

# The North Star

Serving Task Force Marne  
U. S. Division- North, Iraq



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## Civil Affairs departs Iraq, leaves lasting impression

By Spc. Michael Adams  
TF Marne PAO

Staff Sergeant Michael Clemency will redeploy to the U.S. this spring. After he returns and in-processes, he'll arrive home just in time to be with his Family for the birth of his niece.

He looks forward to reuniting with his own Family and sharing the stories of when he met and helped Iraqis and their families.

Staff Sergeant Clemency, of China Grove, N.C., is a civil affairs specialist with the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion attached to Task Force Marne.

He spent his deployment meeting with village mayors throughout northern Iraq to see how his battalion could assist them with renovations and construction.

Staff Sergeant Clemency

was on one of many Civil Affairs teams attached to the brigades assigned to TF Marne. His team worked in support of 1st Battalion, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Bri-

gade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division. He worked primarily in the Sinjar area. The teams met with town mayors to determine what kind of amenities the city or

town needed.

During a series of meetings the team members would determine how they were authorized to help under Iraqi law and guidance by the battalion commander. Staff Sergeant Clemency said no promises were ever made until the project met all legal and financial standards.

Projects ranged from street repairs to hospital renovations, but most of the time in his area of operations, the mayor's requested improvements to water pipes. All projects were completed by Iraqi contractors, staff Sgt. Clemency said.

"One of Civil Affairs' motto is 'Win their hearts and minds,' and we did that," said Staff Sgt. Clemency. "I enjoyed talking to a lot of the



Courtesy Photo

Specialist Mead Lyons (left) and Staff Sgt. Michael Clemency pose with Iraqi children in Sunini after a key leader engagement.

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## DoD authorizes nonchargeable R&R leave for deployed Soldiers

By Jim Garamone  
American Forces Press Service

Some deployed servicemembers will not be charged for rest and recuperation leave under a new Defense Department policy.

The new policy allows servicemembers in designated areas to go on rest and recuperation leave without charge to their leave accounts.

"So in a sense, it is an administrative

absence and that's up to 15 days," said Sam Retherford, the Defense Department's director of Officer and Enlisted Personnel Management.

In the past, the leave was charged to servicemembers' accounts, though travel time from the theater to the airport closest to their destinations was not charged against their leave, Retherford said.

The nonchargeable rest and recuper-

ation leave program will be limited to the "most arduous" areas, and the combatant commander must recommend it through the Joint Staff for approval by the undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, Retherford added.

To qualify for the program, members must be serving in a leave restricted

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## Combined fire



Photo by Pfc. Adrian Muehe,  
3SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div. PAO

**Private First Class Daniel Stamper, a native of St. Frances, Minn., and an assistant gunner for Headquarters Platoon, Apache Company, 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, ducks down as a 60mm round is fired in the desert area around Forward Operating Base Grizzly, March 23. This was part of a three-day fire coordination exercise designed for forward observers and mortar men to practice their skills. For the rest of the story, see Monday's North Star.**

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people out there. I saw a lot of things. It's something I can take home and say I saw what was going on in Iraq."

Staff Sergeant Clemency also enjoyed getting to know the Iraqi people.

"I enjoyed talking to the kids, they were really smart, you could learn a lot from them," he said. "I liked seeing the people happy. It felt good knowing that U.S. forces were there and helped Iraqis."

Sergeant James King worked on two different CAT teams, with the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division.

His team supervised more than 30 projects focused on rebuilding schools, wells, roadways, culverts and other infrastructure. The team covered areas all over northern Iraq including areas close to the Syrian border. One project he is particularly proud of is a market streetlight project in Ba'aj.

The project will provide for lights in the main market area of Ba'aj for years to come. This not only provides an obvious increase in security during the evening hours but also improves the economy, thanks to the businesses being able to stay open later, he said of the project.

His missions were hard work that required long drives sometimes through sandstorms.

But in the end he knew the mission was worth it.

"You can't help but like it," he said. "In the end, everybody likes to be a part

of the rebuilding of an entire nation. At the end of this tour I'm looking back and going 'Yeah all those people have water because of what our team did' or 'Hey the next time somebody needs to be rushed to the hospital they have a road to travel on because of us.' But it's also the great feeling you get when the mayor of a local city or a sheik or a mukhtar shakes your hand and truly is thankful for the work we put in for his people."

Colonel Rick Leonard commands the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion. He spends most of his time ensuring everything is in order for his unit to move back home.

He said he is proud of his battalion for the work they did for Task Force Marne.

He added that his battalion worked with local community leaders, broke down cultural barriers, gathered critical information to combat terrorism, and re-built 159 schools in the Ninewa province.

The battalion conducted split operations based on the needs of United States Division – North. A number of Soldiers were attached to brigades, provincial reconstruction teams and the USD – N headquarters.

Sergeant Alison Lancewicz, of Buffalo, N.Y., is a planning and coordination noncommissioned officer with the battalion attached to the Salah ad-Din Provincial Reconstruction Team.

At the PRT, she worked with Tikrit

University students where she helped Iraqi university students learn English.

Many of the Students want to learn English so they can pass an English language test that will allow them to transfer to a university in America.

"The best part was working with the students," said Sgt. Lancewicz. "I made a couple of really good friends with a couple of students."

When they come to school in America we plan on hanging out. That's the coolest part."

While she enjoyed her job, she also took pride in what she was doing as well.

"When I get home I can say I was a part of rebuilding Iraq," she said. "The country has seen a lot of destruction but I was a part of the construction."

Members of the battalion also played a crucial part the the task force's support to the Iraqi elections.

Captain Travis Montgomery, of Bethesda, Md., is the plans officer for TF Marne G-9. He played a role in the Iraqi elections, facilitating what the guys on the ground were doing with the Iraqi elections.

"I was the liaison between United States Forces – Iraq, United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq and the American Embassy and the brigade combat teams," he said. "It was hard work. I was the go-to guy for anyone on the ground for the chief of staff or commanding general. To be that reliable, it feels good."



# Supplies plus-up Iraqi medical company

By Spc. Ry Norris  
3SBCT, 2nd Inf Div PAO

“We will have a medical company soon,” said Iraqi Army Capt. Amer Abdul Aljaleel, the 5th Iraqi Army Division surgeon, during a meeting with officers of Charlie Company, 296th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division.

Soldiers from the Arrowhead Brigade visited Forward Operating Base Khamees to drop off medical supplies and equipment to Capt. Amer and 1st Lt. Wassim Ahmed, executive officer, in an effort to strengthen the capabilities of Iraqi the oldiers.

White cardboard bins filled with \$50,000 worth of medical supplies and equipment were unloaded off a flatbed truck and placed into a holding container near the 5th IA’s medical facility.

The bins included various items such as emergency blankets, burn treatment sets and ultrasound machines.

The supplies will be



Photo by Spc. Ry Norris 3SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div. PAO

*Iraqi Army 2nd Lt. Ali Satar, 5th IA Div. supply officer, signs the hand receipt for the medical supplies from Maj. Sam Jungman, commander of Co. C., 296th BSB, 3SBCT, 2nd ID, at FOB Khamees, March 22.*

distributed at a later date to medics in the IA Division, according to Capt. Amer.

“We want to help build the capacity within the Iraqi Army,” said Army Maj. Sam Jungman, commander of Co. C, 296th BSB.

Over the past few months, Soldiers from these two nations have participated in numerous training courses to learn about infectious diseases, preventive

medicine and how to operate ultrasound machines for diagnostic purposes.

Captain Amer is the driving force behind everything because of his determination to have a medical company, according to Maj. Jungman. “Dr. Amer has worked extremely hard to get it to the level it is at now. I am grateful of the partnership we have with Dr. Amer’s clinic. The last

class showed exceptional skills. They impressed my staff with how much they’ve progressed.”

“I want to thank the doctors for their support. I appreciate all the efforts involved to make this happen,” said Capt. Amer. With the additional supplies and equipment, his dream is fast becoming reality. “We will have a medical company soon.”

## Continued from LEAVE, Page 1

area, where no dependents are allowed.

They must be receiving hostile-fire pay and in areas where travel in and out of the country is restricted.

“Two additional areas are that the duty has to be extremely arduous and the command has to foresee continuing combat operations,” Retherford added about the requirements.

The benefit will take effect once an area is designated by the undersecretary

of defense for personnel and readiness and will not apply retroactively.

The Army identified the need as especially important for junior members, Retherford said, because they typically do not have a large amount of leave accumulated.

“At the end of their deployment, there is very little in their leave accounts for rest, recuperation and reintegration to the family and community,” he said.

“So this program means they will not be charged for the R&R leave, and they will have that leave upon redeployment,” he continued.

Inability to take leave upon returning from a deployment is a problem for Soldiers.

The services want their people to take leave so they can decompress and reintegrate with their Families and communities.

The services have been allowing administrative leave upon redeployment from a

combat zone, but generally limits it to local areas around bases.

The commander of U.S. Central Command requested that Iraq and Afghanistan be designated as nonchargeable rest and recuperation areas, Retherford said.

“We quickly coordinated this request with the military departments to ensure we provided servicemembers with this new benefit as quickly as possible,” he added.

## Task Force Marne Heroes of the North



Sergeant Joseph Malewicki, of Bridgeport, Conn., is with Company A, 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division. He has done an outstanding job throughout Co. A's deployment while serving as assistant company operations intelligence support team analyst and company master driver. His hard work and dedication to duty facilitates the company's mission by ensuring a consistent flow of information between the company COIST and the Battalion S-2. This allows the line platoons to be armed with the latest information as they venture out into sector to conduct patrols and key leader engagements, all that he does in this role is vital to mission success. In his role as master driver, Sgt. Malewicki ensures that the company's fleet of vehicles maintain a fully mission-capable status at all times. He also teaches driver's training classes, enabling the company to have qualified and licensed drivers regardless of any situation that may arise. To date he has licensed eight new drivers on the Mine Resisted ambush Protected vehicle fleet.



Specialist Martha Montes of Los Angeles is with 334th Signal Company, 296th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division. She serves as a radio operator for the brigade. She is also the first female to serve as a Stryker primary gunner and navigator in the brigade as well. Her intimate knowledge of the Stryker RWS, M2 .50 Caliber Machine Gun, Force 21 Battle Command Brigade and Below 2 and Blue Force Tracker systems are a key component in her platoon's ability to move safely around the Diyala province. Her ability to plan routes on the fly and communicate information to her vehicle squad leader has enabled her platoon to maneuver on more than 30 separate explosive ordnance disposal escort missions. She also has been the primary trainer on the RWS operation and maintenance for two secondary gunners on her team.

# Al-Marbid Poetry festival celebrates Iraqi art

## Cultural Tidbit Special to the North Star

The 17th annual Al-Marbid Poetry Festival was held recently in Basra. More than 170 Iraqi poets and more than 50 foreign poets recited poetry at the event.

The three-day festival featured folk art, book and photography exhibitions and a performance by the national symphony in addition to the poetry readings. There will also be a semi-

nar on the problems associated with translating poetry from one language to another.

Two short films were shown, one about the city of Basra and another on poetry in a modern and free society entitled Badr Shakir Al-Sayyab, or "Here Lies the Rain".

This festival is a landmark event. While this is the seventh annual festival, the festival has only been held intermittently due to internal problems

and security concerns over the years. The first festival was held in 1971.

This year: however, the festival was able to happen again due to the increased security and stability of the nation.

Participants this year included poets from Spain, France, USA, Sweden, Denmark, Romania, Serbia, Turkey, and Azerbaijan and numbers of Arab states to celebrate the rebirth of Iraq and the continuation of Iraqi art.

## You are invited

### Writing Women Back into History

#### Talent Show

Where: COB Speicher, North MWR  
When: March 27, 8:10 p.m.

### Four Horseman of the Arockalypse (3rd ID Band)

Where: FOB Q-West, Mosul, FOB Sykes,

FOB Warrior  
When: April 1-4, Time TBD

### Paschal Divine Liturgy

Where: St. George's Chapel, COB Speicher  
When: April 4, 12:45 a.m.

### Easter Sunrise Service

Where: Main Gym Stadium, COB Speicher  
When: April 4,

Chuck Mulligan (Hypnotist)  
Where: COB Speicher, FOB Normandy, FOB Warhorse, COL Cobra, FOB Grizzly,

COL Bernstein  
When: April 4-8, Time TBD

### Twista

Where: FOB Q-West  
When: April 14, Time TBD

### Zac Brown Band

Where: FOB Warrior, Mosul  
When: April 16-17, Time TBD

### Darryl Worley

Where: COB Speicher  
When: April 30, Time TBD



# REGIONAL HEADLINES

## NASCAR racer helps Georgia woman win lottery

Atlanta Journal-Constitution

DECATUR, Ga. - Jo Ann Drennan says she's been watching NASCAR for about 15 years.

The great-grandmother of six included her favorite driver's car number for a recent Fantasy 5 drawing.

Driver Jeff Gordon hasn't won a race yet this season. But Drennan picked all five numbers correctly, winning the \$258,604 jackpot.

Drennan, 80, said she was checking her numbers in the Sunday AJC when she realized she'd won.

"I just sat and looked out the front door," Drennan said. "Then I said, 'Thank you Lord.'"

Some family members that live out of state didn't believe Drennan when she told them she'd won, she said. A usually chatty brother in Kansas City was speechless.

"The whole family just absolutely lost it," said Drennan, who says she plays the lottery regularly. The Fantasy 5 win, drawn March 20, was her fourth win of the week on a single ticket. She previously won \$8 and three tickets.

"I just love playing the lottery," she said. "I think it's an inexpensive way to have fun."

Family members, including two grandchildren, have benefited from the lottery-funded HOPE grant. Along with Gordon's No. 24, Drennan used

family birthdays and the age of a grandson for her timely combination.

So why Jeff Gordon? Drennan says he was at the height of his career when she first got turned on to the sport. "You're just about one of the best looking young men I've ever seen," Drennan said she thought when she first saw Gordon.

Her sons took her to Talladega to see a race for her 75th birthday, and Drennan said she's traveled and lived in all sorts of places.

For now, she's not sure what she'll do with her winnings.

"I'm going to be a very wise person about it," Drennan said. "For now, I'm just going to sit back and think about it."

## Police: Ex-worker disabled cars via Web

United Press International

AUSTIN, Texas - Police in Texas said they arrested a former auto dealership worker who allegedly used a computer to disable more than 100 vehicles after he was fired.

Austin police said Omar Ramos-Lopez, 20, who was fired from his position as a collector for Texas Auto Center in January, used his home computer March 2 to access the dealership's Web site and disable the engines and activate the horns of more than 100 vehicles sold by the business, the Austin American-Statesman reported, March 18.

"He was the collector for Texas Auto

Center, so he had the password and all the necessary requirements to get into the system and manipulate the vehicles," Sgt. Keith Bazzle said.

The system is in place so the dealership can deactivate vehicles when customers fail to make payments, company officials said.

They said further security measures are being implemented to prevent similar incidents in the future.

Ramos-Lopez was arrested March 17 after police traced his computer's IP address.

He was charged with felony breach of computer security and jailed in lieu of \$3,000 bail.

## Sword-waving man detained on Bainbridge Island

Associated Press

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, Wash. - Bainbridge Island police have detained a man they say was waving a large sword around and stabbing objects in the parking lot of a Bainbridge Island building supply store.

The shirtless 35-year-old man was covered with scrapes and cuts. He told the off-duty Bainbridge Island police officer who approached him March 22 that he was "hunting werewolves and chuds" who could disguise themselves as humans. The man said he feared getting hurt.

The man put down his sword and knives at the officer's request and was taken to Harrison Memorial Hospital for evaluation.

## THE North Star

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4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team,  
1st Infantry Division  
2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team,  
3rd Infantry Division

3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team,  
2nd Infantry Division  
1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team,  
1st Armored Division

25th Combat Aviation Brigade,  
25th Infantry Division  
130th Engineer Brigade  
135th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

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