

US, Iraqi Forces secure election sites  
See Page 10A

Army Family Covenant:  
Housing  
See Page 5A

Hunter opens new Youth Services  
See Page 1B

# THE FRONTLINE

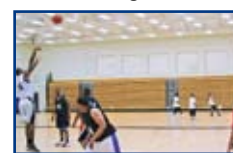
PSRST STD U.S. Postage Paid  
Permit no. 43,  
Hinesville, Ga. 31314

VOL. 45, ISSUE 9

Serving the Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield communities • [www.stewart.army.mil](http://www.stewart.army.mil)

MARCH 4, 2010

Bball champions crowned  
See Page 10B



Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas

Soldiers with Company B, 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, practice cordon and search operations during the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's first collective training exercise, Vanguard Focus, March 1.

## Vanguard Focus preps 4IBCT for Iraq

Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas  
4th IBCT Public Affairs

The 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division kicked off its first collective training exercise at Fort Stewart, Feb. 22. The operation dubbed Vanguard Focus is preparing nearly 3,500 Soldiers for an upcoming deployment to Iraq.

The 4th IBCT, which transformed from a heavy

armored unit to light-infantry last September, is now tackling its newest initiative – to advise and assist. Vanguard Command Sergeant Major Joseph Altman said his 'Advise and Assist' brigade will help set up the Iraqi government for success when U.S. Soldiers withdraw from the Iraqi theatre.

"The (Advise and Assist) mission also allows us to build rapport with the Iraqi people, so that we can maintain a good, long-term relationship after

the war, much like the U.S. did in Europe and Korea," he said.

During the two-week field operation, Soldiers are evaluated on their ability to accomplish both lethal and nonlethal tasks, to include training and facilitating Iraqi Security Forces, key leader engagement, cordon and search operations, reacting to improvised explosive devices, and other scenarios that mirror Iraq's current status.

See FOCUS

Page 3A

## GA Guard unit returns to Stewart from Afghanistan

Sgt. 1st Class Roy Henry  
Georgia Department of Defense Public Affairs

Georgia's 1st Squadron, 108th Cavalry is the third group – and so far, the largest – of Georgia's 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team to arrive at Truscott Air Terminal from their year-long deployment in Afghanistan.

The more than 400 citizen-Soldiers touched down in two waves, with some coming in around 11:15 p.m., Feb. 28, and the remaining troopers at about 3 a.m., March 1.

The 1/108th Cav. headquarters is in Calhoun, Ga. Other 108th units are home stationed in Rome (Troop A), Dalton (Troop B) and Canton (Troop C). Also home from Afghanistan is Cedartown's Company D, 148th Brigade Support Battalion, which

provides logistics support to the cavalry.

The 1/108th Cav. troopers are among the more than 2,000 citizen-Soldiers who left in June 2009 to spend a year supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

Their mission was to train and mentor the Afghan National Army and National Police.

"I think if you ask any one of us, we're really proud of the work we did over there, but someone like me, being back, well it's a great weight off my shoulders," said Sgt. 1st Class Joe Dyer, who leads Troop A's third platoon. "As a leader, I'm not only concerned about getting the mission done right, I'm concerned about the safety of my Soldiers. I thank the Lord that I'm lucky enough not to have lost anyone over there, and that they're all home now, safe and sound."

See GUARD

Page 2A

## Leaders kickoff AER campaign

Sgt. Robert Schaffner Jr.  
4th IBCT Public Affairs

The Army Emergency Relief announced the kickoff of the 68th annual AER Campaign, March 1. The campaign, which runs from March 1 through May 15, began at Fort Stewart-Hunter Army Airfield with a small, early morning ceremony over donuts and coffee at the Fort Stewart Army Community Service building.

Opening remarks were given by Fort Stewart-Hunter Army Airfield Garrison Commander Col. Kevin Milton, followed by his signing of a DA Form 4908 to officially begin the 2010 AER Campaign.

Also in attendance were Brigadier General Jeffrey Phillips, 3rd ID deputy commanding general-rear; Stewart-Hunter Garrison Command Sgt. Maj. James Ervin, along with approximately a dozen other Soldiers and civilians representing several units on post.

"The 2010 AER campaign slogan is 'Soldiers Helping Fellow Soldiers,'" said Frederick Sledge, ACS Fort Stewart-Hunter Army Airfield AER officer.

AER is a private, nonprofit organization founded in 1942 that is dedicated solely to "Helping the Army Take Care of its Own" by providing financial assistance to Soldiers and their Families in time of emergency financial need. The program offers grants and interest free-loans to active duty and retired Soldiers, activated Reservist and their eligible Family Members.

See AER

Page 11A

## Commander-in-Chief flies into Hunter

President Barack Obama returns a salute as he exits Air Force One after landing at Hunter Army Airfield, March 2. He was greeted by Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Phillips, 3rd ID deputy commanding general-rear; Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Ashmen, 3rd ID Command sergeant major-rear; and Ginger Cucolo, wife of 3rd ID Commanding General Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo. President Obama was visiting Savannah to hear the concerns of local and state leaders. This was his first trip to Savannah as president.



Jimmy McSalters, MVIC Photographer



Photos by Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas

**Soldiers assigned to 6/8 Cav., 4th IBCT, approach the key leader engagement lane during Vanguard Focus, Feb. 26.**



**FOCUS**

from Page 1A



**ABOVE: Sergeant Evan Cameron, 731st EOD Co., sets out to detonate an IED during a Vanguard Focus training exercise with 3/7 Inf. Regt. Soldiers, Feb. 28.**

**BELOW: Specialist Eric Downey and Private Hunter Mercher, both assigned to Co. A, 3/7 Inf. Regt., clear a building as part of a cordon and search operation during 4th IBCT's pre-deployment training exercise, Vanguard Focus, March 1.**



"The situational exercises are great training tools," said 4th IBCT psychological operations planner and observer controller, Sgt. 1st Class David Cogdill. "Incorporating Iraqi role-players into the scenarios help provide Soldiers with an intense, chaotic and realistic environment similar to what they could face while deployed."

Sergeant Douglas Firely, member of Troop B, 6th Squadron, 8th U.S. Cavalry Regiment, 4th IBCT, said the role-playing Iraqi locals he encountered during a cordon and search mission, Feb. 26, reminded him of his last tour to Iraq.

"They were very realistic," he said. "The Soldiers who have not yet deployed now have a good idea of what's to come."

Private Hunter Mercher, a rifleman with Company A, 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 4th IBCT, said he feels better prepared for his upcoming first deployment after he rehearsed the situational training exercise lanes with his unit, Feb. 28 and March 1.

"I now see the big picture," he said. "We started out with squad level, then platoon, and company level

drills; (Vanguard Focus) is exercising everything we've learned."

Though Vanguard Focus was configured to be complex, the scenarios will intensify when the brigade deploys to the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., in April.

"Vanguard Focus helps give Soldiers a sense of brotherhood, teamwork, camaraderie and a sense of self confidence to accomplish the complicated tasks they will face at NTC," said Command Sgt. Maj. Altman.

The 1st Battalion, 76th Field Artillery Regiment and the 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment will also rotate troops through the training lanes during the second week of the brigade-wide exercise, while Soldiers assigned to 4-3 Brigade Special Troops Battalion and 703rd Brigade Support Battalion provide the Vanguard team with logistical support. Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield tenant units like the 731st Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company and the 385th Military Police Company are also assisting the field exercise, which is scheduled to be completed March 5.



**Soldiers with Co. B, 3/7 Inf. Regt., undergo a cordon and search operation as part of Vanguard Focus at Fort Stewart, March 1.**



**Second Lieutenant Michael Vance, platoon leader with Troop C, 6/8 Cav., maneuvers his Soldiers through the key leader engagement lane during 4th IBCT's Vanguard Focus, Feb. 26.**

# Marne Faces Marne Places

## 1/36 Infantry scout 'earning his spurs' in northern Iraq

**Master Sgt. Duff E. McFadden**  
2nd HBCT Public Affairs

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE MAREZ, Iraq** – In today's Army, the cavalry scout is considered the commander's eyes and ears on the battlefield. Scouts engage the enemy with anti-armor weapons on their scout vehicles in the field, track and report enemy movement and activities, and direct the employment of various joint weapon systems against an adversary.

With its heavy, physical demands and specialized skills, serving as a cavalry scout is not an easy task – especially if you add in the fact you're a 34-year old Soldier re-joining the military after an extensive break in service.

Specialist Aaron Suchan, a scout platoon gunner with the 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division, is "earning his spurs" in Mosul, Iraq, as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The 1/36 Inf. Reg. from Fort Riley, Kan., is attached to 2HBCT in Ninewa province.

A 1994 graduate of Greenville, Wis., High School, Spc. Suchan attended basic training between his junior and senior years.

After graduation, he was stationed at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., where he served as a wheeled vehicle mechanic. In 1995, he was given a medical discharge for flat feet.

"When I was in the military the first time, I was actually pretty young," Spc. Suchan said. "I thought I was a hot shot, but boy, did I get a wake-up call. It was hard to come to the realization, 'You're not that great.'"

"Being in the military was just something I always wanted to do. I've always looked up to Soldiers while I was growing up. I liked what they represented. When you watch the ads on TV, you see Soldiers repelling out of a helicopter. I thought, 'That's the unit I want to get into.'"

Despite a 12-year break from the military, the then-31 year-old decided he wanted to give the Army another shot.

Specialist Suchan was working at a Wisconsin steel mill and took nearly a \$40,000 pay cut to re-join the service.



**Specialist Aaron Suchan**

"My recruiter said I could get a waiver to come back in," Spc. Suchan said. "I wanted to finish what I started, so I figured I'd try again and see if I could do it. It was pretty much what I remembered. I have to admit I was a little nervous, just hoping I wouldn't break again, physically."

Needless to say, Spc. Suchan has noticed a few differences between the Army of the mid-90's and today's force.

"Today's Army is definitely more prepared," he noted. "We have a great class of people, plus plenty of funding and training. I was 31 years old when I joined the Army the second time. The first thing I noticed: it seems a little harder to recover and recuperate following a hard day of (physical training), or work. I also seem to get winded a little easier than I used to."

Becoming a cavalry scout, he said, was an easy decision.

"I wanted to be on the front lines, to be hands-on and to be involved in everything going on," he said. "The

Scouts have a very long tradition, history and heritage. It's very important to me to have a (military occupation), which stands for something."

At 34, Spc. Suchan is the oldest Scout in his platoon, but that doesn't faze him in the least.

"You're never too old to do anything," Spc. Suchan said. "The cavalry scout job was meant for an 18 to 25 year-old Soldier, and yet, I'm keeping up with them. What probably drives me the most is the fact I don't want to be passed up by the younger guys in the platoon."

Specialist Suchan also completed Air Assault School, finishing in the top half of his class, as well as being trained in Army combatives.

Married and the father of two children, Spc. Suchan is already thinking about his future Army career.

After re-enlisting for five years in December, he has high hopes of being promoted.

He said he plans to stay in the Army, which, he says has been good to him.

"I like it here. Everything is the way it is for a reason. Every day, I'm happy to be here. I talk to people back home about how proud I am of what I do. I definitely take pride in my job; I know I'm making a difference here," he said.

## 1/15 Inf Regt assists in lasting project

**Staff Sgt. Natalie Hedrick**  
3rd HBCT Public Affairs

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE ECHO, Iraq** – Leaders of the Diwanayah Provincial Reconstruction Team and the 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, completed the first step toward what is hoped to be a lasting source of income for many farmers in Diwanayah.

While Company A, 1/15 Inf. Soldiers provided security, Feb. 16, unit leaders, along with agricultural advisors, Dr. Mohamed, Dr. Abdul, and Bill Baker, escorted members of the Director General of Agriculture to five farms in the area to take samples of the soil and evaluate them for the funding of plastic tunnel houses.

"Tunnel houses are like low-tech greenhouses," said 1st Lt. Paul Lively, 2nd Platoon leader, Company A, 1/15 Inf.

From the soil samples taken, PRT and 1/15 Inf. leaders will be able to determine if the selected farms are suitable to receive micro grants for tunnel housing as part of the Commander's Emergency Response Program, according to 1st Lt. Matthew Dandola, a civil affairs team leader attached to the 1/15 Inf.

Baker explained Diwanayah had been a large exporter of wheat, barley, and rice prior to the Saddam era; however, these are large field crops that require a steady source of water for the canal



Staff Sgt. Natalie Hedrick

**First Lieutenant Matthew Dandola, a civil affairs team leader attached to the 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, talks to local children as leaders of the 1/15 Inf. Regt., the Diwanayah Provincial Reconstruction Team, and members of the Director General of Agriculture take soil samples of possible tunnel housing in Diwanayah, Iraq, Feb. 16.**

system for irrigation. Over the last ten years, conflict and drought have reduced water flow in the canals and has severely limited the production of large field crops.

"The rice was a good source of income, but they were only farming 10 percent of their fields," Baker

said.

Mohamed explained that to fix this problem, the farmers need to grow crops that take up less water and less land. Cucumbers and tomatoes are the ideal crops that fit these criteria.

In addition to finding the right crop, farmers needed to maximize the limited water they did have. Tunnel housing uses the greenhouse effect from sunlight to provide a growing environment warm enough to grow vegetables, Mohamed added.

"Plastic tunnel houses allow the farmer to extend the vegetable growing season through the winter months," Baker said.

While taking soil samples, Baker, Mohamed, and Abdul also taught the DG of Agriculture staff how to plot the points where the samples were taken.

According to 1st Lt. Lively, training the staff and providing the farmers with the tunnel houses will stimulate the economy. The goal is for these first five plastic tunnel houses to pave the way for more.

"What this will do for the Coalition Forces is provide the famers with steady income," 1st Lt. Dandola said. "This way, they won't have to go anywhere for money. They can avoid the temptation of taking money from the insurgency."

Baker is pleased with the way the project is moving forward.

"(The Iraqi counterparts) have been involved from the very beginning," he said. "We are working together as a great team."

### Marne Voices Speak Out

### March is Women's History Month.

*What female, past or present, has made an impression in your life?*

"Oprah Winfrey because she found a way to make money and investments, which has prompted me to do the same."

**Kameron Sanders**  
Family Member



"My wife, Pamela, because she has supported me throughout our 26 years of marriage."

**Sgt. Robert Schaffner**  
HHC, 4th IBCT



"Hillary Clinton because after all the stuff she has gone through, she still remains strong and active in her career."

**Sgt. 1st. Class Stanley Lent**  
HHC, 1/30th Inf.



"My mom, Annie Fleming. She was a great teacher and taught all of the men in the Family to be respectful."

**Clyde Fleming**  
Retired Military



"Anna Mae Hays because she was the first woman promoted to the general officer rank of Brig. Gen. in the U. S. Army."

**Jim Sandoval**  
Retired Army



"My wife, Gloria, because she's a real, old-fashioned teacher, who loves teaching."

**Randy Murray**  
DoD Civilian

**Voice your  
opinion!  
Write a letter to  
the editor!**

**Send to:**

Marne TV & The Frontline  
Attn: The Frontline, Editor  
112 Vilseck Rd., Suite 109  
Fort Stewart, Ga. 31314  
or email to:

stewfrontline@conus.army.mil  
or fax it to (912) 767-9366

visit [www.stewart.army.mil](http://www.stewart.army.mil)

### The Frontline

112 Vilseck Rd., Suite 109  
Building 419  
Ft. Stewart, Ga. 31314

©2010

ADVERTISING: (912) 368-0526  
THE FRONTLINE OFFICE: 767-5669  
HUNTER NEWS BUREAU: 315-5617

This civilian enterprise newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army. Contents of the Frontline are not necessarily the official views of, or are endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or U.S. Forces Command. It is published weekly by the Public

Affairs Office, Fort Stewart, Georgia. 31314-5000. All editorial content of the Frontline newspaper is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the Public Affairs Office of Fort Stewart, Georgia and the 3rd Infantry Division, and is printed by Morris Newspaper Corporation of Hinesville, Inc., a private firm in no

3RD INFANTRY DIVISION COMMANDER MAJ. GEN. TONY CUCOLO  
3RD INF. DIV. DEP. CMD. GEN. REAR, SR. CMDR. FS/HAAF BRIG. GEN. JEFFREY E. PHILLIPS  
USAG FS/HAAF CMDR COL. KEVIN W. MILTON  
HUNTER AAF CMDR LT. COL. JOSE L. AGUILAR

3rd ID PAO — Maj. Jeff Allen  
3rd ID NCOIC — Master Sgt. Marcia Triggs  
3rd ID staff writer — Sgt. Joseph McAtee  
3rd ID staff writer — Sgt. Johnathon Jobson  
3rd ID staff writer — Spc. Michael Adams  
1st Bde. NCOIC — Staff Sgt. Jennifer Menger  
1st Bde. staff writer — Spc. Jared Eastman  
2nd Bde. staff writer — Spc. Dustin Gautney  
2nd Bde. staff writer — Pfc. Crystal Bradley  
3rd Bde. NCOIC — Staff Sgt. Natalie Hedrick  
3rd Bde. staff writer — Spc. Ben Hutto  
3rd Bde. staff writer — Pfc. Erik Anderson  
3rd Sust. Bde. NCOIC — Sgt. 1st Class Rhonda Lawson  
3rd Sust. Bde. staff writer — Spc. Gaelen Lowers  
4th Bde. NCOIC — Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas  
4th Bde. staff writer — Sgt. Robert Schaffner  
Avn. Bde. NCOIC — Sgt. 1st Class Kim Green  
Avn. Bde. staff writer — Spc. Monica Smith

Garrison PAO — Rich Olson  
Command Information Officer — Jim Jeffcoat  
Assistant CIO — Jennifer Scales

Editorial/Design Staff  
Managing Editor — Jennifer Hartwig  
Public Affairs Specialist — Randy Murray  
Production Manager — Sherron Walker  
Graphics — Mark Geary  
Advertising Mgr. — Cynthia Barnes

Hunter Army Airfield Public Affairs  
Hunter Army Airfield PAO — Steven Hart  
Assistant PAO — Nancy Gould

way connected with the Department of the Army, under exclusive written contract with Fort Stewart, Georgia. The civilian printer is responsible for commercial advertising. Subscription rates are \$12/3 months, \$20/six months and \$36 for 12 months. Rates are Third Class mail inside the continental U.S.



# ARMY FAMILY COVENANT: Keeping the Promise

## BBC supports Covenant's housing initiatives

**Joel Jacobs**

*BBC Deputy Project Director*

Living upgrades have been one of the major issues within the Army, or any branch of service. Here at Stewart-Hunter, Balfour Beatty Communities continue to meet the quality of life for all Soldiers and their Families who live on the installation. BBC has taken the time to respond to some questions that may be of import to those who have interest in the Army Family Covenant's area of housing.

**Question:** *What makes Stewart-Hunter housing outshine or comparative with other installations or the community?*

**Answer:** A key element of the success of Family housing comes down to our BBC employees. Many of our staff members are military spouses, prior military or retired military. Although this is not a requirement, we believe this helps BBC connect better with our residents as we have been through some of the same trials and tribulations.

This also pertains to great people on the Army side. The local Army command team is and continues to be involved and committed to the success of the Residential Communities Initiative.

When this is coupled with the partnership that exists between the DPW Housing Division Branch and Balfour Beatty Communities, it results in the same goal – taking care of the Soldier and their Families.

Another contributing factor to a positive Family housing experience is Balfour Beatty's Lifeworks program; we believe this is a huge part of our success. The events are focused on the Military Family and many times are partnered with other support agencies on the installation.

Feedback from these events is always positive and is another way we can connect with our residents. These events take place in the community, which makes it easier for Families to join in the fun and further provides yet another way that helps their neighborhoods seem even more like home.

Last but not least is that Balfour Beatty Communities listens to our residents. The Annual Army Housing Survey identifies areas that we are doing well with and some areas where we could do better.

We use this feedback to develop courses of action that can improve the overall housing experience; to date, the survey has indicated that we have steadily improved over the last four years. Our goal will be to continue this trend and try to do our part to make Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield a Southern Living Station of Choice.

**Q:** *Explain the connection with RCI.*

**A:** The Residential Communities Initiative provides assistance and oversight of the privatized housing partner. This relationship was mandated by Congress to ensure the project provides what was agreed upon and remains solvent.

The Residential Communities Initiative office and Balfour Beatty Communities work together in stride with the common goal of providing the best possible communities to Soldiers and their Families.

**Q:** *How are the unaccompanied senior enlisted/officer quarters incorporated into the structure?*

**A:** Marne Point is a pilot program that the Army requested Balfour Beatty Communities to build. It consists of 334 apartments; 298 one bedroom and 36 two bedroom for a total of 370 beds.

We are very excited about this program as this is the first time we have been afforded the opportunity to offer brand new homes to our single senior Soldiers, staff sergeant to captain.

Even though Marne Point is on Fort Stewart, it is still considered a stand-alone project with its own staff, maintenance, and budget that is independent from Family housing.

Marne Point is managed by Balfour Beatty Communities and still reports to the same local and corporate echelon as required.

**Q:** *Are there plans for more housing at either installation?*

**A:** The plan for Hunter is to build 98 new homes for private through staff sergeant behind the new Child Development Center off Perimeter Road. This project is scheduled to be completed in the near future.

As far as when out-year home replacement construction commences, Balfour Beatty Communities will communicate this new information to our

residents and public affairs office well in advance.

**Q:** *What are the range sizes of units that are available?*

**A:** Current homes on the Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield consist of two, three, four and five bedroom homes. All new homes constructed are three and four bedroom homes. Two and five bedroom homes are not programmed to be built for new construction.

**Q:** *Explain how the electric/water bills have to be paid by living on post?*

**A:** Electric bills are remitted to our third party utility billing company "Eso" formally known as "Ista." Payment options include regular mail, online, or over the phone (\$1.70 convenience fee). Residents can log on to the Web site [www.ista-direct.com](http://www.ista-direct.com) to create/manage their account or contact customer service at 1-(800) LOW-3014 for any questions regarding their account.

**Q:** *How does a person sign up for housing?*

**A:** As soon as a Soldier is notified that he or she is being assigned to Fort Stewart and receives his or her orders, he or she can apply for housing by contacting the leasing office or applying on line at [www.fortstewartfamilyhousing.com](http://www.fortstewartfamilyhousing.com), or [www.haaffamilyhomes.com](http://www.haaffamilyhomes.com).

The BBC leasing agent will collect documents necessary to place the Family on a wait list for the rank/bedroom size they qualify for.

**Q:** *If a person has problems, whom do they get in contact with?*

**A:** If a resident experiences unsatisfactory service, he or she can contact the BBC Community Managers to help resolve the issue.

At Fort Stewart, please contact Ellie Delaney at (912) 408-2471 or Theodore Burnside, (912) 408-2475 press #1, or for Stephanie Clair press #2, and at Hunter, please contact Melissa Robinson at (912) 459-2140.

If at any time during this process a resident is not satisfied with the results he or she received from Balfour Beatty Communities, he may contact the Government Residential Communities Initiatives Resident Liaison, Alicia Hite at (912) 767-1378 or submit a comment through ICE at <http://lice.disa.mil>.

# Education Matters



## Repayment of \$3,000 to VA set

For active duty personnel who erroneously collected the \$3,000 Emergency Advance Payment through the Veterans Affairs Office, you will be receiving a letter from VA's Debt Management Center. The letter will explain your rights, responsibilities, and repayment options. You will be able to set up a payment plan with the Debt Management Center, 1-800-827-0648. If you do not get a letter in the next few weeks, you should call the center. For more information, go to [www.gibill.va.gov/](http://www.gibill.va.gov/), see Breaking News, then click on Advance Pay Recovery Procedures. The VA call center has been revamped, and it is now easier to reach a VA representative Monday-Friday by dialing 1-888-GI BILL 1 (1-888-442-4551).

## DoD halts MyCAA program

The Department of Defense temporarily halted the Military Spouse Career Advancement Account, "MyCAA," education and employment program on Feb. 16 in order to review procedures, financial assistance documents and the overall program, per Tommy T. Thomas, Deputy Undersecretary of Defense, Military Community and Family Policy. This pause will not affect spouses who have an FA document approval number for upcoming classes. During the temporary suspension, no new MyCAA accounts may be created, and no new financial assistance applications will be accepted.

Military OneSource Spouse Education and Career Consultants can still provide education and training, career exploration, assessment, employment readiness and career search assistance. They can be reached toll-free at (800) 342-9647. For a six page list of other sources of financial assistance, go to [www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com), do a Web search for "MyCAA," then click on "Alternative Educational Funding Opportunities."

## Hope Grant for College Credit offered

Of special interest to those who cannot use MyCAA at this time, Savannah Technical College has the Technical Communications Specialist program, which is a great option to fulfill the General Education Requirement courses for your degree. Under this particular certificate program, the Hope Grant will cover the cost of Composition and Rhetoric, Literature and Composition, College Algebra, Public Speaking, Psychology, Sociology and Computer Concepts. These classes can later be transferred to most other colleges and universities.

Many other HOPE eligible diploma and certificate programs are offered by Technical Colleges throughout Georgia, including Savannah Technical College, Airport Road in Hinesville. Some classes are even available on-line or in the Fort Stewart Education Center. For more information, click on [www.gsfc.org](http://www.gsfc.org) and [www.savannahtech.edu](http://www.savannahtech.edu) or call Savannah Tech:

Education Center 408-2430; Hinesville 408-3024; Savannah 443-5700. Also explore the Georgia Virtual Technical College Web site at [www.gvtc.org](http://www.gvtc.org).

## College registration now open

The upcoming Spring II term dates both on-post and distance learning classes are listed below. Some courses are offered during the day. Please contact the college directly for course schedules and enrollment information.

**Central Texas College** – 767-2070/Hunter Airfield, 315-4090, March 22-May 15; **Columbia College** – 767-5336/Hunter Army Airfield, 352-8635, March 22-May 15; **Embry Riddle** – 767-0339/Hunter Army Airfield, 352-5252, March 22-May 23 ; **Savannah Tech** – 408-2430, March 31-June 14 ; **Webster University** – 767-5357/Hunter Army Airfield, 354-0033, March 15-May 13.

## Mechanics: ASE Testing available

Automotive Service Excellence certification testing will be administered only at the Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith Army Education Center on May 6, 11 and 13. The registration deadline is March 17.

All military personnel are eligible to test. Soldiers should see the following individuals for ASE registration BEFORE the registration deadline: Olivia Penrod at Stewart (767-8331) or Ken Brown at Hunter (315-6130).

The first three tests are free, but the Soldier must pay the \$36 registration fee. Recertification tests are not covered. Registration and additional test/recertification fees are due at the time of registration and are non-refundable. Examinees need to report at 8:45 a.m. on the exam dates, since testing will begin promptly at 9 a.m.

Study materials can be obtained at [www.ase.com](http://www.ase.com). Click on the tabs: 1. "Prepare to Test" 2. "ASE Study Guides" 3. Select the specific test

## Merit scholarships offered

The Officers' Spouses Club provides merit-based scholarships for eligible military Family Members. Applicants must be a spouse or unmarried dependent of an active duty, active duty reserve or National Guard member, retired or deceased member of the military who will be attending accredited institutions of secondary education. The application must be post-marked no later than March 12.

The Fort Stewart Enlisted Spouses Club promotes the Rita Ackerman Scholarship for Spouses of an active, retired or deceased enlisted Soldier and residing in the Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield area. Must be completed and mailed by April 1. Both applications are available at the education centers.

## Hunter Spouses' Club offers scholarships

The Hunter Spouses Club Scholarship Program will

award scholarships to deserving students (HSC member or his/her spouse/child) to further their education. Scholarships will be awarded on the basis of academic achievement, citizenship, extra-curricular activities, letters of recommendation, and an essay. Enter their Web site, [www.hunterspousesclub.org/](http://www.hunterspousesclub.org/), select scholarships and download the application for complete details. Applications must be completed and mailed by March 20.

## Scholarships offered

The Central Texas College Foundation provides 155 awards to competitively selected students every year. Foundation scholarships are both need and merit based. For more information, or to view a listing of available scholarships and eligibility criteria, go to [www.ctcd.edu/f\\_aid/2009-2010/scholarships.cfm](http://www.ctcd.edu/f_aid/2009-2010/scholarships.cfm) and click on "CTC Foundation." In addition, there is an institutional scholarship for an active duty or retired Marine Corps service member or immediate Family Member. See details by clicking on [www.ctcd.edu/marine/index.htm](http://www.ctcd.edu/marine/index.htm).

## Columbia offers spouse scholarship

Spouses of military personnel can take their first classroom course free while they complete their financial aid paperwork and enrollment procedures with Columbia College. The active duty member does not have to be enrolled with Columbia College. In addition, Columbia offers spouses a 20 percent tuition discount for "in-seat" (classroom) courses. Call the Fort Stewart site at 877-3406 or 352-8635 for Hunter.

## Source available for Post-9/11 GI Bill

The Post-9/11 GI Bill, Chapter 33, is a non-contributory benefit (no up-front payment required by Soldiers) for those who served on active duty on or after Sept. 11, 2001. The Veterans Administration Web site at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) provides in-depth eligibility information and a link to the on-line application. It also includes all information and steps concerning transferability to Family Members. If you have questions after exploring the Web site, call (888) 442-4551.

## Online academic skills course available

The Peterson's Online Academic Skills Course is now available to all the Services, DoD Civilians, and Family Members. OASC is designed for individuals who want to build their math and verbal skills to excel in their jobs, pass their exams, advance their careers, or continue their education. The course will diagnose the individual's current level of reading comprehension, vocabulary, and math abilities and teach the concepts and skills needed to increase proficiency in each of these academic areas. To register for this free course, click on [www.petersons.com/dantes](http://www.petersons.com/dantes).

# Fort Stewart-Hunter Army Airfield Briefs

## Weekend DFAC hours posted

The Fort Stewart weekend dining facility for March 6-7 is Warrior Transition Battalion Dining Facility, building 12902. Weekend serving hours are breakfast, 8-9:30 a.m.; lunch, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.; and dinner, 5-6:30 p.m.

The Hunter Army Airfield weekend dining facility for March 6-7 is the 1/75 Ranger Dining Facility, building 110. Hunter Army Airfield dining facility weekend serving hours are 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. for brunch, and 4:30-6 p.m. for dinner.

Vanguard Dining Facility is scheduled to be closed March 6-7 and will reopen on March 8 at regular weekday serving hours.

## Recycle old phonebooks

You may be wondering how to recycle old telephone books. The Directorate of Public Works, Environmental has an answer. Place them in a plastic bag with other paper items and put it in a poly-cart or recycling dumpster. Off post collection sites are located throughout Liberty County to include the Liberty County Courthouse Annex, Flemington/Midway/Riceboro/Walthourville City Hall, YMCA, and the Liberty County Planning Commission. For more information, contact Amanda Hinesley at 767-4459.

## Smoking areas designated

Smoking is permitted in designated areas only. Per Fort Stewart Regulation 420-11, smoking areas will be designated by commanders/supervisors in accordance with Army Regulation 600-36. Proper receptacles shall be provided to dispose of smoking materials. Safety cans shall be emptied into trash containers only after they have been soaked with water.

For additional contact information contact the Fort Stewart Fire Prevention Office at 767-7006, or the Hunter Army Airfield Fire Prevention Office at 315-5075.

## SOAR Spiritual Fitness Run slated

The 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment Chaplain section is hosting a Battalion wide Spiritual Fitness run. The run will be physically and mentally tough. The route and end point will not be revealed to the runners. Everyone is encouraged to finish the run together. Breakfast will be at the end point where the battalion chaplain and a few other key leaders will give some spiritual advice and encouragement as they face daily challenges and deal with multiple deployments.

## 3rd ID 91st reunion scheduled

The 3rd Infantry Division Society and attached units in wars and in peacetime will hold their 91st reunion, Sept. 19. The reunion will be held at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City at Reagan National Airport, 2799 Jefferson Davis Hwy., Arlington, Va., 22202. To reserve a room, call (703) 418-1234 or (800) 233-1234. Room rates are \$119 per night, plus tax. Free airport transportation to and from the Reagan National Airport and Crystal City Metro. Reduced parking rate is \$10 per day.

For additional reunion information, contact Monika Stoy at (703) 912-4218, or e-mail [monikastoy@yahoo.com](mailto:monikastoy@yahoo.com).

The Society of the 3rd Infantry Division is seeking those who served in the 3rd ID and attached units in wars, peacetime, or special interest to join the Society. Contact Henry Burke (803) 782-7517, or e-mail [pennieburke@sc.rr.com](mailto:pennieburke@sc.rr.com). Visit the Web site at [www.3rddiv.org](http://www.3rddiv.org)

## Stewart

### EOD consolidating, moving

Over the next three weeks, all of the Explosive Ordnance Disposal companies on Fort Stewart will be moving to our new complex on Rt. 144. The office numbers for the 38th EOD, 731st EOD, 756th EOD and the 766th EOD will be changing.

Appropriate sections will be notified of the new numbers once phone installation is complete.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal services, such as the 24-hour response capability, will not be hindered. The 24-hour response line will remain the same as is currently published, (912) 368-6529.

Please continue to utilize your current TRIAGE method to ensure the appropriate authorities (Range Control and the Law Enforcement desk) are aware of incident calls.

If there are issues with the 24 hour contact number or any concerns about the move, please contact Master Sgt. McHaney at (912) 856-8446.

## TMP hours reduced

The Transportation Motor Pool Operations business hours at Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield have been reduced. New operational hours are as follows:

Fort Stewart TMP business hours are 6:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Hunter Army Airfield TMP business hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Hunter Army Airfield Driver Testing will provide services, Monday and Friday.

For more information, contact Rita Johanson at 435-0153 or John Brinson, Fleet Manager/COR, at 435-0285.

## Gate 5 lanes now reduced

Until March 12, the Gulick Ave. Access Control Point (Gate #5) will be reduced to two lanes of traffic, one in-bound lane and one out-bound lane. Subject closure is necessary to upgrade the electronic system at the gate. Detour signs and traffic control devices will be displayed and posted for the closure duration.

Motorists are encouraged to avoid this area to minimize traffic congestion and to be alert to changes in traffic patterns around the area. For additional information, please contact Alan Trowhill, Corps of Engineers at 767-3287. We appreciate your patience during this construction effort.

## Shop of the Marne open, expanded

After renovations, the Shop of the Marne is now open, featuring the new Magnolia Room. This room will be available to hold FRG meetings, baby showers, coffees and more. Shop of the Marne is open Tuesday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Friday, 4-7 p.m.; and the first Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information, call (912) 767-9268.

## Hunter

### Easter Sunrise Services at Hunter

Hunter Chapel will hold its Easter Sunrise Service outside the Hunter Chapel on Easter Morning at 7 a.m., April 4. The 45-minute service will include music, scripture reading and a message by the garrison chaplain.

Following the service, a time of celebration and fellowship will be conducted in the chapel fellowship hall. Everyone is welcome to attend.



## AAFES Reduces hours during deployment

**Troop Brigade:** Monday- Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Hunter Gas Kiosk:** Monday- Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday - Sunday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Stewart Popeye's/AP:** Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; Saturday-Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Stewart Main Store:** Monday-Saturday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Hunter Corner Express:** Monday- Friday, 5:30 a.m. to 9

p.m.; Friday, 5:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Saturday-Sunday, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

**Hunter Popeye's/AP:** Saturday-Sunday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Hunter Military Clothing Sales Stores:** Monday - Saturday, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Sunday, 12-5 p.m.

**Stewart Military Clothing Sales Stores:** Monday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Closed Sunday

**Bryan Village Shoppette:** Monday-Friday, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturday-Sunday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

**Fort Stewart Main Shoppette:** Monday-Sunday, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

**Robin Hood:** Monday-Friday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Saturday - Sunday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Cinnabon:** Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday - Sunday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

## Gate closures

Gate closures and operational hours have changed for two gates on Fort Stewart. Gate 2, which is located off South Main Street in Hinesville and Troupe Avenue on Fort Stewart, is closed until further notice.

Gate 3, which is located off of GA 47 and Harmon Avenue on Fort Stewart, has changed its 24-hour operation to a 16-hour operation of 5 a.m. to 9 p.m.

# Military children special, resilient, flexible, strong

**Bob Mathews**  
FMWR Marketing Publicity Specialist

Normally, the teenage girl at the Child, Youth and School Services' Youth Center is very cheerful, bubbly and positive.

But one day, sadness was evident on her face and in her demeanor.

At first, the girl told Youth Center Director Gary Williams that she didn't want to talk about what was troubling her, but later she opened up and told him.

"I miss my dad," she confessed.

The Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield calendars for April are filled with special activities saluting, celebrating and supporting some very special children, such as the teen who was having a tough time dealing with her father's deployment to Iraq.

April is the Month of the Military Child, and Stewart/Hunter will join other Department of Defense installations in the United States and around the world in applauding Military Families and their children for the daily sacrifices they make and challenges they overcome.

Williams, along with other Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation employees who work with military children, was asked to describe what makes them special and why April is designated as a month to honor and thank them.

Descriptions of military children were sprinkled with words like "unique," "strong," "flexible," and "resilient."

"These kids, to me are very, very important," Williams said. "They have to deal with elements of life that a lot of kids don't deal with. They are special in that they deal with stuff that we, as adults, might not be able to deal with. They have to deal with deployments. They have to deal with their parents not necessarily being together all the time."

Williams added, "These kids need all of the things that we can offer them, because their parents need a place for them to be safe. It's like a safe haven. Fathers and mothers serving in Iraq or



Nancy Gould

**Children walked in celebration of Month of the Military Child in a kick-off parade at Hunter Army Airfield's Child Development Center, April 1, 2009.**

elsewhere can be at ease, because they know their children are well taken care of."

Williams said Youth Center activities and programs give military children time away from thinking about the challenges they face in everyday life.

As was the case of the teenage girl who missed her dad, Williams said, "You may not be able to experience what they are experiencing or know exactly how they feel, but you can kind of help them and let them know that they are not alone. Sometimes they just want a little bit of support and have someone to talk to. It means a lot to me to just be there for them."

Maria Boiza, Program Operations Specialist for CYSS, describes military children as "very unique and special because they go through life faster than any other child or youth at the same level. By the time that they are 12 or 13 years old, they have moved six or seven times, they have changed their friends, they have experienced different schools, different states and countries. When I grew up, my home was my home until I

got married. Military children do in one year what non-military might do in 10. It is good and it is not so good."

"The good thing is they get to learn cultures, diversity, how other people live, history, and geography by traveling. On the other token, the moving, the separation, losing friendships—that is very hard, especially for teens."

Boiza said she first realized how strong military children are in 2000, while serving in Belgium at the NATO S.H.A.P.E. community. There, children from 28 countries attended the DoDEA school.

"Everybody congregated in groups, the Spanish-speaking, the English-speaking, the French-speaking, and so on. Within a week, parents were still in separate groups. The kids were no longer with the groups; they were all mingled together. That showed me that the kids are flexible. They are able to deal with situations better than the adults."

Boiza added, "Kids don't see barriers. They don't see races. Kids don't care who you are or how you look. And I notice that with military kids, they are

so used to changes that they are very resilient, they adapt easily."

Linda Moseley, Army Community Services Mobilization and Deployment Manager at Stewart and Hunter, said, "The children face many challenges, including the possibility that their parents could be killed or injured, and they do so with great resiliency and spirit. I believe they become more independent earlier on. They face more challenges and they are ready for the many things that life has to offer."

Her husband, Maj. Steve Moseley, is deployed.

"My son (Eric) is 7, and he's been through most deployments with his dad," Moseley said. "I really think he grows stronger every time with respect to their time together and really respects what we stand for in the United States."

Third Infantry Division Commander Maj. Gen. Tony Cuculo, in remarks at the end of the 2009 Month of the Military Child observance at Hunter, cited a number of reasons why military children are special.

"You are going to see your mom and dad in uniform. You are going to see their long hours, deployments and their sacrifice. And you are going to understand better than any kid up to age 18 to 21 in this nation of what the meaning of freedom is. Your mom and dad are actively engaged in defending freedom."

"And so freedom, the ability to vote, the ability to go when you want where you want, that will have a much more special meaning to you than others. Trust me gang, when you are 18 you will know how special it was to be a military kid. We are so proud to provide for you in any way we can, because you are so special," Maj. Gen. Cuculo said.

Month of the Military Child opening ceremonies will be held 9-11 a.m., April 1 at the Fort Stewart Child Development Center, building 403.

Simultaneously, an opening ceremony will be held at the Hunter Army Airfield Child Development Center, building 1284.



## Warrior Transition Battalion Changes Command

Chris Rich, MVIC Photographer

**Lieutenant Colonel William C. Reitemeyer accepts battalion Colors from Winn Army Community Hospital Commander, Col. Paul R. Cordts, during the WTB Change of Command ceremony at Marne Garden, Feb. 18.**

# Recognizing African-American warriors, past and present

**Spc. Crystal M. O'Neal**  
2nd HBCT Public Affairs

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE MAREZ, Iraq** – A man, armed with a musket and gunpowder, wades through the swamps of South Carolina. Looking right, then left, he sees his comrades positioned as he is – poised and ready to defend against the approaching enemy.

Knees bent, shoulders squared, and weapon at the ready, he notices the sea of faces surrounding him. Although they're not all of the same hue, they still hold that same look of determination, that look when fighting for something you strongly believe in – freedom.

Approaching voices ring out and the sounds of men and horses sloshing through the swamp can be heard. He tightly clenches his rifle. His mind relaxes, as he prepares to fight to the death. This Revolutionary War Soldier smiles, not allowing the threat of death to lower his spirits. He knows he won't actually fight to the death; he has to survive.

"After all, my master says after we win this war, I am my own man," he thinks happily.

With this joyful thought, he pushes forward, determined to fight, to survive, and to become free.

From the battle for America's independence against the English, to the

present Operation Iraqi Freedom, Black Soldiers have ably proven themselves as American Soldiers, defending the American flag in every major war fought by the United States, as well as several minor conflicts. Many of these servicemembers served honorably, giving their lives in battle, while enduring racial discrimination.

Despite the way they were treated, Blacks continued to serve in the Armed Forces, in segregated units, with inadequate supplies and uniforms, performing menial jobs thought to take little brain power to perform.

Historical military inroads were made by units, such as the Buffalo Soldiers, the first peacetime, all-black regiment in the regular U.S. Army, formed in 1866; and the Tuskegee Army, America's first black military airmen, who battled in the skies of World War II. President Harry S. Truman desegregated all of U.S. Armed Forces on July 26, 1948, by way of Executive Order 9811, making it illegal, by military law, to make a racist remark against any servicemember.

Thanks to former President Truman's order and the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, black servicemembers today are guaranteed – by law – military and civilian, equal and just treatment while on and off-duty.

According to Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Andrews, Task Force Marne com-

mand sergeant major, currently deployed to northern Iraq in conjunction with Operation Iraqi Freedom, the present-day strides taken to ensure all Soldiers in the Armed Forces receive fair treatment are immeasurable.

"I am elated by the leaps and bounds that have been made to ensure all Soldiers are being treated fairly regardless of their race," said the command sergeant major. "I am glad African-Americans in the military are finally being truly acknowledged and recognized for all the talents and hard work we bring to the military. Things have definitely come a long way, though there are still things we can work on as Soldiers and leaders, fighting for one common cause – our nation."

This Task Force Marne leader said he hopes he serves as a role model, not only for Black Soldiers, but for all Task Force Marne Soldiers.

"I always try to set a good example," he said. "I know my Soldiers look up to me, and I strive to be a positive role model for them at all times; I want them to believe they can achieve anything in this world. If they just stay grounded, remember the discipline instilled in them from their upbringing, as well as the Army standards, they won't go wrong."

Sergeant First Class Nicolette Shields, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division Equal Opportunity

advisor, said ethnic observances programs such as EO guarantee equality among the ranks.

"In this program, we educate the Soldiers on each other's differences. We recognize several cultural observances, including but not limited to Black History Month, Asian-Pacific Week, and Hispanic Heritage Month," Sgt. 1st Class Nicolette said. "By teaching the Soldiers why another Soldier may do things differently because of his culture, upbringing or background, we rid them of ignorance, and they gain a sense of respect for each other. The Soldiers always appreciate this training; they say it helps them to know their battle buddies better."

Spartan command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. Valmond A. Martin, said he challenges all his Soldiers, regardless of race, creed or ethnicity, to remember Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous dream: To judge people by the content of their character, instead of by the color of their skin.

"As an Army of one, we must always, always remember the many that came before us," said Command Sgt. Maj. Martin. "The struggles and injustices they suffered, so we can stand and fight as we do today, one team, one fight. We must not forget. We must not take it for granted. It is our duty to make sure everyone, every single one of our Soldiers, is treated as they should be."

## Ugandan soldiers join COB Speicher Black History Month observance

**Sgt. Johnathon Jobson**  
TF Marne Public Affairs

**CONTINGENCY OPERATION BASE SPEICHER, Iraq** - Soldiers from the 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion and Ugandan soldiers from Contingency Operating Base Speicher worked together to celebrate Black History Month with an elaborate performance, Feb. 27.

The observance included a speech by Spc. Aleer Duot, with the 724th Transportation, 264th CSSB, out of Bartonville, Ill., a choir performance and a play. Ugandan soldiers sang, danced and did acrobatics.

Specialist Duot spoke about his childhood in Sudan, as civil war ravaged the country. The civil war was caused by tensions between the Islamic northern portion of the country and the Christian south. He fled the country and immigrated to the United States where he finished school and joined the Army.

This was not the first time Spc. Duot has told his story in front of a large group of people. He has spoken at schools and other meetings in the U.S. many times to pass on his story in an effort to promote understanding and to help end violence caused by

racial and religious tensions.

Ugandan soldiers then took the stage to sing and dance to their native songs. The Ugandan soldiers serve as guards on COB Speicher, controlling access to the installation, the dining facilities, gyms and Morale, Welfare and Recreation facilities.

"It was my intent to include the Ugandans because it is not too often that you are located with soldiers from Africa," explained Sgt. 1st Class LaShay White, the equal opportunity leader for 264th CSSB, out of Fort Bragg, N.C. "If we are going to do a Black/African-American History program, then what better way to bring it together than with soldiers from Africa."

After the Ugandans were finished, the audience heard an inspirational speech from Lt. Col. Shatrece Buchanan, the Task Force Marne Equal Opportunity advisor and a recitation of "The N word," an essay renouncing the use of the derogatory term for African-Americans by all races.

Next, two Ugandans entertained the audience with an acrobatics show by displaying amazing balancing acts, dancing and jumping through hoops and a surprise showing of a Ugandan feat where the performer pushes a metal pin through his cheeks.

"They attended the rehearsals like everyone else, so we knew everything that was in their routine, except for the one putting the wire throughout his cheeks," said Sgt. 1st Class White, a native of Mobile, Ala. "He caught everyone off guard with that," she added.

Following the Ugandan acrobats, Soldiers from the companies of 264th CSSB performed the play "Silver Trumpets," which was written by Lt. Col. Buchanan. The play centered around three friends who ran a barbershop together and used it as a venue to unite people from all walks of life and promote the basic values of life.

Even as the observance came to a close, the audience, which almost completely filled the gym, had barely dwindled, despite the fact that it was held around the time most units were doing shift changes.

"As an EOL or anyone putting on a performance, your biggest fear is whether or not you are going to have a good turnout to see the hard work you and the Soldiers have put in to the process," said Sgt. 1st Class White. "When I saw the gym start to fill up, I was happy, but when at the end of the night I looked out and saw that most of the people were still there, it gave me the best feeling."

# US, Iraqi Forces secure election sites

**Spc. Samuel Soza**  
367th MPAD, USD-S Public Affairs

**BABIL PROVINCE, Iraq** – Soldiers of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team and the Iraqi Security Forces in Babil Province have joined forces to ensure the safety of Iraqi citizens during the March 7 national elections, only the second such elections since the overthrow of Saddam Hussein.

“Our role during the elections is to help with election site security,” said Capt. Matthew McDonald, “Bayonet” Co. commander. “There’re 52 of them in my (area of operations).”

Bayonet Company platoon leaders are partnered with Iraqi Army company commanders and Capt. McDonald works with an Iraqi Army battalion commander on a daily basis.

“We work together to do joint mission planning to build individual skill training in their soldiers, to build collective skill training in their leaders and to synchronize their staff efforts for intelligence and operations,” Capt. McDonald said.

Staff Sgt. Nicholas White, a Bayonet Company squad leader, trains with his Iraqi counterparts to address various security situations that might arise at election sites.

“(Some days) we’ll take the squad out, from one of the companies we were working with, and do MEDEVAC classes or how to establish a traffic control point,” Staff Sgt. White said.

Captain McDonald said he is con-

fidant in the ISF’s abilities and cited their recent successes during the religious holidays of Ashura and Arba’een.

As is customary during Arba’een, many Muslims made the pilgrimage to the holy city of Karbala in southern Iraq.

“We’ve been extremely proud of our ISF partners,” Capt. McDonald said. “Before the elections, they went after the violent extremist network cells and during both holidays they were out in force, manning checkpoints 24/7, (which lent) itself to a really successful event down here.”

To ensure election site security is just as successful, the Iraqi and U.S. forces will have to work together, Capt. McDonald added.

“We will bring all the ISF partners in, and we will all get on the same sheet for the security plan,” he said.

Whatever the plan, the Soldiers of Bayonet Company will be in the background during the elections, said Staff Sgt. White.

“The only thing we are really going to do is assist the ISF in making sure (the Iraqi people) have nice places where they’re not worried about the repercussions of expressing their opinions,” Capt. McDonald said.

Captain McDonald is optimistic about the elections.

“I think the elections will go smoothly,” he said. “I think the Iraqis here are very excited about exercising their new right to vote. They want to be heard; they want to



Spc. Samuel Soza

**U.S. Soldiers from 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division and Iraqi Security Forces interact with children in Babil Province, Feb. 15. U.S. military and local Iraqi leaders have been working to ensure election sites are safe for Iraqi citizens during the March 7 national elections, the second since Saddam Hussein was overthrown.**

voice their opinion. So I think the turnout will be really good down here.”

Although the elections are a major step for the country, they are not the culminating event for Bayonet Company. Captain McDonald is already considering the next mission for his Soldiers.

“I think the critical time will be

the post-election period as the new government takes control,” he said. “(We hope) that everything goes peacefully and that the new parties that are elected don’t have a lot of fallout with supporters of the old parties.”

Babil is one of the nine provinces that make up United States Division – South.

## Scout training aids Iraqis in becoming air mobile qualified

**Master Sgt. Duff E. McFadden**  
2nd HBCT Public Affairs

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE MAREZ, Iraq** – With the advent of the helicopter, airborne military operations became centered on the concept of strategic mobility, or getting the maximum number of Soldiers into the area of operations in the shortest amount of time.

Over the course of five days, members of the Iraqi Army and Kurdish Peshmerga learned all about air mobile tasks, such as providing perimeter and landing zone security, loading and unloading aircraft, movement formations, and detainee operations, at Joint Security Station India, located in Al Kindi, Iraq.

The Iraqis were introduced to the U.S. Army’s “crawl, walk, run” concept of training, as they took part in numerous exercises leading up to use of an actual aircraft.

First, the Iraqis observed demonstrations by the 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry Scouts, with 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division. Next, they walked through where they should be lined up, each person’s responsibilities, and the order for tactically entering and exiting.

The Soldiers trained on a 9-foot by 18-foot wooden box constructed to resemble a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter, complete with passenger seats and crew chief area. The training culminated with all 22 students loading and unloading aboard actual U.S. UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters.

Through endless repetition, as well as timed drills, they learned to respect the capabilities of the U.S. Army’s tactical transport helicopter. The routine quickly turned into the necessary memory needed to react to air mobile situations.

Room clearance and detainee operation scenarios were also added, but the focal point of the training – safe entry and exit of a moving aircraft – trumped everything.

“While this course involved loading and unloading helicopters and the tasks subsequent in getting onto the helicopter, it also included safety factors, such as buckling your safety belt and ensuring you’re safe on the helicopter,” said Capt. David Fierner, Headquarters Company commander. “Beyond that, it was Americans training Iraqis to lead themselves.”

“It was great seeing the progress over the five-day stretch. At first there was some hesitation, but by day five, the Iraqis were training the trainer,” said 1st Lt. Andrew Higgins, scout platoon leader and a Mansfield, Ohio resident. “With Iraqis in the lead and Americans on the opposite side with the assist-and-advise mission, we were able to see them grow. And by day five, they were actually able to get in the aircraft, fly around and get out, with very little assistance from U.S. forces.”

Perhaps the biggest lesson imparted upon the Iraqis wasn’t directly related to the air mobile training. It may have been how American enlisted Soldiers were leading the way in providing this training, leadership and direction, especially for an Army that’s not used to seeing such instruction coming from enlisted Soldiers.

“Not only did the Iraqis learn the skills of air mobile operations, but we got to develop them as Soldiers,” said Capt. Fierner. “My Soldiers also got to develop camaraderie with the Iraqis, whom they’ll be working with in future operations. So, they got to develop a bond and they got to impart



Pfc. Gregory Gieske

**Being tactically removed from a Blackhawk helicopter during the last stage of the training mission, 1st Lt. Larry Richardson, 1st Battalion, 36th Infantry, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, role plays a detainee being delivered for further interrogation to Joint Security Station India, near Al Kinidi, Iraq.**

their knowledge of this skill onto the Iraqis.”

Everyone involved agreed the biggest training improvement would have been more “hands-on” training with actual Blackhawks. There’s a huge difference between simulating the placement, loading and unloading of a UH-60, and then actually doing it.

“With more seat time, they could actually jump in and see how hard it actually is to put on seat belts with and without bags loaded inside the aircraft and then flying around,” said Staff Sgt. Jeremiah McLaurine, the senior scout with the HHC, 1/36th Inf. scout platoon.

As for the Iraqis, they were pleased to work alongside their American counterparts.

“It’s a very good class,” said Capt. Ahmad Talib Karim, a 10-year Iraqi Army veteran. “It’s motivating for our soldiers to train with the U.S. Soldiers. This is a whole new idea, as we haven’t done this before, learning how to load and unload the aircraft. Anashalla – hopefully – we’re going to prove we’re very qualified for such training.”

“Our soldiers are very excited to learn this and they want to learn even more, especially when it comes to flying, loading and unloading the helicopter. These soldiers are the best in their units, that’s why they were picked for this class. They’ve all had Special Forces training, and that’s helped them to learn this training,” Capt. Karim said.

According to Staff Sgt. McLaurine, a Lima, Ohio, resident, his scouts trained and trained hard. “You train the first time, so people become familiar with it. You train the second time, so you begin to see results. You then train harder, so that way, you’re saving lives during combat.”

For Sgt. Eduardo Castellar, scout platoon, this was his first experience in instructing the Iraqi Army. “Actually, it was pretty fun.

Having contact with soldiers from another country

was a pretty good learning experience. Their language was different, so it was literally hard at times, but I did enjoy it.”

“You can see their officers leading their troops, just like we do. That’s pretty common for any army. We have Soldiers helping train the Iraqi Army, and they’re all getting along pretty good together, helping each other out. They were showing us how they do their training and we showed how we do our training, all the while trying to improve each other,” Sgt. Castellar said.

“The Iraqis got some first-hand experience with our aircraft and saw how we load and unload tactically in a combat zone,” said Sgt. Vincent Arrelano, scout platoon. “Now, they’re more familiar with our tactics so they can transform them into their tactics in the near future. Working together with the Iraqi forces showed them how to train, so they can train their soldiers to become unified and work hand-in-hand in future operations with us.”

The proposal to have Iraqi Security Forces participate in on air mobile exercises was generated by the local Stability Transition Team.

After working hand-in-hand with Iraqi Army officials, it was felt that such training would be of huge benefit to specialized Iraqi soldiers.

“The Stability Transition Team working with the 2nd Iraqi Army, brought this idea to 1/36,” said 1st Lt. Higgins. “The scout platoon was given a task and purpose. The task was to be able to train the Iraqi Army on air mobility skills, and the purpose was a greater understanding of helicopter usage, and also when the Iraqi Army has its own helicopters, they will have these same skills to be able to train the trainer.”

Thanks to the success of such programs as the one at JSS India, the Iraqis will have many more opportunities to learn alongside their American counterparts, especially as the March 7 Iraqi elections draw nearer.

# Colors cased by 87th CSSB in preparation for deployment

**Spc. Gaelen Lowers**  
3rd Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs

The 87th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade cased their colors at Marne Garden, March 1 in preparation for their deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"I have almost 14 or 15 years here at Fort Stewart throughout my almost 30-year career in the military," said Col. Shawn Morrissey, 3rd Sustainment Brigade commander. "The history of the 87th [CSSB] is remarkable. Their leadership has been remarkable, and once again, under the leadership of [Lt. Col. Kimberly] Dauband and [Command Sgt. Maj. Cynthia] Howard, I know without a doubt in my mind, that the 87th [CSSB] is ready to go to war."

Colonel Morrissey went on to say that on a personal level, he has watched the unit throughout his time in the Army and is just as impressed with their dedication to duty and service to the nation now as he was years

ago.

Lieutenant Colonel Daub echoed the statements of pride in the Soldiers of the 87th CSSB.

"On the field before you are the outstanding Soldiers of the 87th CSSB," said Lt. Col. Daub. "I take great pride in our Soldiers' commitment, courage, pride and dedication. We have come a long way and I am truly proud of them. We are physically fit, mentally and emotionally tough, have the confidence to lead and the courage to stand up for what we believe in. The 87th CSSB is truly Army strong."

Since its inception in 1936 at Fort Des Moines, Iowa, the unit has been deployed to Algeria and Italy during World War II and Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Shield. It participated in Operation Hurricane Andrew Relief, traveled to Somalia in support of Operation Restore Hope, has units in Haiti for the recovery efforts, and has most recently deployed on three separate occasions to Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom I, OIF III and OIF '07-'09.



Spc. Gaelen Lowers

**Command Sergeant Major Cynthia Howard, the 87th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion command sergeant major, and Lt. Col. Kimberly Daub, commander of the 87th CSSB, case their unit's Colors during a Casing of the Colors ceremony, March 1. The 87th CSSB is deploying to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.**

## AER ————— from Page 1A

"This program (AER) is vital to the success and livelihood of Soldiers and Families," Col. Milton said. "This is about Soldiers helping Soldiers."

The Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield goal for this year's drive is 100 percent solicitation of those eligible and a monetary goal of \$125,000.

Sledge noted that Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield AER provided loans and grants in excess of \$3.8 million to assist 3,910 Soldiers and Families in 2009. Stewart and Hunter received \$302,748.37 in contributions from the 2009 AER Campaign.

Armywide, AER provided more than \$12 million to 5,600 children and spouses in education scholarships, Sledge said. Last year, 3,200 children and 1,600 spouses received scholarship money from AER.

"No other major corporation in the world takes care of its employees the way the Army does through the Army Emergency Relief program," said Staff Sgt. John B. McBride, ACS Fort Stewart AER campaign coordinator.

Active duty Soldiers interested in contributing to the AER Campaign may do so by cash, check, or allotment. U.S. Army Reserve and Army National Guard Soldiers may contribute by cash or check. For more information about AER programs and eligibility, personnel in the Fort Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield community can call ACS at 767-5058.

**67 Years  
of  
Helping the Army  
Take Care of Its  
Own...**

**Army  
Emergency  
Relief**

You can help...  
participate in AER  
Campaign  
March 1 - May 15