



Four Iraqi National Guard Soldiers performs well in their first patrol of the streets of Baghdad's Karadah district.

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Commandos get right-seat ride from Ironhorse Soldiers to learn the lay of the land.

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Cav Country

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"Telling the First Team's Story"

September 3, 2004

Ironhorse Undertakes Large Op. In Sadr City



By Pfc. Erik LeDrew, 122nd MPAD

Sgt. Eloy Garza, a Soldier with White Platoon, C "Comanche" Company, 2-5 Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, fires on a group of Mahdi Army insurgents dressed in black and armed with AK-47s and rocket-propelled grenade launchers, from his improvised guard position in a building occupied by his platoon in Sadr City. Garza's platoon served as dismounts for their company which was part of the initial push into Sadr City during Operation Iron Fury. Since a second insurgency erupted in Sadr City Aug. 5, Muqtada al-Sadr's militia has caused much unrest in this volatile part of Baghdad that is home to more than 2 million Iraqis. The main objective of the 1st Brigade Combat Team's operation was to bring peace and stability to the area. See story, pages 8, 9.

Headhunters Keep Insurgents on Their Heels During Baghdad Conferences

By Spc. Jan Critchfield
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD, Iraq-- August has been an important month for the fledgling Iraqi government. The entire world watched as conferences were held to determine important aspects of how this country will be run without a dictator at its helm.

With the international zone packed with hundreds of journalists covering the conference, even one unfortunately placed mortar round could make international headlines, giving the world an

image of a violent country with no hope of peace and prosperity.

For this reason, the "Headhunters" of the 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment and the rest of Task Force 1-9 stepped up area patrols. Their goal was to disrupt and destroy insurgent cells, whose aim is to impede political progress being made despite their violent actions.

Talil Square, the junction of two main Baghdad arterials and an area already known for its of anti-Iraqi insurgent activity, was the focus of a great deal of the Headhunters' firepower.

"Neutralization of anti-Iraqi forces in Talil Square is essential to a safe Baghdad [because] it is very close to the government seat of power [in the International Zone]," said Lt. Col. Thomas MacDonald, commander of Task Force 1-9's Headhunters. The Headhunters' area of operation borders the International Zone and has been the origin of insurgent mortar fire into the International Zone in the past.

"What we're doing is we're absolutely saturating the area with patrols, trying to change our patterns up with a combination of mounted patrols, dismounted patrols [and] sniper emplacements to keep the enemy off balance," MacDonald said. "[The



By Spc. Jan Critchfield, 122nd MPAD

A man suspected of participating in attacks on multinational forces is led by Task Force 1-9 Soldiers to a temporary detention center set up during a raid in central Baghdad's Talil Square.

enemy] can't predict when he has a safe time to operate."

The efforts of the men of the task force proved a great success. Twenty-nine suspected insurgents were arrested, and five caches containing rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, and other assorted arms were seized from August 15

through August 19, when the conferences ended. Most importantly, no mortars were fired from this area into the International Zone during the high-level meetings.

"We've been very successful in disrupting their activities this week," Macdonald said.



By Spc. Jan Critchfield, 122nd MPAD

Spc. Mohammed Adams, left, a medic with Company C, 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment, takes a breather after treating three Iraqi National Guardsmen injured in a grenade attack at the Al-Jauyifer police station during operations near central Baghdad's Talil Square.

If It's Not Me, Then Who Is It?

As a routine part of applying for a home loan, my loan officer checked my credit report for credit scores. While looking over the document with her I noticed several unfamiliar accounts and addresses where I had never lived. What I discovered next was shocking.

I had been robbed. My identity was being used by a thief to obtain credit cards and charge purchases in my name. I was mad. I was scared. I was weeks away from buying my first house and now some creep was about to mess that all up for me.

I soon learned though, that there were people who could help me. I also learned that I was not alone. Hundreds of thousands of innocent people are victims of identity theft every month.

According to www.identitytheft911.com, identity theft can affect anyone, regardless of age, gender, economic status, or race. Identity theft is the fastest growing crime in America; an increase fueled, in part, by the involvement of organized crime. And almost 10 million Americans were victimized by identity theft last year; an increase of 41 percent over the year before; at a cost to the U.S. economy of nearly \$53 billion.

Identity theft criminals use many different ways to gather your private information. Rummaging through discarded mail may reveal addresses and the attached customs slips may have other tidbits of information. They can read Social Security Numbers from checks written at local stores. Recently, unsolicited e-mails from thieves posing as CitiBank and U.S. Bank employees asked for account information over the web.

If you feel you have been a victim

Commentary

SFC Tony Sailer



Editor

of identity fraud, the experts at www.identitytheft911.com have some advice for you.

Immediately call the fraud units of the three credit reporting companies; TransUnion, Experian, and Equifax; and report that someone is using your information to obtain credit fraudulently in your name. Have your file flagged with a fraud alert. Add a victim's statement to your report.

Immediately contact all creditors with whom your name has been used fraudulently, by phone and in writing. You'll see evidence of these accounts on your credit reports. Creditors will likely ask you to fill out fraud affidavits.

Report the crime to your local police or sheriff's department. You may also need to report it to police departments where the crime occurred. Give them as much documented evidence as possible and get a copy of the report.

I took most of the steps suggested and my experience turned out all right. My credit was cleared and I was able to buy the house my family was hoping for. But not everyone is so lucky. Don't assume your personal information is safe while on deployment. Protect your information and shred your mail. There are those in every country who would take advantage of learning your secrets.

Pegasus 6 Focus

Treating Iraqis with Respect Affects Force Protection

By Sgt. Christina Rockhill
1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq-- A cordon and search on Aug. 19 in Baghdad has resulted in the damage of not only personal property for one Iraqi family, but also the loss of trust and confidence in the U.S. Army and their country. No 1st Cavalry Division Soldiers were involved in the raid, but the division's commanding general said the implications would affect the First Team troops.

"It makes no difference to the family who did this," Maj. Gen. Peter Chiarelli said. "It is our mess to clean up."

Lt. Col. Rick Welch, civil affairs officer for the 1st Cavalry Division said that during the cordon and search an Iraqi's house was vandalized and their personal property was seized. The family said that their door was kicked in, their windows were broken, their closets were trashed, and a lock was shot off a door, even though the family had offered to unlock it.

The family's car was also vandalized. The vehicle's windows were smashed and the body dented. In addition to the vandalism, several thousand

dollars and some of their personal property were stolen during the raid. The family said two mobile phones, a blood pressure machine, two computers, a collection of cigarette lighters and Islamic prayer beads were also seized. Some of the family's legal weapons were also taken during the raid.

Chiarelli is ordering an investigation into the event and is working to fix the damage that has been done. He also said he will meet the family and apologize for what happened to them.

"We must take the time to remedy the situation," he said. "Soldiers will go back to the house to correct the wrong, we will replace stolen money or stolen property, and contractors will be brought into repair the damage."

The negative effects of this raid go far beyond mere damage to the family's house and vehicle. Chiarelli said, even though the physical damage can be repaired, rebuilding the family's trust and confidence will be more difficult.

"If you dishonor a man here, you will make more than one enemy," he said. "His entire family and most of his friends will also become your enemy; regaining his honor becomes a necessity."

Chiarelli said that even if Soldiers don't agree with the culture of the Iraqi people it is important to understand it. He said that prior to missions a risk assessment should be done and cultural sensitivities should be assessed and taken into account.

"Cultural awareness is like risk mitigation," he said. "We must ensure we do not dishonor a man as we go about the

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Army photo

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Spur & The Moment

Photos by Pfc. Erik LeDrew, 122nd MPAD

"What do you do to stay in touch with the folks back home?"

"Just letters and a telephone. I write a lot of letters."



Spc. Bernard DeAngelo
B Co., 2-5 Cav.

"I call once or twice a month, but I mostly just use email."



Sgt. Tim Griffin
HHC 2-5 Cav.

"I just use the phones, call home every once in a while."



Sgt. Matthew Atkinson
HHC 2-5 Cav.

"The phone center and the internet café. I like using the web-cams they have."



Pfc. Jason Moore
C Co., 1-82 FA

"Telephones and email. I got to do a video-teleconference with my family, which went pretty well. I could actually see and hear them."



Sgt. Richard Ford
D Co., 115th FSB

"I bought a cell-phone over here, so I just call home. The internet here is free, but I just don't have the time to use it."



Staff Sgt. Matthew Wooten
HHC 1-12 Cav.

Help is Just a Mouse Click Away

By Master Sgt. Dave Larsen
1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

CAMP VICTORY NORTH, Baghdad, Iraq-- School is in session back in central Texas, and after Labor Day weekend, children across the United States will all be back in the classroom. For most parents, keeping tabs on their child's progress in

school is easy: notes sent home, regular report cards, and the ever-popular parent-teacher conferences.

For Soldiers deployed to Iraq, though, those options weren't available ... until now.

The 1st Cavalry Division's system automation section has installed a special computer workstation in the division head-

quarters building with the sole purpose of allowing deployed parents the ability to stay on top of their children's progress in the classroom.

The workstation, called the Interactive Counseling Center (ICC) is part of the Military Child Education Coalition's (MCEC) efforts to help service members stay involved in their children's educational needs, even though they may be thousands of miles away.

The ICC workstation is available now for deployed parents to use in Baghdad.

"We've tested the system twice," said Capt. Leyla Roman, the ICC project officer and a battle captain with the division's system automation section. "This program offers a lot of options for parents, including face-to-face video teleconferencing with teachers or school counselors."

Roman said that hundreds of schools are linked into the web-based ICC system, including every high school in the Killen/Fort Hood area. The benefit for Soldiers is that instead of trading e-mails, or relying on the postal system to keep them abreast of their children's issues at school, they can address them immediately ... and in real time.

"The biggest advantage, I see, is for the military single parent," Roman said. "But every parent should be aware of the

program and take advantage of it."

Roman said that, currently, there is only one ICC workstation in Iraq, located in the division main headquarters building on Camp Victory North. She said that the administrators of the program at MCEC are looking to add more systems, based on how much the current workstation is utilized.

"There is the possibility of laptop versions of this workstation to be fielded elsewhere [within the division]," Roman said. "The big thing now is to get parents in here to use it."

Deployed parents interested in using ICC can sign up by going to the system automation section's (G-6) main page on the division's secure intranet. Roman said that by clicking on the ICC icon, Soldiers can fill out the required request form and get the process started.

The automation section will contact the school and set up a time for a video teleconference between deployed parents and school representatives.

It's that easy.

"Even though most of the schools participating are high schools, we should also be able to contact middle school and grade schools and get them involved in the program, too," Roman said. "All Soldiers need to do is contact us to get the process started."



By Spc. Andy Miller, 122nd MPAD

Capt. Leyla Roman, the project officer for the Interactive Counseling Center, checks out the workstation in the 1st Cavalry Division's headquarters building. The ICC workstation offers deployed parents the opportunity to communicate via video teleconference with their children's teacher or school counselors.

Shias to Make Annual Pilgrimage to Baghdad

By Spc. Andy Miller
122nd MPAD

CAMP VICTORY, Iraq-- A person approaching Baghdad from the North or the West will encounter the site of the four golden minarets of Kadhamiyah. This site marks a Shia Muslim holy shrine of the burial site of Imam Musa al-Kadhim the seventh of the 12 Imams, or saints, of Islam.

Shias from around the Middle East have been making an annual pilgrimage to Kadhim's tomb as part of an Islamic rite of passage ever since his death in 799 A.D. Multi-National Forces in the Baghdad area can expect an influx of Shia pilgrims to the Kadamiyah area before and during the day of visitation, which falls on Sept. 10.

While actual numbers are difficult to predict, Soldiers patrolling the Baghdad area can expect up to 500,000 pilgrims to visit Kadhim's tomb, according to Capt. Ray Buenteo, a civil affairs planner with headquarters company, 1st Cavalry Division.

Shia events like this one were suppressed under Saddam Hussein, and his arrest has allowed Shia Muslims to practice

their religion with more freedom. The confusion often caused by a mass movement of people like this can provide cover for anti-Iraqi forces, Buenteo said. During the Islamic holy day of Ashura last March, suicide bombers attacked Shias paying their respects at the Kadhamiyah shrine killing 58 and wounding 200.

According to Isa Bassari, a cultural adviser with the 1st Cav. Div., it is important for Soldiers in the area to make a distinction between Shias making a peaceful religious pilgrimage, and insurgents who may hide within their ranks and attempt to cause disruptions as they have in the past.

"The pilgrims aren't going to be a problem, they came to take the blessing and go home," Bassari said. "The problem is going to be the insurgents."

Jake Lester, another cultural adviser with the 1st Cav. Div. has experienced similar Muslim religious event in Egypt. He said Soldiers can expect large, boisterous crowds in the days leading up to the event.

"Expect a lot of noise, bodies pressed together like you would not believe, and watch out for the pickpockets, they're going

to be everywhere," Lester said. "You're going to have people [selling] things all over the place. If you don't speak Arabic you're going to be terrified because, there are going to be people singing, there are going to be people shouting, there are going to be people basically abasing themselves in front of this martyr. It's going to be sheer chaos. Watch it from far away and you'll see a method to the madness, but inside there you'll only see the madness."

Buenteo added that Americans should probably stay away from the pilgrims, but remain prepared to offer assistance if needed. He mentioned that Soldiers should make themselves aware of cultural differences, to reduce the chance they will disrupt and offend the pilgrims during their holy rituals.

"There are cultural events, sub-events going on within this event, and if you think you are helping and you may be violating their ritual," Buenteo said. "And specifically, they may be dehydrating, but they are fasting, and they cannot drink water, and if you give them water or something, you could basically disrupt their pilgrimage."

1st Cav Vows to Fix Vandalism

Continued from page 2

business of conducting operations. I am not saying put yourself or your Soldiers at risk, but every time we disregard a man's honor in this culture, we create many more enemies."

Differences in culture can lead to misunderstandings and can cause dishonor to a family if not handled properly, Chiarelli said.

"If we knock on someone's door in the middle of the night demanding to come into their home and search we must give them time to ready themselves," he said. "In many Iraqi households, it is inappropriate for a man outside of the family to see a woman's face uncovered."

Chiarelli said his Soldiers should have patience with the Iraqis and if a suspect needs to be questioned the Soldiers should try to make sure the family doesn't have to watch him or her being detained.

"If you hand-cuff, blind fold and possibly worst of all put a man on the ground and put the bottom of your foot on his neck in front of his family, you have made many enemies



Army photo

for life," he said.

As more and more raids are being conducted in concert with the Iraqi National Guard it is increasingly important for the First Team troops to set the standard for Iraq's future security forces, Chiarelli said.

"Our actions can demonstrate how to properly conduct a search and knock," he said. "We have a responsibility to ensure they too conduct searches in a professional manner."

Chiarelli said Soldiers have more influence on the attitudes and actions of the Iraqi people than they realize.

"Please take stock of your actions while in contact with Iraqi citizens," Chiarelli said. "Your actions may save your life or the life of the Soldiers who follow you into your sector in the months ahead."

War Eagle Troopers Keep the Calm

By Pfc. Erik LeDrew
122nd MPAD

CAMP WAR EAGLE, Baghdad-- They mount up in their Bradley Armored Fighting Vehicles, tracked beasts that are smaller, slightly less frightening than the behemoth of an Abrams tank, and yet are far more maneuverable. These Soldiers are prepared for the worst, hoping for the best.

On any given day and at any given time, these troopers, the Soldiers of Task Force Lancer, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, are policing and patrolling the over-crowded-yet

sometimes forebodingly empty-streets of Baghdad's infamous Al-Thawra District, commonly referred to as "Sadr City."

One such "movement-to-contact" patrol rolled out of Camp Eagle's gates early one morning.

The patrol entered the southern portion of Sadr City minutes later, while it was still cloaked in the darkness of the early morning, with only the incessant squeaking of the Bradleys' treads to give away the patrol's presence.

It was quiet at first--too quiet as that well-worn saying goes. Rounded slivers of heat could be seen intermittently on the Bradleys' thermal scanners, signatures that

were easily discerned to be people suspiciously peeking out from behind walls.

With the exception of a few rapid engagements, pausing every now and again to properly clear an intersection, the patrol remained fairly uneventful as the sun began to rise.

Then reports came in saying that a group of RPG gunners had been spotted running down the alley parallel to the patrol's route. So the patrol paused and before long, those suspicious peeking heads were visible on the monitors again.

The patrol sat thus, waiting for the insurgents to try to get off a shot, but nothing happened. They merely peeked out from time to time.

Finally tired of waiting, the patrol decided to press onward another block. As the lead Abrams rounded the corner, it encountered a barricade of tires on one side of the street which it attempted to circumnavigate with the patrol in-tow.

"The thing that makes it most difficult to properly patrol the city is that these [insurgents] have gotten very, very good at making and placing [improvised explosive devices (IEDs)]," said Spc. Jeff Judkins, Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 2-5 Cav., and a native of Joshua, Tx. "They'll put remote-detonated IEDs under the pavement in the road or disguise them as trash."

The Abrams drove past the barricade without incident, but as the first Bradley began to pass by the barricade, an IED buried in the pavement was detonated underneath of it.

The patrol waited for a damage assessment as RPGs began raining down on them from the surrounding rooftops.

The patrols returned fire with high-explosive (HE) rounds from the Bradley's 25mm guns, launching them in the direction of the incoming fire.

Another IED was detonated after the patrol had turned around and was moving back the way it had come, but the patrol pressed onward.

"We encountered six IEDs during that one patrol," Volesky, a native of Spokane, Wa., said, "and

killed I don't know how many insurgents."

Since arriving to take over control of Sadr City March 31, 2-5 Cav. has constantly conducted such patrols through the two Shia insurgencies, the first one lasting from April 4 until the middle of June, leaving Sadr City with a month of relative peace, before the insurgency reignited August 5.

"We had 82 days of sustained combat from April to June, followed by a month where we switched from lethal to non-lethal operations," Volesky said. "And then August 5th we went right back into lethal operations without missing a beat."

2-5 Cav. passed the 90-day mark of combat operations August 13, during which time it engaged countless enemies and lost a few of its own soldiers.

"Frankly, we've killed far more enemy that I'd have cared to," Volesky was quick to point out, "because the only way we're going to win this thing is by improving the people of Sadr City's quality of life, not by pulling triggers."

However, until the current insurgency agrees to another cease-fire, Volesky maintains that 2-5 is ready to react to whatever contact the enemy has to offer his Soldiers.

"Our mission here is the most important mission I've had in 20 years of service," he said. "My battalion's never failed a mission, and we're not going to fail this one."



By Pfc. Erik LeDrew, 122nd MPAD

Spc. Jeff Judkins, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cav. Div., tightens the track tension on the Bradley he drives while his patrol takes a break.

Support Soldiers Keep Brigade Moving Forward

By Sgt. Dan Purcell
122nd MPAD

CAMP EAGLE, Baghdad-- As the spotlight focuses on armored vehicles and ground pounding Soldiers moving through the streets of Sadr City, several kilometers down the road support Soldiers are busily refitting and refueling the frontline.

Marking a turning point in an on-going effort to bring security and stability back into Sadr City, the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division unleashed its might on August 17 in Operation Iron Fury.

As the brigades' combat units made their advance through the city, another base composed of mechanics, medics and logistics personnel worked around the clock to help keep the large and complex operation moving forward.

"We are the logistical element for Taskforce Charger [1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment] and our mission is to provide the Soldiers with beans and bullets, just about everything they need to stay in the fight," Capt. Aaron Curtis, commander, Charley Company 115 Forward Support Company explained. "Logistically, things are going very well for us because of the hard work and creativity of my Soldiers and NCOs [Non-commissioned officers]."

Maintaining and sustaining a brigade-wide operation

in a real-world environment is not an easy task. It takes plenty of coordination and planning to bring it all together.

"We basically have five missions here, which include providing a forward logistical element, guarding the area, running supply convoys, recovering and maintaining vehicles," added Curtis. "At first, some people thought our company was too small to set up a logistics base for the whole brigade, but my NCOs said we could and we did."

In addition to the "beans and bullets" that keep the Army moving, other considerations include the Soldier's medical concerns and treatment of casualties. To do this, a forward aid station, composed of a doctor and a team of medics, is ready at a moment's notice to meet medical emergencies as they arise.

"Essentially, we were brought up here by our battalion as a forward aid station. Basically, our purpose is to provide level-one combat health support," Lt. Col. (Dr.) Bob Gerhardt, Battalion Surgeon, 1st Battalion, 12 Cavalry Regiment explained.

"We take care of soldiers with urgent medical emergencies that might otherwise prevent them from surviving if they weren't treated within 10 or 15 minutes," Gerhardt said. "We also try to provide very basic sick call services to the elements down here that are providing the logistical support for the operation. By being close to the action, we can be more helpful."



By Sgt. Dan Purcell, 122nd MPAD

Spc. Jeremy Patterson, a mechanic with Charlie Company, 115 Forward Support Company, refuels an M88 Recovery Vehicle during Operation Iron Fury.

Iraq Fire Station Gets a Makeover

By Sgt. Dan Purcell
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD-- After years of war and neglect, the Amariya Fire Station celebrated the completion of a major effort to restore it to a fully functional firehouse replete with fire trucks.

Soldiers from the 425th Civil Affairs Battalion and Company A, 91st Engineers, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division along with Amariya firefighters and members of the Baghdad press club officially marked the occasion with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

Capt. Marc Chung, team leader, 425th CA Bn., said the fire

station is the most important project to date because it is the only one in an area that serves all of the west side of the Tigris River.

"We have spent about \$70,000 of Commanders Emergency Relief Program funds to get this station to where it's at today," Chung said. "The building has been completely reconitioned, but it is a work in progress."

"The current emphasis is on fixing the trucks and building a room for unexploded ordinances that are found and turned in by the local people. Right now there are only three trucks that are fully operational, but there are five more being worked on," Sgt. Levy Dalhstrom, project

coordinator, 425th said.

The project took a local contractor two months to complete, while the station has grown from 24 to 54 firefighters and administrative staff, added Dalhstrom.

"In the future, we would like to get them more equipment, like oxygen masks, and training," Dalhstrom said.

In addition to the project, Chung praised the efforts of the 91st Eng., Bn., for providing the necessary security so that the renovation could proceed unhindered.

"We feel like part of the 91st team," said Chung. "They have really gone out of their way to help us on this project by providing security escorts for us, whenever we've needed one, and by helping to dispose of the [unexploded ordnance.]"

Built in 1985, the firehouse has been fully operational, but seen few repairs and suffered a good deal during the war, said Col. Waleed, Amariya fire chief.

"I really appreciate what the Coalition has done for us," Waleed said. "Last year we put out 800 fires, even though we did not have much to work with...and during the war, we stayed at our post without pay to protect the people as best we could with what we had to work with."



Photos by Sgt. Dan Purcell, 122nd MPAD

Staff Sgt. Nestor Ibarra (left) conducts a radio check while 1st Lt. Carlos Restrepo remains on watch during a grand opening event marking the restoration of the Amariya Fire Station. Both Soldiers are assigned to Company A, 91st Engineer Battalion, 2nd Brigade combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division and were part of the team assigned to provide security for the ceremony.



Capt. Marc Chung (left) 425th Civil Affairs Battalion, the Iraqi contractor responsible for the restoration repairs (center) and Col. Waleed prepare to cut a ribbon commemorating the renovation of the Amariya Fire Station.

91st Engineers Use Robots to Keep Streets of Baghdad Safe

By Sgt. Christina Rockhill
1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD-- Soldiers from the 1st Cavalry Division are using technology to their advantage. They have been using robots, from the Rapid Equipping Force, to help them on their patrols.

Soldiers of Company A, 91st Engineer Battalion have been using the multi-functional advanced remote control or MARC Bot on their daily patrols to sweep the

streets of Baghdad for improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

The MARC Bot, which resembles a large remote controlled car, has all-terrain wheels and a retractable arm with a wireless camera attached to it. The operator of the robot uses the remote control to navigate the MARC Bot closer to a possible IED. Then by watching a monitor on the controller he can determine whether or not it is an IED.

Sgt. 1st Class Chad Carpenter, of Rapid Equipping Force, said the increased dis-

tance between the Soldier and the IED is an obvious advantage when dealing with explosives.

"It allows stand-off from IEDs, for Soldiers to go ahead and detect them, which does two things," he said. "Number one it helps save their lives in case the thing goes off, and number two, if it's not an IED it will allow them to go ahead, get it off the road and continue the mission rather than blocking [the road] off and waiting for [an explosive ordnance disposal team]."

(Below) Spc. Randall Archie, Company A, 91st Engineer Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division uses a remote control to navigate the multi-functional advance remote control (MARC) bot. Archie, from Raceland, Ky., had to take a short training course to learn how to use the MARC Bot but said it was an easy transition for him because of his childhood love of remote controlled cars.



Photos by Sgt. Christina Rockhill, 1st Cav Div. Public Affairs

(Above) The MARC Bot is used by a Soldier of A Co. as they patrol the streets of Baghdad for improvised explosive devices. The robot, which allows Soldiers to detect IEDs from a safe distance, has all-terrain wheels and a retractable arm with a camera attached to it.

Spc. Randall Archie is the MARC Bot operator for Company A, 91 ENG and said that the MARC Bot not only saves lives, it also saves time and embarrassment.

"It's kind of embarrassing whenever you call EOD and sit around blocking off a main road for an hour or two hours waiting for them to get out there, and then they show up and it's just a bag of trash," he said.

Archie said even though his crew hasn't found any IEDs with the robot, he said it's more effective than the usual tools they use.

"It allows us to get eyes on," he said. "You can see a lot with [binoculars] and everything else, but with this you're right on it. It makes it a lot nicer."

Maj. Carlos Munson, the 1st Cav. Div. Rapid Equipping Force Liason, said the \$3,000 MARC Bot is operator friendly and easy to use.

"Initially [the Soldiers] are a little nervous because the robots are expensive, but once they got the tactics, techniques and procedures down for utilizing a robot the patrols tend to be more confident and been able to identify a suspect IED," he said.

Munson said they have only lost a couple of robots from explosions, but said it's better than losing a couple of Soldiers.

"In the past, a lot of Soldiers have gotten injured by walking up on suspect IEDs to check them out," he said. "This way if the IED blows up the only thing that's hurt is the robot and we can easily replace a robot."

Grey Wolf

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Iraqi National Guardsmen Perform Well in First Raid

By Spc. Jan Critchfield
122nd MPAD

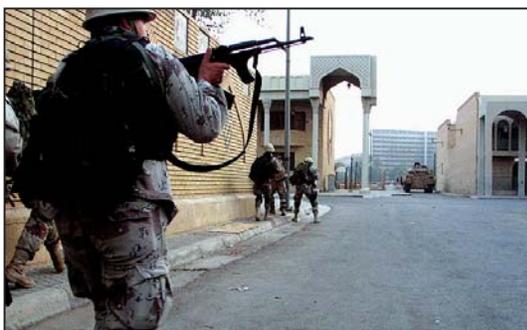
BAGHDAD-- Months of training paid off for a group of four Iraqi National Guard (ING) members during a raid conducted recently.

Tasked with deploying a backpack-carried loudspeaker system, the team performed well. They used the skills they had learned from their cadre, 1660th Tactical Psychological Operations Detachment, (PSYOP), a reserve unit from the 345th Tactical Psychological Operations Company, based in Dallas, Texas. The 345th is attached to the 1st Cavalry Division.

Staff Sgt. Martin Morales, one of four 1660th Soldiers training ING Soldiers in the techniques of psychological operations, jumped from the back of a Bradley Fighting Vehicle during the raid to find that he was separated from the rest of his element by 400 meters.

"By the time we caught up with everybody, [the ING] had already set up and were broadcasting [with the loudspeaker]," Morales said. "They know that they can do the job, they just need the tools to do it."

Morales is pleased with the progress the ING Soldiers have



Photos by Spc. Jan Critchfield, 122nd MPAD

(Above) Iraqi National Guardsmen trained by the 1660th Tactical Psychological Operations Detachment, move into position after unloading from a Bradley Fighting Vehicle during an operation on Baghdad's Haifa Street.

(Right) Iraqi National Guard Cpl. Hatam Abed Al-Kareem trains with Sgt. Mark Powers of the 1660th Tactical Psychological Operations Team to set up a portable loudspeaker in as little time as possible. This type of training aided in the team's success during a raid the next day.

made. "At first, they were providing security for us. Now, they're running most of the mission and we're providing security for them."

Conducting patrols in Baghdad's Karadah district almost every day, the team pass out a coalition-produced newspaper called Baghdad Now and an informative coloring book called Baghdad Kids. They also document sightings of

anti-coalition graffiti and vandalism with a photographic record. If an owner of a poster is found, their identity is also recorded.

Although stickers depicting anti-Iraqi leader Al-Sadr are regularly found on the team's patrols, the situation in the Karadah district has improved, Morales said.

"One thing we've been teaching them is how to interact with people on the street, to tell people the



truth, try to educate people and open their minds," he said.

"They know that their main weapon is their mind, not their [rifle]," Morales said.

The ING Soldiers feel that their job is important.

"In the past, all the security forces were working against the Iraqi people," said Cpl. Hatam Abed Al-Kareem, one of the ING Soldiers being trained by the 1660th, through an interpreter.

Although Saddam's security thugs murdered Hatam's father because his father didn't approve of the Iran-Iraq War, he said it was not his primary reason for joining the Iraqi National Guard.

"I want to see my neighborhood in a good condition," Hatam said. "People know the progress is coming. It's just a matter of time."

Hatam believes the residents of

the area are happy with the presence of the ING Soldiers.

"The people that live in Karadah are open-minded," Hatam said. "People see [ING] on the scene and they see that we are doing our job to improve the security in their neighborhood."

Ever since the first time the ING Soldiers went out with the 1660th, an Iraqi presence on their missions has always been an asset, Morales said.

"These guys are more than just paperboys. They're actually going out [into Baghdad] and aggressively seeking people in the Mahdi Army and seeking Al-Sadr supporters," Morales said. "[Many ING Soldiers] are content to going on a raid when they're told to do so. These guys, on daily patrols, are looking for members of Sadr's militia."

(Right) Iraqi National Guardsmen take a quick mug shot during a traffic stop initiated when a sticker depicting anti-Iraqi leader Muqtada Al-Sadr was spotted in this cab driver's vehicle. Although the man was very cooperative and friendly, procedure still called for a face to be matched with the Al-Sadr sighting.



Accident Prevention



- Prevent accidents by enforcing standards.
- Leaders should know their high-risk Soldiers and council them on correcting their behaviors.
- Don't walk by; make on-the-spot corrections of unsafe actions.
- Apply the risk management process to reduce mission hazards.
- Maintain situational awareness and don't let your guard down.

4th BCT Welcomes 60 New Soldiers to NCO Corps

By Sgt. Merrion LaSonde
122nd MPAD

CAMP COOKE, Taji, Iraq-- "The origin of the non-commissioned officer can be traced back to the Roman legions," said 1st Sgt. Michael Clowser, first sergeant of Headquarters Company, 4th Brigade Combat Team.

"When Roman commanders found the tactical and administrative requirements of drilling and fielding a successful army absorbed all their time, they turned to the ranks for assistance," Clowser continued. "They picked exceptional Soldiers to be commanders of ten and assistants to commanders. To be an NCO, then and now, means that entry to or occupation of a position of responsibility and authority is based upon demonstrated competency and continued performance."

Sixty new NCOs were welcomed into the ranks of the NCO Corps during an induction ceremony held at the Camp Cooke Morale, Welfare and Recreation Theater the evening of Aug. 15.

Typically held once annually, the ceremony is symbolic of Soldiers confirming their commitment as newly appointed



By Sgt. Merrion LaSonde, 122nd MPAD

Prior to passing beneath the arch of the NCO Corps Bridge, Soldiers must first run the gauntlet of sergeants major, armed with water bottles to wet down the newly appointed NCO's stripes.

NCOs, explained Sgt. 1st Class Ola Clark, senior personnel sergeant, S-1, 4th BCT.

"They are now taking their place among their peers and

assuming positions of leadership," the Monroe, La. native said.

At the beginning of the ceremony, three specialists recited

their Soldier requests to the new NCOs, asking them to listen often and guide them toward their future.

"Treat me with respect ... do not break my spirit with your words ... and speak with me often, sergeant. Your guidance patience and understanding will more quickly teach me to Be, Know and Do. Train me, sergeant, so that I, too, may one day be a sergeant."

The guest speaker for the evening was 2nd BCT Command Sgt. Maj. Neal Ciotola.

"All I ever wanted to be when I joined the Army was a sergeant. All I ever wanted to be growing up was a Soldier," he said.

Ciotola went on to explain his views and experience of leadership.

"Schofield's definition of discipline: It is important to incite or instill in the minds of your subordinates an intense desire to do nothing but accomplish the mission," Ciotola said.

"And you can do this by not being tyrannical with your Soldiers. Even in the face of the greatest diversity, it is possible to incite and instill in those that aspire to be like you and follow you, an intense desire to never want to let you down. That is my

definition of leadership."

Citing a portion of a speech by Winston Churchill, Ciotola said, "To whom much is given, much is expected ... much is required. I am not the backbone of the Army; you are. I am closer to the end, than the beginning. Tomorrow this Army is yours. What will you do?"

One by one, the Soldiers were called up to accept their certificate and to run the gauntlet of sergeants major armed with spray bottles to wet down their stripes. Then, each newly appointed NCO passed beneath the NCO Bridge archway, symbolically accepting their added responsibilities as leaders of Soldiers.

When asked what the ceremony meant to him, Waldoboro, Me. native, Sgt. Tristan Dyer, a radio operator/maintainer with the 615th Aviation Support Battalion, said, "It is a time-honored tradition; a rite of passage to welcome you into the NCO corps."

Sgt. Daniel Porteus, a heavy wheel mechanic with HHC, Task Force Attack, and native of Killeen, Tx., explained, "This ceremony marks your induction into your new rank. It makes you feel more a part of it. This rank is not given; it is earned."

45th Medical Company (Air Ambulance) Beats the Clock

By Sgt. Merrion LaSonde
122nd MPAD

CAMP COOKE, Taji, Iraq-- The instant a person sustains a life-threatening injury from a roadside improvised explosive device (IED) or small-arms fire in the Baghdad area, the clock starts ticking for the 45th Medical Company (Air Ambulance).

"After we get a medevac [medical evacuation] request, our response time is about four-and-a-half minutes to be in the air," said 45th Med. 1st Sgt. Robert Boler. "On average, we are at the site in 10 minutes. We pride ourselves on getting there quick."

One of four medevac companies in theater, the 45th handles all calls from Baghdad on through the southern reaches of the Central Command's area of operations in Iraq.

"Our focus and direct support is to the 1st Cavalry Division within Baghdad and south. It is our primary mission," Boler said.

The 45th is a self-sustaining company with the same elements of an aviation battalion, only smaller.

"We have over 100 personnel in our company," Boler, a Detroit, Mich. native, said. "Of those personnel, we have our own medics, pilots, mechanics and headquarters elements; just platoon-size rather than company-size."

The 45th has been in Iraq for the past

eight months and in that time has transported more than 2,000 patients, been on more than 1,300 missions and logged more than 2,700 hours of flight time.

"We are the smallest and the busiest," said Company Commander Maj. Chris Knapp, a native of Milwaukee, Wis., and pilot for the company. "We are the busiest just because our [area of operation] is Baghdad. We cover some of the hottest areas in theater."

In addition to maintaining its own necessary personnel, the 45th also maintains its fleet of helicopters.

Sgt. 1st Class Luis Arzadon, the maintenance platoon sergeant and native of San Gabriel, Calif. is in charge of the crew that maintains the aircraft currently on the ground.

"I have mechanics, shop personnel, quality and production control and technical supply personnel," Arzadon said. "Our mission is to support the flight platoon. We make sure the helicopters are flyable at all times. I think the maintenance crew is the meat and potatoes of how we can get the medics where they need to be."

Sgt. 1st Class Vito Dichristina, flight platoon sergeant and native of Buffalo, N.Y., supervises approximately two-thirds of the company.

"I take care of the pilots, flight medics and crew chiefs," Dichristina said. "We can do everything in-house and are on-call 24

hours a day, seven days a week for medevac coverage."

Dichristina explained the vital nature of the on-call crew's quick response. "There is what we call the golden hour," he said. "That is the hour between the time a person sustains an injury to the time we get them to a hospital. Focusing our efforts on staying within that hour time frame means the patient's chances of survival are excellent. We also have what we call the platinum 10 minutes. The intervention on the ground within the first 10 minutes of a person's injury greatly increases their chances of survival."

Dichristina likes what he does and lauds the cohesiveness of his crew.

"What I like most about flight crew is that we may all have our separate areas of responsibility, but we pull together for a mission," he said. "We can take a wounded guy from a dark alley in Baghdad to a beautiful hospital where he will be taken care of. It is the best job."

Since it was established at Long Binh, Vietnam in September 1967, the 45th has played a vital role in the success of military missions all over the world. From Kosovo to Iraq and their home base of Ansbach, Germany, the 45th is in the business of saving lives.

"I know every commander says this, but I've got some of the best people working for me," Knapp said. "I have top notch medics



By Sgt. Merrion LaSonde, 122nd MPAD

Spc. Darrick McClain of Stockport, Iowa, is a Blackhawk crew chief with the 45th Medical Company (Air Ambulance). He pressure washes built-up dirt and debris off the hydraulic deck of his aircraft every 30 days.

and crew chiefs, most of which are either combat lifesaver qualified or they receive on the job training. We've got the best mission in the Army and the satisfaction of knowing we save lives."

Operation Iron Fury:

Story and photos by Sgt. Dan Purcell and Pfc. Erik Ledrew

CAMP EAGLE, Baghdad--Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team (BCT), 1st Cavalry Division spearheaded a task force which included elements of the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment and the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment--both of Ironhorse BCT--



when they kicked-off Operation Iron Fury August 17, in an all-out effort to root out the radical "Mahdi Army" forces that have been terrorizing the local civilian population.

"The objective of Operation Iron Fury was to reduce the Mahdi Army's influence in Sadr City and provide a secure and stable environment for the people," said Capt. Anthony Martinez, Unit Public Affairs Representative for 2-5 Cav.

Since the Mahdi Army launched a second insurgency in Sadr City August 5, shops and government offices have been closed-down in the heavily-populated area

(Left) Sgt. Eloy Garza, an Infantryman with White Platoon, C "Comanche" Co., 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cav. Div. and a Robstown, Tx. native, over-watches a street in Sadr City from his makeshift guard position in a building his platoon occupied during the second day of Operation Iron Fury.

(Below) Sgt. Shawn Dunlap, team chief, Headquarters, Company (Maverick), 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division keeps his thumb on the trigger of his 50 cal. machine gun as his company rolls towards Sadr City.



and U.S. Army-run humanitarian missions have come to a stand-still.

"This operation is a combined effort conducted by the 1st Brigade," said Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Battle, 1-12 Cav. "We want the law abiding citizens [of Sadr City] to know that we are here and that we will do what it takes to support a legitimate government so that all Iraqis can live a normal life."

During the initial phase of the operation, Soldiers from 2-5 Cav. pushed into the center of the city to secure their company's objectives.

Capitalizing on the brigade's foothold in the city, 1-12 and 2-8 Cav. commenced their respective attacks the following day.

"This is the largest operation I've been on," said Spc. Thomas Jeffcoat, Headquarters, Headquarters, Company (Maverick), 1-12 Cav. "We should have done this a long time ago because the Mahdi Army has just been running wild out here."

"This is my first time out here in Sadr City, and it's a lot different from [1-12 Cav.'s] regular area of operations: There's more activity, more improvised explosive devices, and rocket propelled grenades," Spc. James Garcia, HHC, 1-12 Cav., added.

By day-three of Iron Fury, the 1st BCT had exceeded its initial expectations for the mission, pushing blocks past their planned objectives despite mounting opposition from the insurgent forces.

"The operation is going exceptionally well," said Battle. "The tempo has been very high and I have been very impressed with the way the Soldiers have conducted themselves."

"The equipment has been holding up well," he added, "and even when it's down, they get it back up again."

In order to keep the front-line troops moving, Ironhorse Brigade's forward support elements gathered at a location several kilometers from the fighting. These elements included C Co., 115th Forward Support Battalion, a team of medics from 1-12 Cav., and two Civil Affairs teams from the 478th Civil Affairs Battalion.

"This is a full spectrum operation so we are staying focused," Battle said. "This is the first time we have conducted an operation of this scale here, but it needed to happen and it's paying big dividends."

"I think that that when this is all over we will get a lot of thumbs up from the civilian population," he added. "The key thing here is we are bringing peace to Sadr City, so that the people won't be afraid to walk down their streets."

(Below) A local Sadr City girl looks out from her home at passing troops who patrolled in her neighborhood to help bring back security and stability.



(Above) Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters, Sadr City, prior to moving out towards their first objective.

1st BCT Takes the Fight to the Mahdi Militiamen



(Left) An M113 Armored Personnel Carrier patrols the streets of Sadr City.
(Below) Pfc. Miguel Miranda, right, and Spc. Michael Gratace, both of White Platoon, C "Comanche" Co., 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cav. Div., lead their team out of the house their platoon occupied to re-mount their Bradleys and move out with the rest of Comanche.



and Headquarters Company (Maverick) assemble their vehicles along route Delta, located in Sadr City, as their first objective during Operation Iron Fury.

Dismounts Lead the Way During Iron Fury

By Pfc. Erik LeDrew
122nd MPAD

CAMP EAGLE, Baghdad-- Some flew above Sadr City in Apache attack helicopters during Operation Iron Fury and some rode on the ground in Abrams tanks or Bradley Armored Fighting Vehicles, but some Soldiers had another method of transportation: their own two feet.

For every company of armored tanks and Bradleys that pushed into the volatile portion of Baghdad during Ironhorse Brigade's extensive operation, there was a platoon of dismounted Soldiers like the Infantrymen of White Platoon, C "Comanche" Co., 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment (2-5 Cav.), 1st BCT, 1st Cav. Div.

When the call came for 2-5 Cav. to mount up in their Bradleys and move into Sadr City at 5:15 p.m. August 17, the Soldiers of White Platoon crammed into the troop transport area at the rear of their Bradleys, where they sat with equipment and weapons resting on their laps, waiting to hear that telling command ring-out over the troop speaker in back: "Dropping ramp."

After rolling out of Camp Eagle's gate, Comanche Co. proceeded to "Route Charlie," a street in Sadr City that was their designated area of responsibility for Iron Fury.

Around 8:15 p.m. that evening, after hours of slowly creeping up Route Charlie in the hopes of spotting an improvised explosive device before it could detonate on one of their vehicles, Comanche Co. reached an intersection that was their first-day objective and the Soldiers of White Platoon were given the word to dismount.

Under the imminent threat of RPG attacks, possible IEDs and sporadic small arms fire, the platoon proceeded to clear several nearby buildings and alleyways, before locating a house where the Soldiers could adequately provide over-watch for the rest of their company staged along Route Charlie.

They spent the night there, hunkered down in make-shift guard positions on the roof of the building, defending the slew of armored vehicles on the streets below from would-be assailants and eliminating the persistent Mahdi Army snipers slinging lead their way.

After a night of filled with mortars, sniper-fire and very little sleep, the Soldiers of White Platoon raided a nearby house, netting a slew of detainees and various weapons such as a Dragunov sniper rifle, an AK-47, an RPG launcher with several armor-piercing rocket-propelled grenades, a couple of mortars, and a Mahdi Army uniform.

At noon, the platoon piled up in the back of their Bradleys and Comanche Co. moved-out to establish another strong-point further up Route Charlie.

White Platoon's actions that first day and the following days were but a small component of Operation Iron Fury, they insist that it's but a day in the life of a 2-5 Cav. trooper.

"We do missions like this everyday," said Spc. Alexander Bryant, White Platoon, C Co., 2-5 Cav., 1st BCT, 1st Cav. Div. "This is just an everyday thing."



By Pfc. Erik LeDrew, 122nd MPAD

Spc. Michael Gratace (left) and Pfc. Miguel Miranda (right), both of White Platoon, C "Comanche" Co., 2-5 Cav., take a moment to rest while monitoring the radio in a building their platoon occupied on the second day of Operation Iron Fury in Sadr City.

Bowie Brigade

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September 3, 2004

Stuttgart, Ark. Soldiers Profiled

By Staff Sgt. Rebekah-mae Bruns
39th BCT Public Affairs

CAMP COOKE, Taji, Iraq--
The town of Stuttgart, Ark., sometimes referred to as "Sugar Town," has 27 of its community members currently serving in Iraq with the 39th Brigade Combat Team's 39th Support Battalion.

Here are a few of the town's Soldiers and their experiences as they continue to serve just north of Baghdad in Taji, Iraq.

Spc. Chris Slaughter



"When I get home, I am going to try and spend more time with my son."

Spc. Chris Slaughter, a signal support specialist, keeps people talking. He ensures the lines of communication are open by keeping the phones and radios working.

The deployment is a giant learning curve for Slaughter. One weekend a month didn't always supply him with the knowledge he needed for his job, but going to Iraq put him on course.

"I've learned a lot more about my job being deployed than I did state side in the Guard," said Slaughter. "It's a real learning experience."

Missions in Iraq have given

Slaughter a better appreciation for his life in the states. He didn't always realize the difference until the Army sent him halfway across the world.

"I just know people in America are so blessed," said Slaughter. "I've went out on missions and saw people who were living in trash."

Spc. Gilbert Mitchell

"The first thing I'm doing when I get home is going on vacation."

Spc. Gilbert Mitchell, 45, is a truck driver for the army. After 22 years in service, this is his first major deployment in the military. Like everyone else, he is learning to cope with mortar attacks.

"It's okay," he said of his time in Iraq. "But all this BOOM...BOOM!" his voice trails off as he sits shaking his head.

In his spare time he teams up with some of the other Soldiers to play a friendly, but competitive game of Spades.

In Iraq, Mitchell has learned that people have to take care of themselves no matter what the situation or environment.

"I've learned you've got to take care of yourself, you've got to stay focused and most importantly, you've got to pray," said Mitchell. "It makes things happen."



Sgt. Jeremiah Pitts



"The first thing I am going to do when I get home is kiss my family."

Sgt. Jeremiah Pitts, 41, is a supervisor at the Stuttgart Water Company back in Arkansas. But last October, when his unit was activated for Operation Iraqi Freedom II, he traded his water for something more solid - sand. Pitts, along with 26 other soldiers from Stuttgart, headed for the deserts of Iraq.

In Iraq, Pitts is in charge of the Iraqi nationals who work on base. His workers, he says, are teaching him that he doesn't need a lot of the things he used to think he needed. In Iraq there are sometimes 8-9 families living in one room with no amenities, he said.

"The food we throw away at home can feed a whole household here," said Pitts. "The people back home need to realize what they are living in right now and thank God for it."

There are things about the culture that has surprised Pitts, like their willingness to give even if it seems there isn't enough for them.

"If there is only one person that has food and there are 11 people, they share their food amongst everyone and everybody is happy," said Pitts. "They believe in closeness - we need that in America."

Spc. Tommy Bryant

"First thing I'll do when I get home, I'm going to see my little girl."

Spc. Tommy Bryant, 23, is an ammunition specialist. Aside from supplying his company with bullets, he has helped destroy old Iraqi munitions. The area where he resides used to be one of Saddam's major military posts before the U.S. Army moved in. They found it littered with old bullets, so Bryant is helping to clear it out.

Bryant never really thought the activation for Iraq would happen, but it did and he says it has taught him a lot about who he is.

"I've learned I can handle myself in extreme situations," said Bryant. "It's one of those life-altering things where you learn a lot about yourself and the people you are with."

The members of Bryant's family had a multitude of reactions to his deployment. His father was proud of him, and his daughter, he said, was probably still too young to know the meaning of him going to Iraq, but his mother, he thinks, has taken it the hardest.

"My Mom - I don't know how she deals with it," said Bryant. "I wouldn't want my child coming over here, but she's a lot stronger than most people think she is."



Spc. Dorian Humphrey and Spc. Kimberly Hancock



"The first thing I'm going to do when I get home is take a bath." (Hancock)

"The first thing I'm going to do when I get home is get some American food." (Humphrey)

Spc. Dorian Humphrey and his twin sister, Spc. Kimberly Hancock, 19, are the two youngest Soldiers from Stuttgart serving in Iraq. They joined the Guard within a week of each other.

Both Humphrey and Hancock were two months into their freshman year at college when their company was activated for Operation Iraqi Freedom II. Hancock said she joined the guard to help pay for her college tuition.

"I wasn't thinking about Iraq at all," Hancock said.

The guard recruiter kept showing up at Humphrey's house and at his work. Finally, he thought, his sister joined, so why not?

"The next thing you know, we're over here in Iraq - in war. I always said I wanted to travel and see the world," Humphrey said with a smile. "I'm traveling, but it's not the way I wanted to. The next time I'm going to be more specific."



Photos by Sgt. Merrion LaSonde, 122nd MPAD

39th Brigade Soldiers Presented Combat Infantryman's Badge

At their Combat Infantryman's Badge ceremony, 21 troops from Headquarters Company, 39th Brigade Combat Team were awarded the badge for their actions during their convoy up to Iraq from Kuwait in April 2004. The company had direct enemy contact during the convoy earlier this year.



1-8 Cav. Delivers Seeds to Iraqi Farmers

Story and Photos by
Pfc. Al Barrus
122nd MPAD

AL RASHID, Baghdad-- As the 5th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, plan to improve agriculture in Al Rashid, members of the 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment civil affairs team, presented farmers of Al Boetha with more than 68 tons of seed, fertilizer, and other supplies at the Al Ahar School.

The delivery of the seed started July 6. The distribution is one

of many to take over two weeks, just in time for the second planting season, said 1st Lt. Charles Cole of the 1st Cav. Rear Operations Cell (ROC), tasked to 5th BCT as the agriculture officer.

The brigade will distribute approximately 2200 tons of these supplies among 8000 family farms in Al Rashid. The 5th BCT agriculture project, which also includes animal vaccinations that took place earlier this summer, cost \$600,000.

The distribution of the supplies was coordinated by Company

A, 489th Civil Affairs Battalion, Cole said, with the assistance of the 5th BCT line battalions.

"They both work hand in hand with the sheiks and neighborhood advisory councils to identify the power brokers for their areas. Once they have done that, they determine how many farmers there are and what they need in each area."

Supplies included certified seeds for wheat, corn and maize; urea and other fertilizers; and insecticides and herbicides. While seeds aren't always the hardest things to come by for farmers, the seed given by the 5th BCT agriculture team provides a wider gene pool for the plants.

"Most Iraqi farmers can grow their own seed, but they have

been doing it so long that the germination is poor," Cole said. "This seed we're giving them is certified seed that introduces a wider gene pool and increases the farmer's yield. The larger their yield the larger their income. The more crops a farmer can produce the more jobs are created and food produced."

The seed distribution is such a simple project, Cole said, but agriculture affects around 85% of Al Rashid's population, so the impact will be enormous. Cole also said that since the seed distribution, mortar fire on Camp Ferrin-Huggins has reduced drastically.

"The attacks that we receive here are usually mortars that are fired from fields owned by these farmers," he said. "If you notice

(Left) Local men from Al Boetha unload bags of seed and fertilizer at the Al Ahar School in the southeastern region of the Al Rashid district, the 5th BCT area of operations. More than 68 tons of the seeds and fertilizer were delivered to the local farmers August 4, providing them with high-yield seeds just in time for the second planting season of the year.

(Below) Maj. Luther Webster of Company A, 489th Civil Affairs Battalion, speaks with community leaders while men unload seed at the Al Ahar School in Al Boetha. Since seed distribution started July 26, mortar attacks on Camp Ferrin-Huggins have significantly decreased.

that since we started the distribution almost two weeks ago there hasn't been a mortar attack here."

Much of the decrease also comes from talking with the farmers and land-owners during the distribution, said Staff Sgt. Barry Rinehart of the 1st Cav. ROC.

"In exchange for this seed we ask them to tell us if they know of any [anti-Iraqi] activities that are going on," Rinehart said. "They agree to give this information for the seed, and we tell them that we expect it."

"Our main objective is to save U.S. Soldier's lives while helping the farmers to be self sufficient," Cole said.

With the seed project nearly under their belts, the 5th BCT agriculture team has plans for future areas of improvement in Iraqi agriculture, Cole said.

"We conduct a farmers meeting every Sunday morning here. They bring us issues and problems that they are having."

"The farmers have requested assistance with diseases in their vegetables, so our intent is to work with Texas A&M to have their produce disease specialist to assist us in October."

With these improvements, the 5th BCT agriculture team and civil affairs hope to help out the people of Al Rashid starting at the lowest level possible.

"We're trying our hardest to see that the seed is distributed to the individual farmers," Rinehart said. "If we get it to the individuals who need it the most, we know they will appreciate it and use it, and hopefully that will help bring more stability to the local economy."



Iraqi Intervention Force Assumes Area of Operations

By Cpl. Bill Putnam
122nd MPAD

CAMP FERRIN-HUGGINS, Baghdad-- The Iraqi Intervention Forces' 2nd Battalion, "Leopards," formally took responsibility for part of the 5th Brigade Combat Team's area of operations during a short ceremony recently.

This is the first time that an IIF unit has taken control of a sector.

"What they bring to the table is new capabilities," said Col. Stephen Lanza, 5th BCT commander.

The Leopard's leadership uncased the battalion's colors to signify the unit's activation and assumption of Abu Dashir of the Al Rashid district. The 1st Cavalry Division's 5th BCT patrols Baghdad's Al Rashid.

The 5th BCT's Company C, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, used to

patrol the area.

An American advisor to the unit, Marine Maj. Eric Davis, said the Leopard's main mission will be combat operations. They'll take on the missions that are beyond the capabilities of the Iraqi National Guard like arresting high profile terrorists, or large cordon-and-search operations, he said.

They've already taken on such missions, Davis said. The battalion has been patrolling Abu Dashir for about a month now and conducted several large operations, one of which resulted in the arrest of one of the Multi-National Force's most wanted terrorists, he said.

The Iraqi Soldiers are motivated to do this mission, Davis said. Several times the Leopard's commander has asked the advisor not to go with them on missions, he said.

"They're ready for this and want to go out and do their mission," Davis said.



By Cpl. Bill Putnam, 122nd MPAD

The Iraqi Intervention Force's 2nd Battalion company guidons on display at the uncasing and assumption of mission ceremony at Camp Ferrin-Huggins July 31. The Leopards are the first IIF battalion to take over an area formally controlled by American troops.

Commandos

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September 3, 2004

Commandos 'Officially' Arrive in Baghdad

By Pfc. Brian Schroeder
10th Mnt. Div. Public Affairs

CAMP VICTORY NORTH, Baghdad-- Soldiers from the 2nd Brigade "Commandos" Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division participated in an uncasing ceremony Aug. 12 to signify the beginning of their combat operations in Iraq.

"The uncasing ceremony is a formal ceremony that designates the unit's movement into combat," said Sgt. Maj. Michael E. Kinzie, "Commando" acting BCT sergeant major. "Today's ceremony signified the day we assumed our area of operations. It designated our official transformation from our training phase to our combat phase."

During the small ceremony, Col Mark A. Milley, 2nd BCT commander said all the units within the Command BCT were doing a good job and urged them to continue "keep it up" throughout their entire deployment.

Because of a change in the BCT mission, the ceremony date moved from Aug. 16 to Aug. 12.

"I think Soldiers are very well prepared, considering the short time period we had to prepare, and the length of time we have had as a whole unit," Kinzie said. "They are well prepared for their mission."

Color sergeants post is a time-honored tradition dating back to ancient warfare. The color sergeant was entrusted to guard and protect the regimental colors while marching into battle. The privilege was given to the strongest and bravest Soldier in the unit.

At the end of the ceremony, Milley turned to the commanders and sergeants major of the BCT and told them to keep the colors in combat for the remainder of their tour in Iraq. He also added a challenge for the sergeants major to be the keepers and bearers of the colors.



By Pfc. Brian Schroeder, 10th Mountain Division Public Affairs

Col. Mark A. Milley, 2nd Brigade "Command" Combat Team commander and Sgt. Maj. Michael E. Kinzie, 2nd BCT "Commando" acting command sergeant major uncasing the 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division colors.

2-8 Cav. Hosts 1-41 Inf. in Right-Seat Ride

By Pfc. Erik LeDrew
122nd MPAD

CAMP CUERVO, Baghdad-- The newly-arrived Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 41st Infantry Regiment, out of Ft. Riley, Kan. and attached to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, recently conducted a right-seat ride with the troopers of the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat

Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

A right-seat ride gives incoming units a chance to see what the current units are doing.

The right-seat ride lasted two days, beginning August 2, and was carried out around Camp Cuervo in northeastern Baghdad, where 2-8 Cav. is located.

During the right-seat ride, the 1-41 Inf. Soldiers took the extra seats in the 2-8 Cav. trooper's vehicles and tagged along for the

ride, standing back to study how certain things are done at some points and getting their feet wet to help at others.

Blue Platoon, Company B, 2-8 Cav., began the right-seat ride at 1 p.m. escorting elements of 2nd Platoon, Company B, 1-41 Inf., on a patrol through a marketplace known for its crowds of people, severe traffic problems and the occasional rocket-propelled grenade.

Instead of trying to negotiate their Humvees through the gridlocked traffic, Blue Platoon parked their vehicles on the side of the road and decided to give the 1-41 Infantrymen a ground's-eye view of the marketplace, by patrolling it on foot.

After walking almost a kilometer however, they were forced to call off the dismounted patrol and rush back to their vehicles in order to respond to a possible vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) near a Christian church and a mosque where another had been recently detonated.

When it turned out to be a false alarm, the two platoons ended the day's right-seat by conducting several "snap" traffic control points (TCPs), hastily formed checkpoints that last only a few minutes, at different areas in 2-8 Cav.'s sector.

The following day, Blue Platoon again escorted elements of 2nd Platoon, as well as the 1-41 Inf. Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. David Batchelor.

The final day of the right-seat ride began August 3, at 9:30 a.m. as the patrol rolled-out to finish the foot patrol in the marketplace that was interrupted the day before.

The patrol did not get called away this time around, so after 45 minutes of snaking through the

crowds single file, pausing once in a while to point something out to the 1-41 Inf. Soldiers, they returned to their vehicles.

The right-seat ride patrol returned to Camp Cuervo without encountering any further incidents, finishing the 1-41 Infantry Battalion's right-seat ride with 2-8 Cav.

For many of the 1-41 Infantrymen, this right-seat ride provided them with their first opportunity to get out on the streets of Iraq since they arrived at Camp Victory North in mid-July.

"We've spent the last few weeks doing squad and platoon level training at [Camp Victory North]," said 2nd Lt. Dale Marrou, a platoon leader with Company B, 1-41 Infantry. "But this was our first opportunity to get out on the streets and actually do our job, instead of simulating it [in a training environment]."

Batchelor said the Soldiers of 1-41 Inf. had a rapid pre-deployment: their unit was notified of their impending deployment on April 29, and began departing for Kuwait June 16.

"We weren't notified of our deployment early enough to really get much of a train up back [at Ft. Riley]," Batchelor said. "So for us, this right-seat ride is the most important component in preparing us to do our job, which we'll begin doing now in about a week."



By Pfc. Erik LeDrew, 122nd MPAD

Lt. Col. David Batchelor (right), commander, 1st Battalion, 41st Infantry Regiment, attached to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, listens as Sgt. 1st Class Joe Davis (left), Blue Platoon, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, talks about the different ways his unit patrols the marketplace, during the second day of 1-41 Inf.'s right-seat ride with 2-8 Cav. Although 1-41 Inf. is attached to the 10th Mountain Division, they are usually a part of 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division.

Mechanic's Memory Honored at Camp Cooke

By Sgt. Merrion LaSonde
122nd MPAD

CAMP COOKE, Iraq-- "We are here ... to honor a fallen comrade, Sgt. Tommy Lee Gray," said Lt. Col. Jim Rainey, Commander, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 39th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division. "[We] honor him as an American who died in a foreign land while serving his country; as a man who was loved by his family and respected by his friends; as a non-commissioned officer who lived the NCO creed; and finally, as an outstanding mechanic."

Gray died while performing

his duties as a maintenance expert for Bravo Company, 215th Forward Support Battalion. His death is made all the more tragic due to its accidental nature.

"On the 3rd of August, Gray was killed in a vehicle accident," said Capt. Jacob Brown, commander of Company B. "Soldiers from his team and the Apache Combat Repair team ran to his aid. The actions of these Soldiers were like that of heroes, but his injuries were too severe and he couldn't be saved. This was a tragic accident and we must learn from this to ensure that it never happens again."

Teammates and leadership alike remember Gray as never

being clean.

"I first met Gray at [Junior ROTC] along with the rest of the team," Brown said. "About the only thing I remembered was that he was dirty. For those of you that aren't mechanics, this is a true measure of how hard someone works."

His team leader also called to mind Gray's dedication to mission and "can-do" attitude.

"[He was] the first to put on coveralls at the beginning of the work day. He never complained, nor afforded excuses," team leader, Sgt. First Class George Bayer said. "There was no quit in this man. 'Give up' was not in his vocabulary. When given a task, he would attack it aggressively and not stop until it was completed to standard."

Bayer also reminded those in attendance of the lighter side of Gray's nature.

"He had some good one-liners that would have us all laughing, and he would throw in one of his patented facial expressions that would have you rolling."

For his service, Gray received the Bronze Star Medal and the Global War on Terrorism Medal. He is survived by his wife and two daughters.

Bayer concluded his eulogy,



Photos by Sgt. Merrion LaSonde, 122nd MPAD

Sgt. Tommy Gray, a combat mechanic with the 215th FSB, 39th BCT, died August 3 in a vehicle accident while serving in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

echoing the feelings of his entire team.

"There will always be a spot on my team for his memories," Bayer said. "I will someday get a

replacement, but I will never get another person like Sgt. Gray. He will not only be missed as one of my Soldiers, but as a friend as well."



A farewell salute is rendered to the memory of Sgt. Tommy Lee Gray, a mechanic with the 215th Forward Support Battalion attached to the 39th Brigade Combat Team.

Donated Sports Memorabilia Adorns Camp Cooke DFAC

By Sgt. Merrion LaSonde
122nd MPAD

CAMP COOKE, Taji, Iraq-- An autographed pennant from the Dallas Mavericks; a jersey worn by former Orlando Magic team member Tracy McGrady; a picture of star franchise player Reggie Miller of the Indiana Pacers. These are just a few of the many items of sports paraphernalia that cover the walls and ceiling of the Command Sgt. Maj. Eric Cooke Sports Café Dining Facility at Camp Cooke.

Prior to its opening day, 1st Lt. Deon Maxwell, adjutant for the 27th Main Support Battalion, Division Support Command, 1st Cavalry Div., sent letters to the National Basketball Association, National Football and Hockey Leagues, as well as many others, requesting donations of sports memorabilia in honor of Cooke. Maxwell has already received enough to rotate the items currently on display.

"The response has been

awesome," Maxwell said. "We have already gotten so much and more arrives every day. I am waiting on an autographed basketball from the Miami Heat."

Along with the national sports organizations, some universities jumped on the bandwagon as well. The University of South Carolina sent flags and banners with a promise of more to come.

Not to be out done, World Wrestling Entertainment contributed a championship belt signed by none other than Kurt

Angle, Edge and Christian.

Lt. Col. Carl Bird, commander of the 27th MSB, explained how the idea started and then how it all came together.

"The assistant division commander for support saw the Sports Oasis at Camp Victory and tasked us to do something similar with our dining facility," Bird said. "It was a battalion effort to overhaul the DFAC from decorations to the food."

Members of the 27th MSB performed a mission analysis as

well as taking requests from the Soldiers via the suggestion box available in the DFAC.

"The Soldiers were not happy with the DFAC," said Maxwell. "They wanted improvements. We went the extra mile and improved the food quality and selection as well as creating an environment for the Soldiers to get away and relax."

Sgt. Victor Delgado, a cook with Headquarters Company, 980th Engineer Battalion, 1st Cav. Div., has seen and heard many responses from the Soldiers.

"I am seeing more people in the chow hall," said Delgado, a native of Austin, Texas. "The atmosphere has changed. It is a more comfortable environment and the food has improved. Most of the responses in the suggestion box have been very positive."

Pvt. Adam Prince, a member of the Iraqi National Guard coordination team, 39th Brigade Combat Team, enjoys the sports theme of the café as well as the



by Sgt. Merrion LaSonde, 122nd MPAD

many items decorating the facility.

"Sports mean a lot to many Soldiers over here," said Prince, a native of Little Rock, Ark. "It is going to be great to root on our favorite ball clubs, especially when the playoffs roll around. The World Series, Super Bowl, NBA Finals; they are a part of America. We grew up watching them with our fathers, brothers, friends and now our fellow Soldiers. The café brings a part of home to us. Those small things make time go by a little faster."



by Sgt. Merrion LaSonde, 122nd MPAD

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September 3, 2004

Weather Shines on Fair's Final Day

By Mark Sommer
Buffalo News

ERIE COUNTY, N.Y.-- Rainy days kept total attendance down, but Sunday's demolition derby sells out.

Sunshine and warm weather allowed the Erie County Fair to go out Sunday like it came in. That helped make up for unusually wet weather that had caused crowd totals to slump since the rain first reared its head on the fair's third day.

Sunday's official attendance



By Harry Scull Jr., Buffalo News
Jake Mazher, of Toronto, carries a large stuffed animal he won at the Erie County Fair.

count was 100,891, which brought the total 11-day amount to 883,119, down from 1.015 million in 2003.

"It was an awesome day," said fair spokeswoman Lou Ann Delaney. "The weather was wonderful, and the fair ended on a high note."

The sold-out demolition derby also helped bring the crowds out.

"The demolition derby was ridiculous," said an approving Eli Sipos of Buffalo. "They were just banging the hell out of each other. What more do you want?"

While Buicks, Chevrolets and Fords took turns pummeling each other, 13-year-old Matthew Lester of East Amherst watched anxiously. His father, Donald Lester, was behind a Cadillac.

"I was nervous," said Lester. "But it was very cool."

College students Paul Gorczyca, of Lackawanna, and Jennifer Pajak, of Hamburg, were among the volunteer firefighters on hand to protect spectators and drivers on the outside of the track.

"We had to get one guy out of the car, but he was all right," Gorczyca said.

Jerry Edmunds, of Hamburg, said the derby was a blast. The

coolest thing? "A car got on top of another car. He was peeling out even when he was up there."

Organizers have begun to rebrand the fair as America's Fair to differentiate it from an Erie County Fair in Pennsylvania, and to reflect its size, which is bigger than some state fairs, Delaney said.

She said a new name had other advantages, too.

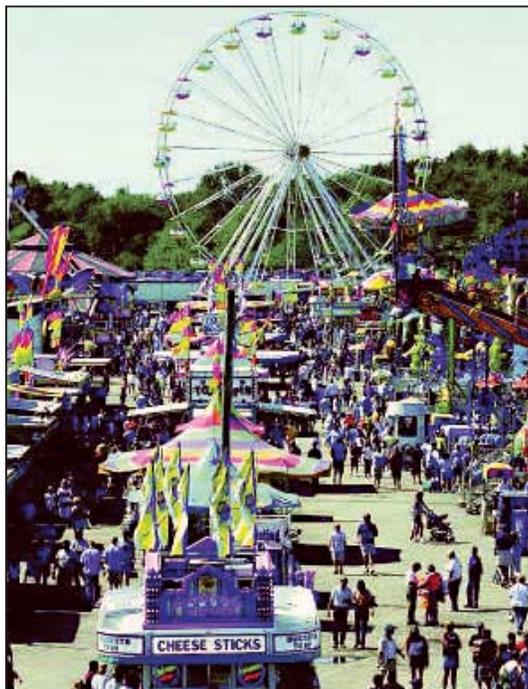
"America's Fair is a fresh face and helps us when we're attracting grandstand entertainment and larger sponsors," she said.

While the name may be in transition, the main attractions, though - from amusement rides and games, agricultural displays and various sales booths - remained as familiar as ever.

So did the carnival-type food, including roasted corn, onion rings, homemade root beer, bratwurst, Philly cheese steaks, ribbon-cut fries, and some new additions like vegetarian tempura.

Then there was the barbecue.

"It's been a good day. Buffalo is a crowd that loves demolition derby, so it's been great," said Ben Thompson, owner of Big D and Bubba's barbecue, winner of the Best Fare of the Fair award.



By Harry Scull Jr., Buffalo News
Visitors seek out their last round of rides on the final day of the Erie County Fair Sunday. Good weather brought out a big crowd.

Dallas Cowboys May Get Their Own Channel

By Jean-Jacques Taylor
Dallas Morning News

IRVING, Texas-- The Dallas Cowboys are close to an agreement with Comcast Corp. to create a cable TV channel that would air around-the-clock Cowboys programming, sources familiar with the team's negotiations said Monday.

The Cowboys hope to launch the channel - available only to subscribers of Comcast, the primary cable provider for Dallas and its suburbs - this season, according to the sources.

An announcement is scheduled for Thursday, sources said, adding that a letter of intent has yet to be signed.

Cowboys vice president Jerry Jones Jr. declined to comment. Comcast executive director of communications Angel Biasatti would neither confirm nor deny the talks.

Comcast and the Cowboys already have a sponsorship agreement for signs at Texas Stadium.

Comcast serves more than 21 million customers nationwide - including 22 of the



nation's top 25 TV markets, according to its 2003 shareholder report. The cable company has more than 500,000 subscribers in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

The Cowboys, who would join the Atlanta Falcons as the only NFL teams with their own channels, would produce original content as well as airing shows featuring owner Jerry Jones and coach Bill Parcells after they have appeared on KTVT-TV (Channel 11), the Cowboys' official station.

The Cowboys could also televise Mr. Parcells' daily news conference, as well as preseason games.

Although the Cowboys can't televise their preseason games in another NFL market,



By Irwin Thompson, DMN

Cowboys owner Jerry Jones can expand the exposure of his team if his 24-hour TV channel comes to fruition.

such as Houston, they could air the rest of their programming.

Because there is no NFL team in Los Angeles, the Cowboys could take advantage of marketing opportunities in Southern California by having the channel available to Comcast subscribers there.

The Cowboys completed their training camp in Oxnard, Calif., on Friday and have agreed to return in 2005. Oxnard is about an hour north of Los Angeles.

Comcast announced last

week that it will place the 24-hour, league-produced NFL Network on its "Digital Plus" subscriber service, which costs \$5 more per month than "Digital Classic," its basic digital package. The Cowboys channel would be available to basic tier subscribers, sources said.

The Cowboys have contacted Babe Laufenberg of KTVT and local broadcaster Bill Jones about roles on the network, several sources said.

The Cowboys, who have in-house production and a

video studio, studied Atlanta's concept before deciding to launch their own channel, sources said.

Atlanta began Falconsvision, which repeats a four-hour loop of original programming, last year.

"We're still developing content," said Jim Smith, Atlanta's director of marketing. "For us, it's about an extension of the brand, and it gives Falcons fans an opportunity to see programming they can't get access to anywhere else."

The Cowboys would also use a four-hour loop of original programming, sources said.

Mr. Jones' show and Cowboys Huddle, which features Mr. Parcells, are produced on site. The team could add shows such as a Cowboys version of ESPN's SportsCenter or round tables with local print, radio and television reporters or their own Web site staff.

The Cowboys like the idea of their own network because it gives them brand exposure, the ability to create and support their own image and an opportunity to enhance fan development, the sources said.

First Day Brings New Quad, Student Services

By Tracie Dugan
Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark.-- Students who began classes at the University of Arkansas' Fayetteville campus Monday can expect increased services this semester with an added focus on those most likely not to finish a degree.

The most tangible change on campus this fall is the new 600-bed Northwest Quad dormitory complex that just opened.

But the new services UA officials expect to phase in this semester will likely make their own impact - particularly for students who live off campus.

The new initiatives will range from increased efforts to connect nontraditional and commuter students to campus life, to expanded health services, to added support for students with disabilities.

The Fayetteville campus, which recently revamped an office devoted to "nontraditional" students to include all students who commute from outside campus, has long considered improvements to its six-year graduation rate one of its most stubborn problems. "Living on campus is one of the strong predictors of graduation rate," said Sylvia Scott, director of the Office of Nontraditional and Commuter Students, referring to long-term national studies. "Yet 70 percent of our students live off campus, and we've never been able to reach those students."

Elsewhere in the state, other universities have made preparations for more students -

offand on-campus, alike - as the fall semester swings into gear.

At the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, an urban campus rich with commuter students, there will be room for about 1,050 more off-campus dwellers to park. One lot is completed along 28 th Street and officials expect to finish another sometime this year.

And in Jonesboro, another 282 drivers are having an easier time finding a space at Arkansas State University.

At the Fayetteville campus, Scott is poring over survey responses gathered last spring from 2,600 of the university's 11,000 off-campus students.

Nontraditional students typically consist of those who enroll later in life or who juggle full-time jobs or families along with their classes, Scott said. A commuter student is any student who lives off-campus.

Together, the two groups could prove key in helping the UA improve its graduation rate. "It's this huge population out there," Scott said.

Last fall, the Office of Nontraditional Students moved from its prime spot in the student union to a more out of the way location in Walton Hall, Scott said. The office is

back in the union this year, and Scott spent much of the summer addressing off-campus students, in orientation sessions. Among her topics were how to navigate the campus's parking system and a cafeteria meal plan that is being marketed to off-campus students.

Students with disabilities will also see increased offerings this semester, said Tim King, director of the UA center that serves

from a remote site.

And by mid-October, UA students who seek medical attention in an existing, cramped Health Center will have a new \$8 million center double in size.

Financed in part by an 85-cents per credit-hour student fee, the 36,000-square-foot Pat Walker Health Center will also feature a pharmacy closest to the university's busiest intersection, at Maple Street and Garland Avenue, said the center director, Mary Alice Serafini. At other campuses around the state, new student services also are in the works.

ASU also plans a special treat come Sept. 7 on the campus's north side. There, Jazzman's Hardwired Cafe will offer 41 wireless and hardwired work stations along with coffee and pastries.

Students attending the University of Central Arkansas in Conway, meanwhile, are also eating in style. A revamped cafeteria had its debut the first week of classes.

Aramark, the company that provides food service for UCA, picked up most of the tab for renovations, paying about \$3.5 million.

At Arkansas Tech in Russellville, students have three new apartment-style housing units on campus this year. The two-and four-bedroom set-ups will house another 150 students. That's not enough to take care of the school's influx of students wanting on-campus housing, though.

Several are still stationed at hotels because of an overflow.



them. The new services will likely make just a small dent, he predicted, likely serving nine or 10 students at most. "In the world of what I do, that's like four million," King said.

His office is currently working

on a schedule for two new golf carts that will ferry disabled students around campus. The carts were donated earlier this summer by Regions Bank and the Arkansas Arthritis Foundation. "It's a limited service right now," King said, adding that the center conducted a pilot program last year using borrowed University Police cars and another donated by a Lions Club member.

The disabilities center also is working on a new transcription program in which a transcriber helps students take notes during class using laptops, either in the classroom or

August Rains Break Records; Bring Some Pains

By Peter Farrell
The Oregonian

PORTLAND, Oregon-- Mud threatened to make a mess of the lawn mower races at the Clackamas County Fair. A forest fire southeast of Roseburg got a wetting down. Some Portland apartments were flooded, while gardeners finally were able to give their hoses a rest.

Outside of flood threats, it isn't often news that it rained in Oregon.

But in two days, Portland broke two rainfall records and received more than three times as much rain as it had so far in August.

Saturday's 0.54 inches of rain in the Portland area broke the Aug. 21 record of 0.27 inches set in 1971. It was the first measurable rain at Portland International Airport in two weeks. The Aug. 22 record of 0.69 inches, set in 1975, had been broken by 6 p.m. Sunday.

It rained so much Sunday afternoon the National Weather

Service issued a rare-for-August urban and small streams flood advisory for low-lying areas. It was to expire Sunday night.

There's more to come, forecasters said, with showers likely through Thursday. "Another pretty strong system is coming in that could bring a lot more rain," said Ira Kosovitz, a National Weather Service forecaster.

A sudden downpour Saturday night threatened to drown the "Down and Dirty Rodeo" at the Clackamas County Fair, but the rodeo went on. And people showed up at the Canby fairgrounds Sunday ready for the weather.

"They're walking around with umbrellas and smiling as they go through the puddles," fair Manager Rayvan Davis said. Still, the lawn mower races moved under cover because "the arena is kind of like a mud bog."

The downpour overwhelmed the combined sewer system that Portland expects to finish replacing in about seven years, and sewage flowed into the Willamette River.

The city Bureau of Environmental Services issued non-standard warnings to swimmers and boaters to avoid swallowing the river water for 48 hours after the rain stops, to wash after contact

with the water and to thoroughly cook any fish caught in the river.

A plugged drain in an apartment building's parking lot backed up water into six ground-floor apartments in the 11000 block of Southwest Barbur Boulevard. Firefighters from Engine 18 tried to clear the drain. Red Cross volunteers provided food, shelter and prescription cost assistance to three children and eight adults who could not return home.

One place the rain was welcome was at the Bland Mountain fire near Canyonville, where wind had spread the fire to 3,666 acres.

The fire is in timber replanted after a larger 1987 fire. It started Friday about 35 miles southeast of Roseburg and has destroyed two vacant homes and three outbuildings. The threat to other homes lessened Sunday, and a structural fire task force that protected them was disbanded. More than 1,200 firefighters have fought the fire. The cause is under investigation.

The Northwest Interagency Coordination Center reported the fire was about 55 percent contained Sunday evening.

Forest fires rarely have been in the headlines this summer, but an analysis at the coordination center shows that the number of forest

fires in Oregon is running ahead of average.

"It isn't a case of so few fires," said Marc Hollen, a coordination center spokesman. It's a question of fewer fires that developed into big ones.

Hollen ran these numbers over the weekend: Oregon has averaged 2,804 reported forest fires over the past 10 years. This year, there have been 2,901 reported fires.

The dramatic drop is in the acreage involved. The 10-year average is 297,704 acres on fire, compared with 22,438 acres going up in smoke so far this year.

And although it seems Washington is having a much worse fire year than Oregon, he said, the numbers are similar. "They have had less than half the acreage involved than they normally get."

He said a staff meeting recently concluded that much of the reason for the smaller size of the fires is the increased emphasis on fire prediction and the repositioning of firefighting resources, including helicopters, that start attacking the fires sooner.

It also helps, he said, that other states haven't had big fires that draw on Oregon firefighters and equipment.



By Dana Romanoff, The Oregonian

Jim Birdsell (right), in charge of maintenance, helps resident Matt Burgess remove his bed from his flooded apartment on Southwest Barbur Boulevard near Tigard on Sunday. "I woke up, and it was like a little ocean with everything floating in it," Burgess said. "It was like a bad dream." Burgess found out that his insurance does not cover water damage.

Demme's 'Candidate' Can Hang With Original

This summer's remake of John Frankenheimer's classic 1960s film "The Manchurian Candidate" is a crackerjack political thriller that serves as a great antithesis to this summer's special effects extravaganzas.

The film stars Denzel Washington as Army Maj. Ben Marco-Frank Sinatra's role in the original-Meryl Streep as Senator Ellie Shaw, and Liev Shreiber as her son, Gulf War hero and Vice-President hopeful Raymond Pretiss Shaw.

The film opens in Kuwait as Marco and his squad of SF Soldiers (including Shaw) are on a reconnaissance patrol in occupied-Kuwait when they get ambushed by the enemy. What happens next is where the mystery of the film lies. See, they all think Shaw saved them but they don't remember it.

The plot picks up some years later in an election year, although it does not specify exactly which year it is. Raymond Shaw is poised to become the next Vice-President due to some nefarious deals brokered by his loving mother, Ellie Shaw.

Meanwhile, the other members of Shaw's SF squad, including Marco, have all been suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, having recurring nightmares about what really happened during their

LeDrew's Reviews

PFC Erik LeDrew



Movie Critic

"lost patrol" and whether or not Shaw was really responsible for saving them. The catch here is that they all share the exact same nightmares.

Coincidence? I think not. Leave it to our upstanding leading man, Ben Marco, to seek out the truth, a truth that involves shadow conspiracies, frugal political machinations and a powerful corporation called Manchurian Global.

No more shall be said, for those who have not seen the great original will find much to like in the new "Manchurian Candidate." And for those who have seen Frankenheimer's version...well, the movie will serve as a great companion piece to the original, updating and modernizing it for today's world, while still offering up a few new twists to the original's labyrinthine plot.

While the original film was a borderline satirical look at America's fear of communism in the 1960s (Vietnam was but a blip on the horizon when the original "Manchurian Candidate" was made), director Jonathan Demme chooses to take a much more serious tone when dealing with our country's modern politics in his remake.

Aside from the sly revelation leading to the remake's climactic scene, the largest difference between this and the original is the tone.

While the original created a very desperate atmosphere of paranoia and moved at a breakneck pace-even by modern standards-Demme's version takes it's time to slowly build the tension, drawing his audience into Marco's quest for the truth, even if it means losing his sanity in the process.

Marco may be the main character in this film, but Denzel is almost over-shadowed by his costar, Liev Shreiber as Raymond Shaw. Maybe this is because we have come to not only take Denzel's performances for granted, but have come to expect a great performance from him (one could say the same of Hanks, De Niro, Pacino, etc.).

Nevertheless one can't take for granted Schreiber's performance as



Courtesy Paramount Pictures

Denzel Washington as Army Maj. Ben Marco in the recent remake of 'The Manchurian Candidate.'

the tortured soul that is Raymond Shaw, a man forced by his very overbearing mother to become something he despises, and forced to pretend to be someone he isn't.

After a small role as an assassin in "The Sum of All Fears" and countless smaller roles in independent films, Shreiber really steps up to the plate here, turning in a wonderful performance that causes us to constantly revise our opinion of him.

Is he in on the conspiracy, or merely a pawn? Is he just a spoiled

rich kid? Or is there something stirring beneath the surface?

Those are all questions that Shreiber's performance as Shaw brings up over the course of the film, and to say he pulls it off admirably would be an understatement. The fact that he can hold his own against Denzel and Streep is a remarkable feat.

Performances aside, it is Jonathan Demme who deserves the most credit for giving us a movie that flat-out refuses to ride on the coattails of its predecessor, and bravely paves it's own way, using the original as a stepping stone.

The remake's ending isn't quite as bold as that of the original, but it works in the context of Demme's film, leaving us not necessarily feeling good about how everything turned out, but hopeful nevertheless.

It must also be added that prior to "The Manchurian Candidate" Jonathan Demme directed two very unloved movies, "Beloved" and "The Truth About Charlie," and one great movie, "The Silence of the Lambs."

While "The Manchurian Candidate" is easily Demme's best movie since his modern classic "Silence of the Lambs," the question remains whether or not it is as good as "Silence."

Only time will tell.

Deployment Blues = Olympic TV Diversions

By Master Sgt. Dave Larsen Absentee Sports Buff

Ron Bensenhom is now facing a five-month term in a Greek jail for diving into the Olympic Pool in Athens from the 3-meter diving board. He wasn't sentenced for style points, though he should have been sentenced for his lack of fashion sense.

The baby blue tutu with white stockings and blue polka dots went well enough, but the 31-year-old Canadian accessorized with black tennis shoes. Such a faux pas deserves punishment!

We will pause from the pigskin prognostication to talk about the greatest amateur sporting event in world history - the Olympics.

We Americans have kicked serious international butt in the Olympics, but the sights and pageantry of the games is what got my attention.

For example: I remember



walking into my favorite dining facility to see that women's beach volleyball was on the large screen television, with a hotly contested match between Germany and the good ole US of A. I was mesmerized!

I probably looked like Homer Simpson staring down a donut. Halfway through this deployment, I cared more about the uniforms (or the lack thereof) worn by the participants than the actual outcome of the matches. It was especially interesting to me and my fellow television enthusiasts when the TV camera would zoom in to show the hand signals passed between players. I'm not sure what they meant (fast ball, curve, change up?) but they were fun to watch.

As I pen this particular column, the Olympics are far from over. The Team USA softball team was nearly perfect in their run to a gold medal, and the women's basketball team seems unbeatable, too. The current crop of NBA "Dream Team" wannabe's, though, are another story.

The Denver Nuggets' rookie sensation Carmelo Anthony guaranteed gold in Athens before the team's first practice together in June. Then the team played uninspired ball in their four exhibition games, getting spanked by the team from Italy and barely beating non-qualifying Germany.

In Athens, the NBA superstars dumped their first game to Puerto



Sports Buff

Rico; losing by a record 19 points! They dumped another game to Lithuania before qualifying for the medal round with an unimpressive 3-2 record.

I don't know, at the time of this writing, whether or not Team USA's men's basketball team pulls their collective heads out of their collective posteriors, but my guess is that at the first sign of struggle, the team will fold.

Talent alone isn't enough, especially when everyone else plays with heart and with national fervor. Our NBA stars just play in the Olympics for fun. They view the game as their day job. They don't play too hard, and want to avoid injuries, which would jeopardize their multimillion-dollar contracts.

This team will go down in history, even if they win the gold medal, as the first US Olympic squad filled with NBA stars to lose a game. Personally, I'm unimpressed.

In another sports arena, the American men and women's gymnastics teams enjoyed tremendous

success, though I must confess that I only watched the women compete. I didn't even know that the guy who won the men's all-around title (thanks to a disputed score) was a fellow Cheeshead.

Anyway, as I write this, I am less than 24 hours from boarding a plane at the Air Force's passenger terminal in Baghdad. As you read this, I am probably vegetating on my couch ... remote in hand ... sucking down a cold (root) beer.

Had the Olympics occurred after my environmental leave, I probably would have paid more attention to the sports themselves - the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat - unfolding in front of me.

But, I didn't.

During my leave, I doubt if I'll be quite so distracted by what I see on television. In fact, the only television I plan to watch is Monday Night Football, Sept. 13 as my beloved Packers head down to Charlotte to open their season.

Go Packers!

(NOTE TO MY EDITOR, WITH EYES ROLLING SKYWARD: Our boss, Lt. Col. James Hutton, the public affairs officer of the 1st Cavalry Division, has graciously ordered that he fill in for the next column while I enjoy central Texas barbecue. He will probably talk about boxing ["whatever!"], though he has promised to pick Weeks Three and Four of the NFL season with a guest picker by his side. Maybe he'll ask the CG?)

Standings

MLB
As of August 26, 2004

American League East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	78	48	.619	--
Boston	72	53	.576	5.5
Tampa Bay	59	68	.465	19.5
Baltimore	57	68	.456	20.5
Toronto	53	74	.417	25.5

Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Minnesota	71	55	.563	--
Cleveland	64	64	.500	8
Chicago Sox	61	63	.492	9
Detroit	60	66	.476	11
Kansas City	44	80	.355	26

West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Oakland	73	53	.579	--
Anaheim	73	54	.575	0.5
Texas	70	55	.560	2.5
Seattle	46	79	.368	26.5

National League East Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	72	53	.576	--
Florida	63	61	.508	8.5
Philadelphia	62	65	.488	11
NY Mets	59	66	.472	13
Montreal	54	72	.429	18.5

Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
St. Louis	83	43	.659	--
Chicago Cubs	70	56	.556	13
Houston	64	62	.508	19
Cincinnati	60	65	.480	22.5
Pittsburgh	60	66	.476	23
Milwaukee	55	70	.440	27.5

West Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Los Angeles	70	58	.547	4
San Francisco	73	53	.579	--
San Diego	68	58	.540	5
Colorado	55	71	.437	18
Arizona	39	89	.305	35

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