

Danger

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Forward

Volume 1, Issue 5

August 2004

*On Patrol:
Task Force 1-7
secures the streets
of Bayji*



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On the cover

Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment pull security during a foot patrol in the city of Bayji on July 24. MG John R.S. Batiste, also was on the patrol. He wanted to get a feel for what the Soldiers see, their work conditions and a better feel for the city. Additionally, the general met with local leaders.

Photo by
SPC David Dyer.

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MG John R. S. Batiste, on a visit to the Iraqi National Guard compound at FOB Paliwoda, shakes hands and talks with the Iraqi Police and Iraqi National Guard on August 3. (US Army photo by SPC David Dyer)

TIDBITS ...

- ◆ **Wanted:** Soldiers who have family in Central Ohio. Please contact MSG Weasner at 553-3394 or stop by the PAO office in the Division Main.
- ◆ Be sure to check out Danger TV available at Task Force Danger PAO.
- ◆ Have an awesome picture from a mission? Task Force Danger PAO accepts digital photos with cutlines. Photos must have Soldiers "doing the right thing" ... in proper uniform, implementing safety, no smoking, profanity, vulgarity. Submit photos via e-mail (firstid.pao@us.army.mil) or stop by the PAO office in the Division Main with a USB drive or CD.

MESSAGE FROM DANGER SIX

As I participated in a recent memorial service for a fallen comrade, I felt honored and privileged to be standing in formation with so many great American Soldiers and patriots. While the grief for the loss of one of our own was overwhelming, we found comfort in our God and each other. Never have I served with finer warriors, men and women completely dedicated to each other and to the units within which they serve. We understand the meaning of teamwork. We trust one another and move out on mission with confidence in knowing that the entire division combat team is leaning into the fight. We know that success is fundamental and will never accept anything but victory. We know that victory is non-negotiable. As I look into the eyes of the Soldiers of this great division, I see a degree of commitment, maturity and steadfastness that only a seasoned veteran would un-



MG JOHN R. S. BATISTE

derstand. I see proud Soldiers who have earned their combat patch. I see professionals who love their country. Your hard work and sacrifice in Iraq is paying off in spades. You are taking the fight to the enemy with all forms of contact, every day and every night. At the same time, you are breaking the cycle of violence and bringing hope to a ravaged people. Indeed, we are now witnessing irreversible momentum as the 25 million good people of Iraq are well on their way to living in a free and democratic society. I know you are very proud of the contributions you are making. You all will continue to make an enormous difference. You have my profound respect. God bless you all and continue to take care of one another. Continue mission.

- Danger 6

MESSAGE FROM DANGER SEVEN

I would like to thank all the Soldiers not in the spotlight who are making this mission a success. They may not be out kicking in doors or laying in a sniper hide position waiting for Anti-Iraqi Forces trying to dig in an improvised explosive device. These Soldiers work 24 hours a day coordinating, supplying, providing command and control and a host of other missions that I don't think they learned at Advanced Individual Training or the Officer Basic Course.

They manage contracts for services like barber shops, laundry services, construction laborers, and local retail stores on our Forward Operating Bases. They manage the Segovia computer and weight rooms, Morale, Welfare, Recreation centers, and AAFES retail stores. They guard and monitor local contractors who maintain our buildings, install air conditioning, provide clean water for bathing and dispose of waste materials.

They are Soldiers who designed the Entry Control Points and man them daily, protecting us from the vehicle borne improvised explosive devices. They are the ones you see in our guard towers at each FOB. These Soldiers stand proudly at guard protecting their buddies so they can rest, refit, and prepare for the next mission.

You will see these Soldiers in the motor pools covered in grease working on vehicles that are too hot to touch. They know that an up-armored humvee is not protecting their friends sitting non-mission capable in the motor pool. They understand that in a sector the size of West Virginia, non-mission capable ve-



CSM CORY MCCARTY

hicles will bring Task Force Danger to a halt.

Walk into any Aid Station in the Task Force and you will see a determination on the faces of the medics that translates; Soldiers in this Task Force are going to get the best care possible. Look at the setup, look at the supplies; they are ready, willing and capable. Soldiers can trust their lives with any aid station in this Task Force. I have seen that they are that good!

Watch a Task Force Danger Logistic Convoy roll down the road. You can see the Warrior Ethos exuding from every vehicle. Their well-rehearsed SOPs and Battle Drills continue to save lives as they move down the IED-infested main and alternate supply routes. Every one of the Soldiers know that there are AIF and IEDs along their routes, but that does not abate their determination to deliver their payload to the Soldiers who need it.

It doesn't matter that you are in Headquarters Battery, Troop or Company, a Forward or Main Support Battalion, or just plain given a mission that before you came to Iraq there was no such requirement for in the U.S. Army. There are scores of other Soldiers who go unnoticed by the majority every day, but are invaluable to this mission. I want you all to know that every Soldier in this Task Force's mission is critical, and MG John R. S. Batiste and I personally salute and thank you for the professional accomplishment of your daily mission. You are truly heroes among heroes!

- Danger 7

DUTY FIRST!



Local Iraqis watch as the 82nd Engineer Battalion works a traffic control point near Baqubah on July 20. (US Army photo by SPC James B. Smith Jr.)



SGT Kris R. Van Beveren, a cavalry scout from HHC, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry, performs a mobile launch of the Raven small unmanned aerial vehicle at FOB Normandy on July 8. (US Army photo by SGT Kimberly Snow)



On August 5, PFC Patric Grysen, from A Battery, 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, carries rockets found in a field outside the city of Bayji, Iraq, to a HMMWV to be transported to a storage site. (US Army photo by PFC Elizabeth Erste)



SGT Mike Spencer, from the 415th Civil Affairs Battalion, smiles as he leaves a market in Al-Hawaish, Iraq on July 19. The unit was in the village to assess construction of a police station and meet local people to discuss any problems. (US Army photo by SFC Chuck Joseph)



SPC Kevin Rodriguez, from HHC, 82nd Engineer Battalion, mans a .50 caliber machine gun at the gate of FOB Gabe on July 17. (US Army photo by SPC James B. Smith Jr.)



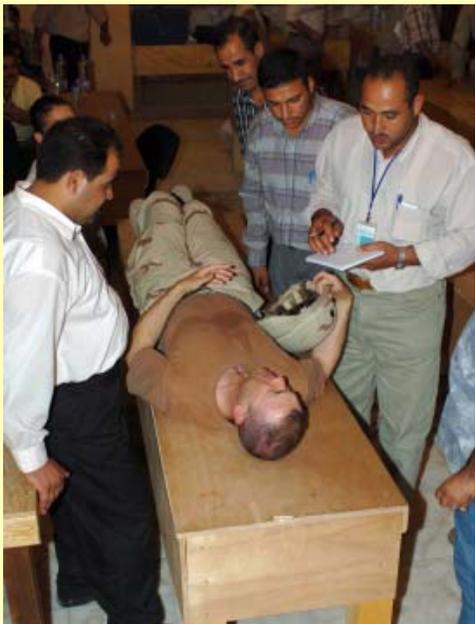
SSG Raymond L. Wray, an infantryman with 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, instructs Iraqi National Guard Soldiers in body search techniques at the ING training facility at FOB Normandy July 11. (US Army photo by SGT Kimberly Snow)



SPC Christopher D. Cox, a crew chief from Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, 4th Brigade, mans a 7.62mm machine gun aboard a UH-60L Black Hawk helicopter near Forward Operating Base Speicher, Iraq on June 19. (US Army photo by SFC Chuck Joseph)



SGT Warren D. Misa from 3rd Platoon, A Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment pulls security alongside a Soldier from the 205th Iraqi National Guard during a patrol of Jazeera, Iraq on July 11. (US Army photo by SGT Kimberly Snow)



LTC Michael Brumage, Division Surgeon for 1st Infantry Division, poses as an ill patient in order for a group of Iraqi nurses to make an assessment. Soldiers from the Division Surgeon's office and the 415th Civil Affairs Battalion held the seminar in July on FOB Danger to help the nurses hone their medical skills. (US Army photo by SFC Nancy McMillan)



PFC Alan Walker with A Battery, 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, calls to his fellow soldiers after finding more rockets in a row of bushes located in a field outside the city of Bayji, Iraq on August 5. (US Army photo by PFC Elizabeth Erste)



PFC Eric Gustasaon, assigned to the 1st Military Police Company, mans his weapon during a convoy to Baqubah, Iraq to release Iraqi prisoners on June 3. (US Army photo by PFC Brandi Marshall)



SSG Heun Hean from Bravo Company, 82nd Engineer Battalion, talks to a local Iraqi vendor in Baqubah, Iraq on July 20. (US Army photo by SPC James B. Smith Jr.)



A Soldier from the 205th Iraqi National Guard provides overwatch during a joint patrol on July 11, with Soldiers from 3rd Platoon, A Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, in Jazeera, Iraq. (US Army photo by SGT Kimberly Snow)

Continuing the mission ...

42nd Infantry Division prepares for OIF III

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SPC ISMAIL TURAY JR.
196TH MPAD

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DANGER, TIKRIT, Iraq - When terrorists flew two planes into the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, the 42nd Infantry Division, headquartered in Troy, New York, was among the first military organizations to respond.

The Rainbow Division will resume its contribution to the Global War on Terrorism when it replaces the 1st Infantry Division in North Central Iraq at the beginning of 2005.

The 42nd ID's headquarters mobilized in early June and came to Tikrit to conduct a reconnaissance, get acquainted with the area and learn from the 1st Infantry Division, said MG Joseph Taluto, the 42nd ID's Commander.

Two weeks later, another headquarters team - mainly the division support command - returned for another reconnaissance. Then in July, a leaders' reconnaissance with the division's brigade and battalion commanders was conducted.

Taluto and his staff plan to return in mid-August for a fourth reconnaissance, he said.

"Our reconnaissance has been constant and consistent and I think it has been worth every effort," the general said. "We owe a real debt of gratitude to the 1st Infantry Division for the way they received us. It's been a truly professional relationship in every sense of the word.

"MG John Batiste, 1st ID Commander and the Big Red One Soldiers have set us up for success from day one."

Working with the Big Red One to get an idea of how they operate was like going back to school, Taluto said. He and his staff learned so much, including how the IID prepared for its deployment, things it did well and things it could have done better or differently while in theatre, the general said.

"A lot of effort went into getting the 1st ID to the high operating level that they are at right now," Taluto said, "My intent is to bring back those lessons learned from the 1st ID and incorporate them into our own staff training".

The 1st ID and 42nd ID, both of which have historic legacies, share the same birth year, and they forged a relationship when they fought alongside each other during WWI.

The driving force behind the for-



MAJ James MacGregor, left, the 1st Infantry Division's chief of plans, chats with his counterpart, LTC Mark Moser of the 42nd Infantry Division during a video conference at Division Main in July.

mation of the 42nd ID in 1917 was GEN Douglas MacArthur, then a colonel and the division's first chief of staff. He put together the division with National Guard regiments from across the country in preparation for WWI.



LTC Mark Moser, left, the 42nd Infantry Division's chief of plans, confers with MAJ Steve Nettleton, 1st Infantry Division's Information Operations plans officer during a meeting at Division Main in July.

The Army opted to form the division with National Guard regiments because the government wanted to increase support for the war, Taluto said. Besides, many of the National Guard members had more combat experience than other active army Soldiers since the guardsmen had only recently participated in the Mexican-Expedition against Pancho Villa in 1916-1917.

Because the division was comprised of units from across 26 states and the District of Columbia, MacArthur made the statement that, "This division stretches across the nation like a rainbow". The media liked the phrase and the 42nd ID became known as the Rainbow Division.

The 42nd ID deactivated after WWI and reassembled again for WWII in 1944. The Rainbow Division served in Southern France and Germany in 1945, where the division liberated the infamous Dachau Concentration Camp. In 1947, it returned

officially became a National Guard combat division, and has served in that capacity ever since.

Today, it stretches across nine states, but two-thirds of its soldiers are located in New York and New Jersey.

About two hours after the September 11 attacks, the 42nd ID was mobilized for state active duty, becoming one of the first military organizations to respond to the terror attacks. The division's mission was to provide security, logistical support and administrative oversight of the World Trade Center site.

Hundreds of sailors, Marines and Air National Guard Airmen were attached to the division's joint task force during the yearlong assignment, Taluto said.

The 42nd ID recently adopted the motto "Never Forget" as a tribute to two of its Soldiers who perished in the World Trade Center. Both were at their civilian jobs in the towers at the time of the attacks, one a World Trade Center Security Officer and the other a New York City Fire Fighter.

Taluto added, "Our motto also means we don't forget all the great warriors that came to this country and made the ultimate sacrifice to get us to this point. We never want to forget our veterans who protected our freedoms over the years, whether they were at the liberation of Dachau or the woods of the Argonne."

Infantry facilitates creation of community council

**STORY AND PHOTOS
BY SGT ROLAND G. WALTERS
196TH MPAD**

OWJA, Iraq - Cordoned off in the corner of the room by camouflaged ponchos and wooden two-by-fours was a makeshift voting booth. Waiting inside were sealed, black spray painted Meal, Ready-To-Eat boxes with slots cut into the tops to receive ballots.

As more people filed into the conference room, the buzz of conversation grew.

Politics sound the same in any language.

Soldiers of 2nd Platoon, Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment improvised with the tools of the voting process, but democracy was demonstrated just the same on June 15.

Saddam Hussein's birthplace, Owja, was one of the first towns to hold elections for positions in the town council.

"The importance of the election is that the people get a say in who will represent them," said CPT David M. Krzycki, Commander of Alpha Company, 1-18th Infantry.

"I want all the problems solved, but more importantly, I want someone who cares about the city," said Mohmood Ibraheem Kaleel, a former gardener of the deposed dictator.

Krzycki said it all began with a community meeting for people to come and voice their concerns. The community selected projects with the 1st Infantry Division granting approval and funding. He said the idea of creating a community council to solve their problems surfaced and now the foundation of how the city



SFC David P. Cravener, platoon sergeant for 1st Platoon, Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, holds the curtain for a citizen of Owja as he exits the voting booth.

should run has been built.

With more than 220 voters, organization was a key part in accomplishing the election, Krzycki said.

Members of 2nd Platoon were tasked to explain and demonstrate the democratic process.

A total of seven positions were voted on during the election. Posts included Director of the Council, Vice Director of the Council, Director of Transportation, Director of Education, Director of Utilities, Director of Agriculture and City Manager.

The Soldiers patiently answered any questions voters had.

Soldiers explained the posts up for election and their corresponding responsibilities. The floor was then opened for nominations with nominees' names written on the board under the corresponding post.

After the nominations, candidates addressed the crowd, telling the people what they hoped they could accomplish during their year-long term. Residents cast their votes by dropping paper ballots into the MRE boxes with the respective candidate's name on it.

Once the voters were done casting ballots, the boxes were brought out, opened and tallied in front of the people.

The votes were recounted by another person to verify the results. That count was then placed beside the nominee's name on the board for everyone to view. Once all the boxes were emptied the winner was announced, congratulated and given a moment to speak.

"The goal of the election today is for them to elect officials for the council to solve the problems, not us," Krzycki noted. "I think that they are well on their way."



CPT David M. Krzycki, Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment Commander, demonstrates dropping the ballot into the makeshift ballot boxes.

Providing for the children through "I CAN"

**STORY AND PHOTO BY 1LT WILLIAM A. DIEFENBACH
4-3 ADA UPAR**

The Iraqi Children Assistance Network (I CAN) was established to allow American Soldiers the opportunity to work with Iraqi children and provide them with hope for a brighter future.

Through Operation I CAN, Soldiers distribute donated school supplies and toys to Iraqi children. Soldiers have distributed over 100 boxes of donated school supplies throughout the country. They are gathering more for the upcoming school year.

Army officials said the program works to bridge the misperception gap between Iraqi children, their families, and Soldiers by providing the children with greater opportunity for hope in their future as well as the future of their country.

The Army Civil Affairs' objective is the restabilization of Iraq through humanitarian assistance and development projects. Officials said achieving this goal allows the Iraqi people to function as a legitimate, pros-

perous and safe country without the further aid and supervision of the United States.

I CAN is part of the broader, Army-wide effort to revitalize Iraq's infrastructure and invigorate its self-sufficiency and capacity for autonomy. It operates on a people-to-people basis at the grassroots level. It encourages positive and close relationships between Iraqi children and U.S. troops.

By distributing school supplies and toys to the Iraq children, Soldiers work directly against the aims of the Anti-Iraqi Forces that seek to discredit the U.S. presence.

Army officials said the ultimate goal is to shape the children's and their parents' perspectives on why the U.S. troops are here.

Operation I CAN allows Americans stateside to participate directly in helping win the hearts and minds of Iraqis.



SPC Erik Martiz, from the 4-3 ADA, hands out school supplies in support of Operation I CAN.

Soldiers help Kurdish village rebuild

**STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC SEAN KIMMONS
25TH ID PAO**

RADAR, Iraq - Funds from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division's Commander's Emergency Relief Program recently paid for two construction projects that stand out from the damaged structures and tents of this Kurdish village.

The Kirkuk-based Sinur Company was awarded \$82,000 for the construction of government and municipal buildings in Radar, which were scheduled to be completed in June. Pending projects for Radar include a clinic, school, generator, water pump and tank system.

"This is the very start of the rebuilding process," said 1LT Robert Elzer, a fire direction officer from 2nd Platoon "Outlaws," Charlie Battery, Task Force 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment.

"There are 76 other villages like Radar in the Shwan district and about 50 of them have been destroyed by the Iraqi Army," he said.

Elzer and CPT Deron Haight, commander of Forward Operating Base Altun Kapri, are responsible for acquiring funds and managing the infrastructure projects in Radar which is the capital of the Shwan District. In the future, they will lend out their support to the other villages in the district.

Throughout the 1980s, the Iraqi Army kicked the



Omar Hadi applies cement to a wall of the Radar government building. 2nd BCT CERP funds paid for the construction project.

Kurdish people out of this district. Now with the old Iraqi Army gone, the Kurds are returning home.

"Everybody who was originally kicked out of this area wants to come back," Elzer said. "We have an estimate of about 20,000 to 30,000 people who have the intention of moving back into this area."

This is the main reason CERP funds were established for the Radar infrastructure, so when Kurds do settle back here it will be an easy transition for them.

"We are helping a lot of people who were treated badly over the last 20 or 30 years," Elzer said. "The CERP money is a great tool because we can make a big impact in the local districts."

Ali Mohammed Ahmed, a Radar villager, expressed his gratitude toward the Coalition during Haight and Elzer's recent visit to Radar.

"We feel that they have rescued Iraq as a whole and they are supporting the community here," Ahmed said. "We depend upon them."

To further assist Radar villagers, the Sinur Co. hired all of its unskilled labor force from the village.

"They employed 100 local laborers for the two construction projects," Elzer said. "It's a win, win situation for the village. It supports their local government and puts money in the pockets of the locals."

The United Nations and Non-Governmental Organizations are also assisting the village by providing food and tents to the displaced Kurds.

In almost three months the "Outlaws" have had 30 projects approved for about \$300,000 to help build up the Iraqi infrastructure.

Insignia changes made in Warrant Officer Corps

**STORY AND PHOTO BY
SFC CHUCK JOSEPH
196TH MPAD**

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, TIKRIT, Iraq - Task Force Danger units here held a ceremony in the base gymnasium July 9 to award branch insignia to warrant officers and rank insignia for Chief Warrant Officer 5s.



Photo by SPC David Dyer

A chief warrant officer with the 1st Infantry Division receives the Signal Branch Insignia, which replaces the Warrant Officer Corps' "Rising Eagle" insignia, from the MG John R.S. Battiste, commander of the 1st Infantry Division.

The event and changeover coincide with the 86th anniversary of the Warrant Officer Corps' founding.

The insignia for Chief Warrant Officer 5 replaces the old Master Warrant Officer insignia that has been used since 1988, said CW5 Jamie Haas, 4th Brigade safety officer.

Originally, CW4s received the title of Master Warrant Officer with no promotion in pay grade. In 1991, the grade of CW5 was recognized, and those elevated to that rank continued to wear the insignia of Master Warrant Officer, Haas said.

BG Stephen D. Mundt, Assistant Division Commander for Support, pinned the "new" rank insignia on four of the task force's six Warrant Officer 5s.

Unit commanders then went into the ranks of the all-warrant-officer formation and pinned branch insignia in place of the "rising eagle" insignia on the collars of the remaining warrant officers.

Mundt addressed the honorees and crowd and commended the warrant officers for their expertise and professionalism.

"You have had a right, ever since I met you, to wear your branch insignia on your collar," he said.

The change is Army-wide by order of the Chief of Staff of the Army.



BG Stephen D. Mundt, Assistant Division Commander for Support, speaks to the formation of more than 70 Warrant Officers in the Forward Operating Base Speicher gymnasium.

Warrant officers now align themselves with their respective branches. A total of 78 warrant officers from 13 Army branches received branch insignia, as more than 50 of the awardees' fellow soldiers looked on.

Keeping the birds flying high



The pilot of a UH-60L Black Hawk helicopter from 2nd Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, 4th Aviation Brigade, flies a transport mission from Forward Operating Base Speicher, Iraq to Babylon on June 17.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SFC CHUCK JOSEPH 196TH MPAD

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq - The Army's Black Hawk helicopter is one awesome piece of machinery. Its two 1,300-horsepower turbo-shaft engines spin four 54-foot fiberglass-titanium main rotors that can lift almost 12 tons into the air.

The aircraft can carry an 11-man infantry squad, with its equipment, and fly 153 knots. That's aviation terminology for 176 m.p.h..

The 2nd Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment of the 4th Aviation Brigade, flies 16 of these beasts. However, what makes this unit stand out isn't the high-speed aircraft, it's the high-speed men and women who fly and maintain them.

Each helicopter crew consists of four Soldiers — two pilots and two crew chiefs. The crew chiefs are enlisted Soldiers while the pilots are a mix of warrant and commissioned officers. Regardless of the crew's make up, flying these machines is a team effort.

A normal mission starts two hours prior to the flight. Members of the crew report to the tactical operations center (TOC) for a briefing, draw weapons, ammunition, maps and a flight plan, then head to the flight line. At the aircraft, the crew completes a hands-on inspection.

Pilots and crew chiefs climb through, under and on

top of the aircraft checking fasteners, fluid levels, pins and hundreds of other parts that make this amazing hunk of metal fly. At times, it resembles any preventative maintenance session one might encounter in the Army. At other times, it is quite obvious that this vehicle is going to leave the ground, and there's no room for error.

During a pre-flight inspection on FOB Speicher June 18, 1LT Jeffrey Stvan, a Bravo Company pilot, noticed some wear on an abrasion strip on one of the tail rotors. He deferred to SPC Justin M. Trayford, a crew chief, for his verdict. Trayford, a former airborne infantry Soldier, inspected all four leading edges of the rotor blades and determined that the vehicle was air-worthy.

In the harsh desert climate, abrasion strips protect the leading edge of the blade from erosion that is caused by sand and dirt in the air, Trayford said. If the protective strip were to break down or come off, the rotor could quickly deteriorate. On an aircraft with numerous moving and vibrating parts, both pilots and crew chiefs have to know the vehicle inside out to ensure safety.

Every member of the team is responsible for constantly being on the look-out for anything that could go wrong, said CW3 Robert R. Tyler, a pilot from Bravo Company.

"We need every set of eyes," Tyler said. "We're disciplined, but we need more free thought on an \$8 million aircraft."

Crew chiefs are on the front line of maintenance.

They are taught the basics from technical manuals at advanced individual training, but they really learn the aircraft once they arrive at the unit, said SSG Nathan C. Bullock, a turbine engine mechanic from Delta Company, 2-1 Aviation.

New Soldiers are assigned to the maintenance company first. There they learn the finer points of maintaining Black Hawks. Crew chiefs spend six months on average in the maintenance company before they are moved to one of the two flight companies. Many enjoy the wrench-turning part of the job so much that they choose to stay in the hanger.

When there's an opening on a crew, the flight company chooses the best and brightest Soldiers from the maintenance company, said SPC Jason M. Burdick, a crew chief from Delta Company. When an officer defers to an enlisted crew chief for an opinion on a possible defect in the aircraft, rank doesn't matter, knowledge and experience in the shop does.

Once the inspections are complete and the Black Hawk's twin engines thump to life, the pilots and crew chiefs take on distinctly different roles. The pilots fly the aircraft and command the mission. The crew chiefs manage the passengers and payload, and provide security through doors on the side of the aircraft.

Like Soldiers on the ground in Iraq, flight crews had to adapt to a different threat in the air. Small arms fire and rocket-propelled grenades are the main threats in the sky as well as on the ground. Crew chiefs are constantly on the lookout for these threats. Also, be-

cause they cover a large area, crews are on the lookout for weapons caches and abandoned arms left over from prior wars.

"Here, we fly leaning forward with both hands on the weapon, 30 to 70 feet off the ground," said SGT Guy C. Durocher, a crew chief from Bravo Company.

Low level flight is called terrain flight or NAP of the earth (NOE) flight. NAP is an acronym for near as possible. These types of flights are the best defense against ground threats.

It's also an exhilarating experience. With the doors open to stave off the heat, the Black Hawk screams through the sky, skimming just above the surface. Wind pounds the occupants' faces and whips their clothing into frenzy. Gravity pulls on the human body with every banking turn, and the ground blurs below for those who dare to look down.

The crew is accustomed to the thrilling ride of the Black Hawk in low level flight. They've flown like this, virtually nonstop, since Task Force Danger arrived in theater.

The flights are tracked in the TOC by the battle captains and support staff. CPT Chad S. Gross, senior battle captain for the 2-1, said the operations tempo is the fastest he's seen. The TOC staff tracks mission arrivals and departures, maintenance status, crew rotations, radio frequencies, landing zones, restricted operating zones, as well as a host of other func-

tions that are needed to keep the flights in the air.

The battalion has flown about 600 missions in the first four months of the yearlong deployment. They fly day and night and keep one crew on standby for emergency situations such as personnel recovery.

The pilots seem to enjoy all the flight time. The tempo was hectic at first, Gross said. However, the unit has settled into a battle rhythm, and the missions are going well, he added. Most of the staff officers are pilots, and they pull away from their duties to help out with the fly-

ing and maintain flight time.

The unit's primary mission is troop transport. Each day, helicopters are dispatched to all corners of Danger's area of operations. Every Soldier flown to their destination is one less Soldier subjected to the dangers on the ground, said Crew Chief Trayford, who has been flying for two years.

Stvan, a former infantry Soldier, enjoyed flying so much that he became a pilot. He loves to fly and gets the most satisfaction by helping Soldiers get home.

"I like to take the enlisted guys home for R and R," Stvan said. "We hook them up to the ICS (internal communication system). They tell us where they're going, and they always have a smile on their face."

Tyler has a lighthearted definition of mission success.

"Success is taking off and landing," he said, adding he enjoys everything about his job and finds it rewarding. "It's a really good Zen-like feeling to have a good day out in the air," Tyler said.



Pilots, crew chief, and passengers alike get a window with a view as the Black Hawk flies throughout Iraq.

City council transcends cultures



CPT Jonathan M. Stewart, Commander of Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 252nd Armor Regiment, is a special advisor for the cities of As Sa Diyah and Jalawla. The Ohio National Guardsman speaks with members of the city council in As Sa Diyah.

STORY AND PHOTO BY SPC SHERREE CASPER 196TH MPAD

AS SA DIYAH, Iraq - CPT Jonathan M. Stewart is used to delivering things, but not just because the Ohio National Guardsman is a postal carrier in the civilian world.

As special advisor for As Sa Diyah and Jalawla, the Commander of Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 252nd Armor Regiment helps bring projects in the area to fruition.

The problem is that he often works hard just trying to get the city councils to give him project requests.

"They call me the supreme commander of Jalawla and As Sa Diyah," he said, laughing. "It can be quite the power trip if you let it."

Attending a Wednesday morning city council meeting in As Sa Diyah, Stewart noted that the group is "starting to come together."

"I steer them in the right direction," Stewart said of the council members. Jalawla's population is about 45,000 while As Sa Diyah has about 35,000 people. In As Sa Diyah, the Coalition Provisional Authority has approved \$2.6 million for an electrical substation; something sorely needed since power is only on for two hours

at a clip and then off for another four to six hours.

"By the end of the year, As Sa Diyah should have enough electricity," he said.

As he sat down to chat with the mayor and some councilmembers before the meeting, Stewart asked why they haven't compiled a list of "to do" projects.

"They are afraid to make decisions," he explained after the meeting.

Essentially, if someone suggests something, but it doesn't materialize, he or she is considered to have failed, he said.

"Democracy is still new to Iraq," he said.

That's why many are apprehensive about suggesting new projects for the city. Stewart said they don't want to lose face with their peers.

Looking around the room, Stewart searched the faces of those gathered for someone to come up with a project request. He's been asking for three weeks for ideas.

"Here's the big question," he said. "What projects do you have for me? I have money."

"Everyone wants to rebuild Iraq," he tells the group.

Stewart emphasizes that he can't stress enough for the need to have the city councils submit project ideas to him so he can seek funding. Once the money is secured, three bids are sought for the project.

"This is how it works," he explained. "The city council needs to say that it wants a new health clinic. An estimate is then given."

Once the city council and mayor agree on a project, Stewart then pursues funding for it.

"The group right here and the mayor make decisions," he said. "Any requests that come to me will come from the city council and the mayor."

Adding: "This is the only forum in which decisions are made for the city of As Sa Diyah."

Tear it up platoon

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT KIMBERLY SNOW
196TH MPAD

FORWARD OPERATING BASE GABE, BAQUBAH, Iraq — As a powerful jolt rushed through their bodies, they felt, rather than saw the blast.

Dust filled the air and small pieces of debris rained down upon them.

“Woo hooo!” yelled one. From their position, crouched down behind a dirt wall about 50 meters away, they removed their hands from their ears, grinning somewhat nervously - the blasts still gave them a thrill.

The men, Soldiers from 3rd “Tear it up” Platoon, Bravo Company, 82nd Engineer Battalion, had just conducted a controlled detonation of two Italian-made anti-tank mines they found during a route security sweep of Blue Babe Highway. It’s the same roadway known affectionately to many Soldiers here as “RPG Alley”.

They found the mortars cached in a palm grove near an abandoned house just off the highway. They also found and detonated an improvised explosive device emplaced on the side of the highway nearby.

“We’re always searching, always looking for something,” said SGT Todd G. Mersinger, a combat engineer from 3rd platoon’s 1st squad. “That’s why we find the things we find. We had just searched that house and that area a couple of days before, so the mines were just placed there.”

Because 3rd Platoon is the company’s assault and obstacle platoon, they didn’t have any experience with mine detection and demolition before training for this mission, said 2LT Tom F. Lagatol, the platoon leader.

Lagatol explained that as an A&O Platoon, their primary mission is to build and demolish bridges and to shape the battlefield. But out here, they’re really performing their secondary mission as infantry Soldiers.

“To go from that to doing (military police), infantry and demo stuff, they’ve had the hardest transition since they were A&O and now they’re line dogs,” said Lagatol, a native of Westwood, N.J.

“They’re doing twice the amount of work and they’re performing twice as good as everyone else because they do twice as much,” he said.

Although the Soldiers are authorized to conduct controlled detonations, each situation dictates whether the explosive ordnance team has to be called in, said Mersinger.

“If (an IED) is command detonated, we can do it ourselves. If it’s remote detonated or a very large daisy chain or if we find a humongous cache, we call EOD,” he said. “We’ve only had to call them twice since we’ve been here.”

The men of 3rd Platoon have found about 40 artillery rounds and 15 improvised



SGT Todd Mersinger of 3rd Platoon, Bravo Company, 82nd Engineer Battalion, runs demolition cord for the controlled detonation of two Italian-made anti-tank mines found during a route security sweep of Blue Babe highway in Baqubah, Iraq on June 26.

explosive devices on the highway - more than anyone in the battalion, said Lagatol.

On April 23, they discovered the largest weapons cache in the division, he said.

While investigating a report of two men on a motorcycle planting IEDs, the Soldiers came upon a father and son collecting water in ammunition cans, said Lagatol.

When asked where they got them, the pair took Soldiers to a location where they discovered several U-berms (concrete highway dividers arranged in a “U” shape) full of tank fuses, 155mm artillery rounds and hundreds of thousands of 23mm anti-aircraft rounds.

Lagatol attributes their success to the hard work and dedication of his platoon sergeant, SFC Justin R. Lucius, and his squad leaders, particularly 29-year-old combat engi-

neer SSG Joseph L. Macavinta, Bravo Company’s 1st squad leader.

Macavinta, a 10-year veteran, has an uncanny ability to seek out caches, Lagatol said.

“It’s like finding a needle in a haystack,” said Lagatol.

A humble, soft-spoken man with an air of authority, Macavinta insists he is successful only through the hard work of his troops.

“I appreciate the guys for that,” he said. “They’re great, every last one of them. They bust their butts every day and they always make me look good.”

In addition to route security, the Soldiers also conduct combat patrols, provide convoy escorts and perform raids. Once they undertook a cordon and talk - a cooperative effort with psychological operations and civil affairs - to hand out school supplies and do village assessments.

On one raid in Al-Saw’aid - where they had been ambushed a few days prior - Soldiers found several rocket-propelled grenade launchers, AK-47 rifles with about 40 magazines and ammunition, six 135mm rounds and \$1.5 million worth of Iraqi Dinar.

While patrolling, troops conduct flash Vehicle Control Points and inspect the Iraqi National Guard checkpoints.

During a VCP the Soldiers conduct random inspections of vehicles traveling the highway, including any vehicle they consider suspicious. Lagatol said the vehicles are checked for weapons, wires and “anything they’re not supposed to have.”

But it also serves another purpose.

“It lets (the insurgents) know that we’re looking for them, and that we’re not going to take (Iraqi citizens’) money or IDs or harm their women and children,” he said.

While inspecting ING checkpoints, Soldiers look to see that the checkpoint is manned correctly, weapons are on “safe,” and ING Soldiers have what they need to do their jobs.

The troops said they’ve enjoyed working with and helping to mold the ING Soldiers and Iraqi Police Forces.

Mersinger said the best part of being here, however, is bonding with fellow Soldiers.

“You get a lot closer and value people more,” he said. “It also lets you see what you’re made of.”

But of all their missions, the Soldiers of 3rd platoon say the best part of the job is “blowing stuff up.”



SPC Joshua Jones of 3rd Platoon, Bravo Company, 82nd Engineer Battalion, preps a charge for the controlled detonation of an IED his team found.



Soldiers from 3rd Platoon, Bravo Company, 82nd Engineer Battalion detonate an IED found during a route security sweep.

TF 1-27 Infantry honors Army, unit on Wolfhound Day

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SPC SEAN KIMMONS
25TH ID PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE MCHENRY, Iraq - The early morning sun glared down on hundreds of Task Force 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment "Wolfhounds," as they stood in formation to commence Wolfhound Day with an award ceremony here June 14.



1SG Fidelito Ordonio, first sergeant with Alpha Company, TF 1-27 INF., throws his hands up in celebration of his company's tug-of-war victory June 14.

"What better way to start the 229th birthday of the Army than with an award ceremony in a combat zone," said LTC Scott Leith, Commander of TF 1-27 INF, 2nd Brigade Combat Team.

During the ceremony held on Wolfhound Day - a day for task force Soldiers to celebrate and honor the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment - Leith spoke of how the Wolfhounds have played a part in the Army's long history.

"We were formed in 1901, interestingly during the Army's 127th year of service," he said.

Leith went on to give examples of the battalion's tours that took them around the world. Missions included the Philippine Insurrection in 1902, Army of Pacification in Cuba in 1907, chasing Poncho Villa on the Mexico border in 1913, Siberia in 1919, Philippines and Japan in 1945, Korea in 1950, Vietnam in 1966 and, currently, in Iraq.

"Now with the Army 229-years old, where are the Wolfhounds?" Leith asked. "Once again, 229 years later, the Wolfhounds are deployed."

"Now you and your actions are part of that heritage," Leith said.

Concluding the ceremony, company elements headed over to a long, thick rope to begin the competitive segment of Wolfhound Day.

Forty Soldiers from one company battled an equal number of Soldiers from another in an event that got adrenaline pumping and unit pride jumping.

After a successful bout against Headquarters and Headquarters Company and a time consuming victory



SSG James Burciaga (left), a squad leader with Alpha Company, TF 1-27 INF., receives some motivation from SSG Hejoun Chung (right), in the championship tug-of-war bout against Bravo Company as part of Wolfhound Day.

against Bravo Company, Alpha Company pulled out the winner.

PFC Josh Coombs, a radio transmission operator from Alpha Company said the final bout felt like a 10-minute struggle.

"I just wanted to get that rope across," Coombs said. "Eventually we wore them down and won."

In between bouts, a marksmanship competition with M16 rifles and M9 pistols was held. The event had six Soldiers from each company knock-out 50 push-ups and hit targets from 25 meters away.

Alpha Company Soldiers came out victorious once again and won the Wolfhound Day guide-on streamer.

"The purpose of today was to build esprit among the Wolfhounds," said MAJ Daniel Hurlbut, Executive Officer for TF 1-27 INF.

He said it was even more important to have all these events occur on the Army's birthday.

"With the Army's birthday and being deployed, it was significant to reinforce the traditions of the Army and celebrate the proud history of the Wolfhounds and the Army," Hurlbut said. "Also, it's an excuse to have a big competition and shoot some bullets."

2/ 25th ID intelligence teams utilize tracking equipment

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SPC SEAN KIMMONS
25TH ID PAO

KIRKUK, Iraq - Similar to how American police officers can obtain criminal records by running a name through a computer system, Army intelligence units in Iraq are keeping tabs on released detainees.

It is called the Biometrics Automated Toolset system, which Army intelligence units use to collect distinct characteristics of ex-detainees and record their crimes before they are released into the general public.

Intelligence teams from Task Force 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment and Bravo Company, 125th Military Intelligence Battalion, gathered biometrics of seven ex-detainees during a mission inside Kirkuk's Iraqi Police headquarters building June 29.

The major characteristics they received from the ex-detainees were their fingerprints and a mug-shot.

SSG Jamie Carver, the intelligence analysis sergeant for TF 1-21 INF, said fingerprints and a photo are al-



SSG Jamie Carver, the intelligence analysis sergeant for TF 1-21 INF., fingerprints a released detainee on the BAT system June 29.

ways acquired in these missions. He said if an ex-detainee is re-captured, it will be easier to track down their history.

"If we ever arrest or apprehend these guys again, we will have them in a database," Carver said. "The more evidence we have on these guys, the better chance we have to put them away for a long period of time."

Information gained from these BAT systems is shared with several classified databases. This allows various intelligence, law enforcement and border control agencies access to it.

Carver said the idea behind the BAT system and its attached scanners is to "register" Iraqi ex-detainees, then to alert law enforcers when one of them tries to enter the country. It is a database of terror suspects.

Once a week, Carver, 1st Lt. Adrian Castro, the tactical intelligence officer for TF 1-21 INF, and the B Co., 125th MI BN intelligence team register an average of 10 ex-detainees coming from the Tikrit detention facility or the Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad.

Iraqi recruits graduate from training academy



Iraqi National Guard Soldiers stand at attention in formation during the playing of the Iraqi national anthem before graduating from the Iraqi National Guard Training Academy in Tikrit, Iraq. The class of 309 Soldiers was the first to complete the three-week basic training course at the new academy.

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT ROLAND G. WALTERS
196TH MPAD**

TIKRIT, Iraq - After crawling to the battle position, the Soldier focused down the length of his Bulgarian-made AK-47. He breathed in hot air heavily as plumes of dust settled around him.

“Bang, bang, bang, bang,” shouted the drill sergeant, as he tried to get the recruit to mimic his simulation of sending bullets downrange.

The Soldier immediately rattled off his best imitation. Then pausing a moment, gathered himself for his next rush, then was gone in a cloud of dust.

The individual movement technique course is just one of the blocks of instruction a recruit for the Iraqi National Guard can expect to endure during the training. The 1st Infantry Division graduated the inaugural class of 309 students July 10 at the ING Training Academy in Tikrit, Iraq.

“The graduation is a major milestone in your life and for the sovereignty of Iraq,” said MG John R. S. Batiste, 1st ID

Commander, while addressing the graduates.

“It’s important that Iraq have a competent and confident security force that is capable of securing itself and the people of Iraq,” said MAJ Scot R. Bemis, ING Training Academy Commandant.

This is the sole ING academy for the 1st ID’s entire area of operations. In the past training was done “in-house” by the separate ING battalions.

Since the transfer of sovereignty on June 28, more of the country’s workload has been placed on the shoulders of the Iraqi people. Already the ING have been conducting more operations. This consolidated training academy helps ensure that all the Soldiers receive the same training, Bemis said.

Bemis said physical challenges did exist in setting up the training academy. Initially construction and renovation was a challenge because the area was looted pretty heavily for pipes, wires and fixtures, he said. There were also challenges in getting the Arabs and Kurds to work together. There was strife during the first day or so, but after that everything was okay, Bemis said. “Basically the language barrier was our biggest problem,” said SFC Reginald McDonald, senior drill sergeant of the ING Training Academy.

Fortunately, he said the academy has good translators. The training isn’t as fluid as the instructors would like because there is a pause during translation so Soldiers know what is expected of them, he said.



An Iraqi National Guard recruit practices reflexive fire drills while an ING drill instructor gives commands.



LEFT: An Iraqi National Guard Soldier hits the ground and low crawls towards a cover of sandbags.

RIGHT: Newly-graduated Iraqi National Guardsmen raise their instructors upon their shoulders while celebrating the completion of the three-week basic training course.

BELOW: An Iraqi National Guard recruit demonstrates Individual Movement Techniques while an ING drill instructor shouts words of encouragement.



Nearly all of the training materials are in Arabic and Kurdish. The academy has 17 Iraqi instructors attached to the 12 coalition instructors spread throughout the six platoons.

The coalition instructors are either drill sergeant-qualified or are already qualified to instruct. The Iraqi instructors have prior military experience. Some top graduates from the ING Primary Leadership Development Course have been pulled to teach the basic course, McDonald said.

The course is modeled after Army Basic Training, just more condensed, McDonald said. ING recruits are instructed on wear of the uniform, military customs and courtesies, drill and ceremony as well as basic rifle marksmanship.

Bemis said instruction is based off of the Iraqi Army's marching, saluting, even weapons familiarization on the AK-47. Recruits are also taught first aid, personnel and vehicle search as well as IMT.

"There is a bright road ahead," he said.

Almost all the outdoor training is run by the Iraqi instructors. They already teach 50 percent of the classroom material.

"We are well on our way to handing it over to them by 1 October," Bemis said.

"We have a great sergeant major who has had 22 years in the Iraqi army," he added.

With the exception of some administrative duties, the Iraqis are expected to run things in the future. The academy is also looking to expand the Iraqi Basic

Course to five weeks and PLDC to four weeks.

Officer Training is currently being developed to be taught alongside the two other courses.

Construction for an obstacle course and urban training site has already begun. A mosque, first aid station and billets are also some more of the construction projects to change "ING Island" into a fully functional training academy.

"We built what we think of as a world class center," said Bemis.



The Black Hawk helicopter ... workhorse in the air

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SFC CHUCK JOSEPH
196TH MPAD

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq - At first glance, the hangar appears to contain the remnants of Saddam's air force strewn across the floor.

Aircraft parts clutter every corner, table and work bench. Upon further study, a helicopter emerges from a cleared area in the middle of the work bay. The superstructure is up on stands. Its shed skin is stacked around the frame.

Pieces of the tail section are piled neatly in the corner. An engine, with its components, is mounted on a rack. It becomes obvious. There is an element of organization to the chaos. Mechanics have methodically taken apart and are in the process of rebuilding a Black Hawk.

The UH-60L Black Hawk helicopter is the 1st Infantry Division's workhorse in the air. The 2nd Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment maintains and flies most of the task force's Black Hawk fleet.

The battalion provides general aviation support to include passenger transport, sling load operations, and when needed, air assault missions. Two flight companies fly eight helicopters each, and a third company is in charge of maintenance.

The battalion is tasked with flying at least 1,000 hours each month. It has exceeded that requirement by flying an average of 1,300 hours during the first four months of the deployment.

All that flight time adds up to more maintenance, and nobody keeps the aircraft flying better than Delta Company, 2-1 Aviation. The unit has held the best operational readiness rate for Black Hawks in the Army for the past 10 months, said CPT Kevin M. Coyne, Delta Company's Commander.



SPC Jason M. Burdick (left), and SPC Ray C. Winey disassemble and inspect the housing for one of the struts to the aircraft's wheels on June 18.

What makes that an even more impressive statistic is the fact that half of the battalion was deployed to Kosovo last year, and now the entire battalion is serving here. Coyne, a native of Wheeling, W. Va., said his Soldiers are determined to keep that rating throughout the year-long deployment.

Aircraft readiness is tracked in six-minute intervals, and each aircraft is on the clock when it's broken down. Additionally, aircraft are taken out of service for mandatory inspections.

In addition to daily maintenance, the aircraft undergo a more thorough inspection after every 100 flight hours. At 500-hour intervals, they go through an extreme makeover known as a phase inspection.

"A phase inspection is like stripping down a '68 Mustang and rebuilding it," said Warrant Officer Brandon Harwood, a pilot with Bravo Company.

Stripping down the aircraft is exactly what the maintenance company did to the Black Hawk in this hangar bay. It is 78 percent complete on its 2,000-hour phase inspection. Coyne said phase inspections normally take 45 to 60 days during peacetime at the unit's home base. But on the frontlines, his team works 24-hour shifts to complete the inspections in 14 days.

Coyne's unit may do two phase inspections every six months in the rear. Here, they have an aircraft in phase constantly and may have two in the process at the same time.

Coyne credits his experienced production control non-commissioned officers and warrant officers with the success. The maintenance specialists track aircraft and parts to ensure that all the right pieces come together.

"Being able to get the hard-to-reach part is a large part of our success," Coyne said.

Many parts come from many different places, and moving them here can be complicated. From their experiences in Germany and deployments to Kosovo and Turkey, the production control people have learned to get parts quickly, Coyne said.

The maintenance company gets help for major repairs from the 601st Aviation Support Battalion. They are located near the 2-1 Aviation and support other aviation elements in the task force.

Another time-consuming part of the maintenance process is documentation. Every job on an aircraft has a paper trail, and every mechanic signs his or her name to each step of the work.

By the time a phase inspection is complete, a 150-page book is created with every step of the work documented, said SPC Jason M. Burdick, a crew chief who is assigned to the maintenance company.

"If we removed a nut, it's in this book," Burdick said.

Additionally, technical inspectors must give their



SPC Jason M. Burdick (standing), and SPC Ray C. Winey, both crew chiefs from Delta Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, 4th Aviation Brigade, conduct a portion of the inspection on a UH-60L Black Hawk.

stamp of approval after examining each nut, screw or part that was touched during the work.

There's an awfully long paper trail involved with each repair or inspection, but it's necessary, said SSG Nathan C. Bullock, a turbine engine mechanic in Delta Company.

Bullock handles the engine portion of the phase inspections. Both of the aircraft's 1,300-horsepower engines are removed, disassembled, rebuilt and reinstalled. Occasionally, one has to be replaced, which adds time to the job.

The engine work takes Bullock about 36 hours to complete, and about five of those hours are spent on paper work.

"If you replace a bolt on a high speed shaft and don't do it right, the aircraft will come apart," Bullock said. "Every time you do maintenance, you have the lives of at least four people (crewmembers) in your hands."

After an inspection or repair is complete, two additional inspections take place. The mechanics, with their supervisors, inspect the aircraft for foreign objects. A misplaced bolt, screw or tool could become lodged in one of the control mechanisms, which could have catastrophic results.

When the aircraft is cleared, the inspection moves to the mechanic's toolbox. Every tool, including the ratchets, sockets and driver bits, is inventoried, and like the repairs, the results of these inspections are documented.

Given the operational tempo of Task Force Danger, one after another, the phase inspections will go on. Most of the battalion's aircraft will reach 2,000 hours of flight time on this deployment, Coyne said.

"The guys in the hangar are doing such a great job," Coyne said.

"I fly," he added. "I'd fly any aircraft these guys have worked on."

In that hot, dusty concrete hangar on FOB Speicher, 16 crew chiefs, NCOs and mechanics labor 24 hours a day to keep these \$8 million aircraft in the sky. The work is tedious, the paper trail monotonous, but the maintenance company commander is sure his Soldiers are up to the challenge.

Old ordnance, aging ammunition's final destination ... OBLIVION

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC SHERREE CASPER
196TH MPAD

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq - Although Operation Desert Storm took place more than a decade ago, many of its remnants still linger in Iraq.

Namely unexploded ordnance stockpiled by former dictator Saddam Hussein.

Soldiers from the Wisconsin Army National Guard and its attached units have been tasked with the dangerous mission of removing aging ammunition left on Forward Operating Base Speicher, once home to an Iraqi air base.

MAJ Patrick D. Beyer, projects officer for the 264th Engineer Group, said the goal is to clear all of the captured enemy ammunition on FOB Speicher and dispose of it properly.

"Saddam purchased hundreds of tons of ammunition," Beyer said.

Surveying the area where the firepower lay, Beyer points out that a lot of the firepower is "old Iraqi ordnance that hasn't been used for years."

The clearing of all captured enemy ordnance on FOB Speicher may appear as a daunting task to some, but the Wisconsin Army National Guardsmen appear to go about their mission methodically.

"There is stuff from everywhere," Beyer said of the countries which Hussein reportedly purchased the ordnance from. He said a lot of it is Soviet-made.

Beyer said much of it is actually unexploded ordnance that was either damaged during initial fighting or has gotten so old that it will have to be detonated in place. In order to do this, a demolition pit will be dug to minimize the shrapnel of the explosion. A stand-off distance of 800 meters will be needed with the largest bomb weighing in at 250 pounds.



Ordnance destined for demolition

"It has a significant hazard to U.S. Soldiers and Iraqi citizens," Beyer said of the unexploded ordnance. "The removal of it is quite an important thing to do."

In a five-day span, Soldiers, with the help of Iraqis, moved about 7,000 pieces of ordnance, everything from 57mm rockets to 250-pound bombs. Beyer said large French-made cluster bombs and 200 large missiles were among the ordnance to be disposed of.

"Pretty much there's a little bit of everything from artillery rounds and rockets to air to air missiles to large bombs," he said. "It's just quite the large group of different types of ordnance here."

Beyer said the Iraqis understand the importance of removing all of the ammunition on FOB Speicher.

"They are here to work and help us out and we are glad to have them," he said.

SPC Terry W. Alderson, who operates the forklift which puts the ordnance on trucks to be hauled away, said getting rid of the firepower is important so that it can never be used on the Iraqi people or Coalition Forces.

"You have to take into consideration who left this spot," he said. "That would have been old Saddam Hussein."

Looking around the area, Alderson said the nearby buildings were reportedly blown up in 1991 during Desert Storm. The former combat engineer, now a military truck driver, was tapped to ensure that everything from air to ground missiles and artillery shells was hauled away for disposal.

"As engineers we tend to get involved with everything from ammunition destruction to operations outside the wire," Beyer said. "This is just a little extra mission that we picked up."



An Iraqi man helps unload unexploded ordnance to be hauled away for detonation.



SPC Terry W. Alderson uses a forklift to load unexploded ordnance on to trucks to be hauled away for destruction.

Conducting traffic control points ...

a joint effort



PFC John Dain prepares to inspect a trunk while Iraqi National Guard Soldiers guide the driver to the side of the road.

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT ROLAND G. WALTERS
196TH MPAD**

SAMARRA, Iraq - The rumble of the fighting vehicle was enough to numb body parts. The rhythmic sound of the track rolling over hard pavement could lull anyone to sleep. Combined with the heat, cramped space and barely ergonomic seats, it's hard to believe people even travel in it.

It was, however, a small price to pay for the safety the M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle provided from an Improvised Explosive Device to Soldiers of 2nd Platoon, Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment on June 23.

Second Platoon "Skull Stackers" headed out of Forward Operating Base Brassfield-Mora in the morning for what they thought would be a typical day.

Their missions for the day?

To join the Iraqi National Guard and conduct a joint Traffic Control Point in a random location as well as check pipelines in the nearby area. They were also tasked to assemble a TCP in another location.

TCP's are important because in most of Iraq there is a centralized road system, said 1LT Peter Park, platoon leader of 2nd Platoon.

The highway systems are very big and used for transportation to include smuggling goods such as rocket propelled grenades (RPG) and improvised explosive devices (IED) making materials, he said.

The platoon set up the TCP quickly and efficiently. Stringing concertina wire partially across the road, red cones marked the end of the wire as well as path for the vehicles. Squad Automatic Weapon gunners and Bradleys were placed in strategic locations alongside the road for clear fields of fire.

Setting up TCPs also acts as a deterrent to Anti-Iraqi Forces trying to smuggle weapons, said SFC Jody R. Heikkinen, platoon sergeant for 2nd platoon.

"When we were doing missions in the city our focus was more on the city, we encountered more IEDs



PFC John Dain talks with an Iraqi National Guardsman after inspecting a vehicle during a joint traffic control point on June 23 near the city of Samarra.

on the northern and southern bypass. Since we pulled out of the city and concentrated on Highway 1, they (IEDs) have gone down quite a bit," Heikkinen said.

Second platoon worked alone for the first-half of the TCP conducting searches on cars that looked suspicious.

The platoon continued to conduct searches on vehicles until the ING arrived. Rotating within the platoon and working together with the ING, both groups were able to get "face time".

"They're not a whole lot different from our Soldiers," said SPC Nathan Willoughby, a SAW gunner for 2nd Platoon. "They have a lot of the same worries and interests that we do."

Willoughby added that it's comforting to know there are people in Iraq who really do want to help out American Soldiers and their country.

Park said after conducting the joint TCP the platoon sergeant's Bradley ran into an IED. It happened while the platoon was reassembling to carry out another mission.

"I was relieved that my track had done its job keeping the people inside alive," said PFC James Moore, the platoon sergeant's Bradley driver.

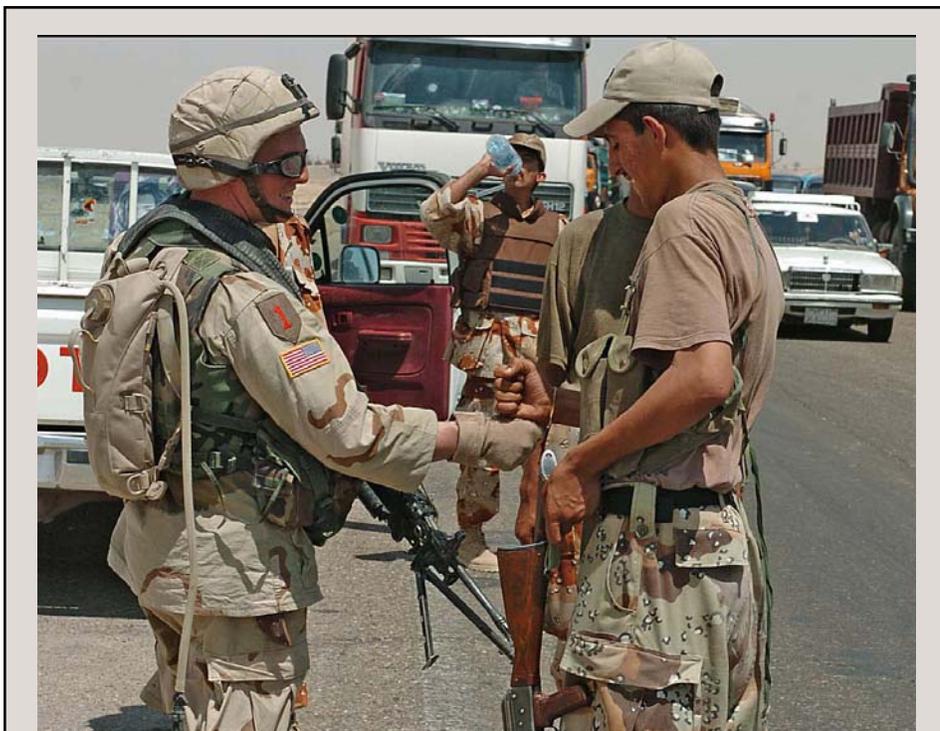
According to the Explosive Ordnance Disposal unit, the IED was a plastic anti-tank mine buried two feet deep in the gravel median.

"Initially, I didn't know if it was an RPG or what it was" Heikkinen said. "I saw my road wheel and armor plating fly off and there was debris everywhere so I jumped up and told them to drop the ramp."

Asked about his reaction to the IED attack, Heikkinen replied, "(I was) first shocked, then made sure everyone was okay, then it was anger."

"Back when we used to go into the city we took contact almost daily, it was direct fire," he said. "This is the first time we have actually had an IED incident."

"All in all, no one got injured, we came home safe, it was a good mission," Park said.



SPC Nathan Willoughby, from 2nd Platoon, Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, gives an Iraqi National Guard Soldier a fist bop after conducting a traffic control point.

Country artists entertain troops in Iraq & Kuwait

STORY BY

CPT L. PAULA SYDENSTRICKER
196TH MPAD

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DANGER, TIKRIT, IRAQ-What happens when you mix country music and Soldiers in Iraq? You get a morale treat for American troops.

Stars for Stripes sponsored a Summer Salute for the troops stationed throughout Iraq. For this tour, Judy Seale - president of Stars for Stripes - brought Chalee Tennison and Danni Leigh to entertain the troops. Both artists have had success in the country music industry.

There were 10 stops in Iraq and Kuwait, with five of them being in the 1st Infantry Division area. The tour kicked off in Kuwait where the country artists performed several shows, signed autographs and visited with the troops. The singers performed on the Fourth of July at Forward Operating Base Anaconda in Balad, Iraq.

"When I first started, I started out with the USO and I had no idea that we had that many troops stationed throughout the world," Seale said.

Seale started Stars for Stripes, a non-profit organization that solely works on donations, in 2002. The or-

ganization is dedicated to providing quality entertainment to internationally deployed U. S. military forces, according to Stars for Stripes' Web site.

From the stars to the band and staff, all who participated volunteered their time and talents. Although none were compensated financially, Leigh said Soldiers' smiles were worth it.

Tennison and Leigh - who gave separate performances for the Soldiers - are entertainers with shows scheduled in the states.

"Both of these entertainers have paying gigs at home, but cancelled shows to come here to thank the troops for what they do for us," Seale said. "Stars for Stripes was founded so that we could take entertainment to the troops stationed in the remote sites."

Tennison, who hails from Texas, had her debut album "Parading in the Rain" released last year.

"If it weren't for the guys and gals over here fighting for our free-

dom, my children wouldn't have much of a future," said Tennison, a mother of three.

She also said that they got to see things over here that the media doesn't talk about.

"I want to take a snapshot and take it home for all to see what good is going on," Tennison said.

Leigh, whose hometown is Strasburg, Va., wrote,



SGT Larry Cameron of Bravo Company, 230th Support Battalion, and Danni enjoy a song and laughter.

Photo by MSG Cynthia Weasner



Photo by CPT L. Paula Sydenstricker

Chalee has SSG Brendon McKeage of the 2nd Battalion, 197th Military Police, help sing a song during the Summer Salute Tour.

"I want to feel that way again," a single on Tracy Byrd's album.

"Musicians want to come over and say thank you for protecting, fighting for freedom. I appreciate my freedom and I realize what goes along with that," Leigh said.

She said with a smile on her face, "They kind of dig us here. We bring a piece of home."

More Stars for Stripes tours are scheduled for later on in the year with entertainers like Chely Wright, Charlie Daniels, and Lynyrd Skynyrd.

Town welcomes Iraqi National Guard

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SPC SEAN KIMMONS
25TH ID PAO

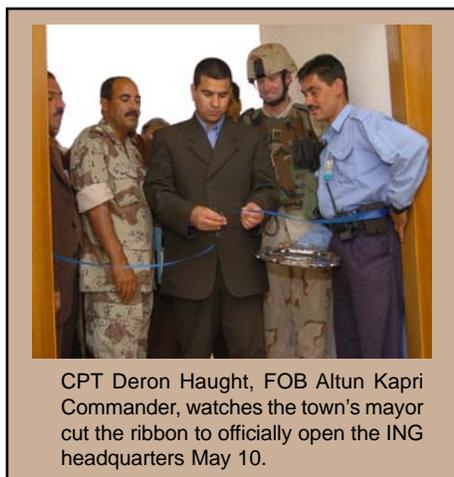
ALTUN KAPRI, Iraq- The streets of this Kurdish, Arab and Turkomen town just got a lot safer with the installment of an Iraqi National Guard company here.

More than 190 personnel from Bravo Company, 1st ING Battalion will conduct security operations in order to protect key assets and the Iraqi people within the town. They will execute these missions from their headquarters building that was funded by the Coalition Provisional Authority.

Soldiers from 2nd Platoon "Outlaws" of Charlie Battery, Task Force 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery Regiment were in attendance for the grand opening of this headquarters building, where they welcomed the ING company to Altun Kapri in May.

"We are here tonight to welcome and celebrate the arrival of Maj. [Ahmed] Shahad and his company of dedicated officers, NCOs [non-commissioned officers] and Soldiers," said CPT Deron Haught, commander of Forward Operating Base Altun Kapri.

"Their presence here represents many things," Haught said. "It represents a commitment they have made to their community and their country. A commitment they have made to defend democracy."



CPT Deron Haught, FOB Altun Kapri Commander, watches the town's mayor cut the ribbon to officially open the ING headquarters May 10.

Haught also noted the unity between the ING and U.S. troops as they stood in formation together during the ceremony.

"In the ranks before us stand Kurds, Turkomen, Arabs and Americans dedicated to the ideal that all men are created equal. And to the notion that together we can change our future and the future of this great nation," he said.

This multi-ethnic bond will grow as Outlaw Soldiers assess the skills of the ING personnel. The assessment will help the ING company become more capable of conducting joint operations in the future.

The Outlaws have already worked jointly with another ING unit from the nearby town of Dibbis. Haught recalled their value during a cordon and search mission.

"We searched an entire village and they played a big part," he said. "They cordoned parts of the village so the U.S. Soldiers could go in and conduct the searches."

Their effectiveness proved to Haught how the ING can exercise outside their daily routines and make his unit more influential.

"They can do more than man check points and guard government buildings, they have the ability to conduct combined operations with us," Haught said. "We're a platoon-sized element here, but now with them we can do some company-type missions that we couldn't do before."

The new ING presence also alleviates some of the problems that the Iraqi Police have had in town.

"It helps the Iraqi Police out tremendously, because they are the only ones running the check points," Haught said. "It frees them up, so they're able to do law enforcement-type of operations."

Released detainees get new lease on life

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SFC NANCY MCMILLAN
196TH MPAD**

TIKRIT, IRAQ - In an effort to enhance the sovereignty plan and show no ill will toward Iraqi citizens imprisoned a year ago, more than 40 detainees were released throughout the country in June.

Forty-five male detainees stepped off buses inside the new Iraqi National Guard headquarters compound in Tikrit, Iraq, to a new lease on life.



An Iraqi man, who was detained for a year, steps off the bus which delivered him to freedom in Tikrit, Iraq.

The men were given bottled water, cola and a plate of food. They sat calmly and ate prior to being told by keynote speakers of the on-going transformation in Iraq. The men were also told of what was expected of them as citizens.

"Today, you are being released to join your family and friends within your community," said MAJ Mike Morrissey, of the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment.



As a gesture of goodwill, CPT Mamoon Yonis hands food, soda, and water to one of the detainees.

Morrissey told detainees not to commit actions that will lead to their arrest because there is no tolerance for violence within their community.

"The detainees need to understand the difference from the way things were when they went in, to what is happening now," said CPT Robbie Johnson, an ING military advisor.

LTC Jeffrey Sinclair, Commander of 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, said by releasing the detainees, Coalition Forces hoped to reintegrate them back into society.

It's hoped that "they will continue the progress

started by the combined forces and area residents," Sinclair said.

Johnson said there's been a lot of interaction between Coalition Forces, Iraqi Security Forces and local citizens to make Tikrit and Salah Ad Din a secure and safe place.

"It's a partnership and one that the Iraqi people need always be a part of," he said

COL Kahlil Hassan, an ING Commander, said terrorists must not be given any opportunities to commit violence.

"We've been working hard with local communities to improve the infrastructure and quality of life for all citizens," said Johnson. "The detainees are members of their community once again and need to help make good things happen."

Now that you are free, be part of the future of Iraq, Morrissey said.

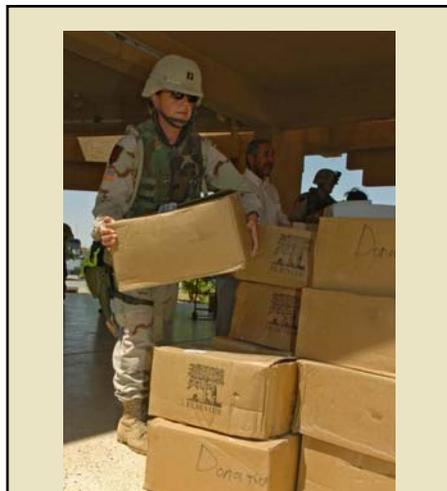
With that said, the men were escorted out the gate to cheering families awaiting their newly-freed loved ones.



A detainee, freed after a year of imprisonment, gets a big hug from a family member.

Tikrit Hospital, University gets delivery from Soldiers

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY SFC CHUCK JOSEPH
196TH MPAD**



CPT Donna Kentley stacks boxes of text books that were delivered to Tikrit University.

TIKRIT, Iraq — Task Force Danger Soldiers delivered medical supplies, textbooks and journals to the Tikrit Hospital and Tikrit University College of Medicine on July 7.

The 1st Infantry Division's 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment and the 415th Civil Affairs Battalion coordinated and carried out the delivery.

The University of Tennessee Medical School collected 150 boxes of textbooks from medical students in the United States. The Elsevier Publishing Company provided the shipping from the U.S., said CPT Donna Kentley, a physician's assistant with the 415th CA Battalion.

Kentley, who spearheaded the latest delivery, said it boosted the number of books in the medical school's library to more than 50,000.



On July 7, Soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division's Task Force Danger and Tikrit Hospital workers unload text books donated by medical students in the U.S.

When the U.S. arrived in Iraq and started the rebuilding process, the university used photocopied texts for teaching medical students and nurses, she said.

Engineers unearth ancient archeological sites

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SPC SEAN KIMMONS
25TH ID PAO**

KIRKUK AIR BASE, Iraq - Artifacts dating back 5,000 years from Iraq's multicultural past were discovered here when Soldiers from Bravo Company, 65th Engineer Battalion dug into a hill while gathering dirt for Hesco defense barriers last spring.

CPT Nicholas Gianforti, an intelligence officer for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team and an anthropology major from St. John Fisher University, was one of the first to respond to the archeological site after its discovery.

"Once the engineers found it they stopped, backed off and notified the brigade tactical operations center," Gianforti said. "The next day, I went out to the site to verify whether or not it was an archeological find."



SPC Lorie Bright touches a piece of ancient pottery embedded in a hillside on Kirkuk Air Base May 23.

Gianforti found the area, as well as some nearby hills on the west side of the base, to be an archeological site.

"I think it's a great find," he said. "We are operating in and protecting the birthplace of civilization. It's amazing that Soldiers just have to step outside their living quarters and be at the doorstep to ancient civilization."

During May, reservists from Bravo Company, 451st Civil Affairs Battalion invited local archeologists from the Museum of Antiquities on base to identify artifacts and other potential archeological sites. Based in Pasadena, Texas, the unit is attached to 2nd BCT.

"As Americans, our policy is to respect the cultures of the country that we find ourselves in," said MAJ Karl Morton, Commander of Bravo Company, 451st CA.

"The better the locals understand that, I think the more supportive they'll be to what we are doing overall," he said. "That's one of our main missions in Civil Affairs."

Ghaib Fadil Karem, director of the Ministry of Antiquities, appreciates the efforts of the Army and Air Force in safeguarding Iraq's ancient history.

"I realize how sincere [the Army and Air Force] are to the Iraqi culture," Karem said through an interpreter. "Before I knew about this I had another idea about this matter where I was concerned about the sites beneath the earth in the area. Now I know they are here trying to protect these sites and are preserving them for the Iraqi people."

A trio of Bravo Company Soldiers - 1LT Wes Boyer, SPC Joel Hilborn and SPC Lorie Bright are in charge of assisting the local archeologists.

"Once we found out that this was an archeological site, we wanted to preserve and find out where other ones are because we didn't understand the significance of it," Boyer said.

Morton said originally the site was believed to be burial grounds, but closer examination revealed its animal bones and pottery were related to an ancient settlement and not a contemporary mass grave.

Some of the pottery found on base is about 5,000 years old and linked to the Yorghun Tepe or Nuzi people of the Hurrian civilization.

Nuzi was a provincial agricultural town in the small



Ghaib Fadil Karem, director of Ministry of Antiquities in Kirkuk, points out a few pottery pieces that were discovered on Kirkuk Air Base. Some of the pieces are about 5,000 years old.

Hurrian kingdom of Arrapha, whose capital is today buried under Kirkuk. Arrapha was situated along the southeastern edge of the area under Mittanian domination.

Babylonia lay to the south and to the west was Assyria, whose revolt against the Hurrian kingdom of Mittani probably led to Nuzi's destruction in the 14th century, and ultimately contributed to Mittani's collapse.

In 1927, Harvard University excavated the town of Nuzi, which is about 10 miles south of Kirkuk. One remarkable item recovered from this site was the world's oldest map etched on a rock dated at 5,500 years.

"The area that we now know as Iraq used to be known as Mesopotamia," Morton said. "Mesopotamia is credited as being the cradle of civilization and being the initiators in the development of the agricultural system, a writing system and metal alloys."

Morton said Iraq is a country sitting on top of the world's oldest and most significant history of mankind. He noted that it's a mystery as to what may be found next. He said this is why it's important to safeguard these particular sites on base until the Ministry of Agriculture in Baghdad decides what to do with them.

"For right now it will be our responsibility to make sure we don't cause any damage to the sites," Morton said.

Tikrit University Medical School plans partnership with Harvard

**STORY BY SFC CHUCK JOSEPH
196TH MPAD**

TIKRIT, Iraq - Officials from the 1st Infantry Division's Task Force Danger and Tikrit University College of Medicine met July 7 to formalize plans for a new partnership with Harvard Medical School.

The Tikrit University College of Medicine will submit a 200-page report about the school's structure and organization to Harvard, who will then analyze the report and prepare a five-year plan, said CPT Thamus J. Morgan, a veterinarian with the 415th Civil Affairs Battalion and faculty member at Harvard University.

Whenever the battalion's civil affairs teams go out,

the Iraqi people tell them they want more knowledge, Morgan said. The Harvard plan will provide for a free exchange of that much-needed knowledge.

Morgan said Harvard has similar programs in place at 19 other universities worldwide, and the plan is expected to be similar to those other programs.

Iraqi faculty and staff could be studying in the U.S. in September as part of a faculty-staff exchange program, Morgan said. The plan should have Harvard faculty and staff in Iraq as soon as the State Department lifts the ban on U.S. citizen travel to this country, she added.

The two schools already share a common theme in their teaching methods. The Tikrit medical school adopted problem-based learning years ago, and that

method of learning is a hallmark of Harvard, Morgan said.

Students are placed in learning situations from the day they enter the schools. She said they are not expected to simply study and regurgitate facts, but are expected to dig into a problem and find the solution by using all the resources available to them at the schools.

The resources at the medical school in Tikrit should improve with the program, Morgan said. All of the universities Harvard has worked with have benefited from the partnerships, she added.

"It's a win-win situation for the people of Iraq," Morgan said. "Some day, you will be able to visit Iraq as a tourist and know there is a world-class health facility available here."

A call from a Soldier

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SPC SHERREE CASPER
196TH MPAD**

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DANGER, Iraq - If all goes as hoped, Lonestar or Alabama may be performing a song penned by a 1st Infantry Division Soldier while stationed here.

"A Call From A Soldier," was written by one Soldier for another.

But it's not what you might think.

Like many stationed far from home, the distance between loved ones can often seem insurmountable. This feeling overwhelmed SGT Joseph W. Pittard, a trombone player with the 1st ID Band.

"There is not much I can do from here for my wife that is special, but I wanted to do something," said the 26-year-old from Augusta, Ga.

With music literally playing much of the time around him, Pittard thought it only natural to write a song for his wife, Jennifer, of more than two years.

Problem was he didn't know how to begin.

Enter SFC Dion J. Kruczek.

The 38-year-old from Mechanicsburg, Pa., plays the piano for the Big Red One's band and is an accomplished singer, songwriter in her own right. Four years ago, the Soldier recorded country songs she composed herself in Nashville, Tenn.

"He wanted to write a song for his wife, but he didn't know how, so I wrote it for him," Kruczek explained.

A prolific songwriter, Dion churned out the lyrics and music for the song in about a half hour. She found Pittard working on a five-ton and asked him to step back into the small palace the band calls home. After



SGT Joseph W. Pittard, a trombone player with the 1st Infantry Division Band, listens to the song written for his wife, Jennifer.

hearing Dion sing the lyrics while playing the piano, Pittard said the word "wonderful" came to mind.

"It's the nicest thing that anyone has ever done for me," he said.

Dion said any Soldier stationed in the desert in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom can relate to the lyrics of the three minute, 21 second song which has been registered with BMI.

One stanza goes:

"I wish I knew when I'd be back home again

"The lonely nights are comin' on again

And I pray to God that we'll make it through the day

And in the darkness he'll show me the way."

"We all miss our families," Kruczek said. "It's a universal feeling that we have."

While the mother of two - Danielle, 6, and Alex, 4, - may have composed the song, it actually became a family endeavor in the end.

Kruczek's husband - SFC James J. Kruczek II - lent his talents as lead vocal for the song. James, a drummer for the 1st ID Band, is also a member of the Big Red One's nine-member rock band, Inner Sandman, along with his wife.

The 37-year-old from Falmouth, Ma., rehearsed and recorded the song in the Band Hall's laundry room on Forward Operating Danger. He can also be heard playing the guitar and drums on the song that he mixed. SGT Brendan Owen is on lead guitar with SGT Jason Hoffmann on bass guitar.

But a song written for a loved one isn't much good if she doesn't hear it. Having the unit's Family Readiness Group leader in Bamberg, Germany, hand-deliver the recording would have been the most obvious choice, but Dion had another idea.

She sent Tina Petersen, the FRG leader, a copy of the CD with a handwritten letter to give to the station manager at AFN Wuerzburg in hopes that the song would be played on the air and surprise Jennifer.

James said he hopes to perform "A Call From A Soldier" during the Inner Sandman's next tour. The BRO rock group has been to nearly all of the FOBs in the 1st ID's footprint.

But Dion is thinking even bigger.

She would like to reach a worldwide audience and has taken steps to accomplish that mission.

"I think he did a phenomenal job," Dion said of her husband's recording, "But to sell it we need a large name."

She has e-mailed Oprah Winfrey and written producers of "Regis & Kelly," in hopes of attracting support for the song. Dion said she would like their "connections" in getting a big-name artist to record the song.

Dion would like all money earned from the song to go to veterans disabled in Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

In her e-mail, Dion explained that she and her husband have taken on the "mother and father" roles for the young Soldiers in their squad.

"The separation from our families is heartbreaking and we all talk with each other and share stories about our loved ones to pass the time," she wrote.

Dion said "A Call From A Soldier" is dedicated "to all Soldiers separated from their loved ones."

She said her long-term goal is to have a compilation of songs written by Soldiers in the desert recorded by well-known artists.

"There are a lot of inspired musicians here," she wrote Oprah.



SFC James J. Kruczek II, a member of the 1st Infantry Division Band and its rock group Inner Sandman, sings "A Call From A Soldier."



SFC Dion Kruczek, an accomplished singer and songwriter in her own right, composed the lyrics and music to "A Call From A Soldier."

Maintenance keeps 30th BCT combat ready

**STORY AND PHOTO BY
CPL MATTHEW PUTNEY
30TH BCT PAO**

FORWARD OPERATING BASE CALDWELL, Iraq- Like trying to perform open-heart surgery in a hot tent in the middle of a desert, the removal of an engine, transmission and transfer case from the M923 cargo five-ton (6x6) vehicle is one of the more difficult and time consuming mechanical efforts to attempt under the best of conditions.

For the team of SGT Todd E. Furr and SGT John Thompson, both of Bravo Company, 230th Forward Support Battalion (FSB), the removal of these components had to be done quickly.

“We need to remove these parts from one vehicle and use them to bring two other vehicles up to combat readiness” said Furr, a



SGT Todd E. Furr and SGT John Thompson, both with Bravo Company, 230th Forward Support Battalion, put the finishing parts on an engine they replaced on a Five Ton (6x6) Tractor.

full-time Army National Guardsman from Concord, NC.

These parts will be going into M931 five-ton tractors, which are used to pull the supply trailers that support FOB Caldwell. “The sooner these parts are installed, it means additional supply transportation assets that are vital to our combat readiness” commented Thompson, an electrician from Kannapolis, NC.

Both men agree that working hard is helping the time pass by very quickly. They are a team that understands how important it is for them to keep things rolling in support of the entire Brigade.

As per Furr and Thompson, mechanics contribute to combat effectiveness every time they break open their tool boxes and put tactical vehicles back in the line of duty.

Raining steel

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY
MSG MIKE WELSH
30TH BCT PAO**

FORWARD OPERATING BASE COBRA, Iraq - In a matter of minutes, the mortar team fired deadly and precise volleys of “steel rain” from their 120mm mortar tubes.

“At any given time we can shoot and man two gun tubes,” said SGT Craig Thompson, a Soldier with Combat Support Team (CST), 1st Battalion, 252nd Armor Regiment.

As the Fire Direction Center Chief, Thompson has the responsibility of coordinating with the mortar crew.



SPC Brad Forehand prepares a 120mm mortar, High Explosive, for a fire mission.

“Missions are called in by FM with a grid, it might be immediate suppression, illumination, it varies,” Thompson said. “I receive the mission, compute the data and send it out to the gun line. If the computer goes down, I revert to the manual method and keep up with the battle tracking.”

With 11 years in the North Carolina Army National Guard, Thompson now finds himself on his first deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

Just before sundown the CST received another fire support mission from the FDC. Thompson plots the data that will send 120mm mortar rounds out of the tube and into the heart of the enemy.

“Let them know we got something for them,” said SPC Kelly Teeter, a gunner on the precision crew.

Teeter brings to the team three years of infantry experience with the 25th Infantry Division before he joined the National Guard two years ago.

“We have been getting HI (Harassment and Interdiction) missions to shoot quite regularly lately,” he said.

When asked about what his primary responsibility is on the crew, Teeter confidently said, “I put the gun on the target.”

Although an infantryman, Teeter is deployed as a mortar man with the 30th Brigade Combat Team as they support the 1st Infantry Division.

“We are always wondering what we are shooting at,” said SPC Brad Forehand, a CST Soldier.

“It’s not until we get the BDA (Battle Damage Assessment) after the mission that we find out what the target was,” he said. “This causes us to treat all the missions the same, regardless if it’s training, HI or immediate suppression,” Forehand said.



Members of the Combat Support Team conduct a fire mission launching 120mm High Explosive mortars.

Honing skills or taking out frustration ...

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT KIMBERLY SNOW
196TH MPAD

Soldiers enter the ring

FORWARD OPERATING BASE NORMANDY, MUQDADIYAH, Iraq — For a small group of Soldiers tucked away in a corner of this forward operating base (FOB), the gloves are on - along with headgear and mouthpieces.

CPT Jamey E. Friel, the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment maintenance officer, has been training and teaching boxing fundamentals as well as supervising and refereeing sparring sessions for Soldiers stationed here since early May.

“You’re a little tight, loosen up,” he said to one of his trainees. “Okay now, parry my punch. Good, good.”

Friel’s easygoing manner encourages the fledgling boxers, some of whom are just getting started and others who are looking to fine-tune their skills. Others, he said, just want to get in the ring and see what they can do.

“There are a lot of guys who just put the gloves on and... they’ll go at it, kind of like they’re in a bar,” Friel said. “I try to give these guys a little bit of skill, build their confidence.”

The sparring matches actually started during the unit’s deployment to Kosovo last year, he said. He trained Soldiers who already had some experience and refereed matches to make sure the guys didn’t get hurt.

The sparring sessions resumed here in Iraq when CPT Brian M. Ducote and he approached some of the Georgian Soldiers who were stationed there and asked them if they wanted to do some boxing and wrestling, he said.

“Of course they were very excited about it,” said Friel. “It was interesting, they were really a jovial group of guys who wouldn’t pass on the opportunity to either get in the ring and fight or get in the ring and wrestle.”

Stories of his initial matches with Soldiers from the Georgian 16th Mountain Infantry Battalion have achieved somewhat mythical proportions among troops stationed at FOB Normandy. One Soldier recalled at least 15 challengers lined up for a shot at Friel. He insists, however, that five was the most he fought consecutively.

“I’d go a couple of rounds with one, then another would come in,” he said. “It was good training for me because when I used to box competitively, that was one of my techniques. I’d bring a guy in the ring for two minutes and then rotate him out and bring a fresh guy in, just to continue to work me.”

SGT Shane D. Coulon, a Bradley Fighting Vehicle mechanic with the battalion’s headquarters company, is one of Friel’s current trainees.

Coulon, who said he enjoys contact sports, began sparring and training with Friel about three weeks ago. Although



CPT Jamey E. Friel (right), spars with SGT Shane D. Coulon at FOB Normandy.

he was with the unit in Kosovo and wanted to do it then, Coulon said he didn’t have the time.

He said he enjoys the sessions and wishes they had more time for them. As it is, they try to get together twice a week for about two hours. And he said the sparring sessions have actually improved his physical fitness.

“Going out and (sparring), is better than running two miles. I get winded a lot faster,” he said. “I’ve also started going to the gym a lot more. You need more stamina and more strength.”

Over the Fourth of July holiday, the maintenance section put together an exhibition match. Friel sparred in a couple of matches and refereed several more, encouraging the Soldiers with any sort of grudge or animosity to “put the gloves on and just have at it,” said Coulon.

He said eventually, Friel, who is no stranger to competition, wants them to compete against some of the other sections to check their progress.

While a cadet at the United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., Friel took third place in the national collegiate boxing championships during his sophomore year and improved to second place his junior year.

He also took advantage of an opportunity to spend a semester at the United States Air Force Academy just outside Colorado Springs, Colo., as part of an exchange program. He did that because the boxing program was one of the best in the nation, he said.

The Air Force Academy’s Falcons have won 18 of 25 national team titles and all 25 regional titles. They have also produced 90 individual champions.

While attending the Air Force Academy, Friel met and trained with boxing coach Eddie Weishers, who he said was the most influential person in his boxing career.

“He’s not only a tremendous man, but also a tremendous coach at the National Collegiate level,” he said.

Friel, 27, began boxing in his hometown of Galesburg, Ill. only six months prior to his appointment to West Point.

He said boxing has been a passion of his for as long as he can remember. And fortunately, he said, boxing classes were required for all male cadets. Female cadets must complete a self-defense course.

“My parents wouldn’t let me fight until I showed them that it was a requirement once I got accepted at West Point,” he said. “I used that as my bargaining chip and I started fighting and I haven’t stopped since.”



CPT Jamey E. Friel, honored as the USAFE light heavyweight boxing champion in 2002, instructs Soldiers stationed at FOB Normandy in boxing fundamentals July 10.



CPT Jamey E. Friel throws a punch while sparring with troops stationed at FOB Normandy.

Show gives locals chance to interact with Iraqi, Coalition leaders

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SPC SEAN KIMMONS
25TH ID PAO

KIRKUK, Iraq - After years of being smothered by media restrictions throughout Saddam Hussein's regime, Iraqi people are now exposed to a variety of internal and external information sources.

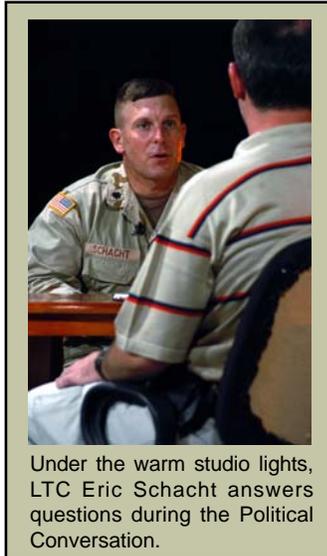
An unbiased source of information comes from the U.S. funded Iraqi Media Network (IMN), which replaced the old Iraqi media network with a modern media organization for the country's people.

In the city of Kirkuk, IMN established the Kirkuk TV station. This station, like other IMN stations, passes along local and national news and entertainment to the Iraqi people.

Kirkuk TV has recently aired a live talk show program that allows Iraqis to discuss local issues with local leaders via telephone.

Local Iraqi and coalition leaders participate on "Political Conversation."

Initiated by the Information Operations cell of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, the talk show provides leaders the opportunity to eliminate rumors and limit confusion citizens may have within the Kirkuk area.



Under the warm studio lights, LTC Eric Schacht answers questions during the Political Conversation.

It's also a way for leaders - especially from Iraq - to earn the confidence of local Iraqis.

"The primary focus of starting this show was two part," said MAJ Bill Southard, Chief of the Information Operations cell.

"One part was to legitimize the Iraqi government and the other was to provide information to the Iraqi people," he said.

Because of Saddam's extensive use of false information, Southard said the Iraqi people are still hesitant to believe anything from the Iraqi media. This was his main reason to create a talk show that would be aired live.

"I wanted this [live] talk show so the Iraqi people could see their leadership, ask them questions and make their own educated decisions on what's going on in their future," Southard said.

The recent Transfer of Sovereignty was the primary topic of discussion for the first two episodes of "Political Conversation."

Kirkuk Coalition Provincial Authority coordinator Paul Harvey and Kirkuk Governor Abdul Rahman Mustafa were the

guests for the inaugural show on June 25. Most of the questions they answered pertained to the Transfer of Sovereignty.

On the second installment, 2nd BCT executive officer LTC Eric Schacht and Kirkuk's chief of police General Turhan Yusef joined together to show that

Coalition Forces are still in Iraq even after the transition. They said the Coalition Forces will continue their partnership with the Iraqi Security Forces.

"I think it's good to get this show kicked off as we turn over sovereignty," Schacht said after the second show. "Eventually, we want this show to go more into a format of Iraqi leaders talking to their public."

Besides working with the Kirkuk TV station, the 2nd BCT Information Operations cell helps spread the coalition's message through local newspapers, weekly press conferences and media advisories.

"We are doing everything in our power to inform the Iraqi people of all the good things such as projects, security and economic development within the Kirkuk province," Southard said.

Adding: "We are trying to get local Iraqis involved with the national, regional and local governments."



A Kirkuk television worker makes sure the Political Conversation show on July 1 runs smoothly.

Cultural awareness crosses borders

STORY BY SPC SHERREE CASPER
196TH MPAD

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DANGER, Iraq - In order for Soldiers to fulfill their missions in Iraq they need to be culturally aware of their surroundings.

While troops deploying to the region in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II receive a short briefing on what to expect when interacting with the locals and their environment, an in-depth course has been designed at the Peace Operation Training Center (POTC) in Zarka, Jordan.

National Guardsmen assigned to the 1st Infantry Division in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II will get that opportunity during two five-day training courses in late July.

About 100 Soldiers attached to the 1st ID are slated to participate in the cultural awareness course. Members of the international military have also attended the course. All courses for the U.S. Soldiers are taught in English.

COL Ali A. S. Almahasneh, the commandant of the training center, said the facility in Jordan is ideal for

training because of its proximity to Iraq. He said Jordanians and Iraqis are culturally alike in many ways, from religion to everyday customs.

"Our main goal is to help Soldiers have a better understanding of the Iraqi culture," he said.

Course participants immerse themselves in the culture with books, tapes and cassettes on the country.

The cultural awareness program gives Soldiers a better understanding of such topics as the basic Arabic language, the organization of Iraq's society, religion as well as the "Do's" and "Don'ts" when interacting with the local people.

During the course, Soldiers are given the opportunity to visit a village in Jordan similar to those they will find in Iraq.

"They will be able to pass through the local markets and shops," Almahasneh said. "Part of the visit is recreational."

Almahasneh said instructors from the Peace Operation Training Center have given advice on cultural awareness training for mobilizations.

"We are the only regional training facility in the Middle East on peacekeeping issues," he said.

Almahasneh pointed out that 32,000 Soldiers from

the Jordanian army participated in peacekeeping missions from 1989 to the present.

Last fall more than 85 Soldiers participated in three cultural awareness courses at the training center. From brigade commanders to non-commissioned officers, those attending the course varied in rank structure and responsibility.

Day One of training gave a cultural overview of Iraq to Soldiers. Subsequent days saw groups rotating through lanes training to simulate what cultural scenarios may arise while conducting everything from a checkpoint search to a convoy.

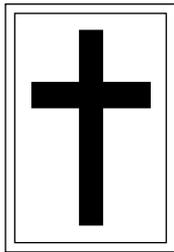
Tactical Training Procedures (TTP) and cultural awareness often go hand-in-hand, Almahasneh said.

Training for U.S. Soldiers was initiated by LTG David D. McKiernan, Commanding General of the 3rd United States Army.

"He discussed cultural awareness training for troops before deployment to Iraq," Almahasneh said. "They found that this place (POTC) is the best place to train."

"We have the appropriate training facility," he said.

An introduction to the POTC course notes that while Soldiers are trained to fight, "We train them to make peace."



More than expected

**BY CHAPLAIN (MAJ) BETH M. ECHOL
2/25 ID HEADQUARTERS**

What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? John 11:7

Jesus asked his disciples what they expected to see when they were sent to the desert to meet John the Baptizer. John was more than could be imagined. Some said he was a wild man with fire in his eyes prone to strange dietary habits. He was in the least more than expected.

What did we expect to see in the desert? For the Soldiers of the 225th Forward Support Battalion, the last six months have been more than expected. Many Soldiers have faced challenges and forged friendships that would have been inconceivable in Hawaii.

Families who remained on the Island or returned to the Mainland discovered a world they had never imagined. Some have encountered financial challenges, ill-

nesses and loneliness. Some have experienced a new level of independence never expected.

As we face the remaining months apart we stand in awe of what God has done and wait in joyful expectation for the future. What I have found more than anything in these last months is prayer. Prayer that my family is well, prayer that the convoys arrive safely, prayer that the evening passes peacefully, prayer that Soldiers recover from injuries, prayer that we will all be together again.

Carlo Carretto a Roman Catholic social worker who left everything he had and went to the desert wrote in *Letters From The Desert*, *A few ideas matured in solitude and taking shape around an activity which has been, without any doubt, the greatest gift that the Sahara has given me: prayer.*

While the voice that summoned us may have been given through a set of military orders it was surely influenced by the will of God. These months have challenged us in new ways totally unexpected whether we were called to the desert or remained at home. But like so many others before us, we have started the journey towards a relationship with our God and with one another and it began first in prayer.

Prayer breakfast celebrates 229 years

**STORY BY SGT W. WAYNE MARLOW
1ST ID PAO**

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DANGER, Tikrit, Iraq - Soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division celebrated the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps' 229th birthday here with a prayer breakfast July 29.



Chaplain (MAJ) Loran Bulla
Division Engineer Brigade

In the Division Main's conference room, 1st ID Chaplain (LTC) Michael T. Lembke presided over a program of thanks and reflection.

Normally, Soldiers celebrate the Chaplain Corps' birthday with hamburgers in a park, Lembke said.

"But in our circumstance ... it's more important to get together and pray," he said.

The chaplain's remarks centered on four ideas: Keep breathing, keep going, keep learning, and keep growing.

"Focus on the solution rather than on the problem," Lembke said. "Don't be preoccupied with tedious, repetitive activities. When you go around fretting all the time, it leads to paralysis."

"Coming up the steps to the D-Main, how do you make it up?" Lembke asked. "One step at a time. The Psalms say trust in the Lord and do good. It doesn't say do well. It says do good. It suggests some movement. Keep going, take action, do good."

Lembke also referred to the Psalms when addressing the importance of learning. "It says to be still and patiently wait for the Lord. When you become a student of what's going on everyday it's much more exciting," Lembke said. "It gives you the bigger perspective."

And learning leads directly to growing, Lembke said. "Trust that even in the most difficult circumstances, success



Chaplain (1LT) S.K. Alfstad
117th Chaplain Detachment



Chaplain (LTC) Mike Lembke
Division Chaplain



Chaplain (CPT) Lane Creamer
4-3 ADA

**PHOTOS BY SPC DAVID DYER
196TH MPAD**

comes to those that keep learning. If trees can grow in the desert, so can I," he said. "Don't postpone becoming the person you want to be because you're deployed."

MG John R.S. Batiste, 1st ID commander, addressed the contributions Lembke and other chaplains have made to the Army.

"Chaplains have always meant a lot to me as a commander. That goes all the way back to my days as a platoon leader," Batiste said. "A commander and his chaplain need to be inseparable. You have served our Army since 1775 and you're a huge part of it, make no mistake about it."

Batiste touched on the importance that freedom of religion has played in the United States, and he said the opportunity is ripe for religion to play a big role in Iraq. He told of speaking with "moderate, forward-thinking clerics who will be a key part of the transition."

Keeping with the ecumenical approach, Batiste said, "Islam is related to Christianity. There is common ground and we're going to find it."

And the chaplains will play a key role in this, Batiste said.

"You are right at the forefront, you're making history," he said. "Everyday here in Iraq we're taking one step at a time. We do that because everything we do is on a rock-solid foundation and we know that there is a reason for everything that happens. Keep Soldiering. It's is God's grand design, which no one in this room can fathom."



Chaplain (CPT) Stanley Allen
101st MI Battalion



Chaplain (CPT) Bret Gilmore
121st Signal Battalion

In Memory of Task Force Danger and 1st Brigade Combat Team Soldiers killed while serving in Iraq through July 31, 2004

SSG Christopher E. Cutchall
D Troop, 1-4 Cavalry
September 29, 2003

2LT Todd J. Bryant
C Company, 1-34 Armor
October 31, 2003

SSG Gary L. Collins
A Company, 1-16 Infantry
November 8, 2003

SSG Mark D. Vasquez
A Company, 1-16 Infantry
November 8, 2003

SPC Joseph L. Lister
B Company, 1-34 Armor
November 20, 2003

SPC Thomas J. Sweet II
Service Battery, 1-5 Field Artillery
November 27, 2003

SPC Uday Singh
C Company, 1-34 Armor
December 1, 2003

SGT Ryan C. Young
A Company, 1-16 Infantry
December 2, 2003

SGT Jarrod W. Black
B Company, 1-34 Armor
December 12, 2004

SGT Dennis A. Corral
C Company, 1st Engineer Battalion
January 1, 2004

SFC Gregory B. Hicks
B Troop, 1-9 Cavalry
January 8, 2004

SPC William R. Sturges Jr.
B Troop, 1-9 Cavalry
January 24, 2004

SPC Jason K. Chappell
B Troop, 1-9 Cavalry
January 24, 2004

SGT Randy S. Rosenberg
B Troop, 1-9 Cavalry
January 24, 2004

CPT Matthew J. August
B Company, 1st Engineer Battalion
January 27, 2004

SFC James T. Hoffman
B Company, 1st Engineer Battalion
January 27, 2004

SGT Travis A. Moothart
B Company, 1st Engineer Battalion
January 27, 2004

SSG Sean G. Landrus
B Company, 1st Engineer Battalion
January 29, 2004

PFC Nichole M. Frye
415th Civil Affairs Battalion
February 16, 2004

2LT Jeffrey C. Graham
C Company, 1-34 Armor
February 19, 2004

SPC Roger G. Ling
C Company, 1-34 Armor
February 19, 2004

SFC Richard S. Gottfried
HHC, Division Support Command
March 9, 2004

SSG Joe L. Dunigan Jr.
B Company, 1-16 Infantry
March 11, 2004

SPC Christopher K. Hill
B Company, 1-16 Infantry
March 11, 2004

CPT John F. Kurth
B Company, 1-18 Infantry
March 13, 2004

SPC Jason C. Ford
B Company, 1-18 Infantry
March 13, 2004

SPC Jocelyn L. Carrasquillo
HHC, 1-120 Infantry
March 13, 2004

SPC Tracy L. Laramore
B Company, 1-18 Infantry
March 17, 2004

SPC Clint R. Matthews
B Company, 1-18 Infantry
March 19, 2004

PFC Ernest H. Suthpin
B Battery, 2-11 Field Artillery
March 19, 2004

PFC Jason C. Ludlam
HHC, 2-2 Infantry
March 19, 2004

PFC Dustin L. Kreider
B Company, 1-26 Infantry
March 21, 2004

SPC Adam D. Froehlich
C Battery, 1-6 Field Artillery
March 25, 2004

1LT Doyle M. Hufstедler
B Company, 1st Engineer Battalion
March 31, 2004

SPC Sean R. Mitchell
B Company, 1st Engineer Battalion
March 31, 2004

SPC Michael G. Karr Jr.
B Company, 1st Engineer Battalion
March 31, 2004

PFC Cleston C. Raney
B Company, 1st Engineer Battalion
March 31, 2004

PVT Brandon L. Davis
B Company, 1st Engineer Battalion
March 31, 2004

PFC John D. Amos II
C Company, 1-21 Infantry
April 4, 2004

SGT Lee D. Todacheene
HHC, 1-77 Armor
April 6, 2004

SFC Marvin L. Miller
C Troop, 1-4 Cavalry
April 7, 2004

SPC Isaac M. Nieves
A Company, 82nd Engineer Battalion
April 8, 2004

SFC Raymond E. Jones
C Company, 1-7 Field Artillery
April 9, 2004

SSG Toby W. Mallet
C Company, 1-7 Field Artillery
April 9, 2004

SPC Allen J. Vandayburg
C Company, 2-2 Infantry
April 9, 2004

SPC Peter G. Enos
HHB, 1-7 Field Artillery
April 9, 2004

SGT William C. Eckhart
F Troop, 4th Cavalry
April 10, 2004

PFC Nathan P. Brown
C Company, 2-108 Infantry
April 11, 2004

SSG Victor A. Rosaleslomeli
A Company, 2-2 Infantry
April 13, 2004

SGT Christopher Ramirez
B Company, 1-16 Infantry
April 14, 2004

SPC Richard K. Trevithick
C Company, 9th Engineer Battalion
April 14, 2004

SGT Brian M. Wood
A Company, 9th Engineer Battalion
April 16, 2004

SPC Marvin A. Camposiles
HHC, 1-26 Infantry
April 17, 2004

PFC Shawn C. Edwards
B Company, 121st Signal Battalion
April 23, 2004

SPC Martin W. Kondor
A Company, 1-63 Armor
April 29, 2004

SGT Joshua S. Ladd
367th Maintenance Company
April 30, 2004

SPC Trevor A. Win'e
24th Quartermaster Company
May 1, 2004

CPT John E. Tipton
HHC, 1-16 Infantry
May 2, 2004

SSG Todd E. Nunes
A Company, 1-21 Infantry
May 2, 2004

CPT Christopher J. Kenny
F Troop, 4th Cavalry
May 3, 2004

SSG Marvin R. Sprayberry III
HHC, 2-2 Infantry
May 3, 2004

SGT Gregory L. Wahl
F Troop, 4th Cavalry
May 3, 2004

PFC Lyndon A. Marcus
B Company, 1st Engineer Battalion
May 3, 2004

SPC James J. Holmes
C Company, 141st Engineer Battalion
May 8, 2004

SPC Phillip D. Brown
B Company, 141st Engineer Battalion
May 8, 2004

SPC Marcos O. Nolasco
B Company, 1-33 Field Artillery
May 18, 2004

SSG Joseph P. Garyantes
B Company, 1-63 Armor
May 18, 2004

SPC Michael C. Campbell
HHT, 1-4 Cavalry
May 19, 2004

SPC Owen D. Witt
B Troop, 1-4 Cavalry
May 23, 2004

PFC Richard H. Rosas
3-62 Air Defense Artillery, 10th Mountain Div.
May 25, 2004

PFC James P. Lambert
3-63 Air Defense Artillery, 10th Mountain Div.
May 25, 2004

PFC Marcus J. Johnson
D Battery, 4-3 Air Defense Artillery
June 1, 2004

CPT Humayun S. M. Khan
HHC, 201st Forward Support Battalion
June 8, 2004

PFC Jason N. Lynch
C Company, 1-6 Field Artillery
June 18, 2004

2LT Andre D. Tyson
A Company, 579th Engineer Battalion
June 22, 2004

SPC Patrick R. McCaffrey Sr.
A Company, 579th Engineer Battalion
June 22, 2004

CPT Christopher S. Cash
A Company, 1-120 Infantry
June 24, 2004

SPC Daniel A. Desens
A Company, 1-120 Infantry
June 24, 2004

PFC Samuel R. Bowen
B Company, 216th Engineer Battalion
July 7, 2004

SGT Robert E. Colvill
HHC, 1-26 Infantry
July 8, 2004

SPC Sonny G. Sampler
HHC, 1-26 Infantry
July 8, 2004

SPC Collier Barcus
HHC, 1-26 Infantry
July 8, 2004

SPC William R. Emanuel
HHC, 1-26 Infantry
July 8, 2004

SPC Joseph M. Garmback Jr.
HHC, 1-26 Infantry
July 8, 2004

MSG Linda A. Tarango-Griess
267th Ordnance Company
July 11, 2004

SGT Jeremy J. Fischer
267th Ordnance Company
July 11, 2004

SGT Dustin W. Peters
314th Logistics Readiness Squadron
July 11, 2004

PFC Torry D. Harris
12th Chemical Company
July 13, 2004

SFC David A. Hartman
401st Transportation Company
July 17, 2004

PFC Nicholas H. Blodgett
A Troop, 1-4 Cavalry
July 21, 2004

SGT Tatjana Reed
66th Transportation Company
July 22, 2004

PFC Torey J. Dantzler
66th Transportation Company
July 22, 2004

SPC Nicholas Zangara
C Company, 1-7 Field Artillery
July 24, 2004

SGT Deforest L. Talbert
C Company, 1-150 Armor
July 27, 2004

PFC Joseph F. Herndon
A Company, 1-27 Infantry
July 29, 2004

PFC Anthony J. Dixon
B Troop, 1-4 Cavalry
August 1, 2004

SGT Armando Hernandez
B Troop, 1-4 Cavalry
August 1, 2004

SPC Donald R. McCune
1-161 Infantry, 81st BCT
August 5, 2004

CPT Andrew R. Houghton
A Troop, 1-4 Cavalry
August 9, 2004

1LT Neil Anthony Santoriello
1-34 Armor
August 13, 2004

SGT Daniel M. Shepherd
1-16 Infantry Regiment
August 15, 2004

1LT Charles L. Wilkins III
216th Engineer Battalion, 264th Engineer Group
August 20, 2004

PFC Ryan A. Martin
216th Engineer Battalion, 264th Engineer Group
August 20, 2004



CPT Joseph A. Kling, commander of the 748th Ordnance Company, prepares to send a robot down range while Soldiers from the Washington State Army National Guard's HHC, 81st Brigade pull security. The troops were investigating a roadside bomb that detonated as they were traveling on MSR Tampa, near the City of Balad, on Aug. 4. No one was injured in the blast. (US Army photo by SPC Ismail Turay)