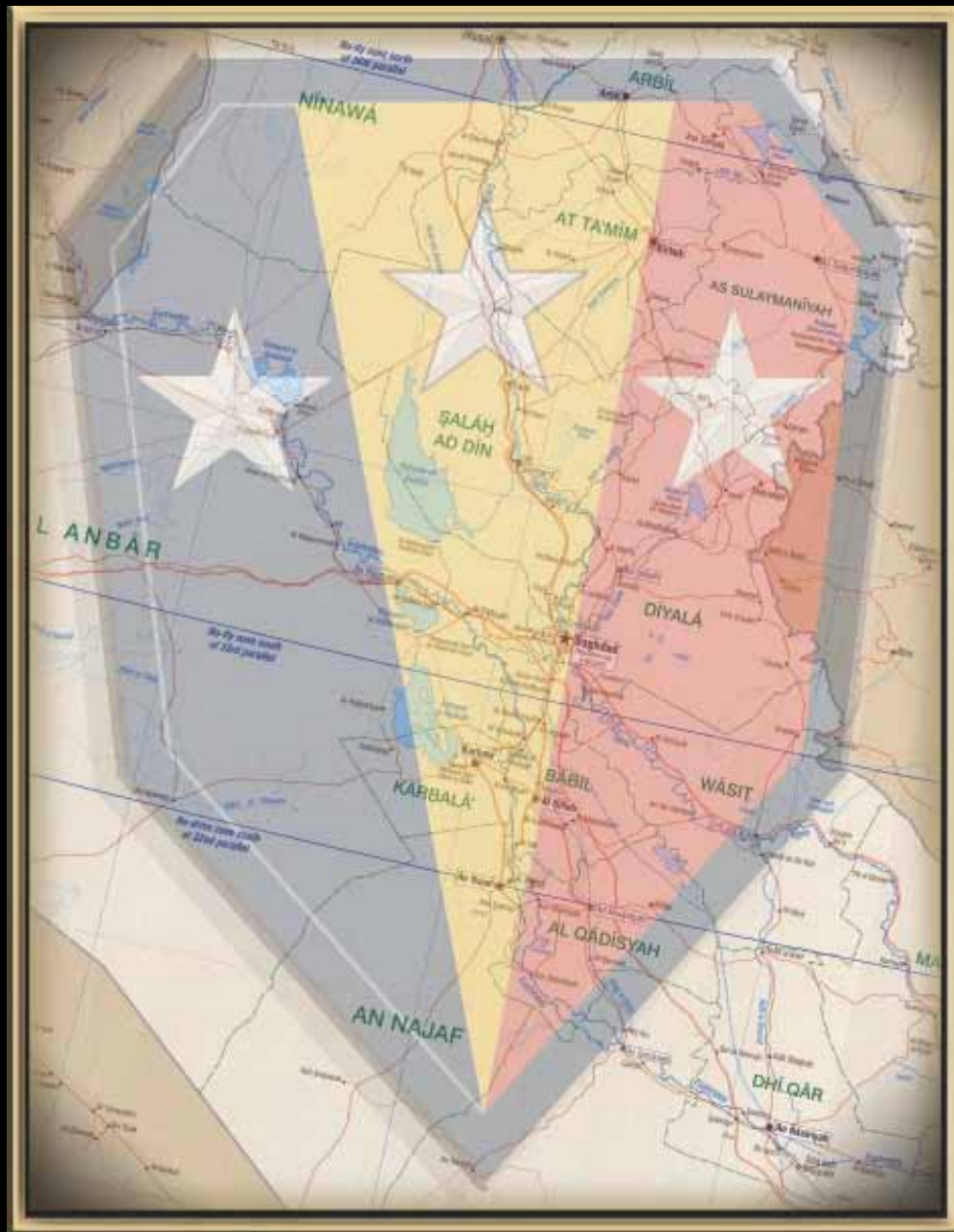
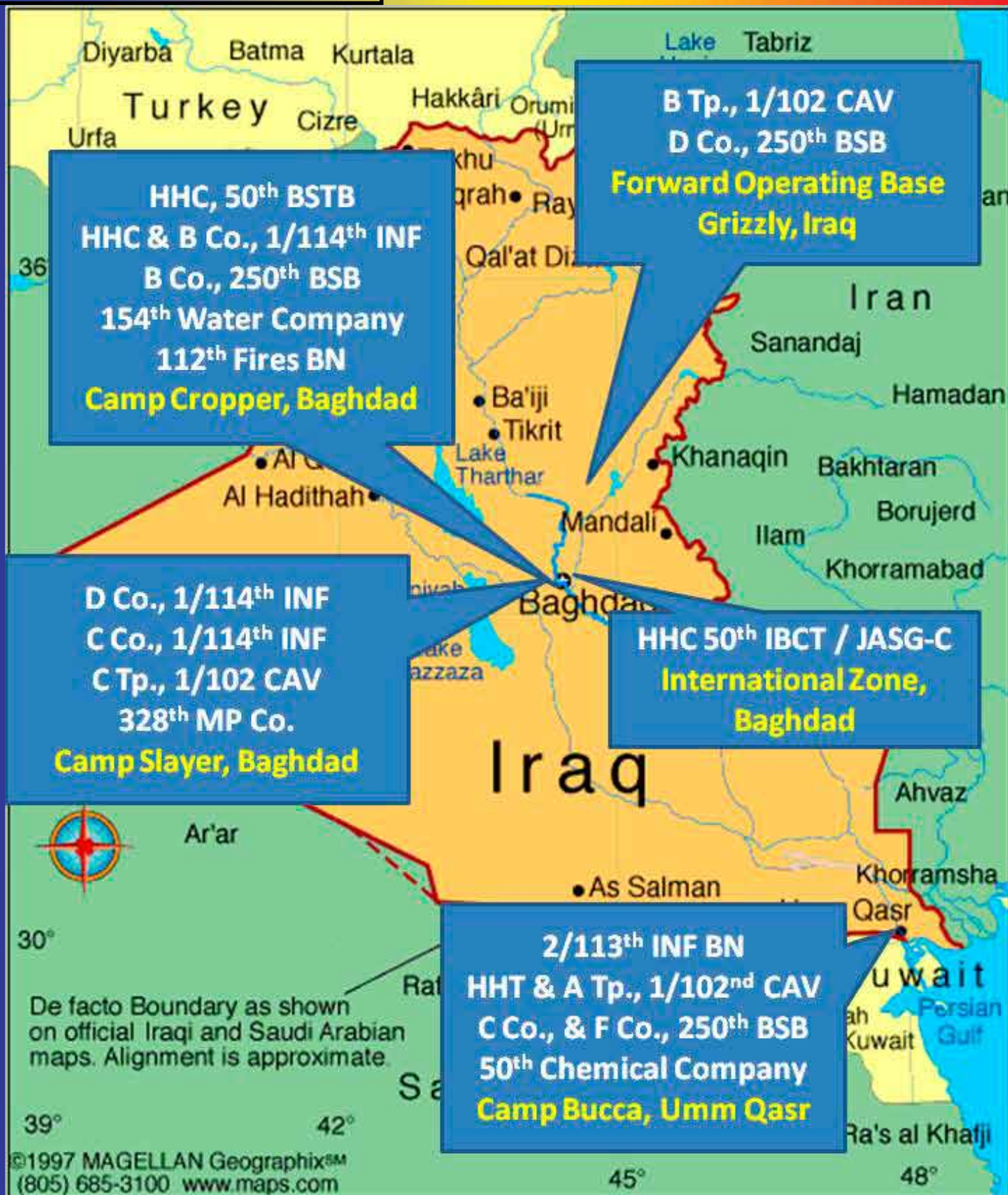


# 50TH INFANTRY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM



OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM  
2008-2009

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## 50<sup>th</sup> IBCT Unit Locations, Iraq



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# 50TH IBCT

TOURBOOK

*Produced by through a Joint  
and Comibined Public Affairs  
Office*

### THANK YOU

To all the Soldiers and Companies of the 50th IBCT, the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Public Affairs, the 444th Mobile Public Affairs and the various Public Affaris representatives who submitted materail that made this Tour Book possible.



*The 50th IBCT Tourbook was published as a yearbook under provisions of AR 360-1, para 3-6 by the Command Directorate's (JASG-C) Command for all military personnel serving in the Operation Iraqi Freedom International Zone. The views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Department of Defense, the U.S. Army, Air Force, Navy or the Marine Corps, or the National Guard Bureau.*





There's not much more I can say to thank you for your service this past year than simply that: Thank You.

You, the Soldiers of the 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team are extraordinary men and women. You have shown with your efforts that military service is a profound and passionate thing and for that, we are all grateful.

When I spoke to you during your welcome home ceremony at Sovereign Bank Arena, I said my happiest moment was when I saw that 2,875 of you went, and 2,875 came home.

No matter what your individual job was in Iraq, it was us back here who benefited from your efforts. You have sacrificed more than we could ever possibly understand; your time, your relationships, your jobs and your lives. And while the military only represents 1% of the population, 99% of Americans benefit from your sacrifice.

Everyone I've spoken too has told me of your great accomplishments in professionally handling every mission given to you while you were deployed. Have pride in the knowledge that you did your jobs well, and your mission was accomplished.

You are a tremendous source for good in America. America is proud of you, New Jersey is proud of you and I am proud of you.

Great Job and welcome home!

Jon S. Corzine



Welcome home Citizen Soldiers of the 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team. I know you've already been welcomed home in grand fashion, from the parade in downtown Trenton to smaller tributes in your home towns. But I want to say it again because I don't think it can be emphasized enough how truly proud we are of everything the Brigade accomplished.

During the year you were away from your families, you preformed tremendously- from your pre-mobilization training at Fort Indiantown Gap and Fort Bliss, all the way to your various duty stations around Iraq and back home. The Army demanded the best, and at the end of the day, 50th IBCT stepped up to the plate.

It's not enough to say that this deployment was historic. It was monumental.


That's because it was New Jersey National Guard's largest deployment since World War II - and because each part of the Brigade oversaw a critical transition of the return of Iraq's sovereignty.

Whether it was the difficult task of detainee operations, or the transition of the International Zone back to Iraqi control, the 50<sup>th</sup> Soldiers combined their civilian and military skill and surpassed all expectations.

But I cannot forget the hometown team who helped make sure you had everything you needed while you were away. The Family Readiness Groups and the rear detachment Soldiers worked tirelessly to make sure you and your families had the support you needed during your time away, as well as during your transition back to civilian life.

Again, welcome home, and thank you for a job well done!

Sincerely,

  
GLENN K. RIETH  
Major General, NJARNG  
The Adjutant General



Well Done! It's been a long tough year, and you, the Soldiers of the 50<sup>th</sup> have performed your duties admirably.

I want to take this opportunity to highlight what you have accomplished during your combat tour. For much of the brigade, the mission was Detainee Operations. And while this seems like a singular focus, as you quickly found out during your training at Fort Bliss, and once you arrive at the Theater Internment Camps, the mission was multi-faceted, politically charged and emotionally demanding. You worked under the magnifying glass everyday.

But difficult as your task was, you were successful. You oversaw the transfer of more than 30,000 detainees either to Iraqi control, or released them to their homes. You helped reduce the U.S. military's footprint in Iraq by working through the process of closing the largest detainee facility in Iraq. All of this, while maintaining force protection and over-watch.

For the JASG-C, you essentially ran the most complex city in the world, the four square mile swath of downtown Baghdad known as the International Zone. Whether it be transferring property back to the country of Iraq, building and public works projects, force protection, or the day to day administrative duties of running a major municipality, the 50<sup>th</sup> JASG exceeded the standard. As a team, you helped to transition the New Embassy Complex into a fully functioning, state of the art Embassy, while turning over the palace that had served as the United State Embassy for six years. You kept the occupants of the International Zone safe, while closely monitoring and documenting those who entered. And you shrunk the Military's footprint in the region.

Your success this past year proved that no matter what the mission, the 50<sup>th</sup> could accomplish it. I am personally very proud of each and every one of you, and am glad we all made it home safe together. Again, Well Done 50<sup>th</sup>! Jersey Blues All the Way!



It's been a long tough year, and I am proud of what you Soldiers have accomplished. The key to success, as with any other mission, centered around training to standards and enforcing those standards. The Brigade's NCOs took that mission to heart.

You were asked to perform duties outside of your military occupational specialty. For many of you, this mission fell outside of what you expected for an Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

How many of you expected to perform detainee operations or draw an area support role? But that's what happened. And while there was some initial grumbling, you accepted your mission and performed it at 110 percent.

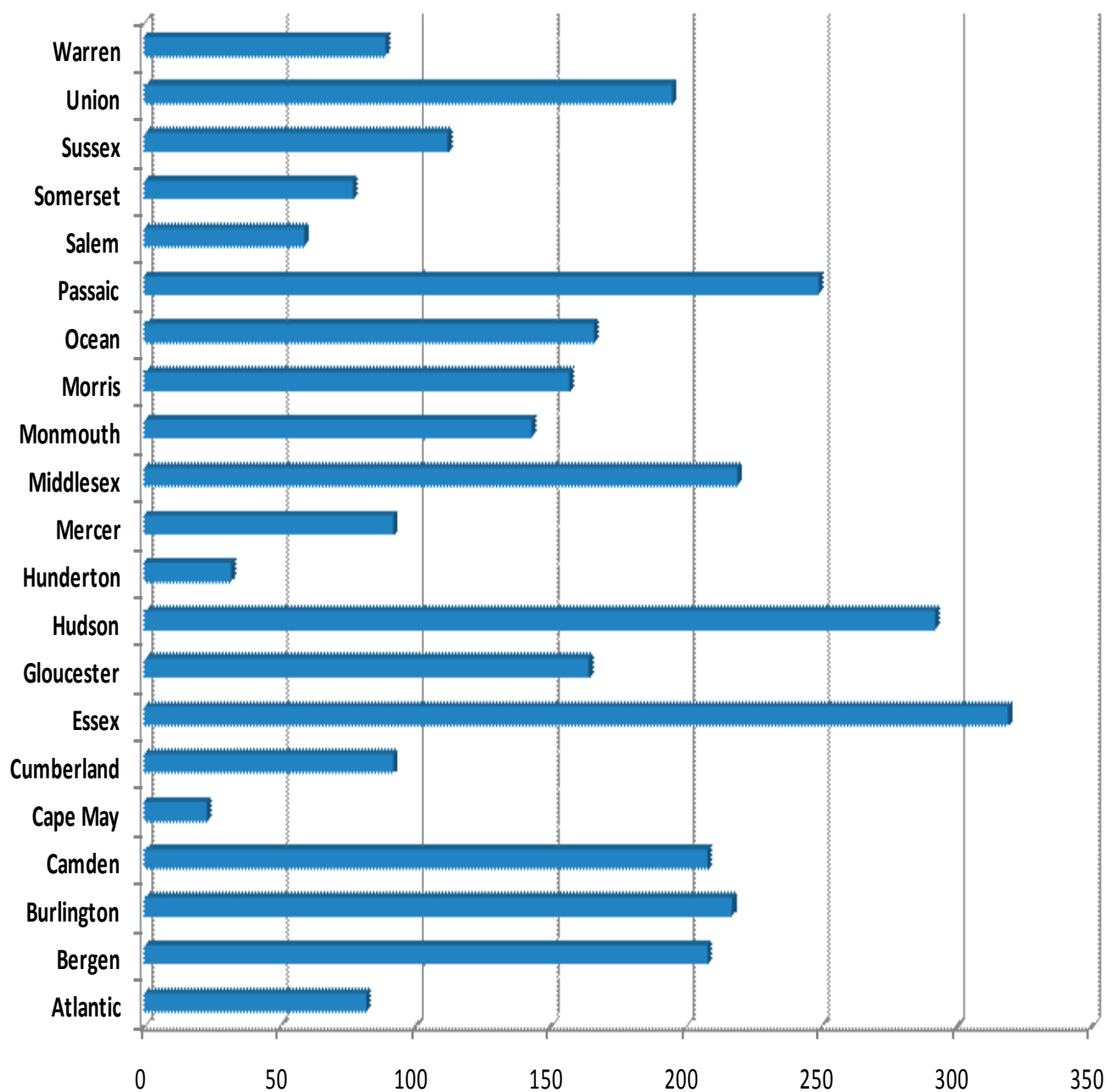
There were plenty of times where complacency could have set in, but the NCO corps did a superb job of continuing training, and maintaining motivation and discipline. Regardless of the mission, the Brigade's Soldiers and NCOs continued to show our active duty counterparts exactly why the National Guard is uniquely qualified to handle missions that fall outside of the traditional Army mindset.

Let's face it, the knowledge you bring as a Citizen Soldier is incredibly diverse and valuable in a combat theater.

I find it significant that this deployment occurred during 2009, the year of the NCO. While the Army was looking for examples of excellence throughout the NCO corps, the 50<sup>th</sup> IBCT was busy setting the standard for excellence. You all know that the NCO corps is the backbone of the Army, but you were also the backbone of the tour. You were the example of professionalism your soldiers needed, and the wealth of knowledge and experience your officers required.

Jersey Blues, all the way!

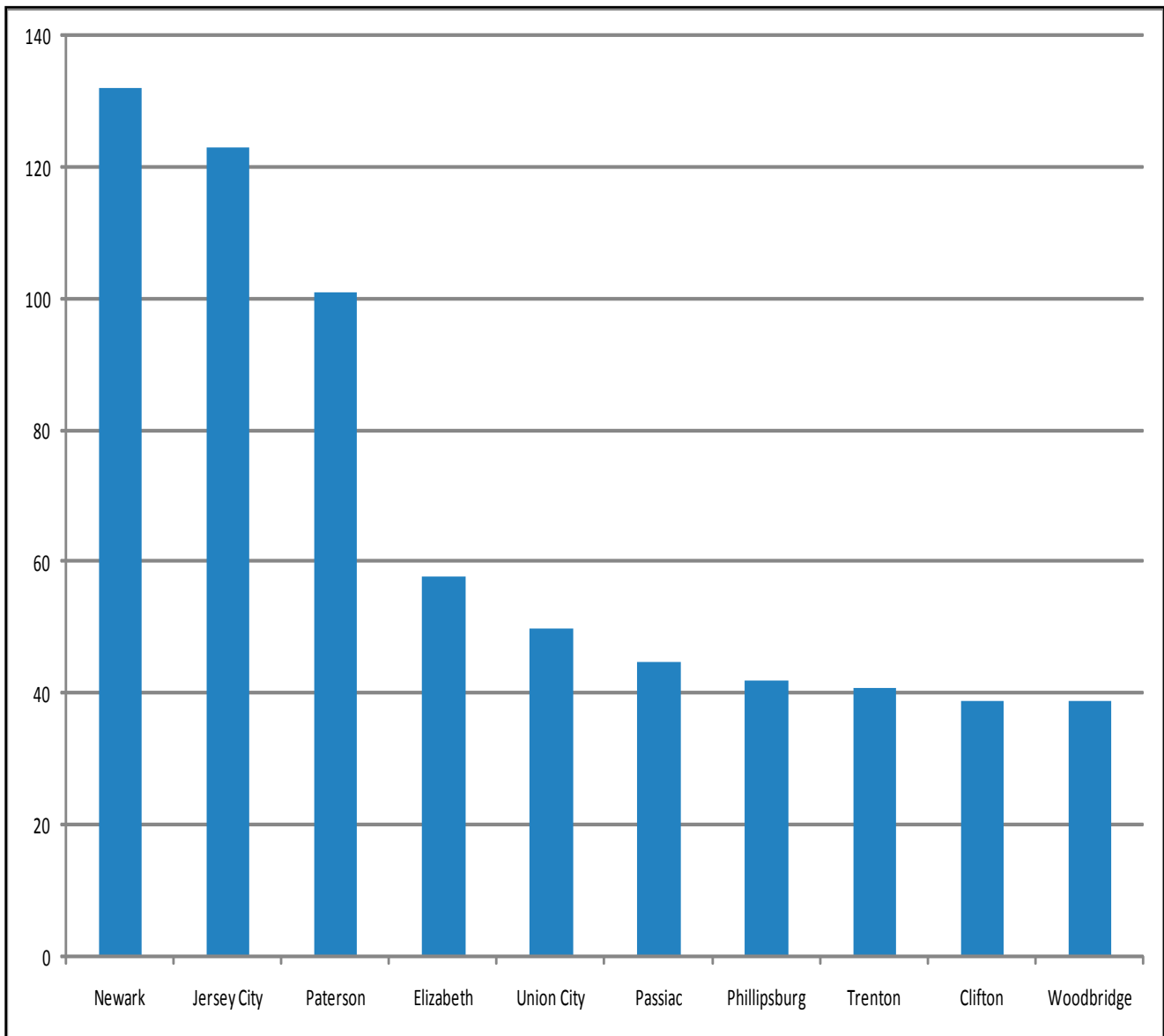
## IBCT Breakdown by County



The 50th IBCT proudly represented each of New Jersey's 21 counties. With 319 soldiers, Essex County comes in at No. 1, with Hudson County's 292 soldiers making them a close second. The geographically lowest county, Cape May, also was the lowest contributor, but, even they have 23 soldiers.



# Top 10 Soldiers' Hometowns



Being centrally localized in northern New Jersey, it comes as no surprise that eight out of the top 10 cities are above Interstate-78. Mayor Cory Booker's city of Newark contributed the most soldiers, with 132. Its eastern neighbor, Jersey City's 123 soldiers was enough to solidify a second spot.

## Significance of the Patch

Flag blue is the color traditionally associated with the Infantry units. The tri-colors of the insignia represent the Brigade's Armor heritage and its alignment with the 42d Infantry Rainbow Division. The three stars signify the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team heritage; also illustrating the unit's home state, New Jersey, the third state of the union to sign the U.S. Constitution. The middle reversed triangular-shape suggests the letter "V" for Victory, denoting victory over the enemies at home and abroad and underlining the unit's mission to defend and protect the nation.



## 50th IBCT Lineage

UNIT LINEAGE	YEAR	MISSION
New Jersey State Militia	1898	Spanish American War
New Jersey State Militia	1916-1917	Mexican Border Conflict and World War I
44 <sup>th</sup> Infantry Division	1940-1945	World War II**
50 <sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade	2001	Operation Noble Eagle
50 <sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade	2004-2005	Operation Enduring Freedom
50 <sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade	2008-2009	Operation Iraqi Freedom

\*\*From September of 1940 until March of 1941 the Federal Government called upon the 44<sup>th</sup> Division, 102<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry, 112<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, 261<sup>st</sup> Coast Artillery, and 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 372<sup>nd</sup> Infantry of the New Jersey's National Guard to help protect our nation. In all approximately 10,000 NJ Guardsmen were ordered to active service and the majority of those men eventually entered combat in The Second World War.

# Command Structure

## 50<sup>th</sup> IBCT

COL Steven Ferrari  
CSM David Kenna



### HHC 50<sup>th</sup> IBCT

CPT Richard Colton  
1SG Gene Jones

### A 1-114<sup>th</sup> INF

CPT David Hampton Jr.  
1SG Patrick Connors

### B 2-113<sup>th</sup> INF

CPT Eric Frenzke  
1SG Morales Rodriguez

### 50<sup>th</sup> CHEM Co

CPT Thomas Fisher  
SFC Gregory Williams

### B 1-114<sup>th</sup> INF

CPT Luis Delacruz  
1SG Joh Giordano

### C 2-113<sup>th</sup> INF

CPT Nicholas Calenicoff  
1SG Robert Merz

### HHC 50<sup>th</sup> BSTB

CPT Sean Combs  
1SG Jeffery Pels

### C 1-114<sup>th</sup> INF

CPT Stephen Pecorelli  
1SG Mark Leonard

### 154<sup>th</sup> QM Co.

CPT Patrick Cramer  
1SG John Hicks

### HHT 102<sup>nd</sup> CAV

CPT Adam Kama  
1SG John Krauss

### D 1-114<sup>th</sup> INF

CPT Richard Karcher  
1SG Michael Warner

### B 250<sup>th</sup> BSB

CPT Margaret Brescio  
1SG Kenneth Ashley

### A 102<sup>nd</sup> CAV

1LT Michael Tarricone  
1SG Mark Rizzo

### A 112<sup>th</sup> FIRES Bn.

CPT Stewart Loy  
1SG Nicholas Cianfrano

### C 250<sup>th</sup> BSB

MAJ Stephen MacKenzie  
1SG Randel Mihalik

### B 102<sup>nd</sup> CAV

CPT Noel Lyn-Kew  
1SG Robert Gerhardt

### B 112<sup>th</sup> FIRES Bn

CPT Kenneth Whipkey  
1SG Barry O'Dell

### D 250<sup>th</sup> BSB

1LT Vincent Tirri  
1SG William Kelley

### C 102<sup>nd</sup> CAV

CPT Joseph McNamara  
1SG Thomas Decker

### HHC 2-113<sup>th</sup> INF

CPT Vincent Siracusa  
1SG Michael Klock

### F 250<sup>th</sup> BSB

CPT James Egan  
1SG Scott Card

### HHC 1-114<sup>th</sup> INF

CPT William Barrera  
SFC Craig Snyder

### A 2-113<sup>th</sup> INF

CPT Manuel Casanga Jr.  
1SG Thomas Alexander

### 328<sup>th</sup> MP Co

1LT Jonathan Welch  
1SG Brett Eberlin



## 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team

### Fact Sheet – Iraq Deployment

The 3100-strong 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), New Jersey Army National Guard, headquartered in Lawrenceville with elements across the state, was alerted in Oct. 2007 for a Security Force (SECFOR) mission with possible future mobilization in support of **Operation Iraqi Freedom**. The focus of the IBCT mission will be to conduct detainee operations, with lesser missions in convoy security, force protection, and operating an Area Support Group.

In addition to standard full-time support staff, select unit members and leadership have been brought on Active Duty Special Work (ADSW) in order to plan and supervise the many tasks to be accomplished prior to mobilization. Soldiers from all six battalions were brought on active duty orders in order to undergo Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP) in November and December, 2007 and January 2008 at Fort Dix, N.J. Make-up SRP times are scheduled through April.

### Time frame:

*Pre-Mobilization training and administrative operations are conducted prior to deployment to prepare the soldiers for their mobilization:*

**February - April 2008:** The unit continues to train on key tasks that all Infantry soldiers and support elements should be able to conduct, with a focus on the mission tasks as time progresses. Remaining 50th IBCT Soldiers participate in the make-up SRP, completing all administrative, legal, medical and dental tasks.

**April 2008:** Annual Training, a three-week period scheduled at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., is used to enhance individual and collective Soldier skills and will focus on weapons qualification, driver training, and Combat Life Saver (CLS) training.

*The unit is scheduled to be mobilized for a total of 12 months in accordance with the January 19 Secretary of Defense directive limiting National Guard mobilization time:*

**June 2008:** The one year mobilization is scheduled to begin early Summer 2008 with stateside mobilization training of less than 90 days at Fort Bliss, Texas.

**September 2008:** Following this, the unit is scheduled to deploy first to Kuwait for approx. two weeks acclimatization in Fall 2008. After this, the scheduled “boots on the ground” time in Iraq for approx. nine months will begin.

**Late Spring 2009:** The 50th IBCT is scheduled to redeploy to the U.S. and demobilize, all within the 12 month active duty time period.

**Safety, Soldier readiness, and family care has been carefully integrated into all pre-mobilization and mobilization plans and are top priorities for this command.**

The 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team is part of the best equipped, best trained Army in the world today and is ready for this mission.

- Over 25 percent of the brigade's members have been previously deployed to locations including Iraq, Afghanistan, Guantanamo Bay Cuba, or the Sinai Peninsula.
- Fort Bliss, Texas, the stateside mobilization training site, is optimal as it is considered the Army's premier detainee operations training site. Fort Bliss will further prepare the 50th IBCT troops with realistic "theater immersion" training.
- **Approximately 2850** of the 3100 Soldiers that will comprise the 50th IBCT in Iraq will come from N.J., with the other 200 from the Michigan Army National Guard.
- Nearly 250 females are part of this deployment.

#### 50<sup>th</sup> IBCT Special Interest Info

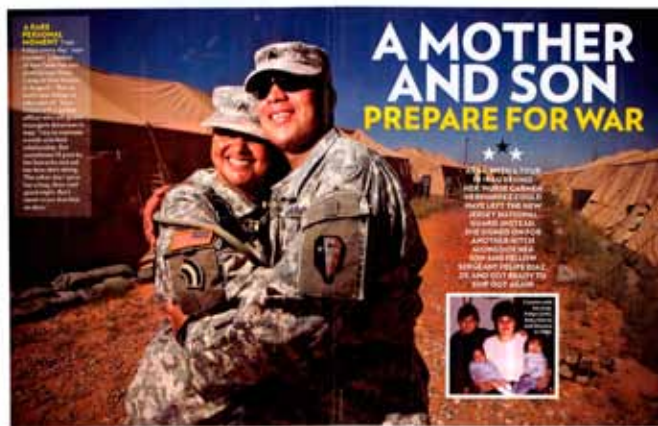
- Married Soldiers: 13
  - 1 additional Spouse Active Duty Marine
- Brothers: 15
  - 5 additional Brothers on Active Duty
- Sisters: 1
- Brother – Sister: 8
- Mother – Son: 2
- Father – Son: 5
- Cousins: 4



There were 25 Family Readiness Groups supporting the 50th IBCT.

New Jersey Family Readiness Groups were assigned by region to one of 10 Family Assistance Centers statewide for guidance and support in helping service members and their families achieve their needs.

Family Readiness Groups participated and assisted in the coordination of Salute The Troops and Welcome Home Ceremonies as well providing constant support to troops and families at home during the deployment.





## The IBCT Informer

Holiday Edition, December 2007

### 50th IBCT launches mobilization with SRP

By Shawn Morris, Fort Dix Public Affairs Staff



Photo by Shawn Morris

Pvt. Kimberly Medina, Sea Girt Medical Command, left, inoculates Staff Sgt. Lisandro Peralta, Alpha Company, 2nd Battalion, 113th Infantry.

The Army put its promise into practice Nov. 27-28 as nearly 300 troops from the New Jersey Army National Guard's 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team underwent pre-mobilization medical processing at the Fort Dix Joint Readiness Center.

Conducting such processing during pre-mobilization preparations comes as a result of a policy issued earlier this year that limits

To meet this timeline, units are now required to accomplish certain tasks formerly completed at mobilization stations — such as the Joint Readiness Center (JRC) — and the New Jersey National Guard's Joint Training and Training Development Center are being used to expedite the process.

“As the mobilization time prior to deployment has been condensed, every opportunity to train during the mobilization phase becomes precious,” said Col. Judith Robinson, Walson Medical Support Element commander.

“These pre-mobilization activities give back some of that precious time to training.” The 50th IBCT Soldiers were offered eye exams, immunizations, blood work, and other medical processing during their two days at the Joint Readiness Center. Additional dates for the remaining Soldiers in the brigade are scheduled for the coming months.

see SRP page 4

Reserve Component mobilizations to no more than one year, inclusive of time spent at the mobilization station, in-theater, and at the demobilization station.

#### INSIDE



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Guard plans for positive deployment experience



On page 7

Lancer, Longbow '07 provides many lessons learned



On page 8

50th IBCT FRG sets introduction, meeting



Photo by Maj. Jason Fetterolf

Sgt. James Bedrossian and Spc. Nicholas Soper of C Company, 2-113th Infantry, watch for approaching vehicles at an observation post, Zall Herr, Albania Oct. 27.

### NJ Guard trains with 21 nations in Albania

By Maj. Jason Fetterolf, PAO, 50th IBCT

ZALL HERR, Albania - Hello. Pershendetje. Yia Su Salute. These were just a few greetings heard in English, Albanian, Greek and Moldovan by a platoon of C Company, 2-113th Infantry Battalion, New Jersey Army National Guard during the “Cooperative Lancer 07 Exercise” (COLR 07) conducted in Albania Oct.19 - 30, 2007.

Conducted in a culturally diverse setting, COLR 07 has various objectives, according to Lt. Col. Bardhyl Kollcaku, commander of the 2nd Battalion, Rapid Reaction Brigade, Albanian Army. These objectives include bringing together NATO, Mediterranean Dialogue, and Partnership for Peace members, increasing interoperability and conducting crisis response operations. He added that this exercise will serve also as a framework for the 1st Albanian Coy (Company) to be evaluated to further Albania's goal of becoming a future NATO member.

Nearly 1000 servicemembers from 21 countries

see Lancer '07 page 6

## 50th IBCT marches into holiday season with families



Photos by 444th MPAD

Santa hears from Robert and Jillian Orzol, children of Anna and Maj. John Orzol, during the Christmas Dinner with HHC, 50th IBCT Dec 8. Col. Jorge J. Martinez, 50th IBCT commander, serves turkey during the Christmas Dinner. Spc. Jon Doyle, HHC, 50th IBCT, with children Sarai and Jon. Wife, Leigh Anne not pictured.



## Family Readiness Group: An introduction

By Dawn Jimenez and Lt. Col. Henri Schepens

The following are quotes from a recent FRG member survey asking: What is a Family Readiness Group (FRG)?

It is a group of members that share a common situation. Most have a soldier deployed. Members may be spouses, children, parents, siblings, or neighbors coming together to offer support and morale for each other as well as the soldiers. A well informed family and community can make the mission easier for a soldier. By establishing a Family Readiness Group, soldiers and families are more aware of what to expect.

This is not an exclusive club. This group is for everyone – from the family of a private up to and including the family of the commander. We have the opportunity to take this experience and turn it into something positive. Use our strengths to lend support to each other. Let's face it, we are all human. We all experience similar emotions. We now have the opportunity to forge a new bond – one of friendship. It is a positive outlet.

Sometimes knowing there is someone else in a similar situation makes the circumstances more tolerable. Together the Family Readiness Group can brainstorm ideas for simple "how to lists" to more elaborate events such as Welcome Home Reunions. It is comforting to know you don't have to go through this alone. There are compassionate people who are trained and willing to help when needed.

It is important to speak to your soldier before deployment about many common issues. It is also important to make sure you have a support system in place when your soldier is deployed. A Family Readiness Group should be part of your support. Come out, explore and join your Family Readiness Group.

Although survey opinions may differ, all agreed that joining an FRG was a positive experience.

### Meeting Notice

The first 50th IBCT FRG Meeting is scheduled for 2 p.m.

Sat., Jan. 12, 2008. This meeting will focus on individual introductions, nomination of key volunteer positions as well as presentations by Veteran Services Organization(s). We will also identify activities and programs we may want to plan during the coming year.

For more information please contact:

**Dawn Jimenez**

Family Readiness Support Assistant  
Lawrenceville Armory  
609-671-6640

**Lt. Col. Henri Schepens**

Brigade Family Programs Coordinator  
609-671-6642

## Health *continued from page 5*

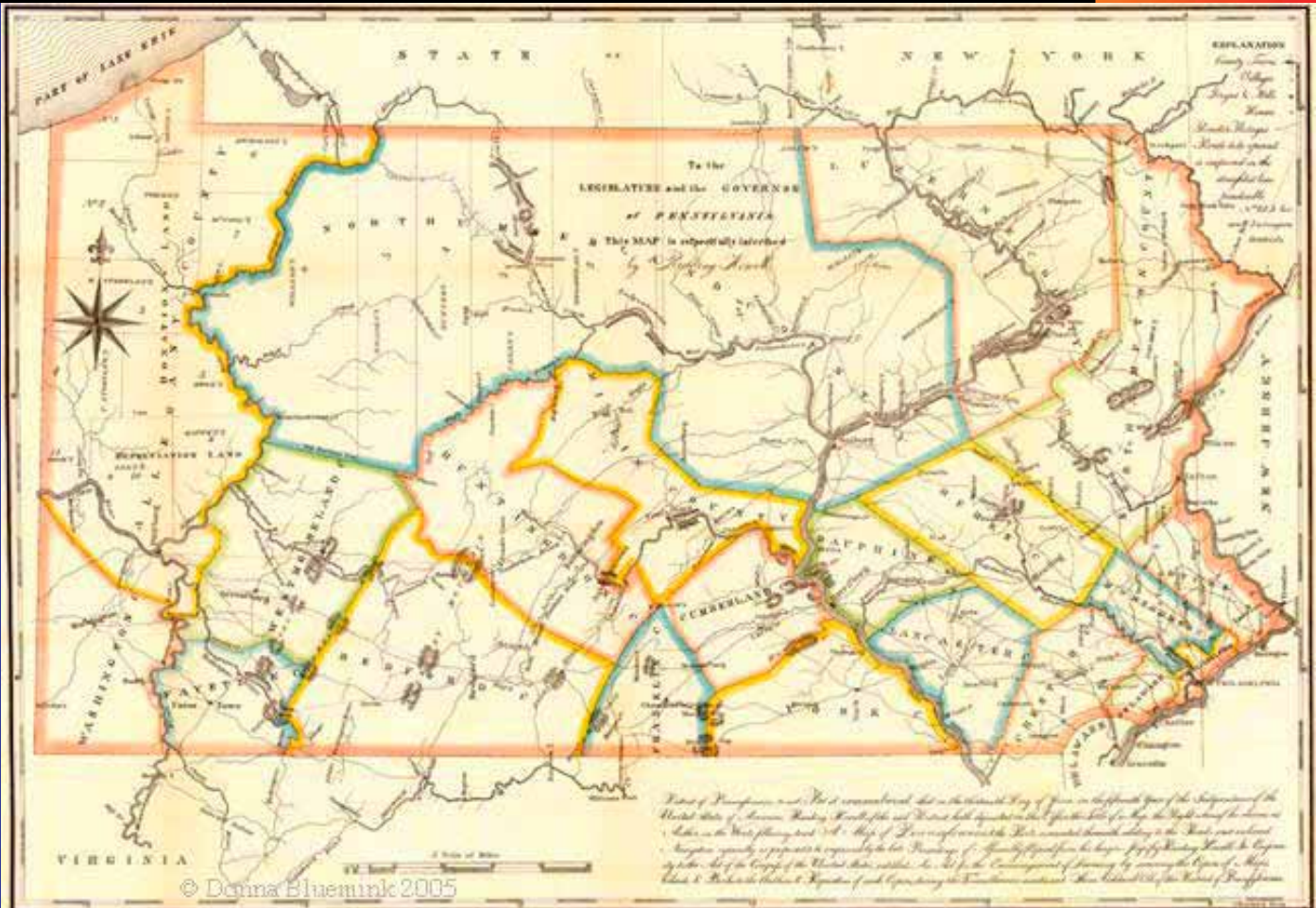
topic, but never did it; those that talk about it and used to do it; and those that talk about it and still do it. Information in "Take charge of your health" will only come from those that *still* do it.

We Soldiers have many things to balance in our lives – our military and civilian careers, our families, and outside activities. Keeping that need for balance in perspective, this health information will be simple to understand, sift out misinformation, and provide tips that will be easy to fit it to your busy schedule.

Remember, you only have one body, and without good health, you lose focus on other aspects in life, including your family and your Army family that is counting on you. Do you feel old? Age is just a number. Do you feel young and invincible? What you do now may impact your health for the rest of your life. Is there anything more important than your health?

Next issue: *Is the Food Guide Pyramid right?*

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# The IBCT Informer

Annual Training Edition, April 2008

## 50th IBCT fills “Gap” for MOB training

By 1st Sgt. David Moore, 50th IBCT

New Jersey drivers entering Pennsylvania see the billboards along the highway that read ‘America Starts Here.’ For Soldiers of the New Jersey Army National Guard’s 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), these signs should read ‘Deployment Starts Here’ because their road to war began at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa.

For three weeks, about 2,800 Jersey Blues Soldiers conducted training that encompassed warrior tasks, weapons, driving and combat lifesaving, with support from approximately 400 Soldiers from other Garden State Army Guard commands.

This was the first time the various elements of the 50th IBCT were in one place preparing for the next phase of training at Fort Bliss, Texas — the IBCT’s mobilization station for their mission in Iraq. Nearly every Battalion in the New Jersey Army National Guard has contributed either units or Soldiers to form the IBCT.

Soldiers are proud of what they have done at Fort Indiantown Gap, according to Col. Steven Ferrari, 50th IBCT commander. He explained, “Our goal was to reach 80 percent of our deployment requirements, and I think we’ve done that.”

While the three-week training schedule focused on combat arms and other hands-on survivability training, Soldiers led by

team leaders and squad leaders were often found rehearsing such tasks as clearing buildings and tactical movements through various hostile situations.

Fort Indiantown Gap was fertile ground for successful team building. “It gave the Soldiers the chance to get to know the Soldier he [or she] deploys with,” Ferrari noted.

According to Staff Sgt. Edwin Tejada of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2- 113th Infantry, the training on new weapons such as the M4 carbine and learning survival techniques for a desert environment has built the confidence of the Soldiers. “Everyone is excited with the new equipment. We’re not a part-time force anymore. We stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the active duty,” said Tejada, a Passaic County resident.



Photo by Pvt. Saul Rosa

*Pvt. Andree Cross takes point and leads fellow Soldiers of the 102nd Cavalry up narrow stairway at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa.*

Spc. Sanjiv Joshi of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 50th IBCT, from Levittown, Pa., and formerly of India, said the training was effective for the next phase of the Iraq deployment. “For me, this training and future deployment is payback. The United States has given me the chance to be a successful business owner. I met my wife here and my children were born here. I am grateful for this opportunity,” he said.

### Inside

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Female Soldiers excel in new role

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Take charge of your health

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Soldiers stick around to save lives

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New unit, new mission, new weapons

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Patch ceremony symbolizes transformed brigade

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Photo Gallery

# APRIL 2008

### Female Soldiers excel in new role

By Staff Sgt. Shawn Morris, 50th IBCT

Sgt. Kathleen Wilson took one small step several weeks ago when she joined the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's 2-113th Infantry Battalion. She hopes it will one day lead to a giant leap forward for women in the military.

Wilson was transferred into the 2-113th Infantry's Bravo Company from the 250th Brigade Support Battalion as part of the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's (IBCT's) efforts to integrate nearly 250 female Soldiers into units preparing for detainee operations missions in Iraq, duties normally carried out by military police.

"When you talk detainee operations, you're going to be handling male and female detainees," explained Lt. Col. Mark Pitera, 2-113th commander. "You need female Soldiers if they come into contact with a female Iraqi adult. An Iraqi male does not like a male Soldier searching an Iraqi female. The last thing you want to do is lose that relationship or not gain that trust." "In our mission, it's extremely important to have female Soldiers work on our team. It's a force multiplier," he added.

When Wilson joined the team just prior to the start of pre-mobilization Annual Training at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., she wasn't sure what to expect.

"I never really heard of females coming into infantry companies before, so I was a little surprised," admitted Wilson, an X-ray technician in both military and civilian life. "I don't know why I was chosen."

The answer to that question is clear to her fellow 2-113th Infantry Soldiers. "She's really high-speed," said 1st Sgt. Ruben Rodriguez, Bravo Company first sergeant.

"She's very motivated," said Sgt. 1st Class Marco Chavez, Bravo Company platoon sergeant. "I like to think that everybody's treating her as a sergeant"

"She's one of the best NCOs I've had the pleasure to work with," said Sgt. 1st Class Stephane Millhollin, Bravo Company platoon sergeant, who was also recently integrated into the 2-113th. "I believe she's a natural leader."

"You wouldn't think she's a new NCO," Millhollin added, noting that Wilson graduated the Warrior Leader Course with superior ratings in October 2007.

Despite Wilson's and the other female Soldiers' qualifications and abilities – and the fact that they will perform combat support duties – the idea of integrating females into combat arms units has met with some opposition. Detractors claim that women cannot physically keep up with men, that inevitable romantic relationships would lead to jealousy and competition, and that women lack the "killer instincts" needed for combat arms.

All these factors, it's argued, would lead to a lowering of standards, a decline in unit morale and cohesiveness, and reduced effectiveness when carrying out missions.

Supporters of integration point out that nearly 200,000 women have served in Iraq and Afghanistan since Sept. 11, 2001, that female pilots and military police officers have served with distinction for years, and that the non-linear nature of combat in the Global War on Terrorism has already forced all Soldiers – regardless of rank, Military Occupational Specialty or gender – to become warriors.

Although the debate will likely continue, reaction to integration in the 2-113th has been largely positive.

"For the most part, the integration has gone well," Pitera explained. "I think the units that have been successful have had strong female NCOs who have been mentors to the junior female enlisted Soldiers."

"Bottom line: We haven't worked with females before. It was terrifying initially," explained Chavez. "But the males in our platoon are like big brothers now."

"I feel very grateful for the females we have with us," he added.

"We have the advantage over the men because we work with men in our units," Millhollin explained.

They respect her rank. They've done a really good job," Millhollin said of the male Soldiers in Wilson's company. "Her knowledge and the way

she demonstrates it – they respect her for that, too."

"They haven't done anything extra and they don't treat us any differently – we're just Soldiers," she added.

"They treat me like an NCO, not a female. There's very good team cohesion," said Wilson.

"There's a lot we can learn from the infantry guys," she continued.

"They've been very helpful sharing their knowledge"

"They don't treat the girls like girls," she said with a smile.

Wilson has a lot to smile about, including a chance to earn her place – and perhaps a place for future generations of women – in an ever-expanding array of units and missions.

"When I signed up in 2003, females couldn't do combat arms," Wilson explained. "Things are changing, and being a part of that is an honor."

"I'm trying to push the other females and myself to do our best," she continued. "All the females in my company – we're all on the same page"

"I'm proud that I'm able to serve," she said.



Photos by Spc. Robert Posa

Top, Sgt. Kathleen Wilson of Bravo Co., 250th Brigade Support Battalion works as an assistant instructor on the M4 rifle range. Bottom, she takes a brief rest from her busy day.



**APRIL 2008**

# 20 FORT INDIANTOWN GAP



## Soldiers stick around to save lives

By Pvt. Saul Rosa

What do Soldiers do when the fighting is over and their battle buddies are wounded but there are no medics around? Simple: They use the skills they learned from the Combat Life Saver course.

The Combat Life Saver (CLS) course held at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., from March 29 to April 19 teaches every Soldier to be a combat lifesaver.

The CLS course is a 40-hour course normally spread over four to five days, yet it was condensed into three days during the Fort Indiantown Gap Annual Training for the New Jersey National Guard's 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), where the Soldiers learned various life-saving skills.

The main skills taught are starting IVs (intravenous needles), suppressing excess blood flow from extremities with the use of tourniquets, using needle decompression to treat a collapsed lung, and maintaining airflow. The course also promotes a degree of trust

and unity between combat lifesavers and combat medics.

"We have to train them to the best of their ability so they can help us when the time comes," said Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Cosmanic, an instructor with the CLS course and a combat medic.

The goal of the CLS course is to have 50 percent of the 50th IBCT qualified by the summer; yet with the team of dedicated instructors and the focused CLS students of the 50th IBCT, the goal will be reached before the end of April with 1,906 total lifesavers.

Although qualification is the announced goal, the true goal is to make every Soldier confident enough to save his battle buddy if the time comes.

"I had this course before but I learned a lot of new techniques and now I feel confident in what I know; I feel great," said Spc. Orlen Zambrano of B Company, 2-113th Infantry, 50th IBCT.



Photo by Spc. Robert Posa

Pvt. Antanacio Guzman, left, performs "live" IV procedure to Pvt. Samuel Diaz to the standards of the Combat Life Saver course. Both are Soldiers of Alpha Co., 2nd Battalion, 113th Infantry, 50th IBCT.

## New unit, new mission, new weapons

By Pvt. Saul Rosa

Tight urban environments require Soldiers to use weapons that are versatile. As the Soldiers of the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) prepare to deploy to Iraq, they have received hands-on training with some of the new weapons needed for their missions.

It was all part of the unit's pre-mobilization training that took place from March 28 to April 19 at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa. Soldiers of the 50th IBCT received training and qualified on weapons including the M4 carbine, M9 pistol and the M500 shotgun.

The M4 is a shorter-stocked version of the M16A2 assault rifle. Its smaller build, retractable stock and shorter barrel (14.5 inches) are well suited to urban terrain because it is easy to manage and maneuver in tight spaces such as buildings, according to Spc. Andrew Bolen, company armorer and supply clerk for the Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the 50th IBCT.

For many of the Soldiers, this training period marked their first time using a weapon system outfitted with the Close-Combat Optics (CCO) sight. The CCO uses a collimated dot (a red laser) that allows the user to aim with both eyes open, making it easier to zero in on targets.

"It's a good weapon, as long as you are good to it," said

Sgt. Richard Schlack, Bravo Troop, 102nd Cavalry, as he cleaned his M4 after qualifying with it the day before.

Another unfamiliar weapon to many IBCT Soldiers is the M500 shotgun, but it is an essential tool for Soldiers involved in urban or detainee operations. The shotgun is an effective suppressive weapon because it can fire non-lethal ammunition, explained Bolen. In urban operations the shotgun can also be used to open locked doors and as support in close combat.

The M9 pistol is commonly the weapon of command-element officers and the secondary weapon of NCOs. However, the urban combat environment often calls for all Soldiers to have a secondary weapon. The M9 is an efficient backup when a Soldier's primary weapon fails or exhausts its ammo.

"The M9 is a great last resort weapon," said Sgt. Raymond E. Szwak, 1-114th Infantry. "It is durable and deadly in close combat."

Learning these new weapons systems is the first of many challenges the Soldiers of the 50th IBCT will encounter on the road to Iraq. Mastering these skills now will surely improve the success of missions faced in the future.



Sgt. Soutsakhone Sysouvang, right, leads fellow soldiers of the 102nd Cavalry at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa.

Photo by Pvt. Saul Rosa



# 24 FORT INDIANTOWN GAP





## New drivers get green light, HMMWV training

By Pvt. Saul Rosa

Approximately 600 Soldiers of the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team attended High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV) training at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa. March 28 to April 19.

The three-day course, conducted by the 1st Battalion, 254th Combat Arms Regiment, trained Soldiers in basic operation of the HMMWV. The course took Soldiers who have had little or no experience with the HMMWV and taught the basics of both daytime and nighttime driving and maintaining the vehicle.

Master Sgt. Steven J. Wollermann, infantry branch chief for the 254th and the Non-commissioned officer in charge (NCOIC) of the training explained that the course is designed to provide the basic driver training required for units to issue Soldiers a military drivers license.

The first day mainly consists of training videos and classroom instruction on safety, operation and familiarization with the HMMWV. The second day, the Soldiers begin driving the HMMWV with the assistance of an instructor and study for the final written exam. On the final day of training, the Soldiers drive the HMMWV with an instructor assessing their performance and take the final written exam.

The basic HMMWV driving course is just the beginning for many Soldiers. However, it is an important part that establishes the basic understanding of military vehicles and the responsibilities that accompanies them.

"I learned a lot from the slideshows, in-classroom training, and instructors," said Pfc. Marlyn Corona, 50th Chemical Co. "I never drove a HMMWV before and I was surprised how well they handle."



Photos by Spc. Robert Posa

Top left, Master Sgt. Steven J. Wollermann, NCOIC of the training, keeps close track of all vehicles and training. Top right, student driver Pvt. Aristotelis Laourdakis of Charlie Company 2-113 Infantry sits behind the wheel of a HMMWV for the first time and slowly negotiates a turn. Bottom, the HMMWV proves to be a rugged and reliable vehicle on the roughest terrain.

## Patch ceremony symbolizes transformed brigade

By Spc. Bill Addison, 50<sup>th</sup> IBCT

On a sunny Wednesday afternoon at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., Col. Steven Ferrari gazed out upon the approximately 2,800 Soldiers under his command who make up the recently formed 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT).

The occasion marked Ferrari's first chance to see his whole infantry brigade combat team in one place since its official transformation March 1 from an infantry brigade. The ceremony officially welcomed and affixed the left-shoulder patch of the 50th IBCT.

"We are now a brigade combat team united by a left-shoulder patch," said Ferrari as he addressed the 50th IBCT Soldiers.

"This left-shoulder patch is our common bond now – we stand as one," he added.

Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Reith, the Adjutant General of the New Jersey National Guard, kicked off the ceremony by patching Ferrari, who in turn proceeded to patch his brigade command sergeant major and battalion commanders.

"Today is truly historic and it's a privilege for me to be part of it," Reith told the troops.

"This is history – you have to understand that. This is history and everything you do going forward is part of history," he added.

The National Institute of Heraldry approved the new left-shoulder

patch on Jan. 22. It is a tri-colored septigon with the traditional blue, yellow and red of the brigade's higher command, the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry "Rainbow" Division, and is also representative of the brigade's armor heritage. The insignia has three stars, which represent the brigade's heritage and as well as the brigade's home state, New Jersey, which was the third state of the union to sign the United States Constitution. The middle reversed triangular shape also suggests the letter "V" for victory.

The patch ceremony came at the end of the 50th IBCT's three-week, pre-mobilization during Annual Training that began March 28 and ended April 19. The brigade will deploy to Iraq this fall.

"This day marks the beginning of the next chapter in the 50th Brigade's history," said Ferrari.

Reith congratulated Ferrari and his Soldiers for everything they've achieved thus far in the process of transitioning from citizens to Soldiers.

"All of the reports I've gotten back about the brigade is that it wasn't just meeting the standard, it's exceeding standard," said Reith.

"This brigade combat team is off and running and there's no question that whatever the nation asks of this BCT, you will fulfill the mission," he added.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Shawn Morris

Pfc. Peterson Pierre-Paul, Foxtrot Co., 250th Brigade Support Battalion affixes his new 50th IBCT patch in unison with his unit members at a ceremony April 17 at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa.





# The Monitor®



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Published for the Fort Bliss/El Paso, Texas Community

April 24, 2008



## WEEKEND OUTLOOK

### FORT BLISS

Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Sunny Hi 84, Lo 56	Sunny Hi 89, Lo 58	Sunny Hi 75, Lo 53

### BAGHDAD, IRAQ

Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Sunny, hot Hi 105, Lo 74	Mostly Sunny Hi 106, Lo 74	Partly cloudy Hi 106 Lo 76



**Adopt-a-Highway**  
Page 39

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**Patch** ceremony officiates 50th IBCT - Page 8

**Bliss** event promises prosperous future endeavors - Page 14

**Youth** fishing tournament 'lures' 300-plus anglers - Page 41

### Post-wide Yard Sale

Saturday • 7 a.m.-1 p.m.  
Biggs, Beaumont, Logan Heights, Hayes, and 801 housing



**Tell me a story**  
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MAJ. DEANNA BAGUE

## Training prepares 102nd Cav. for mobilization

Sgt. Joseph Genovese, front, and Pfc. Neftali Maldonado, both from B Troop, 102nd Cavalry Battalion, 50th IBCT, practice tactics on movement through urban terrain at Fort Indiantown Gap, Penn. For more on this story, see Page 5.

# IMCOM commander visits

## Three-star general discusses base growth, family readiness

JEAN OFFUTT

Fort Bliss Public Affairs Officer

The commanding general of Installation Management Command visited Fort Bliss April 15 and had a lot to say about Soldiers and families, quality of life and transformation.

"I am delighted to be here," said Lt. Gen. Robert Wilson. "I love coming back to Fort Bliss – or 'Team Bliss,' as they call it – to see the Soldiers, civilians and their families."

Wilson went on to talk about Soldiers' incredible contributions to "the greatest change the Army has gone through since WWII."

"We are reshaping our Army, moving one-third of our Army around the United States, returning Soldiers and family members from overseas, growing the Army by 74,000 (by 2013), and converting the Army to a modular force while at war, so it is an incredible feat."

Wilson said today's servicemembers are "the greatest Soldiers, the best-trained Soldiers in the world." He also recognized the civilians and communities supporting Soldiers and their families in this endeavor.

"Fort Bliss is at the center of change," he said. "As I look at Fort Bliss and the Greater White Sands Missile Range complex, there is a syn-



DIETER JESTER

**Lt. Gen. Robert Wilson, commanding general of Installation Management Command, discusses ongoing base transformation projects during an April 15 visit to Fort Bliss.**

ergy of activity and change. The amount of military construction going on is incredible – you see cranes every where, you see transformation in front of you, and there is a tremendous amount of effort to make sure we get it right for Soldiers and families."

In a comment regarding facilities, Wilson talked about the entire inventory of facilities and ongoing transformation of improving Fort Bliss facilities to meet Army standards, and said the

See IMCOM, Page 3



Soldiers from the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team conduct pre-mobilization training at Fort Indiantown Gap, Penn.

## 50th IBCT trains at Indiantown Gap for Bliss mobilization

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MAJ. DEANNA BAGUE • FORT BLISS PUBLIC AFFAIRS



Sgt. Joseph Genovese, from B Troop, 102nd Cavalry Battalion, 50th IBCT, approaches a building during urban operations training.

INDIANTOWN GAP, Penn. – About 3,000 Soldiers from the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team conducted pre-mobilization training during their annual training in preparation for their upcoming mobilization at Fort Bliss.

The 50th IBCT is composed of National Guard units from across the state of New Jersey, with specialties ranging from combat arms to service support units, said Maj. Michael Bobinis, adjutant, Headquarters, 50th IBCT.

“That is the best part of this (annual training) period – we are learning to work with our counterparts” said Bobinis. “As you start learning what the mission is, you become more confident of what’s going on.”

Most of the pre-mobilization training focused on individual Soldier skills like weapons qualification, driver training and combat lifesaver training. Mastering these skills will prepare Soldiers for the collective tasks on which they will train at Fort Bliss, said Capt. Richard Colton, commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 50th IBCT.

“(In the past) we trained for a linear battlefield against a mechanized enemy,” said Colton. “Today, it is not a mechanized enemy that we are fighting anymore. It is a new kind of war. So that is what we are preparing people for down to the lowest level.”

“I just got out of basic training so I’m used to the whole ‘train, train’ deal,” said Pvt. Zeshan Haroon, B Troop, 102nd Cavalry Battalion.

The Guardsmen used every opportunity to train as many tasks as time allotted, including urban warfare, said Sgt. Steven Webb, B Troop, 102nd Cav.

“In cities and built-up areas, tactics change dramatically,” said Webb.

Webb said the threats Soldiers are exposed to range from booby traps and improvised explosive devices to sniper fire and noncombatants. Soldiers have to maintain 360-degree security at all times and be aware of no-shoot areas, as well.

“We have to calculate in a split second whether to shoot or not (or) if a person is a combatant or a noncombatant,” said Webb.

Soldiers said even though Fort Dix, N.J., is a closer mobilization site, they feel Fort Bliss was a wise choice.

“I don’t see any desert at Fort Dix,” said Spc. Priscilla Arias, A Troop, 102nd Cav.

Arias said the weather and environment at Fort Bliss are more conducive to preparing Soldiers to adapt to the theater of operations.

“You are never going to look forward to going away from home or from your family,” said Spc. John Bedoya, A Troop, 102nd Cav., “(but) it was a smart idea (to choose Fort Bliss) because it helps prepare us to keep our minds set on the training instead of thinking you can go home and see your family when they are only half an hour away.”



Soldiers from the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team move toward their objective.



Spc. Wilbert Bynum, A Troop, 102nd Cavalry, 50th IBCT, role-plays as a detainee during pre-mobilization training at Fort Indiantown Gap, Penn.



Soldiers from the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team exit classrooms and proceed to vehicles to conduct driver training.

# 50th IBCT Annual Training at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa.



Photo by 1st Sgt. David Moore



Photo by Spc. Robert Posa

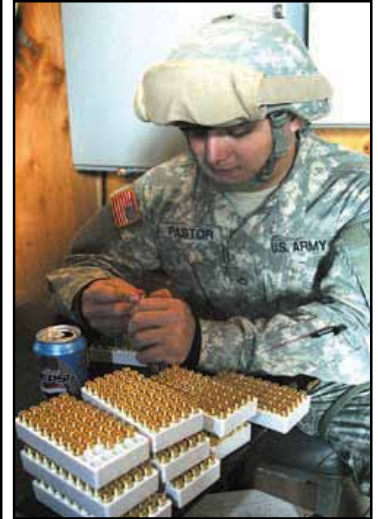


Photo by 1st Sgt. David Moore



Photo by Spc. Robert Posa



Photo by Spc. Robert Posa



Photo by 1st Sgt. David Moore



Photo by 1st Sgt. David Moore



Photo by Spc. Robert Posa

### 50th IBCT Annual Training at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa.



Top row, Photos by Spc. Robert Posa



Photo by Spc. Robert Posa



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Joe Donnelly



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Joe Donnelly



Photo by Spc. Robert Posa







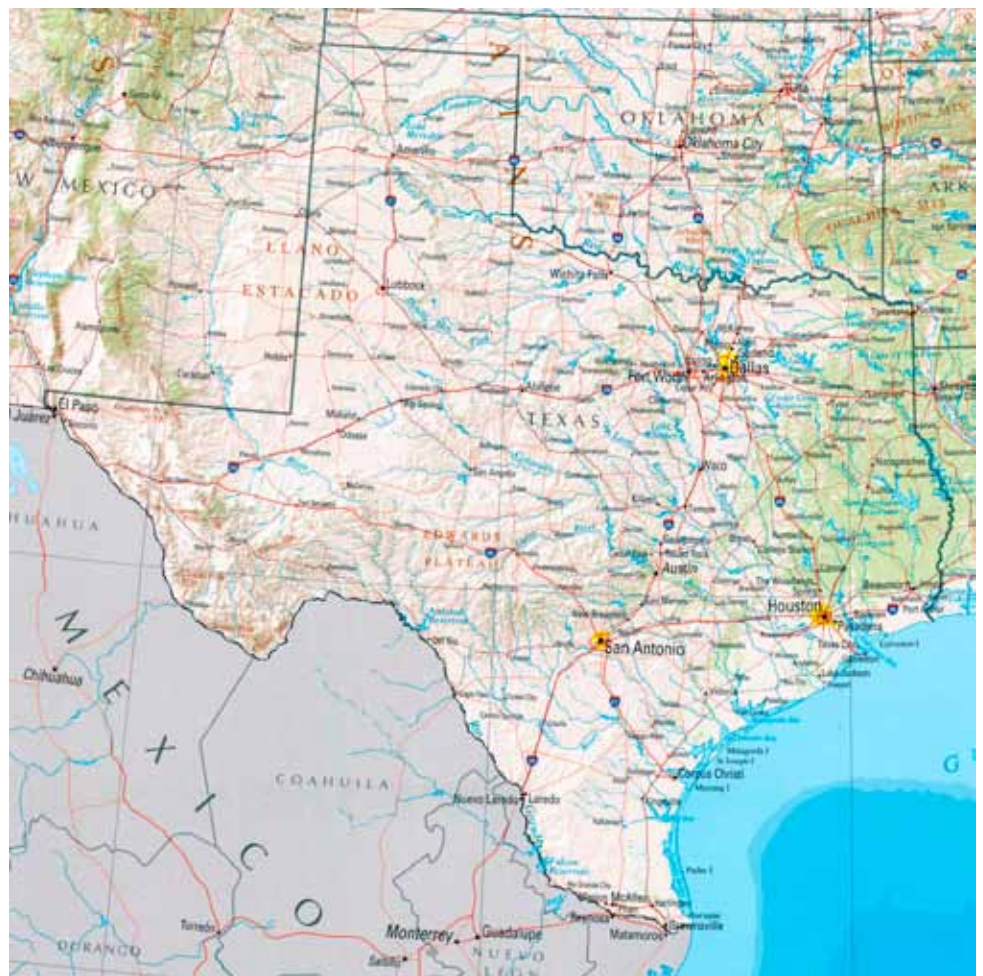


















# The Informer

## 'Jersey Blues'



A supplemental field expedient newsletter for 50th IBCT Soldiers

Issue #2

August 8, 2008

### BULLETS

#### *The Informer seeks photo submissions*

Due to training requirements, the Public Affairs section of the 50th IBCT Joint Area Support Group is not able to cover every unit in every training event.

So, if you capture an image on your digital camera and would like to submit it for possible use in a future issue of *The Informer*, send your photo to [pao50ibct@yahoo.com](mailto:pao50ibct@yahoo.com)

Remember to identify who shot the photo and who appears in the photo by first and last name, rank, and unit.

#### *Registration required for bloggers*

Anyone interested in starting a computer blog must first register with the Public Affairs section of the 50th IBCT Joint Area Support Group by e-mailing [pao50ibct@yahoo.com](mailto:pao50ibct@yahoo.com)

#### *FRG Web site easy to access*

Logging onto the 50th IBCT Family Readiness Group Web site is easy: Start by visiting [www.armyfrg.org](http://www.armyfrg.org) and choosing a username and password.

You'll need to fill out a short form identifying your sponsor (Soldier).

Once your account is approved, you'll be able to follow the links to New Jersey, then to the 50th IBCT FRG site.

## Michigan troops join 'Blues'

**Maj. Jason Fetterolf**  
2-113th Infantry Battalion  
Public Affairs Officer

Under ever-blue skies, on July 2, Col. Steven Ferrari, commander of the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), New Jersey Army National Guard (NJARNG), presided over a patch ceremony for the 1460th and 1463rd Transportation Companies of the Michigan Army National Guard (MIARNG).

The ceremony symbolized a mission-based unification of the 1460th and 1463rd with the 50th IBCT for future operations in Iraq and culminated with the affixing of the 50th IBCT patch to the uniform of the Michigan Soldiers.

Proudly welcoming the 1460th and 1463rd at the patch ceremony were sister elements of the 2-113th Infantry Battalion – including the four deploying companies of the 2-113th Infantry Battalion and Foxtrot Company, 250th Brigade Support Battalion.

Both transportation companies will represent two of eight subordinate companies of the 2-113th while performing detainee operations in the southern Iraq region.

The affixing of the newly authorized 50th IBCT patch was well received.

"It's a beautiful thing. It makes one feel at home. It feels good (to be part of the 50th IBCT)," said Spc. Dale E. Tatum, 1460th.

In regards to the blending of the Michigan and New Jersey units, Capt. Jon



Maj. Jason Fetterolf, 2-113th Infantry Battalion Public Affairs Officer

**PATCHING THINGS UP** -- Staff Sgt. Edward Michela, front, and fellow Soldiers of the 1460th Transportation Company, Michigan Army National Guard, affix the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) patch to their left shoulders during a ceremony July 2 at McGregor Base Camp, N.M.

Marin, 1463rd commander, noted, "I think we are a good fit."

"The (50th) BCT and

better battalion commander. All the company officers have been good also," said 1st Sgt. John Kreil, first ser-

that)," added Capt. Steven Prince, commander, 1460th.

And as every story has two sides, the leadership from the 113th had many things to say about the 1460th and 1463rd.

"They make you feel welcome. Who is welcoming who?" said Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas J. Clark,

2-113th Infantry Battalion command sergeant major, in consideration of when the 50th IBCT leadership went

(continued on page 5)

**Communications and relationship-building between the 50th IBCT and both Michigan companies has been ongoing since Michigan was notified of the mission in February.**

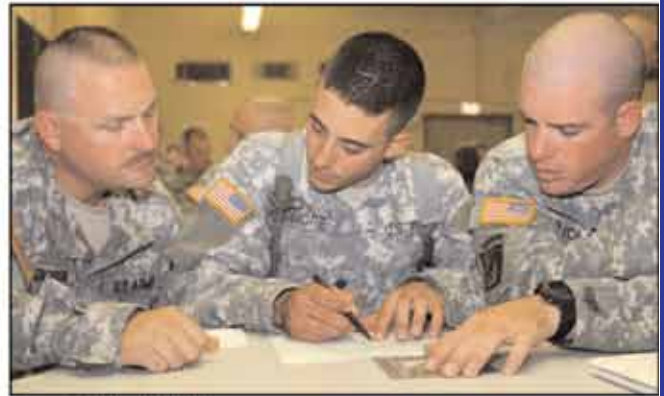
113th has treated us great; with open arms," said Staff Sgt. Gary A. McAlpine, 1463rd supply sergeant.

"You couldn't ask for a

geant, 1460th, referring to the 2-113th Infantry Bn.

"We have been very well integrated, and the patch ceremony (formalized

# Garden State troops tackle training



Sgt. Michael Dickson, Spc. Anthony Finamore and Sgt. Erik Widland, Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 50th Special Troops Bn., from left above, practice map reading during Land Navigation training.



Spc. Thomas Boden and Pvt. Antonia Hoh, Bravo Co., 250th Brigade Support Bn., from left above, find their way using a PLGR during Land Navigation training. Second Lt. Sarah Bernal, Foxtrot Co., 250th Brigade Support Bn., left, gives an IV to Sgt. Beverly Curl during Combat Life Saver training.

photos by Staff Sgt. Shawn Morris  
Soldiers from Bravo Company, 102nd Cavalry Squadron, above, take aim at an insurgent during Close Quarters Combat training. Spc. Joe Merrick, Charlie Co., 250th Brigade Support Bn., below, qualifies with a shotgun.



Other training provided to 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Soldiers includes Maneuver and Mobility Support Operations, Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer, Advanced Rifle Marksmanship, Army Combatives and Tactical Iraqi Language Trainer.



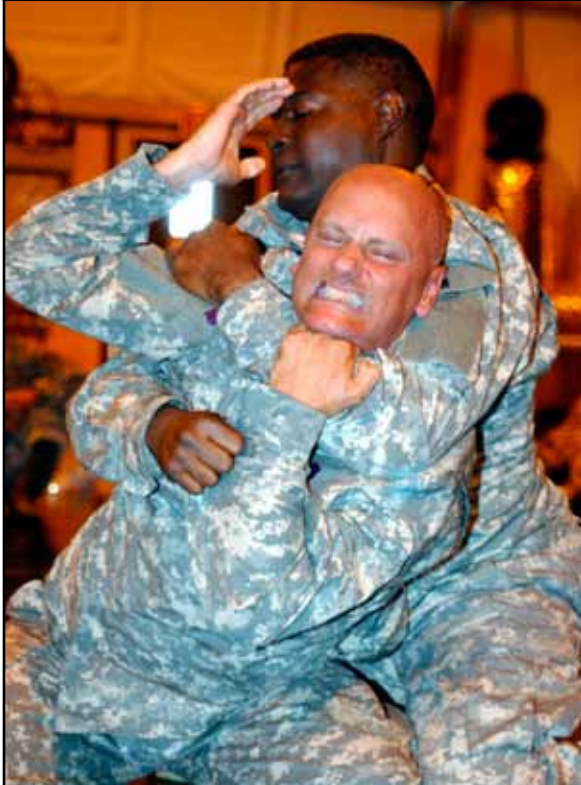
Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 102nd Cavalry Squadron, above, learn about Humvee breaking distances at the Driver Training Course.

Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 50th Special Troops Bn., left, move to the Dismounted Land Navigation course. Spc. Andy Edmunds, 1463rd Transportation Co., above, helps change a Humvee tire during Driver Training. Pfc. Timothy Horner, Delta Co., 114th Infantry Bn., right, checks his azimuth during Dismounted Land



# 44 CAMP MCGREGOR







# The Informer

## 'Jersey Blues'



A supplemental field expedient newsletter for 50th IBCT Soldiers

Issue #1

July 24, 2008

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**PATRIOTIC PARTY --** Pfc. Justin Roxas, B Battery, 3rd/112th Fires Battalion, right, rocks out during Operation Desert Independence at McGregor Base Camp July 4. Activities at the event included a rock-wall climb, demonstrated above by Pfc. T. Grace Diaz, 328th Military Police Company, a Texas Hold'em tournament, below, and an inflatable obstacle course, navigated by Spc. Derrell Schenck, 50th Chemical Company, bottom right.

# Troops rock 4th



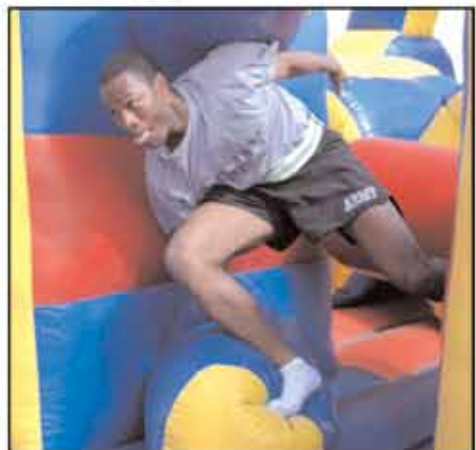
## 'Jersey Blues' celebrate U.S. independence

As the nation celebrated its 233rd birthday July 4, Soldiers from the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team received a gift of their own.

Operation Desert Independence offered food, fun and friendship to Garden State troops training at McGregor Base Camp.

"I think it was a great thing that they did for us here," said Col. Steve Ferrari, 50th IBCT commander. "This definitely shows the Soldiers that someone cares about them and what they do."

Activities at the event included an inflatable obstacle course and bungee run, a rock-wall climb, gyroscope ride, and Texas Hold'em tournament, while musical entertainment was provided by Whiskey Dust and Second Chance.



photos by Staff Sgt. Shawn Morris

# Training hits stride for deploying 'Jersey Blues'

Whoever said the northeast and southwest don't mix hasn't visited New Mexico's McGregor Base Camp lately.

More than 3,000 Soldiers from the New Jersey Army National Guard's 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team have been living and training there since late July.

As the brigade prepares for deployment in support of the

Global War on Terrorism, New Jersey's strongest have endured various forms of training designed to prepare them for what they'll face in theater - including scorching temperatures.

But the 'Jersey Blues' have taken it all in stride, meeting - and often times exceeding - the standard.

Drive on, Soldiers.



Sgt. 1st Class Sheila Farrell, Joint Area Support Group (JASG), 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, below, readies a crew-serve weapon during convoy training. Master Joseph Tatem and Sgt. Conrad Jorje, JASG, from left at right, practice weapons-clearing procedures outside their barracks.



photos by 50th IBCT Public Affairs staff



Soldiers from the 50th IBCT test their protective masks using high-tech tools, right. Employers of 50th IBCT Soldiers, below, are briefed by Capt. Bryan Chubinsky, a trainer with First U.S. Army, as part of the N.J. National Guard Boss Lift program July 9.



Capt. John Aslanian, 50th IBCT



Soldiers from Charlie Company, 102nd Reconnaissance, Surveillance and Target Acquisition (RSTA), 50th IBCT, above, take aim during Close Quarters Combat training June 9. First Lt. Douglas Coppola, left, get fitted for his Improved Outer Tactical Vest during equipment issue. Soldiers take up defensive positions around a humvee during convoy training, below.









## 'Jersey Blues' train as they fight



*Sgt. 1st Class James Stahl, Delta Company, 114th Infantry Battalion, 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), left, assaults mock insurgents with a paintball gun during Individual Movement Technique (IMT) training July 18 at McGregor Base Camp, N.M. Cpl. Adam Jones and Spc. Edward Bennett, Alpha Company, 102nd Cavalry Squadron, right, and Spc. Kevin Smith, also with A/102nd, below right, undergo IMT training Aug. 2.*

*photos by Staff Sgt. Shawn Morris*



*Sgt. 1st Class William Schreiber, Bravo Battery, 112th Fires Battalion, right, practices Reflexive Fire techniques Aug. 16. Soldiers of the 328th Military Police Company, below, prepare their vehicles for Convoy Live Fire training Aug. 13. Part of that training involved medevac procedures, below right.*



*Spc. Christopher Dunn, 1463rd Transportation Company, far left, loads his M203 Grenade Launcher during qualification firing Aug. 1. Pfc. Niles Thompson, Delta Company, 250th Brigade Support Battalion, near left, attempts to free himself from the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer Aug. 14.*



*Spc. Bill Addison*



# Security taskforce takes training to new heights



photos by Staff Sgt. Shawn Morris



Soldiers from the New Jersey Army National Guard's 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) undergo Personal Security Detail training Aug. 20 at McGregor Base Camp, N.M. Sgt. Brian Kofsky, above left, and Master Sgt. Dennis Tatem, above right, both with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), escort a VIP role-played by Capt. Marc Sinclair, 5th Armored Division. Sgt. David Pereda, Headquarters and Headquarters Comp-



any, 113th Infantry Battalion, 50th IBCT, far left, rounds the nose of a Blackhawk helicopter prior to a tactical flight. Master Sgt. Dennis Tatem, Sgt. Ricardo Suarez, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 113th Infantry Battalion, 50th IBCT, and Sgt. David Pereda, from left at left, buckle up prior to a Blackhawk helicopter flight.

## Mission Readiness Exercise brings out best in 113th Infantry

**Maj. Jason Fetterolf**

2-113th Infantry Battalion Public Affairs Officer

In preparation for a dynamic Security Force (SECFOR) mission in southern Iraq, the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2-113th Infantry Battalion, New Jersey Army National Guard, engaged in a Mission Readiness Exercise (MRX) July 24 through Aug. 4 at McGregor Base Camp, N.M.

The MRX was led by the staff of the 2nd Battle Command Training Group (BCTG), 5th Brigade, 75th Division with the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP) taking up the first four days of the exercise.

The 24-hour-a-day MRX provided role-players real enough to fool just about anybody, realistic mission scenarios, and the latest in computerized communications and intelligence systems. The systems included Blue Force Tracker, Mobile Communications System, and the Command Post of the Future.

"Those systems were combat multipliers," said Staff Sgt. Jorge Marin. "The systems made

it easier for the commander to have a better picture of the battlefield."

The 2nd BCTG trainers coached and assisted the 2-113th Infantry Headquarters staff in order to further their skills working together as



Maj. Jason Fetterolf

**GAME ON** -- Lt. Col. Mark Piterski, 2-113th Infantry Bn. commander, center, accompanied by his Arabic interpreter, Pfc. James Nammoura, right, meets with Iraqi Army role-players during the Mission Readiness Exercise July 30.

a team for the purpose of running a tactical operations center. The 2-113th Infantry Headquarters staff focused on the primary SECFOR mission - providing command and control for two Air Force Expeditionary Security Forces Squadrons (ESFS) for the largest detainee operations facility in Iraq.

At the conclusion of the 10-day MDMP and MRX, it was clear the participants had learned many lessons from the experience and were much better prepared for the mission in Iraq.

"Absolutely, (we are) coming together as a team," noted Maj. Douglas Brockmann, executive officer and staff coordinator.

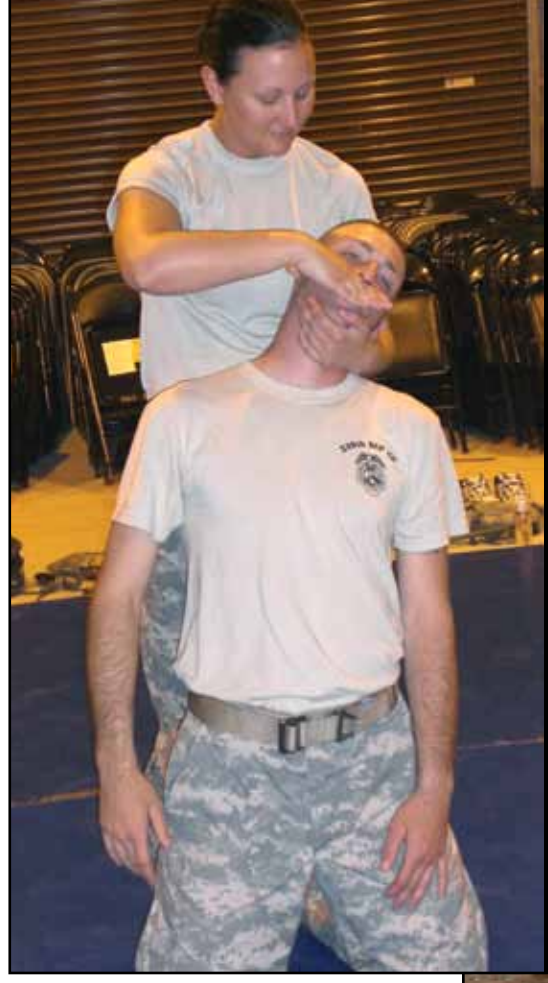
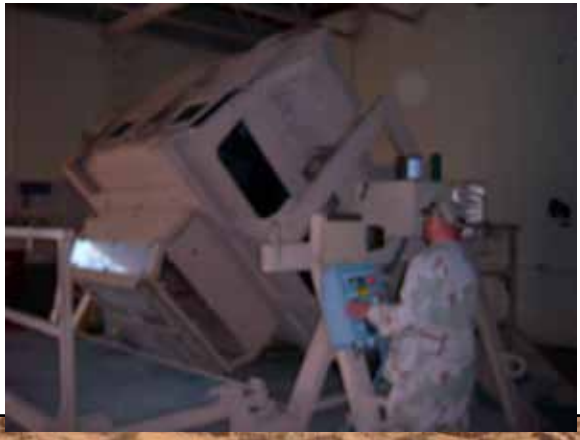
"I learned great teamwork; great teamwork and communication," added Sgt. 1st Class Luis Arroyo, Information Operations noncommissioned officer.

The staff of the 2nd BCTG commended the 2-113th Infantry Headquarters staff on the improvements made by the end of the exercise.

"The state of New Jersey can be very proud of the 113th," said Lt. Col. Randolph Hill, 2nd BCTG.









# Troops train to save lives

**Spc. Bill Addison**  
50th IBCT PAO

Most Soldiers are familiar with the training mantra, "The more you sweat in peace, the less you bleed in war."

But at the Combat Life Saver (CLS) Course at McGregor Base Camp, New Mexico, Soldiers are discovering they'll need to do a little of both as they attempt to save the lives and limbs of their fellow Soldiers in a simulated battle drill at the course's conclusion.

Members of the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, New Jersey Army National Guard, had a chance to test their life-saving skills at the McGregor CLS range amid explosions, fire, smoke and enemy attacks.

"It's our job to validate not only that you've been trained on the skills that you're supposed to have learned in the classroom (first aid, CLS and that sort of thing) but to make sure you're actually as combat competent as we can get you in the four days we have you," said Sgt. 1st Class Vance Switzer, CLS coordinator for the 5th Armored Brigade's Taskforce Redball.

According to Switzer, the goal on the fourth day of class is to give the CLS students a taste of what it will be like to perform their first aid tasks in combat, under fire.

"The objective is to get everybody standardized in these tasks so that they can perform it at speed in a battle drill," he said.

And that includes a live sticking, where Soldiers administer an intravenous injection to a live patient amid the bombs and bullets.

"When you do it in a classroom environment, you're doing it step by step and slow; out here, you don't have time to worry about steps, you just have to do it, so there's a lot of stress involved," said Sgt. 1st Class Tom Falconer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 50th IBCT.

Falconer said that he



feels more confident going forward with the mission in Iraq after completing the lane training.

"I wish this type of training was done more frequently; it really teaches us the realism," he said. "When you're running around, you've got bombs

***"It's a very challenging thing to take the lessons from the book and apply them to a group and actually make you perform to a time hack and to a standard."***

*Sgt. 1st Class Vance Switzer  
CLS coordinator*

going off, you've got enemy in the area, you need to move quick... you understand the importance and stress of getting in there and getting out."

Pvt. David Lynch, a civilian EMT technician in Somerset County, said there were some differences in learning these skills on the Army side of things.

"Using tourniquets on the civilian side is usually never going to happen," he said.

Lynch added that the simulated combat conditions added to the already stressful situation of treating a casualty.

According to Switzer, the goal is to get the students proficient enough as combat lifesavers so that they can successfully navigate the course, from point of wounding to point of care to point of evacuation within 10 minutes.

But as difficult as that may be, Switzer said it's one of the most important skills these Soldiers will take with them to combat.

"Taking them beyond the scope of the classroom is what we're here to do; get you guys ready to come back and come back alive," he said. "To get people to say, 'I know I can do that and I will do that because you literally have the rest of your partner's life to get it right.'"



photos by Spc. Bill Addison

**GUT CHECK** -- Master Sgt. Juan Acevedo and Maj. Robert Bryan, top, carry a casualty to a medivac pickup site during Combat Life Saver training at McGregor Base Camp June 26. Acevedo applies a tourniquet to a casualty during training, above.





# The Informer

## 'Jersey Blues'



A supplemental field expedition newsletter for 50th IBCT Soldiers

Issue #3

August 29, 2008

### BULLETS

#### *The Informer seeks photo submissions*

Due to training requirements, the Public Affairs section of the 50th IBCT Joint Area Support Group is not able to cover every unit in every training event.

So, if you capture an image on your digital camera and would like to submit it for possible use in a future issue of *The Informer*, send your photo to [pao50ibct@yahoo.com](mailto:pao50ibct@yahoo.com)

Remember to identify who shot the photo and who appears in the photo by first and last name, rank, and unit.

#### *Registration required for bloggers*

Anyone interested in starting a computer blog must first register with the Public Affairs section of the 50th IBCT Joint Area Support Group by e-mailing [pao50ibct@yahoo.com](mailto:pao50ibct@yahoo.com)

#### *FRG Web site easy to access*

Logging onto the 50th IBCT Family Readiness Group Web site is easy: Start by visiting [www.armyfrg.org](http://www.armyfrg.org) and choosing a username and password.

You'll need to fill out a short form identifying your sponsor (Soldier).

Once your account is approved, you'll be able to follow the links to New Jersey, then to the 50th IBCT FRG site.

## Training ends for 50th IBCT

**Spc. Bill Addison**  
50th IBCT Public Affairs

While the individual units of the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) hit ground at McGregor Base Camp, N.M., on separate days, they did so with a single focus: Training.

Since then, the Brigade - comprised of approximately 3,000 New Jersey National Guard Soldiers and more than 250 Michigan National Guard Soldiers - has been deeply engrossed in the rigorous McGregor training regimen.

Now, after more than two months, it's all come to an end.

One of the highlights of training was Combat Life Saver (CLS), where Soldiers had the unique opportunity to experience a high-intensity, full-speed lane to test their newly acquired lifesaving skills.

"When you do it in a classroom environment, you're doing it step-by-step and slow; out here, you don't have time to worry about steps, you just have to do it, so there's a lot of stress involved," said Sgt. 1st Class Tom Falconer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 50th IBCT.

And that's exactly the goal, according to Sgt. 1st Class Vance Switzer, CLS coordinator for 5th Armored Brigade's Taskforce Redball.

"It's a very challenging thing to take the lessons from the book and apply them to a group and actually make you perform to a time hack and to a standard," he said.

Training also included Close Quarters Combat, an urban assault course aimed at teaching Soldiers search and security skills.

"It's real intense training because they're preparing us for where we need to go," said Sgt. Delroy Escoffery, a team leader with Bravo Troop, 102nd Cavalry Squadron.

"It will definitely help us because it's for security, and that's what it's all about; security," he said.

Another aspect of the overall training, Convoy Live Fire (CLF), encompassed mounted convoy



*1st Sgt. David Moore*

**LOOKING FORWARD -- Col. Steve Ferrari, 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team commander, leads the way during the Brigade's farewell ceremony Aug. 22 at McGregor Base Camp, N.M.**

maneuvers, reaction to improvised explosive devices, medevac procedures and engaging targets with live ammunition while moving.

Staff Sgt. David Miller, a CLF instructor with 5th Armored's Taskforce Red Hawk, said that with live-fire exercises, safety is key.

"The last thing you need is an injury out on the training lane," he said. "We ensure proper measures of

safety and make sure what needs to be done is done safely out here."

Miller said that success on his lane, like most things in the Army, is dependent on communication.

Success is a word 50th IBCT Soldiers have become accustomed to during their stay at McGregor, and the training they received has helped prepare them as they move toward the next stage of their mission.

## Snapshots from Kuwait



*Combat Life Saver training kept our skills sharp.*



*We were packed in tight for the flight from Kuwait to Iraq.*



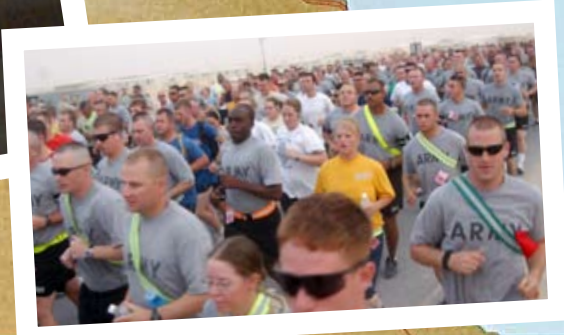
*Working out at the gym was a great way to beat the heat.*



*Keeping our weapons clean and functioning properly was a top priority.*



*Camp Buehring was beautiful at dawn, but hot as an oven during the mid-morning 9/11 memorial run.*



Photos by Public Affairs



**TRANSIT BOARDING PASS**

DO NOT MISPLACE! LOSS OF PASS WILL RESULT IN DELAYED BOARDING.  
DER VERLUST DIESER KARTE HAT EINE VERSPÄTUNG IHRES WEITERFLUGES ZUR FOLGE.  
LA PERTE DE CETTE CARTE PEUT RETARDER VOTRE DÉPART.  
TARJETA DE TRANSITO. LA PERDIDA DE ESTA TARJETA DEMORARÁ EL ABORDAJE DE SU AVIÓN.

**BANGOR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**









**UNIT LOCATIONS: Camp Bucca, Iraq**



**Staff Sgt. Shawn Morris**  
**50th IBCT Public Affairs**

It's been said that it takes a village to raise a child.

Based on the work being done by Soldiers of the 1460th Transportation Company at Camp Bucca's Iraqi Corrections Officer (ICO) Village, the saying also holds true for brothers-in-arms.

This bond between Americans and Iraqis has grown since the Michigan National Guard troops took over the ICO Village in September 2008.

"Our mission is very, very diverse," explained 1st Lt. Amanda Murrell, 1460th commander. "Essentially what we do here is command and control of a mayor's cell-type of environment, in addition to running the ICO Training Academy."

To accomplish the former, Murrell and her Soldiers must remain flexible as they see to the day-to-day needs of the Iraqi cadets living and training in the village.

"We do all of the operations – supply, we manage the Dining Facility, we manage all the admin, in conjunction with the ICOs doing the same things for themselves," Murrell said. "We also do guard-mount procedures, moving ICOs in and out of the TIF (Theater Internment Facility)."

"I wear many hats in the village, making sure all the ICOs get to where they need to go on time," explained Sgt. Travis Povey of the 1460th. "Sometimes that may consist of driving them, sometimes that may consist of calling for a ride."

Povey added that he is also fire warden for the entire village, and that maintaining accountability

## IN THE ZONE

*A detainee is escorted for transfer from Cropper*

*Cropper's Theater Internment Facility*

**FOB Cropper**

*Spec. Heather DiNapoli, B/114th, preps for a mission*

**FOB Bucca**

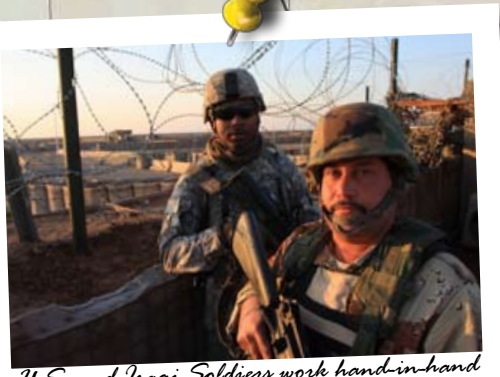
*Spec. Mohammed Shonibare, A/102nd, mans the turret*

*Sgt. Albert Grant, A/102nd, on patrol*

*Detainees at Bucca's Theater Internment Facility*

*Soldiers from HHG/115th patrol Safwan Hill*





U.S. and Iraqi Soldiers work hand-in-hand



Soldiers from B/102nd service an M-2 .50 cal.



Troops conduct base-defense drills at Grizzly

# Inside Iraq with the 50th IBCT



A HHC/113th Soldier visits Safwan's market



Sgt. Ricardo Suarez, HHC/113th, makes friends



for the ICOs is one of his and his fellow Soldiers' most important responsibilities.

As for running the academy, Murrell outlined a clear and simple delineation of duties between her Soldiers and the Iraqis.

“All the training is done by the ICO instructors themselves,” she explained. “Our Soldiers’ role in that is they are observer-controllers to ensure that the standards are being met.”

Those standards are set by the Iraqi Corrections System and Ministry of Justice. The ultimate goal of the academy is to prepare ICOs to work successfully in various TIFs around Iraq.

“We do a Basic and AIT (Advanced Individual Training) class where our brand new ICOs come in from various parts of the country,” Murrell said, adding that the training process takes approximately eight weeks.

“There’s a basic curriculum they have to follow,” she continued. “When a new cadet comes to Camp Bucca, there’s basically a week of admin inprocessing. Once that piece of it is done, we start the classroom portion.”

“They have a checklist of things they go through – Geneva Convention, how to use handcuffs in the proper way, escalation of force, rules of force,” Murrell said. “They go through OC (Oleoresin Capsicum) spray, they do combatives - anything that any guard unit prepping up to take a military police mission does, that’s exactly what the ICOs do.”



“Once they’ve completed that, they’re ready to become an ICO,” she added

But the 1460th Soldiers’ most important mission, according to Murrell, is seeing to the cultural needs of the cadets.

“Understanding those different lines, and what our actions should be in respecting that, was really something we learned along the way, and we really started to embrace their culture along with them,” she said, referring to various cultural traditions such as holidays, prayer practices, and periods of mourning.

“That shows that you really respect and appreciate them when you observe those different things with them,” Murrell added.

For Povey, understanding Iraqi culture and getting to know the ICO cadets and trainers has been a revelation.

“We had very few Iraqis working on the post when I was (In Iraq) before, and now that’s changed,” he explained.

history that’s here, and maybe running into a few friends,” he said.

“With getting to know them, it’s been slow and progressive - I would say slower than those for whom this is their first tour and first experience,” Povey continued. “However, it’s awesome to see the other side and get to know the people who aren’t the bad guys.”

“I’ve made quite a few friends, and a few very close friends I plan to keep in touch with when I get back to the states,” he added.

The 1460th’s tour in Iraq is nearing its end, but for Povey – who will soon be reunited with his wife and four-and-a-half-month-old girl – it marks a fresh start.

“Ten or 15 years from now, I look forward to the opportunity of bringing my family to Iraq as a tourist and showing them some of the wonderful things that are here, some of the tremendous



## AMERICAN AND BRITISH SOLDIERS PROVIDE A PROTECTIVE EYE

By Sgt. 1st Class Edwin Tejada, 2-113th Infantry Battalion



**Pfc. Kyle Wydner surveys the area from the top of Safwan Hill, a Multi-National Forces post, Oct. 19. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Edwin Tejada)**

Men and women of the Armed Forces serving at Camp Bucca, Iraq, sleep well at night because of the security a singular group of Coalition forces Soldiers provide far outside the base perimeter.

One of the Soldiers in this group is Pfc. Kyle Wydner, a forward observer in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2-113th Infantry Battalion, 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, New Jersey Army National Guard.

Like many other young Service members, performing a mission of this type is the fulfillment of childhood dreams.

"I always wanted to do something related with combat," said Wydner.

And so he did. Soon after returning from Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training, Wydner was informed he would deploy to Iraq less than a month later.

Wydner is practically a permanent resident at Safwan Hill, a Multi-National Coalition forces post. Located close to the Iraq-Kuwait border, Safwan Hill was once an Iraqi intelligence and surveillance site

during Saddam Hussein's regime and one of the first battlegrounds during the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Towering over the desert landscape like an iceberg of rock in a sea of sand, the view over the hill is impressive.

"We have a view of everything around us...I can see the Iraqi nightlife and it is very different from ours," joked Wydner.

At an age in which most of his peers are in college, or having fun with wild diversions, Wydner spends long hours tirelessly observing through a scope, looking out for dangers that may jeopardize Coalition troops, a responsibility these Soldiers do not take lightly.

"When we are on duty, we are dead serious about our mission because it involves the safety of our guys," Wydner explained.

At first, Wydner was nervous about working with British forces and the treatment he would receive from other members of the Multinational forces.

"When I first heard I was going to be with the British [Soldiers], I thought I was going to be in a dangerous area, with some hardcore infantry guys, but they are very respectful and look up to us," said Wydner.

He has now adjusted well to his environment and is comfortable performing his mission with his new "mates".

"We [Coalition Soldiers] work together on everything, from cleaning the toilets to watching out for suspicious

activities," Wydner explained.

Despite being in a very restrictive post and enduring a grueling work schedule, Wydner has no regrets about joining the military and celebrating his first enlistment anniversary in Iraq.

"I always knew I was going to do the military before my education," Wydner asserted. "If I were not doing the military, I would be studying environmental science or something that would keep me outdoors, just like in the military."

Rather than kicking doors down or chasing insurgents, as he thought he would be doing, Wydner says that working alongside the Multinational forces, especially the British, has been a great learning experience.

"I am learning about their vehicles, weapons, but mostly about them as people," said Wydner. "They're not that different from us; they want to [see a successful outcome to] the war and help the Iraqi Government and people, but mostly they want to make sure all our guys [Coalition Service members] get out safe," he added.



**From left, Pfc. Kyle Wydner, Sgt. Ricardo Suarez, and Signal Jordan Massey (British Army) survey the area from the top of Safwan Hill, Oct. 19. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Edwin Tejada)**



# HOLIDAY EDITION



*Camp Bucca Soldiers tell Santa what they want for Christmas before their holiday meal on Christmas Day.*





**TROOPS' CORNER**

Sgt. 1st Class Jose A. Rivera, Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 2-113th Infantry, sits on the steps ascending the historic ziggurat (temple) near Tallil, Iraq during his recent visit to turn-in vehicles there Dec. 19. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Arthur Macaspac)



Left, Spc. Raul Garza, Charlie Company, 250th Brigade Support Battalion (BSB), records the time of Staff Sgt. John Rodriguez, right, Foxtrot Company, 250th BSB, as he exits a simulated smoke-filled containerized housing unit that he unlocked with a key found on the floor in just 12 secs. during the Health and Safety Fair at Camp Bucca, Iraq Dec. 18. (U.S. Army photo by Maj. Jason Fetterolf)



On Christmas morning, members of the Intelligence, Security and Reconnaissance (ISR) Platoon, Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 2nd Battalion, 113th Infantry Regiment, 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, take time out of mission preparation to pose with Santa, Mrs. Claus, their elves and reindeer. The ISR platoon was preparing to provide transport and security to Umm Qasr, Iraq for U.S. Marine Corps. Col. Clyde Burton to greet the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. James T. Conway. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Lawrence A. Robinson)



## NEW JERSEY GOVERNOR VISITS N.J. SOLDIERS

By Spc. Amie J. McMillan, 42nd Military Police Brigade Public Affairs

New Jersey Gov. Jon S. Corzine toured the Camp Bucca Theater Internment Facility (TIF) in southern Iraq Jan. 6 to visit Soldiers who are part of

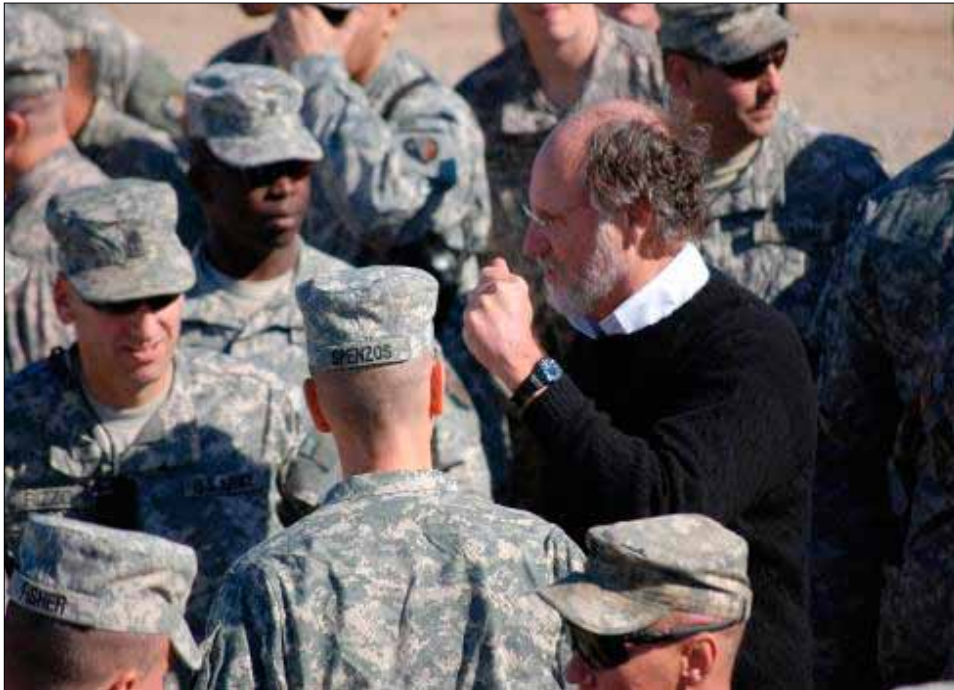
the State's largest mobilization since World War II.

Soldiers of the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), New Jersey National Guard had an

opportunity to meet with Corzine as part of a trip organized by the Department of Defense for state governors who have National Guard Soldiers deployed overseas.

"I've seen you guys in deployment after deployment, job after job, and everything you've ever been asked to do you've done with great excellence; and it's really a point of pride for the State and I have to say it is for your Governor too," said Corzine.

Units of the 50th IBCT deployed to Camp Bucca in September in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and are responsible for such diverse missions as detainee operations, force protection, base defense and installation management.



New Jersey Gov. Jon S. Corzine expressed his gratitude to Soldiers of the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team from the New Jersey National Guard on Jan. 6 for their service to their state and country. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Lawrence A. Robinson)

## THE SUN SETS HERE

Poem by Sgt. David George, 320th MP Battalion

The sun sets here  
As it rises back home  
Surrounded by people  
He still feels alone

His family back home-  
What is he missing?  
Playing with the kids  
And his wife's tender kissing

He'll sleep here tonight  
Awake at every sound  
Trying to slumber-  
He tosses around

He awakes in the morn-  
For another long day

The job he does here  
Doesn't match the pay

He'll work all the hours  
Doesn't much complain  
A small sacrifice  
For freedom maintained

Prepared for battle  
But not as a thrill  
He prays for peace  
But shoots to kill

And the sun rises here  
It sets back home  
God be with you, Soldier  
You are not alone.

Camp Bucca sunset, below, captured by Spc. Amie J. McMillan, 42nd Military Police Brigade Public Affairs



Camp Bucca sunset, below, captured by CH (Lt. Col.) Ken Belling, Task Force Bucca Chaplain



# 74 CAMP BUCCA





## NATIONAL GUARD SOLDIERS PROVIDE INFORMATION AND SECURITY

By 1st Lt. Lawrence Robinson, Media Outreach Officer



**Staff Sgt. Wayne Stine, left, platoon sergeant, and Neil, interpreter, right, 2-113th Infantry Battalion, 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, New Jersey Army National Guard, Intelligence Reconnaissance and Surveillance platoon speak with an Iraqi civilian while providing security during a recent mission in Safwan, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Lawrence A. Robinson)**

The Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) platoon of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2-113th Infantry Battalion 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, New Jersey Army National Guard, is tasked with providing continuous intelligence information for leaders and planners at Camp Bucca.

The platoon is comprised of members who were in the battalion's Reconnaissance and Sniper Sections prior to deployment. The original members honed their skills at Fort Bliss, Texas, and in Kuwait prior to arriving at Camp Bucca. Shortly after arrival, the platoon was augmented by members of the rifle companies of the 2-113th.

"We were non-commissioned officer (NCO) heavy when we got here," said ISR platoon leader 1st Lt. Michael Sterling. "That was a good thing because it gave us some experienced leaders to help train the troops who joined later".

Sterling is a veteran of the Afghanistan campaign where he survived ambushes and firefights as he

and his company trained and led Afghan fighters. He is a respected leader whose experience, knowledge, and planning ability are appreciated.

It is leadership that makes the ISR platoon run smoothly. These leaders include men like, Staff Sgt. Wayne Stine, a police officer from Clifton, N.J., Sgt. Ethan Letz, a recent graduate of Rutgers University with a double major in history and political science, and Cpl. Richard Gilloogly from Arizona.

Gilloogly, the big machine gunner who volunteered for deployment from the Arizona National Guard, stood out from the time he stepped off of the helicopter. Standing 6 foot 5 inches tall, and wearing the combat patch of the Second Marine Division, which he earned in Operation Desert Storm, he is an imposing figure who played All-Marine Football and looks like he can handle any situation given to him.

When he arrived, there was discussion among the 2-113th Battalion staff as to where he should be assigned. Gilloogly said Capt. Dennis Stiles, 2-113th Battalion Assistant Operations Officer, took one look at him, saw the Second Marine patch and told them he knew just where Gilloogly belonged, in the ISR platoon.

Gilloogly likes being on the gun because he can serve as the "eyes" of the patrol. "Some guys get tired of

me reporting everything I see, but I don't care. I want to keep the commander informed," he said. Gilloogly also said that the best thing about being with the ISR platoon is the people.

"This is a great mission with a great bunch of guys and a great leader. I don't know Lt. Sterling that well, but I respect him. He really knows the mission."

Stine and Letz were both members of the ISR platoon before deployment, and helped get the platoon up and running.

Stine is the platoon sergeant assisting Sterling with planning and management of the platoon.

"We originally had sixteen guys, and we had trained together for about a year or so before we got here. Once we got to Camp Bucca and got the new guys we were able to bring them along pretty quickly. It took some work, but the platoon as it is now is about as good a team as I have worked with," said Stine.

In addition to receiving new members to beef up manpower, the platoon received Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles to provide improved transport and weapons platforms. Previously the platoon had an inventory of High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV).

Letz explained that the MRAP gives an advantage by providing a combination of increased protection, speed and visibility, as well as being able to carry a larger number of passengers than the HMMWV.

"Rather than needing four or five HMMWVs to go on a mission, we can go out with as few as two MRAPs. We have to have at least two because only an MRAP has the power to pull another MRAP," said Letz.

Continued on page 30

## NATIONAL GUARD SOLDIERS PROVIDE INFORMATION AND SECURITY

Continued from page 29



First Lt. Michael Sterling takes the lead of a protective service detail (PSD) for Lt. Col. Mark Piterski, Commander, 2-113th Battalion, 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, New Jersey Army National Guard during a recent visit to Safwan, in Southern Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Lawrence A. Robinson)

Because the primary mission of the ISR Platoon is intelligence collection, Sterling and the platoon spend a great deal of time and effort developing human intelligence resources (HUMINT) among the local population, Iraqi military, and police forces from the various towns.

The platoon is constantly traveling throughout the area visiting towns, check points, police stations and military outposts in an effort to maintain a relationship that encourages mutual aid and support.

In addition to reconnaissance patrols, the ISR maintains an observation post and communications relay station on Safwan Hill, the highest point in southern Iraq. From there, members of the platoon can overwatch the area surrounding Camp Bucca, providing up to date information to commanders.

Another duty that the ISR Platoon conducts is the Protective Service Detail (PSD) for distinguished visitors to southern Basra province. The purpose of PSD is to provide protection, usually for Coalition leadership, while they meet with Iraqi

officials or tour the area outside of Camp Bucca.

During a PSD mission, the principal, or [the person being protected] receives the full attention of the platoon. The focus of the PSD mission is to get the principal in and out of their meeting safely and with as little interference from the platoon as possible.

They accomplish this by planning and rehearsals that enable the platoon to provide constant 360 degree protection.

Planning and preparation is conducted at Valhalla, a semi-secluded location that houses the platoons equipment and vehicles. Valhalla is an old Iraqi building consisting of several small rooms with map-covered walls.

Between missions, the ISR platoon has a little room to relax, and maybe play a video game or watch a movie on a portable DVD player, but when the warning order comes down and mission preparation starts get out of the way; the ISR platoon is all business.

Spc. Arthur Brandon, 1st Squadron, 102nd Cavalry Regiment, maintains some of the platoon's electronics.

"Being with the ISR is relaxing in the rear except when they are preparing for a mission," he said. "They get really serious and tough. Trying to get everything just right can make them seem a little uptight."

"We have been doing this long enough that a lot of things stay the same depending on where we're going, but there is always route planning, inspections and briefings that have to take place before the mission starts," Letz added.

The ISR Platoon is made up of a variety of Soldiers, all from the National Guard or Reserve. They have expanded from two squad sized elements into a force that is capable of conducting a variety of missions, from gathering information by building rapport with Iraqi locals, to providing observation, to escorting high-level dignitaries.

Stine commented on the platoon that has developed over the past five months.

"These guys make my job easy. I am proud and honored to be part of this platoon."



The 2-113 Infantry Battalion 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, New Jersey Army National Guard, Intelligence Reconnaissance and Surveillance Platoon Leader, 1st Lt. Michael Sterling, center, 2-113th Battalion Operations Officer Maj. Robert Yencha, left, and 2-113th Battalion Liaison Officer (Basra) Maj. Joseph Torres, right, meet with police officers in Safwan, Iraq during a recent visit. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Lawrence A. Robinson)













**UNIT LOCATIONS: Camp Cropper, Iraq**

Once over the world  
at Cropper  
Sgt. Bill Addison  
50th IBCT/JASG-C  
Public Affairs

In a remote corner of Baghdad's Victory Base Complex (VBC) known as Forward Operating Base (FOB) Cropper, approximately 1,200 New Jersey National Guard Soldiers are performing a very unique mission, the results of which could very well impact future relations between the United States government and the people of Iraq.

The Soldiers are performing detainee operations, a mission requiring them to be act as not only Soldiers, but a guard force as well as diplomats.

"Every Soldier here interacts with a detainee, some day that detainee will be released," said 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Barry O'Dell, of Bravo Battery 112<sup>th</sup> Fires Battalion. O'Dell said the way his Soldiers treat the detainees will echo with their families and ultimately their communities.

"One Soldier could quite possibly touch the lives of quite a number of Iraqis," he said.

"It's absolutely critical for us to really knock dead this mission. We've really got to be spot on," said Sgt. Larry Kruzieski, also of Bravo Battery.

Kruzieski, who served as an In Lew of Military Police Soldier during the N.J. Guards deployment to Germany and Italy in 2005, said he is building off his experience from his previous deployment.

"They are quite similar because they both deal with policing and controlling people," he said.

Of course the 112<sup>th</sup> is only one battalion of New Jersey Soldiers who have been charged with the detainee mission. Capt. Sean Combs, commander of the Headquarters and



Headquarters Company for the 50<sup>th</sup> Brigade Special Troops Battalion, also serves as the officer in charge of one of the detainee compounds.

"Our mindset is to provide care and custody with dignity and respect, it's not only a motto, it's something we really try to do," he said.

The Port Murray, N.J. native said that it's important that his Soldiers let the detainees know that while they are in American care, they will be provided for and treated humanely.

"We listen to their problems, we act on their problems and we take care of them. So that at the end of the day when they leave here I think they leave with the mindset that the American Soldier or the New Jersey National Guardsmen does care," he said. "We take care of them and they go back home saying those aren't really bad people, they do what they need to do to take care of us," he added.

But putting those concepts into practice can be a challenge in itself, especially given 12-hour shifts with the Soldiers on one side of the fence and the detainees on the other. Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Craig Auriemma from Hoboken, N.J., Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge of one of the compounds said that his Soldiers walk a fine line between treating the detainees humanely and maintaining discipline.

"Most of the Soldiers here have a good

rapport with the chiefs and the detainees; they work with them daily," he said. "But they're very careful not to become too friendly," he added.

Auriemma said that he constantly enforces that level of professionalism with his Soldiers, ensuring they always perform each duty, be it head counts or detainee movements for medical appointments, correctly.

"Once they come out of the fence, the friendliness stops and it's complete professionalism," he said.

Detainee operations has become one of the U.S. military's most politically sensitive missions.

"There is constant stress, there's 1<sup>st</sup>. Sergeants coming by, commanders comes through every other day, there is always eyes on what is going on here."

But while he admitted having that level of scrutiny is difficult, he is happy to have so many levels of checks in the operation.

"It also keeps us out of trouble. So there's never any potential threat of anyone saying we're doing anything wrong," he said.

"We know that if we treat them well our hope is that when they go back to their families they can pass that on to anyone who would potentially do harm to our fellow Soldiers outside the wire," he said. "That's an everyday concern that the Soldiers take very seriously," he added.

But not everyone in the brigade was eager to put the idea of care, custody and control into action. 1<sup>st</sup>. Lt. Rose Ulch was a senior at the Citadel when she learned her father, who was serving in Iraq with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division, was injured by a road side bomb.

"At first I was a little bitter to learn that I had to treat them with care custody and control," she said.

But while it was a hard pill for Ulch to swallow, she ultimately learned that there's a lot

more to a person than their actions might show. Given the chance to work with the detainees, she has seen that while she does not agree with their actions, she has gained an understanding for their motives.

"You have to understand basically their foundation before you can convict someone for what they've done. Because you don't know why they do it," she said. For Ulch, the mission has allowed her to move past her anger, and put a human face to the actions that at one time threatened the lives of her father and his Soldiers. Now she



focuses on changing their opinions, and therefore their actions, toward Americans.

But with the overlying theme in Iraq shifting toward transition and turnover to the Iraqi government, one New Jersey company is ensuring detainee operations continues to be handled properly, and within

Geneva Convention regulations long after U.S. forces have turned over the reins.

The 154<sup>th</sup> Water Company is already part of that transition. They house and assist with the training of Iraqi Corrections Officers (ICOs). But with only their training at Camp McGregor to go on, and no experience actually in the detainee camps, the company had to rely on other assets to meet their mission.

"I had many corrections officers that came over here. They took over the academy and ran with it," said Capt. Patrick Cramer.

The Soldiers of the 154<sup>th</sup> do not play a full on trainer role in the area known as ICO village. Instead, they oversee the training conducted by current ICOs.

"We're just there to oversee and make sure the training is being done to standard," said Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class George Reilly of Rutherford, N.J. Reilly said that the ultimate goal is for the Iraqi trainers to take complete control of the training without

American oversight.

But just like any other military base, what happens inside its walls can only be made possible by the Soldiers standing guard at the gates, keeping everyone involved in the operations safe. The Soldiers of Bravo Company, 114<sup>th</sup> Infantry battalion are charged with manning the Entry Control Points (ECPs) as well as providing the FOBs Quick Reaction Force (QRF).

“The interment facility is probably the most important mission on the VBC and the security of those detainees is just as important,” said Capt. Luis Delacruz, Bravo Company, 114<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion commander. Delacruz said his Soldiers are especially proud to be keeping their fellow New Jersey Guardsmen safe.

“They’re doing a terrific job. It’s always a source of pride to be from New Jersey for the Soldiers,” he said. And while the New Jersey flag can be seen flying over multiple buildings on the FOB, the Freehold, N.J. flag flies over Bravo company’s headquarters building, an ode to the company’s home armory.

“As an 11 Bravo, we’re always ready to work entry control points, we’re always ready to do QRF and roving reconnaissance,” he said.

Just down the road from FOB Cropper at FOB Liberty, Delta Company, 114<sup>th</sup> Infantry is performing a much different mission; convoys.

“Not everyone is doing detainee operations out here,” said Capt. Richard Karcher, Delta company commander. Karcher said his company still falls under Task Force 134, the command element of detainee operations in Iraq, but his Soldiers provide convoy security for detainee and equipment movement throughout the operational spectrum of Baghdad. He also has a dedicated squad for Personal Security Detail within the task force.

“My Soldiers love their mission,” he said. “Lack of motivation is not a problem,” he added.

But with that mission comes the dangers that accompany it. Already in this deployment the Soldiers of Delta Company have encountered two Improvised Explosive Devices during operations, luckily no one was injured.

“We are outside the wire every day. It’s not totally safe out there,” said Karcher.

Sgt. John Rosa, motor sergeant for Delta Company, is one of the Soldiers who maintain the equipment the infantrymen rely on. “I take that to heart, and I make sure my guys take that to heart,” said Rosa, a full time field technician for the N.J. Army National Guard from Vineland, N.J. He said that he and his Soldiers make sure nothing goes wrong with the vehicles that they could prevent.

“If that happens, the Infantry guys or the MPs will be in danger, and I would hate to have that on my conscience.”

Rosa is just one of the junior NCO’s the Karcher relies heavily on during day to day operations.

“There’s no doubt that the E-5s and the E-6s run this company and are the backbone of this company,” said Karcher.

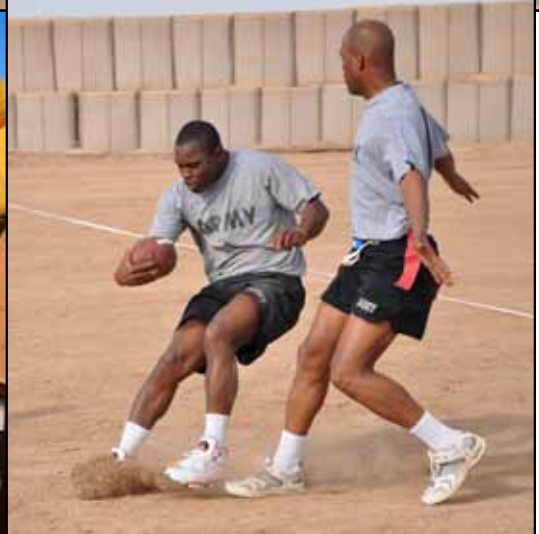
“Some of them are very young. But the E-5s and E-6s early on in the mob process were told and were given responsibilities above their pay grade, and I think that prepped them for when they hit ground,” he added. Karcher said that his company conducted a lot of extra training during their mobilization training at Camp McGregor, New Mexico.

“It paid dividends when we got here,” he said.















**UNIT LOCATIONS: Green Zone, Iraq**

# IN THE ZONE

MAGAZINE



Time running out for  
**Absentee  
Voters**

**Jersey  
Blues**

take helm of Joint Area  
Support Group-Central

**Rising  
Star**

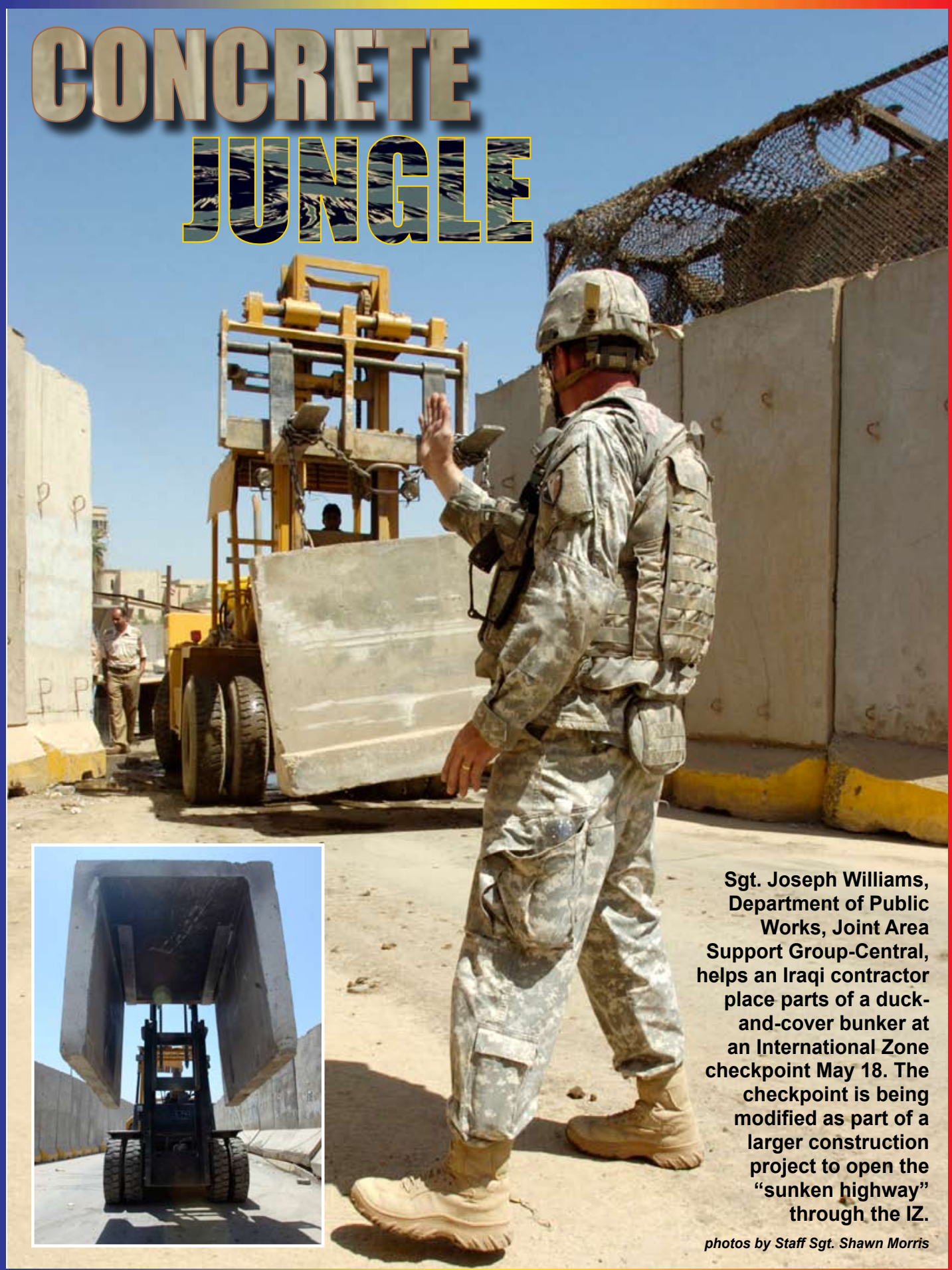
competition brings  
out troops' best

JASG-C Soldiers earn

**Combat  
Patch**



# CONCRETE JUNGLE



Sgt. Joseph Williams, Department of Public Works, Joint Area Support Group-Central, helps an Iraqi contractor place parts of a duck-and-cover bunker at an International Zone checkpoint May 18. The checkpoint is being modified as part of a larger construction project to open the "sunken highway" through the IZ.

*photos by Staff Sgt. Shawn Morris*





# IN THE ZONE

MAGAZINE

**'Repo Man'**  
driven to success in IZ

Deciphering the  
ins and out of

## Taking Leave

Largest  
FOB in IZ  
transfers into  
JASG-C hands

Red Zone kids  
make a splash at

## FOB Freedom

Get Smart  
with Army Ed programs

# Driven to Success

## 'Repo Man' scours IZ streets in search of delinquent vehicles

Story and photo by  
Sgt. Bill Addison  
JASG-C Public Affairs

He's on the hunt.

Suddenly, eyes widening, he cries, "Got one!" throws his vehicle into park, and jumps out to claim his prize.

His name is Spc. Jonathan Pierce - the Repo Man - and he just swiped your car.

However, it's not late payments Pierce is enforcing, it is late dispatches. Pierce is the fleet vehicle manager for the Joint Area Support Group-Central's Transportation Directorate. It's his job to keep track of more than 440 vehicles under his charge.

According to Pierce, re-dispatching vehicles is an important step needed to keep track of the fleet. Up-armored vehicles need to be re-dispatched every two weeks and non-armored every 30 days.

"That way we can keep track of our fleet, and make sure that none of them are being stolen or used for improper reasons," said Pierce, of Sicklerville, N.J.

He added it also gives the Kellogg, Brown and Root (KBR) maintenance shop a chance to do a standard service inspections and make sure they are safe and in good working order.

Pierce said he receives

delinquent dispatch reports every day, but his first response is to contact the individual via e-mail to inform them they have a late dispatch. But after five days of delinquency, Pierce said that's when he goes down to the KBR dispatch office to get the keys for the delinquent vehicles.

"They give me the keys, and I hop into my vehicle, go out and look for them. When I find them, I drive them back to the shop," he said. Averaging about five repossessions per week, he noted that while most are in the main parking lots, others aren't so easy to find and he'll often spend hours driving around the IZ not finding a single vehicle.

Pierce must also coordinate with the International Zone Police. If he didn't, he said, the vehicle may be reported as stolen. And while he is willing to

**"There's the whole thrill of taking someone's vehicle."**

**- Spc. Jonathan Pierce**

work with people to help them get their vehicles back, there are limits to whom he will return them. He said multiple repossessions will result in individuals losing their vehicle permanently.



**THE REPO MAN COMETH** - Spc. Jonathan Pierce, Joint Area Support Group-Central (JASG-C) Transportation Directorate, checks the bumper number of a vehicle he is about to repossess.

"If they can't be responsible for their own vehicle, why should we keep going out of our way to return it to them?" he said. He added that another reason to deny vehicle return is if the records show it's not being used much. Vehicles that are re-dispatched or repossessed with very little difference in their mileage from month to month most likely will not be returned.

But Pierce isn't acting on a power-trip; he explained there are reasons for this policy.


"There are other people who need vehicles and we may not have one available for them. We have to look at who really needs them and make sure those people are taken care of,"

said Pierce.

Pierce, who joined the New Jersey Army National Guard in August 2005 as a tracked vehicle repair specialist, said the last thing he ever expected was to be repossessing vehicles in Iraq.

"This is something I've never done before," he said. "It's surreal; who would have thought I'd be driving around taking people's vehicles in Baghdad."

And while he recognizes his position doesn't make him very popular, he is excited about the task he was appointed.

"There's the whole thrill of taking someone's vehicle. It's different, and you don't do that every day," he said. 







# IN THE ZONE

MAGAZINE

Transportation guru continues  
**Legacy of Service**

JASG-C troops stroll down  
**Main Street,  
Union III**

**A Tale of  
Two Unions**

unfolds for Directorate  
of Public Works

Iraqi government  
takes control of

**'Green  
Zone'**



*photos by Staff Sgt. Shawn Morris and Sgt. Bill Addison*

Iraqi firefighter cadets attempt to douse an automobile fire, above during the first phase of the skills-evaluation portion of their training program at the International Zone Fire Academy. The three-day evaluation ensures the cadets are proficient at fighting several types of fires.



# 'Green Zone' returned to Iraq

Story by Sgt. Bill Addison  
 Photos by Staff Sgt. Shawn Morris  
 JASG-C Public Affairs

The new year marked a new beginning for the government of Iraq, when control of the "Green Zone" in central Baghdad was transitioned to the Iraqi government in a ceremony marking the first of many changes since the new Security Agreement went into effect Jan. 1.

Col. Steven Ferrari, commander of the Joint Area Support Group – Central (JASG-C), the United States Army unit in charge of the Green Zone, spoke at a ceremony marking the turnover of the area's security to Staff Gen. Emmad Yassir Saed Salman Al-Zuhiri, Baghdad Brigade commander.

"Today is the first day of the security agreement going into effect between our two countries. Our mission is still to provide security and support to the Iraqi government, but truly we are a support element and they are in the lead," said Ferrari.

"The transition of Green Zone control from Coalition Forces to Iraqi forces is considered the first step in the implementation of this agreement. Here is Iraq taking



another step toward the future, signaling to its citizens and the international community the security responsibility for the Green Zone in the heart of Baghdad," he added.

Ferrari, commander of the New Jersey Army National Guard's 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team and

resident of Berlin, N.J., noted the historic aspect of the ceremony, turning the seat of Iraqi government back to the government of Iraq since the occupation by Coalition Forces five years earlier.

"It's a good feeling because it's time for change. It's time to give the country back to Iraq. They're proud of their country, they're ready. We're here to support them for as long as they need us to be here. I think it's a great day for them and it's great to be part of this historic day," said Ferrari.




**SEASON OF CHANGE** - Staff General Emmad Yassir Saed Salman Al-Zuhiri, Baghdad Brigade commander, top left, shakes hands with Col. Steven Ferrari, Joint Area Support Group-Central (JASG-C) commander, during a ceremony Jan. 1 to mark the turnover of security for Baghdad's International Zone to Iraqi. Local and international media turned out in droves to hear Ferrari, left, and others speak during the historic event.

Emmad's Baghdad Brigade Soldiers will begin a six-month training and certifications transition plan with U.S. forces. This transition may be extended up to six months by mutual agreement. Ferrari said he feels confident in the professionalism of the Baghdad Brigade.

"The Baghdad Brigade has been here for a while, this is nothing new to them. We'll continue to support them," he said.

Along with increased Iraqi Security Forces presence at the Entry Control Points (ECPs), new Iraqi flags and Arabic signs advising that the Baghdad Brigade is manning checkpoints in the GZ will mark a new look of change.

"For our part, on this day, during the ceremony for this important mission, we assure you that we are committed to the same goals – full implementation of the security agreement, complete transparency and full partnership," he said in his speech.

"Our focus right now is to ensure that working with General Emmad's brigade, that they are trained and that they're ready to take full control and we can start pulling U.S. Soldiers off the check points," said Ferrari. 



**“ Our mission is still to provide security and support to the Iraqi government but truly we are a support element and they are in the lead.”**

**- Col. Steven Ferrari, JASG-C commander**



#### TACTICAL TRAINING

Sgt. Andrew Montes, B Troop, 1-124th Cavalry, oversees an Iraqi "Jundi," or Soldier, of the Baghdad Brigade as he checks the credentials of an Iraqi driver at an Entry Control Point (ECP). Although the Government of Iraq has taken control of the ECPs, Baghdad Brigade Soldiers will continue a six-month training and certifications transition plan with U.S. forces. This transition may be extended up to six months if necessary by mutual U.S.-Iraqi agreement. Photo by Sgt. Bill Addison.







# A TALE OF



One  
For  
Them ...

Story and photos by Maj. Jon Powers  
JASG-C Public Affairs

*Author's Note - Until recently, the Status of Forces Agreement negotiations prevented the JASG-C from releasing stories about property returns to the Government of Iraq. Now that the SOFA is signed, this story is available to tell.*

The first major project the Joint Area Support Group-Central's (JASG-C's) Directorate of Public Works completed was preparing FOB Union I to be returned to the Government of Iraq. The property had been occupied by the Georgian troops. Their hastened departure from

Iraq left the entire base empty, with the exception of a few JASG-C personnel left to run basic operations.

On a predictably sunny day in Baghdad, the process of consolidating the military footprint in the International Zone took a giant, palace-sized step forward. Without ceremony, one massive ring of keys changed hands from American to Iraqi, as FOB Union I was returned to the Government of Iraq.

A process nearly two years in the making concluded as Navy Capt. Tom Karnowski placed the keys to the palace in the hands of Dr. Farhad N. Hussain, Deputy Secretary General of the Council Ministers.

Lt. Col Robert Jarvis found the turnover to be very rewarding. "Al Sajoud was the first palace to be turned over to the GoI in the IZ. This was a significant symbol of the progress towards sovereignty. CAPT K told me later in the day that this had been the greatest day he had in all his time in Iraq. We turned over the palace in the morning and lit the tomb of the unknown in the evening. It meant a great deal to him to have accomplished these tasks," he said.

The lack of pomp did not detract from the significance of the day. A building built from funds taken from many and designed for use by just a few was returned to the new freely elected Government of Iraq by the Joint Area Support Group-Central's (JASG-C's) Directorate of Public Works.

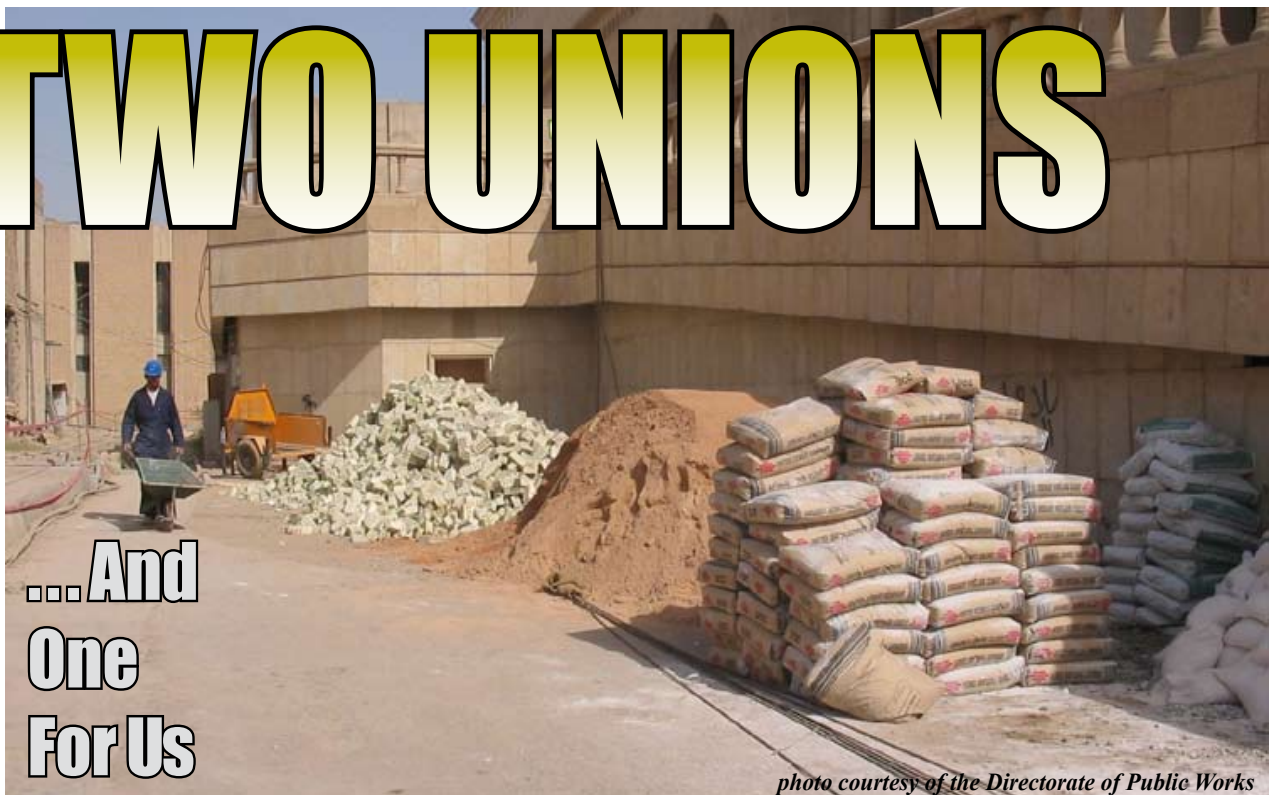
Jarvis added, "I too found it to be one of my best days in Iraq to date. Turning over the palace had

*continued on page 16*



**CHANGING OF THE GUARD** - Navy Capt. Tom Karnowski, bottom right, places the keys to FOB Union I in the hands of Dr. Farhad N. Hussain, Deputy Secretary General of the Council Ministers, bottom left, as Dr. Mawafek Al-Kurmanji, IZ Real Property director, and Air Force Capt. Wes Glisson look on.

# TWO UNIONS



...And  
One  
For Us

photo courtesy of the Directorate of Public Works

Story by Staff Sgt. Shawn Morris  
JASG-C Public Affairs

When the U.S. Embassy (Provisional) building was returned to the government of Iraq at the end of this past year, the Joint Area Support Group-Central (JASG-C) personnel working and living in the embassy compound needed to find a new home.

They found it at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Union III.

When Soldiers from the New Jersey Army National Guard's 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team arrived in Iraq this past September to take over the JASG-C, Union III was little more than a collection of dilapidated buildings and unimproved land. Since then, the FOB's Mayor's Cell has overseen renovation of several buildings for office space, and the installation of living quarters for JASG-C and other personnel.

"We have come a long way in four months," said Maj. Thomas McGhee, FOB Union III mayor.

That journey began with a general cleanup and assessment of the FOB, and quickly moved into renovations including plumbing, electrical and construction in Buildings 1 and 6, which line the FOB's main street, Building 5, the unfinished Baath Party headquarters, and Building 15, located just west of the dining facility.

"We basically just oversaw the contractors doing the work; we have the subject matter experts," explained Maj. Leo Bondad, Directorate of Public Works project

leader. "Unfortunately, a good chunk of everything on the FOB didn't coincide with U.S. standards and international standards."

Bondad also said that incidents in Baghdad's "Red Zone" sometimes prevented local Iraqi contractors from getting to the FOB as scheduled. Despite these and other issues, the work was completed on time and to standard.

"It was a very aggressive schedule," he said. "But we were able to meet the deadline requirements."

Also working to meet a deadline were the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP) contractors

*continued on page 17*



**BRICK BY BRICK** - Two Iraqi contractors put their masonry skills to work as they prepare a new home for the JASG-C Installations Directorate near Bldg. 5 on FOB Union III. Photo by Maj. Jon Powers.





# Signposts to progress

Story and photos by  
Maj. Jon Powers  
JASG-C Public Affairs

The meeting with the Government of Iraq officials came at approximately the half-way point in Maj. Robert Hughes' time in the Green Zone. But the nature of the security functions inside the International Zone has evolved dramatically.

In early February, Hughes met with Hazim M. Hamed, Republic of Iraq Office of the Vice President chief of staff, for a simple exchange of responsibility for the security of the old United Nations compound. With contractors and Iraqi Army present, this non-ceremony held meaning beyond the obvious. Over the course of the last four months, the JASG-C Security Directorate has witnessed a sea change.

"We were prepared that the mission of the JASG was going to be to transition property from DoD and DoS control back over to the Iraqis and today is a perfect example of the transition," said Hughes. "As the Security Directorate we're responsible for making sure the IZ is secure. It's changed because how we conducted that security has changed immensely since we started. What once was only coalition forces and contractors is now done in cooperation with our Iraqi partners."

Hughes, who works closely with the security contractors, has been a part of the return of Forward Operating Base Union I and the Jan. 1, 2009, transfer of responsibility for the Green Zone entry control points.

"It started out that the transition on January 1 was for entry points into the IZ as well as very specific, important pieces of property. We have seen the Iraqis and Americans with contractor involvement that




the transition has gone exceptionally well. And that has led us to be able to transition other properties that much quicker," Hughes noted.

In the end, it is not who is pulling security but how they are doing it. By instating a gradual training program, the Green Zone maintains the same level of safety throughout any transition. "The lack of events has shown that we are successful, that the transition with keeping security in mind is successful," said Hughes.

Hughes is restrained when he speaks of Security Directorate's

place in history, despite its obvious accomplishments.

"When we came into this, we knew our place in history really was to give a country back to its people, and at the end of the day that is the thing we should be most proud of. We did what we were asked to do. We transitioned their property and their land back to them," he said.

The reason for this may be that he has taken the long view on whether their efforts are successful. "When we will be able to tell our story is in 10-15 years when our children are grown," Hughes concluded. 



**MARCHING AHEAD**

Maj. Robert Hughes, JASG-C Security Directorate, meets with Hazim M. Hamed, Republic of Iraq Office of the Vice President chief of staff, top, and other Iraqi officials Feb. 5 to exchange security responsibility for the old United Nations compound. Iraqi soldiers, left, enter the former UN compound to begin their new security mission.

# Art of WAR



Baghdad's buildings bear silent witness to Iraq's recent history, their scarred facades making them look more like ancient Mesopotamian ruins than 20th Century structures. Pictured above is the peak of the FOB Prosperity palace; at left, a chopper flies past Bldg. 5 on FOB Union III; fighting has left a two-legged lion to guard a villa on the Tigris River, below; and the old United Nations compound stands pock-marked with bullet holes at far let. Photos by JASG-C Public Affairs.



# Putting Eyes On the IZ



## Joint Defense Operations Center helps keep International Zone secure

Story and photo by  
Maj. Jon Powers  
JASG-C Public Affairs

Behind a heavy steel door on Union III lies the nerve center for the International Zone (IZ). Behind several rows of computers, Soldiers, Airmen and contractors sit, waiting for the next emergency. Behind the calm demeanor in the room lurks the possibility for chaos at any moment.

The Joint Defense Operations Center (JDOC) has been quiet lately, and that is good news for all.

Maj. Robert Bryan is the Joint Area Support Group - Central (JASG-C) chief of operations in the JDOC. "The JDOC serves as the 9-1-1 center of the IZ; anytime anything happens within the IZ,

whether it is IDF (Indirect Fire) or coordinating a Tier One move for the Government of Iraq, that gets coordinated through us," said Bryan. "If there is an incident with IDF or S-vest (Suicide vest) out at one of the ECPs (Entry Control Points) we coordinate the emergency response out to the incident."

"A lot of it is a common sense approach; we rely on the battle drills," said Bryan. "Everybody in here has a very specific position, some days you are busier than others ... you've got to be flexible and expect the unexpected."

The "J" in JDOC is there for good reason, too. "We have liaisons from Sabre, KBR, Triple Canopy and each one of them brings something unique," Bryan said. Several contractors work in the JDOC.

"Triple Canopy handles a lot of the internal checkpoints; KBR handles emergency fire, emergency medical transport, and vehicle recovery. Sabre handles all of the contracted working dogs."

Spc. Wentworth Grayman was originally assigned to the radio dispatch but has changed jobs. As the Command Post of the Future (CPOF) computer operator he brings the more important occurrences to life. Making graphics and chronological charts to show events in the IZ, he provides those with no knowledge of the IZ or the JDOC an easy way to understand what they do.

Grayman explained these reports consisted of "getting the chronological order of who called who, and the who, what, where, why from the eyes on the ground, capturing the

battle damage assessments and response times.” When bombs aren’t landing, Grayman tracks the movements of government officials or supplies through ECPs and the IZ.

“I have to keep my ears open, listen for what is going on,” said Grayman.

“If IDF comes in (Grayman’s) going to spend a good portion of his day preparing a story board which captures the imagery of the point of origin, point of impact and the battle damage assessment and that goes all the way up to MNF-I (Multi-National Forces-Iraq),” commented Bryan.

A few of the JDOC operations are pro-active rather than re-active. The job of the S2 Intelligence officers is to look forward, not back. The S2 officers coordinate the intelligence activities and produce summaries and analysis for use in JDOC operations. The IZ Police work their desk operations from inside to provide a traffic and security viewpoint.

“We have the ability to work with the commander of the IZ Police to deploy them and next door we have the JOC (Joint Operation Center) so whenever we have to coordinate a Tier One move or significant event it has to work through the JOC because the Baghdad Brigade is manning all of the ECPs,” said Bryan.

The JOC is the most recent addition to the JDOC. After the January IZ Transition ceremony, Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police dedicated staff to an office adjoining the JDOC. Sharing space in this office are the liaisons to the 1st Infantry Division who



**WHAT'S UP, JDOC?** - Maj. Robert Bryan, Joint Defense Operation Center (JDOC) chief of operations, far right, and 2nd Lt. Yaser Saad of the Baghdad Brigade discuss issues relating to International Zone security.

represent the Multi-National Division Baghdad (MND-B).

Twenty-four hours a day the JDOC stands ready to react to emergencies and coordinate a response. Eleven JASG-C Soldiers on three rotating shifts ensure an expedient professional response to all of the IZ’s problems, any time day or night. But since arriving, Bryan has noticed a distinct change in the day-to-day business in the IZ.

“When the 45th was here it was a lot more crisis management. There was a lot of IDF and a lot less political stuff that is going on. We have 27 specific battle drills and none of them talk about how to deal with a political incident involving Tier One or Tier Two Government of Iraq officials,” remarked Bryan.

Bryan admits that the most challenging aspect for the JDOC

comes in the form of the competing interest between security and access. “We still have the role that the 45th had, when there is a fire or IDF or medical emergency we are the ones who deploy the assets to put out the fire,” Bryan said. “But we are also involved from a political standpoint; if we jam up a Tier One at an ECP and it is perceived that it was caused by Americans, it could have political ramifications,” he said. “We don’t have a battle drill for that. We have to apply the access control measures in the IZ defense op-order, but at the same time try to please the politicians.”

One of the greatest concerns for the JDOC is protecting the high-ranking government officials who visit the IZ on an almost constant basis. In December 2008, Bryan had to protect the most powerful politician in the world, President George W. Bush. The plans for the president’s visit originated at Multi-National Corps-Iraq but much of the staffing and execution became a JASG responsibility. Operationally controlled by MND-B, the JASG-C had to block the side streets that accessed the main routes and minimize the number of contracted security personnel that were in the IZ.

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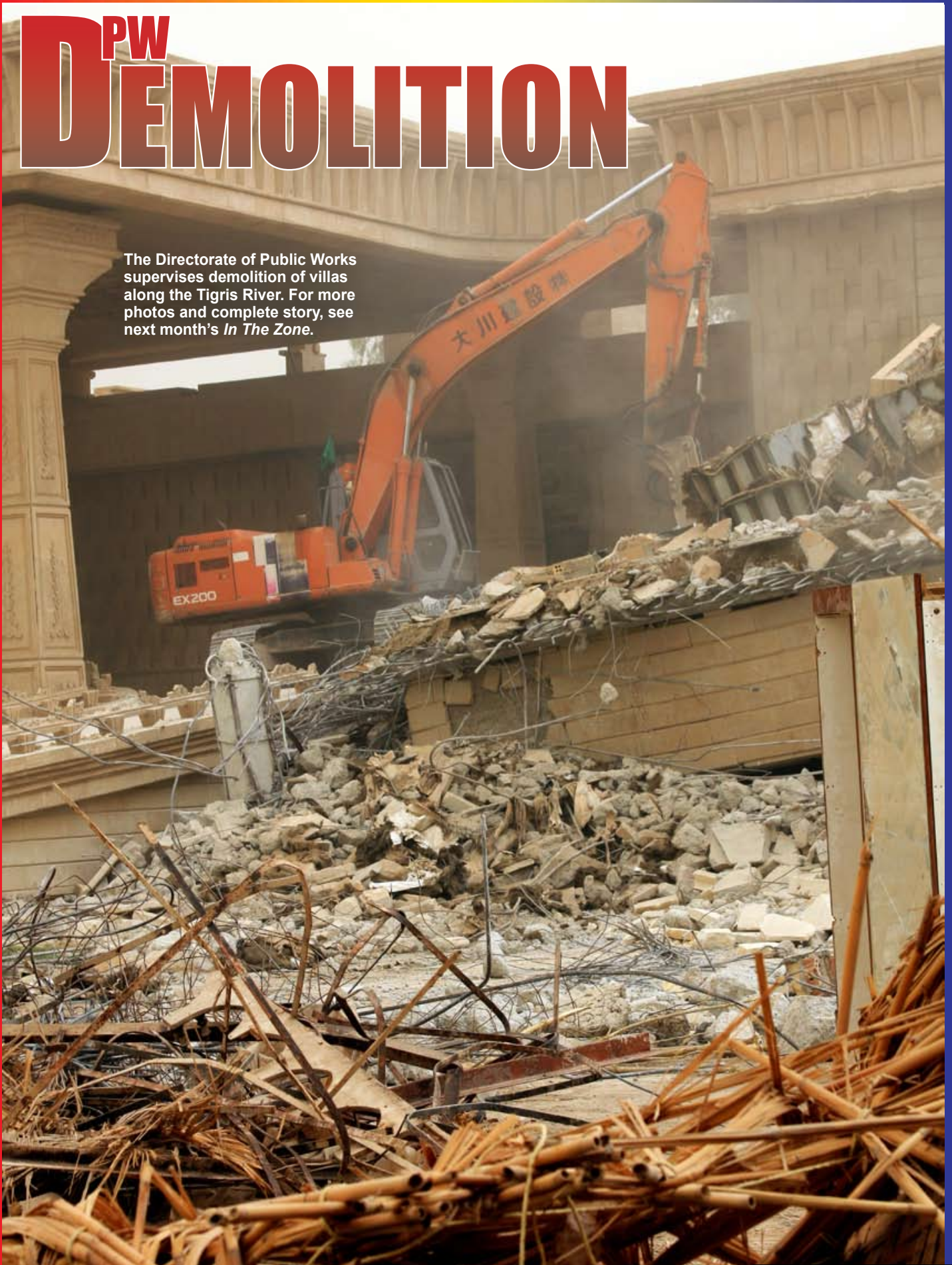
**Some days you are busier than others ... you’ve got to be flexible and expect the unexpected.”**

**- Maj. Robert Bryan, JDOC chief of operations**



# DPW DEMOLITION

The Directorate of Public Works supervises demolition of villas along the Tigris River. For more photos and complete story, see next month's *In The Zone*.



IN THE ZONE

## Riverside villas demolished



**CLEANING HOUSE** - The Joint Area Support Group-Central's Department of Public Works continues to tear down the riverside villa that once belonged to Uday and Qusay Hussein.

*Story and photos by  
Sgt. Bill Addison  
JASG-C Public Affairs*

When you need something built in the International Zone (IZ), you turn to the Joint Area Support Group-Central's Department of Public Works. Recently, DPW got the chance to do just the opposite when they oversaw the demolition of Uday and Qusay Hussein's river villa earlier this month.

The villa is one of several that were built along the Tigris River around 1985. Two of them were later built together and refinished ornately to resemble a palace for the former Iraqi dictator's two sons.

"Initially we were renovating quite a few of those villas to become embassies for the Iraqi government using Iraqi funds," said Air Force Capt. Michelle Sterling, project manager for the demolition of the riverside villa belonging to Saddam's two sons. "These particular villas were heavily damaged during the bombings in 2003, so much so that we couldn't renovate them."

The project, which was funded by the Government of Iraq, is expected to create more space for ad-

ditional embassies to be built. And with most of the labor force being local Iraqis, the project is helping to pump additional money into the local economy.

"It's a good project... you're getting people back to work, you're putting money back into the economy and that really is what's impor-



**CHECKING FOR LEAKS**  
- Capt. John Aslanian, JASG-C DPW, inspects a river villa prior to demolition.

tant to move forward," she said.

For Sterling, the project was an exciting change of pace to the normal construction and renovation projects DPW usually handles.


"Demolition is fun for an engineer," she said. "It's always interesting to me, from an engineering perspective; to see how different

parts of the world do their construction...you can learn a lot about how somebody put something together by taking it down."

Sterling said the buildings were built uncommonly strong, utilizing a greater amount of rebar and steel reinforcement than typically needed for a building of its size. Most of the damage was confined to the areas that were specifically bombed, making a statement not about the American war technology, but the strength of the building's construction.

"These were incredibly robust buildings; they were very much overdesigned," she said.

But Sterling's interest in the building's construction didn't overshadow the feeling of tearing down the home of Saddam's notoriously brutal sons Uday and Qusay.

"It's always important in this part of the world to remember history. Nothing is easily washed away or gotten rid of. But I do think that with all the pain that the country has gone through both during Saddam's regime and then immediately following, that getting rid of some of these symbols of that pain and the oppression is important to the Iraqis," she said. 

# HOUSING BOOM!

Work continues on the South LSA (Life Support Area) at Forward Operating Base Union III as various-sized cranes lift Containerized Housing Units and protective t-walls into place.

*Photos by Maj. Jon Powers and Sgt. Bill Addison of JASG-C Public Affairs*



# IN THE ZONE

MAY 2009 • VOL 1 • ISSUE 8

MAGAZINE

1/7th FA explores  
the legend  
of Excalibur

المسجد  
Dimascus St. شارع دمشق ↑

Exit 50 New Jersey →

Airport المطار

Hilla الحلة ←

Ramadi الرمادي ←



Soldiers, civilian contractors finish up  
new JASG-C digs  
at FOB Prosperity



**UNIT LOCATIONS: FOB Grizzly, Iraq**

FOB Grizzly: 50<sup>th</sup> bares security mission in stride  
Sgt. Bill Addison  
JASG-C/50<sup>th</sup> IBCT Public Affairs

In an area just north of Ballad, near the Iranian border, sits a small isolated forward operating base (FOB) known as Grizzly. Two companies from the New Jersey Army National Guard's 50<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team maintain the delicate balance of both base and area security.

"Our mission here is to provide area security for FOB Grizzly and the surrounding area," said 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Vincent Tirri, executive officer of Bravo Troop, 102<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry. Tirri said that a major part of that mission is to run area security patrols.

"It's a combination of route reconnaissance, area reconnaissance in addition to that security element," he said.

And while some of that mission has been recently scaled back, with another U.S. unit taking on the responsibilities for patrolling the area, the Soldiers of Bravo Troop, also known as Blackfoot, still maintain another crucial mission.

"We have been training the Iraqi army on those area security operation patrols; on manning the entry control points to this area as well as training up their quick reaction force," said Tirri.

This mission is a vital part of implementing the Security Agreement that went into effect 1 Jan. That agreement included transitioning area security operations and base security functions to the Iraqi army.

For Blackfoot, working with the Iraqi army is one step closer to achieving that goal. "The Iraqi army will eventually take control of the area surrounding us," he said.

Spc. Raymond Perez of Bravo Troop said that working with the Iraqi army, or IA, is a matter of teaching them to the standard.

"It's mostly teaching the IA's what we do out here; rules of engagement, escalation of force," he said.

"We were the primary, now they're the primary. We step back we just watch them and go from there."

But the ethos of teamwork at Grizzly extends beyond Blackfoot and the Iraqi soldiers,

Delta Company, 250<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion shares the force protection mission with Bravo troop, as well as performing a modicum of additional functions. Aside from manning towers and ECP's, the Delta Company Soldiers run many of the crucial support elements for the FOB.

"We escort convoys down to Joint Base Ballad and we pick up supplies and bring them back.

We do the fuel mission, we have people in the DFAC we run the mayors cell; what don't we do here?" said 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Christopher D'Alessandro, executive officer of Delta Co.

D'Alessandro said his soldiers also work with the IAs, and have developed a strong working relationship with them.

"Its very interesting to work with them," he said. "We have a lot of stuff in common with them, they're pretty good to work with and they're learning a lot from us."

"It's really a great thing, because we get to interact with the people, the local moqtars, the mayors. For my soldiers to win a place in the Iraqi people's hearts."







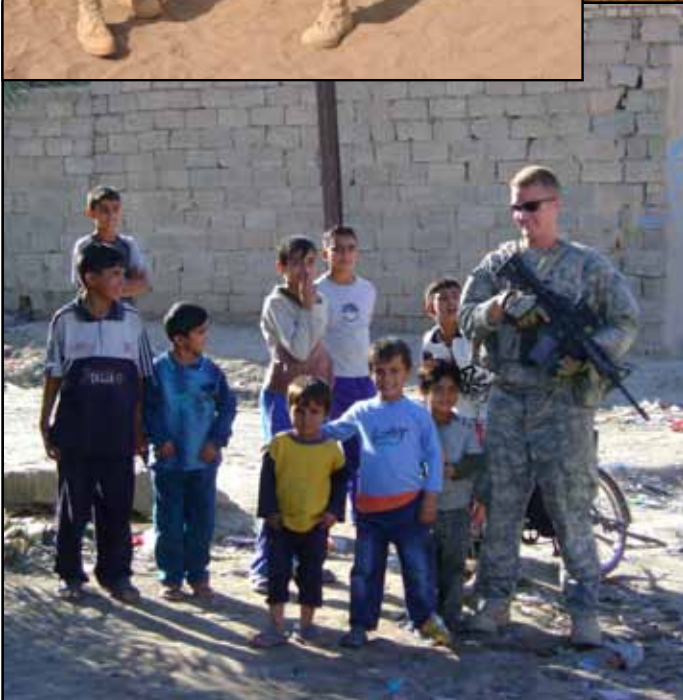




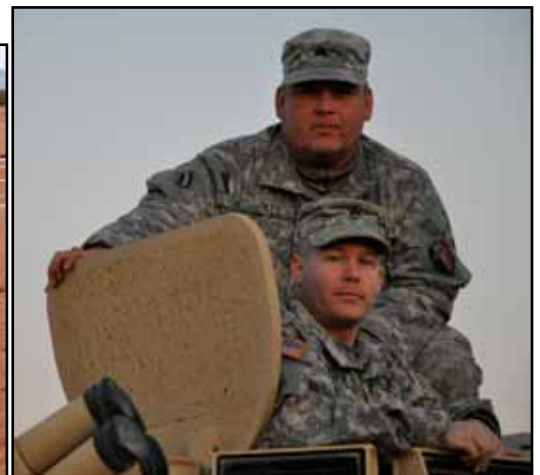






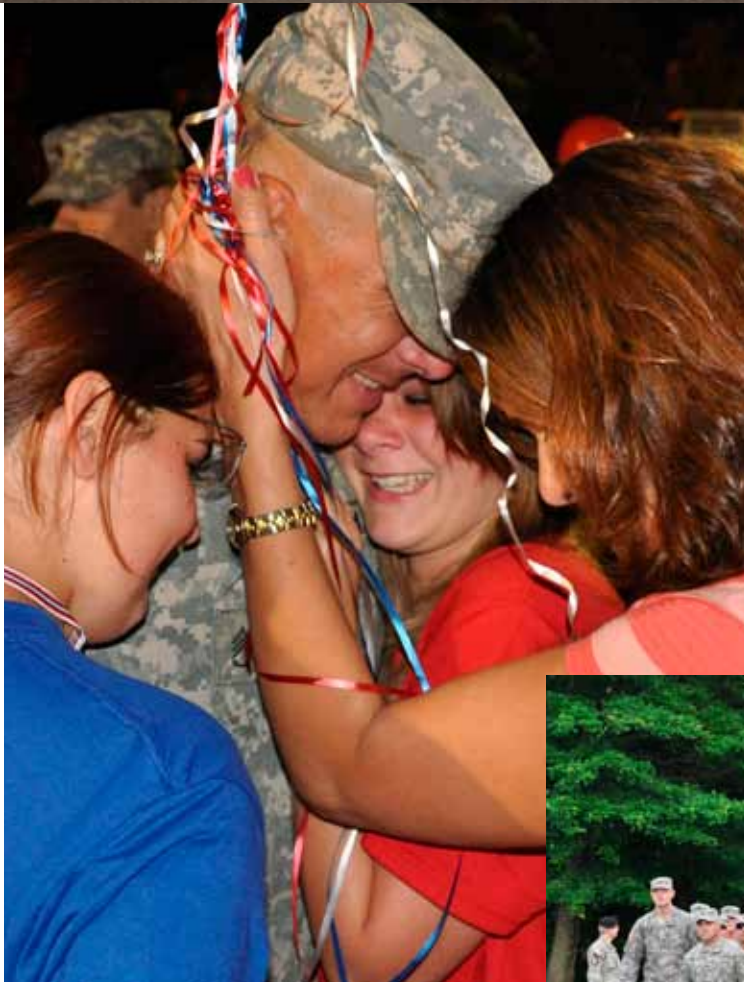






















# COMPANY MISSIONS AND LOCATIONS SUMMARY

## CAMP BUCCA / SAFWAN / UMM QASR

**Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 113th Infantry Regiment**, with its home station in Riverdale, NJ was deployed to Camp Bucca, Iraq where it successfully provided command and control of internal and external base defense security elements for up to 30,000 of Camp Bucca's inhabitants. The Headquarters of the 113th provided the base defense for Camp Bucca by using its organic company Soldiers, Soldiers from Alpha Troop, 1st of the 102nd Cavalry Squadron, managing a US Air Force Security Forces Squadron and a civilian foreign security specialist contractor, and by partnering with Iraqi Security Forces and local Iraqi officials as they took the lead in protecting Iraq. (Camp Bucca is located in southernmost Iraq near the Kuwaiti border and near Iraq's most important port city of Umm Qasr [pronounce: Umm-Ka-Sir])

**Alpha Company, 2nd of the 113th Infantry**, with its home station in Newark, NJ deployed to Camp Bucca, Iraq where it successfully completed multiple missions, beginning with manning a Quick Reaction Force focused on providing security, protection and accountability for the Theater Interment Facility housing as many as 16,000 detainees, which was at that time the largest military detention facility in the world. Next, Alpha Company provided care, custody, dignity and respect for up to 1000 detainees in several compounds while conducting detainee security operations. Lastly, Alpha Company's mission changed to that of providing close base defense around the perimeter of Camp Bucca, equipped with the latest firepower and patrolling in protective armored vehicles.

**Bravo Company, 2nd of the 113th Infantry**, with its home station in Jersey City, NJ deployed to Camp Bucca, Iraq where it excelled at completing two main missions in the Camp Bucca Theater Interment Facility. First, Bravo Company provided for the escort, security and care of detainees in the interment facility hospital, receiving accolades from hospital staff frequently. Secondly, Bravo Company provided care and custody of the detainee population in two different types of compounds, even receiving thank-you letters from detainees for the care given to them while under detention.

**Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 113th Infantry Regiment**, with its home station in Woodbridge, NJ deployed to Camp Bucca, Iraq where it successfully completed its mission there by providing care and custody with dignity and respect for two separate compounds, occupied by up to 1000 detainees in each compound. Charlie Company won the respect of both detained individuals and Military Police superiors due to the professional conduct of its Soldiers under challenging conditions and while working long hours.

**Charlie Company, 250th Brigade Support Battalion**, with its home station in Jersey City, NJ deployed to Camp Bucca, Iraq where it successfully completed its mission there primarily focused on three strategic detainee operations missions; the detainee transportation or "Escort" mission, the Medical Evacuation guard mission and the Processing Mission. To accomplish these three missions, Charlie Company amassed more than 22,000 safe and timely miles transporting detainees around the Theater Interment Facility using up to 10 buses, and separately, securely transported detainees to military hospitals across Iraq to ensure their world-class medical care, and finally, was responsible for safely processing thousands of detainees out of Camp Bucca back to their communities as productive citizens given the opportunity for vocational and educational training.

**Foxtrot Company, 250th Brigade Support Battalion**, with its home station in Teaneck, NJ deployed to Camp Bucca, Iraq where it successfully completed its mission there by providing care and custody with dignity and respect for detainees in three separate compounds - initially running two compounds with more than 1000 detainees each - the largest compounds on base by headcount, then reassigned to a "Super-Maximum"

security compound in February as the mission evolved. Early in the year, Foxtrot Soldiers worked closely with Arabic linguists to successfully register more than 1,600 Iraqi detainees to vote, with subsequent record participation in the second free Iraqi election.

**Alpha Troop, 1st of the 102nd Cavalry Squadron**, with its home station in Dover, NJ deployed to Camp Bucca, Iraq where it successfully executed three concurrent key security force missions there. The Troop's first mission was affectionately known as the "Bucca 500", a close perimeter off-base security patrol. The second mission, the "Bucca to Beuhring Express", was the international border crossing mission where the troop, using the Mine Resistant Vehicles, would shuttle Service members between Camp Bucca and Camp Beuhring, Kuwait in order to depart theater. In the Detainee Air Transfer Security Escort mission, Alpha Troop secured the movement of nearly 10,000 detainees, providing security for their transport to and from Bucca's Interment facility to other facilities in Iraq.

**Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st of the 102nd Cavalry Squadron**, with its home station in Westfield, NJ deployed to Camp Bucca, Iraq. There, it successfully managed Forward Operating Base Bucca operations – to include the camp mayor's office, the Facility Engineering Team, the Department of Logistics, and the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation Department. Running Camp Bucca's mayor's office, Headquarters Troop Soldiers provided management of several hundred facilities and operations for both military Service members and civilians. The Facility Engineering Team managed a multitude of safety-enhancing and quality-of-life improving projects while at Camp Bucca, valued in the millions of dollars. The Department of Logistics ensured necessary supplies and resources were available to the inhabitants of the camp. The Headquarters Troop's Morale, Welfare, Recreation team marketed and coordinated for the recreation and entertainment of the Service members at Camp Bucca, and kept morale high through its efforts that featured a new gym, a new recreation center, and many performers every month.

The **50th Chemical Company**, with its home station in Sea Girt, NJ deployed to Camp Bucca, Iraq where it successfully completed its primary mission there by providing for the care and custody of more than 900 detainees with dignity and respect. The 50th Chemical Company had the task of running the compound known as the "Hard Place." The degree to which the company ensured the success of the mission was evidenced by the positive feedback received after Command inspections. With its detainee operations mission completed in March, the company was tasked with the dismantling of several compounds, as the detainee population decreased due to releases and transfers. The company once again excelled at the dismantling mission and greatly exceeded the expectations of the command.

#### **ASHRAF (FOB Grizzly)**

**Bravo (or Blackfoot Troop, as it is also known), of the 102nd Cavalry Regiment**, with its headquarters in West Orange, New Jersey was located at Forward Operating Base Grizzly, just north of Balad. Missions consisted of Area Security Operations, or mounted patrols, outside the FOB, and Humanitarian Missions to the surrounding towns and villages, where the Soldiers distributed food and supplies to Iraqi men, women and children. In addition, Blackfoot Troop helped to train the Iraqi Army and performed Force Protection missions as well.

Co-Located with Blackfoot Troop, **Delta Company, 250th Brigade Support Battalion**, also out of West Orange, performed Force Protection missions on FOB Grizzly, which consisted of a Quick Reaction Force and coverage of all the Entry Control Points on the FOB. Delta Company also provided a weekly Combat Logistics Patrol, or convoy, to move troops and equipment to other locations in Iraq.

#### **CAMP (FOB) CROPPER - TIF**

Located in Woodbury, New Jersey, **Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 114th Infantry Regiment** set up shop as the Rear Area Operations Center at Camp Cropper, the second largest Detainee Operations facility in Iraq, which was located on the outskirts of Baghdad. The primary mission of the HHC was to oversee and support all the assigned missions given to other New Jersey Guard units that were co-located at Camp Cropper. They also worked in the Mayor's Cell, where the HHC was responsible for the day to day challenges of administering a Forward Operating Base.



**Bravo Company, 250th Brigade Support Battalion**, which hails from Bordentown, New Jersey, was one of many units that made up the Detainee Operations Guard Force. Soldiers worked in compounds alongside Iraqi Corrections Officers inside the Theater Interment Facility, or TIF, where it provided Care, Custody and Control for hundreds of detainees. To prepare for its challenging and sensitive mission, the unit trained alongside other 50th Brigade units at Camp Outlaw, a mock detainee village at McGregor Base Camp, located just outside Fort Bliss, Texas, where the Soldiers learned the tactics and techniques necessary to perform detainee operations. Each unit trained for three weeks at the facility.

The **154th Water Purification Company**, located in Sea Girt, was responsible for overseeing the training of the Iraqi Corrections Officers, or ICO's and the daily operation of the ICO Village training facility at Camp Cropper. The primary mission was to ensure that the training, which was conducted by current Iraqi Corrections Officers, was up to standard. Ultimately, with the help of the 154th, Iraqi Corrections Officers will be able to fully man and supervise their own training facility.

While some Soldiers of **Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 50th Brigade Special Troops Battalion**, located in Port Murray, were responsible for manning one of the compounds inside the Theater Interment Facility at Camp Cropper, others were tasked to escort detainees to and from the Combat Support Hospital, or CSH [Pronounced CASH], where Iraqis received the same medical and dental treatment alongside the Soldiers who were there to provide care, custody and control for them.

The **112th Fires Battalion**, headquartered in Morristown New Jersey, provided two batteries of field artillerymen, **Alpha Battery**, also from Morristown, and **Bravo Battery** which is located in Toms River, to help with Detainee Operations at Camp Cropper. Many of the Soldiers from Alpha and Bravo batteries also performed Military Police duties during a past deployment to Germany. The skills learned for that mission would come in handy as they worked with detainees in the TIF at Cropper.

**Bravo Company, 1st Battalion 114th Infantry Regiment**, out of Freehold was tasked with the important mission of providing Force Protection in and around Camp Cropper. This consisted of manning the Entry Control Points which provide access to the camp as well as mounted patrols outside the perimeter. In addition, Bravo Company also provided a Quick Reaction Force which could respond to any situation within the facility.

#### **VICTORY BASE CAMP – CAMP SLAYER**

**Delta Company, 1st Battalion, 114th Infantry Regiment**, out of Woodstown, set up shop at Victory Base Camp, on the outskirts of Baghdad, where Delta performed a number of missions, including providing Convoy Escorts for members of the Government of Iraq, as well as providing a Personal Security Detachment squad for the Task Force 134 commander, Brigadier General Quantock, and the 11th MP Brigade commander, Brigadier General Kenyon, as they traveled about their Area of Operations. Many of Delta Company's convoys travelled down the famous Route Irish between Baghdad International Airport and the Green Zone. Route Irish, at one time, was considered one of the most dangerous routes in Iraq, but during Delta Company's tour, it became known as one of the more secure ways to travel.

Elsewhere on Victory Base Camp is a separate camp known as Slayer, which the members of **Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 114th Infantry** called home. Charlie Company, out of Burlington, provided Security Force Operations for the Combined Joint Security Operations Task Force.

# 328th Military Police Co.

Effective Sept. 29, 2008, the 328th Military Police Company conducted detention operations, force protection, and a counterinsurgency campaign within the Theater Internment Facility at Camp Cropper, Iraq, to support reconciliation efforts in support of MNF-I and U.S. objectives in Iraq. In addition, the mission required the unit to create the conditions for transfer of the facility to the Government of Iraq through constant and deliberate training of Iraqi forces.



**1st Lt. Jonathan Welch  
Company Commander**

As the only MP company in the 50th IBCT, our MPs were immediately dispersed to all critical areas of the facility in order to provide their expertise and experience. The unit served valiantly in areas including the access control point, the special housing unit, the Immediate Response Force, the detainee compound, the visitor reception center, Military Police Investigators, the tactical operations center, the intelligence office, the Strategic Debriefing Center, Sergeant of the Guard, TIF NCOIC, and Escorts, to mention a few. Support Soldiers remained critical to mission success while serving in the TOC, Combat Support Hospital, Detainee Medical Clinic, R&U, motor pool, and DFAC. Numerous Soldiers were decorated with Impact AAMs for their swift and immediate actions in providing care, custody, and control of detainees under U.S. care.



**1st Sgt. Brett Eberlin  
Company First Sergeant**

A section of MPs from the company was detached to Delta Company, 250th Brigade Support Battalion at FOB Grizzly, Iraq, valiantly providing MP support and expertise in the training of the Iraqi forces. Upon release from theater, the Punishers of the 328th MP Company will forever dread the unannounced presence of a Viper.



**Staff and TIF Support Ops**



**Immediate Response Force**



**Compound IV Day Shift**



**Compound IV Night Shift**



**SHU Day Shift**



**SHU Night Shift**



**Medics**



**Ashraf Detachment**

# 112th Fires B Battery



**Capt. Kenneth Whipkey**  
**Battery Commander**



**1st Sgt. Barry O'Dell**  
**Battery First Sergeant**

In June 2008, Bravo Battery 112th Fires Battalion, Toms River NJ, combined forces with soldiers from Golf Co. 250th BSB, Toms River and Morristown, NJ, and embarked on a historic new mission that took them well outside the scope of their Artillery mission. Bravo 112th Fires was sent to Camp Cropper, Iraq to conduct Detainee Operations.

Capt. Kenneth Whipkey and 1st Sgt. Barry O'Dell took the lead on the care, custody and treatment with dignity and respect of all detainees at the Remembrance II, Theater Internment Facility, and Camp Cropper, Iraq.

Upon arrival, the unit was separated into several different areas to support the needs of the mission. The battery was put in charge of the In-processing Holding Area (IHA). Capt. Whipkey took the lead with many Bravo soldiers by his side, processing over 10,000 detainees, both into and out of the Theater Internment facility (TIF).

Bravo soldiers were also placed in a compound assigned to the 112th Fires, to ensure the care and custody of the worst detainees that Remembrance II had to offer. Soldiers from Bravo 112th Fires expanded the Information Operations staff and guard force as they coordinated 16 classes while adding new ones, such as the first detainee computer classes. Bravo soldiers also made up the majority of the TIF's escort team which transported detainees to appointments, transfers, classes, and releases in the air and on the ground.

The historic coordination of the first free Iraqi provincial election was completed by the Bravo 112th Soldiers. This effort was spearheaded by Bravo Soldiers assigned to the International Red Cross (ICRC) in January 2009. The battery was also faced at the same time with the changes and challenges of the new security agreement between the US and Iraq. Bravo Battery 112th Fires was involved in every facet of the REM II, Theater Internment Facility. Bravo Battery, 112th Fires made critical decisions during their tenure at REM II, which resulted in many changes in how the US operates detention facilities and reflects the positive difference the US has made for Iraq as a nation.



**Headquarters Platoon**



**1st Platoon**



**2nd Platoon**

# 154th Quartermaster Co.



**Capt. Patrick M. Cramer**  
**Company Commander**



**1st Sgt. John Hicks**  
**Company First Sergeant**

The 154th Quartermaster Water Purification and Distribution Company was one of two companies that were attached to the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team and mobilized with only two months notice. The Soldiers of the 154th gave themselves the nickname “Blacksheep” after an ad-hoc group of orphaned pilots that made up a World-War-II Marine Fighter Squadron that was commissioned in 1942. The 154th was also comprised of volunteer interstate transfers from Massachusetts and Rhode Island, Inactive Reserve Soldiers, and those from the New Jersey National Guard. With little support from the Battalion Headquarters, these Soldiers had to come together in a short two-and-a-half-month training period at Fort Bliss, Texas.

Once in Iraq, the company was split up. A portion of the 154th Soldiers was assigned to the Iraqi Corrections Officers Training Academy (ICOTA) and Iraqi Correctional Officer Village. The remainder of the Soldiers were transferred to Alpha Company, 112th Fires Battalion, and assigned to Compound V, a high-value detainee Theater Internment Facility. The 154th Soldiers assigned to the ICOTA mission would train Iraqi Correctional Officers to standard put forth by the Ministry of Justice of Iraq. They accomplished this through counterpart-mentoring, coaching, and providing overall logistical support to the Iraqi Instructors. The 154th trained more than 400 Iraqi Correctional Officers. They also trained ICO supervisors and staff section.

The 154th Soldiers did an outstanding job. The company was sent in many different locations without much direction and forewarning. The Soldiers overcame these obstacles, accomplished their mission and exceeded every standard.



**Headquarters Platoon**



**1st Platoon**



**2nd Platoon**

# 112th Fires A Battery



**Capt. Stewart Loy**  
**Battery Commander**



**1st Sgt. Nick Cianfrano-**  
**Battery First Sergeant**

Alpha Battery 112th Fires Battalion assumed command and control of Compound V on 1 OCT 2009, taking the mission of providing care, custody and control with dignity and respect for the only High Value Theatre Internment Facility in Iraq.

Augmented with Soldiers from the 154th QM company, Alpha Battery executed a wide variety of duties to accomplish its mission. The Soldiers have executed hundreds of external combat support missions, placing themselves in harms way by venturing beyond the protective boundaries of the Victory Base Complex to ensure the safety of High Value Detainee family members and to further assist coalition counter-insurgency initiatives in Iraq.

Concurrently, the Soldiers of Alpha Battery executed thousands of internal support missions vital to the units mission and to the counter-insurgency mission of the Coalition. Soldiers successfully transported hundreds of High Value Detainees to various appointed locations while at all times projecting their professionalism and devotion to the mission.

The continued success of the Soldiers of Alpha Battery was recognized by the Strategic Debriefing Center and as a result of their steadfast dedication to the mission the unit was awarded the honor of executing a special mission in which a considerable amount of intelligence has been gathered against the insurgency in Iraq, greatly aiding the overall success of all Coalition forces in theatre. It has been my privilege and honor to serve with and lead such fine young men and women on this mission and I extend my most heartfelt thanks and gratitude to Soldiers and their families for making this mission successful and leaving me with memories that will last for the rest of my days. To the Soldiers of Alpha Battery, never forget the 100,000 gallons of Kool Aid and four plastic chairs that lost their lives, they will be missed by all.

**A OUTRANCE!**





**Headquarters Platoon**



**1st Platoon**



**2nd Platoon**

# 114 B Co.



**Capt. Luis Delacruz**  
**Company Commander**



**1st Sgt. John Giordano**  
**Company First Seargent**

It was a warm night in mid September when a C-130 landed in a Baghdad Airport carrying the last group of Bravo Company soldiers. As each and every soldier's boot struck the pavement of their new home away from home, we were all quickly becoming a part of something bigger than ourselves. Soon enough the soldiers of Bravo Company would get through their first night of sleep. It was the following morning when we would all come together to move forward with the FOBs Force Protection Mission. It didn't take long for the company to be fully up and operating as Entry Control Point guards and as a Quick Reaction Force.

Now approximately 10 months later, we are fast-approaching our final night of sleep under a Baghdad sky. We've successfully built a strong base defense that will keep the FOB and its inhabitants safe from all intruders. With our incoming brothers and sisters from Wisconsin getting ready to get on a C-130 themselves, we are preparing to train them to take on the same duties and responsibilities that Bravo Company carried out during its stay in the sand box.

Our time here may not have been painless or mistake-free, but all the injuries, mistakes, and mishaps come with the territory. Bravo Company's soldiers proudly represented the 1-114th Infantry with steady motivation and professionalism. As I reminisce of our times here, through all the trials and tribulations, I can look back and still honestly say that it was all "too easy."



**1st Platoon**



**2nd Platoon**

# 114 A Co.



**Capt. David Hampton**  
**Company Commander**



**1st Sgt. Patrick Connors**  
**Company First Sergeant**

Task organized into eight detachments and OPCON to three separate chains of command, A Company was spread throughout six cities and across five hundred miles of Iraq. Fifty-six Soldiers were assigned to the Strategic Counterintelligence Directorate (SCID) Operational Security Team, another fifty-six to the Command Liaison Element (CLE) Operational Security Team (OST) and eight Soldiers were assigned as the Multinational Forces-Iraq (MNF-I) Combined Joint Intelligence (CJ2) Protective Services Detachment (PSD).

The SCID OST was responsible for providing transportation and protective services to Air Force Office of Special Investigations (OSI), Navy Criminal Investigative Services (NCIS), Army Military Intelligence and DoD Civilians assigned to the SCID. The OST coordinated secure travel for the SCID agents in Baghdad, Bucca, Irbil and the surrounding areas in order to perform counterintelligence operations against foreign intelligence services and anti-coalition terrorist cells.

Similar to the SCID OST, the CLE OST provided transportation and protective services to the DoD civilians and military personnel assigned to the CLE. With detachments in Baghdad, Mosul, Kirkuk and Basra, the OST helped plan, coordinate and execute sensitive liaison operations in each of these cities and the outlying areas. In addition to supporting liaison operations, the OST was responsible for the fixed site security of each of the detachments' compounds.

The CJ2 PSD provided executive protection for the Combined Joint Intelligence community's highest ranking military officials, senior executive service officers, state department personnel, intelligence analysts and DoD advisors. The protective services they provided also extended to coalition partners such as General Officers and intelligence personnel from the Iraqi and British armed forces. PSD Soldiers performed missions as mounted and dismounted security, close protection teams, static security and advance site survey planning.



# 250th D Co.



**1st Lt. Vincent Tirri  
Company Commander**



**1st Sgt. Thomas Sharpe  
Company First Sergeant**

Dakota Company, 250th Brigade Support Battalion is based out of West Orange, New Jersey. Traditionally the Forward Support Company for the 1st Squadron, 102nd Cavalry Regiment, Dakota was deployed under a Military Police Company task organization. The Company was a melting pot of soldiers from across the Garden State and was augmented with soldiers from Washington, Kansas, Massachusetts, and several other States.

Drawn from MP Combat Support Operations, Dakota Company executed several operations including Entry Control Point and Tower Security, Convoy Security, and Quick Reaction Forces. Additionally, Dakota soldiers conducted operations based upon several FSC core missions including Sustainment, Logistics and Maintenance support. This diverse mission set was set against the backdrop of an ever changing operations tempo which included the transition of security from Coalition Forces to the Government of Iraq.

Dakota soldiers participated in several aspects of this transition including the training of Iraqi Army soldiers in critical mission skills. The Company also worked closely with Iraqi Security Forces in Humanitarian Assistance Operations that helped to boost the legitimacy of the Government of Iraq in Diyala Province. Dakota soldiers have secured for themselves and the State of New Jersey a proud legacy in Operation Iraqi Freedom, which is highlighted by the historic transfer of responsibility for security to Government of Iraq forces on January 1, 2009.



**Headquarters Platoon**



**1st Platoon**



**2nd Platoon**



**3rd Platoon**

# 250th B Co.



**Capt. Margaret Brescio**  
**Company Commander**



**1st Sgt. Kenneth Ashley**  
**Company First Sergeant**

Planning and Training at Home Stations began in November 2007. Individual Units conducted pre-mobilization training at their locations in Teaneck, Dover, Lawrenceville, Bordentown, and various other Armories in the State. First Sergeant Kenneth P. Ashley was assigned to the Unit in November 2007 to work hand in hand with CPT Margaret E. Brescio to prepare for Mobilization. To maintain Command and Control of the Platoons during the deployment, it was decided to keep the Senior NCOs from the pre-existing leadership as the Platoon Sergeants.

The company was broken down into three Platoons. HHC was led by 1LT Brian Kruzell as Platoon Leader and SFC Maurice Broadnax as Platoon Sergeant, 1st Platoon was led by CW3 Mickey McGuire as Platoon Leader and SFC Francis Koszyk as Platoon Sergeant, and 2nd Platoon was led by 1LT Jarrett Feldman as Platoon Leader and SFC Laurence Wayman as Platoon Sergeant.

Bravo Company arrived in Iraq with 130 Soldiers from sixteen various Units from NJ, CA, ID, IL, OH and MA. Thirty-nine Soldiers were Stop-Loss and thirty-six had previously deployed.

Bravo Company was assigned to 23 battle spaces on and around the TIF, filling 56 different job positions. Troops traveled on various missions outside the wire which included the International Zone, Balad, Taji and Bucca. Immediately making an impact, Bravo's Compound was awarded the Viper Stakes for December 2008 for most improved Compound. During Bravo's tenure in Iraq, 16 soldiers reenlisted. 17 soldiers competed in the German Armed Forces Badge Competition in which 13 were awarded the badge and 23 Soldiers were awarded the Army Achievement Medal for going above and beyond their duties. The Company promoted fifty-one Soldiers during the deployment.





**Headquarters Platoon**



**1st Platoon**



**2nd Platoon**

# 1/102 C Co.



**Capt. Joseph McNamara**  
**Company Commander**



**1st Sgt. Thomas Decker**  
**Company First Sergeant**

Comanche Troop, 1st Squadron, 102nd Cavalry Regiment was mobilized on June 21, 2008 for deployment in the Iraqi Theater of Operations as a part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Troop was assigned the mission of Force Protection for the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Arabian Peninsula (CJSOTF-AP). Our mission essential tasks encompassed area security, maneuver and mobility support operations and detainee operations. Our area of operations spanned Special Forces operating bases in 11 locations, including the Headquarters, CJSOTF-AP, in Joint Base Balad. The mission set for the various locations included integration into operations conducted by Special Forces Teams from the 1st, 5th and 10th Special Forces Groups.

The 81 man C Troop, home stationed in Hackettstown New Jersey, a dismounted reconnaissance element of the Reconnaissance Squadron for the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), formed the core of a 131 man force protection company for the mission. Additional Soldiers were attached from various other elements within the 50th IBCT as well as Individual Ready Reserve and Individual Mobilization Augmentee volunteers.

In all respects the Troop performed the mission with distinction and honor bringing pride, a sense of historic accomplishment and a Battle Streamer home to New Jersey, augmenting the already distinguished service of New Jersey's Cavalry Units. It is with great humility that I say, this has been the finest unit it has been my honor to command. The men of C Troop will forever hold their heads up high in recognition of their service to Country, The United States Army and communities of families and neighbors we call home.



**Team Basrah**



**Team Normandy**

# 102 B Co.



**Capt. Neol Lyn-Kew  
Company Commander**

Blackfoot Troop 1-102D Cavalry Regiment is based out of West Orange, New Jersey. Being a Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop augmented with various support specialties, the Troop is ideally configured to execute a variety of combat missions.

The current mission set, including Combat Presence Patrols, Entry Control Point and Tower Security, Quick Reaction Force and Humanitarian Support Operations exemplifies the unit's capabilities.

As part of the transition of security from Coalition Forces to the Government of Iraq the unit undertook significant responsibility for the training and readiness of two local Iraqi Army Battalions. Joint security operations and humanitarian assistance missions set the stage for a successful transition. The seamless handover on 1 January 2009 only highlights the unit's successes.



**1st Sgt. Robert Gerhardt  
Company First Sergeant**



**Headquarters Platoon**



**1st Platoon**



**2nd Platoon**



**3rd Platoon**



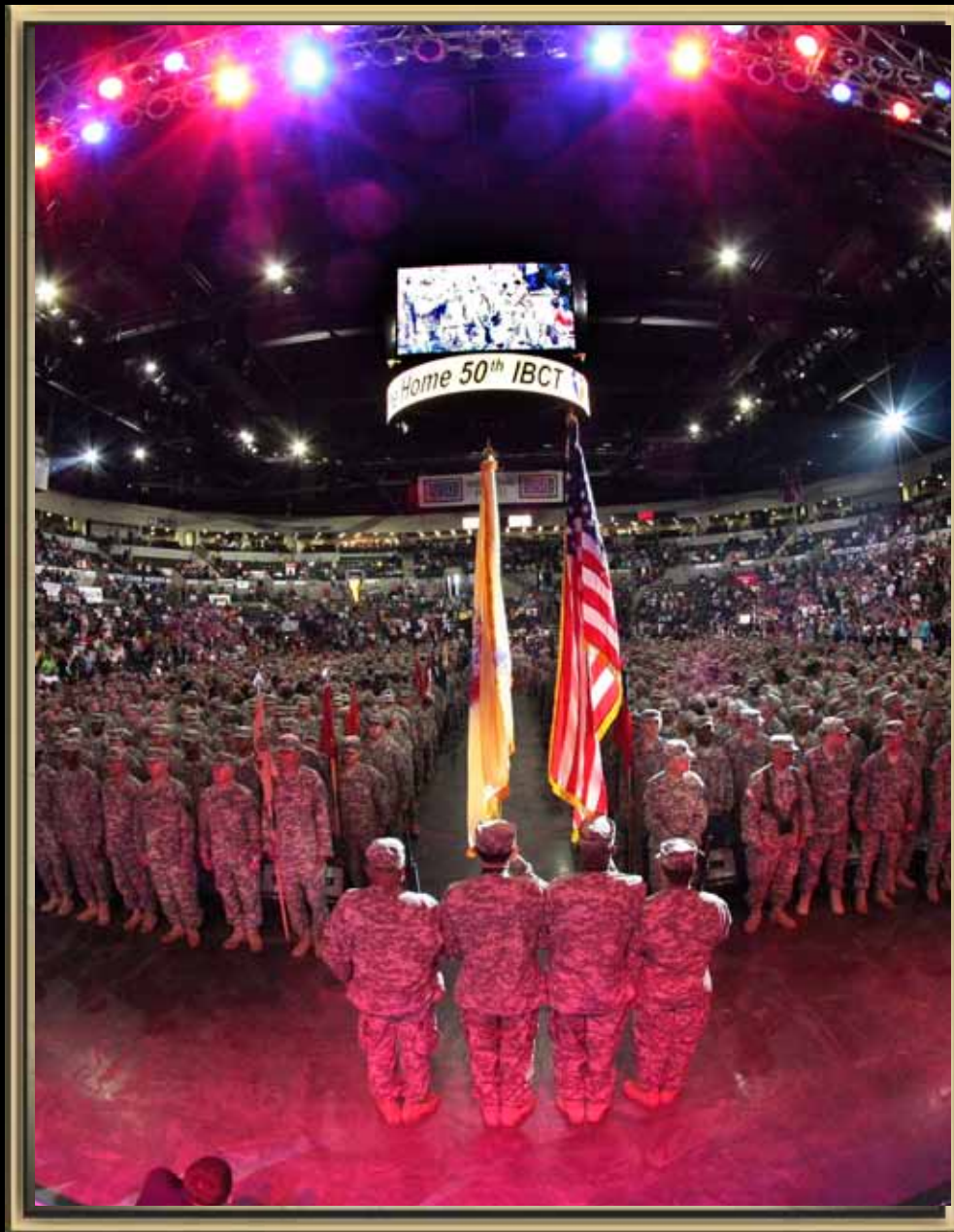








# “JERSEY BLUES”



# “JERSEY’S BEST”