

The North Star

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



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Partnership gives children place to play

By Pfc. Jessica Luhrs,
1BCT, 1st AD PAO

Children in one small village will soon have a place to run and play. A groundbreaking ceremony was held by Domies Iraqi Police along with Company C, 1st Battalion, “Battle Boars” 30th Infantry, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Ga., to mark the beginning of the construction project, in Domies, near Kirkuk province, June 26.

The idea for the children’s park, known as Domies River Park, came from Domies IP Chief, Brig. Gen. Anwar Khader Ahmed Muhammad, who is known by his partners as a man willing to help anyone to better his community.

“After seeing children playing in the streets with nowhere to go that is safe,” said Brig. Gen. Anwar. “I knew something needed to



Photo by Pfc. Jessica Luhrs, 1st BCT, 1st AD PAO

Domies IP Chief, Brig. Gen. Anwar Khader Ahmed Muhammad, and Capt. Cory Wallace, commander of Co. C, 1/30th Inf., 2nd HBCT, 3rd ID, stand with a sign stating ‘Park sponsored by Domies IP and coalition forces, your children are the future,’ during a park groundbreaking ceremony in Domies, June 26.

be done,”

As soon as the “Battle Boars” asked what Brig. Gen. Anwar wanted to do to improve the area he immediately said “build a children’s park,” according to 1st Lt. Jason Gillespie, a “Battle Boar” platoon leader with C. Co.

Brigadier General Anwar then said he wanted it in the

field directly across from the IP station so the police could make sure the children stay safe, continued 1st Lt. Gillespie.

Not only is the park in a safe a secure location for children, upon completion in around 40 days, the area will have a soccer field, jungle gym, trash bins, fence

around the entire park, and a picnic area, said the contractor Kawa Mustafa Hassan.

After the contractor completes building Domies River Park, the IP plan on planting more than 1,000 trees in the park donated by Brig. Gen. Anwar.

In addition to the trees grass will also be planted by city services.

“The park will bring a lot of attention to the area and build a good relationship between the IP and families of Domies,” said 1st Lt. Gillespie.

Brigadier General Anwar agreed this park is very good for the area.

“The people will begin to trust and like the IP more with the building of this park,” he said.

“Anytime the people of Domies see the park they will be reminded we are here to protect them and their families,” finished Brig. Gen. Anwar.

166th RSG prepares to depart Iraq after serving as Speicher’s Mayor Cell

By Spc. Michael Adams
TF Marne PAO

The 166th Regional Support Group spent a year as the Mayor’s Cell for Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq.

In this capacity, the unit took care of logistical issues for the Soldiers on

the base, including making sure food properly reached the servicemembers and civilians stationed here. This summer, after a year of hard work, the 166th RSG is closing up shop and returning to Puerto Rico.

“One of the main goals we had were

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Logistics team breaks through issues

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

Among the many buildings on Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, there is one that Soldiers may never enter. The technicians in this office function as an all-encompassing service group for Soldiers of 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division.

The Brigade Logistics Support Team is the final support line for any issue Soldiers are unable to fix through normal command channels. They are a group of logistical experts in fields such as weapons, ammunition, vehicles, and communications equipment that can provide outside expertise and a higher level of support when difficulty arises.

"We have 14 personnel here who provide a direct liaison between the brigade and Army Materiel Command to assist with any problems the Soldiers cannot fix through their own means," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Daniel Lal, from Hilo, Hawaii, the BLST chief. "For example if a Soldier had a problem with their weapon, we could step in and ensure they get the part needed to fix it, and coordinate with the manufacturer to make sure no one else experiences the same issue."

This is just one example of the many areas the BLST affect during their daily duties. Each day, their representatives visit specific areas around the FOB to speak with the Soldiers they are supporting.

"I make rounds almost every day to check the status of amnesty boxes and the ammunition transfer holding point," said Clinton Crowover, the quality assurance specialist for ammunition surveillance. "I have to work with the guys out there to make sure that rounds turned in are inspected and either decommissioned or cleared for reintegration to the general stock."

The Soldiers that interact with this dedicated group greet them with warm smiles and hearty handshakes, thankful for the support they can provide. Each representative focuses on the most troubling needs in their area of expertise, such as parts needed to get



Photo by Pvt. Zachary Zuber, 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID. PAO

Members of the BLST serve as a connection for Soldiers to resources available from the AMC. They assist in troubleshooting equipment and supply issues in almost every operational aspect for 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID, on a daily basis.

equipment operable again.

When the team here is unable to assist with the problem, they are able to quickly find someone who can.

"We fall under a larger brigade that supports all of Iraq. When our Soldiers need technical assistance, we can request design engineers or technicians to come in and fix the problem," said CW4 Lal. "Whenever there is an issue anywhere, we have the access to the people or parts that can fix it. We are not here to do their [Soldiers'] jobs for them, but to provide the help they need after all their options are exhausted."

Their support has had a significant impact, saving more than \$2 million in repair and parts costs during this deployment, said CW4 Lal. Along with support duties, the BLST is also responsible for the oversight of equipment during redeployments.

"We bring in teams specifically for assisting in the brigade's reset," said CW4 Lal. "We not only provide guidance in the deployed area but also support the units when they get home by managing the issue of all the equipment they will need to restart garrison operations."

Though the majority of Soldiers may not know of the BLST, many of

them have probably been affected in some way by their assistance. During the remainder of their time here, the Arrowhead Brigade can rely on these experts for excellent support.

TASK FORCE MARNE
U.S. DIVISION - NORTH, IRAQ

"WORTH FIGHTING FOR!"

**INDEPENDENCE DAY
CELEBRATION**

July 4, event

Task Force Marne Headquarters will celebrate July 4, with a performance from the band Vertical Horizon at the Contingency Operating Base Speicher Soccer Field. Snacks and beverages will be on site for attendees to enjoy at the Speicher Soccer Stadium during concert.

Continued from RSG, Page 1

to improve the living situation for Soldiers on COB Speicher and to make things better than what they were when we got here," said Capt. Ivy Harris, of Orlando, Fla., and the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment commander for the 166th RSG. "Ultimately, we feel like we made a significant impact on the COB, the COB surroundings and what's available for Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines."

One way the unit helped to meet the needs of the tenant units was to have liaison officers available for the three sections of Speicher, north, main and south. The 166th RSG had round-the-clock operational capabilities to aid units with issues such as requesting vehicles, and needing billeting.

Captain Harris said the 166th RSG also helped ease the transition for units moving on and off the base. Even as their deployment draws to an end, the unit is still working to help the servicemembers stationed here.

"We're making sure troops have the [resources] they need to get their equipment back to their home station, assisting in transportation requests, and making sure their personnel are taken care of," he added.

Ultimately, he gave credit for the unit's success to the Soldiers in the 166th RSG.

"They were excellent," he said. "There were a lot of long hours. They were motivated, they were well

prepared for the mission, I think overall they did very well."

Sergeant First Class Hector Roman, the HHD noncommissioned officer in charge, was proud of what his unit had accomplished. He was particularly happy with what he and his Soldiers accomplished.

"I wanted to leave a positive footprint in Iraq as the detachment sergeant and as a unit" he said. "We had

to keep a positive attitude and work together as a team so we could accomplish our missions more effectively."

The Toa Baja, Puerto Rico, native added he was very happy that there were no major issues with the Soldiers in his unit getting injured or having any major safety violations.

The unit accomplished a number of missions during their time here, such as building a park for Soldiers.

"We are at the positive part of the deployment where we start turning the base over to the Iraqis and they have less to worry about now than they did before we got here," said Sgt. 1st Class Roman.

While the Soldiers were successful while working in COB Speicher, they had help back home.

The Families of the Soldiers with the 166th RSG also played a part in the deployment, being active with the Family Readiness Group, allowing Soldiers to keep in constant contact with their loved ones and coordinating care packages



Courtesy Photo
Sergeant First Class Jorge Lebron, a range control NCO with the 166th RSG, provides instruction to one of many units that conduct weapons training at Short Stop Range on COB Speicher.

60 Iraqi soldiers complete route clearance course

**By Pfc. Jessica Luhrs,
1BCT, 1st AD PAO**

More than 60 Iraqi Army soldiers with 12th Field Engineer Regiment of the 12th Division IA, graduated from a six-week long route clearance course, known as the Ready First Combat Team Route Clearance Academy, at the K-1 IA base, Kirkuk province, Iraq, June 23.

The purpose of the course was to bring the IA one step closer to taking over route clearance operations in the area.

The ceremony was also attended by the Soldiers of Company C, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division.

"I am very impressed with the IA soldiers and I know they will soon be able to take over route clearance missions in Kirkuk," said Capt. Michael D. Kieser, commander of Co. C.

He continued to say this group of Iraqi soldiers impressed him with their motivation to learn and this is why he thinks they will soon be ready to handle all route clearance missions.

Also during the ceremony Capt. Kieser explained to the IA leadership exactly what their soldiers had accomplished during their training.

The course included combat lifesaving, U.S. Army Warrior Tasks and Drills specifically related to route clearance missions, recovery planning and improvised explosive device lane

training, said Capt. Kieser.

Lieutenant Colonel Khalid, 12th FER executive officer, also spoke to the crowd of 'Ready First' Soldiers, IA soldiers and other guests about how much he appreciated the training for his soldiers.

"I appreciate the support from the American Soldiers and I am very pleased with the results of working side-by-side with you. We have fostered a better relationship," said Lt. Col. Khalid.

When the leadership finished with their speeches the soldiers who completed the training received a certificate of completion from the IA and U.S. leadership to validate the training they received.

Task Force Marne Heroes of the North



Specialist Michael Millwood, of Greenville, S.C., is with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Engineer Battalion. He consistently displays the Warrior Ethos and lives the Army Values. Specialist Millwood has worked countless hours since his company's assumption of authority as a radio transmitter operator in the battalion tactical operations center. He has labored tirelessly and thanklessly to track combat logistic and route clearance patrols in order to provide the battalion commander, his staff, and each of the subordinate companies with the most current information on the battlefield. His ability to track current operations, monitor logistical assets, and provide timely and accurate reports is instrumental in the execution of battalion missions. For his professionalism in the conduct of his duties and his exemplary dedication to his duties, he is a most worthy choice for today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.



Private First Class Zackery Sanderson, of Stonefort, Ill., is with 3rd Squadron, 73rd U.S. Cavalry, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. He serves as the radiotelephone operator for his platoon. He communicates and coordinates with air weapons teams and close air support aircraft on a nightly basis during combined border interdiction missions. He is also the platoon's biometric identification equipment (HIDE) expert/operator, during the past week he has helped input over 100 micro-grant applicants into HIDE throughout the area of operation. His skill and personality have made the process flow smoothly, enabling a large number of local nationals to complete their applications in hopes of a new beginning. He also helped interdict and detain 10 individuals attempting to cross into Iraq from Syria. He has been a source of constant motivation, initiative, and positive morale to his platoon. His actions reflect great credit on himself, 3-73, and 2nd HBCT making him an excellent choice for today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.

Iraqis celebrate birth of Iraqi Republic July 14

Cultural Tidbit Special to the North Star

After World War I, and the fall of Ottoman Empire, Iraq came under British occupation. After Iraqis found out that they had a new occupier they started a revolt against the British. The largest revolution was in the South of Iraq, during the 1920 Revolution.

Due to the heavy casualties the British suffered from the revolution, they decided to give the Iraqis their independence and to set King Faisal as king of Iraq in 1921, and the country remained under British mandate. A new era in Iraq started and lasted about 37 years. King Faisal was from the Hashemite Dynasty.

Despite material progress, the Hashemite monarchy failed to win public support and, in particular, the confidence of the younger generation.

Before the revolution, Iraq lacked an enlightened leadership capable of achieving progress and inspiring public confidence. The new generation offered such leadership, but the older

leaders resisted and embarked on an unpopular foreign policy, including an alliance with Britain through participation in the Baghdad Pact and opposition to the establishment of the United Arab Republic.

The failure of younger civilians to obtain power aroused the concern of some young military officers, who were required by military discipline to take no part in politics, called themselves the Free Officers and began to organize in small groups and lay down revolutionary plans.

The number of Free Officers was relatively small, but there were a considerably larger number of sympathizers. The officers worked in cells, and the identities of the participants were kept secret.

Only the Central Organization, which supplied leadership of the movement, was known to all the Free Officers. The Central Organization was composed of 14 officers, headed by 'Abd al-Karim Qasim, who held the highest military rank.

On July 14, revolutionary forces

captured the capital, declared the downfall of the monarchy, and proclaimed a republic. The leading members of the royal house, including the King and Crown Prince, were executed. Brigadier General Qasim, head of the revolutionary force, formed a cabinet over which he presided and appointed himself commander of the National Forces.

A provisional constitution declared that Iraq formed an integral part "of the Arab nation" and that "Arabs and Kurds are considered partners in this homeland." Iraq was declared a republic.

During the Saddam Hussein regime, the government used to commemorate this occasion as the day of the fall of the monarchy and establishment of the Iraqi Republic. In 2007, this day was instituted as Iraqi Republic Day. It is now an official holiday for the whole country.

Editor's note: The Task Force Marne Human Terrain Analyst Team contributed to this cultural tidbit.

WHAT'S WORTH FIGHTING FOR TO YOU?



The freedom for people to have the right to express themselves publicly.
Sergeant First Class Hector Roman,
HHD NCOIC, 166th RSG



I believe our freedom is worth fighting for because freedom isn't free.
Captain Ivy Harris,
HHD Cdr., 166th RSG



Family and friends are worth fighting for.
Specialist Samuel Higdon,
4th IBCT, 1st ID



Knowing that I'm able to live a good life.
Staff Sergeant Amber Magel,
administrative law NCOIC, TF Marne



My freedom, my country, my wife and my two kids.
Specialist Michael Gambrell,
supply specialist, HHOC, 3rd ID

THE North Star

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

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