because she was always there for us and raised us like her own.”



1st Lt. Raymond Klutse, Fort Hood Texas; Executive Officer, Troop C., 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division

“My wife because she supports me through my career.”



Spc. Geraldina Nelson, HHC, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, property book office clerk, Rosedale, N.Y.

“My mom because, coming from a hard place, to progress herself and support her daughters is very strong.”



Sgt. Chris Hoy, Eva Beach, Hawaii, enlisted strength management NCO, HHC I&S

“My wife. She's always been there for me when I have needed her and she helps support others, like the FRG and other Soldiers' families.”

Task Force Lightning's Fallen Warriors

We Will Never Forget Those Who Have Sacrificed



Cpl. Michael B. Alleman
1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team,
25th Infantry Division



Cpl. Zachary R. Nordmeyer
1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team,
25th Infantry Division



Spc. Israel Candelaria Mejias
66th Armor Regiment, 172nd
Infantry Brigade Combat Team



1st Lt. William E. Emmert
269th Military Police Company,
117th Military Police Battalion



Cpl. Jason G. Pautsch
2nd Brigade Combat Team,
4th Infantry Division



Pfc. Bryce E. Gautier
2nd Brigade Combat Team,
4th Infantry Division



Cpl. Michael L. Mayne
1st Stryker Brigade Combat
Team,
25th Infantry Division



1st Lt. Daniel B. Hyde
3rd Infantry Brigade
Combat Team,
25th Infantry Division



Sgt. Michael J. Anaya
3rd Infantry Brigade
Combat Team, 25th
Infantry Division



Spc. Jessica Y. Sarandrea
3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team,
1st Cavalry Division



Staff Sgt. Gary L. Woods Jr.
2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th
Infantry Division



Sgt. 1st Class Bryan E. Hall
2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th
Infantry Division



Sgt. Edward W. Forrest Jr.
2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th
Infantry Division

Have the COURAGE

to seek HELP

**“One suicide is one
too many.”**

Kenneth O. Preston
Sergeant Major of the Army

**Talk to your Chaplain or a
Behavioral Health Professional
or call Military OneSource**

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