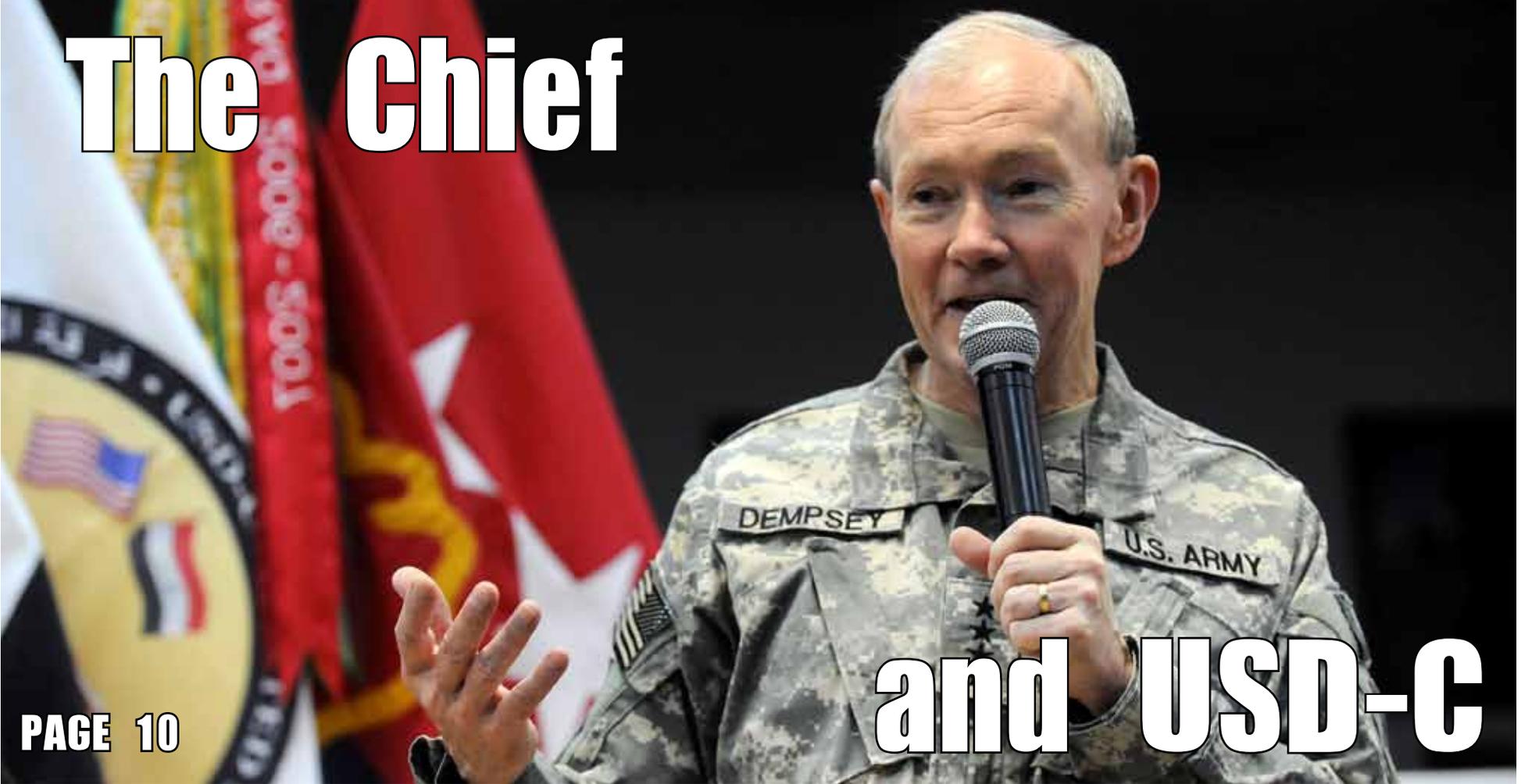


LIGHTNING STRIKES



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PAGE 10

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Jon Soucy, 29th MPAD

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USD-C SPOTLIGHT



Spc. Shawn M. Mason
 HHC, BSTB,
 4th AAB, 3rd Inf. Div., USD-C



Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates presented the Purple Heart to Spc. Shawn M. Mason Sept. 1 by during a ceremony at Camp Ramadi, Iraq.

Mason, a Harrisburg, Pa., native, and a member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, received the Purple Heart for injuries he suffered from an RKG-3 grenade attack Aug. 9 near Fallujah, Iraq.

Mason said his squad was returning from an advising mission with key leaders at an Iraqi Police district headquarters near Fallujah, when he noticed a man walking, and then running, toward the convoy with what Mason said appeared to be an orange bag in his hand. By the time he radioed to the machine-gunner to cover the man, it was too late. The man threw an RKG-3 that, upon explosion, shredded the right, front side of the armored vehicle. Mason, the driver, took shrapnel through his jaw.

"I am very happy the situation wasn't worse than it was," he said. "I am still here today, along with the rest of the people in my truck. It's great knowing no one was seriously hurt or injured."



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Spc. Puakaleihua Westbrooks, of Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 25th Infantry Division, performs a Tahitian dance during the Sexual Assault Awareness Talent Show at Camp Liberty, Iraq, April 23. The talent show, whose theme was "Hurts one, Affects all", was designed to bring people together to commemorate National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month through entertainment and vignettes about real-life statistics related to sexual assault.



USD-C's got Talent!

Variety show raises sexual assault awareness, showcases on-stage talents of service members

Sgt. Oscar Michel, of the 551st Medical Logistics Company, performs an original song on his acoustic guitar called "Ha, Ha" at Camp Liberty, Iraq.



Story and Photos by Sgt. Isolda McClelland
29th MPAD, USD-C

Service members of United States Division-Center brought awareness to National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month by hosting a Sexual Assault Awareness Talent show, where the theme was "Hurts one, Affects all", Camp Liberty, Iraq.

The purpose of the event was to bring about sexual assault awareness to as many military and civilian members as possible. This was accomplished by multiple sources of information that included an information table, a sexual assault awareness slide show, video presentations that depicted several scenarios of sexual assault occurring, and use of a master of ceremonies who recited various real-life statistics related to sexual assault in between the performances.

The talent presented included a mixture of singing, dancing, poetry, and comedy. There were five judges from various units within USD-C. The winners were picked based on four criteria points—stage presence and showmanship, crowd appeal, artistic merit, and performance quality, from which, a first, second and third place winner were chosen.

Many performers were inspired by the idea of using their talent to bring awareness to sexual assault was important to them.

"I have done talent shows ever since I was young and I am comfortable with the song I choose to sing", said Spc. Fredrina McNeil a transportation operation specialist with the 142nd Movement Control Team, who sang "Ready for Love", by India Arie, for the talent show. "I love the idea of using my voice to help bring awareness to sexual assaults."

According to the presidential proclamation, President Barack Obama said, "As we mark National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month, we recommit to building a society where no woman, man, or child endures the fear of assault or the pain of an attack on their physical well being and basic human dignity".

And that's what the show did.

"This was about reminding our peers, our NCO's (non-commissioned), officers, and everyone that we are of the same uniform," said Pfc. David Westbrooks, a command group driver of Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 25th Infantry Division, who added that people should treat each other with respect no matter what the gender or rank, no matter where they come from.



(ABOVE) Spc. Fredrina McNeil performs India Arie song "Ready for Love" while (RIGHT) Sgt. Mose Matautia and Spc. Natuutasina Tuia perform a traditional Pacific Island dance in the Sexual Assault Awareness Talent Show.

Combatives—Part of the Profession of Arms

Story and Photos by
Sgt. Jennifer Sardam
29th MPAD, USD-C

Recently a number of Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 25th Infantry Division, United States Division-Center at Camp Liberty, Iraq, got physical in a weeklong Basic Combatives Course where they learned a variety of techniques and tactics useful for self-defense and engaging an enemy in close-quarters situations.

Sgt. 1st Class Chad Bailey, the division combatives instructor with Headquarters Support Company, HHBN, 25th Inf. Div., USD-C, said this first level of combatives training is to familiarize Soldiers with the basic moves that may be needed to survive on the battlefield.

“If your weapon’s jammed, or if you’re too close to fire your weapon, or you come around the corner and are lackadaisical, then somebody could snatch your weapon from you or anything, and you’ve got to be able to know what to do,” said Bailey.

The training is realistic, so when it comes time for students to hit the mats with their “opponents,” they are randomly paired off without regard to gender or weight.

“If you come upon an enemy, it doesn’t matter what size they are,” said Bailey, a Moses Lake, Wash., native. “We’re not going by weight classes. We’re going for if you are in close-quarters combat, then you want to be able to take your enemy out, if all else fails.”

And the tactics are the same, no matter the type of contender.

“I’ve seen like 6-foot-5-inch guys go against a [woman] that’s like 5 feet 3 inches,” said Bailey. “Because it’s not going to be the perfect world where you get who you want for your enemy.”

This kind of training is useful in



Sgt. 1st Class Chad Bailey demonstrates a move on Sgt. Samuel Forrest, during at Basic Combatives Course at Camp Liberty, April 9. The course went over the fundamentals of combatives.



Sgt. Venucito Borja, with Signal Company, Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 25th Infantry Division, United States Division-Center, puts a combatives move on his “opponent,” Sgt. Samuel Forrest, a with Headquarters Support Company, HHBN, 25th Inf. Div., USD-C during a Basic Combatives Course at Camp Liberty. The course is designed to teach Soldiers basic combatives tactics that may be needed to survive when engaging the enemy in close-quarters combat.



Sgt. 1st Class Chad Bailey, a combatives instructor with Headquarters Support Company, Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 25th Infantry Division, United States Division-Center, demonstrates a move on Staff Sgt. Ryan Malin, at during combatives training at Camp Liberty, Iraq.



Sgt. 1st Class William Leuenberger, right, an assistant basic combatives instructor with Operations Company, Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 25th Infantry Division, United States Division-Center, evaluates a combatives technique executed by Staff Sgt. Adrian Young.

preparing Soldiers to deal with the kind of uncertainty they might face in combat where learning to improvise quickly is key.

“According to what the opponent did, you had to basically figure out what move you needed to go (to) from there to achieve the dominant position,” said Natalroman.

Success in combatives comes from more than just properly executing each move.

“You can’t do textbook all the time,” said Bailey. “You can’t say okay, I’m going to do this, this and this. Because you could practice, and they’re just lying there...trying to help you to learn the moves. But, if somebody’s trying to choke you or doing something else, you want to be able to improvise.”

Bailey said the training builds confidence in the students.

“At first when they come in, there are a lot of them who don’t know how to do anything (in combatives),” he said. “You’ll get Soldiers that are very timid.”

Strengthening Soldiers’ mental and physical resiliency is also one of the goals of the course.

Command Sgt. Maj. Ray A. Devens Jr., command sergeant major of the 25th Inf. Div., who took his first hand-to-hand combat course in 1982, has experienced the benefits of this type of training firsthand.

“I know that my capability of dealing with chaos in combat or in the many challenges I have faced in my life is significantly better than I could have ever imagined it would be due to the many hours of combatives PT (physical training)...that I have been fortunate to be a part of throughout my military career,” said Devens.

On the last day of class, many Soldiers said they felt they had a useful skill they could take with them.

“It’s nice to be prepared for that,” said Staff Sgt. Ryan Malin, a drummer with the 25th Inf. Div. Band and a Los Angeles native. “It just makes you an all around more confident Soldier knowing that you can go into battle

and be prepared for this kind of stuff.”

Once Soldiers graduate from the the course, they are qualified to pass on the skills to Soldiers in their units.

“You teach them (the students) the moves, and you teach them step by step so that they can teach,” said Bailey, “Because each one of these Soldiers now that are in this class will be able to go back and they’re going to be the SMEs (subject matter experts) within their section or company.”

Devens said his goal is to have every 25th Inf. Div. noncommissioned officer and Soldier certified in the first level of combatives.

“It is a method for Soldiers to increase basic physical combat capabilities,” said Devens. “But more importantly, to recognize their own inner apprehension with physically engaging with an enemy combatant, to gain faith and confidence in controlling their own lethal force, and terminate a hostile aggressor as expected by our nation from any member in the “Profession of Arms.”

First Lt. Ben Boettcher, left, with the 774th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, lifts a crate of ordnance from the back of a truck with the help of an Iraqi Army Soldier from the 6th Iraqi Army Division's Bomb Disposal Company, during a combined operation between the two units to destroy the ordnance, April 11. The mission saw the two units working as partners on a real-world mission, rather than training, to destroy ordnance that had been collected from throughout the Baghdad area.



EOD makes it all go BOOM!

Story and Photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Jon Soucy
29th MPAD, USD-C

Disposing of unwanted ordnance is often an explosive process and Soldiers from the 731st Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, attached to 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center and their Iraqi counterparts with the 6th Iraqi Army Division's Bomb Disposal Company recently conducted a combined operation where they set off quite a few explosions.

"We're clearing out a safe holding area for the 6th IA Div. (and) getting rid of the last of a large (weapons) cache they picked up a couple months back," said Sgt. 1st Class Dana Mc-

Clanahan, a platoon sergeant with the 731st EOD Co.

McClanahan said that every few weeks his Soldiers and those from the 6th IA Div. go to the demolition range to destroy items found in the Baghdad area as well as outdated ordnance.

And for McClanahan and his Soldiers this particular day at the demolition range was something different than ranges back home in the U.S.

"You get to see something big go up," said Spc. Clint Graves, with the 731st EOD Co. "Normally you wouldn't get the chance to see (this) in the states because we normally don't get to do this big of a demo op (demolition operation)."

And that also makes for a good hands-on training event.

"It's definitely good training for me," said Graves. "We don't have a lot

of opportunities to come out here and see this much ordnance all at once and be able to get rid of it. So, it is good training."

A mission like this also works to build a greater working relationship between the two units.

"They're pretty fun," said Graves of the Iraqi Soldiers. "Even though we don't speak the same language you can still tease them, razz the a little bit and they seem to get it OK, even though it is more or less hand gestures."

For McClanahan, the relationship with the 6th IA Div. goes back a bit.

"I started with this company, 6th IAD BDC, in 2008," said McClanahan. "Then I left and came back and got lucky and got stuck with the same group of guys. They're really enjoyable to work with."

And McClanahan said that he has

seen quite a few changes in the BDC since 2008.

"They've gotten a lot safer," he said. "They've started using the robots and more of their EOD equipment, instead of doing stuff by hand like they used to."

For Graves, on his first deployment, that change is also evident.

"The way that I look at it, with the EOD guys that we work with on the Iraqi side, they're more than equipped and ready to take over," he said. "They seem to be doing a good job."

But, in the end, for the EOD personnel on both sides the highlight of the day was simply blowing stuff up.

"The best part about being EOD is just to watch the explosions go off," said Graves "Also just going out helping people. I'd like to say EOD is one of the best fields out there."

(RIGHT) Spc. Clint Graves, with the 731st Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, lays out explosive matting during a combined operation with the 6th Iraqi Army Division's Bomb Disposal Company to destroy outdated ordnance. For Graves, the combined operation gave him a chance to work with larger amounts of explosives than he had in the past. "It's definitely good training for me," he said.

(FAR RIGHT) Iraqi Army Soldiers with the 6th Iraqi Army Division's Bomb Disposal Company offload ordnance to be destroyed during a combined mission with U.S. explosive ordnance disposal personnel attached to the 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division-Center. Destroyed ordnance ranged from mortars, hand grenades and ammunition to outdated detonation cord.



FALLEN HERO RUN

WHO: ALL

WHAT: Fallen Hero Run

WHEN: 22 May 2011, sign in 0530, race begins 0620

WHERE: Camp Liberty MWR

DISTANCE: Individual, 6 miles

Participants have the opportunity to select a name of a Fallen Hero and run on their behalf. The first 500 participants to cross the finish line will receive a t-shirt.

**POC for this event is 2LT Marcelle Caruso,
USD-C MWR OIC, DSN: 318-847-3179**

End of tour - 94th MP Co. wraps up mission



Soldiers with the 94th Military Police Company recently wrapped up their tour in Iraq and handed their duties over to Soldiers with the 212th Military Police Company. In recognition of the work the Soldiers have done throughout their tour, an awards ceremony was held at Camp Liberty.

'Saber' Sqdn. troops compete for top marksman honors



Sgt. Norman Bretz, with B Troop, 6th "Saber" Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center, fires his M4 carbine from behind cover during the 'Saber Shooter' competition at Caughman Range on Camp Liberty, Iraq. The competition, which pitted members from each troop within the squadron against each other, measured how effectively an individual Soldier could accurately engage multiple targets in a timely manner while maneuvering and changing out ammunition. Designed to expose Soldiers to shooting their weapon in realistic conditions, the competition also was an opportunity for the Soldiers to build morale through friendly competition. Spc. Kristopher Mancha earned the title of Saber Shooter for having the highest score while A Troop walked away with the award for best troop.

Staff Sgt. Thomas Gruenberg, right, with B Troop, 6th "Saber" Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, reloads his weapon during the 'Saber Shooter' competition at Caughman Range on Camp Liberty, while Maj. Ronald MacKay, the range officer-in-charge, records Gruenberg's time. The competition measured each Soldier's ability to place accurate fire on target in a stressful situation. While awards were given for the top shooters, the ultimate goal of the competition was to build upon individual marksmanship skills.



Story and Photos by 2nd Lt. Daniel Elmlad,
2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div., USD-C

Over the course of a three-day competition, Soldiers with 6th 'Saber' Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center competed for the right to be recognized as the squadron's top marksman.

The 'Saber Shooter' competition, unlike static ranges, measured how effectively an individual Soldier could accurately engage multiple targets in a timely manner while maneuvering and changing out ammunition. Designed to expose Soldiers to shooting their weapon in realistic conditions, the competition was also an opportunity to build morale through friendly competition.

"I liked the competitive atmosphere," said Spc. Paul Murray, with A Troop, 6th Sqdn., 9th Cav. Regt. and a Prescott, Ariz., native. "It wasn't like a normal range. The competition pushed everyone to do better."

The competition was divided into three stages. The first stage required Soldiers to rapidly engage three targets multiple times while also having to reload. The second stage tested a Soldier's capability to effectively move and use cover while engaging multiple targets. The final stage, much like the second, tested a Soldier's ability to engage targets while maneuvering around obstacles.

"I gained a lot of experience out of this competition," said Pfc. Maurice Theriault, with C Troop, 6th Sqdn., 9th Cav. Regt. and a West Springfield, Mass., native. "We don't always get a chance to shoot like this."

Those chances are especially limited, considering the patrols and other work priorities that occupy Soldiers' time while they are deployed. However, the Soldiers' response to the competition was positive and they look forward to more opportunities like this.

"I would definitely do the competition again," said Pvt. Gregory Pike, with A Troop, 6th Sqdn., 9th Cav. Regt. and a Macon, Ga., native. "I think they could improve it by making it a team competition, too."

Spc. Kristopher Mancha, with Hunter Troop, earned the title of 'Saber Shooter' by posting the best score. By virtue of having three of the top four shooters, A Troop, earned the award for the best troop from the competition.

I gained a lot of experience out of this competition. We don't always get a chance to shoot like this.

**Pfc. Maurice Theriault
C Troop, 6th Sqdn.,
9th Cav. Regt.**

An Iraqi Soldier with the 17th Iraqi Army Division commando battalion fires his weapon at the Qa'qaa range south of Baghdad during scout-sniper training, April 13.



'Dragon' Battalion works with 17th IA Div. scout-snipers so they remain

ON TARGET

Story and Photos by
Sgt. Daniel Stoutamire
2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div., USD-C

Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st "Dragon" Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center taught a two-week beginner scout-sniper course to Soldiers with the 17th Iraqi Army Division commando battalion at Joint Security Station Deason and Qa'qaa range—formerly Qa'qaa weapons facility—near Baghdad.

The intent behind the course was to establish a corps of scouts and snipers within the Iraqi Army, some of whom will be relied upon as instructors when U.S. forces leave under the Status of Forces Agreement in place between the two governments, said Maj. Henry Malinverni, with the Stability Transition Team attached to the Dragon Battalion and a Fort Dix, N.J., native.

Traditionally in the Iraqi armed forces, "snipers" have been whichever Soldier in a particular unit was assigned a sniper rifle, Malinverni said, rather than Soldiers with special training and skills capable of providing a valuable battlefield capability.

"We have identified a capability gap within the 17th IA Div. in terms of precision fire," he said. "Doctrinally, we have had to get past differences in terminology – historically for the Iraqis, a sniper is defined as anyone who had a particular piece of weaponry, not necessarily a skill set. So what we did is we outlined, since we had this capability gap and a capability requirement, how we should help them fill that."

Of course, the skill most associated with snipers is the ability to accurately hit specific targets at great distances, and the Dragon Battalion Soldiers had to work almost from scratch with their students, who were using unfamiliar weapons systems with telescopic sights attached.

The trainers and their students gradually moved back the range at which the students were consistently able to hit their targets, said Sgt. Matthew Meckley, a scout with HHC, 1st Bn., 63rd Armor Regt. and a Washington state native.

In addition to increasing the range, the instructors made their students differentiate between targets, by marking them with particular colors, shapes, or numbers.

"The intent we wanted to get across to them—starting in the classroom, to eventually showing them they could do it—was the selective target en-



Sgt. Matthew Meckley, a scout with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center, instructs a Soldier with the 17th Iraqi Army Division commando battalion during a sniper training course at the Qa'qaa range south of Baghdad, April 13. The course, which covered marksmanship and basic concealment skills, is intended to leave an enduring scout-sniper capability with the IA. In the past, for the Iraqi Army, a sniper was a Soldier that carried a certain weapon, rather than a Soldier with a specialized skill set.

agement followed by precision fire," said Staff Sgt. Dustin Capps, a section leader in scout platoon, HHC, 1st Bn., 63rd Armor Regt. and an Oregon native. "To convey the differences between targets, and then to precisely hit what they are aiming at, is a relatively new concept for many of (the IA Soldiers)."

Scout-snipers can be the eyes and ears of a unit, and must be able to conceal themselves and covertly observe enemy activity, along with hitting specified targets at great distances. Part of the training at the Qa'qaa range focused on building

effective hides—concealed positions from which to observe—and, if necessary, engaging the enemy.

The Soldiers instructing the course maintained that the actual shooting is the easier of the two skills.

"(Building a hide and shooting) are two ends of the spectrum," Meckley said. "Ask any Soldier that has been to the sniper school or served as a sniper, they will tell you that the shooting is the easy part—everything else is ten times more complex."

The Dragon Battalion snipers hope to have their most promising students from the course attend the advanced sniper course, where they will augment the skills they learned in the beginner's course, and eventually be certified as instructors for future generations of Iraqi Army scouts and snipers.

"Right now we're slated to have two basic courses," said Malinvern. "From the basic courses, we expect to have some Soldiers that show promise for advanced schooling. They'll move on beyond the defensive nature of the basic course into more advanced training, more offensive-oriented operations... to put that on the table for the IA commanders."

The instructors have had to overcome a variety of cultural and institutional differences between themselves and the IA Soldiers they are training.

"It's still amazing, the things they instantly grasp and do even better than you think (they will) and then other things you anticipate them to understand immedi-

ately, are the things they lack on," Capps said. "We've actually all been impressed with some of the things they grasp instantly and run with, and of course there can be natural frustration when things that you would imagine would be simple, they struggle with."

Despite all that, Capps said the students are eager to learn, and have shown that they care about succeeding and doing their best.

"Another nice thing to see, is when they are struggling, they are upset about it," he said. "To see them be frustrated with it until they get it and then once they finally get it, they get that confidence."

The training the 17th IA Div. is receiving from the Dragon Battalion will give them a capability they have been lacking, giving their commanders more options when confronted by an enemy force. Having competent, confident eyes and ears, with the ability to engage specific targets at distance, means the IA will be better able to provide for the safety and security of the Iraqi people.



Sgt. Matthew Meckley, right, instructs Soldiers with the 17th Iraqi Army Division commando battalion prior to conducting marksmanship training during a sniper training course at the Qa'qaa range south of Baghdad, April 13.



Spc. Michael Wilcox, with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st "Dragon" Battalion, 63rd Armor Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division - Center and an Omaha, Neb., native, passes out ammunition to a Soldier with the 17th Iraqi Army Division commando battalion during scout-sniper training at Qa'qaa range, south of Baghdad, April 13. The course, which covered marksmanship and basic concealment skills, is intended to leave an enduring scout-sniper capability with the IA.

All eyes on USD-C as ser

Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, addresses servicemembers assigned to United States Division-Center during a visit to Camp Liberty.



‘Everyone is a leader’ Mullen stresses leadership, training

Story and Photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Jon Soucy
29th MPAD, USD-C

The U.S. military has seen a tremendous amount of change over the past decade, and further changes are still to come, said Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff while visiting Camp Liberty, Iraq, and service members with United States Division – Center.

“We live in a time of extraordinary change,” said Mullen. “Look at what we’ve become as a military. Almost on the fly, we started off a heavy, kinetic focused conventional force and we have now become the best unconventional regular warfare counterinsurgency force in the world.”

And that change has allowed success in Iraq, Mullen said.

“I’ve been coming here since 2004,” said Mullen. “Look at where we are now. Look at the chance we have given 26 million people and it is their future and it is in their hands. Your mission here is help them get off to a great start as a brand new political system, a brand new democracy and everyone’s democracy isn’t the same but it is a chance.”

As the U.S. drawdown in Iraq con-

tinues, that means additional changes, specifically as it relates to deployments.

“We are at a point now for both the Army and Marine Corps, who has seen the brunt of these wars, where time at home for the next couple of years will double what it has been and be twice as long as the time you were deployed,” said Mullen.

But part of spending less time deployed brings with it somewhat of a change in leadership style, said Mullen.

“Our focus now will be on garrison leadership,” said Mullen. “We use to be a garrison force. (The questions we far are) what is the discipline? What’s the standards? How do we train? How we focus on education and advancement? How do we deal with the challenges that we sort of stick away in a closet, for us and our families, because we have either been at war or getting ready to go again.”

The answer to part of those questions, said Mullen, is basic leadership skills and mentoring those around you.

“Everybody in this room is a leader,” said Mullen. “I don’t care how junior you are. And it doesn’t matter where you are in the formation—front, middle or back—it’s you, it’s

people, it’s leadership in the toughest of times that makes a difference. And I’d encourage you focus on that, develop your own, take care of your battle buddies, mentor somebody. Everybody sitting in this room succeeded because somebody made a difference in their lives.”

There will be challenges ahead, said Mullen, referring to budget concerns over the next few years that, as planned, will see a reduction in numbers serving in the Army.

“The Army will be reduced over the course of the next couple of years,” said Mullen, adding that the projected number is about 520,000 Soldiers serving on active duty.

But, whatever the size of the military, Mullen stressed that it has to be a ready and capable force.

“Whatever military we have, whatever size, it’s got to be ready to go,” he said. “That means bombs have to be in their racks, magazines need to full, training needs to be taking place, all those things.”

Mullen underscored the importance of ensuring the military stays trained and ready.

“I won’t lead a military that is virtually strip mined from the inside so that it look s good (from a budget perspective), but we’re not going to sea,

we’re not flying airplanes we’re not training in the field because we don’t have the money to do that,” he said.

Part of ensuring that means continuing to operate in a joint environment, said Mullen.

“We have to stay balanced and we have to stay whole,” said Mullen. “We are a much better force when we fight jointly. We’ve got to not be redundant, rely on each other and depend on that for the future as well.”

And, Mullen said, it’s the service members that make the difference and get the job done.

“Thanks for what you’re doing,” he said. “Thanks for making a difference. E-mail your spouses, e-mail your kids and tell them I said thanks.”



Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, addresses servicemembers assigned to United States Division-Center during a visit to Camp Liberty. Mullen spoke with the troops about the drawdown in Iraq and possible future plans and changes within the U.S. military.

Senior leaders visit troops

'We've got to preserve that warrior ethos.

That's who we are' Gen. Dempsey, 37th CSA talks with USD-C

Story and Photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Jon Soucy,
29th MPAD, USD-C

Leader development is key to the ongoing success of the U.S. Army, said senior Army officials during a visit with troops from United States Division – Center at Camp Liberty, Iraq.

"I'm personally involved with leader development at every level, because that's what really makes us who we are," said Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, the newly appointed chief of staff of the Army. "I like to describe the Army as the nation's pre-eminent leadership experience."

As part of that, said Dempsey, the Army is currently reviewing the promotion process to ensure that only the most qualified move on to the next rank.

"We're promoting 95 to 98 percent of captains to major, 93 or 95 percent of majors to lieutenant colonel," said Martin. "We're not really separating out the true high performers that we should aspire to have. We shouldn't be satisfied that 98 percent of captains are being promoted to major, because 98 percent of captains don't deserve to be promoted to major. Statistically, that's an infeasible percentage. And we've got to do the same thing on the noncommissioned officer side."

And expanding on the capabilities and education of Soldiers—especially NCOs—is one of the things Dempsey said he and his staff are



Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, newly sworn in as the 37th Chief of Staff of the Army, speaks with Soldiers from United States Division—Center during a visit to Camp Liberty, Iraq, April 19. During his visit, Dempsey touched on changes within the Army to ensure a continued state of readiness.

focusing on.

"The new sergeant major of the Army, Sgt. Maj. Ray Chandler, has a couple things he's working on to do a couple of things for the NCO corps," said Dempsey. "One of them is to give you the same kind of developmental opportunities that heretofore were really (the realm of) the officer corps."

And part of that, said Dempsey, means a central selection board for sergeants major.

However, the role and overall abilities of the NCO corps is something Dempsey said he doesn't want to see change.

"I've watched, personally, the noncommissioned officer corps grow into what it is today," he said. "My first noncommissioned officer in the Army was an alcoholic and when he picked me up at the train station in Germany to go up and grab my (gear) he stopped and had six beers at a guest house. I'm not making that up. Here I am, a 22-year-old second lieutenant thinking, 'Is this what (the Army) is?' I didn't even know how to react to it."

NCOs now, said Dempsey, are leaps and bounds beyond that first encounter.

"The noncommissioned officer corps now, is better trained, but it's not focused just on training," he said. "They're better educated. They're more versatile. They're developing (future NCOs) differently and we have to keep that up."

Maintaining that is part of Dempsey's plan for the future of the Army, which also includes

keeping up the experience level from Afghanistan and Iraq.

"We've got to preserve that warrior ethos," he said. "That's who we are."

That includes maintaining that ethos as the drawdown in Iraq continues.

"I think we have to make sure that as the demand goes down in Iraq and Afghanistan, we've got to maintain what it means to be a Soldier, what it means to be a professional and what it means to be a warrior," Dempsey said.

That also includes going across all components of the Army.

"And, that's active, Guard and Reserve," said Dempsey. We've got to preserve this bond that has developed among active, Guard and Reserve that I promise you wasn't there 15 years ago."

And in the end, for Dempsey, it all comes back to leadership.

"I believe the Army should celebrate the fact that it is the nation's pre-eminent leadership experience," he said. "We've got to push ourselves to understand how we develop leaders."



Gen. Martin E. Dempsey addresses concerns of Soldiers from United States Division—Center during a visit to Camp Liberty, Iraq.

MOM MAKES

In honor of Mother's Day, moms serving in



PFC. Billy Rose

HHC, 299th BSB, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.

herPERSEVERANCE

My mother is my hero because in the face of adversity, she never stopped, slowed, or thought of giving in. At 14, she lost the use of her legs to Polio. She was sent away from her family, friends, and home to Lexington, Ky., and treated at the Shriners Hospital. Seven spinal taps, months of physical therapy and two years later, she was released. My grandparents were told she would never walk again. By 22, she had learned to walk with leg braces and crutches and bought a car she drove with hand controls. A year later, she was working as a secretary for the Knoxville, Tenn., mayor. At 26, she was told could not have children. My brother was born a year later. She was told she would likely not have another child, and if she did, it would have severe birth defects. I was born six years later. At 43, she was diagnosed with cancer. She fought hard, without treatment, and bore it all in silence. She passed away a year and a half later. In the face of all the physical trials and people telling her she could not, my mother never let 'no' stop her. That is why she will always be my biggest hero.

PFC. Alphonso T. Gordon

F Co., 703rd BSB, 4th AAB, 3rd Inf. Div.

herTEACHING

My mother is my friend because she is always there for me. She is truly my hero for raising me and showing me what is right from wrong. She has taught me so much and has shown me that I can be myself and still have friends that accept me for who I am. She is the only person who knows so much about me and I will always love her no matter what. I am always thinking of you and have a Happy Mother's Day!



PFC. Brandon Williams

SJA, 25th Inf. Div.

herDRIVE

My mom is my hero because she was able to raise four boys on her own without the help of a man. Since the age of 18, my mom has worked two jobs to ensure that my three brothers and I wanted for nothing. She has always been an example of a hardworking, independent woman. Her drive has motivated me to continue to strive for success each and every day. She has taught me the importance of hard work, and she has always said "the only time you will find SUCCESS before WORK is in the dictionary."

ME STRONG

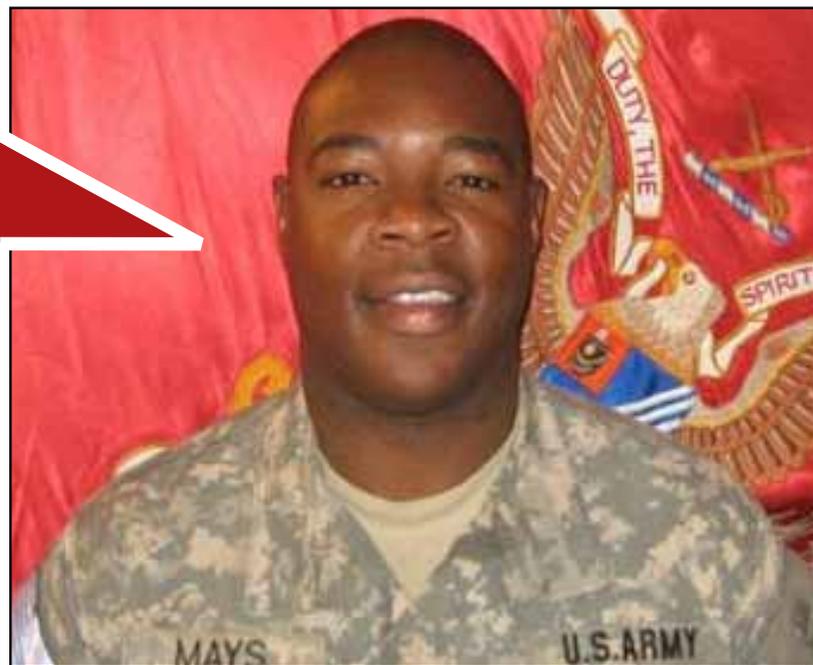
USD-C, and the mothers of USD-C troops.

STAFF SGT. Damion Mays

Battery B, 1st Bn., 76th FA Regt., 4th AAB, 3rd Inf. Div.

herCOURAGE

Mother's day has always been a very special day for me, especially since I became a mother myself. I can look back and remember the many sacrifices that my mom made for me that I took for granted. My mother worked two jobs for most of my childhood. At the time, I just wanted her to be around more. I truly did not understand the complexities of what it meant to provide for a child. To teach, love and nurture a child and accomplish this with a smile, amazing. I want to say thanks mom for your many sacrifices and the love that you gave me.



SPC. Rebecca M. Whitlatch

HHC, 299th BSB, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.

herSTRENGTH

My mom is truly my hero because no matter what life threw at her, she was always there for me and my sister. My dad left us when we were very little, so it was just her and us for most of our lives. She would sacrifice so much to make sure that we were taken care of. While working full-time, and with no help from our dad, she always made it to every school event, no matter how big or small it was. We would get into our fights, but through the years, she became one of my best friends and was always there for me for the big and little problems. When I enlisted, she was the proudest mom. Through my time in Army, we have both grown stronger and our relationship has gotten stronger. My mom, Jeanne Ann Barden, is my best friend and my hero. heart into accomplishing.

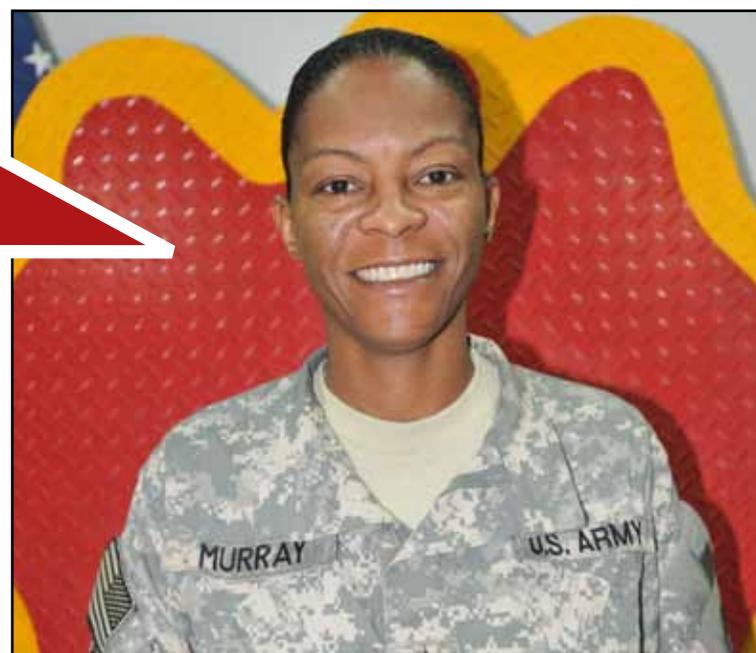


SGT 1ST CLASS April Murray

G1, HSC, HHBN, 25th Inf. Div.

herSACRIFICE

Mother's day has always been a very special day for me, especially since I became a mother myself. I can look back and remember the many sacrifices that my mom made for me that I took for granted. My mother worked two jobs for most of my childhood. At the time, I just wanted her to be around more. I truly did not understand the complexities of what it meant to provide for a child. To teach, love and nurture a child and accomplish this with a smile, amazing. I want to say thanks mom for your many sacrifices and the love that you gave me.



Members of the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior's Oil Security Force unload concertina wire at the Dora Oil Refinery in Baghdad to be used to reinforce security. Soldiers with the 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center helped with the unloading and deployment of the wire during a visit to the refinery, aiding in the defense of a vital piece of Iraq's oil infrastructure.



Refining Security

'Longknife' Squadron works with MOI to deter threats

Story and Photos by
Sgt. Ricardo Spence,
2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div., USD-C

Troopers and leaders with 5th "Longknife" Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center recently met with the security forces at the Dora Oil Refinery in Baghdad to help distribute and deploy concertina wire and other defensive measures. The visit was part of the squadron's ongoing advising and assisting mission, and helped make a vital piece of Iraqi infrastructure more secure, enabling it to support the nation's economy.

The Dora refinery is like a city-within-a-city, with a number of investment firms located there, all partnered with the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior. In addition, 12 privately funded fire departments are located in and around

the refinery, due to the fire risks associated with petroleum-based products. The whole area is secured by its own special police department, the Oil Security Force, whose sole mission is to protect and serve Iraq's oil refineries, including the one at Dora, and their resident workers.

"(Oil) will always be a big part of Iraq's infrastructure, therefore we have to provide the best security because it still is a target for those who want to destabilize our country," said Col. Ibrahim, commander of the Dora OSF. "This is done by preventing would-be attacks."

Part of deterring and disabling threats to the refinery is implementing defensive measures like concrete barriers, concertina wire, and checkpoints. The "Longknife" Squadron, during its meeting with the OSF, used its expertise to help set up the concertina wire and other defenses.

"Anything that looks out of place will not be allowed though our gates and will be sent away and thoroughly investigated," Ibrahim said, adding that he was grateful for the Americans and their help with the defenses.

In a brainstorming session over chai with Lt. Col. Matthew Moore, commander of 5th Sqdn., 4th Cav. Regt. and an Ophelia, Va., native, Ibrahim exchanged ideas on the best security, tactics and practices for his unit.

Ibrahim also thanked Moore and his Soldiers for the assistance in moving and placement of concertina wire at the refinery.

"You and your men are our partners and we are here to help, anytime," Moore said. Ibrahim, in turn, told Moore that his Soldiers were likewise always welcome, though he maintained that his men were up to the task of protecting their piece of Iraq's vital oil infrastructure.

"We will be sorry to see (the Americans) go," he said. "But it is time and we are up to the task of taking care of our country."



Lt. Col. Mathew Moore, left, commander of 5th "Longknife" Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center and an Ophelia, Va., native, gives instructions to Staff Sgt. Niall Cooper, center, a cavalry scout with 5th Sqdn., 4th Cav. Regt. and a Wimberley, Texas, native, on where to place concertina wire at the Dora Oil Refinery in Baghdad. The "Longknife" Squadron met with the refinery's Oil Security Force, helping it to secure a vital piece of Iraq's oil infrastructure.



(ABOVE) Spc. Philip Bova, with C Company, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, looks on as an Iraqi Army Soldier with the 1st Iraqi Army Division fires his weapon during small-arms weapons training in Fallujah, Iraq, April 16. The training covered squad movement techniques, marksmanship exercises and moving under fire as well as other skills. (Photo by Capt. Tiffany Collins, 4th AAB, 3rd Inf. Div.)



(RIGHT) An Iraqi Army Soldier with the 1st Iraqi Army Division practices military operations in urban terrain during a training exercise at Fallujah, Iraq. As part of MOUT training, Soldiers went over movement techniques in an urban area, crossing danger areas as well as methods and techniques for entering and securing a building, covered squad movement techniques, marksmanship exercises and moving under fire as well as other skills. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Tiffany Collins, 4th AAB, 3rd Inf. Div., USD-C Public Affairs)



Pfc. Alvaro Zavala, with C Company, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, looks on as Iraqi Army Soldiers with the 1st Iraqi Army Division participate in commando training in Fallujah. (Photo by Capt. Tiffany Collins, 4th AAB, 3rd Inf. Div.)

Side-by-Side, Step-by-Step

4th AAB, 3rd Inf. Div. and ISF hit it hard with MOUT, map reading and intel

Soldiers with the 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division-Center have been going over a variety of skills and techniques with their Iraqi Security Forces counterparts, raising the bar a bit with each new training evolution.

For the Marine Soldiers with C Company, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, that meant heading out to the range for weapons training with Iraqi Army Soldiers with the 1st Iraqi Army Division where they engaged targets at a variety of distances and under varying circumstances. In addition to the range, the IA Soldiers went through their paces as they tackled

Military Operations in Urban Terrain, which included going over moving through danger areas, moving as a squad through urban areas and the steps and techniques to enter and clear a building.

Meanwhile, Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Bn., 15th Inf. Regt., worked with intelligence officers from both the IA and Iraqi Police as they went over different elements of area intelligence and planning. As part of that they discussed planning and executing current operations, map reading and briefing techniques. The overall goal was to expand on those skill sets within the ISF.

Sgt. 1st Class Vallery Thierry, center, the intelligence noncommissioned officer in charge with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, and an Iraqi Police officer, right, look on as an Iraqi Army intelligence officer explains how he would brief significant activity to his commander. Thierry instructed a combined forces intelligence course to Iraqi Army and police officers at Camp Ali. The course was designed to teach planning for current operations, link analysis, development of areas of interest, map reading and briefing techniques. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas, 4th AAB, 3rd Inf. Div.)



Second Lt. Donald Gillilan, left, a platoon leader with 1st Battalion, 7th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, demonstrates to Iraqi Federal Police Maj. Abbass Hawi Khaleed, second from left, and IFP 2nd Lt. Saif Ahmed Hussein, how to read the different pages on a GPS device at Joint Security Station Loyalty, April 17. (Photo by Spc. Justin Childers, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.)



USD-C at a glance



(LEFT) Col. Paul T. Calvert, commander of the 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, places the Combat Action Badge on Spc. Paul Murray, with A Troop, 6th "Saber" Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div., during an awards ceremony April 15 at Camp Liberty. (Photo by 2nd Lt. Daniel Elmlad, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.)

(BELOW) Spc. Wesley Miller, with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 299th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, receives a coin of excellence from Brig. Gen. Bradley A. Becker, deputy commanding general – support with the 25th Infantry Division, at Camp Liberty, April 18. Miller was recognized for his flawless tracking of thousands of dollars worth of property that has been transported from the centralized receiving and shipping point. (Photo by Capt. John Rawlinson, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.)





(ABOVE) Sgt. Jason Beauregard, left, with C Troop, 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, observes as a mechanic with the 4th Iraqi Federal Police Division cleans an air filter on a Humvee during a maintenance and driver training program conducted by C Troop at Joint Security Station Falcon, April 17. (Photo by 2nd Lt. Daniel Elmlad, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.)



(RIGHT) Spc. Dillon Warren, right, with C Troop, 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, inspects the engine of a Humvee with a mechanic from the 4th Iraqi Federal Police Division during a maintenance and driver training program at Joint Security Station Falcon. The training covered topics including basic vehicle maintenance, pre- and post-mission vehicle maintenance inspections and vehicle recovery drills. (Photo by 2nd Lt. Daniel Elmlad, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.)

USD-C at a glance



Capt. Jason Kneib, right, assistant operations officer with 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division demonstrates a proper throw during Modern Army Combatives level one training April 15 at Camp Taji, Iraq. "Vanguard" Soldiers took the week-long course, which was taught by Kneib and Sgt. Roberto Revelez, also with 1st Bn., 18th Inf. Regt. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan S. DeLong, 2nd AAB, 1st Inf. Div.)



Law Day

Established by Pres. Eisenhower in 1959,

May 1 marks a day of celebration of the rule of law

By Capt. Amy Gordon,
Office of the
Staff Judge Advocate USD-C

May 1 marks the annual celebration of Law Day by the American Bar Association (ABA) in honor of the nation's commitment to the rule of law. President Dwight Eisenhower established Law Day in 1959 and two years later Congress issued a joint resolution designating May 1 as the official day for celebrations.

Law Day encourages us to think more profoundly about the impact of law on our daily lives. As Soldiers deployed to Iraq, many of us have an appreciation for the importance of the rule of law as a concept and the impact a weak legal system can have on a country.

We have witnessed challenges associated with building respect for and compliance with the rule of law in a culture different than our own. We can use Law Day as a time to reflect on what we have learned in Iraq and on the importance of our own legal system in our daily lives.

In addition to fostering a general appreciation of the rule of law, every Law Day celebrates a specific theme. This year, the celebrations are focused on members of the legal profession who have made difficult choices to defend unpopular clients or taken on controversial matters. For instance, before becoming our first lawyer-president, John Adams represented the British officer and Soldiers charged with firing into a crowd and killing five civilians in what became known as the Boston Massacre.

The theme is equally relevant today, as evidenced by the many military lawyers who represented, as zealously as they would an accused Soldier, individuals detained in the Global War on Terror. We see examples of courage today in Iraq as well, as brave men and women are asserting basic tenants of justice in the face of sometimes violent opposition.

Attorneys in the Judge Advocate General's Corps display courage every day when they choose to give the command the proper legal advice, rather than the advice that

would be convenient at the time.

In addition, the Global War on Terror has increased the demand for well-trained, strong lawyers to help answer some of the more challenging legal questions these new and different types of "wars" have raised.

For instance, while still providing useful guidance, the Law of Armed Conflict largely addresses conventional conflicts that include state-sponsored parties, a well defined enemy, a clear beginning and end, and geographic limitation.

The Global War on Terror, with its asymmetric character, amorphous enemies, indefinite duration and global reach, necessarily begs new questions about issues ranging from detention operations to rules of engagement to joint operations between U.S. and foreign forces.

Senior leaders and their legal advisors will continue to play important roles in answering these questions and developing a new paradigm and must be more willing than ever to make difficult decisions and defend what they think is legally proper and morally right

rather than what is politically popular or expedient.

Law Day also provides an opportunity to reflect on the role that legal professionals play in the military.

Throughout recent military operations, legal personnel have provided a full range of services to U.S. forces, ensuring Soldiers receive the training and assistance they need before, during and after deployment.

Lawyers have played crucial roles in recent conflicts, advising on issues ranging from detainee rights to turning over property to the Iraqi government.

Equally important, military lawyers provide legal assistance to Soldiers to help ensure that the Soldiers can focus on their missions downrange rather than on legal problems that may be distracting them at home.

The deployed members of the JAG Corps guarantee continued respect for and protection of all aspects of military law – from administrative regulations to ethics to military justice to operational law.



Officers!

Want to Become a Judge Advocate?
Let the U.S. Army Send You to Law School

- Each year, the U.S. Army selects officers from O-1 to O-3 for participation in the Funded Legal Education Program (FLEP).
- You could become one of them simply by applying!
- You must have served between two and six years on active duty, and have a SECRET clearance. There is a 6-year active duty service obligation.
- You must apply for admission to an accredited law school and take the Law School Admissions Test
- The LSAT can be taken here at VBC!
- Applications are accepted between August 1 and November 1 of each year.

Questions?

Contact the USD-C Legal Assistance Office for Further Information!
DSN 847-2388; S-VOIP 242-4696



Toby Keith Rocks Camp Liberty!

Photos by USD-C
Public Affairs Office

The country music singer recently performed at Camp Liberty as part of his "Locked and Loaded" tour, which brought him to numerous locations throughout Iraq. During his time at Camp Liberty, Keith signed autographs and met with troops from United States Division - Center. Keith also spent time with division leadership where Maj. Gen. Bernard S. Champoux, commander of the 25th Infantry Division and USD - C, awarded him the Commanders Award for Public Service for his continued support of the U.S. military as an entertainer with the USO.



For Mom...



You were there when we took our first steps, and went unsteadily across the floor.

You pushed and prodded: encouraged and guided, until our steps took us out the door.

You worry now “Are they ok?” Is there more you could have done?

As we walk the paths of our unknown, you wonder “Where have my children gone?”

Where we are is where you have led us, with your special love you showed us a way to believe in ourselves and the decisions we make. Taking on the challenge of life day-to-day.

And where we go you can be sure, in spirit you shall never be alone.

For where you are is what matters most to us, because to us that will always be home.

Happy Mother’s Day to all the mothers of USD-C and the mothers of those who have children serving as part of USD-C.

(And don’t forget to call your mom and wish her a happy Mother’s Day. After all, she worries about you.)