



Ironhorse Desert News

Operation Iraqi Freedom



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“Steadfast & Loyal”

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Above Left: Drew Carey MCs the show. Above: Drew's entourage poses with members of the 4th Forward Support Battalion. Bottom left: Soldiers in the crowd enjoy the show.



Drew Carey Entertains Ironhorse Soldiers

Story by CPL Vernon O'Donnell, photos by CPL O'Donnell, SPC Rhea Anderegg and MAJ Josslyn Aberle

FORWARD OPERATING BASE IRONHORSE, TIKRIT, Iraq - On Sept. 28, Tikrit was host to the Drew Carey Comedy Tour, a USO-sponsored event for the soldiers of Task Force Ironhorse.

Drew Carey, star of the Drew Carey Show, hand-picked five of his favorite comedians, including Jeff Ross from Comedy Central's Friar Club's Roast and Blake Clark from the hit film "The Water Boy," to come to Iraq. He also brought Kathy Kinney, the actress who plays the character Mimi on his show who, in her words, was "the eye-candy" of the tour.

The group performed at 13 locations in their five-day trip improving morale for troops wherever they stopped. The comedians said they had a great time traveling around and enjoying the "heroes" of the United States Armed Services.

The night in Tikrit was a great success with many troops coming from all over the Task Force's area of operation to see the event. Prime Mover, made up of members of the Ironhorse band, opened the night up, but as chants of "Drew" began, the sitcom star took the stage to a resounding cheer.

Carey acted as master of ceremonies and entertained briefly between each of the stand-up acts. The comedy show lasted nearly two hours and was followed by an autograph signing session for any soldier present. The stars also posed in pictures with people and continued to entertain while troops waited in line for their chance to chat with the humorists.

"There were so many great comedians and I laughed the whole time," said Spc. Raj Singh, a soldier with 418th Civil Affairs Battalion. "I am not big into going to shows like this, but I really enjoyed myself."

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Task Force News

MPs, ICDC Work Together After Attack by Hostile Forces

Story and photos by SPC Jason Phillips

AD-DULUITAH, IRAQ -- The night was quiet in the small Iraqi town. Though it was 10:00 p.m., men still crowded into shops along the main street, while children played along the sidewalks. Then, bursts of gunfire rang out in the distance.

"Go, go, go!" shouted SGT Peter Powers, a military police officer with the 64th MP Company, to his soldiers. A squad of 64th MP Company soldiers had been talking with Iraqi police officers at the local police station when the shots rang out. Now, they all jumped into their vehicles, and drove along the main street towards the gunfire.

"Can you see tracers?" Powers shouted to his gunner, PFC Julia Atkins, who operated an M249 Squad Automatic Weapon in the Humvee's turret. Atkins is an MP in 64th MP Co.

"I can't see any tracers - I can't see anything," she shouted back.

As the vehicles raced along the street, the shooting became louder and more intense.

"Who's shooting, where are they?" shouted Powers.

"I don't see anyone, I can't see muzzle flashes," the gunner shouted.

Then a rapid burst of shots rang out very nearby.

"That went right over our heads!" shouted the gunner.

Powers directed his driver to turn the vehicle onto a different street, and drive to a nearby gas station. At the gas station, several men carrying AK-47s sprinted towards the MP vehicles.

"Don't shoot them!" shouted Powers. "Those are ICDCs."

The men with the AK-47s were members of the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps who were guarding a gas station in Ad-Duluiyah, a small town about 60 miles

north of Baghdad. The ICDCs didn't speak English but explained to the MPs with animated hand gestures and sound effects that they had been attacked by an unknown number of assailants. The attackers had fled into the night when the MPs arrived. For the next hour, the ICDCs and MPs searched side by side through the dark clusters of buildings for the attackers. They did not find them. No ICDCs or MPs were injured, though there was lots of shattered glass at the gas station, and many rattled nerves.

Sometimes it seems that all of the best and worst of life in post-major conflict Iraq can be found in Ad-Duluiyah. The town is made up of crumbling mud, brick and concrete buildings, yet some of these buildings are being freshly painted and repaired. There are men and women who will smile and wave as U.S. soldiers pass, and others who turn their backs or glare. There are children who scream and cheer with delight when they see the MPs' Humvees driving towards them, and others who spit, give a thumbs down sign or throw rocks.

And there is the enemy. The enemy who attacks day or night, then vanishes into the maze of buildings, narrow alleys and shadows. Now, however, they are confronted by U.S. soldiers and armed Iraqis who are working together to guard and protect the town and its people.

SEE MPs, PAGE 4



SGT Donald Norris, an MP with the 64th MP Company, and a member of the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps inspect damage inside a gas station in Ad-Duluiyah after it was attacked by hostile forces.

Task Force News



Soldiers with the 1-10th Cavalry, 4th Infantry Division, in Tarsaq, a few kilometers from the Iranian border, unload pilgrims who were collected while attempting to cross the border illegally.

One Thousand Iraqis Take Over Patrols of Iranian Border

Story and photos by SSG Craig Pickett

KHANAQIN, Iraq—In a ceremony September 27, the U.S. Army officially turned over control of the Iranian border to the newly formed Iraqi Border Patrol.

Members of the 1-10th Cavalry, 4th Infantry Division, from Fort Hood, Texas and the 1-17th Field Artillery, from Fort Sill, Okla., trained close to 1,000 local Iraqis to serve as border patrol soldiers and monitor the barren stretch of land between the two countries.

COL Sherif Mohammad Nazim, commander of the new group in the Diyala province, said his troops are ready to take over the U.S. soldiers' job. With the support of Coalition Forces, Nazim feels they will stop thousands of people from entering Iraq illegally.

So far, the forces have detained over 14,000 people attempting to enter the country. Colonel Reginald Allen, commander of the 1-10th Cavalry, said most are pilgrims on their way to religious sites in Karbala or Najaf. He said the pilgrims run the gamut from old to young, and most are peaceful. They have found no weapons or contraband of any kind.

The soldiers typically round up the masses attempting to enter and give them water, food and first aid as needed. Then they are taken to the nearest port of entry where they can be processed legally.

The Iraqi Border Guards are currently patrolling the 210-mile stretch of the border that passes through their sector, while the Coalition Forces are in an oversight role. They are helping where they can but letting the Iraqis work their own border.

"This is a very important day," said Nazim. "I will be taking command of all the Diyala border guards. The new border guards are taking control of their community and their country. Not only are they securing their border, but they are securing their future as well."

Task Force News

Medical Warehouse Gets Facelift

Story and photos by SSG Craig Pickett

TIKRIT, Iraq -- Only a couple months ago, the medical supply warehouse in Tikrit was struggling to keep an adequate supply of medicine and vaccines on hand. That's when Task Force Ironhorse stepped in.

The medical supply warehouse is the central storage facility for the Salah Ah Din province and supplies 11 hospitals and 69 clinics with much needed medicines and equipment. After the war, it was left in shambles and soldiers have begun to pick up the pieces.

"I am very grateful," said Dr. Adil Goraha-Akkish, manager of the facility. "If it was not for the U.S. Army, the warehouse would be very tired. Some things we would not be able to fix, like the generator and the refrigerators for maybe two years."

So far the Army has invested \$88,000 into the facility, turning a potential two-year wait into a distant memory. According to CPT Alex Garza, Public Health Team chief for the 418th Civil Affairs Battalion, most of the money has been spent on building and vehicle repairs.

The process of renovation actually started in May, when elements of the 4th Infantry Division established a base of operations in the area. Early on, they assessed the local health care system for the Salah Ah Din province.

"We visited Adil in May," said LTC Kirk Eggleston, division surgeon. "We were assessing the overall health care system and saw this facility as a high-impact, high-yield project."



Dr. Adil Goraha-Akkish explains the cold storage unit to LTC Kirk Eggleston at the central medical supply warehouse for Salah Ah Din province.

The first phase of the project was to ensure they were getting consistent supplies from Baghdad. Then, they turned their attention to the facility, which was in dire need of repair.

One of the most important repairs made was to the generator and cold room storage facility where important temperature-sensitive vaccines are stored. Also, two additional cold storage rooms were rewired and renovated to house vaccines for measles, polio, tuberculosis, and hepatitis B.

"We did not have vaccines for two or three months - vaccines for babies and other life saving drugs," said Akkish, a pharmacist and 24-year resident of Tikrit. "We now have them and distribute them to all of our hospitals and health centers."



MPs, FROM PAGE 2

"The ICDCs take their job very seriously," said SSG Brian Flom, a military policeman with the 64th MP Company, who was an instructor during ICDC training in Ad-Duluiyah. "They are excited about what they are doing; they are proud about their job and about establishing security in their town."

SPC James Teague searched rooftops, alleys and vacant lots with the ICDCs on the night of the attack and was impressed by them.

"I was surprised - their adrenaline was pumping faster than ours!" he said. "It's good to see that there are Iraqi people who want to accomplish the same goals we do in their communities."

A company of soldiers from Moldavia have recently begun working in Ad-Duluiyah with 4th Infantry Division and 64th MP Company soldiers. When U.S. soldiers work along side international and local forces, it sends an important message to the Iraqi people, said Flom.

"It shows them that Americans are not here to occupy or control their country," he said. "It shows that this is a joint effort, a world-wide effort. We are all here to help them."

Task Force News

New Currency for Iraq to be Distributed Throughout the Country Beginning October 15th

Story by SPC Derek Dexter

TIKRIT, Iraq -- Task Force Ironhorse soldiers will be helping to usher in another aspect of a newly-liberated Iraq -- new money.

October 15, a redesigned dinar will go into circulation in Iraq and Coalition forces, including Task Force Ironhorse, will be assisting with security at exchange sites.

The new money will be available in denominations of 50, 250, 1000, 5000, 10,000 and 25,000 dinars. The new dinar resembles the former national dinar used throughout Iraq in the early 1990's. It differs though, in denomination and color.

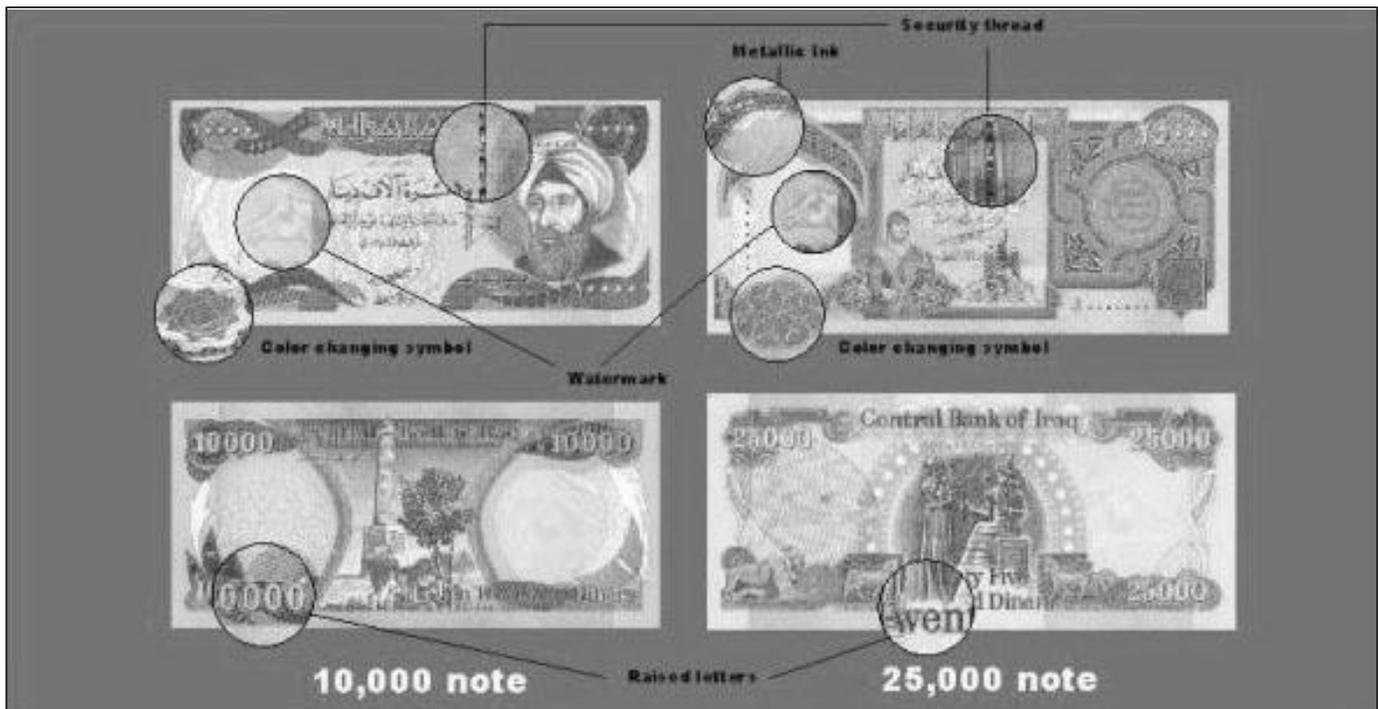
The normal "print dinar" is used in most of Iraq. This is money most soldiers are used to seeing, with the picture of Saddam Hussein on it. In northern Iraq, a "Swiss" dinar is used. The new dinar looks similar to the Swiss one.

The new dinar will be exchanged between October 15 and January 15 at many different locations in Taskforce Ironhorse's three provinces. The Rafidain and Rasheed banks in At Tamim, Salah Ah Din, and Diyala provinces will exchange the print dinar at a one-to-one rate, and 150-to-one exchange on the Swiss dinar.

People holding money in bank accounts will not need to withdraw this money to exchange it. All bank accounts will be automatically converted to new notes at the official rates.

Ironhorse soldiers will assist with security at the exchange sites. These soldiers will assist with the contractor-led operation if the convoys distributing the new currency come under attack or break down.

The new money is further showing Iraq is ready to continue past its former dictatorship. While the currency with Hussein may make an interesting souvenir for soldiers, for a country under the ruled under his iron fist, it is a reminder of repression and tyranny.



Dinar Exchange Security

- Staff at currency exchange sites will also be well trained on how to detect counterfeit Iraqi dinars
- Counterfeit old Iraqi dinars will not be accepted at the exchange sites. Those presenting counterfeit notes will not be arrested or charged with a crime, but their money will not be exchanged.
- Currency exchange sites will visibly mark old dinars upon their exchange for new ones so that they cannot be stolen and re-exchanged later. Once the old currency is marked it will no longer be valid currency.

Task Force News

From Rings to Bars -- Married Lieutenants are now Captains



CPT Jamie Holden gives a thank-you speech after receiving her promotion at a ceremony outside the Division Main palace. Her husband, CPT Brandon Holden, stands to her right as the Task Force Ironhorse commanding general, MG Raymond Odierno, listens. The Holdens are married, and both were promoted to captain the same day at Saddam Hussein's palace in Tikrit.

Story and photos by SPC. Derek Dexter

FORWARD OPERATING BASE

IRONHORSE, TIKRIT, Iraq -- In a short ceremony outside of the palace used as Division Headquarters, two lieutenants received their promotions to captain. The twist is - they are married.

CPT Brandon Holden is the Headquarters and Headquarters Battery executive officer with the 4th Battalion, 42 Field Artillery Group. His wife, Jamie, is the Headquarters and Headquarters company commander of the 502nd Forward Support Battalion. They received their promotions from MG Raymond T. Odierno, commanding general of Taskforce Ironhorse.

The couple has been together since their junior year of college and married for three years. The West Point cadets received their commissions on the same date, and according to Brandon, knew their promotion date would be the same as well.

Jamie added excitedly, "We found out we were getting promoted by the C.G. three days ago."

The captains were deployed to Korea together. Being deployed to Iraq, however, has been a mixed blessing according to Jamie.

"It's good and it's bad," said Jamie. "It's good because I'm able to see him and that makes you feel better, but it's also kind of nerve wracking because I hear about all the things going on out there. Every time I hear something happened, my heart sinks and I pray it's not him."

As deployments are generally a stressful time on both soldiers and their families, the Holdens have a unique experience, sharing this deployment with each other. With the two of them here together, it can be an inspiration to other couples that times such as these can be overcome.

4ID Bands' Upcoming Performances

- Oct 7: Ironhorse Brass Quintet @ Dining Facility at 6 pm
- Oct 9: 7 Iron Horsemen @ Dining Facility at 6 pm
- Oct 14: Brass Quintet @ Dining Facility at 6 pm
- Oct 16: 7 Iron horsemen @ Dining Facility at 6 pm



Task Force News

Story by SGT Gabe Nix

TIKRIT, Iraq – Kapow! What do Batman and the 299th Engineer Battalion's bravo company from Fort Hood, Texas have in common?

Both make a similar sound as they strike a blow to the enemy. The 299th is responsible for cleaning up five different Ammunition Supply Points, containing many different kinds of explosives.

"There was a problem with people looting the ordinance," says 2nd Lt. Jason Gordeuk, a native of Pennsylvania. "We want to neutralize it before it falls in the hands of paramilitary forces."

The process of cleaning the sites is no small undertaking. The 299th has been working on cleaning the sites since the middle of May, rotating companies in and out of the ASPs to give them relief from handling the unexploded ordnance.

Soldiers searching for the UXO come across everything from howitzer rounds to surface to air missiles. The engineers use precautions to be as safe as possible.

"Safety is of the utmost importance, we rely heavily on (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) for guidance," says Gordeuk. A major part of an engineer's training involves demolition schooling, he said.

The soldiers involved in the explosives cleanup are getting a career's worth of experience in just a few months, according to Gordeuk.

In addition to gaining valuable demolitions know-how, soldiers are able to experience the satisfaction that comes with making Iraq a safer place for comrades and civilians.

"We are trying to create a safe and secure Iraq, it's a team effort," says Capt. Kenneth N. Reed, Bravo Company Commander, 299th Engineer Battalion.

Teamwork between the soldiers of Bravo Company is especially important when explosives are involved.

Soldiers work together to clean the sites by hand, moving thousands of rounds of unexploded ordinance. Rounds are wired with C-4. After going through the proper channels to clear the area, they are detonated.

"The explosion is their reward for all of their hard work," exclaims Gordeuk.

After the explosion is over and they have had a moment to enjoy their reward, they move on to the next site.

Local Announcements



Religious Services at FOB Ironhorse

Sunday:

9:30 a.m.-- Protestant

11:00 a.m.-- Gospel

Noon-- LDS

1:00-- Catholic

Wednesday:

6:30 p.m.-- Prayer & Praise

7:00 p.m.-- Bible Study

Friday:

7:30 p.m.-- Jewish

12:25 p.m.-- Muslim

Movie Schedule

Movies at the Soldiers Inn are shown at 11am, 2pm and 8pm.

Movies listed below are for the 8pm showing only.

Oct 6th: Sweet Home Alabama

Oct 7th: Once Upon A Time in Mexico

Oct 8th: A Beautiful Mind

Oct 9th: The Boondock Saints

Oct 10th: Bourne Identity

Oct 11th: The Sixth Day

Oct 12th: Mystery Men

** Sunday's Movies are shown at 2 pm and 8 pm only.**

Combat Stress Team

New Classes Begin in October

Anger Management

Stress Management

located at the FOB
Ironhorse Aid Station.

Call 534-0161

News Briets

Reuters -- Four months after suffering a near fatal heart attack, intrepid British explorer Ranulph Fiennes has announced a new challenge -- running seven marathons in seven days on seven continents.

Story by Carol Torgan, Ph.D. -- Open your window on a sunny afternoon, and what do you hear? The chirping of singing birds? The yelling of playing children? Odds are these days that you'll hear the birds but not the children. As kids spend more time in front of television, computer and video screens, their physical activity levels have decreased. And their body weights have increased. Obesity in kids is now epidemic in the United States. The number of children who are overweight has doubled in the last two to three decades; currently one child in five is overweight. The increase is in both children and adolescents, and in all age, race and gender groups.

Reuters -- Sony Corp, the world's biggest consumer electronics maker, said on Friday it would unveil its all-in-one PSX game device to the public next week.

USA TODAY -- Dennis Lehane has been hailed by some critics as the heir apparent to Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler, masters of the crime novel. Lehane, author of *Mystic River*, the current selection of the USA TODAY Book Club, says he's flattered, "but I don't see it, myself."

Reuters -- China plans to conduct experiments related to a moon landing, a senior science official was quoted as saying on Sunday, just days before the country is expected to launch its first manned space flight.

SPORTS ZONE

COLLEGE FOOTBALL --

#1 Oklahoma won 53-7 over Iowa St., Oklahoma QB Jason White passed for 382 yds and five TDs
#2 Miami squeaked by W. Virginia 22-20 on a Jon Peattie 23 yd field goal with 11 seconds left in the game
#4 Virginia Tech routed Rutgers 48-22, RB Kevin Jones of V. Tech ran for 118 yds and one TD
#7 Tennessee was knocked off by Auburn 28-21, Auburn RB Carnell Williams rushed for 192 yds and one TD
#8 Nebraska dominated Troy State 30-0, Rec Matt Herian caught three passes for 110 yds and one TD
#10 USC routed Arizona State 37-17, USC RB LenDale White rushed for 139 yds and two TDs
#11 Michigan was upset by #19 Iowa 30-27, Iowa RB Fred Russell rushed for 110 yds
#12 Georgia handled Alabama 37-23, Georgia QB David Green threw for 248 yds and one TD
#13 Texas beat #14 Kansas St. 24-20
#16 Minnesota drubbed Northwestern 42-17, Minn. QB Asad Abdul-Khaliq threw for 331 yds and four TDs
#20 Northern Illinois overcame Ohio University 30-23 in overtime
#21 Texas Christian University beat Army 27-0
Utah upset #22 Oregon 17-13
Unranked UCLA manhandled #17 Washington 46-16
#23 Purdue pounded Illinois 43-10, Purdue RB Jerod Void rushed for 120 yds and four TDs
#24 Florida was upset by Mississippi 20-17, Eli Manning threw for 256 yds
Miami (Ohio) drubbed Akron 45-20, Miami QB Ben Roethlisberger threw for 369 yds
Navy upended #25 Air Force 28-25
Baylor beat Colorado 42-30
Wisconsin beat Penn State 30-23
Georgia Tech beat N.C. State 29-21
Bowling Green defeated Central Michigan 23-3

NFL WEEK FIVE --

Minnesota (5-0) beat Atlanta (1-4), 39-26
Kansas City (5-0) beat Denver (4-1), 24-23; KR Dante Hall set NFL record with 4th straight game with a return TD and most return TDs in a season
Green Bay (3-2) over Seattle (3-1), 35-13
Buffalo (3-2) beat Cincinnati (1-4), 22-16
Chicago (1-4) upset reeling Oakland (2-3), 24-21
Dallas (3-1) won again beating Arizona (1-3) 24-7, and held Emmitt Smith to -1 yard rushing in 8 carries, in his return to Dallas.
New England (3-2) beat Tennessee (3-2), 38-30
Miami (3-1) topped the Giants (2-2), 23-10
Carolina (4-0) managed to stay on top in the NFC South by beating New Orleans (1-4), 19-13
Jacksonville (1-4) beat hapless San Diego (0-5), 27-21
San Francisco (2-3) 24 Detroit (1-4) 17
Philadelphia (2-2) held on 27-25 vs. Washington (3-2)
Cleveland (2-2) beat Pittsburgh at Heinz Field, 33 to 13. The Steelers are also (2-2)
Indianapolis at Tampa Bay Monday Night

BASEBALL -- FIRST ROUND PLAYOFF ACTION

New York eliminated Minnesota, 3 games to 1, by winning 8-1. David Wells cruised for the win.

The Florida Marlins defeated the San Francisco Giants 7-6 in game four of their series to advance in the playoffs.

The Red Sox tied the series against Oakland at two games apiece, 5-4 with a late two-run double.

The Chicago Cubs advanced in the playoffs. The Cubs eliminated the Atlanta Braves, three games to two.