



COALITION CHRONICLE

Volume 4, Issue 8 August 2009

BLAP Canals
Flowing Again

*Foreign
exchange:
U.S. Marines,
Iraqi Soldiers*

**BRITISH FORCES
IN IRAQ REACH
END OF MISSION**



Spc. Lucia Arballes of Jamaica, N.Y., assigned to the 3rd Brigade, 215th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, stands next to a 10-K forklift she's been working on at the battalion's mechanic shop at Forward Operating Base Marez, in Mosul, Iraq, July 7. (U.S. photo by Mass Communication Spc. 1st Class Carmichael Yopez)



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"Brother in Arms" give to servicemembers and Iraqi children



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Iraqi-born U.S. Army Soldier returns home to become U.S. citizen



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U.S. airborne medics teach basic skills to Iraqi forces

COALITION CHRONICLE

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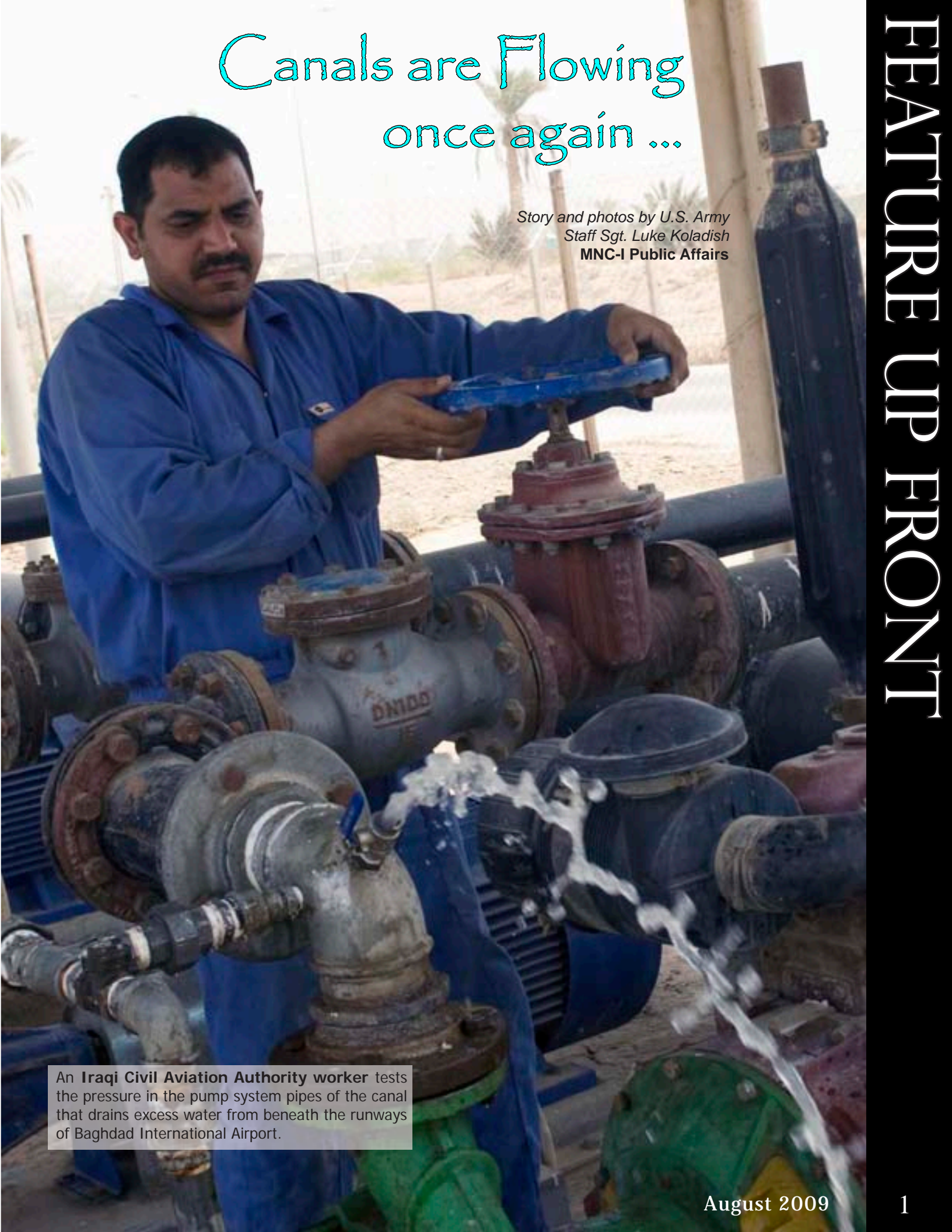
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Canals are Flowing once again ...

Story and photos by U.S. Army
Staff Sgt. Luke Koladish
MNC-I Public Affairs

FEATURE UP FRONT

A man with a mustache, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt, is operating a large industrial valve. He is turning a blue handwheel. Water is spraying out from a pipe connected to the valve. The background shows a desert-like environment with palm trees and a fence.

An Iraqi Civil Aviation Authority worker tests the pressure in the pump system pipes of the canal that drains excess water from beneath the runways of Baghdad International Airport.

August 2009

...at Baghdad International Airport



Sgt. Thomas Jeffrey Phillips, Chief Petty Officer Edward M. Lubas and engineering advisor **Majeed Al Tamimi** from the 364th Civil Affairs Brigade, and engineers from the Iraqi Civil Aviation Authority observe the flow of water into the canal that runs outside of Baghdad International Airport, July 23.

Sgt. Thomas Jeffrey Phillips, Navy Chief Petty Officer Edward M. Lubas, and Majeed Al Tamimi, a bilingual bicultural engineering advisor, stood at the edge of an empty canal that disappeared into the horizon.

The team from the 364th Civil Affairs Brigade, Camp Victory, listened as a diesel back-up generator was fired up, popped, sputtered and then died.

After a few adjustments were made by mechanics from the Iraqi Civil Aviation Authority, the pumps were primed. Water progressed from a muddy trickle to a steady flow, bringing a satisfying end to the project that started back in April.

"It's good to see they were able to pull everything together and get it working," said Phillips, a functional specialties noncommissioned officer-in-charge and Gilbert, Ariz. native.

"To see all that water barreling out and filling the canal was a pretty good feeling."

More than two months ago the ICAA Director General, Sabeeh Al Shebany, expressed that the increasing water levels beneath the runway were a priority for any assistance the 364th could provide said Lt. Col. Howard A. Schaffer of Beaverton, Ore.

"They said the water table beneath the Baghdad International Airport was too high and they thought there might be an issue on our side of the canal system (Victory Base Complex)," said Schaffer, and economic development officer with the brigade.

A series of pumps had been completed as a Commanders' Emergency Response Program or CERP initiative in November 2007 to ensure the water table beneath BIAP did not compromise the

integrity of the runways.

The civil affairs team was concerned that those pump stations might be the problem. After a survey of the sites, Lubas, a telecommunications officer from Jacksonville, Fla., immediately saw the problem.

"The mechanical seals were bad, the control units were covered in dust that causes shorts, back-up diesel pumps were non-operational and there were some holes in the piping system causing a lack of pressure," he explained.

Despite the disarray of the equipment, the team decided that with proper maintenance and a few repairs, the pumps could be operational again.

"The first part was explaining to the Iraqis they didn't need new equipment, they just need to replace a few parts and maintain what they had," Phillips said.

Gorgess Oshan, an employee of the Iraqi Civil Aviation Authority, tightens the bolts for the pipe connecting the submersible to the pump as Sgt. Thomas Jeffrey Phillips, 364th Civil Affairs Brigade, watches, July 23, near Baghdad International Airport.

In subsequent visits, Lubas outlined steps for a maintenance program, coordinated with Iraqi engineers on what repairs had to be done to get the pumps operational, and formed standard operating procedures.

"They were running the pumps in manual position and with a power grid so unstable, once power went out the pumps would shut down and the pressure would bleed out and it wouldn't turn on again."

Part of the new SOP was to keep the pumps running automatically so they would stop when the water reached a certain level, but still keep

water in the pipes to keep the system charged and ready to resume as the canals filled.

"I was astonished today how much work they have done to get to the pumps operational, and they did it on their own, with their own parts," Lubas said during the last scheduled visit to the canals.

The water level at the first pump station had already decreased two feet and the water at the second pump station was flowing easily and smoothly. The BIAP canals merge with other canals until they reach farms needing irrigation.

"They have been shown how it works, they got the parts and they got it working," Al Tamimi said.

"Whether or not they will keep maintaining and keep it running is now up to them, we are finished with the project."

Chief Petty Officer Edward M. Lubas examines the drive shaft of a pump at a station along with Iraqi Civil Aviation Authority engineers outside Baghdad International Airport, July 23.



A unique call to duty:

Maj. Kent Broussard, (left) environmental science officer for the 1st Cavalry Division and other members of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity teach first aid to Iraqi Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts during a recent partnership session. The fraternity “brothers in arms” group meets weekly at Pegasus dining facility on Camp Liberty for fellowship and to make plans for future partnership opportunities with the Iraqi community. The group has previously hosted volleyball and basketball games for the Iraqi children and even took them on a field trip to a nearby fire station.



Fraternity “brothers in arms” give to Soldiers and Iraqi children

**“From what we get,
we can make a living;
what we give, however,
makes a life.”**

That quote from former tennis great, Arthur Ashe, is not just a famous saying, it’s a way of life for a unique group of Soldiers deployed here in Baghdad. They are members of the college fraternity, Kappa Alpha Psi, who meet every week at the Pegasus dining facility on Camp Liberty, Iraq. They are fraternity “brothers in arms” and part of a time-honored tradition of service on the battlefield.

“It’s been up and running here in Iraq since the beginning of the war in 2003,” said Maj. Reginald Satterwhite, a division automations officer for 1st Cavalry Division, Multi-National Division-Baghdad, who hails from Columbia, S.C.

“Meetings like this took place during Vietnam and even World War II.”

At the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, the first list of Kappa Alpha Psi OIF Soldiers was made and it was passed along through the years for new members to join during their deployments. Now, some 115 lists later, the spirit of the group lives on – through service.

“Whenever we can, we like to give back,” said Lt. Col. Joe Berry, a Greenwood, S.C. native and elder member of the group who works with Multi-National Corps-Iraq as a corps signal officer who assists the Iraqi Security Forces.

“We view it as a lifelong commitment,” said Maj. Willus Hall of Lafayette, La. who serves as the officer-in-charge of Iraqi Army

*Story and photos by Lt. Col. Pat Simon
225th Eng. Bde Public Affairs*

partnership with the 225th Engineer Brigade. “We are taught from the onset (during college) that this is a lifelong process, a journey for achievement.”

“Achievement is the premise of everything we do,” echoed Pensacola, Fla. native, Maj. Kent Broussard, environmental science officer for the 1st Cav. Div., MND-B.

What these fraternity brothers achieve is not mandated by an Army operations plan for partnership with the Iraqis, but their accomplishments do meet the same desired goal.

Every other week, Berry, Hall, Broussard and other members of the fraternity reach out to the local community of Baghdad and spend quality time with Iraqi Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. Recently, they

taught the children first aid.

In the past, they have hosted soccer and basketball games. They have even taken the children on field trips to fire stations and gave them a chance to try on firefighter’s gear.

“It is very rewarding to give back to the community and mentor when there is an opportunity to make a difference by educating and empowering our youth,” said Broussard.

The fraternity’s mission of making a difference does not stop there. They also go the extra mile helping fellow Soldiers. The group sponsors poetry readings to give Soldiers a chance to express themselves and jazz socials where Soldiers can kick back and enjoy soothing music. It’s a chance for everyone to escape from the stress of combat life.



“When they are reading poetry for example, they can forget for a moment what’s really going on around them,” said Berry. “If you take their mind off of it for a while, it eases stress.”

“Wherever you can break the

routine of 12 to 18 hour shifts, that makes their situation a whole lot better,” said Satterwhite.” It’s really nice to provide an outlet and downtime for Soldiers.”

As for their own inner circle, these fraternity brothers also have their own support system to help each other make it through the deployment. Just sitting with them for a few minutes can make you feel like you will never be alone with these guys.

“We’re extremely close knit,” said Hall. We’ve enjoyed some of the most hearty laughs and light moments, memories that will last forever.”

Those memories of partnership and giving something back would likely have made fellow Kappa Alpha Psi member Arthur Ashe very proud.

Members of Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity meet weekly at Pegasus dining facility on Camp Liberty, Iraq for fellowship and to discuss plans for upcoming partnership opportunities with the Iraqi community. The group includes (left to right) Maj. Frederick Hall, 225th Engineer Brigade and Maj. Kent Broussard, 1st Cavalry Division; (kneeling) Maj. Reginald Satterwhite, 1st Cav. Div., 1st Lt. Derrick Isaac, 620th CSSB, Mr. Derrick Mitchell, a civilian contractor; and (standing in rear) Maj. Willus Hall, 225th Engineer Brigade and Lt. Col. Joe Berry, Multi-National Corps - Iraq.



Trash collection marks new era in Iraqi province

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE BASRA, Iraq -- U.S. forces are helping Iraqi officials ring in a new era - with services like trash collection.

Soldiers of the 4th Infantry Division's, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, and members of the provincial reconstruction team in Iraq's Basra province met with the provincial governor, July 1, as he distributed the symbolic first trash can to a family as part of a far-reaching cleanup initiative.

Brigade soldiers coordinated with the local government to provide trash cans to residents throughout the city of Basra.

"Both the Iraqis and Americans are committed to follow the terms and conditions of the security agreement, which we are applying step by step," said Basra Gov. Sheltag Aboud al-Mayah.

"At this time, we are going to start a new era of cooperation." In the past era, the cooperation was based on the military, but was also accompanied by some reconstruction efforts.

"The new era will witness that Iraqis and Americans will focus on reconstruction," he continued. "Our

American friends comprehended the important priority of having a clean city, and also the priorities of having water and electricity. They will help us in having these things as essential services."

Distribution of the first trash cans was just the beginning, the governor said. "Today, we'll deliver to the people, as a first step, 12,000 trash cans. At the end, the number will reach 350,000, with each house having one trash container. This is the starting point for a lot of other projects to follow."

In addition to the trash containers, officials in the provincial capital plan on providing regular trash collection services, said Maj. Stanley Hutchison, the brigade's civil liaison team leader.

*Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Rodney Foliente
2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs*

"This project is part of an ongoing campaign to clean up the city of Basra and change the way the city does trash collection," he said.

Other projects include street-cleaning services, incentives for citizens delivering trash directly to dump sites, repairing the trash collection fleet and constructing solid-waste transfer stations, Hutchison said. "For the long term, we're also working with the provincial reconstruction team to get an incinerator to dispose of their trash."

The U.S. has funded about \$8 million for local trash collection and cleanup initiatives, Hutchison said, noting that the city generates about 2,200 tons of trash daily.

With insufficient waste-management services, many residents simply dumped their trash outside their homes and along the roads. Children can often be seen playing

around or in such areas. Local residents have been used to such conditions for years, Hutchison said.

"These conditions are causing problems with the health of the residents," he added. Such conditions also can lead residents to be discontent with their government and the lack of essential services, he noted.

"This is a good thing for the people of the city," said city employee Abasi, who drove one of the trucks loaded with trash cans, and watched with obvious satisfaction as Noordein and his family received a container.

"This will help make the city beautiful, and we can have a healthier and cleaner city," said Abasi, who has worked for the city for three years. He said things have seemed to improve recently, and that he feels hopeful for the initiatives driven by the government and the future of his city.

"We are thankful to the Americans for helping us in our efforts to clean our city," he said. "A cleaner city will benefit all in Basra, but I want this mainly for my children and for all the children of Basra."



A city worker prepared to unload new trash containers from a truck and distribute them to citizens of Basra, Iraq, July 1. About 12,000 containers were delivered, with a goal of 350,000 being delivered in the near future.

Foreign exchange:

Iraqi soldiers and Marines conduct joint weapons range

AL ANBAR PROVINCE,

Iraq – Bullets flew downrange as U.S. Marines with Military Transition Team 7 and Iraqi soldiers with Route Clearance Platoon, 7th Engineering Regiment, 7th Iraqi Army Division, fired machine guns, rifles and pistols during a joint firing range course near Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, July 1.

"The point of the range is to gain familiarity with different types of weapons," said Capt. Russell Tuten, operations advisor with MiTT-7.

Iraqi soldiers blasted targets with their PK medium machine guns from the turrets of Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles, while Marines did the same with their M240B and M240G medium machine guns. Marines and Iraqi



Capt. Russell Tuten (foreground), operations advisor with Military Transition Team 7, teaches an Iraqi soldier with Route Clearance Platoon, 7th Engineering Regiment, 7th Iraqi Army Division, how to properly hold an M4 carbine rifle during a joint firing range course near Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, July 1.

*Story and photos by
U.S. Marine Cpl. Jo Jones
MNF-W Public Affairs*

soldiers then switched places, allowing each other to fire foreign weapons.

"The Iraqis are getting experience with our weapons, and we are getting experience with their weapons systems," said Tuten. "It builds a bond between us to come up here and shoot together."

Cpl. Mark Wedde, a logistics clerk with MiTT-7, fired on the range and said he enjoyed learning more about the Iraqi weapons systems.

"It was pretty neat to shoot the weapons the [Iraqis] use," said Wedde. "It was also fun to work with the Iraqis. They are quick learners."

Iraqi army 2nd Lt. Bashir Adel Abed, commander of Route Clearance Platoon, said he enjoyed interacting with the Marines, and the experience helped Iraqi soldiers gain a better understanding of Marine weapons-handling techniques.

"We had fun with the Marines today," said Abed. "The Marines taught us how to [aim] and fire their guns. Today was really awesome."

Tuten and the rest of his team have been working with soldiers of the 7th IA Division for almost a year. Tuten said the Iraqi soldiers are eager to learn and have shown remarkable progress and confidence in their weapons-handling abilities.

"When I got here, the Iraqis had not trained on these weapons at all, to my knowledge," said Tuten. "They've progressed quite a bit."

Abed said the skills his soldiers learned at the range will help them defend themselves as they work to keep Anbar province safe for the Iraqi people.

"We will be ready for anything."



Iraqi soldiers teach Marines how to properly load ammunition into their PK medium machine gun during a joint firing range course near Al Asad Air Base, Iraq, July 1, 2009.

Iraqi born U.S. Soldier returns home, becomes American citizen

Story and photos by Lt. Col. Pat Simon
225th Eng. Bde. Public Affairs



Spc. "Brown" (foreground), served as a translator during the training of members of Iraq's 2nd National Police in a recent Army engineering route clearance class. Brown has been instrumental in bridging the language gap during the historic transition phase of operations in Iraq.



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, who raised their right hand and recited the oath of citizenship as new Americans at Al Faw palace, July 4.

Vice President Joe Biden and Multi-National Force-Iraq Commander, Gen. Ray 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," he said.

"It is an amazing feeling," said Brown, soon after shaking the hands of both the vice president and 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," he said. "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 quickly found out 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, Brown 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," he 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 that 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."

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.



Spc. "Brown" shakes hands with Vice President Joe Biden during a naturalization ceremony at Camp Liberty, Iraq July 4.



U.S. Army Sgt. Eric Kay with 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, yells instructions to fire an 81-millimeter mortar shell during a live-fire demonstration, for members of the Iraqi Army, in Diayala, Iraq, June 28. (U.S. Navy Photo by Mass Communications Specialist 1st Class Kirk Worle)

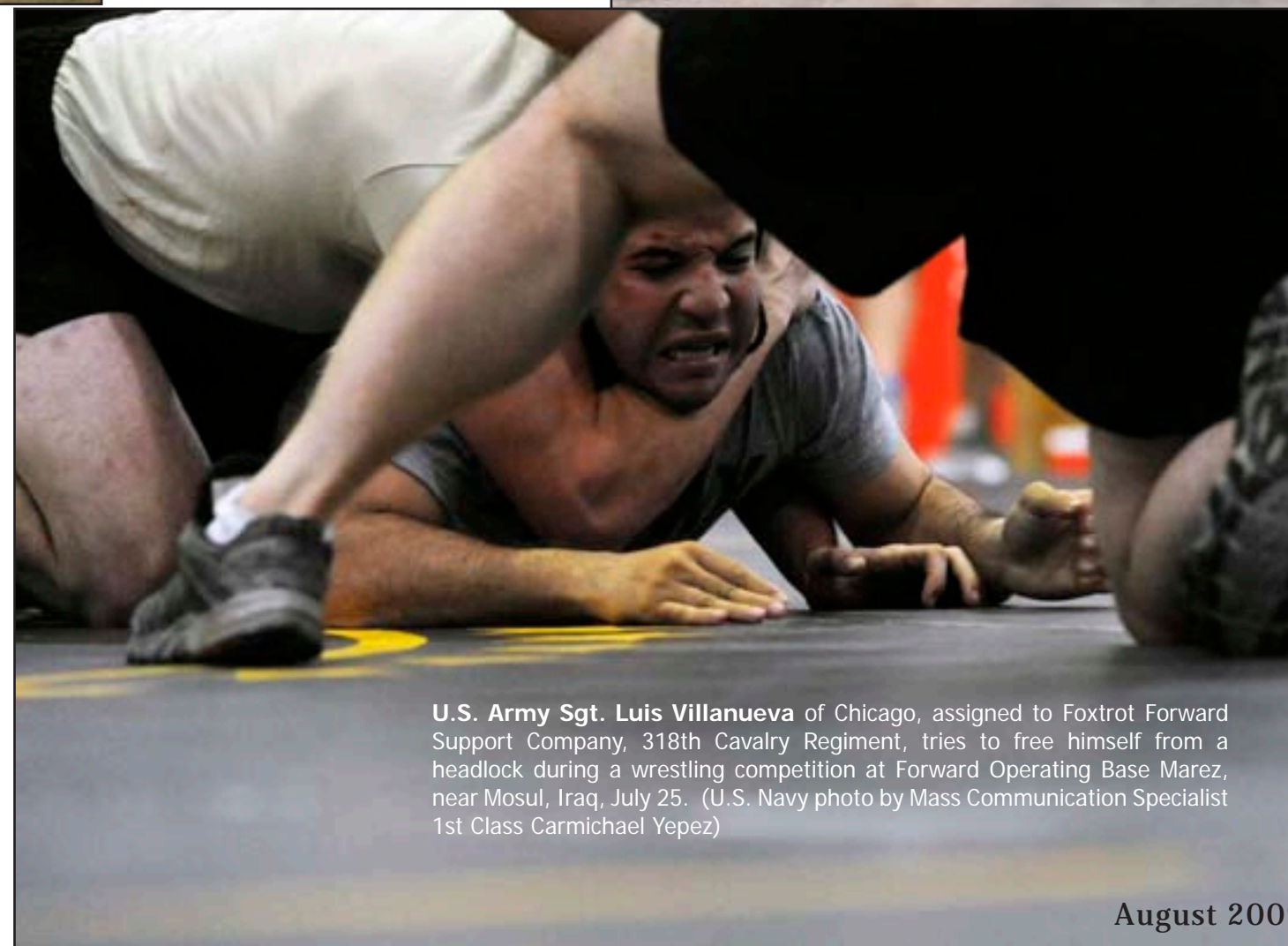
Pfc. Timothy Noonan and **Spc. Calvin Reed** fight for the ball during a touch football game at Camp Victory, Baghdad, Iraq, July 10. Both Soldiers are with the 55th Signal Company (Combat Camera), attached to Joint Combat Camera Iraq. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communications Specialist 2nd Class Edwin L. Wriston)

...**PLAY
HARD**



**WORK
HARD**...

Spc. Lucia Arballes points so that **Spc. Shane Hesselbacher**, can find a bolt to tighten the radiator of a 10-K forklift in their battalion's mechanic shop, at Forward Operating Base Marez, in Mosul, Iraq, July 7. Arballes and Hesselbacher are assigned to the 3rd Brigade, 215th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Spc. 1st Class Carmichael Yopez)



U.S. Army Sgt. Luis Villanueva of Chicago, assigned to Foxtrot Forward Support Company, 318th Cavalry Regiment, tries to free himself from a headlock during a wrestling competition at Forward Operating Base Marez, near Mosul, Iraq, July 25. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Carmichael Yopez)

Senior Chief Navy Diver Craig Simon debriefs Navy Diver 2nd Class Greg Early after completing a dive around the hull of mine countermeasure ship USS Scout (MCM 8), July 1, at Umm Qasr, Iraq. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Brian K. Fromal)



Sgt. Timothy Simmons (left) and Sgt. Nathan Painter (center) have their previous ranks "washed" from them as they salute after being promoted from specialist to sergeant, July 25. The two, from the West Virginia Army National Guard's 150th Armored Reconnaissance Squadron, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, operate from Camp Stryker in Baghdad. Simmons hails from Princeton, W. Va., and Painter comes from Cool Ridge, W. Va. With temperatures hitting more than 110 degrees for days on end, the dousing not only carried on a tradition, but was refreshing as well. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Gregory Key)

Below: Senior Airman David Britt, 447th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron fuels lab technician, and Iraqi air force members connect "Frankenstein" to an Iraqi fuel truck, July 20. "Frankenstein" is a fuel sampling connection built primarily by Britt, an Enterprise, Ala. native, to re-circulate fuel through the hose to the apparatus allowing an individual to safely retrieve a fuel sample. Britt is deployed from McConnell Air Force Base, Kan. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Johnny L. Saldivar)

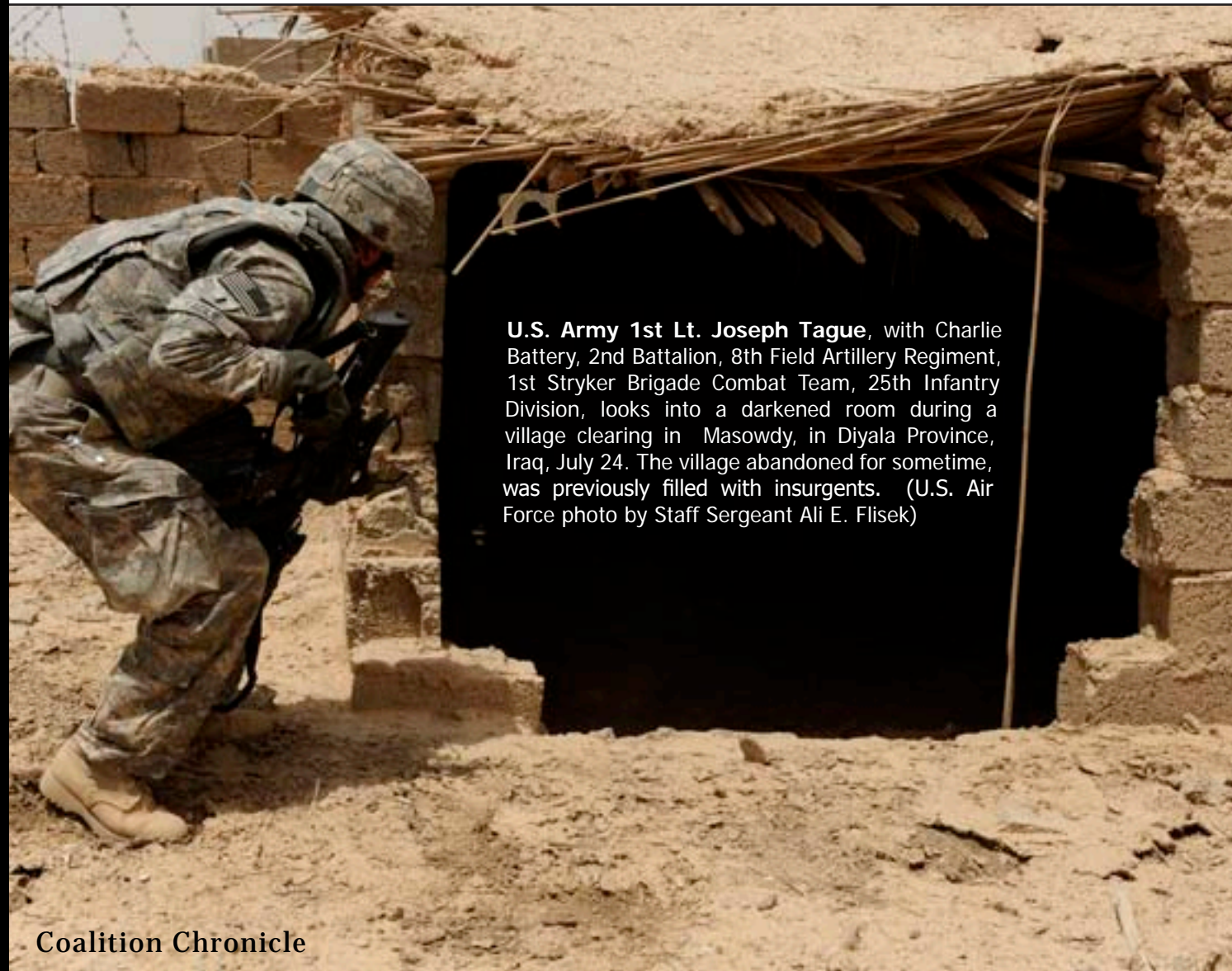
Fargo, N.D. native, Sgt. Adrienn Falk, administrative assistant to the commanding general, 1st Cavalry Division, Multi-National Division-Baghdad, presents a 1st Cav. Div. hat and division coins to actress and United Nations Goodwill ambassador Angelina Jolie, July 23 during a visit to Camp Liberty, Iraq. Jolie took time to speak with and meet MND-B Soldiers while in Iraq as an advocate for the rights of refugees. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jon Cupp)



Spc. Laura Johnson, a photojournalist with the 211th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, gets a hug from NFL head coach Jeff Fisher of the Tennessee Titans at Camp Liberty, July 4. For Johnson, a native of East Orange, N.J., the moment was special—her younger brother, Kenny Britt, is a rookie wide receiver with the Titans. Fisher was at Camp Liberty visiting U.S. troops as part of the USO-sponsored NFL Coaches Tour. (U.S. Army photo by Maj. Annmarie Daneker)



U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, exits a building with Iraqi army Maj. Gen. Habib, commander of the 10th Iraqi Army Division, after meeting with U.S. and Iraqi military leaders at Camp Dhi Qar, Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq, July 28. Gates was visiting COB Adder to discuss current U.S. military involvement in Operation Iraqi Freedom. (U.S. Army photo by PFC Ernest E. Sivia III)



U.S. Army 1st Lt. Joseph Tague, with Charlie Battery, 2nd Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, looks into a darkened room during a village clearing in Masowdy, in Diyala Province, Iraq, July 24. The village abandoned for sometime, was previously filled with insurgents. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sergeant Ali E. Flisek)



A technician with **Company C, 172nd Support Battalion**, sorts through insects caught in a light trap at Forward Operating Base Kalsu, Iraq, July 10. After they are sorted, the sand flies and mosquitoes are placed into small vials to be sent to Baghdad for disease testing. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Bethany Little)

Joint information-sharing center establish in Diyala

DIYALA, Iraq – Soldiers with 25th Infantry Division, keep information flowing and, at the same time, build relationships with their Iraqi counterparts at a new joint operations center in Diyala.

Located at Forward Operating Base Lion, Soldiers with 2nd Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment and their counterparts, the Iraqi Army's 18th Brigade, 5th Division, operate the Combined Operations and Intelligence Cell, the latest joint concept developed by both Iraqi and U.S. forces. The new center is primarily devoted to keeping lines of communication open between the two units, as they continue to work together towards a common purpose.

Capt. Lucas Sandidge, officer-in-charge of the COIC, said the cell's mission is to rapidly report significant activities, track all combined Iraqi Army and U.S. forces movements and track IA units operating without a U.S. partner within the battalion's area of operations.

The method the COIC uses is simple. Soldiers operate a tactical operations center, much like a battalion headquarters. Using interpreters, they feed all information they receive to an almost identical IA TOC in the next room.

"Our mission here is a partnership with the IA to track patrol and missions between the Iraq Army and U.S. Army," said Staff Sgt. Luceldic Harrison, the non-commissioned officer-in-charge of the intelligence cell. "We receive the patrol tracker from our units, then we sit down with the IA and discuss what they are tracking and ensure we are tracking the same missions." The cell was set up before June 30, and was created in part to support

the security agreement.

"It's those hard dates [in the SA] that bring about change and growth in the (government of Iraq) and IA," said Sandidge. "One of the things the COIC does is ensure that as the growth happens, things are getting done the right way, and people are communicating."

One of the challenges the COIC came across when first setting up was the lack of communication between the cell and the IA.

"We have to make sure we are always talking to them and making sure they are comfortable enough to talk to us," said Harrison.

The COIC has found many ways to build relationships; sometimes it is as simple as sitting down and talking with their IA partners.

"It's like making friends. For someone to fully trust you and tell you everything, you need to sit down with them and talk, even if it's simple things like cars or how their families are doing," Harrison said. The Soldiers of the COIC continue to keep the lines of communication open between the 18th Bde. and 2-8 FA, ensuring the Iraqi – U.S. partnership continues to grow.

MND-N Public Affairs



Pfc. Erik Thomas-Zewski takes a report from a coalition unit, while monitoring radio communications in the 2nd Battalion, 8th Field Artillery Regiment's area of operations in Diyala province. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Anthony Jones)

Staff Sgt. Luceldic Harrison, the non-commissioned officer-in-charge of the intelligence cell, and an Iraqi Army soldier point to an Iraqi Army convoy on a map in the Combined Operation and Intelligence Cell office. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Anthony Jones)



Sgt. 1st Class Juan Almonte, of New York City, shows a national police medic how to properly insert a needle in a patient during a combat medic training exercise, July 22 at Joint Security Station Loyalty, located in the 9 Nissan district of eastern Baghdad.

With Iraqi forces in the lead of security in Baghdad, U.S. paratroopers trained their partners on the importance and duties of a combat medic during a day-long training event, July 22 at Joint Security Station Loyalty, Iraq.

To ensure Iraqi Security Force medics are able to assist injured personnel on the ground due to enemy action, combat medics of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division. Multi-National Division – Baghdad, held a series of training lanes for National Police medics assigned to the 4th NP Brigade, 1st NP Division.

The training exercise allowed Iraqi medics to hone their skills by exposing them to several real-life scenarios they may need to save the lives of injured comrades.

Whether it be applying a pressure dressing to a wounded leg, placing a trauma dressing over an injured abdomen or properly using a

Airborne medics teach basic combat medic skills to Iraqi forces

Story and photos by Pvt. Jared N. Gehmann
3rd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

tourniquet on a severed arm, paratroopers taught their ISF counterparts the basics of combat medical care.

"We try to go slow and focus them on understanding why we do each step of care," said Sgt. 1st Class Juan Almonte, a senior medic assigned to the brigade's 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, serving as the primary instructor during the event. "This was just basic trauma training, throwing on

bandages and giving intravenous therapy was the focus of today."

Almonte, a New York City native, added that this is about the seventh time he has done training events like this with the NP medics. Usually the

events are held in small groups of one or two personnel to ensure each Iraqi medic receives step-by-step instruction on an individual level.

Ammar Nijeb, a NP medic who participated in the training said that he learned a lot of new techniques during the event. Nijeb feels the training he received will better equip him for real combat operations in Baghdad.

"Each one of the NP medics had a chance to get hands-on experience during the training," he said. "This is the first time I have given a person an IV, and I thought that was the most interesting part of today."

"It all went well and I am thankful for this training," added Nijeb.

A **National Police medic** with the 4th NP Brigade, 1st NP Division practices applying a trauma wound dressing during a training event July 22 at Joint Security Station Loyalty, located in the 9 Nissan district of eastern Baghdad.





Airmen Build Ties with Iraqi Families

Airmen and Soldiers prepare to deliver goods to local Iraqi families, July 24, as part of the Sather Air Base Good Neighbor Program. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Johnny L. Saldivar)

Story by Senior Airman Alyssa Miles
AFCENT Baghdad Media Outreach Team

Forty-five Airmen volunteered to visit and distribute donated items to local families in Baghdad, July 24, as part of the Sather Air Base Good Neighbor Program.

The program, which is sponsored by Sather's Rising Six, is made up of volunteers who take a trip once a month to distribute care packages to Iraqi families near Sather. The packages include items the Iraqi families may otherwise have a hard time getting, such as personal hygiene items, dry food, toys for children, snacks and treats.

According to Senior Airman Ashley Bruce, 447th Expeditionary Logistics Squadron, more than \$20,000 worth of new and lightly used items have been donated in support of the program by way of supporters from the United States, as well as Airmen and Soldiers inside the Victory Base Complex.

During the most recent trip, the volunteers broke into two groups

with half going door-to-door to drop off packages while the rest stayed behind to play with the children who were excitedly waiting for the Airmen in a dusty compound.

"The children love to see people come here," said Bruce. "They always know we're coming, and they're waiting."

The children quickly took to the Airmen and included some in a game of soccer that was already underway. Other Airmen were taken to a private area where they were taught games the children play from day-to-day.

While donated items and quality time are beneficial to the Iraqi families, Chief Master Sgt. Jodi Stauber, of Duluth, Minn., says the Iraqis are not the only ones who gain from these visits.

"It's good for the Airmen and Soldiers who come out to visit with them," she said. "It's an experience you will never forget. It really makes you feel like you're truly making a

difference in someone's life."

Bruce, from Bellefonte, Pa., deployed from the 18th Logistics Readiness Squadron, Kadena Air Base, Japan, says she gets personal satisfaction from volunteering.

"It's a life-changing experience," she said. "You get to come out and see a different part of the world -- see how it is to be secluded and not have everything you're used to having at home."

Stauber, who works as the 447th Air Expeditionary Group superintendent here and the 148th Fighter Wing command chief in Duluth, says she volunteers because it's a good chance to give back.

"We should reach out to the citizens around us and build those relationships," she said. "It's important to take the time to appreciate this community. I would encourage anyone to come and enjoy the time spent -- it's definitely worthwhile."

Detainees Graduate from Camp Cropper Art Course

Joint Task Force 134 Public Affairs



CAMP CROPPER, Iraq – A group of 12 detainees graduated from the Remembrance II Theater Internment Facility Detainee Art Program, July 15.

The program is one of many set in place to help the detainees learn a trade or skill while working with people who may be of different cultural backgrounds.

As their final product, the members of the class painted a mural displaying the beauty that they saw in Iraq. The mural is split into three parts; the northern region, Baghdad and the south. Each sector displays three historical or geographical landmarks.

"The mural shows how there are many different parts of Iraq but they are all one country," said 1st Lt. Valerie Breunig, the information operations officer-in-charge, 1-158th Transportation Company, 519th Battalion.

At the graduation ceremony, one detainee walked

up to the podium and spoke about the meaning of the group-painted mural and about how the class had opened his eyes to a new way of thinking.

"We want to thank the teachers because they teach us that there is one country and all Iraqis (are) the same. We now know that there is no difference between Sunni and Shia," he said. I am a Sunni and here is my friend, a Shia. We like to say we love this country and there is no difference between Sunni, Shia and Kurds. We drink the same water. Thanks to all who listen, and thanks to American Forces."

During the 30-day course, detainees are taught techniques with straw-blowing watercolor design, sponge painting, ice painting and many other unique design methods.

BRITISH TROOPS REACH END OF MISSION IN IRAQ

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Attila S. Fazekas
MNC-I Public Affairs



“It has been a great honor and privilege to bring our skill sets to the fight.”

*Capt. Adrian R. Craddock
British Army/Task Force Troy*

Members of the multinational, multi-service team known as Task Force Troy gathered at the 1st Calvary Division's Morale, Welfare and Recreation Field House on Camp Liberty, to say goodbye

and present arms, the Union Jack was lowered, Kelly and Craddock assumed their positions. The two officers, showing obvious respect, began to slowly roll the flag in preparation for casing.

For their contributions to the Task Force, the soldiers received official recognition and awards.

Their departure from the Task Force and Iraq brought the British soldier's varied emotions from pride to disappointment.

“I am sad. I would have liked to stay to the end of my tour,” said British army Warrant Officer 2nd Class Darren J. Hankin, of Taunton, Somerset, England. “Obviously, with people leaving it is going to leave gaps. Our withdrawal has been hasty and I feel we left the U.S. in an uncomfortable position needing replacements.”

“I feel immensely proud, but it is tainted with disappointment to be leaving before the end of my six-month tour,” British Army Sgt. Peter J. Hunsperger, Salisbury, England said.

With those feelings in check, their colors cased and an air of military professionalism about them, Craddock had one last statement to make to the Task Force.

“Sirs, Ma’ams, ladies and gentlemen, this is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Out!”

to their British Army comrades with a flag casing ceremony, July 15.

Task Force Troy, Multi-National Corps-Iraq's counter improvised explosive device team, is charged with countering the IED threat posed to coalition forces by gathering and examining the evidence left by IEDs.

“Our whole mission is to exploit the evidence left on the battlefield,” Col. Patrick J. Kelly, Fort Carson, Colo., commander of Task Force Troy said. “The Brits were very good at this and passed on their lessons learned in Northern Ireland.”

“They have saved countless coalition lives,” he added.

The departing British Soldiers felt honored to have been called upon.

“It has been a great honor and privilege to bring our skill sets to the fight,” said British Army Capt. Adrian R. Craddock, Kington, Warwickshire, England, the most senior ranking British officer attached to TF Troy.

The unit was called to attention

Capt. Adrian R. Craddock, senior British Army officer attached to Task Force Troy and U.S. Army **Col. Patrick J. Kelly**, TF Troy commander, prepare the Union Jack for casing, July 15. The casing ceremony signifies the end of mission for the British military contingency assigned to the task force at Camp Victory, Iraq.



IN MEMORIAM

NAMES OF SERVICEMEMBERS WHO DIED BETWEEN JUNE 24 AND
JULY 31, 2009 WHILE SERVING IN OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

**GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS: THAT A MAN LAY
DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS.**

JOHN 15:13

June 24

Spc. Casey L. Hills, 23

June 25

Spc. Joshua L. Hazlewood, 22

June 28

Staff Sgt. Timothy A. David, 28

June 29

Sgt. 1st Class Edward C. Kramer, 39

Sgt. Roger L. Adams Jr., 36

Sgt. Juan C. Baldeosingh, 30

Spc. Robert L. Bittiker, 39

July 8

Pvt. Lucas M. Bregg, 19

July 13

Chief Warrant Officer Rodney A. Jarvis, 34

July 16

Spc. Carlos E. Wilcox IV, 27

Spc. James D. Wertish, 20

Spc. Daniel P. Drevnick, 22

July 19

Lance Cpl. Brandon T. Lara, 20

July 24

Spc. Herberth A. Berrios-Campos, 21

July 25

Staff Sgt. Johnny R. Polk, 39



U.S. Army boots hang from a wire over the “Sugar Shack,” in Maysan Province, Iraq, June 27, in Al Majar Al Kibir in Maysan Province, Iraq. The Combat Outpost Base had been the home to Bravo Company, 4th Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, attached to 2nd Squadron, 13th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division and is now manned by Iraqi Soldiers from the 41st Brigade in compliance with the June 30 Security Agreement. (U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Brendan Stephens)