



(Photo by Master Sgt. Winston Churchill, 615th Aviation Support Battalion)

Santa's... UAV?

Santa, played by Ken Rice, a civilian contractor with the AAI Corporation, and his six reindeer, Soldiers from Company E, 615th Aviation Support Battalion, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, prepare for launch on an unmanned aerial vehicle launcher at Camp Taji, Iraq Dec. 18. Santa is apparently trying to get an early start this year and has traded in his traditional sleigh for something a little newer and more "high tech."

Good preparation, luck gets job done

By Pfc. Shea Butler
7th MPAD

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq - Before the sun even thought to grace the Iraqi sky, a company of Soldiers put their protective gear on, passed their lucky horseshoe around to be kissed by each individual, loaded their vehicles, waited for the word to drive off into the sunrise, and hoped for some luck before their mission to a

Baghdad neighborhood.

The mission for the Soldiers of Company D, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division was to provide operational oversight to the Iraqi army as they searched a neighborhood in Baghdad Dec. 13, after receiving intelligence from locals about anti-Iraqi forces in the area.

Troops from Company D had more than luck on their side. They had days of

preparation to make sure their mission would run successfully.

They started basic maintenance on their vehicles and weapons two days prior to the mission. They sat through rehearsals and briefs to get a good grasp on their mission and intentions, said Capt. Darren Fowler, the commanding officer of Co. D.

Upon arrival to the neighborhood,

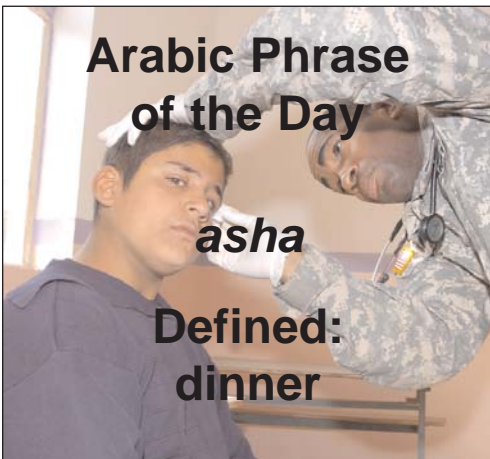
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(Photo by Spc. Chris McCann, 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div.)

10th Mountain CG makes holiday visit

Maj. Gen. Benjamin C. Freakley (left), the 10th Mountain Division (LI) commanding general, talks with Pfc. James Kelly (right), an infantryman with the 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mtn. Div. (LI), and native of Springfield, Ky., on Dec. 17 at Patrol Base Dragon. Commando Brigade Soldiers were visited by Freakley and the division's senior enlisted Soldier, Commnd Sgt Maj. Ralph Borja, recently. Freakley and Borja met with leaders to assess the brigades situation, and thanked the Soldiers for their work.



Arabic Phrase of the Day

asha

Defined: dinner

Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today

High: 50
Low: 39



Tomorrow

High: 55
Low: 35



Monday

High: 59
Low: 32

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Combined search nets weapon caches

Planning

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Soldiers met up with their Iraqi army counterparts and the search began.

Going through people's personal property can be a difficult and dirty mission.

"I was impressed with my Soldiers professionalism throughout the mission," said Fowler, a native of Union, S.C.

The thorough search of houses, vehicles and people paid off for both American and Iraqi uniformed personnel. Together they found what they were looking for.

Three weapon caches, two shape charges and some improvised explosive device-making material were found, Fowler said.

This isn't the first time they have searched this area, but Fowler said it was one of the biggest stashes of insurgent weapons they have found. He said missions like this one help deny insurgents the ability to operate and build confidence between the locals and Iraqi security forces.

"We are out here so insurgents don't have a safe haven," said Pfc. Joseph Roco, a gunner and native of Glenwood Spring, Colo.



(U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Shea Butler, 7th MPAD)

Pfc. Joseph Roco, Company D, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 4th BCT, 1st Cavalry Division, and a native of Glenwood Spring, Colo., patrols a Baghdad neighborhood during a joint Iraqi-U.S. mission Dec. 13

It is a joint effort to protect the Iraqis and to disable anti-Iraqi forces. Cooperation between the IA and coalition forces is getting better, Fowler said,

Successful missions, like this one,

prove that cooperation is working, he added.

"It was an overall good mission," Fowler said. "We brought everyone back safe and we found caches"



(Photo by Spc. L. B. Edgar, 7th MPAD)

Who doesn't like biscuits?

The honorable Robert Gates, Secretary of Defense, decides on what to eat with Spc. Joshua Smith, a native of Englewood, Calif., and member of the 57th Signal Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, during a breakfast meeting with troops Camp Victory, Iraq Dec. 21.

Soldiers provide support for IA's medical mission

299th FSB
2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.

BAGHDAD - Providing medical support to residents of the Bakariya neighborhood is one way Iraqi and U.S. troops are demonstrating their willingness to protect and provide for Iraqi citizens.

A joint medical operation Dec. 9 at a local elementary school saw a crowd of local citizens lining up to be seen by the military health care professionals.

Soldiers from Company C, 299th Forward Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, teamed with 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment and 2nd

Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, to assist the Iraqi Army during this operation.

Pfc. Eliza Sabo and Sgt. Heidi Taylor, both medics with Co. C, helped to provide treatment, medications, personal care items, and even some toys for many local women and children.

Spc. Christopher Lopez and Capt. Jared Dean provided instruction on oral hygiene, and handed out medication, in addition to providing limited tooth extraction. They also handed out plenty of dental floss and toothbrushes.

During the brief operation, the Iraqi and American Soldiers helped more than 35 smiling villagers.



(Photo by Capt. Jared Dean, Co. C, 299th FSB, 2nd BCT, 1st Inf. Div.)

Spc. Christopher Lopez, Company C, 299th Forward Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, hands out dental supplies to local Iraqi children during a medical operation in Baghdad.



(Photo by Pfc. Ben Fox, 3-1 Cav. Div. Public Affairs)

Senator visits FOB Warhorse

Sen. John Kerry is greeted by Col. David Sutherland (far right) and Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Felt (far left), the commander and command sergeant major of 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, at a helipad on Forward Operating Base Warhorse in Baqubah, Iraq, Dec. 16. Kerry visited FOB Warhorse to discuss operations in the area and visit with Soldiers

The 1st Cavalry Division Band invites you to attend this year's Christmas Concert

Six different groups, performing all your Christmas favorites at the Division Chapel on Camp Liberty

**Saturday Dec. 23rd
8 p.m. at the
Division Chapel**

AFC proven "Super" in the end

By Pfc. Benjamin Gable
7th MPAD

Week 15 is in the books and the playoffs are fast approaching in the National Football League.

With the postseason play-off picture coming into focus, it is becoming clear the eventual Super Bowl champions will hail from the American Football Conference.

The Indianapolis Colts, San Diego Chargers are the front-runners from the AFC.

The National Football Conference's Chicago Bears and Dallas Cowboys are the early favorites to play for the NFC championship.

While all the playmakers, big hitters, special teams' studs and clutch players are thinking Lombardi gold, I will predict the Super Bowl Champions.

The final four in the NFC will be the New Orleans Saints, the Dallas Cowboys, the Chicago Bears and the Philadelphia Eagles.

The Chicago Bears, behind their stingy defense and exceptional special teams will welcome the Dallas Cowboys to Soldier's Field for the NFC

Championship game.

While T.O. struggles to have any impact whatsoever on the game, the Bears defense will make just enough stops to allow Rex Grossman and company to defend home field and win, 17-10.

The AFC is more difficult to predict.

Each team that makes the playoffs in this conference could make it to the big show in February. The number of very good teams in the AFC will make for a difficult road ahead for every team involved.

It will be a dog fight to get to the final four in the AFC. The last four standing in the AFC will be the Chargers, N. Y. Jets (spoiler alert), Ravens and the Colts.

Peyton Manning will lead his high-powered offense and improved defense into San Diego to battle Ladanian Tomlinson and the "Lighting Bolts."

Phillip Rivers loses the biggest game of his young career and Manning walks away with the AFC championship for the first time. Colts win 34-24.

Miami is a great spot to



Pfc. Benjamin Gable

vacation, but for the Colts and Bears, it will be all business.

With the circus that always is Super Bowl Sunday, the Orange Bowl and south Florida will be the center of the universe for football fans from all over the globe.

With such high stakes, the one thing a team needs most is a calming influence on the field.

Enter Peyton Manning. He was born to play quarterback and bred for the big game.

On the opposite side of the field is Rex Grossman.

Grossman has had a roller coaster year at best. The Bears will need a monumental effort

from him to have a chance.

The Colts will stretch out the vaunted defense of the Bears and Manning will pick them apart little by little.

On the defensive side of the ball, the Colts will have just enough to stop the Bears deep game while slowing down the run. Grossman will be forced into trying to make plays for his team.

This is where the Bears lose the game.

The Bears special teams will have a big day and the defense will slow the Colts enough to make it interesting.

With the Bears trailing in the fourth quarter Grossman will throw a costly interception, effectively ending all hopes of a Bears win.

Manning and company, after wearing out the Chicago defense the entire game, will march down the field.

And the nail in the coffin? Well that will be a touchdown pass to, who else, Marvin Harrison.

Manning, who will be awarded most valuable player honors, and head coach Tony Dungy win their first Super Bowl, 31-16.

TELEVISION



	8:00p.m.	8:30p.m.	9:00p.m.	9:30p.m.	10:00p.m.	10:30p.m.	11:00p.m.
AFN sports	NFL Post Game	NFL Total Access		College Football Final	Sports Center		Sports Center
AFN prime ATLANTIC	College Football	ESPNews	The McLaughlin Group	ESPNews	Washington Week in Review	Your Total Health	The Entertainers
AFN news	The Journal Editorial Report	Beltway Boys	Larry King Live		The Line Up		CNN Presents