

IRAQI DESTINY

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**Still removing
remnants of
Saddam's Regime**
(See Page 3)

Lynch awarded Bronze Star

by *Bernard S. Little*
Army News Service

WASHINGTON -- Former prisoner of war Pfc. Jessica Lynch waved good-bye July 22 to the medical staff that had treated her for more than three months as she boarded an Army Black Hawk helicopter at Walter Reed's Forest Glen annex.

Lynch, the first of the rescued prison-

ers of war from Operation Iraqi Freedom, was finally headed home to West Virginia.

She arrived in Elizabeth, W. Va., Tuesday afternoon, spoke briefly to the media, and then was taken in a motorcade to her hometown of Palestine.

Monday at Walter Reed, Lt. Gen. James B. Peake, the Army surgeon general, awarded Lynch the Bronze Star, Purple Heart and Prisoner of War medal during a ceremony in the hospital.

See LYNCH, page 10



Brett McMillian

Pfc. Jessica Lynch receives her Bronze Star from Lt. Gen. James B. Peake, Army surgeon general.

Commentary

Combat pay: Soldiers not normally engaged in combat should receive hazardous duty pay too

by *Spc. Joshua M. Risner*
40th PAD

A few weeks ago, I was asked if I am ashamed to be receiving combat pay, since I am a journalist. I'll not mention who the person in question was, only that he is a noncommissioned officer, so I bit my tongue instead of retorting.

I was infuriated by this remark. I didn't know where he got off saying something like that to a fellow soldier, no matter what his job might be.

I've seen this situation all too often in my short career in the Army. Some soldiers in combat arms gets it in their heads that anyone who has a job in support somehow doesn't qualify as a soldier.

Maybe he was thinking that only soldiers who get to see combat should get combat pay. If that was so, then there wouldn't be very many people receiving combat pay. Furthermore, it's not just combat arms that come face to face with the enemy.

An example of that would be the story of Pfc. Jessica Lynch, early on in the war. That was a supply convoy that came under fire. My facts may not be completely straight, but I don't think there were any combat arms soldiers in that convoy.

And even for the soldiers that haven't seen a bit of action, those who have barely left their compounds because their jobs keep them behind a desk, why shouldn't they get combat pay? Are they not in the same place everyone else is? Are they not in a dangerous corner of the world? Are they not separated from their families?

So far, it doesn't seem like the enemy has discriminated much over that fact. They don't care if this soldier is an infantryman or this soldier is an administrative specialist. All they know is that the person is a soldier and that is all they care about.

Everyone is a target in their eyes and will have to defend themselves if they come under attack. I don't think that an administrative specialist is going to sit around and wait for combat arms to come and rescue them.

Anyone who leaves their compound is in just as much danger as the next man and doesn't know if that trip outside the wire will be their last.

After all, we are all soldiers first, journalists, cooks, drivers, etc. second. We are all in the same situation together. We all deserve the pay we're getting.

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On the cover: Spc. Dustin Hall of Towanda, Kan., 1st Battalion, 377th Field Artillery Regiment, Fort Bragg, N.C. loads tank rounds onto a light-medium tactical vehicle to be moved to a safe location and be destroyed. Photo by Pfc. Thomas Day.



Workers from the Mine Advocacy Group look over a stockpile of munitions accumulated in the Mosul area.

Coalition forces, “MAG” clear Mosul area of weapons

by Pfc. Thomas Day
40th PAD

Over 500 tanks, trucks and artillery formerly used by Saddam’s forces have now been collected by the soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 377th Field Artillery Regiment (Fort Bragg, N.C.). Additional mortars, missiles and land mines are also in the process of being removed from the Mosul area as part of a joint effort with European non-governmental organization titled the Task Force Glory.

The Mine Advocacy Group,

a nonprofit organization based in Great Britain, has joined coalition forces in first stockpiling, then destroying the weapons in safe locations.

“Stuff that can be used against American soldiers, we grabbed it first,” said Lt. Col. Tracy Lear of Anthony, Kan., battalion commander, 1-377th. Over 355,000 rounds of ammunition at over 320 sites throughout the local area has been picked up by the 1-377 soldiers, according to Lear. In addition, the unit has cleared 84 tanks and 40 other tactical vehicles from the local area.

The project of clearing the Mosul area of unexploded ordnances and deadly weapons



photos by Pfc. Thomas Day

A local civilian contracted team loads up an Iraqi tank destroyed during Operation Iraqi Freedom onto a truck.

used by Saddam’s forces, according to Lear, will take “years.” The operable weapons collected by the coalition forces could be recycled for use by the new Iraqi army.

“Most of it, you can see, is unserviceable,” Lear said.

All of the weapons collected by TF Glory are currently being held at a site in East Mosul before being destroyed.

According to Lear, many local citizens have come to the site looking to help the forces find weapons, as well as seeking

medical help for injures sustained from an unexploded ordnance.

“It’s amazing how many children we’ve had to treat,” he said. Lear has even brought his battalion surgeon along to the collection point in the event that a local is in need of medical attention.

Ironically, a portion of the weapons found in the Mosul area were provided to the Iraqi military by the United States in support of Iraq and Saddam in the Iran-Iraq War.

Former Iraqi Military sports facility reopens for public after restoration



Pfc. Thomas Day

Col. Samuel Halloway, commander, DISCOM, helps Sheik Talal al-Khalidi of the Mosul city council cut the ribbon on a newly renovated sports complex.

by Pfc. Thomas Day
40th PAD

For the past three months, Sgt. First Class Hector Jusino has made a home at a Mosul sports complex that was formerly used exclusively by the Iraqi army before the fall of Saddam Hussein. After three months of work on the facility, with the help of hired workers and soldiers from the 801st Main Support Battalion, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), the facility reopened July 16, for the children of Mosul to enjoy.

“The Army has decided to give it back to the people of Iraq,” said Jusino, a native of Puerto Rico who said he has found a home in Clarksville, Tenn., when he retires. “I leave something for the Iraqi people that they can use and they can cherish for the future.”

Jusino took the bull by the horn in getting the facility cleaned, painted and equipped, working with his soldiers and over 50 hired workers in Mosul to give the facility a face-lift. Almost \$100,000 was spent to renovate the sports complex, Jusino said.

The sports complex includes a pool, an indoor basketball court and a soccer

stadium, all of which were in tatters when Jusino and the 801st MSB found them. The pool, according to Jusino, resembled more like a lagoon with trash and dead frogs floating in the water.

Col. Samuel Halloway, commander, Division Support Command, opened the new facility with Sheik Talal al-Khalidi, Mosul city council member, with a brief speech congratulating all of those involved before ceremoniously cutting the ribbon on the sports complex and touring Jusino’s work.

“(The sports complex) should stand as a testament to our shared love of athletics and sport,” Halloway said. “We turn this stadium over to you, the people of Mosul, and share hope that its use will continue to stir memories of what we have accomplished together.”

Halloway presented a commemorative 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) coin to the local civilians and soldiers who worked on the project, with Jusino first in line.

“I feel like I’ve been blessed by God to come to Iraq and come to war and instead of destroying, I had a chance to build,” Jusino said. “I hope that in the long run, the Iraqi people get to the position where they can use this facility to the max and try to put somebody to the Olympics through training at this complex.”

Veterans Employment Office putting Iraqis back to work

by Pfc. Thomas Day
40th PAD

The new Veterans Employment Office, built on what was just a few months ago a pile of rubble, is now actively finding work for former Iraqi soldiers and will soon serve civilian job-seekers in Mosul.

“The eventual goal for this office is to turn over to a provincial ministry,” said Capt. Rick Schega of Chalmette, La., who is overseeing the VEO work force comprised of 72 local civilians and seven soldiers. “That way when we leave, they can transition to a civilian employment office.”

July 16, the VEO began operating in

their newly constructed building along the Tigris River in Mosul. The new office, according to Schega, has tripled the compacity of the VEO.

Where once the office was processing just 50 to 60 former soldiers a day at makeshift facilities, the VEO now can process over 150 daily.

“I think fifteen hundred to two thousand people a month is very realistic now that we’ve got an office and a building and a staff dedicated to this full time,” he said. “To date, we have employed over two thousand soldiers.”

Job-seekers who come to the VEO for help are quickly processed through an interview process, and then have their photo taken for identification.

Coalition forces draw soldiers from the

office for help pulling guard at various points throughout the city, for example.

“When these soldiers find out were giving them one hundred American dollars a months to guard a building, they can’t believe it,” Schega said, “because just two or three months ago, they were only getting three dollars a month.”

The new Veterans Employment Office highlights another effort by the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) to stabilize the Mosul job market and economy.

Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, 101st Airborne commanding general, donated around \$100,000 to the project out of his discretionary fund, with an additional \$50,000 coming from the 101st Airborne Division Artillery.

Iraqi prison guards taught modern procedures

by Spc. Joshua M. Risner
40th PAD

Soldiers with the 431st Civil Affairs Battalion and the 156th Military Police Company held a three-day workshop for prison guards Sunday through Tuesday at the youth detention center in Mosul.

The classes are meant to provide new recruits an introduction to corrections procedures according to Staff Sgt. Jay Boen, 431st CA Bn. "We're also providing a kind of refresher course for transportation jailers who are already policemen," he said.

The classes consisted of subjects such as ethics, weapons familiarization and prisoner escort procedures.

Each morning, the recruits were inspected in formation for their uniforms and overall appearance. If a recruit was found to have a shoddy shaving job, they were given corrective training the Army way: push-ups.

After inspections, the potential guards and their already employed counterparts participated in physical fitness training. Some inmates with windows overlooking the training seemed curious and watched as the soldiers helped get the guards in shape.

The Iraqis were enthusiastic in doing PT with the soldiers. In fact, they had a good attitude throughout the training. "The guys we're working with are really receptive to the classes," Boen said. "They ask questions if they don't understand something and they participate actively."

For the most part, corrections procedures in Iraq aren't all that different from procedure in the U.S. according to Boen. "We're not having to change much with the way the guards normally do things," he said.

The workshop will give way to a full-fledged correctional academy slated to begin Aug. 16. The course will be 18 days long and will give the recruits full credentials as prison guards, Boen added.



Soldiers with the 431st CA Bn. and the 156th MP Co., demonstrate take down procedures at a three-day workshop for prison guards.



photos by Spc. Joshua M. Risner

Staff Sgt. William Boen, 431st CA Bn., leads a stretching session prior to physical training during a three-day workshop for Iraqi prison guards.

Mosul Community Sports Complex repaired, open

by Spc. Blake Kent
22nd MPAD

The people of Mosul, Iraq will soon have new facilities for recreation and exercise.

Thanks to 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), community centers, playgrounds, swimming pools, weight rooms and soccer fields are being reconstructed throughout Mosul for the community.

At the Mosul Community Sports Complex, 2nd Brigade helped fund the repair of the gym facilities, including giving the gym a layer of fresh paint, adding air-conditioning, and repairing the gym bleachers and locker rooms.

Second Brigade also added a mural to one wall in the gym, immortalizing the brotherhood that soldiers and citizens of Mosul are working to build.

"I just hope that the people will enjoy this place," said Pfc. Adrian Cisneros of El Paso, Texas, Headquarters Headquarters Company, 2nd Brig., 101st Abn. Div. (AAslt.), who drew the mural.

At the former Olympic Training Center swimming pool facilities, soldiers are helping to repair holes in the abandoned pool and clear trash and rubble.

"When we first started, this area was full of scrap metal, garbage and rubble from when the place was shut down," said Sgt. 1st Class Alan Hackworth of Albany, Org., Company B, National Guard

Component of the 52nd Engineers. "This place hasn't been used since 1984."

Repairs are being made to water lines, the pool is being repaired, gravel and soil are being brought in, and the facility is being repainted.

According to 1st Lt. Krystal Loverin of Bend, Ore., Co. B, 52nd Engineers, the facility was scheduled to reopen 21 July.

"This is a long term project," Loverin said. "They are planning to fix up all the facilities on the property."

At the Mosul Athletic Club that once had training for boxers, gymnastics, soccer and other sports, workers are making repairs from looting, fire and vandalism.

"It had been occupied by Fedayine during the war," said Daniel S. Morgan of Washington D.C., commander Headquarters Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 502 Infantry Regiment, 101st Abn. Div. (AAslt). "The Naba Unis Iman brought attention to this facility about a month ago. Everything inside the building was burned and destroyed."

According to Morgan, the gym is the training grounds for 600 to 800 athletes.

"We are hiring a lot of people to do the work. We have about 50 to 60 guys hired right now," Morgan said.

The facilities are receiving a complete make-over, including repair to the electrical wiring, a new soccer field with an underground irrigation system, a weight room, boxing ring and gymnastics rooms.

"Once this is up and



Spc. Blake Kent

A Mosul man plays a game of soccer inside the newly renovated Mosul Community Sports Complex. Second Brigade helped renovate the facility.

running, this will give the people of Mosul, especially the young children and the athletes, a place to actually come and train and learn about healthy competition," Morgan said. "It keeps children off the streets and provides a safe and secure environment. Talking to the Naba Unis community and the other people around here, they are all looking forward to this opening back up so people can get in here and start getting into active life-styles and competitive sports."

Repairs to sewer lines inside the fitness center area will fix some of the sewage problems in the surrounding community.

Giving children safe places to play is another major concern in 2nd Brigade's redevelopment projects, which includes a number of playgrounds.

"It will provide a safer place

for the children of Mosul, keeping them off the streets," Morgan said. "My thought is that it is a safety issue. Families can bring their children here for recreation."

Currently, the playgrounds around Mosul are unusable, covered with trash and rubble, and unusable swing-sets.

"We have seen a lot of playgrounds like this that are dilapidated and looted," Morgan said. "I don't know why anyone would want to steal swings, but they looted the swings. We have five locations around here and are going to identify two more. There will be new plants and fountains for the park, and new play equipment for the playgrounds."

According to Morgan, the repair projects will help make a safer environment for the people of Mosul and the Coalition Forces in the area.

New Mosul Education Administration Building to open

by Pfc. Thomas Day
40th PAD

The centralized education headquarters in the Ninevah province, after thorough looting after the fall of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, will reopen as a brand new facility this weekend, thanks to a combined effort of the 431st Civil Affairs Battalion, several international non-governmental organizations and local education officials.

Dependent on the schedule of guest speaker Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) commanding general, the opening ceremony will either take place this Saturday or Sunday.

Regardless, the teachers and students of the area will see three months of work on the building come to fruition in plenty of time for the next school year, beginning next month.

"It's definitely been restored better than it was before," said Sgt. First Class Rocky Upchurch of New Deal,

Texas, of the 431st Civil Affairs public education team. "I would hope that this will make the administration practices faster."

In addition to the cleanup and renovation portion of the project, the Ninevah province schools' database will receive a much needed update as all files will go digital after having been stored on paper files before receiving assistance from the coalition forces and NGO's.

The 101st commanding general donated 12 computers out of his personal project fund to upgrade the system's database.

"As far as grades, everything will be kept on computer," said Spc. Thomas Baker of Spring Hill, Ark., "that's the goal."

In addition to the computers donated to the facility, over \$35,000 of furniture has been donated to the education headquarters. For the foreseeable future, armed guards will be posted outside the building.

"Security on the building is going to be better," Upchurch added. "So when it comes to exam time, they'll be able to



Pfc. Thomas Day

Spc. Thomas Baker of White Hill, Ark., 431st Civil Affairs Battalion (Little Rock, Ark.), talks with a local education official about the opening of the new education administration building.

store their exams."

The 431st CA team will continue to work on adjacent buildings, which are still in

need of renovations, that will also serve as additional office buildings for the education headquarters.

Two National Guard brigades deploying to Iraq

by Master Sgt. Bob Haskell
Army News Service

WASHINGTON -- Two brigades from the Army National Guard, totaling 10,000 soldiers, will deploy to Iraq next year to support two active Army divisions earmarked to replace troops now engaged in Operation Iraqi Freedom next year, the Army has announced.

The 30th Infantry Brigade from North Carolina and the 39th Infantry Brigade from Arkansas have been alerted and "may participate in the Army unit rotation plan for Operation Iraqi Freedom," the Army announced Saturday.

The two brigades are part of the Army's plan to replace units that are anxious to return to their homes after leading coalition forces to victory over the regime of Saddam Hussein and to maintain the force required to stabilize that country.

"We intend to alert, mobilize, train and deploy for six-month operations, then redeploy," said Gen. Jack Keane, the acting Army chief of Staff, during a briefing to reporters July 23. "The entire deployment from alert to redeployment and return to home station will last a year."

The 30th Brigade would be augmented with an infantry battalion from the Army Guard's 27th Infantry Brigade of New York. A battalion from the Oregon Army National Guard's 41st Infantry Brigade will augment

the 39th Brigade it was further explained.

One brigade would deploy with the 1st Cavalry Division sometime between February and April of 2004 to replace the 1st Armored Division that is currently serving around Baghdad. The other brigade would deploy with the 1st Infantry Division sometime during March or April to replace the 4th Infantry Division that is serving in northern Iraq.

The two Guard brigades would be replaced by two other Army Guard enhanced separate brigades "based on the needs of the theater," Keane said.

Seven of the nine Army and Marine division and brigade-size elements that

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Around Iraq

Pentagon leaders: Raids, patrols reduce crime

by Kathleen T. Rhem
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON -- U.S. and other coalition forces in Iraq can't defend themselves everywhere all the time, so they've been going on the offensive, a top Defense Department spokesman said today.

Lawrence Di Rita, special assistant to the secretary of defense, said during a Pentagon press briefing that he thinks it's useful to "zoom out" and discuss some of the "significant gains" that have been made in military operations in Iraq since the end of major combat.

For instance, coalition forces have conducted 2,000 patrols -- many jointly with Iraqi police forces -- and 30 raids over the past 48 hours, said Air Force Lt. Gen. Norton Schwartz, director of operations for the Joint Staff, who briefed with Di Rita Tuesday.

These raids have resulted in "241 arrests for various criminal activity, from car theft to murder, and demonstrate that law and order are gradually being restored in Iraq," Schwartz said.

Schwartz described the two major operations coalition forces have undertaken since June 15.

Thirteen raids have been conducted under the auspices of Operation Desert Scorpion, which began June 15 and is

ongoing. These raids have resulted in the capture of 38 detainees and the seizure of \$8 million, millions of Iraqi dinars, and "substantial amounts" of British pounds and euros.

A sub-operation to Desert Scorpion, Operation Sidewinder, ran from June 29 to July 7. In this operation, 4th Infantry Division troops were "tasked to secure Highways 1 and 2 north of Baghdad from Baath attacks against coalition and other civilian traffic," Schwartz said.

This mission led to the capture of 282 detainees and the seizure of 217 rocket-propelled grenades, 200 mortar rounds, 132 small arms and various documents.

The second major operation, Soda Mountain, ran from July 12 to 17. Operation Soda Mountain's goal was to "to increase reconnaissance and presence throughout the whole of Iraq to deter, disrupt and rapidly defeat attacks on coalition forces," Schwartz explained.

This operation brought about 141 raids, which resulted in 611 detainees, including 62 former-regime leaders. Forces also seized 4,297 mortar rounds, 1,346 RPGs, and 635 small arms. A sub-operation, dubbed Ivy Serpent, is ongoing. Ivy Serpent has led to 226 detainees, 800 mortar rounds, 50 small arms and 26 RPGs being taken by coalition forces in a series of 27 separate raids.

"These major operations, as well as the daily patrols and training and assistance that our forces perform each and every

day, are slowly but deliberately building a more stable and secure Iraq," Schwartz said.

He also noted that coalition forces are working closely on many fronts with Iraqis to increase security. The general described several areas of Iraqi cooperation.

- Four thousand Iraqi militiamen will be trained by American forces "in the next several weeks and will work under U.S. command in regions around the country as part of the civil defense force."

- Twelve thousand Iraqis will be trained this year for the new Iraqi army, growing to 40,000 in two years.

- American soldiers are training and equipping Iraqi police forces at several locations around the country.

- Soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division are training an Iraqi facility protection force to provide security at power plants, water-treatment plants and other public works facilities.

In related news, since the demise of Saddam Hussein's sons Uday and Qusay, American military forces in Iraq have seen a lessening in the number of attacks but an increase in the level of sophistication of these attacks, Schwartz said.

Attacks on Americans have gone "from what began largely as small-arms attacks to attacks with use of rocket-propelled grenades and now the use of improvised explosive devices," he explained. "That reflects a level of sophistication (that) has matured over time."



Bridgett Siter

3rd Infantry Division family members greet soldiers returning from Iraq.

Sledgehammer Brigade back at home

by Bridgett Siter
Army New Service

FORT BENNING, Ga. -- It's calm in Kelley Hill's Kefurt Gym, but the hill itself is hopping again with 3rd Infantry Division soldiers.

The gym was the site of what might be called the 'mother of all welcome home ceremonies.' In a series of reunions over a nine-day period, beginning July 10, the gym was decked in red, white and blue, strewn with

confetti and balloons, and plastered in posters that read, "Welcome home, heroes."

Despite the heat, hordes of friends and family members packed the gym to greet the 3,700 soldiers of the 3rd ID's 3rd Brigade, returning from the Persian Gulf, where they spent 13 of the last 15 months.

Third Brigade soldiers fought at Tallil, Samawah, Karbala, Baghdad and other sites with unfamiliar names. It was 3rd Brigade's soldiers who helped secure a key bridge over the Euphrates and cleared the

way for a quick and decisive advance on Baghdad.

"For all that they have accomplished, we want to make sure you know we recognize your great sacrifice, because without your support, we couldn't have done what we did," said the brigade's new commander, Col. Steven Salazar, who spoke to 3rd Brigade families July 17. He thanked families for their support, a sentiment his soldiers echoed with a loud "Hooah" before singing "The Dog-face Soldier," 3rd ID's song.

Around Iraq

SMA visits Tikrit, outlines NCO education fixes

15-day PLDC, same content for one year

by Master Sgt. Debra Bingham
Army News Service

TIKRIT, Iraq -- Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack Tilley announced plans for a compressed Primary Leadership Development Course as he visited with soldiers of the 4th Infantry Division and Task Force Ironhorse in Tikrit, Iraq, July 22.

Tilley spoke about getting the Noncommissioned Officer Education System back on track in the midst of recent deployments.

He said the compressed version of PLDC would deal with the backlog of soldiers requiring the course. For a one-year period, PLDC would run for 15 consecutive days and offer the same curriculum which the present 30-day course offers.

"We are going to crank up our education system because we can't afford to let it lie for a couple of years," he said.

The Sergeants Major Academy was shortened from nine to six months this year to accommodate deployed soldiers, Tilley said.

Plans are also underway to begin returning soldiers for the Basic and Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Courses within the next few months.

Tilley said getting soldiers to NCOES is as important to soldier morale as it is to promotions.

"We're going to start sending people back to school. People who have been



Spc. Rhea Anderegg

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack Tilley, talks to Task Force Ironhorse and 4th ID soldiers in Tikrit, Iraq, July 22.

deployed, we're going to put their names back on ATRRS (Army Training Requirements and Resource System) and we're going to work with the divisions and corps and just start sending them back," Tilley said.

Tilley also spoke about keeping soldiers motivated despite the high operational tempo.

Currently the Army has 370,000 soldiers deployed in 120 different locations, according to Tilley.

He said the senior leadership is looking at that to see exactly what can be done to "slow down the pace of the Army."

The rapid deployment pace could have an impact on retention, something Tilley hopes to avoid. "I've heard comments that we're a 10-division Army with a 12-division mission," Tilley said. "So we are looking at that now to see what kind of

adjustments we need to make."

He advised leaders to be honest with soldiers about what lies ahead and continually work on improving quality of life issues.

"Be honest and straightforward with them and I think they understand that," Tilley said. "You need to talk to soldiers a lot more."

Tilley met with Maj. Gen. Raymond Odierno, commander of the 4th ID, and the task force's senior enlisted leaders. He also received an operational overview.

Tilley got a chance to see how 4th ID is taking care of its soldiers when he paid a visit to Soldiers' Inn, a rest and relaxation site located in one of Saddam Hussein's former palaces in Tikrit.

Command Sgt. Maj. Charles Fuss, 4th ID's command sergeant major., spearheaded efforts to get the facility up and running.

He said Tilley was impressed by it. "He thought the place was great. The Sergeant Major of the Army even played a game of pool with a soldier, and beat him," Fuss said.

Tilley had lunch with soldiers on Forward Operating Base Speicher, before boarding a helicopter to visit task force soldiers and assess conditions in the Division's outlying areas.

He was encouraged by what he saw during his visit, but said he is convinced the quality of life will improve with time.

"Will we have a Burger King or a McDonalds here? I don't know, but I think we will have to continue to improve the living conditions for soldiers, and we will."

Editor's note: Master Sgt. Debra Bingham is the NCOIC of the 4th Infantry Division and Task Force Ironhorse PAO.

Camp of The Week: **Camp Strike**



(Left) Spc. Mike Constantina of Rochester, N.Y., HHC 2nd Brigade, reaches for a cold soda at the Strike Cafe's general store at Camp Strike in Mosul. (Right) Any hoopster who dares drive to the basket must beware of the big man in the middle, with the "4th Man" a constant presence at this basketball court at Camp Strike. (Below) A couple of 101st soldiers sit and watch Fox News as they await their food at the Strike Cafe at Camp Strike. Camp Strike, located along the west side of the Tigris River in downtown Mosul, includes a volleyball court, an outdoor exercise facility and ample internet and phone access to contact home. The compound is home to the headquarters company of the 502nd Infantry Regiment, under the command Col. Joseph Anderson of White Plains, N.Y.



LYNCH, from page 2

Peake, the Army's top doctor, spoke briefly to the Lynch family and members of the assembled "families" of Walter Reed, the Army Medical Department and the U.S. Army before presenting the awards to the 20-year-old supply clerk.

"It's important we gather because ceremonies, decorations and awards are an important part of our heritage and an important part of what we stand for as an Army," Peake said.

"One of the awards [Lynch received] is the very first award Gen. George Washington used to recognize soldiers - the Purple Heart. It was not necessarily about being wounded or injured in action initially, but that's what it has come to symbolize. It's a special award and not one you choose to get."

Peake said the Purple Heart is awarded to a person who has given more to their country than just their military service - "They have given of themselves by

going into harm's way."

He said other awards have to do with the quality of one's service.

"The Bronze Star is given for meritorious service in combat, and the POW medal is one that very few people receive," Peake said.

He added that although the actual cash value of the medals "may only be about \$1.35, to soldiers they're worth a lot more. They're about service and what it means to be part of this [Army] organization and uniform."

After Peake pinned the awards on her uniform, the soft-spoken Lynch thanked the Walter Reed staff for the care she received at the medical center since arriving here in April.

Peake then recognized the Walter Reed staff for the care they've provided Lynch and other soldiers returning from OIF.

"We're proud of them and they're proud of you," he said.

Walter Reed has treated more than 650 patients from OIF since the war began,

170 of whom have been battle injuries.

Lynch was injured and captured March 23 after her unit, the 507th Maintenance Company, was ambushed in the Iraq city of Nasiriyah. Eleven of the company's soldiers were killed in combat or died of injuries.

Lynch was among six captured by Iraqi forces, but she was held separately.

She was rescued from a hospital in Nasiriyah by U.S. Special Forces several days later, reportedly after a tip from an Iraqi lawyer.

She arrived at Walter Reed April 12 after receiving care at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany.

Other members of Lynch's unit who were injured and held captive following the March 23 ambush were rescued by Marine forces in Iraq April 12.

They also received medals during an Independence Day ceremony at Fort Bliss, Texas, where the unit is based.

(Editor's note: Bernard Little is editor of the Walter Reed Stripe newspaper.)

The Judge Says...

Items of legal interest to soldiers

Q: What is a "Social Security Account Number?"

A: *What most people call a "social security number," or "SSN," is properly known as a "social security account number." The word "account" gives a better understanding as to the purpose of the number.*

As we work, the Social Security Administration tracks our earnings, so that when we reach retirement age, a determination can be made whether we are entitled to social security payments. Having a social security account number does not mean there is an individual account, like at a bank, where your social security taxes go; it is the number used to track your working history.

The social security account number was not created to serve as a form of identification. In fact, if you have a social security card issued before 1970, you will see the words "not for identification" printed on it. Over the years, it has become a personal identifying number used not only by banks and employers, who have a need for the number, but countless others, such as merchants when you pay by check. Because of the danger of "identity theft,"

be very careful when giving out your social security account number.

Q: Are Army age limits discriminatory?

A: *Can the Army legally set age limits for soldiers?*

The answer is yes. The courts have recognized that in certain physically or mentally demanding jobs, a maximum age limit can be set. Courts have held that laws that set age limits on occupations like fire fighters, police, and soldiers do not discriminate based on age.

Preventive law tip of the week:

"Identity theft" occurs when someone poses as you, and without authority incurs obligations in your name. Victims of identity theft can find themselves being sued for thousands of dollars for credit accounts they never even knew existed.

Consumer law experts recommend obtaining and reviewing a copy of your credit report at least once a year, and safeguarding passwords and personal identifying numbers. Don't just throw old bills in the trash; burn or shred them first.

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have fought in Iraq this year will be replaced during the second rotation beginning in September, Keane explained.

The intent of the National Guard brigades deploying is to sustain the level of forces that Gen. John Abizaid, the U.S. Central Command's commander, needs to continue operations in Iraq and to instill predictability so that tours of duty for all soldiers there last no longer than 12 months, Keane added.

Ground forces in Iraq currently total 156,400, including 133,300 members of the active Army, the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve. Another 34,000 Army troops are in Kuwait.

All told, 15 of the Army Guard's 45 battalions from the enhanced separate brigades have been deployed overseas during this fiscal year that began last October, and 74,551 of the Army Guard's soldiers are currently deployed around the world. That is 21 percent of the Army Guard's 352,000 citizen-soldiers.

These deployments mark the Army's most ambitious use of National Guard brigade-size elements since World War II, when three infantry regiments from Washington state, California and Georgia, were used to round out three Army divisions, said Maj. Les Melnyk, an Army Guard historian.

Editor's note: Master Sgt. Bob Haskell is a National Guard Bureau journalist.

Man on the Street

What are you doing to cope with the summer heat?



"We're not beating the heat, we're just hanging in there."

- Maj. Scott Vick of Franklin, Tenn., 926th Engineering Group (Montgomery, Ala.)



"Working long hours, drinking as much water as you can."

- Master Sgt. Michael Scarlett of Rockland Co., N.Y., 404th Civil Affairs Battalion (Fort Bragg, N.C.)

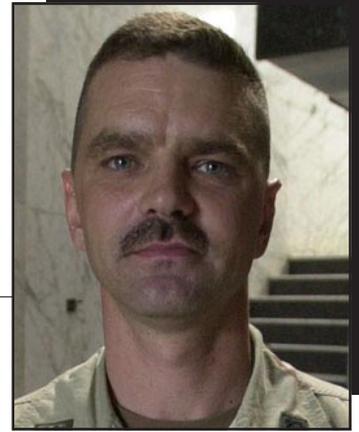
"Trying to drink at least three to four liters of water a day."

- Staff Sgt. Jesse Hopson of Memphis, Tenn., 2nd Battalion, 44th Air Defense Artillery Regiment



"Just drinking water, staying in shape, trying to stay out of the direct sunlight."

- Chief Warrant Officer 2 Art Newsome of Myland, Tenn., 501st Signal Battalion



"You got to stay motivated to beat the heat."

- Spc. Jason Ross of Stafford, Va., 1st Battalion, 377th Field Artillery Regiment (Fort Bragg, N.C.)



"We just got air conditioning."

- 1st Lt. Jennifer Atkinson of Tyler, Texas, 501st Signal Battalion