



# The Dragon's Herald



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## COMMAND NOTES BY DRAGON 6

Dear Soldiers, Families, and Friends of the Dragon Battalion,

As TF 1-63 AR enters the final quarter of our historic tour in support of Operation New Dawn, I think back on all we've accomplished and am continually humbled by the tenacity and dedication demonstrated by the Soldiers of this organization, and take great pride in being a leader amongst them.

We have executed a variety of operations, undergone a great deal of change, worked tirelessly to both improve the capabilities of, and strengthen ties with, our Iraqi counterparts. Our Soldiers have done so in the face of adversity, often reacting to unforeseen circumstances and the enemy's influence upon the battlefield. The efforts of Dragon Soldiers are all the more commendable for professionally executing under the most challenging environmental and geopolitical conditions. We have made great headway in taking the fight to the enemy by, with, and through our partners in the 6th and 17th Iraqi Army Divisions. The Dragons have been crucial in

capturing high value targets across the operating environment. The Iranian-backed militias and violent extremist networks are feeling constant pressure from the daily operations conducted by the Dragons.

Ace company continues to provide quick reaction force support for all of western Baghdad as well as force protection for Victory Base Complex. Bounty is doing a superb job supporting the efforts of the 6<sup>th</sup> Iraqi Army stability transition team, conducts force protection operations, and partners closely with Iraqi battalions to secure western Baghdad. Cobra is setting the standard while supporting the Karkh Area Command transition team, conducting force protection for the Green Zone as well as JSS Muthana. Dealer is doing an outstanding job supporting the 17th IA STT and partnering with the 17th Iraqi Army Division Commando Battalion. Eagle Company continues to support three outlying joint security stations and maintain our equipment to standard. Hellhound's scout platoon and staff sections support numerous missions in the area of opera-

tions, and provide command and control for an area once controlled by three U.S. Brigades. Reaper continues to excel by the enhancing mobility on main supply routes throughout the area of operations for every unit that travels through western Baghdad. I am proud of all the tasks our Soldiers accomplish on a daily basis!

I would like to thank our Families for their support. Your dedication, whether it is taking children to school or sporting events, paying bills, buying groceries, and maintaining the household is greatly appreciated. We miss and love you and look forward to returning home.

As we near the end of this deployment I fully expect the physical and geo-political environment to become even more challenging. I charge all of you to remain focused, disciplined, and driven. Our entire rotation will be judged by how we finish.

Seek, Strike, Destroy, DRAGONS!

Dragon 6



From left to right: LTC Michael Henderson, USF-I Commanding GEN Lloyd Austin, SGM Troy Moore, and CSM Toney Smith



LTC Michael Henderson and sMG Ali (commander of the 17th Iraqi Army Division) get a photo just before beginning a meeting

## CSM NOTES

By Command Sgt. Maj. Toney Smith



- The final quarter of the deployment has begun and we are compelled to spend more time preparing for our withdrawal from theater. The natural tendency may be to let our thinking drift to the home front, but it is more important than ever to focus on the mission.
- I am continually impressed by the professionalism of the young leaders and Soldiers I see in dismounted operations. The mixed mission set could easily have led you astray from the bread and butter of Soldiering, it did not and I commend you for it.
- The enemy is out there. They want to paint our drawdown of forces as a victory and use it to recruit more extremist militants. That will not happen. We have crippled the insurgency and will remain steadfast, diligent, and motivated till we are wheels up. Leaving no doubt of our hard won victory over a determined enemy.
- Thanks to our families for their resiliency and unwavering support. We look forward to seeing you soon.

### Congratulations for the excellent performance given by this month's Dragon Battalion board winners

#### NCO OF THE MONTH—AUGUST



SGT Scott Myers

Echo Company - Senior Medic

#### SOLDIER OF THE MONTH—AUGUST



PFC Robert Hamberg

Charlie Company - Gunner / Driver

# Dragon Grip and Grin



LTC Michael Henderson bids farewell to 1LT Jessica Marney



1LT Jennifer Shelton is awarded an Army Achievement Medal by LTC Michael Henderson and CSM Toney Smith for her excellent performance as the S-4



LTC Michael Henderson bids farewell to 1LT Dennis Helms



From left to right: CPT John Campbell, 1SG Alexander Aguilastratt, LTC Michael Henderson - Pose with a plaque inducting 1SG Aguilastratt into the Order of St. Maurice



CSM Toney Smith bids farewell to MAJ Victor Torres



1SG Mark Bilyeu (left) and 1SG Alexander Aguilastratt blow of a little steam at the weekly Dragon Grip and Grin



MAJ Raymond Dillman bids farewell to the Dragon Battalion

# DRAGONS TIGHTEN UP TOURNIQUET SKILLS

By SSG Justin Phemister

The Combat Application Tourniquet, broadly referred to as a C-A-T, has made tourniquet application user friendly to the point that Soldiers could apply it one handed to their own injury if not too severely wounded.

However, "When you add in armor, gear, nerves, and a scared, writhing patient, you'll need to have had a lot of practice to even have a chance of applying one effectively," said Sgt. 1st Class Sean Bach, the battalion senior medic with 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center and a Ft. Worth, Texas, native.

Bach therefore developed a medic-led advanced tourniquet application course that for two days would challenge Soldiers of the Dragon Battalion to apply tourniquets under difficult circumstances. Nearly every member of 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor, would be required to quickly and effectively apply tourniquets onto a wide variety of simulated injuries being portrayed by actors emulating the noise and shifting of a wounded patient across several likely scenarios.

The most difficult and most common scenario in Iraq in which Soldiers would almost certainly need these skills according to Bach is the aftermath of an improvised explosive device attack on a vehicle convoy.

"Unfortunately this is the reality of the conflict we're in," said Bach. "Casualties inside a vehicle cause all sorts of com-

plications for first responders, and Soldiers need to be ready to think outside the box."

"Outside the box" thinking meant sometimes asking a wounded Soldier who was not incapacitated to help in applying his own tourniquet, or stabilizing the gunner who is harder for responders to reach.

"The first group through treated the first casualties we came to right where they sat (in the HMMWV) and it took us a long time to reach the gunner, but by the time I was acting as the wounded gunner, I got treated in less than a minute," said Pfc. Travis Amstutz, a Soldier of the tactical operations center with 1st Bn., 63rd Armor Regt., and a Norman, Okla., native.

The class was an eye-opener for many of the Soldiers and leaders of the Dragon Battalion.

"The simplicity of the device can be off-putting," said Bach "a Soldier will try it once or twice and think 'oh this is easy,' but in reality it takes a lot of practice to master."

The importance of stopping bleeding and the realization that the process is as difficult as it is necessary, has led to the practice of tourniquet application to endure beyond the culmination of the medic led course to becoming a part of the Dragon's pre-combat check and inspections. In addition, every Soldier will carry one in the left ankle pocket of their uniform, at all times and be assured they are well prepared to use them.



Staff Sgt. Juan Pepi (right), a battle noncommissioned officer with 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, and a Port Orchard, Wash., native, readiness a tourniquet to apply to Pfc. Travis Amstutz (left), a tactical operations center Soldier with 1st Bn., 63rd Armor Regt., and a Norman, Okla., native, as part of a medic-led advanced tourniquet class July 1, at Camp Liberty, Iraq. "We started with a drill to get a tourniquet on in 30 seconds and thought that was pretty tough," said Pepi "it got a lot harder from there though."



Sgt. 1st Class Sean Bach (left), the senior enlisted medic with 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center and a Ft. Worth, Texas, native, leads a group of first responders to the site of a simulated improvised explosive device attack on a high mobility, multipurpose, wheeled vehicle, so they may practice applying tourniquets to their "wounded" comrades, July 1, at Camp Liberty, Iraq. "The Soldiers need to experience using their tourniquets in real world scenarios to have any real proficiency," said Bach.

# DELTA MASCAL EXERCISE

by 1LT Patrick Beaudry

Company D, 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center conducted a mass casualty drill on 23 June to prepare their medics and Soldiers to respond to caring for a large amount of wounded at once. Maj. Jason Clark, the acting company doctor for Company D at Joint Security Station Deason and an Irmo, S.C., native, planned and carried out the exercise. “The training exercise was orchestrated to be intentionally chaotic and confusing,” said Clark.

It had been four months since the last time the company conducted a mass casualty drill of this size. In order to better prepare their Soldiers, Company D decided to increase the realistic nature of the training as much as possible. In order to do so, Sgt. Ricardo Maldonado, the acting platoon sergeant with Company D and a Vacaville, Calif., native, worked with the explosive ordnance division to simulate a real attack.

“You can’t replicate real battlefield stress, but you can get fairly close,” said Maldonado.

At approximately 21:00, the first of three artillery simulators exploded within the borders of Joint Security Station Deason. The tell tale whistle and the loud bang that followed triggered the alarm and sent the entire JSS into action.

Smoke grenades were thrown into the mix making accountability more difficult and increasing the stress of the event for all the soldiers involved. Pre-planned casualties throughout the JSS added to the commotion by dropping where they were and loudly crying for assistance. Soldiers worked in buddy teams to move their “wounded” comrades either to the aid station or the casualty collection point for a pre-planned medical evacuation, depending on the severity of the injury.



Sfc. Derric Dillard (rear left), a platoon sergeant with Company D, 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, and a Naperville, Ill., native, with Cpl. John Bowditch (right), a medic with Company D, and a Spokane, Wash., native and Sfc. Moniem Doud (left), a stability training team linguist, and a Irving, Texas, native, assist a simulated casualty onto a litter. “I tried my best to keep the event as real as possible,” said Dillard. “I’ve been in an actual fire fight. It was very important to me to instill a level of stress and fear that this was real.”

Throughout all the tumult, Cpt. Michael McClain, the commander of Company D, and a Johnstown, Pa., native, acted as the higher headquarters element, testing and evaluating his Soldiers throughout the entirety of the exercise.

“I wanted to make sure the CP (command post) could handle the situation in my absence. The Doc trained his medics quite well, but this drill was also a test of our Company Command and Control structure. When I called over the radio to have the CP set up a QRF (quick reaction force) element, I needed to be sure they could accurately concisely inform our higher headquarters that our readiness had changed due to the significant amount of casualties and that there was not enough manpower to execute an effective reaction force.”

The training was meant to be a surprise and the majority of the personnel on the JSS had no clue it was coming except for those who would be the acting company leadership and the pre-positioned casualties.

“I was shocked,” said Spc. Benjamin White, a forward observer with Company D, and a Matthews, Ala., native. “I had gone to bed after working my shift when I heard the simulators going off, my first thought was we were under attack. Most of the casualties did a good job of keeping the stress level up too. Especially Sfc. Dillard, he should have been given an Emmy for his performance.”

The training proved to be useful not only to the Company D Soldiers at JSS Deason, but also to their 17th Iraqi Army Division counterparts living alongside them. While their leadership was informed of the training event, the information had not fully disseminated to the lowest level on the Iraqi side yet. This in turn let the Iraqi Soldiers believe that the JSS truly was under attack and reacted quickly to assist. Commandos were waiting outside the gate to offer

*“Most of the casualties did a good job of keeping the stress level up too. Especially SFC Dillard, he should have been given an Emmy for his performance.”*

any assistance necessary to their comrades within minutes of the first simulator going off.

“That was perhaps the most interesting surprise of the night, when the Commandos showed up to put out the fires my first thought was ‘not now’. In retrospect it emphasized some key points in our relationship. One, the 17th IA Division values our relationship a great deal and that the Commando’s Battalion Commander was right; they are a specially trained force. Their job is to look at a situation and react to it and they definitely did that tonight,” said McClain.

As the training completed and the simulated casualties gave up their roles, it became clear that the level of preparedness at JSS Deason was fully capable of handling a complex mass casualty event in the unfortunate event that one should occur.

“Overall I would have to say it was a good job. Mistakes were made here and there, but that is why we do these kinds of drills, to identify deficiencies to better prepare for the real thing,” said McClain.

Should the real thing occur, expect the Soldiers of Company D, and the 17th IA Division that occupy JSS Deason, to be ready. “The Dealer company responded exceptionally well, and still had all casualties stabilized and ready for evacuation in a very short period of time,” said the coordinating doctor Clark.



Cpl. John Bowditch (right), a medic with Company D, 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, and a Spokane, Wash., native, carries a simulated casualty with Sfc. Moniem Doud (left), a stability training team linguist with Company D, and an Irving, Texas, native, during a mass casualty exercise June 23, at Joint Security Station Deason, Iraq. The casualty was one of many treated during the exercise, fully testing the preparedness of Company D to handle such an event.

## HELLHOUNDS CONDUCT MEDIC LANES

By SGT Daniel Stoutamire

Soldiers with 1st "Dragon" Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center went through a demanding circuit of training July 15-16 at Camp Liberty, Iraq, designed to test their ability to respond in the event of an attack on their convoy or patrol.

Soldiers were expected to quickly set up a security perimeter, determine the number and extent of casualties, and prepare for their extraction via helicopter or ground medical evacuation. To make things even more interesting, key leaders who have been schooled and have experience in dealing with these kinds of situations were instructed to take a back seat, allowing more junior Soldiers to showcase their abilities and also, to see how they performed under pressure.

"We did that because not always is it going to be the ideal situation, where no leaders get hit," said Sgt. 1st Class Sean Bach, senior medic with 1st Bn., 63rd Armor Regt. and a Fort Worth, Texas, native. "We wanted to test [junior leaders] in a controlled environment to let them see that they can handle the situation, in comparison to an uncontrolled environment outside the wire."

Bach referenced the May 22 improvised explosive device attack which killed two members of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Bn., 63rd Armor Regt., including a platoon sergeant, where events impelled junior leaders had take charge.

"[Removing senior leaders] was so the sergeants and corporals could get a better understanding of what we need to do if some-

thing happens and senior leaders aren't there," said Sgt. James George, a team leader with HHC, 1st Bn., 63rd Armor Regt. and a Madison, Ohio, native. "So we can step up and take over."

Dragon Battalion Soldiers also were forced to deal with a major aspect of the modern battlefield—a civilian presence nearby. Soldiers from the battalion's forward support company, Company E, 299th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div., USD-C acted as Iraqi civilians, something they are uniquely equipped to do.

"A lot of these guys [acting as civilians] are on Combat Logistics Patrols," Bach said. "I told them to act like they see locals act every day on the streets."

Therefore, on top of ensuring that their buddies were being looked after by medics at the scene, Soldiers had to interact with those role-playing as local residents and keep them from getting too close or causing unnecessary confusion.

"You also have to make sure that they are kept out of the area, that you control that area, otherwise they will keep coming in and out, and you don't know what's going on," said George.

With their deployment entering its final few months and some Soldiers beginning to think more and more of home, one of the things that needs to be defeated, Bach said, is the specter of complacency.

"I would say that [1st Bn., 63rd Armor Regt.] as a whole has worked really hard to beat the complacency monster, and

that's part of this [training], is beating that complacency monster," he said.

Since only a small percentage of patrols and convoys face attacks, it is possible to lose focus, he added.

"They know they're going to get hit [here in training], and that's how every patrol should be," Bach said. "They should always be thinking, 'How am I going to react, how am I going to save my buddy's life?'"



Staff Sgt. Brandon Robinson, left, an infantryman with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, and a Raeford, N.C., native, helps carry Staff Sgt. Antonio Hendricks, also an infantryman with HHC, 1st Bn., 63rd Armor Regt. and a Helena, Mont., native, during a situational training exercise July 15, 2011 at Camp Liberty, Iraq. Hendricks acted as a casualty in the exercise, which tested the Soldiers' ability to respond to an attack on their convoy in an area with a civilian presence.

## HELLHOUNDS COMMO SHOP – SHOUT OUT

Hello Soldiers, Family and Friends of TF I-63 S6 team!

We are almost there. With over half the deployment over, we continue to work side by side with Dagger Brigade Network Operations as we prepare to come home. We strive to maintain communication links, while taking that time to reach out to our loved ones by either email, Skype or the old school Defense Switch Network (DSN) which allows you to call home for free.

We have accomplished so much this past month. Most of the COMMO Soldiers have taken Rest and Recuperation; SGT Enoch has won the battalion NCO of the month board, and was selected to go to Sergeant Audie Murphy. SPC Carranza has won the lightning hero of the month award. SPC Carranza, SPC Caylor, SPC Principato, and PV2 Deloatch were promoted.

We recently conducted a highly motivated 4.4 mile run on behalf of the Army's 236th Birthday. SPC Caylor was one of the Soldiers chosen to have a meeting and lunch with our newly appointed Sergeant Major of the Army Chandler III. We will be having a BBQ to strengthen our bond as a platoon.

On behalf of S6 section, we want to thank all of you for staying positive and supportive in our mission during Operation New Dawn. We would also like to thank you for stepping up as head of your household while your spouse or significant other is away. Keep up the good work, we're almost home.

SFC Herbert N. Major

S6 NCOIC

HHC TF I-63AR



2LT Henry Wickham (OIC)  
and  
SFC Herbert Major (NCOIC)

# BOUNTY BOARD



CPT Patrick Vardaro

1SG Gary Stout



Greetings from JSS Constitution! It's hard to believe that we're nearly three quarters of the way through the deployment. Before we know it, the leaves will be changing color and we'll be home at Fort Riley.

The Company has been extremely busy the past few months, which is great because it keeps our minds focused on the mission and helps the time fly by. We recently had separate visits from the Command Sergeant Major of the Army, 18<sup>th</sup> Airborne Corps Command Sergeant Major, and the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Deputy Commanding General. They were all impressed by how committed everyone was to the mission and they had nothing but compliments for the outstanding work of your loved ones.

We'll continue to train the Iraqi Army and conduct security operations right up until the day we leave, but as summer is now upon us, we are beginning the initial planning for some of the many redeployment tasks we'll have to execute in order to return home this fall. One of the biggest tasks before us is to turn -in all of our theater-issued property and equipment, such as our vehicles. This is a painstakingly detailed and time-consuming process, but each time we turn-in a piece of property it means we're one step closer to home. Don't be surprised if you hear about some long days in the motor pool.

The surest way for us to accomplish the mission and keep everyone safe is to be the most lethal fighting force on the battlefield. It's important for you to know, that in all of our operations, we always maintain an aggressive security posture as a signal to the enemy to that we are no ordinary Company. We conduct demanding and realistic training each and every day in order to keep our warrior skills sharp. It's this commitment to each other and the mission that drives us forward. Be thankful for our leaders who instill the discipline that sets the Dagger Brigade apart from the rest.

Thank you to all the Bravo Company FRG Volunteers. You're definitely setting the standard! We're blown away by the fundraising success you've achieved and are greatly appreciative of all the time and effort it takes. The FRG organization is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our core group of volunteers. We owe special thanks to Teri Keys, Carol Harleman, Dawn Richardson, Marie Snyder, and Anne Litchfield. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely,

CPT Patrick Vardaro

1SG Gary Stout



Brigade Commander Col. Paul Calvert awards a Combat Infantryman's Badge to Bravo Company's newest Platoon Leader 2LT Steven White after taking contact on his first combat patrol as a Bounty Hunter



The Sergeant Major of the Army Raymond Chandler receives a briefing from the Bounty Hunter Commander CPT Patrick Vardaro detailing the operations and intelligence from with their battle space



Soldiers from Bravo Company pose with LTC Michael Henderson, CSM Toney Smith and Soldiers of their personnel security detachment after an awards ceremony awarding Combat Badges

## DRAGON PRAYER BREAKFAST



The 1st "Dragon" Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States – Center, conducted a prayer breakfast to build morale and emphasize for one morning the spiritual component to the battalion's overall readiness July 29, at Camp Liberty, Iraq.



Left to Right: CPT Jason Palmer, SPC Devin Gresham, and CPT Dave Mooneyham play at a "Dragon" prayer breakfast conducted to build morale and emphasize for one morning the spiritual component to the battalion's overall readiness July 29, at Camp Liberty, Iraq.



From Right to Left: SPC Sammy Chabert, SSG Kenneth James, and CPT Erik Kemerling, enjoy a breakfast while listening to the Chaplain Band and prayers to guide the Soldiers of the Dragon Battalion through the final quarter of their deployment

## “RECONCILED TRIBES OF GHAZALIYAH” FIELD OPENS THANKS TO DRAGONS

**BAGHDAD** –Edward Bellamy, a 19th century novelist and social observer, once said “If bread is the first necessity of life, recreation is a close second.”

Recognizing the importance of a communal recreation area, the “Bounty Hunters” of Company B, 1st “Dragon” Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center helped fund and develop the “Reconciled Tribes of Al Ghazaliyah” football field. The field was named for the local council that works to keep peace within, the area.

“This project is multipurpose,” said Capt. Patrick Vardaro, the “Bounty Hunter” commander with 1st Bn., 63rd Armor Regt., and a Norwood, Mass., native, “it develops the community, empowers the local leaders, gives the Iraqi Security Forces a good name, and improves the economy through the use of local contractor.”

The Ghazaliyah neighborhood was once a hotbed of sectarian violence, but is now on the forefront of unity efforts between Shia and Sunni religious communities. The Reconciliation and Support Tribal Council for which the football field is named is a group of democratically elected leaders from the mixed tribes in the greater Ghazaliyah area. The council mediates the disputes within its area diverting a potential cycle of violence spawned by sectarian differences.

The field, a joint effort of the “Bounty Hunters,” Sayifiyah Federal Police, and Reconciliation and Support Tribal Council, helped bring together a mixed Shia and Sunni community, put smiles on faces of children, and strengthened the community. Previous projects of the “Dragon” Battalion like building bridges, dredging a canals, establishing a milk collection facility, and cleaning up city streets may have produced more tangible results, but the amount peace, unity, and happiness generated through this project is incalculable.

On July 29th, the day of the field opened, many Iraqis from all different walks of life came together to watch a close match between some of the best players in the area. Religious and political leaders mingled with Soldiers, police, civilians and hundreds of smiling children.

“I was pretty happy for these guys,” said Pfc. Zachary Atwood, a driver with the “Bounty Hunters,” and a San Jose, Calif., native. “I mean we’ve seen openings before at different projects, but you never see the people there this excited.”

The game ended with in a 0-0 tie that nonetheless punctuated the theme of unity that ruled the day. The opening celebration was not nearly concluded, however, and suddenly excitement amongst the crowd grew. Ahmed Abd al Jabbar, an Iraqi National Team player and Al Ghazaliyah native, had come to see the new football field in his hometown and help the Sayifiyah Federal Police (who are

responsible for this area) give away footballs and jerseys.

Adults and children alike swarmed the field to wait their turn to meet the celebrity and get the equipment being given out so they might arrange a league of their own. Even the hardened policeman who have worked harder than anyone to establish peace in this area, were caught up in the enthusiasm and mingled freely within the crowd.

“This is a very safe area now, I feel responsible for the security for everyone and I know it is ok to let your guard down here,” said Col. Bassim, the commander of the Sayifiyah Federal Police with 22nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division.

Once the jerseys and footballs were distributed and Ahmed the National Football Idol had to go, the police, tribal leaders, and “Bounty Hunter” Soldiers began to disperse. Still, groups of children stuck to the field, barely noticing as security forces left, joining in pickup games on their new “Reconciled Tribes of Al Ghazaliyah” football field - the first of thousands of games to come.



The “Reconciled Tribes of Al Ghazaliyah” is written on a sign above the entrance to the new football field on its opening day July 29, in Ghazaliyah, Iraq. “It [the ‘Reconciled Tribes of Al Ghazaliyah’ football field] could become a cornerstone of community unity in what was once a very divisive district of Baghdad,” said Capt. Patrick Vardaro, the commander of Company B, “Bounty Hunters,” 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center, and a Norwood, Mass., native.



Capt. Patrick Vardaro (second from left), the commander of Company B, “Bounty Hunters,” 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center, and a Norwood, Mass., native sits with leaders Reconciliation and Support Tribal Council on opening day of the “Reconciled Tribes of Al Ghazaliyah” football field July 29, in Ghazaliyah, Iraq. “The project brought a lot of people together, security forces, sheiks, businessmen, and even the kids all have a vested interest in this project,” said Vardaro.

# THE DEAL

July was another busy month for the Death Dealers. Our mission shifted focus towards countering the indirect fire threat posed by violent extremist networks in the area as well as the Improvised Explosive Device (IED) threat. Throughout the month, the Soldier's busied themselves with partnering with the Iraqi army to patrol areas where the enemy could employ indirect fire weapon systems or emplace IEDs.

PFC Carlos Silva became a U.S. Citizen on Independence Day. SSG Kenneth Epperson acted as Silva's sponsor and was with him for the week prior going through all the requirements and formations that led up to the event. CPT Michael McClain and ISG Leonardo Alaniz made the trip up to the Al-Faw palace for the ceremony recognizing Silva on his new citizenship.

After the Nationalization Ceremony CPT McClain left to go back to the States on leave. In his place ILT Jon Chandler assumed Command of the Company. Jon's leadership was instrumental in ensuring the company ran just as it did before the absence of its Commander.

July also saw the return of 2nd Pla-

toon, though their stay was relatively short lived. Just two weeks after arriving 2nd was back on the road. The Platoon led by ILT Thomas Skodowski and SFC Jeremy Brown returned to Delta on the 28th ensuring the company has increased mobility and protection during the final months of this deployment.

As the month comes to a close, the Dealers are trying to get as much done as possible. An Advanced Scout Sniper Class just started lead by Major Henrique Malinverni. His course teaches the Iraqi Army Soldiers how to not only engage targets at a distance and provide their commanders with accurate reporting and intelligence gathering, but how to teach their Soldiers to do the same. This will provide the Iraqi Army with the skill set necessary to train their Soldiers and execute missions long after US forces withdraw from Iraq. As the month comes to a close, the Dealers are expected to conduct one last outreach mission to the Iraqi Populace, just before the start of Ramadan 1st of August.



CPT Michael McClain



1SG Leonard Alaniz



MAJ Henry Malinverni prepares advanced scout / sniper course for Soldiers of the Iraqi Army



Recently promoted Sgt. Adalberto Zamora, a mechanic with Company D, a Lompoc, Calif., native, performs a quality assurance check on a high-mobility, multipurpose, wheeled vehicle

## Dragon Reenlistments

ACO - SPC Eric Ruiz

ECO - SGT Kristena Williams

CCO - SPC Jason Tanner

SPC Joshua Saari

## DRAGON PROMOTIONS

### A CO

SPC Yanko Abreu  
 SPC Alfredo Berriosmiranda  
 SPC Benjamin Butler  
 SPC Stallone Obakrairur  
 SFC Jason Allman

### B CO

SPC Thomas Mccann  
 SPC Raymond Moore  
 SGT Wes Bailey  
 SGT Alex Wright  
 SFC William Davis

### C CO

SPC Thomas Campbell  
 SPC Dwayne Walcott

### D CO

SPC Carlos Silva

### E CO

SPC Cory Alvarico  
 SPC Benjamin Casanova  
 SPC Reginald Dates  
 SPC Brent Elledge  
 SPC Kevin Galarza  
 SPC Henry Milligan  
 SPC Mitchell Noonan  
 SPC Brandon Richardson  
 SPC Brandon Rivers  
 SGT Ligaya Harshberger  
 SGT Ross Harkness

### HHC

SPC Ephraim Harrell  
 SPC Paul Henderson  
 SPC Travis Hinton  
 SPC Kenneth Jordan  
 SPC Anthony Morin  
 SPC Jeffery Smith  
 SGT Steven Dubord



CPT Paul Stankich reenlists SPC Eric Ruiz for 4 more years of service



LTC Michael Henderson promotes SSG William Davis to SFC

# REAR DETACHMENT

**Aug 25 9:00am - 3:00pm**

**Riley's Conference Center**

With your soldier soon coming home, many questions may come to mind about getting back into the routine of Family life. Get answers to all of your reintegration related questions while collecting valuable information about the resources available to you.



Featuring: Mrs Penny Monetti, motivation speaker, certified trauma and crisis counselor, Christian author, and Military Spouse.



**Registration is required and childcare is provided at no cost.**  
Heather Stewart Mobilization and Deployment Dept 785.240.5449



While on R & R leave, 1SG Gary Stout of Bravo Company takes time to brief the FRG



Alyssa Odom works on a banner to be sent to her father SSG Keys, and Bravo Company

**1ST BATTALION 63RD ARMOR REGIMENT**

TF 1-63 AR 2 AAB  
Camp Victory  
APO AE 09344

*“The Dragon’s Herald” is a monthly publication of the 1st Battalion 63rd Armor Family Readiness Group. This newsletter is not an official Army publication but is intended as a communication tool between the Battalion and the Family, to share constructive news about the battalion, and to promote the Combined Arms as a whole.*



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