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LIGHTNING STRIKES



VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

UNITED STATES DIVISION – CENTER

JANUARY 24, 2011

CULTURE OF TRAINING



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USD-C HELPS INSTILL TRAINING MINDSET FOR IA FUTURE

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LIGHTNING SEVEN SENDS

"LIGHTNING IN THE NEW DAWN"



We have been entrusted, as leaders serving in United States Division – Center, with the responsibility of taking care of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and Department of Defense Civilians. The values of our respective services are interconnected, mutually supportive and combine to guide and establish standards. We must set the example to ensure that all of our service members and civilians are afforded the best leadership in USD-C. We do

this through coaching, teaching and mentoring that upholds our values. Values hold a squad, company, and organization together. Without values you have little or no trust, faith, confidence or productivity. Values are the foundation and fiber of one's character.

Our values are why America has entrusted every leader with the honor and privilege of leading America's greatest asset—their sons and daughters; our service members. We must never take this responsibility lightly or for granted. We should never compromise the trust America has given us as commissioned officers and non-commissioned officers. There should never be a concern by a subordinate, peer or superior that our values have been compromised. We must identify issues and hold the moral high ground, understand the ramifications of failure and how it will affect our organization. Some might say that leaders are held to a higher standard and that may be true, but I think we are simply held to the standard and as leaders, we must demonstrate our values every day through our actions.

As professionals, we will continue to hold one another accountable, using the values that have been instilled in each of us. We must ensure that our subordinates and peers have the trust, faith and confidence that we

will always do the right thing on or off duty, while deployed or at home station, when alone or in front of a formation.

Retired Gen. Norman H. Schwarzkopf once said, "Character is best measured by the actions we take when no one is watching us."

All service members are the same. They respond to rewards and their superior's approval and—not fear, threats or intimidation. Treat your Soldiers with respect and dignity in all that you do and you will be much more successful in the long run. We cannot tolerate leaders who feel that because they are in a position of authority they can berate, humiliate or intimidate their subordinates through verbal abuse, intemperate language or liberal sarcasm. We are a very capable force that protects our nation's interest at home and abroad with the values of our military.

As we continue to partner and strengthen the Iraqi Security Forces and show them the tactical and operational side of our military occupational specialties, we must also ensure that we show the ethical and moral sides as well. We must show that ethics are an indispensable part of our professional military and that we are a values based organization that treats everyone with dignity and respect from the most junior service



member to the most senior. In doing so, we allow a seed to be planted and ethics, standards and discipline to begin to foster and grow. As we continue to display our professionalism it allows the ISF to do the right thing for their country and the people of Iraq and be seen and recognized as professionals. This is who we are. Tropic Lightning! 🇺🇸

COMMAND SGT. MAJ. FRANK M. LEOTA
DIVISION COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR
25TH INF. DIV., USD-C

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WHY I STAYED IN THE ARMY



LEADERSHIP DID IT!

BY **COMMAND SGT. MAJ. FRANK M. LEOTA**, DIVISION COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR, 25TH INF. DIV., USD-C

I have often been asked what has kept me in the Army. It wasn't long ago that I had thought about enlisting into the Army. Frankly, it was not for patriotism, honor or country. It was about seeking an opportunity for a safe environment and a financial opportunity.

I did not know what to expect of the Army as no one in my family had previously served in any service. My first duty station was in the Republic of Panama. I was a private (E-2) earning \$395 per month with jump pay—which was \$50 at the time. I was assigned to the Company A, 3rd Battalion 5th Infantry Regiment “Motengaters,” and it was the only airborne company within the battalion. It was a great duty station and assignment. The noncommissioned officers were rigid and the senior NCOs were all Vietnam War veterans—as were most of the squad leaders.

The platoon sergeant was Staff Sgt.

Joe S. Johnson and my platoon leader was Lt. Chuck Wagner—hard as nails and smarter than heck. I was immediately made the platoon radio telephone operator—not because of my sheer wit and intelligence, but because I was the new guy. There is nothing like carrying a PRC-77 and “Vincent” device through triple canopy jungle with every “wait-a-minute” vine introducing itself to you. After a year, I was promoted to specialist and moved to be a 90 mm recoilless rifle gunner. Try humping that through the Mojinga swamp!

One of the platoon standard operating procedures was they never allowed anyone in the platoon to conduct any activity on or off post smaller than a fire team. The team leader was always present and in charge—not always the adult supervision you wanted. Everything was about the team. Your roommates were three plus yourself (for me that was Biegorio from Puerto Rico,

Prince from Albany, N.Y. and Gregory from Hattiesburg, Miss.).

It was this duty station that instilled teamwork in me and made me realize that being a Soldier was being part of something larger than myself; it was about the organization. I often wondered if all the platoons in the Army were structured in the same way, as to have your team leader with you every step of the way. The team leader ensured that you transitioned from being a civilian and basic Soldier, into the seasoned Soldier needed in the fire team.

Leaders actively taught, coached, mentored and developed every Soldier within the fire team to be the best Soldier he could be. Rooms were inspected every morning. Hallways were required to be buffed (We used melted-down Johnson's car wax with a makeshift wire handle). Latrines and platoon areas around the company were

inspected every day. You were taught simple things to make life and survival better in a jungle environment, like how to make a hot meal by mixing your C-ration peanut butter and “bug juice” (insect repellent) to make “sterno” and heat up your “beef and shrapnel” (three slices of compressed meat and potatoes covered in a nice film of orange grease).

It was this personal interest in leadership and development that I was exposed to that made me reenlist after my first term and as a team leader, I began the same development for my Soldiers. Personal time and effort is an investment for a leader. To see your Soldier be selected as the Soldier of the month, quarter or year and have that Soldier promoted to sergeant is a great feeling. The time you invest in your Soldiers will pay off and will continue to pay as they, too, will develop their Soldiers and invest their time and efforts as you did. ♥

CHANGE IS GOOD

BY **COMMAND SGT. MAJ. STEVE WOODALL**, COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR, 116TH GARRISON COMMAND, USD-C



Command Sgt. Maj. Steve Woodall (top, center) at one station unit training at Fort Knox, Ky., in 1977.

I have been asked by many people over the years why I chose to join the Army and why I continue to serve in the Idaho National Guard. The Vietnam War was still fresh in everyone's mind when I joined and the Cold War was continuing. The truth was, I didn't have any direction or plan for the future. Subsequently, I was looking for something to do when my best friend called and told me that he had joined the National Guard and I should join. So the very next day, Dec. 1, 1976, I joined the Idaho Army National Guard as an 11E M60 Tank crewman. We

went in on the “buddy program” to one station unit training at Fort Knox, Ky., in January 1977.

The reception barracks were vintage World War II-style. When we started our training, we were moved to the “Disney barracks,” also known as Disneyland. These were three-story barracks that were only about 10-15 years old at the time and much better than the reception barracks. They are still being used today. The defense budget must have been extremely tight back then, because I remember having one of our drill sergeants sending four or five of us to help his buddy clean a warehouse and do odd jobs on weekends. In return, he sent a few cleaning supplies—wax, toilet paper, etc.—for our platoon area in the barracks, as everything was in short supply.

I am also asked about the changes that have occurred since I enlisted. It seemed that everything was old or used and I don't remember getting or using anything new, other than uniforms and boots, and that didn't change until the 1990s. In 1977, much like today's Army, most Soldiers in the rank of sergeant and above had combat experience. In the National Guard

there were many Vietnam War veterans, but most all were prior service as the National Guard didn't play as big of a role overseas as we do today. All of our equipment was from the 50s and 60s which meant that good maintenance was paramount. More often than not, if something broke beyond repair, you went without.

The enlistment, reenlistment, education and other benefits paled in comparison to those enjoyed today. Soldiers in the National Guard, as well as the active Army, during those times were there because they loved what they did and not for the \$60-\$80 we averaged for an entire drill weekend or the \$350-\$600 a month gross wages for active duty (staff sergeants topped out at \$800). Most of the Soldiers lost money on drill weekends in those days and some lose money today by taking time off work to attend drill and other training.

Things have changed immensely since I joined, Soldiers take better care of themselves now, enjoy better facilities, better programs, more opportunities, and better training and equipment—better everything. But Soldiers today still want the same things we

did back then—good leadership, good training and a sense of belonging. The biggest change I see, and I have to admit it surprised me, is the willingness of this new generation to join the military during this time of war, knowing they will be deployed. Our young Soldiers have come to the Army in such numbers that the entrance requirements have been tightened to a level unheard of in the past, as all military services are at or reaching their maximum strength caps.

I applaud this generation for their patriotism and “want to” attitude, and am proud to still be a part of this great Army. What we owe each and every one of our enlisted Soldiers and junior NCOs is the best training and best leadership we can give. No one in the Army joined to fail. Each and every one of us were guided and mentored to where we are by some leader, or many leaders, and now it is time to give back.

One of the rewards for serving over a long period of time is working around Soldiers who are young and unsure of their own future, and being able to help them develop into great leaders and mentors in their own right. Sine Mora. ♥

WHEN LIGHTNING STRIKES...

U.S. Army photo by
Sgt. Jesus J. Aranda, 25th Inf. Div., USD-C



Pfcs. David and Puakaleihua Westbrooks, a married couple deployed with the 25th Infantry Division, United States Division Center, stand at attention as Maj. Gen. Bernard S. Champoux, commanding general of the 25th Inf. Div. (second from left) and Command Sgt. Maj. Frank M. Leota (left), command sergeant major of the 25th Inf. Div., place the division's shoulder sleeve insignia-former wartime service patch on their right shoulders Jan. 14 during the division's combat patch ceremony at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

U.S. Army photo by Cpl. Daniel Eddy, 196th MPAD, 25th Inf. Div., USD-C



Pfc. Clinton Cochran (center), a medic with Company C, 299th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division Center and a Havre, Mont., native, helps loosen the straps on a litter Jan. 5 after an Iraqi Army Soldier demonstrated the proper techniques to secure a simulated casualty onto the litter at Forward Operating Base Constitution, Iraq. The IA went through a two-day course on combat life saving skills.

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jesus J. Aranda, 25th Inf. Div., USD-C



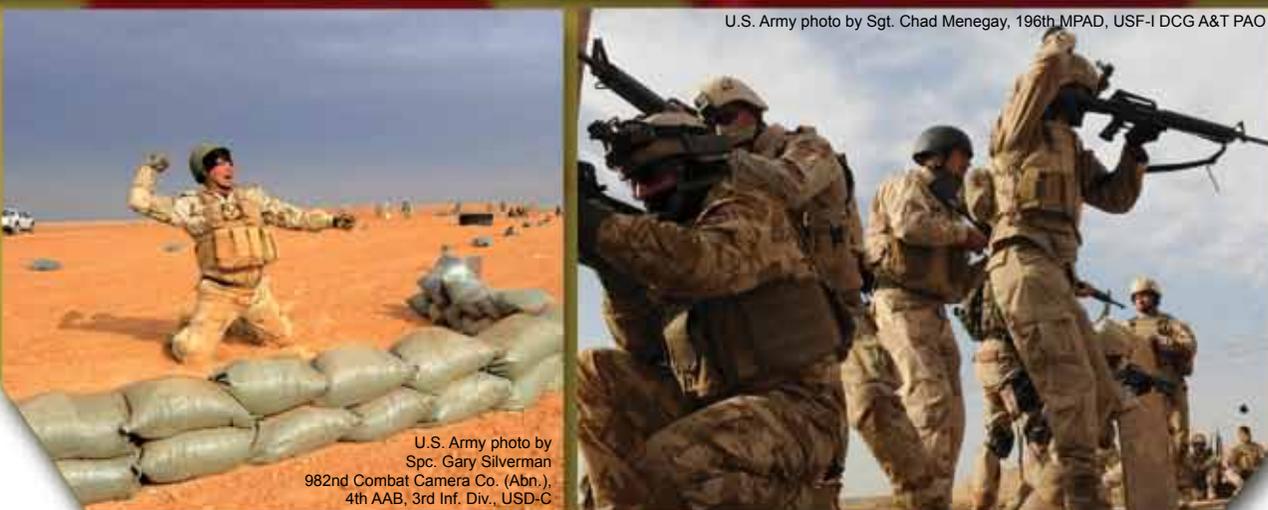
Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III, commanding general of United States Forces Iraq, presents a 25th Infantry Division, United States Division Center, Soldier with a commander's coin of excellence for distinguishing himself among his peers while deployed to Camp Liberty, Iraq.

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jesus J. Aranda, 25th Inf. Div., USD-C



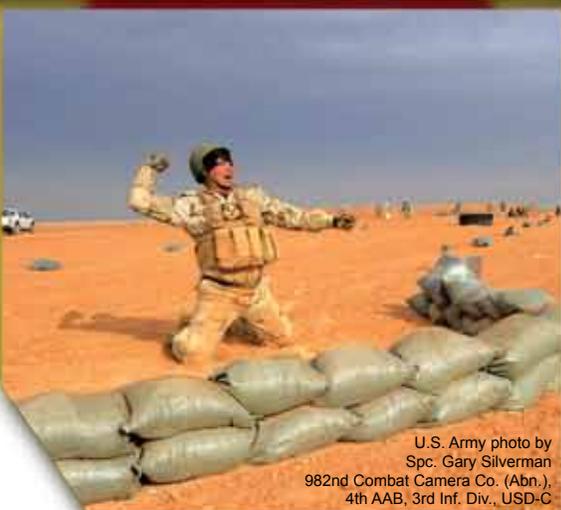
Col. Bradley A. Becker, Deputy Commanding General-Support for United States Division Center, speaks with Lt. Col. Cleveland, commander of 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Inf. Div., Jan. 13 upon arrival at Camp Khalid in west Anbar Province, Iraq.

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Chad Menegay, 196th MPAD, USF-I DCG A&T PAO



Iraqi Army Soldiers with 2nd Company, Commando Battalion, 11th Iraqi Army Division, based out of Joint Security Station Old MoD in Baghdad, practice entering and clearing a building in a glass house drill Dec. 23 prior to an urban operations live-fire exercise at Camp Taji, Iraq. The live-fire shoot house served as the culminating event of an 18-day counter terrorism course.

U.S. Army photo by
Spc. Gary Silverman
982nd Combat Camera Co. (Abn.),
4th AAB, 3rd Inf. Div., USD-C



A Soldier with the 7th Iraqi Army Division throws an inert hand grenade Jan. 4 on a grenade assault course at Camp Al Asad, Iraq. The 7th IA Div. conducted Soldier familiarization training with the assistance of Soldiers with the 4th "Black Jack" Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division Center in support of Operation New Dawn.

U.S. Army photo by
Spc. William K. Ermalinger
2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div., USD-C



Siblings Pfc. John Nuckols (left), an infantryman with Company H, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division Center, and Spc. Victoria Nuckols, an intelligence analyst with 1st Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division North, both Dillwyn, Va., natives, were able to spend Christmas eve together at Camp Taji, Iraq.

Iraqi Police officers prepare to conduct a room clearing exercise Jan. 3 during Special Weapons and Tactics training in Baghdad.

SWAT TEAM STANDS UP IN BAGHDAD

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. KIMBERLY JOHNSON
196TH MPAD, 25TH INF. DIV., USD-C

Iraqi Police officers conduct a room clearing exercise Jan. 3 during Special Weapons and Tactics training in Baghdad.



BAGHDAD—In an act of terrorism, a church is bombed. Its people held hostage—those who are not already dead from the blasts and gunshots—and the police are called. They perform to the extent of their training—cordon off the area and pull security. But what about what is happening inside? A need for a Special Weapons and Tactics team in Baghdad is realized.

Soldiers with the 94th Military Police Company, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center began training select members of the first Iraqi Police SWAT team, in response to that incident during the fall of 2010 in Baghdad, which, according to the Associated Press, left 58 Iraqi Christians dead and 78 wounded.

“After the incident that hap-

pened at the Church of Our Lady of Deliverance,” said Maj. Gen. Sabah al-Shably, head of Baghdad patrolling police, “we realized Iraq needed a SWAT team to deal with that kind of situation—a hostage situation. What’s going on here in Iraq—what has happened before, with the church or other terrorist attacks—can happen again. The best way to deal with a situation like that, has to be a SWAT team

that is high-tech and always ready.”

Sgt. Nicholas Laganas, a military police officer with the 94th MP Co., 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div. and a Lowell, Mass., native, said during the hostage situation at the church, there were Iraqi Police officers all around, but they did not know what to do. They did not have the training needed to handle the hostage situation.

“That was a perfect opportunity

for the Baghdad Police Advisory Team to establish a SWAT team,” Laganas said. “With the help of Maj. Gen. Sabah, here at the police headquarters, and the whole BPAT, we’ve been working with select SWAT trainees for the past month. Little by little, we’re getting there.”

Spc. Albert Barnes, a military police officer with the 94th MP Co., 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div. and an Oxford, Conn., native, said the pur-



Sgt. Nicholas Laganas (standing, left), a military police officer with 94th Military Police Company, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division Center and a Lowell, Mass., native, demonstrates how to take a person to the ground Jan. 3 with Spc. Albert Barnes, a military police officer with 94th MP Co., and an Oxford, Conn., native during Special Weapons and Tactics training in Baghdad.



Sgt. Nicholas Laganas (center), a military police officer with 94th Military Police Company, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division Center and a Lowell, Mass., native, leads a formation of Iraqi Police officers Jan. 3 in physical training during Special Weapons and Tactics training in Baghdad.



pose of a SWAT team is to conduct operations necessary for capturing people who pose a threat to the security of Iraq and to diffuse hostage situations.

Laganas said the significance of training the selected Iraqi Police officers as a SWAT team, versus training the Iraqi Army, is that the IA is trained in heavy weaponry and the IP officers eventually will be the ones patrolling the streets.

“If we can get the Iraqi Police to start working as a SWAT team to take care of the hostage (rescue) situations, that’s what we need to do,” Laganas said, “because the future of Iraq lies within the Iraqi Police force.”

The American Soldiers pooled their experience and created a training program that includes physical fitness, classroom learning and practical exercises.

“Every morning we start the day with physical training,” Laganas said. “Then, we work our way into classroom learning and into practical exercises using the crawl, walk and run stages of learning. We try to drive into the trainees that slow is smooth and smooth is fast.”

Barnes said the SWAT trainees are highly motivated for the training and are proud of being the first SWAT team ever in Iraq.

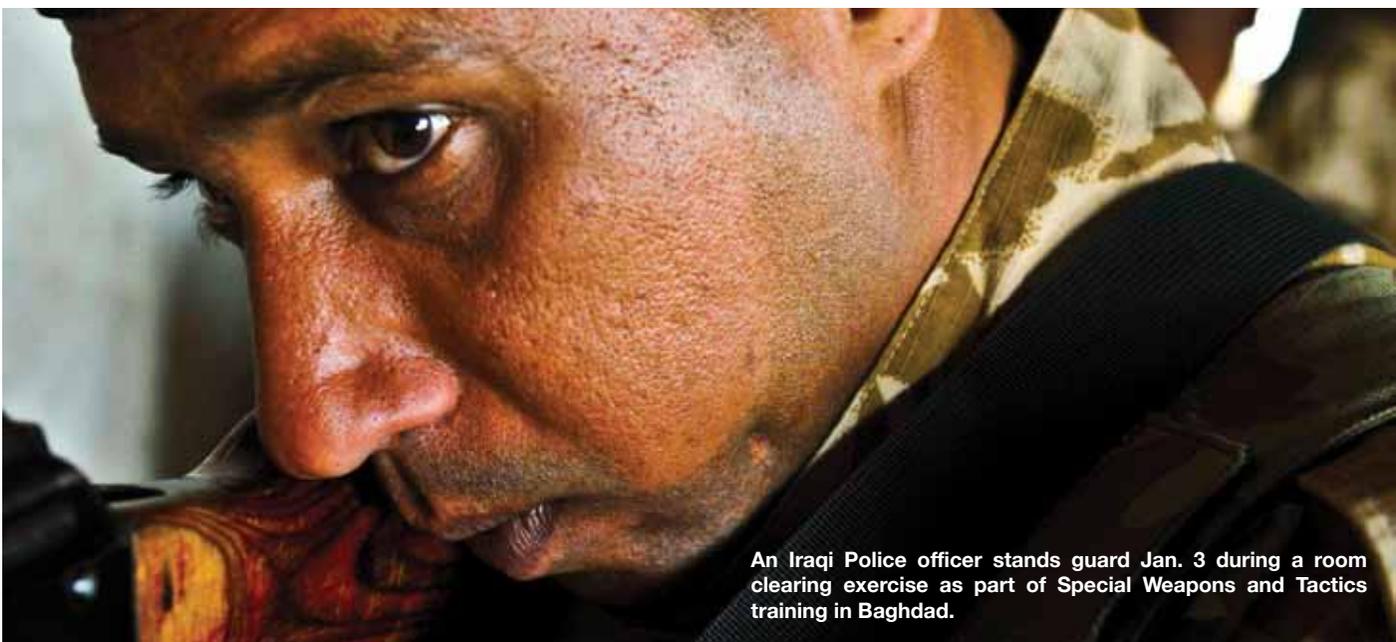
“The Iraqis are very eager to learn,” Laganas said. “Every day they come out screaming our names, ready to (work). They don’t go through the extensive training like Americans do in the (United) States as police officers, so we all do our best to teach them everything we know.”

The training is scheduled for at least three times per week for about two months, and every min-

ute counts.

Once the American forces withdraw from Iraq, the responsibility for continuing SWAT training will be the Iraqi Police force, alone.

“The BPAT has a lot of stock in this SWAT team, because they’re going to be patrolling the streets right away,” Laganas said. “We need to make sure we train them the best we can, because lives are at stake.”



An Iraqi Police officer stands guard Jan. 3 during a room clearing exercise as part of Special Weapons and Tactics training in Baghdad.

Staff Brig. Gen. Abdul Hameed, commanding general of the 7th Iraqi Army Division, observes Iraqi Soldiers training with U.S. advisers with the 4th "Blackjack" Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 4th infantry Division, United States Division Center Jan. 3 at Camp Al Asad, Iraq.



CULTURE

A Soldier with the 7th Iraqi Army Division prepares to crawl through a tunnel Jan. 4 on a grenade assault course at Camp Al Asad, Iraq. The 7th IA Div. conducted Soldier familiarization training with the assistance of Soldiers with the 4th "Black Jack" Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division Center in support of Operation New Dawn.



OF TRAINING

PHOTOS BY SPC. GARY SILVERMAN, 982 COMBAT CAMERA CO. (ABN.), 4TH AAB, 3RD INF. DIV., USD-C



A Soldier with the 7th Iraqi Army Division demonstrates pre-maintenance inspection procedures on the PKC machine gun Jan. 3 during a training exercise known as Operation Tadreeb Al Shamil at Al Asad, Iraq.

Soldiers with 4th "Blackjack" Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division Center have been working with the 7th Iraqi Army Division as



A Soldier with the 7th Iraqi Army Division (right) throws an inert hand grenade Jan. 4 on a grenade assault course at Camp Al Asad, Iraq. The 7th IA Div. conducted Soldier familiarization training with the assistance of Soldiers with the 4th "Black Jack" Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division Center in support of Operation New Dawn.

Spc. Aaron Fletcher (left), with the 4th Black Jack Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regt., 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division Center assists a 7th Iraqi Army Division Soldier on the proper prone firing position Jan. 3 during a training exercise at Camp Al Asad, Iraq.



part of an ongoing mission throughout Iraq, to help instill in the value of implementing regular training schedules between real-world operations. The 7th IA soldiers at Al Asad, Iraq, hit the ground running.



Spc. Servando Flores, with 4th "Black Jack" Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division Center shows an Iraqi Soldier with the 7th Iraqi Army Division his shot grouping with the M-16 rifle Jan. 3 during a training exercise at Camp Al Asad, Iraq. The 7th IA Div. conducted Soldier familiarization training with the assistance of 4th Sqdn., 10th Cav. Regt., 4th AAB, 3rd Inf. Div.

IRAQI ARMY SOLDIERS BECOME COMBAT LIFESAVERS

BAGHDAD—Iraqi Army Soldiers learned combat lifesaving techniques Jan. 5 during a two-day course taught by 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center Soldiers at Forward Operating Base Constitution, Iraq.

These Iraqi Soldiers recently graduated from basic training and are now attending the CLS class before heading to advanced individual training.

By training the Iraqis, U.S. Soldiers hope the tasks learned will be contagious, and Iraqis will start teaching each other.

“A lot of these Soldiers are picking it up extremely quickly,” said Sgt. Ian Faling, senior line medic with Company B, 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd AAB and a Jackson, Mich.,

native. “So we can already see in these classes that the ones that are picking it up a lot quicker are already training other Soldiers. We hope that this class will give them the starting point they need to (continue) training other Soldiers (after the course).”

Faling said he believes they understand the training extremely well. They are enjoying the training, eager to learn, and are putting 100 percent effort into the training days.

Faling said there have been no complications in training the Iraqi Soldiers, and the language barrier is not nearly as great a challenge as he thought it would be. He said by the use of hand motions and a lot of hands-on training, the Iraqis are understanding the concept of CLS quickly—even to

the point that when U.S. Soldiers start explaining the technique, the Iraqis will understand what needs to be done even before the interpreter can translate.

U.S. forces teaching the Iraqis medical tasks demonstrate one of the paramount goals behind Operation New Dawn—partnership.

“It’s a great opportunity for both our Soldiers and their Soldiers in this partnership,” Faling said. “It gives (Iraqi) Soldiers a chance to get up close and personal with (American) Soldiers. It shows that we care and show us that they care. It’s great training for both of us.”

Faling said most U.S. medics involved with the course are on their first deployment and have never had

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
CPL. DANIEL EDDY,
196TH MPAD, 25TH INF. DIV., USD-C



"SOME PEOPLE WORK IN A HOSPITAL, SOME GO TO SCHOOL...SOMEBDY HAS TO SAVE THE PEOPLE. MY (PURPOSE) IS TO SAVE THE PEOPLE."

Pfc. Tyler Allen (background), a medic with Company C, 299th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center and a Las Vegas native, observes Iraqi Army Soldiers carrying a simulated casualty Jan. 5 at Forward Operating Base Constitution, Iraq. Allen helped advise Iraqi Soldiers on medical procedures during two-day combat life saving courses.



Sgt. Ian Faling (right), senior line medic with Company B, 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division Center and a Jackson, Mich., native, shows Iraqi Army Soldiers how to treat a sucking chest wound properly Jan. 5 during a two-day combat life saving course at Forward Operating Base Constitution, Iraq.

the chance to work with Iraqis before, but love the opportunity.

“It’s fun,” said Spc. Brian Cross, a medic with Company C, 299th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd AAB and a West Islip, N.Y., native, and one of five medics training the Iraqis. “It’s like seeing ourselves in basic training and AIT all over again. They are really interested in the material. They ask a lot of questions that frankly ... are a lot more in depth than I thought people at a basic level would ask.”

Cross said, thus far, training the Iraqis is his favorite part of the deployment. He said he had been looking forward to it all week and was even better than what originally imagined.

The CLS training also demonstrates the Iraqis are learning to stabilize themselves as they carry on the missions and the U.S. continues to draw down its forces.

Sgt. Amzi, with the 6th Division, Iraqi Army, said he liked taking CLS training, which can save a friend’s life

or possibly his own life in the future.

Amzi said it was an honor for him to be able to serve his country and wants to protect his fellow Iraqis.

“Some people work in a hospital, some go to school ... somebody has to save the people,” he said. “So I volunteered to save these people. My (purpose) is to save the people.”

Amzi said he, along with all Iraqis, wants Iraq to develop and become stronger and safer as time continues.

Faling said on his last deployment

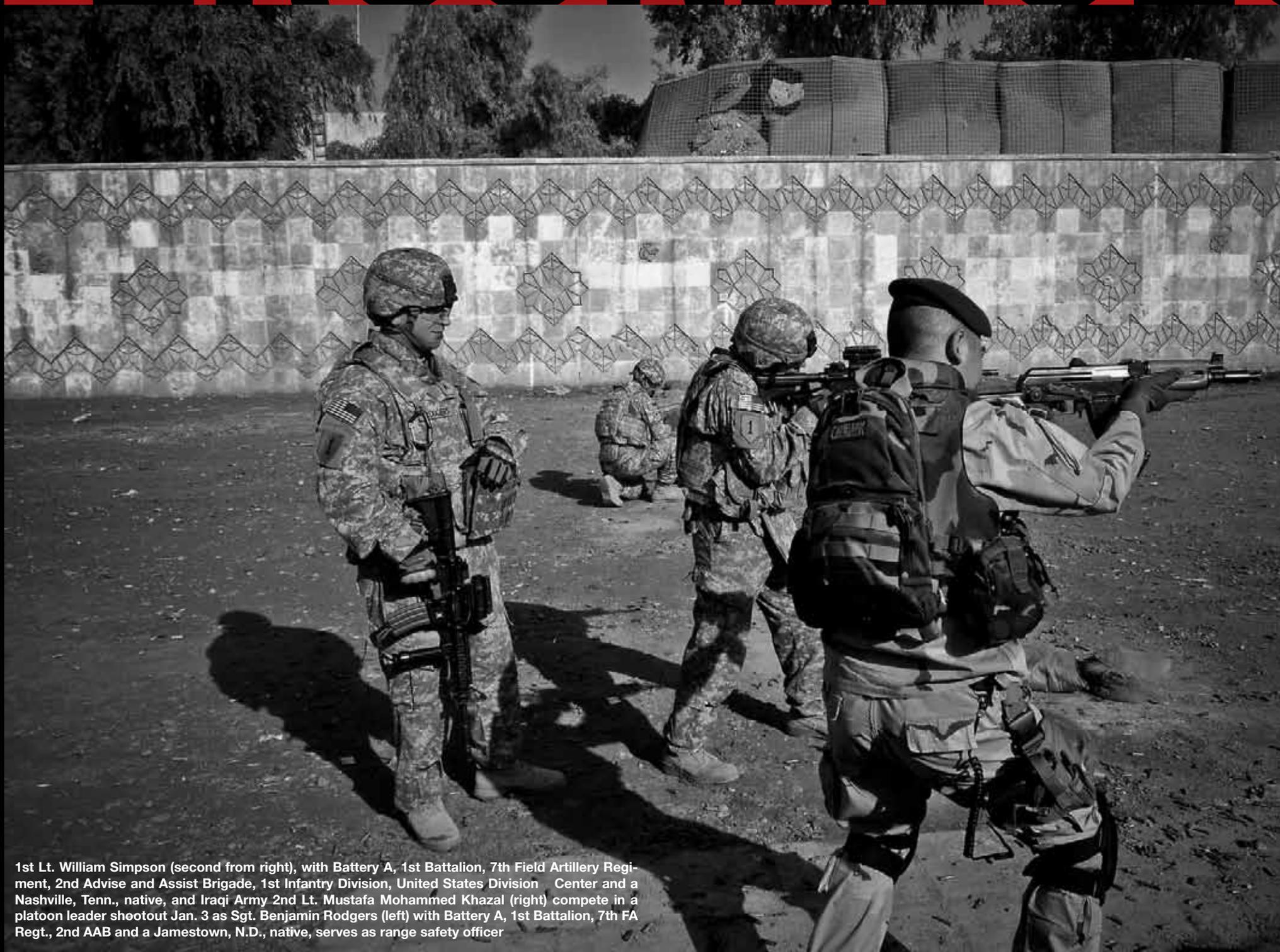
he was frequently out on combat patrols and was focused on countering roadside bombs. This deployment is about building up the Iraqi Army so they can handle situations themselves.

“I am extremely excited for this deployment,” he said. “The difference between this deployment and last deployment is so great. The Iraqi Army seems like they have come so far in just two years and it shows that they are going to be able to take care of their own country.”

PERSONALIST

INSIDE THE PROVING GROUNDS: STEEL BATTALION

STORY AND PHOTOS BY 1ST LT. WILLIAM SIMPSON, 2ND AAB, 1ST INF. DIV., USD-C



1st Lt. William Simpson (second from right), with Battery A, 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division Center and a Nashville, Tenn., native, and Iraqi Army 2nd Lt. Mustafa Mohammed Khazal (right) compete in a platoon leader shootout Jan. 3 as Sgt. Benjamin Rodgers (left) with Battery A, 1st Battalion, 7th FA Regt., 2nd AAB and a Jamestown, N.D., native, serves as range safety officer

BAGHDAD—Iraqi Army Soldiers conducting dismounted operations in the Rusafa area notice a cameraman recording their movement from an alleyway and notify their squad leader of the potential threat.

Simultaneously the senior scout notices a roadside bomb 40 meters ahead. The scout immediately moves to cover as he alerts the other members of his patrol. The squad leader sends a fire team into the alleyway to detain the cameraman while he requests the sup-

port of the explosive ordnance disposal unit.

This is just one of many different training scenarios conducted by 3rd Platoon, Battery A, 1st “Steel” Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center during a tactics, techniques and procedures class taught to their Iraqi Army counterparts at Joint Security Station Old MoD in Baghdad.

The platoon’s primary mission is

serving as the personal security detachment for the Stability Transition Team at the Rusafa Area Command, safeguarding and transporting military leadership during battlefield circulation. However, they have taken on the additional task of developing the PSD for Iraqi Army elements they partner with.

The 30 new Iraqi Soldiers arrived at JSS Old MoD immediately after their Basic Training Course, still discussing how well they had marched at their

graduation the day prior.

Utilizing the crawl-walk-run style of training, in which students progressively build on what is learned before, each day began with an hour of physical training before moving into the classroom portion. Each class consisted of a two-hour lecture and instruction portion followed by hands-on and interactive drills.

Although physical training usually consisted of stretching, calisthenics, push-ups, sit-ups and running, the last

“THIS IS A ONCE IN A LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY TO JOIN THE MOST PROFESSIONAL ARMY IN THE WORLD.”

SECURITY DETAILS

BATTALION TURNS PRIVATES INTO PROFESSIONALS



Sgt. 1st Class Ottis Crawford (top right), with Battery A, 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division Center, observes Iraqi Army Soldiers during a training exercise at Joint Security Station Old MoD.

morning was dedicated to a combined soccer game between the U.S. and Iraqi Soldiers to boost morale.

As a capstone to each day of training, a combat simulation was set up, with 3rd Platoon Soldiers acting as the opposing force to the Iraqis. Focusing on different scenarios challenged the Iraqi Soldiers and their leadership to react under stress while building competence and strength.

The intent behind the simulations was to force the Iraqi PSD to react with

the proper tactics and techniques while maintaining communication within their unit during confusing and difficult scenarios, said Sgt. 1st Class Ottis Crawford, with Battery A, 1st Bn., 7th FA Regt. and a Cleveland, Tenn., native.

These drills also gave the Iraqi leadership an opportunity to exercise effective command and control over their new Soldiers. In addition, the scenarios gave the Soldiers a valuable opportunity to train alongside their officers

and noncommissioned officers, helping to build the relationship and trust between them.

Among the more noticeable characteristics of the training was the constant presence of at least one Iraqi officer overseeing the training and observing the strengths of the Iraqi forces, and being directly involved in the development of their unit.

"This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to learn from the most professional Army in the world," Khazal said.

"We are lucky to have them here, so you need to ask the questions and soak up everything (the American leaders) and (their) Soldiers tell you."

The efforts of 3rd Platoon, Battery A, 1st Bn., 7th FA Regt., coupled with the continued partnership efforts of remaining American forces deployed in support of Operation New Dawn, aim to allow the Iraqi Army to continue increasing its capabilities, ultimately securing a more stable and sovereign Iraq. 🇮🇶

OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN FROM THE MOST

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25TH INF. DIV. RECEIVES COMBAT PATCHES

STORY BY 25TH INF. DIV. PAO, USD-C



BAGHDAD—It wasn't their first day in the Army—nor was it the first deployment for some—but for the 176 Soldiers standing in formation, it was their first combat patch.

Soldiers with the 25th Infantry Division, United States Division – Center, were awarded shoulder sleeve insignia-former wartime service, commonly known as a combat patch, Jan. 14 during a ceremony at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

Pfc. Puakaleihua Westbrooks, a protocol specialist with the 25th Inf. Div., received her first combat patch with her husband, Pfc. David Westbrooks, a mechanic with the 25th Inf. Div.

"This whole experience has been insane," she said. "We've been together more than two years. It will be our first year married in May. We joined (the Army) together and got stationed together out of (advanced individual training), deployed together and now this."

Command Sgt. Maj. Frank M. Leota, command sergeant major

of the 25th Inf. Div., said while the division has deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan before, this deployment means something special, as U.S. forces are assisting, training and advising the Iraqi Security forces in building a more stable and secure Iraq.

"These Soldiers know and understand that what they are doing is making a difference," he said.

Sgt. 1st Class April Murray, plans and casualty operations noncommissioned officer-in-charge with the 25th Inf. Div., said it wasn't until after the ceremony that the gravity of the experience hit her.

"It was a most humbling experience when you think about all the Soldiers who have served and sacrificed so much," she said.

Tropic Lightning Soldiers arrived at Camp Liberty December 2010 for a 12-month deployment to continue to support the advise and train mission as part of Operation New Dawn.

"Since 1933, the 25th Inf. Div. has made significant contributions in every conflict and you



Maj. Gen. Bernard S. Champoux (left), commanding general of the 25th Infantry Division, United States Division Center, awards shoulder sleeve insignia-former wartime service, commonly known as a combat patch, to Pfc. Martha Fisher, a first-time deployed Soldier with the 25th Inf. Div., during a ceremony Jan. 14 at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

are now a visible part of those accomplishments," said Maj. Gen. Bernard S. Champoux, com-

manding general of the 25th Inf. Div. "We're going to ask a lot of you, but give you less, and I know

every man and woman here is up to the challenge. I am very proud of you." ♥

Command Sgt. Maj. Frank M. Leota (right), command sergeant major of the 25th Infantry Division, United States Division Center, awards shoulder sleeve insignia-former wartime service, commonly known as a combat patch, to Bleckie, a military working dog with the 25th Inf. Div. during a ceremony Jan. 14 at Camp Liberty, Iraq.



IRAQI POLICE, U.S. SOLDIERS BRING AID TO HAMDIYAH

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
STAFF SGT. TANYA THOMAS

4TH AAB, 3RD INF DIV, USD-C

HAMDIYAH, Iraq—Violence in Iraq has caused several thousand citizens to flee their hometowns since 2003. Many left behind the only place they've ever known, to save their lives and to protect the lives of their families. Some left the country altogether, and others found safer

regions within Iraq's borders with hope they can live peacefully in their native land.

About 50 internally displaced Iraqi families now reside in Hamdiah, Iraq, and the local Iraqi Police, with the assistance of Soldiers with Company D, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 4th

Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division – Center, are helping to support these citizens as well as families of fallen Iraqi Police officers who also live in the area.

The combined forces conducted a humanitarian assistance mission Jan. 8 in a Hamdiah village, distributing hundreds of bags of rice, lentils and blankets, space heaters, cooking oil and stuffed animals to families in need.

Capt. Edward Goldner, commander of Company D, 3rd Bn., 15th Inf. Regt., said his Soldiers work with the Hamdiah area Iraqi Police on a frequent basis, training their counterparts to work independently once the U.S. military withdraws completely from Iraq. He said he is confident that the Iraqi Police will be able to conduct humanitarian assistance missions on their own in the future.

"The Hamdiah IP chief, Lt. Col. Juma, has an excellent working relationship with the city council representative for the area," Goldner said. "These two leaders have a clear understanding of how to work together to execute an aid mission on their own."

Aside from providing security for the mission, Goldner's troops mostly met with the local residents and observed as



Iraqi Police officers unload blankets Jan. 8 in Hamdiah, Iraq during a combined humanitarian assistance mission conducted by Hamdiah area Iraqi Police and Soldiers with Company D, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division Center.



A Hamdiah area Iraqi Police officer (left) and 2nd Lt. Wendel Friedl, with the 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, unload bags of rice and lentils Jan. 8 during a humanitarian assistance mission to Hamdiah, Iraq. Food, blankets, cooking oil, space heaters and stuffed animals were distributed to displaced Iraqi families who now reside in Hamdiah and to the family members of fallen Iraqi Police officers.



Iraqi children gather to receive stuffed animals Jan. 8 during a combined humanitarian assistance mission in Hamdiah, Iraq.

the Hamdiah police led the seemingly smooth humanitarian assistance operation.

"The Hamdiah (Iraqi Police) are competent and capable of providing security for an event like this in the future," Goldner said.

Helping to prevent violence in Hamdiah, the Iraqi police also handed out "TIP" cards, with phone numbers

to call to report criminal activity, as an avenue toward a more secure and stable Iraq.

"Helping the citizens gives them hope that democracy can be successful, and helps them believe in the (Iraqi Security Forces)," Goldner said. "It's only with a combined effort between the citizens and the ISF that peace will be maintained in the country." 🇮🇶

USD-C CELEBRATES MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

Story and photos by
Sgt. Mahlet Tesfaye
25th Ind. Div., USD-C

BAGHDAD—Since 1986, the third Monday in January has been a federal holiday commemorating Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, and his fight for civil rights. Service members gathered Jan. 17 at the 25th Infantry Division Chapel at Camp Liberty, Iraq, to honor and reflect on the service and sacrifices of one of the most prominent leaders in the African-American civil rights movement.

This event was hosted by the 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center.

“As we observe the 25th anniversary of this annual holiday, we should take a moment to reflect on Dr. King’s powerful and enduring legacy, and the positive impact that he has had on all Americans and America,” wrote Maj. Gen. Bernard S. Champoux, commanding general of the 25th Inf. Div., in a proclamation to the unit.

King is best known for his “I Have a Dream” speech, which



The 1500 Gospel Service praise team performs for service members Jan. 17 during 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division Center's Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration at the Division Chapel, Camp Liberty, Iraq.

he made Aug. 28, 1963 at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Master Sgt. Donald Williams, future operations non-commissioned officer-in-charge with United States Forces –

Iraq and a Houston native, re-enacted the speech during the observance—a performance he has been doing for the past 25 years.

“It is important to celebrate this day, because if you were

to take a piece of his legacy and study that, you would find something different about him every single time,” Williams said. “It takes us back to a time in our life where we can just reflect on a time to do something

captures the essence of what King was trying to achieve, because there were attendees in the chapel of different ranks and different races, but they were all listening to the speech attentively,” Williams said.



Master Sgt. Donald Williams, future operations noncommissioned officer-in-charge with United States Forces Iraq and a Houston native, re-enacts the Martin Luther King Jr.'s I Have a Dream speech Jan. 17 for service members during 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division Center's Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration at the Division Chapel, Camp Liberty, Iraq.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THE WAY THINGS USED TO BE IN AMERICA AND TO RECOGNIZE WHERE WE ARE TODAY BECAUSE OF PEOPLE LIKE KING.

good, and teaches us to be the best that we can be in whatever we do.”

Staff Sgt. Kenneth James, with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div. and a Gainesville, Fla., native, said it's important to celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day because people can benefit from knowing their history and where they came from. It is important to remember the way things used to be in America and to recognize where we are today because of people like King.

“I believe this observance

Williams said the one thing he wanted people to take from the speech is that there is another way, other than violence, to solve our problems—a peaceful and nonviolent way King exemplified.

“As we continue our mission of advising and assisting the Iraqi Security Forces, we realize, just as Dr. King did, that freedom and equality do not come without courage and sacrifice,” Champoux said. “We should harness the spirit of Dr. King’s perseverance as we aid the people of Iraq in their efforts to build a secure, sovereign and stable nation.”

HAVE A DREAM

FITNESS CORNER

Three common incorrectly performed exercises

Lat Pulldown

Begin by adjusting the leg padding so your feet lie flat on the ground with your knees bent at a 90 degree angle. Adjust the seat so that the bar overhead is just out of reach to ensure the longest range of motion. There is no right or wrong hand grip. It is actually good to vary your grip (close grip, wide grip, overhand, underhand and different attachments) so you can work more areas of your back. Your lats are very large muscles and can be worked from a lot of angles. Grip the bar and slightly lean back, arching your back, but not too much. Start by lowering your shoulders, not your arms. Then drive your elbows down and back bringing the bar to your chest, not farther. Really try to pinch your shoulder blades together during the contraction. Slowly raise back up, keeping a slight bend in your elbows, ensure you raise your shoulders up after your arms are extended. Don't stop when your arms are extended; lift your shoulders all the way up, receiving the full range of motion. Always pull the bar in front of your head. When you pull down the bar in back of your neck, it puts a lot of strain on your shoulders, especially your rotator cuffs. Repeat this movement 15 times for three sets.



Hyperextensions

Brace your legs under the support foot pad. Position your body so the top of your hips rest at the top of the bench pad. Extend your arms in front of your body, placing your hands on top of each other. (You can also hold a weight into your chest for added resistance.) Slowly bend forward toward the ground, almost till your hands touch the ground. Many people do not extend low enough which limits your range of motion. The exercise is intended to both stretch and strengthen your lower back muscles. As you raise your torso back up, keep a slight arch in your back, leading the movement with your shoulders. Raise up just slightly past parallel to the bench pad. Focus on your lower back throughout the movement. Repeat three sets, 15 repetitions each.

Squat

The infamous squat is one of the most beneficial exercises. The exercise can be performed many different ways (front squat, hack squat, jumping squat and different weights) concentrating on various muscle groups. To begin the front squat, ensure the bar is placed evenly on the squat rack, along with your hands. Let the bar rest on your deltoids (shoulders), not on your neck. Lift the bar up and take two steps away from the rack. Slowly bend your knees until your quadriceps (thighs) are parallel with the ground. Otherwise, partial squats only focus on the quadriceps and not the hamstring and glute muscles causing an imbalance and often low back pain. Your back, head and neck should remain in a straight line throughout the movement. Ensure your knees do not pass your over your toes. Knee pains while squatting are caused by the knees exceeding over the toes during the squat. After squatting down, extend your legs back up, pushing up with the weight in your heels. Perform 15 repetitions for three sets.



The art of snacking

It's in between DFAC hours, your stomach cannot wait till chow and you need a snack. You start grazing the break room looking for any signs of leftover snacks from open care packages. You begin to reach for the open box of Thin Mint Girl Scout cookies, you could indulge, but then you think it is best just to grit your teeth and decide to wait till dinner chow. One of the biggest myths about snacking is that it's a bad thing. The truth is that it's not snacking itself that's bad for us. It's all the junk food people like to snack on that gives snacking a bad name. Snacks help to manage hunger and prevent bingeing during chow time. In fact, if you eat until you are comfortable (not "full") at lunch, chances are you'll need a mid-afternoon snack to tide you over until dinner with plenty of energy. The secret is to snack only when you need to and to select smarter snacks in moderation.

Try these tips for smart snacking:

- Snacks should be around 100-200 calories— just enough energy to tide you over until your next meal but not so much that it contributes as many calories as a meal.
 - Eat more colorful snacks. Aim for eating a rainbow a day. Natural colorful foods contain more vitamins, minerals and antioxidants than other foods.
 - Don't be fooled by the energy bars. When choosing a bar, look for at least 3 grams of fiber (preferably 5 grams), at least 5 grams of protein (preferably 10 grams), lower amounts of fat with no saturated fat, and fewer than 20 grams of sugar.
 - The key to smart snacking is to have healthy snacks available to you ... at all times. This doesn't mean you have to go buy snacks from the PX. Take advantage of the allotted two items you are allowed to take from the chow hall.
 - The perfect snack is one that packs nutritional power but comes with a low caloric price tag.
- Here is a list of healthy snacks available to you at the chow hall:
- Fresh fruit: kiwi, nectarine, watermelon, apple, banana, plum. Often times satisfy your sweet tooth craving.
 - Fresh vegetables: carrots, red/yellow/green pepper medley, tomatoes, cucumbers. If you can't manage to eat plain, accompany with fat free salad dressing. Vegetables provide a feeling of fullness without the extra calories.
 - Oatmeal packets, I know everyone has hot water available from the coffee pots; it is a great low calorie mid-morning snack.
 - Peanut butter (0.5 ounce container) provides a good source of protein. Better yet cut up an apple, dip it in peanut butter and sprinkle with cinnamon.
 - Yogurt, but be aware, the chow hall yogurt is not low fat nor low calories, but it does provide high amounts of calcium and protein.
 - Nuts, probably one of the healthiest non-processed snacks available. Cruise by the ice cream bar, it contains mixed nuts. Instead of pairing with your ice cream, try as a snack by itself. Remember one fourth of a cup is a serving size, which equates to less than one fourth cup full in a plastic foam coffee cup.

Heed your hunger pang, but forget the guilt when you eat the above healthy snack choices. With planning and a little preparation, you can have healthy foods on hand so that you're ready when temptation strikes.

Capt. Sarah Baumgardner is a graduate of Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, where she majored in exercise physiology. She is certified by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) as a Health Fitness Specialist (HFS). She has worked as a personal trainer and nutritional consultant, training a wide range of demographics. She brings enthusiasm and motivation to inspiring, coaching and increasing Soldiers' fitness levels.





THE RUNDOWN ON PROFILES

What is a **profile**?

A physical profile defines, in writing, limitations to physical activity due to injury, illness or medical condition. The authorized forms for written profiles in the Army are the Department of Defense Form 689 and Department of the Army Form 3349. As of Sept. 23, 2010, providers must use the revised DA 3349 for all permanent and temporary profiles. Providers may use the DD 689 in lieu of DA Form 3349 for temporary profiles not to exceed 30 days. If a commander has questions about a profile, or is unable to use the Soldier within the profile limitations, he may request review, reconsideration or fitness for duty evaluation from the medical provider. A commander decides individual assignment or duties to be performed. Limitations, such as “no field duty” or “no overseas duty,” are not proper medical recommendations. (exception: pregnancy profiles). Profiling officers will provide enough information regarding a Soldier’s physical limitations to enable a nonmedical commander and Human Resources Command to make a determination on individual assignments or duties. Profiles must be realistic. All profiles and assignment limitations must be legible, specific and written in lay terms. (All Army Activities message 384/2010 and Army Regulation 40-501, chapter 7)

What is **eProfile**?

eProfile is a supplement to the medical protection system (MEDPROS). As of Feb. 1, 2011, providers must write all new permanent profiles and temporary profiles longer than 30 days into eProfile. Providers must write existing valid temporary or permanent profiles into eProfile at the Soldier’s next physical health assessment or when the Soldier’s medical or functional status changes, whichever comes first. Providers may write existing profiles into eProfile sooner. Profiles written within eProfile automatically update the Soldier’s medical readiness category status in MEDPROS and the total army personnel database. If a permanent profile, eProfile also automatically updates the Soldier’s PULHES. In addition, Soldiers can view and download their individual profile by going to “My Medical Readiness Status” at Army Knowledge Online. Click “Medical Non-Deployable Profile,” then “View Detailed Information” and “My Profile” under Forms. (All Army Activities message 384/2010)

What about the Army Physical Fitness Test and **profiles**?

Soldiers with temporary physical profiles cannot take a record APFT. They must take a regular three-event APFT after the profile has expired. Soldiers with temporary profiles of long duration—more than three months—may take an alternate aerobic event as determined by the commander, with input from the medical provider. Soldiers with permanent profiles must pass at least one of the alternate aerobic events to pass the APFT. Soldiers who cannot perform the 2-mile run or an alternate aerobic event cannot be tested. To pass the APFT, Soldiers who cannot take the entire three-event APFT must score at least 60 in the events they can take. Alternate aerobic events have no point values for the DA Form 705. These events are scored either “GO” or “NO GO”, except for promotion purposes. For promotion purposes, Soldiers who take an alternate aerobic event and pass, receive a score for that event, equal to the average of the scores for the other two events. Soldiers with permanent profiles for the sit-up or push-up events will be given 60 points for each event waived, and the actual score for any event taken. These Soldiers must qualify on the 2-mile run or approved alternate test. (Training Circular 3-22.20 A-40, A-41 and Army Regulation 600-8-19 3-42 b.(1)(a) and (b) dated April 30, 2010)

What is the recovery time from a **profile**?

Once the profile has been lifted, the Soldier receives a period of time twice the length of the profile, but not to exceed 90 days, to train for the regular three-event APFT—or their permanent profile events, for those with permanent profiles. If a regularly scheduled APFT occurs during the profile period, the Soldier should be given a mandatory make-up date for the APFT. (Training Circular 3-22.20, A-41)

What about temporary **profiles** and medical boards?

Providers must include the first “issued on” date on temporary profiles. Temporary profiles for the same condition cannot exceed 12 months’ duration. The first “issued on” date for the original condition or injury is the start of the 12-month temporary profile limit, even if there are subsequent periods of time the Soldier is not profiled for that original condition or injury. Temporary profiles in excess of six months for the same condition require medical specialty evaluation. Temporary profiles in excess of 12 months for the same condition require a medical board—either an military occupational specialty medical retention board or medical evaluation board). The Soldier may be referred to a medical board sooner than 12 months if the medical provider determines the Soldier has reached his medical retention determination point. The MRDP is the point when the Soldier’s progress appears to have medically stabilized, the course of further recovery is relatively predictable, and where it can be reasonably determined further treatment will not cause the Soldier to meet medical retention standards or render him capable of performing the duties required by his office, grade, rank or rating. (Office of the Surgeon General/Medical Command Policy Memorandum 09-037)