

ANACONDA TIMES

JANUARY 24, 2007

PROUDLY SERVING LSA ANACONDA

Back of the Formation
SOLDIER BRINGS HUMOR OF
MILITARY LIFE TO COMIC STRIP
Page 6

**POWER OF
HELPING**
Page 16



Vol. 4, Issue 4

1/34 BCT >> RSTA



1-167 squadron Soldiers interact with local children during a recent mission near LSA Anaconda.

A "Day in the life"

MWR program takes life on Anaconda back home to family members

See Page 10

LSAA unit has tour extended in Iraq

by Sgt. KaRonda Fleming

Anaconda Times Staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – Soldiers with Task Force 1st Squadron, 167th Cavalry Regiment (Reconnaissance Surveillance Target Acquisition) were surprised by the news they received of a 125-day extension here.

The 1/167 RSTA is a subordinate unit of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, Red Bulls.

The extension will affect approximately 400 Soldiers, said Lt. Col. Martin R. Apprich, commander of 1/167 RSTA who supports the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), with the mission of base defense operations at LSAA in Balad.

"We will continue the same mission at the same location," he said. "We don't anticipate any changes."

Apprich, a native of Papillion, Neb., said, "We have made it this far, and coming on 18 months now, so what's a few more months. I know that four more months is painful, but if we've made it this far, this is just one step further and it's not that big of a step."

Family readiness groups are the vital link to keep the squadron connected, Apprich said. There is very strong leadership within the FRG's, and Nebraska's state leadership engages those leaders on a daily basis.

See EXTENSION, Page 15



Staff Sgt. Randy Birdwell, a truck driver assigned to the 2nd Military Integration and Transition Team, explains roll-over drills to Iraqi soldiers of the 2nd Iraqi Motor Transportation Regiment at An Numanayah Army Training Base.

"I will never quit."

Master Sgt. Douglas Taylor from Houston, Texas
C company 1/149th Aviation Regiment >> First Sergeant



IA rescue hostages, detain suspects, capture weapons

BAGHDAD — Iraqi Soldiers freed two hostages, detained 10 suspects, and seized a weapons cache in several recent incidents throughout Iraq, Coalition officials said.

Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, freed two hostages held by insurgents during a raid Thursday in eastern Baghdad, U.S. military officials said.

The raid also uncovered a weapons cache, including mortars, 60 mm mortar rounds, 130 mm projectiles encased in concrete, homemade bombs and blasting caps.

Last week, Iraqi Army Special Forces captured four suspects during operations in the Sadr City neighborhood, officials said. The suspects are believed to be leaders of a kidnapping and murder cell responsible for the deaths of Iraqi civilians.

The Iraqi-led operation, with Coalition advisers, targeted men suspected of violence against innocent Iraqis, including kidnapping, illegal trials and executions. They also are suspected of organizing and directing sectarian-based mortar attacks on neighborhoods surrounding Sadr City.

Iraqi Forces detained three additional people for questioning.

On Tuesday, 1st Iraqi Army Division troops, with Coalition advisers, captured the suspected leader of an insurgent cell during operations in Ramadi, officials said. The suspect is thought to be responsible for trafficking weapons and homemade bombs used in attacks against Iraqi civilians and security forces.

Recent Iraqi Police graduates begin working in Baqubah

BAQUBAH — About 125 Iraqi Police officers, assigned to various units in the area, graduated from the first Iraqi Police Training Academy in Baqubah recently.

“Officers from the Emergency Ready Forces, the Quick Reaction Forces, and Baqubah Iraqi Police participated in this two-week long training academy,” said Maj. John J. Herrman, Task Force Blue operations officer. “Those officers are now ready to assume their duties as the rule of law enforcers here in Baqubah.”

The training for the IP officers was

provided by their own Iraqi instructors and special weapons and tactics team, otherwise known as SWAT, Herrman said.

“Instructors from the Tactical Iraqi Police Academy provided the classroom portion of the training; the range cadre taught weapons handling and maintenance, and SWAT members assisted with the hands-on portion of the training,” Herrman said. “We provided oversight through the (Iraqi police liaison officer) and our Military Police.”

The training included classes on democratic policing, the Iraqi Constitution, rule of law, weapons safety, proper firing techniques for both AK-47 rifles and handguns, shoot and maneuver, hands-on defensive techniques, dismounted patrolling as a member of a team, mounted patrols, react to improvised explosive devices, first aid, and entering and clearing a building, Herrman said.

He also said during this training, the IPs received their new uniforms and equipment that signifies they are police officers.

“The training academy will continue providing classes every day through the end of January, and quarterly after that,” Herrman said. “They expect to have at least 25 percent of the Baqubah Police Force trained by the end of the third training cycle.”

“For most police officers here, this was their first formal training,” he continued. “They have been out on the streets mixing it up for years, never fully understanding the proper way to use a weapon, the rule of law, the constitution they are to support, or how to conduct themselves as a policeman. We hope that the course turns out a more ethically and tactically proficient policeman, able to better enforce the laws of Diyala, and to serve and protect all Iraqis.”

“The Iraqi Policemen are some of the bravest people we have ever met,” said an American police advisor supporting Task Force Blue. “They risk their lives, and those of their families, on a daily basis trying to bring law and order to the streets of their cities. The training we are providing is designed to save some of those lives and extract a high price from the terrorists and insurgents who choose to attack these officers.”

Maj. Gen. Ghassan Adnan Awad Al-Bawi, the Diyala chief of police, attended the ceremony, and provided the graduates a motivational speech.



About 125 Iraqi Police officers, from the Baqubah area, graduated from the first Iraqi Police Training Academy in Baqubah. The training for the IP officers was provided by Iraqi instructors.

Year of historic highs, heartbreaking lows

BAGHDAD — “Historic highs and heartbreaking lows” – that is how the Multi-National Force - Iraq spokesman summed up 2006 in Iraq during a press conference Wednesday at the Combined Press Conference Center here.

Maj. Gen. William B. Caldwell IV said that despite the notable achievements the Iraqi people made in 2006, key challenges still lie ahead.

As a major achievement in 2006, Caldwell cited the establishment of the first permanent democratically elected government in Iraq’s history.

Contrasting the new government with the previous regime, Caldwell said, “Months of negotiation produced a national unity government, rather than a government that privileges the interest of one sect or the ethnicity of another.”

He also referenced the first significant pieces of legislation passed by the Iraqi Council of Representatives – the Import Liberalization Law and the Investment Law – as signs of progress.

“The Iraqi people continue to

overcome the legacy of 35 years of brutal dictatorship and to build a secure, stable and self-governing nation,” he said.

Besides establishing a national unity government, Caldwell said the Iraqi people took significant steps toward assuming responsibility for their own security in 2006.

“On January 1st, 2006, only one of Iraqis’ 10 Army divisions was responsible for its own battle space,

meaning it would plan, coordinate and conduct security operations independent of Coalition forces. Today 80 percent of Iraqis’ divisions are in the lead,” he said.

Caldwell also noted that in 2006 the Iraqi Army and Police

assumed overall responsibility for all law enforcement and security activities in three provinces: Al-Muthanna, Dhi Qar and An-Najaf.

However, while these achievements are important, Caldwell said that “neither the Multi-National Force – Iraq nor the Iraqi people achieved the strategic conditions we wanted at the end of 2006.”



Maj. Gen. William B. Caldwell IV speaks to members of the media during a press conference Wednesday at the Combined Press Information Center.

Learning from the past



82nd Sustainment Brigade senior leadership engage in cultural immersion during a session of officer professional development to the Ziggurat of Ur near Camp Adder, Iraq.

ANACONDA TIMES

Anaconda Times is authorized for publication by the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) for the LSA Anaconda community. The contents of the Anaconda Times are unofficial and are not to be considered the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, including the Department of Defense or Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Anaconda Times is a command information newspaper in accordance with Army Regulation 360-1.

Anaconda Times is published weekly by the Stars and Stripes central office, with a circulation of 5,000 papers.

The Public Affairs Office is on New Jersey Ave. in building 4136, DSN 318-829-1234. Anaconda Times, HHC 13th SC(E), APO AE 09391. Web site at www.mnf-iraq.com/publications_theater.htm

Contact anaconda.times@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

13th SC(E) Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Michael J. Terry

Chief of the Anaconda Consolidated Press Center

Maj. Jay Adams
jay.adams@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

210th MPAD Acting Commander

Maj. Robert W. Catlin
robert.catlin@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

Print OIC

Capt. Perry Jarmon
perry.jarmon@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

Editor

Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bell
mark.bell@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

Copy Editor

SpC. Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown
alexandra.brown@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

Staff Writers

Staff Sgt. Angela Archie
angela.archie@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

Sgt. Gary A. Witte
gary.witte@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

Sgt. Joel F. Gibson
joel.f.gibson@us.army.mil

Sgt. Kevin McSwain
kevin.mcswain@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

Sgt. KaRonda Fleming
karonda.fleming@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

SpC. Amanda Solitario
amanda.solitario@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

Contributing Public Affairs Offices

332 Air Expeditionary Wing
36th Combat Aviation Brigade
402nd Army Field Support Brigade
411 Engineer Brigade
164th Corps Support Group
657th Area Support Group

1/34 Brigade Combat Team
45th Sustainment Brigade
82nd Sustainment Brigade
593rd Corps Support Group
15th Sustainment Brigade

Iraqi, Coalition Forces combat IED teams

by Spc. Mike Alberts

3rd BCT, 4th ID PAO

KIRKUK, Iraq — As the first morning light peaked over the desert horizon, helicopters landed on fields outside their objective. Simultaneously, dozens of tactical vehicles crawled into position. The air and ground assault into this deceptively quiet region of the Kirkuk Province was underway, and would yield impressive results.

Recently, hundreds of Iraqi Security and Coalition Forces isolated, cleared and assessed eight villages in the northern part of the Rashaad Valley just outside of Kirkuk, Iraq, during a joint, coordinated air and ground operation.

The Rashaad Valley borders the southern end of the city of Kirkuk. The valley is home to thousands of Iraqis in dozens of small villages.

The northern end of the valley is partially wedged between two roadways that provide primary access into Kirkuk. Improvised explosive devices buried under and beside these roads are frequent hazards. Those responsible for much of the IED activity live among citizens within the targeted villages, according to Capt. Jonathan Graebener, company commander, Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team.

“There’s a lot of enemy activity in the form of IEDs and other criminal cells that operate in the area,” explained Graebener. “Additionally, this particular location doesn’t receive a lot of attention from the government in terms of infrastructure repair and other basic needs because of the poor security situation,” he continued.

“The goal was to go into these villages to disrupt, detain and capture IED cells and networks, and to make an assessment of the eight villages for future civil military operations.”

To accomplish the complex mission required the coordination and synchronization of hundreds of Iraqi Security Force and Coalition Force personnel, and dozens of assets.

The Iraqi Army’s 2nd Battalion, 3rd



Iraqi police officers with Kirkuk’s Emergency Services Unit mobilize outside of two villages in the Rashaad Valley as part of a combined Iraqi Security Force and Coalition Force air and ground operation outside of Kirkuk, Iraq. The mission resulted in the detention of several anti-Iraqi forces involved in IED cells and the confiscation of significant amounts of bomb-making materials.

Brigade, 4th Army Division set up pre-dawn blocking positions around the objectives to monitor traffic in and out of the area while more than 100 officers with the Iraqi police’s elite Emergency Services Unit (ESU) integrated with Coalition Forces to conduct the air and ground operation, according to Capt. Ryan Nacin, battalion task force fire support and assistant plans officer, 2-35.

“Alpha company 2-35 was the main [coalition force] effort for both the air and ground operation,” said Nacin. “However, [among other specialty units attached to us] the operation included our battalion command and control element, a quick air reaction force platoon from Bravo Company, a mortar platoon from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, a security element from Delta Company and route clearing teams from our Brigade Special Troops Battalion,” he said.

In addition to these ground elements, aviation attack, reconnaissance and troop transport assets were provided by 2nd Cavalry Regiment, 25th Combat Aviation Brigade, and equipment and personnel from 25th CAB’s 2nd and 3rd

Battalions. Squadron 6.

“One goal was to clear [the area] of the overt enemy presence which included IED emplacer cells. Doing so will create a more permissive environment for us to work in,” said Lt. Col. Michael Browder, battalion commander, 2-35. “The other piece is the civil military operation,” continued Browder. “We linked up with village elders, leaders, and other people of influence to develop a better sense of these towns to assess their needs.”

Such assessments revealed that some of the primary issues were as simple as fixing a broken water pipe to better supply clean water and refurbishing existing schools and health clinics.

“The whole operation was successful on many levels,” said Browder. “We captured and detained a number of people of interest. We detained a number of IED emplacers which helps us identify the IED cells in the area. We cleared and recovered several IEDs from roads. We made contact in every village. We conducted our civil affairs assessments. And we collected enough evidence to put some IED cell members in jail for a long, long time.”



A Humvee door is pulled off using the Rat Claw, a flat steel hook developed by 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (LI) Safety Officer Bill Del Solar. Del Solar developed the Rat Claw to aid in extraction of Soldiers from Humvees when the doors are damaged or wedged shut.

Safety officer develops lifesaving tool

by Spc. Chris McCann

2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. (LI)

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq - One of the top killers of Soldiers in Iraq isn’t necessarily combat-related.

Since operations began in March of 2003, many Soldiers have been killed when they can’t escape a Humvee - often because it has rolled into one of Iraq’s numerous irrigation canals.

When an armored truck is upside-down or on its side, it can take three Soldiers to push a door open enough to get out, and if the doors are sunken into the mud, it can be nearly impossible.

“If you go into a canal, there’s a really good chance you won’t come out alive,” said Bill Del Solar, the safety officer for 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry).

Del Solar has been working to change that.

Because a Soldier’s chances of being in a vehicle roll-over are relatively high, and the odds of making it out relatively low, Del Solar worked, during his last rotation to Iraq in 2004 and 2005, to develop what is known as the Rat Claw.

“We were having trouble with vehicles,” said Del Solar, who is seeing the fruits of his labor on his second deployment to Iraq. “We saw the combat locks, and that Soldiers couldn’t get out.”

Combat locks keep the doors shut in the event of an improvised explosive device detonation, shielding the passengers. But they make the door harder to open - which can be just as deadly.

“The fire chief and I put our heads together to figure out what we could do,” said Del Solar, a native of Erie, Pa. “We realized if you could get your hooks in, you could get the Soldiers out.”

After some experimentation, they developed the Rat Claw, a flat, steel hook that attaches to almost anything - the humvee’s built-in winch or towing hook, a chain set, or aircraft cable.

One tug with another vehicle can open the door, or if necessary pull it completely off.

“If you get a little momentum, you can pull anything off,” Del Solar said.

From start to finish, the operation takes less than a minute under ideal circumstances.

“In the worst case, from the time the vehicle goes into the water until they can get the door open, three minutes,” he said.

The human brain can go three to four minutes without oxygen before suffering damage, he added.

“It’s a reasonable amount of time for a rescue,” he said.

One battalion had to use the Rat Claw recently when a humvee was flipped over in an IED explosion.

The doors were damaged by the force of the blast, but Soldiers were able to open the vehicle and extract their wounded comrades, including Lt. Col. Michael Infanti, their battalion commander.

“I remember I was pinned inside the truck,” said Infanti, a Chicago native. “Fuel was dripping on me, I was in pain. But the Soldiers did extremely well, and the Rat Claw worked. It took one try and I was out of the vehicle.”

email us your story idea to

anaconda.times@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

What impact has Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s legacy had on the military?



Spc. Anisha McRae

“The service is made up of people from all walks of life. Everybody comes together as comrades whether Christian, Muslim, black or white. It’s a beautiful thing.”



Lt. Col. Thomas Mayhew

“The military is a model of integration. Everyone has an equal shot in the military. He (Dr. King) gave his life to so that all people could be free to go to the top with hard work.”



Spc. Stephen Razo

“His message could help Iraq come together as a family. If they had a nice cook-out and drinks together, they’d probably get along a lot better.”



Airman 1st Class Isaac Salazar

“You can see people from different countries, religions, groups, come together as brothers in the military under the DoD as one. Different uniforms, all one common fight.”

On the Road -- 594th Transportation Company keeping heavy trucks moving north



Photo by Sgt. Thomas L. Day
Chief Warrant Officer Michael Taheny trains up on a welding machine the 594th Transportation Company commonly uses during repairs.

by Sgt. Thomas L. Day
40th Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait — The 594th Transportation Company is a supply distributor for the entire Iraq theater, running supply missions to as far north as Mosul, a city nearly four-hundred miles north of Baghdad.

The job given the maintenance platoon of the 594th is to make sure the vehicles make it through Iraq without a vehicle breaking down.

Tightening screws, checking fluids, rotating tires — acts that could be routine, the supply convoys depend on when they move into Iraq.

“Every time they come off a mission, they come through the shop,” said Sgt. 1st Class Scott Shepherd of Harlan, Ky., the platoon leader for the 594th’s

maintenance platoon. “The next morning after a mission the convoy is required to come in ... We fix everything on the spot.”

Nineteen Soldiers are assigned to the maintenance platoon; a team large enough to handle eight to 10 vehicles at a time.

“Glorious home,” as Sgt. Stephen Hardy of Houston calls it, is a Texas-sized tent at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, which the maintenance platoon has used as its repair facility.

From Kuwait, supply convoys roll out with a parade of massive, three-axle trucks [called a “Bobtel”], most carrying flatbeds. One truck in tow, however, carries nothing but a box.

The box is packed with wrenches, fluids and extra parts. “That way we’re pulling a full system behind us,” Hardy

said.

Added armor attached to the vehicles, according to the Soldiers, is what keeps the maintenance platoon busy.

“(The added armor) really pays hell on those vehicles,” said 1st Sgt. Douglas Emmons, the 594th company’s top enlisted Soldier.

The vehicles, according to Emmons, carry several thousand pounds of added armor.

The platoon is nothing if not battle tested. More than half of the company has been submitted for a combat action badge, denoting that the Soldier wearing the badge has been involved in a combat engagement. Of the 19 Soldiers assigned to the maintenance platoon, only three have not been

deployed to the Iraq theater before.

This deployment, according to the Soldiers, differs from the previous tours in one aspect: convenience.

In 2003, the company was deployed with the 101st Airborne Division in northern Iraq.

Orders for missing parts could take as long as several months to arrive. This time around, the mechanics have encountered a

noticeably quicker process.

“It’s running smooth as silk now,” Stephens said about the parts replacement process. “On a day to day basis, parts are rolling in pretty good.

“We go through parts like it’s going out of style.”

“We fix everything on the spot.”

— Sgt. 1st Class Scott Shepherd

Caring -- a word both countries understand

by Sgt. 1st Class Jamie Favreau

3rd BCT, 1st CAV PAO

BALAD, Iraq -- Iraqi citizens and coalition forces may speak different languages but they care for people all the same.

Dr. Riyadh Sabri, an Iraqi doctor, and Maj. Paul Fleenor, along with other medics from 3-8 Combined Arms Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, set up a medical care operation, known as a Cooperative Medical Engagement, for the people of the Al Audey Village inside the Rawashid district of the Diyala province, Dec. 23.

The mission was for Iraqi Army Soldiers along with coalition forces to screen the villagers by checking their vital signs and asking for health problems for Sabri to take a look at.

Sabri, the primary care giver for the operation, was assisted with medications and supplies provided by Soldiers from 3-8 CAB. It was because of the joint effort that they were able to screen and treat over 125 local villagers.

At first the local population came in slowly but after a few moments word had gotten out that the Iraqi Army and coalition forces were here to help, said Staff Sgt. Ruben Garcia, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3-8 CAB. People started coming in more and more, and soon it was more than the medics had anticipated, he said.

“It was hard to keep count of everyone we treated,” added Garcia. “So we just kept going until supplies went out.”

To Garcia, it was a chance to show the Iraqi people that he and his fellow Soldiers care about the local’s health



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jamie Favreau

Maj. Paul Fleenor, head surgeon for 3-8 Combined Arms Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, checks the vision of a small Iraqi boy during the IA’ and 3-8’s Cooperative Medical Engagement in the Al Audey Village inside the Rawashid district of the Diyala province.

and they could trust the Soldiers, he said. The majority of the patients Sabri came across only had minor injuries or sickness, except for one — a small boy with an infected cut on his hand.

The boy, who had obtained the cut weeks ago, had not received any medical treatment for his wound. The cut was so infected that the infection was running up to his wrist. If the boy went untreated for as little as one more day, the chances of him losing his finger would have been greatly increased. The medics worked quickly to help the young boy and treat

his wound.

“If he keeps the wound clean and keeps taking his antibiotics, he will be fine,” said Garcia.

Though Fleenor, head surgeon for 3-8 CAB, and his medics had their hands full with screening patients, they knew this operation was more about supporting the Iraqi doctor and giving the people in the village confidence in the ability of their local doctor to take care of them.

“It’s good to start working with the local doctors,” said Fleenor. “The people of Al Audey were very thankful.”

Camaraderie important to pair of young troops

by Pfc. Jeffrey Ledesma

1st CAV PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq — Despite the many dangers that lurk behind abrupt corners, wait idly underneath the fine sands and come falling from the gray sky, two forward observers with Headquarters Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, know why they have their boots on the ground in Iraq: the Soldiers right beside them.

Although it has been said numerous times before by Soldiers throughout history, Pvt. Michael Ferreira agreed that when the rubber meets the road, he doesn’t fight for politicians. He fights for his battle buddies in the dirt right next to him. The native of Springfield, N.J., said that although it’s somewhat cliché, it’s true.

His battle buddy sees things the same way.

“There’s a certain honor that comes with combat; doing everything you possibly can to protect the guy next to you,” said Pvt. Brad Thornburg, a 20-year-old from Denver.

The relative safety of working at the division’s headquarters building sometimes leaves these two young Soldiers wanting something more.

When Thornburg enlisted in August 2005 he wanted to be a combat Soldier. About a month later, Ferreira raised his right hand and swore in straight out of high school.

They both signed up to become fire support specialists despite their

recruiters throwing other options onto the table. Before they found themselves in cavalry country, they were at Fort Sill, Okla., where the boom of artillery rounds is commonplace.

Ferreira admitted that, being in a combat arms specialty, he has a certain inner desire to be a part of the fight. The pair now finds themselves working side-by-side in the headquarters of Multi-National Division-Baghdad on the west side of the Iraqi capital, the center of a war zone.

Ferreira said that as someone who wears the Army uniform he worries about the troops that are out of the wire facing the possibility of death each day. Thornburg confessed that although he thinks that it’s terrible that so many Soldiers have made the ultimate sacrifice in this war, he would jump at the first opportunity to go outside the wire.

Ferreira, 19, added that if he could do something that would help his fellow Soldiers get back to base safe and alive that’s what he’d like to be doing.

“It doesn’t matter if it’s an earth-moving mission to deliver world peace or to just transport air conditioners to another (forward operating base),” said the youngest Soldier of the division’s fire support cell. “I just want to be out there.

“I’d probably take a bullet for this guy,” Ferreira said about Thornburg, a battle buddy since airborne school. “(For) most of the guys in my section there wouldn’t even be a thought of whether or not I’d put myself in harm’s way in order to save their lives.”

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

Combat Stress Control

13th Medical Company (CSC)

829-1402

- individual counseling by appointment or walk-in
- command referrals
- services for combat and operationally stressed soldiers

RELAXATION TECHNIQUES
MONDAY TO SATURDAY
3:30 TO 4 P.M.

STRESS MANAGEMENT
MONDAY AND THURSDAY
10 TO 11 A.M.

HOME FRONT ISSUES
MONDAY AND THURSDAY
5 TO 6 P.M.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION
WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY
11 A.M. TO NOON

ANGER MANAGEMENT
TUESDAY AND FRIDAY
11 A.M. TO NOON

ANXIETY AWARENESS
WEDNESDAY
3 TO 3:30 P.M.
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

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

COMMUNICATION SKILLS
TUESDAY AND FRIDAY
10 TO 11 A.M.

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS
WEDNESDAY
9 TO 11 A.M.

for more information, email:
melissa.kale@us.army.mil

829-1402

Prime BEEF on the menu at COB Speicher

by Maj. Richard Sater
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq -- Sitting still doesn't suit these civil engineers.

Sixteen square miles, about 100 miles northwest of Baghdad is camp, Speicher, and it isn't much different from any other camp in northern Iraq: ankle-deep dust, Soldiers and Sailors and Airmen and Marines with a job to do and they are doing it.

Camp life is like home life. You need a place to eat and sleep and work, a place to put your stuff, a little light, a little heat, a few improvements around the place to make it not just livable but somewhere you feel comfortable hanging your hat at the end of a long work day.

Enter Detachment 10, 732nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron. Approximately 60 of the Air Force's finest are deployed here to help repair, renovate, construct, and maintain base facilities, in lieu of Army engineers.

It's the first Air Force CE Prime BEEF (Base Engineer Emergency Force) detachment here, and nine different civil engineer units have contributed Airmen, the largest contingent from Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., and others from bases as diverse as Seymour-Johnson in North Carolina and Sembach, Germany.

Upon arrival, these Airmen even had to fix up their own work place and sort out their own tools before they could begin helping others.

"We did some scrounging," admits Master Sgt. Bruce Stocking, operations superintendent, deployed from the 28th CES at Ellsworth AFB.

It was quick work; within a week of boots-on-the-ground, they were in full operational mode.



Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq -- Senior Airman Jason Schwager, Detachment 10 732nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, deployed from Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., builds a staircase at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq.

Det. 10 handles projects large and small: repairs, maintenance, and operations in the garrison facilities that make up Speicher and even construct new buildings when required.

The work runs the gamut from changing light switches to building a chapel, "from a dollar-fifty to \$150,000," according to officer in charge Maj. Craig Johnson, deployed from the 355th CES at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz.

It's the repair shop of your dreams, four teams - electrical, heavy, mechanical, and operations - consisting of electricians, power pros, carpenters, heating and air-conditioning specialists, heavy-equipment

operators, plumbers and more.

Whether you need a building rewired to eliminate safety hazards and improve its efficiency or new office space designed, complete with cubicles and work stations ingeniously crafted of plywood and other materials that are easy to get, Det. 10 is your point-of-contact, just as a Prime BEEF unit would be at any Air Force base.

"We do the same thing here that we do stateside, except a whole lot more of it," Johnson said.

That whole-lot-more is complicated by what complicates everything in Iraq: dust and wind and rain and a supply system

that doesn't stock everything typically required to maintain a base.

"If our supply doesn't stock it, we can't go to Home Depot," he said. And there are little problems to solve, dozens of parts that are metric instead of standard, or the wrong length or shape or function. Det. 10 makes it work anyway.

Equipment is tired, used hard in this desert environment.

"The fleet is 15 years old," said Master Sgt. Don Anderson, 431st Civil Engineer Squadron, Sembach, heavy repair superintendent. The graders, dumptrucks and rollers the detachment inherited are "a challenge to keep running, but we manage," he said.

The trick? "A lot of creativity to get simple repairs done," said Master Sgt. Brad Branfield, electrical shop superintendent, deployed from Ellsworth. "You keep looking, keep trying until you get what you need," whether it's batteries or spark plugs or generator parts. "There's no end to the fixing."

There is also a requirement to keep on top of it. Urgency is the normal operating mode at a contingency base, and this one is no exception.

The base is expanding, with its population expected to grow by 50 percent next year.

For the focus to remain on the mission, the support structure has to be in place - and fully operational.

But there is always a bigger picture. It's not just brickwork or plumbing a toilet.

"Think about the task. What's it for? We're not just installing a light switch," Branfield said. "We're providing power for a PRT," a Provincial Reconstruction Team headquarters for the civil affairs unit that works directly with Iraqi civilians and town leaders to improve the lives of the local citizenry.

"We have an impact on the soldiers' lives," said operations officer Capt. Mike Pachel, also deployed from Ellsworth AFB.

The results are immediate. Improved billets. Post exchanges set up near living areas.

"We're contributing," Pachel said. "It's a support role, but it allows others to do their important stuff" outside the wire.

One chapel, three post exchanges, nearly 500 Hesco barriers placed and filled, 120 Army billets remodeled, a whole building rewired and re-plumbed and painted, beddown of two unmanned aerial vehicle weapon systems, two satellite dishes installed, dozens of other projects big and small mean one thing.

"We're helping people out. Making things better than they were before we came," said Master Sgt. Philip Aitken, mechanical superintendent, deployed from Ellsworth AFB.

They will depart shortly, satisfied in that regard, with a new Det. 10 to take their place.

Commentary: 'A day on, not a day off'

by 1st Lt. Tyrone Bess

8th Security Forces Squadron

KUNSAN AIR BASE, South Korea -- As we celebrate the world-changing movements of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and countless other civil rights leaders, their actions resonate in the theme of this year's Martin Luther King, Jr. Day: Remember, act, celebrate, and it's a day on -- not a day off.

Remember
Remember past challenges, hurts and conflicts endured by those who came before you. Remember your own past because there lies the person you are today.

I am reminded of a quote my mother once shared with me from Louisa May

Alcott: "I am not afraid of storms, for I am learning to sail my ship." Those words exemplify all Martin Luther King Jr. stood for.

Knowing the relentless criticism he would undergo, not only from those different from him, but also the very people he stood in the gap defending.

Standing up to continuous beatings, threats against his life and the lives of family members and enduring unjust prison sentences -- all for the right to be called equal.

Few in the military are old enough to remember seeing the violence demonstrated against nonviolent protestors during the civil rights movement.

However, we have heard of and seen video of inhumane treatment against

those demonstrators and remember the bloodshed, sacrifice, attack dogs, fire hoses and determination exhibited for the right to have a drink of water, a sandwich at the local restaurant with those from all walks of life. The sacrifices were not for those who lost their lives, but for those of us who would come after.

What we do today and the lessons we're learning now are not for our benefit, but those who will follow in our footsteps.

Act
Dr. King acted on what he believed were injustices against African Americans. In a letter from a Birmingham, Ala. prison, Dr. King wrote to fellow clergymen. "I cannot sit idly by in Atlanta and not be concerned about what happens in Birmingham. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

He acted as the sounding voice in a time when African-American's were barely heard. His actions could move mountains and teach us to act in defense of what we believe is right.

As military men and women, we have to realize the fight has not stopped. We have a role to act on behalf of others who do not have a voice. Those in the Middle East and Africa need our voice, our remembrance, our action. Acting on injustices is important because as the popular military saying goes: "Freedom isn't free."

Celebrate
Celebrate the past from which we

came and the future ahead. Celebrate those who realized change was needed and despite the seeming insurmountable odds banded together to create a legacy lasting beyond their lifetimes.

Celebrate the fact that regardless of your status you are free. Free to dream, free to meditate, free to pray and free to think. These freedoms can seem so small we take them for granted not realizing how many are dying right now for the same privileges.

Celebrate that you're in a position to help make a difference and positively affect another person's life.

Even when Dr. King realized his life was coming to an end, celebration was on his mind.

He chose to stand where others would not, he chose to go where others were afraid of and he chose to celebrate before the outcome could be seen.

The celebrations during January and February do not affect African-Americans alone; these months are for all to remember the past in order to affect the present and future, to act for what we know is right and celebrate because you know the end result is freedom and life.

I will end with one of Dr. King's more famous quotes: "The true stature of man is not how he stands in times of comfort and convenience, but how he stands in times of challenge and controversy."

Be courageous, remember, act and celebrate.

Read all the Balad Air Base News at:
www.balad.afnews.af.mil

“Back of the Formation”

Local artist brings humor, experience to comic strip

by Spc. Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown
Anaconda Times Staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq—The Anaconda Times would like to introduce our new comic, “Back of the Formation,” and its creator, Spc. Brian M. Wilson.

The comic strip, which will begin to be featured in our paper weekly, focuses on life in the Army and especially Iraq.

“If you can make fun of yourself, it makes the day go by quicker,” said Wilson of Columbia, Mo., a combat medic with the 206th Area Support Medical Company.

Back of the Formation, Wilson said, is a sort of take off on the back-of-the-class, or class clown mentality. The comic features a less-than stellar Soldier, PV2 Spaz, who is always seen with a five-o’clock shadow, carrying a cigarette.

The series humorously profiles everyday life of the junior-enlisted in

Iraq, while taking a light-hearted view at many of the tasks that must be carried out by Soldiers here.

Wilson said the comic came to life while working late shifts at Phipps Troop Medical Clinic.

“We thought it would be funny to take some of our conversations and turn them into a comic,” Wilson said of working and joking with his colleagues at the clinic.

He said he first started making a few comics in Microsoft Paint, showing them only to his friends. When they suggested other people might like them, Wilson started posting the comics in other places.

“I anonymously started putting them up in the TOC (Tactical Operations Center),” Wilson said.

His commander got a kick out of the comics, and started to ask to see them daily, so now Wilson creates a new comic nearly every day.

“My biggest compliment is when people ask where we found the com-



“Back of the Formation” creator, Spc. Brian M. Wilson spends his free time creating daily cartoons for friends and servicemembers on LSA Anaconda.

ics, and I’m able to say ‘we didn’t find them, I made them,’” Wilson said, who takes inspiration from his favorite comic strip, “Calvin and Hobbes.”

It takes about an hour for Wilson to create one comic, he said, which he does during his free time at night. He said he enjoys taking the time to add details to each cartoon, such as giving each character a PT belt and individual characteristics.

Wilson said his characters are ste-

reotypes of each kind of Solider, but wants to ensure that he is not trying to make fun of any person in particular.

He even said he identifies most with his unkempt main character, proving his comic is to be taken only in jest.

“I am private Spaz,” Wilson said jokingly.

Readers can check the comic page each week to catch Wilson’s “Back of the Formation.”

Water puddles are hazard to Anaconda residents

by Sgt. Kevin McSwain

Anaconda Times Staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq—As rain begins to fall more frequently on LSA Anaconda, servicemembers must become familiar with wet weather hazards.

As flooding continues to affect the area, servicemembers should be cautious of water collection ponds.

Drive cautiously, reduce your speed on post, and keep a good distance between vehicles. Also ensure that windshields, windows, and mirrors are properly cleaned.

To prolong the life of gravel surfaces, reduce driving on them where possible. Driving on gravel surfaces causes these areas to become muddy in wet weather conditions.

To keep in compliance with force protection regulations, keep vehicles a minimum of 25 meters from all barriers around housing areas. This will also reduce the accumulation of mud around these areas.

As holes are formed from water erosion, do not attempt to use dirt or any other fine sediment to fill the water holes. This will not fix the problem and may create a more dangerous situation and more mud in which vehicles may get stuck.

During flooding, contaminants can easily be transferred during water run-off. Keep out of pooling and flood water when at all possible. Wash areas exposed to water to reduce ailments caused by potential unsanitary conditions.

Please be vigilant as wet weather brings increased hazards. Continue to observe the areas around your housing and work area. Also, be aware of the location of potential electrical hazards.

Continue to conduct risk assessments and remind personnel to think safely. Make sure sand bags are in good condition and check T-walls and barriers to make sure they are not shifting or leaning.

Report any flooding or safety concerns to the Mayor Cell at DSN (318) 829-1832.

OSACOM changes team during TOA ceremony

by Staff Sgt. Lorin T. Smith

36th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs Office

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – More than 250 Soldiers stood outside the LSA Anaconda Sherpa Terminal and watched the 3rd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment (3rd Bn., 135th Aviation Regt.), transfer authority of the fixed-wing aviation command to Operational Support Airlift Command (OSACOM) on Dec. 10, 2006.

The ceremony marked the casing of battalion’s colors by Commander Lt. Col. Mark W. McLemore and Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Miller.

“The crews of the 3rd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment, demonstrated exceptional mission focus and commitment to providing the best fixed-wing aviation support available,” said 36th Combat Aviation Brigade Commander Col. Vernon A. Sevier, Jr.

OSACOM Commander Lt. Col. Pat Weber and Command Sgt. Maj. Jimmy Mills, uncased their colors, signifying the beginning of the new unit’s deployment in Iraq.

“The 3rd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment challenged us and set the bar very high,” Lt. Col. Weber said. “(OSACOM) will strive to live up to your standards. We thank you very much for the leadership and coordination you provided over this last year.”

Task Force Mizzou, the operational name given to 3rd Bn., 135th Aviation Regt., has flown more than 10,000 accident-free combat hours, moved more than 12 million pounds of cargo and transported more than 33,000 Soldiers across the Iraqi battlefield.

McLemore told Soldiers that their dependability and desire to do the mission has set them apart from all of their predecessors, and that his unit has greatly surpassed other fixed-wing units who deployed to Iraq in every category.

“You have performed your duties in an outstanding and professional manner that has allowed us to achieve great success.”

As the battalion Soldiers head back to Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., to reunite with their families, OSACOM, from Fort Belvoir, Va., comes in to “Take Charge” where they left off.

“You are prepared and have worked very diligently since your mobilization began,” Sevier said to the OSACOM Soldiers. “Now it is your turn to step forward, execute the mission and set a higher standard.”

OSACOM is made up of more than 100 Soldiers from 26 states. As part of the 36th Combat Aviation Brigade, they join five other battalions and a headquarters company that is made up of

more than 2,500 National Guard Soldiers and more than 200 Individual Ready Reservists from across the nation.

The 36th Combat Aviation Brigade is the first fully-transformed Army National Guard combat aviation brigade to deploy to Iraq.



The ceremony marked the casing of 3rd Bn., 135th Aviation Regt.’s colors by Commander Lt. Col. Mark W. McLemore and Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Miller. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jonathan Hipp)

Conserve water everyone must share

SHOW ME THE MONEY

LSA Anaconda Tax Center

Consolidated Legal Center (Bldg 9103)

Opens Feb. 19

Through May 15

Hours of Operation

Mondays

9 a.m. to noon

Wednesdays

Noon to 8 p.m.

Fridays

9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Please be sure to bring any related documents (W2s, interest statements, spouse and/or childrens’ SSNs, etc.) We will assist with preparation of Forms 1040a or 1040EZ. The Form 1040 and any kind of business ownership are outside the scope of our program and we will not be able to assist customers with these issues.

If you have any questions, contact Sgt. Bethany Becker at 829-1838 or email her at:

bethany.becker@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

Just a couple more things to do



Photo by Master Sgt. Charles A. Wheeler

The Delta mission crew performs post flight checks on their UH-60 after a long day in the air.

MWR program offers glimpse into servicemembers lives

by Sgt. Kevin McSwain

Anaconda Times Staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq—Servicemembers now have the opportunity to become stars as well as heroes to their loved ones.

The Morale, Welfare, and Recreation East and the Mayor Cell are giving Soldiers the opportunity to make a video of themselves to send home to their families.

“The ‘Day in the life’ program was created so servicemembers could show people back at home what a day for a Soldier is like here on Camp Anaconda,” said Sgt. John Gumataotao, Garrison MWR non-commissioned officer in charge with the 657th Area Support Group.

Gumataotao, the creator of the program, said he got the idea from the “Read to me” program in which servicemembers sit in front of a stationary camera and record themselves reading a book for their children.

“I wanted to give servicemembers the opportunity to do more than just sit and read a story,” Gumataotao said. “I wanted them to be able to tell their story.”

The program provides servicemembers with a digital camcorder and as many blank digital video disks as they require.

“We have 28 camcorders and more than 23,000 disks,” he said. “We received these supplies from the Adopt-a-Soldier Platoon. Without them this would not have been



Sgt. Shanikue Swann prepares to record a shout-out as Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Stitzel holds a camcorder, doanted by the Adopt-a-Soldier Platoon, from the “A day in the life” program.

possible.”

Servicemembers on LSA Anaconda have already begun to take advantage of the program and feel it is a good way to communicate with family and friends back home.

“When I heard about the program I thought it was an excellent way for Soldiers to interact with their loved ones,” said Sgt. 1st Class Kelly L. Stitzel, platoon sergeant for A Company, 67th Signal Battalion “Cable Dawgs.”

Stitzel said the program gave servicemembers a way to send a more personalized message to those at

home.

“Soldiers are not able to talk to their loved ones as frequently as they would like,” he said. “But with this program, they are able to send something back home to show everyone they are doing well and make it more personal than an email.”

Gumataotao said equipment will be signed out to units for a maximum of 30 days.

“Soldiers can record a message the way they would like as long as it doesn’t violate operational security or General Order One,” he said. “Each person who uses the camera must sign a waiver before operating the camera.”

Gumataotao said this is not the first time the New Jersey-based organization has made a donation to the servicemembers of Anaconda. The organization has been donating to servicemembers for more than three years, and is focused on improving the morale of every servicemember fighting the war on terrorism.

“This is the second year the organization has donated blank disks, but the first time they have donated so many digital camcorders,” he said.

“They have been donating sporting equipment and other supplies to servicemembers here for more than two years.”

Gumataotao said the program, which began Jan. 2, will run for six months.

“Soldiers will have the opportunity to record their own shout-outs for the different holidays throughout the year,” he said.

Gumataotao said they have already signed equipment out to five different units and are looking to have more units come in soon and take advantage of the program.

“We have already loaned out more than ten cameras and over 1,000 discs within the first week,” he said. “And for people who want to read to their children, we have books donated by elementary schools in Hawaii that servicemembers can use.”

Gumataotao said the program has taken a while to get underway for the year but he feels it will allow more Soldiers to participate.

“Due to certain issues, we were not able to receive the equipment before the holiday season,” he said. “But with efforts of Adopt-a-Soldier Platoon and servicemembers, we were able to have it available at the beginning of the year.”

Gumataotao said, while finalizing the program, he received help from several servicemembers from the 22nd Personnel Services Battalion.

“Command Sgt. Maj. Earlene Y. Lavender created the waiver and Spc. Edwin A. Moloy designed the flyer that we are using to inform servicemembers about the program,” he said. “Many other Soldiers from the unit helped and everyone’s contribution was greatly appreciated.”

Gumataotao said he plans to do a video shout-out thanking the Adopt-a-Soldier Platoon organization.

“This is an excellent way for Soldiers to communicate to friends and family back home and the people responsible for this program deserve our thanks.”

Those with questions can contact Gumataotao at DSN: 829-3015.

GOT art?

Artists needed to help celebrate Black History Month

Join the celebration of black history all during the month of February by sharing your art

Contributors of portraits, paintings, sketches, and drawings, of all kinds, that would like to have their works displayed contact:

Sgt. 1st Class Wendy Shoulders at 829-1208
wendy.shoulders@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

Pfc. Amanda Yanta 829-3114
Amanda.yanta@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

Introduction to Spanish 1
Jan. 25 to March 15
Thursdays, from 6:30 to 8 p.m.
 visit the Blackjack Education Center for information

Army, Air Force celebrate life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

story by Sgt. Kevin McSwain and photos by Spc. Walton McJordan



LSA Anaconda's Voices of Praise Choir sing several selections during the opening events of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Ceremony at the MWR East Recreation facility.

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq - On this day 78 years ago, a child was born who would change history and continue to impact a nation even after his death.

This child was named Michael Luther King, Jr.; most know him as Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. King's life and legacy was remembered here during a celebration which lasted for a majority of the day.

In addition to numerous individual events many servicemembers participated in a 5 kilometer run and attended a celebration, all in honor of Dr. King.

The Nobel Peace Prize winner, who was known for his non-violent protest of racial inequality, used techniques practiced by Gandhi to protest segregation and discrimination.

"There is something that I must say to my people, who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice: In the process of gaining our rightful place, we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred," said King during his speech at the Lincoln Memorial on Aug. 28, 1963.

King also said we must not allow creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. His policy of nonviolent protest was the dominant force in the civil rights movement.

The celebration of his birthday has been a national holiday for 21 years and was the first new holiday since 1948,

when Memorial Day was created as a "prayer for peace" day.

Many view the holiday as not a day of leisure, but a day of love for your fellow person and fellowship with friends. And this was the idea behind the organization of the 5 km run here and the observance which followed later in the day.

"This event was organized as an overall observance of Dr. King's accomplishments," said Capt. Kathy A. McKay, personnel officer for 1034th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion. "This is our way of recognizing the many accomplishments of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr."

McKay said over half of their headquarters volunteered to help support the event which accommodated more than 350 participants.

Each participant received a t-shirt, commemorating the event. Top competitors included Capt. Martin Wennblom, commander of the 60th Ordnance Company, with a time of 17:08 and Sgt. Jennifer Moran, supply noncommissioned officer for the 127th Quartermaster Company, with a time of 19:39.

The two Soldiers, along with the second and third finishers of each gender, were presented with a certificate and other awards during the celebration of Dr. King's birthday at the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Center East.

The winner of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. essay contest was also announced during the celebration. Senior Airman Clenaure Carter took first prize with his essay titled, "The written history of Martin Luther King Jr."

"He is my hero," said Carter when asked what compelled him to write the



Members of the U.S. Air Force Color Guard march into the Town Hall building at LSA Anaconda for the presentation of the colors at the beginning of the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. commemoration ceremony.

essay. "Dr. King is the reason I wrote the essay, I was not looking for praise, it was in his honor."

Carter said he began a MLK breakfast at his high school, which is still held every year, and says he is just paying respect to a man that has helped change the history of the United States.

During the celebration, servicemembers were educated on some

of the accomplishments of Dr. King and entertained with soulful songs.

"I think Dr. King would be proud to see that so many of us are living his dream," said 1st Lt. Wenda Throckmorton, commander of the 209th Quartermaster Company. "We have come a long way and I am proud to be a part of this."

Brig. Gen. Robin Rand, the commander of the 332nd Air

Expeditionary Wing, Balad Air Base, Iraq gave remarks on Jan. 14 during a commemoration ceremony held at the Town Hall building here.

"I think that he (King) would be hopeful," Rand said as he compared what life was then to what it is now. "Look at the diversity that we have here today."

Brig. Gen. Michael Terry, commanding general of the 13th

Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), also sent out words honoring Dr. King's vision in the form of a memorandum.

"Dr. King was truly a prophetic voice that bridged the chasms of hostility, prejudice, ignorance, and fear to touch the conscience of America," he said. "Americans should be proud of our commitment and united in our reverence for freedom and equality."



The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day 5k run at LSA Anaconda featured several hundred runners this year.



Members of LSA Anaconda's Voices of Praise Choir lift the Servicemember's spirits during the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Ceremony at the Town Hall building.



Capt. Martin Wennblom, commander of the 60th Ordnance Co. crosses the finish line in 17:18 to capture first place in the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. 5k-run at LSA Anaconda.



Everyone at the ceremony had a chance to sample the cake that was made for the ceremony.



Soldiers assigned to the 82nd Sustainment Brigade bow their heads for a few silent minutes of remembrance.

Photo by Pfc. Robert Baumgartner

82d SB, Tallil Soldiers remember MLK Jr.

by Staff Sgt. Felix A. Figueroa

82nd Sustainment Brigade

CAMP ADDER, Iraq - "I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation," said Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on Aug. 28, 1963.

Unfortunately, an assassin's bullet took out Dr. King before he could see his dream materialize. Fifteen years later, President Ronald Reagan signed a bill into law acknowledging the celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day as a national holiday on the third Monday of January.

"I don't really think about it too much," said Spc. Jermaine Maddox, Signal Systems Support Specialist, 82nd Sustainment Brigade.

"However, I am very grateful for his sacrifices," he added.

Some Soldiers were indifferent about Martin Luther King Day, but many were not. Troops of all races, creeds and religious backgrounds throughout Camp Adder gathered at the memorial center and bowed their heads in prayer to show respect before the actual observance started.

"He laid the foundation down for equality, not only for blacks, but for all Americans," said Staff Sgt. Tyrone

Jenkins, a mechanic with the 82nd Sustainment Brigade.

"He was a great man and I think he should have been president," he added. Observances like this are very important because they reinstate the importance of the contributions made by Dr. Martin Luther King.

"I think my generation should take the time out and do research as to why this day is so important," Jenkins added. The first national celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. day was twenty years ago on January 20 1986. This year's theme for the observance was Remember! Celebrate! Act! A day on, Not A Day Off.

All American Chorus visits 82nd SB

by Pfc. Robert Baumgartner

82nd Sustainment Brigade PAO

CAMP ADDER, Iraq – The All-American Chorus, the official ambassadors of the 82nd Airborne Division, performed at Memorial Hall Jan. 8 for the enjoyment of multinational forces stationed here.

The Chorus had a special guest in attendance. Chuck Weiss, a 62-year old veteran of the 82nd Airborne Division and original member of the All American Chorus in 1967, is currently a Department of Defense employee working here on Camp Adder.

“It’s great to be with my boys again,” Wise proudly proclaimed.

“The most amazing thing is that these

guys are the same as I was. Twenty-year olds are twenty-year olds, in Vietnam or Iraq,” he said.

There was a broad showing of support for the chorus from all branches and nationalities.

Cpl. Thomas Shelley, a scout/recon vehicle driver with the Australian army, particularly liked the chorus’s rendition of “Blood on the Riser’s.”

“It was funny. I like the American sense of humor, especially in the military,” he said.

“The fact that paratroopers can laugh about something like their ‘chutes not opening is what makes the American military unique, in my opinion,” Shelley laughed.

The chorus’s selection was a mixture

of motivating and heart-rending songs. From the ubiquitous Lee Greenwood hit “Proud to be an American,” to the official 82nd Airborne Division song “Put on Your Boots,” the chorus delivered in both acoustic performance and showmanship.

“Their version of Toby Keith’s ‘American Soldier’ was amazing,” Maj. Eric Olson said.

“I’ve heard the song before, but I’ve never heard it done acapella before,” he said.

From the sheer talent of their singing ability, to their on stage showmanship, the 82nd Airborne Division’s All-American Chorus delivered yet again to Soldiers in need of an uplifting performance.



Wearing their traditional maroon berets, paratroopers with the 82nd Airborne Division’s All American Chorus entertain servicemembers at Camp Adder, Iraq. Photo by Pfc. Robert Baumgartner



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bell

A 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment Soldier pulls security during a recent medical assistance visit mission near Anaconda.

Introduction to Sociology CLEP
 Thursdays from 6 to 8 p.m.
 Feb. 15 to April 5
 visit the Blackjack Education Center for information

EAST REC MWR DANCE LESSONS **COUNTRY SWING**
SALSA **CARRIBEAN**
 COME FIND OUT WHAT’S THE HYPE ALL ABOUT

“Ordinary Women doing Extraordinary Things”
 Psalm 139:14
Women’s Conference
 Sponsored by “Committed Women For Christ”
 Saturday, March 10 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
 For more information, call Sgt. Tammy Morgan at DSN (318) 829-1215 or tammy.morgan@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

NEWS REEL anaconda
 watch it on the Pentagon Channel

Army Reserve Affairs
Building 4135
DSN: (318) 829-1113

LTC Russell D. Rogers
 russell.rogers@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

SSG Brandon D. Fambro
 brandon.fambro@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

SSG Annette Tyler
 annette.tyler1@balad.iraq.centcom.mil

49th Transportation Battalion team solves daily Space-A Sherpa puzzle

by Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bell

Anaconda Times Editor

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq -- As the old Army advertising motto goes, "We do more before 9 a.m., than most people do all day."

One small group of logisticians literally make that happen day in and day out on Anaconda.

For six Soldiers assigned to the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)'s 946th Transportation Detachment, moving cargo and personnel on and off of the airfield begins well before the sun comes up.

At 3 a.m., Soldiers are busy filling paperwork, matching personnel and much-needed cargo with the appropriate Army's C-23 Sherpa aircraft that are scheduled to fly in a short period of time to numerous locations throughout Iraq.

"We send mission-essential cargo and personnel to different destinations so servicemembers can complete their missions successfully," said Sgt. Kristina Hackman.

During an average week, Hackman, an Army Reserve Soldier from Panama City, Fla., said her team moves more than 350 personnel and 150,000 pounds of cargo in and around the Iraqi theater of operation.

"For every pallet and personnel we can put on the aircraft, that is one less convoy than needs to go out on the roads," she said.

The small movement control team gets their missions each morning from the aviation unit that flies the C-23, and the team works fast to manifest the cargo and people and load the planes to be ready to fly on time.

"We have a certain weight total, cargo and passenger, that we have to fit into each mission," Hackman said.

Although the team makes it seem effortless and without flaws, the team's



Spc. Tim Isaac double checks a C-23 manifest for a recent flight mission.

synchronized working schedule could be described as working on a 1,000-piece jig-saw puzzle on top of a washing machine stuck in the spin cycle.

"We always have to make everything fit to ensure the most efficient mission for both the aircraft and passengers," she said. "We try to make everything fit where there is weight and space availability."

Being up at the early-morning hours with passengers trying to get on the last-available space on a small fixed-wing aircraft takes calming nerves and a positive attitude, said one Soldier from the Kansas unit.

"It's all about customer service," said Pfc. Nicole Brainard, a native of Ozawkie, Kan., about some people who get a little upset and confused because of the space limitations and availability on aircraft. "It's important to make sure they are happy because without a friendly face, we have no business."

Brainard said what keeps her attitude positive is working with different people each day.

"So many people come through here

that are either trying to go on pass, have meetings, or going home on emergency leave, and it makes a person respect what everyone else in Iraq is doing," Brainard said. "They are trying to do their jobs, and it's a good feeling knowing you helped someone do their job just by doing yours."

Not being on the front lines or making the international news doesn't discourage Brainard and her team. She said logisticians are just as important as the infantry and tankers out fighting the war against terrorism.

"If we, as transportation Soldiers, aren't here, then who's going to get the infantrymen the supplies they need to get to the bad guys?" she asked. "Whether they need it here or on the other side of Iraq, we get it to them every time. Without us, nothing moves anywhere. We are the backbone of the Army."

Although the team spends their days and evenings helping coalition forces move around Iraq, they each know the end result is for a better country for the Iraqi people.

"I am able to support the air cargo

mission throughout Iraq by getting the people and equipment where it needs to go in a fast manner," said Spc. Tim Isaac. "People depend on this stuff and I am able to help them complete their mission as well. Also, by transporting this equipment and sensitive items it can save peoples' lives by getting them off the roads."

Like Isaac, Brainard's desire to make a positive change in a nation's future, led her to join the armed services.

"I joined because of my family, and I wanted to do nothing more than help out my country," Brainard said. "I want to try and make a difference. If I don't do it, who will?"

Brainard said she joined the Army

Reserve knowing she would be deployed to either Afghanistan or Iraq.

"We are not here for the American people but are here to help the Iraqi people rebuild their country," she said. "If we make something good come out of this war than it was all worth it, and I made a small difference. Even if most people don't know what I did while I was here, I know I helped, that makes me fighting in this war worth it."

Whether the team is filling a last-minute space available flight or making sure passengers have ear protection, success of an early-morning mission is determined by how much cargo and personnel they move in and out of Balad.



Sgt. Kristina Hackman helps two passengers with information about their delayed flight because of fog.



Personal baggages sits on pallets waiting for an early-morning flight on Balad Air Base.

ANACONDA
exclusive
NEWS SERIES

from AMR to final destination

A four-part series on how separate commands work together to move personnel, cargo by air

1. OSACOM planning
2. MCT's Space-A puzzle
3. Flight Engineers
4. Sherpa Flight

Next Week

We'll go behind the scenes with the Sherpa flight engineers who ensure the cargo and passengers meet the safety requirements for the C-23 Sherpa aircraft

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 24**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 25**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 26**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 27**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 28**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 29**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 30**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 31**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

Read to Me

send your valentine message or
record a birthday greeting

Digital Camcorders + Recordable DVD+ YOU = Video Message made easy.....read a book or a bedtime story to your son or daughter, send a shout out to your family and friends, or produce a mini series of your day here in Iraq..

for more information, contact the MWR staff at 829-3015

West side competition brings out the big boys of the bench press

by Staff Sgt. Lorin T. Smith
36th CAB Public Affairs Office

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – Sgt. 1st Class Jason Anderson was the only competitor to properly lift 400 or more pounds during a One Lift contest at the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation West center.

The 1st Battalion, 131st Aviation Regiment Soldier wowed the crowd by putting up 435 pounds on his first try. On his second and third attempts, he attempted 450 pounds on the bar, but said he was not at the top of his game on this night.

Anderson was one of 14 Soldiers from the 36th Combat Aviation Brigade who pumped their way to a successful showing in this strength and fitness competition.

Each competitor has one lift to pump as much weight as possible in three separate tries. While that may sound easy to do, the lift has to be done properly. That means the lifter must execute one repetition under control, follow all commands from the judge without moving their feet.

Many competitors received “no lift” calls from the judge because of small issues like lifting their bottom off the bench or hitting the rack with the bar on the way back up.

The competitors were divided into weight classes to ensure that this event gave everyone an equal chance to demonstrate their strength on a “pound for pound” basis.

The winner was determined by a percentage of how many pounds above their body weight he or she lifted. For example, Chief Warrant Officer Arturo Mauricio, from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 36th CAB, lifted 325 pounds and weighed in at 195 pounds, giving him a lift of 167 percent of his body weight.

This 167 percent lift was his score for the competition. This score was good enough to finish second in his weight class of 190-199 pounds.

Mauricio, a 40-year-old Texas native, tried to push 340 on his third lift, but he reached muscle failure and was unable to push the bar all the way up.

“I could have done better if I had trained harder, but this event is all about fun,” Mauricio said. “All I wanted to do was to try and instill confidence and motivation into the younger Soldiers by having an old man like me in the event.”

Anderson, a night-shift police sergeant in Enterprise, Ala., is a member of the American Drug-Free Power Lifting Association, and competes both in the military and professional weight lifting events.

He first started lifting weights at 16 years old. Then, he successfully put up 310 pounds on the bench press, and now, he’s benching 450.

“For these events, you have to know the basics to be successful,” he said. “You must make sure to pause until the judge gives you the signal to continue to lift, and keep the proper body position, among other things.”

Anderson currently holds five state power lifting records in Alabama, including his specialty, the bench-press.

MWR West representative John



Sgt. James Futrell, B. Company, 449th Aviation Support Battalion, successfully lifts 300 pounds during the competition.

Vernon likes helping west side Soldiers and civilians with their training.

MWR West has a long-standing rivalry against MWR East, and Vernon always wants west side weightlifters to come out on top in base-wide competitions.

“I teach the guys how to train properly and lift under control,” he said.

Vernon, a former Army first sergeant who knows from experience what it

is like to be deployed, has seen many Soldiers who have never before lifted weights asking him for advice and training techniques.

“I want to get Soldiers to go home [physically] better than they left,” Vernon said.

MWR West will square off against MWR East in a three-event weightlifting competition in January.

Raw Materiel’s LSAA Schedule

- Jan. 25 Raw Materiel East Recreation Center at 7 p.m. – Full Show Band
- Jan. 28 Freedom Chapel at 9 a.m. - Quartet
- Jan. 29 Raw Materiel West Recreation Center at 8 p.m. – Full Show Band
- Feb. 1 Raw Materiel H6 Recreation Center at 8:30 p.m. – Full Show Band
- Feb. 2 Raw Materiel West Recreation Center at 8 p.m. – Full Show Band
- Feb. 3 Raw Materiel East Recreation Center at 7 p.m. – Full Show Band
- Feb. 4 Contemporary Church Service East Recreation Center at 9 a.m.

LSA ANACONDA

Winter Softball Schedule

Come out and root for your favorite at Provider Field

LSA Anaconda Softball Team

Games start at 11 a.m. every Saturday and Sunday

SUSTAINER REEL TIME THEATER

(Schedule is subject to change)

Wednesday, Jan. 24

- 5 p.m. Happy Feet (PG)
- 8 p.m. Borat (R)

Thursday, Jan. 25

- 5 p.m. Code Name: The Cleaner
- 8 p.m. Stranger than Fiction (PG-13)

Friday, Jan. 26

- 2 p.m. Deck the Halls (PG)
- 5 p.m. Casino Royale (PG-13)
- 8:30 p.m. Freedom Writers (PG-13)

Saturday, Jan 27

- 2 p.m. Happy Feet (PG)
- 5 p.m. Freedom Writers (PG-13)
- 8 p.m. Deja Vu (PG-13)

Sunday, Jan. 28

- 2 p.m. Freedom Writers (PG-13)
- 5 p.m. Deck the Halls (PG)
- 8 p.m. Casino Royale (PG-13)

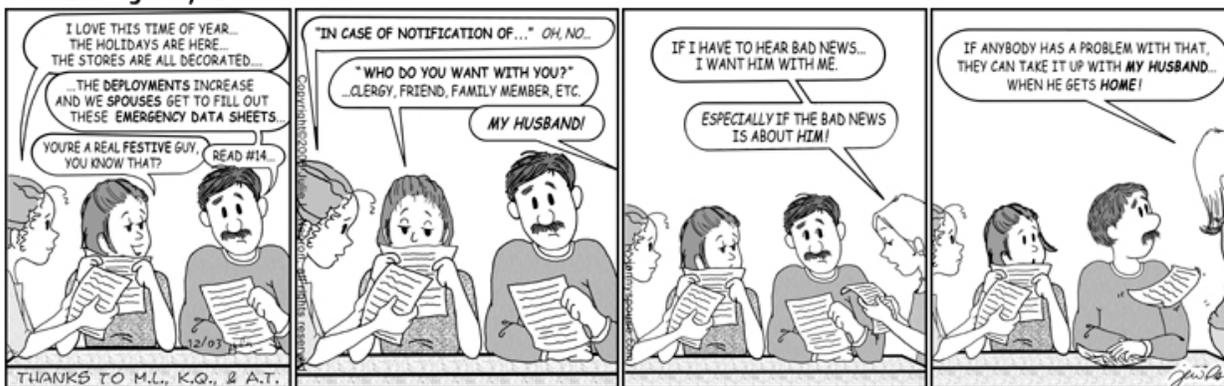
Monday, Jan. 29

- 5 p.m. Deja Vu (PG-13)
- 8 p.m. Freedom Writers (PG-13)

Tuesday, Jan. 30

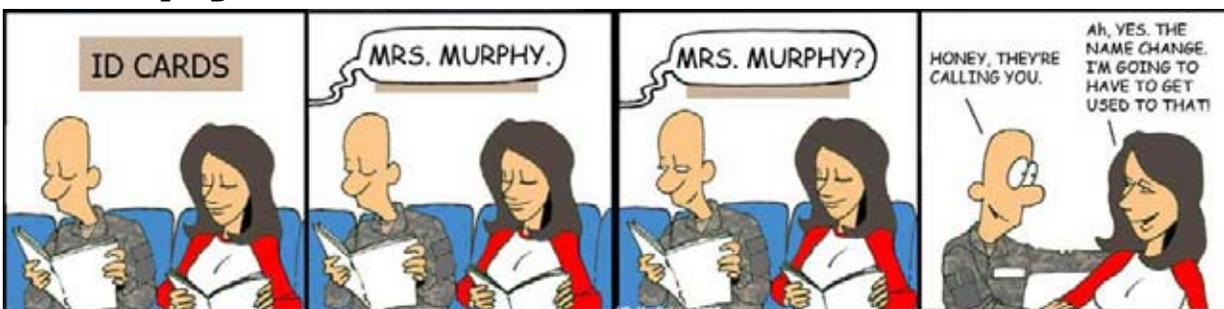
- 5 p.m. Deck the Halls (PG)
- 8 p.m. Casino Royale (PG-13)

The Emergency Data Form



<http://jennyspouse.com>

Pvt. Murphy's Law



<http://www.pvtmurfphy.com>

BACK OF THE FORMATION



PSB earns Lightning Support combat patch during ceremony

by Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bell

Anaconda Times Editor

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – During a recent combat patch ceremony, Soldiers from the 22nd Personnel Services Battalion, headquartered at Fort Lewis, Wash., covered their empty, green, right arm Velcro rectangle, with the 45th Sustainment Brigade Patch.

More than 100 Soldiers were present as battalion staff gave a brief history of the ritual ceremony and the 22nd PSB.

“We have Soldiers operating in 23 forward operating bases across Northern Iraq,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Earlene Lavender, battalion command sergeant major.

Lavender said the battalion is comprised of both active and reserve component Soldiers from the States and overseas. The 22nd PSB comprises of C and D Companies, 38th PSB, 111th and 747th Postal, 813th Replacement Company and G Company, 18th PAB.

“This combat patch finally symbolizes us as one unit to support all Soldiers and DOD civilians in Iraq,” she said.

The battalion task force ceremony recognized both the individual Soldier’s achievements for being combat veterans as well as placing a significant marker in the Battalion’s Lineage, said Lt. Col



Photo by Sgt. Kevin McSwain

Staff Sgt. Kristina Fugitt, from Fayetteville, N.C., B Detachment personnel action center administration NCO receives her combat patch from Lt. Col. Robert J. Yost, 22nd PSB commander.

Robert J. Yost, battalion commander.

“The 22d Personnel Services Battalion is one of the most decorated personnel battalions in the active Army,” he said. “It has been awarded five meritorious unit commendations and 16 campaign streamers from World War II and Vietnam.”

Parts of the battalion have participated in numerous rotations to

both Afghanistan and Iraq, but this is the first time the headquarters deployed for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

One by one, Yost “slapped” on the 45th Sustainment Brigade patch as a Shoulder Sleeve Insignia which acknowledges both the individual Soldiers’ achievement as well as the battalion’s.

“That is why today’s ceremony

is so important, for both the Soldiers and the unit’s history,” he said. “It is truly an honor to serve with these great Americans, some of whom are here for a third or fourth rotation. We are taking time collectively as a battalion task force to conduct a patching ceremony just as our predecessors have done; we are continuing that tradition.”

Yost said for him, the combat patch is an outward sign, a right of passage announcing to others that he has been deployed, away from his family, in harms way, accomplishing the mission assigned to him.

“It is not something to boast about, but rather another reason why I proudly wear the United States Army uniform,” Yost said. “I see it as a mark of experience, something you cannot get from attending a school or course. It is one thing to have professional military education to improve yourself and advance in rank but this is at an entirely different level.”

He said the ceremony is recognition for conducting missions in combat.

“It provides a whole new level of experience that cannot be reflected on your official military record or annotated on a course certificate,” he said. “Earning a combat patch is a universal graduation certificate that all veterans understand.

I am proud to have earned my combat patch with these Soldiers today.”

As his Soldiers stood in formation, Yost said that he hopes each of them challenged themselves in some way, earning valuable experience, and as a result they have bettered themselves at the completion of this deployment.

“Many of our Soldiers are conducting duties outside of their normal military occupational skills responsibilities and they are exceeding all expectations,” he said. “It is my hope that they are taking advantage of this time to get some unique experience that will help their career.”

Yost said at the end of their tour in Iraq, he hopes his Soldiers accomplish their mission as a team - not individual Soldiers but rather as one corporate organization that is Army Strong.

“They each came here for their own reasons as unique individuals, bringing their own special talents,” he said. “Everything we have done and will continue to do is accomplished marching to the same beat.”

Yost said that years from now as the Soldiers look back, it is his hope they will remember those Soldiers standing next to them in formation who helped them accomplish the mission and return home safely.

Personnel troops earn combat patches

by Spc. L.B. Edgar

7th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Combat is a challenge not every Soldier in history overcomes. A Soldier serving on the front lines in the Global War on Terrorism earns the Army combat patch for his effort, which distinguishes a Soldier who has deployed in defense of his nation.

The latest recipients of this honor are the Soldiers of 15th Personnel Services Battalion, who received their Shoulder Sleeve Insignia for War-Time Service here with Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks, 1st Cavalry Division deputy commander for support, 1st Cavalry Division in attendance at the ceremony Jan. 6.

The ceremony honored the Soldiers of 15th PSB for their contribution to the on-going mission, Sgt. Randi Richards, personnel noncommissioned officer, Detachment 4, 847th Personnel Services Battalion, 15th Personnel Services Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) said.

“I think it’s important to recognize Soldiers who have left their families, friends and loved ones behind to go overseas to defend their country in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom,” said the

native of Akron, Ohio, who left a husband behind to deploy.

Receiving the Patch of America’s First Team made the ceremony even sweeter, said Richards, who is deployed for the first time in her eight-year Army career.

“It’s definitely an honor to be part of such a distinguished division,” she said.

For Spc. Craig Morrison, emergency on-call runner, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 15th PSB, who is away from his wife and two kids, the accomplishment, was also a family affair.

“I am proud of it. I don’t really consider it a combat patch seeing how we’re personnel services, we’re combat support. I feel by being away from my family for a year gives me the right to wear it,” said Morrison, who hails from Middleton, Mich.

In addition, having received his combat patch, Morrison said he feels more a part of Soldiers, both past, present and future.

“I like being put in with all the Soldiers who have worn it in the past. It’s definitely an honor to do that. When I go home on R and R (rest and relaxation) I’m going to be walking tall and proud wearing it on both shoulders,” Morrison said. “It’s definitely a morale booster. It falls into the category of honor and pride. It definitely feels good to put it on.”



Photo by Spc. L.B. Edgar

Spc. Craig Morrison, emergency on-call runner, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 15th Personnel Services Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) receives his Shoulder Sleeve Insignia for War-Time Service from Sgt. 1st Class Zenalia Moses, a detachment sergeant who hails from Coco Beach, Fla., on Camp Liberty, Iraq, Jan. 6. Morrison, a native of Middleton, Mich., earned the right to wear the patch after serving in Iraq for more than two months.

CMO, from Page 16

the targeting officer for the 1/167 says he thinks the local Iraqis have slightly mixed feelings about living so close to a U.S. base.

“I think it’s a double-edged sword,” Pellant said. “I think for the most part, the local nationals feel safer knowing that we’re here and we’re patrolling through their village ... I think they feel safe seeing us drive by quite a bit.”

He spoke about some of the projects that have been done in the past, and commented on the importance of water treatment plants.

“If you’ve been out in this environment at all, you’ll see that these people are pretty poor,” Pellant said.

“I mean, they’re walking to watering holes with cans, and buckets, and pails, and then filling them up with water and walking back to their houses.”

Pellant said by providing Iraqis with the resources to improve their water and the way it is distributed, it is making a big difference in their lives by ensuring they have clean drinking water and that the water comes to them, instead of vice-versa.

He also said he believes the general attitude towards U.S. troops in this area is changing. This may be due to a level of trust that is being formed by providing the Iraqis with the chance to help themselves.

“When I went into some of these villages months and months ago, you wouldn’t see children at all,” he said. “Now when you go out there, as soon as a Humvee pulls up, children come pouring out (of their houses).”

After a few trips out with this group of Soldiers, it is clear that they are doing one of the most important jobs in Iraq. Their dedication to helping the Iraqi people is breaking down barriers where barriers have been built, and are replacing them with jobs, assistance, and supplies from the other side of the globe, ensuring them a better chance at a future.



Spc. Lance D. Borman, a gunner with the 1/167 RSTA pulls security on site during a recent mission.

Instructors needed for:

**ENGLISH COMPOSITION
COLLEGE MATH
HUMANITIES
INTRO TO SOCIOLOGY
INTRO TO PSYCHOLOGY
US HISTORY 1 & 2
NATURAL SCIENCE
ETHICS IN AMERICA
INTRO TO BUSINESS LAW
MICRO ECONOMICS
BUSINESS LAW
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
PERSONAL FINANCE
PRINCIPLES OF SUPERVISION
PRINCIPLES OF FINANCIAL
ACCOUNTING
PRINCIPLES OF FINANCE
GRE/GMAT/SAT/ACT PREP
BASIC COMPUTERS
PRINCIPLES OF MANAGEMENT
AFCT (ASVAB/GENERAL TECHNICAL)
AFAT (FLIGHT APTITUDE TEST)
SPANISH I
ARABIC**

**Blackjack Education
Center**

EXTENSION, from Page 1

Apprich said, "It's them (FRG leaders) being able to carry our message forward is what is going to be the key."

"We will frequently share web cam video," Apprich said when explaining how communication boosts everyone's morale. "As a matter of fact, I may be the best man of my father's wedding by way of video tele-conferencing. We will be doing more family VTC's than we normally do," he said.

Leaders within the squadron are looking into ways to help their Soldiers to understand the significance of the extension.

He said, "We are getting out, speaking to the Soldiers individually, both myself and my commanders. We are trying to get a sense of the kinds of things people will be missing, like births, weddings, and other key important things in the Soldiers lives. We are trying to find ways to keep connected."

"I will address more family readiness group questions as well," he said. "Before, we would answer questions through telephone and email, but we will now do more face-to-face VTC type things."

An extension order is similar to military orders for any deployment, which states the mission for all Soldiers.



Lt. Col. Martin R. Apprich

"This is the word we were waiting for," said Col. David Elicerio, the commander of 1/34th BCT. "The news last week came as a surprise to all of us. Ever since the early rumors about this

I know that four more months is painful, but if we've made it this far, this is just one step further and it's not that big of a step.

- Lt. Col. Martin R. Apprich

deployment back in 2005, we have relied upon official orders to make our plans. I know such caution can be frustrating for those who want speed, but I believe the trade-off in accuracy is worth

it." "The extension order only tells you are extended. It does not lay out the details of your mission in the future," said Lt. Col. Larry Herke, the

Increased water in housing areas create environmental hazards

by Spc. Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown
Anaconda Times Staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq — Many Soldiers on Anaconda have experienced what the rainy season in Iraq is like in recent weeks.

Mud, flooding, and leaks have brought extra challenges to getting around on base, but aside from the agitation of muddy boots, there are some health concerns to look out for as well.

With the cold and wet weather, residents of Anaconda need to be aware of hazards such as infections and mold, said Pvt. Diego Cano from Seneca, S.C., a preventive medicine specialist with the 133rd Medical Detachment.

"It is extremely important for Soldiers who are out in wet conditions to take care of themselves by ensuring that they remain as warm and dry as possible," Cano said. "Besides the associated safety hazards, the main medical threats to personnel are foot infections and injuries."

Cano said a common problem for Soldiers working in wet conditions is

Athlete's foot. The common fungal infection can be prevented by changing out wet socks, alternating boots, and using foot powder to absorb excess moisture, he said.

Cano also warned about walking through those big puddles in sandals.

"Soldiers should avoid walking through standing water in flip flops or shower shoes, especially if they have any open cuts or lesions," Cano said. "With any open cut there is always a threat of infection."

As for leaky ceilings in trailers, excess water in rooms can pose a threat of bacteria buildup. Certain conditions are necessary for mold and mildew to grow, Cano said, which include warm temperatures from 40F to 100F and a constant water supply.

"Floor mats should be washed regularly as well so that they don't harbor bacteria and fungi, which may grow into mold or mildew," he said.

Dirt on surfaces also provides nutrients for the growth of mold. Cano said it's important for Soldiers to keep their living areas clean in all seasons to ensure safety and health.



Lt. Col. Martin Apprich briefs his troops at the east entry control prior to a recent mission.

BCT executive officer. "The detailed operational order is being developed now. The Red Bulls can honestly say they are the best in the world at the Theater Security mission. We have all the cutting edge training, equipment, and vehicles. We certainly are disappointed by the delayed homecoming but there is no doubt we are the best Soldiers for this mission."

The seven battalions of the brigade

provide convoy and base security missions across Iraq, and have already patrolled over 1.5 million miles of Iraq, inspected tens of thousands of vehicles, discovered hundreds of improvised explosive devices, upgraded more than 600 armored vehicles, and re-enlisted approximately 1,000 Soldiers.

The brigade was originally scheduled to return back home in mid-March.

"I think everyone was a little shocked

by the news," said Command Sgt. Maj. Douglas Julin, the BCT command sergeant major. "It's hard on families, on employers. Everyone was making plans for a spring reunion back home. But, we've made it this far, we can make it through this."

Although 1/167 RSTA is headquartered in Lincoln, Neb., they also have Soldiers from Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky and New Jersey.



More than 4,000 troops of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, assemble in the shape of the "Red Bull" unit crest during a special formation at their farewell ceremony at Camp Shelby, Miss., March 16, 2006, before their deployment to Iraq. The unit was extended for up to 125 days yesterday as part of President Bush's new strategy for Iraq.

BE ALERT DURING HEAVY FOG

USE YOUR HEADLIGHTS (LOW BEAM)

REDUCE YOUR SPEED

LIMITED VISIBILITY-USE REFLECTIVE BELT/VEST

IMPACTING LIVES ONE VILLAGE AT A TIME



Sgt. 1st Class John A. Duffy of Bronx, N.Y., a chaplain's assistant with 1st Squadron, 167th Cavalry Regiment helps unload some boxes of school supplies.

Photos by Spc. Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown



Iraqi children show off their new goodies during a recent visit by Soldiers.

A journalist's perspective: a CMO mission to Abu Hishma

by Spc. Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown

Anaconda Times Staff

ABU HISHMA, Iraq—On a brisk Iraqi winter morning, I crawled into the back of a Humvee on its way outside the wire with a platoon of Soldiers from two different units for the second time.

The mixture of Soldiers from 1st Squadron, 167th Cavalry Regiment (Reconnaissance, Surveillance, Target, Acquisition), and 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment form a platoon who go on missions visiting local towns around Anaconda several times per week.

My second trip with the group, I am going to gain a better understanding of the civil military operations in which Anaconda Soldiers are deeply invested. Some of them spend their entire deployments in an effort to improve the living conditions of the Iraqis in this area.

Rolling down an inconveniently muddy road, we are glad that today the mud isn't accompanied by rain.

Our destination: Abu Hishma, an average Iraqi town with two primary schools we will visit.

As we near the first school, we drive through a maze of narrow, walled streets with hap-hazard electrical

wiring just out of reach of our Humvee's antennas. Residents are lined on each side glancing curiously in our convoy's direction. While some children laugh and wave, others try their best to ignore the convoy's presence.

Cows and other farm animals mingle casually along with the townspeople in what seems to be the village center, lined with shops. There are fruit vendors and shops for various household items, all

ornately advertised in Arabic painted on the shops' walls.

After several twists along bumpy streets, our convoy comes to a stop in front of our first destination.

The school ahead of us is set back from the main road, so there is little notice as we disembark from the vehicles, aside from the swarms of children being let out of the school- it must be lunch time.

As we walk into the school, 2nd Lt. Justin D. Helfer of Columbia, S.C., the civil military operations officer for 2/82, meets with school administrators to discuss projects that have already been completed. The Army helped the school initiate improvement plans as they do in other towns, using a sort of reimbursement process.

The reimbursement process works to develop the local villages, but instead of U.S. Soldiers simply going out and doing the work, the Army helps towns contract the work out to neighborhood laborers. That way the local economy is boosted, the employment rate goes up,

and the Iraqis are actively involved in improving their own communities, said Capt. Benjamin P. York from Lincoln, Neb., an officer with 1/167 RSTA.

"The main thing is just building relationships," York said. "When you are working with Iraqis, the first thing you have to do is build a relationship, and that takes a long time."

York, who goes out often on civil military operations missions, has seen the growth in the Iraqi towns his group has visited since their deployment began. He said he thinks the work being done is making a real difference.

"If you look at this school here, we're doing several projects ... I definitely think at this level they are feeling the impact of the things we are doing," he said.

While still at the first school, Helfer and others inspected the work that had been done which include the replacement of broken windows, and the purchasing of a water pump and a generator. When the troops agree that the work previously decided on had been completed, the Soldiers hand the school administrators a reimbursement- in cash.

As \$50 U.S. bills are counted out, the Iraqi school administrators smile with gratitude.

Outside, Soldiers unload boxes of donated school supplies which they deliver to almost every school they go to. With an influx of supplies from different organizations and individuals in the states, the Soldiers try their best to ensure the children can capitalize on their education.

While passing out supplies is usually a hectic sprawl of hands outstretched, reaching for anything they can grab, today's distribution goes a little more smoothly than usual, as a few students are ushered into classrooms where they sit, receiving a few items each.

Leaving the first school, we head back to the Humvees and back into the town center. The second school on our agenda is along a busier street, and many locals are lined on either side as we head into the building. Children tug at the sleeves of Soldiers, asking for anything that is visible on a Soldier's uniform. "Mister, give me pen," and, "Mister, you give me sunglasses?" are frequent requests on most missions into Iraqi towns.

While at one school projects are finishing, at this one new projects are just beginning. Inside this second school, which is quite smaller than the first, Helfer speaks with the officials



A school administrator at the first school we visit signs some paperwork before receiving reimbursement pay.



Sgt. 1st Class Joseph B. Persky, the civil affairs NCOIC for 13th SC(E), hands out school supplies to children in a classroom. Two civil affairs personnel came on the mission to see first hand how the supplies they work to collect are dispersed.

about possible projects there. He says he has been to the school a few times, and nothing has been started. At the reluctance of school officials to take initiative, Helfer gives a timeline of a few weeks to start before he will move on to another town.

The troop's translator even tries arguing with the school officials, telling them they will lose their chance at help if they do not take action.

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.

In the school's courtyard, children mill around the Soldiers pulling security. A row of youngsters who don't attend the school, have climbed its outer wall to peer down on what is happening inside. One shows Soldiers with a smile that she is holding a leash attached to a cow on the other side of the wall. Another reaches down to pass out a few fresh oranges to the visitors. Differences