

The Sustainment Times

FORWARD Camp Taji, Iraq

Published by the 1st Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs Office

The Special Troops Battalion Brings Equity To The Fight



In this issue...

- “Durable” proves reliable
- Bailey’s Hot Tracks
- Soldier on the Street
- ...and much more!

ARMY STRONG. **U.S. ARMY**

1st Battalion, 143rd Field Artillery



California National Guard
Taps into the Michigan National Guard for a medical officer

By Sgt. Steven Brown, Sgt. James, Lt. Col. Dan Falk, and Staff Sgt. Robert Mendenhall, USMC, PFC

The California National Guard's 143rd Field Artillery received out for a general medical officer and found Capt. Michael White, a Michigan National Guard Support Battalion, to fill the position.

Based in Fraser, Michigan, White, 37, has been in the Special Troops Battalion since 2004. He has been in the Michigan National Guard since 2004. He has been in the Michigan National Guard since 2004. He has been in the Michigan National Guard since 2004.

Michigan Dr. joins the team Pg. 8

1103rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion



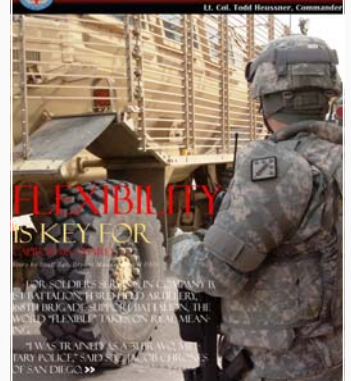
Hawaiian Unit
Make security vehicles more secure

By Sgt. Andrew Morrison, Sgt. Bill Paul

The 1103rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, is currently in Hawaii. The unit is currently in Hawaii. The unit is currently in Hawaii. The unit is currently in Hawaii.

536th Maintenance make vehicles secure Pg. 10

168th Base Support Battalion



FLEXIBILITY IS KEY FOR
Soldiers stay flexible Pg. 17

Commander's Corner

Col. Kevin G. O'Connell, Commander



(Left to right) Col. Kevin O'Connell, commander of the 1st Sustainment Brigade; Lt. Col. Rob Weaver, commander of the 610th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division; and Col. Ricky Gibbs, commander of the 4th IBCT, 1st Inf. Div, pose for a photograph Jan. 19 during O'Connell's visit to FOB Falcon. (Photo by Spc. Andrea Merritt)

"Durable" proves reliable in Iraq

Story by Spc. Andrea Merritt

1st SB PAO

Leaders in the 1st Sustainment Brigade visited the 610th Brigade Support Battalion on Jan. 19 at FOB Falcon to receive feedback on the logistical support they provide to the unit.

During their visit, the 1st SB discovered their support has helped the 610th BSB exceed Army standards and that their Fort Riley connection can mean so much more, especially during deployment.

Part of the 610th BSB's mission is to provide maintenance and repair parts for vehicles – among numerous other tasks – to the warfighters of the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, while in Iraq.

"We have to highlight how well the 610 BSB is doing. They're absolutely the best support battalion in theater ... They have been absolutely phenomenal in the support they've given to the brigade. We couldn't ask for better." Col. Ricky Gibbs, commander of the 4th IBCT, 1st Inf. Div.

The 610th BSB has the best demand and customer satisfaction in Baghdad, said Lt. Col. Rob Weaver, commander of the 610th BSB. The time their customers have to wait on repair parts is about 14 days, which is below the Army's standard of 15 days.

Weaver attributes part of the unit's successes to the 1st SB.

"Since they've been here, we've been able to exceed Army standards in all of our logistical areas and a large part of that is due to the support we got >> Pg. 3

Dear First Sustainment Brigade Soldiers and Families,

Sustainment support to Multi-National Corps-Iraq continues to go exceptionally well for the 1st Sustainment Brigade. The Special Troops "Reliable" Battalion from Fort Riley, Kansas is providing unprecedented human resources and financial management support across most of Iraq. The 1-143d Field Artillery "Grizzly" Battalion from Walnut Creek, California is critical to force protection at Camp Taji. The 68th Combat Sustainment Support "Stagecoach" Battalion from Fort Carson, Colorado operates essential supply points in addition to their distribution and services mission. The 168th Brigade Support "Make It Happen" Battalion from Fort Sill, Oklahoma distributes all types of supplies directly to our supported units, as well as performing critical maintenance functions. The 1103d Combat Sustainment Support "Roadmaster" Battalion from Euphala, Alabama provides transportation, supply, and maintenance support and has done the heavy lifting on moving huge barriers to make Baghdad and Iraq more secure. These missions are all planned, monitored, controlled, synchronized, and supervised by the Brigade staff, also from Fort Riley. In addition to the locations where our battalion headquarters are from, our formation is comprised of companies and detachments from 39 states and Germany. The grand total population of the Brigade is about 4,000 Soldiers.

The Soldiers across the Brigade are performing magnificently and are the best I've seen in my 25-year career. You continue to amaze me with their positive attitudes, perseverance, initiative, and drive to be the best. I am very proud to be your Brigade Commander. Thanks for all you do for the 1st Sustainment Brigade, the Army, and the Nation.

I also want to thank all the Families that are giving us support from back home. You are the unsung >> Pg. 4



Leaders of the 1st Sustainment Brigade and 610th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, attend a review and analysis brief Jan. 19 at FOB Falcon. (Photo by Spc. Andrea Merritt)

» from the 1st Sustainment Brigade and their subordinate units providing us the transportation and repair parts from Victory Base (Complex),” said Weaver.

“The 1st Sustainment Brigade has shown great flexibility to provide the items we need when we need them,” Weaver added.

While visiting with the 610th BSB, Col. Kevin O’Connell, commander of the 1st SB, and members of the support operations staff attended a review and analysis brief to see the progress the battalion has made and also to ask if there was more they could do to help.

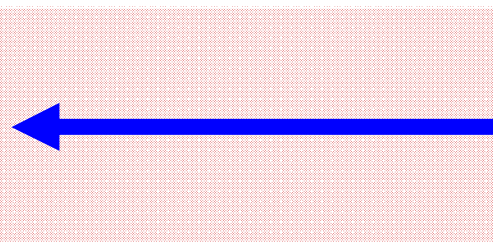
“It’s just a lot easier. The hard situations you’re in Iraq, it’s just nice to see a familiar face or hear a friendly voice at the other end of the phone and know you can count on them,” said Weaver.

“The 1st Sustainment Brigade has shown great flexibility to provide the items we need when we need them.”

The 4th IBCT, 1st Inf. Div. has fought a long, hard fight with al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups for the security of East and West Rashid districts. They have lost 84 Soldiers and 700 more were wounded, said Gibbs.

In about three months, the 4th IBCT, 1st Inf. Div. will be returning home to Fort Riley and the 1st SB will continue to provide exemplary support to them until they leave.

“I have all the confidence in Col. O’Connell and the great 1st Sustainment Brigade and obviously since we’re from the same division, same post, I know I’ll get great support,”



The Sustainment Times

FORWARD

The Sustainment Times Forward is a monthly newsletter produced by the 1st Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs Office.

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We are looking for content, so please submit letters, articles, photos, drawings, comics, etc. to:

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On the cover:

Lt. Col. Robert Brem, the commander of the Special Troops Battalion, holds up 2.4 million dollars in currency.

(Photo courtesy of Lt. Col. Robert Brem)

CSM Time

CSM Frank G. Cardoza



Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Cardoza goes native. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude)

» heroes of this war and your sacrifices do not go unnoticed. In many ways, your task is more challenging and stressful than that of your deployed Soldier. Thank you for your untiring support. You are always on our minds.

The 1st Sustainment Brigade is a big team and every member, whether deployed Soldier, Family, Rear Detachment, Family Readiness Group member or Family Readiness Support Assistant, is critical to accomplishing the mission while taking care of Soldiers and Families. We need every one of you to stay safe, healthy, and strong -- physically, mentally, and spiritually. You are all too important to be taken out of the fight for an injury of some kind. Thanks again for all you are doing and let's take care of each other. With great admiration and respect,

COL Kevin O'Connell, Durable 6



Two 1st Sustainment Brigade Soldiers watch the first snowfall in the Baghdad area in more than 100 years on Jan. 11. The light snow began to fall in the early morning hours and ended shortly after 9 a.m. "My first reaction was, 'Man, it's really snowing in Iraq!' I was told it hasn't snowed out here in over 70 years. We were here for a rare event," said Master Sgt. Mark McPhan, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the personnel services section of the 1st SB. (Photo by Spc. Andrea Merritt)



Special Troops Battalion

Lt. Col. Robert D. Brem, Commander

Special Troops Battalion

HR

510th Finance Company replaces the last PSB

Story by Spc. Andrea Merritt

1st SB PAO

After a long 15 months, the last-standing, active-component personnel services battalion in the U.S. Army has left Iraq and returned home to Fort Hood, Texas.

transactions.

“Our deployment was very successful. It was challenging. It was a good experience for all of us, from the privates all the way up to the sergeant major and me. We learned something everyday,” said Lt. Col. Angela Odom, commander of the 15th PSB.

“The most challenging thing for us, me and sergeant major, was having the nine command teams geographically disbursed in those 26 different locations and actually getting out to them,” said Odom.

Sometimes the command team would have to travel anywhere from Kuwait to Ramadi, Kalsu, Rustamiyah, Buka, and Basra all in the matter of a week.

Although it was a challenge to make sure all the different elements were on the same page and understood the mission, the biggest challenge the unit faced was the loss of two of their Soldiers.

“Each Soldier counts. We had over 1,000 Soldiers in the battalion and the fact that we couldn’t get two of them home, it counts,” said Odom.

Even though losing two Soldiers was a hard hit for the battalion, they faced it together. However bitter-sweet the return home was, many of the Soldiers had to focus on a new mission – reintegrating with their Families.

“I don’t have the words. It’s like it’s not real,” said Spc. Tishon Showers, a supply specialist with the 15th PSB, before the return home. “I’m ready though. I’m going to go see my Family, hang out with them, and eat some barbeque.”

The Soldiers of the 15th PSB will be able to enjoy the New Year with their loved ones, and soon, the last PSB standing will stand no more. The battalion is scheduled to inactivate in April 2008, but all their successes will not be forgotten. **STF**



Incoming and outgoing commanders cut the cake.

The 15th Personnel Services Battalion cased their colors during a transfer of authority ceremony with the 510th Human Resources Company, based out of Fort Eustis, Va., January 2nd to mark the end of their service in Iraq.

“The ‘Broncos’ occupied a footprint previously held by two personnel services battalions, encompassing an area of over two-thirds of Iraq and supporting over 100,000 Coalition Forces throughout Multi-National Corps-Iraq in 26 geographically-

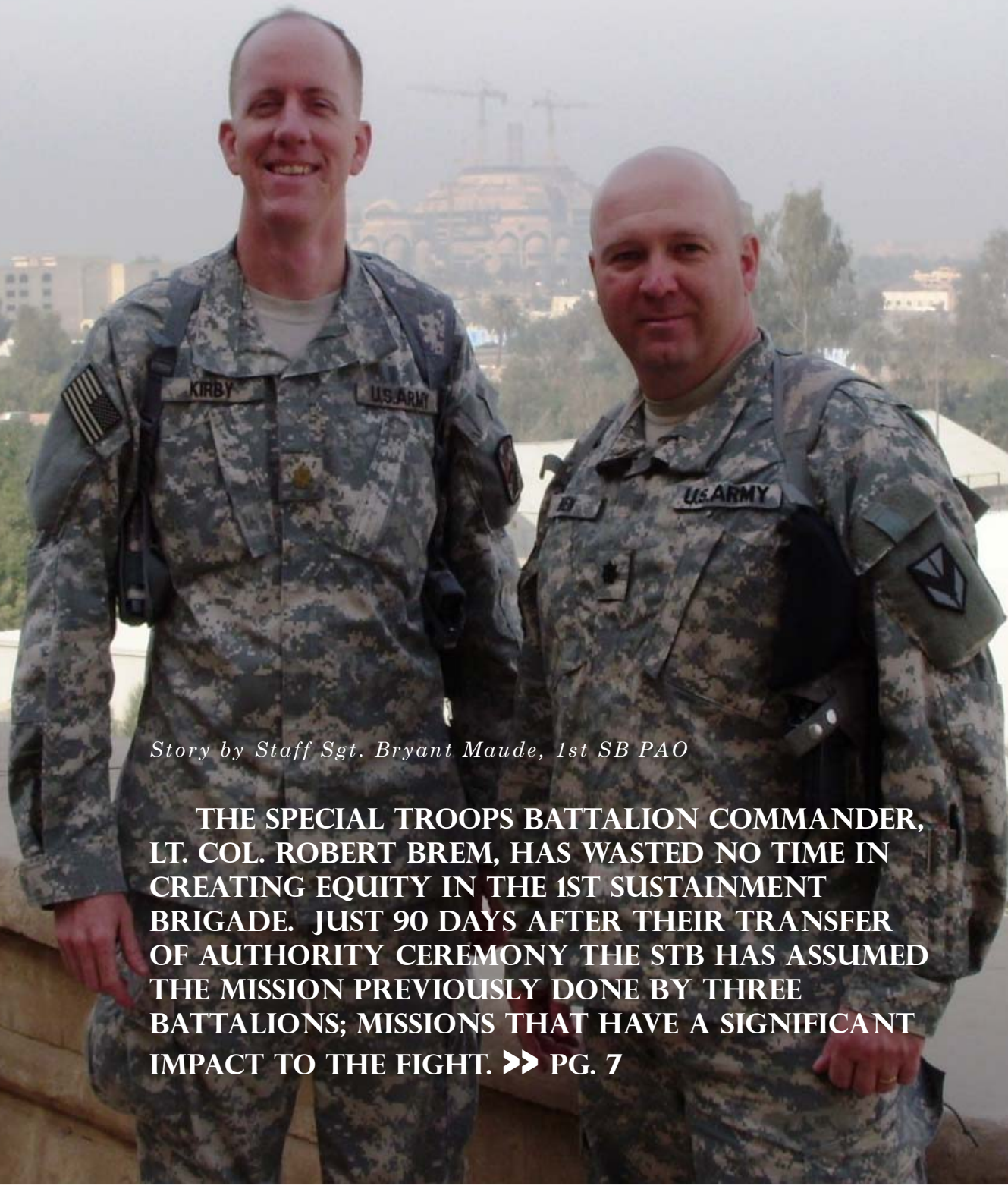
disbursed locations,” said Col. Kevin O’Connell, 1st Sustainment Brigade commander.

This job will now be performed by a single finance company under the leadership of Maj. Ric Richmond and the ever-growing Special Troops Battalion team.

While in theater, the 15th PSB managed 15 Army post offices and 16 mobile missions that processed more than 61 million pounds and four million pieces of mail. The unit’s R5 teams conducted nearly a half-million

“The most challenging thing for us, me and sergeant major, was having the nine command teams geographically disbursed in those 26 different locations and actually getting out to them.”

NEW GROUND FOR THE STB



Story by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude, 1st SB PAO

THE SPECIAL TROOPS BATTALION COMMANDER, LT. COL. ROBERT BREM, HAS WASTED NO TIME IN CREATING EQUITY IN THE 1ST SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE. JUST 90 DAYS AFTER THEIR TRANSFER OF AUTHORITY CEREMONY THE STB HAS ASSUMED THE MISSION PREVIOUSLY DONE BY THREE BATTALIONS; MISSIONS THAT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT TO THE FIGHT. >> PG. 7

“BUILDING THESE RELATIONSHIPS BEFORE WE EVER DEPLOYED SO WE COULD HIT THE GROUND RUNNING...WAS KEY.”

» “It’s a big mission and a big change, but we planned for, trained for, and looked forward to it,” said Brem; referring to the addition of the 510th Human Resources Company and the 24th Financial Management Company.

“Both companies are commanded by field grade officers, and they both assumed missions held previously by individual battalions,” continued Brem.

It was the early decision by the 1st Sustainment Brigade Commander, Col. Kevin O’Connell, to take the human resources operations and the financial management operations staff in the brigade and embed them in the STB.



Capt. Michael Pagel, the officer in charge for the Special Troops Battalion, ‘Easy Red’ Aid Station at Camp Taji, Iraq, withdrawals some money from his Eagle Cash Card. He is assisted by a cashier with Detachment B, 24th Financial Management Company.

A FAST MOVING TRAIN

“This early decision allowed us to prepare as a team,” stated Brem. “Building these relationships before we ever deployed so we could hit the ground running...was key.”

Just one of their new missions, finance, has a huge impact on the welfare of 92,000 Soldiers, civilians, and contractors working in two divisions, Multi-National Division-Baghdad and Multi-National Division-Center, and the future of Iraq.

“They (24th Financial Management Company) indirectly support the (Iraqi) economy in this way,” explains Maj. Thomas Buchholz, the financial management support operations officer for the Special Troops Battalion. “They provide money for paying agents who in turn pay contracts.”

“These contracts do everything from build or improve roads, improve structures, build guard towers for Iraqi security, etc,” continues Buchholz. “All these contracts are out there to support the Coalition Forces and the Iraqi economy.”

The 24th Financial Management Company. also cashes checks for corporations. For instance, if a civilian company operating in their area has a memorandum of agreement with the U.S. military, they can cash a large corporate check at one of their offices. They can then turn around and pay their workers, subcontractors, and suppliers in cash.

“Anything that deals with Soldiers’ money, the 24th Financial Management Company has something to do with it. Anything having to do with paying agents...or a contractor being paid, they have something to do with it,” said Buchholz.

Additional growth comes with its challenges and the STB is no exception. They’ve gone from a Camp Taji centric battalion, to one with four companies placed in 16 additional forward operating bases throughout Iraq.

Leveraging technology is one key to success for Brem. “We utilize the communication tools we have to stay in touch with our subordinate units. We encourage the companies to do the same thing with their detachments,” states Brem.

“Using and recognizing communication tools are our weapon systems for command and control. You need to treat them like a weapon system. Maintain them, train on them, and deploy them to gain maximum effectiveness. These are some of the things I brought with me from Korea where we were early adapters,” Brem added.

From a processing standpoint, Brem found financial management and human resources very similar to the logistics functions. “Although the names and processes are different, from a management function, it’s really similar to logistics,” said Brem.

Looking back, it’s been a fast moving train for the Soldiers of the STB, and the pace is not going to let up.

“We’ll grow again in a few months,” said Brem. “We pick up two companies of Soldiers and the mission to manage force protection here at Taji.”

As he continues to improve operations, Brem looks ahead to the eventual end of the deployment. His focus is to set up his successors for success. “We’ll be looked at by how well we set them up for success,” says Brem.

STF



1st Battalion, 143rd Field Artillery

Lt. Col. Ian Falk, Commander



California National Guard

taps into the Michigan National Guard for a medical officer

Story by Sgt. Stewart Brown, 1st Bn., 143rd FA, and Staff Sgt.

Bryant Maude, 1st SB, PAO

The California National Guard's 1st Battalion, 143rd Field Artillery reached out for a general medical officer and found Capt. R. Dale Jackson, a Michigan National Guard flight surgeon with the 3rd Battalion, 238th General Support Aviation.

Raised in Prince William County, Va., Jackson currently lives just north of Detroit where he is completing his post-graduate medical specialty training in combined Emergency and Internal Medicine at Henry Ford Macomb Hospitals.

"The Soldiers are lucky to have someone like him," said Maj. Michael Wise, the 1st Bn., 143rd FA executive officer. "He sees things in a broader sense and works hard to make sure the right things are done for them."

Jackson's 18-year Army career is a combination of active duty, Army Reserves, and National Guard service. It was the encouragement of some fellow battalion surgeons and physician assistants that led him to pursue a career as a physician.

"Having the opportunity to deploy in a time of war is, in a sense, me coming full circle," said Jackson. "It's not everyday you get to take care of the best patients in the world—the American Soldier."

Jackson is proud of his service in the National Guard and is amazed by the large number of guardsman serving in Iraq.

"The fact that yesterday they were lawyers, salesclerks, office workers, and contractors, and today they are professional Soldiers serving as infantrymen, military police, combat truck drivers, and logisticians amazes me," stated Jackson.

"They are performing admirably and their dedication, commitment, and professionalism should fill their Families and every Americans' heart with pride," he added.

After his service in Iraq, Dr. Jackson will head back to work and complete his post-graduate specialty training. He plans to work full time for a health care system and serve in the Army National Guard until retirement. **STF**

Capt. R. Dale Jackson, a Michigan National Guard flight surgeon with the 3rd Battalion, 238th General Support Aviation checks out a Soldier. (Photo by Sgt. Stewart Brown)

THE BIG RED ONE FLEXED MUSCLE IN THE GULF WAR



Al Bargan oilfield, Kuwait 1991

Who could forget the Gulf War launched on G-Day, 24 February 1991. The build up leading to the war was broadcast day and night live by the newly formed cable network, CNN, and once the war started it was over in 100 hours. The 1st Infantry Division, commanded by Maj. Gen. Thomas Rhame, was there; and as usual, the Big Red One performed exceptionally well.

The Division's two maneuver brigades from Ft. Riley were rounded out by the 2nd Battalion, 66th Armor and 3rd Battalion, 66th Armor, 1st Battalion, 41st Infantry, and the 4th Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery from 2nd Armored Division (Forward) in Germany. It was responsible for the initial breach of the Iraqi defenses, consequently rolling over the Iraqi 26th Infantry Division, taking 2,600 prisoners.

The Big Red One continued its assault on enemy-held territory for an additional 100 hours, engaging 11 Iraqi divisions, destroying 550 enemy tanks, 480 armored personnel carriers, and taking 11,400 prisoners.

By the morning of 28 February 1991, the Division had secured positions along the Highway of Death, preventing the Iraqi retreat. **STF**



1ID Soldiers



Highway of Death



1103rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion

Lt. Col. Lee Ellis, Commander



Hawaiian Unit

make security vehicles more secure

Spc. Paulo Young, a welder with the 4th Infantry Division who currently works with the 536th Maint. Co., cuts metal that will be used to make fire suppression steps for the MRAP. (Photo by Spc. Andrea Merritt)

Story by Spc. Andrea Merritt, 1st SB PAO

The 536th Maintenance Company, 1103rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, has been in Iraq for about two months and during that time they have been working to help protect the lives of the warfighters.

The Hawaii-based unit is the only direct support maintenance company located on Camp Taji, and they have been tasked to make, at times, life-saving modifications to the warfighters' vehicles – namely, the

Stryker and mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle or MRAP.

“This is unique to our deployment. We didn’t do any of these modifications in garrison. They aren’t needed in garrison,” said Chief Warrant Officer Three Jeff Meier, the Allied Trade Shop technician for the 536th Maint. Co.

“It’s a change of pace definitely. It’s a lot more fast-paced and non-stop,” said Spc. Carl Weeks, a machinist with the 536th Maint. Co, as he described how his days went. >> Pg. 11



»»For the Stryker, the Soldiers of the 536th Maint. Co. install ballistic glass around the gunner's hatch for protection against snipers and fragments from IEDs. The Soldiers also install framing for sniper screens and sometimes have to make Rhinos from scratch.

The Rhino, which protrudes like a giant horn, is an electrical device mounted on the front of the vehicle and is designed to detonate roadside bombs along a route before the convoy reaches them.

"The MRAP was being fielded when we arrived, so the modifications are new," Meier stated. "The (Army Materiel Command) brings the MRAPs to us for modifications before they are issued out to the warfighters."

The factory-made Rhinos on the MRAPs were mounted directly in front of the winch, so if a vehicle needed to be recovered, the Rhino would have to be removed.

The Soldiers of the 536th Maint. Co. had to make new mounts so the Rhino would sit to the side of the winch instead of in front.

The Soldiers have also had to make covers to conceal the fire suppression system bottle and exposed wires inside of the MRAP.

"All these jobs are very time consuming," said Meier. It takes about seven hours for three to four people to install the ballistic glass on the Stryker. It takes about five hours to make a Rhino from scratch and another hour for the Soldiers to mount it onto the MRAP.

"Since the 536th Maint. Co. began modifications to the Strykers and MRAPs, they have repositioned more than 100 Rhino mounts, made between 300 and 400 cover plates for exposed wires, installed more than 100 pieces of ballistic glass onto Strykers on the camp, and made about 40 steps to cover the fire suppression system bottle," said Meier.

"This shop is all about the Soldiers on the floor doing the work everyday ... The work that they do, we believe and we know, helps protect the lives of some of the warfighters who go out the gate everyday," said Meier. "They work hard, they don't complain, and we're proud of them. We wouldn't be successful without them."

The posted hours for the Allied Trade Shop are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., but the Soldiers rarely ever leave at 5 p.m. They have worked as late as 9 p.m. to get modifications, as well as their other tasks, completed.

"I actually feel like we are doing something (important)," added Weeks. "We do our best, and we're proud of what we do." **STF**

Spc. Carl Weeks, a machinist with the 536th Maint. Co., prepares ballistic glass to be installed on a Stryker. The ballistic glass helps to protect gunners from snipers and fragments from IEDs.

Around Camp Taji

COUNTRY LINE DANCE

COME ONE
COME ALL!!!


EVERY FRIDAY
BLDG 680
@
1900



Start the year off right. Tuesdays and Thursdays at building 509 is a Pilates class. The class is open to everyone on Camp Taji. Get the six-pack abs you've always dreamed of. Classes start at 11:00 and last one hour.

POETRY NITE

Every Sunday @ the
Cinema
@
2000hrs



Coming events on Camp Taji in February 2008

Get your country dance on every Friday night at building 680. The Country Line Dance starts at 19:00. Have a good time with friends.

Pilates

Emphasis on the Abdominals, Buttock & Thighs. Get a lean, toned muscle and a toned your body.

Location: **BLDG. 509**

Beginning January 1, 2007 Every Tuesday, Thursday & Sunday @ 1100-1200 HRS.

POC: Denise Hagler
denise.hagler@army.mil



A nice change of pace for Soldiers and civilians on Camp Taji is Poetry Night at the Cinema. Bring material or plan to listen. Either way have a good time.

STAY


INVOLVED

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1st Sustainment Brigade and 1103rd CSSB

Celebrating Black History



February 09, 2008, 1700-1800 hours
MWR Theater - BLDG 93, Camp Taji, Iraq
Guest Speaker: CH (CPT) Denise Hagler

Hot Tracks

By Pfc. Rashi Bailey

I have a treat this month; for all my fellow lovers of music. In the past, Bailey's picks was just that, the top ten for the next month giving you good music to make it while we enjoy our tour in Iraq. But this month, I got a chance to sit down with Za, one of the founding members of the Atlanta-based, Neo-Soul / Hip Hop group from the 90's, Arrested Development. You may remember them from the singles, "Tennessee" and "Mr. Windom." We talked about music, and how it's changing, what's new with the group, the new album, and his new up-and-coming artist, V. Marie. I even had the pleasure of speaking with her. I hope you enjoy.

Bailey: *So how's the weather in Atlanta?*

Za: Getting some rain. Getting kind of cold too. But I haven't been outside today.

Bailey: *Had to ask because Atlanta is my hometown.*

ZA: Ok, cool. Cool. Hold it down.

Bailey: *Let's get down to business. Arrested Development was one of the hottest rap groups when I was a kid. The message was so positive and neo soul when everyone else was doing gangster rap. What message are you delivering to the listeners today or has it changed any from then?*

Za: No, we are committed to that same message. We haven't changed anything.

Bailey: *So have the members changed?*

ZA: Well, Speech is still there (and so are) Montsho Eshe, One Love, Nicha, Radason, Baba Oje, JJ Boogie, and myself. I was mostly behind the scenes before I join the group, but I've been around about 13 years. The four original members are still a part of the group.

Bailey: *So are you touring still as a group?*

ZA: We surely haven't stopped. We're 30th with Shaggy, UB40, and the Whalers. New Year in there. We're pretty much at "The Loft" here in Atlanta; that's on "Since the Last Time." It's been in stores

Bailey: *So being from Atlanta myself sound, can you give me your opinion on*

ZA: I say that Atlanta is still in search of up things. Rap is taking some negative trying to flip something. But it's all



Arrested Development

Bailey: *So I hear you're working with a new artist out of Atlanta. Can you tell me a little bit about her?*

ZA: Yea, V. Marie is actually my first artist from a producer standpoint. We're still looking at the direction. We're coming up with great material. Just trying to find a way to market her. But we're making some major head way.

Bailey: *So V. Marie. Were you born and raised in Atlanta?*

V. Marie: No, I wasn't. I'm originally from Long Island, New York. My dad's business moved our family to Atlanta when I was ten. And I love it here. I think it would have been a lot harder trying to start my career in New York. >> Pg. 14



V. Marie in studio

about to do a show in Australia on January We just got back from Japan; we brought the international. But we got a show coming up January 24th. We have a new album out titled since October.

and seeing the changes of the Atlanta where Atlanta-based music is heading?

that new sound. Everyone is trying to change turns, but I think Atlanta, as a whole, is different ideas and new opportunities.

Soldier on the Street

We asked Soldiers the following question: "Are you going to vote, and if not, why not?"



David Williams

CSSAMO analyst

1st Sustainment Brigade

"Yes, because if you don't vote you lose the privilege and honor to vote, and two, if you don't vote it's like saying you don't care."



Spc. Anthony Braun

Human resources specialist

1st Sustainment Brigade

"Yes, to make sure my vote counts."



Staff Sgt. Marcus Berartez

Administrative NCOIC

41st Transportation Company

"Yes, so my voice can be heard as to who I want to put there (in office)."

» Bailey: *I see you've been on "House of Pain" and played a passenger in "Why did I get married," how was it working with Tyler Perry?*

V. Marie: It was wonderful. Really laid back. He speaks to everybody; he'd make it out to the shoots, and made sure you didn't feel pressured. I loved his plays even before I meet him. So that whole experiences was great. But he really is a nice person.

Bailey: *So tell me, how did you meet up with Za?*

V. Marie: He's a friend of my dad's. We meet when I was 12. But we started working on music together after I got out of high school.

Bailey: *Pianist, vocalist, songwriting, choreography ... How did you get so talented? Were you just born with the gift of the arts or was it something you had to work hard at?*

V. Marie: I come from a musical background. My mother was in a band in the 80's. They toured around New York doing shows and weddings. My brother is an artist also. I watched him growing up, but I did a lot of plays and stuff for my church. So I guess it's just a part of me. But this is hard work.

Bailey: *Any words of encouragement to inspiring artist that might read this article?*

V. Marie: Just to keep your head up. Don't listen to anybody's negativities and what they have to say. You only get one life, so if you're going to do something, block everything else out and stay focused and go for it.

Bailey: *Thank you very much Za and V. Marie.*

The group's latest album, the follow-up to their 2004 comeback *Among the Trees*, is entitled *Since the Last Time*, and was released internationally on September 18, 2006. *Since the Last Time* was subsequently released in the United States on October 30, 2007, on Vagabond Record & Tapes, Speech's label. So go pick that up. Look out for V. Marie on your radio and on your T.V. soon. She is a rare talent that is hard to come by. So this month's pick is *Since The Last Time* by none other then Atlanta's own "Arrested Development." Check it out. **STF**



68th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion

Lt. Col. Darrell Duckworth, Commander

Transformation Takes Place at the bulk fuel farm at Victory Base Complex

Story by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude, 1st SB, PAO

One year ago, the bulk fuel farm at the Victory Base Complex, Iraq, was dirty, inefficient, and in serious need of repair. Today, thanks to the hard work and diligence of some dedicated Army Reserve Soldiers, the bulk fuel farm is clean, orderly, and highly efficient. >> Pg. 16



Spc. Chris Griffith, a native of Stockbridge, Mich., and fuel specialist with the 192nd Quartermaster Company, fuels a truck at the bulk fuel farm.

“This place was in shambles.”



(Left to right) Sgt. Janell Brown, of Tallmadge, Ohio, and Staff Sgt. Brett Nelson, of Fostoria, Ohio, both fuel specialists, adjust a fuel container.

LESS TRASH

FASTER SERVICE

RECYCLED MATERIALS

QUALITY SOLDIERS

» “This place was in shambles,” said Spc. Chris Griffith, a native of Stockbridge, Mich., and fuel specialist with the 192nd Quartermaster Company, 68th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, of Milan, Oh.

“I think we hauled over 30 tons of trash out of here in our first month,” recalled Sgt. 1st Class Wilfredo Velez, the platoon sergeant for the 192nd QM Co. “This place was neglected for years.”

As they developed their plan of attack, they decided early on that recycling would need to be a part of the clean up strategy.

“We created a program where not everything went to the dump,” explained Velez. “We wanted to recycle materials and return unused equipment back in to the Army inventory.”

So that’s what they did. In the process of cleaning up the farm, they separated materials into different categories like vinyl, wood, plastics, and aluminum. They also returned an estimated \$100,000 worth of discarded equipment back to the Army supply system.

The problem ran deeper than trash though. The fuel farm is the sole source for aviation fuel, diesel, and gasoline for the greater Bagdad area, and at the time, it was operating at about 25 percent of its capacity. Very few pumps worked properly, and the berms surrounding the fuel bags were in severe need of repair.

“When we arrived, six pumps worked,” stated Velez.

Early on, the team went to work on the pumps. They increased the number of pumps from six to twelve and doubled the capacity of each individual pump allowing 24 trucks to receive fuel at once instead of six.

“We went from one truck taking three hours to get fuel to fifteen minutes, on a bad day,” said Velez proudly.

The goal of Maj. Phil Sharp, commander of the 192nd QM Co., was to focus on increased customer service and improving the overall look and functionality of the farm.

“We ran our ideas through our chain of command...and they supported our ideas,” said Velez. “We couldn’t have done it without their support. We totally reconstructed 66 fuel berms.”

With just 34 Soldiers and 24 civilian contractors, the 192nd QM Co., did the work required by 100 people. The Soldiers had it rough. They worked 12-hour shifts, traveled back and forth from work by bus and ate most of their meals at the farm, but they rarely complained.

“Their motivation comes from within,” said Velez. “They would be standing out in 130-degree temperatures working and still have a smile on their face.”

As they prepare to leave Iraq, the Soldiers of the 192nd QM, Co., talk about the things they are looking forward to most upon their return home. The little things like driving, shopping, and finishing their degrees. And when asked what they are most proud of they all agree, “The fuel farm!” **STG**



168th Base Support Battalion

Lt. Col. Todd Heussner, Commander



FLEXIBILITY IS KEY FOR CALIFORNIA GUARD

Story by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude, 1st SB PAO

FOR SOLDIERS SERVING IN BRAVO BATTERY, 1ST BATTALION, 143RD FIELD ARTILLERY, 168TH BRIGADE SUPPORT BATTALION, THE WORD "FLEXIBLE" TAKES ON REAL MEANING.

"I WAS TRAINED AS A 31 BRAVO, MILITARY POLICE," SAID SPC. JACOB CHRONES OF SAN DIEGO. >> PG. 18



Spc. Juan Garcia rings the giant Rapid Aerostat Initial Deployment balloon down to 50 feet. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude)

» “19 Kilo, tanker,” stated Spc. Michael Dahl, of Beaumont, CA., who is one of a dozen California National Guard Soldiers assigned to the Rapid Aerostat Initial Deployment (RAID) mission for the 168th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade.

“It was kind of thrown in our lap,” said Staff Sgt. Thomas Coy, the non-commissioned officer in charge of the RAID mission.

The RAID is a giant balloon that flies high above the bases in Iraq. It gives commanders on the ground a visual look at the area outside of the wire. Bravo Battery was tasked with the mission shortly after arriving in theater and has adapted well.

“It was difficult at first because you have to calculate the right mix of helium and oxygen,” stated Spc. Uriel

“THESE GUYS ARE ALL SMART AND WE’RE ALL FLEXIBLE. YOU HAVE TO BE, I GUESS.”

Torres, RAID operator for Bravo Btry, 1st Bn., 143rd FA, “but it’s easy now.”

Each of the team members underwent two and a half weeks of training before they were handed the around-the-clock mission of maintaining the giant balloon. “It’s going great now,” said Coy. “These guys are all smart and we’re all flexible. You have to be, I guess.”

Monitoring giant balloons is not the only thing Bravo Battery has had to adapt to. Just down the street, at Entry Control Point #3, is another group of Soldiers performing an equally critical mission - force protection.

“Basically, we’re the defense of the base,” stated Sgt. Michael Taylor, from Newberg, N.C., the gate sergeant of the guard at ECP #3 for the 46th Chemical Company. Trained as a chemical specialist, Taylor had to adapt quickly to the security mission given to him by Bravo Btry, 1st Bn., 143rd FA.

“A guy has to be flexible to do this job,” said Taylor. “It takes flexibility to manage security, make improvements, control traffic, and whatever else they may have for you.”

The old saying, “If life gives you lemons, make lemonade,” seems to apply for these Soldiers; as all indications point to them making lemonade out of lemons. **STF**

Spc. Juan Garcia keeps a close eye on the giant Rapid Aerostat Initial Deployment balloon as it’s lowered. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude)





Chaplain's Thoughts

Chaplain Terrence E. Hayes, Brigade Chaplain

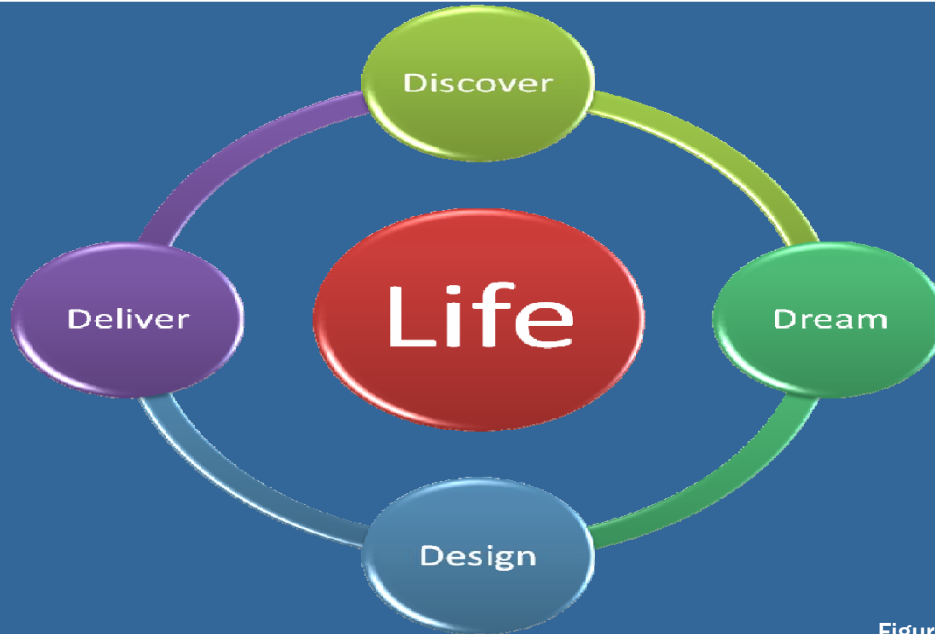


Figure 1: Appreciative Inquiry Cycle

Written by Chaplain (Capt.) Larry Van Hook
STB Chaplain

Increasingly, Army leaders are beginning to take a fresh look at the stereotypical styles of leadership common to the Army. True military leadership requires more than a loud voice and a commanding demeanor; it requires people smarts. It requires what social scientists call *emotional intelligence*. Emotional intelligence is being smart about what moves people toward excellence. It begins with an intuitive awareness of our own feelings and how our emotional behavior affects others. Leadership is empathic. This does not mean that our stoic tradition of commanding leadership must be turned into a maudlin, Polly-anna, feel-good, pie-in-the-sky type of leadership. Rather, it means that Soldier's leaders have to be realistic. To assume that Soldiers can simply bury emotional responses under some thick skin of HOOAH is naïve.

Goleman, Boyatis, and McKee (2002) aptly write, "Break-throughs in brain research show why leaders' moods and actions have enormous impact on those they lead, and shed fresh light on the power of emotionally intelligent leadership to inspire, arouse passion and enthusiasm, and keep people motivated and committed." We may not always be able to conceptualize a good leader, but all of us know how a poor one can create a toxic atmosphere that poisons the emotional climate of a unit. Such *dissonant* leaders may enjoy short-term results, but in the long run, undermine the mission.

Here is where I think chaplains and chaplain assistants can make a real difference by inspiring commanders and NCOs to be emotionally intelligent (and often at the same time, morally intelligent). In others words, we can be spiritual leaders that

guide our units through the white-water of working relationships as well as personal ones. We can teach military leaders to create resonance. Resonance is the ability to drive the group's emotions positively so that it brings out everyone's best.

While many aspects of emotional intelligence can be addressed, I want to address one resonant building strategy that I have introduced to stakeholders within our battalion. It is called *Appreciative Inquiry* and is centered in what brings our unit to life—its positive core (figure 1).

Each unit pro-actively walks through each step in the cycle starting with an initial meeting. There, they first *discover* their team's strength—not their weaknesses and foibles. They ask themselves, "What is the one thing we do better than anything else?" "What brings life to our team?" Secondly, they *dream* by simply imagining an ideal situation or future. What would the situation be like if we were free to exercise our strength to the fullest? Based on the realization of the positive core and their ideal future, the team puts together a *design* that maximizes that relationship. Finally, together, the team *delivers* the results, and the cycle begins again with a greater understanding.

My dream, as a chaplain, revolves around a positive core of building relationships. First, I wish to help Soldiers build a resonant relationship with God and then one with each other. Our design is to offer quality religious services and team building training such as Chaplain Hayes' "Building a Results Oriented Team" and my "Emotionally Intelligent Leadership and Teambuilding Training." Our unit ministry team covets your prayers as we seek to make a difference in the lives of the Soldiers we serve. **STF**

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Spc. Ida Nunez is the promotions clerk for the Special Troops Battalion. She is this month's choice for Loyalty. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude)