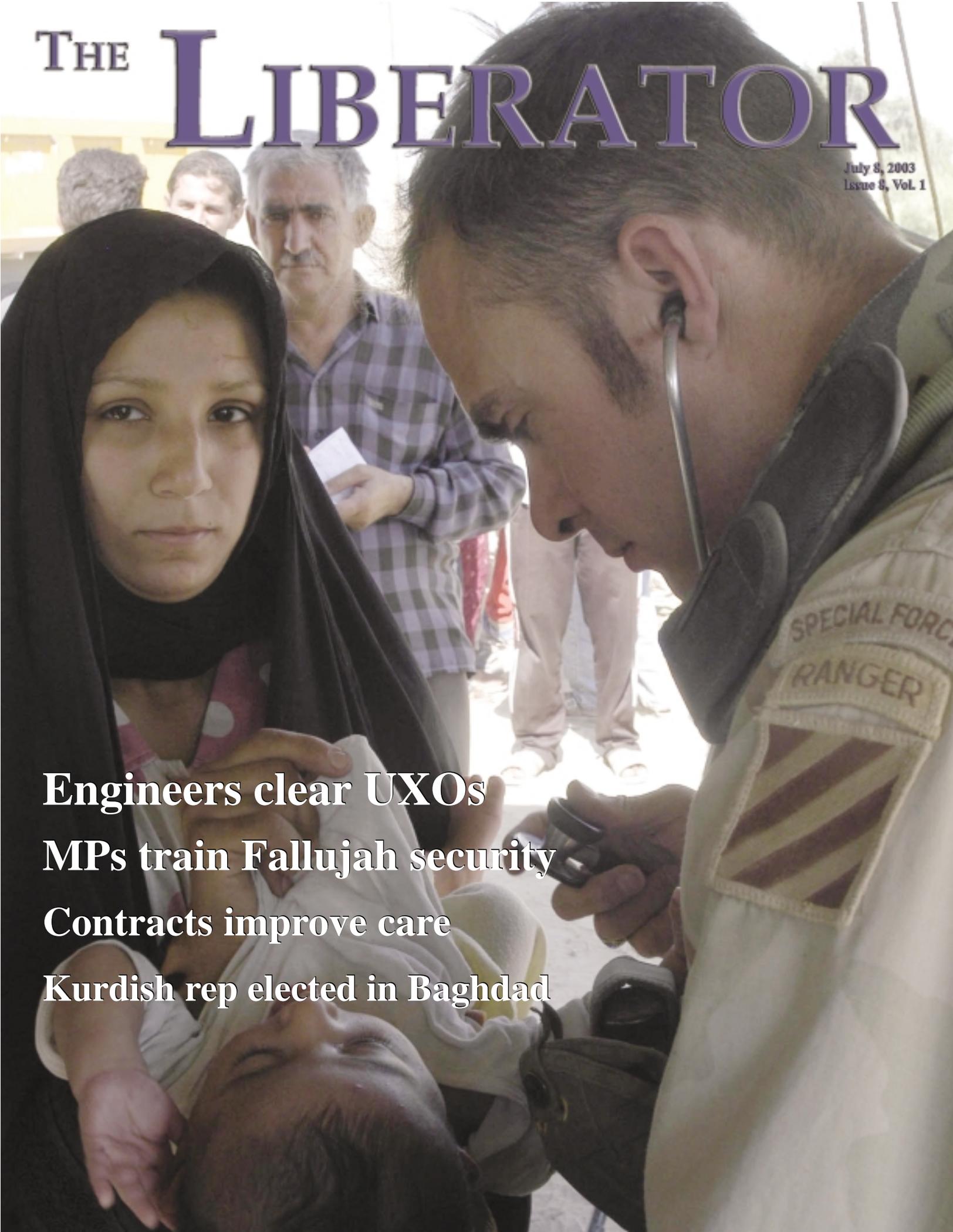


THE LIBERATOR

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Engineers clear UXOs
MPs train Fallujah security
Contracts improve care
Kurdish rep elected in Baghdad

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On the cover: A physician's assistant with 1/9 FA checks an Iraqi baby at a medical treatment facility for children the battalion set up in a small village near Fallujah July 11. Photo by Spc. Katherine Robinson.

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COMMENTARY

Freedom through responsibility

SPC. RYAN SMITH
372nd MPAD

Four Iraqi men frantically push-start a beat-up pickup truck. A soldier tells them he will shoot their tires if they don't leave immediately. Thirty meters away, there is a backhoe with its engine running. The men were using the equipment to steal underground cable. One of them drags a strip of cable along, trying to hang on to his loot.

Looting in Baghdad isn't as simple as mobs breaking into buildings and stealing whatever they can. In the chaos, the average looter runs in and grabs what he can hold. He takes whatever isn't nailed down. The Baghdad looter, on the other hand, brings a truck and a crowbar, and steals everything, including the kitchen sink.

Fire stations, schools, electric substations, and other public service buildings, have been destroyed—in most cases, not by combat, but by criminals. Many of these places are empty shells, buildings with broken-out windows and doors, ripped-out copper wiring and electrical fixtures—looters have stolen or broken everything—sinks, toilets, ceiling fans, furniture — everything is gone.

Army units, including civil affairs units, along with the Office of Coalition Provisional Authority and international organizations, are working to rebuild the city. The infrastructure that holds Baghdad together is slowly being repaired. The damage done by war and thieves is gradually being reversed.

But often, as soon as repairs are made, these organized, industrial-strength looters steal or destroy whatever has been repaired.

The answer to the problem is,



Sgt. Mark Bell

A Kurdish resident of Baghdad's Musfa District cast his vote during a recent election for the Baghdad Advisory Council.

of course, security. But where is the security to come from? American soldiers can't be placed as guards at every public facility and business in Baghdad.

The city's police don't seem to be effective against the problem, either. The police presence I have witnessed generally consists of sometimes-uniformed men directing traffic. I have seen police cars driving around town, but they seem to blend in and remain unnoticed. Occasionally, an officer rides by on a motorcycle.

This may be the Wild West, but a six-shooter is no match for an AK-47—which all criminals seem to have here.

Iraq has been immersed in the cult of the gun. Schools have paintings on their walls of soldiers firing weapons into the air. For a repressed society, it seems a lot of people are knowledgeable about the workings of an assault rifle.

Right now, the answer has been to make possession of certain weapons illegal. That's a good idea—except criminals don't turn guns in. If owning a gun is a crime, then the criminals sim-

ply have an advantage over law-abiding people who relinquished their weapons.

The military began granting gun licenses to Iraqi business owners, firefighters and even school headmasters who have a legitimate need for protection.

That's a clear sign serious societal changes need to be made. A country where the headmaster of a school has to keep a weapon on the school's grounds needs rebuilding from the ground up—not only in its infrastructure, but also in its ideology.

Democracy can be learned. Millions of people worldwide have begun adjusting to new freedoms in new democratic governments in the past 10 years.

Establishing security is our priority. But along with security, we need to help people understand freedom depends on individual accountability.

No longer should Iraq be a country where people exist in a voiceless majority—decisions being made only by a dictator and the upper echelons of management in an authoritarian government.

352nd CA pays tribute to fallen leader

STAFF SGT. CONRAD COLLEGE
372nd MPAD

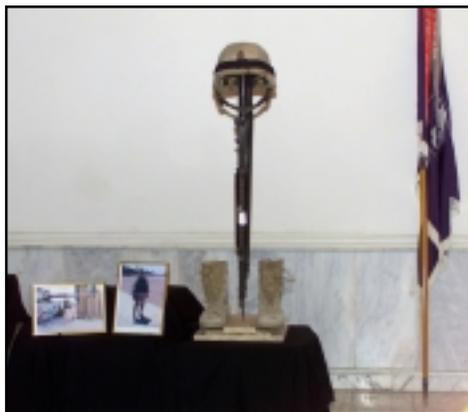
A memorial service for 1st Sgt. Christopher D. Coffin, first sergeant of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 352nd Civil Affairs Battalion, was held in Baghdad, Iraq, on July 3.

Coffin was killed July 1 in Iraq when the convoy he was riding in was attacked on a main supply route south of Baghdad.

More than 100 soldiers and officers, including two generals, crowded into a room to attend the memorial service held in the 352nd headquarters building. Many other soldiers stood in the hallways outside the room.

One sergeant told how, some years ago, he had been hurt in an accident and was taken to the hospital. Speaking with a breaking voice, the sergeant said he would never forget when 1st Sgt. Coffin came and sat by him all night, ensuring everything would be all right.

An officer testified, in a trembling voice, how Coffin had always been concerned for



Staff Sgt. Conrad College

The memorial service held in memory of 1st Sgt. Christopher D. Coffin featured this traditional display of rifle, ID tags, boots and helmet along with pictures.

the welfare of his soldiers. He said Coffin taught every soldier and officer that he worked with his first rule of the Army: "Mission first, but take care of your soldiers — always."

Coffin was born July 8, 1951, and spent most of his childhood in New Jersey. He graduated from Ryder College in 1981 with a

history degree.

Coffin joined the Army June 29, 1971 as a tank crew member. He served on active duty for three years before joining the Army Reserve August 21, 1974. Many years and promotions later, he joined the 352nd CA Bn. Aug. 1, 2002.

He was an avid skier and spent much of his vacation time with his wife skiing in the Rocky Mountains in Colorado.

In his civilian work, Coffin was a police officer for many years. In 1998, he transferred to the Department of Defense as a federal police officer, and worked at several U.S. military installations, including the Pentagon and Fort Detrick, Md. He was assigned to the U.S. Park Police in Maine, where he and his wife resided.

Coffin is best remembered for his stern, but fair, attitude and his constant concern for the well-being of his soldiers.

Coffin is survived by his wife Betsy of Kennebunk, Maine; his mother, May of Somerville, N.J.; his brother, Thomas; and his sister, Devon D. Newman.

Cavalry scout recognized by Army, soldiers

SGT. CRAIG ZENTKOVICH
50th PAD

Standing at attention, waiting to be presented an award July 5 was Staff Sgt. Kenneth R. Franco.

The section leader from E Troop, 9th Cavalry, was due to receive the Silver Star, as the medal reads, "for gallantry in action."

Ask him how he feels about receiving the award and he'll tell you, with an immovable sincerity, "I alone didn't earn the award — we all earned the award."

Franco, a Queens, N.Y., native, is referring to the six soldiers in his section with whom he's spent the last 10 months.

"If anybody is deserving of the (Silver Star) it's him," said Pfc. Jason Punyahotra, a gunner in Franco's section. "He led the troop through countless contacts and always had control of the situation. He put himself in harm's



Sgt. Craig Zentkovich

Staff Sgt. Kenneth R. Franco, section leader, E Troop, 9th Cavalry, was awarded the Silver Star "for gallantry in action."

way to protect us many times."

E Troop has served as 2nd BCT's reconnaissance team.

"We were up close with the enemy more times than I can count," Franco said.

The BRT's first contact came at Objective Rams, west of An Najaf. Franco's hard-shell

HMMWV led the troop.

"After we came into contact, receiving and returning fire, (Franco) moved closer to the enemy, directed fires and provided cover for the entire troop," said Cpt. Scott C. Woodward, E Trp., 9th Cav., commander. "While under heavy fire, he assessed the situation and made recommendations which ended up benefiting the entire troop."

Franco suggested they hold off on movement over the high ground to their front, uncertain of what lied ahead.

"I coordinated with (Task Force 1-64) so they could take the high ground," Woodward said. "As soon as (TF 1-64) hit the high ground, RPGs were flying at them from every direction. Forty-eight hours of fighting later, more than 300 Iraqi troops were captured or killed." No E Troop scouts were injured.

Woodward said, humbly, "He

saved all of us (in the troop) from what was over that ridge."

The heaviest contact they received occurred April 2 as they were clearing a route east of Karbala.

Franco's vehicle once again was leading the troop when they encountered a company-sized Iraqi force.

"When they were about 500 meters from us they were engaged by mortars, RPGs and small-arms fire," Woodward said. "For more than two minutes, (Franco) suppressed enemy to his left and right who were 100 meters away so the rest of the troop could get into position to effectively engage them."

There were two concerns that motivated Franco throughout the war, as they do now.

"I want to make sure all of my soldiers make it home," he said. "And I want to get home to see my son."

MPs train Fallujah security guards

SPC. JACOB BOYER
31D (M) PAO

FALLUJAH, Iraq – The first Iraqis to join the Facilities Protection Service in Fallujah completed the classroom portion of their training July 5 at the Military Police Training Center.

Although many of the 39 Iraqis taking the course had been security guards before, the goal of the class is to standardize their training and reinforce their duties, according to Sgt. 1st Class Terry L. Ford, provost marshal operations sergeant, 3rd Military Police Battalion.

“We want to reinforce their beliefs in human rights and teach them to have respect and dignity

of other people,” he said. “They need to have the latest understanding of rules of engagement and use of force.”

The security guards will guard facilities critical to national interest, Ford said. Initially, they will focus on water treatment plants, hospitals and electric plants, but as more complete the training, more sites will be guarded.

The guards, who work for \$50 a month, have been without work or pay since early April, when Saddam Hussein’s regime fell, Ford said. As classes are completed, more Iraqis will be back to work.

“The more of them we get through this training, the less they’ll have to work for the small

amount of pay,” he said. “They’re restless to start back to work, but some of them think the training is a waste of time. They don’t quite understand the reason we’re doing this.”

Many of the sites that the guards will soon be protecting are currently guarded by U.S. forces in the area, Ford said. Just as the police in Fallujah are gradually taking over patrolling from soldiers, the guards will eventually take over the security of these sites.

“We’re trying to get them to be more proactive, instead of inactive or reactive,” he said. “We want them to police themselves. If an Iraqi commits a crime, we want Iraqis responding.”



Spc. Jacob Boyer

Sgt. 1st Class Terry L. Ford demonstrates how to detain a suspect to a class of Iraqi security guards.

CID agents keep 31D crime-free in war, peace

SPC. KATHERINE ROBINSON
50th PAD

FALLUJAH, Iraq – Drug addicts, murderers, thieves, rapists — the thorn in the side of any society.

The military, like any large group, has its bad apples. But it also has a team of highly specialized soldiers whose main focus is to root out such weeds in both war and peace – the Army’s Criminal Investigation Division.

The 30th Military Police Detachment is attached to 3rd Military Police Company in Fallujah for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Currently made up of five soldiers, the CID detachment conducts criminal and felony investigations for 3rd Inf. Div.

The detachment investigates combat-related and accidental deaths, the loss or theft of government equipment costing more than \$1000, the loss or theft of classified or sensitive documents, and many other incidents.

The CID soldiers have gone a step beyond their day-to-day mission during the deployment, Special Agent in Charge, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Kevin Roof said, and investigated mass gravesites as well as war crimes.

Warrant Officer 1 Barry Young, assistant special agent in charge as well as a team chief, said the biggest challenges about conducting



Spc. Katherine Robinson

Special Agent Jim Mead (left) and Capt. Chet Gregg, a military attorney, interview an Iraqi with the help of interpreter Mahdi Ahmed Salih (middle) July 8.

their mission in Iraq is a heightened threat-level and communication problems.

The agents regularly talk to Iraqi citizens during investigations. During the war, they also interviewed enemy prisoners of war to get information about possible war crimes and atrocities against Iraqi people, according to Roof.

Special Agent Jim Mead agreed the language barrier is an obstacle. “Sometimes in the translation, the dialect gets in the way,” he said. It’s also different working with the Iraqi people in a strange city, he explained.

“It’s different when you work in a certain jurisdiction and you have access to (people) all the time.”

Mead said the mission here is basically the same as it is at home, but it has changed in a way.

For instance dealing with EPWs is not normally a CID mission. But, like everyone else, they are in a different environment than usual.

“We’re soldiers and we’re a 3rd Infantry Division support element, so we’ve risen to the occasion and done a lot of things expected of us as soldiers, not (only) as agents,” he said. “We get in a foxhole and send rounds down-range just like any other soldier.”

But other than the work environment, not much has changed, Mead added. “What we do here, we do every day. That’s what we’re trained for.”

Young said he feels the detachment is an asset to 2nd Brigade Combat Team and 3rd Inf. Div. by adding specialty training and advice to a variety of situations, as well as investigating and often retrieving lost or stolen equipment.

“They utilize our reports to determine what happened and to prevent it from happening down the line,” he said. “That’s what they call us for – expertise. Other people may say ‘this is what happened,’ but we’ll dig deeper.”

Leaders support 2nd BCT after explosion

SPC. MASON T. LOWERY
50th PAD

FALLUJAH, Iraq – A deadly explosion that leveled a building in the Hasam Mosque compound June 30 threatened to sever the relationship 2nd Brigade Combat Team soldiers and citizens of Fallujah have cultivated over the past month. But, it did not.

The mayor, Imams, and local sheiks from Fallujah stood behind the Spartans and said they didn't believe coalition forces caused the explosion.

Fallujah Mayor Taha Bedawi said soldiers and the people of Fallujah are in the same situation — terrorists are attacking them as well.

"We can see that the coalition forces are still working in Fallujah, and this type of accident won't stop them. Whoever tried

to break the relationship between the coalition and people of Fallujah failed."

The Spartans and Fallujah leaders are conducting separate investigations of the incident. Preliminary reports from both indicate the U.S. had no involvement.

Sheik Abdul Satar, representing the head imam, said he heard the explosion came from within and also came from the air, but believes the explosion was not caused by either a missile or helicopter attack. Satar said whenever the explosion originated; he thinks it was caused by someone who wants to make trouble between coalition forces and the people of Fallujah.

He said there are too many outsiders in Fallujah trying to make trouble, and all he wants is a safe and secure city for his



Staff Sgt. Joseph Robsky

Wreckage from the building that collapsed the night of June 30 next to the Hasam Mosque in Al Fallujah.

people.

At the site of the explosion, tensions were high. Therefore, the local Fallujah police accepted the primary task to investigate. "We didn't want to force ourselves onto the site. We wanted to respect (the Fallujah Police)," said Maj. Mike Peloquin, 10th Engineer operations officer.

During their investigation, the

Fallujah police soon realized that by moving the roof to free any possible survivors, important evidence was also removed, further hindering the investigation, according to Peloquin.

Because of soldiers' limited access, they were only able to issue preliminary conclusions. The building appeared to have exploded from within. Soldiers did not find fragments consistent with United States military weapons. Because the walls of the building were not reinforced, a small explosion could have brought it down.

Soldiers observed one crater, which was one foot deep – not indicative of a U.S. Missile, according to Staff Sgt. Joseph Robsky, an explosive ordnance disposal technician from 759th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company.

Engineers clear UXOs near Fallujah road

SPC. JACOB BOYER
3ID (M) PAO

FALLUJAH, Iraq – Between caches left behind by instruments of Saddam Hussein's regime and unexploded ordnance left behind following Operation Iraqi Freedom, engineers in Iraq have a lot of clearing to do.

Soldiers from A Company, 489th Engineer Battalion, currently attached to 10th Engineer Battalion, are helping clear unexploded ordnance scattered around 2nd Brigade Combat Team's complex near Fallujah.

There are massive amounts of UXO in the area, said 1st Lt. Jeffrey Wallace, platoon leader, A Co., 489th Engineers. The compound, located just south of Highway 28 and just east of Highway 1, served as a training base of anti-Iranian forces supported by Hussein.

"This place is loaded with UXO," he said. "There are artillery rounds, tank rounds, air defense rounds and mortars everywhere."

Wallace said clearing the area of ordnance could take more than two months. A number of pushed-up berms in the area conceal large piles of rounds.

The job has inherent dangers, said Staff



Spc. Jacob Boyer

Staff Sgt. Anthony Cimino, A Co., 489th Engineer Battalion, inspects a mortar round near a road outside of Fallujah.

Sgt. Anthony Cimino, squad leader, A Co., 489th Engineers. But he makes sure his soldiers are briefed on what to do each day they go out.

"So far nothing bad has happened to us," he said. "The main thing we need to remember is not to mess with anything that has already been blown up or tampered with."

Each time a soldier finds a piece of ordnance, he inspects it to ensure it has not been tampered with, Cimino said. He also checks

to see if a fuse has been screwed in. If one has, the soldier has to be extra careful not to rotate the ordnance while he is carrying it, he said.

"It's doubtful that anything would go wrong, because we're very careful," said Spc. Jacob Cooke, combat engineer, A Co., 489th Engineers. "I still get worried every time I pick one up though because you just never know."

After the ordnance is placed in a transport vehicle and carefully stabilized, the engineers take the load to a nearby demolition pit, where it is destroyed, Wallace said. They are able to destroy up to 100 pounds of explosives with each charge. They destroy about 130 rounds each day.

"We blow this stuff up every hour on the hour," Cimino said. "We go out, pick up as much as we can and bring it back so our demo guys can destroy it."

Cimino said although the work can become routine for the soldiers, the danger reminds them to be cautious.

"Nobody's an expert at blowing up UXO," he said. "Every time we finish a day of this work, I just thank God that nobody's been hurt."

Fallujah hospital contracts improve Iraqi care

SPC. JACOB BOYER
3ID (M) PAO

A series of contracted projects have helped keep patients at Fallujah General Hospital cooler and healthier during their stays.

A new water chlorination system, air conditioners and a new water cooling system are the first of several projects planned for the hospital by 3rd Infantry Division (Mech.) Engineer Brigade's Contracting and Infrastructure Repair Team, said Capt. Kevin Jackson, assistant operations officer, Engineer Brigade. Future plans include a hostel for resident physicians, a revamped electrical system and improved access to the facility.

The Contracting and Infrastructure Repair Team is not responsible for doing any of the work, he said. They coordinate funding, allowing the hospital's administrators to hire Iraqi workers to complete the projects.

When the team first started working in Fallujah in early June, conditions at the hos-



Spc. Jacob Boyer

An Iraqi doctor checks the pulse of a sick patient at Fallujah General Hospital.

pital, which serves 500,000 Iraqis in the Fallujah area, were "miserable," Jackson said.

"It was so hot," he said. "There were elderly women sitting on the floor fanning their children with pieces of paper or whatever else they could find. They were giving unclean water to their patients because that was all they had. At times, parts of the hospital had to be shut down because there wasn't enough power."

The team met with Dr. Rafee H. Chiad, director, Fallujah General Hospital, to assess what he thought was the hospital's greatest needs, Jackson said.

After coordinating with the city's mayor, contracts were put out for bid and funds were provided for the work. More than 80 air conditioners and five new water coolers made it possible for patients to find relief from the Iraqi heat.

"It's a complete turnaround," he said. "Now you can walk down the halls, look into a room and see them turning off the air conditioners because the rooms are comfortable even when it's 100 degrees outside."

The hospital fell into disrepair due to long periods of neglect by the Baath Party regime in Iraq, Chiad said.

"Bad administration by the government has caused these problems for a long time," he said. "They would tell us it was because of the (United Nations) sanctions, but we knew they could have done more."

2nd ACR doctors heal injuries, communities

SPC. SHAUNA McROBERTS
1 AD PAO

Gaith, a 7-year old Iraqi boy, struggles to walk with the aid of his doctor. An external fixator protrudes from his left leg, held there by pins embedded in his bone above and below a fracture in his femur.

This is just one of Gaith's weekly visits to his doctor to treat his injuries: two broken legs in addition to the fractured femur.

His doctor, a U.S. soldier, holds Gaith's hands tightly as the boy shuffles forward.

At Camp Muleskinner the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment Forward Surgical Team sees both Iraqis and Americans.

The 20-soldier team includes three general surgeons and an orthopedic surgeon. The unit is equipped with a two-bed emergency room, a two-bed operating room, and a small intensive care unit filled with state-of-the-art medical equipment.



Spc. Shauna McRoberts

Maj. Daniel White, an orthopedic surgeon, 2nd ACR, guides Gaith Jabbar across the floor of the surgical team's operating room.

The doctors are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"We're basically the Emer-

gency 911 of the Army," said Maj. Daniel White, 2nd ACR FST's orthopedic surgeon and Gaith's doctor. "We're the trauma surgery section for life or limb threatening injuries."

The surgical team has treated American soldiers for illnesses such as appendicitis and infections of the hand and foot. However, approximately 80 percent of the patients the team sees are Iraqis, according to White.

These patients are usually brought in by American soldiers.

"We see horrific injuries in these people," said White. "A lot of gunshot wounds and pedestrian/automobile accidents."

Many of the surgeons' patients are children, one as young as three months old, he said.

"It's heart-breaking," said Maj. Richard Malyszczek, a general surgeon with 2nd ACR FST. "You realize how fortunate we are just to have the comforts of being American."

In addition to treating Iraqis,

the surgeons are also working to help improve the medical system in Iraq. They visit local hospitals around Baghdad several times a week and assess their problem areas and recommend improvements.

"Our mission is to get the medical system on its feet," White said. "We learn what the deficiencies are and how we can supplement or correct them."

Most of the hospitals in Iraq are dealing with similar problems: limited nurses, limited supplies and primitive medical technology, White said.

However, Iraqi doctors, many of whom studied in Great Britain, are highly skilled and eager to work with the Americans.

"Most of the senior doctors we interacted with know our literature, but have not been able to leave the country to learn the techniques," White said. "They're very enthusiastic to see us operate because they want to learn new things from us."

Task force brings Iraqis, U.S. together to rebuild

SGT. BRENT M. WILLIAMS
49th PAD (Airborne)

Scorched ceilings, burnt walls, ransacked rooms filled with broken glass and the ashes of a fallen regime—it's nothing a little hard work can't fix.

The 1st Armored Division's Task Force Neighborhood an administrative building for the Al Bay'aa school district last week.

The Al Bay'aa administrative schoolhouse for the 150 schools in the community was looted during the war.

Task Force Neighborhood, a joint effort between the Iraqi people and U.S. military assets is working to help rebuild Iraqi communities, said Capt. Daryl R. Roerick, commander, 142nd Engineer Battalion.

The team hired 130 Iraqis to assist in the cleaning out of de-

bris from the building, repairing doors, painting soot covered walls and ceilings.

"We never have any trouble finding workers when needed," Roerick said. "They want to work. The Iraqi people appreciate what the American Forces are doing."

Task Force Neighborhood has been operating in neighborhood communities throughout Baghdad since early May.

Engineers work with civil affairs, who hire contractors and laborers, working with locals to repair and restore buildings and areas within Baghdad, while enablers work on medical and dental issues, checking shots and giving vaccinations and other similar projects.

The task force was created to give the Iraqi people an opportunity to improve their quality of life, said Roerick.



Sgt. Brent M. Williams

Soldiers of 1AD's Task Force Neighborhood work to repair a swingset at the Al Bay'aa school.

A from the 411th Civil Affairs Battalion contacted local council members to provide the laborers.

The direct support team, attached to the 325th Airborne In-

fantry Regiment, worked with battalion commanders and headmasters in the Al Rashid District to assess the work needed and nominate project sites for Task Force Neighborhood, said Capt. Daniel C. Lee, team chief, 411th CA Bn. said.

All the schools and administrative buildings in South Baghdad have been neglected, according to Lee.

The buildings need basic maintenance, said Lee, to include replacing windows and doors, plumbing and water lines, fixtures and bathrooms, and upgrading electricity and lights in the classrooms.

"Task Force Neighborhood is a good program," Lee said. "It really shows Iraqis that American Forces are here to help Iraqi people get back on their feet, get back to normalcy."

Civil Affairs officer lends a hand to help orphans

SPC. RYAN SMITH
372nd MPAD

They are the left behind. The forgotten. The unwanted. The unknown.

There may be hundreds—probably even thousands—of homeless, orphaned children on the streets of Baghdad. Some of the children's parents are dead, some parents have simply left their kids to survive on their own, begging for food in the streets.

Regardless of the reasons, it is an issue that requires attention—attention that rarely came from Saddam Hussein's regime.

That's where U.S. Army civil affairs soldiers step in. Capt. Stacey Simms, special functions team chief, 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Greensboro, N.C., has been working with orphanages in Baghdad to help solve the problem.

He has also taken to the streets, looking for homeless kids who would be willing to go to an orphanage.

Simms first went to the Al Fardaws traffic circle, near the Palestine Hotel and the Baghdad Sheraton. Street kids and other children often gather around the fountain, he said.

The problem of homeless children in the area was first brought to the military's attention by concerned journalists who often stay in the hotels nearby, Simms said.

One of the obstacles that Simms faces in trying to help these children is that they were often treated poorly in state-run homes, he said. They were threatened and frequently abused.

A teenager Simms spoke to said that he was beaten for joking around with other children at Dar al Rahma.

Unfortunately, there is little Simms can do for kids who refuse to leave the streets, except to return later to provide them whatever assistance he can.

"I can only help people who are willing to help themselves," he said.

If the children could have seen the conditions at the two orphanages that Simms visited July 3, it might have changed their minds.

Simms also assessed two Catholic homes for girls in Baghdad that needed supplies and repairs. Both were in relatively good condition, compared with other places in the city.

While the sisters of both orphanages told Simms of their needs—food, plumbing re-



Spc. Ryan Smith

Capt. Stacey Simms, special functions team chief, 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion, greets children at an orphanage in Baghdad.

pairs, air conditioning, clothes, and so on—the girls were excited to meet American soldiers.

Their needs will be met by a number of different organizations, Simms said. The military, along with private organizations, will begin to provide assistance as soon as possible.

"We see the results almost immediately," he said. "It's incredibly rewarding. It's my life's work while I'm here."

TF 4-64 improves conditions at clinic

SGT. CRAIG ZENTKOVICH
50th PAD

As Iraq's rebuilding continues, so do the daily missions of supply distribution throughout the country.

Hospitals and medical clinics, looted and ransacked during the war, are now operating with greater resources than there were before the fighting began.

In 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division's area of operation, greater Fallujah, medical facilities have received supplies and services from the brigade and its task forces on a daily basis.

A Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, continued the distribution effort Thursday at Khaldiayah Medical Clinic.

A Co., 3-7 Inf., part of Task Force 4-64, delivered and installed five air conditioning units, shelving units, waiting room chairs, toilets and washbasins, a safe, and a refrigerator in the clinic.

This marked the fourth visit of the task force to the clinic. Previous visits included assessments, medical supply distribution and salary arrangements.

"Based on what the local residents have said, the clinic has never been as nice as it is now," said Maj. Mark R. Rasins, TF 4-64 executive officer. "A majority of the effort that has been put into the clinic is based on what the people have said they need."

And what they've needed, they've received.

"We were able to get (KMC) two dental examination rooms, complete with chairs, lights and all the fixtures that are necessary to make them fully operational," Rasins said. "(The clinic) hired local contractors and residents to assemble the rooms."

The clinic has also received ceiling fans, and 15 fluorescent lights and fixtures, as well as much needed medical and surgical supplies in previous weeks.

The reception they receive now is a far cry from that of the first two visits, according to TF 4-64 physician's assistant, 1st Lt. John Frasure.

"The first time we came here, we received some very unpleasant looks," he said. "And the second time, (residents) threw rocks at us."

Another area of initial resentment came from the doctors at the hospital.

"When we pulled up (for the first two visits), the patients mobbed us, wanting us to diagnose and treat them – the doctors just stood and watched this," Frasure said. "We were finally able to convince them that we couldn't provide any better treatment than the Iraqi doctors – the expertise doesn't vary."

As the amenities continue being delivered to KMC, and with a fully functional generator already in place, the clinic is well on its way to becoming an efficient medical facility, according to Rasins.

Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Dunkleman, TF 4-64 intelligence analyst, has provided the "handyman" skills necessary to install the air conditioning units and new circuit breaker, as well as rewiring the electricity throughout the clinic. "I enjoy getting out and doing this for the communities," he said. "Most of the time I get help from the staff and locals."

It is the increasing motivation of the local populace and their ever-warming reception to American soldiers that is making the TF 4-64 job easier to do.

"We've done a lot to win over the hearts and minds of Iraq," Rasins said. "And the soldiers deserve all the credit. It's phenomenal – they've gone from 'see it and shoot it' to handing out soccer balls with a smile. They've done an amazing job."

With the question of redeployment still open-ended, TF 4-64 and all of 2nd BCT will continue with supply distribution and other community projects until they receive the word.

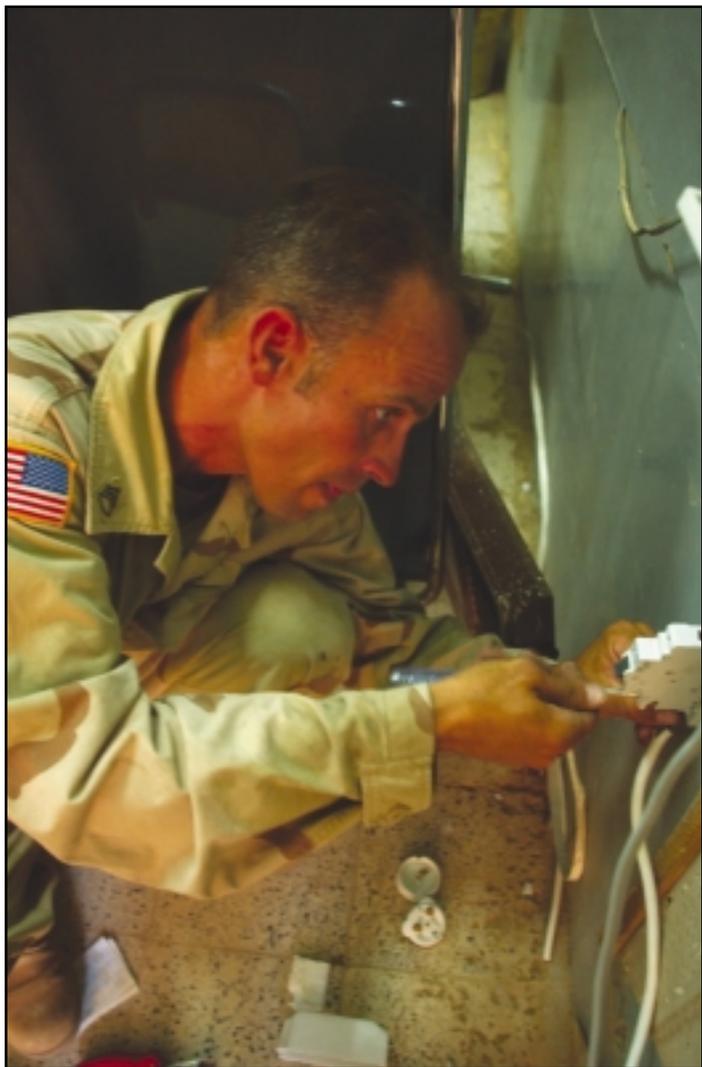


Spc. David Lauderman, HHC 4-64 HEMMT driver, carries two of many fire extinguishers Thursday into Khaliyah Medical Clinic. The fire extinguishers were few of the many items distributed to the clinic by TF 4-64.



Staff Sergeant Jeffrey Dunkleman carries a bench into the waiting room of the Khaldiayah Medical Clinic.

Sgt. Craig Zentkovich



Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Dunkleman, TF 4-64 intelligence analyst, installs a switch for an air conditioning unit at Khaldiyah Medical Clinic.



Lauderman hauls two porcelain toilet bowls into Khaldiyah Medical Clinic. All of the items distributed to the clinic replaced those that were looted during the war.



Spc. Dean Bryant, A Co., 3-7 Inf., bradley driver, helps lower a safe onto a cart during TF 4-64's supply distribution at Khaldiyah Medical Clinic.

Kurdish rep elected to Baghdad council

SGT. MARK BELL
372nd MPAD

With help from 1st Armored Division and 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion, a small group of Kurdish representatives from the Rusfa District in Baghdad selected 61-year-old Khaled Al Faily to the Baghdad Advisory Council at the Humanitarian Assistance Center July 7.

Al Faily was congratulated by nearby friends after Col. Peter Mansoor, 43, 1st Armored Division's 1st Brigade commander, announced the winner between four candidates.

"Democracy has arrived in Baghdad," Mansoor, originally from Sacramento, Calif., told the crowd. "Make your voice be heard. This is only the beginning and definitely not the end."

With a permanent smile etched into his cheeks, Al Faily said his biggest concern for a post-Saddam Baghdad is fixing the numerous problems created by the former dictator.

"I want to help all of my people who live in Rusfa," said the office accountant. "I want to fix the biggest problem which is the lack



Sgt. Mark Bell

Khaled Al Faily, 65, left, is congratulated for a victory in a recent election for the Baghdad Advisory Council.

of security in the area."

The Rusfa District is Baghdad's most diverse district, according to Capt. William Thompson, 35, from Asheboro, N.C., a reserve civil affairs officer assigned to 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion, based in Greensboro, N.C.

Thompson said the Rusfa District has more

than 450,000 people living in a small area in the heart of the city.

"It's probably one of the most interesting districts," he said. "We have both the medical and bank districts, but at the same time we have some very significantly poor residents who are starving to death."

The Rusfa District is one of nine districts within Baghdad's city limits. It is also one of the largest districts and is broken down into 13 neighborhood councils, according to Maj. Will Delgado, 35, from Middletown, N.J., executive officer, 1st Battalion, 36th Armored Regiment, 1st Armored Division.

After completing the first ballot of more than 10 candidates, and announcing the top four names for one final vote, losing candidates turned sour and announced several of the four victors did not live within the district.

"I hope everyone who doesn't live in my district will participate in their district's election process," Mansoor said to the disappointed candidates and onlookers who were asked to not vote. "It is very important everyone in Iraq takes part in your country's new government."

Interim council helps restore order in Baghdad

SGT. BRENT M. WILLIAMS
49th PAD (Airborne)

BAGHDAD, Iraq — The 82nd Airborne Division's 2nd Brigade Combat Team, working with the Coalition Provisional Authority and the Iraqi people, have created an interim council to help restore order to local neighborhoods and communities in the Al Rashid District.

The brigade's officers working civil/military operations are assisting in the establishment and administration of a neighborhood and district civil self governance program by working with the people of Baghdad to create the Al Rashid District Advisory Council.

The military's role for the council is to provide the resources, direction and order for the Iraqi people to govern their country, said Col. Arnold N. G. Bray, commander, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment.

"Our goal is very clear in that we are trying to get the organization back so that Iraqis can rule other Iraqis," Bray said at the first district council meeting in Baghdad May 19. "We all know that it is a safe and secure environment that we want," Bray said. "Information and progress are the things that make this happen."

The intent of the council is to have representation from every community in South Baghdad, said Lt. Col. Steven J. Smith, commander, 2nd Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment.

The 2BCT's Task Force Falcon is working with local community

leaders in the district to repair the internal infrastructure of the Iraqi government, addressing issues of commodities, fixing problems with power, water, sewer, schools, sanitation, food and public health services in Baghdad, said Smith, officer-in-charge of the brigade's civil/military operations.

The council, which began meeting in mid-May, has grown in size from 13 people at the first meeting to more than 45 council members.

The council representatives, speaking on behalf of their communities and neighborhoods work with U.S. forces to meet the needs of their people, Smith said.

"I think the goal is that Iraqis are increasingly running their own communities, making their own decisions and eventually this will be a governing council instead of an advisory council," said Chap. (Maj.) Jim Murphy, regimental chaplain, who arranges the weekly meetings.

"It's getting to the point, where it's not us answering their questions, but the directors of the ministries and the (department of public works) are addressing their issues," he said.

The council works directly with officials from public health and education, electric and power, civil defense, police and fire departments, and water and sewage programs in Baghdad, Smith said.

Working with key city representatives, the Al Rashid council is working for the well being of the people.

The closer things get to normal in Baghdad, the safer the environment for coalition soldiers and for the Iraqi people, Smith said.

Top general visits war fighters in Iraq

SGT. BRENT M. WILLIAMS
49th PAD (Airborne)

SPC. KATHERINE ROBINSON
50th PAD

The Chief of Staff of the Army, Gen. John M. Keane, spent time with 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division (Mech.), soldiers from 1st Battalion, 64th Armor and paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne Division's 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment July 5.

Keane visited the various units to commend the soldiers for their outstanding service during the war.

"There's nobody in the war that fought longer or fought harder than you guys," he said. "This is an absolute brotherhood that I am standing in the middle of ...

"I have been in awe of it my whole life, because what this is



Spc. Katherine Robinson

Gen. John Keane, chief of staff of the Army, speaks to soldiers at TF 1/64 during his visit to 2nd BCT in Fallujah July 5.

fundamentally about is none of you wants to die, but all of you are willing to do so for each other."

The soldiers wrote their own chapter in United States Army history, Keane told them, and set an example for others to follow.

"You will be able to help oth-

ers face the fear. You can't do this unafraid, and you know that. You hold onto yourself even though you are afraid, and you can function even though you are afraid, and that's what a soldier's all about."

Keane expressed his pride in the soldiers, and offered them

some words of encouragement and some of hope, as well as a reminder to keep holding on.

"I wish you could be around the American people and hear the emotion that they have for what you all have accomplished here," he said. "It's unbelievable. I've never seen anything like it in thirty-seven years.

"I know you're probably anxious to hear some of that yourselves," he added. "That day will come. But we are soldiers, and that's what we do. We soldier. We do what the mission requires of us, and if the mission is to stay longer, we stay longer."

Before heading to dinner with the soldiers, Keane said, "most people in America cannot do what you do.

"Why? Because they don't have the physical and mental toughness to do it, and they don't have the heart," he said.

Army dental clinic treats soldiers, civilians

SPC. CHAD D. WILKERSON
372nd MPAD

The U.S. Army Baghdad Hospital dental clinic opened in Baghdad July 5 to provide standard dental treatment to soldiers in the area.

The dental clinic, located in what used to be Saddam Hussein's personal medical treatment facility, is equipped with all the standard tools and equipment to treat dozens of soldiers every day.

"We opened shop three days ago, and we have done mostly operative exams and procedures," said Capt. Cynthia V. Brito, dentist with 561st Medical Company out of Vilseck, Germany. "I have seen more than 20 soldiers so far and we have done fillings and examinations."

Brito is part of a six-man team that was sent from her unit from Camp Anaconda in Balad, Iraq, to start a dental clinic for the soldiers in Baghdad.

"Our mission is to provide dental treatment to the surrounding area units, so that if a

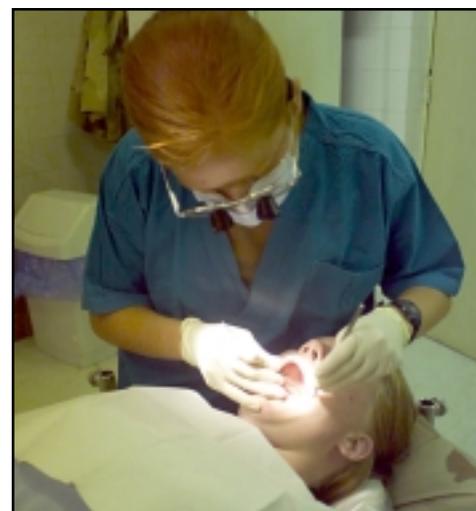
dental emergency arises, we can ease the soldier's pain and fix them so they can get back to their unit to carry on with their mission," Brito said from underneath her sterile mask and protective eyeglasses.

Business is picking up at the clinic because many of the soldiers are just now finding out the clinic is there, Brito said. The clinic, however, is prepared for the challenge thanks to all the dentist chairs and supply storage that outgoing Iraqi personnel and looters left untouched.

"Our busiest day, so far, has been July 4th, and the soldiers are just now learning that we are here," Brito said. "It only took us one day to set up shop, and business has been on the rise every since."

The main motivation in a job like this, Brito said, is the soldiers she is able to work with and learn about.

"We have been meeting new people everywhere we have been," said Spc. Clemente Perez, dental assistant, 561st Medical Company. "The Army has a lot of diversity and it is fun being able to learn about people from



Spc. Chad D. Wilkerson

Capt. Cynthia V. Brito, a dentist from 561st Medical Company, checks for cavities on a soldier in Baghdad.

all different backgrounds."

"The troops make this a great experience," Brito said. "I have learned a lot about the military and how all these systems and units work during my time in, and it has been great."

EOD makes an 'impact' on Iraq

SPC. CHRISTOPHER STANIS
1AD PAO

Under the reign of Saddam Hussein, Baghdad's streets were littered with weapons and filled with ammunition caches.

Now, 18th Ordnance Company (Explosive Ordnance Disposal), out of Fort Bragg, N.C., is doing its part in restoring humanity to Iraq's capital.

EOD has uncovered more than 100 caches since arriving in April, said Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Elliot, a team chief with 18th Ordnance Co.

"We've found them in schools, playgrounds, parks ... the only place we haven't found one is in a mosque," he said. "We don't want these things used against U.S. forces or the Iraqi people, so we're trying to get as much UXO (unexploded ordnance) as possible."

Originally, the unit was split in to heavy and light teams, however, due to changing missions, it has become all light teams, Elliot said.

A light team consists of two EOD soldiers and a three-man engineer reconnaissance team (ERT) from 1st Armored Division to pull security.



Spc. Christopher Stanis

Staff Sgt. Matthew Chapman, 18th Ordnance Company (Explosive Ordnance Disposal), places C-4 on a rocket propelled grenade.

"(The ERT is) there to keep us safe," Elliot said.

If weapons or UXO can be salvaged, or moved to a clear site for demolition, EOD moves them.

If the device must be blown in place, they take the proper safety precautions and dispose of it.

"We've (blown UXO) as close as 10 meters to a school," Elliot said. "We put sand

bags and tires around the device. We did no damage to the school, or windows, or anything."

The reason for salvaging as much munitions as possible is for rebuilding the Iraqi army. And simply that they have no where to dispose of it, said Staff Sgt. Bryan Harrington, 18th EOD.

Elliot said they receive up to 20 new incidents daily – mainly from soldiers on patrol – and can clear anywhere from five to 15 depending on what they are and how far away they are.

Though they do find a lot of UXO, often times a report will leave the ordnance team empty-handed.

"We'll get (to a site) and a local will have already gotten it," Harrington said. "We don't know what he wants with it, but it's gone."

One thing EOD has been lucky enough not to find is booby-trapped caches.

"I don't think (Iraqi soldiers) had time to (set traps)," Harrington said. "They didn't anticipate the war moving this fast."

"I think they stayed until they knew the officers and senior officials were gone, and then they left," he said.

1AD DISCOM inaugurates range in Iraq

SPC. CHRISTOPHER STANIS
1AD PAO

CAMP DOGWOOD, Iraq – "Guts and guns – that's what made America free," said Command Sgt. Maj. Patrick Douglas, 1st Armored Division Support Command sergeant major. "So it

is appropriate that we are shooting guns on this 227th celebration of freedom."

It was lock, stock and smoking barrels for 1AD DISCOM soldiers July 4 with the grand opening of Camp Dogwood Range.

The range was built so soldiers could practice their marksmanship and to periodically test fire their weapons to ensure mission capability, said Col. Kenneth Dowd, DISCOM commander.

"We want to be sure (soldiers') weapons

will work before going on operations," Dowd said.

Though the main purpose of the range is for soldiers to stay qualified on individual weapons systems, opening day brought soldiers the opportunity to fire some weapons they do not normally use such as Russian RPK machine guns and AK-47 assault rifles.

"We want soldiers to be familiar with these weapons systems," Douglas said. Soldiers may have to use any weapon available on the battlefield, he said.

Douglas added another unusual weapon to the arsenal for the day's range – a 1930s style single-barreled Winchester shotgun along with shotgun shells custom made for Uday Saddam Hussein.

The three-hour range was open for any DISCOM soldier who wanted to show up, according to Douglas.

"The familiarization with the foreign weapons was great," said Spc. Benjamin Gray, Headquarters, Headquarters Company, DISCOM.

Gray said he wouldn't trade his M-16 for any of the foreign weapons he test fired at the range.

"The AK-47 is powerful, but it's only good for up close (fighting) because it doesn't have much control," Gray said. "The M-16 is deadly accurate."

Douglas said overall, the range went very well.

"We received a lot of positive feedback," he said. "This was the chance of a lifetime."



Spc. Christopher Stanis

A DISCOM soldier practices suppressive fire with an AK-47 assault rifle at the Camp Dogwood Range July 4.

GLOBAL NEWS

Iran's president offers to resign

ASSOCIATED PRESS

TEHRAN, Iran — President Mohammad Khatami said in a speech he would resign if people want him to, amid growing public dissatisfaction over his failure to meet promises of democratic reform, a newspaper reported.

It was the first time Khatami has publicly offered to resign. Iran's formerly popular president has come under increasing pressure in recent months to stand firm against unelected hard-line clerics and fulfill election promises of freedoms and democratic change in Iran.

"We are not masters of people but servants of this nation. If this nation says we don't want you, we

will go," Khatami was quoted as saying by the government-owned daily, *Iran*.

Khatami made the comments in a speech in Karaj, west of the capital Tehran, on Thursday. State-run television and radio censored the part that discussed a possible resignation.

Khatami's hopes for a compromise with hard-liners have been thwarted in recent weeks after the Guardian Council, which vets all parliamentary legislation, rejected two key reform bills presented by the president.

Those bills would have given Khatami greater power to stop constitutional violations by his hard-line opponents and bar the Guardian Council from arbitrarily



AP

We are not masters of people but servants of this nation. If this nation says we don't want you, we will go," Khatami said.

disqualifying candidates in legislative and presidential elections.

"We have to approve the qualifications of various candidates. If the people feel the pro-

gram they vote for meets obstacles, then they will not participate in the elections," *Iran* quoted Khatami as saying.

Khatami has repeated during recent years that he was powerless to stop hard-liners from violating the constitution and acting against voted reforms.

Among those violations, he has cited the closure of more than 90 pro-democracy publications in the past three years, the arrest of dozens of prominent intellectuals and writers and closed trials without jury.

Khatami has said he was responsible under the constitution to stop such violations, but the hard-line judiciary has ignored his warnings.

New post-war Iraq political body to meet

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BAGHDAD — The first post-Saddam Hussein governing body of Iraqis will hold its inaugural meeting Sunday, a watershed event on the nation's path to democracy, said the top U.S. administrator, promising the council will have "real political power."

Iraqi political leaders and the U.S.-led provisional government were in the final stages of setting up the political body, according to diplomats and negotiators, who expected the formal announcement of the council's makeup as soon as Sunday.

L. Paul Bremer, Iraq's American administrator, said the Governing Council of Iraq planned to meet for the first time Sunday and is part of the U.S. "plan to support the establishment of this government of, by and for Iraqis."

"It represents all the strands from Iraq's complicated social structure — Shiites, Sunnis, Arabs, Kurds, men and women, Christians and Turkmens," Bremer wrote in an opinion piece posted on the New York Times

web site Saturday.

"The council will immediately exercise real political power, appointing interim ministers and working with the coalition on policy and budgets," he added.

In another step forward, the U.S. military said it was turning control of a restive western city over to Iraqi police, the first time coalition forces have agreed to leave security in the hands of local law enforcement in a major population center.

Iraq's seven main groups that opposed Saddam's rule and other political leaders met Saturday in Baghdad and were hoping to hold a final organizational meeting in the capital the next day, said Adel Noory Mohammed, a leader of the Kurdistan Islamic Union.

He said final details, such as how to announce the council, were still being worked out.

Bremer had scheduled a news conference for Saturday at which he was expected to announce the council, but the meeting was canceled and no reason was given.

Many Iraqi political leaders want the coun-

cil to announce itself, to give the appearance of independence from the occupying powers. Others want to hold a joint news conference with top U.S. officials to highlight cooperation.

The council will consist of 25 to 30 prominent Iraqis and will have the power to name ministers and select an independent central bank governor.

It will be consulted by Iraq's American leaders on all important issues and is meant to be the forerunner of a larger constitutional assembly that will have about a year to draft a new constitution.

National elections to select a fully sovereign Iraqi government are expected to follow sometime in late 2004 or early 2005.

The Americans promised a constitutional assembly would be set up within weeks in the aftermath of Saddam's ouster in April. But they revised their plans several times.

The governing council had at first been envisioned as a consultative panel, but Bremer later acceded to Iraqi demands for real political power.

Indonesian police arrest terror suspects

ASSOCIATED PRESS

JAKARTA, Indonesia — Indonesian police arrested seven terror suspects — one of whom allegedly committed suicide while being questioned — and raided a bomb-making factory, seizing explosives more powerful than those in last year's Bali bombings, officials said Friday.

They also found three books containing schedules of church services in Indonesia, police said, raising fears of plans for attacks on the country's Christian minority.

The developments were a further sign that Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation, is cracking down on Islamic militancy after the Oct. 12 attacks on Bali nightclubs. Before, the government had been accused of failing to act on overseas warnings that terrorists were targeting the nation.

The seven suspects were believed to be members of Jemaah Islamiyah, the al-Qaeda-linked Southeast Asian terror group accused in the Bali blasts, which killed 202 people, mostly young foreign tourists.

Two suspects were arrested Tuesday in the capital, Jakarta. A third

— a 28-year-old named Ihwanudin — committed suicide after his arrest Friday in Jakarta, police chief Gen. Makbul Padmanegara said.

His death raised questions about his treatment at the hands of the police, whom rights activists have long accused of brutality and torture.

Asked by reporters the likelihood of a handcuffed suspect being able to kill himself, Padmanegara said: "I swear to God this is how it happened."

Four other militants were arrested Wednesday in the central Javanese town of Semarang. Their arrests led officers to a shoe shop, behind which they found a bomb-making factory containing a large arsenal of weapons and explosives, said Maj. Gen. Didi Widayadi.

Police found four boxes of TNT, 25 sacks of potassium chlorate — the chemical used in the Bali explosions — 1, 200 detonators and unspecified laboratory equipment.

Officers also seized a pistol, several shoulder-launched rockets, 22,000 rounds of ammunition and several boxes of militant Islamic literature and video recordings.

Widayadi said officers were investigating whether the suspects were linked to the Bali attacks.

Israel considering deporting Arafat

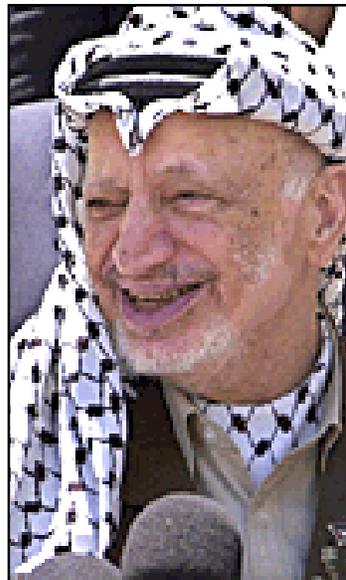
ASSOCIATED PRESS

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon urged European leaders to cut off ties with Yasser Arafat, and a key Sharon aide said Saturday that Israel would consider deporting the Palestinian leader if he continued trying to "scuttle the peace process."

A senior Palestinian official said it was Sharon who was endangering peace moves with his "incitement" against Arafat, who is waging something of a power struggle against his moderate, U.S.-backed prime minister, Mahmoud Abbas.

The recriminations come at a delicate time, with violence markedly down but the sides deadlocked over Israel's demand that militants be disarmed and the Palestinians' demand that Israel release thousands of prisoners.

Both Sharon and Abbas are expected to travel to Washington in coming weeks for meetings that could be crucial to the "road map" peace plan aimed at ending 33



AP

An aide of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon says Yasser Arafat, above, is disrupting the peace process.

months of Mideast fighting and creating a Palestinian state by 2005.

Sharon, who also travels to London on Sunday to meet British Prime Minister Tony Blair, was quoted by Britain's Daily

Telegraph newspaper as saying European officials were making "a major mistake" by maintaining links with Arafat.

On Saturday, a British parliamentary delegation visited Arafat at his headquarters in the West Bank town of Ramallah.

"Every act of this nature only postpones the progress in the process," Sharon was quoted as saying. "By that they are undermining Abu Mazen," referring to Abbas by his nickname.

Speaking to reporters after his meeting with the lawmakers, Arafat said Sharon's remarks did not surprise him.

"Is this the first time he says this? Did he forget what he said during the siege of Beirut?" Arafat said, referring to Israel's 1982 expulsion of Arafat and his loyalists from Lebanon.

Arafat spent over a decade in Tunis and returned to the Palestinian areas — after a quarter-century's exile — in 1994 under the interim peace accords that established autonomy in parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Nationalists in Israel have called on Sharon to expel Arafat, who is accused by the United States and Israel of fanning the flames of terrorism against Israelis. But Sharon has bowed to U.S. pressure and to the assessment of his security advisers that Arafat could cause more harm in exile.

Sharon aide Raanan Gissin said Israel told the United States "that we would have no other choice but to re-examine the status and condition of Mr. Arafat due to the fact he continues to attempt to scuttle the road map to peace and undermine Abu Mazen and his government in his efforts to implement the road map."

The issue of expelling Arafat would be subject to "renewed discussion" if Arafat did not mend his ways, he said.

Arafat has been stuck for about 18 months in his office building at his Ramallah compound, which was mostly destroyed by Israel's military. Israel's position is that he can travel abroad, but might not be allowed to return.

USS Reagan commissioned in Virginia

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NORFOLK, Va. — The ship's whistle blared and warplanes streaked overhead as the Navy commissioned its newest aircraft carrier, the USS Ronald Reagan, and former first lady Nancy Reagan told the crew to "bring her to life."

The carrier, nearly 1,100 feet long and standing 20 stories above the waterline, is the first to be named for a living president. The flight deck covers 4.5 acres.

The former president, now 92 and ailing with Alzheimer's disease, didn't attend the ceremony at Norfolk Naval Station.

"Today we send forth a great American ship bearing a great American name," Vice President Dick Cheney told the crowd.

"Something tells me any po-

tential adversary of the United States will take note when word arrives that the USS Ronald Reagan has been sighted off shore," Cheney said.

By the time the two-term president left office in 1989, the Navy had nearly 600 ships, about twice the ships it has today.

"He came to the presidency with a clear understanding of the tools our Navy would need to protect the American people," Cheney said.

Nancy Reagan christened the ship in 2001, breaking a bottle of American sparkling wine against its bow.

On Saturday, she walked to a podium on the deck of the nuclear-powered ship, waved to the cheering crowd on the pier below and said: "I only have one line, so 'Man the ship and bring



AP

Former first lady Nancy Reagan stood in for her husband, Ronald Reagan, who has Alzheimer's disease, her to life.

Sailors in dress white uniforms replied "Aye aye, ma'am," then raced aboard the ship decked out with red, white and blue bunting as a band played "Anchors Aweigh."

Two F-14 Tomcat and two F-

18 Hornet jets flew overhead in formation and the carrier's whistle blared.

The Reagan, expected to serve the Navy for more than 50 years, will be based in San Diego, be home to 6,000 sailors and carry more than 80 aircraft. With two nuclear reactors, the carrier can travel faster than 30 knots and operate for 20 years without refueling.

Construction took about five years. It is the ninth, and second-to-last, Nimitz-class carrier to be built at the Northrop Grumman shipyard in Newport News.

Ann Stinson drove from Grove City, Pa., to attend the ceremony because her niece's husband is a sailor assigned to the Reagan and their infant daughter is to be baptized aboard the ship Sunday.

NASA officials share Columbia blame

FLORIDA TODAY

WASHINGTON — Failures in management and safety programs at NASA deserve as much blame in connection with the Columbia disaster as the piece of foam that struck a wing after takeoff, investigators said Friday.

We've now decided that these things are equal," retired Navy Adm. Harold Gehman, chairman of the Columbia Accident Investigation Board, said at a news conference.

Gehman's comments mark the first time he has put NASA's systemic problems on equal footing with the foam strike as a contributing factor.

More than half the report will deal with NASA management failures as well as inadequacies in the agency's safety and quality assurance programs, investigators said at the news conference.

Gehman said congressional lawmakers or NASA's administrator would find it easy, based on the report, "to follow-up on some process that doesn't look right because they think maybe somebody fell down on the job."

His remarks followed release of a 189-page document that cites the foam debris strike to the shuttle's left wing as the direct



AP

Chairman Harold Gehman, far left, and other members of the Columbia Accident Investigation Board talk to media.

physical cause of the accident.

Compiled by the board and a separate NASA investigation team, the document said manufacturing flaws — such as cracks, divots and inadequate bonding — probably contributed to the fatal foam loss. The document will be an appendix to the investigation board's final report.

Stiff winds that buffeted the shuttle in flight, and a severe swiveling of the ship's twin

solid rocket motors to counteract those forces, also might have contributed, the document said.

It said the damage to the wing provided a pathway for hot gasses to penetrate the ship's thermal armor during Columbia's ill-fated reentry.

"All the evidence assures us the foam did it," Gehman said.

Investigators also said:

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration should treat its remaining three shuttles as test vehicles rather than operational spaceships. "We need to treat each launch as a first launch," added Air Force Brig. Gen. Duane Deal, another board member.

- NASA should equip its remaining shuttles with the type of flight data recorder carried aboard Columbia and recovered after the accident. NASA's oldest orbiter was the only one to be equipped with that type of recorder, and data recovered from it has been key to the accident investigation.

- NASA should be able to act on the board's recommendations and return its shuttle fleet to flight within the next six to nine months.



Sports Highlights



NASCAR

Winston Cup

1 Matt Kenseth	2551
2 Dale Earnhardt Jr.	2371
3 Jeff Gordon	2348
4 Bobby Labonte	2296
5 Michael Waltrip	2134
6 Jimmie Johnson	2079
7 Kurt Busch	2067
8 Kevin Harvick	2049
9 Rusty Wallace	2019
10 Sterling Marlin	1998

Busch Series

1 Scott Riggs	2440
2 David Green	2438
3 Ron Hornaday	2407
4 Todd Bodine	2397
5 Jason Keller	2356
6 Brian Vickers	2352
7 Bobby Hamilton Jr.	2249
8 Johnny Sauter	2210
9 Shane Hmiel	2125
10 Scott Wimmer	2123

MLB

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Wednesday

Cleveland 4, NY Yankees 0

Detroit 2, Chi White Sox 1
Boston 2, Toronto 1
Texas 8, Minnesota 6
Kansas City 4, Anaheim 0
Tampa Bay 9, Oakland 3
Seattle 6, Baltimore 5

Thursday

Oakland 6, Tampa Bay 3
NY Yankees 6, Cleveland 2
Detroit 4, Chi White Sox 2
Boston 8, Toronto 7
Texas 4, Minnesota 1
Anaheim 5, Kansas City 3
Baltimore 7, Seattle 2

Friday

Detroit 1 Chi White Sox 0
Oakland 5 Tampa Bay 2
Anaheim 7 Kansas City 1
Cleveland 3 NY Yankees 2
Boston 7 Toronto 1
Texas 9 Minnesota 4
Baltimore 4 Seattle 1

Saturday

Cleveland 12, Chi White Sox 7
Boston 5, Detroit 3
NY Yankees 8, Toronto 5

Kansas City 13, Texas 3
Anaheim 3, Minnesota 0
Oakland 2, Baltimore 0
Tampa Bay 3, Seattle 3

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Wednesday

Florida 4, Chi Cubs 3
San Francisco 8, St. Louis 3
Philadelphia 13, Montreal 6
Atlanta 5, NY Mets 3
Houston 6, Cincinnati 3
Pittsburgh 8, Milwaukee 7
Arizona 9, Colorado 3
San Diego 8, Los Angeles 5

Thursday

Atlanta 6, NY Mets 3
Chi Cubs 5, Florida 1
Philadelphia 2, Montreal 0
Los Angeles 6, St. Louis 5
Houston 12, Cincinnati 2
Milwaukee 2, Pittsburgh 1
Colorado 11, San Francisco 7
Arizona 8 San Diego 3

Friday

Pittsburgh 5 Milwaukee 4

Atlanta 13 Chi Cubs 3
San Diego 14 Arizona 2
Philadelphia 7 NY Mets 9
Houston 11 Cincinnati 2
Los Angeles 9 Seattle 4
Colorado 11 San Francisco 3

Saturday

Atlanta 9, Chi Cubs 5
Florida 5, Montreal 4
Philadelphia 10, NY Mets 3
Houston 4, Pittsburgh 2
Cincinnati 6, Milwaukee 1
St. Louis 4, San Diego 2
San Francisco 10 Arizona 7

PGA

Greater Milwaukee Open

Jay Don Blake	-8
Jerry Kelly	-7
Brett Quigley	-7
Patrick Sheehan	-7
Loren Roberts	-5
Steve Allen	-5
Shigeki Mauyama	-5
Joel Edwards	-5
Heath Slocum	-5
Tommy Armour III	-5

U.S. defends Gold Cup

The United States took another positive step after last month's failure in France, beating El Salvador 2-0 on Saturday night as it began defense of its CONCACAF Gold Cup championship. Eddie Lewis and Brian McBride scored for the United States, which managed just one goal in the Confederations Cup in June when it went 0-2-1.

The United States beat El Salvador twice last year, 4-0 in the 2002 Gold Cup quarterfinal on Jan. 27 at Pasadena, and 2-0 on Nov. 17 at Washington.

Big East split

Xavier will join the Big East for basketball and Cincinnati will join a newly created league for football and basketball if a proposed breakup of the Big East takes place for the 2005-06 season.

The *New York Post* reported the Big East football members had decided to break away from five non-football schools remaining in the Big East and start a conference by adding Louisville and Cincinnati, along with Notre Dame as a basketball-only member.

New quarrel for King, Tyson

A bodyguard for boxing promoter Don King has sued Mike Tyson, alleging the former heavyweight champ punched him twice during a scuffle on I-95 and broke a bone in his face.

Isadore "Izzy" Bolton, 44, of Boynton Beach, sued Tyson for compensatory damages of more than \$15,000 and expects to seek punitive damages as the suit progresses, said Bob Montgomery, an attorney for Bolton. The lawsuit was filed Friday in Palm Beach County Circuit Court.

Giles, Prior may miss All-Stars

Braves second baseman Marcus Giles was out of the lineup Saturday because of a concussion from colliding with Cubs pitcher Mark Prior, and both might not play in the All-Star Game.

They slammed into each other during Atlanta's 9-5 victory Friday, and Giles still had a headache Saturday.

"If I'm not well enough to play in a regular season game, where it matters, the All-Star Game is just a bonus," Giles said.

Stewart wins first pole

Tony Stewart pulled off a surprise and got his first pole this season in qualifying Friday at Chicagoland Speedway. The Winston Cup champion, struggling through a difficult season and not known as a strong qualifier, turned a track-record lap of 184.786 mph on the 1.5 mile oval get the seventh pole of his career and first since last August in Indianapolis.

"That was a good, solid run," said Stewart, 11th in the standings. "If I had to go out there and do it again, I'd feel comfortable doing it."

Schilling falls in return

Barry Bonds and rookie Jerome Williams helped make Curt Schilling's comeback a miserable one. Bonds tied a major league record with his 12th consecutive 30-homer season and Williams allowed two hits through six innings Saturday in the San Francisco Giants' 8-1 victory over the Arizona Diamondbacks.

"I'm disappointed. I didn't pitch well," Schilling said. "I felt fine. Everything felt good. I just didn't get the job done today."