



Comedians bring a little bit of laughter to Camp Cooke.

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5th BCT Soldiers detain an Iraqi suspected of supplying insurgents with illegal weapons.

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Cav Country

Volume 1, Issue 4

"Telling the First Team's Story"

June 11, 2004



By Spc. Jan Critchfield, 122nd MPAD

Baghdad firefighters finish extinguishing a fire that started in a humvee on May 20. An electrical problem within the vehicle was likely the cause of the fire and was not a result of hostile actions said Sgt. Anthony Avallone, a military policeman with the 89th Military Police Brigade attached to the 1st Cavalry Division. Avallone, who was at the scene, said one 89th MP Soldier sustained minor injuries while jumping from the vehicle. No other Soldiers were injured in the fire, but the humvee was destroyed.

Iraqi Detainees Are Returned Home

By Spc. Andy Miller
122nd MPAD

AL SAIDIYAH, Baghdad-- Hundreds of Iraqi prisoners were released from Abu Ghraib prison as part of a coalition-planned mass release on May 21. While most of the prisoners were released back to the areas where they were originally picked up, the 1st Battalion 21st Field Artillery Regiment of the 1st Cavalry Division escorted some of them safely back to their homes.

Several busloads of released prisoners were greeted by their family and friends at Thunder Forward Operating Base (FOB).

Escort missions are not unusual for the 3rd (Beast) platoon. They do them all the time, but this was a different kind of mission than they were used to.

"Usually when we do escort missions, it will be an escort from inside the FOB going out, and we'll escort as the security element," said Lt. Daniel Stockton, platoon leader for the Beast platoon. "This time we

were taking an escort that was way outside of our [area of operations], and bringing them in."

The platoon met the busloads of prisoners in Abu Ghraib, near the prison. When they reached the meeting area, the platoon was met not only by the buses, but also by a large crowd of civilians. The civilians had stopped traffic in the road and were mobbing around the buses.

"I thought it was going to turn into a riot," Stockton said. "We had to do something to get [the buses] moving before it got completely out of hand."

After stopping at Thunder FOB, the rest of the detainees were taken to a central location in Al Saidiyah. From there they were able to get rides to their homes. An Iraqi Police element helped the Beast Platoon provide security at the location. Taking security precautions to ensure the released prisoners make it home safely is essential, according to Cpt. William McPherson, the

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1st Cav. Raid Nets Anti-Coalition Suspect, Large Amount of Cash

By Sgt. Dan Purcell
122nd MPAD

CAMP WAR EAGLE-- A man suspected of involvement in the slayings of Iraqi civilians and policemen was apprehended Saturday, May 22, during an early morning cordon and search of his residence in the Baladiat District.

Initially, the main purpose of the search was to enter the residence and confirm or deny the existence of suspected arms, ammunition and explosive caches, said Capt. David Woodruff, Company B "Barracudas" commander, 20th Engineer Battalion attached to Task Force 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment.

However, once there the mission changed.

"We got word that this man, a high ranking party-official in the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution, was

detained for questioning," Woodruff said. "There had been reports that he was linked to the deaths of some Iraqi civilians who were cooperating with the coalition forces."

In addition to detaining the suspect, Soldiers from Company B and Company A, "Apache Blue", searched the house and found a large amount of U.S. currency, six automatic rifles, four pistols, ammunition and four radios.

"The radios led us to believe that this man might be responsible for compromising our radio transmissions," Woodruff said.

Sgt. 1st Class Felipe Azua, 478th

Civil Affairs Battalion, who went along as a civil military operator (CMO), explained that it's the CMO's job to get the civilians out of the way of the search team and explain to them why the Soldiers are there.

"We try to do it in a polite and friendly way because we understand that there are terrorists working within the area and they come into people's homes and threaten them into letting them use the home," Azua said. "The families are not always involved, but are being forced into it."

Azua explains to the families what's going on and apologizes for any inconvenience the search teams have caused.

After the initial search produced nothing unusual, Azua decided to check the kitchen again. He was right on the money.

"I was surprised to find the money," he said. "Normally people don't hide stuff in the kitchen."

Azua had another Soldier help him look through the pots and pans. He noticed a wall locker with a shelf at the bottom, and a trap door behind it.

"I pushed it open and found a bag with over 150,000 U.S. dollars," he said. "That's pretty rare because we usually only find five or six thousand dollars and it's often in Dinars."

At the end of the search the detainee was taken away for further questioning.

"We try to do it in a polite and friendly way because we understand that there are terrorists working within the area and they come into people's homes and threaten them into letting them use the home."

-Sgt. 1st Class Felipe Azua
478th Civil Affairs Bt.



By Sgt. Dan Purcell, 122nd MPAD

Sgt. Timothy Knight searches a kitchen cabinet while Spc. Lester Orellana assists. Both Knight and Orellana belong to Company B, 20th Engineer Battalion, attached to Task Force 1-12 Cav.

The Temple of the Living God

In the book of Haggai, we find that the Jews had gotten a little too comfortable after their return from exile in Babylon. It was approximately 520 BC and God's people were more interested in living "large" in paneled homes rather than re-building the Lord's House. Although God didn't really need a house, He was concerned that His people had lost their vision and grown spiritually lazy. As biblical scholar J. Alec Motyer stated, "The un-built house was a statement that it was a matter of indifference whether the Lord was among His people. Committing themselves to building was a testimony that the Lord mattered." Thus, the Lord spoke mightily through Haggai calling his people to task!

Almost 2,500 years later, Christians in the Armed Forces ironically find themselves living, fighting and possibly even dying in the land of the Babylonian exile. Unlike the Jews, however, we have come here willingly to fight the War on Terrorism and fight for the freedom of a foreign people. Likewise, while living "comfortably" in the birthplace of civilization is desirable, it is not of primary concern. For on a daily basis, we wrestle with the deeper issues of life such as family separation, grief, death, faith, hope and God.

In regards to the Lord's house, we have come to realize that it really doesn't matter whether we worship Him under the blue skies, in a canvas tent or a palace of the former regime. Sure, it's easy to get hung up on the "church" building, but what really matters is that we remember that we are individually and corporately God's temple. For in the book of First Corinthians, the Apostle Paul asked: "Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?" (1 Cor 2:16). In the second book,

Chaplain(CPT) Jim Combs

2-12 Cav.

hereminded these same believers: "We are the temple of the Living God" (2 Cor 6:16).

As we wrestle with the reality of a year-long deployment, we grow deeper in our faith and seek a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. So, we meet in our big green Tent chapel with the dusty, dirt floor and corporately lift up songs of praise to our Father.

Just as God encouraged his obedient people through Haggai, we must also have faith that His word remains the same: "Be strong...be strong...My Spirit remains among you...do not fear." Indeed, whether we worship in a simple tent or grand cathedral, in the United States or in Iraq, God will fill His house with glory and declare it a place in which He will grant peace. It's a simple lesson, but easily missed. For in the states, we may take for granted the things we have. In the pursuit of comfort, we may become dangerously close to losing our vision and leaving our part in God's plan undone. Yet, in this foreign land, He has challenged us to "give careful thought" to the paths we had previously chosen and the resulting harvest or lack thereof that was reaped. May soldiers and family members draw near to God and experience an amazing joy and strength as God fulfills His promise to draw near to them (James 4:8). Then, as we walk in the faith of Christ, we will be bound by a grace that doesn't require a tabernacle made with hands. For we are the tabernacle...the temple of the Living God!

Pegasus 6 Sends

Turning point: An event marking a unique or important historical change or one on which important developments depend, a decisive moment.

In little more than two weeks, the future of Iraq will be placed back in the hands of the Iraqi people. The formation and swearing in of Iraq's transitional government honors this country's status as a sovereign state.

Since arriving in Baghdad, we have worked closely with City, District, and Neighborhood Advisory Councils as well as the people of this city. Our efforts have demonstrated to the people of Baghdad that we are serious about helping them improve their lives.

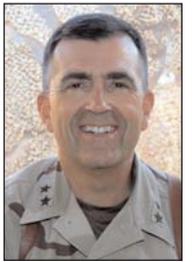
Every project we have started or completed has been done so at the behest of the Iraqi people. Our help rebuilding the city's infrastructure - electrical power, water, sewage systems and bulk trash removal - will continue for our entire deployment, and possibly well beyond our time here in Iraq. Thousands of Iraqis will be employed in these efforts to improve the living conditions here, thereby giving a boost to the local economy, too.

These projects have been necessary to help rebuild the infrastructure. Iraqis see progress every day. The streets of this city are becoming cleaner, water and sewage treatment plants are operating and new ones are being built. We also see progress on the political front for the Iraqi people, such as the finalization and signing of the new Baghdad City Charter.

It's important for every Soldier to understand our mission: make this city a safe and secure environment where Iraqis flourish as they improve the living conditions of every resident of Baghdad. We must all be committed to this effort, and realize that we are entering into a partnership with the new Iraqi transitional government.

We are not an Army of occupation. We will partner with the new Iraqi government. As our hosts, it is important that our Soldiers use care and cultural sensitivity when dealing with the local populace.

Maj. Gen. Peter Chiarelli



CG 1CD

The motto, "Polite, Professional and Prepare to Kill," will remain as appropriate on July 1 as it is today. If armed insurgents, anti-Iraqi forces, attempt to usurp the power of the new Iraqi government or attack coalition forces it is our duty to repel those efforts, and to destroy aggressors.

But it is also our duty, our responsibility, to treat the local population with the dignity and respect due to a sovereign and free people.

If you can imagine it, think of the streets of Baghdad as those of your own hometown. If a repressive dictator had to be overthrown to provide you your freedom, how would you like to be treated in the aftermath of such a momentous event? I, for one, would want to take the future of my country into my own hands and assist a new government in creating a safer place to live and raise my family.

I firmly believe that the people of Iraq wish for these same things.

As Iraq approaches a return to sovereignty, it is also important that each of our Soldiers understands this simple message: Iraq belongs to the Iraqi people. We are here because the transitional Iraqi government requires our assistance as they work to create a more representative, democratic nation. Our mission is clear, and the future success of that mission depends on all of us doing our part.

I'm proud of the work the First Team has already accomplished in such a short time. I know that if we work as a team and a true partner to the new transitional Iraqi government we will fulfill the promise of a brighter future for all Iraqis.

First Team!

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Spur & The Moment

"How are you acclimating to Iraq?"

Photos by Spc. Jan Critchfield, 122nd MPAD

"I like it over here, but then I don't like it over here. I'm getting used to the way stuff is running, but I miss my wife and son."



SPC David McSwain, HHC 1CD, 382nd FSB

"The heat isn't too different than where I come from (Village of Dedeo, Guam), [and] there's been a lot of water that's been provided at the job



SGT Adele Pama-Gomez, C Co., 411th Eng.

"It's fine. The heat's the heat, but it's pretty good. When we first got here it was



SGT Frank Lorang, HHC, 1st Brigade

"This is my second time around, so it's pretty easy to acclimate to the weather and things like that. So, I'm doing pretty good."



SGT Darius Galbreath, A Co., 91st Engineers

"The culture is different. The way you see it on TV and the way you read it in newspapers and such is nothing like visualizing it for the first time."



SPC Donald Simms, HHC, 1st Brigade

"I'm just waiting for the weather to warm up and get to the temperatures I like. I'm getting used to it pretty well, including the Iraqi food I've been eating."



CPT Joseph James, 2-12 Cavalry Regiment

1-8 Cav. Conducts Raid, Iraqis Thankful

By Pfc. Al Barrus
122nd MPAD

AL RASHEED, Baghdad - Troopers of 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment of 5th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, took on a four-block section in the Al Saha neighborhood for a cordon and search operation Monday, May 24.

But it wasn't the 200-home objective that surprised the Soldiers of the battalion, it was the way they were treated by the locals, said Capt. Rodney Schmucker, the operations planning officer for 1-8 Cav.

"People in that area really seemed like they wanted to work with us," said Staff Sgt. Riley Flaherty, a squad leader in Company C, 1-8 Cav. "It's a lot different than what we are used to ... they were glad we were there."

Schmucker said the reason behind the large-scale raid was from the frequency of improvised explosive devices being placed along the neighborhood's bordering highways, as well as the number of mortar and rocket attacks

from the area in the past weeks.

Soldiers from 1-8 Cav., working with Iraqi Civil Defense Corps soldiers, sealed off the perimeter around the area only permitting civilians with emergencies to come inside.

"We had some local leaders there as well as a sheik and a [mosque services member]," Schmucker said. "We wanted them there so we could make sure that they know what we were trying to do."

"This wasn't a kick-in-doors type of raid," he said. "We informed them what we were doing and why we were there."

Though no target personnel were detained and no significant amounts of contraband were found, except for some small-arms weapons and a hand grenade, the Soldiers felt they accomplished the mission.

"For what we wanted to do, it met our intent," Schmucker said. "Part of it was intelligence gathering and making sure, for future missions, we are set."

The raid also gave the Iraqis a chance to see the troops in their



By Sgt. Dan Purcell, 122nd MPAD

Staff Sgt. Terill Boatner (right) and Pvt. Cicpriano Griego of Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, search the vehicle of a man traveling on the roads bordering Operation Mustang Lionsault. ICDC soldiers explained to the civilians what the unit was doing and they cooperated very well.

neighborhood and know that the Soldiers are looking out for their safety.

"Since we did this during the day there were a lot of people out there who saw and witnessed us," Flaherty said. "They saw us mak-

ing sure the area is somewhat safe, and not just for us but also for the civilians out there."

The event gave the troopers of 1-8 Cav. a new feeling toward the people whom they help protect.

"Communicating with the people and getting around in that area just seems pretty pro-coalition," Flaherty said. "It's the feeling on the street. They are polite to us, and we are polite back to them."

Knowing the Differences in Iraqi Culture vs. American Culture is a Great Advantage

By Staff Sgt. Pat O'Halloran
G5 Operations NCO



As many of us have learned by now, subjects that at home in the United States may seem common conversation are decidedly different in Iraq. A compliment may turn into a gift. A casual inquiry may offend someone. A simple comment about politics becomes an uncomfortable conversation about your country's enemies and alliances.

Knowing how to interact on a friendly level can lead to more fulfilling relationships with Iraqis, better represent the Army and the United States, and accomplish the 1st Cavalry Division mission.

Compliments

In the United States, we are a society of flattery: "What a great shirt you're wearing. Is that new?" "That's a very nice watch. Was that a gift?"

Oftentimes, for us, comments like this is a throwaway, a means of being polite before moving on to business; an icebreaker.

In Iraq and in the Arab world, compliments about material things put the compliment receiver in the position of offering the item as a gift.

A Civil Affairs captain was meeting with a local official recently, when he complimented the official on his fine dishdashah, or robe. The official offered him the dish-

dashah and the captain politely declined. An Army interpreter then told the captain that to refuse again would insult the official.

This also leads to reciprocal praise. The official might then have complimented something of the captain's, leading to the same situation.

Questions

Iraq, like the rest of the Arab world, is a male dominated society. Most women play a role that, by Western standards, is subservient. Especially in a home or private setting, men and women do not interact in ways that are common in the United States.

This is also true of conversation between men. A man does not inquire about a host's wife or daughters, or compliment them.

A better method of doing so, as part of casual conversation, is to inquire about an Iraqi's family instead of his wife, or compliment something in particular that the wife may have done, without complimenting her directly. "That was a delicious meal" is much better than, "Your wife pre-

pared a delicious meal."

Also, rather than, "How is your wife?" a better question would be, "How is your family?"

Religion

Iraqis like to teach about Islam, and it is very natural for Americans with little exposure to inquire about certain aspects of the religion.

As with any religion, continued questions can lead the Iraqi to wonder whether the American would be interested in converting to Islam.

A response that would not insult the Iraqi would be that while you have the utmost respect for Islam, converting would offend your family.

Politics

It is easy to speak the Army point of view on Iraq; we're here to help Iraqis establish a sovereign, democratic government responsible for its own security.

What isn't so simple, but could very well come up in conversation, is the Palestinian-Israeli problem. It is best not to express a view either way as Soldiers should not be expressing views on regional conflicts as they are not spokesmen. What could be said is that Iraqis working with Americans can resolve problem peacefully to set the example for all people caught in conflict.

Gestures

Commanders in the 1st Cav are adamant that part of our mission is to

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Iraqi Prisoners Released

Continued from Page 1

McPherson said.

officer in charge of the brigade detention facility at Camp Ferrin-Huggins.

"You've got a mass detainee release, and you've got enemy out there trying to run their own information operations campaign,"

A division release board at the coalition joint task force level will determine which prisoners are eligible for release. After final determinations are made, First Team elements will ensure former prisoners are safely escorted home, McPherson said.



By Spc. Andy Miller, 122nd MPAD

Iraqi civilians crowd around buses loaded with prisoners slated for release from the Abu Ghraib Internment Facility. Former prisoners were escorted from the prison to Forward Operating Base Thunder, where most were released to family and friends. Remaining prisoners were escorted to the Al Saidiyah neighborhood of the Al Rashid district of Baghdad.

FIRST TEAM

1-12 Cav. Buys Iraq's Weapons

By Spc. Bryan Kinkade
1st Cav. Div PAO

AL-UBAIDY, Iraq-- Just outside of Sadr City, in an empty field, Company C of the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, set up a weapons buy-back program.

In the middle of a three-day project, Company C spent over \$6,000 buying weapons and munitions from the local Iraqis May 16.

"Every Iraqi citizen is allowed one registered weapon per household," said the command sergeant major of the First Team's 1st Brigade Combat Team, Command Sgt. Major Stanley Small. "Our intent is to get all of the illegal weapons off the streets."

Locals turned in munitions such as AK-47s, rocket-propelled grenade launchers and several different sized mortars reaping rewards ranging from as little as \$20 to \$200 per weapon. The size of the reward depended on how potentially dangerous a weapon could be if in the wrong hands. Many of the Iraqis turned in multiple weapons and one man received a reward of \$1,740.

The drop off point for the



By Spc. Bryan Kinkade, 1st Cav. Div PAO

A Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal detonates some unstable explosives that local Iraqis brought to Company C, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiments' weapons buy-back site just outside of Sadr City, Sunday.

project was located just outside of the village of Al-Ubaidy. It was the first time the division has done this kind of project and Small said there might be more chances for

the Iraqis to sell their weapons.

"It's been good and it has gotten better each day," Lt. Col. Tim Meredith, 1-12 Cav. commander, said.

In two days, 1-12 Cav. had bought 82 mortars, four grenades, three rocket-propelled grenade launchers and three AK-47s from 14 Iraqis. Some of the Iraqis came back two or three times.

To inform the Iraqis of the project, leaflets were distributed to different portions of the city, by ground and air, explaining directions to the site and what they could bring. Coalition forces also spoke to the local Neighborhood Advisory Councils and District Advisory Councils to explain the program.

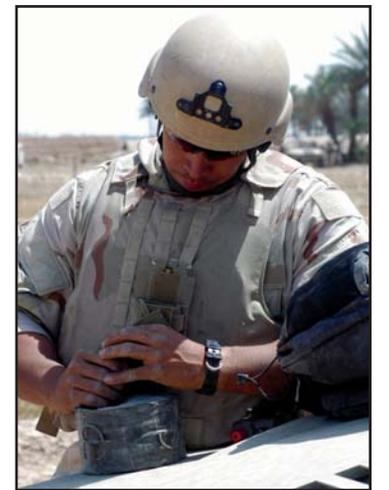
There were three different sites for the weapons buy back program and the exchange was simple. The Iraqis brought the munitions to the site, where a Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal team checked them out. Then the Iraqis were paid cash for what the weapons were worth.

If the munitions were unstable, the EOD team would have to destroy them with explosives.

This was an amnesty project. Iraqis could turn in weapons, get the cash they earned and leave with no suspicion.

"It goes a long way to creating a safe and secure environ-

ment," Meredith said. "We would much rather have people run these weapons in, than have our Soldiers and the Iraqi people face them. The greatest thing is that it takes weapons off of the streets that could be used against coalition forces, and does it safely."



By Spc. Bryan Kinkade, 1st Cav. Div PAO

Aviation Ordnance man 1 Chris Garcia, U.S. Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal team, wires the detonation device to the explosives. He detonated the explosives to destroy unstable munitions that local Iraqis brought to the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiments' weapons buy-back site.

Task Force 2-5 and 306th ICDC Conduct First Joint Operation

By Sgt. Dan Purcell
122nd MPAD

CAMP WAR EAGLE-- In a pre-dawn raid Soldiers of Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment and the 306th ICDC Battalion conducted their first joint 'cordon and search' operation to root out suspected terrorists wanted for attacks on coalition forces.

On Tuesday, May 25, Bravo 1-12, Task Force 2-5, provided a cordon around "Square Town", a name Soldiers gave to a squatters village located near War Eagle Forward Operating Base, while the



By Sgt. Dan Purcell, 122nd MPAD

Soldiers of the 306th ICDC Battalion secure the residence of a suspected terrorist wanted for attacks against coalition forces.

306thBn., searched for an inhabitant suspected of attacking the base.

"The objective of this operation was to detain a man who was shooting mortars at this FOB," explained Lt. Col. Gary Volesky, battalion commander, 2nd Bn., 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division. "We did the outer cordon with the coalition and the objective was completed by the ICDC under the direction of their company commander."

"This is the first time that company commander had his whole company out there conducting an operation. Today, we had three of his platoons out there, one working traffic control points and two doing simultaneous searches," Volesky added.

Capt. Douglas Chapman, company commander, said the size and scope of the operation was also a first for Bravo 1-12.

"This is the first time we used the two companies in a Task Force patrol, which is part of our continuing effort to put an Iraqi face on our operation here," Chapman said. "So, what we have here is one full ICDC company and one full American company out there on this operation."

"Our mission here is really three fold: Continue to provide security and stability, improve the quality of life for the Iraqi people and train those security elements, like the ICDC, to be able to take over the roll of providing a safe and secure environment," Volesky said. "So, from this perspective, today's operation was a continuation of [ICDC] training and integration into our



By Sgt. Dan Purcell, 122nd MPAD

Pfc. Brandon Egli, Bravo Co., 1-12 Cav., speaks with a Soldier from the 306th ICDC Bn., during a joint cordon and search operation.

operations in order to get them out there on their own, doing exactly what we do, but they're running the whole show themselves," Volesky said.

As for Pfc. Brandon Egli, B Co., 1-12 Cav Regt., working with the 306th ICDC Bn., 'Jaguars' for the first time was like learning a new job.

"I have worked with other ICDC units before, doing cordon and searches, but the Jaguars are more aggressive and more verbal. We have better communication with their soldiers," Egli said. "One guy came up to me and said if we need anything, like

where to orient their weapons, to let him know. Often, the biggest problem between us is the communication, but this went off real great."

"We are integrating the ICDC into every operation we do because by June 30, they must be fully capable of conducting their own operations," Volesky said. "They have some limitations right now; they don't have their own vehicles or communications, so we are working those issues. We really worked today's operation on a number of different levels, and they did great."

Artillery Troops Take Up Old Habits

By Pfc. Al Barrus
122nd MPAD

CAMP BLACK JACK-- "You'd better get down, man, it gets pretty dusty when they fire," 1st Sgt. Agustin Rodriguez bellowed, taking a knee and covering his ears under the roar of a M109-A6 Paladin's engine. As the sound of amplified thunder penetrates your ears and jolts your heart, a 155-millimeter, high explosive round launches from a Howitzer. For a moment, you can't see a thing as loose dust is knocked into the air by the tremor.

The Soldiers of 3rd

Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division appreciate these sights and sounds. On this day, May 14, they re-qualify their skills as artillerymen: the job they joined the Army for, but not the job they've been doing since they got to Iraq.

"Today we are conducting group qualification to take over brigade fire support from Alpha Battery," said Capt. Mike Barefield, Bravo Battery commander. The battalion rotates out batteries every two months, and the 'hot' battery keeps one of its line platoons standing by to fire at

all times. Everyone else conducts patrols, and cordon and search missions in Baghdad, because the battery is still responsible for keeping the peace in its area of operation.

Alpha Battery has been hot since the First Team took over the fire missions in April. Starting May 15, it's Bravo's turn to point the big guns down range, Barefield said.

This is the first time these troops have fired since their exercise at the National Training Center at Ft. Irwin, Calif., nearly a year ago. The artillerymen are excited to be back in their Paladins.

"The Soldiers are hyper to do this, and they want to prove they are better than the next guy," said Sgt. 1st Class Troy Cummings, platoon sergeant in B Battery. "They want the faster time. [But] they need to forget about being quick for today, though. You need to get in there and do everything by the book for qualification."

The troops are granted plenty of time to practice: going through all the steps with their crew teams before qualifying. When it comes to certification, first the Soldiers do a dry fire with their platoon sergeant standing by with a checklist, verifying they go through all the regulation procedures. They just don't fire a



By Pfc. Al Barrus, 122nd MPAD

The earth trembles and kicks up dust as a 155-mm shell is lobbed from Camp Black Jack to an open field north of Baghdad. Bravo Battery, 3-82 Field Artillery, 2BCT is firing for qualification, as they take their brother battery's place as the fire support battery instead of doing infantry full-time.

live round, Cummings said.

Once they are 'Go' on the dry fire, the commander assesses them. If approved, they do a live fire: everything by the book with the platoon sergeant checking again, but this time, Cummings said, they launch a 155-mm HE round down range.

The Howitzers point at an open field north of Baghdad, which was also an impact zone used by the 1st Armored Division. A TNT-filled HE round has a 50-meter kill radius. Accuracy is important: hence all the training. But after the preparation is through, speed becomes critical, too.

"You could be moving the vehicle down a tank trail ... and receive a fire mission and have

45-to-90 seconds to stop and shoot," the platoon sergeant said. "You have to be quick. You have to be good."

The Soldiers of B Battery know what's required of them in the artillery, and it's why they joined the Army.

"It's hard work," said Pvt. Eldin Bosque, an artillery loader. "A lot of nights we're going to spend out here in the Paladins, but that's what we do for our country. That is what we do, and that's what we're here for."

"I can't imagine myself doing anything else for the Army," Cummings said. "When you're in the field with this Paladin right here, I'm convinced that there can't be a better job out there."



By Pfc. Al Barrus, 122nd MPAD

Spc Alberto Esparza, a cannon crewmember of B Battery 3-82 Field Artillery loads a 155-mm high explosive round into the Howitzer as part of qualification. The TNT-packed rounds are pointed at a designated impact zone north of Baghdad.

15th FSB Keeps First Team's Trucks Running

By Pfc. Al Barrus
122nd MPAD

CAMP BLACK JACK-- The 2nd Brigade Combat Team is a high performance force that operates day and night in their mission, as do their vehicles. That's why the 15th Forward Support Battalion keeps the gallons flowing all hours of each day at Camp Black Jack, rotating six-hour shifts throughout the battalion.

"During my company's daily, six-hour shift we fuel anything from mopeds to Abrams tanks," said Staff Sgt. Derek Brown, distribution chief in B Co. 15th FSB. "On our hours of operation, we pump around 2,600 gallons of fuel each day."

While some vehicles hold more fuel than others: 300-gallon fuel reservoirs in the tanks compared to a humvee's 25-gallon reservoirs; lines are a consistent sight at the 2nd BCT fuel point.

But not all the vehicles are in line for the same kind of fuel. Similar to the civilian world, the military operates with two basic types of gasoline: diesel fuel and unleaded gasoline.

Diesel fuel is the most commonly used petroleum by the Army. Both tracked and wheeled vehicles use it.

The unleaded fuel is for the non-tactical vehicles that the division uses on the base

camp. Civilian sports utility vehicles are a common mode of transportation for the Army in a more urban environment. Many of the compact vehicles found around post such as the golf carts and all-terrain vehicles have engines powered by unleaded gas. But when it comes to fire hazards, unleaded fuel is more dangerous.

"[Diesel] fuel burns slower because it has so many additives, and it requires a continuous flame to ignite," Staff Sgt. Charles R. Spence, a fuel supply non-commissioned officer in charge in Delta Co. "But unleaded gasoline can catch fire with a simple spark, and it will go up in seconds."

Many precautions are made to enhance the safety at fuel points. Smoking within a 50-foot perimeter of the area is prohibited, but oddly enough, static electricity is more apt to cause a fire.

To prevent static electricity from starting a fire, the fuel trucks need to be grounded.

"We wire our fuel trucks into a grounding-rod driven four feet into the ground, and that helps soak up the sparks," Brown said. "If the tanks want to fuel up, they need to be grounded, too."

Another danger working with gasoline is skin contact with the fuel. The fuel pumps on the Heavy Expandable Mobility Tactical Truck can propel up to 350 gallons per minute. Even when the pump is turned off,



By Pfc. Al Barrus, 122nd MPAD

To expedite the fuel point line movement, Co. D, 15th FSB fueler, Spc. Nicole Cabral, fills up a humvee, having donned proper eye protection and gloves. The fuel point is usually self-serve, but at peak hours the fuelers stop supervising and start pumping.

gravity pushes the fuel at a significant rate out of the nozzle and can backfire when topping off a tank.

Goggles suffice for eye protection, but Soldiers also need to wear gloves while pumping because the fuel is carcinogenic, according to Brown.

"We try to maintain the proper precautions," the distribution chief said.

With safety in mind, the fuel-point supervisors of 15th FSB are proud to serve the 2nd Black Jack BCT with the lifeblood of the mobile Army.

"What I like about my job is it's a very important job," Spence said. "Without fuel nothing runs; nothing moves. I also love to work with my Soldiers and help keep all the engines going."

ICDC Hits the Streets with the 1st Cav.

By Spc. Jan Critchfield
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD - Select Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) Soldiers have been assigned to join Task Force Baghdad troops patrolling the city streets here, lending their familiarity with the city to the coalition goal of making this a safer place to live.

Understanding the culture and language of the Iraqi people are two of the most daunting tasks facing US troops patrolling Iraq. In order to track down terrorists and criminals, soldiers have to be trusted and understood by those Iraqi citizens with vital information that could lead to an arrest.

Interpreters work well to overcome the language barrier; politeness, tactful language, and a smile often gains trust. But where those interpersonal skills might fail, the simple solution of one Iraqi speaking with another does not.

The field of psychological operations demands exactly what the ICDC has to offer: street smarts, and a comprehensive knowledge of what's going on with the people of Baghdad. That's why, for the last two months, an even mix of 345th Psychological Operations Team members and ICDC Soldiers have been scouring the streets for those who would choose to interrupt the peace.

One such ICDC soldier, a corporal, says that he just wants to "draw the love between the people [of Baghdad]."

Bringing a personal stake to the job, Soldiers like him are working to improve the very neighborhood they live in. Ending the careers of bomb-makers and terrorists becomes a very personal undertaking, and also promotes a sense of connectivity with the job that might not be felt by ICDC Soldiers who, for instance, guard sensitive sites but whose significance is not at all as immediate for them.

This ICDC corporal, a 26 year-old Baghdad native, is guarding the most sensitive site possible: his own home.

"We speak with the people ... and tell them that bad guys want to destroy our country and stop the progress that is happening these days," the corporal said of his typical tasking when rolling out with the 345th.

"I am very proud when working with coalition forces," the corporal said, "I worked hard for months in order to work with Coalition forces."

"The [ICDC] Soldiers that we've had are motivated [and] patriotic. They know the future of Iraq rests on them," said Sgt. Martin Morales, a member of the 345th who is out on the



By Spc. Jan Critchfield, 122nd MPAD

Iraqi Civil Defense Corps Soldiers paint over anti-coalition vandalism on a central Baghdad church courtyard wall. streets of Baghdad with ICDC soldiers everyday.

"When we first took [ICDC] out into our sector, people would walk up to them and say 'Mister, mister!' and [the ICDC] would say 'I'm not a mister! I'm an Iraqi!' Once the kids found out they were ICDC Soldiers they came up and started kissing them, ran into their homes and told their moms and it was like a block party. They were happy to see Iraqi soldiers out on the street, keeping it safe," Morales said.

Contrary to such positive attitudes, reports of insurgents terrorizing those Iraqis employed by the US in Baghdad are not uncommon, Morales said.

"There are a lot of people out there that are afraid because they've been threatened by insurgents ... that



By Spc. Jan Critchfield, 122nd MPAD

An Iraqi Civil Defense Corps corporal scrapes the image of Muqtada Al-Sadr from the cab of a vehicle. The vehicle owner consented to the removal of a few pro-Sadr stickers after a brief talk with Soldiers of the 345th Psychological Operations Battalion concerning the meaning of such pro-Sadr propaganda.

if they came to work, they'd [be killed]," Morales explained. "These [insurgents] are cowards. That motivates me even more to go out and catch these people."

The 345th also distributes the coalition-produced newspaper *Baghdad Now*, in addition to the task of speaking with the citizens about their feelings concerning various subjects, helping to gauge what type of project might be of benefit to the locals.

"The biggest thing we have going right now is *Baghdad Now*," said Sgt. Mark Powers, an assistant team leader with the 345th. "It puts out information about what's going on throughout Baghdad. We also have posters we put up letting the people [of Baghdad] know about the new constitution and bill of rights."

People flocked to the humvee distributing the newspaper, risking being struck by traffic to get a copy. Several people even stopped their vehicles while traveling in the opposite direction and holding up traffic, just to get a copy. A few locals even grabbed a bit of the stack and started passing them out themselves.

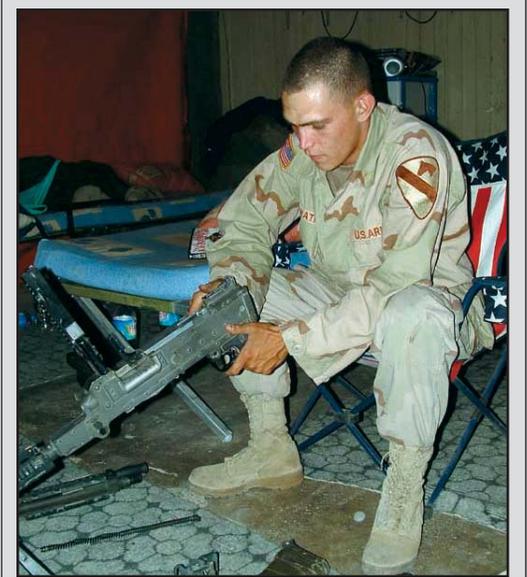
"It gets pretty wild sometimes," Morales said. "We have a great time."

The 345th team members have seen progress in the neighborhoods they patrol over the past few months.

"I think our area has made a whole lot of progress," Powers said, "A lot of people sat on the fence when we got here. Now, a lot of people are starting to help the coalition."

The team's ICDC member agrees.

"Everyone who loves our country [should] recruit ICDC to protect the people who live in our country," the corporal said. "I hope that progress will happen in Fallujah like it happens in Baghdad."



By Sgt. John Queen, 3rd BCT PAO

Pvt. Sean Watkins from the 2nd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment was selected as the 3rd Brigade Combat Team's 'Hero of the Week' for his life-saving initiative. Watkins successfully treated a young Iraqi boy suffering from heat stroke.

Cav. Trooper Aids Injured Iraqi Boy

By Sgt. John Queen
3rd BCT PAO

BAGHDAD, Iraq - The right person, at the right place, at the right time, with the right training can make all the difference in a place like Baghdad.

Escorting members of the Coalition Provisional Authority on mission after mission, the days seem to blend together like a scene from the movie *Groundhog Day*. At times, though, they are punctuated by one of the true reasons the Army is here: to help.

Pvt. Sean Watkins and other Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 82 Field Artillery, were on an escort mission to the Al Dura oil refinery in Baghdad recently. As they waited to escort an official to a meeting, Watkins noticed a number of Iraqi civilians carrying a young boy who appeared to be injured. Watkins, taking the initiative, asked his platoon leader if he could go check the boy out.

"He kept pressing the issue that this kid needs care," said 1st Lt. Corey Clyburn, Watkins platoon leader.

Getting the okay from Clyburn, Watkins climbed out of his gunner's hatch and went to assess the boy's condition.

"I could immediately tell he was suffering from heat stroke," said Watkins. "He was unconscious; he wasn't sweating. He was pretty bad off."

Watkins returned to his vehicle and retrieved his combat life-saver bag.

"I then administered an IV to the boy," he said.

After five minutes on the intravenous solution, a physical difference could be seen in the boy's condition, Watkins said.

"He began to sweat again, he regained consciousness," he said. "By the time we left, he was able to sit up, talk and drink water on his own."

"This is the kind of stuff Watkins strives for," said Clyburn. "He saved that kid's life."

"Private Watkins is a good Soldier that did the right thing at the right time," Command Sgt. Maj. Willie Jones said. "I'm really happy he was there."

"It was a good experience for me," Watkins said.

LNO Finds Release Through Music

By Sgt. Merrion LaSonde
122nd MPAD

Camp Victory-- Pvt. Kristopher Feagle just celebrated two firsts: his first year in the Army and his first deployment. As part of a four-man team of aviation operations specialists in Headquarters Company, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, his days in Iraq are filled with facilitating helicopter transportation for civilians and Soldiers alike.

Aviation was not his first choice. Before being sworn into the Army, Feagle discovered he has a form of color blindness.

"I am red-green color blind," he said. "I found out when I had trouble seeing the hidden pictures within the colored bubble picture cards. Since infantry and any kind of mechanic were out of the question, my recruiter suggested aviation ops."

After basic combat training, the 19-year-old Lake Wales, Fla. native spent eight weeks at aviation operations school in Fort Rucker, Al. learning how to process air mission requests (AMR) and the overall mission of the 4th BCT.

"I arrange chopper rides for people to wherever they need to go," Feagle said. "If there isn't a mission already scheduled, I send

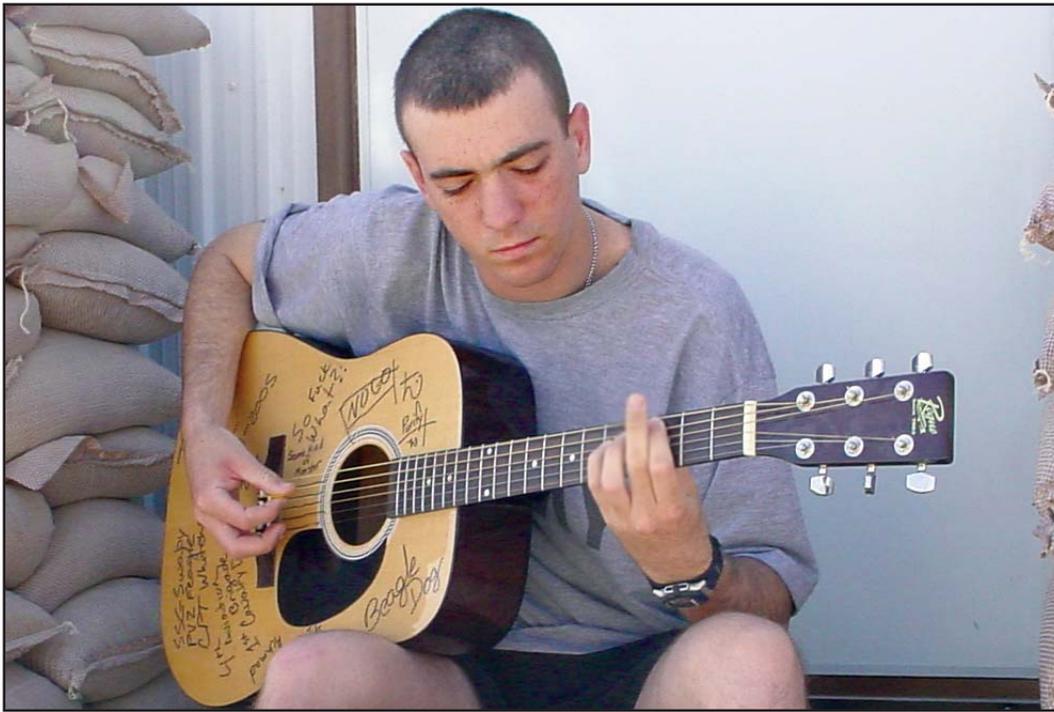


Photo by Spc. Marie Whitney, 122nd MPAD

Pvt. Kristopher Feagle, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, relaxes in front of his trailer with one of his six guitars. He has been playing the guitar for over ten years and after his enlistment in the Army is over, intends to attain his degree in music and teach.

an AMR specific to that request."

Feagle and his team members coordinate all helicopter requests from individual transports to the other forward operating bases in and around Baghdad to cordon and search and route reconnaissance air support.

When Feagle is not acting as

the local military travel agent, he unwinds by the lake on Camp Victory trying to catch some of the fish or relaxes on his doorstep playing one of his six guitars.

"I want to own a 76 Gibson Explorer," Feagle said. "It was the first electric guitar I ever saw in a music video."

Feagle has been playing guitar for the past ten years and hopes one day to turn his passion into a livelihood.

"When I am finished with my enlistment I am going to get my degree in music and teach guitar," said Feagle. "My guitar is my release."

Cav. Band Performs

Small ensemble performances will be played during the evening meal at the dining facilities located on Camp Victory. Dates and locations are listed below:

- June 11- "Four of a Kind" Trombone Quartet
Buffalo DFAC
- June 12- 1st Team Band Saxophone Quartet
Antelope DFAC
- June 15- 1st Team Band Brass Quintet
Buffalo DFAC
- June 18- 1st Team Band Jazz Combo
Victory South DFAC
- June 19- 1st Team Band Saxophone Quartet
Antelope DFAC
- June 22- 1st Team Band Dixie Band
Buffalo DFAC
- June 25- "Four of a Kind" Trombone Quartet
Victory South DFAC
- June 26- 1st Team Band Saxophone Quartet
Antelope DFAC
- June 29- 1st Team Band Dixie Band
Victory South DFAC

1st Cavalry Division Band Summer Concert Series will begin June 9 and will be held in the Victory North Post Exchange courtyard.

Performances will begin at 1930 hours every Wednesday evening.

A Little Bit of Laughter Goes a Long Way for 1st Cav. Soldiers

By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel
122nd MPAD

CAMP COOKE-- The Comics on Duty World Tour rolled through Camp Cooke providing a much needed dose of laughter and time off for soldiers on the base. Closed for breakfast and lunch to facilitate the event, the Camp Cooke Tent Dining Facility #1 provided the shade and refreshments for the mid-morning show hosted by the 4th Brigade Combat Team (BCT), the "Warriors," 1st Cavalry Division (CD), on May 20.

"Since the beginning of the year, the Comics on Duty tour has made 52 appearances in Iraq. And man, do we just love coming here to see all of you," said Robert Davis, executive producer of the tour addressing the standing room only audience.

Soldiers laughed and relaxed for over an hour and forty five minutes enjoying the comic stylings of Steve Mazan, Jeffrey Steele, Bob Perrell, PJ Walsh and Chris Alpine.

"This is exactly what I needed," said Private 1st Class Jesse Lumm, 615th Aviation Support Battalion, 4th BCT, 1st CD. "I get some time off from work to be here for about an hour or so, sit and hang out with my buddies and get to see



By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel, 122nd MPAD

"You must be a MARINE!" exclaims Chris Alpine to a soldier who caught one of his jokes just a little bit too late. The many styles of humor received warm responses from the audience but none received more laughter than those at the expense of other branches of service.

a good show, hopefully get a laugh or two. After this, I'll go to chow and by the time I get back to work, the day is almost over. We've been working pretty much non-stop since we got here so the break is really nice."

If the response to the comedians'

jokes was any indication, the show was well received by soldiers as the laughs abounded. Jokes about single life, military life, and being in Iraq were all bandied about but none drew greater appreciation than those leveled at other branches of service.

"You must be a Marine!" exclaimed comedian Chris Alpine as one soldier noticeably understood the joke a little bit behind the rest of the crowd, his laughter beginning after others had stopped. The comment launched the crowd into uproarious laughter and claps of appreciation that caused the comedian to stop for a minute to let the audience settle before he could continue.

"I think the show was a huge success," said 1st Lt. Tavares Tukes, Public Affairs Representative, 4th BCT, 1st CD. "I'm really glad we were able to bring the show to Camp Cooke. The soldiers have been working really hard and deserve to laugh and forget about work and where they're at, even if it's just for a little bit."

Originally scheduled to take place in April the tour had to reschedule due to security concerns at the time. But Davis, noting the commitment of the comics on the tour, said it was easy to get things back on track.

"These guys really love what they

do and they love bringing a little bit of humor to the troops. All of them had to cancel all their shows for the month of April to be here, when we found out we had to reschedule in May, not a single one hesitated to cancel all the shows they had at that time and be here to entertain the troops."

In appreciation for the show, Col. James McConville, commander, 4th BCT, 1st CD presented Davis and each of the comedians with a plaque.

Holding the plaque above his head, Davis said to the crowd, "We want to thank you all for having us, you all in the audience are the real heroes. Be safe, and get home soon, we love and miss all you."



By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel, 122nd MPAD

Col. James McConville, commander, 4th BCT, 1st CD presents plaques of appreciation to all the comedians who entertained soldiers at Camp Cooke as part of the Comics on Duty World Tour May 20.

Memorial Day

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Photos by Spc. Marie Whitney, 122nd MPAD

(Above) The First Cavalry Division Band plays in honor of the Memorial Day Observance that was held in front of the new Division Main building at Camp Victory North. The memorial day observance included an invocation by Chaplain(MAJ) Grant Johnson, a music feature of Battle Hymn of the Republic by the 1st Cav. Band, a chorus of Soldiers singing and a speech by the First Cavalry Division Commanding General, Major General Peter Chiarelli.

(At left) Gen. Chiarelli and Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Hernandez dedicate two wreaths of flowers to all the 1st Cav. Soldiers who have fallen during the Cav.'s time in Iraq. The dedication of the wreaths took place during the Memorial Day Observance at Camp Victory North.

Overcoming Differences Made Easier With Respect

Continued from Page 3

demonstrate through words and deeds that we are here to help Iraqis. One recent example of their commitment was an order banning soldiers from painting or displaying offensive artwork or words on vehicles.

One way soldiers can further make this point is understand and use Arab gestures when appropriate, and avoid those that are offensive. Here is a list of some common gestures from the Iraq Country Handbook:

-Placing the palm of the right hand on the chest immediately after shaking hands with another man shows respect or thanks.

-Touching the tips of the right fingertips to the forehead while bowing the head slightly also connotes respect.

-Biting the right forefinger, placed sideways in the mouth, is an expression of regret.

-Placing the palm of the right hand on the chest, bowing the head a little and closing one's eyes means "thank you" (in the name of Allah).

-The "OK" sign, if shaken at another person, symbolizes the evil eye.

-Hitting the right fist into the open left palm is an expression of obscenity or contempt.

-Placing a half-closed hand in front of the stomach, and then turning it slightly, connotes that the person to whom the gesture is made is a liar.

-Pointing a finger or writing utensil at anyone is considered threatening and is reserved for animals.

Greetings and Personal Space

In the United States, a simple "Hi, how are you?" will often lead directly into a meeting, with small talk.

Arabs often use a more lengthy process, but one that establishes friendly relationships.

Shaking hands is done upon every meeting, and when departing. They are lengthy handshakes, and may involve grabbing the elbow of the other person. The handshakes are generally not as firm as those of Americans.

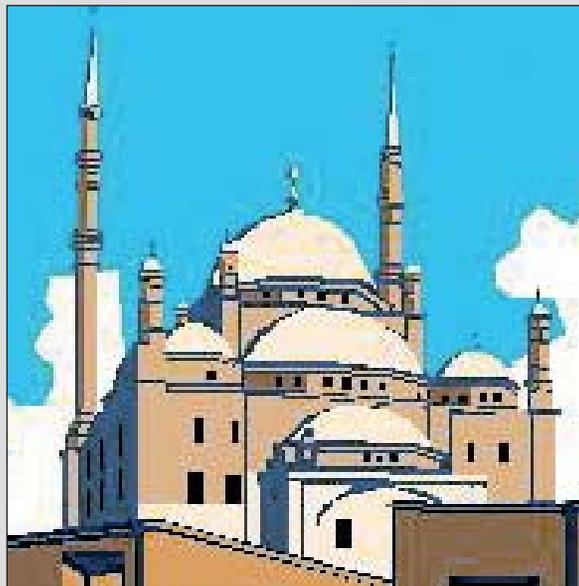
When you enter a room of people, Iraqis expect greetings before sitting down. Eye contact is important, as it indicates respect.

If there is a female in the party, do not offer to shake her hand unless she extends it first. This is also important for female soldiers to recognize, as they will likely have to initiate greetings.

The idea of personal space in the Arab world is much closer than that of typical Americans. Often times, Iraqis will stand close enough to breathe on the other person. The reaction of the American will usually be to step back, in which case the Iraqi often steps back into the space. Iraqis may consider continued steps back by the American as a desire not to interact with the Iraqi. The Iraqi might see this as

offensive and wonder what he has done to offend the American.

Another custom that may seem unusual by American standards is that of same-gender hugging and embracing. Consider it



a compliment if an Iraqi hugs a soldier; it indicates that the Iraqi views the soldier as a close friend.

Arab Viewpoints

Arabs generally look at the world through five conceptual viewpoints, according to the Iraq Country Handbook, published by the Department of Defense. Some views may seem irrational to Westerners, raised through different teachings.

-Atomism. Westerners often look for causes to problems and for effects from those problems.

Arabs, on the other hand, view incidents as isolated occurrences.

The parts tend to be the focus, rather than the whole. A Westerner's view might be simplified to A+B=C; the Arab view is A=A, B=B, C=C, and any relation is not meaningful. This could be difficult for an American to understand in a negotiation session. If a water pump is broken due to poor maintenance and misuse, an American might replace the pump, but develop a training program to ensure proper usage as that is the underlying cause. An Arab might view the pump as the problem that needs replacing.

-Extremism. The way an Arab looks at the world is often at either

end of the spectrum. Black or white, there is no gray area. As the Iraq Country Handbook points out, if there is a problem with a project, the entire project has a problem. This leads Arabs to view difficulties with a different perspective than Americans.

-Fatalism. Whether it is God's will, or fate, many Arabs believe that everyday occurrences are out of their control, and thus are willing to accept hardships that come along with God's blessings. An American attempting to fix a prob-

lem, or make something happen, may have frustration in dealing with Arabs who feel this way.

-Paranoia. The long, difficult history of the Arab world has led to the concept of paranoia permeating society. This is particularly true in Iraq, where former President Saddam Hussein's Ba'ath Party operated with cruel conviction to oust opposing elements. This also leads Arabs to view problems not as the result of other factors, but rather as a plot against them or their goals.

-Wish vs. Reality. Arabs sometimes mix fact with what they want the fact to become as part of their rhetorical discussion. This makes separating the two difficult at times. For instance, the Iraq Country Handbook points out the seeming contradiction of Arabs on one hand wanting that which the modern world has to offer, yet wanting an Islamic society free from Western influences. The reality and desired reality tend to blend; separating the two can be difficult for Westerners, especially those with little experience in the culture.

We Seem Strange to Them

While many views and customs of Arabs may seem strange to Americans, it is important to remember that they see many of our ways as odd also. Overcoming these differences is much easier when approached with an open mind and a willingness to respect the other's culture. This demonstrates a willingness to work together, a spirit that transcends differences.

MPs Carry Olympic Torch at Fort Hood

By Spc. Jason Phillips
89th MP PAO

More than 350 Fort Hood military police participated in the Central Texas Law Enforcement Torch Run May 19.

Texas law enforcement agencies raise public awareness for Special Olympics by annually carrying the torch across the state to the Texas Special Olympic Summer games, where it is used in the opening ceremonies to light the ceremonial flame. The summer games were held this year May 21 - 23 in San Marcos.

"We, as Soldiers, have a responsibility to support our nation," said Maj. John Bogdan, acting commander, 720th MP Battalion. "As MPs we are also a part of the law enforcement community and supporting this event is part of our civic responsibility."

Fort Hood MP units that participated in the torch run included Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 89th MP Brigade, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 720th MP Battalion, 411th, 401st, 149th, 64th, and 4th

MP Companies and 178th MP Detachment. The Provost Marshall's Office helped coordinate the run with local law enforcement.

Members of the Copperas Cove Police Department passed the torch to Bogdan at the intersection of Old Georgetown Road and Copperas Cove Road on Fort Hood's west boundary.

MPs then carried the torch nine and one half miles along Tank Destroyer Road to the East Gate where they passed the torch to members of the Killeen Police Department.

"When I saw them come running down the road towards us and the formation seemed never ending, I was in awe," said Sgt. Sandra Hunt, one of the KPD officers who accepted the torch from the MPs. "We have always had awesome support from Fort Hood when it comes to Special Olympics. They are an essential part of accomplishing what we need to accomplish in this area."

During the run, the MPs were greeted by hundreds of students who lined the side of the road at Smith Middle School and



By Spc. Jason Phillips, 89th MP PAO

Smith Middle School Students cheer as Maj. John Bogdan, acting commander, 720th MP Bn. (carrying the torch) and other Fort Hood MPs pass along Tank Destroyer during the Central Texas Law Enforcement Torch Run May 19.

Meadows Elementary School. As the runners passed, students cheered, held up banners and waved flags.

Many of the students have parents who are returning from overseas deployments, currently deployed, or scheduled to deploy, said Sandra Forsythe, the Smith Middle School principal. This was an opportunity

for her students to show support not only for Special Olympics, but for their families she said.

"There has not been much joy this year for many of our students," she said. "It was amazing to feel the energy and the release of emotions as they cheered and it shows how much kids need opportunities to show support for Soldiers and their

families."

The MPs were surprised to see the students who had gathered to support the run, said Bogdan.

"It was great to see that the kids were able to come out and support us," he said. "It was very motivational for all of us to hear them cheering and see them waving the flags."

Town Dedicates New Veterans' Memorial

By Natalie Pohlman
Worthington Daily Globe

EDGERTON, Minn.-- Community members honored veterans by remembering their sacrifices at a Memorial Day service and Edgerton Area Veterans Memorial dedication Monday.

The names of approximately 800 Edgerton area veterans dating back to the Civil War, including 19 Gold Star veterans who died in active service, are etched into India jet black granite monuments at the new downtown memorial.

"A lot of names are engraved in these monuments. Nineteen are

especially honored because they gave the ultimate - their life in service to our country," said Retired Navy Capt. Kenneth E. Verbrugge during the morning address.

The families of each fallen soldier, who came from all across the United States, stood as the names were read aloud during a Memorial Day service at the site Monday.

American Legion Post 42 Commander Pete Boer asked members of each branch of the armed services to stand as the public high school band played their songs.

"Our country is indebted to

you for the services you gave in the most difficult times for our country," he said.

"We're thankful that so many could be here," Edgerton Mayor Jim Achterhoff told the audience of several hundred. "I think this crowd here today shows us that patriotism is not dead."

Post Chaplain Henry Schmidt prayed for blessings upon the families of servicemen and women as wars threaten our country again.

"Please be with our armed services as they seek to do their duty," Schmidt said. "Keep our faith strong and true."

Worthington Monument Works was hired to construct the memorial.

"It's a very fitting and appropriate tribute to our veterans," said Randy Heeringa, owner and CEO. Verbrugge agreed.

"To all today, we say thank you for your service," he said.

Every veteran memorialized on the new monuments is listed in a book put together by a committee of the American Legion Auxiliary.

"We started in 2002. We went and visited about 10 other memorials in the area, and we took the best from those and made one of our own," Schoolmeester said of the publication.

Copies are available for sale through the Legion.

Dreams Unfold for Local Ore. Ballerina

By Sandra Swain
The Daily Astorian

WARRENTON, Ore.-In an unassuming pre-fab church-turned-dance-studio, 14 teenagers in leotards and ballet slippers leap and twirl to the beat of classical piano music from a boom box on a cluttered desk in the corner.

Some struggle a little to keep their balance as they pirouette on the grey vinyl floor. It's hot under fluorescent lights, even with the air conditioning on.

The class is taught by one of the Maddox Dance Studio's most famous alumni - Liz Miner, a Warrenton woman who made it to the big time.

Miner, 26, is a soloist with the San Francisco Ballet. She has just finished the 2004 season, dancing the lead in the first American production of Sylvania, choreographed by renowned artist Mark Morris. It was her first full-length ballet with the company, and she received favorable reviews in several magazines, including *The New Yorker* and the *San Francisco Ballet Review*, in which Renee Renouf wrote that Miner "exhibited a remarkable sense of proportion" reminiscent of the legendary Margot Fonteyn.

National attention is gratify-

ing, but it hasn't turned Miner's head.

"It's very nice to just be home and see my mom and just rest," she said. She's enjoying spending a few days where it all began, and a few aspiring dancers are learning ballet from someone who, not so long ago, was just like them.

"Energy in the legs, I want to hear you brushing the floor." Small and lithe, her blonde hair pulled back in a knot, Miner moves gracefully among the dancers, most of whom are at least a head taller. Even when she's walking, she looks as if she's dancing.

The music starts again. Many of the dancers' doting parents sit in plastic chairs in an adjoining room, where the altar used to be, watching the action through a big picture window.

After 45 minutes, the class is over. "Very nice work, good work, everyone," Miner said. There's applause and two dancers exchange a high five.

Miner knows she's a role model for these students. She's happy to teach this class and grateful to the dancing school's founder, Jeanne Maddox Peterson, who started teaching ballet in Astoria decades ago, and moved her studio to Warrenton in 1994.



Photo courtesy of Worthington Daily Globe

Featured speaker and retired Navy Capt. Kenneth E. Verbrugge addresses the large crowd attending the Memorial Day and Edgerton Area Veterans Memorial dedication program Monday morning in Edgerton.

Bowie Brigade

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June 11, 2004

Soldiers See Children as Future of Iraq

By Staff Sgt. Rebekah-mae Bruns
39th BCT PAO

BAGHDAD, Iraq-- Sister Benina Hurmez Shukuana is a Catholic Nun who runs a school in downtown Baghdad. She has taught three generations of children, some of which have come back to teach in the same school.

Her legacy has seen the rise and fall of Saddam Hussein - the persecution of Christians, Jews, and Shia Muslims alike, yet her school has managed to flourish.

Several years ago, Mother Theresa spent 45 days with Sister Benina in Baghdad. They were close friends she said. And they were of the same order, Sisters of the Immaculate Conception.

"She said everyday she and the kids get together and say a prayer to keep the coalition forces safe," said Staff Sgt. Jim Ellifrit, 24, of Vancouver, Wash., who recently visited the school to meet with Sister Benina.

Despite the school's Catholic affiliation, children of families from all religious backgrounds attend.

Sister Benina's school is in a sector of Baghdad that the 1st Cavalry Division's 39th Brigade Combat Team is helping rebuild. Soldiers who recently went to assess her school found there is not a real playground, only an empty trash-ridden lot next to a bustling street filled with cars and donkey carts.

The Soldiers are eager to get a

project moving to provide a better environment for the youngsters.

"Our mission is the children," said Ellifrit. "We want to create an environment where they can have a good future."

The project, now moving through the bidding process, will include clean up for a soccer field and a protective fence for safety.

"It will be open to the community with controlled access," said Staff Sgt. B.M. Hess. "It will not be used as a parking lot so that people can just throw trash in there."

While at the school, Sgt. Kyle Neuenschwander, 24, of Medford, Ore., distributed t-shirts to children.

"I expected to get rocks thrown at me but it wasn't the case," Neuenschwander said. "Their country is war-stricken with forces driving around their roads armed to the teeth with ungodly amounts of fire power and yet they're happy we're here."

After distributing t-shirts, several children playfully lifted their shirts to show Neuenschwander they had mischievously tucked away three or four in their pants rather than the allotted one they were allowed.

They ran off laughing as if to dare him to a game of chase. But Neuenschwander's heart is too big. Not only did they make off with extra t-shirts, he also ended up giving away his rank.

"They're very crafty but they are the same as any kids I have ever met," said Cpl. Matthew Mintz, 33, of Tillamook, Ore. "It makes me



By Staff Sgt. Rebekah-mae Bruns, 39th BCT PAO

Staff Sgt. Jim Ellifrit, 24, of Vancouver, Wash., signed autographs for the children at the school. Ellifrit recently visited the school to meet with Sister Benina.

miss my kids."

As Ellifrit signed autographs for the children he felt a tiny hand slip into his.

"Now I know how all those celebrities feel when they are trying to get back to their dressing rooms and people are shoving pen and paper at them," said Neuenschwander. "I got mobbed."

"I went to shake the little guy's hand but he wouldn't let go," said

Ellifrit. "He began pulling on me and then I understood he just wanted help getting outside of the school grounds."

A swarm of youngsters sandwiched in for autographs and t-shirts left little room for mobility, especially for a small boy who just wanted to get home.

"They give this mission meaning," Neuenschwander said.

Steadying themselves in a

tumultuous environment, they understand a larger picture.

"Information is going to win this war, not bullets," said Ellifrit as he sat contemplating the future of Iraq.

"Our mission here has to be the children. We can keep capturing people but until the new generation takes over, there will still be old religious and party bias, and old problems."

1st Cav. Div. Civil Affairs Delivers the Goods

By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel
122nd MPAD

TAJI, Iraq-- Trust. To an Iraqi populace overly familiar with the lies and deceptions of the former regime, trust of those in power is hard to come by. As coalition forces work to restore sovereignty to the Iraqi people, cooperation from local governing councils grows more important with each passing day.

Soldiers of A-Team 5, 489th Civil Affairs Battalion (CA), 2-7 Cavalry, 39th Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 1st Cavalry Division, delivered school supplies and facilitated the delivery of clothing and medical equip-



By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel, 122nd MPAD

A member of the Al-Taji Nahia, the equivalent to a Neighborhood Area Council, examines the many boxes delivered by A-Team 5 of the 489th Civil Affairs Battalion. The team delivered school supplies and clothing during a visit May 9.

ment provided by the First Team's Division Support Command (DISCOM) during a council Meeting May 9. With this delivery to the Al-Taji Nahia, the equivalent to a Neighborhood Area Council, the CA Team took a step towards building the trust of the council they support.

"This delivery lets the local populace know we [coalition forces] care and we are trying to make a difference," said Capt. Bob Fraas, a civil military operations officer with the 489th CA Bn. "It also gives the council some legitimacy. By delivering the supplies to the council members instead of directly to citizens and having the council members and Imams pass the items out, we've enabled the council members to say 'See, we are able to work with the Coalition.'"

Wide grins were seen and appreciative words heard as Soldiers carried 35 boxes of supplies into the building situated between Highway 1 and Camp Cooke. Council members rummaged through the boxes inspecting the items, laughing as they came across stuffed animals and plastic bottle nipples, diapers and cans of baby formula.

"For Baby!" explained Capt. Elizabeth Levitt, the division medical logistics officer with DISCOM, as she held up a box of formula and motioned



By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel, 122nd MPAD

Sgt. John Hultquist of the 489th CA Battalion shows members of the Al-Taji Nahia some of the medical supplies his team delivered. In addition to medical equipment, the CA team delivered school supplies and clothing with the First Team's Division Support Command.

towards her stomach indicating the item was food.

"All of the clothing came from families back in the United States," said Col. Mark Hurley, DISCOM commander. "They [American families] wanted to do something for the Iraqi people, and we felt this was a really good way for the families to be involved."

Switching gears to talk about the medical supplies his command had provided, Hurley took a moment to

explain some of the other areas DISCOM could be helpful in building relationships with the local governing council.

"We bring a lot of unique skills to Iraq. We've got medical skills, logistics skills, and people who've got pretty big hearts," he said. "The intent of DISCOM is to provide services to the Iraqi people, on a small scale, gain their trust and cooperation and build a better trust between the two peoples."



By Pfc. Al Barrus, 122nd MPAD

Spec. Elama Palemene of Headquarters Company 1-8 Cavalry examines documents found among chemicals and electronic equipment suspected for weapon making during a midnight raid at an Al Dura home in Baghdad May 23.

Cav. Detains Alleged Weapon Supplier

By Pfc. Al Barrus
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD, Iraq-- A weapons supplier and two other suspects were detained May 23 at an Al Dura home by the Soldiers of Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 5th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

Working from a tip received by a man who was arrested three weeks ago, squads of the 1st Platoon "Bad Boyz" detained a weapons supplier, during a midnight cordon and search mission, said Capt. Jeff Mersiowsky, Company B commander. The search also yielded electronic equipment and chemicals that could be used to make homemade weapons.

The suspected weapons

supplier was detained and questioned along with two other males who lived in the home, because of the alleged bomb-making materials.

"When we started doing tactful questioning, they started lying and making up different stories," Mersiowsky said. "As soon as they started lying I decided that we should take them [into custody for] further questioning."

After detaining the alleged weapons supplier and the two other suspects, the Soldiers pushed on to find a second weapons supplier at a nearby farmhouse.

"We doubt they are expecting us ... and we don't suspect that we will need to fire any rounds," said 1st Lt. Chris Widell, Company B.

The second search

yielded no suspects or weapons.

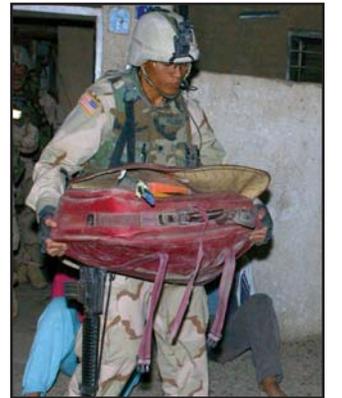
"I thought the chance of getting [the second weapons supplier] would be lower because we have his brother," he said. "He obviously knows that we have his brother in custody, and that he'd probably leak information, so we think he took a clue and left."

Mersiowsky said the operation went very smoothly.

"There was no collateral damage," Mersiowsky said. "We didn't have to break anything in the house or knock down any doors."

The Soldiers detained a weapons supplier, two suspects, confiscated materials that could be used for making weapons and did so without having to fire a round. In their eyes the raid was a success.

"We always hope for a safe mission, but we [have to] expect to get caught in a fire fight," Mersiowsky said. "We are trained for whatever comes at us."



By Pfc. Al Barrus, 122nd MPAD

Pvt. Juan Aguilar of Company B 1-8 Cav. places chemicals and potential bomb making materials outside for examination while detainees wait to be questioned during a midnight raid in Al Dura.

1-7 Cav. Works to Put ICDC Soldiers on the Streets

By Spc. Andy Miller
122nd MPAD

AL RASHID, Baghdad-- They arrived by truck, secured the area and quickly moved into position. They were there to complete a cordon and search operation planned by Soldiers from 1st Squadron, 7th Regiment Cavalry of the 1st Cavalry Division. The Soldiers on the ground weren't all Cavalry though. Most of them were Iraqi.

To help prepare them for this kind of 'real world' mission, the 1-7 Cav. Soldiers trained with Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) Soldiers from the 304th ICDC Battalion for months. The 1-7 took over the ICDC training program from the 1st Squadron of the 1st Cavalry Regiment, who had recruited many of them and seen them through Iraqi basic training.

Cpt. Martin Wohlgenuth, a fire support officer with 1-7, has

been involved with training ICDC Bravo and Charlie companies since he arrived in Baghdad three months ago. After watching them progress on mission essential task list (METL) skills and certification, he decided they were ready to test their skills in a combat environment.

May 27, under the guidance of 1-7 Cav. troops, ICDC Bravo Co. conducted a cordon and search mission in the Al Sowaib area of Al Rashid. It was the first company wide ICDC combat operation in the First Team's area of operations. According to Wohlgenuth, the ICDC Soldiers did exactly what they were trained to do.

"We had a team that went in a cleared the building, another team that went in and searched, and they did exactly that. The guys we had dismounted on the ground stayed where they needed to be. They stayed in kneeling or a prone position, observing," Wohlgenuth said. "[They] searched the buildings.



By Spc. Andy Miller, 122nd MPAD

Staff Sgt. Faletoa Sea, a fire support noncommissioned officer with 1st Squadron, 7th Regiment Cavalry of the 1st Cavalry Division, performs a pre-combat inspection with Iraqi Civil Defense Corp (ICDC) Soldiers from Bravo Co., 304th ICDC Battalion. Sea has been training the ICDC Soldiers to prepare them to operate independently of the First Team.

They did a thorough job. We found plenty of weapons with ammunition. I couldn't have asked for anything more. They exceeded everybody's expectations."

For ICDC instructor, Staff Sgt. Faletoa Sea, a fire support noncommissioned officer with 1-7 Cav., it was a feeling of accomplishment to watch the ICDC Soldiers perform successfully in a 'real world' operation.

"Even though they're not 100 percent, I was very pleased with their performance," Sea said. "[We need] to make sure they can do the job, so when we leave, it can be a better place for the citizens of Iraq."

When the 1-7 Cav. Soldiers took control of the ICDC training program, the plan was to get the new Iraqi Soldiers prepared to conduct operations on their own by mid

July. Ultimately, the expectation is that the ICDC, along with other Iraqi security forces, will replace the need for a coalition security presence in Baghdad.

"I think the ICDC represents our ideals because most of Iraqi people want to help their country," ICDC Sgt. Maj. Hassan Abdul Kadum, the ICDC 40th brigade sergeant major, said. "I think my country depends on us. We must lead our country so we must fight."

When ICDC Bravo Co. went into the fight together for the first time, they knew they were being evaluated by the 1-7 Soldiers on the ground with them. It was their to use their training, and that's what they did, according to Lt. Jason Dudley, an ICDC trainer with 1-7 Cavalry.

Inside the building, the ICDC

squad leader competently responded to situations that are typically only seen in higher level training situations, Dudley explained.

"That's the level of proactivity that [noncommissioned officers] need to have at the critical moment, and that was what impressed me," Dudley said. "That was when I realized we don't need to spoon feed these guys anymore."

After months of training, battle drills and METL certification, the ICDC Soldiers had achieved a standard acceptable to the First Team. When the moment came, the ICDC came up with a victory. Along with a performance that pleased their 1-7 trainers, the ICDC Soldiers successfully seized several illegal sniper weapons with ammunition, along with a quantity of counterfeit money.



By Spc. Andy Miller, 122nd MPAD

A Soldier with the 1st Squadron, 7th Regiment Cavalry of the 1st Cavalry Division works with an Iraqi Civil Defense Corp (ICDC) Soldier from Bravo Co., 304th ICDC Battalion.

Soldiers Keep Promise to Village, Gain Trust

By Sgt. Christina Rockhill
1st Cav. Div. PAO

ABU ETHA, Iraq-- The Soldiers kicked around the idea for a month, trying to figure out how they would fulfill a promise that was made before they had even stepped foot into Iraq.

"It was a promise made by the [82nd Airborne Division]," said 1st Lt. Hanibl Olmeda, a platoon leader for 68th Chemical Company of the 1st Cavalry Division. "For the past four or five months they were stating that they were going to get a soccer goal and soccer field and soccer balls and it never happened."

The tiny village of Abu Etha was a hostile area for Soldiers up until a month ago when First Team troopers started doing daily patrols in the area.

"When we first arrived, the locals were very afraid, very nervous of our presence because this village had seen a lot of turmoil and a lot of raids in the past," Capt. Ben Ring, company commander of Co. A,

1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, said. "The villagers now are friendly. Since we've come here, over the past 6 weeks, we've been very friendly and we've engaged the populace, and now the kids run up to our vehicles and greet us with cheers."

The turnaround of the village is especially significant for the safety of the Soldiers. Before they started their patrols, the roads near the village were littered with improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

"The road we're going on right now had seven IEDs in a week," Ring said. "Since we started operations in that village, we've detained one person who was the cell leader for the whole terrorist cell in the area. Then we've pretty much treated [the villagers] kindly and given them candy and just talked to them and we haven't had any IEDs on the road ever since."

When Ring learned of the promise, he started working with his team to get soccer goals for the children. He said it started out as a simple project,



By Sgt. Christina Rockhill, 1st Cav Div. PAO

A local Iraqi girl from Abu Etha helps Soldiers and her playmates hold up a soccer net so that it doesn't get tangled. Soldiers of the 1st Cavalry Division put up the soccer net.

and he had some local Iraqis build him the goals from scratch. He was surprised when he found out that the goals were a little larger than he had expected.

"It was a little shocking at first. We asked for soccer goals and somehow we got regulation international-standard size soccer goals," Ring said. "But when you put them on the field,

the kids see them and you dig them into the ground a little bit, it doesn't make that big of a difference."

When the Soldiers pulled

Texas Family Has 1st Cavalry Division Tradition

By Cpt. Timothy Tate
122nd MPAD

When Spc. David Aron Brown from the 1st Cavalry Division received his Army Commendation Medal on May 13 with other Soldiers from his unit, he was carrying on a long-standing family tradition of military excellence like a few others.

There was a V-Device, for valor, on his ARCOM just like the other Soldiers from 2nd Troop 12th Cavalry Regiment. But there was something different for Brown on that day. His father, Sgt. Maj. David Howard Brown was standing by, watching his son receive his medal.

The similarities between father and son go far beyond their first and last names. Sgt. Maj. Brown, who works in the division headquarters' operations section and just went over 29 years in service and his son both enlisted into the army as tankers.

"He joined as a 19K (M-1 Abrams tanker)," the elder Brown said. "Back when I joined it was 19E for the M60 Patton (tank)."

"That's ancient history for me," his son replied.

Spc. Brown was raised the son of a Soldier. His grandfather, Stewart, on his mother's side was a military retiree having served in both World War II and in the Korean War.

At the age of nine, as his father began a tour in Korea, Spc. Brown decided that he wanted to move in with his grandparents on

the family farm in Whitehouse, a small town south of Tyler, Texas. It was during this time that he found that he loved working with animals, just like his father had years before. He would go out with his grandfather a couple of hours every day to take care of the cattle.

"Once there were twin calves born and the mother wouldn't nurse one of them, so I had to bottle feed it everyday," the younger Brown recalled. "The calf died eventually of some sickness. That really hurt."

Five years later, his grandfather passed away, leaving his grandmother alone with the farm. The younger Brown, again, decided to go back to the family farm, but this time to take on a much greater role.

"I had to work the farm every day with my uncle," he said. "We did everything from calving to shots, feeding, taking them to the veterinary [clinic] and eventually to the auction."

During his second time living on the family farm, Spc. Brown spent all four of his high school years attending Whitehouse High School, just like his dad. His high school superintendent was a former classmate of his father's.

Spc. Brown followed in his family's footsteps on high school athletic fields, excelling on the baseball and football teams.

"Our family has a tradition for putting up some really good high school football players," Sgt. Maj. Brown noted. "We are so serious about football in our family that whenever any of us are in Texas to this day, we always go to high school or local junior college football games together."

The elder Brown made sure that his whole family shared many deep beliefs in common as well.

"My family has a very strong sense for the defense of our nation, our constitution, and fully understands commitment to the

military," he said, describing his son and how he was raised. "I am really proud of him. He is a very determined to do things and accomplish things in his life. He is not afraid of anything. He and his siblings all believe in God and have a real strong faith. I'm really glad about that."

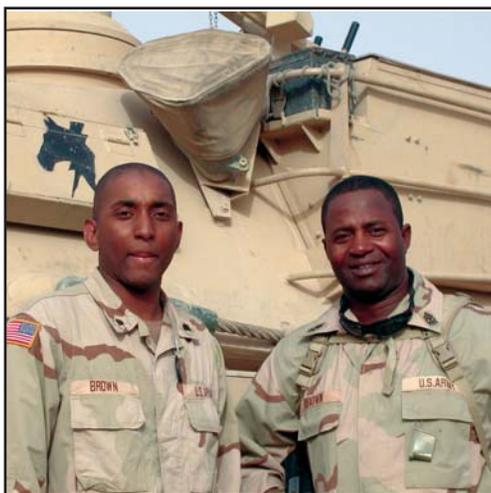
"My family stands on the belief 'Blessed are the peace makers for they shall be called the children of God.' [Matthew 5:9]," Sgt. Maj. Brown added. "That's why I volunteered to come over here. I wanted to be a part of this. I also wanted to be here with my son. I came here so I could fight for what my family believes is right."

The father turned to his son and asked, "If you could get a message out to the people who live where you do all your patrolling, what would you say to them?"

"I would just want them to know what we're here for; what we're trying to do for them," the young specialist began after a thoughtful moment. "There are the lights and the electricity, but there's a lot more than that. I'd like them to know what it's like just to go down to a shopping mall and hang out. To me that's what freedom is: just doing what you want when you want to do it. I'd like them to know that's what we're trying to do for them."

And when does he think this freedom will come to Iraq? His father interjected for him.

"It's going to take some time," he said. "It's going to happen, but it's going to take some time."



By Capt. Timothy Tate, 122nd MPAD

There's more than 30 years of Army experience in the Brown family from Whitehouse, Texas. Most of that belongs to Sgt. Maj. David Howard Brown (right). His son, Spc. David Aron Brown was awarded the Army Commendation Medal, with "V" Device (for valor).

VTC Connects Families To Soldiers in Iraq

By Spc. Bryan Kinkade
1st Cav. Div. PAO

CAMP VICTORY NORTH, Baghdad-- Early in the morning, Maj. Peter Butts sat down in front of a special television. He was full of excitement when the screen came up and he saw students of Salado High School; his son's high school.

Thousands of miles away from his home and family, deployed to Logistics Support Area Anaconda, Iraq, Butts was the first Soldier to have the opportunity to watch a high school graduation through the 1st Cavalry Division's video-teleconferencing system. In fact, he was the only Soldier to have a child graduating from Salado High School, so he had the VTC system to himself.

"This is one of those things that I wouldn't miss for the world," said the operations officer for the 49th Movement Control Battalion, 13th Corps Support Command.

Butts said he was very

pleased to have this opportunity and was ecstatic to be able to watch his son, Alex, graduate.

"Next to having been there, this was the next best thing," he said.

Before Butts deployed, his family thought he would be able to watch it over the Internet. He investigated and found out that the 1st Cavalry Division would be broadcasting, via VTC, every high school graduation.

"It was great," Butts said. "Towards the end, I was able to talk to my whole family."

Since Butts was the only Soldier at the VTC graduation, he was allowed about 40 minutes to talk to his family.

"He was able to show me his diploma," he said excitedly. "This was a great opportunity, even if I wouldn't have been able to talk to him; just to see it."

Butts son, Alex, plans on joining the Air Force. His father is extremely proud of him.

"This is one step towards success, and one start to build-



By Capt. Timothy Tate, 122nd MPAD

Trumpeter Sgt. Brian Reilly, French Horn player 1st Sgt. Robert Stagg, tuba player Staff Sgt. Walter Smith, trombonist Spc. Anthony Savickas and trumpeter Sgt. Alton Huckaby perform live for Salado High School graduation via video teleconferencing from Baghdad, Iraq.

ing a future," he said about his son's graduation.

This VTC started the beginning of a weeklong sched-

children graduate this year.

Several cameras around the Expo Center gave Butts different views of the graduation and a camera pointed at him put his face on a big screen in the Expo Center.

Also attending the VTC graduation, the 1st Cav. Div. Band performed a concert for the graduation ceremony, from the desert via VTC. Their performance was broadcasted live straight to the Expo Center.

"[The division] put this together to make it a reality," Butts said about the VTC system. "In my mind, it was as if I was there."

He was very thankful that he had the opportunity to watch his son graduate, and for the division sharing the VTC system with the rest of the Fort Hood units.

"I can't express my gratitude to let us partake in this graduation," Butts said. "We have more people coming from [LSA] Anaconda. I'm going to be able to go back and tell them what the experience was like."

Soldiers Give Soccer Field to Iraqis

Continued from Page 12 into the village with the enormous goals, kids came running from down the road. Soon a large crowd formed around the Soldiers as they prepared to unload. Men from the village helped carry the metal posts and little kids gathered picks and shovels to dig holes for the poles to sit in. Other children rushed to get wheel barrels they

would fill with concrete to set the posts into the ground. The community gathered with the Soldiers to set up the soccer field. As the plan came together, five and six-year-old kids helped unravel the fluorescent green soccer net, and everyone wore huge smiles.

"This is pretty much what it's all about," Ring said. "Our mission here in Iraq can be tire-



By Sgt. Christina Rockhill, 1st Cav. Div. PAO

1st Lt. Hanibl Olmeda, a platoon leader for 68th Chemical Company, hands out donated toys, school supplies and t-shirts to the villagers of Abu Etha. Most of the items given out were sent to the Soldiers from back home to give to the local villagers.

some. It can be difficult and very arduous, but it's events like these that really make it worthwhile. When you see the expressions on kids faces as you arrive with soccer goals and they are cheering, it really warms your heart."

The Soldiers also handed out t-shirts, candy, school supplies and toys that were donated from friends and family back in the states.

"It's definitely making a difference," 2nd Lt. Brandon Titus, of 1-8 Cav., said. "It's amazing what a smile and saying hi and just getting to know the people will do; it's great."

The Soldiers left behind a bright blue soccer ball for the children and left the little village knowing they had made a difference.

"It's just gratifying at the end of the day to know that we did make a difference in somebody's life," Olmeda said. "These kids here, they're the future of this country. So the more of them [that] like us, the better opportunities we have with them in the future."

ule to connect all Fort Hood-based deployed fathers and mothers to the Bell County Exposition Center to see their



By Spc. Jan Critchfield, 122nd MPAD

Students of Al-Uruba kindergarten in Baghdad's Karkh district explore and show off new toothbrushes and tubes of toothpaste provided to them by the 478th Civil Affairs Battalion, a Florida Army Reserve Unit attached to the 1st Cavalry Division.

Henry Rollins Visits Camp Black Jack

By Spc. Michelle Newbold
1st Cav. Div. PAO

CAMP BLACK JACK-- Henry Rollins of the Rollins Band and the 1980s punk band Black Flag, visited the Black Jack Dining Facility on May 26 to sign autographs and meet with the Soldiers. Rollins has appeared in movies such as "Bad Boys II" and "The New Guy," and has written several books. Currently, he is starting his own record label and is the host on a Los Angeles-based morning radio show.

Rollins spent about an hour and a half happily signing his autograph onto pictures, books, and magazines; or whatever Soldiers brought to him.

"The heat here is incredible," Rollins said to one Soldier while signing his picture, which was handed out to the individuals, free of charge.

"I've been a big fan for the last 11 years," said Spc. Greg Taber a RADAR repairman with Headquarters Battery, 4th Battalion, 5th Air Defense Artillery Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division. "I'm really glad to see one of my idols."

"A lot of artists are willing to volunteer their time to do this," said Tracy Thede, a United Service Organizations Tour Producer traveling with Rollins. Thede works with Armed Forces Entertainment to bring the stars overseas. In the past she has



By Spc. Bryan Kinkade, 1st Cav. Div. PAO

Spc. Phil Valliant, an infantryman with 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, has Henry Rollins of the Rollins Band sign one of his shotgun shells during an autograph signing at the 2nd Brigade 'Blackjack' Dining Facility May 26.

helped bring artists such as Robin Williams, Colin Quinn, and Drew Carey to Iraq.

"There are celebrities out there that want to support the Soldiers," Thede said.

Many of Rollins' fans showed up to the autograph signing, including 1st Lt. Chad Harlow of 3rd Bn., 82nd Field Artillery Regiment.

"I've been a fan since about '92 or '93," he said. "This is a cool one they have here."

Dressed in a white t-shirt, brown

pants, and black sneakers Rollins spoke with the Soldiers as he signed his picture.

When one Soldier asked him how long he had been in Iraq, he replied, "only three or four days, not long term like you."

After signing countless autographs, Rollins was whisked away to visit more Soldiers in the Baghdad area. The Soldiers were pleased; especially Taber who said, "I never thought I'd come to Iraq and see someone I really like."

Useful Arabic Phrases

Greetings

Welcome - *ahlan wasahlan*
-response - *alan feek*

Greeting for any time of the day
- *asalamu alaykum*
-response - *wa alaykum salam*

Hello - *marhaba*
-response - *marhabtain*

Pleased to meet you. - *ahlan wasahlan tasharafna*

Praise god - *alhamdulillah*

God Willing - *imshaallah*

Be safe - *Wa assalama*
-response - *salam*

God keep you safe - *alla isalmak*

God be with you - *alla ma'ak*

FIRST TEAM

First Sergeant's Bible Study Lifts Soldier's Minds, Bodies and Spirits

By Spc. Marie Whitney
122nd MPAD

There are many ways Soldiers can find a reprieve from the vigors of working in a combat zone. Some keep their minds busy through reading, calling home or playing video games. Others exercise their bodies by running or working out. But there are other Soldiers who are looking for something else. These Soldiers are looking for some spiritual relaxation. And 1st Sergeant Edwin Kerns, First Sergeant for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Cavalry Division, helps them to achieve that.

Kerns, originally from Jacksonville, NC, is the major facilitator and the teacher at a Bible study that takes place at the Division chapel on Camp Victory North. Bible study groups are a common thing for Soldiers to have in a combat zone, said Kerns.

"I started doing this about two weeks after I got here. I

"This group is not just for believers. Even if a non-believer wants to come, they can come. They never know what they might learn,"

-1st Sgt. Edwin Kerns
HHC, 1st Cav. Div.

was going to hold off and wait to see if anyone else was going to start one. But God put it in my heart not to wait."

The Bible studies are held Monday's, Wednesday's and Friday's from 7:15 p.m. to about 8:45 p.m., depending on the night.

"It's a good way for Christians to get together in fellowship and study the Word of God and stay close to God."

Each night the Bible study group covers a variety of different subjects from different

books on Christianity. And some of the discussion covers topics directly related to being in a combat zone. One of the tools Kerns uses to teach from is the 91st Psalms, which talks about "How God protects you. How you shouldn't dwell or worry everyday about something happening to you, because you know god is watching over you," said Kerns.

Kerns welcomes questions from the Soldiers before, during and after the Bible study sessions. "If we're talking about something and they have a question about it, I invite them to ask it so it can be answered immediately," said Kerns.

Sgt. Patrick Simon, also from HHC First Cav. Div., has been in attendance since Kerns began the Bible study sessions. "It's been very inspirational. It makes a big difference," he said. "Like I tell [1st Sgt. Kerns], 'I might be late. But I'm gonna be there.'"

But Kerns does not limit

his Bible study sessions to Christians only. Soldiers of all religions are invited to attend; believers or non-believers. "This group is not just for believers. Even if a non-believer wants to come, they can come. They never know what

they might learn," he said. "The bible study is [also] for people of different faiths. I'll never turn anybody away."

Kerns said, "We're ever learning about God. And we can all learn from one another."



By Spc. Marie Whitney, 122nd MPAD

1st Sgt. Edwin Kerns, HHC 1st Cavalry Division, speaks to Soldiers and civilians about how marriage relates to the Church during one of the Bible study sessions he leads at the Division Chapel on Camp Victory North.

In Remembrance

June 11, 2004

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Farewell to Fallen Comrades in Arms...



(Right) An 81st Brigade Soldier gives a final salute to his fallen comrade, Sgt. Jeffrey Shaver during the memorial service. Shaver was killed May 12 by an improvised explosive device.

(Below) A volley is fired in honor of Sgt. Jeffrey Shaver, a Soldier from the 81st Brigade in the Washington Army National Guard. Shaver was killed in Baghdad May 12 by an improvised explosive device.



Photos by Spc. Jan Critchfield, 122nd MPAD

Memorial Honors Fallen 115th FSB Soldier

By Sgt. Dan Purcell
122nd MPAD

CAMP WAR EAGLE-- A memorial service was held Friday, May 21, paying tribute to PFC Leslie D. Jackson, Alpha 115 Forward Support Company, who fell in action on May 12 while serving her country in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

The youngest member of her company, was remembered fondly by her fellow Soldiers in a final farewell at War Eagle Forward Operating Base.

"She would do anything asked of her," Sgt. Keith Garvin, A 115th FSC. "I would ask her to do something and she used to say, 'Sgt. Garvin, when you ask me to do something, you know I might gripe about

it...but, guaranteed I'm going to get it done'."

During the memorial, PFC Victoria Thompson eulogized her best friend with a poem.

"A Prayer for You: If we could have a lifetime here, I dream that will come true.

I pray to God, with all our hearts, for yesterday and you. A thousand words can't bring you back, we know because we tried, and neither will a million tears because we know we cried. We loved you with our broken hearts and our happy memories too, but we never wanted memories, we only wanted you," Thomas recited.

Jackson, fresh out of high school and advanced individual training, joined the 115th FSC in January 2004 and served

with the Supply and Transportation platoon. Her awards include the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart, the National Defense Service Medal and the Army Service

Ribbon.

"We dedicated the hallway in our barracks to her...We now call it Jackson Hall," Staff Sgt. Rico Harris, 115th FSC, said.



By Sgt. Dan Purcell, 122nd MPAD

A fellow Soldier salutes in honor of a fallen comrade during a memorial service held for PFC Leslie Jackson, supply and transportation platoon, 115th FSC. Jackson was killed in action May 12 while serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II.



Our Fallen Troops

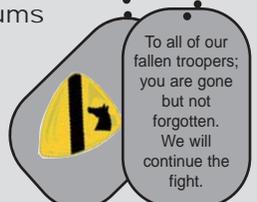
PFC Leslie Jackson

SPC Beau Beaulieu

SGT Hensley Box

SGT Jeffrey Shaver

SPC Charles Odums



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'Troy' is a Beauty of an Epic

By William Arnold
Seattle PI Movie Critic

Let's get this one big caveat out of the way straight off: Wolfgang Petersen's \$200 million blockbuster, "Troy," is pretty much a travesty of its source, Homer's great epic poem, "The Iliad." Classical purists will want to throw stones at this movie.

Major characters of the saga who live safely through Homer's telling get killed off. Sequences of the narrative are rearranged, often clumsily and for reasons that serve no clear dramatic purpose. And, oh yes, the decadelong war is compressed into less than two weeks.

Also, apparently in the interest of homophobia, the character of Patroclus is now Achilles' cousin, not his best friend, and the love the warrior feels for him -- which motivates Homer's climax -- is given to Briseis, elevated from minor slave girl to feisty Trojan princess.

One could go on like this all day. But the amazing thing about all this apparent disrespect is that it doesn't really matter. "Troy" is such an exhilarating piece of epic

filmmaking that it pulls you in, sweeps you up and works very much as its own thing.

And at the end of its fast-moving, two-hour, 45-minute running time, it's taken us to roughly the same place as Homer, in its own way capturing all the pageantry, political complexity and rich characterization of Western literature's first great masterpiece.

Set 3,200 years ago, the story deals with the Greek war against the Asia Minor city of Troy that's sparked when Troy's prince, Paris (Orlando Bloom), makes off with Helen (Diane Kruger), the wife of Menelaus (Brendan Gleeson), brother of Agamemnon (Brian Cox), the head Greek king.

The Greeks draft their great but reluctant champion, Achilles (Brad Pitt), raise a fleet of 1,000 ships and sail across the Aegean Sea to get Helen back, but Troy lies behind huge walls that have never been breached and things quickly get bogged down.

In Homer's version, the quagmire that ensues is seen from three perspectives: the Greeks, the



Courtesy of Warner Brothers Entertainment

Brad Pitt stars as 'Achilles' in Warner Bros. Pictures' epic action adventure "Troy," also starring Eric Bana and Orlando Bloom.

Trojans and the gods, who take sides in the conflict and keep coming down from Mount Olympus to directly enter the fray as allies of the mortals.

Like Robert Wise's 1955 "Helen of Troy" (a much inferior movie), Petersen's version leaves out the gods completely and

tries to envision what this event might have been like if it had actually transpired and was later mythologized by Homer.

Having accepted that premise, he then faced the choice that has confronted all the directors of the computer-generated historical epics of recent years: to go for the

gritty realism of a "Master & Commander" or the romance of a "Gladiator." He chose the latter.

Each of its major roles seems perfectly filled, with such gems as Brian Cox's magnificently malevolent Agamemnon, Brendan Gleeson's slovenly brutish Menelaus and Peter O'Toole's weak but noble King Priam of Troy.

In the thankless role of Paris, Orlando Bloom strikes just the right chord of self-centered softness, but he also gives the cowardly character an appealing vulnerability and self-disapproval that explains why his family and nation might stand behind him.

As Paris' brother, the great Trojan hero Hector, Eric Bana ("The Hulk") is so unexpectedly strong and yet so sympathetically human that he all but steals the picture.

As Achilles, the beefed-up Brad Pitt sometimes trips on his faux-classical English accent, but he also finds his character. He's suitably conflicted off the field, and his personal interactions are all marred by just the right touch of hubris.

Old Rivalries, New Contenders Take Center Stage

With apologies to baseball fans from the Sunshine State, when the Florida Marlins won the World Series last year (for the second time in a decade), many of you probably looked at it like I did: fluke.

The Marlins won it all with their best power hitter ailing and on a budget about one-third of the New York Yankees. This year, (surprise!) the Marlins are two games up on the Philadelphia Phillies in the National League Eastern Division one-third of the way through this season. Leading the way for the 'Fish' is their power hitting third baseman, Mike Lowell, with 14 home runs and a .346 batting average (through June 1).

Baseball this year is full of surprises. In the American League, the Chicago White Sox and the Anaheim Angels sit atop the central and western divisions, respectively, and in the National League, the Cincinnati Reds are 2-and-a-half games up on the Chicago Cubs in their central division race.

Reds first baseman Sean Casey is flirting with a .400 batting average with 50 games under his belt. At .394, Casey is one of the biggest surprises of the 2004 season. He even hit nine homers

Commentary

already, which is generally what he cranks out in an entire season.

The Chicago Cubs, if you recall, are my personal pick to win the National League pennant. It appears that the National League is the league of parity - there are 11 (!) teams playing .500-ball or better. Of course, everyone's beating up on the lowly Montreal Expos ... this year's version of the Detroit Tigers. Even my Milwaukee Brewers are a game over .500! (It won't last, but I can dream, can't I?)

In the American League, an old rivalry dominates the sports pages this spring. The New York Yankees, my pick to win it all this year and the best team that money can buy, currently holds the best record in baseball. Yet, the Boston Red Sox remain dead even with Steinbrenner's boys.

Off-season acquisitions are paying off BIG for both teams. Pitching has been especially important. Curt Schilling joined the Red Sox this winter, and he's now forming a formidable one-two punch with Pedro Martinez. Schilling is 6-3 thus far, and still striking out almost one batter in every inning he throws.

Yankee import Kevin Brown

MSG Dave Larsen



Sports Buff

has faired even better. Brown sits at 6-1 after his first 11 starts, filling the void left by the now un-retired Roger Clemens (who is looking like a Cy Young candidate for the Houston Astros, by the way).

Perennial all-star Manny Ramirez leads the way for the Red Sox at the plate, currently fourth in the league's hitting race with a .346 batting average. Add to that hefty average 14 homers, 15 doubles and 37 RBI, and you can see the value that Manny brings to the Bosox.

After an extremely slow start, Alex Rodriguez is starting to look at home at third base, and has heated up at the plate along with the temperatures in New York City. A-Rod (at the time of this writing) is hitting just under .300, with 12 dingers. That's good numbers, but for a guy making \$25 million a year, it's fairly pedestrian.

A guy from Baltimore is lead-

ing the AL in hitting so far: one-time utility infielder-turned-all-star outfielder Melvin Mora is hitting a whopping .384, following a breakout year in 2003. His Orioles are even playing .500 ball!

OK, that's all the good news. Here's who stinks so far: the Seattle Mariners, Kansas City Royals, Tampa Bay Devil Rays, Montreal Expos (previously noted), and the Arizona Diamondbacks.

Of that list of stinkers, every team is surprisingly poor, except for two of them: everyone predicted the Expos and Lou Piniella's Devil Rays to be cellar dwellers in their respective leagues. Seattle, though, won more than 90 games last year. This year, they're on a current pace to lose 90!

With the Major League Baseball All-Star Game less than a month away, here's my votes for mid-season accolades:

MVP, National League: Barry Bonds, San Francisco

MVP, American League: Manny Ramirez, Boston

Cy Young, National League: Roger Clemens, Houston

Cy Young, American League: Kenny Rogers, Texas

Next month, we might even start talking about football again! Until next time: Go Packers!

Standings

MLB
As of June 2, 2004

American League East Division			
	W	L	Pct GB
New York	31	19	.620 --
Boston	31	21	.596 1
Baltimore	24	24	.500 6
Toronto	23	29	.442 9
Tampa Bay	18	32	.360 13

Central Division			
	W	L	Pct GB
Chicago Sox	29	21	.580 --
Minnesota	28	23	.549 1.5
Detroit	23	28	.451 6.5
Cleveland	22	27	.449 6.5
Kansas City	18	31	.367 10.5

West Division			
	W	L	Pct GB
Anaheim	31	21	.608 --
Texas	28	23	.560 2.5
Oakland	27	23	.540 3.5
Seattle	19	32	.367 12

National League East Division			
	W	L	Pct GB
Florida	30	22	.577 --
Philadelphia	27	23	.540 2
Atlanta	26	25	.510 3.5
New York	25	26	.490 4.5
Montreal	16	35	.314 13.5

Central Division			
	W	L	Pct GB
Cincinnati	31	21	.596 --
Chicago Cubs	28	23	.549 2.5
Houston	28	23	.549 2.5
St. Louis	27	24	.529 3.5
Milwaukee	26	24	.520 4
Pittsburgh	23	25	.479 6

West Division			
	W	L	Pct GB
Los Angeles	27	23	.551 --
San Diego	28	23	.549 2
San Francisco	26	25	.520 1.5
Colorado	20	31	.380 7.5
Arizona	19	33	.353 9

Glossary:
W: Wins, L: Losses, PCT: Winning percentages, GB: Games back

NBA

As of June 2, 2004

Playoff Standings Eastern Conference

Indiana vs. Detroit
Indiana 78, Detroit 74
Detroit 72, Indiana 67
Detroit 87, Indiana 78
Indiana 83, Detroit 68
Detroit 83, Indiana 65
Detroit 69, Indiana 65
Detroit wins series 4-2

Western Conference

L.A. Lakers vs. Minnesota
L.A. Lakers 97, Minnesota 88
Minnesota 98, L.A. Lakers 71
L.A. Lakers 100, Minnesota 89
L.A. Lakers 92, Minnesota 85
Minnesota 98, L.A. Lakers 96
L.A. Lakers 96, Minnesota 90
L.A. Lakers wins series 4-2

NBA Finals

June 6: Detroit at L.A. Lakers
June 8: Detroit at L.A. Lakers
June 10: L.A. Lakers vs. Detroit
June 13: L.A. Lakers vs. Detroit
*June 15: L.A. Lakers vs. Detroit
*June 17: Detroit at L.A. Lakers
*June 20: Detroit at L.A. Lakers

*if necessary

NHL

As of June 2, 2004

Stanley Cup Finals

Tampa Bay vs. Calgary
Calgary 4, Tampa Bay 1
Tampa Bay 4, Calgary 1
Calgary 3, Tampa Bay 0
Tampa Bay 1, Calgary 0
Series tied 2-2

June 3: Calgary at Tampa Bay
June 5: Tampa Bay at Calgary
*June 7: Calgary at Tampa Bay

*if necessary