

Serving the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), the Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield communities

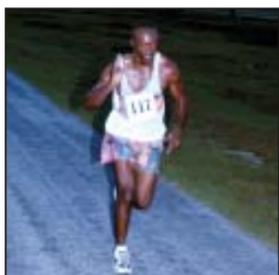
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3ID colors return

CG to pass reins in Sept.

Sgt. Raymond Piper

Editor



Michael Lemke

Maj. Gen. Buford C. Blount III, 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) commander, passes the 3rd Inf. Div. colors to the Division Command Sgt. Maj. Julian Kellman, who is responsible for maintaining and safeguarding the colors, who presented them to the color guard to secure during a ceremony at Hunter Army Airfield Friday.

"The 3rd Infantry Division performed magnificently ... throughout the war and it's great to bring the majority of the division home," said Maj. Gen. Buford C. Blount III during a press conference at Hunter Army Airfield, Ga.

The 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) commander returned with 197 soldiers Friday to Fort Stewart.

The last of the division's equipment is being loaded onto ships and about 1,500 soldiers remain in Kuwait and should return to the United States within the next four or five days, Blount said.

The 3rd Inf. Div. Colors were returned to the installation to symbolize the return of the division to Fort Stewart

Blount passed the 3rd Inf. Div. colors to the Division Command Sgt. Maj. Julian Kellman, who is responsible for maintaining and safeguarding the colors, who presented them to the color guard to secure during a ceremony at Hunter Army Airfield.

"I'm real proud of the great work the soldiers have done and proud of the great support of the spouses and the community," Blount said. "I know the soldiers are looking forward to getting back to their families."

Blount said he did not think that a deployment in the next 12 months would be in the future for the division. The focus will be on training and rotations for each of the division's four brigades to the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif., in 2004, Blount said.

"First, we have to get our equipment out of storage and get it back into shape, and get back to training and focus on the NTC rotations for each brigade," Blount said.

Members of the division have been redeploying for the past month.

Prior to the redeployment the soldiers conducted peace-keeping actions in Al Fallujah, Iraq, after an earlier redeployment had been changed because the fighting turned from open warfare to guerilla warfare and terrorist attacks, according to Blount.

"We were helping to stabilize the situation in Iraq. Fallujah is a great example," Blount said. "The city was in great turmoil (when we began operations there). When we left, it was fairly stable."

He added that the majority of the people in Iraq support the coalition and are trying to take control of their destinies.

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System speeds 3ID redeployment

11,000 soldiers process through validation center

Staff Sgt. Nate Orme

Army News Service

CAMP NEW YORK, Kuwait — "It was really quick compared to the (Soldier Readiness Process) in the states," Pfc. Anthony Tudela said. "It's a step closer to going home."

Tudela, a health care specialist with the 2nd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment was referring to a new process for redeploying soldiers out of theater, known as the Deployment Cycle Support Contingency Plan.

"Previously, units would return home before attempting to reconstitute," said Maj. Clois Hill, director of replacement operations for the 3rd Personnel Command. "Basically, this was done at home station. This has never been done in theater before," Hill said.

"Since May, 11,000 soldiers, most from the

3rd Inf. Div. as well as a couple of National Guard units, have processed through the validation center at Camp New York," said Spc. Kuchineal Campbell, a personnel services specialist with the 546th Personnel Services Battalion, Bravo Detachment, Fort Hood, Texas. The 546th is an active-duty unit that works closely with the 3rd PERSCOM. Kuchineal works at the Quality Assurance table, where he makes sure each soldier's paperwork is completed before he signs off on it.

"The 444th finished processing the 3rd Inf. Div. Wednesday," said Sgt. Lamar Howard, the assistant team leader for the validation process. The 444th PSB also has validation operations at camps Udari, Virginia and Arifjan, validating many other units for redeployment in addition to

See SYSTEM, Page 5A



Staff Sgt. Nate Orme

The 444th PSB validation team prepares redeploying soldiers of the 3rd Inf. Div. on Camp New York.



Sgt. Kyle J. Cosner

A D Co., 160th SOAR soldier watches the Blackhawk flying in formation with them.

D Co., 160th SOAR moves to Hunter

Sgt. Kyle J. Cosner

U.S. Army Special Operations Command

NAVAL STATION ROOSEVELT ROADS, Puerto Rico — Under the eerie green glow of night-vision goggles, three special operations aircrews took to the skies here early Tuesday morning, leaving behind a tropical paradise and a legacy of successful operations in Central and South America.

As the three MH-60 Blackhawk helicopters left the airfield here, D Company, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne) left behind its home of five years for its new residence at Hunter Army Airfield, Ga.

I think that there are going to be many benefits gained by the unit

and the special operations community by us being here (in Georgia)," said Maj. James Myrick, Company D's commander and a Blackhawk pilot himself.

On a flight route that zigzagged through the infamous Bermuda Triangle, the three helicopters made their way through the Caribbean region, making stops in the British West Indies, the Bahamas and Florida en route to their final destination.

While forward-deployed in the Caribbean region, the company served as the tip of the regiment's spear for operations in the U.S. Southern Command's area of responsibility.

But with the future of the Roosevelt Roads installation now in question, Myrick said the deci-

sion to relocate was made proactively to ensure the unit's mission readiness.

"All levels of the chain of command facilitated this, from battalion to regiment and up through (the U.S. Army Special Operations Command), and really made it go much smoother than I thought it would," he said.

Prior to its arrival in Puerto Rico, the unit had been located in Panama but was forced to relocate in 1998 under similar circumstances.

Blue skies, blue waters and the exotic locales along the flight route made for what Myrick described as one of the more pleasurable missions he's undertaken in recent

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Weather Forecast

FRI		
High		Low
89°		71°
SAT		
High		Low
89°		71°
SUN		
High		Low
88°		70°

USNS Bob Hope helps 3ID return home



Photos by Staff Sgt. Brian Sipp

Soldiers, from 1st and 2nd Bn. of the 3rd Avn. Regt., tighten a blade of a helicopter in preparation for their flight back to Hunter Army Airfield. The helicopter was unloaded off of the USNS Bob Hope Aug. 21.

First of Division's equipment returns from Iraq



(Above) A vehicle moves off of the USNS Bob Hope. (Right) Soldiers maneuver an Apache helicopter blade into position so it can be attached to the aircraft. (Below) An Apache awaits preparation to be moved back to Hunter.



Staff Sgt. Brian Sipp

Hunter Public Affairs Office

Beginning the final chapter in the 3rd Infantry Division's (Mechanized) deployment during Operation Iraqi Freedom, the United States Navy Ship Bob Hope docked at Ocean Terminal Berth 13 at the Georgia Ports Authority in Savannah on Aug. 21; it's decks and hold full of U.S. Army vehicles and equipment scheduled for maintenance and reconstitution.

The USNS Bob Hope is one of 19 Large, Medium-Speed, Roll-on/Roll-off ships, or LMSRs, which are operated by the Military Sealift Command to enhance the nation's sealift capability.

On hand to welcome the ship was Brig. Gen. Jose D. Riojas, assistant division commander (support), 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), U.S. Representative Max Burns, state senators Eric Johnson and Pricilla Thomas, and Doug Marchand, executive director of the Georgia Ports Authority.

"This was a symbolic morning," said Burns. "To watch the unloading of war-torn equipment operated by our men and women who served during Operation Iraqi Freedom come off any ship is meaningful, but because this equipment rolled off the USNS Bob Hope, the experience has been magnified. Bob Hope was an American who showed us all how to encourage our troops when they needed it the most. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to be present today as the USNS Bob Hope arrived

home for the first time since the passing of its namesake," Burns said.

The responsibility for unloading the 1,400 pieces of equipment was shouldered by the 841st Transportation Battalion based out of Charleston, S.C., in conjunction with Georgia port employees. This included 36 helicopters, 40 tracked vehicles, 500 wheeled vehicles and approximately 800 miscellaneous items such as trailers and containers. "It's a great honor to be able to do this for the 3rd ID," said Lt. Col. Paul Ernst, commander of the 841st.

Acknowledging the tremendous symbolism of the event, the first priority for Riojas, however, was focusing on the business side of the reconstitution process. "It is vital that we have our equipment back up to standards as we begin training again," he said.

Soldiers from 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 3rd Aviation Regiment were hard at work cleaning equipment and mounting blades on their helicopters in preparation for their flight back to Hunter Army Airfield.

All of the vehicles that are damaged will be repaired and everything will be subject to intensive inspections at motor pools and hangars throughout Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield, said Riojas.

The USNS Bob Hope was the first of seven cargo ships scheduled to return to the Georgia port over the next month.

Editor's Note: *Jailene Erickson contributed to this article.*



Photos by Tammy McCurry

(Right) A Humvee sits on the USNS Bob hope waiting to be transported off to be inspected and travel to Stewart or Hunter.

(Above) The U.S. Coast Guard provides home land security for the port in Savannah, Ga.

1,500 3ID troops return this week

Staff Report

There is no shortage of emotion at Cottrell Field's redeployment ceremonies.

This week, more than 1,500 soldiers returned home on 11 flights.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized); 2nd and 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment; 1st Brigade, 2nd Bde.; 3rd Bn., 7th Cavalry; 703rd Main Support Bn.; 1st Bn., 3rd Air Defense Artillery and 3rd Bn., 69th Armor are the returning units.

"It seems like an eternity. I can't believe he's finally coming home," said Diana Lewis, a Family Readiness Group leader.

She said it was tough waiting for her husband, Sgt. 1st Class John Lewis. Because of her position, she has welcomed home so many other soldiers from his unit.

Pfc. Dorsol Plants, A Troop, 3/7th Cav., has been deployed since Jan 22.

"It feels great to be home. Part of me feels like it's a dream, and I'll wake up in my cot in Kuwait," he said.

Like many soldiers, Plants said he would be taking home a lot of memories from Iraq.

"My most memorable event was the night there was a major sand storm and everything was lit up blood red. There was an Iraqi caravan moving in the same area, so I was worried about running into them, but everything worked out in the end," he recalled.

He said he missed taking a shower and not worrying about having enough hot water. Plant's parents and brother were there to welcome him home.

Plant added, "I'm a bit nervous, but excited to be seeing them again. A lot can change in six months."



Sgt. Raymond Piper

(Above) Families get excited as their loved ones march onto Cottrell Field Sunday during a welcome-home ceremony.

Spc. Jimmy D. Lane

(Left) An anxious and excited wife smothers her husband with kisses upon his return from Iraq.

MATCH POINT

Always keep a shovel, rake and water nearby when burning debris.

REMEMBER, ONLY YOU CAN PREVENT FOREST FIRES.

 A Public Service of the U.S. Forest Service and Your State Forester. 

VOICES AND VIEWPOINTS

Women in military ... Struggle for equality

Jack L. Gillund

Army News Service

WASHINGTON — I was four years old when my father died. To this day, I have few, if any, memories of him. What I do remember about my childhood is my mother's never-ending determination. She made sure my three brothers and I never needed anything.

Raised in a small, mid-western town, I grew-up in the 1960s and '70s. Surrounded by farmland, it was 50 miles to the nearest small city. Daily my mother was out of bed at 4:30 a.m.. She packed our school lunches, made our breakfast and ensured we had clean clothes before she got in a car and traveled an hour to that city to work on a factory assembly line. When she got back home, she cooked our dinner and made sure our schoolwork was done correctly. Her weekends were spent baking, taking care of our garden, doing laundry, cleaning the house, shopping, and going to church.

Because of the strength and determination my mother showed, I grew up understanding that women can do anything men can. Historically, this wasn't a common feeling. Throughout time, women have been fighting to obtain the respect and equal rights they deserve. Even since the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, American women have had to fight for their voice to be heard.

Women have always been a part of America's military force. During the Civil War they put aside the suffrage movement to stand beside their men.

Women volunteered as nurses and ran hospitals. One, Sally Tompkins, even used her own funds to equip a hospital for Confederate soldiers.

Since then, the U.S. Army has seen an ever-increasing number of women soldiers. Their role as nurse has continued, but they have added almost every other military occupational specialty.

Despite their proven duty to the country, it wasn't until 1972 that women gained eligibility to participate in Reserve Officers' Training Corps programs — 52 years after they gained the right to vote. They were not allowed admittance into the United States Army Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. until 1976. Since the inactivation of the Women's Army Corps in 1978, female soldiers have seen action in virtually every military operation America has undertaken.

Throughout their struggles for equality, women have proven they are as capable as men in every way — from the small Minnesota town I grew up in to America's fighting, peacekeeping and humanitarian forces in counties throughout the world. As Sojourner Truth said in her "Ain't I a Woman?" speech given in 1851 in Akron, Ohio: "If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back and get it right-side up again."

Tuesday is Women's Equality Day and the anniversary of the signing of the 19th Amendment. Hopefully, everyone throughout the world will take the time to thank the women they

know for the strength they contribute to humanity. One day isn't enough, but it's a start.



Staff Sgt. John E. Lasky

Military Police, Spc. Colleen J. Neubest, prepares to download at Tuzla Air Base, Bosnia, for a tour of three to six months. Fedor, a four year-old Dutch Shepherd drug dog, will use his specialty to locate narcotics.

Not a hero's stance; sexual impropriety

Spc. Chuck Wagner

Army News Service

WASHINGTON — I recently heard a platoon sergeant pass along a nugget of Army experience to his troops. He started with a stern admonishment on a point of uniform wear, emphasizing the punishment for disobedience. He then addressed "the issue of relationships." He curtly reminded the troops to "keep your business private."

The issue, we were left to presume, was adultery. Or, maybe it was fraternization. We'd seen evidence or heard rumors of both. His advice was don't get caught. Why hadn't he clarified the regulation and the punishment, as he did with uniform wear?

The sergeant unwittingly served as the mouthpiece for years of implied behavior. He shared the ageless idea that soldiering — an inherently difficult and dangerous way of life — deserves certain excesses. These excesses traditionally involve drinking and the pursuit of sex.

One soldier spoke out from formation, "tell them not to do what they are doing."

As many of us had, this soldier realized adultery is too common for comfort on deployments. Already on the flight into Honduras, soldiers were pulling off their wedding bands. TDY means "temporarily divorced for a year," someone joked.

In some ways, public expectations hoist a freewheeling image on soldiers.

Hollywood makes millions on the private life of an Army grunt. From "Dirty Dozen" to "Full Metal Jacket," movies depict military history as a sequence of battles spiced with rowdy parties and sexual escapades.

But it's not just silver screen magic. Soldiers sometimes live up to a reputation they've earned on deployments across the globe.

A recent editorial in a major Honduran newspaper blamed U.S. soldiers for promoting prostitution, for corrupting minors, even for introducing the "Vietnam flower," a sexually transmitted disease. The writer sensationalized to make political points, yet his prose bowed to an image of the American soldier as a drinker and a carouser.

When asked what to make of American soldiers rolling into Baghdad, an Iraqi bystander told news reporters he's anticipating "democracy, whiskey, sexy."

Opportunities for sexual impropriety increase when the host nation is poor.

Soldiers commonly use the term "aranas," or spider women, for the host of Hondurans seeking a marriage certificate to pluck them out of poverty.

These women attend base open-house events as a chance

to meet soldiers, and are notoriously easy targets for intimacy-starved soldiers. The opportunities are great, and the results predictable.

The base legal office too often sees Honduran single mothers seeking to contact soldiers who've returned home. Usually there is no paperwork showing marriage, parenthood or dependency, so their requests go nowhere. The baby becomes one more mouth to feed in a country chronically short on food.

In some cases, the soldier has a wife and children in the U.S., and doesn't want to be found.

The Army has detailed regulations covering just about every aspect of sexual behavior. But shelves of regulations can't stop adultery or the irresponsible fathering of children.

As the U.S. Supreme Court has discovered time and again, privacy issues are a legal minefield, and proving misconduct in the bedroom is an enforcement nightmare. In an all-volunteer force, the risks to morale and

recruitment are too high; they simply won't allow the Army to kick up a witch-hunt for sexual misconduct.

The Army will make bedroom decisions its business, but only when formal complaints force officials to act, which isn't often. Damage to an accused soldier's career can be great, and few people are willing to press ahead with complaints that would amount to "nobody's business" in the civilian world.

The "don't ask, don't tell" policy has been with the Army for generations, because it has been the military's unwritten guidance for almost all bedroom activities. The policy is a giant shrug — admission the military can't standardize sexual behavior, the most personal choice in human nature. Not even the most disciplined Army can stop love, whether it's the here-ever-after or just-for-tonight kind.

The Army has tried to alleviate sex's clinical issues even if it can't address the moral consequences. At installations across the world, pre-weekend safety briefings invariably encourage safe sex. Making it safe doesn't necessarily make it right, however.

Then again, why should the Army care about adultery or illegitimate children?

There are realms in which character and responsibility are still critical. When it comes to marriage, child rearing and defending the nation, a person's success boils down to commitment.

Good leadership needs to point out to young troops that "don't ask, don't tell" doesn't mean "don't care." The wives, husbands or children at home who are being compromised by a soldier's sexual adventurism are the same folks our Army devotes itself to defending. How can soldiers pretend they'd die for a cause for which they can't even keep their trousers buttoned?

"Good leadership needs to point out to young troops that 'don't ask, don't tell' doesn't mean 'don't care.'"

Marne Voice

THE FRONTLINE

Readers respond to the question:

What do the division colors and the colors homecoming represent?

"To me it's a rally point for our division and the return of our division from an accomplished mission."

**Sgt. Barry L. Massey
3/69 Armor**

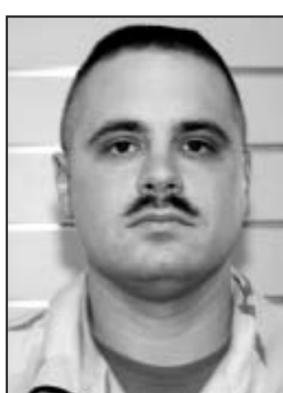


"This division has a long history of conflict. The story of honor strength and service has returned."

**Staff Sgt. Corey Scott
Harvey
3/7 Cav.**

"3rd ID has more history than any division in the Army. It is a point of pride with me and my soldiers. This is just another chapter in division history."

**1st Lt. Bryan D. Jones
2/7 Inf.**



"I am proud of being a part of a very historical division. Now that the colors are back we must strive to maintain standards."

**Sgt. Tee A. Achee
26th FSB**

"I am proud to be part of this unit. There was a lot of sacrifice; there are still soldiers dying everyday."

**Staff Sgt. Debra A. Jefferson
269th Trans.**



"The 3rd ID has a lot of proud history, and I am proud of the patch, but not everyone is back."

**Staff Sgt. Lainnie Daley
703rd MSB**

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Write a letter to
the editor!**

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Bush vows 'No retreat' in global campaign

Gerry J. Gilmore

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — President George Bush vowed Tuesday to continue the almost two-year-old war against global terrorism.

America and its allies have achieved many victories against global terrorists since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States, Bush declared at the American Legion's national convention in St. Louis.

The president noted that al Qaeda no longer is using Afghanistan as a haven, and that Saddam Hussein's brutal and terrorist-friendly regime was kicked out of power in Iraq.

Terrorists, Bush pointed out, hate societies that promote tolerance and freedom, because "freedom is a threat to their way of life."

Saddam and his minions, Bush said, will not return to power in Iraq. Yet, he acknowledged Iraq remains a dangerous place as Saddam remnants, anti-Western foreign fighters, and criminals continue to attack U.S. and coalition forces and perform sabotage "to undermine the advance of freedom."

Al Qaeda and other worldwide terror networks "recognize that the defeat of Saddam Hussein's regime is a defeat for them," Bush said.

The establishment of a democratic Iraq in the heart of the Middle East, the president continued, represents "a further defeat for their ideology of terror."

"The more progress we make in Iraq, the more desperate the terrorists will become," Bush said.

Terrorists in Iraq have murdered innocent people, the presi-

dent pointed out, including women, children and humanitarian aid workers, some of whom were killed in the Aug. 19 bombing of the U.N. headquarters building in Baghdad.

By committing such atrocities, Bush said, it's evident that global terrorists have "declared war on the entire civilized world."

However, the president stressed that terrorists will not intimidate the civilized world into backing off, noting that to acquiesce would only invite additional and bolder attacks.

As the campaign against global terrorism continues, Bush noted Iraqi citizens are providing more intelligence information to U.S. and coalition troops, leading to the capture of Saddam loyalists and the seizing of weapons caches.

"There will be no retreat," Bush vowed, noting U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq are continuing "the offensive against Saddam loyalists, the foreign fighters and the criminal gangs."

Recent U.S.-coalition military operations in Iraq have included more than 200 raids, Bush he noted, while netting more than 1,100 detainees.

Of the key Saddam Hussein operatives on the "55" most-wanted card list, Bush noted 42 have been captured or killed — including the recent deaths of the deposed dictator's two sons.

The search continues for other former leaders of the Hussein regime, Bush said, declaring, "We will find them."

Since May 1, when major combat operations in Iraq were declared ended, "we have seized more than 8,200 tons of ammunition, thousands of AK-47s, rocket-propelled grenades and other weapons," the president said.

The Iraqi people, Bush noted, can rest assured "that the regime of Saddam Hussein is gone and it is never coming back."

SOAR

from page 1A



Sgt. Kyle J. Cosner

A Blackhawk helicopter carrying members of D Co., 160th SOAR, flies over the shores of Puerto Rico. D Co. 160th SOAR has been relocated to Hunter Army Airfield from Puerto Rico.

memory.

"I think it went extremely well and extremely smooth," he said of the flight.

While in Puerto Rico, Myrick said most of the unit's missions involved providing aviation assets to both ground and maritime special operations forces, as well as bilateral support to host countries throughout the region.

Those missions, Myrick said, will not change, despite their new home on American soil.

Administratively, the company had always been attached to 3rd Bn., 160th SOAR (Abn.), but was and will remain under the operational control of Special Operations Command — South, the special operations component of the U.S. Southern Command.

SYSTEM

from page 1A

the 3rd Inf. Div.

"After the 3ID is out, everyone will be redeployed directly from Iraq by 5th Corps. We've already successfully redeployed the 2nd and 3rd Brigade Combat Teams of the 3rd ID. We're now redeploying their 1st BCT," said Howard, a homicide detective with the Baltimore, Md., police department who had been transferred to the 444th by the Army Reserve for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Maj. Charlie Foreman, also of 3rd Personnel Command, is the officer-in-charge of the validation operation here.

He explained what made the plan worked — "We validate units like the 3rd Inf. Div. Redeploying soldiers come in and receive a series of briefings — first a general information briefing on the process, then a briefing each for medical, legal, chaplaincy and finance."

"Next, soldiers go to 'manifest,' where they swipe their ID cards (through a computer reader) to ensure they are in the theater database," said Forman. Soldiers without identification cards or tags can have them made at another station. "Soldiers have to have both items in order to get on the plane home," said Foreman.

Next comes a stop at the 444th Personnel Services Battalion where soldiers get validated and complete the administra-

tive paperwork they will need when they get home.

"The validation team works directly with redeploying units' administration office," Foreman explained.

"They make sure all the information each soldier needs is correct before the unit leaves the validation site," Foreman said.

"Redeployment is normally about a four-day process. Upon arrival into camp, units first must secure billeting and register with the dining facility. The validation operation is the next step in the process," Foreman said.

After validation, units begin the laborious process of cleaning personal equipment, drawing and turning in of supplies such as ammunition, cleaning vehicles at the wash rack, and tending to internal unit business matters.

"The validation group of 12 soldiers from the battalion is split into two teams. Each does the same task on different shifts," said Foreman. "We validate an average of 500-800 soldiers a day," he said.

"It was pretty smooth," said Staff Sgt. Lascelles Cuff, a chemical operations specialist with the 3rd Inf. Div., of the process.

"We filled out our medical forms in Iraq, so all they had to do was initial each section on the checklist and get a final signature at the validation station."



Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.

Lt. Col. Michael C. Presnell, 10th Eng. Bn. commander, passes out one of more than 350 awards to his soldiers for achievements in OIF during a ceremony at Club Stewart Friday.

10th Engineers earn medals

Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.

Staff Writer

An awards ceremony was held Friday at Club Stewart at 9 a.m. for the soldiers of the 10th Engineers Battalion who earned awards of valor and commendation.

Operation Iraqi Freedom was one of the most successful missions in the history of the unit," said Lt. Col. Michael C. Presnell, battalion commander from the 10th Eng. "Every soldier here today has had a large part in the success of the unit accomplishing their mission."

A story in pictures about the unit's time in Iraq was shown to the crowd before the awards were passed out.

The slide show portrayed the battalion's drive to Baghdad and some of the work that was accomplished along the way.

"Many years from now when you have grandchildren sitting on your lap, only then will you realize the impact you had on the war," said Presnell.

Close to 400 awards were given, including five Bronze Stars with valor, 10 Purple Hearts for being wounded in battle and more than 300 Army Commendation medals.

The youngest soldier to be awarded the bronze star was Sgt. Dustin R. Lucas, 23, a team leader from the 10th Eng. Lucas also received a purple heart.

"We were rolling through a dust storm and we were

ambushed. I wasn't sure we were being fired upon at first, I just heard whizzing noises going by my head. When I realized we were being shot at, a bullet had ricocheted off the side of our vehicle and hit me in the arm. At first, I thought I had just banged my elbow, then I felt blood going down my arm. I ignored it and just kept firing," said Lucas.

"When Sgt. Lucas was shot it didn't even phase him," said 1st Lt. Eric Canady, a platoon leader for delta company from the 10th Eng. "He was shot in the arm, but he kept rocking on the 50 cal., laying down suppression fire. It wasn't until we got everything under control that Lucas came forward and asked for medical attention."

"Lt. Canady nominated me for the Bronze Star," said Lucas. "He was the best platoon leader I ever had. He always looked after us. Some people were afraid to go on any dangerous missions, but Lt. Canady kept volunteering to go back through Baghdad. If he was scared, he sure didn't show it."

"Sgt. Lucas was nominated because he always kept cool," Canady said. "When we got into any heavy situation, Sgt. Lucas always got on the com and started making jokes to keep up morale. He got the Bronze Star because he earned it."

"Remember your training," Lucas said. "Once you are in combat it all comes back to you. That's the best advice I can give a soldier to come out of any dangerous situation safely."

MPs recognized for valor, achievements in OIF

Sgt. Sam Hoffman

Staff Writer

During the Civil War, the Army began awarding medals rather than a percentage of spoils; they have recognized soldiers for outstanding performance since then.

The 3rd Military Police Company recognized more than 130 of its soldiers at a ceremony Friday at Marne Garden.

Twenty-five Bronze Star Medals — including three awarded for valor — were presented along with 107 Army Commendation Medals — two for valor — five Army Achievement Medals, five Certificates of Achievement and, for cooperation combating terrorism, six FBI certificates. Three Purple Hearts were awarded, and none of them were from fatalities.

In fact, no deaths were sustained by the 3rd MP Co. during

Operation Iraqi Freedom, said Lt. Col. John M. Huey, 3rd MP Battalion commander.

"I was very proud that we were able to go through combat operations for so long, without anyone (getting killed)," he said.

Platoons in the company gave direct support to the Brigade Combat Teams.

Soldiers provided logistical security, convoy security, convoy escort and prisoner of war handling.

"As the brigades captured the bad guys, we took them over and detained them," Huey said.

Prisoner of war operations took the 3rd MP Co. all the way to Baghdad and Fallujah, where with the help of 2nd Brigade, they were able to restore law and order by establishing a new police department, he said. They provided training and new uniforms to

recruits.

"These guys were no different from the brigades. They were on numerous occasions engaging the enemy," Huey said.

He attributed his unit's success to an "outstanding job, lots of valor and heroism."

According to Capt. Kevin Pugh, 3rd MP Bn., the most forwardly deployed MP Co. in the history of the Army helped the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) by detaining, processing and transporting more than 2,000 enemy prisoners of war.

There was also a change of responsibility at the ceremony when 1st Sgt. John Jones turned the company over to newly appointed 1st Sgt. Eddie Magwood.

"1st Sgt. Magwood, how does it feel to be the luckiest man in the MP Corps?"



Courtesy photo

Lt. Col. John Huey, 3rd MP Bn. commander, awards out-going 1st Sgt. John Jones the Meritorious Service Medal and Bronze Star Medal in a ceremony held Friday at Marne Garden.

315th Tactical PSYOP Co. fights rumors

Spc. Christopher Stanis

1st Armored Division PAO

BAGHDAD, Iraq — In a city that has a reputation of running widespread on rumors, the opinions of Baghdad's residents might be easily swayed because of misinformation.

The tactical psychological operations teams throughout the city combat false rumors daily to subdue fears and paranoia citizens may have about the coalition.

"If there is somebody spreading rumors against (the United States), we're not going to go out and call them liars; that would just lend them more credibility," said Cpl. Philip Chun, Tactical PSYOP Detachment 1230. "Instead, we just put out the truth."

The TPTs from the 315th Tactical PSYOP Company spend a lot of time in the community disseminating information through Baghdad Now, the PSYOP-created newspaper designed to provide citizens with positive news on the coalition's work in Iraq.

They also distribute posters and handbills and broadcast loudspeak-

er messages with important information such as staying away from unexploded ordnance or joining the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps.

While out in the city, these PSYOP teams also listen to the concerns of residents.

"We're not (intelligence) gatherers," said Capt. Aaron Davis, TPD 1230 officer in charge, "but if somebody comes up to us with a problem, we won't turn them away."

Davis said they collect as much information as they can about a situation - whether it is a robbery, a need for medical care, or information leading to the arrest of Fedayeen members - and pass it on to the proper authorities.

The willingness of Iraqis to approach and work with coalition forces to provide information reflects how tension has diminished since the 315th TPC's arrival in Baghdad May 1.

"In a lot of ways you can tell Iraqis are accepting us more because (PSYOP) posters used to stay up an average of three days then they would get torn down," Chun said. "Now we still see

posters still hanging after three weeks."

Davis said, considering the population of Baghdad, only a small number of people hate the coalition enough to bring harm to the forces.

"There are five million people in Baghdad. I believe 99.96 percent of them are happy with us here," Davis said. "Eventually that small percentage (who are against the coalition) will be drowned by people saying, 'Shut up. Life is better.'"

Davis also attributed much of the remaining resistance to Iraqis on the lower end of the social ladder.

"The middle-class people and the educated people (in Baghdad) realize that (the rebuilding process) is going to take time," he continued. "It is the poor guy who had nothing before the war, has nothing now and looks into the future and sees nothing, who is taking advantage that we're not as aggressive as Saddam."

Davis said over time Iraq could become a great example for peace in the Middle East. "Iraq could be a shining light among Islamic countries," he said. "In the future it could be a good friend of the United States."



Spc. Christopher Stanis

A soldier with the 315th PSYOP Co. hands out copies of Baghdad Now, the PSYOP-created newspaper, to help discourage rumors.

Linguist helps bridge communication gap



Cpl. Joe Niesen

Ahmed Jamal, an Iraqi linguist serves as a translator for a soldier and a civilian at Rifles Base.

Cpl. Joe Niesen

350th MPAD

AR RAMADI, Iraq — "We are proud to be here, proud to serve. We are a part of history here," said Tony Helou, a category two linguist, currently serving with the PSYOP section at the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment's Rifles Base.

Services rendered by the linguists assigned to the various military units in Iraq are invaluable to the soldiers and overall success of the mission.

Linguists who work for the Army fall into one of three categories. Category one linguists are native citizens from the region that have offered to work with Coalition Forces. Category two, are typically American citizens with a background in the area of interest. In Iraq, they tend to be of Arabic or African descent and are fluent in Arabic languages as well as English. Category two linguists

are often recruited through Department of Defense contracting companies that specialize in multilingual resources. Category three linguists often share the same background as a category two, but have skills and experience that make them able to perform duties that the others cannot.

Most of the linguists are happy to aid the soldiers they are assigned to. "Of course I enjoy what I am doing. These (soldiers) are generally nice people who want to change the conditions here for the better," said Jamal Osman, a category two linguist.

Osman volunteered for the assignment after hearing about it at a job fair in his home state of Virginia. At home, Osman works as a software developer, when he applied for a job with the Titan Company, they offered him the job of linguist instead. He describes his role as a linguist as one that allows him to be a "mediator

between the local population and the soldiers."

Ahmed Jamal, one of the Iraqi linguists, hired locally by Titan, has said that he simply found the job when he approached a military compound looking for work after the war. He has worked as a linguist for several military units before coming to Rifles Base and is in agreement with the other linguists regarding the pride he takes in his job. He was a translator before the war and hopes that the work he does with the U.S. Army will help him when he continues his education.

Linguists volunteered for their assignments in Iraq just like the soldiers they work beside daily. Linguists also recognize the amount of dependence that the military places on them and their skills and work hard to bridge the language gap that separates the soldiers from the civilian population they have been sent to protect.

Cavalry scout recognized by Army

Sgt. Craig Zentkovich

Staff Writer

Vice Chief of Staff General John Keane presented awards to members of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team in Fallujah, Iraq, July 5.

Among the awardees 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, the Queens, N.Y., native, is referring to the six soldiers in his section with whom he's spent the last 10 months training and leading. The same soldiers he led from Kuwait into Iraq in March, and later on to Baghdad. The same soldiers who have fortuitously come across a mentor, an inspiration and a fine example of what a soldier and leader could and should be.

"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 way to protect us many times."

E Troop had served as the 2nd BCT's reconnaissance team since Operation Iraqi Freedom kicked off March 20. As the forward-most element for the brigade, their mission was to clear routes for the brigade. If they came into contact with the enemy forces, they would use the least amount of force possible, report the situation to brigade headquarters, and let the armor and infantry take it from there.

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

The BRT's first contact came March 22 at Objective Rams, west of An Najaf. They came upon a roadblock when they were engaged by dozens of Iraqi troops. 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."

Woodward had wanted to move forward, but 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 soldiers 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 to facilitate the movement of the brigade into attack position to cross the Euphrates River.

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



Staff Sgt. Kenneth R. Franco

exchange of fire, his and another vehicle pushed through the engagement out front to minimize contact.

"When they were about 500 meters from us they were engaged by mortars, RPGs and small-arms fire," Woodward said. "For more than 2 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."

One soldier in the troop received shrapnel wounds when an RPG destroyed the M240B machine gun he was operating.

Franco, the epitome of modesty and not one for accepting accolades, saw nothing that he did as extraordinary, brave or courageous. "It was just going through the motions," he said. "We'd trained six months for this beforehand. The soldiers did their jobs and did them well."

There were two concerns that motivated Franco throughout the war and the months following it.

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

Franco, who redeployed and returned to Fort Stewart Aug. 8, had not seen his one-year-old son Sebastian since deploying to Kuwait in September.

"June was the first time I had talked to him since we left Camp New York in February," he said. "None of us had any way to communicate back home.. I'm going to catch up on all the time we missed."

The mission of E Troop had evolved into local security patrols and personal security details after the war ended — first in Baghdad and then in Fallujah.

Throughout the deployment, Franco remained the consummate professional, the standard for what a noncommissioned officer should be. He accomplished the mission and looked out for the welfare of his soldiers. The soldiers know him, respect him and admire him.

"He does things the right way all the time, never taking shortcuts," Punyahotra said. "I never looked up to anybody in my entire life until I met him ... he's inspired me."

"Whenever a soldier has a problem or needs to talk, even if they're not in his section, he'll do everything possible to help them."

Through his actions during and after war, Franco had again proven to every member of E Troop that he is the standard.

"Staff Sgt. Franco is one of the finest NCOs I've ever met — in everything he does," Woodward said. "He's not only looked up to by the soldiers and other NCOs, but by every officer in the troop."

E Trp., 9th Cav., now firmly planted on U.S. soil, has the honor of having within their ranks a professional for all to emulate and learn from — undoubtedly deserving of a Silver Star.

CENTCOM News

One soldier killed, two wounded in attack

BAGHDAD, Iraq — One 205th Military Intelligence Brigade soldier was killed and two were wounded in an improvised explosive device attack on a military convoy in Baghdad at approximately 7:45 a.m. on Aug. 27.

The soldiers were taken to a nearby combat support hospital.

The soldiers' names are being withheld pending notification of next-of-kin.

Soldier dies from non-hostile gunshot wound

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A 130th Engineer Brigade Soldier died on August 25 from a non-hostile gunshot wound.

The soldier was evacuated to the 21st Combat Support Hospital, where he later died.

The soldier's name is being withheld pending notification of next of kin.

The incident is under investigation.

4ID soldier dies in traffic accident

A 4th Infantry Division soldier died as a result of injuries sustained in a traffic accident between Tikrit and Forward Operating Base Anaconda in Balad at approximately 6:40 p.m. on Aug. 25.

The vehicle the soldier was riding in had a flat tire causing the convoy to stop along side the road to replace the flat. While changing the tire, a passing Iraqi vehicle was involved in a traffic collision, which caused it to spin out of control and strike the soldier.

The soldier was evacuated to the 21st Combat Support Hospital for treatment. The soldier died of injuries received at approximately 10 p.m.

The soldier's name is being withheld pending notification of next-of-kin.

Coalition forces repel attack in Kandahar Province

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — Coalition special operations forces and Afghan militia forces repelled an attack early this morning by anti-coalition forces leaving more than 14 enemy dead and no coalition casualties.

The attack occurred in the vicinity of Tarin Kowt in the Kandahar Province with anti-coalition forces using small arms and rocket-propelled grenades.

Coalition forces used ground and air assets in response to enemy fire.

Coalition aircraft engaged the enemy forces with laser guided munitions and 25mm ammunition.

Soldier drowns in Euphrates River

AR RAMADI, Iraq — A soldier from the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment drowned in the Euphrates River at approximately 8:30 p.m. Aug. 23 near the Hadithah Dam, west of Ar

Ramadi.

After a thorough search of the area, the soldier's body was found and positively identified at approximately 11 a.m. Aug. 24.

The soldier's name is being withheld pending notification of next of kin.

Confiscated, destroyed weapons equal safer Iraq

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Coalition forces continued to confiscate and destroy weapons and ammunition in Iraq on Aug. 22.

Acting on a tip from a local source, the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) captured enemy equipment and detained suspected enemy personnel in East Mosul on Aug. 21. The confiscated weapons included three Russian machine guns, one 60mm mortar tube, two AK-47s, 50 AK-47 magazines, 3,500 rounds of small arms ammunition, one protective mask and various communications equipment.

In an unrelated incident, acting on a tip from a local source, the 101st AD detained one individual for making counterfeit Iraqi Dinar. The 101st confiscated rolls of magnetic security bands, three sheets of 10,000 Iraqi Dinar, an automatic number machine, a press machine and a computer with money software loaded on it.

Fourth Infantry Division soldiers on patrol discovered a weapons cache near some old fighting positions just south of Tikrit. The cache consisted of 200 pounds of propellant, 80 rounds of 14.5mm machine gun ammunition, one loaded AK-47 and one rocket-propelled grenade. An explosive ordnance detonation team will dispose of the weapons.

During an aerial patrol north of Khan Bani Said in Diyala province, an OH-58 D, Kiowa Warrior helicopter discovered a weapons cache consisting of four D-20 towed artillery pieces and 200 artillery rounds. Additional weapons and ammunition seized in other patrols include 50 artillery rounds, 104 rocket-propelled grenade rounds, four rocket-propelled grenade launchers, 22 mortar tubes, 48 high explosive anti-tank 100mm rounds, two claymore mines and six AK-47s.

In the last 24 hours, coalition forces conducted 21 raids, 922 day patrols and 645 night patrols. The units also conducted 233 day patrols and 159 night patrols jointly with Iraqi police.

Marines help rebuild women's center

AD DIWANIYAH, Iraq — The Marines carried shovels and sickles as they waded through the chest-high grass surrounding the dilapidated athletic building. When the building is finished it will become the city's new women's and youth center.

The center will be a place where women can come to relax or where mothers can drop off their children for a little while. There is a need for a women's center in Ad Diwaniyah because women make up nearly 60 percent of city's 260,000 inhabitants.

The Marines opted to leave their usual day's routine and traveled to the center to conduct a massive cleanup around the building, which had fallen into disrepair over the years. Large loads of rocks, bricks, broken glass and other large debris were hauled by bucket into the bed of a 7-ton truck to be taken to a nearby dump. Weeds, grass, paper and smaller trash was

loaded into another truck and carted to another location.

The work was sometimes backbreaking as Marines used shovels to scrape thick clots of dried mud caked on the edges of the floors near the building's walls. The volunteers wore surgical masks to protect themselves from the clouds of dust that filled the rooms while they were being swept clean.

Once the building is clean a contractor will renovate the building's interior, which should take another 30 to 45 days to complete. The renovation will cost about \$99,000. Some of the upgrades include a new generator and a new air conditioning system.

A section of the building designated as the auditorium is also being renovated. Among other things, the large rectangular room will need new glass for the large windows that stretch the length of the room.

Future projects being considered include construction of a swimming pool and a sports complex on an adjoining piece of property.

Coalition reorganizes day-to-day issues

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Coalition soldiers are assisting with the reorganization of Iraq's day-to-day economy by negotiating with Baghdad's vendors to move their booths from the streets back into marketplaces and by accepting claims from Iraqis to pay for damages incurred by the actions of U.S. forces.

Soldiers from the 1st Armored Division are notifying vendors in the Ad Hamiyah district in northern Baghdad that they must move their booths from the streets back into designated market areas. The vendors moved into the streets after the fall of Saddam's regime, making it difficult to walk or even drive through many neighborhoods. After negotiating with vendors in the Sha-ab and Al Mhadi neighborhoods to move their goods out of the streets, the 1st AD arranged for a contractor to rebuild portions of the markets.

Additionally, the 1st AD's plans include cleaning up the garbage-laden streets once they are cleared of consumer traffic. Giving more organization to the markets will help deter crime, which is a problem in the region.

The U.S. Army is accepting claims from Iraqis for damages incurred due to the actions of U.S. forces. The U.S. Army pays claims to injured Iraqis under the Foreign Claims Act, which is a federal statute enacted by Congress. The purpose of the FCA is to develop positive relations and promote goodwill between the U.S. and Iraqis.

The FCA covers claims for real or personal property damage, personal injury and wrongful death. The FCA does not cover claims arising directly or indirectly from the combat activities of either U.S. forces or enemy forces. For a claim to be payable, U.S. troops must act negligently or wrongfully. In order to file a claim, the claimant must file the claim in writing within two years of the incident and ask for a specified amount.

The U.S. Army has appointed Foreign Claims Commissions throughout Iraq to accept and process the claims. These commissions provide claimants with the proper forms to start the process. The claims process takes an average of one month. To date, more than four thousand claims have been filed with more than half of them resulting in payment. Almost \$400,000 in claims have been paid to Iraqi citizens.

Not just medical supply distribution ...

Tuskers provide care for Habbaniyans

Spc. Mason T. Lowery

Staff Writer

HABBANIYAH, Iraq — With bullets and rocks still a constant threat, Tusker soldiers and medics go out almost every day and provide medical aid to Iraqis in villages near Habbaniyah.

They are providing emergency care, showing American soldiers' good faith, and helping the Iraqis get their medical system running efficiently again so they can rely on themselves, according to C Company (Cyclones), 4th Battalion, 64th Armor commander Capt. Edward Ballanco.

"Helping these people does a lot, but they're always left wanting," he said.

The medical situation in this area, and much of Iraq is bleak. Medics with C Company, 26th Forward Support Bn. (attached to 4/64 Armor), have helped eight clinics in the Habbaniyah area during the month they've been there.

Four of the eight clinics only had walls — looters had taken everything, according to 1st Lt. Monica Casmaer, C Co. physicians assistant.

The Tusker soldiers and medics have given these clinics approximately \$500,000 dollars in medical and construction equipment; including air conditioning units, sinks, toilets,

refrigerators, cleaning supplies, 50 stethoscopes, 40 blood pressure cuffs, 10 dotoscopes, four nebulizers, five dental chairs, four lab microscopes, exam tables as well as thousands of pills.

More help is coming; the Cyclones just received \$17,000 dollars to assist mosques, schools and clinics in the area, Casmaer said.

"We've been able to come in and get their clinics functional and better than pre-war levels. They've had more attention from us than their own government. That speaks volumes. I can't put an amount on how much they appreciate us," Casmaer explained.

Casmaer said the two biggest problems she and her soldiers faced when they first assessed the clinics were the lack of care to patients during the war, and the corruption and lack of coordination involved in getting medical supplies to the clinics from Baghdad.

Warehouses in Baghdad had enough medical supplies to stock clinics for a year, but the deliveries weren't being made. Tusker soldiers went to a warehouse, loaded four HEMMTS and three 5-ton trucks full of supplies and delivered them to the clinics.



Spc. Mason T. Lowery

1st Lt. Monica Casmaer, C Co., 26th FSB physician's assistant, treats patients in the village of Saqlawis — a suburb Habbaniyah, July 8.

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1/9 FA treats children near Fallujah



Spc. Katherine Robinson

A physician's assistant for 1st Bn., 9th FA listens to a girl's heartbeat in a village north of Fallujah July 11.

Spc Katherine Robinson

Staff Writer

FALLUJAH, Iraq — In a small housing complex north of the village of Abu Nassir, the wind blew through a small crowd of robed women and small children waiting to receive medical treatment July 11.

A physician's assistant and several combat medics from 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery, along with a pediatrician from 26th Forward Support Bn., set up a small treatment facility for the children, after seeing several health problems on previous humanitarian visits.

Children suffering from ailments ranging from coughs and diarrhea to neural fibrosis and undernourishment alternately waited patiently with their parents and played with the other soldiers during the visit.

More than 200 little Iraqi boys and girls were seen, first by the medics, who checked their vital statistics and recorded their ailments, and then by the PA and the doctor. The soldiers handed out primarily cold medications, antibiotics and vitamins, as well as some antiparasitic medicine to fight worms

and dysentery, according to the PA, who requested his name not be used.

The PA said most of the undernourishment cases were not serious, but 1/9 FA continues to hand out humanitarian rations in the area.

There were, however, children with more serious health problems, said Maj. Andrew Doyle, pediatrician and battalion surgeon for 26th FSB. "We saw chronic neurological diseases and thyroid diseases," he said. For such cases the doctors wrote diagnoses, recommendations for treatment, and told parents to bring the children to the local hospital.

The medical treatment the soldiers provided was a much-needed blessing according to the PA. "It's an underserved area that wouldn't have (much) medical care otherwise," he said. The nearest clinic is nearly three miles away and many parents don't have cars.

Doyle and the PA said the experience was a rewarding one. "That's why you're a doc or a PA, so you can make a positive impact in somebody's life everyday," the PA said.

"It's a different setting, but it's also

rewarding to know you can get out and go do that. The Army gives you the opportunity to go help people who need it," Doyle added.

For the combat medics, who are trained to treat battlefield injuries under terrifying circumstances, the chance to treat children was a relieving change.

"It's different, but it was awesome," said Spc. Daniel Keene, who was attached to 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment during combat operations. "It makes me feel like I'm doing something out here.

"That one little time out there today makes all this Iraq stuff worth it," he added.

The PA said the soldiers were lucky they got the opportunity. They got many of the medications from an Iraqi hospital that was closing, and without that, they wouldn't have been able to do the mission.

"It's very difficult to get the appropriate medications for pediatrics through the Army system," Doyle said. The Army doctors deal more with soldiers than with children.

"I'm glad I got to go today," Keene said. "It's something I can take back home with me and never forget."



Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.

Soldiers form up on Cottrell for the Welcome Home Ceremony after arriving at Fort Stewart.

Gen. Blount leads 197 soldiers home

COLORS

from page 1A

Blount said, "You have a small minority that are still fighting the inevitable. We have to take care of them, and we are making progress everyday."

Blount will pass the reins of the 3rd Inf. Div. to Maj. Gen. William G. Webster Jr., Sept. 26.

Blount will move to his next assignment as the assistant chief of staff, G-3, after commanding the division since November 2001.

Webster will be leaving his position as the deputy commanding general, 3rd U.S. Army with duty as the deputy commanding general, Combined Forces Land Component Command.

Webster has served at Fort Stewart as the assistant division commander for maneuver beginning in May of 1997 and left in November 1998. He also served at Fort Stewart when it was the home of the 24th Infantry Division.



Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.

Soldiers and family members rush to greet each other on Cottrell Field.



Michael Lemke

Blount and color bearer bring the division colors off the flight.



Photos by Spc. Jonathan M. Stack

(Above) Soldiers move to the sensitive item turn-in point after departing the aircraft. (Below) The 3rd Inf. Div. Band plays as the soldiers depart the aircraft.



Spc. Jonathan M. Stack

Maj. Gen. Buford C. Blount, 3rd Inf. Div. (Mech.) commanding general, leads the returning colors and soldiers onto Cottrell Field during a Welcome Home Ceremony Friday.

The wait is over ...

Soldier's return takes away baby blues

Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.

Staff Writer

One of the happiest and most trying times in a newlywed couple's life can be the birth of their first child. With all the planning and assurance of good health for the baby and the mother, trips to the doctor, Lamaze classes and a lot of foot and back-rubs, both parents are needed to make this time go by smoothly. But what happens when the father is deployed early in the pregnancy?

"I was very upset when I found out John was getting deployed," said Charlene Lee, wife of Spc. John D. Lee, a track mechanic from the 703rd Main Support Battalion. "I was three months pregnant with my daughter, Savannah, when the news came. He was in Baghdad at the airport when the baby was born."

"I got the news three days after Savannah was born," said John. "My commander gave me the news and 10 minutes later I was on the phone with my wife."

Having a new baby was hard to deal with without her husband, but John's mother came to help, along with church members and the Family Readiness Group, Charlene said.

Being away from his wife wasn't too easy on John either.

"I went to church in the desert a lot, and that helped me through it. I was anxious to

get back, but I knew I couldn't do anything about that, so I tried not to worry about it. We were unsure about when we were going to leave," John said.

"We got one close call to head home, but the line up was canceled. The 1st Battalion 3rd Air Defense Artillery got on buses and were two miles out of Camp New York's gate when they were called back. We got on their buses and headed out. Not until we were actually loading our gear onto the plane did we say hey, this is really happening," John said.

"Now things are back to normal. I get to enjoy my baby and my wife"

Spc. John D. Lee
703rd MSB

a lot of daydreaming while he was gone about him coming home. He called very early in the morning so I was sure I was still dreaming when he called. But sure enough, 18 hours later he was home."

The first couple of weeks home it was hard to sleep, still being on desert time, John said. "I couldn't sleep at all at night and all day I was dead tired," he said.

The couple had their hard times adjusting and their share of arguments, they agreed. "He was used to doing things the desert way and I was used to doing things

"When I called Charlene from the Frankfurt airport, she thought I was kidding," John said. "I told her 'I would call as soon as I could', and Frankfurt was as soon as I could."

"It was like I was dreaming," said Charlene. "I had done



Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.

Spc. John D. Lee and his wife, Charlene, enjoy spending time with their daughter, Savannah, after a long deployment.

the way I have been while he was gone. That caused a lot of tension when he first came back, said Charlene."

"Now things are back to normal. I get to enjoy the baby and my wife. We're going to spend a lot of time together. If they go to the store, I'm going. If Charlene and the baby are invited to a friends house, I want to go too," John said.

As far as the future, the couple is trying to save money to buy a house, they said. "Now that we aren't getting the extra money from John being deployed, things are a little tight, but we'll make it," Charlene said. "We took our relationship for granted at first, but after being apart, we won't take it for granted ever again. I am very happy we are a family once more."

Fallujah police requests independence

Spc. Katherine Robinson

Staff Writer

FALLUJAH, Iraq — Twenty five to 30 Fallujah police officers gathered outside the mayor's office July 10, requesting more equipment and more independence from American forces.

In a meeting with Deputy Mayor Hussein Ali and 2nd Brigade Combat Team's government support team leader, Capt. John Ives, the police representatives said the police feel American presence in their department may pose a danger to them as well as soldiers.

They said the Fallujah police are ready and capable of keeping the city safe without too much help from American forces.

The police requested that coalition forces leave the police station and allow the Fallujah police to patrol the streets themselves instead of jointly with military police. They also requested more vehicles so they could patrol more frequently and they asked that the military have a quick reaction team on call in case the police needed assistance with anything.

"Give us a chance," said police chief Brig. Gen. Riyadh Abbas Abdullatif Karbool through an interpreter. "We are grateful, you have done well. Now see what we can do. If we need you we will call you and we are sure you will be

here in five minutes."

Karbool added that the demonstration was in no way anti-American or anti-coalition and it is in fact, a healthy step for new Iraq that the people feel they can speak their mind.

"I think this is a wonderful indicator of where we want Iraq to be," Ives said. "I think it's wonderful that they feel they can come talk to us.

"I completely respect their decision and I will talk to the colonel," he added.

Ives did bring the issue to the attention of Col. Joseph P. DiSalvo, 2nd Brigade Combat Team commander shortly after the demonstration.

"It really wasn't a demonstration," DiSalvo said. "They were just saying they are happy with the equipment we've given them, and they could use more, especially vehicles and we know that. They are anxious to be self-sufficient."

While granting some of these requests may take some time, DiSalvo said once American forces can get more equipment — including radios and weapons — there is no reason the police force shouldn't be completely self-sufficient.

Ives said the goal is to give the city entirely to the people. "This is a good, honorable city. The people are good people ... I just want to make sure the police are safe."



Spc. Katherine Robinson

Fallujah police officers hold a demonstration asking American forces to allow them to patrol Fallujah without American assistance.

POLICE REPORTS

- **Subject:** Family member, 23-year-old female
- **Charges:** Simple assault, disorderly conduct
- **Location:** Fort Stewart

- **Subject:** Family member, 30-year-old female
- **Charges:** Failure to stop at red light
- **Location:** Fort Stewart

- **Subject:** Private, 19-year-old male, Aviation Brigade
- **Charges:** Pedestrian under the influence
- **Location:** Hinesville

- **Subject:** Civilian, 22-year-old male
- **Charges:** Driving under the influence, driving without a license
- **Location:** Fort Stewart

- **Subject:** Private, 18-year-old male, Aviation Brigade
- **Charges:** Improper lane change, driving while license suspended
- **Location:** Hinesville

- **Subject:** Sergeant, 36-year-old male, Headquarters Command
- **Charges:** Drunken driving
- **Location:** Hinesville

- **Subject:** Staff Sergeant, 38-year-old male, separate battalion
- **Charges:** Driving under the influence, speeding 150/45

- **Location:** Richmond Hill

- **Subject:** Sergeant, 25-year-old male, Headquarters Command
- **Charges:** Failure to yield right of way
- **Location:** Fort Stewart

- **Subject:** Specialist, 22-year-old male, Division Artillery
- **Charges:** Drunken driving, suspended driver's license
- **Location:** Fort Stewart

- **Subject:** Airman, 21-year-old male, separate battalion
- **Charges:** Improper backing
- **Location:** Fort Stewart

- **Subject:** Specialist, 22-year-old male, Aviation Brigade
- **Charges:** Speeding 112/45, racing on highway, driving under the influence
- **Location:** Hinesville

- **Subject:** Specialist, 43-year-old female, separate battalion
- **Charges:** Following too closely
- **Location:** Fort Stewart

- **Subject:** Specialist, 22-year-old male, separate battalion
- **Charges:** Failure to stop at stop sign
- **Location:** Fort Stewart

- **Subject:** Specialist, 27-year-old female, Division Support Command
- **Charges:** Loud music
- **Location:** Hinesville

- **Subject:** Staff Sergeant, 34-year-old female, separate battalion
- **Charges:** Improper backing
- **Location:** Fort Stewart

- **Subject:** Family member, 41-year-old female
- **Charges:** Following too closely
- **Location:** Fort Stewart

- **Subject:** Specialist, 21-year-old male, Division Artillery
- **Charges:** Disorderly conduct
- **Location:** Hinesville

- **Subject:** Specialist, 27-year-old male, Division Artillery
- **Charges:** Disorderly conduct
- **Location:** Hinesville

- **Subject:** Sergeant, 25-year-old male, Division Artillery
- **Charges:** Disorderly conduct
- **Location:** Hinesville

- **Subject:** Sergeant, 22-year-old male, Division Artillery
- **Charges:** Disorderly

conduct

- **Location:** Hinesville

- **Subject:** Private 2, 25-year-old male, Division Support Command
- **Charges:** Failure to appear
- **Location:** Hinesville

- **Subject:** Private 1st Class, 22-year-old male, separate battalion
- **Charges:** Failure to appear
- **Location:** Hinesville

- **Subject:** Sergeant, 25-year-old female, Division Support Command
- **Charges:** Deposit account fraud
- **Location:** Hinesville

- **Subject:** Private, 33-year-old male, 3rd Brigade
- **Charges:** Driving while license suspended
- **Location:** Fort Stewart

- **Subject:** Civilian, 36-year-old male
- **Charges:** Driving while license suspended, fleeing or eluding police
- **Location:** Fort Stewart

- **Subject:** Private 1st Class, 19-year-old male, Division Support Command
- **Charges:** False report of a crime
- **Location:** Fort Stewart

Fort Stewart soldier found dead

Sgt. Craig Zentkovich
Staff Writer

A soldier assigned to the 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) was found dead in her Hinesville home Aug. 17.

Pfc. LaKeitha R. Sims, a food service specialist in Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 3rd Forward Support Battalion, was 20 years old.

“She was a loving mother

and an excellent soldier,” said Maj. Roland Slater, HHD, 3rd FSB commander. “During (Operation Iraqi Freedom), she would spend much of her free time, with her daughter, helping out (rear detachment operations) at the company.”

A native of Mayesville, S.C., Sims arrived to Fort Stewart, her first duty station, in Sept. 2002 following advanced individual training at Fort Lee, Va.

“From the beginning, she did what she was supposed to, with little or no supervision, and got the job done,” Slater said. “I wish I had some more soldiers like her. This is a great loss.”

Sims is survived by her 3-month-old daughter, Lakeiyah.

The incident, being treated as a homicide, is currently under investigation by the Hinesville Police Department.

Soldier, 2-year-old son found slain

Staff Report

A 24-year-old 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) soldier and her son were found dead in her Savannah residence Friday.

Dead is Spc. Annisha Sutton and 2-year-old Shaun Sutton Jr.

Detectives have identified Shaun Sutton as the suspect in the deaths of his wife and two-year-old son.

The Savannah Morning News reports that Shaun, 25, was missing from his home, on the 1800 block of Vassar St. in Liberty City, when police responded to a 911 hang-up call there at about 9:30 p.m. Friday.

Upon arrival officers found the bodies of two people inside the residence. Emergency medical personnel were summoned to the scene but both were found to be already deceased.

Detectives have not released the cause of their deaths. Autopsies will be performed by GBI pathologists in Savannah.

Police spent Friday night and Saturday morning looking for Sutton. They arrested him at about 1 p.m. Saturday on Bull street, according to Bucky Burnse, public information officer with the Savannah Police Department.

A neighbor, who asked not to be named, said not a lot was known about the family. They had been renting a house in the neighborhood for less than a week before the deaths, reported Savannah Morning News.

Sutton was assigned to B Co., 603rd Maintenance Battalion (Aviation), headquartered at Hunter Army Airfield.

She entered the Army September 23, 1997 and was assigned to Fort Stewart and Hunter in March 1998.

3ID IN BRIEF

Stewart

School absences conditional Fort Stewart Schools (Diamond and Brittin) will support recently deployed soldiers, within reason and within available resources, when requesting a student absence.

Students will be considered excused during block leave. Parents are encouraged to coordinate with the student's teacher on missed homework/class assignments.

Time away from school should be kept at a minimal.

Liberty County Schools will grant up to five days of unexcused absence during block leave for children of deployed soldiers.

Soldiers are required to provide a written request to the school principal which states the reason for the absence and projected dates that the student will be out of school.

Students will be allowed to make up missed homework/assignments.

Teachers will work with students to ensure that they do not fall behind in the classroom. Since Liberty County schools are required to follow the No-Child-Left-Behind mandate and are grade by attendance, students will be required to be re-enrolled in school if an absence exceeds five days.

Main Gate

Gate 1 has only one accessible inbound lane and one accessible out bound lane.

All inbound traffic entering through Main Gate is routed to a new four-way stop located where General Stewart Way intersects with Memorial Drive and proceeds to General Screven Way.

Construction will be on-going during this period. To alleviate the traffic flow 4th Street Gate (Gate 2/Troupe Gate) is open.

Army Family Action Plan

Training for facilitators, recorders and issue support staff 9 a.m. to noon today, at Club Stewart. Youth AFAP conference Sept. 6 at 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Club Stewart.

Delegate training Sept. 8, 8:30

a.m. to 2 p.m. at Club Stewart. AFAP conference Sept. 9, 8:15 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Fort Stewart. Contact Vicki Wiginton or Stacy Thompson at 767-5058 for more info.

Family Assistance Center

Army Community Service at Fort Stewart scaled back its Family Assistance Center hours of operation.

New hours are 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday. Weekends will be handled with an on call roster and phones forwarded to EOC.

Childcare needed

Military wives are needed to provide childcare in their homes. Free training and assistance offered through Youth Services' Family Childcare program. Why not consider this opportunity to make money?

For more information call 767-2311.

Education Center hours

The Main Education Center, Building 130, will continue with expanded hours due to the high demand for service. The 1st Brigade/Divarty Learning Center will return to regular business hours.

Computer access is available during the week at the Main Learning Center, Building 130, 8:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, from 7:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday and from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday.

School Liaison Office

This office has moved to Bldg. 443, Room 13, Gulick Ave. (Leisure Activities Center). If you are a parent of a school age child in public or private school, the SLO needs your input!

For more information, contact Dave Smith, 767-6533.

Hire a teen

Teens need jobs! Hire them to help you with your daily tasks, such as - pet care, window cleaning, car washing, babysitting, assisting with parties and many other chores or duties.

Hunter

Blood Drive

American Red Cross is sponsoring a blood drive Friday, at 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. with a CD holder giveaway, Saturday, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. with Super Goose Sports, hockey demonstrations and Monday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

All participants on Saturday and Monday will receive a Thrasher commemorative T-shirt and a chance to win two tickets to an Atlanta Thrashers game.

For more information, please call 912-961-5766.

After-school program

The Hunter Youth Center is now signing up students in the 6th grade level and higher for a free After-School Program.

First through 5th graders may also sign up, however, space is very limited. Those who are interested can register at Building 1286.

Continuing education

Family members, mobilized Army Reservists and Army National Guardsmen can continue their education during their relocation to Hunter Army Airfield, regardless of their specific unit, at the Hunter Army Airfield Education Center, Building 1290.

For more information, call 352-6130.

Classrooms are also available for training and FRG meetings. For additional information about these locations, or the ACES program, call the Main Education Center at 352-6130.

First Steps Program

The First Steps Program needs volunteers.

This is a program that provides information and support to expectant and new parents stationed at Hunter.

Volunteers will make home visits to expectant parents and provide a 12 month phone call follow up.

Volunteers are paid mileage reimbursement and enjoy flexible hours. For more information, call 756-6516.

Morning road closure

North Perimeter Road from the 117th Tactical Control Squadron to

the Stephen Douglas Street intersection will be closed to vehicular traffic from 6-7:30 a.m., Monday through Friday to support unit physical fitness programs.

Ask your unit first sergeant or contact the Hunter Safety Office for Hunter's physical training policies, by calling 352-5814.

Bible study

A weekly Bible study will be held in the building adjacent to the post chapel Wednesdays at 11:30 a.m.

Burger King

Burger King at Hunter PX will be closed for renovations and will re-open Sept. 20.

During this time Burger King will continue to operate from a portable grill in front of the PX.

Skeet Range

The skeet range is open 4-9 p.m. Thursdays and 9 a.m. to noon on Saturdays.

Fort Stewart and Hunter Hunting and Fishing Permits, Georgia State Hunting and Fishing licenses are also sold in Bldg. 8250.

An Education course is required for an on-post hunting permit. For more information, call 352-5916.

Couples Reunion Workshop

A workshop, designed to assist families dealing with the stresses of reintegration back into the family after deployment, will be held in the Hunter ACS ballroom from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m. on Friday and Sept. 11.

Please call 352-6816 with the expected number of people attending and a date of the workshop attending. Free childcare will be provided.

Hunter Golf Course

Guys and Dolls Tournament, Sunday starting at 4 p.m. Fee is \$30 per couple and includes greens fee, golf cart fee, and prizes. This will be a 9-hole scramble event.

Call 352-5622 for more information.

Landmark Inn

This Inn is located at 165 Duncan Drive, and have special military rates starting at \$44 per night.

Winn Army Community Hospital

3rd Thursday Training

Services at Winn and Tuttle will be limited today for staff training. Winn will be closed 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. and will offer emergency care only during that time. Tuttle will be closed 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Exceptional family member

The next Exceptional Family Member Program enrollment orientation will be 1:30 to 3 p.m. today in Patriot Auditorium.

Meet other families and learn about other community support services. For more information, call 370-6505.

Preventive Medicine

The Department of Preventive Medicine has relocated to buildings PB473 and PB474, across from Army Community Service. For more information, call 370-5085.

Make-up School Screenings

School Health Screenings are still available at Winn. Vision and hearing screenings are by appointment only by calling 767-6633. Dental screening is available at the sponsor's assigned dental clinic and immunizations are available on a walk-in basis 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. and 1 to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Physical Exam Clinic

The clinic has been relocated to Soldier Family Health Clinic #2, Building 612, 767-7750.

Winn Seeks Volunteers

Winn is looking for adult volunteers to help out in a wide range of areas from administrative specialists to chaperones to certified or licensed nurses.

For more information, call 370-6903.

Winn and Tuttle Champions

The Winn and Tuttle Champions program matches representatives with Family Readiness Groups to answer questions about what healthcare services are available to you - from transferring your TRICARE enrollment to refilling prescrip-

tions to schedule appointments.

For more information, call Winn's representatives, Linda King or Darla Vaught, at 370-6225/6143 or Tuttle's representative, Marilyn O'Mallon, at 352-6015.

Intervention Services

Military families with children up to 3 years old who may be at risk for developmental delays can call Educational and Developmental Intervention Services for a free screening. Services include home visits, occupational therapy, special instruction, physical therapy, speech and language therapy, vision and hearing screenings, family training, developmental screenings and assessments.

For more information, call 370-6349.

Tuttle TRICARE enrollment

TRICARE enrollment briefings for Tuttle are held by appointment from 9 to 11 a.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and 1 to 3 p.m. Thursday. To schedule an appointment, call 767-6633 or 1-800-652-9221.

TRICARE Classes

The next Explanation of Benefits TRICARE class will be held 10 to 11 a.m. Sept. 2 at Tuttle. To register, call 692-8724.

Family Reunion Support

Family reunion support is available for families having difficulty adjusting after a deployment. Support is available by appointment or on a walk-in basis. For more information, call 370-6100 or 370-6111.

Coping Support Groups

The Coping Support Group is for adults having difficulty dealing with the stress in their life. The group meets 9 to 10:30 a.m. every Monday. The Coping Support Group for Children meets 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Monday for children ages 6 to 9 and 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Thursday for children ages 10 to 13.

For more information, call 370-6100.

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Contracting turned over to Iraqis

Spc. Jacob Boyer
Staff Writer

FALLUJAH, Iraq — The reconstruction of Fallujah turned a corner July 12 when Engineer Brigade turned responsibility for choosing and monitoring contractors doing work in the city over to local Iraqis. Although the brigade will continue to disburse money for municipal projects in the area, a team of three Iraqi engineers will now help the mayor prioritize the jobs and monitor those doing them, said Maj. Clint Pendergast, operations officer,

Engineer Brigade. “We decided it was a good time to turn over this part of the operation because we’d completed most of the easy, quick-fix contracts for the city,” he said. “As the projects get bigger, Iraqis need to monitor the quality control of their construction projects. “The engineers will be responsible for all aspects of choosing jobs and contractors to do them, Pendergast said. Engineer Brigade’s Contracting and Infrastructure Repair Team has been acting in that capacity since early June, but the

goal is to eventually turn all of their services over to the people. “With them taking over, we will train them in fair business practices for contractors, issuing work orders and receiving bids and ensuring they get out and check the contractors’ work for quality,” he said. “We feel that this is an important step as we prepare the Iraqi people to run an Iraqi system of government.” The city’s mayor, Taha Bedewi Hameed, chose the engineers, who went to work immediately. “We want to check the contracts to limit the errors that may happen,”

said Yousif Abdull Whad Mansoull, one of the city’s new engineers. Pendergast said it takes time to pull away from the responsibilities the team has taken on, because the Iraqi people are not accustomed to handling municipal services and repairs for themselves. “Under Saddam Hussein, Fallujah didn’t have a budget to perform normal upgrades to the city,” he said. “All they ever received was emergency repair funds. Even then, the money was sent from Baghdad to Ramadi to whoever was doing the project. The mayor never had a

choice on where to spend money,” Mansoull, a college professor, said he took the job “to help the people of my city in their time of suffering. “I want to make work for the people,” he said. “When there is work here, it adds to the people’s happiness. It is my fortune when the people of Fallujah are happy.” “The U.S. will not be here forever,” he said. “Having the Iraqis check the work should increase the quality of the work. It will also decrease the cost as they do more work and train a new system of localized government.”

Decision on dam’s power generation pushed back

Spc. Jacob Boyer
Staff Writer

AL LUMBAR, Iraq — Representatives from the Iraqi Ministries of Irrigation and Electricity and coalition forces decided to continue the Hadithah Dam’s current amount of power generation at a meeting July 10. The dam, which is currently the sole source of power for the Al Lumbar Province, may have to cut back on the amount of water it allows through its generators, said Col. Ed Cardon, commander, Engineer Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized). Less water will mean less electricity for the district, but Iraqis are unsure if they will have enough water for irrigation and other uses if too much is drained from the reservoir. The situation will be reevaluated at a meeting July 24. “You have to have some water in reserve for irrigation,” Cardon said. “And, they are concerned that if the dam continues to generate at the current level, they won’t have enough.” Hadithah Dam has been generating more power than normal in recent months because of damage to electric lines throughout the country, Cardon said. The Al Lumbar Province stretches from western Baghdad to Iraq’s western borders, and includes Ar Ramadi, Al Fallujah and several other small to mid-

size cities. It normally draws power from plants in Baghdad as well as the dam. Iraqis in the region are currently getting power only 12 hours a day, and that situation could get worse. “The electric grid here is damaged to the point where the only power comes from the dam,” he said. “If the dam has to reduce power, it’s possible some cities in the region may not get any power at all. With the power they are getting now, the factories are unable to run.” Putting the decision off for two weeks will allow the Ministry of Electricity more time to try to repair the lines from Baghdad, Cardon said. It will also enable them to improve the quality of the power. “Right now, there is no steady voltage or frequency to the power the people are getting,” he said. “When that happens, things don’t work well and equipment can be damaged. They need surge protectors for everything. They’re working on a load-shed plan that will allow them to get extra megawatts from the power they’re drawing now.” Help may also come in the form of more water for the reservoir, Cardon said. Either rain or more water flow from upriver nations like Syria and Turkey could help solve the problem, but both would take time.



The Hadithah Dam is the subject of many discussions regarding power generation in Iraq’s Al Lumbar Province.

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Ad Council



Spc. Katherine Robinson

1st. Lt. Robert Woodruff, HHC 3/15th Inf. Reg., hands a box of frozen chicken to an Iraqi man.

2nd BCT feeds Fallujah

Spc. Katherine Robinson

Staff Writer

FALLUJAH, Iraq — Winning hearts and minds ... and feeding empty stomachs was 2nd Brigade Combat Team's focus when the BCT soldiers delivered thousands of frozen chickens to mosques in the Fallujah area.

Task Force 3-15 Inf. kicked off the three-day operation on July 14, delivering 2,000 chickens and canned meat to 20 mosques to be redistributed among the people. On July 15, Task Force 1-64 took over the mission, and on July 16, Task Force 4-64 took it to Habbaniyah.

The first day, 3-15 soldiers drove a refrigerator truck full of chickens from Baghdad to Fallujah, where the frozen fowl was moved into their interpreter's trucks for delivery.

The soldiers broke up in teams and, trucks packed with poultry, headed out to the neighborhood mosques.

When the delivery trucks arrived at the mosques, soldiers waited outside while the interpreter's delivered the chickens — they didn't enter the mosques out of respect for the wishes of the imams.

At most places the chickens were dropped off without a hitch, but there were a small group of imams who refused to accept the gifts.

"We'll eat rocks. We don't want your chickens," one imam told Sgt. Jason McGinn, a 346th Psychological

Operations Company soldier, who led one of the delivery teams.

The people did seem to like rocks, since at another location, crowds of little children threw them at the soldiers driving by.

At another mosque, the imam was more polite, but still refused the 100 chickens the soldiers were offering. He said he didn't want to be blamed if there were any problems redistributing them.

"There are some people who like us and there are some who don't," McGinn said. "But the majority of people in Fallujah like us, and are very appreciative of what we are doing and are very grateful."

"It doesn't hurt our feelings. It's unfortunate because they're hurting their own people more than helping them," he added.

McGinn and his soldiers discussed delivering the chickens to the people directly, but at the translator's suggestion, took the issue to the mayor's cell instead. Eventually they decided to send the undelivered chickens back to the mosques with the interpreters, in hopes that the imams would be more willing to accept if soldiers weren't around.

As long as the food gets to Fallujah's needy citizens, the mission is a success, regardless of the delivery method, McGinn said.

"It's a slow process winning hearts and minds, but we're getting there," he said.

Government support links Fallujah, 2nd BCT

Spc. Katherine Robinson

Staff Writer

FALLUJAH, Iraq — They speak different languages. Their cultures are worlds and centuries apart. But with open hearts and minds, the Iraqi citizens and coalition forces are not finding it difficult to work together.

Capt. John Ives, 2nd Brigade Combat Team's government support team leader spends his days at the Mayor's office, acting as a liaison between 2nd BCT, Mayor Taha Bedawi and the citizens of Fallujah.

"We (the government support team) handle everything from the smallest claims and complaints against U.S. forces, to ensuring the mayor's policies are looked at, identified and acted upon," Ives said.

Made up of 15 soldiers, including engineers who handle contract issues, the team also helps identify key figures in the community, keep up good relations with the local population,

and make sure 2nd BCT commander's policies are effectively relayed to the mayor and the city's citizens, he added.

Ives and his team listen to all the concerns of the Fallujah residents and try to help them. There are some complaints he can do nothing about but offer his sympathy — such as complaints that tanks and Bradleys are too loud — but Ives said he deals with all issues as quickly as possible. Once he finds out something is wrong, he immediately brings it to the attention of Col. Joseph P. DiSalvo, 2nd BCT commander, so a remedy can begin.

"Because of that ... they feel they can ask me anything, and tell me anything and in turn I feel the same about them, so we have a great working relationship now," Ives said.

"When we first got to town, there was still minor looting going on," Ives explained. The first day he walked into the mayor's office, Bedawi told

him about a certain number of buildings being looted daily, and asked, "What can you do to help?"

"That's easy," Ives said. He called the commander, at the time Col. David G. Perkins, and arranged for quick reaction teams to be placed in the areas near the buildings until units began to patrol those areas.

"The looting stopped, and the mayor was incredibly surprised and excited by that," Ives said.

"(Ives) is a very good officer," said Fallujah's Deputy Mayor, Hussein Ali. "He's intelligent and he does his work in a super way."

Ives' campaign to win hearts and minds stretches beyond the mayor's cell, to people he's never met, Ali said. "So many families in Fallujah know his name although they didn't see him because he is dealing with our people in a very good way, so they tell their families and neighbors ... people tell me, 'please give him our wishes.'"



Spc. Katherine Robinson

Capt. John Ives, government support leader, and Deputy Mayor Hussein Ali talk about areas in the city that need security guards.

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MPs train Fallujah security guards

Spc. Jacob Boyer

Staff Writer

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.”

CID agents keep Army crime-free in peace, wartime

Spc. Katherine Robinson

Staff Writer

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 Infantry Division (Mechanized).

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 their mission in Iraq is a heightened threatlevel 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 downrange 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 hap-



Spc. Katherine Robinson

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

pening 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.”

MEDICS

from page 11A

They discovered stockpiled medical supplies in Saddam Hussein’s former private hospital. Combat stress soldiers use that building as their headquarters now, and let the Tuskers take 2 more HEMMTS and 5-ton trucks full of supplies.

“These people went months without care. The people hurt most (during the war) were chronic patients. Being able to give them a nice, healthy stock of medicine really helped them,” she said. One clinic had been out of medicine for so long that when Casmaer and her soldiers gave them a three-month supply, it ran out immediately.

Casmaer and her soldiers discovered one flaw in all the help they were providing — they were disrupting the clinics’ medical system; the people only wanted to see American doctors.

“Iraqis think American doctors are the best. Their doctors

are more than adequate,” she said. To fix this problem, she and her medics have shied away from treating patients in the clinics.

They still deliver supplies to the clinics, but now treat patients on unannounced visits in the streets. They don’t announce the visits because too many people would leave the clinics for her treatment, and it also would be too dangerous — the lingering enemy elements could easily set up an ambush.

Now, they drive into a village in the evening. They stop where they see people gathered. Their interpreter announces that a doctor is present to see patients, and people line up.

On July 8, Casmaer and her medics, with Cyclone soldiers providing security, visited the village of Saqlawis — a suburb of Habbaniyah. Thirty or 40 people instantly lined up.

The first patient complained of stomach pain. Casmaer asked her questions through the interpreter, and prescribed her Povidium. The second patient had eye swelling. Casmaer checked her eye and asked Spc. Lena Billingsley, a C Co. medic, to dig in their pill suitcase for the appropriate cure.

A man held his baby daughter as Casmaer checked her swollen stomach. Casmaer told the man to get his daughter to Al Fallujah or Baghdad as quickly as possible for a sonogram; her liver was hard and it was life threatening.

A woman asked Casmaer how much she owed her. Casmaer told her it was free.

As darkness and danger approached, Ballanco had to give the order to leave. Casmaer said, “We’re never at a loss for patients — we only run out of time.”

Fallujah leaders support 2nd BCT after explosion

Spc. Mason T. Lowery

Staff Writer

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 wherever 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 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.



Staff Sgt. Joseph Robsky

Wreckage from the building that collapsed June 30, next to the Hasam Mosque in Fallujah.



Spc. Jacob Boyer

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

Engineers clear UXOs

Spc. Jacob Boyer

Staff Writer

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 Eng. Bn, 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 Eng. 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 Sgt. Anthony Cimino, squad leader, A Co., 489th Eng. 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 Eng. "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 remindsthem 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."

Monument to recognize fallen soldiers

Spc. Casandra Bolton

372nd MPAD

The Hinesville Military Affairs Coordinating Committee is sponsoring a monument addition to Marne Gardens for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Donations are being accepted to help with

the funding of the monument.

"Anyone wishing to make a donation can make their checks out to the 'City of Hinesville, Military Affairs Coordinating Committee,'" said David Anderson, chairman of Military Affairs Committee.

The address that donations can be mailed to is 115 M. L. King Dr., Hinesville, GA, 31313.

"Col. (Edwin) Marrero and our Mayor Thomas Ratcliffe had talked about the idea of the memorial," Anderson said.

"At our last meeting, Col. Marrero was present and he presented the plan to the committee," he said.

After the plan was presented, the committee voted and accepted the challenge of sponsoring

the Operation Iraqi Freedom memorial monument.

The addition to Marne Gardens is going to add another walkway that leads up to a memorial to honor the soldiers who fought in the war.

"It is important that we remember those who gave their lives in Operation Iraqi Freedom," Anderson said.



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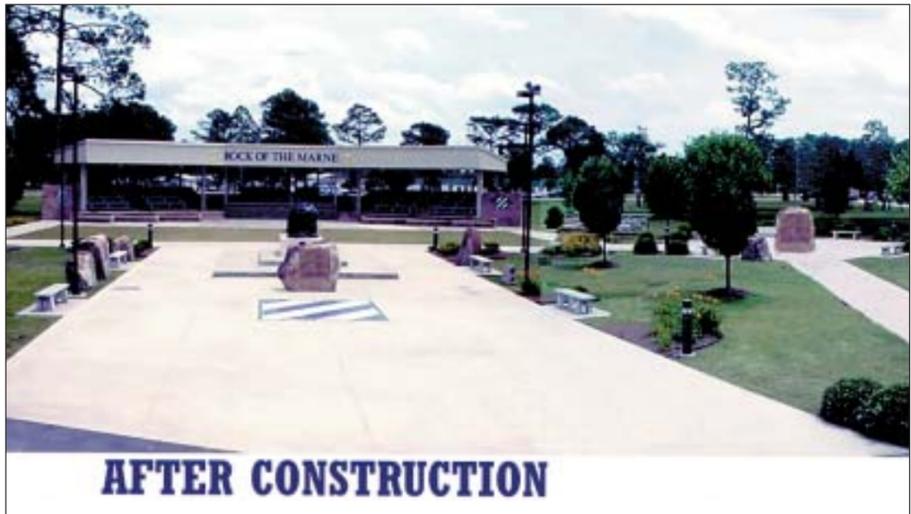
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Transformation tough, important, progressing

Sgt. 1st Class Doug Sample

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said bringing change to a department as large as the Pentagon will be tough, but change is important so that the military is not "stuck back in the 20th century."

"We've worked hard at it, we've got a lot of wonderful people working on it," Rumsfeld said during an Aug. 18 National Public Radio interview. "It's a difficult thing to do with a great big institution like this." But he said that if the transformation initiatives under way are "as successful as the department believes they will be, I think there will be some success."

Rumsfeld emphasized that transformation efforts within the Pentagon would not be easy. "Change is hard for people," he said. However, he explained that Pentagon leaders understand the importance in organizing, training and equipping the military for the 21st century.

He also noted that lessons learned from Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan,

as well as the global war on terrorism, illustrate the importance for changes in the military.

"It's not good enough to be capable of fighting big armies and big navies and big air forces on a slow, ponderous basis," he said. "We have to be able to move quickly and have to be agile and have to have a smaller footprint. And we have to be able to deal with the so-called asymmetrical threats, the kind of threats that we're facing with terrorists and terrorist networks. So I think the people in this department understand it and that they're making good progress on it."

Rumsfeld also discussed nuclear threats posed by Iran and North Korea. He said that Pentagon officials do not believe that Iran currently possesses nuclear weapons, but there are strong indications that North Korea may have up to three.

"We know they (Iran) have the ability to deliver ballistic missiles and conceivably if they had a nuclear weapon, could deliver it. But at the moment no one that I know of in our intelligence community or elsewhere assesses that they currently have that," he said. "It has been assessed that they're engaged in a process where they may wish to acquire or

develop or produce nuclear weapons. But at the moment it's my best information that they don't have them."

However, Rumsfeld said North Korea is a different situation. U.S. intelligence has assessed that North Korea, "very likely" has "one or two or three weapons," and that the country has programs to develop and the materials to produce nuclear weapons, he noted.

"They've announced that they have them (nuclear weapons). That is to say they've informed people," he explained. "... Because it's a closed society, it's not possible to have really good visibility into what they're doing precisely. ... If they're saying what they're saying, one has to assume they have some reason for saying it: either that it's true or that they want others to believe it's true."

Rumsfeld also expressed his concern for the likelihood of North Korea, which has sold ballistic-missile technologies in the past, selling nuclear weapons to other countries.

"If they're publicly saying they would be happy to proliferate those technologies and if we know they proliferated ballistic-missile technologies, then reasonable people have to assume that that's at least a strong possibility."



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