

April 2007

Vol. I, Issue VIII

*the* **STATIC LINE**





# the **STATIC LINE**



## MESSAGE FROM THE TF 2-PANTHER COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR



Greetings Panthers! It is an honor to be able to address the Paratroopers, families and past members of the Panther Regiment.

At Sgt. Joshua Boyd's memorial, Chaplain Outen read this quote: "The true Soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him." - G.K. Chesterton

This is as true today as it was in 1911, and it has been demonstrated in so many

ways during these past few months. Sgt. Boyd was not an Infantryman, he was a medic, as was Sgt. 1st Class Sebban, and there are countless others out there that chose a career in the military that had nothing to do with infantry or even combat arms.

If Mr. Chesterton were to know the Army of today, he very well may have worded his quote differently. Every day that we are here, we eat, sleep, workout and drive or ride in something. All of that amounts to about six troopers to support one combat arms trooper. The enemy has drawn the lines of combat for us, and those lines are directly in front of us, wherever we go, whatever our job.

Although not specifically tasked to operate as a combat unit, many Service and Support troopers are confronted with lethal situations daily, causing these men and women to become dual-hated. In order to conduct their support missions they must be prepared to enter and survive hostile terrain, exchanging their wrenches, supply forms and awards

trackers in order to don individual body armor, a personal weapon, and an up-armored humvee. Pilots fly low to the ground with little or no armor protecting them, all to support the combat trooper who is engaged, or needs to get to and from the mission. Our engineers construct or destroy things, but also ensure that almost 100 miles of road are kept safe.

I have sat in our Tactical Operations Center and listened to Combat Logistics Patrols, that are delivering needed cargo to other FOBs, confirm the identification of "emplacers" or "triggermen" and because of their training and discipline, are very adept at eliminating that threat.

If you were to sit down for lunch with Sgt. Duvan Sanchez from the 82nd Brigade Support Battalion without knowing him, and listen to his stories, you might conclude that he was an infantryman - not so. He is a wheeled vehicle operator that spends his time driving the roads. We have mechanics convalescing from injuries received while supporting recovery operations

of a platoon and came in contact themselves. Our Military Intelligence no longer sits in the dark and reads reports sent from the "front". They are out there on the ground with their Tactical Human Intelligence teams. These are just some examples of the actions of our support Troopers that could argue Mr. Chesterton's quotation.

Although I have not received permission to do so, on behalf of all the combat arms within the Panther Regiment, I salute those who go out every day excepting the same risks and tensions that are inherent to the non-linear battlefield in order to provide us with the best support in theater. To all of those who truly do love what is behind them, but are also out there engaging the enemy in front of them because the Panther Brigade units need what they have and services they offer: Thank You!

**ATW!!  
H-minus!!!  
CSM Brent Hagel-Pitt**

## *-CONTENTS-*

**BSB TROOPS RECEIVE COMBAT BADGES, PAGE 1**

**ADAPTING TO MEET MISSION NEEDS, PAGE 1**

**POLICEMEN GRADUATE SURVIVAL COURSE, PAGE 2**

**PALIWODA LANDOWNERS RECEIVE COMPENSATION, PAGE 3**

**COMBAT OPERATIONS IN AD DAWR, PAGE 4**

**SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS AT BAYJI OIL REFINERY, PAGE 6**

**TROOPS COMBAT COMPLACENCY IN IRAQ, PAGE 7**

**PROVINCIAL COUNCIL PASSES CAPITAL BUDGET, PAGE 8**

**3rd BCT Commander:  
Col. Bryan Owens**

**3rd BCT CSM:  
CSM Bryant Lambert**

**3rd BCT Public Affairs Officer:  
Capt. Aydin Mohtashamian**

**3rd BCT PA NCOIC:  
Staff Sgt. Michael J. Carden**

**3rd BCT PA Specialist:  
Sgt. Joshua R. Ford**

**3rd BCT PA Specialist:  
Spc. Amanda Jackson**

**The Static Line is an authorized monthly publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents of this monthly publication are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the United States Government or the Department of Defense. The editorial content of this monthly publication is the responsibility of the Public Affairs Office of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division.**

*the Static Line welcomes columns, commentaries, articles, and photographs from our readers. Send submissions to Staff Sgt. Michael J. Carden at [crdn.carden@us.army.mil](mailto:crdn.carden@us.army.mil). We reserve the right to edit for security, accuracy, propriety, policy, clarity, and space.*

# Troopers awarded combat badges

**Sgt. Joshua R. Ford**  
**3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO**

**COB SPEICHER, Iraq** - Ten Paratroopers from the 82nd Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, were recognized for combat action during a ceremony March 21 at Contingency Operations Base Speicher.

Maj. Gen. Benjamin R. Mixon, 25th Infantry Division commander, presented six Paratrooper medics with the Combat Medic Badge and four Paratroopers the Combat Action Badge.

"It's a privilege any time I get to award Soldiers with the combat action badge or combat medic's badge. I'm proud of these Soldiers and their service to the nation," said Mixon. "I am definitely proud of your service."

Though the Paratroopers are part of a support company, they are constantly outside the safety of the base providing logistic support to the other units at other bases throughout the brigade's area of operation, said 1st Sgt. Robert E. Penick, Company A, 82nd Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division.

"The brigade support battalion is in the thick of things. We deliver all classes

of supplies for (bases) in support of the maneuver battalions, so during that process, sometimes we encounter enemy contact. We're just like any other Soldier on the battlefield. We're combat warriors," said Penick.

"It is great to get these Paratroopers recognized," added Penick.

Cpl. Carlos Largaespada, a medic with Company C, 82nd Brigade Support Battalion, said to receive his combat medic badge was a matter of just being "in the wrong place at the wrong time."

"For a medic, it's nothing to celebrate ... being awarded the CMB typically entails somebody getting hurt," said Largaespada.

The enemy does not discriminate between Soldiers. Combat arms and combat support Soldiers, alike, are on the same battlefield in today's war on terror.

Mixon commented on the recent troop surge in Baghdad after the ceremony and said, "We are in a critical time," and mentioned that each Soldier in Iraq is needed. He then congratulated the Paratroopers of 82nd Brigade Support Battalion on all the success they have made since they have been deployed.

"What you are doing out there is important, and we are making progress. I can clearly see it across (Multi-National Division-North)," said Mixon.

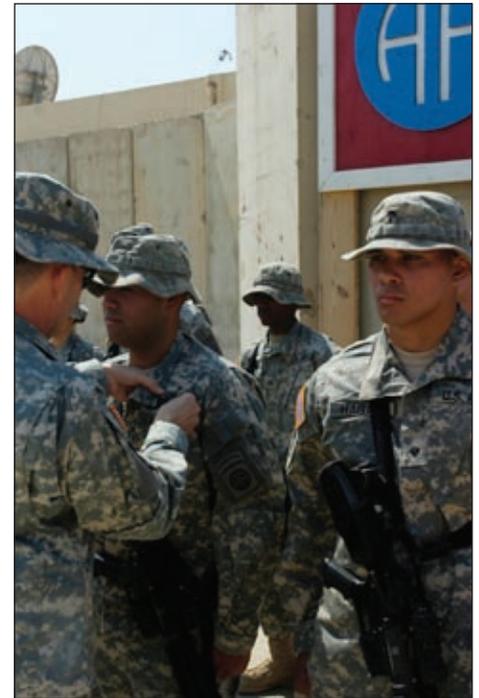


Photo by Sgt. Joshua R. Ford/3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO  
**Maj. Gen. Benjamin R. Mixon, 25th Infantry Division commander, pins a combat medic badge on Cpl. Carlos Largaespada, a medic with Company C, 82nd Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, during a ceremony March 21 at Contingency Operations Base Speicher, Iraq. During the ceremony Mixon presented four combat action badges and six combat medic badges.**

## Adapting to meet demands in combat

**Sgt. Tony White**  
**5th MPAD**

**BALAD, Iraq** - The Bradley Fighting Vehicle ramp door lowers with three Soldiers piling out, their hearts pumping. The squad leader positions them along the side of the road to scan the orchards for enemies. It is a far cry from jobs they knew just a few weeks ago.

When 3rd Combined Arms Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, Soldiers, Sgt. Eric Vilella, Spc. Anthony Navarro and Spc. Tommy Ryan, arrived in Iraq their jobs did

not put them directly in the enemies' crosshairs. Yet six months after arrival, like many Soldiers in theater, these three infantrymen have found the key to success revolves around their ability to adapt to the demands of war.

"It's a new job, it's a change," said Vilella, a squad leader. "I was only in charge of four guys and now I am in charge of seven. It's a big responsibility. I am trying to pick the brains of the other squad leaders, so I can bring these guys home and not have anybody hurt."

Armor infantry troops, such

as these, are accustomed to patrolling within the confines of their fighting vehicles, but during their current tour in Iraq, they've found themselves conducting missions as light infantry Soldiers.

"You maneuver differently on the ground than when you are in a vehicle," continued Vilella, a native of San Antonio, Texas. "I have been mounted the whole seven years I have been in the Army. There are just different things you have to know. I am just really learning what to do now."

Through the shuffling of

personnel in a combat zone Vilella, Navarro and Ryan have become entrenched in positions they are not accustomed to filling.

Vilella and Navarro spent a good amount of their tour as Bradley crewmen, providing transportation and security for other infantrymen. Ryan came to Iraq expecting to serve his tour as a training room clerk. Now he's working as a machine gunner, answering to his team leader, Navarro, with Vilella leading them and five others as their squad leader.

— see **DEMANDS**, page 2



Photo by Sgt. Anthony White/ 5th MPAD

Sgt. Eric Vilella, a squad leader from 3rd Combined Arms Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, communicates with his squad over a hand-held radio while pulling security near the Ad Dujal Police Station March 12 near Balad, Iraq.

“It might be on-the-job training, and you can train all you want afterwards,” said Navarro, a team leader from Colorado Springs, Colo. “But you are

still out there everyday and it (isn’t ideal) missing all of that training, but you still have a job to do. The only way to get better is to keep doing it. You can train

all you want for Iraq, but it will never be like it really is here.”

“You need the good team leader, good squad leader, giving you encouragement, telling you that you are doing it right,” added Ryan, a native of Yukon, Okla. “If there is something you are doing wrong, they tell you, and you work on it.”

Working together, the Soldiers are adapting to each other establishing a feeling of combat cohesion. The squad realizes the importance of understanding each other’s nuances because, when they make enemy contact, there must be a feeling of trust.

“I am trying to build that with our guys,” Vilella. “It’s hard though, but you just have to get used to it. But that is just the way it is sometimes. You have to get used to how people work and try to fit in.”

“It falls back on combat cohesion,” Vilella concluded. “You build confidence, knowing this guy knows what he is doing and you know this guy has your back. I know I was blessed with a good squad that was already trained up and I know they will do what they need to complete the mission.”

## Policemen graduate survival course

**Sgt. Tony White**  
5th MPAD

**BALAD, Iraq** - Nearly 30 Iraqi policemen graduated from a basic survival course March 10 near the city of Ad Dujal.

They now rejoin the Iraqi police after completing the five-week course, which is designed to familiarize the policemen with a basic skill-set necessary to protect and serve the local population as well as themselves.

During the first two weeks of the course, the officer’s education covered a curriculum comparable to basic training subjects such as weapons, marksmanship, and searching and questioning techniques.

As the course progressed, the policemen moved to manning checkpoints near Ad Dujal,

standing side-by-side with U.S. forces for a three-week internship.

Interacting with locals during the on-the-job training was an integral part of the training, said Iraqi Gen. Muzhir Aubed Dharfir, police chief for the Ad Dujal district.

“The new volunteer (policeman) does not have any experience,” he said. “After taking this course, he will have that experience in the field. God willing, we will get to continue to train these officers.”

“We are improving their skills here,” he continued. “This is primary training and there is room for improvement in the future for their skills and the training.”

Although the course may have provided the police officers new techniques and some much

needed police experience, for some of the officers, it was a refresher course, said Capt. Patrick Blankenship, commander, Company C, 3rd Combined Arms Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division.

“You have a lot of former soldiers from the old Iraqi army, who are going to be Iraqi policemen,” Blankenship said. “A lot of them have a base line of training, and it is good for them to get back in the saddle again.”

From day one, the officers showed a level of motivation and enthusiasm, Blankenship said, which allowed the training to set in with them.

“The officers have survived and thrived doing the training,” Blankenship said. “(Graduation) is a sense of accomplishment for

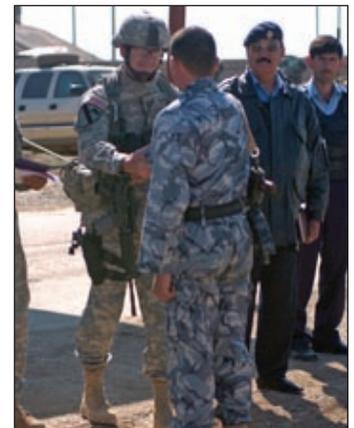


Photo by Sgt. Anthony White/ 5th MPAD  
An Iraqi Police officer receives his diploma after graduating the basic survival course during a ceremony March 10 at Forward Operating Base O’Ryan, near Ad Dujal, Iraq.

them and us to see the fruit of their labor. This is worth-while training and it is serving and protecting the Iraqi people.”

# Paliwoda landowners receive compensation

**Sgt. Joshua R. Ford**  
3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

**FOB Paliwoda, Iraq** - More than 70 people waited outside the gates of Forward Operating Base Paliwoda to receive compensation for something they thought they had lost to coalition forces almost four years ago.

Soldiers with the 3rd Combined Arms Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, and Detachment B, 125th Finance Battalion, compensated the many Iraqis who own land that makes up FOB Paliwoda March 18 at the FOB's Joint Coordination Center.

This was the second opportunity for FOB Paliwoda landowners to receive compensation. In September, Soldiers with 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division, compensated 83 of FOB Paliwoda's true landowners.

The event was publicized over radio stations and newspapers a month in advance so people would have time to get paperwork together to prove they own land on the base.

Landowners with the proper documentation received \$1,600 to \$2,400 depending on how big the lot was – each ranging from 250 to 300 square meters.

More than 400 people own land on FOB Paliwoda, which is located outside of Balad, Iraq, and more than 150 have been paid.

"I had a bad feeling when the Soldiers

took my land. I wanted to build a house on the land for my kids when they get older," said Pad Al Rzakh, a nurse at Balad's hospital and father of seven children. "Now with this money, I will be able to support my children by opening a shop and buying new clothes for them."

Like Rzakh, many of the landowners have big plans for their money.

Amem Karrim, a retired Iraqi soldier and veteran of the Iraq-Iran war, is trying to help his brother who is in a Baghdad hospital because he was shot by terrorists.

Mother of six, Pshar Muhammad, wants to do something nice for her children. She said she is going to buy all of her kids their own bicycle and then pay off her family's taxes.

"I have been very patient," said Muhammad. "I knew (coalition forces) would give us something for our land. You can't just take something and not give anything in return. I am very grateful for today."

The payoff was more than just getting the people their deserved money, according to Sgt. Jose Guajardo, dispersing noncommissioned officer, Detachment B, 125th Finance Battalion.

It is a way to support commanders on the battlefield, said Guajardo. By paying the people for their land, it gives coalition forces a place to base strategic operations from and builds a trust between the Balad



Photos by Sgt. Joshua R. Ford/3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO  
**A landowner of Forward Operating Base Paliwoda waits to receive his compensation while Sgt. Jose Guajardo, dispersing noncommissioned officer, Detachment B, 125th Finance Battalion, counts his money March 18 at the Joint Coordination Center on Forward Operating Base Paliwoda near Balad, Iraq.**

population and the U.S. forces.

After the last payoff, the FOB was only attacked once for the rest of the time the Soldiers from the 4th Infantry Division were there, said Staff Sgt. Chris Sorrum, legal noncommissioned officer, 3rd Combined Arms Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division. This showed Sorrum that the people gain a trust with the unit deployed to FOB Paliwoda.

"I think that it shows that democracy works and that it can work here," said Sorrum. "We're here to foster a relationship with them that will hopefully last beyond us occupying their land." The Army plans to pay landowners of FOB Paliwoda once a year. More than 150 landowners have been paid for the first year already, accumulating at least \$250,000, said Guajardo.

Guajardo estimates that more than 250 landowners remain to be compensated, and the first year of payments will total more than \$775,000. The Soldiers occupying FOB Paliwoda plan to hold similar payouts throughout the year.



**Command Sgt. Maj. James Norman, 3rd Combined Arms Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, hands a woman 2.2 million Iraqi Dinar (equaling more than \$2,000) March 18 at the Joint Coordination Center on Forward Operating Base Paliwoda near Balad, Iraq. More than 70 people were compensated for land they own that is being used by coalition and Iraqi forces.**



Photo by Sgt. Joshua R. Ford/3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

A Paratrooper from Battery A, 1st Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, guards a detainee April 1 during operations in Ad Dawr, Iraq.

## ‘Loyalty’ roots out insurgents in Ad Dawr

**Sgt. Joshua R. Ford**  
3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

**AD DAWR, Iraq** - “Wake up!” yelled the cannon crew chief. “We have got to get on the road in 15 mikes,” he said, while Paratroopers squirmed out of their sleeping bags and began to prepare for the upcoming mission.

It was an hour-long trip from Forward Operating Base Sad to Ad Dawr. But with all the moving elements the trip would turn into a more than three-hour journey.

Dozens of vehicles, making up the better part of a battalion, lined up at the base’s front gate, ready to take the fight to the enemy.

Anxious to get rolling, Paratroopers in one vehicle started to exchange stories about different missions they had been on or the roadside bombs that had

hit their convoy.

They were preparing for another rush of adrenaline. A rush Sgt. Jeffery Hevener, squad leader, Battery A, 1st Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, said happens every time he stacks on a wall preparing to kick open a door and clear a room.

After traveling for nearly three hours the city was in view. The night was black with nothing in sight in all directions except for the city’s lights, which were directly in front of them.

The towers of two mosques stood tall, one glowing neon green and the other a dark red.

As the artillerymen got closer to the city, they conducted one last check of their equipment. They gathered as many blind folds and zip-ties as they could,

knowing that they would have to detain multiple enemy insurgents.

They had patrolled here before, and almost every time something had happened, whether it was taking small-arms fire from a roof top or a terrorist tossing a grenade at a convoy. The town had a violent history.

Ever since we got (to Ad Dawr) there have been numerous incidents, said Capt. Wade A. Germann, commander, Battery B, 1st Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division.

On August 31, 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st (Air Assault) Airborne Division, lost Staff Sgt. Michael L. Deason days before he was supposed to go home, when a terrorist

————— see **LOYALTY**, page 3

lobbed a grenade at his truck.

On Dec. 14, the Iraqi police station in Ad Dawr was demolished when a car bomb smashed into the front of the station, killing nine Iraqi police and wounding at least six others.

On March 11, Sgt. Daniel E. Woodcock was killed when he went to kick open a door and set off an explosive that was set to go off as soon as the door was opened.

The Paratroopers knew the city was used as a safe haven by insurgency, and they were determined to stop it.

The convoy broke up going to their specified targets once they entered the city. Battery A rushed straight up the middle of the city kicking up clouds of dust behind them.

“That’s the house,” the platoon leader said over the radio. “Dismount, dismount, dismount,” another Paratrooper yelled over the radio.

The artillerymen exited

their vehicles and ran to their first objective, taking cover behind the wall surrounding the small home. “Ready,” one Paratrooper said to the other. “Go,” the artilleryman yelled. Next a loud smashing noise was heard after one Paratrooper kicked the metal gate open.

Paratroopers, along with Iraqi army soldiers, flooded into the courtyard, then into the house where they found their first objective.

He was a terrorist and insurgent financier; the predecessor of someone Battery A had detained two months earlier.

“Alright, throw him in the back of the detainee vehicle and let’s hit up the next house,” said the platoon leader.

The Paratroopers from Battery A continued the searches in the city and saw the sun come up that morning.

Sweat dripped from the Paratroopers’ exhausted



Photos by Sgt. Joshua R. Ford/3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

Sgt. Josh Walker, forward observer, 2nd Platoon, Battery A, 1st Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, smashes a gate with a breach tool March 30 during operations in Ad Dawr, Iraq.

faces that afternoon. They would get time to recuperate but that time would be short. More terrorists dwelled in Ad Dawr, and their mission was to find and detain or kill them.

To isolate the insurgents in Ad Dawr, Battery B set up a cordon outside of the city, not letting anyone in

or out, while Battery A and Company B, 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, conducted searches inside the city.

The operation went on for more than a week and resulted in numerous detainees, all of whom were known to have links to terrorist organizations.

“I believe that this operation will lead to more successful operations within Ad Dawr, because once you rid a town of insurgents, the people will be able to engage in council meetings openly and will not have to put on two faces, one towards the coalition and one towards the insurgency,” said Germann.

Planning for the operation began when Iraqi army officials and Ad Dawr city council officials came to the U.S. Army for help, said 1st Sgt. Jeffery Vollmer of Battery A.

“Insurgents believe that Ad Dawr is somewhere they can go where it is safe, and this operation will take that perception away from the insurgents,” he continued.



Paratroopers from 2nd Platoon, Battery A, 1st Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, and Iraqi army troops maneuver to an objective March 30 during operations in Ad Dawr, Iraq.

# OPF takes steps to improve security

**Sgt. Joshua R. Ford**  
**3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO**

**BAYJI, Iraq** - They wear camouflaged uniforms and dark-blue jackets labeled "O.P.F." in yellow letters and are seen at each gate and guard tower in the Bayji Oil Refinery. The Oil Protection Force and Iraqi soldiers' sole purpose is to provide security for the Bayji Oil Refinery.

The garrison is a battalion-size force placed there to help prevent refinery theft and corruption.

Nabhan Mohammed, deputy commander of the O.P.F. in the Bayji refinery, and Capt. Kwenton Kuhlman, overseer of everything that takes place in the refinery and Company B commander, 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, recently met to talk about the relationship between the Iraqi army and the O.P.F.

Iraqi soldiers and O.P.F. workers have been working very well together, according to Mohammed, but embezzlement and corruption levels have not made a drastic change even with the army looking over the



Photos by Sgt. Joshua R. Ford/ 3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

**An Iraqi soldier runs to check an oil tanker driver's identification card before letting him exit the facility March 9 at the Bayji Oil Refinery, Iraq.**

O.P.F.'s shoulder.

During the meeting Kuhlman introduced two contracts for new anti-corruption equipment – mostly lighting and surveillance gear – that will be installed inside and outside the oil refinery.

"This equipment will allow the guy pumping fuel to do it without having a gun to his head," said Kuhlman.

"This is how professional oil refineries around the world do business."

Corruption has infested the facility's employees. Iraqis and insurgents have been stealing fuel from the refinery for years.

"Together we will make it really hard and really expensive to steal from (the refinery)," Kuhlman said to Mohammed during their meeting.

The refinery, when operating at its full capability, can produce more than 22 million dollars in oil a day.

To help the refinery operate at this level, Mohammed and other leaders within the O.P.F. and the Iraqi army have promised to change the current situation by conducting security operations inside and outside of the refinery to include checking on the distribution pipelines.

The progress Mohammed has made so far has been

outstanding, said Kuhlman, but there is a lot of work that still needs to be done.

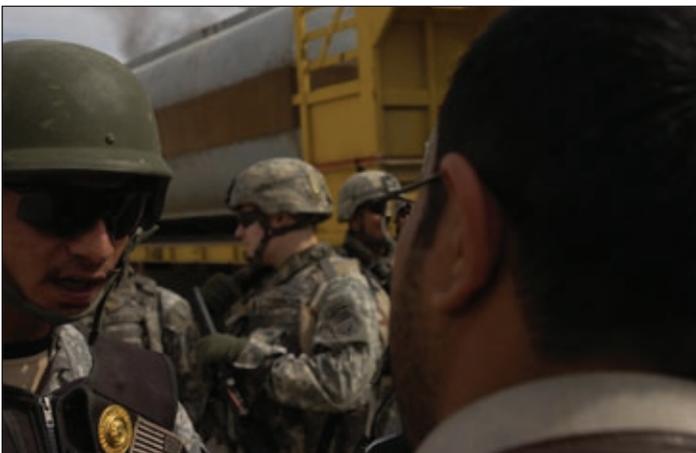
"Firing those who are corrupt and paying guards and soldiers on time are important things to do so the facility can operate properly," added Mohammed.

"Fuel is too important to the Iraqi people to have guards not doing their jobs," said Kuhlman.

Some of the products the refinery produces, such as propane, are essential to the Iraqi's everyday-needs, like cooking and cleaning.

"We have to have a culture in the O.P.F. that doesn't tolerate corruption," said Kuhlman.

To adopt this "culture," Mohammed said he will continue to work with his men and the Iraqi army, letting them know that if anyone is found stealing anything out of the refinery, they will be arrested.



**An interpreter questions a driver before letting him exit the oil refinery with his tanker March 9 in Bayji, Iraq.**

# There's no place for complacency in combat

**Sgt. Joshua R. Ford**  
3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

**COB SPEICHER, Iraq** - Breaking the monotony of an everyday routine may sound simple enough. Some people may take a vacation or weekend getaway with their family. Others may simply just sit around the house or re-visit a neglected hobby, such as golf or fishing, but for troops deployed to Iraq, breaking the monotony is easier said than done.

Going through the same routine everyday can get boring and cause a Soldier to cut corners making the repetitive, tedious jobs easier and done faster. But what if Soldiers try to cut those corners out on a patrol?

One Soldier took this such approach recently when he was supposed to be on guard duty in an Iraqi village but instead took a nap. During his nap a terrorist ran pressure-detonated wire right in front of his vehicle that was found later by a fellow Soldier.

Fortunately, nobody was injured, but that Soldier's actions are a result of negligence, which is a product of being complacent, said Spc. Austin Mistretta, infantryman, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division.

Complacency is what happens to a Soldier when he gets used to a certain routine

— whether it be going outside the wire or pulling guard duty — and starts to miss the smaller details that he used to pay attention to. Once the Soldier becomes comfortable in a combat environment, he loses that precision.

All Soldiers hear it from their commanders or noncommissioned officers, "Six months down the road you are going to have to fight complacency."

Eight months into the deployment the Paratroopers of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, are fighting complacency — each Paratrooper with his own method.

Mistretta said he treats every mission like it was the first he's ever gone on.

"It keeps me aware of my surroundings and helps me do my job better," said Mistretta.

The first time Mistretta went on a combat patrol, he was alert thinking anything could be a roadside bomb and any building could be harboring a sniper waiting to strike.

The best way to combat complacency is to provide good leadership, according to Command Sgt. Maj. King O. Parks, 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division.

"That's what I challenge each and every one of my leaders to do — to put himself in the shoes of that Soldier, and to focus his efforts on (what he could do to battle

complacency)," said Parks.

Complacency steps in when leaders are only focused on getting their element prepared for a mission, said Parks. But if a leader focuses his efforts on the leaders below him, and those leaders focus their efforts on the leaders below them, and finally those leaders focus on the Soldiers, a unit combats complacency because all of the individual efforts that come together making a combined effort.

The battle against complacency is easy for the Paratroopers of 3rd Brigade because of the high standard the 82nd Airborne Division sets for its troopers, said Mistretta.

"We have a higher standard than everyone else. That's why we get haircuts the first Monday of every week. We maintain our standards over here. We keep our hands out of our pockets. We keep our headgear on. It's that higher-level of discipline and training that makes us better than everyone else," said Mistretta.

Parks thinks differently than many when it comes to reducing the up-tempo to let Soldiers relax and refit. He claims that giving the Soldier even higher standards than before is the best way to ground him.

You have to focus Soldiers more and give them more detailed information on the Soldiers' duties. It will force a Soldier from just knowing that the Soldier will come to work, perform his duty and then go home. After giving a Soldier the additional detailed information, the Soldier shows up more focused, which means more individual thinking about what is required of the Soldiers to perform his tasks the right way, said Parks.

Relaxation is something you do when you're at home in the states, totally safe, with your wife and children, said Parks.

When a Soldier is tired, it means he's doing his job to the best of his ability, added Parks.

"Otherwise, if I'm going to be over here, let's get after it," continued Parks, "Let's make something happen. There's a mission to be done, and let's get after it."

The everyday grind gets old and boring, but it is important for every Soldier to come up with their method of fighting complacency. If telling yourself every mission is like the first one helps fight complacency, do it. Every Soldier needs some way to make the norm seem new, said Mistretta.



Photo by Sgt. Joshua R. Ford/3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO

Sgt. Carlos Campos (left), squad leader with the brigade personal security detachment, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, goes through pre-combat inspections multiple times everyday with his Soldiers to fight complacency.

# Provincial Council approves capital budget

**Public Affairs Office**  
**3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO**

**TIKRIT, Iraq** - Salah ad Din Provincial Council Chairman, Sheik Rasheed, formally announced the passage of the province's 2007 capital budget April 2 at the Provincial Council Building in Tikrit.

The proposed budget became official after a unanimous vote by the Salah ad Din Provincial Council March 28.

Sheik Rasheed opened the event by discussing the budget allocation and distribution. The budget allocates 117 billion Iraqi Dinar for investment projects throughout Salah ad Din, to include Tikrit, Bayji, Samarra, and Balad.

Regardless of religion – Sunni or Shiite – or social standing, the budget will be spread across the province to facilitate equal improvements throughout, Rasheed said.

The next step, sending the final budget proposal to the governor's office for project execution, is also complete, as Deputy Provincial Council Chairman Nabil handed the budget to the deputy governor and assistant governor for technical affairs the following the initial vote.

Under the 2007 Ministry of Finance regulations, the provincial council's role in the budget process is limited to approval of the budget and oversight of the budget execution. The Salah ad Din



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael J. Carden/3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO  
**Sheik Rasheed (far left), Salah ad Din Provincial Council Chairman, formally announces the passage of the Salah ad Din Province 2007 Capital Budget during a press conference April 2 at the Provincial Council building in Tikrit, Iraq. Several members of the Provincial Council were also present.**

Provincial Reconstruction Team, a State Department entity that works hand-in-hand with the local

government, is currently working with the deputy governor and his staff to assist them with the project execution process.

"Improving governance in Iraq is not a tangible thing. So many people may not comprehend the magnitude of this event. Having been here for a year, and seeing how hard this council has worked during that time, I am amazed at their progress," said Maj. Dave Navratil, Provincial Reconstruction Team, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division.

"This council worked long hours, achieved the required quorum, and achieved a level of pride not easily found in this province, or the country, during recent times," Navratil continued. "The next step is up to the Iraqis. They are riding a huge wave of momentum right now, and they need to keep it going, because they still must execute this plan. We are eager to see what happens next."



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael J. Carden/3BCT, 82nd Abn Div PAO  
**Col. Bryan Owens (left), commander, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, congratulates newly-frocked 1st Sgt. Eric Klinedinst March 29 at the Panther Headquarters on Contingency Operations Base Speicher, Iraq. Klinedinst became the first sergeant of Company B, 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, which is based at Forward Operating Base Summerall near Bayji. His company has the role of overseeing security and progress of the Bayji Oil Refinery, which is the largest in Iraq. Klinedinst is stepping down from the position as the battalion's operations sergeant major, which is the second highest enlisted position in a battalion.**

**IN HONOR OF THOSE WHO MADE  
THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE ...**



**SFC JOHN S. STEPHENS  
KIA, TEAM ELITE  
TIKRIT, IRAQ  
MAY 16, 1965 - MAR 15, 2007**



**SFC BENJAMIN L. SEBBAN  
KIA, 5-73 CAV  
AS SADAH, IRAQ  
JUL 14, 1977 - MAR 17, 2007**



**SGT JASON SWIGER  
KIA, 5-73 CAV  
QUBBA, IRAQ  
JUL 19, 1982 - MAR 25, 2007**



**SPC JASON NUNEZ  
KIA, 5-73 CAV  
QUBBA, IRAQ  
DEC 3, 1984 - MAR 25, 2007**



**PFC ORLANDO GONZALEZ  
KIA, 5-73 CAV  
QUBBA, IRAQ  
JUN 27, 1985 - MAR 25, 2007**



**PVT ANTHONY WHITE  
KIA, 5-73 CAV  
QUBBA, IRAQ  
AUG 30, 1985 - MAR 25, 2007**

# 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment 82nd Airborne Division



**All the Way!!  
H-Minus!!**

