

ANACONDA TIMES

JANUARY 10, 2007

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SB Shuffle

'85 Bears' McMahon visits Illinois Guard for New Year's Eve

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KAAABAAMM!

All-star weekend brings out the best slam dunks, 3-point shots

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Air Force Maj. Larry Harris (right), hands off the keys to three new communications buildings Dec. 29 to William Roberts, the site manager for the Electronic Sustainment Support Center, after a ribbon-cutting ceremony here.

LSAA Redbulls bring year-long local CMO missions to a close

See Page 16

Communications support opens new doors

by Spc. Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown

Anaconda Times Staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq—Three new buildings for the Communication-Electronics Life Cycle Management Command were opened Dec. 29 in a ribbon-cutting ceremony here.

Although the services offered inside the new buildings have simply relocated from other places on Anaconda, the new locale will help them provide more efficient support.

One building is for installing and repairing Blue Force Tracker for Armored Support Vehicles, another is the new location of Toby Hannah computer repair, and the third is a building for the maintaining and repair of the Fire Finder tracking system.

“(We are) service providers for the Program Managers, providing support for Soldiers in communication, electronics, systems,

See SUPPORT, Page 11



Staff Sgt. Jeff S. Swanson, a cavalry scout with B Troop, 1st Squadron, 167th Cavalry Regiment stands guard as an Iraqi boy watches during a visit to a secondary school in Al Fadoos, Dec. 26.

“I will always place the mission first.”

I am Maj. Audra Reynolds-Patterson, from Gilbert Ariz.

HHC, 36th Combat Aviation Brigade >> Intelligence Officer



Guardsmen give bad guys bad days

“When the Soldiers are in contact with the enemy they need fire support right now.”

-Spc. Bryan Bjerklie

story and photos by By Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood



Spc. Jared Smith of Duluth, Minn., (left) and Spc. Lee Knutson of Oklee, Minn., both of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 136th Combined Arms Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, man a 120 millimeter mortar tube during a drill earlier this month at Camp Fallujah, Iraq.

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq -- In just a couple of minutes, Soldiers of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 136th Combined Arms Battalion, can make the enemy have a bad day.

That is the time it takes four Soldiers working as a team to set the fuse on the round, set the deflection and elevation on the gun, and “hang” (fire) the round.

“We get called pretty regularly, mostly to provide illumination at night for the combat outposts here. We also provide the counter battery fire at the insurgents,” said platoon sergeant, 1st Sgt. Richard Ellwood of Duluth, Minn.

He said his platoon’s mission is to provide indirect fire for the Soldiers and Marines around the Anbar Province.

“We support them with high explosive and illumination rounds 24/7,” he said.

His platoon of about 30 Minnesota Army National Guard Soldiers fires a wide range of mortars.

This platoon also dug all the fighting positions for its mortars. They fortified their bunkers with reinforced concrete, wood timbers, and layers of sandbags.

“If you’re in that bunker and a round impacts, you’re going to be safe,” said Ellwood, who has been involved with mortars for the last 15 years.

The reason that the platoon built their own bunkers was that the Marines that the platoon

replaced did not have the same mortar systems. The platoon’s mortars were brought from Minnesota. They have trained on them since the mobilization began.

“We’re pretty fortunate that this is what we trained for and we’re doing it here,” Ellwood said.

“Basically we’re firing back at the enemy. That’s all you could want as a mortar team in Iraq,” said Spc. Jared Smith of Duluth, Minn.

Firing back at the enemy has been a memorable experience for Spc. Bryan Bjerklie of Goodrich, Minn.

He said when the round goes off, “it takes your breath away.”

The concussion of the round knocks things off the walls in the fire direction center located a few meters from the fighting position, said Bjerklie.

The platoon has also supported mounted patrols.

In either mission, this platoon’s mission is vital to saving lives of Soldiers and Marines, said Ellwood.

When soldiers are on patrols or combat outposts and need accurate indirect fire support, the mortar platoon provides that. When the Soldiers are in contact with the enemy they need fire support right now. They need those rounds to be impacting onto the enemy’s location,” he said.

And all in a two-minute warning.



Spc. Anthony Sanborn of Alexandria, Minn., (center) checks the fuse setting of a 120 millimeter mortar as Sgt. Steven Luijens of St. Cloud, Minn., (right) tells him which setting to use during a drill earlier this month at Camp Fallujah, Iraq.

ANACONDA TIMES

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36th Combat Aviation Brigade	45th Sustainment Brigade
402nd Army Field Support Brigade	82nd Sustainment Brigade
411 Engineer Brigade	593rd Corps Support Group
164th Corps Support Group	15th Sustainment Brigade
657th Area Support Group	

Taji New Year's Eve celebration seen around the world

by Sgt. 1st Class Nick Conner
15th Sustainment Brigade PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq—Dropping temperatures didn't faze the crowds of Soldiers and civilians who turned out for the New Year's Eve celebration in front of the Mayor's Cell, here. Live music kept revelers dancing during the final moments of 2006, as eyes turned to the giant palm tree dropped to mark the start of 2007.

But it wasn't just those in attendance who took part. Soldiers from 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), 1st Brigade Combat Team and Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs Offices set up a live video satellite feed during the final countdown of the year.

Maj. Randell Baucom, 1st BCT Public Affairs Officer got the idea after seeing FOX News conduct live interviews for Christmas Day. He contacted the Digital Video and Imagery Distribution System hub in Atlanta, Ga., and arranged for Dec. 31 satellite time.

"This really couldn't have happened without the Soldiers who came and participated," he said. "Without them, it's just a satellite in a box."

An estimated 52.6 million viewers from around the world watched the party in Taji, with video from the celebration airing on national FOX, CNN, NBC, ABC networks and distributed around the globe by the Associated Press. A large portion of local affiliate stations from Massachusetts to California also picked up the festivities.

"It was very stressful at first", said Sgt. Robert Strain, 1st ACB, 1st Cav. Div. on setting up the mobile satellite station. I had some concerns, since ours was the only live feed of the night. I wanted it to look good; I wanted it to be right, he said.

"We got to put our best foot forward."

Sgt. Raymond Kokel, 1st BCT, 1st Cav. Div., kept busy most of the night taping Soldiers giving personal greetings to families and



Sgt. Robert Strain, 1st ACB, 1st Cav. Div. on setting up the mobile satellite station during New Year's Eve at Camp Taji.

friends. He packaged all the "shout-outs" to send to the main DVIDS hub in Atlanta. From there, local TV stations used them during their own news casts.

"There was a lot of energy out there [coming from the Soldiers]. Being able to be part of it, to give all the Soldiers a chance to send something home, was exciting."

"The experience to be part of the New Year's Eve process was great," said Kokel.

The DVIDS allows Public Affairs Soldiers to send photos, audio and video stories, and live video feeds directly to civilian news organizations. This near real-time exchange puts Soldiers' and their unique stories from deployments into the living rooms of America.

Baucom sees the satellite system as the "...biggest bang for the PAO buck..." The Soldiers, and their willingness to interact with the media back home, determine its success.

"It will continue as long as Soldiers are willing and able to tell their stories," he said.



Soldiers stand in line for their chance to be seen around the world during New Year's Eve at Taji.

email us your story idea to anaconda.times@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

Where would your ideal vacation location be and why?



Spc. Lyndsey Riess

"Anywhere but here."



Sgt. Kate Fair

"What is a vacation?"



Staff Sgt. Darian Jones

"Bells Beach in Australia because of the waves and scuba diving."



Sgt. 1st Class Carl Bjornstal

"Waikiki Beach in Hawaii because of the water, nice beach and the ladies."

Squad runs gamut of convoy escort missions

by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood

1/34 BCT PAO

CAMP AL ASAD, Iraq -- Staff Sgt. Michael Warmenhoven and his squad from Company B, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry have run the gamut of convoy escort security missions for the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division.

The squad spent its first four months at Camp Adder with the 1-34 Brigade Troops Battalion and later the 134th Brigade Support Battalion. There they rode in Humvee gun trucks escorting semi trucks and trailers driven by civilian contractors to points north, including Logistical Support Area Anaconda.

In September, the squad returned home to Al Asad, where, his company escorts convoys to Jordan and back. The 300 mile, one-way trip takes almost two days to complete.

This western port of entry allows the fastest route in the region. It takes less than a week to move these commodities compared to a minimum of 45 days from Kuwait and Turkey.

Warmenhoven of Marion, Iowa, said the only thing similar about convoy escort missions in eastern and western Iraq is the long days of driving.

Differences include the nationality of the drivers, their attitudes and experience, and the amount of traffic on the road.

"On the Adder runs, if something broke down, the drivers would have it fixed or have a solution by the time you made it to the problem truck," he said. "Out here, the drivers tend to add to the problem and it takes a lot of shouting to get them motivated to do anything."

This "motivation" can start before sunrise. The Soldiers inspect the trucks and trailers in a civilian contractor yard.

These inspections include looking for contraband, illegal passports, and unauthorized passengers.

Once the inspections are completed and the drivers have received a safety brief, the convoy of empty trucks or "deadheads" rolls out the gate.

For the first few hours, this convoy will travel along a narrow road carved up on each side by roadside bomb blast holes.

As Warmenhoven's vehicle turned onto this road, his driver Spc. Jonathan Bengston of Iowa Falls, Iowa, wished his fellow Soldiers to "have fun."

Several hours later, his convoy will arrive at Camp Korean Village where the Soldiers will prepare for their next trip to Forward Operating Base Trebil, Jordan.

The trucks are parked in a large staging yard filled with hundreds of vehicles.

The Soldiers will have any maintenance concerns fixed by a dedicated staff of mechanics.



Staff Sgt. Michael Warmenhoven of Marion Iowa, Company B, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, powers up his Blue Force Tracker in his Armored Security Vehicle Nov. 27 at Camp Korean Village, Iraq.

The Soldiers will conduct another safety check before departing this tiny Marine Corps outpost in route to FOB Trebil.

Once the convoy reaches the FOB, the empty trucks are dropped off.

The Soldiers will then escort trucks full of

commodities like fuel and food to CKV where they will stay overnight.

The next morning the convoy leaves for Al Asad.

Warmenhoven said some of these runs home have taken as long as 14 hours because

of roadside bombs or trucks breaking down.

Warmenhoven said he liked the night convoys for two reasons, the cooler temperatures and the Soldier's night vision capabilities. He said the cooler temperatures allowed him to push the convoys to higher speeds.

He said in comparing the average speeds, the day convoys are much slower than the night convoys.

He said the drivers also struggled with the extreme heat during the summer day trips.

Warmenhoven also really liked the night missions because of all the convoys on the road at the same time.

The reason, he said was he knew he would be assisted quickly in case of emergencies.

"Anyone who has served as convoy commander and has been hit would probably back me when I say that there is nothing better than hearing people jump all over each other on the radio, saying that they are on the way to your position."

It is a good bet Warmenhoven's company would "jump all over him" in case of an emergency. He served with this company for eight years before transferring to a Michigan Guard unit.

In fact, He returned to Task Force Iron for this deployment in order to deploy with the Soldiers he knows and had served with before.

"More than likely I was going to get deployed with a Michigan unit," he said. "I knew all these guys and trusted these guys."



Semi trucks and trailers escorted by Soldiers of Company B, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, stretch for several miles during a security halt on Nov. 27 on this road in western Iraq.

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood

Remembrance

"I've Been to the Mountaintop"

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- His MO

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SATURDAY
10:30 TO 11 A.M.

SLEEP HYGIENE

MONDAY AND THURSDAY
6 TO 6:30 P.M.

GOAL SETTING

MONDAY AND THURSDAY
11 A.M. TO NOON

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WEDNESDAY
2 TO 3 P.M.
SATURDAY
10 TO 10:30 A.M.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

TUESDAY AND FRIDAY
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WEDNESDAY
9 TO 11 A.M.

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Balad's ground radar technicians enable command, control of tactical air battlespace

story and photos by
Air Force Staff Sgt. Alice Moore

BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq -- Precision and attention to even the slightest detail is crucial when you're responsible for maintaining ground radar systems.

Providing 24-hours-a-day support, the 727th Expeditionary Air Control Squadron's ground radar shop ensures Balad's ground radar systems work flawlessly.

"Our job is to maintain two full AN/TPS-75 ground radar systems on base," said Staff Sgt. Tyler Hand, 727th EACS ground radar systems supervisor, deployed from Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho. "Our radar is capable of detecting aircraft, both friend and foe, up to 250 nautical miles away. It is one of the only three-dimensional radar systems in existence, and can detect objects up to 99,000 feet above the earth."

Typical work for the shop includes hours of daily inspections, lubrications, alignments and other preventative maintenance for the radar systems, Hand said.

"We are responsible for troubleshooting and repairing any malfunctioning part in the system, which includes more than 7,200 separate parts," he said. "These range from coolant systems, high voltage lines, motors, high power amplifiers, fans, relays and many circuit cards and micro-electronics."

Hand said that the radar's identification-friend-or-foe feature enables operations crews to control and monitor aircraft over Iraqi airspace with pin point precision as well as detect enemy aircraft.

"Hostile aircraft that do not respond to our radar's interrogation are still detected and tracked using five megawatts of power radiating in 360 degrees of rotation. We can see any object in the air; aircraft, weather patterns, and even solar radiation patterns," he said. "The transmitted power reflects



Senior Airman Stacey Morris performs a daily preventative maintenance inspection Dec. 19 on one of the ground radar systems at Balad Air Base, Iraq. Airman Morris, a 727th Expeditionary Air Control Squadron radar maintenance technician, is deployed from Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho.

off of anything in the air, and reflects off the object, and comes back to us at either a lower or higher frequency, depending on the direction of the target."

Hand said that the ground radar shop maintains the "eyes of the pilots and generals." With such a big responsibility, mistakes can't be made.

"Our radar is the looking glass through which the air missions are coordinated. We can't afford to perform inspections and system alignments half-heartedly," he said.

The daily responsibilities also give Airmen assigned to the ground radar shop here a sense of purpose, said Senior Airman

Adrienne Samora, 727th EACS radar maintenance technician also deployed from Mountain Home.

"Our job is surveillance maintenance. Without us, aircraft can fly wherever they want. There would be a 'mess' in the sky," Samora said. "We're the only ones who do what we do out here."

No matter the challenge, Hand takes his job seriously because of what is at stake.

"When troops are in contact and bombs are dropping, we cannot allow our system to falter. Our mission requires both urgency and quality. The consequences would be devastating if either is neglected."



Senior Airman Adrienne Samora conducts a daily preventative maintenance inspection Dec. 19 on one of the ground radar systems at Balad Air Base, Iraq. Airman Samora, a 727th Expeditionary Air Control Squadron radar maintenance technician, is deployed from Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho.

LRSD Soldiers take point during midnight ceremony

by Sgt. 1st Class Douglas Schultz

1-167 RSTA PAO

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq—Delta Company 134th Long Range Surveillance Detachment from Crete, Neb., an Army National Guard unit, conducted a new year's day awards ceremony as the clock turned to midnight, ringing in the new year.

Capt. Kyle Hildebrand told his unit that he wanted to be the first unit in Iraq to conduct an awards ceremony in 2007.

Spc. Chas Grieve had his name drawn, and he was the first Soldier in the company to be awarded the Iraqi Campaign Medal.

Hildebrand pinned his medal on after Staff Sgt. James Uhing, the company communications sergeant, gave a countdown to midnight.

"Normally you spend New Year's drinking champagne. This year will be one for you all to remember," Hildebrand told his unit.

The rest of the company was then awarded their medals in the chilly early morning hour.



Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Douglas Schultz
Soldiers of Delta Company, 1-34th Long Range Surveillance Detachment in formation.



Spc. Chas Grieve being awarded the Iraqi Campaign Medal by Capt. Kyle Hildebrand.



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Authors remember Ford's courage during fire in WWII

WASHINGTON – Thirty years before fighting political fires in the wake of Watergate, President Gerald R. Ford battled blazes in World War II.

U.S. Naval Historical Society documents and a newly released book, "Halsey's Typhoon," by Bob Drury and Tom Clavin, capture the story of a young Navy Lt. Ford who saved lives by helping to put out a fire on the USS Monterey.

In December 1944, Ford, then a Navy lieutenant, was a gunnery officer on the light aircraft carrier, which was providing air cover for the second wave of the Philippines invasion as part of Adm. William Halsey's Third Fleet.

Serving as deck officer during the ship's midnight to 4 a.m. watch, Ford saw 40- to 70-foot waves swelling around his ship as it headed into the path of a howling typhoon.

Typhoon Cobra, as the storm was later called, rolled the Monterey 25 degrees, causing Ford to lose his footing and slide toward the edge of the deck, the sources reveal.

The two-inch steel ridge around the edge of the carrier slowed him enough so he could roll and twist into the catwalk below the deck. As he later stated, "I was lucky; I could have easily gone overboard."

At the height of the storm, 100-knot winds and towering waves rocked the Monterey and several fighter planes tore loose from their cables and collided into one another.

The collisions ignited aircraft gas tanks, and soon the hangar deck was ablaze. Because of a quirk in the Monterey's construction, flames were sucked into the air intakes leading to the lower decks, spreading the fire inside the ship.

In a Dec. 28 New York Times commentary, Drury and Clavin remembered Ford's actions.

Halsey had ordered Monterey's skipper, Capt. Stuart H. Ingersoll, to abandon ship as the Monterey blazed from stem to stern, they wrote.

Ford stood near the helm, awaiting his orders.

"We can fix this," Drury and Clavin quoted Ingersoll as saying. With a nod from his skipper, Ford donned a gas mask and led a fire brigade below. All the while, they wrote, aircraft-gas tanks exploded as hose handlers slid across the burning decks.

"Into this furnace, Ford led his men, his first order of business to carry out the dead and injured," they wrote. "Hours later, he and his team emerged burned and exhausted, but they had put out the fire."

After the fire, Monterey was declared unfit for service. But historical documents credit Ford's courage for ensuring that nearly all its men survived to take part in the Battle of Okinawa.

Typhoon Cobra delivered the Navy's worst "defeat" of World War II, capsizing three destroyers, damaging 12 more ships, destroying 150 planes, and killing 793 men, historians note.

And it nearly made a casualty of the future president.

Ford was later promoted to lieutenant commander, and he ended his Navy career in 1946 at that rank.

Da' Bears, 1744th ring in new year together

by Staff Sgt. Glen Chrisman

1744th TC PAO

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq- New Year's Eve 2006 is one that Soldiers with the 1744th Transportation Company will always remember.

Soldiers crammed into the unit's Operation Center late Sunday night to ring in the New Year with former Chicago Bears players Jim McMahon and Kevin Butler, and two other celebrities. Anaconda was the eleventh stop for the five-day celebrity tour.

Many Soldiers were excited as they waited in the hallway for their chance to shake hands and get an autograph from the quarterback and kicker of the 1985 Super Bowl Champion Chicago Bears.

Others couldn't wait to meet Karri Turner who played Lt. Harriet Sims on the hit TV show "Jag," and weather anchor and feature reporter for CBS's "The Early Show," Dave Price.

One Soldier said it was a nice taste of home, while another said it was nice to be remembered by others on New Years Eve in Iraq.

McMahon has visited Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. talking to recovering wounded and injured Soldiers several times, and said it's nice to travel to different bases and work with Soldiers.

He said it means a hell of a lot for Soldiers to have five minutes away just to get their mind off of things.

McMahon has two Super Bowl rings. One ring he earned as the quarterback for the Chicago Bears in 1985 and one when he was a back-up to Brett Favre as part of the Green



Karri Turner, Dave Price, Jim McMahon and Kevin Butler, present the Illinois State flag to the Illinois Army National Guard' 1744th Transportation Company before the midnight hour.

Bay Packers Super Bowl team in 1997.

He jokes about how the Packers ring appraises at \$10,000, while the Bears ring was only worth about \$3,000.

Butler sat alongside McMahon as they signed autographs and joked around when some of the younger

Soldiers commented about how the Bears last Super Bowl win came before they were born.

Butler became the first kicker inducted into the college football Hall of Fame in 2001.

He said it is nice to let the troops know they are appreciated and that they are thinking of them and support them.

The longtime kicker said he is inspired visiting the Soldiers and realizes how important their mission is, and how the visits benefit the troops.

While the former Chicago Bears were making their first trip to the Middle East, this was the fifth time "Jag" star Turner has visited troops overseas.

She said it's a privilege, especially this time of year, to see the Soldiers who can use a dose of home.

Turner said it's a lot of fun and nice to give back a little bit.

Turner, who has spent the last ten years as a series regular on the military-based show, said it's nice to connect with the Soldiers and she can't wait to come back.

The evening wouldn't have been complete without laughter brought on by comments from Price.

Price, who worked for WBBM TV in Chicago from 1996 to 1998, has been a part of CBS News' "The Early Show," since July 2003.

This trip was his third to Iraq, having also made a stop in Afghanistan in 2005.

Price said it's remarkable to see what the troops are doing.

He said it's a goal to make the Soldiers feel good, but when they leave he feels pumped up and wants to do it all over again. According to Price, the only thing better than visiting the troops would be to see them all come home.

The 1744th Transportation Company was selected for the special visit on New Year's Eve because the former Chicago Bears stars requested to see an Illinois-based National Guard unit while they were visiting.

The 1744th is one of three Illinois units currently deployed to Iraq, and the only one at Anaconda. Although the unit is based in Streator, it's made up of Soldiers from all parts of Illinois.

While the ink from the autographs may fade, the memories of welcoming in 2007 will forever be remembered by Soldiers of the 1744th TC.



Spc. Joe Torres looks on as former Chicago Bears quarterback, Jim McMahon signs his autograph during a visit to the 1744th Transportation Company, an Ill. National Guard unit on Dec. 31.



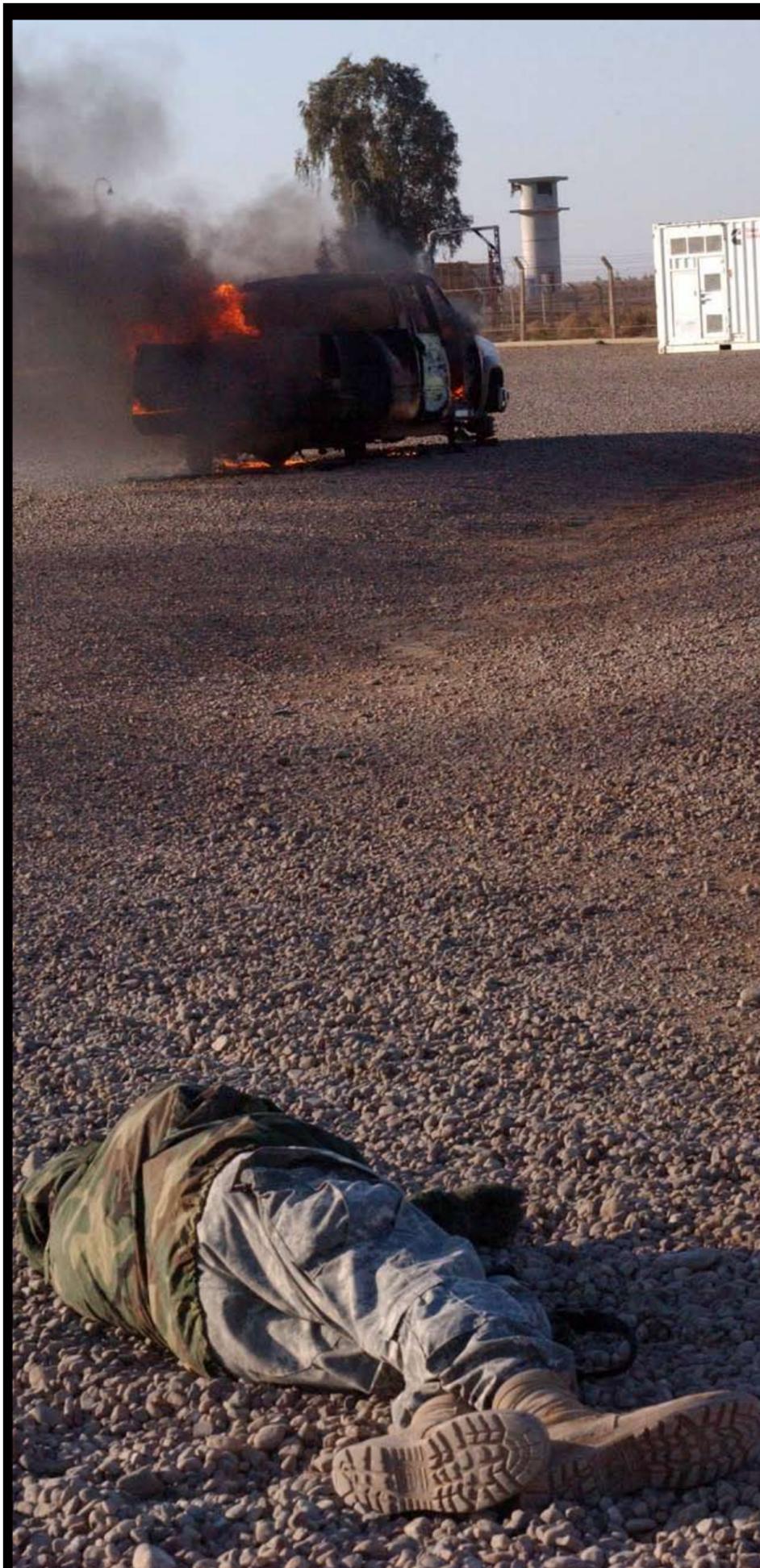
1st Sgt. Royal Shaefer, of the 1744th Transportation Company, greets actress Karri Turner as she arrives to sign autographs during her visit to LSA Anaconda on Dec 31.

Photos by Sgt. Kevin McSwain

TRAINING WITH FIRE

Mass casualty exercise keeps first responders alert

story and photos by Staff Sgt. Angela Archie



Spc. Scott Radtke, 60th Ordnance Company, firefighter from Nineveh, Ind. extinguishes the flames that were engulfing an exploded truck during mass casualty exercise.



A firefighter prepares his equipment before responding to the fire during the exercise.



Medic Sgt. Frank Richards, of the 206th ASMC, and Spc. Andrew York, 60th Ordnance Company, attend to "victim", Sgt. 1st Class Raul Resio's abdominal wounds sustained from an exploding truck.

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq -- A vehicle explosion kicked off a mass casualty exercise conducted by servicemembers here Dec. 28.

Green and white smoke plumes filled the air simulating a chlorine explosion at the main laundry facility caused by an explosive device mounted in a delivery truck.

The mass casualty exercise is a periodic event conducted to test and evaluate the post's emergency response assets' reaction time and communication systems during a chemical, biological, nuclear, or hazardous material incident, according to Maj. Ed Camacho, 657th Area Support Group force protection action officer.

Securing the area minimizes potential casualties resulting from an attack.

"Our job is to provide a safe, secure environment for these guys and minimize the injuries," said Air Force Capt. Mel Turner, Detachment Commander, 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron.

"The exercise will help us identify the course of action we need to take to achieve a cohesive, joint services environ-



Sgt. Sean Okumura, 60th Ordnance Company, Seattle, Wash., responds during the exercise.

ment."

First responders address casualties, site decontamination, and transporting victims and patients. Sgt. 1st Class Joe G. Hunt, Sr., surgeon section NCOIC of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Surgeon Cell was among the first of many to suffer serious injuries from a simulated vehicle explosion.

Responders completed an exterior sweep of the area and upon transmitting, the "all clear" announcement was made, signaling the end of the exercise.

"That was a lot of fun," said Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Powner, 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron fire chief.

Communication between services throughout the exercise is crucial.

The key to ensuring a successful mass casualty exercise is prior planning and communication between the components such as Joint Defense Operations Center, mayor's cell emergency operations center, fire department, medical units, and security forces according to Lt. Col. Madonel R. Pascual, 657th Area

Support Group, garrison installation information management OIC.

The planned exercise is practiced before hand.

"A communications exercise is conducted and rehearsed to verify battle captains on duty, call signs, and that all communication is green" said 1st Lt. Bobbie Box, 657th Area Support Group, garrison installation information management deputy.

Master Sgt. Ed Urbi, assistant chief of fire operations, 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, said that the exercise was positive.

"I think things went really well, as soon as we got the word from the Provost Marshall's Office, we knocked out the fire and treated the patients," he said.

Once the area clean-up was conducted, participants gathered at the Black Jack Education Center for an initial after action review.

"We look at coordinating with different agencies as well as being able to integrate all the pieces between the fire department, medical, security, and Joint Defense Operations Center," said Maj. David Hale, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) surgeon.

Hale's positive attitude was echoed by guest exercise observer, Maj. Robert W. Kimberlin, 258th Rear Area Operations Center executive officer from Tallil.

"I'm learning a lot from what you all did. We'd like to achieve the same operation tempo observed today," Kimberlin said. "The importance of setting specific goals is one thing I'm going to take away with me."

The lessons learned during the mass casualty exercise will be used to further evaluate plans and procedures with an eye towards updating standard operating procedures as necessary.

"We want to pass on skills and lessons learned to future units," Camacho said.



The sun sets over Harbor Gate after a long day of driving, some of the Turkish drivers bring supplies from as far away as Germany.

From sunrise to sunset

13th SC(E) team keeps convoys, supplies moving south from Turkey to servicemembers in Iraq

by Sgt. Kevin McSwain

Anaconda Times Staff

HARBUR GATE, Iraq—Along the Turkish border lies a small compound that has a big impact on the everyday life of servicemembers throughout Iraq.

Habur Gate, a convoy support center, is located in the green zone of northern Iraq.

“Habur Gate is one of the main points of entry into Iraq,” said Capt. Anthony Hall, 258th Movement Control Team commander. “Supplies for coalition forces travel through here before being distributed to different operating bases located all over Iraq.”

The 258th, which is attached to the 45th Sustainment Brigade, is responsible for

organizing and assembling convoys to distribute the supplies to servicemembers supporting the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) mission.

“You can think of Habur Gate as a huge truck stop,” said Sgt. 1st Class Brian K. Mattingly, detachment first sergeant. “The trucks carrying supplies are staged here until a convoy can be organized.”

The drivers of the trucks are from the neighboring country of Turkey, and they are escorted by coalition forces to the appropriate locations.

“This is a very unique area,” said Hall. “We have Kurdish guards providing security, Turkish drivers transporting supplies, and coalition forces providing convoy support.”

Hall said there is a great working relationship with the Kurdish and they are able to learn a lot about the Turkish culture through daily interaction with the local nationals.

“We have overcome many challenges through teamwork and communication between people of many different cultures and backgrounds,” Hall said.

Habur Gate is also responsible for taking care of the Soldiers who are a part of the convoy security provided by the 352nd Corps Support Battalion, based in Mosul, Iraq.

“We feed, house, and provide MWR support for Soldiers as they arrive and wait on a mission,” said Mattingly.

Mattingly said their team of 26 Soldiers provides food, maintenance, medical assistance,

and communications support to more than 100 Soldiers on any given day.

“We provide all these services in one building called the Marble Palace,” he said.

The Marble Palace is a four-story building, donated to coalition forces in 2003 by the Kurdish. The building provides housing for servicemembers and local nationals, as well as the Soldiers who arrive for convoy security.

As food, fuel, and supplies enter the gate, Soldiers at Habur Gate work hard to make sure servicemembers have what they need to accomplish their mission.

“We are here to make sure servicemembers get what they need,” said Mattingly. “And with the help of everyone here, we are able to supply a large part of Iraq with essential equipment.”

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Small unit, big mission

840th DDBS streamlines redeployments, container management

by Spc. Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown

Anaconda Times Staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – Lt. Col. James F. Sears took over command of the 840th Deployment Distribution Support Battalion from Lt. Col. Todd C. Robbins in a change of command ceremony here Jan. 2.

“I believe I am handing over to you a world-class unit,” Robbins said addressing Sears.

The 840th is a unique unit in that its actual duty station is currently in Iraq.

“We are an enduring unit, we don’t go away,” Robbins said. “As far as providing distribution services to the war fighter, we are here.”

The small unit’s mission is three-fold, according to Robbins from Berwick, Pa. Their mission includes container management, the re-deployment of troops, and the booking of cargo from its origin to its destination.

As part of their job re-deploying troops, the 840th has the pleasure of knowing they are helping Soldiers pack up to go home after a year’s deployment. They send teams out to different Forward Operating Bases to help other units pack up gear and equipment, and make sure it gets out of theater and back to the unit’s home station.

“I enjoy being part of the 840th,” said Chief Warrant Officer Sultan Erick Gamboa from San Diego, Calif., a mobility officer for



Lt. Col. Todd C. Robbins (center), commander of the 840th Deployment Distribution Support Battalion, faces his replacement, Lt. Col. James F. Sears in a change of command ceremony here Jan. 2.

Photo by Spc. Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown

the 840th. “I get to see Soldiers go home to their families, it’s very rewarding.”

Based out of Turkey until 2003 and formerly a transportation unit, one of the goals of the 840th is to cut down on the amount of non-essential containers on the road, and to streamline its processes.

“If we can take a Soldier off the road instead of them guarding a container on the road, we would much rather use contracted assets,” Robbins said explaining their push to use more private contractors such as their partners, American United Logistics, and Armored Group International.

He said decreasing the amount of congestion on the roads in Iraq is a big deal for his unit.

Some of the success the 840th has had in the past few years has contributed greatly to movement effectiveness and military spending.

The battalion first arrived in Iraq in January 2005 when container detention costs were about \$14 million per month. The price has now dropped to \$180 thousand per month, just two years later.

Robbins said the unit has also made the shipment of goods from Kuwait to Iraq seven days faster, eliminated the need for 450 contracted assets, and generated a total savings of about \$22 million.

Spc. Jo’van Williams also from San Diego, a re-deployment specialist with the 840th, said the best part of the job is being able to send troops home, especially when they don’t have nice living conditions.

“Usually they are really excited to see us,” Williams said.

The incoming commander, Sears, said that his number one priority is to keep Soldiers off the road, and that he would like to maximize movement capabilities during his year with the 840th.

“I’m going to do my best to convert Iraq and Kuwait to look like what the States, Germany, and Korea look like as far as commercial movement,” Sears said.



Air Force Maj. Larry Harris (second from left), uses a pair of regular scissors, while William Roberts (second from right), the site manager for the Electronic Sustainment Support Center, cuts the ribbon to three new communications buildings on Logistical Support Area Anaconda, with some bigger ones Dec. 29.

Photos by Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown

SUPPORT, from Page 1

and equipment,” said Brian L. Kelly of Ellsworth, Wisc., the Electronics Sustainment Support Center manager for Iraq.

The services offered aid the war fighter, and allow Soldiers forward communication support on today’s battlefield, a valuable tool.

By bringing the services to one location, and by enhancing the resources to repair communications equipment, it will quicken the time it takes to fix broken tools needed inside and outside the wire.

“It’s an expanding of operations as we pick up additional repair agreements, we needed more space,” Kelly said, explaining the need for the new buildings.

Kelly estimated that with the additions to their production, their output will expand by 25 percent.

“It’s going to be a shorter time for re-

pair,” said David Horne of Sumter, S.C., senior civilian representative for the 402nd Army Field Support Brigade.

“(Our services) bring logistics closer to the Soldier,” Horne said.

The buildings, located behind the education center, are hardened, and are examples of the best structures that can be built in Iraq, according to Maj. Eric Andrews of Los Angeles, Calif., the project engineer for military construction, Army Corps of Engineers.

“It’s probably the nicest construction you’ll see in Iraq,” Andrews said.

The buildings already withstood a test of their durability, when a mortar landed outside one during construction, damaging the outside walls.

The building stayed intact though, and is a testament to its strength.

The new CECOM services will begin operation soon, and will improve communications support to the war fighter from Iraq’s logistics hub, Anaconda.

LSA ANACONDA RELIGIOUS SCHEDULE

Religious schedule subject to change

Roman Catholic Mass

Saturday 5 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel
 Saturday 8 p.m. Provider Chapel
 Sunday 7:30 a.m. Freedom Chapel
 Sunday 9 a.m. Tuskegee Chapel
 Sunday 5:30 p.m. Provider Chapel
 Sunday 11 a.m. Air Force Hospital
 Monday - Friday 5 p.m. Tuskegee

Sacrament of Reconciliation

30 minutes prior to each mass

Protestant-Contemporary

Sunday 10 a.m. Town Hall

Latter Day Saints

Sunday 1 p.m. Provider Chapel

Sunday 4 p.m. Freedom Chapel

Sunday 7 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel

Church of Christ

Sunday 2 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel

Islamic Prayer

Friday 12:30 p.m. Provider Chapel

Samoan Congregational Service

Sunday 4 p.m. Provider Chapel

Friday Shabbat Service

Friday 7 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel

Protestant-Gospel

Sunday, 11 a.m. MWR East Building

Sunday 11:30 a.m. Freedom Chapel

Sunday 2 p.m. Air Force Hospital Chapel

Sunday 7 p.m. Provider Chapel

Protestant Praise and Worship

Sunday 9 a.m. MWR East Building

Sunday 9 a.m. Eden Chapel

Sunday 7 p.m. Freedom Chapel

Sunday 7:30 p.m. Eden Chapel

Wednesday 7 p.m. Freedom Chapel

Protestant-Traditional

Sunday 9:30 a.m. Air Force Hospital

Sunday 9:30 a.m. Provider Chapel

Sunday 10 a.m. Freedom Chapel

Sunday 5:30 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel

Sunday 8:15 p.m. Air Force Hospital

Non-Denominational

Sunday 9 a.m. Signal Chapel

Non-Denominational Spanish

Sunday 2 p.m. Freedom Chapel

Protestant-Gospel

Sunday 3:30 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel

Protestant-Liturgical

Sunday 11 a.m. Tuskegee Chapel

January 10**Aerobics**

6 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

Yoga

6 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

Boxing

7:30 to 9 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

Rock Climbing Class

8 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

8-Ball Tourney

8 p.m.
West Recreation Center

Madden '05

8 p.m.
West Recreation Center

9-Ball Tourney

8 p.m.
East Rec Center

DJ Classes

8 p.m.
East Rec Center

January 11**Tae Kwon Do**

7 to 8:30 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

NOGI Jiu-Jitsu

9 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

Level 2 Swim Lessons

7 p.m.
Indoor Pool

Level 1 Swim Lessons

8 p.m.
Indoor Pool

ANACONDA ACTIVITIES

Your one-stop connection to activities around LSA Anaconda
to add your activity to the event calendar, email anaconda.times@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

Battlefield Ground

8 p.m.
East Rec Center

January 12**Aerobics**

5:30 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

Boxing

7:30 to 9 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

Chess Tourney

8 p.m.
West Recreation Center

4-4 Volleyball Tourney

8 p.m.
West MWR Fitness Center

Caribbean Dance

8 p.m.
East Rec Center

January 13**Aerobics**

noon to 1 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

Open Court Volleyball

6 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

500m Fins/Kickboard

9 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.
Indoor Pool

Texas Hold'em

8 p.m.
West Recreation Center

Aerobics

8 p.m.
West MWR Fitness Center

Salsa Dance

8 p.m.
East Rec Center

Tae Kwon Do

7 to 8:30 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

NOGI Jiu-Jitsu

9 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

Level 2 Swim Lessons

7 p.m.
Indoor Pool

Level 1 Swim Lessons

8 p.m.
Indoor Pool

Command & Conquer

8 p.m.
West Recreation Center

Dodgeball Tourney

8 p.m.
West MWR Fitness Center

Texas Hold'em

8 p.m.
East Rec Center

January 14**Aerobics**

5:30 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

Boxing

7:30 to 9 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

100m Butterfly

10 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.
Indoor Pool

Spades Tourney

8 p.m.
West Recreation Center

4-4 Volleyball Tourney

8 p.m.
West MWR Fitness Center

Caribbean Dance

8 p.m.
East Rec Center

January 15**Aerobics**

noon to 1 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

Open Court Volleyball

6 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

One-Mile Swim Race

10 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.
Indoor Pool

Texas Hold'em

8 p.m.
West Recreation Center

Aerobics

8 p.m.
West MWR Fitness Center

Salsa Dance

8 p.m.
East Rec Center

January 16**Open Court Volleyball**

6 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

Tae Kwon Do

7 to 8:30 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu

9 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

Green Bean Karaoke

8 p.m.
Green Bean Coffee Shop

5-5 Basketball Tourney

8 p.m.
West MWR Fitness Center

Poker

8 p.m.
East Rec Center

January 17**Aerobics**

6 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

Boxing

7:30 to 9 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

Rock Climbing Class

8 p.m.
East MWR Fitness Center

One-Hour Swim-A-Thon

Two-Person Teams
5:30 a.m.
Outdoor Pool

Jam Session

8 p.m.
West Recreation Center

Aerobics

8 p.m.
West MWR Fitness Center

196,850

the number of inches in the Martin Luther King Jr. Run
Jan. 15 at 6:30 a.m. at Holt Memorial Stadium
register between Jan. 2 and 12 at any MWR fitness facility

82nd SB leaders strengthen warrior spirit

story and photos by Staff Sgt. Felix A. Figueroa

CAMP ADDER, IRAQ – We’ve all seen the war movies depicting a battled-hardened soldier running out of ammunition then charging up a hill with brass knuckles or a knife and engaging in some serious hand-to-hand combat.

Since the Global War on Terrorism began, the Department Of Defense has restructured and re-introduced hand-to-hand combat training to troops known as combatives. As far back as WW I, combatives has been a part of military training, but it wasn’t till after WW II, that combatives went from being a side note, to being an integral part of training. It was an Army colonel from that era, Col. Rex Applegate, author of “Kill or Be Killed,” an early combatives instructor who said it best: “Unarmed combat is just what the name implies- a system of fighting intended for use when weapons are not available or when their use is not advisable.”

The instruction of combatives is so imperative today, that Non-Commissioned Officers in Drill Sergeant School are required to undergo an eight-hour block of instruction and must be level one qualified in order to graduate.

“I was instantly hooked and hungry for more. I was the first DS in my company to be certified level one and two,” said Sgt. 1st Class William Bravo, 82nd Sustainment Brigade Battle NCO. The 38-year-old New Yorker continues to teach combatives and said the

heart of combatives is to instill the Warrior Ethos.

“To have the courage to (come) close with the enemy and never accept defeat or quit,” he said. “That’s what I want all the troops I come in contact with to walk away with more than any drill I can ever teach.”

82nd Sustainment Brigade Troops and Soldiers everywhere must first understand the basics of combatives before training begins.

There is not a lot of throwing and hardly any striking in early levels though.

The Modern Army Combatives Program level one teaches three basic drills, which form a core. Each student learns to maneuver between positions constantly and how to use the opponent’s weight against them. “At first I didn’t want to do combatives, but the hands-on training left me wanting more,” said Sgt. Arnaud Bouhan, 82nd Sustainment Brigade.

For the 26-year-old Ivory Coast native, this is not his first time participating in combatives. “The last time I did this training was with my old unit and it wasn’t hands-on. We did the “talk through” method and before I knew it, time up!”

Army Field Manual 3-25.150, chapter one, paragraph 1-2, states the purpose of combatives training is to keep Soldiers prepared to use different levels of force in an environment where conflict may change from low intensity to high intensity over a matter of hours.

Many military operations, such as peacekeeping missions or non-combatant evacuation, may restrict the use of deadly weapons. Hand-to-hand combatives training will save lives when an unexpected confrontation occurs.

“The training was good. Not only was it an opportunity to do something different for PT, I feel it enhanced cohesion within the section,” said Staff Sgt. James N. Blake, 82nd Sustainment Brigade. “I’ve seen Ultimate Fighting Championships before and that’s what I was expecting. What I learned was that you do not have to be a big person to take someone down. It’s all about technique, timing and confidence in what you know.”

Mental calmness, situational awareness, dominant body positioning and physical balance are some of the basic principles underlying all combatives techniques. Many regard the late

Bruce Lee, famous martial arts action movie star, as the father of modern mixed martial arts. Lee’s evaluation of traditional martial arts exposed vulnerabilities. Lee was a consummate professional who mixed modern fighting styles with traditional ones, creating a versatile and flexible defensive posture against possible physical attacks.

With the high operations tempo, especially in urban terrain, combatives is crucial to the development of our modern fighting force. Gen. George S. Patton once said, “Very few people have ever been killed with the bayonet or saber, but the fear of having their guts explored with cold steel in the hands of battle-maddened men has won many a fight.”



82nd Sustainment Brigade Soldiers go through combatives procedures.



Sgt. 1st Class William Bravo demonstrates proper submission methods.

SUSTAINER REEL TIME THEATER

(Schedule is subject to change)

Wednesday, Jan. 10
 5 p.m. Flag of our Fathers (R)
 8 p.m. Night at the Museum (PG)

Thursday, Jan. 11
 5 p.m. Casino Royale (PG-13)
 8 p.m. Santa Clause 3 (G)

Friday, Jan. 12
 2 p.m. Flushed Away (PG)
 5 p.m. Flag of our Fathers (R)
 8:30 p.m. Borat (R)

Saturday, Jan 13
 2 p.m. A Good Year (PG-13)
 5 p.m. Borat (R)
 8 p.m. Saw III (R)

Sunday, Jan. 14
 2 p.m. Borat (R)
 5 p.m. Santa Clause 3 (G)
 8 p.m. Flag of our Fathers (R)

Monday, Jan. 15
 5 p.m. Santa Clause 3 (G)
 8 p.m. A Good Year (PG-13)

Tuesday, Jan. 16
 5 p.m. Saw III (R)
 8 p.m. Borat (R)

CMO, from Page 16

Justin D. Helfer of Columbia, S.C., the civil military operations officer for 2-82.

Helfer explained that the missions in Anaconda's surrounding towns are better securing the base. He said the 1-167 is only responsible for a certain distance outside Anaconda's walls, but these missions are above the required duty.

"It's a Force Protection issue," Helfer said. "If the (Iraqi) people are happy, they are less likely to cooperate with terrorists."

"When we go out there, it is a definite show of goodwill," he said.

York said the programs the Army has been working on with the Iraqi locals are helping change the people's opinion of Americans. He said one of the biggest problems in Iraq is unemployment, and many young Iraqi men who need to provide for their families resort to making money in less-than-respectable ways.

"If you look at why a lot of attacks happen outside the LSA, it leads back to unemployment," York said.

He said that it is hard to place a number on actual unemployment rates in Iraq, but estimates it is about 50 to 60 percent.

The programs the 1-167 RSTA and the 2-82 FA are working on in the local towns help boost the local economy by providing jobs. When a project is initiated, the Army seeks out local Iraqi contractors to do the construction, plumbing, or electrical work needed, so towns are being improved while providing workers are getting a paycheck.

"A lot of young men without work would rather do honorable work," York said. "We are providing them with that opportunity."

Sometimes it's not always easy to find towns that want the Army's help, Helfer said. If the town leaders don't want to work with the U.S. Army, then they don't pursue projects in that location. For the most part though, he said the local Iraqis are grateful to receive the help.

The way which towns are chosen to have projects started in them is not a complicated process. Soldiers on the frequent patrols through the towns will speak to the locals, asking them about their living conditions, and if any major improvements are needed. If the help is wanted, the project is feasible, and it is approved, it will most likely be done, Helfer said.

The projects the small convoy checked up on at a primary school during the Dec. 26 visit included 16 recently replaced windows, a new

water-pipe system, and a bathroom improvement project.

Helfer met with school administrators to discuss the pricing of new bathrooms, if a contractor had been contacted yet, and also checked on the conditions of the newly-installed water pipes.

The school, built in 1979, had never had running water before, and only primitive bathrooms. With the Army's help, the school is creating a better learning environment for the approximate 950 children who attend it each week.

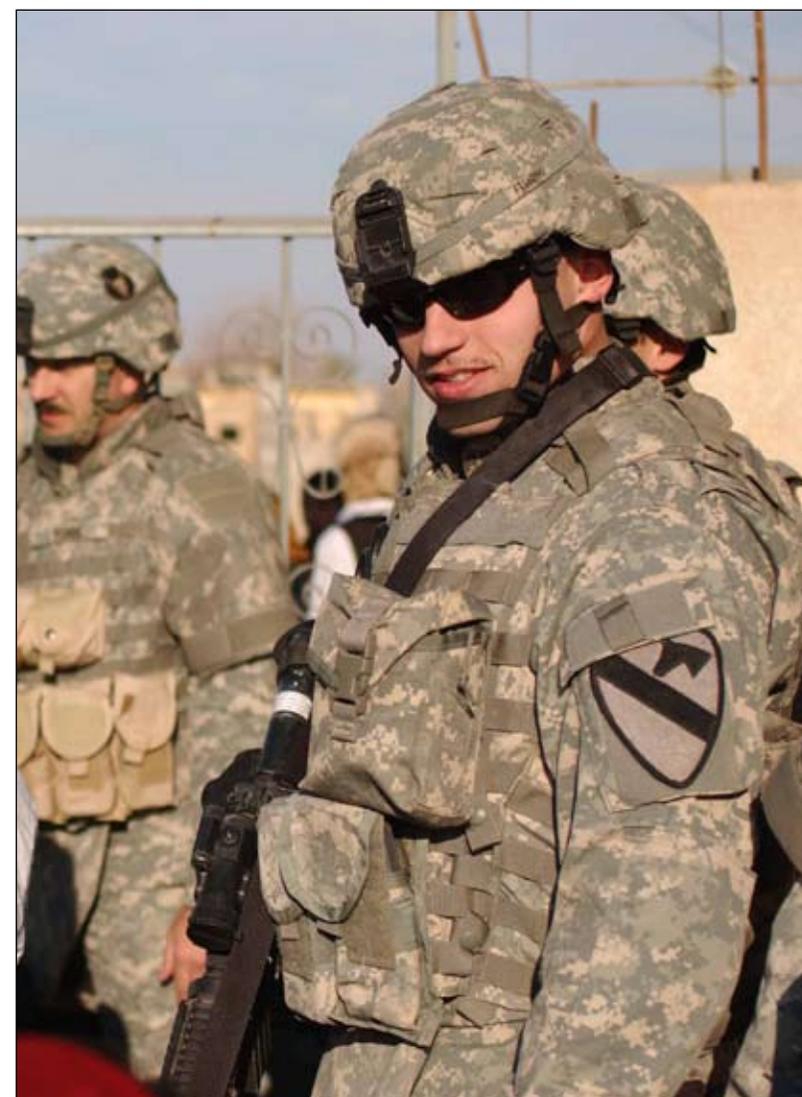
The 1-167 will be leaving in

the spring and is currently trying to wrap up pending projects in the months before its departure. Although they aren't sure if the unit replacing them will continue the missions they started, the squadron hopes to sell their replacements on it.

"We hope that the new unit does take over our mission," Helfer said. Until that is determined, the 1-167 will hand over their projects to the 2-82 for safe keeping, and to bring as much improvement as possible to the surrounding area until they leave.



An Iraqi girl stands alone outside the school while others are in class.



Spc. Hubert Sowizral, a medic, looks on as the Iraqi schoolchildren are let out of school for the day.



An Iraqi boy gives Soldiers a wave as he passes them on the road.

HaganaH F.i.g.h.t. Class

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All-star weekend slam dunks into Anaconda



John Hardy rises above the rim to execute one of his many contest-winning dunks during the all-star weekend slam-dunk competition Dec. 30 at Sprung Gym.



Judges hold up their score cards so the announcer can tally the results after a contestant completes his series of dunks during the all-star weekend slam-dunk competition on Dec. 30 at Sprung Gym.

March Madness comes three months early to Anaconda's Sprung Gym

story and photos by Sgt. Kevin McSwain

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq—Numerous servicemembers and civilians participated in an all-star weekend which began Dec 30th at Sprung Gym here.

The event consisted of a three-point contest, a slam-dunk competition, and culminated with male and female all-star games on Dec. 31.

Players for the two games were chosen for their performance in the latest basketball league.

"Each player was chosen based on their sportsmanship, ability, and military bearing," said Yolanda Gaddy, Morale, Welfare, and Recreation East sports director.

There was a three-point shooting contest for both males and females, with the winner of each category competing for the overall three-point championship.

Spc. Latonya Curley won the female competition, and had to take on Spc. Brad Heckler in the final round. Heckler became the shoot-out champion after defeating Curley.

The slam-dunk contest, which was

open to any servicemember who wanted to participate, was held after the shootout.

John Hardy, who works in Sprung Gym in the MWR East sports department, won the dunk contest in convincing fashion, obtaining a perfect score in every round.

The main event showcased the talents of players from the Eastern Conference versus players of the Southern Conference.

"The league is divided into four divisions, which was split into two conferences," Gaddy said. "As teams sign up at the beginning of the season, they are randomly placed into a division which is in one of the two conferences, modeled after professional basketball."

"The Eastern Conference won the male competition by a score of 111-107," she said. "And the Southern Conference won the female competition by a score of 27-25."

The festivities entertained privates to sergeant majors, lieutenants to lieutenant colonels and it proved that MWR is an excellent way for servicemembers to relax and have fun during their deployment.

The Army Reserve Retention Office at LSA Anaconda

Current bonuses are:

\$15,000 for 6 years and \$7,500 for 3 year reenlistments

Warrant Officer Applications -- Direct Commission Applications

AGR Recruiter Applications -- RC to AC Packets -- IRR to Select Reserve Transfers

For more information call SFC Bettina Oberkirsch at 318-829-1129

Building 4135 on New Jersey Ave Behind the Mayor Cell



A gunner sets aside some vegetables local Iraqis handed him as he pulled security with his vehicle outside the secondary school in Al Fadoos.



2nd Lt. Justin D. Helfer of Columbia, S.C., the civil military operations officer for 2-82 smiles as he interacts with some local children.

1-167 wraps up civil military operations before heading home

story and photos by Spc. Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – On Boxing Day, the day after Christmas, a handful of vehicles left Anaconda’s gates to travel down a dusty road to visit a nearby town in the heart of Iraqi farm land.

As part of the ongoing effort to build up a good relationship and rapport with the surrounding villages of Anaconda, Soldiers of 1st Squadron, 167th Cavalry Regiment (Reconnaissance, Surveillance, Target Acquisition), and 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, stopped in the town of Al Fadoos to check up on current projects there.

Projects in the local towns include providing water systems, school improvements, and route repair, which were all started voluntarily by the RSTA.

The squadron is in charge of base security

for Anaconda, so their duties pertain to the base only. However, the unit believes that in order to protect the base, they have to become involved in the local communities outside it, to learn what they can of possible threats, and build friendships with the people who may turn into allies.

“In order to defend the base, you can’t just stay on the base,” said Capt. Benjamin P. York from Lincoln, Neb., the information operations officer for squadron.

The 1-167 works with cannoneers, who owns the battle space around the base, to complete its missions outside the wire in a unique partnership.

“We’ve been working hand-in-hand the whole time we have been here,” said 2nd Lt.

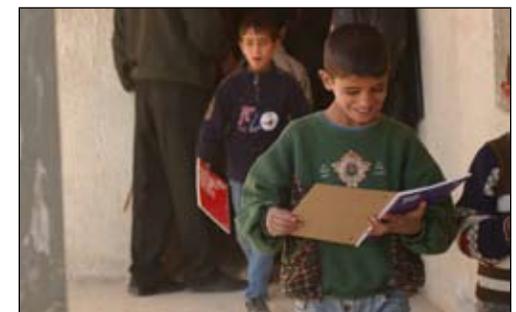
See CMO, Page 14



An Iraqi schoolgirl takes pause from her studies to accept some candy handed out by Soldiers in her classroom.



Helfer speaks to school officials with the help of an interpreter about the conditions of a new water system at the school.



An Iraqi boy walks back to class after receiving a notebook.



An Iraqi boy shows his delight at a visit from U.S. troops.



Iraqi children line up as a few of the donated supplies are handed out by school officials.