

# ANACONDA TIMES

FEBRUARY 14, 2007

PROUDLY SERVING LSA ANACONDA



Vol. 4, Issue 6

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## 'Instincts over feelings' help convoy security team neutralize enemy threat

by Spc. Dustin Perry  
*1/34 BCT Public Affairs Office*

**CAMP ADDER, Iraq** – Thirty seconds. Within a short sliver of time, a dozen U.S. Soldiers, conducting a routine convoy operation, endured an engagement with the enemy under the Baghdad twilight, quickly and safely quashed the threat with a textbook reaction, and came away with a war story they will be able to take home and tell to their grandkids one day.

Answering to the radio call sign, the members of the 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 136th Infantry Regiment convoy logistics patrol team regularly escort supply trucks and other vehicles to and from countless locations all throughout Iraq.

During the evening hours of Jan. 7, the team hit the road from Camp Taji for a convoy that would take them about 200 miles in the southeast direction. Only a few hours into an otherwise routine mission, they encountered the first of many obstacles the night had in store for them.

"At approximately 10 p.m., we came up on an [improvised explosive device] in the middle of the road," said Staff Sgt. Steven Davis, convoy commander.

After securing the area they heard a loud explosion to the west of their position, Davis said.

"[Then], we had an Iraqi Army convoy come up that had stopped about 50 meters behind us, roughly," Davis said, a native of Owatonna, Minn. "Our rear gunner could see people running around their vehicles, and he called me up to let me know what was going on."

The gunner, Spc. Alexander Jimenez of Tacoma, Wash., said the Iraqi soldiers were telling him they had at least two of their own soldiers who were dead and an unknown amount of wounded after being hit by an IED and coming under rifle fire. Davis sent his No. 3 vehicle to the rear to assess the scene.

"They had a lot of guys with gunshot and shrapnel wounds," said Sgt. Josh Day, a Belview, Minn., native and noncommissioned officer in charge of the convoy. "I told them to bring their wounded up to us because we weren't going to run around to the back of their convoy, we needed to secure our own."

**see CONVOY, Page 3**

# Sherpa crews helping keep convoys off roads

*See Page 8 and 10*




Staff Sgt. James Shead, from Austin Texas, 2nd Battalion, a 82nd Field Artillery Regiment aid station treatment NCO, helps a young girl open a meal-ready-to-eat package during a recent humanitarian medical assistance visit in a village near LSA Anaconda.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bell

**"Trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills."**

I am Sgt. Joanne Obrien from Hartford, Conn.  
21st Combat Support Hospital >> emergency room NCOIC



## Iraqi Village Builds Women's Center in North Baghdad

**BAGHDAD** -- A small town in north Baghdad Province provides a positive glimpse of Iraq's future. Assriya Village, located outside Camp Taji, has about 4,600 residents representing all sects.

"Assriya" in Arabic means "modern" and its name exemplifies the way residents treat each other. They worked together to build a Women's Center that officially opened in August and today that facility is producing apparel for children.

The \$230,000, 400-square-meter facility includes 12 sewing machines and 12 computers to encourage female business opportunities. Local residents have sewn dozens of dresses, sold many in the local market, and are now looking to expand their business enterprise.

They are working with Camp Taji to open a store there. They also are contacting Baghdad merchants about the possibility of selling their apparel.

Col. Debra Lewis, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Gulf Region Central District, recently visited the facility and talked to those operating it. "It's great to see the community's positive outlook and pride in what the Center represents," she said.

Lewis brought with her 16 boxes of fabric, thread and other sewing items donated by Americans wanting to help. (The Daughters of the American Revolution and Seattle churches are among those supporting the effort.) Six of the local women who are part of the work force expressed their sincere appreciation.

Lewis plans to continue seeking stateside support for this facility, and doing whatever else she can, after seeing the impact this is having on the community, she said.

After his father was killed, Sheik Luqman Raheem stepped in and is continuing his work at the center. The 414th Civil Affairs Battalion at Camp Taji was responsible for getting the project funded through the Commander's Emergency Response Program. USACE oversaw the construction. Capt. William LeFever with the 414th said Luqman has done a good job getting the Women's Center going and also has plans to open an internet cafe there to generate even more revenue for the facility. After his father was killed, Sheik Luqman Raheem stepped in and is continuing his work at the center. The 414th Civil Affairs Battalion at Camp Taji was responsible for getting the project funded through the Commander's Emergency Response Program. USACE oversaw the construction. Capt. William LeFever with the 414th said Luqman has done a good job getting the Women's Center going and also has plans to open an internet cafe there to generate even more revenue for the facility.

## Iraqi police rout insurgents in coordinated AIF attack

**MOSUL, Iraq** -- Iraqi policemen from station South East 6 killed two anti-Iraqi forces during a failed attack Jan 28. in Mosul, Iraq.

AIF launched the coordinated attack on the IP station that included rocket-propelled grenades, small-arms fire, and between 30 to 50 attackers on a ground assault team in the failed effort.

The Mosul-based IP at the station responded to the attack, immediately calling a quick reaction force, including Iraqi Army soldiers to support defense of the IP station.

Two AIF were confirmed killed and the IP suffered five wounded in the attack.

## Coalition Forces destroy suspected insurgent hideout

**TIKRIT, Iraq** -- Iraqi Army and Coalition Forces Soldiers found and destroyed a suspected insurgent training site with explosives during a security patrol northwest of Samarra, Jan. 27.

Soldiers from Company D, 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, and IA soldiers found 20 rocket-propelled grenade launchers, one 82 mm mortar tube with a base plate, four 60 mm mortar tubes with base plates, a car battery and more than 7,000 large caliber machine gun rounds at the site.

An explosive ordnance disposal team destroyed the discovered weapons and the buildings.

The mission was in response to a report of a suspicious area seen by air crew members as they flew missions over the area.

## Operation Turki Bowl dismantles terrorist group south of Balad

**BAGHDAD** -- Coalition Forces Soldiers captured a suspected insurgent allegedly responsible for planning and conducting several improvised explosive device and car-bomb attacks in western Baghdad and Fallujah.

The capture occurred during operations Feb. 1 in Abu Ghraib district east of Baghdad International Airport.

The suspect is associated with the Al Qaeda in Iraq terror network.

Three additional suspected insurgents were detained by Coalition Forces.

## CF captures terrorists IED manufacturing leader

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## Iraq's ESU leads cordon and search

**KIRKUK, Iraq** -- The Emergency Services Unit here, with support from 25th Infantry Division Soldiers, conducted an early morning cordon and search operation Saturday outside the city.

The ESU searched three villages for contraband with 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment Soldiers, while an American civil affairs team spoke with locals to gauge living conditions in the area.

"The villages were thoroughly searched," said 1st Lt. John Byler, A Company platoon leader, 2-35. "These guys are allowed to have one AK and one magazine. A couple guys tried to get away with five so we'd take the extra four."

While no contraband was found during

the search, the ESU's professionalism should help build confidence with the populous, Byler said.

"The ESU are some of the better guys that we work with," Byler said. "They're well-trained by and large. We're here for support and guidance."

While the ESU searched house to house, Spc. Richard Hy of the 402nd Civil Affairs Battalion, spoke to the mukhtar of Inhraom, a village of about 1,000 residents. The mukhtar is the village leader and a valuable source of information.

The mukhtar expressed the village's desire for a medical clinic, Hy said. The village is also in need of a water treatment system to replace their current irrigation system.

Hy said that after his team has collected the information, they will figure out what they are able to do to help the village, in hopes of building better relations there.

## MN-B Soldiers evacuate young girl following attack in Al-Doura

**BAGHDAD** -- A five-year old Iraqi girl was wounded during an insurgent attack on coalition forces in the Al-Doura district of the Iraqi capital.

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment and 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, part of the 1st

Cavalry Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team, were conducting a security patrol of the area with an Iraqi Army platoon when the platoon was attacked by a rocket-propelled grenade followed by small arms fire.

During the attack, the girl received multiple gunshot wounds to her legs and arms.

Soldiers provided emergency medical treatment and evacuated the girl and her neighbor to the International Zone where she received further treatment for her injuries.

## ISF receive leadership training during 3-day course

**TIKRIT, Iraq** -- A new non-commissioned officer course in Tikrit graduated its first class of Iraqi soldiers from the 9th Battalion, Strategic Infrastructure Brigade on Wednesday.

The three-day course, established and taught by U.S. Soldiers from Contingency Operating Base Speicher, is targeted at improving the leadership skills of both SIB and Iraqi army NCOs.

The curriculum was tailored to meet the needs of the junior NCOs, involving a more hands-on approach to teaching various soldier skills, such as weapons maintenance. The original curriculum was aimed towards senior level leadership positions,

## Early-morning party



More than 100 servicemembers woke up early to watch the annual Super Bowl football at MWR West Recreation Center. Prizes donated by the NFL and other organizations were given away during the game.

# ANACONDA TIMES

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

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82nd Sustainment Brigade  
593rd Corps Support Group  
15th Sustainment Brigade

# Casey: U.S. Army not broken, Reservists, Guardsmen essential

by Sgt. Sara Wood

American Forces Press Service

**WASHINGTON** - The Army faces significant challenges in the years ahead, but it is still the world's preeminent land power and has not been overly strained by the war on terror, Gen. George W. Casey Jr., commander of Multi-National Force-Iraq, said here today.

Casey, who has commanded in Iraq since July 2004, is President Bush's pick to be the next Army chief of staff. Speaking at his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Service Committee, Casey expressed confidence in U.S. Soldiers.

"I see in Iraq every day a splendid Army," Casey said. "I know that (current Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker) has problems with the forces yet to deploy and with some of the strategic elements that will deploy later, but from what I see in Iraq, the Army is far from broken."

Casey said he believes in the Army vision and transformation, and that his position in Iraq has given him an opportunity to see the Army at work in the war on terror. Today's Soldiers are the best he has seen in his entire career and make a difference in Iraq every day, he said. He pledged that U.S. Soldiers and their families, who make tremendous sacrifices, will be his top priority if confirmed.

The Army's transformation to a lighter, modular-based force has been successful in Iraq, Casey said. The smaller units are able to handle the complexities of the war in Iraq, he said, and transformation will continue to be important in the Army's future.

Casey also noted the importance of the Army National Guard and Reserve to the service's mission. The United States is approaching a point where half of Guard and Reserve troops are combat veterans, and these troops will be essential to future operations, he said.

The 100,000 troop increase in Army end-strength of 65,000 troops over five years is adequate, Casey said, and the new strategy to secure Iraq can work. He noted that Iraqi security forces have assumed control of security in several provinces. The main challenge remains in Baghdad, where sectarian violence has surged, he said.

"For the Iraqis to successfully assume and sustain security responsibility, their security forces must emerge as the dominant security forces in the country," Casey said. "To do this, political and militia influence over the security forces must be eliminated and levels of sectarian violence, particularly in the capital, must be brought down substantially - brought down to the point where the people in Baghdad can be safe in their neighborhoods. This is what we are working toward in Baghdad. It will take time, and

the Iraqis do need our help."

The five additional U.S. brigades Bush has pledged to Iraq will give commanders on the ground extra flexibility they need to accomplish the mission, Casey said.

The United States is relying more on Iraqi forces and requiring them to take responsibility for security in Baghdad, Casey said. However, the Iraqi population does not have high levels of confidence in the security forces, especially the police, he said. To deal with this problem, the coalition will team with Iraqi army and police units in daily operations.

"That's where the coalition comes in, because when they see us operating with the Iraqi police particularly, the population has a greater level of confidence that they'll be treated properly," he said.

The firefight that took place this week in Najaf was a perfect example of how Iraqi and coalition forces should work together, Casey said. The Iraqi police responded to a situation and found they couldn't handle it alone, so they called the Iraqi army; the Iraqi army arrived and needed support, so they called for coalition backup. "The Iraqis dealt with it with our support," he said.

Three provinces in northern Iraq will soon be under Iraqi control completely, and more provinces are to follow, Casey noted. Across Iraq, 14 of the 18 provinces have 10 or less incidents of violence

per day, he added. However, he acknowledged that the situation in Baghdad is grave and said the city's importance as the center of government cannot be overlooked.

Casey outlined several things U.S. leadership can look for when measuring the success of the Iraq security plan. The first indicator will be a reduction in lawlessness and the level of sectarian killings, he said. Second is continuing work on the security situation in Baghdad until the people can feel safe in their neighborhoods. Another measure will be the emergence of the Iraqi security forces as the dominant force in the country. Also important are an improvement in basic services in Baghdad and the engagement of political and religious leaders in the peace process.

The situation in Iraq is not nearly where he thought it would be, Casey said, but he stressed that his experience in the country has strengthened him as a leader. He has dealt with the highest levels of U.S. government, mentored three Iraqi prime ministers, and dealt with different ambassadors, he said. "I have learned an awful lot about strategic leadership, and I believe that will help me greatly as the chief of staff of the Army," he said.

Casey said he recognizes the tremendous responsibilities associated with the chief of staff position and said he is willing to take it on.

## CONVOY, from Page 1

Day instructed an Iraqi Army captain to split the injured soldiers into two groups, "which ones were worse or better." He then told his medic, Pfc. Joshua Livingston of Minneapolis, they were going to have to call in a few helicopters and execute a small-scale medical evacuation for what they thought was only a few people.

"From there, it just escalated into a mass casualty evacuation - like that," said Day, with a quick snap of his fingers. "They just kept coming. They had wounded that were being carried by other Iraqi Army. They were bringing trucks up that had even more wounded in them and a lot more who were dead."

With the increasingly complex situation, the rear Humvee in the convoy was immediately called to provide assistance. The driver, Spc. Steven Rockwell, a second medic in the Earthpig 66 patrol and a native of Cookeville, Tenn. began administering medical care and helping with the evacuation.

Less than an hour after the convoy stopped, an EOD team destroyed both the IED and an additional explosive device. Establishing a landing zone for the incoming aircraft and continuing

the medical evacuation were the next priorities, Day said.

"We had already triaged all the patients who were getting ready to be medically evacuated," Livingston said. "The first two helicopters were on the ground, so we immediately started loading the injured. At that time, I think one of the Iraqi soldiers was yelling that a truck pulled up. He yelled, 'Enemy!' and he notified us that we had an unidentified vehicle in the area."

The vehicle had been creeping up from the side of the road. Shortly after being spotted, someone exited the truck and began running toward the convoy and firing, said Cpl. Aaron Glasscock, a gunner from Opelousas, La.

"I started popping flares in the vicinity of where they had seen the truck," said Glasscock. "We started taking fire, and bullets were impacting all around the truck. I saw one guy, an insurgent, moving about 75 meters in front of me. He was firing and moving up closer to our position. That's when I opened up with my M-240 machine gun. I fired maybe a 40-round burst. As soon as I did that, I noticed a building about 25 meters in front of where I engaged the first enemy," Glasscock continued.

"Small-arms fire and muzzle flashes were coming out of the windows, so I immediately turned my weapon and started engaging the building. At about the same time, the Iraqi Army guys on the ground saw where our tracer rounds were flying and about 30 or 40 of them started opening fire on the same building."

Glasscock fired a single shot from his M203 grenade launcher, which ended the enemy's engagement after about half a minute, and a cease-fire was called. One Iraqi soldier was slightly wounded during the fire fight.

"In a matter of seconds, the threat was completely neutralized," Day said. "At that point, we started right back up with our medical evacuation sequence. We advised the medevac team that we were not receiving any more fire. The LZ was clear for them to return."

A total of 12 Iraqi casualties were evacuated to a nearby medical treatment facility, Livingston said. Com-

munication with the Iraqi Army went really smooth throughout the ordeal. Everyone involved was organized and coordinated, he said.

Many of the 2-136th Soldiers also lauded their Iraqi counterparts for the quick and decisive way they reacted during the fire fight, despite the fact that several of them were already injured from the previous attack.

The Iraqi soldiers were tough Glasscock said. "They had one truck that rolled up with bullet holes in the doors. The guy who was sitting on that side, he got out and he had matching bullet holes all up and down his body. He got out of the truck and stood up. He lifted his shirt to show us he had been hit, but he said he was OK."

Asked how his Soldiers handled the attack, 1st Sgt. Joseph Persing, the Truck Commander in the scout truck, said it "was kind of a remarkable deal."

"It was a basic situation when it first started and it turned into a complex situation, which they handled very

well," Persing said, a native of Heron Lake, Minn. "It was something that you only train on a little bit, but when we were put in the actual situation it appeared to me that it was like second nature." Day echoed the remark, saying he was "highly impressed" with the way the other Soldiers in his company reacted.

"It was instinct over feelings," Day said. "We had a situation, we had a lot of wounded, we needed security, but we still had our primary mission to complete."

Close to 11:30 p.m., the convoy was back on the road. The remainder of the trip was without incident. Day said the attack hasn't done anything to set his team back or slow them down. He said they are being totally proactive and taking the event as a learning experience.

"We had a traumatic event, but it goes on all over theater," Day said. "Everybody who runs missions outside the wire will eventually have to deal with something similar to what we experienced. We're part of the big plan in this country, so we can't just say, 'Hey, we did our good deed.' We've still got an important piece of the puzzle to finish. We have just got to keep going."

**"It was a basic situation when it first started and it turned into a complex situation, which they handled very well."**

- 1st Sgt. Joseph Persing

On the street with Staff Sgt. Angela Archie

## What qualities does the ideal mate require to win your heart?

Pfc. James Edmond



"They have to have a good personality, be family oriented and also like to have fun."

Pvt. Charlene Ahrens



"Honesty, trust and loyalty similar to a loyal, puppy waiting for you to return home. The most important thing that's required for a relationship is honesty."

Staff Sgt. Benjamin Roland



"Non-smoker with a good personality and sense of humor. Be independent enough to hold things down while I'm deployed."

Sgt. 1st Class Lynwood Owens



"Be honest, trustworthy, respectful, and most of all, be yourself. Be kind, loving, not hot, but a little spicy."

# Army denies terrorists stronghold in Diyala

by Sgt. Armando Monroig

5th MPAD

**BALAD RUZ, Iraq** -- The U.S. Army concluded a massive, nine-day assault Jan. 13, centered on a series of small villages in the Diyala province that for the past 18 months had been used as a safe haven for insurgents.

During the operation, Soldiers from the 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment Reconnaissance, 82nd Airborne Division, killed more than 100 insurgents and detained 54 suspected of involvement with terrorism activities in the area, which is located just south of Balad Ruz.

The unit, located at Forward Operating Base Caldwell, also reported capturing six unnamed leaders of an underground organization thought to have ties to Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups hiding in the villages of Turki, Hamoud, and 30 Tamuz.

In outlying palm groves and canals, Soldiers found weapons caches containing more than 1,100 Katushya rockets, 1,500 rocket-propelled grenades, 500 mortars and a variety of bomb-making materials.

Sunni insurgents defended the area with small arms fire, anti-tank mines and improvised explosive devices.

"The effects will be felt just outside this area in places like Baghdad, Baqubah and further out to the west," said Capt. Stephen Dobbins, the commander of Troop B.

Leaders of the 5-73rd Cav. suspected that insurgents were using the area as a training ground for conducting terrorist activities elsewhere. The villages are an

hour's drive from Baghdad.

Last month, the unit raided the area after finding a large weapons cache there. More than 100 insurgents and two U.S. Soldiers were killed in the fighting.

This last assault was bolstered by the Iraqi Army and U.S. Army units from forward operating bases in Muqadadiyah and Baqubah. Air Force B-1 bombers and F-16 fighter-bombers dropped bombs on nearby canals and tunnel systems to destroy insurgent defenses before Soldiers moved in to secure the area.

Soldiers battled ankle-deep mud as they cleared canals and villages.

The 5-73rd Cav., along with the Iraqi army, is now in the process of setting up a combat outpost in Turki from which to control the area.

"It will be a place where Coalition Forces and the Iraqi army can work jointly to develop intelligence, plan rehearsals, and execute missions out

here," said Dobbins.

The outpost will also be used to facilitate infrastructure improvement projects and strengthen the area's education system.

"With the outpost, the Iraqi security forces can provide a safe and secure environment for those in the area who want a better opportunity for their families," said Lt. Col. Andrew Poppas, the commander of the 5-73rd Cav.

Poppas said that his unit has already begun to assist with the repatriation of village residents driven out by a mostly Sunni insurgency.

"The end state is to create a safe and secure region with a continuous Iraqi Security Forces presence," said Poppas.

"That way, we deny the enemy a safe haven in which they can conduct illegal acts with impunity," he said. "You can't let an environment of extremism remain in a free and safe society."



Photos by Spc. Amanda Morrissey



(Above) Iraqi soldiers stand guard over detainees who were rounded up as part of a massive operation to clear the Tawillah region of Iraq of insurgents. The 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment Reconnaissance (Airborne), Fort Bragg, N.C., along with members of 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division and 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division, participated in the mission that began Jan. 4. (Left) Soldiers from the 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment Reconnaissance (Airborne), Fort Bragg, N.C., prepare to enter a series of small mud huts in the Tawillah region of Iraq.

## Iraqi security forces, coalition give humanitarian aid to needy

by Spc. Courtney Marulli

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

**FOB LOYALTY, Iraq** — Iraqi security forces distributed much-needed supplies to refugees, with help from 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery, 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team Jan. 31. Distributed in Baghdad's Diyala neighborhood were blankets, heaters, food and cooking oil.

Capt. Dave Eastburn, Battery B commander, said the 2-17th organized the project and arranged for the supplies to arrive, but the Iraqi troops and national policemen carried out the operation.

While Soldiers from 2-17th and members of 4th Brigade, 1st Iraqi Army Division pulled security, Soldiers of 8th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi National Police Division distributed the supplies and successfully completed the mission.

"I think all the Iraqi civilians realize we helped them out a great deal today and that's a success," said Eastburn, a native of Columbus, Ohio.

Soldiers in 2-17th were approached by local residents, both men women, who wanted to communicate their needs. Some of the women showed their children's government cards, so the Soldiers could see their photographs. A few Soldiers showed pictures of their family in return.

The people waited patiently as the supplies were unloaded from two large trucks and were pleased with the toys handed out to their children.

Approximately 1,000 families were given supplies.

Eastburn said he meets with the Diyala Neighborhood Advisory Council



A humanitarian drop brings food, blankets, heaters, and cooking oil to displaced people in the Baghdad's Diyala neighborhood Jan. 31. Units involved in the drop were 2nd Battalion, 17th Field Artillery, 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, the 8th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi National Police Division and the 4th Brigade, 1st Iraqi Army Division.

to discuss projects with its leaders. One such leader is known as "Madhi," who Eastburn has worked with on several projects.

The refugees are important to her, Eastburn said, as she likes to ensure they are taken care of because they don't have anything.

"She likes to put a coalition forces face to things, so they know we're here to help," Eastburn said.

He added it also lets the people know that the coalition forces aren't just here for security, but also to work side-by-side with the Iraqi security forces.

Since she represents a predominately poor population, Madhi has the respect of the people she represents because

they know she is in charge and that she'll get them what they need, Eastburn explained.

"We got a very positive response from the people there," Eastburn said. "They're grateful for both the coalition and the help we're providing."

Eastburn said the people know that Madhi has access to coalition forces and Iraqi security forces, helping to ensure the local residents get help, when needed.

"I have a great partner with Madhi, because she comes up with the ideas of how to help," Eastburn said. "She really knows the importance of having a coalition and the Iraqi security forces face to it."

## Breakfast kicks off month-long celebration

by Sgt. KaRonda Fleming

Anaconda Times Staff

**LSA ANACONDA, Iraq** — Servicemembers celebrated together during the African American Black History Month prayer breakfast held Feb. 1 in the Castle Heights dining facility.

"It's a great feeling to help people to celebrate our heritage," said Lt. Col. Keith Jackson, a logistics officer for the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and was the guest speaker for the program.

He said "It's an honor to be able to talk about black history, which is really a part of American History, from a unique perspective."

The breakfast celebration, which began and ended with a prayer, also had performances by the Gospel male service choir, a dance routine, and a poem.

The choir sang the spiritual 'I don't feel no ways tired,' and Staff Sgt. Isidore Dione, a member of the radical praise dance ministry, performed a routine to the song 'Thank-You.'

"It means a lot to have you all participate and take part in this celebration," said Col. Christine M. Gayagas, the deputy commanding officer of the 13th SC (E) during closing remarks for the program.

She said "There is strength in diversity, and if you just look amongst our formation and see the contributions of the likes of the sergeants major, officers, and NCOs. We could not do it without great effort, talent, and contribution from you, and those who have come before you."

The prayer breakfast was the beginning of several programs that will take place here at LSA Anaconda during the month of February.



Sgt. Douglas T. Watts leads the members of the Gospel Male Service Choir Feb. 1, singing "I Don't Feel No Ways Tired," during a Black History Month prayer breakfast at Logistical Support Area Anaconda.

Photo by Sgt. KaRonda Fleming

# 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.

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TUESDAY AND FRIDAY  
10 TO 11 A.M.

**RELATIONSHIP SKILLS**  
WEDNESDAY  
9 TO 11 A.M.

for more information,  
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## 829-1402

## Radiology team helps provide critical medical care for battlefield injuries

by Staff Sgt. Alice Moore

332nd Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs



Senior Airman Julie Stewart, (from left) Army Pfc. Daniel Salas, and Maj. Robert Jesinger review an X-ray at the Air Force Theater Hospital at Balad Air Base, Iraq. Stewart is a 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group radiology technician, and Jesinger is the 332nd EMDG radiology flight commander, both deployed from Travis Air Force Base, Calif. Salas is a 53rd head and neck team radiology technologist deployed from Fort Lewis, Wash.

BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq -- In a combat zone, determining the proper medical treatment for battlefield injuries can be a matter of life or death.

The 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group Radiology Flight ensures fast and accurate image production and interpretation are conducted so patients receive the right care.

"Radiology deals with imaging the entire body," said Maj. Robert Jesinger, 332nd EMDG radiology flight commander deployed from Travis Air Force Base, Calif.

Jesinger said some typical radiology work done by members of the flight include computed tomography (CT), radiographs, or X-rays and ultrasounds.

Ultrasounds involve sound waves used to create images. CTs are composed of three-dimensional images used to detect problems that two-dimensional X-rays can't find.

The radiology procedure depends on the type of injury that comes in, Major Jesinger said.

"For example, we would perform an X-ray on a patient who has an ankle injury," he said.

"A patient who has pelvic pain would have an ultrasound done."

Although the flight's first priority is to provide services to trauma patients, they also see service patients who need follow-ups and outpatients, Jesinger said.

When patients arrive at the Air Force Theatre Hospital with battlefield injuries, the team performs their procedures as quickly as possible. It's then a diagnosis is made so the patient can be treated before being evacuated for further medical treatment.

Because the flight has such a vital mission, Jesinger said there's no room for errors.

"Half of our job is ensuring the images

we produce are done as accurately as possible," he said. "We also have to be vigilant and make sure our equipment is operational at all times."

Compared to working at his home station, Jesinger said the operations tempo is much higher.

"We are easily twice as busy given the number of doctors and technicians we have," he said.

The major said compared to the last deployment rotation the radiology team from Air and Space Expeditionary Force (AEF) 3/4 dealt with approximately 15,000 cases compared to 14,000 studies done by AEF 1/2.

"The challenge comes with seeing more traumas here than what we'd see back at home station," said Senior Airman Julie Stewart, radiology technician also deployed from Travis.

Airman Stewart said despite the typical challenges of a deployed environment, there are aspects of her job here she finds rewarding.

"I feel like I'm really doing what I'm trained to do here. We're involved in just about every trauma here," she said. "I really feel like I'm helping."

The flight usually has to perform multiple exams at any given time. The total joint force flight operates with several Air Force and Army members, which includes radiology physicians, and radiology technicians. The Army technicians are associated with the Army's head and neck team.

"It's great working with the Air Force," said Army Pfc. Daniel Salas, 53rd head and neck team deployed from Fort Lewis, Wash. "We work well together as a team."

Since the mission in Iraq doesn't stop, the radiology staff doesn't either.

"We work very hard to provide good service," Major Jesinger said. "We're service-oriented so that patients can get the care they need as quickly as possible."

## Spooky delivers frightening results for terrorists

by Chief Master Sgt. Gary Emery

Air Force Special Operations Command

HURLBURT FIELD, Fla. -- Spooky is about to get a little scarier.

Crews at Hurlburt Field have put the finishing touches on the first AC-130U Spooky gunship armed with the 30 mm Bushmaster cannon. The rearmed Spooky retains its 105 mm cannon but replaces the 25 mm and 40 mm guns with Bushmasters.

The project is a "win-win," according to Air Force Special Operations Command officials -- unless you're one of the bad guys.

"We're buying increased lethality and accuracy at the same time we're improving reliability," said Lt. Col. Mike Gottstine, AFSOC's chief of strike/intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance requirements. "The bottom line is we'll have more gunships available for the warfighter on a day-to-day basis."

The aging 40 mm Bofors cannon, which has been around in various guises since World War II, is increasingly hard to maintain, Gottstine said, and there is no production line set up to replace shrinking ammunition stocks. While the 25 mm gun is newer, he said, "it is a maintenance hog as far as the amount of money and time we spend maintaining the ammo handling system."

In addition, because no other Air



Tech. Sgt. Ben Filek practices loading a 30 mm Bushmaster cannon aboard an AC-130U Spooky gunship Jan. 26 at Hurlburt Field, Fla. The 30 mm gun will eventually replace both the 40 mm cannon and 25 mm gun on U-model gunships. Filek is an aerial gunner with the 19th Special Operations Squadron at Hurlburt Field.

Force aircraft use the 25 mm cannon, no one is working on developing new types of ammunition that could be effective for gunship operations, he said.

The Bushmaster cannon, on the other hand, will arm the Marine Corps' new amphibious assault vehicle, is installed on some Navy ships and is being looked at for uses in other capacities. Because of that, "the services are developing a lot of variations of 30 mm ammo," Gottstine

said. "Different types of ammo will allow us to perform different missions or maybe give us some options to prosecute our targets differently."

The 25 mm cannon was originally installed in gunships as a suppression weapon to keep enemy troops pinned down so they could not move or shoot, said Paul Brousseau, AFSOC AC-130U requirements contractor support. However, the 25 mm has no air burst

capability, which is often preferable for suppression fire, he said. "The Marine Corps is looking at a 30 mm airburst round that could possibly be a good capability for us sometime in the future," he said.

The new cannon fires 200 rounds a minute, faster than the 40 mm and a bit slower than the 25 mm guns it replaces, Gottstine said. "The 25 mm throws a lot of lead down but it scatters it more than the 30 mm will. We're expecting increased lethality and increased accuracy with this weapon," he said. "Hits are what counts."

Gunners from the 1st Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt Field are ready to put their new weapon to the test.

"It's going to be fun, it's going to be interesting," said Master Sgt. Chris Jette, an aerial gunner with 1st Special Operations Group standardization/evaluation. "Overall, we don't know what the round actually does from our platform until they do the testing, but it looks like it's going to be good."

"I'm impressed with how easy it is to work on," said Tech. Sgt. Ben Lerman, an aerial gunner with the 4th Special Operations Squadron. "Hopefully, it will make our job as gunners easier. Commonality between the (forward and rear guns) means we will have interchangeability of parts so we can fix them in the air."

## Military OneSource offers free online tax filing

WASHINGTON -- The Defense Department's Military OneSource family support program is once again offering free, online tax preparation and filing for servicemembers and their families, officials said Feb. 2.

The service began Jan. 15. It's available to all servicemembers, and their families.

This is the second year of the program, said Jane Burke, the principal director in the office of the deputy undersecretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy.

"How to use the refund may be the first financial decision of the year" for servicemembers in improving their financial readiness, Ms. Burke noted. DOD is launching a campaign called "Military Saves" to encourage servicemembers to save money and eliminate or reduce their personal debt.

Filers who use Military OneSource's online system can expect to receive their refund within 10 days, Ms. Burke said. And Military OneSource tax consultants, she said, are trained to answer questions on preparing and filing taxes.

Tax-filing assistance also is available through the Internal Revenue Service's electronic filing program.

# 15th SB: Base security adapts, works hard

by Spc. Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown

Anaconda Times Staff

**CAMP TAJI, Iraq—** Soldiers throughout theater often find themselves performing jobs different from what they joined the Army to do while deployed.

Members of the 1157th Transportation Company from Wisconsin, and the 410th Quartermaster Company from Kentucky are no exception. While they usually work with vehicles and supply respectively, they were both tasked by the 15th Sustainment Brigade to provide base security on Camp Taji prior to deploying.

"I've become comfortable with my job," Sgt. Kristen M. Gust from Oconomowoc, Wis., a truck driver with the 1157th, said of her new duties.

Re-training for the units included weapons familiarization, IED and vehicle identification, tower procedures, and a brush-up on terrain association.

The 1157th Soldiers man towers and Castle Gate, one of Camp Taji's four entry control points, while the 410th sticks strictly to towers.

Pfc. Michael J. Wilson, also a truck driver in the 1157th and a native of Ellsworth, Wis., said he doesn't mind the

change of pace.

"It's not too bad, I actually enjoy it," Wilson said.

His guard tower shift runs from 6 a.m. till 2 p.m. daily. Rain or shine, his unit guards Camp Taji's perimeter, rarely getting days off.

"To me, working on the holidays is better than sitting back at the barracks thinking about home," he said.

Gust agreed saying unit members only have one another for company, so the key is to keep interesting conversations with their shift partners.

The 1157th also rotate where they work: one day will be at the gate's entry, another day in a tower. Also, switching shift partners on a daily basis combats complacency on the job, said Gust.

As for excitement on the job, the base security Soldiers seldom see it. Soldiers have evacuated the towers due to nearby IED threats, but under their watchful eyes, not much outside the base goes unseen, they said.

Sgt. Brian K. Bailey, a communications NCO from Stanford, Ky., with the 410th said base security is a more rewarding job than his previous military occupation as a crane operator.

"This job is more intense," Bailey



Photo by Spc. Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown  
Sgt. Kristen M. Gust from Oconomowoc, Wis., a truck driver with the 1157th Transportation Company sits guard at her post for the day at Camp Taji's Castle Gate entry control point Jan. 24.

said. "Safety is a factor in both, but to me, being out here protecting the forward operating base is of high importance."

The 410th's shifts are six hours instead of eight, but theirs are followed by unit classes and physical fitness.

"It does get monotonous, but we

make the most of it," he said.

Bailey, who is on his third deployment in 17 years, said he feels good about helping protect his fellow Soldiers on Camp Taji.

"The interests of the United States have been compromised, so we're here to defend it," he said.

## 15th SB Soldiers train Iraqi counterparts in Class IX operations

by Spc. Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown

Anaconda Times Staff

**CAMP TAJI, Iraq—** Two 15th Sustainment Brigade supply Soldiers have a not-so-average supply job here.

Staff Sgt. Marie C. Taylor, and Sgt. Shawntrese D. Peak are the only 15th SB representatives working alongside about 50 Iraqi nationals in the Class IX yard here.

Class IX is the Army's supply designator for all vehicle repair parts.

The unique part is the yard provides all the military tactical vehicle repair parts in Iraq for the Iraqi Army - not the U.S. Army, said Taylor.

The U.S. Army intends to train up Iraqi soldiers to take over and operate the yard before long.

"This is the only Class IX parts activity in Iraq that is being stood up, and will be transitioned to the Iraqi Army within the next year," said Chief Warrant Officer Ronald Diehl of LaPorte, Ind., a maintenance technician for Multi National Security Transitional Command-Iraq.

Located on the Iraqi side of Camp Taji, the yard holds warehouses full of vehicle repair parts for use by Iraqi units. Additional parts can be ordered from the States, but the total process of ordering and receiving parts may take up to 180 days, said Taylor.

Taylor, of Cayes, Haiti, the Class IX NCOIC with the 512th Maintenance Company, said she enjoys her job, and is glad of the opportunity to work with local Iraqis.

"They are good people, hard workers, and we really have a good working relationship with them all-around," she said.

Taylor and Peak took over the yard in September replacing the unit which started it.

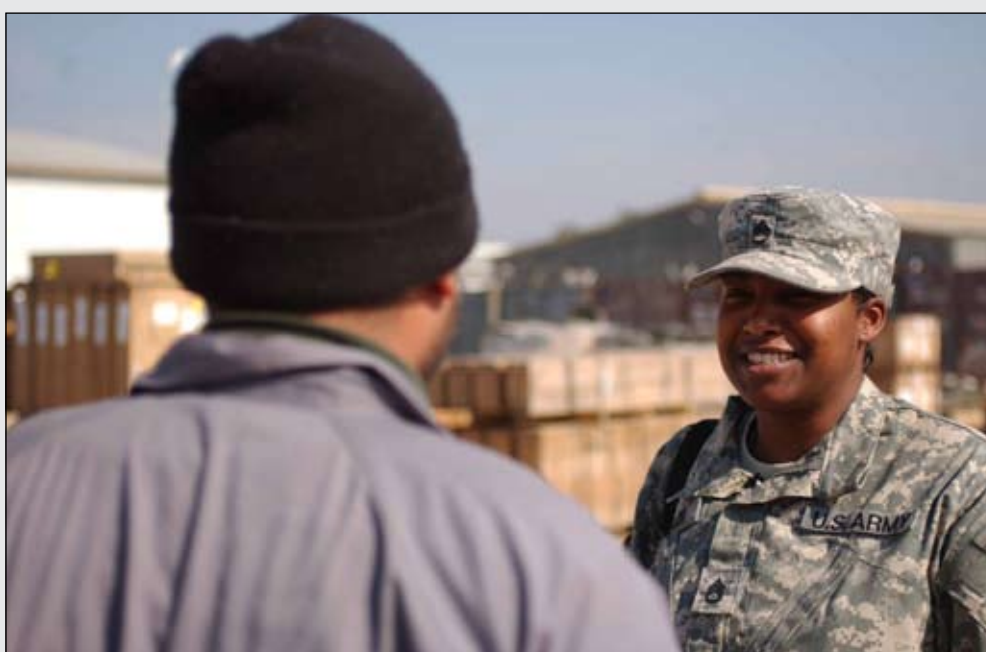


Photo by Spc. Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown  
Staff Sgt. Marie C. Taylor of Cayes, Haiti, the Class IX NCOIC with the 512th Maintenance Company speaks with an Iraqi worker, instructing him on some of the day's work. Taylor is one of two female 15th Sustainment Brigade Soldiers working at the yard.

Taylor said they overhauled the warehouses and conducted a 100 percent inventory, setting up programs to track all of the parts requested and shipped out of the yard.

A typical day for Taylor and Peak include trips to the Central Receiving and Shipping Point, organizing shipments of parts, and doing inventories.

"We never know what exactly is coming in," said Taylor referring to the parts. "It all depends

on what is needed."

The 15th SB Soldiers also oversee the local Iraqi workers at the yard, instructing them where items should be moved, and mentoring them in supply and inventory techniques.

"There is a language barrier, but that is expected," Taylor said.

She said they often communicate with the Iraqi workers with a modified type of sign language, and have come to understand each other even with

limited communication.

Taylor said the Iraqi workers were a little surprised to be working with female Soldiers at first, but they have gotten used to each other now. Although the female Soldiers help run the yard, they comply with some rules to accommodate the Iraqis, such as not riding in vehicles without a male escort, and leaving work before it gets dark.

Peak, of Omaha, Neb., also of the 512th, said her job is rewarding because she has the chance to work with the Iraqi locals.

"The best part is knowing that we are here helping the Iraqi people establish a democracy," she said.

Peak said the experience she and Taylor have is a unique one. They have the opportunity to learn a lot about the Iraqi culture, and that is something not a lot of Soldiers get to do, she said.

The Iraqis working with the 15th SB Soldiers feel the same way- they learn from each other. An Iraqi worker at the yard said he likes working with the female Soldiers and has a good relationship with them.

"They just tell me what they need to finish their work ... we work together, to accomplish our work," he said.

The worker said he likes working for the betterment of his country.

"I feel a lot of pride working for the Iraqi Army, and doing anything I can for my country," he said.

The U.S. Soldiers are looking forward to when they can hand over the yard to the Iraqi Army.

"It's worked," Diehl said. "They helped train 25 (Iraqi soldiers) back in September ... and they will be instrumental when we transition this to a full-time Iraqi force."

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# Why I Serve:



Sgt. 1st Class David Washington Photo by Spc. Karly Cooper

## RSTA Soldier shares experience with troops

by Sgt. 1st Class Douglas Schultz

1/167 RSTA Public Affairs

**LSA ANACONDA, Iraq** – The Warriors Leader Course is the first of many military schools a young Soldier will take during his or her tenure as a Sergeant.

Although the two-week course isn't offered for Soldiers deployed to Iraq, one non-commissioned officer doesn't let a combat zone stop his Soldiers from learning the basics of military leadership.

Sgt. 1st Class David Washington has spent the past three months educating Soldiers in Warrior Leader tasks to include: Troop Leading Procedures, Drill and Ceremony, Army Physical Fitness, Risk Management, and what to expect during field situational training exercises.

Washington was selected by the company first sergeant to teach a general military class one evening each week.

Washington asked the first sergeant, "What about teaching these guys warrior leader tasks and preparing them for the actual school?"

Three months later, Washington is still teaching young Soldiers.

SFC Washington has been an instructor at the 209th Regional Training Institute at Camp Ashland, Neb. for the past 12 years. He had started there in the Operations Section, but for most of his time there he has been an instructor.

"My biggest reward is seeing Soldiers graduate from [Noncommissioned Officer Education System]," he said.

WLC is designed for specialists who are promotable and sergeants who are new to the NCO Corps.

Teaching WLC here at LSA Anaconda has been rewarding to both Washington and Soldiers.

He said the Soldiers who have received the training feel better prepared to take the actual WLC when they return from Iraq.

"What a good way to help the Joe's out and help them succeed," Washington said. "In turn it has helped me brush up on my skills."

Washington said he likes his job at the RTI in Ashland, NE.

"In my 12 years I have learned so many things from so many Soldiers," he said.

After the deployment, Washington plans to return to the RTI and retire in 2009. "I'm going to do some golfing and hang out where it is warm, not worry about the cold weather and enjoy life," he said.

Washington said although he doesn't have any kids, educating Soldiers has given him somewhat of a fatherly responsibility.

# MNC-I Corps sergeant major thanks troops at Q-West

by Spc. Kyndal Hernandez  
45th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs

**FOB Q-WEST, Iraq** -- As part of a multi-stop whirlwind tour of bases throughout Iraq, the Multi National Corps - Iraq command sergeant major spoke to a capacity crowd Saturday at Q-West's Morale Welfare and Recreation Theater.

Command Sgt. Maj. Neil Ciotola made the trip from Camp Victory to speak with Soldiers about the importance of their missions and express his appreciation for their efforts to sustain logistical operations in Iraq. Known for his exceptional sense of humor, Ciotola used his comedic wit to relay a message of gratitude.

"I really only came here to thank you. You guys are doing an outstanding job, and I wanted to come and give credit where credit is due," Ciotola said.

"We will fix this country one broken down motorist at a time," he added, reflecting on a personal experience involving Iraqi citizens and expressing his hopes for the successful future of this nation.

Ciotola also conveyed to the Soldiers of Q-West the importance of this logistics hub and its support of forward forces.

"You make the toughest part of warfare look easy, sustaining the force, and the logistical aspects of it. I think you are going to see major growth here," Ciotola explained.

"Q-West will remain here for a while because when we pull out of places like Mosul and Tikrit, it will be up to FOBs with logistical support to maintain the structure and support of fighting forces."

More than 1,000 Soldiers – packed into theater seats and temporary bleachers,

some even standing in rows five deep – responded warmly to his frank way of getting his point across.

"I thought his speech was very humorous, but also very informative," said Spc. Steven Pilkons, a driver with 45th Sustainment Brigade. "I think his visit was definitely a morale booster for the Soldiers here. Everyone really seemed to enjoy it and get a lot out of it."

Ciotola's messages included maintaining moral and ethical conduct at all times, taking care of yourself as a Soldier as well as the rest of your team, and maintaining high standards and discipline.

With more than 30 years of Army experience and having seen the military post-Vietnam to current operations in the Global War on Terrorism, Ciotola said he has a better understanding of the Soldiers under MNC-I.

"People talk to me all the time about the state of the Non-Commissioned Officer Corps," said Ciotola. "The Army that I joined 31 years ago, paled in comparison to the capacity, the capability and the effectiveness that is fielded here today."

As an example, Ciotola grabbed a Small Arms Protective Insert, or body armor plate, and highlighted rapidly evolving technology that continues to be fielded at an unprecedented rate to make the Army stronger and Soldiers safer.

Imparting his knowledge and sharing his experience is one of his personal missions as a military leader, he said.

"I have so much that I want to pass on to all of you but there are not enough hours in the day sometimes. This is the only job where you can just devote yourself every day to making your men and women [Soldiers and NCOs] better than you are."



Command Sgt. Maj. Neil Ciotola, the MNC-I command sergeant major, expresses thanks to Q-West's troops during a town-hall-style meeting at the base's MWR Theater.

# Army Reserve Affairs


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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](mailto:bethany.becker@balad.iraq.centcom.mil)

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# Taking convoys off the roads



Chief Warrant Officer Ty Blasingame (left) goes over the upcoming mission with Staff Sgt. Eddie Agregaard, Chief Warrant Officer Jim Oliver, and Spc. Robert Stadalnick during a flight.



Staff Sgt. Eddie Agregaard and Spc. Robert Stadalnick work together to carefully guide a pallet of cargo onto an Army C-23 Sherpa aircraft before a mission.



Chief Warrant Officer Ty Blasingame methodically prepares the aircraft for pre-dawn flight from LSA Anaconda.

## LSAA Sherpa crews transport cargo, personnel by aircraft

photographs by Sgt. Kevin McSwain

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq — As lethal improvised explosive devices are a common daily tactic of terrorists against coalition forces and Iraqi people driving on the roads in Iraq, commanders are always evaluating their methods of delivery of cargo and personnel in and around Iraq. One Solution is the Army C-23 Sherpa aircraft.

Sherpas soar into the sky everyday from LSA Anaconda delivery people and cargo to forward operating bases throughout

Iraq. Soldiers assigned to 1 Company, 185th Theatre Aviation Company have the predawn mission to the skies each day.

During an average week, Sherpas move more than 350 personnel and 150,000 pounds of cargo in and around the Iraqi theater of operation -- taking convoys and Soldiers off the roads and into the air.

This is their story told through the eyes of our camera lens.



Staff Sgt. Eddie Agregaard lowers the Army C-23 Sherpa rear cargo door to load pallets that will be transported to a forward operating base in Iraq.



Passengers board an Army C-23 Sherpa for intra-theatre movement to various locations in Iraq.



Using internal communications, Spc. Robert Stadalnick assists Sherpa pilots during prechecks before an early-morning mission carrying passengers and cargo to numerous destinations throughout Iraq.



The shadow of an Army C-23 Sherpa can be seen on the flat Iraqi terrain during an early-morning flight from LSA Anaconda.



Chief Jim Oliver controls the aircraft during a recent flight from LSA Anaconda.





Chief Warrant Officer Ty Blasingame looks out to the Iraqi horizon during a recent intra-theatre flight from LSA Anaconda.

Photos by Sgt. Kevin McSwain

## Time for Change...

# Aviators trade cyclic for fixed wing aircraft for mission

Sgt. Kevin McSwain

Anaconda Times Staff

**LSA ANACONDA, Iraq**—A majority of Army aviators can trace their beginnings back to the helicopter, but as

time passed, some pilots search for a new challenge.

Many find that challenge when they become fixed-wing pilots.

"Becoming a fixed wing pilot was a great career progression opportunity," said Chief Warrant Officer James Smith, unit standardization pilot for I Company, 185th Theatre Aviation Company. "It was a chance to learn a whole new facet of aviation."

Smith said each aircraft has mission essential advantages over the other so it comes down to the pilot's choice.

"In general, the

advantage to fixed-wing aircraft includes greater range and lower maintenance requirements," he said. "But a rotary aircraft can land on different types of terrain and maneuver in different situations."

Smith said the environment of each aircraft is different.

"The environment of fixed wing aviation is different, high altitude versus low altitude for rotary aircraft," he said. "You also use a method called instrument flying in a fixed-wing and visual flying in a rotary."

With that being said, Smith said the fixed-wing aircraft has gone back to a low and visual technique, just like helicopters.

"The tactical flying of a fixed-wing aircraft can be quite exhilarating," he said. "We learn, as pilots and as a unit, how to get so

much more

performance out of this airframe than we ever imagined."

For some pilots, the desire to fly is the same but the



Chief Warrant Officer Ty Blasingame watched the ground crew for instructions on LSA Anaconda.

reasons are a little different.

"Altitude," said Capt. Chad M. Rose, company commander, when asked what he liked most about flying his aircraft. "Too much gravity makes me grumpy."

Rose, who has been flying fixed-wing aircraft for 15 years, said he chose to fly the C-23 for a few different reasons.

"It feels very rewarding to be able to fly a vessel capable of carrying as much as the C-23 can, whether it is cargo, passengers, or both," he said. "Our mission helps transport things safely, and helps us keep our Soldiers off the roads."

Rose said the fixed-wing aircraft's capabilities are some of the reasons he chose to fly them instead of rotary aircraft.

"The fixed-wing aircraft have more speed capabilities," he said. "They are also more fuel efficient

and aerodynamically stable than a helicopter."

Army aviators have to attend an initial rotary wing pilot training course, which consists of about 12 months of training at Fort Rucker. Pilots selected for fixed wing training must attend a 10 week fixed wing course followed by specific training in the aircraft they will fly.

"The course for the C-23 Sherpa is about six weeks long," Rose said.

Smith, a pilot for over 21 years, said training is an on going thing in their field.

"After you have completed the initial training for aviation, you take what you learned back to your unit and continue

to practice and receive additional training from the more experienced pilots."

Even though Smith has chosen to become a fixed-wing pilot, he still loves helicopters.

"The first time you fly at a low altitude and hover

in mid-air can not be described or duplicated," he said.

No matter the reason why an Army aviator chooses to fly a fixed-wing or a rotary aircraft, the main point seems to be the same.

"I feel a sense of accomplishment and contribution to the war when I transport servicemembers and equipment safely to help our fellow Soldiers accomplish their tasks," Smith said.

*"I feel a sense of accomplishment and contribution to the war when I transport servicemembers and equipment safely to help our fellow Soldiers accomplish their tasks."*

- Chief Warrant Officer James Smith

# Illinois Soldiers watch as Bears fall in Super Bowl XLI

by Staff Sgt. Glen Chrisman

1744th Transportation Company

**LSA ANACONDA, Iraq** - For some, the excitement was built up for the past two weeks, but for others the anticipation had been building for 21 years. Dozens of Soldiers from the 1744th Transportation Company sacrificed their much needed sleep in hopes of watching the Chicago Bears win their first Super Bowl title since 1986. But the Bears faithful found themselves watching the game thinking to themselves the all to familiar phrase "Wait until next year."

Many Soldiers didn't care that the game started at 2:30 a.m. in Iraq. Spc. Jimmie Wong-Soto, 37, of Chicago, Ill. said it's a once in a lifetime opportunity. "Win or lose, I didn't want to miss this," Wong-Soto said. "What's a few hours of sleep when you have a chance to see the Bears in the biggest game of the year?"

While some Soldiers from the Sreater, Ill.-based National Guard unit watched the game at one of the bases dining facilities or recreational centers, about a dozen Soldiers crammed into Spc. Gerald Snyder's room. The 19-year old Verona, Ill. native said there wasn't going to be anyone sleeping around him with the noise coming out of his ten foot-by-ten foot room. "This is about as close to being back home as we are going to get," Snyder said. "We've got friends, a great environment, and the Bears in the Super Bowl, you can't ask for much more when you're in Iraq," Snyder said with a smile.

The chance to see the Super Bowl was a big morale boost for many Soldiers, but still some were disappointed they didn't get the full Super Bowl experience. Because contractual obligations prohibited the Armed Forces Network from showing commercials not produced by the Department of Defense, the Soldiers weren't able to see the always anticipated Super Bowl ads. "I always

look forward to seeing the commercials," Staff Sgt. Mike Bickham of LaSalle, Ill. said. "Sometimes the commercials are more exciting than the game, especially if your team is losing. But we can't complain, at least we get to watch the game," Bickham said.

The game was filled with ups and downs for Chicago Bears fans. The Morale, Welfare, Recreation center at LSA Anaconda was roaring with applause and hollering when Devin Hester ran back the opening kick-off. The handful of Indianapolis fans watching the game showed their own team spirit when Peyton Manning threw a touchdown pass seven minutes later.

The Colts pulled away in the second half in part due to two interceptions by Bears quarterback Rex Grossman who had been criticized by Bears fans all season. Spc. Snyder was disgusted that Bears stuck with Grossman all year and didn't pull him in the second half. "He goes through the season with the team carrying him on their shoulders and then can't get it done when the team needed him most," Snyder said.

Staff Sgt. Michael Wirtz, 28, of Tinley Park, Ill. said the criticism was a little harsh. "He's only one player," Wirtz said. "It takes a team to win or lose a game."

Although very disappointed to see the Bears squander away a chance to win the Super Bowl, most of the Soldiers were very confident that the Bears would be back to the big game next year. "They've got a great team," Spc. Megan Stephen, 21, of Matoon, Ill. said. "I have no doubt they will return next year."

Even though many Soldiers of the 1744th TC stayed up to see the game, most had mixed feelings about the end of the game. Some were happy for Peyton Manning for finally solidifying himself in NFL history while others were disappointed that they would have to wait another year for the title to come back to Chicago.

# Black Jack Soldiers, CBS Sports Kick Off Inaugural Baghdad Bowl

by Sgt. Robert Yde

2nd BCT, 1st Cavalry Division

**FOB PROSPERTIY, Iraq** - With the Super Bowl still a day a way, by Saturday afternoon the biggest game in Baghdad had been decided.

Dubbed the "Baghdad Bowl," two 15-man teams made up of Soldiers assigned to the 2nd "Black Jack" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, donned Indianapolis Colts and Chicago Bears jerseys and squared off in a flag-football game sponsored by CBS Sports Feb. 3.

On hand to referee the game was CBS football analyst and three-time Super Bowl winner Randy Cross.

CBS provided the game jerseys with a team of Soldiers based in the International Zone representing the Colts and a team of Soldiers based at FOB Falcon, located in southern Baghdad, representing the Bears.

Footage from the game was aired during CBS' Super Bowl pre-game program.

Before beginning the game, the players gathered mid-field where Cross performed the traditional coin toss with a coin specially minted in commemoration of the San Francisco 49ers Super Bowl XVI victory 25 years ago over the Cincinnati Bengals.

"I'm a fan, I've got to be honest," joked Cross, who won his three Super Bowl rings with the 49ers.

After winning the coin toss, Team Falcon opted to begin the game on offense and drove down the field for the first score. However, their touchdown was quickly negated by Team IZ, who scored on their first play from scrimmage.

On their second play Team IZ pulled ahead and never looked back after a long touchdown pass put them up 14-7.

"I'm having a good time," Team IZ's Capt. Craig Gary said at halftime.



Photo by Sgt. Robert Yde

A Team International Zone player tries to make his way through a group of Team Falcon players during the Baghdad Bowl at Forward Operating Base Prosperity Feb. 3. Team IZ won the inaugural Baghdad Bowl, sponsored by CBS Sports and aired during the Super Bowl pre-game show, 35-25.

"This is an awesome opportunity for Soldiers."

For all the Soldiers involved, both the players and spectators, the game offered a much welcome break from their daily combat missions.

"I think it's a really great thing," said Staff Sgt. Michael Rathbun, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, who played for Team Falcon. "Many of us are living out on combat outposts, so it's the first time we've been on a FOB for a while."

During the game, t-shirts and hats provided by CBS were passed out to the crowd by Team Falcon cheerleaders, Spc. Erin Braun and Spc. Shaunette Buntain, both medics with the 15th Brigade Support Battalion.

"We are the Falcon pride," Buntain said. "We got together and we figured this would boost the morale a little bit."

Not even the support of their

cheerleaders, however, could help Team Falcon overcome Team IZ, who won handily, 32-25.

After the game, the players once again gathered midfield, where Cross presented both team captains with a game ball. Another ball autographed by CBS' entire NFL Today crew, to include NFL greats Dan Marino, Boomer Esiason and Shannon Sharpe, was accepted by Black Jack Brigade Commander Col. Bryan Roberts on behalf of the entire brigade.

"At the end of the day, we'll all leave here victorious because we're all members of the Black Jack team," Roberts told his Soldiers. "And we've got a heck of a lot of people out there depending on us to wake up tomorrow morning and get back out there into the fight."

According to Cross, the event was all about doing something for the Soldiers who are out every day in the fight.

## New Handbook helps Soldiers survive first 100 days in Iraq

**WASHINGTON** - A new handbook on how Soldiers can survive their first 100 days in Iraq is now available at <https://call2.army.mil/new/toc.asp?document=2393>.

"Soldier Handbook: Surviving Iraq," was developed due to the increased casualty rate during the first 100 days of a unit's deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, according to Col. Steven Mains, director of the Center for Army Lessons Learned at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

The handbook educates Soldiers on how not to become complacent to potential dangers and to be mindful of resourceful enemies who closely

observe U.S. tactics to adapt their attack strategies, said Mains.

The handbook is based on responses from more than 1,700 Soldiers - captains, lieutenants and Soldiers from the ranks of staff sergeant and below. About 1,000 of the responses were taken from interviews with redeploying units in Kuwait and Soldiers at Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Carson, Colo. and Fort Stewart, Ga.

The Soldiers were asked questions pertaining to individual Soldier behavior, unit leadership, equipment and pre-deployment training.

"Our intention was to learn from the Soldiers

what they thought contributed to their survival in Iraq," said Milton Hileman, senior military analyst for CALL. "We asked them to focus their answers as if they were talking from one Soldier to another."

The remaining responses came from a 23-question survey that CALL placed on its Web site.

"We were pleased with numerous responses we received from many of the Soldiers," said Hileman. "The Soldiers in many cases were very insightful."

"Several Soldiers came up to me after filling out the survey and said 'Thank you for asking,'"

said James Gebhardt, senior military analyst for CALL. "They had a sense of self-worth and self-importance."

Among other recommendations, many Soldiers recommended:

- Staying aware of their surroundings,
  - Listening to their leaders,
  - Avoiding routine or predictable patterns,
  - Following standard operating procedures, and
  - Using protective gear and armored vehicles.
- The handbook will be made available in paper format this month.

# 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

**February 14****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

**February 15****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](mailto:anaconda.times@balad.iraq.centcom.mil)

**Battlefield Ground**

8 p.m.  
East Rec Center

**February 16****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

**February 17****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

**February 18****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

**February 19****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

**February 20****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

**February 21****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

# 25th ID BAND

## FEBRUARY 17

### EAST MWR RECREATION CENTER

#### VISIT YOUR LOCAL MWR FACILITY OR MWR WEBSITE FOR START TIME

# SHOUT OUTS FROM HOME

My Dear Glen Hancock, I really miss you and so does Mary. We both send our love and know that you are doing really great and are counting down the days when you come home. Love, kisses, and Hugs, Christine and Mary

Tony, You are truly my BFA. TJ & I miss you and love you. Know you are constantly in our hearts and prayers. Love, Dina and TJ

Hello from Hermanville, Mississippi We love you Wayne and are very proud of you. Thank you and all the soldiers for what you are doing for our Country. MG & Boo

To Alex Lopez, We are so proud of you and can't wait until you come back home. Take care of yourself out there. We miss you more than anything. Love you always, Cely and "AJ" Lopez

Dear Ron, I love and miss you very much! The girls said to "tell Papaw hi and we love him" STAY SAFE AND BE CAREFUL!!!! I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU, lab-ty

Harrison Manko we miss you bunches and cant wait to see you when you come home on leave. we love you and are very proud of you. Paula, Heather, and Corey

Ryan Nilson....My Love, My Life Aidan, Marie and myself really miss you and you are always in our thoughts. Keep up the good work and continue to be safe. We are counting down the days till you are back home with us. All our love....Aidan, Marie and Michelle

Hey Ramon! You are in my prayers...thank you for being so good to my little cousin and fighting hard for our country. You Rock! Talk to you later~ Candace

To my love Ramon Lopez, I am so proud of you. I miss you terribly & can't wait to see you. I love you so much. God Bless you.

Dear Joseph Lynes, We miss you & look forward to your return. Happy Valentine's Day! Love, Melissa, Jared, Jeremy, and Adam

Casey W Franks, You are our hero and we miss you and love you. Brandy, Jason And Kids

Jeremy Rupprecht, We miss you more as each day passes. Thanks for everything you are doing for our country and

for us. We love you lots and miss you more... Oh the places we'll go... Melissa, Chicago and Brewtus Rupprecht

My friend and husband, RICHARD STAPLETON, Hey Honey, I love and miss you so much. You and everyone please stay safe, I am proud to be your wife. Can't wait to be with you again. Love and Kisses, Connie

Hi Aaron this is a shout out to you from all of us! Especially your wife Veronica and your children Janely, Daniel, Stephanie, Tracy and Joshua. We want to send lots of hugs and kisses. Saludos! We send our Hi's. Bythes love you.

My Dearest Love Albert Ericson, I just wanted you to know that Scout, Roy and I are missing you a lot. We just wanted you to know that you are always on our minds and can't wait for you to come home. Lots of love, Sabrina Ericson

Albert, Dad and I are proud of you and missing you, with all our love Take care and god bless all of our service men.

To our hero Jerry Parish, We are so proud of you. You are always in our prayers. We love you and miss you very much. Can't wait for our Carribean Vacation!! Big hugs and kisses.. Giena, Blake and Derek

Dear Sabino, Mark, Sabino Jr. and I all love & miss you so very much. We are so proud of you & all the other soldiers. Hugs & kisses, Angie, Mark & Sabino Jr.

Hello Danny Dunn, Keep hanging in there and flying right!! Can't wait to see you when you come home! Don't worry boxes will continue to flow! Take care and be safe! Randy and Lisa Sutton

Hey Shaun Duncan, You saw the New Year's video of the family, are you sure you want to be our adopted brother?! Let the good times roll! Randy and Lisa Sutton

Dear Ryan (Roon), Lots of love from Colorado! We miss you bunches and are very proud of you!! Love from Mom and Bob

For our Dad and my Husband, Jason Graff, We love you and miss you, and just want you to know how proud we are of you. Be safe, and Keep the Faith. Love, Sue, Jacob, Sydney, Conrad, Tucker, Gabby, and the cats

To my sweet heart, Walter Griner Jr. I miss you more and more everyday. We all love you and wish you the very best. I know your doing wonderful things for our family and we cant wait til your here. XXoxoXXoxX Mrs. Liz Griner

Hey Marcus Moore, Ashlyn and I want to wish you a very Happy Valentine's Day. We can't wait to see you for R&R. We are so proud of you. We miss you and love you so much. Megan and Ashlyn

Hi Mark Larson! We are all getting excited to have you home for R&R!! We love you, are so proud of you!!! And miss you very much!! Love, Mary, Kelly, Peter, Emily, Bryce, Keith, Alyssa, Jared, Mindy, Luke, Claire, Carrie, Dave, Sebas, Eva

Ricky, Your 5 girls love you "soooooo much" and we can't wait to see you! Happy birthday and happy Valentine's Day, too! We love you! Lucy, Sparky, Eileen, Tess and Meaghan

Hello Jeff, We, mommy, Anna Lisa, Andrew, and Julia are here, very happy to have you as our dad serving our country with honor. We hope you have a wonderful Valentine's day, full of thoughts about how much we love you are with you every minute of every day. Wij houden van jou!! Joanna, Anna Lisa, Andrew, and Julia XXoxoxoxo

Hi Andrew Briggs, We all miss you like crazy and are counting the days till your return home. So proud of what you are doing but still looking forward to the day to give you a big hug! Keep safe and stick with your buddies. See you soon - keep thinking of that nice steak dinner for your birthday! Love you always, Ma

The Love of my Life: Russ Jones- Our love continues to grow stronger through the miles. Noah and I couldn't be prouder Of the honor and dedication you show. I believe in you with all of my heart. You are my strength,

my rock, My best friend and true love. Despite the boundaries that keep us apart. Forever yours, Steph and Noah

To my dear husband David Mendoza, I miss you so much and love you even more. I am so very proud of you. It is you that I adore. I want everyone to know that our love runs so deep. I love everything about you david. I even love your feet! ~your Angel

Dear Raymond Dharsano, We know you are having the time of your life in Iraq with your new family and friends, but we really miss you and think that you are an awesome person. We love hearing your stories and adventures. Take care of yourself and our thoughts are with you. Love, The Tusko Family

Dear Belynda Lindsey, I can't believe that you are over in Iraq. You are so sweet and probably bringing so much joy to everyone you come into contact over there. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family always. Love, Lilah Tusko

Dear Tina Shah-Merrill, I just found out that you are in Iraq. You are so amazing. My thoughts and prayers are with you. Love, Lilah Tusko

Hi Chris Golden, We just wanted you to know how much we love you, miss you and are so proud of you. We cannot wait for you to come home safely to us. From your 3 little babies...Emma, Adam and Jack and from 1 big baby...Jamie

Jeffrey Jones, The fish are not biting. They are waiting on your return! When you get back we'll have a sandbar fish fry!! Keep up the good work. We are proud of you. Love you, Mom, Dad and Joey

Hi Nick, Just a quick hello to tell you how proud Mom and I are of you and all of you who are doing a great job to protect our freedom. Nick, we love you and miss you. Dad

Dearest Jessica Rohr, we all miss you very much and we all send our love and prayers and would like to let you know how proud we are of you and all the soldiers. Mom, Randy, Chris, Michelle

My Dearest Tracy The oldest one is about to drive, oh just great.

The middle one is worried about her weight, and the youngest just threw up what he ate. It's my life I wouldn't change a thing, it was fate. Please hurry home and don't be late its your turn to run the funny farm, my mate love Pamela, Brittani, Amber and Matthew :)

Gregory, We love and miss you very much. Stay strong and be safe. You are in our thoughts daily. Especially Tyler's Love, Karen, Jacob, Tyler & Nicholas

To my Charles Shores: Your Bella misses you with each passing day! Remember we are all thinking of you and miss you. I am so proud of you! XOXO, Mako

HI, JOSE E. DIAZ: PARA TU FAMILERES NUESTRO HEROE Y ERES TODO LO QUE PODAMOS VIVIR DIA A DIA, PENSANDO SIEMPRE EN TI Y EXTRANANDOTE. TU ESPOSA Y CHICOS, KELLY, JONATHAN, JAYJAY Y BEBE.

Albert Ericson, We miss and love you! Take care and hope to see you soon. Love, Your Big Sister Trish

Dear Pat Uschuk: We'd like to say that we missed you on our honeymoon, but we didn't. Think pink! Love, Thea (and Dad) Very proud of you!

Roger Ramjet AKA Dad, What's up crusty! Hope your enjoying your vacation. I hear the beach is great out there this time of year! Seriously, you now I am the proudest son in the world and would trade places in a second if I could. YOU DA MAN!!! Love Ya, Jason

To my Husband, Jacob Carter. Sending across lotsa LOVE and HUGS on Valentine's Day! From a heart that beats only for you. I love you and miss you. Stephanie

To the love of my life Craig D. Neeley, You are so special to me. I want to tell you that all of your family and friends, including Rose and myself are so proud of you. You are our hero! We are eagerly awaiting your return. Lots of Love, Sherry, Rose, and Ginger

Dear Son Derek Taussig, You are my hero son. Thoughts of you are often in my heart and prayers. By the way, I hope you don't mind me wearing your boots that you left at the house, they're great. Have a

happy Valentines Day and I'll see you soon. Love, Dad

Hello Eddie We all miss ya. Stay safe. God Bless, Love the Daleiden's

Albert Hope you are doing fine. Grandma is doing good. Come home safe. hope to see you soon. love aunt margaret

Albert (Bud) The fish aren't biting and colder than heck. Keep your eyes opened and hope to see you soon. Love Dad

Hello Albert, hope all is well and your safe. We still don't have much snow, but it's suppose to turn cold soon. Hope it's warm there. Love Aunt Sandy

Hi Ed from Uncle Max, should be here fishing with us. Your Uncle Bob and Dad can't seem to catch anything. I caught the big one. Stay safe talk to you in person soon. Love Uncle Max

Hey sweetheart, just wanted to say that we love you and we miss you badly. happy birthday and happy valentine's day. be safe and be careful. hope all is well. you will be home to us soon. :) <3 always, brandi and chandler

Dear Dean Stonner, As the unofficial humor supervisor of your unit, we know how appreciated you are over there, keep up the good work! You are a true hero to everyone that knows and loves you. We can't wait to see you back home safe! Just remember, "it wasn't a cough, it was a puke!" Love, Kim, David, Quin and Colin

To my Pooky, I can't wait for you to come home. I miss you and love you so very much. See you soon. Love, Candy

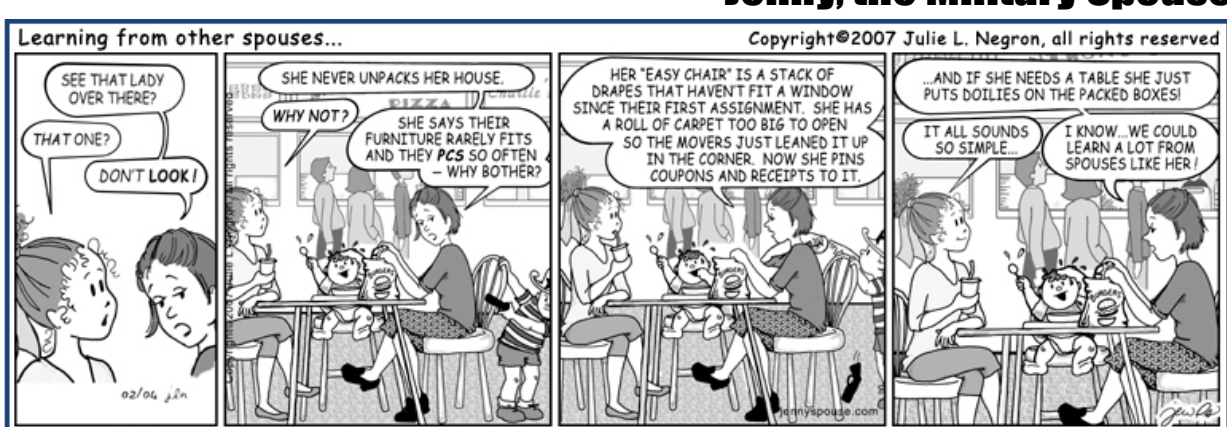
Albert, I have been catching a lot of fish. I really miss you. I really wish I could see you again sometime soon. LOVE, DAVID

Dear Paul Henderson, Just wated you to know that we all love you and miss you bunches! We can not wait until your home! Love, Tiffany, Kyleigh, Jordan, Lexis, and The One on the Way

## SUSTAINER REEL TIME THEATER

(Schedule is subject to change)

- Wednesday, Feb. 14**
  - 5 p.m. Accepted (PG-13)
  - 8 p.m. The Fast and the Furious (PG-13)
- Thursday, Feb. 15**
  - 5 p.m. Norbit (PG-13)
  - 8 p.m. Unaccompanied Minors (PG)
- Friday, Feb. 16**
  - 2 p.m. United 93 (R)
  - 5 p.m. Mission Impossible 3 (PG-13)
  - 8:30 p.m. Rocky Balboa (PG)
- Saturday, Feb. 17**
  - 2 p.m. The Departed (R)
  - 5 p.m. Rocky Balboa (PG)
  - 8 p.m. Blood Diamond (R)
- Sunday, Feb. 18**
  - 2 p.m. Rocky Balboa (PG)
  - 5 p.m. Eragon (PG)
  - 8 p.m. Crank (R)
- Monday, Feb. 19**
  - 5 p.m. Snakes on a Plane (R)
  - 8 p.m. Beerfest (R)
- Tuesday, Feb. 20**
  - 5 p.m. Batman Begins (Pg-13)
  - 8 p.m. Rocky Balboa (PG)



# Center keeps convoys ready to roll

*Combat Logistics Patrol Readiness Center ensures vehicles, crews are ready for the road*

by Spc. Kyndal Hernandez

*45th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs*

**FOB Q-WEST, Iraq** -- Much like a locker room huddle before a big game, hundreds of troops and truck drivers rally each day at the Combat Logistics Patrol Readiness Center here before heading outside the wire on missions throughout northern Iraq.

Inside, the center provides a brief sanctuary, allowing teams to make final preparations, focus on the mission, rehearse procedures and join in prayer. Outside, a safety team ensures vehicles meet all mission requirements.

"The first idea of the CLP RC was for it to be a place where Soldiers came before they went on convoys to get their intelligence briefings and conduct last-minute checks to make sure they had everything they needed before they went out of the gates," said Sgt. 1st Class Renee Kelly with 423rd Transportation

Co., NCOIC of the center.

Kelly said they have about 15 Soldiers working at the site to help troops with their last-minute checks, making sure all of their radios work properly, and doing basic preventative mechanic checking service on all vehicles to ensure they are working properly and will not break down in the middle of a mission.

"We actually catch a lot of things when we do the PMCS on some of the trucks," said Kelly. "We have about three to four convoys coming through here everyday and at least two trucks out of every convoy get deadlined and can not go on the mission."

"Our job out here is very important -- we save lives," said Staff Sgt. Richard Lopez with 423rd Transportation Company, safety NCOIC at the center. "It is our job to make sure these trucks are mission ready to go off the base and keep these Soldiers as safe as possible. So, I take it very seriously."

Since being built in 2004, the CLP RC has become more than just a place for Soldiers to come and receive a convoy briefing, it has become a place for them to come and relax and clear their mind before they head out on their mission.

"The CLP RC that we have here is really unique," said Kelly. "This isn't just a place Soldiers come to get their convoy briefings before they head out on missions, it has turned in to more of place for them to come and relax before they head out, and I think they

really enjoy it. They are only supposed to arrive here about 45 minutes prior to leaving, but some of them show up about an hour and a half early."

Not only is it unique in that way, Kelly said, the center also provides a place for units to conduct training such as IED lanes training, communications training and additional training for gun trucks.

"Basically we do a lot of the training that troops get when they are in Kuwait before they get in country, but it is more

elaborate and detailed," Kelly said.

The CLP RC also plans to provide HEAT, or Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer, training to teach Soldiers proper response in the event of a vehicle rollover.

"Our staff stays busy here -- from coordinating all the training, to making sure the place is clean and snacks are refilled for Soldiers to take on convoys. We really enjoy it though and we are always looking for ways to improve it," Kelly said.



A Soldier walks back to his vehicle after stocking up on drinks and snacks at the CLP RC as his convoy prepares to move out on another mission.



Spc. Michael Davis, a mechanic with 298th Trans. Co. checks the wheels on a M915 truck to ensure all the bolts are tight and the tires are properly inflated.



Soldiers line up their trucks outside of the Combat Logistics Patrol Readiness Center for safety and maintenance checks before moving inside for convoy briefings, mission rehearsals and final preparations.

## BE ALERT DURING WET WEATHER

WATER HAZARDS CAN CAUSE SERIOUS INJURY AND DAMAGE TO VEHICLES. USE EXTREME CAUTION WHILE BRAKING.

# Production play to portray the arts

Sgt. KaRonda Fleming

Anaconda Times Staff

**LSA ANACONDA, Iraq** – The 49th Movement Control Battalion, as part of the many command supported activities for Black History Month, is sponsoring a production program at the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Center East lounge on Friday Feb. 16 at 8 p.m.

The production can be put into the same category as a musical or play.

“We wanted to do something different,” said Capt. Janaia J. Nash, the plans and MWR officer for Headquarters and Headquarters Company for the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

There are many aspects of life that have shaped African Americans culture, she said.

“What better way to show the arts than to perform the Arts,” the Jacksonville, N.C. native said. “So, we decided to do a timeline portraying a story entitled ‘Once Upon a Time,’ which focuses on the arts and how it shaped our culture and how it has evolved.”

Nash said it is important that all of Logistical Support Area Anaconda servicemembers and civilians have the opportunity to see such a show. It is a form of education that shows how the arts were vital in the survival and progression of African American people.

Being in a combat environment makes programs like this one hard to pull off.

She said “It is very difficult to put together a production like this because of the lack of resources while being deployed, the time for the cast members to attend the rehearsals, and also the wartime atmosphere of having to be on missions with duty first.”

There will be individuals of several ranks, races, and creeds that will take part in various reenactments, dances, and solo performances.

“I feel that the show is already a success,” Nash said. “It’s a success because of the time, energy, and effort that has been put forth by the individuals partaking in the show.”

“Also, with the background support we are getting from the command, the show is already a success,” Nash said.

There are a multitude of performances that the audience will enjoy ranging from the early 1700’s all the way up to today, using decades to emphasizing the cultures of that time.

“I think the audience will enjoy our dance team and the soloists the most. Our dance team is hot,” she said.

The only cost to attend this performance is a couple of hours of everyone’s time, otherwise, it is free, she said. Also, refreshments will be served.

It took approximately 40 days to put all the planning together, Nash said. The cast rehearses twice a week for at least three hours. That is the minimal requirement. However, there are individuals who have taken it upon themselves to hold extra practices during their free time.

She said just in the cast itself, they are showing how individuals have stepped up and taken part by showing that this is something that they want to do. It proves that they all have selfless service and dedication.

Each person coming together will show others what servicemembers also believe in.

“We believe in the Army and what it stands for,” she said. “We also know the different things that the different cultures have been through and we want a representation that will give attributes to those people.”



Soldiers from 1st Brigade, 34th Infantry Division, provide security for both Soldiers and local residents during a recent civil military operations mission to deliver donated medical supplies to a local health clinic.



Brigade Support Battalion Soldiers and Iraqi health clinic workers maneuver a large box in the clinic.

# Minnesota organizations, 1/34 work together to impact one Iraqi village

story and photos by Spc. Brian Jesness

**AL BATHA, Iraq** -- Task Force Wolverine recently delivered more than \$30,000 worth of donated medical supplies to a village in southern Iraq.

The Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Brigade, 34th Infantry Division, delivered the much-needed medical supplies for the Al Batha clinic which included orthopedic braces, crutches, an electrocardiogram (EKG) machine, and additional supplies.

The supplies were donated by organizations from Little Falls, Minn., including Little Falls Family Medical Center, Little Falls Orthopedics, and St.

Gabriel’s Hospital to help increase the capabilities of the clinic, which serves a city of more than 100,000 Iraqis. The mission into Al Batha was the culmination of months of planning and coordination between Soldiers in Iraq, the Wolverine rear detachment and the Little Falls Medical Group.

After the ceremony, Dr. Dakhil presented Lt. Col. Brian Olson, task force commander, with a document stating, “The Al-Batha health center presents with much thanks to US Army Forces to help us bring assistance to our center.”



1st Lt. Jessica Jarrot pauses for a photograph.



Lt. Col. Brian Olson, task force commander, shakes hands with Dr. Dakhil after a successful delivery of medical supplies.



Lt. Col. Brian Olson, walks with a battalion Soldier to visit nearby youth.



Four residents walk outside the health clinic during a military humanitarian visit.

# Happy Valentines Day

from all of LSAA's Families

