



By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel, 122nd MPAD

Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, fires one round in a twelve round fire mission as Soldiers from Arkansas' Battery C, 1st Battalion of the 206th Field Artillery Regiment, 39th Brigade Combat Team (BCT) prepare to load another round into a 105mm Howitzer artillery piece. Blum and Command Sgt. Maj. John J. Leonard, Jr., Command Sgt. Maj. of the National Guard Bureau, visited with Soldiers of the 39th BCT at their Forward Operating Base of Camp Taji, Iraq Sept 29. During a visit with Soldiers from the 39th BCT, Blum and Leonard discussed concerns that the National Guard Soldiers have about the future role of the National Guard.

Baghdad Play Area Restored

By Spc. Jan Critchfield
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Work to restore a dilapidated Tashree neighborhood playground was finished Sept. 28 as a part of multinational force efforts to improve the quality of life for local residents.

The project took two weeks to complete, cost \$30,000 and employed ten local laborers.

"This project is two things ... a soccer field-slash-basketball court," Capt. Alexander Rasmussen, 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, projects officer said. "The other half of this project was streetlights in the complex for security."

Home to thousands of Iraqi citizens and completely enclosed within the International Zone, Tashree is positioned right at the doorstep of the Interim Iraqi Government. This makes security and stability a high priority for the neighborhood.

"No one likes to walk down the street at night, in the dark," Rasmussen said. "When we say security, people automatically think 'terrorism', but it's also just regular crime."

Although crime has not
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Guard Chief Visits Taji

Cpl. Benjamin Cossel
122nd MPAD

CAMP TAJI, Iraq - With just a few months left until units deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II begin redeployment to home stations, planners and logisticians with the National Guard Bureau are facing challenges not seen since the end of World War II.

Addressing issues ranging from the comfort of individual Soldiers to concerns of redeployment, Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum,

Chief of the National Guard Bureau, spent the day visiting Camp Taji, Sept. 29, talking to commanders and Soldiers of the Arkansas National Guards 39th Brigade Combat Team attached to the 1st Cavalry Division.

"With over three National Guard Brigades and various detachments now serving in theater, the largest National Guard deployment since World War II," explained Maj. Andreas de Kunffy, the 39th's information officer, "the issues and problems

of how those units will redeploy to home station is of major concern."

De Kunffy went on to explain that models that exists for active duty units, whereby a unit returns home, has 30 days of receiving of equipment, maintenance and other issues and then begins block leave potentially would not work for a National Guard Brigades unless changes are made.

"Once a unit is demobilized, they are no longer on federal orders

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By Spc. Jan Critchfield, 122nd MPAD

Children of Baghdad's Tashree neighborhood play soccer on a field renovated as part of a project coordinated by the 1st Cavalry Division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team in an effort to improve relations with the local population.

Restored Playground Keeps Iraqi Kids Safer

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 been disproportionately bad in the area, security lights were a priority for the neighborhood council. A team of Company B, 478th Civil Affairs Battalion, a Florida Army Reserve unit attached to the 1st Cavalry Division, identified the playfield as being in need of renovation.

"You have security on the one hand, and then something for the kids on the other. An extracurricular activity for them in the

off-time after school rather than them sitting around and getting into trouble ... Security is very important considering the vital operations you have [here]," Rasmussen said.

Area residents were pleased with the improvements and, after a ribbon-cutting ceremony, enjoyed cake amid a sea of ram-bunctious children.

"When [the kids] saw this thing, their eyes got real big, and they were like, 'Wow, this is cool,'" Rasmussen said.

Chief Concerned with Guard Issues

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 and return to their one weekend a month status," noted the Fort Smith, Ark resident. "This issue is going to have to be addressed in order for a National Guard Brigade size element to properly receive, account for, and submit any paperwork needed for all the equipment that deployed with us [the 39th BCT]."

During a briefing attended by Blum as well as Command Sgt. Maj. John J. Leonard, Jr., Command Sgt. Maj. of the National Guard Bureau, commanders and staff officers of the 39th BCT addressed such concerns as well as offering potential solutions. While answers to the many questions raised are still in the planning stages, Blum noted that the suggestions taken from his visit with the 39th BCT and other National Guard brigades currently deployed would be taken back to Arlington, Va., headquarters of the National Guard Bureau.

As the issue of return to home station weighted

heavily in Blum's concerns, the primary reason for Blum's trip was to visit with Soldiers of the camp and listen to concerns and problems they faced.

"Getting out here on the ground and seeing first hand what the troops are experiencing is extremely important," noted Blum as he walked through the 39th Support Battalion's maintenance section examining armor attachments Soldiers there made.

As they talked to Soldiers, both Blum and Leonard asked if there was anything they could do to help. Soldiers gave voice to issues ranging from the granting of new, secondary Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) because of the job training to challenges faced with shortages of parts needed.

"It's really great that the general is able to get out here like this and visit with the troops," said Birdsong. "He seems genuinely concerned with the issues we are facing."

Useful Iraqi Words/Phrases

Do you understand?
hal tafham[ee]

Thursday High: 100 Low: 74 	Friday High: 98 Low: 72 	Saturday High: 98 Low: 70 
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Weather information provided by 1CD Staff Weather Office (SWO)

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News Notes

Plan B in Works for Absentee Ballot

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (Democrat-Gazette) - State officials are unsure how many of about 3,000 Arkansas National Guardsmen in Iraq will be forced to use a federal write-in absentee ballot to cast their votes in the Nov. 2 election, a spokesman for the secretary of state's office said Monday. Janet Miller, deputy secretary of state for elections and public affairs, said it's too early to tell how many of the soldiers in Iraq will be forced to use a federal write-in absentee ballot because of a lack of regular absentee ballots. "The counties that we have talked to have talked to their printers and are trying to expedite everything," she said Monday in an interview.

"Smokehouse" Causes Blaze

MAGNOLIA, Ark. (AP) - A portable house used to teach children how to escape from a burning home clipped a power line while it was being towed Tuesday, causing a nearby house to catch fire. No people were hurt, but a dog died in the blaze. The unlikely series of events started while the Fire Department towed the Arkansas Children's Hospital "smokehouse" to an elementary school. Firefighters had taken the route before. But since the last visit, new utility poles were installed, and the smokehouse caught a low wire, pulling it away from the home of Cassie Farrar.

Iraqi-Americans Visit Hood

FORT HOOD, Texas (Temple Daily Telegram) Two Iraqi-Americans paid a call on Fort Hood Tuesday to conduct an informal forum sponsored by Department of Defense on conditions in Iraq post Saddam Hussein.

Tamara Quinn, 50, and Pakeza Alexander, 39, both of Nashville, Tenn., are naturalized American citizens who are also natives of Iraq.

The two said they escaped the Ba'athist regime to make their way to the United States.

Ms. Quinn said she immigrated to the United States in 1973 at age 19.

"I came here to go to school because I already saw what Saddam's regime had done to hurt his people," Quinn said.

She said she boarded a



Temple Daily Telegram

Tamara Quinn listens as Pakeza Alexander speaks at Fort Hood. Both were born in Iraq.

plane in the dark of night knowing she was leaving for good even though she had made it appear going to school was her only agenda.

"The most terrifying time in my life was as I sat there waiting for the plane to leave," Quinn said. "I

worried that someone would find me out and take me down. You have no idea how badly I wanted out."

She said she had to leave her family behind, but within two months they left the country and followed her.

Ohio Scientists Develop Humvee Armor

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) -The military is ordering more lightweight armor developed in Ohio that protects troops in Humvees from automatic weapons fire and grenades without slowing the vehicles.

Unarmored Humvees have become targets in the war in Iraq. The vehicle was designed to carry troops and supplies, not be part of the fighting. Special-operations forces were looking for lighter armor that doesn't affect their speed or make Humvees too heavy to transport on planes.

Some Humvees, made by AM General in Mishawaka, Ind., are being equipped with up to 3,000 pounds of armor, which slows them down. The new armor offers less protection, but weighs 750 pounds.

The military has tested

75 of the armor kits in the Middle East and has ordered 400 more from Columbus-based Battelle, the world's largest independent, non-profit research institute.

Battelle introduced the armor kits last week at the Naval Institute's ninth annual Warfare Exposition and Symposium in Virginia Beach, Va.

"The bad guys come up with newer tactics, and we come up with newer techniques," said Skip Dirren, who heads Battelle's Navy marketing operations.

With no time to invent armor, Battelle went to the marketplace and found that an armor made of polyethylene and titanium survived testing at its laboratory.

The armor is 15 times stronger than steel, according to John Bockbrader, project manager. His team of

engineers adapted the armor to fit Humvee parts considered vulnerable, including doors, seats, wheel wells and the underbody.

The armor will not stop blasts from homemade bombs and rocket-propelled grenades that Iraqi insurgents have repeatedly used.



AP

U.S. soldiers in a Humvee stand guard as smoke rises after a car bomb explosion in Baghdad.

Road Teams Win Game 1

Twins Blank Yankees

NEW YORK (AP) - Johan Santana and the Minnesota Twins' dazzling defense had the New York Yankees seeing double.

Santana and the Twins escaped trouble with the help of a record-setting five double plays, Jacque Jones homered in his first start since the death of his father, and the Twins beat the Yankees 2-0 Tuesday night to win their eighth straight opener in a post-season series.

"I was able to throw the right pitch at the right time because I know my teammates can make some plays," Santana said. "Tonight we proved what the team, the Minnesota Twins, are all about."

BoSox Bomb Anaheim

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) - Curt Schilling has pitched a lot better in big



New York Yankees' Jorge Posada is tagged out by Minnesota Twins catcher Henry Blanco during the second inning of in Game 1 of the American League Division Series.

games than he did Tuesday.

Fortunately, he had a large margin for error early on, so everything worked out for the Boston Red Sox.

Schilling worked effectively into the seventh inning, Manny Ramirez and Kevin Millar homered during a seven-run burst in the fourth and the Red Sox beat the Anaheim Angels 9-

3 to open the AL playoffs.

Schilling said he felt "incredibly strong" in the bullpen before the game and had good velocity, but struggled otherwise.

"I knew I wasn't as sharp as I have been," he said. "Looking back, I made some mistakes today. I left some pitches over the plate. (But) solo home runs don't beat you."

New Ball (& Chain) for Tiger?

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados (AP) - Tiger Woods snorkeled off the coast of Barbados on Monday amid reports he's set to wed Swedish model Elin Nordegren on the Caribbean island this week.

The wedding was planned for Tuesday at the Sandy Lane resort on the island's west coast, two sources who said they had knowledge of the event told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Newspapers in Barbados and Ireland also reported that the two will marry at the resort. The Barbados Daily Nation ran a front-page photograph Monday of a yacht that is anchored off the island and rumored to have the 24-year-old

Nordegren and guests aboard.

The 28-year-old golfer was seen early Monday boarding a small boat with snorkeling equipment at a beach near Sandy Lane.

Nordegren's mother, Barbro Holmberg -- Sweden's migration minister -- would not comment on when the wedding will take place, her press secretary Odd Guteland said. But Holmberg "is not in Stockholm this week, and won't be back until Monday."

Woods' publicist, Bev Norwood, did not return numerous telephone calls.

Nordegren was working as a nanny for Swedish golfer Jesper Parnevik when she met Woods three years



Elin Nordegren and Tiger Woods are pictured at the Ryder Cup gala dinner on Sept. 15.

ago at the British Open. Woods asked her to marry him last December during a sunset walk at a game reserve in South Africa, where he was playing in the Presidents Cup.

In Brief

Showtime to Film Terror Cell Drama

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) - The Showtime cable channel is developing a potential television series about the inner workings and personal lives of a fictional group of Islamic terrorists, a network spokesman said on Tuesday. The program, titled "The Cell," is conceived as the behind-the-scenes story of European and American converts to Islam who are planning terror attacks in the United States, and would be aimed for a debut on Showtime next year, he said.

Ricky Williams Wants to Play

NEW YORK (AP) - Ricky Williams wants to rejoin the Miami Dolphins and has asked the NFL how soon he can return, his agent said Tuesday. It's unclear whether Williams must serve a suspension the rest of this season for repeated violations of the league drug program. He has asked the NFL for a hearing to clarify his status, but no date has been set. The 2002 NFL rushing champion stunned the Dolphins when he retired just before training camp in late July. On Sept. 24, Williams was ordered by an arbitrator to repay more than \$8.6 million to the team for breaching his contract.

