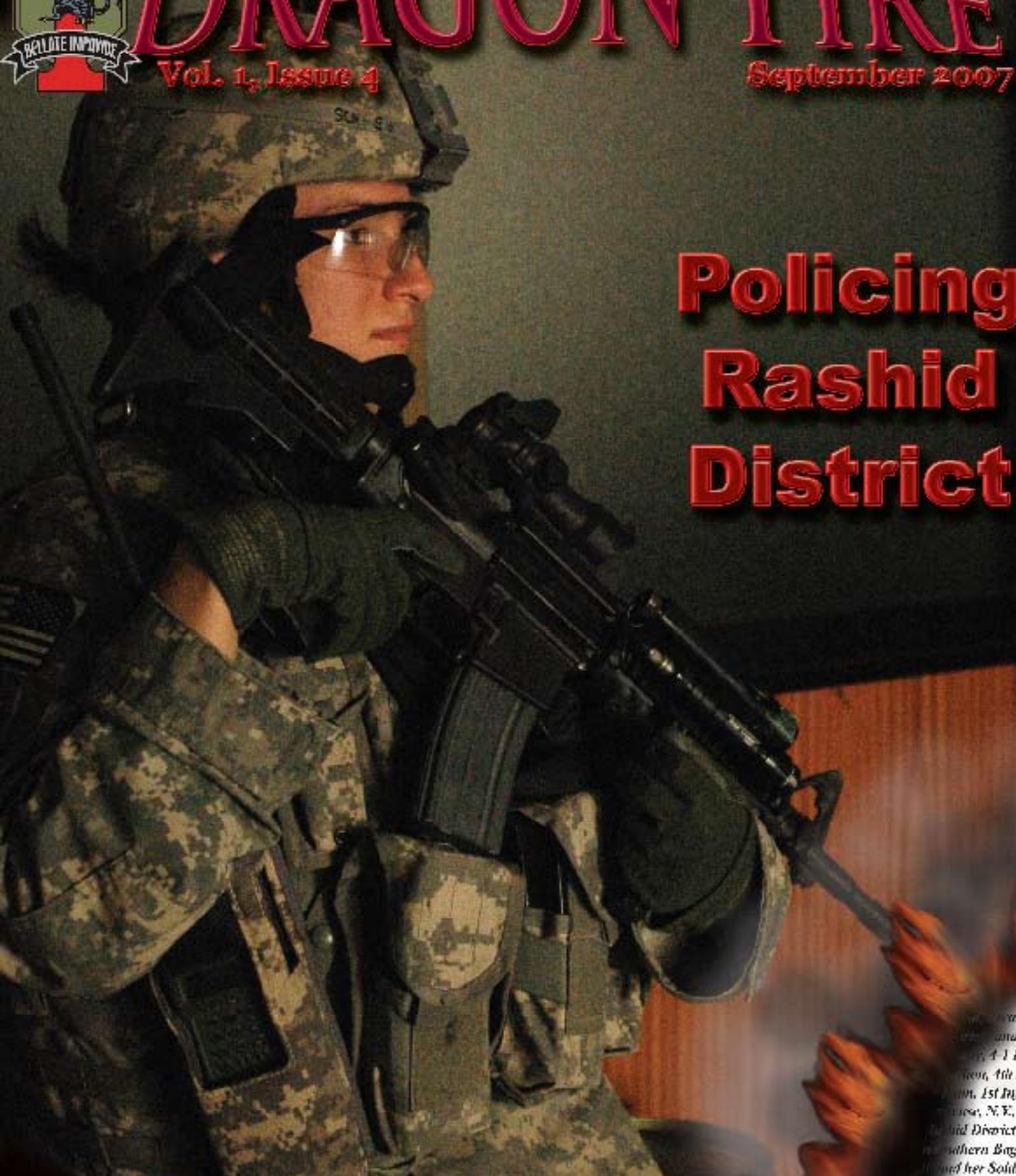




# DRAGON FIRE

Vol. 1, Issue 4

September 2007



## Policing Rashid District

For the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team

...  
... and  
... 4-1 Brigade  
... 4th Infantry  
... 1st Infantry  
... N.Y., pulls  
... Rashid District Action  
... Southern Baghdad,  
... and her Soldiers  
... BSB's Intra-  
... nation Element to a  
... AC Hall. (Smith/4th

# Brigade has Al Qaeda on the run

Dragon Soldiers, families and friends – It has been many long months since we said good-bye to our loved ones when we deployed. Though we have been here only a short time, we have made tremendous strides in providing a safe and stable environment for the peace loving people of Iraq.

We have done this by taking the fight to the enemy, while providing the citizens with basic necessities such as medical treatment and fuel. Our operations throughout July and August have put Al Qaeda and other extremists on the run. I believe the best defense is a good offense and that is exactly what we have been doing. Throughout Operations Dragon Fire and Dragon Hammer we have been steadily grinding down our enemy and forcing him to run.

Recently, our troops captured three suspected Al Qaeda leaders and continue to round up more extremists each day. Every day the numbers of concerned citizens giving us tips lead us to arrest numerous bad guys and to confiscate the weapons caches they hide.

I believe this is a direct result of our outstanding Soldiers interacting with the people and our work in reconciling differences between the various ethnic groups.



*Col. Ricky D. Gibbs meets Maj. Gen. Joseph F. Fil, Jr. Multinational Division Baghdad, and 1st Cavalry Division commander.*

Our work with Sunni tribes is beginning to bear fruit across the District. These citizens are protecting themselves from the bad guys who indiscriminately target women and children in order to create an atmosphere of hate. Such was the case when Iraqi National Police and our Soldiers rescued a baby girl after terrorists killed her mother and uncle and left her to die.

To the families back home in the States and Europe – I wholeheartedly thank you for your support through this deployment. Our Soldiers cherish every moment they talk to you and every care package you

send. Know that these outstanding Soldiers work hard and are making a positive impact on the lives of everyday Iraqis.

As you read the stories contained in the subsequent pages, I ask you to remember that they are just a small sampling of the many successes our Soldiers are having in support of our operations, and that many other great stories are unfolding across the brigade.

Keep after it, and reflect on our division motto: No mission too difficult, No sacrifice too great...DUTY FIRST!

*Col. Ricky D. Gibbs  
Dragon 6*

## Female Dragons uphold Army traditions

Few can surpass the women Soldiers of the Dragon Brigade as role models of courage, wisdom and strength. It is sometimes forgotten, however, that the ethos of the American warrior does not lie in the individual, but beyond a Soldier's outward appearance. On many occasions while on battlefield circulation, I have observed a Soldier in full kit "getting after it" only to realize that the Soldier I was watching is one of the many female Soldiers assigned to 4th IBCT.

There are many skeptics out there who would easily fall back to the outdated adage of "Women aren't big and strong enough for combat." Well, it's time to dismiss the myth. Today's Army is focused on the Warrior Ethos, and from the time a Soldier, male or female, reports to their first duty assignment they have endured, side by side, the same rights of passage.

A report by the U.S. Army Institute of Environmental Medi-



*Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne talks to CENTCOM Sgt. Maj. Jeffery A. Morin at Joint Security Station Raider.*

cine at Natick, Mass., concluded that "when a woman is correctly trained, she can be as tough as any man." That is without a doubt the case of the women who serve within the Dragon Brigade.

Throughout history, women have been taking up arms to defend our right to freedom. Today more than any other conflict our female Soldiers are out front along side of the infantryman, artilleryman and scouts.

They play a critical role in the support and mission success of the Dragons within the Rashid District of Baghdad. This month's Dragon Fire is

focused on those young women and how their roles in fighting the enemy directly impacts the successes of the Dragon Brigade. I am extremely proud of these fine Soldiers and their contributions to the fight.

*"Get After It!"  
Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne  
Dragon 7*

FROM THE MOUTH OF DRAGONS



*Soldiers from Company C, 4-1 Brigade Special Troops Battalion, show a brief slideshow prior to the handing out of Cobra "SSSSS" awards during a company-level ceremony Aug. 5, at the Velvet Camel on Forward Operating Base Falcon. The Soldiers put together the awards ceremony on their own, and paid for the wooden snake awards out of their pocket. (Smith/4th IBCT Public Affairs)*

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Dragon Fire is an authorized publication for members of the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division. Contents of Dragon Fire are not necessarily official views of or endorsed by the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, the U.S. Army, or 4IBCT, 1ID.

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## On the cover

*Cpl. Cassandra McGill, a team leader with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4-1 Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division from Syracuse, N.Y., pulls security at the Rashid District Action Council Hall in southern Baghdad, Aug. 21. McGill and her Soldiers were escorting 4-1 BSTB's Infrastructure Coordination Element to a meeting at the DAC Hall. (Smith/4th IBCT)*

# U.S., Iraqis provide . . .



## Medical Care

by Spc. Ben Washburn  
and Pfc. Nathaniel Smith  
4IBCT Public Affairs

*Sgt. 1st Class Brian Starns, the brigade surgeon noncommissioned officer in charge with the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division from Colorado Springs, Colo., checks a young boy's heartbeat during the unit's medical visit to southern Baghdad, Aug. 11. (Smith, 4th IBCT Public Affairs)*

When Gen. David Petraeus, the commander of Multi-National Forces-Iraq, goes before Congress in September, one of the benchmarks for the success in Iraq will be the ability to provide essential services to Iraqis.

Soldiers have been doing that by providing medical services to the citizens of southern Baghdad.

Both Vanguards of Task Force 1-18 and Tomahawks of 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment both held medical screenings for Iraqis in Rashid.

### Task Force Vanguard

Task Force Dragon elements from the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, and the 610th Brigade Support Battalion teamed up with an Iraqi healthcare provider and two Iraqi nurses to treat civilians in the Ghartan region.

The Soldiers also provided the area with chlorine tablets to purify drinking water.

Citizens of the area turned out in force from mid-morning to the middle of the afternoon, braving the Iraqi heat all day long, showing how desperately the people needed the medical services.

Separate areas were set up to provide healthcare to males and females with respect to cultural sensitivities, allowing women to receive concealed treatment from other women.

Sgt. Rashawnda Clugston, a human resource

es sergeant with HHC, 4th IBCT from Norman, Okla., said being able to help with the mission despite not being from a medical field was a rewarding experience.

"It was good to be a part of something," she said. "Working in an office all the time, I can't always see the good we're doing.

"It was good to see they were being seen and they were getting help."

Clugston, who contributed by searching female patients, did not have to participate in the mission, but she chose to get involved in order to make a difference.

"I volunteered to be a part of something that made me feel good," she said.

Master Sgt. James Fales, a member of the 4th IBCT's Iraqi Security Forces Cell from Raymore, Mo., said the mission helped American and Iraqi forces build a rapport with the civilians.

"The access to the local population will help build better relationships with the U.S. forces," he said. "It also helps to legitimize the local authorities there."

Whether or not the Soldiers return to provide further treatment depended on the perceived impact they made, but Fales said being able to help the people just this one time, especially the kids, was satisfying.

"I'm always reminded that no matter where you go on the planet, kids have the same sick-



*Capt. Russell Giese, the battalion surgeon for the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division from River Falls, Wisc., talks to an Iraqi man about his health problems through Spc. Ahmed Ahmed, a linguist. (Smith, 4th IBCT Public Affairs)*

nesses they have everywhere," the Purple Heart recipient said. "If you can help take care of some of the minor illnesses, make them healthier, happier, it makes you feel good to do it."

### Tomahawks check town's pulse

Since the start of the war, many Iraqis have not received quality healthcare because of security concerns. On July 29, the 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, attached to 4th Brigade, 1st Inf. Div. at Forward Operating Base Falcon, conducted a mission to provide free health checkups to Iraqi citizens in the Mahmudiyah neighborhood of Baghdad.

Despite triple digit temperature, Iraqis were lined up outside waiting to be seen. While inside the house, it was even hotter with all the medics, patients and doctors with nothing to cool the air, the heat was one of the biggest challenges faced during the mission.

“The hardest challenge was dealing with the heat. Not having central air, or fans, or something to try and help cool down not just us, but the patients. We had a lot of kids and a lot of older folks and their body temperature doesn’t regulate as easily as ours,” said Staff Sgt. Tamika Eaddy, a senior medic with Company C, 610<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion.

Iraqi doctors came on their own without American escort or protection to work for free to help the people of their community.

One medic said the role they played was crucial.

“We had cooperation from the Iraqi doctors that came to assist us,” said Sgt. Naomi Sankitts, a medic from “Charlie Med.”

“It went smooth because we need some interpreters, but with medical knowledge. By them being there, it helped us to assist the Iraqis even better,” said the native of Lakeland, Fla.

The doctors and medics saw well over 100 patients during the day. They treated everything from dehydration, stomach pain, and respiratory problems, to name just a few cases. For Memphis native Staff Sgt. Anthony Chaney, the treatment noncommissioned Officer for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2-23 Infantry, the mission was rewarding in two ways.

“Personally, it makes me feel good to give something back to someone that has less, who is a little more impoverished than we are. As a Soldier, it just felt good to do my job.”

Anyone that goes outside the wire knows about the Iraqi children. Most missions aren’t focused on helping them, but the mission today was different. Being able to help the children of Iraq is a gratifying experience for 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Brian Coaker, the medic platoon leader from New Boston, Mich. for HHC 2-23 Infantry.

“Hanging out with the kids, seeing the smiles on their faces, passing out toys, and then seeing the gratitude of the parents for getting their kids taken care of, I think that was the biggest reward.”

The 2-23 knew that a lot of female patients would show up. Being respectful of cultural differences, the battalion knew it would be necessary to bring in female medics for the mission. “Charlie



*Pvt. Joshua Haggard, from Homestead Falls, Ohio, checks the blood pressure of an Iraqi child during the mission on July 29 in Mahmudiyah. Haggard is assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division. The “Tomahawks” are attached to the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division at FOB Falcon, Baghdad.*

Med” stepped up to support the mission, providing two female medics.

“As a female and a senior medic, I was in charge of helping with seeing the female patients, making sure there was a female in the room, a chaperone, or someone they felt very comfortable with and not just all males.” said Eaddy, a Florence, S.C., native.

The mission was long, the temperatures high, and the patients were numerous, but the mission also went off without a hitch Coaker said.

“I think overall the mission was a success. We were able to bring two local doctors in to help with the treatment. We saw about 130 patients in a four-hour period. I think overall it went pretty well.”, the platoon leader said.

Eaddy said the mission showed a desire for a peaceful future for Iraq by all sides.

“This mission made a big difference to me,” she said. “Once I got there and saw how appreciative the people were, and that they weren’t all malicious people, it kind of helped me get a perspective on not everybody’s a bad person in Iraq. I know bad things do happen, but when you do things like this it helps them realize that not everybody in America is a bad person either.”



*Staff Sgt. Tamika Eaddy, a senior medic with Company C, 610<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion from Florence, S.C., takes the blood pressure of an Iraqi woman during a medical capabilities mission in southern Baghdad, July 29.*

# ARMY LIFE

not lost in

التفسير  
translation

## Linguists bridge cultural gap

Story, photos by Pfc. Nathaniel Smith  
4<sup>th</sup> IBCT Public Affairs

The reasons behind somebody raising their right hand and swearing to defend a nation they are not a citizen of are multi-faceted and compelling, and in the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, 12 Soldiers have done just that.

The 4th IBCT out of Fort Riley, Kan., has employed Arabic-speaking U.S. Army linguists to assist units and sections in a variety of ways, from understanding complex cultural differences to simply translating conversations and documents.

These unique Soldiers are just that: Soldiers. They just happen to be able to facilitate in communication between Iraqis and Coalition Forces.

Many of them came from the Middle East or North Africa to the United States seeking a better life. They each have their own stories and their own reasons for joining the Army in a time of war.

In Spc. Nyakeni Shuol's case, she wanted to give something back to the country that gave her and her family a better life.

Shuol, who works with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4-1 Brigade Special Troops Battalion Infrastructure Coordination Element, came to the U.S. five years ago from Egypt. She left her homeland of Sudan with her husband, Duoth Chau, and their son, Sebit, who is now 12, to get away from the war there.

In 2005 she started talking to recruiters for an army at war in Sioux Falls, S.D., where she was studying to become a medical assistant. Al-



Spc. Ahmed Ahmed, watches for enemy activity

ready a year-and-a-half into a two year Associate's Degree, she had a decision to make.

With strong support from her family, she did enlist, and now she is serving in Iraq.

When we came to the U.S., I felt like I had something I wanted to give the U.S. back," she said, "for giving me a safe area for my

kids and myself."

"When



Shuol

As for the job itself, Shuol said she took satisfaction in helping others.

"I'm really excited that I'm doing something that somebody needs to be helped with," she said.

Spc. Ahmed Ahmed, the linguist for the 4th IBCT's top enlisted Soldier, Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne, left Ye-

men for the United States with his brother in 2000, and a little over a year ago, he was working as a forklift operator.

Being a Soldier, not necessarily in the Army, had always been a dream of his. In the summer of 2006, with a mixture of support and anxiety from his family, Ahmed enlisted to become an American Soldier.

"I wanted to be in the Army no matter which one," he said. "I lived in the States and I liked it so I decided to join the Army."

Now, a little over a year into his Army career, Ahmed says he loves everything about serving, and is already considering reenlistment.

"I like the Army life, it suits me," he said. "You've been led and later on you lead, that's one of the things I like, too."

Shuol said she feels the same way.

"I like the way the U.S. Army, and it is my way," the mother of two said. "It's a good job and a good future."

"I just want to be an example for my kids so I can be something they can look up to."

While Shuol and Ahmed have said they enjoy Army life, it has not all been easy for them. Earlier in this deployment, one of their fellow linguists, Spc. Charles Ladu, who was working for the Company A, 4-1 BSTB route-clearance team, was wounded when an improvised explosive device struck the vehicle he was in.

For both immigrant Soldiers, the attack landed close to home as Ladu is Shuol's brother-in-law and was Ahmed's battle buddy through Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training.

"We were all on the same boat together, and he was a close friend to me," Ahmed said. "That made me mad because he is the father of kids. I was mad, I was literally crying outside."

Luckily, he was only injured and is now recuperating at Fort Huachuca, Ariz. The 12 linguists in Task Force Dragon have diverse backgrounds, but the bringing together of these people from such different walks of life serve as an example to the citizens of Iraq: people from different cultures and religions can work together to accomplish something



## 'Raider' gift a kick

Photos by Pfc. Nathaniel Smith  
4IBCT Public Affairs

### 1-4 CAV builds Iraqis a place to play



Top: An Iraqi soccer player makes a corner kick in southern Baghdad's Rashid District, Aug. 26. The players had '1-4 Cav' emblazoned on the back of each jersey, showing their appreciation for the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division out of Fort Riley, Kan., without whose efforts the game would not have taken place.

Above: A gunner with the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, scans the area as he secures the soccer field in East Rashid Aug. 26.

Above Right: Lt. Col. Jim Crider, from Hopkinsville, Ky., talks to a group of Iraqi elders at the 35th Street Market, Aug. 26. The market has seen great success since the 'Raiders' took charge of the area of operations in June.

Right: An Iraqi goalie makes a save during a soccer game in southern Baghdad's Doura region, Aug. 26.

The Raiders built the field so Iraqis can play one of their favorite sports.



# From 'Mortaritaville' to Falcon

## Sea of change can't sink Soldier

By Sgt. 1st Class Robert Timmons  
4IBCT Public Affairs

Being a cook in any unit and not doing your job is difficult enough. It's equally as hard being a female in the an infantry battalion.

For Spc. Mollie Bixler, who works in the 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment's Tactical Operations Center at Forward Operating Base Falcon in southern Baghdad both are true, but not as troublesome to her as some may think -- she has been through a lot of changes in her 4 1/2 year Army career.

"It is a very big change," the Grand Rapids, Mich. native said. "It is a lot different then what I am used to."

The 24-year-old cook, who is on her second tour in Iraq, said she thought she would go to the battalion's forward support company but instead was sent to work on computers in the TOC.

"I am not computer literate," she said. "I got to work it out. Fortunately the guys here were real patient with me. I had done some command post work at Forward Operating Base Rustamiyah."

She has done so well in fact, that her boss lauds her work ethic.

"She is very good," said Staff Sgt. Alan Prater, an infantryman and the 2-12's assistant operations noncommissioned officer who hails from Sepulpa, Okla. "She was out of her place when she got here and knew nothing about TOCs, but she has learned and has done really well.

"In fact, she works harder than my infantry guys," he added with a laugh.

Even though she is in a predominately high-testosterone field, she was welcomed by everyone she works with.

"It's unique and awesome" to work in the infantry unit, she said. "I am treated like a little sister by some and a big sister by others. From the very beginning they were very protective of me and took care of me like one of their own."

Even though they welcomed her with open arms, Bixler said she still worked hard to gain their trust.



*Spc. Mollie Bixler, 24, a cook assigned to 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, attached to the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Inf. Div., poses in front of a flag at the unit's headquarters building at Forward Operating Base Falcon Aug. 30. Bixler is the only female working in the battalion's tactical operations center.*

"It's a battle you have with yourself," she said. "You want it so bad you work hard to be treated like an equal. And I am treated like an equal, but I still do everything I can to keep up."

Working in different environments is nothing new to her, since she is in a totally different place than she was during her first time in Iraq. She was assigned to the 18th Personnel Support Group at Camp Anaconda her first deployment.

"It was definitely different than here," she said about spending a year at the base dubbed, 'Mortaritaville.' "It was kind of dull but we got lots of mortars and were hit

quite a bit, but it was much larger base

"I was kind of worried about Falcon because I heard it was not a very good place," she added saying that it wasn't as bad as she thought.

Bixler also said that Anaconda, because of its size and amenities, had more to offer Soldiers.

Despite being the only female in an office full of males, she looks forward to the time she can go outside the wire and be taken deeper into the fraternity of combat arms with a unit that is, "a lot closer than I have ever seen before."

"I know I am going out," she said with a smile. "I am looking forward to it. They are like my little brothers, anything I don't know I know they will teach

me."

Bixler, who re-enlisted recently, will undergo even more changes in the coming days as she prepares to join the NCO Corps.

The 2-12 is part of 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division based at Fort Carson, Colo. and is attached to the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, from Fort Riley, Kan.



## SECRET

## Women's intuition aims Dragon fight

by Pfc. Nathaniel Smith  
4th IBCT Public Affairs

For the infantrymen, tankers and scouts patrolling the streets of the Rashid District, around every turn can be a danger. Knowing what lurks behind that corner could mean life or death; mission success or failure.

To get a clear picture of the terrain, all forms of intelligence are gathered from what is said on the airwaves to what tips concerned Iraqis give. Taking all these bits of information and crafting it into a useful tool is what the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division Intelligence Fusion cell does.

That section, comprised mostly of female Soldiers, offers a unique perspective to the war fighter on the ground.

"The Brigade staff has a different perspective than the troops on the ground. We take their information to produce a broader picture," said Capt. Kerri Lewers, a military intelligence officer with the shop, who hails from Des Moines, Iowa. "It is good to get a female perspective to add to the overall picture. I came from a military intelligence unit where I worked with a lot of females. My battalion commander and most of the staff were females. Now, I work in a unit where a lot of people have never worked with women before, but I like the challenge of disproving stereotypes."

Sgt. Emily Coley, an imagery analyst with the 4th IBCT from Gastonia, N.C., said while being a woman doesn't directly impact her job, she does feel women have a natural desire to care for their units.

"Females have more of a maternal instinct," she said, "so we take care of the battalions a little better."

Lewers said, "We work hard to support them on the ground and we take our job seriously. We take it personally if someone is hurt because of bad intelligence."

Coley, 25, joined the military for new experi-



*The Soldiers of the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Inf. Div., Intelligence Fusion cell. Second row from left: Spc. Erica Logan, Sgt. Emily Coley, Capt. Elizabeth Bourne, 1st Lt. Ashley Oliver. Front row from left: Spc. Maria Maciel, Spc. Beckie McCumbers, Staff Sgt. Melissa Gonzalez.*



*Capt. Kerri Lewers and Spc. Chenique Walker*

ences and to see new places, and the Army has helped her do just that as she has already been to Korea, Japan and China over the course of her three-and-a-half year career. Her job also appeals to her natural skills, she said.

"Before I joined, I was going to school for an associate's in fine arts, and I wanted something I could still apply art to," she said. "It was either this or topographical analyst, and I chose this for a higher clearance and you get to do cooler things."

While Coley said she does not get treated differently because she is a woman, her job does have limitations on where she can work, such as a Special Forces unit, but she said she saw why.

"I know that physically I don't think I could do

that, because what if something happened. I understand, but I'm a little jealous," she said.

Spc. Erica Logan, 22, from Merced, Calif. said her experiences growing up being the youngest in a family that included five brothers and three sisters toughened her up for Army life.

"Having a lot of brothers and being the youngest made me a stronger person both physically and mentally," the intelligence analyst said. "The Army is everything you make of it."

Spc. Beckie McCumbers, an intelligence analyst for the 4th IBCT from Front Royal, Va., had one question for those who said women should stay at the base.

"How would you feel when you go out and go after targets with no intelligence? How would you feel if you couldn't see everything?"

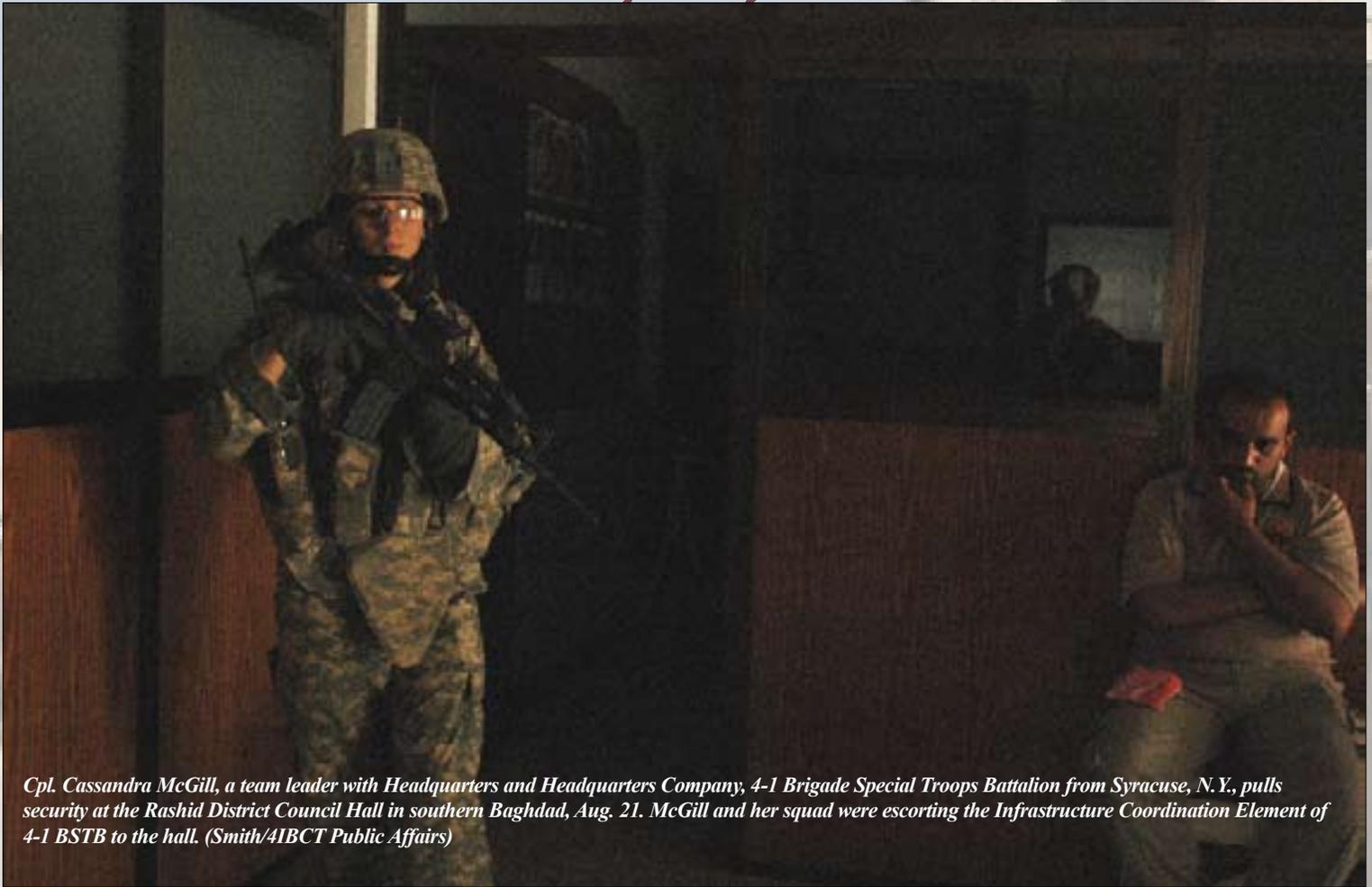
Logan was a little less harsh than McCumbers when she said, "Intel world usually stays on the FOB, but we still do our job and we all do our part in the fight."

McCumbers' response is indicative of the importance of the intelligence shop's functions. The 20-year-old Soldier said this importance is an added challenge, but at the same time, she embraced it.

"There's a lot of pressure. All our products help all units and battalions get their job done safely," she said. "It is a good feeling to know that we contribute as much as we do."

No matter the pressure, the Soldiers in the shop strive to do their best at all times.

Overall Logan summed it up best when she said, "You take pride to be in the Army, especially during a time of war. Being in the Army is more than just giving some of your time – you are giving a part of yourself."



*Cpl. Cassandra McGill, a team leader with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4-1 Brigade Special Troops Battalion from Syracuse, N.Y., pulls security at the Rashid District Council Hall in southern Baghdad, Aug. 21. McGill and her squad were escorting the Infrastructure Coordination Element of 4-1 BSTB to the hall. (Smith/4IBCT Public Affairs)*

# Female police officers show strength

by Pfc. Nathaniel Smith  
4th IBCT Public Affairs

A convoy of military police pulled into Forward Operating Base Falcon a little before noon. Most Soldiers would be thinking about getting out of their body armor and into the chow hall.

One Soldier removed a glove, looked at the delicate hand that had been concealed for hours while on the mission, and said, "Man, my nails are broken."

MP's don't usually concern themselves with their nails too much, but this Soldier, Cpl. Cassandra McGill, is a Soldier in a male-dominated field.

Being a woman and being a team leader in an MP unit does not come without challenges, but McGill said that while some Soldiers do look at her as having something to prove, most view her as an equal.

"A lot of men look at a female and they see another Soldier, but it's all dependent on the person and their past experience with female Soldiers," the Syracuse, N.Y., native said. "If they've had female Soldiers that are trouble-makers or they've had female Soldiers that pull their weight. It all depends on how you work also, and if you prove yourself.

"As long as you do what you have to do, it turns out okay."



*Spc. Jena Harris, a medic with the military police platoon of Headquarters, Headquarters Company 4-1 Brigade Special Troops Battalion sits in a vehicle during a mission. (Taylor, 4-1 BSTB)*

Spc. Jena Harris, the medic for the MP platoon of HHC, 4-1 BSTB from Medford, Ore., said the way she is treated in a unit comes from the leadership's example.

"You have to be a woman, but at the same time you have to be tough," she said. "A lot of the way people are going to treat you comes from the way a squad leader treats you. If they have a tendency to look over you and make the guys pull more weight than you, the men are going to resent you because you're getting special treatment. Not that we want special treatment, it just happens that way.

"We want to get out there and help those guys, but if they're not giving us the opportunity to earn our place, then those

guys are going to judge us, no matter what we do."

While it seems like the female Soldiers are in an unenviable position, both had good reasons for picking their respective jobs.

When McGill joined the Army almost five years ago, she was a cook in a support company of the 15th Forward Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division. When she deployed with the unit, she met her husband who was serving with 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Bde., 1st Cav. and she got the inspiration to switch to a more combat-oriented job.

"I knew when I left that unit I was probably not going to

have the same opportunity to be in combat,” she said. “I joined to be an MP because it’s probably the closest I’ll get to be in combat. My first deployment I got to do a lot of stuff alongside the infantry guys. I just had fun and it felt right.”

Harris, who has been serving for two years, said she had always had a desire to join the military, and wanted to have a job with civilian applications.

“I wanted something I could continue on with after I got out of the service,” she said. “I realized coming out of AIT that I wanted to be a line medic, or as close to a line medic as a female could be. I’ve been really fortunate.”

While Harris and McGill have been around for a little while now,

both still feel they have to prove themselves as Soldiers.

“The opportunity that they’ve given me shows that they’re allowing me to prove myself. I have a great team, they do what I say, and they do what they’re supposed to do,” McGill said. “I think I pull my own weight and they allow me to prove myself. There’s going to be Soldiers in the squad that are never going to look at me the same as if I were a male Soldier, but in general the squad has let me prove myself and they accept me as an equal.”

Harris said being viewed the same as her fellow male troops is a rewarding feeling.

“There’s nothing more satisfying than being a woman in a male unit and having them look at you as an equal,” she said.



*Sgt. Rashwanda Clugston, a personnel actions sergeant with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th IBCF, walks down a street in Chertan, on her way to helping with a medical assistance mission put on by 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment. Clugston searched all females waiting to see medical personnel. (Smith, 4IBCF Public Affairs)*

# Four-month Dragon Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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# Vanguards, Iraqi volunteers secure Radwiniyah

by Spc. Ben Washburn  
4th IBCT Public Affairs

The goal has always been to return control back to the Iraqis. In recent months, an increasing number of Iraqis have stood up to the challenge of reclaiming their country from terrorists and insurgents by joining the Iraqi Provincial Volunteers. A trip with the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 1st Inf. Div., attached to 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Inf. Div., into Radwaniyah provides a glimpse of what is happening not just there, but in other parts of the country. There, IPV's are manning checkpoints along the roads to stop Al-Qaeda and insurgents from operating in their area.

Their checkpoints are often simple. A few sandbags piled up into a makeshift bunker. Some rubble or scrap metal pulled across the street to force cars to slow down. Whatever supplies they can scrounge up, with a bit of assistance from the Coalition Forces, is all it takes for them to secure their roads. The IPV's work throughout the day, through the heat and the sun, to secure their own neighborhoods.

"It's a big step towards giving control back to the people. I feel a lot safer," said Spearfish, S.D., native Spc. Russell Harmon, a team leader with Company C, 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, attached to Company E, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment.

"There's a lot more of them. They're a lot more organized," said Pfc. Anthony Mondelli, a gunner with Company C, 1-28 Inf. The IPV's are making progress, despite their limited resources. As the time passes, they will be more able to protect their roads and neighborhoods. They've done a great job so far, forcing the insurgents to stay away. I get shot at. I'm a gunner and I said.

"We drive around now and don't even think it's because of them," the native from Copiague, N.Y.,

Because the IPV's are from guard, they know who is and from the area. That's a big that the Coalition Forces don't one reason the IPV's are better points than anyone brought in from outside the area, one missioned officer said.



able to control



Members of the Iraqi Provincial Volunteers greet a convoy of U.S. Army humvees in Ghartan before a recent visit by medical personnel. The IPV's are actively protecting parts of Rashid District. (Smith, 4IBCT, Public Affairs)

which has forced the insurgents to stay away. Sgt. 1st Class John McGlothlin, of Company C, 1-28 Inf., said that's why they are effective.

"The reason it works so well with them is they know the people who live in their area. So if we get someone that's not from the area around, they're going to be the first to know it," said the platoon sergeant from Bradford, Ohio.

The IPV's do more than just secure the roads to keep insurgents out. They have proven reliable in preventing improvised explosive devices.

"We don't have to concentrate on route clearance as much," Harmon said. By allowing Coalition Forces to concentrate more on finding insurgents and weapons caches, the IPV's have proven themselves to be a combat multiplier for Coalition Forces.

While the IPV's are volunteers right now, they will receive pay soon. As the program continues they will attend formal police training, turning them into a professional force, and bring positive economic change to the area.

"They can put money back into their economy," Mondelli said. The residents of Radwaniyah also see the increased security, feeling more comfortable out of their homes and on the roads.

"A big difference is we see people out on the roads. When we first got here we saw a lot less people," Mondelli said. The people realize that violence doesn't have to be a way of life.

"I think they finally realize there could be hope for the country, and they're just trying to do their part," said Pfc. Christopher Novak, a gunner from Stewart, Fla., assigned to the 1-28 Inf.

The IPV's have done a great job since they began manning checkpoints. "So far they've been really successful, very few incidents since we stood them up. Things seem to be getting quieter," McGlothlin said.

Despite the success, the most important aspect is that it's the Iraqis taking charge of security and allowing Coalition Forces to step back and assist where necessary. Radwaniyah is just one area, but is a sign of hope for all of Iraq.

Mondelli summed it up with one sentence. "It's been a dramatic change since they've been here."



It's that knowledge

# Lightfighters in celand



Lightfighters secure a street corner in Hateen.



Sgt. 1st Class Rickie Jackson, Lightfighters' Platoon Sergeant, watches Sgt. Nathan Vaughn's back on patrol in Hateen.

## Proud Americans patrol Hateen

By Pfc. Philip Goral  
Photos by 1st Lt. Brian Cooke  
2nd Bn. 32nd Field Artillery

First Platoon, Alpha Battery, the "Lightfighters," was built up from the ground at Fort Riley, Kansas as part of a 105mm Field Artillery unit using guns we jokingly called, the "Pop Guns." We trained to fight as artillerymen for a year. We spent countless days in the field shooting numerous fire missions to support the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team. The Lightfighters knew their job and knew it well. That all changed in November 2006 at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, California, when we were informed of the upcoming deployment to Iraq.

Even then, we did not know what our mission would be, so some of the platoon trained for an artillery mission while the rest trained for a motorized infantry mission. All our questions were answered in January 2007 when we found out that we were going to Baghdad and we were going to be Infantry. We had one month to train on small-unit movement tactics, close-quarters marksmanship and light infantry combat missions before we made the long trip over the pond to the "Big Sandbox."

15 In Kuwait, we received the best infantry training I think I could

experience outside of being on patrol on the streets of Baghdad. Since then, we have done much to improve our Area of Operation, the hayy (neighborhood) of Hateen. On the map in our Battery Command Post, one can see that Hateen is labeled "ACELAND." ACELAND is our neighborhood and we patrol it like police officers looking for the bad guys.

For five months, we have worked hard to help rid Hateen of terrorism and make life better for its citizens. We played a part in building Joint Security Station Torch and participated in Operations Arrowhead Strike 9, Ace Strike 1, Patriot Strike, and Alexander Hamilton. We have and continue to conduct the Patriot Census, an effort aimed at better identifying and understanding the population demographics of our sector. The Lightfighters have conducted numerous combined patrols with the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police, teaching them our tactics to help them better themselves so that one day, they can take over total control of the security of Hateen.

We have escorted Civil Affairs teams to assess the schools in the area to find out what they need to better educate their children. The platoon also played a role in a Cooperative Medical Engagement, an operation in which Army doctors and medics established a free clinic for a day to help people get proper med-

ical treatment and the medicine that they need to treat themselves for months to come. To the average person, it may sound like we have done our fair share here in Iraq, but we still have plans to do more to improve security and help the people of Hateen.

I think that this has been the hardest change for me while being here – helping the people. I was trained for a fight since Basic Training way back at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. I think everyone comes here for the first time thinking that it will be just like the movie "Black Hawk Down," but it is really not. Most of the people want us here not just to protect them, but to teach their Army how to accomplish the things that they cannot yet do on their own.

I often hear rumors about when we are going home. Some people even say we may go home three months early from our original one-year deployment. I just say, "You're kidding yourself, buddy." In all reality, I think we as an Army and as a nation will be here for at least a few more years. The Iraqi people need us more than most think.

Since the first day, I sounded off with the name Lightfighters in formation until now, I have been through a lot - from transforming from an artilleryman to an infantryman to getting on-the-job training on the streets of Baghdad. My time here, the sights I have seen and the missions I have been on...these are things that I will remember for the rest of my life. Besides other Soldiers, who can say that they have done the things I have done or been where I have been? Nobody, that's who, and that gives me a great sense of pride. It is the same for the rest of the men in my platoon. We all come from different backgrounds, hometowns, and lifestyles, but we have all gathered in this one place to do what is right. We are here to uphold freedom and preserve and promote democracy. We are doing this one step, one day, one helping hand at a time.

# Phoenix quenches Falcon thirst



*Story, photos  
by Pfc. Nathaniel Smith  
4th IBCT Public Affairs*

When most Soldiers get back off mission, they're thinking about two things: hot chow and a hot shower.

For the latter, they probably never even stop and think about where that water comes from or who processes it for human usage. If that water wasn't flowing, then they'd be more likely to ask those questions and who was responsible.

Alas, the life of a water treatment specialist.

For Forward Operating Base Falcon, employees of Kellogg-Brown and Root were making the unusable water usable until about June of this year. At that time, the troops' water demands at the base had grown beyond their capabilities.

In comes the Phoenix of the 610th Brigade Support Battalion. The fuel and water platoon of Company A, 610th BSB has Soldiers trained as water treatment specialists. However, during the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's rotation at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., they trained as fuelers, adapting to what the expected mission's demands were going to be.

Despite having spent the last year-and-a-half training for one job and not even expecting to serve as "Water Dogs," as they're good-naturedly called, Co. A has been providing Falcon and Dragon Brigade elements in Baghdad at the joint security stations and coalition outposts with water for everything from laundry to showers to the dining facility.

The Soldiers use a Tactical Water Purification System (TWPS) to purify water that is pumped from a tank of unusable water owned by KBR. The water typically undergoes between four to seven purification processes, depending on the level of contamination.

The TWPS is capable of pumping out 1,500 gallons of water every hour, operating 20 hours a day with four hours of maintenance. The water 610th is pumping out is for non-drinking purposes only, but is capable of producing drinking water.

On Aug. 30 the TWPS reached the 1 million gallon mark of potable water produced for FOB Falcon.

Spc. Jose Rodriguez, a water treatment specialist with Co. A, 610th BSB from Rosemont, Calif., is one of those Soldiers, working in the shadows in his little corner of the FOB while everybody else enjoys the fruits of his labor, most not even realizing where it's coming from.

He doesn't mind most Soldiers not knowing he's there. He finds it more rewarding just knowing his work helps his fellow troops live in relative comfort, the father of two said.

The commander and sergeant major of the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Col. Ricky Gibbs and Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne, have noticed the hard work the platoon does, but Rodriguez doesn't let that go to his head.

Instead, he's quick to pass along any praise he receives to his platoon leader, 1st Lt. Robby Gabehart from Moscow, Idaho.

Company A, 610th BSB was given a muddy, uneven plot of land to use for their water purification point. Gabehart was responsible for providing gravel to even out the ground, camouflage netting to keep the Soldiers cool, and force protection measures to keep them safe from indirect fire.

Gabehart doesn't point that out when asked about what his platoon has accomplished, but he does talk about his Soldiers. He praises them for shifting their focus, quickly and effectively. His Soldiers handle themselves professionally, with or without receiving attention for their work, he said.

Talking to the troops, it becomes clear nobody's going to take credit for anything they accomplish, but the entire platoon is responsible for helping to make this summer a whole lot more comfortable for all the residents of Camp Falcon.



*Top: Company A, 610th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division's water purification site at Forward Operating Base Falcon. The 'Atlas' has been providing clean water to the base since early June.*

*Above: The water purification site at Forward Operating Base Falcon before Company A, 610th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division established itself. The unit made the ground more level and installed force protection measures to provide clean water to the base.*

*Opposite: Spc. Jose Rodriguez, a water treatment specialist with Company A, 610th Brigade Support Battalion from Rosemont, Calif., checks water levels at Forward Operating Base Falcon, Aug. 6.*

# Finding Terrorists Anywhere in the world

by Pfc. Nathaniel Smith  
4IBCT Public Affairs

In previous conflicts involving the U.S. Army, leaders could simply say "Take that hill," and their Soldiers would get it done.

In modern Iraq, "that hill" is not as easy to find. That's where Arthur Scalzo and the embedded law enforcement professionals are helping Soldiers find their enemy and keep them from killing their fellow troops.

Scalzo, a Suffolk County, N.Y., native with over 30 years of federal service between the military and the Drug Enforcement Agency, and Ray Hilburn, a twenty-year law enforcement veteran from Wimberley, Texas, train the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division's battalions in combat law enforcement tactics such as sensitive site exploitation, search and seizure, and detainee operations.

Scalzo said it is an honor for him to contribute to the war effort in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"I couldn't be more pleased with the way the (4th IBCT) has treated us, especially the Soldiers," he said. "I don't ask anyone to do anything I wouldn't do myself so I take a lot of pride in showing the Soldiers firsthand how to do combat law enforcement."

The battalions Scalzo trains include the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, and the 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment. As 2-23 Inf. leaves the area of operations, he will do the same for the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment.

Despite the Soldiers of these units not receiving any prior training, Scalzo said the Soldiers have been very responsive to what he teaches.

"Everyone's receptive. What I've learned is you can teach a course, but then you have to apply it. There has to be a practical exercise incorporated



Scalzo

into the teaching-learning experience," he said. "My greatest success has been teaching it and then applying it in a practical environment: high value target missions. Once we've done that, we get back, it's like a spark. I can see that spark after I've taught it, been on a mission, had the after action report, and then the practical application of

what we've done.

"Seeing that evidence and then applying it to targets after that, the troops are very receptive and understand the value of it."

Scalzo, who has been on roughly 40 missions with Dragon elements to date, said he has seen results using this training method.

"The amount of evidence we are now collecting and applying to targets has definitely increased. It's not part of the basic infantryman's training, and what I teach is

to not confuse law enforcement with military operations," he said. "Your job is to overcome the objective and kill the enemy if necessary; however, once that objective is secure, quickly put on that cop hat, and start the police work."

The veteran of joint DEA and foreign military operations in the jungles of Bolivia, Peru and the Philippines said his greatest challenge is helping young leaders understand the character of their enemy.

"Mentoring company commanders and helping them to deal with the obstacles they and their troops face every day, helping them understand situational awareness, helping them to understand criminal nature of these criminal organizations trying to undermine U.S. efforts in stabilizing and getting democracy to Iraq," he said. "It's complicated, there are obstacles every day, just try to overcome



Art Scalzo, a law enforcement professional attached to the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division from New York City, photographs a suspected explosively formed penetrator at Joint Security Station Black Lion in southern Baghdad, August 4. (Smith, 4th IBCT Public Affairs)

them and drive on."

Scalzo, who will return to his job at the Suffolk County District Attorney's office once his tour with the Dragon Brigade is done, said the best way for him to meet these challenges is simple: keeping his head up.

"I really enjoy working with the young (Soldiers)," he said. "I get great job satisfaction by working with the young enlisted, the young Officer Corps, and NCOs, teaching them my trade, and learning something about them. You learn something new every day."



Hilburn

# Legal Haircut



*Capt. William Johnson, an attorney with the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division's Brigade Operations Legal Team, gives what appears to be a reverse "mohawk" to Maj. Keven Kercher, Brigade Judge Advocate from West Fargo, N.D. Aug. 30. After Johnson finished giving the haircut, Kercher was completely bald. (Timmons, 4IBCT Public Affairs)*



**Think about it**  
*Equal opportunity and you*  
 by Sgt. 1st Class Lorenie Powell  
 Brigade EO Advisor

# Women Change America



*Powell*

We celebrated Women's Equality Day Aug. 26 to commemorate the 1920 signing of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the United States Constitution, which granted women the right to vote. This was the culmination of a long struggle by United States women fighting for a voice in our democracy.

In 1971, the United States Congress designated Aug. 26 annually as Women's Equality Day to remember the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

Our Nation celebrates Women's Equality Day to commemorate the tremendous positive change brought on by the Women's Movement. Due to the countless millions of women who planned, organized, lectured, wrote, petitioned, lobbied, paraded, and broke new ground in every field imaginable, our world was irrevocably changed. Their dedication to the suffrage movement improved our society, and continues to inspire women today.

When the first Women's Rights Convention was convened in 1848, women in the United States had limited financial, legal, and political power. In addition to being denied the right to vote, they also could not own property, control their wages, or claim custody of their children.

Courageous heroes like Carrie Chapman, Alice Paul, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony refused to accept women's status, and began a determined struggle to gain suffrage for women. Leading active and vocal groups like the National American Woman Suffrage Association, these women risked attack and arrest to organize marches, boycotts, and pickets, which mobilized an influential lobbying force of millions. Finally, on Aug. 26, 1920, the women's suffrage movement accomplished its goal through the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to Constitution.

These women of the past paved the way for service members like Capt. Centrell Watson, HHC, 610 BSB Company Commander, Capt. Sharon Lankford, OIC, 4<sup>th</sup> I BCT, Troop Medical Clinic and Sgt. 1st Class Heather Ellis, NCOIC, Brigade Operations Legal Team.

We educate our Soldiers and others associated with the military by providing information on the contributions and successes of Women throughout History. As we celebrate Women's Equality Day let us remember this is but the link in a chain, and we should all feel compelled to forge the bonds of the past into the possibilities of the future.



**Multinational Corps-Iraq uniform policy states that no name strips can be worn on the back of the "boonie" cap.**



**NOW**

**and**

**THEN**

# Life evolves at COP Attack

*Story, photos by Pfc. Nathaniel Smith*  
4th IBC T Public Affairs

Doing a lot with a little. It's the story of the U.S. Soldier: being faced with unfavorable odds, being given the necessities to work with, and being expected to accomplish something great.

The Soldiers of Company A, 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division have upheld that tradition in southern Baghdad.

Attack Company was given an abandoned recreation center in the contested Aamel neighborhood of the Rashid District. Out of a gym that was covered in bird droppings, a flooded basement, and a cluttered weight room, the Soldiers have created a fully functional outpost where they can live and work.

In addition to the Co. A Soldiers, the 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade Mechanized National Police Training Team operates out of the COP.

On March 16, the troops moved in under cover of darkness. Operating continually for a period of 72 hours, the unit set up guard positions to establish a foothold in the middle of the Rashid District. Now, the Black Lions of 1-28 Inf. have the "Jewel of southern Baghdad," as their battalion commander, Lt. Col. Patrick Frank, once called it.

Spc. Alan Noe, a dismount with Co. A, 1-28 Inf. from Miami, said the outpost is a nice place to unwind while off mission.

"A little more relaxed than the FOB," Noe said.

To help the Soldiers loosen up when they're



*Pfc. Matthew De Leon, a gunner with Company A, 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division from Yucaipa, Calif., pumps some iron in the weight room at Coalition Outpost Attack, Aug. 2.*

not fighting off terrorists, the COP has been outfitted with new air conditioners, refrigerators and generators to provide electricity.

"The quality of living has improved a lot since we first established an operating base," Noe said. "We like it here a lot. We all like it here."

Pvt. Coleman Hykes, a RAID Tower Systems Technician with Company A, 1-28 Inf. from Okolona, Miss., said in addition to preferring the COP to the FOB, the outpost helps the com-

pany accomplish it's mission.

"We're right here in our (area of operations). If something happens, we can come right out here," he said. "We don't have to do anything to get out here to get to our objective."

In addition to assisting with accomplishment of the mission, the outpost has multiple services available to the Soldiers, such as a DSN phone to call home, a non-secret internet connection, and a television hooked up to an American Forces Network.

Hykes added that while he feels safe and well-connected to his family back home, even his buddies have noticed the amenities COP Attack has to offer.

"I have friends that live back at the JSS, and they say this is better."

Of all the services provided to the Soldiers, one of the most popular is the weight room. Noe said he appreciates the benefits of some quality physical training.

"Getting a good workout is good for the body," he said. "It makes you feel better and improves your health."

"It's pretty sweet," said Pfc. Matthew De Leon, a gunner for Company A, 1-28 Inf. from Yucaipa, Calif. "We can workout after every mission or when we're just chilling."

'Chilling' is not something Soldiers get to do a lot. At any moment, they can go from relaxing to responding to enemy activity in their area of operations. When those few and far between opportunities to kick back do come, they should have a safe, comfortable place to do so. And that's just what COP Attack provides.

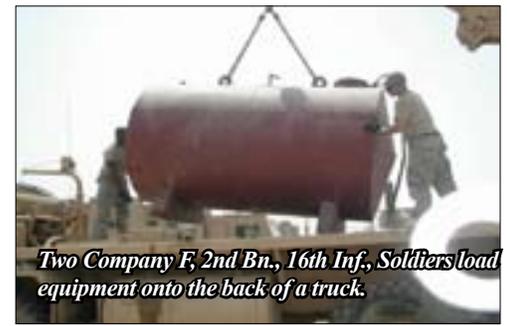
# Dragon Fire Around the Brigade



*During a patrol in eastern Baghdad, Spc. Barry McDonald pulls security in front of his vehicle.*



*An Iraqi man kisses the hose of the water truck delivering in his neighborhood. For many Iraqis in OE Ranger, water provided by coalition forces is the only source of safe drinking water available.*



*Two Company F, 2nd Bn., 16th Inf., Soldiers load equipment onto the back of a truck.*

## Area increasingly secured by

*By 2nd Lt Ryan D. Wood*  
2nd Bn. 16th Infantry

In an effort to adapt to the ever changing battlefield in the heart of Iraq, the Rangers of 2-16 Infantry are on the move. With recent drops in sectarian violence in the Ranger operational environment and the increasing need for essential social services, the Rangers are consolidating in an effort to sustain the gains made and improve their ability to assist the Iraqi people.

“Our initial task when we arrived in Baghdad was threefold,” said Battalion Commander Ralph Kauzlarich, 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment. “We were to reduce sectarian violence, assist in the development of Iraqi Security Forces and assist in providing essential services to the people of OE Ranger. Our efforts up until now have decreased the violence level significantly, and now we are reorganizing to better achieve our remaining objectives.”

Prior to August, the Rangers were responsible for five distinct neighborhoods in eastern Baghdad that comprised 32 Muhallahs. With the new distribution of forces, Task Force Ranger will now only be responsible for four neighborhoods with a population of approximately 350,000

people. According to Kauzlarich, this change will allow a greater concentration of forces and better align the 2-16 Inf. boundaries with the ISFs they work with.

This change from clearance to control operations won’t cause major changes in the daily actions of the companies operating throughout Baghdad, said Maj. Brent Cummings, Battalion Executive Officer, 2-16 Inf. It will allow an evolution to operations which are less intrusive on the general population.

“The companies will continue to conduct combat patrols and dominate the terrain,” Cummings said. “What will change is a shift to more intel-driven, pinpoint raids instead of clearance operations, allowing us to control the zone better.”

The boundary shift has also aligned 2-16 with a single National Police Battalion instead of the two that the Rangers were working with in the past. According to Kauzlarich, this will allow much better communication, coordination and training opportunities which were somewhat hampered by having to work through two different chains of command in the past.

The increased security and drop in violence has also allowed a more concentrated effort to provide essential services to the people of OE Ranger.

With many Iraqis in the area living with no

power, water or sewage removal, the efforts of the Rangers and the local ISF forces the Rangers work with are their only links to these essential needs.

“Our guys are involved in building essential services every day,” said Cummings. “They will help ISF forces provide security for essential services projects and work with the ISF to bring new projects into the neighborhoods so that the people can see and benefit from the results of the security that Task Force Ranger is providing”

Dozens of projects are being worked throughout the Ranger OE with many nearing completion. Sewage projects, water treatment, power generation and transmission, and school rehabilitation projects are all in progress. In one much needed project, 2-16 Inf. is providing 40,000 gallons of water per week to local neighborhoods and increasing that amount to 94,500 gallons per week by the end of the month. For many residents, it is the only source of water not contaminated by sewage.

As always, change brings challenge, but the Soldiers of 2-16 Infantry continue to adapt and move forward in their efforts to secure a better future for the people of Iraq.

# Dragons take to the Diamond



*Story, photos by Pfc. Nathaniel Smith  
4th IBCT Public Affairs*

The summer sun and the triple-digit temperatures that accompany it here haven't been the only thing dominating the field in front of the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's headquarters building.

Service members and civilians operating out of Forward Operating Base Falcon have been heating up the base paths in a summer softball league that provides physical fitness, as well as a break from the stresses of a combat zone.

"I look at it as a morale booster. It helps us keep our minds off of the mission," said Spc. Waylon Wren, a pharmacy specialist with Company C, 610th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th IBCT, 1st Infantry Division from Lebanon, Ky. "It's a nice way to relax and just to get away for a little while, to play some softball, and have a good time."

Cpl. Neal Robinson, the personnel automations services noncommissioned officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th IBCT from Baltimore, agreed.

"It keeps me busy. Outside of work, you have to have something to do," he said. "Might as well get together with the rest of the crew and have some fun."

Sgt. 1st Class Aaron Sargent, the HHC, 4th IBCT personal security detachment platoon sergeant who moonlights as a referee at the games, saw the benefits to his Soldiers participating in the league.

"It definitely gives them an out, a way to get away from going out in sector all the time or their (noncommissioned officers)," he said. "It's kind of a release of stress and tension. It gives them something that they enjoy doing."

"It's fun, it's competitive, but at the same time it's relaxing."

While there is a strong competitive spirit at the games, Wren said it's a different sort of competitiveness than when he played in the post league at Fort Riley, Kan.

"It was taken seriously at Riley. Here it's like so what, you've got bigger things to work on," he said. "It's not serious. I just play it for fun. At Riley it's dead serious."

For Robinson, who has an extensive athletic background including receiving a basketball scholarship to Morgan State University in Baltimore, losing is not an option.

"I am very competitive. I do not like to lose," he said. "I always say it is not in my vocabulary. I am having a good time here though."

Sargent said Soldiers play intensely, but do a good job of keeping it in perspective.

"Games definitely get competitive; people argue and yell at each other. They definitely take it seriously," he said. "They have fun, but they still want to win."

Robinson and his fellow Soldiers' spirited stance on the games does not take away from the inter-unit camaraderie the games build.

"Not only are we getting together within our own unit, but we got all the other units participating," he said. "Yeah, on the field we might be going at each other head-to-head, but once we get off at the end of the day, it brings us closer."

Wren saw a distinct translation from on-the-field unity to a stronger unity off the field for the troops.

"The Army's a team game, and so is softball," he said. "You've got to play the game and you've got to trust your teammates. You're only as strong as your weakest link."

*Top left: Staff Sgt. Jeffery Willis, a platoon sergeant with Company D, 610th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division from Drew, Miss., pitches during a softball game at Forward Operating Base Falcon, Aug. 29.*

*Left: Spc. Adrian Amaya, a driver with Company D, 610th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division from Hebronville, Texas, reacts to a hit during a softball game at Forward Operating Base Falcon, Aug. 29.*

# The Dying Ember teaches fellowship

## Spiritual Fire by Chap (Maj) Gregory Thogmarin



EVERY NOW, WITH OVER SIX months down, there is still a lot of time ahead of us. So, how do we get on through this thing? Consider this story:

### THE DYING EMBER -- A Lesson in Fellowship

A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going. After a few weeks, the pastor decided to visit him. It was a chilly evening. The pastor found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire. Guessing the reason for his pastor's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a big chair near the fireplace and waited.

The pastor made himself comfortable but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the play of the flames around the burning logs. After some minutes, the pastor took the fire tongs, care-

picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone. Then he sat back in his chair, still silent. The host watched all this in quiet fascination. As the one lone ember's flame diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more. Soon it was cold and "dead as a doornail."

Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting. Just before the pastor was ready to leave, he picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it.

As the pastor reached the door to leave, his host said, "Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fi-

ery sermon. I shall be back in church next Sunday."

As a chaplain, I could draw many applications from that little story. It is a story that is about more than going to church. I offer it as a reminder that people need people. Even the Lone Ranger had Tonto.

As we push on through the demands of this deployment it is important, very important, that we have friends and hopefully family relationships that provide strength and encouragement.

It is at the same time extremely important that the people we commit to, "our friends," are well chosen.

Next May will come. There is a light at the end of this tunnel. One key to getting there in good shape is having folks to help us bear the burdens along the way. This is true for Soldiers and Army Families.

Be good to one another and share strength and encouragement with one another.

And, may God bless you with strength and peace.

# Steel Falcon Chapel Worship Schedule

*Sunday*  
Contemporary Protestant Service  
1030  
Gospel Service  
1300  
Latter Day Saints Service  
1600  
Traditional Protestant Service  
1930  
Prayer Service  
2100

*Wednesday*  
Gospel Service  
1900

*Thursday*  
Catholic Mass  
1900

*Friday*  
Jewish Service  
1800

*Saturday*  
Liturgical Worship Service  
2000

## Bible Studies

*Tuesday*  
1900

*Thursday*  
1930

# FALLEN DRAGONS

NO MISSION TOO DIFFICULT  
NO SACRIFICE TOO GREAT

*"If you are able, save them a place inside of you and save one backward glance when you are leaving for the places they can no longer go. Be not ashamed to say that you loved them, though you may or may not have always. Take what they have left and taught you with their dying and keep it with your own. And in that time when men feel safe to call the war insane, take one moment to embrace the gentle heroes you left behind."*

- Maj. Michael Davis O'Donnell  
Dak To, Vietnam, January 1, 1970

*Spc. Cristian Rojasgallego*  
2-3 Inf. August 2

*Spc. Eric Salinas*  
2-3 Inf. August 2

*Cpl. Sean Hensel*  
2-23 Inf. August 14

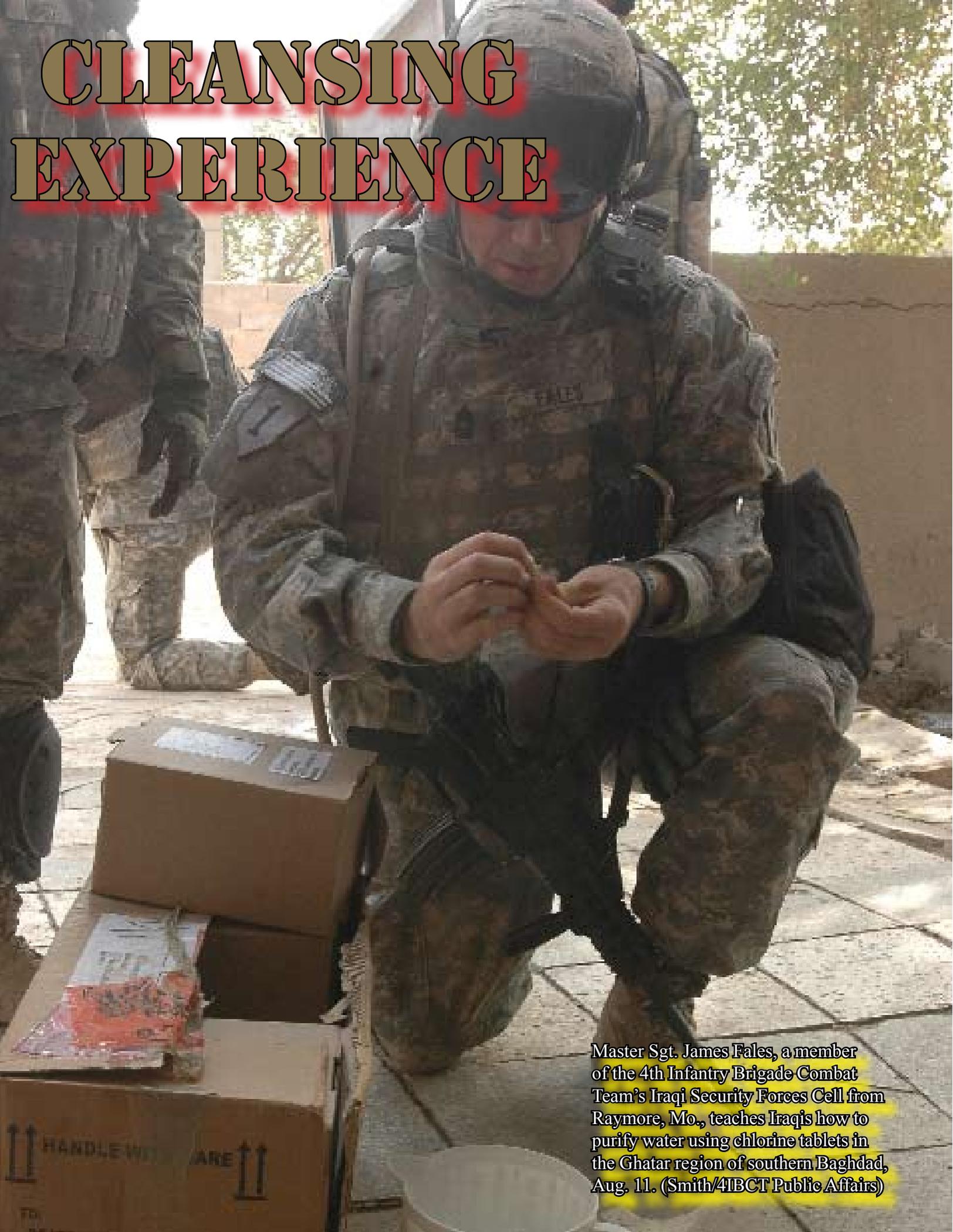
*Staff Sgt. Fernando Santos*  
2-3 Inf. August 2

*Pfc. Braden Long*  
1-4 Cav. August 4

*Staff Sgt. Jason Butkus*  
1-28 Inf. August 30

*Spc. Chris Neiberger*  
1-18 Inf. August 6

# CLEANSING EXPERIENCE



Master Sgt. James Fales, a member of the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's Iraqi Security Forces Cell from Raymore, Mo., teaches Iraqis how to purify water using chlorine tablets in the Ghatar region of southern Baghdad, Aug. 11. (Smith/4IBCT Public Affairs)