

IRAQI DESTINY

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**Olympic Pool
open to Iraq's
future athletes
(See Page 3)**

FRAGO defines hookahs as drug paraphernalia

(CMOC PAO) -- A division fragmentary order published Aug. 11 states that beginning Aug. 21 the traditional tobacco pipes commonly referred to as hookahs will be defined as drug paraphernalia.

In accordance with Central Command's General Order number 1A, the possession or use of drug paraphernalia is prohibited.

All soldiers must dispose of hookahs in their possession and discontinue use of such devices as of Aug. 21.

Citizen's tip leads to weapons confiscation

by Sgt. Ty Stafford
40th PAD

Local citizens are striving to reach a more safe and secure environment here. Recently, a local resident informed members of the 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) of an individual believed to have helped participate on an attack of a convoy Tuesday night.

The convoy, which was attacked on the western side of Mosul, received enemy fire that destroyed the trail vehicle. The soldiers in the trail vehicle escaped the burning HMMWV and were able to link up with the two lead vehicles.

Breaking contact to escape the ambush site, the convoy reconsolidated and returned to retrieve sensitive items from the destroyed vehicle. But, upon returning they

received fire again and once again retreated from the scene. Two soldiers received minor injuries during the attacks.

A quick reaction force was mobilized, but no enemy attackers were found.

Later Tuesday night, a source arrived at the 2-502nd operations center with information on one of the possible attackers, and then led soldiers to the suspect's house where the individual was detained.

Upon searching the house, they found several weapons and ammunition including 10 antitank rounds and U.S. style battle dress uniforms.

Three other individuals were detained near the ambush site but were released.

This is an inspiring example of the increasing cooperation the populace of Northern Iraq has given to coalition forces over the last few weeks, leading to several key seizures of weapons and suspected former regime loyalists.

Letter to the Editor

Weapons of Mass Destruction search needs time

There is now, as it seems, a kind of debate about weapons of mass destruction both in the States and in the U.K. President (George W.) Bush and Mr. Tony Blair, as it shows, are under pressure to some extent both from some senators of Congress and Mr. Blair from some members of Parliament. The suicide of a Doctor in the U.K two weeks ago who was associated with this respect has heightened the situation too much.

Many politicians have blamed Mr. Blair of furnishing them uncertain information about the Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, which led them to support the idea of

invading Iraq and removing Saddam's regime. The situation is like a pot boiling and throwing bubbles here and there.

Now the whole world seems to boil in thought; those who have supported the invasion and those who are their opponents. As for us, we earnestly ask the two sides to be patient for a time. Time hasn't come for the emergence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. When Saddam Hussein is arrested or even killed, you will see people coming to the coalition forces to supply them with information that is not available now. The most important thing that one should keep in mind is that

Saddam Hussein had ordered all his parties working in the field to prepare themselves to hide the very kind of weapons that were being destroyed under the U.N. resolution. That started in the year 1993 and continued until the end of the regime.

I am sure that one day everything will be clear and the American administration was right in taking the decision of removing Saddam's regime.

Contributed by
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On the cover: Brig. Gen. Frank Helmick (right), assistant division commander of operations, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), helps Sheik Talal (middle) cut the ribbon during the opening ceremony of the Olympic Pool in Mosul, Iraq Aug. 8. Photo by Sgt. Ty Stafford.



Sgt Ty Stafford

Former Iraqi Swim and Dive team members make use of the newly opened Olympic Pool facility in Mosul, Iraq.

Olympic Pool reopens in Mosul

by Sgt. Ty Stafford
40th PAD

After a long-awaited two months, the Olympic Pool in Mosul opened its doors to the public.

With the help of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and locals working with engineer teams from the 52nd Engineer Battalion, from Fort Carson, Colo., and the 877th Engineer Battalion, from Alabama, the two million gallon pool was finally completed the day prior to the ceremony.

The pool, prior to the war, was a

training facility for the Mosul Dive and Swim team and will once again be a training area and a public pool area.

“When we first came out there were piles of trash and debris all over and the pool only had four feet of water in it.” said Capt. Mac Griffin, commander, Company C, 877th Eng. Bn.

Working with local contractors the company used an earth-moving platoon and a construction platoon to level ground and make needed renovations to the main pool house and the pool itself.

“We brought in close to 100 truckloads of dirt to level off the place,” he said.

After the general maintenance and

ground work the crews fixed the pipes, filters and tanks, said Lt. Col. Mike Rorex, operations officer for the 926th Eng. Bn., who helped oversee the project.

As a guest speaker, Brig. Gen. Frank Helmick, assistant division commander (operations) for the 101st Abn. Div. (AAslt.), said that this was a very important step in getting the city back to normalcy.

“Another one that the commanding general wants to move forward on is the sports arena,” Helmick said.

“Sports has no boundaries ... and this swimming complex is the first step in moving toward a new and better Iraq,” he said.

Mosul making progress in water projects

by Sgt. Robert Woodward
101st Abn. Div. (AAslt.) PAO

Coalition forces in Mosul are working to bring the water treatment and distribution systems back up to standard after years of neglect and poor maintenance.

The Al Jazeera Pump Station has had a new cooling pump installed and passed

the testing phase. It is ready for operation. A contractor will also install an additional cooling pump as a backup, installation will begin this week.

To combat the ongoing water-loss problem, units from the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) have assessed a number of large and small water line breaks.

The division has selected three different contractors to repairs the 17

large diameter (greater than 16 inch) water line breaks. Repairs are already underway for 44 smaller breaks throughout the city. A total of 32 have been completed so far, and repairs are ongoing for six more.

All repairs are expected to be fixed within approximately six weeks. Expected cost to fix all leaks if \$14,000.

Two call in lines have also been set up to take calls on water problems to help avert future water loss problems.

Around Iraq

Bush: more than 100 days to undo Saddam's legacy

by Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON -- President Bush praised the progress coalition military and civilian personnel have been able to make in Iraq, but said that 100 days is not enough time to undo the legacy of Saddam Hussein.

In his weekly radio address Aug. 9, Bush noted that it is but 100 days since the end of major combat operations in Iraq. He said the time has been marked by steady progress.

"Every day we are working to make Iraq more secure," Bush said. "Coalition forces remain on the offensive against the Baath Party loyalists and foreign terrorists who are trying to prevent order and stability." He said the progress is evident to the Iraqi people as more and more are cooperating

with coalition forces and tipping them to the regime remnants still threatening peace.

Iraqis themselves are helping with security. Coalition officials said there are about 30,000 Iraqi police back on the beat, and coalition officials have begun to recruit a new army and a civil defense force.

"Every day, Iraq is making progress in rebuilding its economy," he said. "In Baghdad, the banks have opened, and other banks will open across the country in the coming months. This fall, new bank notes will be issued, replacing the old ones bearing the former dictator's image. And Iraq's energy industry is once again serving the interests of the Iraqi people. More than a million barrels of crude oil and over 2 million gallons of gasoline are being produced daily."

The coalition is paying civil servants with funds recovered from the former regime, and life is returning to normal for the

Iraqi people. Bush said hospitals and universities have opened, and in many places, water and other utility services are reaching prewar levels.

"Across Iraq, nearly all schoolchildren have completed their exams," he said. "And for the first time in many years, a free press is at work in Iraq. Across that country today, more than 150 newspapers are publishing regularly."

But most important, the Iraqi people are taking daily steps toward democratic government, the president noted. "The Iraqi Governing Council, whose 25 members represent all of that diverse country, is meeting regularly, naming ministers and drawing up a budget for the country," he said. These men and women will soon set the conditions to allow a representative group to begin drafting a new constitution

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Coalition and Iraqi people work together to make Iraq secure

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- A local community voluntarily organized a weapons turn-in day August 11 to help create a safe and secure Iraq as coalition forces continue the mission for peace.

A local village, Tal Alseer, coordinated a weapons turn-in recently with the 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment attached to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force. The turn-in collected an 82mm mortar tube, hundreds of mortar

rounds and one 14.5 mm antiaircraft gun with 16 cases of ammunition. Due to the success of the event, the battalion is working to reward the Tal Alseer village to encourage this type of activity in other areas.

In a 1st Armored Division raid, soldiers detained a suspected weapons dealer and confiscated more than 1,440 rounds of small arms ammunition, 17 AK-47s, 19 20mm flares, four grenades, one 9mm pistol

and one rifle.

In a separate incident, acting on a tip from a local source, 1st AD found a weapons cache of eight mortars and one rocket-propelled grenade. An explosive ordnance team will dispose of the weapons.

Meanwhile, Task Force Iron Horse soldiers working in support of the 4th Infantry Division conducted an operation, which resulted in one individual detained and

confiscation of 178 rounds of 155mm ammunition, five 90mm tank rounds, and three 120 mm mortar rounds.

In one 24 hour period, Coalition forces conducted 32 raids, 824 day patrols and 638 night patrols. The units also conducted 122 day patrols and 83 night patrols with Iraqi police.

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New soldiers from Poland get to know Iraq

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- Soldiers from Poland are getting to know Iraqis when they meet with local leaders and present food gifts to the population as they work side-by-side with U.S. forces.

Ten pallets of humanitarian rations were distributed throughout the city of Karbala by coalition soldiers from the Polish army with the assistance of U.S. Army Civil Affairs soldiers.

The food gifts were meant as a means by which to introduce the Polish soldiers

to Iraqi leaders and organizations.

Local Iraqi officials in Karbala met soldiers from Poland when they were introduced by Marines to help them better perform their mission to oversee fuel pipelines and stop the movement of stolen ordnance along back roads outside the city. Troops from a Polish advance party also participated in a patrol to observe the Marines at work first hand.

The patrols are important because they ensure safety of the people in the area by

protecting the pipeline.

Firehouses in Nineveh are being set up and running by soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). The 101st is helping renovate the main Mosul fire station as well as fire stations in the surrounding areas of Al-Jezear, Al-Nahri, Al-Karam and Raas Al-Gada. The soldiers are also facilitating the delivery of 300 fire trucks.

Contributed by
CJTF-7 Coalition Press Information Center

Around Iraq

Firing upon Palestine Hotel deemed justified

by Gerry J. Gilmore
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON -- U.S. troops fighting their way into Baghdad April 8 were justified when they fired a tank round at a local hotel, an incident that killed two television cameramen, a recently concluded U.S. Central Command investigation determined.

The tank crew, attached to the U.S. 3rd Infantry Division, was told that enemy combatants in the battle area near the Tigris River were directing rocket-propelled grenades and other heavy fires against the advancing Americans, according to an Aug. 12 CENTCOM news release.

The Iraqi defenders were putting up stiff resistance, the release stated, and were fighting for their capital city

“without any regard for civilians and civilian structures.”

American monitoring of message traffic on a captured enemy radio at the time disclosed enemy observers were in the area directing fire against the U.S. troops, according to the CENTCOM release.

Personnel from embattled U.S. units, the release continued, observed what they believed to be enemy troops directing fire against the Americans from the balcony of an upper room of a high-rise building. U.S. witnesses also observed flashes of light — which appeared to be enemy fire coming from the vicinity of the building.

The U.S. tank crew fired one 120 mm round at the suspected enemy observer position, the CENTCOM release stated. Continuing monitoring of the captured radio at the time disclosed that the enemy was

reporting being fired upon.

Shortly after the tank round hit the building, enemy fire directed against the Americans ceased.

It was only “some time after the incident,” according to CENTCOM, that the American unit became aware that the structure hit by the tank round was the Palestine Hotel -- a place many journalists were using as a base of operations while covering the war.

And the Americans didn't know until later, according to the CENTCOM report, that two TV cameramen, a Ukrainian with Reuters and a Spaniard working for Spain's Telecinco television according to news reports at the time, had been killed by the tank round.

The CENTCOM report concluded that the U.S. unit “had positive intelligence that they were under direct observation from an enemy hunter/

killer team” and that “the activities on the balcony of the Palestine Hotel were consistent with that of an enemy combatant.”

Baghdad fell to U.S. troops on April 9, but on April 8, the city “was a high intensity combat area,” according to the CENTCOM release.

The release noted that U.S. troops had fired at the hotel in self-defense, consistent with the rules of engagement. It went on to say those journalists at the Palestine Hotel during the April 8 incident “had elected to remain there despite repeated warnings of the extreme danger of doing so.”

CENTCOM noted that “the journalists' deaths at the Palestine Hotel was a tragedy and the United States has the deepest sympathies for the families of those who were killed.”

Ivy Lightning neutralizes enemy

TIKRIT, Iraq -- The 4th Infantry Division and Task Force Ironhorse have launched two precision raids which are the fifth in a series of operations focused on neutralizing paramilitary, former regime loyalists and other subversive elements within Iraq.

Operation Ivy Lightning is a surgical strike in the remote towns of Ain Lalin and Quara Tapa, located along the Jabal Hamrin Ridge, to isolate and capture non-compliant forces and former regime loyalists who are planning attacks against Coalition forces.

The lightning raids were conducted with the combined-arms power of attack aviation, armor, mechanized infantry and air assault operations to rapidly deploy dismounted infantry to secure their objectives.

This is the first time Coalition forces have deployed a sizable presence in the isolated area near Tikrit, and operations will not cease until these hostiles are

located and destroyed.

Intelligence reports gathered from a variety of sources indicate former regime leaders may have fled to the remote area after aggressive operations surrounding Tikrit, Ba'quba and Balad have disrupted their capability to plan attacks against Coalition targets.

Coalition members encourage local Iraqi leadership to take initiative and aid in the capture of subversive elements attempting to hinder the rebuilding of Iraq.

Ivy Lightning, like previous operations Peninsula Strike, Desert Scorpion, Sidewinder, and Ivy Serpent, will sweep the task force's area of operations to remove elements attempting to undermine Coalition efforts to restore stability in the region.

Explosive device kills three, wounds five

by Gerry J. Gilmore
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON -- Explosive devices apparently planted by pro-Saddam insurgents killed two U.S. 4th Infantry Division soldiers and injured three in two separate incidents in Iraq on Aug. 12 and 13, according to U.S. Central Command news releases.

Two soldiers were taken to the 28th Combat Support Hospital after their M-113 armored personnel vehicle hit an explosive device Aug. 13 near the town of Ad Dwar. One soldier eventually died of his injuries. And CENTCOM reported that

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Contributed by
Central Command PAO

New police station opens after renovations

by Spc. Mary Rose Xenikakis
22nd MPAD

Promotions, ribbon cutting, cake and hot temperatures filled a newly rebuilt police station in celebration of its grand opening on the evening of August 9.

Guest of the festivities included Maj. Gen. David H. Petreaus, commander, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Col. Joseph Anderson, commander, 2nd Brigade, 101st Abn. Div. (AASlt.) and Gen. Mohamed Khayri Barhawe, Mosul police chief.

Barhawe spoke to the guest and offered his appreciation to Coalition Forces and to his police officers for the milestones that have been made.

"There were three things we looked at when we upgraded the station," said Capt. Barry Brinker, 503rd Military Police Battalion, Fort Bragg, N.C., "Force protection, living conditions and an important one, making the station look better."

Showing that the uniform has changed, the structure has changed and that the police aren't driving around used vehicles will win the hearts and minds of the local citizens, according to Brinker. It shows that the local police have changed and there's a new way of doing things.

There are 22 stations currently under renovations in Mosul. The grand opening of this station depicts the future for the other 21 police stations in Mosul.

Anderson spoke to both the 503rd MP Bn. and the local police officers. He told the soldiers in the 503rd MP Bn, "It's through your example that you're setting



Pfc. Mary Rose Xenikakis

Maj. Gen David H. Petreaus, commander, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and Gen. Mohamed Khayri Barhawe, the new police chief of Mosul argue over who will be first to enter the newly rebuilt police station in Mosul on August 9.

the standard here for the country of Iraq and certainly the Nineveh Province. You've equipped the station, repaired the station and you've trained this force. Your deployment here looks very good."

He went on to tell the local police, "You need to continue to work hard enforcing the law in this city and rebuilding your police force. This station will be an example for all that follows."

Brinker said the local police are taking pride in looking professional in their new uniforms and their new rebuilt police

station. Those who have gone through the Mosul Police Academy also take pride in the change they've made because of it.

"They're taking this very serious," he said.

Anderson told the local police at the celebration, "You're off to a great start."

Then he finished up by giving the local police a challenge, "My challenge to you, is that your performance, your daily routine, becomes as good as your station, your uniform and your equipment."

Fall football coming to 101st area of operations

by Pfc. Thomas Day
40th PAD

With the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) likely stuck in Northern Iraq until after the Super Bowl, around 200 satellite systems are on their way to provide soldiers access to college football Saturdays and NFL Sundays back in the United States.

"We're expecting about 200 receivers," said Capt. Edward Powell of Ocean City, NJ, 501st Signal Battalion, who has lead the effort to bring the satellites to the soldiers of the 101st. "That would pretty much break it down to a company level."

Additional satellite systems, according to Powell, are destined for Morale, Welfare and Recreation facilities. The 101st Airborne Division G-6 office has also recently launched an effort to provide

televisions for dining facilities at 101st compounds.

Powell denied that the effort, which started over a month ago, was strictly geared towards bringing football to the soldiers, but acknowledged "it coincides nicely with football season."

"It's not just about football, its providing soldier morale support," he said. Powell, who does not describe himself as a football fan, highlighted efforts by the G-6 office to bring telephone and internet access

to soldiers to at least a battalion level if not lower.

Games will be broadcast through the Armed Forces Network, which provides a news station, a sports station and a general television station for servicemembers overseas.

The satellites are expected around Aug. 31. Major college football games are slated for the day before, Aug. 30, and the New York Jets and Washington Redskins kick off the NFL season Thursday, Sept. 4.

Deployment doesn't stop pre-RIP class

3rd Bn., 327th Inf. Rgt. prepares soldiers for Ranger school

by Spc. Blake Kent
22nd MPAD

This isn't the 'back 40' at Fort Campbell, or even the miles of woodlands at Camp McCall. This is training in Iraq, with real gunfire just off in the distance and a 'real world' threat ever present.

Twenty-three soldiers of the 3rd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) conducted a seven-day Ranger indoctrination course in Mosul, Iraq, training soldiers in leadership and in combat operations.

"My battalion commander wanted us to do this because we really don't have time to develop squad leader and squad tactic skills," said Staff Sgt. Dwayne Stone of Grant County, Kentucky, 3-327, "and if we are here long enough we will end up losing leadership that will need new soldiers to step up and fill in the gaps. The commander is really focused on developing leadership on the soldier level."

The training consisted of four days of classroom training and then a three day field training exercise in a forested area in Mosul.

The instructors concentrated on developing the soldiers' leadership abilities, their ability to create a plan and execute it, and their attention to detail.

"When you lead by example, the soldiers will follow. All you have to do is look forward and keep moving," Stone said to a group of the soldiers in an after action review. "It doesn't matter if you are a type A or a type B personality; you have to be the guy that gets the job done. As a team leader you can't have your eyeballs on your boots. You have to be confident and lead. It is okay to make mistakes, we all make mistakes, but you pick yourself back up and drive on."

On the FTX, the soldiers were given a mission from their higher command that they had to breakdown to squad level jobs, then brief that to their squad.



Spc. Blake Kent

Soldiers of the 3rd Bn., 327th Inf. Rgt., 101st Abn. Div. (AAslt.), deployed to Mosul, Iraq, get a taste of Ranger School and practical training in leadership and squad movement on the same terrain previously occupied by Iraqi troops. The soldiers faced long patrols, the real world threat of possible enemy attack and heat reaching 120 degrees Fahrenheit.

The soldiers were not graded on their choices in how to conduct the operation, but on the quality of their planning and execution of the plan.

"We are here to teach how to conduct combat operations," Stone said. There are many ways to execute an operation, and it isn't how you choose to do it, it is how you plan to do it and then execute that plan."

"I'm glad they are letting us use our notes out here, there is just so much to keep in mind when you are making your plans," said Spc. Omar Canales of Rock Falls, Ill., Company D, 3-327, showing a half-inch thick notebook full from the four days of classroom training.

The missions were conducted in squad size elements, which would move to their objective, then conduct link-up procedures, rejoining with the other squads.

Though the physical requirements that would be a part of Ranger school were not pushed and distances to their objectives were not far, the soldiers still had to contend with the rough terrain, 120 degree Fahrenheit heat and moving with full rucksacks.

Within the first two days of the FTX there were four heat casualties.

Two medics were attached to the

training to ensure the safety of the soldiers in the extreme heat.

The soldiers also were supplied with plenty of water, which they had to conduct resupply requests for, adding to their training.

"What is unique about this is it is comparative to what they were doing during the Vietnam era. You actually get to do this in a combat environment. It gives the feeling of doing it because it is right and it's the thing that should be done. We had firing off in the distance from us last night. It keeps the soldiers in the mindset of the reality of it all."

A few of the soldiers who do well in the training will have the opportunity to go back to Fort Campbell to go through the Ranger Indoctrination Program and then to Ranger School, but the number of soldiers who are able to attend is dependent on the number of Ranger School slots that are made available to the unit.

"Even if they are not ready to go to Ranger School, this week is still sending educated soldiers back to their units," Stone said. "This way we are doing nothing but promoting good things and developing leadership. I've seen a big difference in their ability since their training from day one."

Local contractors set to rebuild South Mosul Courthouse

by Pfc. Thomas Day
40th PAD

The South Mosul Courthouse, so thoroughly looted after the fall of Saddam that some parts of the building look as if they nearly burned to the ground, will undergo two and a half months of renovations after a local construction company signed a contract currently worth about \$40,000.

Lt. Col. Richard Ott of Memphis, Tenn., and Maj. Dan Evans of Hueytown, Ala., both officers with the 926th Engineering Group (Montgomery, Ala.), met with local officials and a representative of Al Hasan Construction Company Wednesday at the Mosul Civilian Military Operations Center to finalize the contract and the blueprint.

"I think it's a great day for the Mosul Courthouse and the Ninevah province," Ott said, opening the 30-minute meeting. "We hope we can satisfy our customer and our customer is the chief judge."

Chief Judge Faisal Habib and other local officials added their input to the blueprint plans for the new courthouse, many of which could not be addressed by the cash-strapped Ott and Evans.

"We depend on the Coalition Provisional Authority for money," Ott said. "I'll do the best that I can with the money we have."

The current sum of the contract will grow once the engineers receive the



Pfc. Thomas Day

Lt. Col. Richard Ott, 926th Engineering Group (Montgomery, Ala.), looks through the blueprint plans for the rebuilding project of the South Mosul Courthouse.

remaining money for the project, which is expected within the next week. Evans, a reservist who doubles as a civilian engineer with the Army, conceded that funding has been an issue for the project, but appears to be working out.

"Right now (Al Hasan Construction Company) was awarded the contract for the amount of money we have on hand.

As we get more money, we can add to the contract," Evans said.

Current plans for the 55-year-old building include a new courtroom and lounge.

The project is expected to last around 75 days. Al Hasan's winning bid for the contract beat out six other local construction companies for the project.

1-377th Field Artillery rebuilds impoverished Mosul school

by Pfc. Thomas Day
40th PAD

Just two months ago, shortly after the 1st Battalion, 377 Field Artillery Regiment established its Tactical Operations Center outside of Mosul, a man walked right up to its front door with a note. Unable to speak English, he wrote a note asking for help rebuilding his school.

The man was Walid Khether, the Headmaster of the Helala Secondary School, named after a village just five miles down a

dirt road. His school, like many in the Mosul area, had been so neglected by Saddam's regime that it could barely continue instructions.

After \$8,000 worth of renovations to the school, with the money coming from the 101st Division Artillery commander Col. David Martino's discretionary fund, the school looks like new. "Now the teachers and students are very happy in this building," Khether said.

Five teachers and about 160 students attend the school in a village that scarcely has running water and electricity.

Capt. Brandon Reeves, of

Mattoon, Ill., commander, HHS Battery, oversaw the project, but his soldiers were not involved in the actual renovation process. All of the labor was supplied by an employed contractor.

"Everyone is proud of that school. It's ten times better than what it was," Reeves said.

When students return to school after their summer break later this month, they will see a newly painted school with seven new air-conditioning units and ceiling fans, as well as new chalkboards, electrical wiring to ensure power, and heaters for when the thermom-

eter goes south. School supplies came from the small town of Spencer, Wisconsin, a town of about 2,000, who donated packages of pencils, chalk and paper they had been collecting at local shops.

"I wish we could do more for others who are in worse shape," said 1st Sgt. Marcus Alexander of Birmingham, Ala., first sergeant, HHS Battery. "If we could, we would."

"We will never forget your efforts," Khether told the soldiers who had supported the school's renovation, through a linguist. "You are all invited to my house anytime."

Citizens can be reimbursed for coalition damages

by Spc. Blake Kent
22nd MPAD

Coalition Forces are providing reimbursement for citizens who have been injured, or had property damaged or taken by Coalition Forces.

Citizens can make claims to Coalition Forces in all incidents except for damage that occurs during combat operations.

According to Capt. John Boyer, Chief of Claims for the 101st Airborne Division, raids are considered combat operations, and claims from raids are not payable.

If Coalition Forces commit any form of wrongful act though, such as causing damage in an automobile accident, citizens can place a claim.

Citizens should get as much information as possible concerning the Coalition Forces' vehicle or group that caused property damage. If the soldier's name,

bumper number of the vehicle or any number off the side of the vehicle, and a description of the type of vehicle can be acquired, it will lend legitimacy to the claim, Boyer said.

A police report from either local police or Coalition Forces military police is also useful for the citizen's claim, Boyer said.

For vehicle accidents, property damage should be assessed by a local repair shop and given a cost estimate for repairs.

Coalition Forces also provide teams that are trained in giving cost estimates, and can assess damages to property.

In some cases, money is confiscated from citizens in raid operations. If the money is determined to be acquired legitimately, then it is returned to the citizen. Also, when property is confiscated, citizens should receive a receipt from Coalition Forces listing what has been taken.

Money taken during raid operations

that is found to be obtained illegally by citizens, including money received through black market sales, of such things as weapons and fuel, will not be returned to the citizen.

Illegally obtained money taken from citizens is handed over to the local judicial system and goes to fund local police programs and reconstruction projects throughout Mosul.

To place a claim, citizens can go to either the claims offices located at the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Brigade Tactical Operations Centers or the Civil Military Operations Center, located at the Nineveh Hotel.

All claims are investigated for their legitimacy by the claims office once all the information concerning the claim has been gathered.

Payment of claims usually takes three to nine days after the claim has been processed, Boyer said.

The payment of claims occurs every Wednesday at the Nineveh Hotel.

Soldier uses welding kit to invent Army hardware

by Pfc. Mary Rose Xenikakis
22nd MPAD

Every soldier, unique in his own way, brings some type of talent to the Army's table. But, a soldier's ability to create ideas and submit them to be patented, with the help from his command, can go a long way in helping with the future of the Army.

For Spc. Nicholas R. Platt, a 23-year-old native of Turin, NY, it was his ability to weld and his hard work ethics that got the attention of his leaders and the attention of Artillery and Mortars Engineering Team in Rock Island, Ill., a place where soldiers can submit ideas, so they can be put to use.

Platt put his talent to use after his executive officer, Maj. John Burdett, with 1st Battalion, 377th Field Artillery Regiment., 18th FA Brigade (Airborne), 18th Abn. Corps, Fort Bragg, N.C., bought a welding kit.

According to Command Sgt.

Maj. Ricky T. Gravely, battalion command sergeant major, 1-377th FA Rgt., "After the young soldier received the welder's kit. The rest of the story is pure history."

"From the Army perspective a good welder at unit level is a major cost savings," said Burdett. "It allows the unit to gain in effectiveness."

The soldier went straight to work after getting his welding kit by building tire racks, which provided better storage and organization at the motor pool, where he worked. He then continued to build spacers for hydraulic lift platforms in the maintenance bay for 1-377th and making railings to protect the trees outside a billeting area on Fort Bragg.

After successful projects, Platt's next projects changed the history of the Army and field artillery forever, Gravely said.

Gravely said, "I knew from the past war, Desert Storm and Desert Shield, the current tires for the Howitzer (a towed,

general purpose artillery weapon) would create problems, due to the tire's narrowness."

He remembered the tires from the Army's five ton vehicles fit on the howitzers, but they had to reverse the hub. This was still an unresolved problem due to the stress it put on the hubs, by reversing the rims. Gravely knew that the extensive amount of traveling would sheer off the hub of the howitzer.

"I went to the motor pool to find Platt and see if he could cut out the hub housing and mount it to the center of the rim," Gravely said. "Once again Platt accomplished this mission. There was no wobble in the tires during travel."

With determination and assistance from Platt's command Rock Island approved the modification for combat use.

With this approved modification the 1-377th packed their bags and headed for Iraq. They traveled 500 miles on asphalt roads without the problems that the unit encountered with the

narrow tires normally used on the howitzers.

Gravely said after they moved overseas to fight in Operation Iraqi Freedom, Platt continued to amaze his leadership by building a MK 19, 40mm grenade machine gun bracket, and then went on to build a SUV-type bracket to hold spare tires on the unit's vehicles.

"We're the only ones in theater carrying spare tire mounts," said Staff Sgt. Samuel Talavera Jr., battalion motor sergeant. "Everyone now comes to us for help. Platt is a valuable asset for the battalion and everyone out here."

Platt said humbly, "The unit has provided me equipment, instruction and outstanding leadership."

According to Burdett, Platt is hard working and dedicated.

"He is a rare and truly motivated self starter with perfection as his mantra," Burdett said. "He is completely selfless and looks to make the unit better."

Camp of the Week

Camp Claiborne



photos by Pfc. Thomas Day



(Top right) Pvt. Ian Sill of Circleville, Ohio, 2-44th Air Defense Artillery Regiment, spray paints a seized Iraqi anti-aircraft weapon. The weapon sits right at the entrance of Camp Claiborne. (Top left) Spc. Raul Delgado of Loredo, Texas, 2-44 ADA, works the cash register as unit mate Pfc. Todd Hill of Plano, Texas, buys a handful of goodies at the Camp Claiborne Post Exchange. (Above) Sgt. Cliff Mobley (left) of Topsell, N.C., 2-44 ADA, Spc. Teresa Ventura (center) of Brandon, Fla., 501st Signal Battalion, and Pfc. Wendall Banks of Waterberry, Conn., 2-44 ADA, wait for their dinner at the Camp Claiborne Restaurant. (Left) Chamin Hasinwsa, Camp Claiborne barber, gives Sgt. Charles Sturdivant of Vernon, Ala., 877th Engineering Battalion, a high-and-tight.

Around the 101st

Erbil Airport improvements:

In an attempt to foster good relations with the Kurds of northern Iraq, soldiers from the 37th Engineer Battalion, which is attached to the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) are working to improve an airport in Erbil.

A military airport was originally built on the site years ago and still exists, but a commercial and civilian addition to the airport was never built.

To give the people of the Erbil area access to international travel, and hopefully boost the economy, the engineers of the 37th Eng. Bn. are working with locals to build the airport and the 24-kilometer road that leads there.

The groundbreaking for the airport and the road began Monday.

Ninevah firehouses:

The final meetings are being held by members of the Mosul city fire chief and the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) public safety team to get the Nineveh area firehouses up and running.

The city's fire departments are waiting for 300 fire trucks promised by the United Nations, to be delivered.

Also, the 101st plans to spend \$11,182 on renovations on the Al-Jezear fire station, \$9,648 on the main fire station, \$30,846 on the Al-Nahri fire station, \$18,362 on the Al-Karam station and \$10,640 Raas Al-Gada station.

Local hires:

The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) has, to date, hired 6,711 locals for jobs throughout the Nineveh region.

BUSH, from Page 4

and free elections will follow.

Bush pointed out that all major cities and most towns now have representative councils. "Freedom is taking hold in that country, as people gain confidence that the former regime is never coming back," he said.

But much remains to be done, Bush emphasized. "There is difficult and dangerous work ahead that requires time and patience," he said. "Our country and the nations of the Middle East are now safer. We're keeping our word to the Iraqi people by helping them to make their country an example of democracy and prosperity throughout the region. This long-term undertaking is vital to peace in that region and to the security of the United States. Our coalition and the people of Iraq have made remarkable progress in a short time, and we will complete the great work we have begun."

The Judge Says...

Items of legal interest to soldiers

Q: What legal matters should I be thinking about while deployed?

A: *A power of attorney is one of the most used and misused legal documents.*

A POA can be very helpful in managing your affairs while you are deployed. With a general POA, the person given the power can do anything on your behalf: such as pay bills, register vehicles, file income taxes.

The person can also abuse a general POA by emptying bank accounts, and charging up credit accounts. If you need a POA, or are having problems because of one, contact the Staff Judge Advocate at the Division Rear at the Mosul Airport terminal.

Q: War Souvenirs: Can I keep the gold-plated AK-47 I found?

A: *What locally acquired items can we bring home with us? For example, can I bring back a jar filled with Iraqi "moon dust" as a souvenir? Or what about Leo, the pet camel spider that I got while we were in Camp Virginia?*

Guidance has been issued on permitted and prohibited items, and a legal review process for items is being established.

Watch future issues for more details.

Preventive law tip of the week:

When most people think of income taxes, they think of two types: federal and state.

But if you look in the deductions column of your LES, you will see a third type: FICA tax.

FICA tax is the employee's share of employment tax, also known as social security tax. Even when earning "tax free" income, a soldier must still pay FICA tax.

There is an annual limit on the amount of FICA tax that can be taken out of an employee's pay. The limit varies each year; the 2003 amount will be listed in the 2003 tax year instructions for IRS Forms 1040 and 1040A.

If an employee works for one company, that company will stop withholding FICA tax once the annual limit is reached. But if the employee has two or more jobs in a year, the total FICA tax withholding by all companies may exceed the annual limit.

Because most reserve soldiers worked at another job before they were mobilized, it is very important that they total the amounts of FICA tax withheld from all employers in 2003 (add the amounts in Block 4 of all IRS W-2 forms). If too much was withheld, the taxpayer can claim an "excess social security tax" credit on IRS Form 1040 or 1040A.

DEATHS, from Page 4

another 4th Division soldier was killed and two wounded early evening on Aug. 12 when their convoy encountered an explosive device near Al Taji. The injured soldiers were taken to a nearby medical facility for treatment.

The Aug. 12 evening attack had been preceded earlier that day by a similar incident near Ar Ramadi, which also involved an explosive device that killed one U.S. 3rd Infantry Division soldier and wounded two.

In other Iraq news, CENTCOM reported that a 101st Airborne Division soldier had died of injuries and a civilian interpreter was hurt Aug. 12 when their vehicle was struck by a taxi.

And a soldier with the U.S. 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment apparently died in his sleep Aug. 12 at a camp in Ar Ramadi, according to CENTCOM.

The names of the dead and wounded were being withheld pending notification of next of kin.

Man on the Street

When the Iraqis go to the Olympics, what will be their best event?



"Bobsled team, look at Jamaica!"

- Spc. Bill Batten of Rochester, NY, 101st Airborne Division Band



"Volleyball, I know they are good at it."

- Thomas Doski, contracted linguist

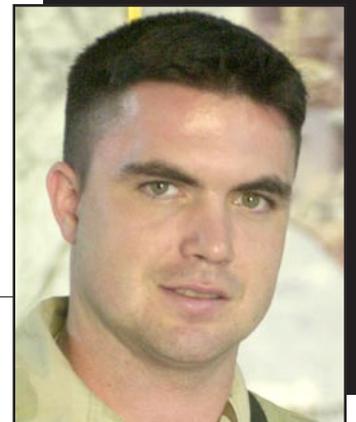
"Soccer probably, it seems that's what their kids grow up with."

- Capt. Greg Guimont of Burnsville, Minn., 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) G-3 office



"Wrestling and weight lifting, that's the two main things they do here."

- Sgt. David Gulas of Fort Campbell, Ky., 501st Signal Battalion



"I gotta say, I don't see them being swimmers."

- Staff Sgt. Eric Swett of Fredrick, Md., 52nd Engineering Battalion



"Soccer, I don't know what else they play here."

- Sgt. Maj. Mike Merkle of Woodlawn, Tenn., Headquarter and Headquarters Company, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault)

