



# The Expeditionary Times

*Proudly serving the finest Expeditionary service members throughout Iraq*

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<http://www.hood.army.mil/13sce/>

## Strict dedication



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to face at holiday bash**

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# Sergeant major of Army visits Balad

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SPC. NAVEED ALI SHAH  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – More than 100 Soldiers sat in chairs, nervously fidgeting with their uniforms, when the cry of “at ease” rang out from the back of the room Dec. 18.

The Soldiers snapped to the position of parade rest, hands clasped tightly behind their backs, as Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston entered the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation center east during a visit to Joint Base Balad, Iraq, Dec. 18 and Dec. 19, as part of a United Services Organization tour of Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan.

“For the last eight years, the office of the sergeant major of the Army has been sponsoring a USO show coming over here  
**SEE VISIT ON PAGE 4**



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston answers questions during a Dec. 18 town-hall style meeting with senior NCOs from units across Joint Base Balad, Iraq, during which he talked in depth about the enlisted force structure, senior NCO career management and growing the military in the future.

# Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff leads tour to Adder

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
PFC. LISA A. COPE  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION ADDER, Iraq – Adm. Michael G. Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, accompanied by several celebrities on a United Service Organizations tour, visited Contingency Operating Location Adder, Iraq, Dec. 18, to meet with local dignitaries and discuss progress in southern Iraq.

Country music singer Billy Ray Cyrus, tennis star Anna

Kournikova and comedian Dave Atell came for a meet and greet at Memorial Hall at COL Adder to take pictures, sign autographs and meet service members.

Mullen said the area has improved since his last visit and he expects Iraq to become even more stable after the elections.

“There has been remarkable progress since I was last here,” he said. “It is a tribute to a great deal of hard work and an awful lot of sacrifice on the part of Iraqi and American citizens.”

Mullen said he is focused on maintaining the relationship between the U.S. and Iraq throughout and after the draw-down.

“I very much look forward to a long-term relationship between the United States and Iraq, and that relationship will grow into a partnership,” he said. “The United States will never forget Iraq.”

Cyrus said he had been touring with Mullen and the USO for about a week throughout Afghanistan and Iraq.

“It is an honor and a privilege to be here, in Iraq, seeing the brave young men and women risking their lives day in and day out for freedom,” he said.

The trip was eye-opening for him, Cyrus said, and it gave him a whole new appreciation  
**SEE TOUR ON PAGE 4**



Adm. Michael G. Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, answers a question during a press conference for local media Dec. 18 at Contingency Operating Location Adder, Iraq.

## Balad Blotter December 16 - December 22

### SHOPLIFTING:

A complainant telephoned the Law Enforcement Desk to say a subject had been observed shoplifting. The complainant said Dec. 21 at roughly 7 a.m. the subject removed labels from one black belt, four Under Armor undergarments and proceeded to place them in his pants. The value of the belt is \$16 and the Under Armor undergarment is \$19.95 for a total value of \$79.80. He said he discovered the shoplifting after finding the labels and then reviewing the store security video. A patrol was briefed, dispatched and arrived on the scene and made contact with the complainant to verify the subject's shoplifting. The patrol viewed the video and determined there was probable cause to apprehend/detain the subject for shoplifting. The subject appeared to be a middle aged male, roughly 68 to 70 inches tall, of Indian decent, wearing light colored pants, a dark jacket with an Oasis label, and a dark hat. The patrol was informed that the subject is employed by Oasis Water Treatment Company. The patrol initiated a sweep of the Oasis Water Treatment yard and was unable to locate the subject. The patrol obtained a manning roster of all personnel who were working the night shift but could not make contact with personnel due to the shift change.

### SUSPICIOUS ITEM:

A complainant telephoned the Law Enforcement Desk via 911 and said there was a suspicious item at the location. A patrol was briefed and responded to the location. A K-9 unit was briefed and responded as well. Patrol related items were two, six oz. water bottles duct taped together with a silver powder similar to the powder found in Meals, Ready-to-Eat heaters. The patrol said related items were found inside a bunker and they would only evacuate the immediate area. The JBB Fire Dept arrived on the scene. The Fire Department and the patrol requested explosive ordnance disposal presence. EOD was briefed and arrived on scene. The related item was an MRE bomb and EOD removed the item from the location.

### ASSAULT:

Complainant walked into the Law Enforcement Desk and said the victim had been assaulted by the subject at 1:45 a.m. Dec. 17. Charlie-2/2A assisted the victim with an Air Force IMT 1168/Statement of Suspect/Witness/Complainant. The victim said he was at the tool crib showing a tool to someone and noticed the subject walking out with isopropyl alcohol. The victim then asked the subject if he signed out the isopropyl alcohol. The subject approached the victim and threw the contents of the bottle in his face and began to strike him with his fists. The victim received medical treatment which included two staples in his head. Patrols arrived at H-7 Housing/A-35 to locate the subject. The patrol made contact with the subject. The patrol apprehended the subject and initiated a search of his person. The patrol found nothing. The subject was notified he was suspected of Article 128/UCMJ, assault and was advised his 5th Amendment rights via AF IMT 1168, which he acknowledged and requested a lawyer. The subject was released to his supervisor via Department of Defense Form 2708/Receipt for Inmate or Detained Person.

NIPR: 443-8602

SIPR: 241-1171

Email: PMOdesk@iraq.centcom.mil

# Mental Health: four Monsters, a wake-up call

BY NAVY CAPT. STEVE BRASINGTON  
COMBAT STRESS CONTROL PSYCHIATRIST



After a Soldier chugged four 16 ounce Monster Energy drinks, he walked into the Troop Medical Clinic to complain he could not sleep.

The troop medical clinic woke up the on-call combat stress control team member to evaluate the sleepless Soldier.

The early morning consultation resulted in a Soldier living out the consequences of his decision – a sleepless night due to caffeine intoxication.

Energy drinks primarily give you a boost by supplying caffeine.

A single 16 ounce can of Monster contains 160mg of caffeine.

By comparison, a single 12 ounce can of Mountain Dew contains 55mg of caffeine.

In other words, the sleepless Soldier drank the equivalent of a 12 pack of Mountain Dew in one hour and expected to sleep. No marks for common sense can be awarded in this case.

A moderate amount of caffeine is 100mg to 150mg in a day.

One can of energy drink is plenty of caffeine for a person who has not developed tolerance to caffeine.

An 8 ounce can of Ripit contains 90mg. I have witnessed individuals sip several Ripits in one morning.

Three Ripits equals 270mg of caffeine. That is enough to make your hands tremble if you are not used to it.

The problem is, people do get used to drinking lots of caffeine and they notice when their level of caffeine begins to drop.

As noted in the emergency patient's complaint, sleeplessness is a prominent sign of caffeine intoxication. Other signs include facial flushing, restlessness, nervousness, excitement and increased urination.

Excessive loss of body water can lead to dehydration. Every Soldier has been told to avoid heat injury by replacing fluids with water. Drinking water is the best way to keep your body well hydrated. Drinking caffeinated

soft drinks is actually counterproductive due to the increase in urination.

What happens when you try to cut down your caffeine intake? Many of you already know the answer. You get a bad headache. To relieve the headache, you caffeinate. It can be very hard to stop, because you have trained your body to function on caffeine.

Unless you enjoy headaches, there is just one way to get off the caffeine and that is by gradually reducing your intake.

As you reduce your daily caffeine consumption by 25mg to 50mg a day, you need to switch to decaffeinated products or simply drink water. Go slowly.

If you want to change your ways before you re-deploy, give yourself 4 to 6 weeks, so you are not grouchy. The medical department does not have a medication to make it easy.

Pain relievers can make your headache better, but taking more than 2,400mg of Tylenol every day can be a problem. Do not do it – you will develop a sick liver.

Heed the guidelines. I have noticed a pattern of warriors pushing beyond moderation when it comes to substances meant to benefit us.

Overusing caffeine can create a pattern for over-use.

Anecdotally, Soldiers with chronic sleep problems tell me they chug Nyquil by taking one-quarter to one-third of the bottle to get to sleep.

In the rear, Soldiers drink alcohol to sleep. Over-use of alcohol is very common among military members, according to my clinical experience.

Unsafe use leads to unsafe behavior.

The Army Medical Department wants you to stay safe, healthy and productive.

Make good decisions by heeding common sense guidelines. I hope you do not need a doctor to tell you four Monsters before bedtime will not help you get a good night's sleep.

Stay safe and sleep well.

Come see Combat Stress Control for more information about sleep hygiene.



## EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

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15th Sustainment Brigade  
36th Sustainment Brigade  
90th Sustainment Brigade  
96th Sustainment Brigade  
41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team  
155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team  
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing  
194th Engineer Brigade

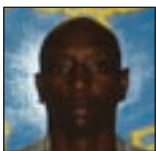
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## 13th ESC Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz

**Mission Statement:** The Expeditionary Times Staff publishes a weekly newspaper with the primary mission of providing command information to all service members, partners, and Families of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) team and a secondary mission of providing a means for units on Joint Base Balad to disseminate command information to their audiences.

# The Weekly Standard

BY LT. COL. REGINALD HOWARD  
13TH ESC COMMAND INSPECTOR GENERAL



**"If** you can't apply the standard to everyone, you cannot apply the standard to anyone."

Welcome to The Weekly Standard, the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) inspector general's weekly contribution to the Expeditionary Times.

Our goal is to help educate and enlighten the great Soldiers and leaders with the 13th ESC on the regulations, policies and trends impacting our units every day. Along with several other outlets and events, the IG will use The Weekly

Standard to address those topics.

You can expect to see information regarding such issues as promotions, nonsupport, awards, uniform policies, inappropriate relationships and other important topics.

We will also attempt to answer your questions and welcome your input through our NIPR e-mail at [escig@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:escig@iraq.centcom.mil).

I'd like to use this edition to briefly introduce you to your new 13th ESC IG team. Our organization is composed of 10 inspectors general, dispersed throughout the 13th ESC area of operations with five offices; each one collocated with a brigade element to maximize and provide the command the best possible support.

Our Soldiers not stationed on one of the listed contingency operating locations can call the Joint Base Balad number to have their issue addressed.

Our new team consists of both active duty Army and Army National Guard Soldiers and is listed below along with their location and contact information. These outstanding Soldiers are a welcome addition to the 13th ESC IG team as they bring a wealth of knowledge about USAR and ARNG issues.

Check back next week for another installment of The Weekly Standard.

Until then, you can find additional information at our Web site on the 13th ESC NIPR portal at <https://www.jbb.iraq.centcom.mil/provider/special-staff/IG/default.aspx>.

## Sexual Assault Response Coordinator

From the Joint Base Balad sexual assault response coordinator team: Protect yourself from acquaintance sexual assault; know your intentions and limitations and communicate them clearly. You have the right to say "no" to any unwanted sexual contact. If you say "no" say it like you mean it. Back up your words with your body language. Call the JBB SARC at 443-7272 or contact via pager 443-9001, 159 for help. Army members should seek assistance with their unit victim advocate or deployed-SARC; you may also call 433-7272 or 443-9001, 122/135 for assistance.

## Interested in a movie?

Check the movie schedule on Page 20

**Joint Base Balad (304th SB):** DSN 433-2125  
Lt. Col. Reginald Howard (Command Inspector General)  
Maj. Christopher Minor (Deputy)  
Master Sgt. Roy Thacker (NCOIC)

**Q-West (10th SB):** DSN 827-6115  
Lt. Col. Gary Davis

**Adder/Tallil (36 SB/41 B):**  
Maj. Andrea Shealy - DSN 833-1710  
Maj. Jeffrey Copek - DSN 833-5915  
Master Sgt. Marta Cruz - DSN 883-1710

**Al Asad:** DSN 440-7049  
Sgt. 1st class Alexander Arce

**Taji (96 SB/155 BCT):** DSN 834-3079  
Master Sgt. Richard Faust  
Lt. Col. Paul Bird

# A holiday uniform message from the Expeditionary Times' first sergeant

BY 1ST SGT. AANGI K. MUELLER  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES 1ST SERGEANT



**A**round Christmas we expect people to be nicer, spread good cheer and wish one another good tidings.

Recently, I've seen none of that when it comes to uniform corrections.

I've read Army Regulation 670-1. I'm a first sergeant with 20 years under my belt. I know a little bit about the proper wear of the uniform and grooming standards.

I have not seen a single spot in that regulation where it says a uniform correction should:

- be delivered in such a manner so as to ensure humiliation to Soldiers who need correction;
- incite rage and high blood pressure in the corrector before you've even spoken to a troop;

- or be delivered in such a manner as to remove any doubt about someone's heart being two sizes too small.

We all have horror stories, on both sides of the table – from privates who look like a soup sandwich to the loudest guy in the room pointing out flaws to make himself feel better.

Here are a few examples I've seen since arriving at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, in just the past few months:

- "We're not in the ... Air Force – put your hair up," a female Soldier yelled to another female Soldier who's hair had come out of its holder during a 5K race.

There are dozens of ways that uniform correction could have been presented but this Soldier chose to be hateful.

- As a specialist ran at the stadium, an officer stepped in front of her and yelled at her to stop. She was wearing her headphones, which she believed was only prohibited on the roads. The officer made the specialist do push-

ups and, when she asked to recover, dropped her again for not counting the push-ups loud enough.

If I had this gentlemen's name, I would have asked to speak to his commander, or pointed him toward the Inspector General's Office. This officer not only chose to be nasty, but violated policy by making the specialist do push-ups. Don't believe me? Ask the inspector general.

Honestly, I've got about 10 more I could recite, but these two stuck in my mind because they were so vicious. Some I saw myself, and I always try to stress professionalism to the corrector afterward, some came to me through my troops and other Soldiers.

If I walked out of my building with a bootlace out – I would want someone to correct me.

The manner and tone of a correction makes all the difference.

Why would you ever choose to be nasty first? Are you trying to use it as

an excuse to vent on someone?

You should attempt, with a uniform correction, to ensure the Soldier presents a more professional appearance.

When correctors are snide, angry, abusive, yell or fly off the handle, their behavior is unprofessional.

After the Reindeer Run 10K Dec. 19, my fellow racers and I went to the dining facility.

A group of three Soldiers came into the facility wearing tan T-Shirts with their Army physical training shorts.

I stopped to let them know that the tan T-shirt isn't authorized there but a staff sergeant got to them before me.

"Hey," he said. "Just wanted to let you know that you may catch a hard time wearing those T-Shirts – they're not authorized in the DFAC."

Nice.

Well delivered, well received.

Think about that the next time you stop someone for a uniform correction. 'Tis the season.

**13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)**  
"Phantom Support"



<http://www.hood.army.mil/13sce/> **ON THE WEB**



# SMA evaluates condition of Soldiers in Iraq, Afghanistan

## VISIT FROM PAGE 1

to Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan for the Christmas holidays,” said Preston, who has been the Army’s senior non-commissioned officer for five years. “I’m very honored, very humbled to have the opportunity to sponsor this USO trip.”

The visit was twofold, providing troops with entertainment and appreciation in the spirit of the holiday season and giving the Army’s senior NCO an opportunity to evaluate the conditions of Soldiers on the front lines of Iraq and Afghanistan.

“With this one here in particular, bringing the entertainers over ... it’s an opportunity for them to say thanks to all of our service members over here that are serving, to say thanks for their service, their sacrifices that they and their families are making back home,” said Preston, a native of Mount Savage, Md. “For me, as an individual, as the Sergeant Major of the Army, it’s an opportunity for me to come over and really to talk to Soldiers, talk to leaders and really see how we, as an Army, are doing, not only with the mission, but how we’ve done at manning, equipping, training and preparing our organizations for the missions that they’re accomplishing over here every day.”

Preston held two open-forum meet-



**Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston addresses Soldiers from Joint Base Balad’s Sgt. Audie Murphy Club during a Dec. 18 town-hall style meeting with senior noncommissioned officers from units across JBB. “It’s an opportunity for me to come over and really to talk to Soldiers, talk to leaders and really see how we, as an Army, are doing, not only with the mission, but how we’ve done at manning, equipping, training and preparing our organizations for the missions that they’re accomplishing over here every day,” he said.**

ings during his visit to Joint Base Balad. The first was a round-table dinner with senior NCOs from units throughout JBB, during which he talked in depth about the enlisted force structure, senior NCO career management

and growing the military in the future. He boiled his leadership philosophy down to one point.

“We have to teach our Soldiers to fix things at the NCO level,” he said. “Put somebody in charge of it and

hold them accountable.”

Preston’s other forum focused on junior Soldiers at JBB, during which he talked about recruiting and retention, suicide prevention, post traumatic stress disorder and deployments. Preston offered advice to the future leaders of the military sitting before him.

“The most important thing you’re going to gain from your time in the military is not the technical skills,” said Preston, who enlisted in 1975 as a cavalry scout and has served in every enlisted leadership position in the Army. “Leadership is the one trait most sought after by employers, so each of you should strive to be a sergeant.”

During his visit, Preston also met with Command Chief Master Sgt. Paul Burgess, the senior NCO with the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing, and Command Sgt. Maj. Mark D. Joseph, the senior NCO with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

Preston said he was proud of the service members at Balad, in particular the Soldiers of Fort Hood’s 13th ESC.

“As we now begin to transition this operation to the next stage, the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) is the right organization,” he said. “They’ve got the right experience, the right Soldiers, the right leaders in place to make that mission a success.”

## Admiral, ‘There has been remarkable progress since I was last here’



**Adm. Michael G. Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, speaks during a meeting with local dignitaries Dec. 18 at Contingency Operating Location Adder, Iraq.**

## TOUR FROM PAGE 1

ciation for the United States military.

“For me, to be with our troops during this holiday season, I have to tell you what I have witnessed the last week from Afghanistan to here in Iraq: we have got the greatest military in all of the world,” he said. “I am proud of our troops and this trip, for me, I will never forget. This is the trip that I learned how awesome our military really is.”

Staff Sgt. Mario A. Bonilla, a training noncommissioned officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 36th Sustainment Brigade out of Temple, Texas, 13th Sustainment Command (Expedi-

tionary), participated in the meet and greet at Memorial Hall.

Bonilla, a Long Island, N.Y., native, said meeting everyone and witnessing their appreciation for the troops was a great experience. He got a picture with Cyrus to send to his daughter because she is a fan of Miley Cyrus, the singer’s daughter who plays Hannah Montana on TV.

Although Bonilla did not get to meet Mullen, he said he appreciates Mullen traveling overseas to see how his troops live and work.

“Once you are here, it is different; you actually see how we are living and what we are doing,” he said. “It is a good morale builder when higher command comes out here.”



To my Son Spc. Stephen Maevers,

Merry Christmas Son! I hope to see you soon! I wish I could be with you! I LOVE & MISS you! BE safe!

Love Always, Mom, Sissy, Aunt Tracey, Pepaw & Sean



# JBB Honor Guard looks for a few good men, women

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. KEITH S. VAN KLOMPENBERG  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Service members' discipline and precision earn accolades, perhaps none more than those who serve in Honor Guards.

The Warfighters with the Honor Guard at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, volunteer their off-duty free time to performances that require a strict dedication to practice and perfect maneuvers that properly honor those who gave their lives in service to their country, said Senior Airman Valerie Vasquez, the assistant noncommissioned officer in charge of the JBB Honor Guard.

"The Honor Guard is a serious commitment of your time," said Vasquez, a diet therapy journeyman with the 332nd Expeditionary Medical Group and Pensacola, Fla., native.

Vasquez said the Honor Guard performs at events on base to display the military's discipline and attention to detail.

"Our ceremonies include performing colors presentations, as well as postings for various events, 21 gun salutes for the fallen, base retreat ceremonies, and other events and ceremonies in support of Joint Base Balad," she said. "These performances showcase teamwork, discipline and unwavering mutual trust."

Master Sgt. Scott Shockley, an equal opportunity adviser with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and Chamois, Miss., native, said his office has called upon the Honor Guard to participate in equal opportunity observance events.

"The expectation level is high," he said. "They are very professional and very sharp."

Shockley said he recommends any-



Service members in the Joint Base Balad Honor Guard execute a six-man flag fold during one of the team's bi-weekly practices at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

one who has the time to consider volunteering for the Honor Guard. Not only is it a great way to honor the fallen, but it is also a great way to honor one's own unit, by displaying extreme discipline and dedication.

Because much is expected of the Honor Guard, much is expected from those who choose to join, said Vasquez.

"We would like at least three months to get you trained and participating in Honor Guard details," she said.

Vasquez said a signed letter of commitment is required prior to a service member joining, indicating a willingness to attend all performances and bi-weekly practices.

Membership in the JBB Honor Guard is open to all Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines, she said.

Though the time and commitment required of the Honor Guard can be daunting, especially because service members at Balad work long hours and often conduct stressful missions, the

rewards are great, said Vasquez.

"Honor Guard is the one thing I have been most passionate about through my entire enlistment," she said. "The honor I feel as I represent my service, my base and especially my team, is overwhelming."

"While performing colors, as a guardsman stands sharp, crisp and motionless, there is much time to think about why we stand in front of such an audience. We stand there, honoring our country, because this is who we are."

**Telling the Providers Story from all across Iraq**



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keyword: Balad and Beyond



# Providers at Q-West help Soldiers stay connected

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
1ST LT. MICHAEL ANDERSON  
15TH SUST. BDE. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq –

Soldiers at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, help run a 24-hour computer lab to keep up Soldier morale and enable service members to communicate with friends and family anywhere in the world.

The lab consists of 18 computers and 8 phones, manned by Soldiers with A Company, Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary). These services are provided at no cost to the Soldiers, said Spc. Edward Sauls, a technician at the center and Missouri, Texas, native.

Sauls said the center serves 50 to 100 Soldiers on a daily basis, and is open to any unit at Q-West.

Spc. Brandon Charles, a communications technician with A Co., also works in and helps maintain the computer center.

"It is a really relaxing environment, good use of personal time and helps

keep up morale," Charles, a Harvey, La., native, said.

A Co. Soldiers renovated the lab in October, cleaning, painting the desks and installing a new walkway in front of the center, he said.

"We have a lot of pride in our unit," said Sauls. "We couldn't put up our patch until it was sufficiently cleaned."

First Sgt. Willie Johnson, A Co.'s senior noncommissioned officer, gave Command Sgt. Maj. Lawrence Wilson, the Multi-National Force-Iraq senior noncommissioned officer, a tour of the facilities.

"(Command Sgt. Maj.) Wilson was very impressed with our facility and the services we provide to the Soldiers," said Johnson, a New Orleans native.

A Co. Soldiers continue to operate the center, which has proven to be a valuable asset by providing a way to contact family members and friends, said 2nd Lt. Robert Longhauser, a platoon leader with A Co.

The facility also serves as an alternative method for Soldiers to continue their education, by completing on-line courses when unable to attend college in a conventional classroom, said Longhauser, a Cincinnati native.

Longhauser said communications



The 15th Sustainment Brigade computer lab at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, is operated and maintained by Soldiers with A Company, Special Troops Battalion, 15th Sust. Bde., 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

technology has come a long way since the days of the Vietnam War era. Then, Soldiers had to rely on mail carriers, and there was no standardized method for tracking correspondence, he said. That made it almost impossible

to complete college courses in such a harsh battlefield, said Longhauser.

"We are truly lucky to have such capabilities of technology and communications at our fingertips during these times of deployment," he said.

## Carpentry shop helps service members help themselves

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. KEITH S. VAN KLOMPENBERG  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The self-

help carpentry shop and Troops to Task program at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, not only help service members and local nationals build furniture out of wood, but also build skills and relationships through a joint partnership.

Service members interested in building new furniture for their living area or workplace may stop by the carpentry shop Tuesday through Thursday, take a brief safety course and receive a signature card that allows them to work in the shop, said Senior Airman Mark Hathaway, a carpenter at the self-help shop and a Bartlesville, Okla., native.

Hathaway said the signature card also allows Warfighters to check out tools to use at their unit.

Hathaway said roughly 20 service members per week use the facility to build shelves, desks, entertainment centers and even ping-pong tables.

Soldiers with Headquarters and



Air Force Staff Sgt. William Ferguson, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the self-help carpentry shop at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, and a Elmendorf Air Base, Alaska, native, gives a safety course dry run to demonstrate proper use of shop equipment to service members interested in using the facility.

Headquarters Company, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) took advantage of the carpentry shop to create large wooden Christmas decorations for the front of their buildings, said Capt. Pi-

lar Restrepo, the HHC commander and a Miami native.

"We have somebody with the ability and we're able to count on his skills to build them," said Restrepo. "It has been

a great way to increase morale."

Hathaway said his shop can provide assistance and instruction to those who have less experience with woodworking.

"One of the biggest things is knowing your measurements," he said. "I love to help design and help Soldiers realize their ideas."

If service members do not have the ability or time to build the furniture they need, local nationals can build it for them, said Air Force Tech Sgt. Patrick Galla, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Troops to Task program and a Traverse City, Mich., native.

Galla said the program works with roughly 170 local nationals, providing both skilled and unskilled labor to JBB.

"They have very good craftsmanship," he said. "They have built everything from desks, to ramps for aircraft."

The local nationals work on base beautification projects in addition to providing construction labor for units, he said.

Galla said the program not only helps the locals build their carpentry skills, but helps them develop organizational and managerial skills as well.

"We're building good relationships here and providing skills for the local nationals after we leave," he said.

# Masonic Family celebrates 12 Days of Christmas with service members



**Capt. Eddie Chew, commander of E Company, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment out of Katterbach, Germany, and a San Antonio native, chooses a gift during the Fourth Annual 12 Days of Christmas celebration Dec. 22 at Morale, Welfare and Recreation west at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.**

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. RYAN TWIST  
*EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF*

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – On the third day of Christmas, the Masonic Family gave to the military ... three Nintendo Wiis, two calling cards, and a laptop.



In the 12 days leading up to and culminating with Christmas, the Prince Hall Affiliated Masonic Family raffled off presents to service members who attended the Fourth Annual 12 Days of Christmas celebration at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation centers Dec. 14 through Dec. 25 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Each night, drawings were held at one of three locations at Joint Base Balad: MWR east, MWR west and the Air Force Recreation Center, with the biggest drawing held on Christmas.

Staff Sgt. Olivia E. Bradshaw, the human resources sergeant with the 547th Transportation Company out of Washington, 49th Transportation Company, 90th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), said the Masonic Family sponsors the charity event. Bradshaw, a St. Croix, Virgin Islands, native, said the Masonic Family's main mission is to serve the community and, because the JBB community is primarily military, they choose to give to the service men and women in theater.

"Giving back to the community and the Soldiers throughout the year is one of the key contribu-

tions that the Masonic Family engages in while in theater," said Bradshaw, a member of the Order of Eastern Star, Stars of Light Chapter 178 out of Oklahoma.

Bradshaw said these locations were chosen because of their popularity, to ensure even service members who did not know of the event would participate and spread the word.

Errick I. Davis, a maintenance leader with the L-3 Communications Corporation, said items were donated by families in the United States or paid for out of pocket by the Masons.

Davis, the chairman of the event, chief leader of the Masonic organization here in Iraq and a Cleveland, Ohio, native, said the gifts included calling cards, Nintendo Wiis, laptop computers, Xbox's, digital cameras, camcorders and iPods.

"I look forward to this throughout the work day, coming out here and doing the 12 days of Christmas," said Davis, an 18-year member of the Masons. "I like to see the expressions on their faces when they open their gifts."

The event is geared toward ensuring every service member receives a gift during the holidays, he said.

Bradshaw said being away from family, friends and loved ones can be hard, and the Masonic Family wanted to bring a sense of normalcy to Iraq. This celebration can help boost fading morale during the holiday season, she said.

"In the end, this is to show them that we appreciate their sacrifice of being away from their families, and we hope to put a smile on a Soldier's face, joy in their hearts, and lift their spirits," she said.

## 1218th Trans. Co. keeps mission moving

BY SGT. JULIA NORBERG  
*96TH SUST. BDE.*

AL ASAD AIR BASE, Iraq – Dec. 8, four mechanics in the 1218th Transportation Company motor pool worked on a troublesome fifth-wheel device from a M1070 heavy equipment transporter.

"It just wasn't working properly, so we figured we would try and rebuild it," said Pfc. Marc Thompson, a wheeled vehicle mechanic and a West Palm Beach, Fla., native.

After a few minutes of tinkering with the spring-loaded mechanisms, locking pins and bulky parts, Thompson and his fellow mechanics had completely revitalized what normally would be written off as a six-year-old, unserviceable part.

Their "can do" spirit and "no job is too big" approach highlight the Soldiers who serve with the 1218th Trans. Co. maintenance section, said Thompson's supervisor, Sgt. 1st Class Joe Cortinas, the 1218th Transportation Co. motor sergeant and a West Palm Beach, Fla., native.

"These guys just grabbed this equipment, were unfamiliar with it, started working on it and have done a beautiful job maintaining it since we got here,"

Cortinas said. "It is amazing how quickly they grasped the knowledge; 90 days later they are subject matter experts and maintaining the fleet of trucks to the highest standard possible."

According to maintenance records provided by Chief Warrant Officer 3 Robert McKenzie, maintenance officer with the 1218th and a Stuart, Fla., native, the operational ready-rate of the unit has seen a dramatic increase. Non-mission capable reports from September 2009, compared to similar reports published in December 2009, show a 25 percent decrease.

"I believe (improving the readiness rate) had to do with figuring out how the supply and maintenance system worked here at Al Asad," McKenzie said.

By developing relationships with people on post, McKenzie said his maintenance section can think and work outside of the box to implement creative solutions to problems with no immediate fix.

"The hard work of all our maintenance folks just completes the process," he said.

Sgt. Elvin Avila-Davila, a senior wheeled vehicle mechanic and a West Palm Beach, Fla., native, attributes the success of the unit maintenance program to two major factors.

"We have finally got a handle on all the left over parts from the previous two

or three units," Avila-Davila said. "Those parts are all organized now, which helps us out a lot. We have also been taking (preventative maintenance checks and services) personally. I couldn't live with myself if I knew someone got hurt, or worse, because one of us didn't check something before a truck went on mission."

Avila-Davila said with the parts situation under control and an adequate stockpile of parts, the unit can quickly identify and solve dead-line faults and malfunctions without interrupting mission readiness.

When he runs the quality assurance and quality checks line – a last line of PMCS defense before a 1218th truck is certified to go on mission – he ignores no details, he said.

"We hit the big stuff and the little stuff – my favorite is checking the lug nuts on the wheels," Avila-Davila said.

Sgt. Thomas McDonagh, a West Palm Beach, Fla., native, said he takes pride in ensuring the readiness of his vehicle.

"The QA/QC process does take a long time and it can be a pain, but it is to ensure our safety and our vehicle's readiness before it goes out on the road," he said.

The maintenance expertise of the 1218th Trans. Co. has also seen a shift in focus, in accordance with overall changes

to the mission, said 1st Sgt. Bobby Parlor, with the 1218th.

"As our mission changes, the focus changes, so we have to realign our maintenance program to fit what is needed most and what is mission essential," said Parlor, a West Palm Beach, Fla., native.

Parlor said although the unit's primary job – maintaining prime movers – is on-going, it has increased its focus on maintaining material-handling equipment, such as all classes of forklifts and container handlers.

Pvt. Timothy Gandolfo, a mechanic with the 1218th Trans. Co. and a West Palm Beach, Fla., native, said he was more than happy to meet the challenges of the shift in the unit's maintenance program.

"I didn't know how to maintain a Kalmar (RT-240) when I got here but, after just working with it and reading about it, we have been able to keep them in operation," Gandolfo said.

Cortinas said his mechanics are the heart and soul of the company. Spc. Romaine Osbourne, a wheeled vehicle operator with the unit and a Boynton Beach, Fla. native, said the mechanics are a cohesive unit.

"We are a family down here; with teamwork we can get anything accomplished," he said.

# Service members sing together Christmas Eve

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. RYAN TWIST  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Service members spent their Christmas Eve reading scripture, singing songs and listening to the band play at Morale, Welfare and Recreation center east at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Capt. Carlos A. Molina, battalion chaplain with the 49th Transportation Battalion out of Fort Hood, Texas, 90th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), said the event was held to celebrate the Advent season and the lighting of the Christ candle on Christmas Eve.

Molina, a Mayagüez, Puerto Rico, native, said the idea was to invite people to come and listen to a story. They read scriptures instead of preaching, weaving them around Christmas songs to tell the story of Christ, he said.

"I think overall the event went well," said Molina. "We wanted to



**Soldiers sing Christmas songs Dec. 24 at Morale, Welfare and Recreation center east at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Service members came to the event to listen to Bible readings and spiritual music.**

have more people. However, we got more than usual. There was anywhere from 80 to 100 people here tonight."

First Lt. Candace C. Daunis, executive officer with the 910th Quar-

termaster Company out of Ardmore, Okla., 80th Ordnance Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), said the crowd was quiet but she hoped

their spirits were lifted.

"I hope we brought some happiness to them and the songs were uplifting," said Daunis, who said she misses her family and the stories they share during Christmas dinner.

Daunis, a Grand Rapids, Mich., native and a singer with the band, said being deployed over the holidays can be rough.

"We're an extended family and we know we can't be home with our loved ones, but we still can praise the Lord and help each other get through the holidays," she said.

Molina echoed this sentiment.

"It's important, because we need to remind folks that the reason for this particular season, especially when they're deployed ... is to bring a message of hope to the people," he said.

He said service members have a place to go any time, to find refuge and rest and simply forget life outside the walls of the center for a little while.

"As they left here today it is our hope that they walked away with a sense of the Holy Spirit ... and Christ's presence in their lives," he said.

## JBB holds sexual assault self-defense class

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. KEITH S. VANKLOMPENBERG  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – More than a dozen Soldiers, Airmen and civilians spent Christmas Eve at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, learning sexual assault defense techniques.

"Every day, 240 women are attacked in America," said Air Force Staff Sgt. Rafael Strothers, a flyaway security team member with the 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron and a Charlottesville, Va., native.

Strothers and the other instructors, all flyaway security team members, demonstrated how attacks are likely to start and taught students how to react and counter those attacks.

"There's nothing wrong with having a tool to use in any given situation," he said.

Students learned how to break a choke hold, standing and on the ground, using martial arts and Modern Army Combatives Program techniques, said Strothers. The instructors also focused on arm and wrist control moves and pressure points.

"These moves are designed to be easy but you have to practice them," he said.

The more students practice those maneuvers, said Strothers, the more they will become automatic. In a dangerous situation, they will be able to react quickly and appropriately.

"I can't wait to practice on my coworkers," said Sgt. Tiffany Miner, a cargo specialist with the 159th Seaport Operations Company, 80th Ordnance Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment



**Sgt. Tiffany Miner, a cargo specialist with the 159th Seaport Operations Company and a Dallas native, practices a wrist-control self-defense move with instructors at a sexual assault self-defense class Dec. 24 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.**

Command (Expeditionary) and a Dallas native.

Although the moves were simple and easy to execute, she said she could see how effective they were when she practiced them on the instructors.

The class was part of a two-tiered instruction program, said Air Force Maj. Allan Bigtas, the sexual assault response coordinator with the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing and a Kohola, Hawaii, native.

"You try to prevent sexual assault through education, but you also want to give the public tools to defend against it," he said.

Bigtas, who organized the event along with the volunteer instructors, said holding self-defense classes was better than handing out whistles, because 80 to 90 percent of rapes are committed by an acquaintance. This means the victim might have willingly gone to a secluded place with the at-

tacker where a whistle would be ineffective, he said.

After the instruction portion of the class, students were given the chance to practice defense techniques on the instructors. One by one, the students fell victim to a simulated attack and used the moves they learned to react and counter it.

"You now have a few tools to defend yourself and make them regret attacking you," said Strothers.

# Provider commanding general checks progress on fuel farms

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
PFC. LISA A. COPE  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

**CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION ADDER, Iraq** – The commanding general of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) out of Fort Hood, Texas, visited Camp Cedar II, Iraq, and Contingency Operating Location Adder, Iraq, Dec. 21 to see the progress being made toward moving the fuel farm from Cedar II to COL Adder.

“My goal was to take a look at Cedar,” said Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz. “Go down there and take a look, see the plans for moving that fuel farm over here, see the progress that has been made. A lot of great things have been going on, a lot of progress. (There is) still some work to do, some friction points to iron out, but I think we are on track and it is looking good.”

Wentz said the Adder fuel farm is scheduled to be completed in March and all convoy operations for the area will be conducted there after Cedar II is emptied of fuel and closed, as part of the eventual drawdown of U.S. forces and equipment from Iraq.

The environmental clean-up for Cedar II is scheduled for this summer and the base is scheduled to be turned over to the Iraqi Government in early fall 2010, said Wentz.

Lt. Col. Darrell J. Debish, the support

operations officer with the 36th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), has worked on the project since his arrival in country in July.

Debish, an Austin, Texas, native, said the 36th Sust. Bde. has worked hard to speed up the construction of the fuel farm at Adder to get the estimated 180-day project finished on schedule.

“We are actually having our organic Soldiers lay bags out there because I cannot get the KBR (Inc.) contract done in time to get the bags rolled out,” he said. “I can get it done for them to start pumping fuel in them, but I cannot get them to lay out bags. So we are doing it ourselves.”

Debish said the fuel farms will operate dually, with both Adder and Cedar functioning until the new fuel farm at Adder can handle all operations for the area.

“My biggest concern is ... getting the fuel drawn down on Cedar in a timely manner without losing any, wasting any or causing any more headaches on the Soldiers we have,” he said. “We still need to be functional at Cedar because we support all of southern Iraq and most of central Iraq with that fuel.”

Wentz said the fuel farm should be a success and he appreciates all of the hard work of the 36th Sust. Bde. Soldiers on this project.

“I always enjoy coming down to Adder, seeing the great 36th and all the folks here – they do such great things,” he said. “It is good to see folks right before the holidays and wish them well.”



Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commanding general of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) out of Fort Hood, Texas, watches as Soldiers roll out the bags for the fuel farm Dec. 21 during his visit to Contingency Operating Location Adder, Iraq. Wentz said the Adder fuel farm is scheduled to be completed in March, and all convoy operations for the area will be conducted there after the one at Camp Cedar II is emptied of fuel and closed as part of the upcoming drawdown of U.S. forces and equipment from Iraq.

## 55 reservists replace roughly 100 outgoing Soldiers

BY SPC. MICHAEL V. CAMACHO  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

**JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq** – More than 55 Reserve Soldiers from Puerto Rico replaced roughly 100 Reservists this month, providing support operations at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, to the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

The 210th Regional Support Group out of Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico, took control of operations from Soldiers with the 304th Sustainment Brigade Detachment 3, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), at the culmination of Det. 3's year-long deployment.

An awards ceremony at JBB's Morale, Welfare and Recreation center east Dec. 22 recognized the service

of the 304th Sust. Bde. Det. 3 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and marked the transfer of authority.

Det. 3 is composed of Reservists from 19 states and two territories, said Master Sgt. Sylvester Ishmael, the unit's noncommissioned officer in charge of reset and redistribution. The unit's personnel primarily serve in logistical and specialized services.

The detachment arrived months after the brigade's main body and remained at JBB after the brigade was replaced in September, said Ishmael, a Pensacola, Fla., native.

“We came as a later element to augment the expeditionary sustainment commands that were here in theater,” he said.

The request-for-forces Soldiers from the 304th were tasked to fill vacant positions in the sustainment command, said Capt. Debra Graham,

officer in charge of personnel with Det. 3.

“When the command identifies areas they need to fill based on their in-theater mission, they reach out to the Reserves to fill those billets,” said Graham.

Originally assigned to different sections of the 3rd ESC, Det. 3's Soldiers stayed in positions as the 3rd transferred authority to the 13th ESC, said Ishmael.

Soldiers with the 210th will augment the 13th ESC in much the same way when the 304th Sust. Bde. Det. 3 leaves, said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Archie Clark, personnel chief with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th ESC.

“They are here to replace the outgoing RFF personnel that were brought here to augment the 3rd ESC, as well as the 13th,” said Clark.

The Puerto Rican Soldiers specialize in logistics and mission-support areas critical for a sustainment command, said 1st Lt. Carmelo Rodriguez, asset visibility deputy with the 210th RSG and an Adjuntas, Puerto Rico, native. The 210th personnel serve at the communications help desk, finance, supply and other duty positions to support mission operations, said Rodriguez.

“The 13th ESC is a very complete command but, when you cover such a large area and so many units, you need a little bit of help to make sure you cover down on everything,” he said. “As Reservists, we focus a lot on combat service support. We're over here to offer the 13th ESC, and everybody who falls under the 13th ESC, the full spectrum of anything and everything that is support for the Soldier and the mission.”

# 16 equal opportunity leaders graduate

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
STAFF SGT. ROB STRAIN  
15TH SUST. BDE. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – Sixteen Soldiers at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, graduated from an equal opportunity leaders course during a ceremony at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation tent Dec. 17.

The six-day course was designed to prepare noncommissioned officers to serve as equal opportunity leaders for their units, and was the first one offered to units at COL Q-West, said Sgt. 1st Class Johnnie Mitchell, the equal opportunity adviser with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

After graduation, EO leaders assist commanders at the battalion level and below with their EO programs, said Mitchell, a Sylvania, Ga., native.

"EO is important because it makes sure all Soldiers are treated with dignity and respect," Mitchell said.

Command Sgt. Maj. Nathaniel Bartee Sr., the senior noncommissioned officer with the 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), was the guest speaker at the event.

Bartee told the students to think about what they learned in the course and what it means to them.

"What are you going to take back to your unit?" he said.

He said Soldiers look up to their leaders, so they must set the example of what right looks like.

"We have to make sure, on a daily basis, we are doing what is right," Bartee said.

During his remarks, Bartee also emphasized the importance of being fair and honest with every Soldier, regardless of their background.

He closed by challenging the students to take what they have learned back to their units and fix problems they might find there.

The class is scheduled to be held monthly at COL Q-West and is open to Soldiers holding the rank of sergeant (promotable) and above, said Mitchell.



**Sgt. 1st Class Johnnie Mitchell, the equal opportunity adviser with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), speaks to students Dec. 17 during the first equal opportunity leaders course at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq. Sixteen equal opportunity leaders graduated from the six-day class.**

## Community comes together to help injured Fort Hood officer

STORY AND PHOTO BY CPL. JESSICA HAMPTON  
15TH SUST. BDE. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

FORT HOOD, Texas – Soldiers with the 15th Sustainment Brigade's rear detachment, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) out of Fort Hood, Texas, volunteered Dec. 3 to work with members of the Lowe's Heroes program and the Knights of Columbus to build a wheelchair ramp and deck at the home of Sgt. Kimberly Munley, the civilian military police officer who was injured during the shooting at Fort Hood Nov. 5.

"Our biggest hero right now is Kim and Sgt. (Mark) Todd," said Annjeanette Kuczenski, the project manager and community liaison for Lowe's in Killeen, Texas. "And so we're building a wheelchair ramp and deck for her, so she can be in the backyard with her kids and not be confined to the house."

According to a Dec. 3 Associated Press report, Munley was shot in the leg and hand during the attack, and will remain in a wheelchair until after she undergoes a total knee replacement.

Munley and Todd, "another civilian officer in Fort Hood's police force, are credited with shooting Maj. Nidal Hasan to end the Nov. 5 shooting spree on the Texas Army post, about 150 miles southwest of Fort Worth," according to the AP report. "Todd, 42, was not injured and is already back at work."

Team Wagonmasters became involved in building Munley a ramp through a Soldier whose husband works with Kuczenski, and asked for volunteers.

Soldiers worked alongside employees and retired engineers to build a wheelchair ramp, deck and gazebo for Munley and her family, but the project was shut down due to rain.

"We decided that was not enough," said Pvt. Nathaniel Gopaul, a transportation management coordinator with the 15th Sust. Bde. and a South Jamaica, N.Y., native. "We wanted to finish what we started, so after (3 p.m.) formation on Thursday, we



**Soldiers with the 15th Sustainment Brigade volunteer Dec. 3 to build a gazebo at the home of Sgt. Kimberly Munley, the civilian officer who was injured during the Nov. 5 shootings at Fort Hood, Texas. Munley was shot in the leg and the hand and will require a full knee replacement to leave her wheelchair.**

piled in a car and did what we had to do."

Sgt. Destony Troy, a legal liaison and command finance specialist with the 15th Sust. Bde., volun-

teered to help put the finishing touches on the deck and gazebo.

"When I heard what and where the project was, I had to step in and do something," said Troy, an Odessa, Texas, native. "It was a great honor to do this for someone in my very own neighborhood who did so much for a lot of Soldiers that day."

Kuczenski said they are all family.

"There's really six degrees of separation here," said Kuczenski, whose husband works with Munley.

Gopaul, who works at the 15th Sust. Bde. headquarters building less than a half of a mile from the Soldier Readiness Processing Center where the shooting occurred, said he believes a Soldier's job is to protect the American way of life without asking for anything in return.

"It was fun using power tools, swinging a hammer and working for a good cause," he said. "She not only protected the Soldiers in the center that day, but me and my battle buddies, too ... And for that I am honored to do this for her and her family."

Ron Strasser, a retired engineer with the Knights of Columbus, said the project was a small way to reciprocate the Munley's service to the people of Fort Hood.

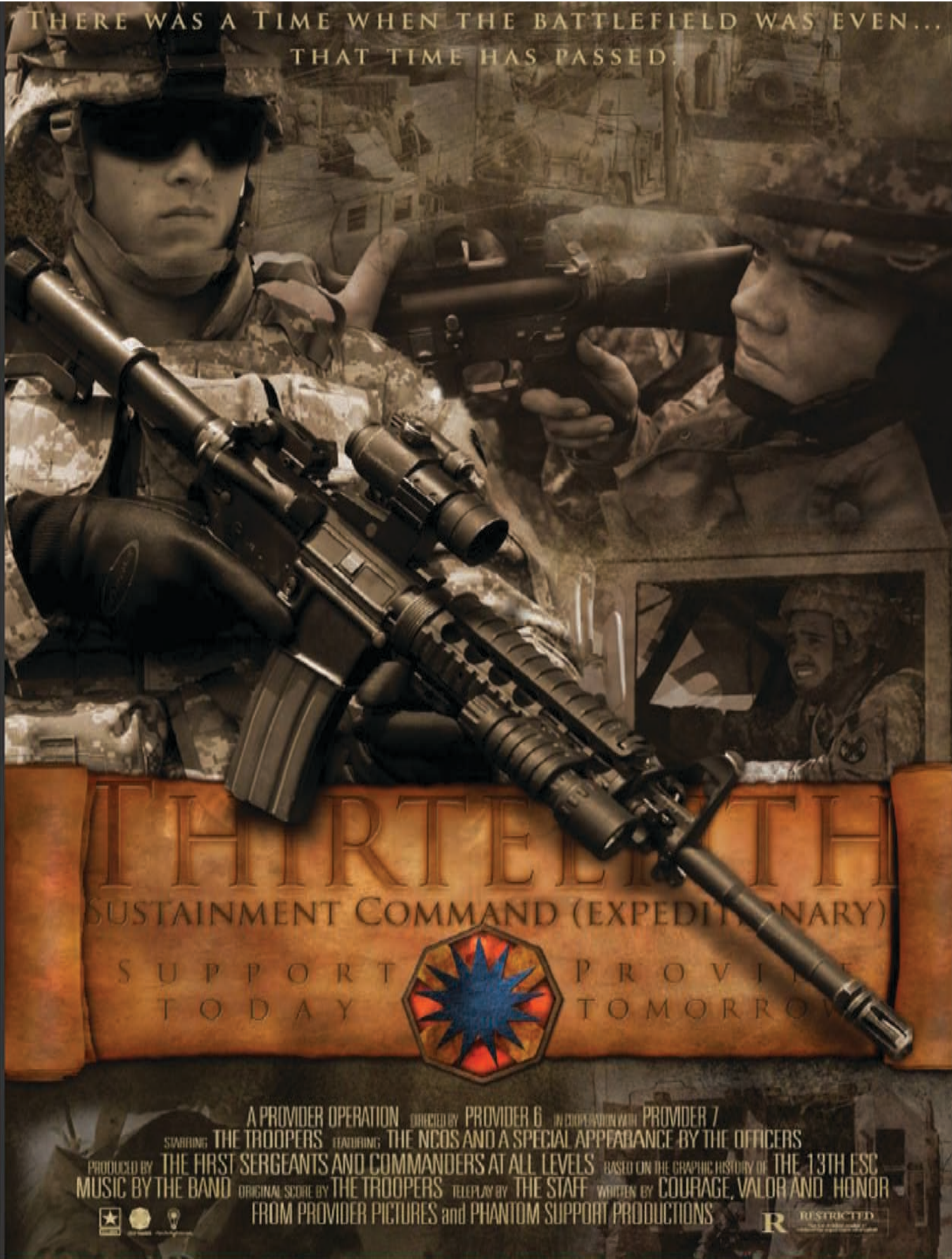
Kuczenski said the community came out in full force for the project.

"I'm really pleased with the finished product and the community response," she said. "It was awesome that the 15th was able to come out, and I look forward to working with them on other community projects."

Munley spoke with Kuczenski at the dedication after the project was finished.

"She said she really appreciated everyone's support and expressed how grateful she was for the 15th Sustainment Brigade being there to help out," said Kuczenski.

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN THE BATTLEFIELD WAS EVEN...  
THAT TIME HAS PASSED.



# THIRTEENTH

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# Wagonmasters meet with old

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SGT. MATTHEW C. COOLEY  
2/198TH COMBINED ARMS

**JEDELLAH SOFLA, Iraq** – Near the southeast corner of Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, lies a small farming village surrounded by arid desert.

Concrete buildings, lit only by sunlight, dot the area, separated by cinderblock and mud walls from sheep, dogs, chickens, cows and rabbits. Large, sand-filled barriers surround everything, separating it from the flat, sandy landscape.

The bleat of sheep, voices of children playing and conversations in Arabic and English were the only audible sounds.

Just outside the village, a line of Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles waited, as Soldiers mingled with dozens of children and men in traditional Iraqi clothing.

Leaders with the 15th Sustainment Brigade Wagonmasters, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), met with local leaders Dec. 16 at the home of Doctor Mohammad, the shaykh of Jedellah Sofla, for introductions and to give gifts to the village's children.

Locals in attendance included Hussen Ismaiel Ahnd, another Jedellah Sofla leader known as a mukhtar, and Hawas Naif, a local leader from Al Hader, Iraq, as well as some of Mohammad's brothers.

The male Soldiers sat with the local leaders telling stories and briefly discussing the situation in the area, while the two female Soldiers visited with the village women in a separate house, as is customary in Iraq.

Mohammad, or "Doc Mo," as he is known to U.S.

Soldiers, had a large dinner of kebabs prepared for the group, which they ate with their hands while standing at a long table.

"My children would love to eat with us today because they love to eat with their hands," said Col. Larry Phelps, the 15th Sust. Bde. commander and Greenville, Ala., native.

In addition to being the shaykh, Mohammad runs a small clinic, has a construction contract with Q-West providing front-end loader and dump truck services, and supports Coalition forces by helping maintain security in the area and acting as intermediary between them and local leaders, said Maj. Roger Jackson, construction officer with the 15th Sust. Bde. and Barbourville, Ky., native.

Chavo, the 15th Sust. Bde.'s local Iraqi linguist, started working with the U.S. Army as a result of Mohammad's work.

In 2003, Mohammad helped Q-West leadership to set up a civil-military operations center outside of Q-West, to help the local population find work and provide the labor forces the military needed.

At the age of 11, Chavo went to the CMOC.

"I met Doc Mo, he was a community leader," Chavo said. "He started helping me a lot ... he found me a job."

Mohammad said Chavo began as a laborer at Q-West, learning English step by step. After his English improved, Mohammad helped him to get work inside the base.

"(When) I brought him, he (was) still very small," Mohammad said.

Helping Coalition forces has not always been easy for the doctor.

Jackson said, "December 2007 is when he hit an IED on his way to Q-West ... causing him to lose both legs and almost his life."

U.S. forces were able to save Mo-

hammad's life, but not his legs, Jackson said.

"He's almost like a brother that I never had," he said. "I was very upset about it."

After his recovery, Mohammad learned to walk on prosthetic legs with the help of crutches and continued to take care of his village and support Coalition forces.

He later began work with the governor of the Ninawa province to secure government funding for the village's school, whose teachers were previously paid through a charitable program started by a U.S. Soldier in 2007, said Jackson.

"Now they're paid by the government," he said.

Mohammad is working with the Iraqi government to obtain medical supplies for his clinic, which used to be supplied by the U.S. Army.

"All the villages around here need this clinic," said Ahnd.

After dinner, Soldiers talked with their hosts and dozens of curious children.

Lt. Col. Mark Paget, deputy commander with the 15th Sust. Bde. and an Orange, Calif., native, gave his watch to one of the children as a sign of goodwill.

"That may be the best investment you've ever made," Phelps told Paget on the ride back to base.

Ahnd gave some of the Soldiers a tour of the livestock, accompanied by a group of smiling children who pulled at the Soldiers' clothing and vied for their attention.

Despite the language barrier, the Soldiers found a way to communicate with their hosts. Capt. Elaina Hill, the 15th Sust. Bde. adjutant and a Fairbanks, Alaska, native, said body language helped with communication.

"You could still understand what they were asking," she said.

Phelps told Mohammad the children were the



A local girl watches Staff Sgt. Stuart Gimble, the 15th Sustainment Brigade personal security detachment platoon sergeant and a Washington native, during a visit by 15th Sust. Bde. leaders Dec. 16 near Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.



Iraqi leaders and 15th Sustainment Brigade Soldiers walk together during a visit by 15th Sust. Bde. leaders Dec. 16 near Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

# friend, bring gifts to children

biggest reason he enjoyed visiting.

All the Soldiers said it was a good experience.

"I'm glad I went, to actually get out there and mingle with the culture," Hill said. "I definitely want to go back."

At the end of the visit, Soldiers brought bags and boxes full of stuffed animals, candy and toys to give to the children. The children laughed and yelled as they scrambled for the toys.

Phelps said he wanted to return to bring school

supplies to the children in the future, that the village children reminded him of his own.

"I miss my kids," he said.

**(Below) Col. Larry Phelps, 15th Sustainment Brigade commander and a Greenville, Ala., native, gives a Wagonmaster coin to Hussen Ismaiel Ahnd, mukhtar of Jedellah Sofla, Iraq, during a Dec. 16 visit by 15th Sust. Bde. leaders.**



**Capt. Elaina Hill, the 15th Sustainment Brigade adjutant and a Fairbanks, Alaska, native, plays with a local Iraqi boy during a visit by 15th Sust. Bde. leaders Dec. 16 near Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.**



**Hussen Ismaiel Ahnd, mukhtar of Jedellah Sofla, Iraq, shows 15th Sustainment Brigade Soldiers around the village during a Dec. 16 visit by 15th Sust. Bde. leaders.**

# Service members go face to face at holiday bash

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SPC. MICHAEL V. CAMACHO  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The stadium was filled with cheers, the sounds of men being pummeled and bodies hitting the mat, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq's X-mas Bash Extravaganza, hosted by 1st Battalion, 155th Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Dec. 19 here at JBB.

The boxing tournament featured seven weight classes and competitors faced people in the same class, said Capt. Brady Williamson, the commander of E Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms.

Spc. Moya Diego, a helicopter maintenance specialist with D Company, 3rd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment and a Clute, Texas, native, took the welter weight (141 pounds to 150 pounds) championship.

Sgt. Antonio Lester, a truck mechanic with the 518th Tactical Installation Network Company and a Statesboro, Ga., native, took the middle weight (156 to 170 pounds) championship.

Spc. Eric Spradley, a combat engineer with A Company, 37th Engineer Battalion and a Cincinnati native, took the cruiser weight (171 pounds to 185) championship.

Airman 1st Class Sean Scott, a radar maintenance specialist with the 727th Expeditionary Air Control Squadron and a Jacksonville, Fla., native, took the light-heavy weight (186 pounds to 205 pounds) championship.

Spc. Russell Bond, an operations assistant with C Company, 7th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment and a Cambia, Ore., native, claimed the heavy weight (205 or more pounds) championship.

Competition inspires service members to stand above the rest, said Williamson, an Oxford, Miss., native.

"Contact sports such as combatives, boxing and martial arts inspire Soldiers to become more physically and mentally fit," he said. "With intense physical training and a competitive event, the Soldiers get a level of focus to push themselves and get into a good fighting shape."

Not all service members are motivated to get in shape solely for an excellent Army physical fitness test score, said Williamson. When a Soldier puts on a pair of gloves and gets into the ring, that is motivating, he said.

Williamson said competitors trained for weeks to prepare for the tournament.

"Preparation and participation in these types of events allow officers, (noncommissioned officers) and junior enlisted (service members) to work together and build camaraderie with their fellow Soldiers in a friendly competitive environment," he said.

Contact sports appeal to a much broader audience, drawing in competitors from all branches, said Williamson.

Williamson said there were varying levels of boxing experience, but many fighters getting into the ring were beginners.

Each match consisted of three, one-minute rounds, with judges deciding the victor. Scores were based on each fighter's effort, technique, skill and performance, he said.

Williamson said safety was a high priority, so medics sat in each corner to check any injuries sustained during the fight. Also, boxers wore protective headgear, mouth guards and 16 oz. gloves.

"Medics and nurses from all over JBB volunteered to assist in pre and



Staff Sgt. Alejandro "P-We" Pedraza, a medical technician with the 332nd Contingency Aero-medical Staging Facility and Los Angeles native, stands ready to fight during the X-Mas Bash Extravaganza Dec. 19 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

post fight needs," he said. "We did not expect any major injuries and there were none."

The only injuries were bruises, bloody noses and headaches, all of which were expected, said Williamson.

Spending time with coworkers and fellow service members at any event is a great morale booster, said Capt. Griselda Cavavos, a clinical nurse with the 332nd Contingency Aero-medical Staging Facility.

"This is awesome," said Cavavos, a Houston native. "We're coming out with our group after work and we're having a good time supporting our guys, so morale is definitely up 150 percent."

As spectators watched, the fighters experienced their own excitement.

"You can't really compare it to other sports, it's one-on-one," said Bond, the heavy

weight champ. "At first, there's a little bit of butterflies and adrenaline but, once you get in and throw a couple punches, it goes away and you get focused on who you're fighting."

More than 30 people signed up to fight in the X-mas Bash Extravaganza and the large crowd showed a lot of support, said Williamson.

"We appreciate all the volunteers, especially with (visiting) cheerleaders and bands on post that night," he said. "All participants and spectators conducted themselves with excellent sportsmanship and military bearing."

Williamson said the 1/155th BCT plans to sponsor more events in the upcoming months, including the Freedom Fight in early February.



Senior Airman Joseph "The Wall" Wallington, a medical technician with the 332nd Contingency Aero-medical Staging Facility, throws a barrage of punches into Senior Airman Bryant Snider, a munitions assistant specialist with the 332nd Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron, during their bout in the X-mas Extravaganza Dec. 19 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.



Spc. Eric Spradley, a combat engineer with A Company, 37th Engineer Battalion and a Cincinnati native, faces off with an opponent during one of the cruiser weight matches at the X-mas Bash Extravaganza boxing tournament Dec 19 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Spradley took the cruiser weight champion title.

# Musicians, comedian, cheerleaders perform at Balad

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. RYAN TWIST  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The Sergeant Major of the Army's Hope and Freedom Tour 2009, brought country music artists Mark Wills and Keni Thomas and four Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders to Sustainer Theater Dec. 19 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

The United Service Organization event also included host Leeann Tweeden, comedian Sheryl Underwood, singer, songwriter and actress Alana Grace, and the U.S. Army band, "Downrange," who traveled to Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan to support the troops during the holiday season.

The musicians held a concert and signed autographs after the show.

"For the last eight years, the office of the sergeant major of the Army has been sponsoring a USO show," said Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston, a Mount Savage, Maryland, native. "(I am) very honored and very humbled to have the opportunity to sponsor a USO trip."

Command Sgt Maj. Mark D. Joseph, with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) out of Fort Hood, Texas, said the event brings morale to the installation and gives the troops an opportunity to see and visit with entertainers, comedians, cheerleaders and band members for free.

"During the holiday season, it is a hard time being separated from family, friends and loved ones," he said. "So this gives (the Army) the opportunity to bring a little bit of home to you here in Iraq."

Joseph said he is grateful the tour comes back annually to spend time with the troops. He said this is his third deployment and his third time seeing the

Hope and Freedom tour.

Airman 1st Class Jami L. Welch, security forces officer with the 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, said the event started well, and only got better as the night wore on.

Welch, a Vacaville, Calif., native, said the interaction between the performers and the crowd was amazing, especially when the cheerleaders came out and pulled service members on stage to help with the show. It helped get them out of their comfort zone and allowed them to forget about where they were for a moment and have some fun, she said.

Welch said she appreciated the fact that many of the performers had some kind of military affiliation. Some are currently serving, some are prior service, and some have family in the military, she said.

"That was cool, because they understand what we're going through," she said. "I'd definitely go back again (to see the show)."

Capt. Willie A. Williams, safety officer with the 13th ESC and a Chesterfield, Va., native, said these events get the troops away from their daily schedule and help boost morale.

"It gets people out of their rooms and, for a little while, gets them thinking about something else other than their jobs and what they have to do," he said.

If he had the opportunity, Williams said he would look forward to seeing the show again.

"I wouldn't miss it," he said.

Col. Frederick Brown, assistant chief of staff for operations with the 13th ESC, said the performers made everyone smile.

"I think each and every one of the performers tonight did a magnificent job," he said. "I think the (Hope and Freedom tour) is the best thing we could have here at JBB to entertain our Soldiers."

The performers traveling with the



**Justine Phillips, a Dallas Cowboy cheerleader, musician Alana Grace and Command Sgt. Maj. Mark D. Joseph, with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) out of Fort Hood, Texas, listen to the Army Band, Downrange, perform at the Sustainer Theater Dec. 19 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The United Service Organization tour traveled to Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan during the holiday season.**

tour sacrificed their time in the United States with their families, and took the time out of their busy holiday schedules to travel overseas and entertain service members, said Brown, a Naches, Miss., native.

Keni Thomas, a country music artist and a Gainesville, Fla., native, said the audience is appreciative of the USO tour.

"We're so happy to be here and they're happy to have us," Thomas said ... "We love it. It's the best show that we get to do."

Meagan Sharp, a Dallas Cowboy cheerleader and a Roanoke, Texas, native, said she was excited when she found out she would have the opportunity to come and perform for the troops.

"We're just really excited," said Sharp. "I think the moment it set in was whenever we were getting all our protective

gear. We're just so excited to be here."

She said she appreciates what service members do, allowing everybody back home to do what they enjoy.

Alana Grace, a musician and Los Angeles native, said she had heard stories about entertaining here and was excited to come and interact with the troops.

"It's important to give back and it's important to boost morale over here," said Grace. "I can't imagine spending a long period of time out here, and seeing what you have to give up to do that, it's incredible."

Brown said events like these help show everybody why troops serve.

"We should continue to have these tours to motivate our Soldiers," he said. "I would like to say this is why we as U.S. Soldiers ... fight every day and defend our country. Because we love the U.S.A. and this is what it's all about."

## Troops decorate dining facility, gym with NFL flags

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
MAJ. GREG ATWOOD  
96TH SUST. BDE.

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Football season has hit the gym and dining facility at Camp Liberty, Iraq, in the form of donated NFL memorabilia.

Capt. Greg Patton, the chaplain with the 620th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a St. Louis, Mo., native, said he wanted to decorate the local gym and dining facility and, because it was close to football season, NFL memorabilia sounded like a good theme.

After the Green Bay Packers sent a care package containing a team flag, Spc. Jared Sanscrainte, the chaplain

assistant and a Circleville, Ohio, native, expanded his requests for memorabilia from just the teams of the Soldiers' home states, to all of the NFL teams.

Sanscrainte said the response thus far has been better than they expected, with 30 of 32 NFL teams donating flags. Some teams also included photos, T-shirts, towels and hats.

"It is a whole lot nicer walking into and working out in the gym now that it is properly decorated," he said.

Sanscrainte said his goal is to see every team in the NFL represented.

"Surprisingly, many of the team owners or coaches have personally donated to the cause," he said.

St. Louis Cardinals' owner, William Bidwell, donated memorabilia. Bidwell served as a chaplain in the U.S. Navy, said Sanscrainte.

Spc. Wesley VanWinkle, a St. Louis

native, worked with Sanscrainte from the beginning and helped him hang the NFL flags from the walls and ceiling of the gym.

"We only have the Dallas Cowboys and the Philadelphia Eagles' team flags left to collect, and we are not giving up," Patton said.

To recognize the teams' contributions, Patton returned the favor by sending American flags that have been flown at Camp Liberty to the teams.

"Many of the teams have been pleased by the return gift," he said. "In fact, the Indianapolis Colts and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers have written back, stating they will proudly display the flags at their home stadium. In the end, the exchanged flags bring a little bit of home to the Soldiers and have given their supporters in the NFL a reminder of the Soldiers that they have helped."



**Spc. Jared Sanscrainte, chaplain assistant and a Circleville, Ohio, native, hangs a donated Jacksonville Jaguars flag in the gym used by the 620th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).**

# Santa makes a run for it at JBB

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
SGT. KEITH S. VAN KLOMPENBERG  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Service members, civilians and Santa braved the cold to participate in the Reindeer Run 10K Dec. 19 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Christmas music played on the speakers at Holt Stadium as runners arrived before the sun appeared, to warm up with a 10K while Santa ran and danced with them.

Races are common at JBB, but this one aimed to be a bit different, said Sgt. Austin Nightingale, an executive administrative assistant with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), who hosted the event.

Nightingale, a Missoula, Mont., native, said he decided to double the length of the average race here at JBB and use a completely different course.

"I'm a runner myself and I wanted to do something different," he said. "The 10-miler was a bit long, so this



**Col. Fredrick Brown, assistant chief of staff for operations with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and Santa (Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Kohles, the noncommissioned officer in charge of Iraqi Security Forces linguists with the 13th ESC) sprint ahead of the pack to start the Reindeer Run 10K Dec. 19 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.**

seemed like a good compromise."

Nightingale said the 13th ESC, which sponsored the event, received a generous donation from Pure Sport,

which supplied towels, water bottles and hundreds of post-workout recovery drinks.

Col. Fredrick Brown, assistant

chief of staff for operations with the 13th ESC and a Natchez, Miss., native, gave the opening remarks just before the sun began to rise, laughing as he did so.

"I want you to remember this day in 10 years," he said. "Someday you'll be telling your grandchildren about the day you ran the JBB 10K."

Santa Claus followed Brown to the podium and provided the crowd with a safety briefing and a promise to pose for pictures afterward.

The race started with Santa and Brown sprinting ahead of hundreds of service members and civilians, but Santa quickly dropped out to provide encouragement to the runners in the form of dancing.

"I only know one dance," said Santa, whose true identity is Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Kohles, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Iraqi Security Forces linguists with the 13th ESC.

Kohles, an Apalachin, N.Y., native, said he enjoyed making appearances for service members as Santa.

"This just cheers them up during the holidays," he said. "I give them a chance to laugh."

# Q-West Soldiers celebrate the holidays

BY 1ST LT. DANIELLE R. GORDON  
395TH CSSB

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – Though only a handful of Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 395th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion will be home for the holidays this year, the spirit of Christ-

mas still found its way to Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

The HHC, 395th CSSB, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) halls have been decked, the desks adorned with sparkling Christmas trees and windows ornamented with snowmen and snowflakes. Though some in the Connecticut-based unit crave a nostalgic, white Christmas, other Soldiers said they were happy to be warm this time of year.

Along with tinsel and snowflakes, care packages are sent from throughout the United States, from families and organizations dedicated to taking care of deployed service members.

"It's amazing to me still, after seven years (in Iraq), the amount of prayer and love that is extended to us," said Capt. Amy Noble, the battalion's chaplain. "I'm sure everyone will gain five pounds of love this holiday season."

Though the Soldiers will not gather

around a tree Christmas morning with their Families, the mail is abundant with holiday cards from home, said Pfc. Phillip Makowski, an information system specialist and mail clerk.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Teri Watkins, a battalion logistics civil augmentation program officer, offered advice to get Soldiers through the holidays.

"Never lose the child-like wonder of Christmas," said Watkins.

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# Transforming conventional into creative: discovering, designing 'bright crystals' of contradiction



**"The Stress Doc"**  
**Mark Gorkin**

These days everyone wants to be creative, to think outside of the box, but how do you walk the talk?

As a workshop leader who often tries to give organizations a "Jolt of CPR: Being Creative, Passionate and

Risk-Taking," let me share one concept that just might be an integral component of creative thinking and problem-solving.

To expand your worldview and problem-solving vision, consider these seven cognitive complexity keys for transforming the conventional into the creative:

a. Challenge the conventional. To think in the opposite reveals a willingness to confront the conventional and the accepted or even "the respected authority."

While some view this as defiance, others see a delicious opportunity. As von Oech wryly noted in his classic on creativity, "A Whack On the Side of the Head": "Sacred cows make great steaks." Or, more potently and paradoxically, consider the pioneering 20th century artist, Pablo Picasso's refrain: "Every act of creation is first of all an act of destruction."

Sometimes thinking outside of the box is not sufficient.

To start fresh and be fertile, you may have to blow up the sucker, or at least be willing to challenge some traditional or foundational assumptions.

To seek a higher truth, one may have to look at the oppositional with a more complex, ironical or even volatile mind's eye and become more comfortable with seeming contradiction.

Hot ice anyone?

b. Recognize yin-yang perspective. This Eastern symbol depicts a complex truth: that seeming opposites don't necessarily result in division or separation, but potentially flow into each other forming a greater, interconnected whole.

Also, the symbol illustrates how a small circle of contradiction embedded in its opposite – as represented by a small black dot in the largest part of the white flowing amoeba-like space or a small white dot in the largest part of the black flowing amoeba-like space – is seeding the emergence of its counterpoint. That is, the white space ultimately transforms into black space and the black into white.

Finally, what about this seemingly contradictory example: have you ever had a fair fight with a close friend or partner? You both express angry feelings, each one says his or her piece without wanting to rub the other's face in the mud, and, lo and behold, once feeling genuinely heard – even with-

out reaching total agreement – the anger begins to subside, replaced by a sense of relief, sure, but also some intimacy, perhaps even trust.

c. Develop forest and trees, tactics and strategy. Oppositional thinking is not simply reactive.

By definition, it's positioning one concept in juxtaposition or relation to another – such as by quality, e.g., "wet vs. dry," quantity, e.g., "large" vs. "small" or by position, "above vs. below" or "hill vs. valley." That is, oppositional perspective challenges you to see multiple points of view, including your antagonist's mindset – which may facilitate understanding and empathy or even give you advantage in terms of short-term tactics and long-term strategy.

Creative problem solving requires some feel for details (the trees), but you also want a sense of the big picture (the forest).

Grappling with polarity encourages the rejection of simplistic black or white, and good or bad thinking. A capacity to make discriminations, to see shades of gray and, especially, examining both sides of an issue is critical for being a guide on the cutting edge. Remember, these days, if you're not living on the edge you're taking up way too much space.

d. Blend the analytic and the empathic. Oppositional processing also means building a mind bridge within, harnessing your masculine and feminine energy, using your head and heart, or, according to one neuropsychological researcher, cultivating "bi-hemispheric peace of minds."

Of course, the different sides of the brain-personality are not always in perfect harmony. On a personal level and in the performance arena, I need time and space for my manic, out there, stage persona. But I also must have room for being a sometimes melancholy or a frequently introspective and analytically insightful cave dweller.

Alas, sometimes one soars then crashes or at least burns or runs out of energy before the rejuvenation cycle kicks in.

But when I have both these energy – mind and mood – sources cooking and interacting, when my heated passion is tempered with cool purpose and hard-earned perspective ... then I'm "Touched with Fire" (the title of a book by psychologist and best-selling author, Kay Redfield Jamison).

e. Pay homage to Janus, F. Scott and A. North. Many people in the arts and sciences have recognized the importance of reconciling seeming opposition to achieve a sense of wholeness or enriched integration – what Albert Rothenberg called "Janusian Thinking."

This cognitive process was named for the dual and opposite profiled, Roman deity, Janus, whose image was often found on gates and doorways. And appropriately, Janus was the god of "beginnings and endings" and of "leavings and returns." Consider my Janusian-like linguistic loop of

beginnings and separations: "One must begin to separate ... one must be separate to begin."

Moving from the mythic to the more contemporary, thinkers of all stripes, including Nobel Prize-winning physicist, Alfred North Whitehead and acclaimed 20th century author, F. Scott Fitzgerald, have embraced the latter's ideas about the significance of grappling with opposition: "The test of a first-rate intelligence is the capacity to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time and still retain the ability to function. For example, one should see things as hopeless yet determined to make them otherwise." Sounds like another leading edge mantra.

f. Explore and express text and context. As a word artist – both on the page and on stage – the importance of grappling with text and context is inescapable.

Text is the on its face data or utility of a message, while one notion of context is the envelope of personal, interpersonal, cultural, historical background or circumstance in which the message is embedded, thereby providing or coloring its full meaning and significance.

The best communicators understand that, in yin-yang fashion, both text and context, along with substance and style and a forest and trees perspective must be accounted for if real meaning is to be gleaned, or if message sent is to be message received.

Can you relate to this vexing example of one-dimensional information flow? Have you ever received directions for assembling a product with only verbal instructions and no supportive images?

Of course, accurately receiving a message is only half the battle. The cutting edge communicator is not simply passionate but also knows how to deliver a message, especially by telling a story. According to Daniel Pink, in his book, "A Whole New Brain," most of our thinking and our knowledge are organized as stories. Storytelling is the ability to place facts in context and to deliver them with emotional impact. A story blends high concept and high touch. Stories are high concept because they sharpen our understanding of one thing by showing it in the context of something else, a basic tool for understanding.

Finally, as James Lukaszewski, founder of The Lukaszewski Group Inc., a crisis communication firm, observed in a recent speech: "Telling stories is far more powerful than all of the studies, analyses, data and information piled together on any given subject you can name. Data is debatable; stories permit everyone who hears, sees or reads to make up their own minds from their own perspectives. Great leaders tell great stories. Stories help others learn to be leaders. ... Be a storyteller and you'll become known for being helpful, memorable and a source of inspiration, insight, as well

as self-evident truths."

g. Generate and tolerate thesis-antithesis tension. When trying to reconcile the seemingly irreconcilable, you may experience what psychiatrist, Richard Rabkin, called a state of "thrustration," which I defined thusly: "Thrustration occurs when you're torn between thrusting ahead with direct action and frustration as you haven't quite put together the pieces of the puzzle."

Some are not able to tolerate such tension.

However, if you can stay with such cognitive tension and confusion, the angst just may fire the right hemisphere of your brain with the potential for sparking metaphorical images and analogies along with surprising and paradoxical visual puns. The reward may be worth the risk.

Closing Summary

A conceptual framework for turning on your creative brain has been outlined. Seven paradoxical, mind-expanding tools were illustrated:

- Challenge the Conventional,
- Recognize Yin-Yang Perspective,
- Develop Forest and Trees, Tactics and Strategy,
- Blend the Analytic and the Empathic
- Pay Homage to Janus, F. Scott and A. North,
- Explore and Express Text and Context, and
- Generate and Tolerate Thesis-Antithesis Tension.

So, learn to discover and design bright crystals of contradiction. You will transform conventional cognition and communication into imaginative, insightful and multifaceted understanding and adaptation – the hallmarks of creative connection.

This connection manifests in two domains: 1) the intrapersonal realm of mind-mood/mania-melancholia/heatedpassion-cool purpose interplay, bi-hemispheric peace of minds and the "Aha!" experience and 2) in the interpersonal realm of empathy and emotional intelligence.

**Mark Gorkin, LICSW, "The Stress Doc"**™, is an acclaimed keynote and kick-off speaker, training/OD and team building consultant, psychotherapist and "motivational humorist." He is the author of "Practice Safe Stress: Healing and Laughing in the Face of Stress, Burnout & Depression" and "The Four Faces of Anger: Transforming Anger, Rage, and Conflict into Inspiring Attitude & Behavior." A kickoff speaker for Estrin Legal Education Conferences, the Doc is America Online's online psychohumorist™ and pioneer of a USA Today Online "HotSite" – <http://www.stressdoc.com> – recognized as a workplace resource by National Public Radio. For more info on the Doc's speaking and training programs and products, email [stressdoc@aol.com](mailto:stressdoc@aol.com) or call 301-875-2567.

# Logistical training, advisory team returns to Marez

By PFC. JOHN G. KING  
15TH SUST. BDE.

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION MAREZ, Iraq – The 515th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Logistical Training and Advisory Team returned to Contingency Operating Location Marez, Iraq, early this month after four months in Al Kasik.

Capt. Edward Gonzales, the team chief and officer in charge of the LTAT, Sgt. 1st Class Salomon Trujillo, the linguist manager and noncommissioned officer in charge, and Sgt. Ernest Archuleta, the training NCO, all with the 515th CSSB, rejoined their fellow New Mexico National Guardsmen from the Al Kasik base, which is controlled by the Iraqi Army.

The purpose of the LTAT is to help train and assist the Iraqi Army to become independent before U.S. troops withdraw from the country. The primary training conducted by the LTAT included military vehicles and ordering proper maintenance supplies from the warehouse, said Gonzalez a Corrales, N.M., native.

An additional part of their mission is to provide vehicle maintenance services



Courtesy photo

Sgt. 1st Class Salomon Trujillo, the linguist manager and noncommissioned officer in charge with the 515th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion's Logistical Training and Advisory Team and an Albuquerque, N.M., native, explains a reference binder to a maintenance shop worker with the help of a translator at Al Kasik, Iraq.

for the 2nd and 3rd Iraqi Armed Forces Divisions, he said.

Gonzales, who supervised the LTAT operations at Al Kasik and had previous work experience with foreign military groups, said he enjoyed his time with the IA and being a part of daily Iraqi life.

"The Iraqis are hard workers who make sure to complete their mission," he said.

In addition to training the Iraqi personnel on vehicle maintenance, Archuleta, a Carrizozo, N.M., native, said he trained dining facility workers on proper sanitation and cleanliness of the workspace.

Trujillo, an Albuquerque, N.M., native, served as the maintenance shop supervisor and ensured Iraqi armed forces had everything they needed to complete their jobs properly. He received help from their team of translators to create numerous binders that listed vehicle parts and their stock numbers as visual aids and ordering references, he said.

Al Kasik is the first IA base to go into an overwatch phase, which means it will have only occasional visits from U.S. troops to ensure that they are progressing as an independent force.

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## Quilts with Love sends Soldiers touch of home

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
CAPT. VINCENT CERCIONE  
96TH SUST. BDE.

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Even the desert gets cold in the winter, and service members' Families stateside know Army sleeping bags cannot beat the comforts of home.

Maggie Jones, the mother of Chief Warrant Officer 2 Deron Jones, a maintenance technician with 1st Maintenance Company, 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), received a call in September 2003 that she said changed her life completely. Deron Jones, an Ogden, Kan., native, had asked his wife for blankets from home, so she called Maggie

Jones for a homemade quilt. Forty quilts later, Quilts with Love was founded.

"I was expecting just a fleece blanket," said Deron Jones. "But my mom thought I should have something better."

As word got out about Deron Jones' quilt, requests for more quilts for deployed service members poured in. Maggie and her friends agreed that any Soldier serving should receive this touch of home, so they created Quilts with Love.

Volunteers from around the country help by providing supplies and even creating the logo for each blanket.

"We are a small group of ladies, but we do a lot of work," said Maggie Jones, a Republic, Mo., native. "All the quilts are made and filled with our love and support for all the troops – whether they receive a quilt or not. They are made to use to keep warm, to know our love and support."

The Army-issued sleeping bag just

does not have the feel of home for service members deployed 6,500 miles away, said Capt. Scott Burnett, the battalion communications officer and an Oklahoma City native.

"The phenomenal gesture boosts their morale," says Staff Sgt. Jose Castro, a mechanic with the 260th CSSB and a Junction City, Kan., native, who has assisted Deron Jones to ensure Soldiers receive the extra special gifts.

Quilts with Love sends quilts to Iraq and Afghanistan, and will send them wherever Soldiers or their Families request.

The quilts are free for service members, but the organization requests a note from them if time allows, Maggie Jones said.

"We send paper and addressed envelopes with the quilts to help make it easier for them if they choose to do so," she said. "These are letters we have received from

grateful Soldiers, reminding us how very much they appreciate that 'hug of love' and support from a snugly reminder of home."

The organization set up Internet user groups and a Web site, and will accept donations ranging from money and supplies to time and skills, but never once asked a Soldier to pay. To date, Quilts with Love has distributed more than 1,600 quilts and their number keeps climbing.

"The ladies do a great job," said Deron Jones. "It not only helps keep the Soldiers warm, but gives them a little piece of home."

Maggie Jones said she and her friends continue out of appreciation for service members.

"This project fills our hearts with so much joy," she said, which is a reflection of Quilts with Love's motto: "Keeping them warm, keeping us safe."

TELL YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS HOW MUCH YOU MISS THEM

E-mail: expeditionarytimes@iraq.centcom.mil

# Sudoku

The objective is to fill the 9×9 grid so each column, each row and each of the nine 3×3 boxes contains the digits from 1 to 9 only one time each.

Last week's answers

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 9 | 1 |
| 4 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 8 | 2 |
| 6 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 4 | 5 | 7 | 3 |
| 1 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 9 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 4 |
| 3 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 8 |
| 9 | 5 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 7 | 1 | 6 |
| 8 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 9 |
| 5 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 7 |
| 2 | 7 | 1 | 9 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 5 |

Level: Hard

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 2 |   |   |   |   | 4 |   | 1 |
|   | 3 |   | 7 |   |   | 6 |   | 2 |
|   |   |   |   |   | 4 |   | 7 |   |
| 1 |   |   | 6 |   |   | 3 | 5 | 4 |
|   |   |   |   | 7 |   |   |   |   |
| 9 | 5 | 2 |   |   | 8 |   |   | 6 |
|   | 4 |   | 5 |   |   |   |   |   |
| 5 |   | 3 |   |   | 1 |   | 4 |   |
| 2 |   | 1 |   |   |   | 6 | 5 |   |

# TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. Who wrote “Breakfast At Tiffany’s”?
2. Which writer of horrific happenings was himself involved in a road accident while out walking in 1999?
3. What type of jungle animal was Shere Khan?
4. What was Ian Fleming’s first novel?
5. What was the first book in the Goosebumps series?

1. Truman Capote 2. Stephen King 3. Tiger 4. “Casino Royale” 5. “Welcome To Dead House”

# JB BALAD WORSHIP SERVICES

TRADITIONAL - Sunday

|                                 |                                    |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 0200 Air Force Hospital Chapel  | 0930 Provider Chapel               |
| 1030 Freedom Chapel (West side) | 1100 Castle Heights (Bldg. 7562)   |
| 1400 Air Force Hospital Chapel  | 1730 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6) |

GOSPEL - Sunday

|                                    |                                 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1100 MWR East Building             | 1200 Freedom Chapel (West Side) |
| 1230 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6) |                                 |

1900 Provider Chapel

CONTEMPORARY- Sunday

|                                    |                                 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 0900 Chapel- Next Iraq/MWR East    |                                 |
| 1030 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6) |                                 |
| 1400 Castle Heights (Bldg. 7562)   | 1900 Freedom Chapel (West Side) |

Wednesday

2000 Gilbert Memorial Chapel

LITURGICAL (Episcopal, Anglican, Presbyterian) - Sunday

1700 Provider Chapel

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST - Saturday

1000 Provider Chapel

CHURCH OF CHRIST - Sunday

1530 Castle Heights (Bldg. 7562)

LATTER DAY SAINTS (MORMON)- Sunday

|                                    |                                 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1300 Provider Chapel               | 1530 Freedom Chapel (West side) |
| 1900 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6) |                                 |

MASS - Saturday

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6) |  |
| 2000 Freedom Chapel (West Side)    |  |

Sunday 0830 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

1100 Provider Chapel

1100 Air Force Hospital

Thursday

1100 Air Force Hospital

Mon., Wed., Fri.

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

Monday-Friday

1130 555th Engineer Bde. (Bldg. 7200)

JEWISH SHABBAT SERVICES- Friday

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

Saturday

0930 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

1700 Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

ISLAMIC PRAYER - Friday

1230 Provider Chapel

PAGAN/WICCAN FELLOWSHIP - Thursday

1900 The Shack

Saturday

1900 The Shack

GREEK ORTHODOX - Sunday

0900 Provider Annex

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CALL:

Gilbert Chapel: 443-7703

Provider Chapel: 433-2430

Freedom Chapel: 443-6303

# JB BALAD ACTIVITIES

INDOOR

POOL

Swim Lessons: Mon., Wed., - 6 p.m.

Tue., Thu., Sat., - 6:30 p.m.

AquaTraining: Tue., Thu., - 7:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m.

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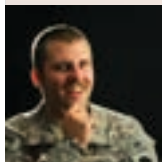
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# Arts & Entertainment

## 'Invictus,' more about sports than apartheid

BY SGT. JAYSON A. HOFFMAN  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



Clint Eastwood's ("Gran Torino") latest directorial effort turned out to be more about the 1995 Rugby World Cup than about Nelson Mandela's struggle to lead his country through apartheid, but it's worth a watch.

Although slow at times, this movie shows the great effect a sports moment can have on people.

"Invictus" is the story of Nelson Mandela's (Morgan Freeman) rise to power in South Africa and how, with the help of an underdog international rugby team, he plans to lead his coun-

try through the apartheid. He soon befriends the captain of the South African Springboks rugby team, Francois Pienaar (Matt Damon) and inspires the poorly performing team to win the World Cup for the future of South Africa.

Rugby in South Africa was considered a sport affluent whites played, whereas soccer was considered a sport that struggling blacks played, adding to the frustration between the two races during years of racial segregation.

Mandela worked to convince the entire country to support the Springboks, bringing the people together in a shared hope for victory. Mandela saw this as a step in uniting his torn nation.

Freeman ("Unforgiven") delivers one of his best performances to date as Mandela, but the direction the film took into the feel-good sports realm hindered him from really delving into the true character of Mandela. We get to see how Mandela understands the people and how he sees forgiveness as the only way to heal his nation. However, the film failed to really capitalize on his struggles, both during a 30-year imprisonment and when he became the nation's first democratically elected president after the end of apartheid.

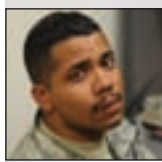
Damon ("The Bourne Identity") delivers a solid performance as the leader of a rugby club that many didn't think had a chance in advancing in the World Cup, let alone winning it.

Although this movie missed many opportunities to show the true heroic efforts of Mandela, it was still a solid sports movie. It managed to elevate the importance of a sports moment from just a victory into a unifying event. Everyone knows the outcome of most sports movies going into the theater (underdog defeats impossibly tough opponent), but Eastwood still did a solid job of keeping me on the edge of my seat until the final whistle.

As a fan of rugby, it was nice to see a film on the big screen about a sport misunderstood in America. While "Invictus" is not a great biopic, or a great sports movie, it touched on enough heart-warming themes to make this slow-paced film worth watching.

## 'Watchmen': New movie renews love for classic graphic novel

BY SPC. MICHAEL V. CAMACHO  
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



After reading a fresh release of the classic graphic novel "Watchmen," I've decided my Christmas gift to myself will be the movie's director's cut, released in November.

The film's initial launch was in March – I saw it in theaters the week it came out. I watched the previews every day for months before that, and the movie sent chills down my spine.

I am not alone. In its first weekend, "Watchmen" grossed more than \$55 million at the box office.

In my research into the movie, I discovered that "Watchmen" was a 12-part

graphic novel by writer Alan Moore, artist Dave Gibbons and colorist John Higgins, and published by DC Comics in 1986 and 1987. It was later condensed into a stand-alone graphic novel, listed on Time Magazine's All-Time 100 Novels alongside greats such as "The Lord of the Flies," "The Great Gatsby" and "The Lord of the Rings."

Unlike many recent comic adaptations, "Watchmen" is faithful to its original storyline. Discrepancies between the graphic novel and movie were unavoidable in translating the writing and illustration from the novel's visual style into a live-action movie.

A quick history lesson borrowed from the novel:

In the 1940s, vigilantes took to the streets to fight off criminals and masterminds who ran rampant. As they strove to

make a difference, a generation embraced its new heroes.

Years later, laws illegalized the vigilantes, forcing them to take off their masks and hang up their capes. Only two government-sponsored vigilantes remained in service. A third, Rorschach, a troubled, rogue vigilante with a black and white view of good and evil, defends the innocent and kills wrongdoers.

The story is set in 1985, during former President Richard Nixon's third term, after a sound American victory in the Vietnam War. The book's world is darker, and citizens have become disillusioned with the masked heroes.

When Edward Blake, also called The Comedian, is murdered, Rorschach works to uncover what he thinks may be a sinister plot.

Moore's heroes are laced with flaws, mental quirks and deep-seated personal issues. This creates depth of character and also shows that these vigilantes may be the lesser of two evils, simply by supporting a just cause.

The story is well-written and, coupled with Gibbons' art and an array of visual elements that really only work in a graphic novel, does well to weave the main storyline with a comic within the comic – "The Dark Freightier."

Although "Watchmen" characters mirror many of those typical to DC Comics, Moore's story gives a dark and troubled look into the lives and minds of those who defend us against evil.

I enjoyed the movie, but I highly recommend fans read the book for the deeper story the film could never reproduce.

## PVT MURPHY



### Sustainer Reel Time Theater

#### Wednesday, Dec. 30

5 p.m. Avatar  
8 p.m. The Men Who Stare At Goats

#### Thursday, Dec. 31

5 p.m. The Fourth Kind  
8 p.m. Did You Hear About The Morgans?

#### Friday, Jan. 1

2 p.m. 2012  
5 p.m. Sherlock Holmes  
8:30 p.m. Theater Reserved for New Year Program

#### Saturday, Jan. 2

2 p.m. Planet 51  
5 p.m. Sherlock Holmes  
8 p.m. Alvin and Chipmunks: The Squeakquel

#### Sunday, Jan. 3

2 p.m. Sherlock Holmes  
5 p.m. Alvin And Chipmunks: The Squeakquel  
8 p.m. 2012

#### Monday, Jan. 4

5 p.m. Pirate Radio  
8 p.m. Planet 51

#### Tuesday, Jan. 5

5 p.m. 2012  
8 p.m. Sherlock Holmes

#### Wednesday, Jan. 6

5 p.m. Pirate Radio  
8 p.m. 2012



# PHOTOS AROUND IRAQ



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Eileen Kelly Fors

**Soldiers with the 145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, capture images and video of the 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery, 3rd Striker Brigade Combat Team, 3rd 2nd Infantry Division, firing rounds to calibrate an M777 Howitzer Dec. 8 at Contingency Operating Location Warhorse, Diyala Province, Iraq.**



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Advin Ila-Medina

**An Iraqi Soldier places a grenade on the ground during a weapon cache parade Dec. 8 at Contingency Operating Location Constitution, Baghdad. All the weapons found within the last month were brought out to be inventoried by the Iraqi Army officers.**



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Canaan Radcliffe

**Soldiers with E Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, instruct Iraqi Police during a mission to conduct U.S. weapons familiarization training Oct. 19 at Altun Kupri, Iraq.**



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Eileen Kelly Fors

**A Soldier with the 3rd Striker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, pulls security during a training exercise Dec. 11 in the Diyala Province, Iraq.**



U.S. Army photo by Spc. David C. Innes Jr.

**Soldiers with the 1st Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, and Iraqi Army Soldiers with the 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 1st Federal Police Division, search the river banks for improvised explosive devices during a cordon and search mission Dec. 12 at known historical cache sites for Operation Iron Warrior II, Baghdad.**



U.S. Army photo by Specialist Ernest E. Siva III

**Iraqi Army Soldiers in training, at the Tallil Training Center, participate in an obstacle course as part of their physical fitness test Dec. 7 at Camp Ur, Dhi Qar, Iraq. Soldiers have to meet minimum requirements in sprints, push-ups, sit-ups, and an obstacle course for their physical fitness test.**

# NEWS AROUND IRAQ

## Croatia donates explosives detection dogs to Iraq

BAGHDAD – Representatives from Croatia delivered six explosives detection dogs to Iraqi officers at the Baghdad International Airport Dec. 16.

The Iraqi Police, who will take the dogs and orient them to their new home here, accompanied the five German shepherds and one Belgian shepherd from the airport.

The dogs were all trained in a center in Dugo Selo, near Zagreb.

The contribution is part of the NATO Training Mission – Iraq donation program. NATO advisers work with the Iraqi government to identify training needs and coordinate requests for equipment and support through the security ministries.

Italian Maj. Gen. Giuseppe Spinelli, deputy commander of NTM-I, said, “I believe this is an important step forward in our effort to actively support the Iraqi Security Forces in their critical mission to protect the citizens by preventing terrorist attacks.”

## Comptrollers discuss budget challenges with Ministry of Defence

BAGHDAD – The American Society of Military Comptrollers, Desert Eagle Chapter meeting Dec. 9 opened dialogue with the Iraq Ministry of Defence, directorate general for intelligence, and security financial managers.

Audrea Nelson, CDFM/resources adviser for the Iraq Training and Advisory Mission for Intelligence, provided an overview of the full spectrum of the ITAM-INTEL resources and financial management advising role provided to DGIS.

Iraqi and U.S. military comptrollers gained a better understanding of how to improve daily financial operations through dialog, said Nelson.

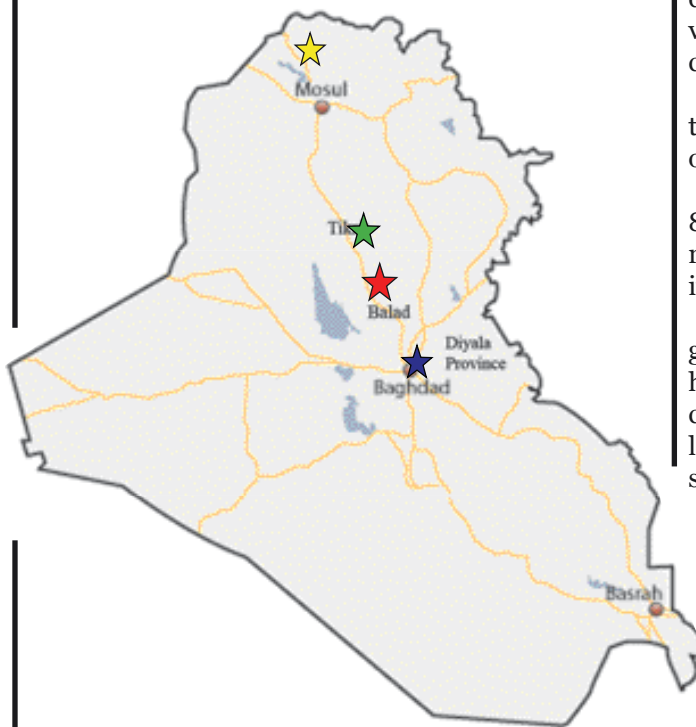
Lt. Col. Emad Youssef Elias, director of budget and requests, emphasized that Iraq relies on oil revenues in projecting available funding for the nation. Due to continued shortfalls in oil revenue generation, Emad said Iraq faces budget constraints.

Because of the lack of surplus funds, it is imperative that every MoD organization closely monitor budget execution, said Emad.

Staff Brig. Gen. Mahmoud Rashid Fayat, director for administrative affairs, expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to share information with the ASMC members.

In a related event, the ribbon cutting ceremony for the DGIS headquarters, a \$34.7 million infrastructure project gifted to Iraq by the U.S. Government was held Dec. 14.

“(Iraq) is most grateful for the contributions the



U.S. has provided in rebuilding Iraq’s capacity,” said Mahmoud.

U.S. Air Force Lt. Justin Gabbard, president of the ASMC Desert Eagle Chapter, thanked Staff Brig. Gen. Mahmoud and his team of comptrollers for engaging in the discussions.

“It was a humbling experience to listen to some of the obstacles the DGIS financial managers are faced with in securing annual budgets and in maintaining financial transparency,” he said.

## Iraqi Ministry of Justice receives key to new training center

BAGHDAD – Holding a 3-foot wooden key – a symbol of a future of hope and the development of a safe and secure Iraq – Multi-National Forces – Iraq transferred control of the new multi-million dollar training facility from U.S. forces to the Ministry of Justice, the Iraqi Corrections System, and ultimately to the people of Iraq Dec. 15 at Camp Victory, near Baghdad.

The new Iraqi Corrections Training Center, near Baghdad, was constructed to consolidate Iraqi correctional training sites into one location and provide full-spectrum training for Iraqi correctional officers and students.

“The idea was simple,” said Brig. Gen. David Quantock, commanding general of Task Force 134, in his remarks to the more than 200 attendees at the ceremony. “(To) improve the capacity and capability of the Iraqi corrections service (we needed to) develop a state-of-the-art facility that can train and teach all correctional disciplines.”

To run a correctional facility you need more than guards, said Quantock.

“You need mid-level supervisors, you need wardens, you need engineers and you need administra-

tors,” he said. “This facility will be able to accommodate all those requirements and provide a training venue that allows for the development of a first-rate correctional officer.”

The \$28 million corrections training facility has the capacity to train and house nearly 1,000 students or correctional officers.

The center has four computer labs with more than 80 computers, a non-lethal firing range, 13 classrooms, a dining facility and a mock correctional facility that replicates a real prison.

Civilians, Soldiers and contractors of the Gulf Region District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq have worked for months, side-by-side with Iraqis, to create a center that would impact the people of Iraq long after the engineers leave the area, in line with the security pact signed with the Government of Iraq.

Robert Medlock, Gulf Region District project manager for the new Iraqi Corrections Training Center, said this facility is critical to the training of Iraqi Correctional Officers (ICOs) who will become the first line of security for the detainees that have been secured in Iraq.

“This facility will help train, teach, prepare and motivate the ICOs to do a job that few can do,” said Medlock.

Col. Dan Anninos, commander of GRD, responsible for the reconstruction efforts in Central and Northern Iraq, said the professionalism and commitment to excellence of the entire team of Iraqis as they worked together with U.S. forces, has been key to the success of this project as well as that in providing the citizens of Iraq a stable, secure and sovereign country.

“I am thankful for a workforce of American and Iraqi professionals that dares to dream of things that never were and make them real,” Anninos said. “Thousands of our facilities and trained Iraqi associates were nothing more than figures on a spreadsheet at one time.

“Today, they are a reality due to the hard work and deep commitment of our team – the key to the development of a safe and secure Iraq.”

Although extremely proud of the completed facility, the actual structures were not the most important thing to Medlock, he said.

“Being a part of this historic event and helping the people of Iraq create and sustain their own viable government and infrastructures has made today that much more special,” he said. “I am privileged to have been a part of such an event by being a member of the elite force of Corps of Engineers team members.”

## Iraqi Directorate General for Intelligence, Security opens new headquarters facility

BAGHDAD – Iraq’s Ministry of Defence held a ribbon cutting ceremony Dec. 14 in Baghdad for a new 13,900 square meter headquarters facility for the Directorate General for Intelligence and Security.

Maj. Gen. Richard Rowe, Iraq Training and Advisory Mission director, said, “(DGIS) will provide a world class facility to bring their whole team together and allow the organization to (better) focus on their mission.”

DGIS would serve as the heart of the intelligence

community for the MoD and will be central to collection, synthesis, processing and dissemination of intelligence. The DGIS compound consolidates intelligence agencies and offices into a secure, modern facility, the director general for DGIS said.

He said, "We are humbled by and grateful for this magnificent gift from the United States to Iraq. It is an important symbol of the friendship between our countries and will be important to our continuing fight against the terrorists trying to influence Iraq."

## Iraqi Air Force marks major milestones

 TIKRIT, Iraq – The Iraqi Air Force celebrated the arrival of four training aircraft, a ground breaking for a new air traffic control tower, and the handover of facilities for an air college Dec. 16 in Tikrit, Iraq.

Abd Al-Qadir Al-Mufriji, the Iraqi minister of defense, was joined by Iraqi Staff Lt. Gen. Anwar Hamad Amen Ahmed, Iraqi Air Force commander, U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Michael Barbero, Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq commander, and a host of other senior Iraqi and U.S. military officials to commemorate all three events.

"Today marks a major milestone in rebuilding the Iraqi Air Force and the security of Iraq," said Barbero. "Much work remains, but the Iraqi Air Force continues to make significant progress, and today is another step forward."

The aircraft are the first of 15 T-6As to be used as a stepping stone toward training Iraqi pilots to handle more advanced multi-role fighters the air force would use in the future to protect Iraqi airspace. This \$210 million joint U.S./Iraq venture provides the aircraft to the Iraqi Air Force, along with flight simulators and associated training.

The first eight, purchased by the Government of Iraq, are scheduled to arrive at Tikrit by the end of January 2010. The last seven, purchased by the United States, are expected by the end of December 2010.

The construction of a new air traffic control tower at Tikrit, slated to be completed in the latter half of 2010, will provide the base with critical airspace control for its pilot training environment. The tower is designed at nine floors high and will incorporate an air traffic controller simulator in the base of the tower itself for on-site controller training.

In support of the new Iraqi air college that is scheduled to offer its first courses in January 2010, U.S. forces handed nine buildings to the Iraqis to be used as dormitories for student pilots.

Eventually, the entire college facility will be Iraqi operated and will have a capacity of up to 1,500 students learning in various levels of academic and flight training at any given time.

## Iraqi signal school celebrates second graduation

 TAJI, Iraq – The 1st Iraqi Army Division graduated 29 Soldiers from the second in a series of Iraqi Army Tactical Communications Center courses Dec. 9 at Taji, Iraq.

Training for the Soldiers began Nov. 8, with a two-day block of basic communication skills, followed by a 10-day portion comprised of theory and practical classroom instruction on the Harris and SINCGARS radios.

After students learned the role of the tactical communications center and how it supports the division command, they completed the course with a full-scale field exercise.

"The Iraqi Signal School has come a long way to improving their quality of instruction," said Master Sgt. Scott Parks, Iraq Training and Advising Mission – Army adviser to the school.

Instead of a formal graduation ceremony, the students demonstrated their newly acquired skills to members of the Iraqi Ministry of Defence, Iraqi Ground Forces Command, and key leaders from the 1st, 11th, and 14th divisions.

Col. Ismael Ayad, Iraqi Signal School commander, told his students he was proud of their hard work and was pleased to see the progress they had made during the training.

Maj. Bob Thompson, senior U.S. adviser to the Iraqi signal school, said, "These Soldiers return from training ready and able to provide reliable tactical communications to their unit's operations centers."s

The school has produced 58 Soldiers who are fully qualified on tactical control center set-up and operations.

## Air Force opens new headquarters building

 CAMP STRYKER, Iraq – Iraq Training and Advising Mission – Air Force recognized the grand opening of its new headquarters building Dec. 17 at Camp Stryker, Iraq.

Lt. Gen. Michael Barbero, Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq commander, and Maj. Gen. Robert Kane, ITAM-AF director, recognized the grand opening of the facility with a ceremonial ribbon cutting.

"I couldn't be happier with the outcome of this facility," said Kane.

The 6,900 square foot building was completely renovated, with some of the most advanced fiber-optic phone and Internet cables available. The 808th Engineer Company and telecommunication specialists from the 50th Signal Battalion completed the infrastructure project one month ahead of schedule and saved more than \$490,000.

U.S. Air Force Maj. Mike Freeman, civil engineer adviser assigned to ITAM-Air Force and lead project officer for the facility renovation, said, "This was the perfect event to recognize all of the people who made this building what it is today. I can't say enough about the outstanding efforts of the young Soldiers of the 808th Engineering Company."

## Zakho Emergency Hospital holds ribbon cutting ceremony

 DAHUK, Iraq – A state-of-the-art trauma center became a reality Dec. 7, when the community of the northern Iraqi province of Dahuk celebrated the official opening of the Zakho Emergency Hospital.

The \$2.6 million, 40-bed facility was built with Economic Support Funds provided by the United States and includes surgical wards, X-ray and MRI facilities, an interior parking lot, a security fence, a fully staffed security building and a power plant building to provide full-time dedicated

electrical power to the hospital.

Additionally, the Kurdistan Regional Government, Ministry of Finance provided 1.2 billion Iraqi dinar, roughly \$1 million, for additional medical equipment and furniture for the facility.

The Kurdish border town of Zakho, which serves as the major border crossing between northern Iraq and Turkey, is one of the most populated areas within Dahuk province.

Prior to the opening of this facility, the area was in serious need of a trauma center to attend to its 250,000 citizens and to the thousands of accident victims treated yearly.

Due to its location as a major border crossing, hundreds of semi-tractor trailers pass through these mountainous and rugged roads every day, which results in automobile accidents and trauma injuries. These injuries account for a large percentage of the medical care in Zakhu.

Without this facility, trauma patients would have to be transported 56 kilometers to the already over-crowded hospital in Dahuk.

"This project is very important to this city and to the people from around the area since it will provide emergency services to thousands of people," Tamer Ramathan, governor of Dahuk, told the more than 200 attendees at the ceremony.

"(The completion of this) project is a direct result of the efforts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Department of State. We are thankful that they partnered with us to make this project a reality."

According to U.S. Department of State figures, the U.S. has spent more than \$1.1 billion in assistance to the Kurdistan region since 2003; \$40 million of that has been in health facilities and \$8 million of the \$40 million in Dahuk alone.

"It is an honor and a privilege to stand before you today and deliver this magnificent facility," said Col. Dan Anninos, commander of the Gulf Region District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq. "My team is very proud of this facility and we hope it increases the community's ability to receive quality and timely healthcare for its many citizens."

Anninos went on to say this day could not have been possible without the hard work and partnership of the Kurdish owned general contractor, Sipan Company.

"Patience, persistence and perspiration make an unbelievable combination of a successful team," said Anninos. "Together we built this facility one brick at a time with our collective hands, hearts, minds and souls, and built a magnificent facility that all of us can be proud of."

"My command is looking forward to our continued efforts and working alongside with the great many citizens, construction contractors, local and national leaders to deliver many more projects like this one. This is what the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers do – we build and we deliver with passion in order to improve the quality of life for others."

Anninos said from the time the reconstruction effort began in Iraq, there have been successes in capacity building and the enhancement of quality of life, including security and justice, transportation, communications, health and education, sewer, water and electricity.

"The Gulf Region District, my command, is a proud team of volunteer civilian professionals, both U.S. and Iraqi," Anninos said. "We work alongside of communities just like this one to deliver magnificent projects—this is our passion."

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq has completed thousands of reconstruction projects in partnership with the U.S. government and the government of Iraq. Since 2004, USACE has completed 5,257 projects throughout Iraq valued at more than \$9.1 billion, and has 350 projects ongoing.

# Phantom Support



U.S. Army photo by Capt. William A. Thompson



Chaplain Col. Lawrence Dennis of Elgin, S.C., was promoted to the rank of colonel by Brig. Gen. Paul Wentz, the commanding general for 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Mansfield, Ohio, native. Dennis serves as the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 751st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion chaplain under the 96th Sustainment Brigade.

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Ryan Twist



U.S. Army photo by Spc. William Pereira

(Above) Spc. Elijah Williams, a prescribed load list specialist and a Heavy Equipment Transporter operator with the 296th Transportation Company, 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Jacksonville, Fla., native, operates a forklift to move supplies from a connex as the 296th continues to identify non-mission essential equipment in support of the responsible drawdown of forces and equipment from Iraq.

(Left) World Wrestling Entertainment superstars John Morrison and the Miz perform for the troops Dec. 4 at Holt Stadium at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. WWE superstars and divas came to Iraq to film and perform the "WWE Tribute to the Troops," which aired Dec. 19.

Soldiers with the 659th Maintenance Company, 620th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), work in the Class IV yard in Al Asad, Iraq, banding plastic piping as part of the Operation Clean Sweep project to retrograde equipment in Iraq.



U.S. Army photo by 2nd Lt. Brian Knotts

Spc. David Lopez, with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 260th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Queens, N.Y., native, works on T-wall artwork in front of the battalion area. Lopez is a part of the battalion's carpentry team that has been responsible for decorating the battalion area.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Matthew C. Cooley