

The Sustainment Times FORWARD

Camp Taji, Iraq

SPO NATION

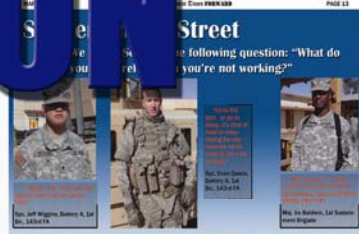
SPO NATION

LIVE THE DREAM

MULTI-NATIONAL DIVISION BAGHDAD



In this issue...
Iraqi Truck Company
Brother's Keeper
Barrier Missions
Soldier on the Street
...and much more!



Big Red One at Remagen, Germany, March 1945



68th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion

U. Col. Darrell Burkworth, Commander



Soldiers Off The Road Pg. 14



Chaplain Terrence E. Hayes, Brigade Chaplain



Operation Story Time Pg. 19



SPO NATION

Commander's Corner

Col. Kevin G. O'Connell, Commander

Dear First Sustainment Brigade Soldiers and Families,

When I was a Squadron Commander in the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment at Fort Irwin, California, we had a great prayer breakfast program. The Regimental Chaplain would bring in great guest speakers from all over the country to motivate and help enhance the Regiment's spiritual fitness. We did this monthly and had the Regimental Dining Facility cater the breakfasts. The Chaplain brought in nationally renowned speakers such as coaches, wounded Marines, and even a former death row convict, who all shared their personal stories on how they maintained or turned their lives around to be happy and successful. One speaker that stuck with me was then Chaplain (LTC) Sonny Moore. I had never met him before, but have always remembered his message. He had previously been the 82d Airborne Division Chaplain and, at the time I met him, he was attending the US Army War College. I'll just paraphrase, to the best of my memory, what he shared with us. He called it "The Four B's to Live By."

Be yourself... don't try to be somebody you're not. As a leader in the Army, your Soldiers can immediately tell if you are genuine or not, and can see right through someone who is just acting the part. Everybody is different and one thing that is great about the Army is its diversity. Your unique qualities make your team, whether it's the squad, platoon, or company, even stronger.

Be positive... a positive attitude and perseverance can get you through any situation. When things aren't necessarily going as well as they could, remember that this is a temporary circumstance. Having a positive attitude is knowing in your mind that your actions can make anything better. I see this every day in the Brigade as Soldiers at all levels continue to find ways to improve their areas of responsibility.

Be going somewhere... have a plan for the future. Sometimes, especially on a long >> Pg. 3



(Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude)

(Left to right) Col. Kevin O'Connell, the commander for the 1st Sustainment Brigade, tours the Supply Support Activity with Philadelphia native Chief Warrant Officer Two Joseph Stewart, the accountability officer for Company A, 94th Brigade Support Battalion and Sparkman, Ark. native Staff Sgt. Carlet Williams, the warehouse noncommissioned officer in charge. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude)

94th Brigade Support Battalion praises "Make it Happen"

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

On a recent visit to Rustamiyah, the commander of the 1st Sustainment Brigade toured the Supply Support Activity run by Company A, 94th Brigade Support Battalion.

Col. Kevin O'Connell, commander of the 1st SB, visited Rustamiyah in an effort to gage the service provided by elements of the brigade. After speaking with Chief Warrant Officer Two Joseph Stewart, the accountability officer for the 94th BSB, it appears things are going well.

"The 168th BSB has been providing outstanding support," stated Stewart.

requisitions back into the system – an estimated \$59 million."

The 168th Brigade Support Battalion, or "Make it Happen," is one of five battalions under the 1st SB serving throughout the Multi-National Division-Baghdad.

Stewart noted that since their arrival in early December 2007, the SSA was able to process an estimated 72,000 material release orders (repair parts, office supplies, or engineer equipment) at a value of \$127 million thanks to the support of the 168th BSB. **STF**

The Sustainment Times

FORWARD

The Sustainment Times Forward is an award winning 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. Hielke "Hike" Welling, the support operations officer holds up MND-B with Sgt. Maj. Mark Hill, the support operations sergeant major.

(Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude)

CSM Time

CSM Frank G. Cardoza



Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Cardoza (center) cuts up with Command Sgt. Maj. Eugene Thomas (left) and Command Sgt. Maj. Ofelia Webb (right) (Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude)

►►deployment, things can seem like Groundhog Day, every day the same. By having a plan, whether that's getting additional training, furthering your education, planning your R&R leave or redeployment vacation, or charting out your retirement savings portfolio, you'll be much further ahead in the long run. By setting goals and objectives, you'll be able to have a much more fulfilling life.

Be kindly towards others...remember that every single person you deal with is someone else's most valuable treasure. Whether it's a worker in the DFAC, PX, or laundry; a civilian local or third country national; or a Soldier, regardless of age, rank, color, or religion; everybody deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. You'll also find that the better you treat others, the better you'll be treated.

I saw Chaplain (now COL) Sonny Moore years later at Fort Riley, and he was still living by the Four B's. I think we can all learn something from him as we apply the Four B's to our personal, individual lives. I want to thank all of you for taking the road less traveled and having the character and

moral courage to serve in the US Army when the Nation needs you in this time of war. Every unit in the 1st Sustainment Brigade is doing a magnificent job supporting Multi-National Corps-Iraq with supplies, maintenance, distribution, human resources, and financial management. Keep up the great work and keep finding ways to improve your team and your quality of life, both near and long-term.

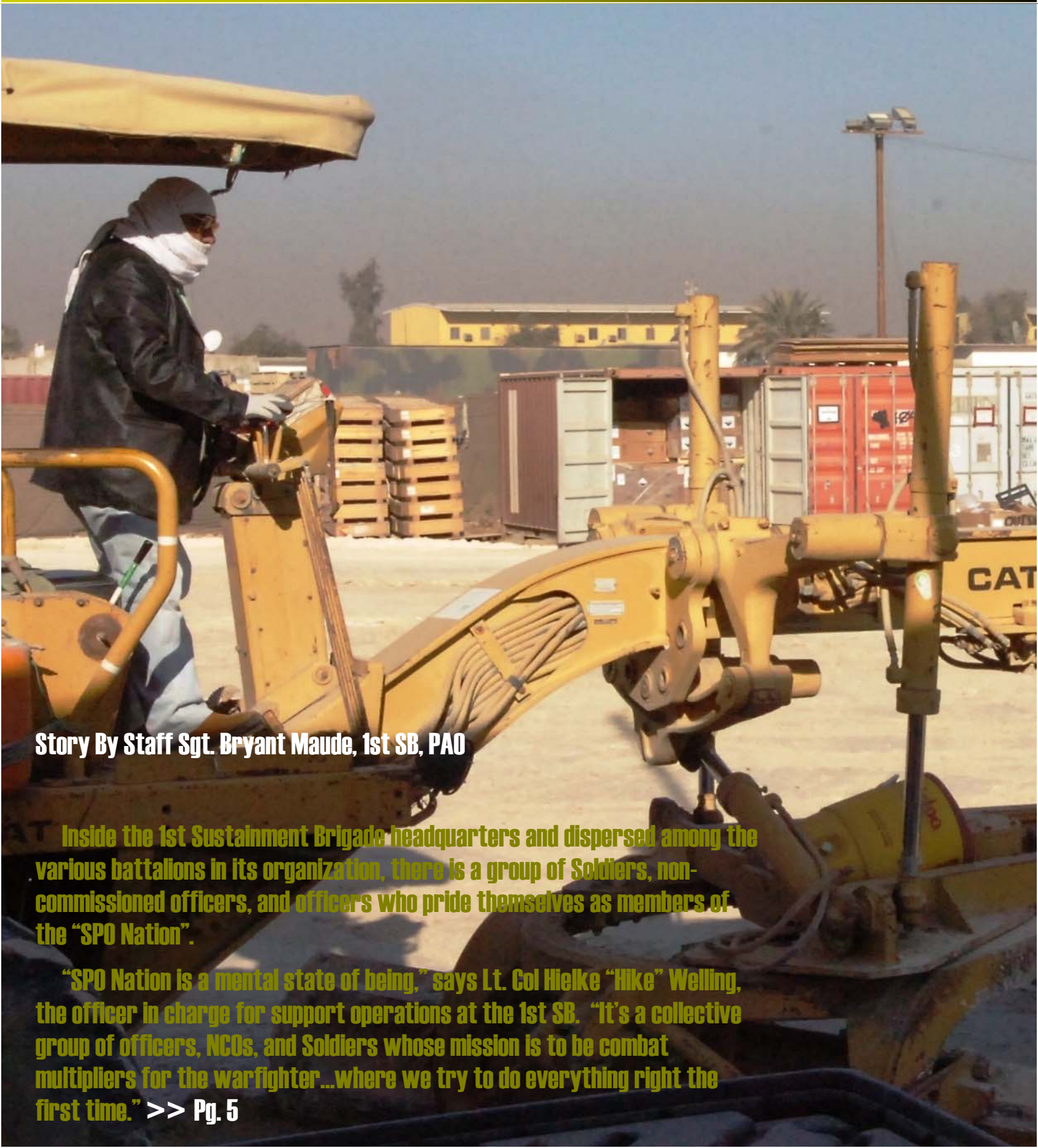
Thanks again for all you do. I'm proud to be your Brigade Commander.

COL Kevin O'Connell, Durable 6



Have you got your Hooah card yet? If you're caught doing great things, you might!

SPO Nation, driving to perfection



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

Inside the 1st Sustainment Brigade headquarters and dispersed among the various battalions in its organization, there is a group of Soldiers, non-commissioned officers, and officers who pride themselves as members of the “SPO Nation”.

“SPO Nation is a mental state of being,” says Lt. Col Hielke “Hike” Welling, the officer in charge for support operations at the 1st SB. “It’s a collective group of officers, NCOs, and Soldiers whose mission is to be combat multipliers for the warfighter...where we try to do everything right the first time.” >> Pg. 5



“Again, that SPO Nation mindset, led us to peeling back the onion and we found things that didn’t look right, things that could be done better,” said Welling.

(Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude)

»The term “SPO Nation” was first coined by Maj. Christopher Dexter, the deputy support operations officer for the 1st SB, at Fort Riley, Kansas, prior to their departure for Iraq.

“I was looking for some kind of team name,” recalled Welling. “He was talking about living the dream and SPO Nation...because of the size of the organization...so I put it out there and it wasn’t long before it caught on with the Soldiers.”

If you look at SPO Nation, you will find out quickly that this mindset has definitely produced exceptional results in a short period of time. These results were not a product of luck, happenstance, or accident; rather, they were the results of very precise, purposeful planning that started back in Fort Riley several months prior to their departure to Iraq.

In November 2006, before the 1st Infantry Division Support Command transformed into the 1st Sustainment Brigade, Welling and his select team, were in contact with the current, in theater brigade, the 15th Sustainment Brigade. In April, they joined several of the soon to be subordinate commanders in an exercise at Ft. Bragg, N.C., where they could put faces to names. It was here that the seeds of change were planted that, in the end, would yield the type of productivity gains Welling was striving for.

“At this point, we had no ideas of changing things; it was more of a time to gain insight as to how we’d support 19 brigades in the area of operation,” recalled Welling. After hitting the ground in September 2007, they started their investigation; learning about the process and asking the hard questions, like “how do we do things better?” and “how do we improve the process?”

“Again, that SPO Nation mindset, led us to peeling back the onion and we found things that didn’t look right, things that could be done better,” said Welling. “We wanted to know why it is being done this way.”

This line of questioning guided them to the developing of initiatives. And it was these initiatives where SPO Nation set out to improve the ten sections underneath them; everything from contracting, services, supply, distribution management, and planning.

“We developed initiatives for each of these areas and then started to execute,” explained Welling.

SPO Nation saw immediate results in some areas. The first success was in re-missioning the distribution mission at Forward Operating Base Hammer.

“When we arrived, Hammer was getting their support from Camp Taji and Balad and that didn’t make sense from a time and distance factor,” stated Welling. “At the time, there was a 13-day wait for a part to arrive, and this was affecting combat power rates.”

The challenge to providing support at FOB Hammer was partially due to location; it is one of few bases east of the Euphrates River. After careful analysis, it was determined that the Soldiers would be better served out » Pg.6

»of Victory Base Complex and BIAP (Sather Airfield) rather than Camp Taji.

Welling reached out to the 168th Brigade Support Battalion “Make it Happen” at VBC, and presented the idea of shifting the mission to them.

“We were excited to get the mission,” said Maj. Paul Sanders, the support operations officer for the 168th BSB. “There were a lot of innovations made by us early on in supporting some of our other FOBs and this freed up some of our assets, so we used those assets to support FOB Hammer.”

This move also helped the 168th BSB in an unexpected way. They were tasked, on occasion, to move barriers which utilized a lot of assets and threw their schedule way off.

“It was a deal with Brigade, that if we give you FOB Hammer, we’ll take all those barrier missions and move them to 1103rd CSSB,” said Sanders.

One area affected by the change was the Supply Support Activity at FOB Hammer. Chief Warrant Officer Three Pandora Searls, the supply systems technician, of Company A, 203rd Brigade Support Battalion, was having issues getting their unserviceable repair parts retrograded from Hammer back into the Army supply system.

“The 168th was very responsive to our need to get the retrograde back into the Army supply system,” said Searls. “They are not only dropping supplies off, but are also picking up five to six containers of retrograde a week.”

The result of this 30-day effort reduced the customer wait time from 13 days to eight days. The customers at Hammer are happy to get their stuff faster, combat rates went up and that’s what’s important to the members of SPO Nation.

A second group of initiatives took place in the Consolidated Receiving and Shipping Point (CRSP) yards at VBC

and Camp Taji.

“Reports weren’t standardized, databases were antique, people weren’t watching things to the level I like, so we started building new reports and organizing the process,” said Welling “Staff Sgt. Cresse and Chief Johnson were instrumental in this process.” (See Productivity Gains in the CRSP Yard, Pg. 7)

As a result of improving the flow of data, the time for moving products in and out of the yard went from a nine-day average to, at one point, five days in Taji and three days at Victory Base Complex. “This is very significant when you think about it,” stated Welling.

There were other initiatives that SPO Nation worked on like the creation of visual products to aid in the understanding of product movement, doubling air movements, and even the small things, like the daily delivery of the *Stars and Stripes* newspaper did not elude their attention.

“I looked at operations at Taji where we don’t have an airfield and I thought, ‘What the heck, why can’t we get newspapers and supplies everyday,’” said Welling.

He looked at what the Corps was doing at Taji with their four times a week Joint Military Mail Terminal (JMMT) run to Taji from Balad and thought “why not piggy back off what they’re doing.” The idea was simple: embed some 1SB assets into the JMMT logistics patrols and nest our existing, three times per week, CLP runs on alternate days to establish seven-day service.

The added bonus was that this type of transportation arrangement didn’t cost them any more resources. It was simply the synchronization of operations that led to a smarter, more efficient way of doing business; the SPO Nation way of doing business. **STF**

The 41st Transportation Company, 1103rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade Soldiers truck much needed supplies to Company Operating Base Callahan.

(Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude)



Productivity gains

in the CRSP Yard

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

A couple innovative Soldiers and a curious chief warrant officer of the 1st Sustainment Brigade believed that accurate information in the hands of decision makers, at a faster rate, could create increased productivity gains in the Brigade's central receiving and shipping point yards - and it has.

"I got involved after a visit by Staff Sgt. Cresse," said Chief Warrant Officer Two Nadine Johnson, the support operations transportation mobility officer for the 1st SB.

"We had problems with the existing software at the Taji CRSP, and he brought up the idea of building a whole new database. He wanted to tie it in with the database he was currently working on for the transportation movement request section," explained Johnson.

For Staff Sgt. Mark Cresse, the TMR manager for the 168th Brigade Support Battalion, the idea for a database came several months prior to meeting Johnson as he observed the archaic method currently utilized by his command.

"The system that was used to track TMRs was based on counting colors on a spreadsheet" said Cresse. "There had to be a better way."

It took Cresse months of trial and error before his third adaptation of the TMR database was installed, tested, and observed to be working.

"After version two blew up, I made version three and it ran great, so I contacted the 1103rd, and they agreed to let me install it there to see if it improved their operation," said Cresse.

He installed the software and improvements were made. Cresse continued to make small changes to his TMR software, but wanted to do more. His chance came after he received a request from the Brigade to visit Camp Taji and assist them with an issue they were having.

"When I made a trip down there, I got together with CW2 Johnson and I told her I could make one for the CRSP also," recalled Cresse.

With only a little knowledge of CRSP yard operations, Cresse paid a visit to a friend, Sgt. Michael Muntifering, the non-commissioned officer in charge of the Victory Base Complex CRSP yard database.

"I asked him to help because he knew how to run a CRSP and how to work in Microsoft Access," said Cresse.



Sgt. Michael Muntifering, the Victory Base Complex CRSP Yard data base non-commissioned officer in charge, 192nd Quarter Master Company (center) instructs Master Sgt. J.D. Miller, the support operations non-commissioned officer in charge for the 1103rd CSSB (right) and 1st Lt. Erik Solberg, the road master officer in charge for the 1103rd CSSB on the recently installed Transportation Movement Request Workspace software he helped develop. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude)

"He had problems with the existing software at the Taji CRSP, and he brought up the idea of building a whole new database. He wanted to tie it in with the database he was currently working on for the TMR section," stated Muntifering.

The two of them went to work on the new database. Cresse focused on data coming in; Muntifering focused on data going out, and Johnson provided oversight.

"My role was giving guidance on what the database should be able to do for us," recalled Johnson.

The project came with a series of challenges for the Soldiers.

"I had to re-learn Access. I took a basic course my freshman year of college, but we didn't go nearly as in-depth as SSG Cresse and I did. We would continually come up with new ideas for the database, and trying to implement those ideas in terms of code and functionality was the hardest part," said Muntifering.

"After about a month, we got a good product together that reduced errors and was compatible with the other databases. Now the Brigade is working off multiple interacting systems that have improved movement through increased visibility of cargo," stated Cresse.

At its base, the software cuts much of the work out of the
 >>Pg. 12



Special Troops Battalion

Lt. Col. Robert D. Brem, Commander

Easy Red puts out big numbers

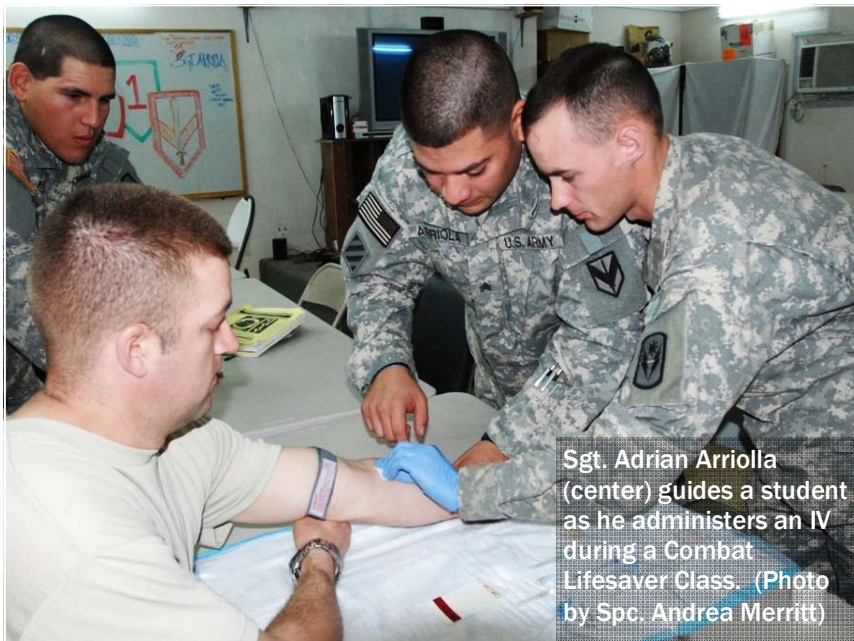
Story By Spc. Andrea Merritt, 1st SB PAO

The medics of the Special Troops Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade operate the Easy Red Aid Station on Camp Taji 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

On top of their duty to run a non-stop operation at the aid station, treating service members and select civilians who reside on the camp, they train other Soldiers to save lives at the facility's Combat Lifesaver Course.

The Easy Red Aid Station has the leading CLS program on Camp Taji. Since the facility began teaching CLS in November 2007, the aid station has certified almost 250 combat lifesavers.

When Capt. Michael Pagel, the officer in charge of the aid station, compared Easy Red's numbers to the CLS programs at Fort Carson, Colo.; Fort Stewart, Ga.; Fort Hood,



Sgt. Adrian Arriola (center) guides a student as he administers an IV during a Combat Lifesaver Class. (Photo by Spc. Andrea Merritt)

"I CAN STOP THE BLEEDING. I CAN SAVE SOMEBODY'S LIFE IF IT COMES DOWN TO THAT."

TX; Fort Lewis, Wash.; and Fort Riley, Kan.; he found that the amount of combat lifesavers the aid station certifies is very similar.

"Our numbers are relatively high compared to how other people have dedicated combat lifesaver programs, and we only have our one staff of 11...who run this aid station 24-hours a day and teach a continuous combat lifesaver program," Pagel said.

The CLS course is offered three weeks out of the month and has one primary instructor. Other medics in the clinic offer a hand in teaching the class when needed.

"We [have] instructors here that actually have experienced combat and it's just a matter of getting the students involved," said Staff Sgt. Scott Locke, the platoon sergeant for the medics at the Easy Red Aid Station.

"Here in theater, it's easy to get them involved because they have a reason to learn it. Especially with the units that we're training; half of them are always out on convoys," Locke added.

In CLS class, Soldiers train to render proper first aid to a casualty as well as administer IVs. Both students and the instructor look forward to taking a stab at IV training.

"I like doing hands on. I like interacting with the Soldiers and the students. I like showing them exactly how it's done," said Sgt. Adrian Arriola, a medic with the 1st SB and the primary instructor for the CLS course.

"Everybody's a visual learner and if you give that block of instruction visually, they're going to take in that knowledge more," added Arriola, who was an infantry medic for seven years before he arrived to the 1st SB.

The aid station added litter bearing to its course outline, which is not normally taught in a basic CLS class.

"After our (mass casualty exercise), we realized a need for greater training on patient evacuation, including both litter carries and loading and unloading ambulances," Pagel said.

Although the medics of the Easy Red Aid Station are proud of the 250 certified combat lifesavers, the staff at Easy Red says they have the capability to produce more.

"Coming through a course like this will not only help you in the Army, your mission, but also driving down the road..." said Locke. "It will provide you with some type of background to say 'I can stop bleeding. I can save somebody's life if it comes down to that'." **STF**



Spc. Richard Wiley, a gunner with Battery A, 1st Battalion, 143rd Field Artillery, administers an IV during a Combat Lifesaver class Feb. 14 at the Easy Red Aid Station. (Photo by Spc. Andrea Merritt)



1st Battalion, 143rd Field Artillery

Lt. Col. Ian Falk, Commander

BROTHER'S KEEPER

Story by Spc. Andrea Merritt, 1st SB

PAO

As a convoy security unit, the Soldiers of Battery A, 1st Battalion, 143rd Field Artillery, 1st Sustainment Brigade, are charged with safely escorting convoys from one point to another.

During convoys, they are their "brother's keeper." The Soldiers have to remain alert and ever vigilant as they travel down potentially unsafe roads.

"The number one thing that's important to me when working with any transportation company is that they have confidence in us," said Sgt. 1st Class Donald Fisher, a gun truck commander and the platoon leader for first platoon, Battery A, 1st Bn., 143rd FA, 1st SB.

The unit has a good reputation for protecting their convoys. Although there have been IED blasts and small arms fire incidents, the unit has had no serious injuries or any escalations of force while on the road, said Fisher. Confidence is exactly what the transportation units have in them.

"Our gun trucks have been good at finding stuff and not getting us into bad situations," said Sgt. Derek Frey, an assistant mission commander for the 494th Transportation Company, 1103rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 1st SB.

"We don't encounter a lot of engagements. Other people travel the same routes as us and a lot of them seem to have problems. We attribute that to the way our vehicles are performing," Fisher said.

During the convoy, the vehicles have constant communication with

each other. If at a halt, all eyes in the vehicles are watching for anything suspicious as the gunner in the hatch keeps his weapon at the ready and scans the sectors around him.

"If you look like you know what you are doing, nobody really wants to mess with you. Don't make yourself a target," Fisher added.

Although the possibility of an enemy attack is real, the Soldiers enjoy traveling. They get to see many different parts of the country and interact with some of the locals.

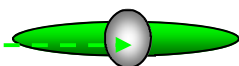
"Some of the missions we run, we do get to interact with the local population, and they're really receptive," said Fisher. "If you treat them with respect and show them that Americans aren't bad, maybe their attitude will change, and they will start working with us."

When passing through a town, the Soldiers are friendly and wave at the people they see. They believe in respecting all people, but their biggest concern is the safety of the convoy.

"Our battery commander calls (my Soldiers) the 'Wayward Home for Lost Boys' because they have different (military occupational specialties) and attitudes, as well as a wide age range; but they are some of the smartest, most courteous, and faithful Soldiers you will ever run into," Fisher said.

The transporters have to trust the gun truck company to choose the routes they will travel and what actions to take if an incident occurs. The gun truck commander has to constantly think ahead and trust his Soldiers to do their jobs.

"I can't see what a 20-year-old gunner is doing at the back of a convoy, so I have to trust him enough to make the right decision at the right time," Fisher concluded. **STF**



"IF YOU LOOK LIKE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE DOING, NOBODY REALLY WANTS TO MESS WITH YOU. DON'T MAKE YOURSELF A TARGET."

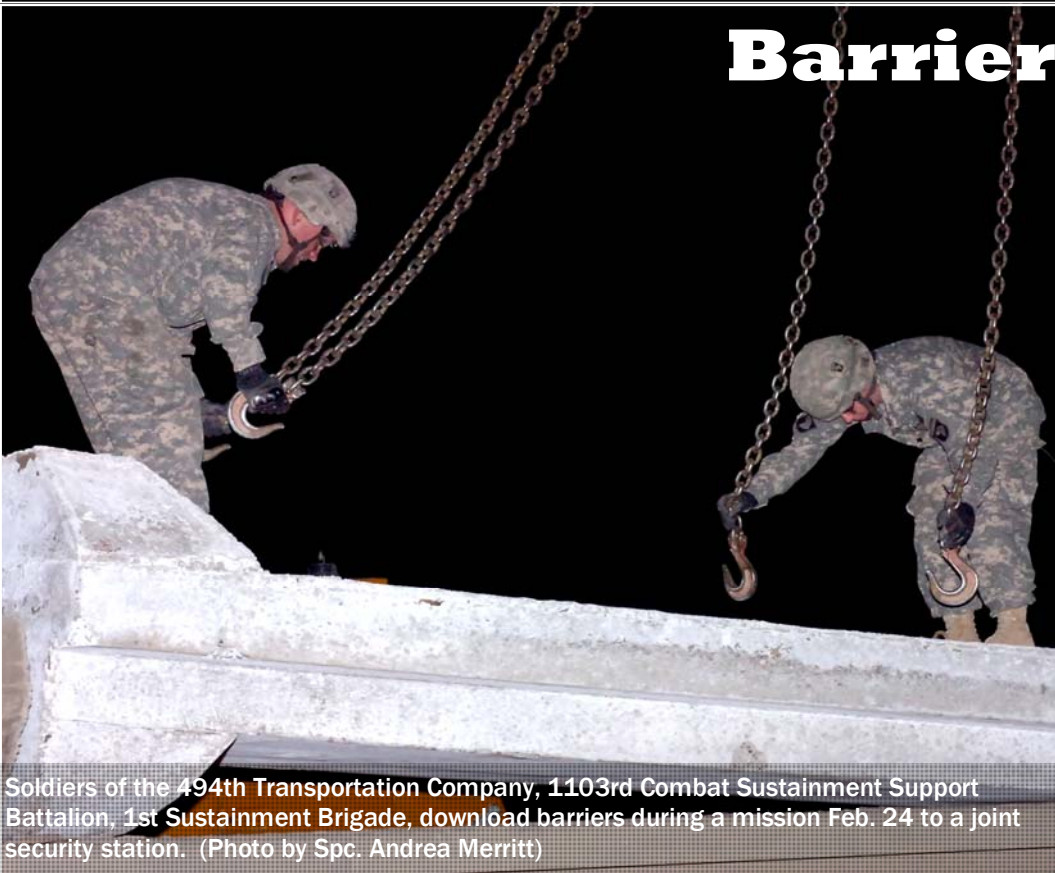
(Photo by Spc. Andrea Merritt)



1103rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion

Lt. Col. Lee Ellis, Commander

Barrier Missions



Soldiers of the 494th Transportation Company, 1103rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, download barriers during a mission Feb. 24 to a joint security station. (Photo by Spc. Andrea Merritt)

the support operations officer for the 1103rd CSSB, 1st SB.

“Although a section of the wall is destroyed, the munitions, or whatever is used, expended all its energy against the wall and it never reaches its intended target. So it affords a great degree of protection from the enemy,” Baxley said.

Despite the fact that a mission can last anywhere from a few hours to a few weeks, the Soldiers of the 494th TC understand the importance of the barrier missions, so they have no qualms about constantly being on the road. At times, they even look forward to it.

“Sometimes it’s exciting,” Frey stated. “We go to different places, different (joint service stations) and different COPs. We never take barriers to the same place twice.”

With a barrier mission, the Soldiers are responsible for loading the barriers onto the vehicles, hauling them to the location they will be erected, downloading them, and at times, emplacing them.

“Emplacing the barriers was a new experience. There were a lot of new things we had to learn,” Frey said. “We learned how to handle barriers and how to work with the local national crane operators.”

“Sometimes we would tell the operators to go up, and they would go down ...,” said Sgt. Fredrick Dyess, a motor transportation specialist with the 494th TC.

The Soldiers of the 494th TC are proud of the work they have done, but they are even more proud that, so far, there have been no successful attacks against them on the road and that there have been no serious injuries while handling the 10,000-pound walls.

They accredit these accomplishments to the Soldiers who provide convoy security for them as they travel on the roads and to the safety standards that the company and battalion have in place. **STF**

494th TC Soldiers motivated to do the job

Story by Spc. Andrea Merritt, 1st SB,

PAO

Almost 20 years ago, Germans celebrated the fall of a famous concrete wall that, for so many years, segregated and isolated many of its countrymen from one another.

Today in Iraq, concrete walls have a different purpose. Barriers have been erected around a number of structures on forward operating bases and combat outposts throughout Iraq in an effort to protect the service members who reside on them from enemy attacks.

Soldiers of the 494th Transportation Company, 1103rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, have traveled through the night on different missions to deliver barriers to other brigades and battalions throughout Multi-National Division-Baghdad.

Although the Fort Campbell, Ky., unit is not the only company in the battalion that delivers barriers, it has been a critical piece to the missions since its arrival to theater in February, 2007.

“We’ve done other missions, but since October we have done, pretty much, nothing but barrier missions,” said Sgt. Derek Frey, a motor transportation sergeant with the 494th TC, who was the assistant mission commander for some of the missions.

Due to the efforts of the 494th TC and other companies in the 1103rd CSSB, the battalion has delivered more than 10,000 barriers throughout MND-B.

“(The barriers) have proven to be very effective. There have been multiple engagements and attacks against our forces, and the wall would be in the way,” said Maj. Van Baxley,

Around Camp Taji



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.



Coming events on Camp Taji in MARCH 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.



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.

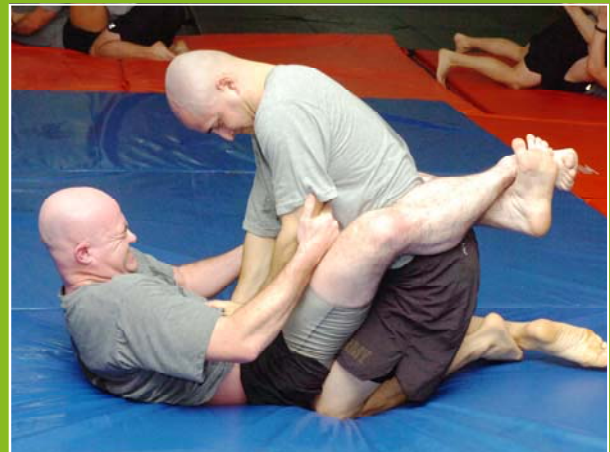
STAY

INVOLVED

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Participators watch as Pfc. Daniel Taitingfong (bottom), an ammunition stock control specialist with the 1st Sustainment Brigade and an instructor for the jujitsu class on Taji, demonstrates a throw on Staff Sgt. Ernesto Diaz (top), an administrative NCO for the 1st Sustainment Brigade support operations section during jujitsu class.



Staff Sgt. Ernesto Diaz (right), a support operations administrative noncommissioned officer with the 1st Sustainment Brigade, attempts to pass the guard of Maj. John Caudill (left), the officer in charge of the Contracting Coordination Cell for the 1st SB, during a jujitsu class.

Hot Tracks

By Pfc. Rashi Bailey

Ten outstanding women in music history

10.) Shania Twain: Born Eileen Regina Edwards, August 28 1965 in Windsor Ontario, Shania is a singer and songwriter in the country and pop music genres.

9.) Britney Spears: Hailed as the next Madonna, Britney Jean Spears was born December 2, 1981. She is an American pop music singer, songwriter, dancer, actress, and author. Spears has sold over 76 million records worldwide.

8.) Janet Jackson: Janet Damita Jo Jackson, was born May 16, 1966. Janet is an American actress, singer, songwriter, record producer, dancer, activist and global superstar.

7.) Aretha Louise Franklin: Born March 25, 1942. Aretha is an American singer, songwriter, and pianist. She has been called for many years "The Queen of Soul", but many also call her "Lady Soul," as well as the more affectionate "Sister Ree."

6.) Dolly Rebecca Parton: Born January 19, 1946, Dolly is a Grammy-winning and Academy Award-nominated American country singer, songwriter, composer, musician, author, actress, and philanthropist.

5.) Whitney Elizabeth Houston: Born August 9, 1963. Whitney is a Grammy award winning, American R&B singer, actress, film producer, and former model. She is well-known for her powerful vocals, outstanding vocal inflections, and expansive vocal range.

4.) Tina Turner: Born November 26, 1939, as Anna Mae Bullock. Turner is an American singer, dancer, entertainer, actress and songwriter. Turner's success, dominance and popularity in rock music earned her the title, "The Queen of Rock & Roll", and she has won eight Grammy Awards.

3.) Cher: Cheryl Sarkisian LaPierre was born on May 20, 1946, and is an American singer, actress, songwriter, author and entertainer. Among her many accomplishments in music, television and film, she has won an Academy Award, a Grammy Award, an Emmy Award and three Golden Globe Awards.

2.) Madonna: Madonna Louise Ciccone Ritchie, was born August 16, 1958. She is a singer, song writer, producer, director, writer, actor, diva, icon, and an entertainment legend. She is also considered the "Queen" of popular music by the recording industry.

1.) Diane Ross: Was born March 26, 1944, and is an American singer, songwriter, and Academy Award nominated actress, whose musical repertoire spans pop, R&B, soul, disco and jazz.

These are just a few of the great women that contributed to the music era of past and present. I challenged you to do your own research and find out for yourself the others. This has been Bailey's Picks for the month of March; I hope you enjoy!

>> (From Pg. 7) research. Transportation battalions and other customers can now obtain daily updates to the past 30 days of data, thus eliminating time consuming phone calls to obtain the same information.

"Also, the TMR managers within the battalions are better able to see what we're dealing with now that everyone is using standardized data. The process of CRSP and TMR scrubbing has been automated. The same goes for troublesome cargo at the CRSP. If a piece meets certain criteria, it is automatically flagged and allows for quicker research. It's pretty cool," stated Muntifering.

"The database is already having effects on how we do business," said Johnson. "It's more efficient. It gives me more up-to-date and vital information quicker and its easier

to search...I can see right away if something is incorrect; I am able to give a more accurate picture to the commander."

Never ones to rest on the past, Cresse and Muntifering are already looking at ways to expand the software to others.

"It would be great if the Army finally standardizes transportation logistics theater-wide. It would be fantastic if everyone used the same type of data and the same systems. Even if it weren't our system, it would be neat to know that I may have had a hand in spurring that change," concluded Muntifering.

"I love what I do now, so I am going to make every effort to make it to warrant officer so I can really make some good things happen for transportation. I am a lifer, so I want to do as much as I can," stated Cresse. **STF**

Soldier on the Street

We asked Soldiers the following question: "What do you do to relax when you're not working?"



"I bought a Wii not that long ago so that keeps me pretty busy."

Spc. Jeff Wiggins, Battery A, 1st Bn., 143rd FA



"Go to the gym or go to sleep. It's kind of hard to sleep during the day because we do most of our runs at night."

Spc. Evan Quaco, Battery A, 1st Bn., 143rd FA



"Read and run. I mostly read non-fiction and history. I run because I have a lot more energy after I run."

Maj. Ira Baldwin, 1st Sustainment Brigade

Big Red One at Remagen, Germany, March 1945



In March of 1945, the 1st Infantry Division crossed the Rhine River at the Remagen Bridgehead. The division broke out of the bridgehead, took part in the encirclement of the Ruhr Pocket, captured Paderborn, and ended the war in Czechoslovakia.



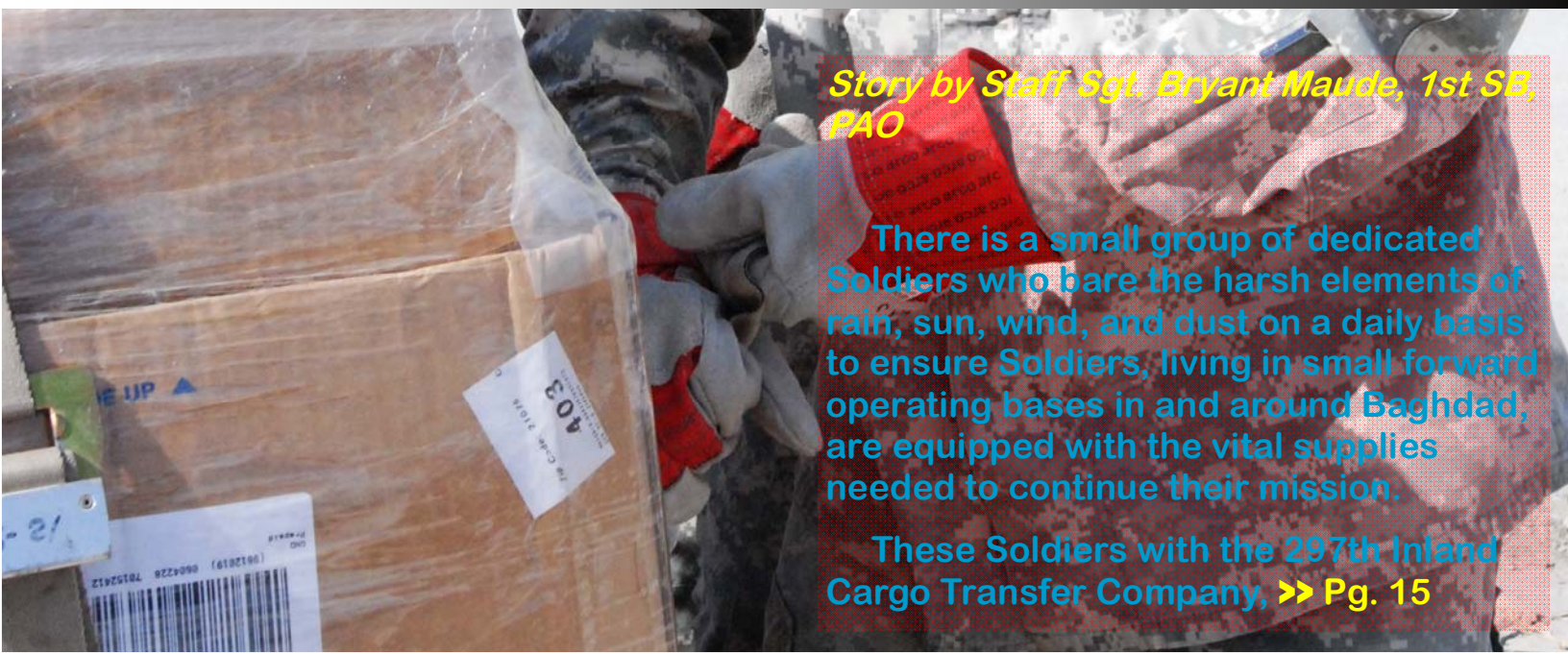
68th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion

Lt. Col. Darrell Duckworth, Commander



“Soldiers Off The Road”

shifts mission for 297th Inland Cargo Transfer Company



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

There is a small group of dedicated Soldiers who bare the harsh elements of rain, sun, wind, and dust on a daily basis to ensure Soldiers, living in small forward operating bases in and around Baghdad, are equipped with the vital supplies needed to continue their mission.

These Soldiers with the 297th Inland Cargo Transfer Company, >> Pg. 15

➤ 68th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, also clock in long hours so that other Soldiers can stay off the road.

“To keep Soldiers off the road, we fly the cargo instead of trucking it,” said Sgt 1st Class Brian Kunz, a native of Knoxville, Tenn., and the officer-in-charge of the Arrival / Departure Airport Control Group at Sathar Air Base. “In order to do that, we have to break these incoming pallets down into sizes that work for the helicopters.”

Cargo flies into Sathar Air Base by fixed wing aircraft (C-5, C-17, or C-130), and is usually packaged on individual pallets, 96 inches tall and up to 10,000 pounds. The cargo is then off-loaded and placed in the Air Force inbound lanes.

“There are three categories of palletized cargo that we receive; pure, mixed, and miscellaneous,” states Kunz.

Pure pallets consist of cargo destined for one location; mixed pallets consist of cargo destined for multiple locations, and miscellaneous pallets will either stay on Victory Base Complex or other destinations that aren’t flown to on a daily bases.

“The supplies here, according to the Army, need to be broken down and on its way to the customer in five days,” says Kunz. “Our Battalion says three days; we do it in 48 hours, probably because we’re trying to be the fastest A/DACG on the planet.”

Each pallet that comes off the planes is identified by way of an identification

tag. The A/DACG Soldiers know how to read the tags and determine what product goes where. Trucks from VBC also arrive to the A/DACG, and as they do, Staff Sgt. Anthony Reaves, a Miami native, and the platoon sergeant for the A/DACG platoon, 297th ICTC, is there to greet them and direct them to the proper lane.

“I have a team that breaks down pallets and a team that builds pallets,” said Reaves, “I constantly train them on any changes that take place so we don’t miss a beat.”

The Soldiers trained and trained for the mission prior to arriving in Iraq and this training helped prepare them for the volume of materials they would be handling.

For Spc. Berman Tsinnijinnie, a native of Page, Az., and a cargo specialist with the 297th ICTC, the job came easy.

“It was hands-on training and I enjoyed it very much,” said Tsinnijinnie.

“It’s a lot of manual labor,” said Spc. Jorge Bernardez, a cargo specialist and Bronx, N.Y. native. “We break down and build 15 to 18 pallets a day on our shift alone.”

The A/DACG personnel identify pallets in need of break down by location and date from oldest to newest. Pure pallets are broken down to CH-47 specifications (54” tall and 3,000 pounds or 50” and 5,000 pounds) and are placed in the appropriate HELO lane. Mixed pallets are also broken down to create either HELO pallets or local pallets.

“The 68th CSSB sends allocated KBR trucks to pick-up and distribute the cargo bound for local VBC destinations, on a regular basis,” said Kunz.

The “Soldiers off the road” initiative was one of a number of new initiatives started by the support operations section of the 1st SB after their arrival and, as a result, the need for manpower at the A/DACG increased.

“Originally, we had 20 people here at this location and that has grown to 35,” recalls Kunz. “I have an additional 15 maintenance personnel on the other side I’m accountable for as well.”

Manning and harsh weather wasn’t the only challenge facing these Soldiers coming into the A/DACG; the equipment readiness of their vehicles was also an issue.

“We had an equipment serviceability rate of around 60 percent when we got here,” said 1st Lt. Audrey Iriberry, the executive officer for the 297th ICTC. “Thanks to Chief Chandler in maintenance, our ES rate is 98 percent.”

“Those guys really make it happen because the equipment here is old, and they work night and day to make sure it runs,” echoes Kunz.

With plans to upgrade the facility by cementing the entire ramp they are located on and adding new shelters for the cargo to be housed as they break it down and prepare it for transport, it won’t be long before Sergeant Kunz realizes his dream of becoming the fastest A/DACG in the Army. **STF**



Sgt. 1st Class Kunz is the 297th Inland Cargo Transfer Company, officer in charge of the Arrivals/Departure Airport Control Group. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude)



168th Brigade Support Battalion

Lt. Col. Todd Heussner, Commander

Transformation takes hold

at the Iraqi Truck Company

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

When Capt. Curtis Yankie, the commander for Company A, 168th Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, and his team took over the management of the Iraqi Truck Company (ITC) at Camp Liberty, the challenge was ominous.

The trucks were in bad shape, the drivers were disheartened, the facilities were archaic, and their reliability was unacceptable; something needed to be done.

“When we started out, we had an equipment serviceability rate of 60 percent,” stated Yankie. “That translated to roughly half the time the mission didn’t get done for one reason or another. The trucks were breaking down, the guys didn’t want to go out and do their job.” It was a mess.

This situation created additional challenges for Lt. Col. Todd Heussner, the commander of the 168th BSB. Every time an Iraqi truck broke down on the road it meant convoys were stopped, troops were vulnerable to attack, the mission was delayed, and additional Soldiers and trucks were needed to come out and recover the non-mission capable equipment. >> Pg. 17



“BEFORE, IF SOMETHING LIKE A WINDSHIELD WIPER BROKE, THEY’D GO ALL THE WAY DOWN TO BAGHDAD TO GET IT FIXED. THIS WOULD RESULT IN THEM BEING OUT THREE OR FOUR DAYS.”

»»“When I looked at the ITC, and their inability to get the job done, I had to consider risk to the Soldiers and accomplishment of the mission,” recalled Heussner. “Until we could get the ITC to make the necessary changes and improvements...we had no other choice but to shift ITC trucks to on base missions only.”

This shift in mission provided a window of time where their method of “offensive logistics”, as it applied to the ITC, could be monitored and tested.

“Logistics operations is a fully-integrated, proactive system of logistics support that anticipates requirements, synchronizes support, integrates deliberate combat logistics patrols with mission requirements, and improvises when standard support will not meet the requirements,” declared Yankie.

With this in mind, Yankie and his team went to work and created a four-step plan that would ultimately transform the ITC to a proficient, reliable operation and get U.S. Soldiers back off the road for good.



“We had to get in here and build a team. So we started out with four focus areas; cultural awareness, training, improved facilities, and maintenance,” said 1st Lt. Lawrence Jenkins, the ITC officer-in-charge.

The team started playing soccer with the drivers, taught them American football, organized monthly dinners, included them in training; anything to break down cultural walls and stereotypes.

“Every month, we would come down here and the drivers would bring local food back from Baghdad like lamb, fish, chicken, and rice,” recalled Jenkins. “The Soldiers would get in there with the drivers and eat local dishes, drink chi (tea with sugar and milk), and have a chance to bond.”

Safety was another area. Each Soldier is required to maintain their annual training according to their command requirements. “So why not incorporate the Iraqi drivers into the training?” thought Jenkins.

“At first, they were a little hesitant, didn’t want to get involved with training, but now they do,” said Jenkins. “We had a fire safety class out here and the Iraqi drivers showed up. They got a lot out of the training and really enjoyed it. Now they want to attend all our training. They learn how to be safe and how to take care of themselves out there on the road. The more they can do for themselves, the better.”

The team took it one step further when they decided to integrate the staff into combined facilities.

“We don’t have the Army truck master office and the Sigma truck master office; we are in the same office working side-by-side,” stated Yankie. “We no longer have these suspicions between the Iraqi drivers and the Soldiers due in part to the cultural awareness initiatives, including them in our training, letting them know we care, and also working next to them.”

The team could see that this inclusiveness was having an impact, but until they dealt with the poor living environment and vehicle maintenance, they would not impede the high turn over and downed vehicles; so facilities and maintenance needed to be addressed with management.

“When we arrived, they were living out of their trucks or in little shacks,” recalled Jenkins. “If they wanted to take a shower, they would take a few bottles of water, crawl into a cement bunker, and douse themselves in an effort to keep clean; it was pathetic.”

“I sat down with management and explained the facts. Until they improve facilities and maintenance, they were going to keep losing drivers and money. If they wanted to succeed here, they needed to improve things,” recalled Yankie. »» Pg. 18

“SO WHY NOT INCORPORATE THE IRAQI DRIVERS INTO THE TRAINING?”

»As a result of these tough conversations, the management decided to take some of their profits and invest it like the Americans suggested. They built five brand new, living trailers, a dining facility, a shower trailer without water, and a maintenance area.

“The drivers believe the company cares, and they no longer wish to leave,” said Jenkins.

“I like it here very much,” said Muhammad, one of the ITC supervisors. “Things are better today and best tomorrow...the drivers are happy.”

Morale was improving, turn over was dropping, and the team was determined to improve vehicle reliability.

“We incorporated the Army business practices and the Army maintenance program here,” said Yankie.

“They can perform maintenance on-site,” stated Jenkins. “Before, if something like a windshield wiper broke, they’d go all the way down to Baghdad to get it fixed. This would result in them being out three or four days.”

The team helped them implement their own form of the Army Maintenance Management Program. They recommended standardizing their fleet of vehicles, and house common spare parts on-site to reduce the need for travel to Baghdad to get service.

“They can do almost all routine checks and services here. The only thing they can’t do is major overhauls, like engine or transmission repairs, and there are plans to move that to this site,” stated Jenkins.

In his book “Good to Great”, Jim Collins writes “If you have the right people on the bus, the problem of how to motivate and manage people largely goes away. The right people don’t need to be tightly managed or fired up; they will be self-motivated by inner drive to produce the best results.”

A good example of one person on the bus was Spc. James Murray, the truckmaster for Company A, 168th BSB. Murray saw the need for a maintenance service pack for each type of vehicle in the ITC. On his own initiative, he created service packs, had them translated into Arabic, trained the

drivers on how to utilize the service packs, and then monitored the results.

“What we’ve seen is a huge increase in reliability with these trucks. We’ve gone from a 60 to 98 percent ES rate,” said Sgt 1st Class Steven Downey, Company A, 168th BSB. “They can get a truck in and out so much faster now that they have these checks, parts on hand, and maintenance facility in-house.”

“This has instilled pride in the drivers. They want to take care of their trucks; they know the company is going to help them fix it, and they no longer want to take it to Baghdad or anywhere else to get it fixed,” continued Jenkins. “These drivers clean and maintain their vehicles with pride...out of 52 bobtail trucks, we only have one down.”

In an operational environment where results speak louder than concepts, it is evident based on the results that this four-step plan is working. In addition to equipment serviceability climbing from 60 percent to 98 percent, there has been zero turn over of drivers in the past 90 days, there are 30 ITC trucks on the road every day, and in the past six months, we have hauled \$495 million worth of assets, 6.2 million gallons of fuel, driven over 150,000 miles, conducted 573 deliberate convoy logistic patrols that have taken roughly 7,180 Soldiers off the road.

“The results of this initiative inside the ITC are substantial,” stated Heussner. “We, as a Battalion, have increased our customer base - the number of units we support - by 40 percent, and at the same time, the number of Soldiers needed to support our mission has dropped by 30 percent. Alpha Company Soldiers have demonstrated to me that they understand the idea of “offensive logistics” support, and they have seized this opportunity to implement it into the Iraqi Truck Company. It is exciting to see.”

As a result of this success, the Iraqi Truck Company project is expanding by two more contracts. In the near future, you can look for even more Soldiers getting off the roads, more money in the hands of the Iraqi people strengthening their economy, and a greater chance that a transfer of logistics from Coalition Forces to the Iraqi people will take place. **STF**



“THEY CAN DO ALMOST ALL ROUTINE CHECKS AND SERVICES HERE. THE ONLY THING THEY CAN'T DO IS MAJOR OVERHAULS LIKE ENGINE OR TRANSMISSION REPAIRS AND THERE ARE PLANS TO MOVE THAT TO THIS SITE,” STATED JENKINS.



Chaplain's Thoughts

Chaplain Terrence E. Hayes, Brigade Chaplain



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

It's called "Operation Story Time", and the idea is simple. A Soldier reads a children's book to his kids in front of a video camera and then the video is converted to a DVD and mailed back home to the Soldier's Family.

"The idea was conceived prior to my first deployment," recalled Capt. Charles Leggett, the 168th Brigade Support Battalion chaplain. "We were looking at things that would help Soldiers keep in contact with their Families."

At the time, Chaplain Leggett was assigned to the 382nd Field Artillery, out of Ft. Hood, Texas. They thought they could video tape Soldiers reading a letter, but shortly after they arrived in Iraq, a box of children's books arrived and the plan changed.

"I received a box of children's books from the executive officer's wife," said Leggett. "So we brain-stormed some ideas and came up with story time for Soldiers' Kids."

This is the chaplain's second deployment and as a result, he is better prepared. He has a digital camera, high-end video editing software, and thanks to the thoughtfulness of some caring people at Tuttle Elementary School in Sarasota, Florida, lots of books.

"My mother told the school about it, and they all chipped in and donated books and sent them to us," said Capt. Jennifer St. John,

the battalion adjutant.

Captain St. John also enjoys reading to her daughter.

"The first time I read a book to her, she didn't understand that I wasn't there. She kept asking to play it over and over again," said St. John. "Now story time with mommy is one of her favorite things to watch."

Sgt. Kyi Waterhouse, a human resources non-commissioned officer with Headquarters Company, 168th BSB, also enjoys reading books to her boys. She first heard about the program back in July, and she thought it would be fun to try.

"When I sent the first one to my boys, they were very happy to finally see me and very excited to hear the story," recalled Waterhouse. "They started asking for more."

Waterhouse has filmed four story times so far and plans to continue every month or two until she gets home.

"Their favorite books are 'Clifford, the Big Red Dog', 'Rainbow Fish', and I like reading the 'Care Bear' books to them," said Waterhouse.

"We've recorded about 80 story times, so far," stated Leggett. "It seems to make an impact, so we'll continue to do it as long as we're here." **STF**

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Sgt 1st Class Peggy Anderson, is the Trans Night NCOIC / Day TMRs for SPO Nation. She is this month's choice for Duty. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude)