

The North Star

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



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'Dragon', PRT boost grain production with storage More Iraqi farmers crops will make markets with Samarra grain silos

By Spc. Shantelle Campbell
4IBCT, 1st Inf. Div. PAO

Soldiers of the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, out of Fort Riley, Kan., and Provincial Reconstruction Team members conducted a final inspection of the Samarra Silo, Samarra, Iraq, April 20.

The silo, or grain storage facility, in Samarra is one of eight agricultural projects that have been completed in Salah ad-Din province since the 'Dragon' brigade deployed to the province last fall.

According to Captain Pailey Eapen, the brigade projects manager, the renovation of the Samarra Silo, which used to be a coalition forces forward operating base in 2003, is a project

that will help to better the economy in Samarra by boosting the production of grain and jobs in the area.

"We made sure that the (forward operating base) was in good condition before we transferred it over (in October 2009) by ensuring there were no environmental issues."

"Beyond that, we (didn't) have the expertise to handle the refurbishing of the silo; so, we ended up having to contract it out (which) helps the local economy because we're adding to the jobs within the economy" said Capt Eapen.

"To build in the agricultural economic infrastructure will assist many farmers, so that when they harvest their crops; they'll have a place store to them, and they



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Shantelle Campbell, 4IBCT PAO
Captain Pailey Eapen, the 4IBCT projects manager, finishes the inspection of a facility at the Samarra Silo, April 20. The silo, or storage facility for bulk materials, in Samarra will store grain and is one of eight agricultural projects that have been completed in Salah ad-Din province.

won't have to sell them all at the same time," he added.

There are currently nine other projects in progress throughout the Salah ad-Din

province that are all aimed to strengthen the agricultural economy and promoting a

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Arrowheads came, trained and now inventory, account

By Pvt. Zachary Zuber
3SBCT, 2nd Inf Div PAO

"My wife had twins before we got here," said Cpl. Christopher Walters, a vehicle commander for Headquarters and Headquarters "Highlanders" Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division. His only familiarity with his new little ones has been through web-

cam. "It's exciting for me to start getting ready to go home to see them grow up."

Since the middle of March, Cpl. Walters and the rest of HHC, 2/3 Inf., have been preparing for the closure of Forward Operating Base Normandy. Mission focus is paramount, but the Soldiers are realizing that in just a short while they will return to Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

To accomplish this task, they

have focused on administrative requirements to redeploy.

Their mission here in Iraq has been to train and cooperate with local forces to ensure they have the tactical skills necessary to secure their communities. As these Soldiers prepare to rejoin their own cities and towns, the Iraqi Security Forces are doing

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Diyala province officials and Lisa Piascik (center), Diyala Provincial Reconstruction Team leader, cut the ceremonial ribbon to open the new Baqubah Landfill on April 22. This landfill is part of a larger sanitation initiative undertaken by the 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, to help clean up the area.

**By Pvt. Zachary Zuber
3SBCT, 2nd Inf Div PAO**

Centuries ago, Diyala province, Iraq, was part of the cradle of civilization; once a bustling region with a thriving economy embodied in the vibrant hues from orange and pomegranate fruit trees, and vegetables harvested in the farmlands—and soon after—sold in the marketplaces.

These days, an individual would need a vivid imagination to picture the flourishing past amid the modern-day drought and heaps of burning garbage along the country side.

Seeing this, local government officials have recognized that the current trash disposal process must change.

Together, with the Diyala Provincial Reconstruction Team and 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, the leaders of Diyala province, commemorated the opening of the Baqubah Landfill on Earth Day, April 22.

These organizations have begun a new initiative in the provincial capital, Baqubah, to promote proper waste disposal procedures and to generate better sanitation service.

“It is very impor-



Haider Kadhum Hosien Aziz, directorate general of municipalities for Diyala Province, receives a sign for the Baqubah Landfill opened on April 22. The landfill, along with newly created waste removal services, is part of a sanitation initiative in cooperation with the Diyala Provincial Reconstruction Team and Soldiers from 3SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div.



Cleaning the streets of Baqubah Diyala, PRT leaders open city landfill

tant for us to create these resources for the cities and the people,” said Mr. Haider Kadhum Hosien Aziz, directorate general of municipalities for Diyala province. “With proper trash and sewage networks, we can clean up the area and have a healthier, more beautiful city.”

The landfill is considered only one component of a larger project dedicated to shifting the local citizens’ perception of trash disposal beginning with a new network of community trash and recycling bins placed throughout the city. Soldiers from 1/37th FA have collaborated with members of the PRT to establish contracts to hire local employees and equipment to institute a proper disposal process where garbage is first placed in dumpsters that can then be hauled to the landfill.

“We will now be trying to encourage people to use bags for their trash, and to use the new bins so it can be taken by trucks, the PRT gave us, to this landfill,” said Mr. Aziz. “This will be very important for people to transfer from what we used to know to a more modern way now, and for the future.”

Throughout each step of the process, Diyala provincial leaders, the PRT and 1/37th FA have enabled a change in the community mentality so the citizens will take part in the new system. The people have used

roads and yards as dumpsters for so long, changing their habits will be a challenge to overcome. In order to do this they have offered educational materials to local leaders, including the Imams who broadcast to a wide audience daily.

“The education process has been ongoing since we have been here,” said Capt. Rick Helton, commander of Alpha Battery, 1/37th FA. “We are letting people know the benefits of keeping streets and waterways clean, and what can happen if they don’t.”

The focus on education will help people understand the potential health concerns they face if their current habits do not change, said Mr. Aziz. Creating a healthier environment may also encourage more people to visit the city. It has also generated interest among community leaders in several other large cities that would benefit from an upgrade in utility services.

“It has been a good starting point just to get this first one opened up,” said Capt. Helton. “It has garnered a lot of interest in several cities, such as Khanaqin, Khalis, and Muqdadiah, and is something we will definitely work towards there.”

If they can continue to garner support with the surrounding areas, the rest of Diyala province could soon see a significant upgrade in its sanitation utilities. Habits are often difficult to break, but with help from the people, the entire region has the potential to once again achieve international recognition for its beauty.

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better quality of life for the local citizens.

"Any projects that are done that relate to helping the economy function and getting it back to where the products can get back from the farm to (the consumer) is really important," said Tom Pick, the agricultural advisor for the Salah ad-Din PRT.

"Agriculture is the backbone to (the Iraqi economy) and the more we can do to support that and have it functioning well ... (then the more) potential (it has) to multiply throughout the economy," Pick concluded.



Captain Pailey Eapen, the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's projects manager, inspects a facility at the Samarra Silo, Salah ad-Din Province, April 20. The renovation of the Samarra Silo is a project that will help to better the economy in Samarra by boosting the production of grain and jobs in the area.

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Shantelle J. Campbell, 41BCT, PAO.

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U.S. Army photo by Pvt. Zachary Zuber

Every weapon and spare part that Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, owns must be recorded before leaving Forward Operating Base Normandy. The reduction of tactical missions in the surrounding area has given the Highlanders enough time to accurately complete a detailed inventory before departing this summer.

the same. Watching ISF take the lead role has shown the Highlanders the effect they have had in the community.

"The [Iraqi] Security Forces have been doing great work without us," said Capt. Ryan Bell, commander of HHC 2/3 Inf. Highlanders. "They have kept us up to date on everything going on, including arrests and actions taken by the security council to improve the community."

The Iraqi Security Forces have increased security patrols throughout the community, and seen a rise in the number of arrests, said Capt. Bell. The Highlanders can focus on those facts to measure the success of their diligent work.

"The Soldiers are excited to see that the area is doing well without them," said

Capt. Bell. "If it wasn't, that would mean we had missed the mark somewhere."

Despite reducing combat operations the Highlanders have kept very busy. Their new focus is to pack all the tools they used to create their success. They are conducting a detailed inventory that involves finding and recording everything registered to them, down to the beds they sleep on. Some people may expect an infantry unit to have little more than guns to count, but the list is staggering.

"First we inventory all the real property ... almost \$30 million worth of equipment which we will hand over to the Iraqis," said Capt. Bell. "Then every company in the battalion is doing

a 100 percent inventory of all organizational property and theater provided equipment, which for HHC is about \$115 million worth of equipment."

The inventory process has required hard work and long hours from the Highlanders. They have implemented guard shifts overnight to secure items waiting to be counted, packed and shipped home.

"We are trying to get ahead of the game before we start the process of leaving," said Cpl. Walters. "The whole process of itemizing everything and packing it well, will speed up our time through customs and get us home quicker."

As they work on final preparations, Soldiers anticipate their return to Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., but Capt. Bell's focus is on ensuring everyone gets home safely.

"Our focus has been on helping the Iraqis capture and prevent terrorists," said Capt. Bell. "Now I'm looking forward to setting the stage and getting our people focused on the next mission which is to get redeployed safely with all our people, weapons and equipment."

The Highlanders have worked hard to make their mission a success. Soldiers and their families have grown during the deployment, and one young father is looking forward to watching his two young children grow right before his eyes.

U.S. Army photo by Pvt. Zachary Zuber

HHC 2/3 Inf. "Highlanders" begin the packing process to return all their equipment to Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

Task Force Marne Heroes of the North



Specialist Carolyn Gonzalez, from New York City, is with Company C, 296th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division. She serves as a squad leader in the Evacuation Platoon, and has supported more than 50 Combat Logistics Patrols within Diyala province. She has also conducted two military-civilian medical operations in Moqhadiya. Along with maintaining a full-time status as a student at Pierce College online, her daily duties include conducting CLP missions, daily sick-call, supervising the operation of the internet café, maintaining one Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle and supervising four Soldiers. She is truly an inspiration to those around her and an excellent choice for today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.



Specialist Ian Yrigoyen, of Los Angeles, is with Company A, 296th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division. He serves as an ammunition specialist and is an excellent example of an inspirational and motivated Soldier. He always puts the maximum effort into any tasking and mission assigned to him. He assisted in retrograding 60 milvans of ammunition valued at more than \$2 million and turned in residue worth more than \$200,000. He is the maintenance representative for his section and oversees the maintenance of three M1120 with trailers, four forklifts, one Humvee and one kalmar. He was the assistant instructor of the first Iraqi Partnership Armament Course and frequently supports combat logistics patrols. He volunteered to serve as a truck commander for more than 20 missions. His determination and attention to detail make him an excellent choice for today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.

On this day, April 26, in history ...

www.history.com

1711 - David Hume, whose essay "Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth," influenced the founding fathers, was born in Edinburgh, Scotland.

1865 - John Wilkes Booth, President Abraham Lincoln's assassin, was killed by Union Soldiers after they found him on a Virginia farm.

1918 - Fanny Blankers-Koen, who won four Gold Medals in the 1948 Summer Olympics, is born in the Netherlands.

1954 - Jonas Salk began the polio vaccine field trials on 1.8 million school-age children.

1954 - The Geneva Conference in Geneva, Switzerland began. The conference eventually led to the end of French involvement in Vietnam.

1977 - Studio 54 opens in New York City. At its height of popularity, the club was considered by many to be the most famous in the world.

1986 - The Chernobyl nuclear plant, near Kiev, U.S.S.R., now Ukraine, exploded, becoming the largest nuclear disaster up to that time. More than 70,000 people died as a result.

Task Force Marne Kid Hero of the North

Aryn Katheryn Jackson is the daughter of Capt. Tonya Jackson, the Battalion Adjutant of 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery Battalion.

She is an 11-year-old 5th grader at Beebe Middle School in Little Rock, Arkansas who

regularly excels academically as an honor student.

Aryn is a seasoned Girl Scout who participates in caroling at her local retirement home, cleaning her community park, and conducting food drives.

She is an avid reader with a membership with the Readers of Arkansas Book Club, and also a former cheerleader for her local recreational football team.

Due to her poised demeanor and outstanding scholastic achievement, she was nominated and chosen to be a Student Ambassador for People to People in order to represent the United States in Australia later this summer.

Aryn is a confident and bright performer, but her biggest accomplishment to date is loving and caring for her five year old brother, Julian, in her mother's absence.



REGIONAL HEADLINES

Ferndale man punches Cost Cutter employee after complaints about body odor

The Bellingham Herald

BELLINGHAM, Wash. - A Ferndale man was arrested April 19, for allegedly punching a Cost Cutter employee after customers complained about the man's body odor.

At about 11:40 a.m., Bellingham police responded to the Cost Cutter at 1275 E. Sunset Drive for a report of a fight between an employee and Christopher T. Boehringer, 31, said police spokesman Mark Young. Officers found employees holding Boehringer down in the second aisle of the store.

Boehringer apparently was in the store for about four hours Sunday when the complaints were made by other customers.

When he returned to the store on the same day, the employee approached him, either to talk about the complaints or about loitering in the store -- police reports are unclear on that.

"It doesn't appear (the employee) was going to ask him to leave the store. He was just sharing the complaints, but the conversation didn't get far," Young said.

Boehringer "snapped," Young said, throwing down a package of batteries and punching the employee in the mouth. The employee suffered a minor injury that didn't require treatment. Boehringer was booked into Whatcom

County Jail for investigation of fourth-degree assault.

Cats evicted to make way for Bush library

Dallas Morning News

UNIVERSITY PARK, Texas - If there is a promised land for feral cats, it might be Southern Methodist University, where dozens of them dine on hand-delivered kibble, sleep in custom-built shelters and lounge under their own personal hedges.

For years, kitty utopia stretched unbroken across the Southern Methodist University campus.

But now there's trouble on the border. On a wedge of land just southeast of campus, one colony has lately found itself back in the sewers -- competing for the university's affections with the 43rd president of the United States.

"Would you live in a place like this, with the sun bearing down on you half the day?" asks Althea Webb, gesturing across the wasteland.

Webb, 62, joined SMU's feral cat program in 2005. Webb can not only name most every cat on campus, but can recite genealogies and the histories of SMU's dozen colonies.

The troubles for the Binkley cats, as Webb calls those who live on the future library site, began in 2008, when SMU demolished the apartment buildings they lived under. They have been on a sort of long march ever since -- final destination unknown.

Anti-Kidnapping tip:

Ensure every Patrol Safety Brief includes counter-kidnapping procedures, audible and visual warnings of enemy approach, a set communications check-in schedule, identify rally points if separated and safe patrolling distances within crowded areas or during instances of civil unrest or protests.

You are invited

Darryl Worley

Where: COB Speicher

When: April 30, Time TBD

UFC Tour

Where: COB Speicher, May 4,

FOB Normandy and

FOB Grizzly, May 5

FOB Cobra and

FOB Warhorse, May 6

FOB Gabe/Cruz-Morris

and Q-West, May 7

When: Time TBD

Kudos to Kids

Post a message and your photo to your kids in the Fort Stewart April 29 Frontline and the Savannah April 30 Coastal Courier!

Use an MWR commercial computer or your personal computer to visit www.connectstewarthunter.com/kudosForKids for more information about the program.

Imagine the surprise on your kids face! Give them something they can cut out and keep for a lifetime!

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

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