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Soldier Edition

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An issue dedicated to soldiers' stories

Progress continues in the “Year of the NCO”

DIVISION COMMAND SGT. MAJ. JAMES W. REDMORE
MND-C



CAMP VICTORY – We have had great progress within the professional maturity of the noncommissioned officer corps since the Global War on Terror began. Our noncommissioned officers evolved to a level of excellence unmatched by any other war-fighting organization in the world. This makes the Army theme “Year of the NCO” for 2009 very appropriate.

When the Warrior Ethos and Soldier’s Creed were introduced, they provided all the direction needed to help transform a mindset consistent with a more prompt and modular approach in our war-fighting units. The warrior-first mentality had a profound impact on how we approach training and on the expectations we place on our non-commissioned officers. It helped develop the confidence and spirit needed to face the enemy and endure the challenges of combat.

One of the most powerful evolutions



Courtesy photo

Command Sgt. Maj. James W. Redmore pauses while visiting friends at a market in southern Iraq. Increased security in the MND-C area of operations allows Iraq and U.S. forces to patrol neighborhoods on foot and build relationships with the community.

derived from the warrior-first mentality is the universal focus on a common warrior skill set. All Soldiers, regardless of military occupational specialty, must be able to perform basic war-fighting tasks required to fight and win on the battlefield.

Today, we have Soldiers in low-density military occupational specialties that are as confident and competent in their war-fighting skills as combat arms Soldier. The days of “I only work

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Man on a Mission: *Doing it the Reichard way*

Spc. Josh LeCappelain
MND-C



CAMP VICTORY – “Oh, you just missed him. He literally just stepped out. Nope, I’m not sure when he will be back. Your best bet is to just check back every so often.”

Anyone who has ever gone looking for Sgt. 1st Class Israel Reichard has undoubtedly heard similar phrases. A man constantly on the move, he glides with suddenness in his step, the crisp stride of a man on a mission – which is always the case.

“He is definitely energetic and always has a good comment or

two,” said Maj. Edwin Ross, Camp Victory deputy mayor. “He gets things done – he makes them happen.”

Reichard, a native of San Diego and Long Beach, Calif., wears two hats this deployment – platoon sergeant for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 10th Mountain Division and Multi-National Division – Center housing mayor on Camp Victory. Both jobs are independently time-consuming and taxing, but the man known as “ferocious” handles them with ease.

Everywhere he goes, people have information for him or

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nudges and greetings, no matter the rank. For those who know him, a sense of appreciation for all his efforts permeates any conversation about Reichard.

“He’s a man you can approach. He loves to help out Soldiers, going out of his way,” said Spc. Benjamin Sieben, an orderly room clerk who works with Reichard. “I can go to him with a problem and know that he’ll work on it, doing his best to help.”

“He has a passion for helping people,” said Sgt. 1st Class Dawn Taylor, Division Special Troops Battalion senior human resources noncommissioned officer-in-charge. “He is one of my best friends; a strong leader who is very ambitious. He takes the time to sit down with Soldiers, wanting to know what is wrong with them and how he can help.”

Since enlisting in the Army in 1996 as an air defender, Reichard attended Basic Combat Training at Fort Sill, Okla., and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Bliss, Texas. He spent time in Germany, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, and at Fort Drum, N.Y., -- which he has called home for four years now.

He earned accolades such as Soldier of the Year in Hawaii, as well as NCO of the Year during his stay at Fort Drum.

All of his experience and excellence helped him grow into the person he is today, said Command Sgt. Maj. Tyrone Smoot, DSTB senior enlisted leader.

“He’s a lead from the front type of NCO. He has exceptional loyalty to the unit and exemplifies all of the Army Values. I consider him a tremendous asset to Task Force Mountain and TF Gauntlet,” said Smoot.

Lt. Col. Steven Parker, DSTB commander, echoed these sentiments, having known him for many years, dating back to

problems that can use his expert assistance. He is quick to provide acknowledgement of Soldiers he knows, offering handshakes, playful

Parker’s time as a captain.

“He’s matured as a leader, but with the same level of energy. His biggest strength is that he cares deeply about Soldiers. He’s always been a make it happen kind of guy. If you have one guy like that, you can count on him to always get things done. We wouldn’t ask (what we ask of him) to anyone else,” said Parker.

Another strength of “Rock” Reichard’s is his relationship with civilian contractors on Camp Victory.

“He understands how to interact with civilian agencies. Not everyone is equipped to do so like he does,” Parker added.

Donald Shaffer, a Kellogg, Brown and Root site manager on Camp Victory, works closely with Reichard on a variety of issues.

“He comes to me with problems and knows what channels to go through to get them handled,” said Shaffer, who describes Reichard as outgoing, very-knowledgeable and motivated. “He’s more about taking care of the unit and their areas than he is about himself.”

As he travels the dusty roads trying to contact hard-to-reach contractors, he is constantly flagged down and stopped. It never stops, not that he minds.

“I’m honored that I can be that person who people come to. Even if it’s a fourth-and-long, wrong side of the 50 yard line problem, I try to give people a hand,” said Reichard.

Extensive networking helps Reichard maximize his efforts and their lasting effects.

“My intent is to establish relationships that are mutually beneficial,” he said. “I know that, no matter where I go, I’m going to create an immediate impact. I want to make my presence felt, while helping everyone that I can.”

Maj. Mike Stewart, Camp Victory terrain and facilities manager paused before he redeploys to thank Reichard for all the



Photo by Spc. Josh LeCappelain

Sgt. 1st Class Israel Reichard pauses to speak to a Soldier while making his rounds on Camp Victory. He always has time to talk to his Soldiers and ensure they are getting the resources they need to succeed.

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THE Mountain View

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Friends make re-enlistment memorable

SGT. ALLISON CHURCHILL
41ST FIRES BDE.



FOB DELTA – Three friends re-enlisted together on Dam Bridge in al Kut in a ceremony lasting less than five minutes.

The three Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 41st Fires Brigade Soldiers: Staff Sgt. Patricia Fernandez, a communications noncommissioned officer from District Heights, Md.; Sgt. Staff Cesar Morales, a command driver from McKinney, Texas; and Staff Sgt. Corey Jarels, a personal security team squad leader from Bedford, Va., were glad they were able to co-ordinate the event.

The NCOs have been friends for nearly two years. Jarels and Fernandez met in 2005 in a previous deployment with the 41st Fires Bde.

Morales worked for Col. Richard Francey, 41st Fires Bde. commander, when he was the 4th Infantry Division Rear Detachment commander.

They moved to the brigade when Francey took command in January 2007.

“Sharing this event with both of them was cool,” said Morales.

Morales, who re-enlisted indefinitely, said the idea was his. The team realized the time the brigade commander had available was also one of the best times to close off the bridge to traffic. He said he knew neither of his friends would have a similar opportunity for future re-enlistments.

Jarels, a first time re-enlistee, said being able to hold the ceremony in the city is one of the ways this deployment has been more rewarding.



Photo by Sgt. Allison Churchill

With al Kut in the background, Col. Richard Francey, 41st Fires Bde. commander, re-enlists Staff Sgt. Patricia Fernandez, Staff Sgt. Cesar Morales and Staff Sgt. Corey Jarels on Dam Bridge. Morales and Jarels are both members of Francey's personal security team and cross the bridge several times a week; Fernandez, a communications NCO, is married to their NCOIC.

“Last deployment we had the same mission, but this time we get to interact with the Iraqis,” said Jarels. On the brigade's deployment with the 4th Inf. Div., he and his teammates escorted the brigade leadership from Camp Liberty to the Green Zone several times a week for meetings.

“This time we get to actually see the change we're making,” said Jarels, who re-enlisted for four years.

For Fernandez, whose job usually keeps her in the brigade tactical opera-

tions center, it was a rare chance to see where her husband, the PST NCOIC, goes on a regular basis. The ceremony marked her third re-enlistment.

The three friends plan to continue making the most of the opportunities the Army offers.

Morales said the greatest treasure of the Army is good friends like Jarels and Fernandez.

“The people you meet and the people you do your job with – they make the Army,” he said.

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work he has done since arriving in Iraq.

“You've made quite a (lot) of improvements for 10th Mountain Division folks,” Stewart told him, signaling toward a walkway that Reichard was instrumental in constructing to improve safety. “I really appreciate everything that you've done.”

Reichard has one goal that he hopes to realize sooner rather than later.

“First sergeant has always been what I'm working toward,” he said, noting that he wants to go as far as possible. “I exude professional excellence. I've found that, for me, the most important thing is hustle. I just don't ever stop.”

“I can easily see him as a very successful first sergeant of a company, enroute to getting picked up for sergeant major,” Parker said.

Reichard plans his schedules the night before, factoring in half of everyday to work on issues that affect the headquarters platoon. He manages every issue he faces, while still taking time to speak with Soldiers he knows in a personal capacity.

“I met him in Kuwait, before we came over here,” said Pfc. Michael Whittington, a DSTB accountability clerk. “He's a hell of an NCO. Anything I need, he's there for me. I had a birthday over here...he found out, next thing I knew, he had a cake for me. I don't know how he pulled that off.”

“I want to think the best in people,” Reichard said. “I always do self-assessments on what I need to work on...on weaknesses. I ask myself, ‘How can I do this?’ You need an effective plan of action. I'm all about providing superior results, even with minimum assets.”

As most of Camp Victory can attest, Reichard almost always succeeds.



Photo by Sgt. David Turner

Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Williams, of Bloomington, Ill., Co. C, 3-7 Inf. Regt., 4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., greets an Iraqi boy while on patrol near Musayyib, in northern Babil province, Oct. 5, 2008. Williams' platoon regularly stops to visit residents of the area to learn about their concerns such as the quality of water or grievances with the local government.

NCO

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in the motor pool” are over. Everyone is a warrior first.

There is nothing uncommon about seeing artillerymen entering buildings and clearing rooms; nothing uncommon about logisticians responsible for commanders' personal security details; food service specialist providing convoy security; and tankers conducting dismounted patrols in an urban environment.

Today, we see the most diverse and flexible Task Forces ever assembled. Task Force Mountain has consisted of cavalry, armor, mechanized infantry, light infantry and fires brigades performing as maneuver forces. Each brigade conducts operations unique to their traditional role, and they do so admirably.

The noncommissioned officer is the force behind this transformation. They are responsible for the development of our Soldiers' individual, crew and team-level tasks. They understand the importance of inspiring and motivating Soldiers, even in tasks outside their scope of expertise. I see the success of their actions every day during battle-field circulations. I have conducted dismounted and mounted patrols with every unit within our task force, and it's absolutely amazing to witness the

level of professionalism we have in our Army.

Our renewed focus and mentality helped shape our core competencies as warriors and strengthened our mental and physical toughness.

It developed the spiritual foundation needed to have the will to fight under the most adverse conditions. It prepared Soldiers during the day-to-day patrols in 120-degree heat on the streets of Baghdad wearing full armor, or those patrolling at elevations in the Himalayas of Afghanistan, where it seems only animals go to die.

“I have conducted dismounted and mounted patrols with every unit within our task force, and it's absolutely amazing to witness the level of professionalism we have in our Army.”

This toughness, this drive, has been our way of life for the last seven years. Our noncommissioned officers have instilled these strengths within our Soldiers with confidence through competence.

The aggressive operation tempo we have endured the last five years has seasoned our noncommissioned of-

ficers to a level of war understanding higher than ever before.

This is thanks to our new training requirements, which have become a lot more demanding and sophisticated as well. A Soldier's weapon is no longer just a weapon; it is a system.

Noncommissioned officers train their Soldiers to exploit their system regardless of job specialty. Today, our Soldiers conduct reflexive firing drills as part of their short-range marksmanship. They conduct tactical rifle ranges instead of just the standard qualification tables of old.

Another variable with a profound impact has been the Army's emphasis on combative training. All Soldiers train on these critical tasks as part of their common warrior skill set. These paradigm changes have had a huge impact on our entire Army. All our Soldiers now have the ability and spirit to close with the enemy and destroy him with the confidence and discipline of a true professional.

Another profound evolution in our noncommissioned officers is the level of expectations placed on them. It is much higher now than ever before during my career. With the fight taking place at the squad and platoon levels in two theaters of conflict, every noncommissioned officer is critical in achieving success and saving lives. This requires them to perform at the highest level of potential within their roles.

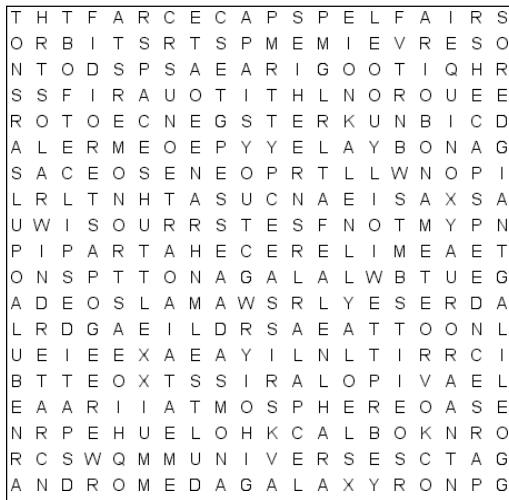
There's no micromanaging and no suppression of their initiative. They are required to make decisions that can determine the life or death of the warriors they lead.

They understand governance, economic development and the importance of reconstruction. They associate with provincial leaders, sheikhs, village elders, school principals. They get to know them personally and talk to them professionally. They're credible in the eyes of these leaders, and that says a lot about them.

The level of personal and professional maturity of our noncommissioned officer corps is nothing short of remarkable. We have come a long way in the last seven years during the Global War on Terror and the transformation of our Army.

We have the best noncommissioned officers of any war-fighting organization in the world. That's why we're the backbone of our Army and why it's clearly appropriate to make this year's theme the “Year of the NCO”.

Word Search



Astronomy

- Andromeda Galaxy
- Apoogee
- Asteroid
- Astronomer
- Atmosphere
- Aurora
- Binary Star
- Black Hole
- Constellation
- Corona
- Crater
- Deep Space
- Eclipse
- Equinox
- Galaxies
- Galileo
- Gravity
- Hubble
- Kepler
- Light Year
- Meteor
- Milky Way
- Moon
- Nebula
- Orbit
- Parsec
- Perigee
- Polaris
- Proxima Centauri
- Pulsars
- Quasars
- Red Giant
- Satellite
- Solar System
- Solar Wind
- Space Shuttle
- Spacecraft
- Stars
- Sun
- Supernova
- Telescope
- Tides
- Universe
- White Dwarf

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH YOUR TAX RETURN?



Photo by Spc. Tiffany Evans

"I am going to invest in Harley Davidson stocks because they made \$100 in the past week," said Sgt. Aron Cartes, of Tallahassee, Fla., Iraqi Security Forces cell operations noncommissioned officer, Multi-National Division-Center.

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Do you have an idea for the Soldier Issue?

The Mountain View staff would like to showcase your photos, drawings, poems, funny stories, favorite quotes and whatever else you'd like to share with our readers.

Send all submissions and ideas to Staff Sgt. Amber Emery at amber.emery@iraq.centcom.mil

For the answer to today's puzzles, go to:



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Photo by Spc. Tiffany Evans

"Not invest it in AIG because their stock is tanking," said Sgt. 1st Class Jennifer Williams, of Pulaski, N.Y., public affairs operations noncommissioned officer, Multi-National Division-Center.

Trivia of the Week

What two "colorful" rivers meet to form the world's longest river?