

IRAQI DESTINY

Volume 1, Issue 45

October 23, 2003



Honoring the fallen...

*716th MPs pay tribute
to three of their own
killed in Karbala*

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Letters to the Editor

We are not only thinking of you - you are our heroes! We also are worrying about you, all of you, and praying hard for your safety! You are doing a fabulous job of protecting the future of millions of people. We cannot begin to express our appreciation to you -- and so many of us feel this way. Take care and protect yourselves, God bless you and America!
- Pat and Jerry Costello,
Texas

Thanks a million! As a career veteran of 32 years, service during World War II, Korea and Vietnam, I fully appreciate all the trials and tribulations all of you are going through.

You have my and my family's appreciation, gratitude and thanks for the outstanding work you are accomplishing under the worst of conditions. While I can only speak for myself and

family, from my conversations with many, many others I feel that they, too, feel as we do.

Please don't let the liberal media's propaganda get you down. The work you're doing and the actions you've taken are most meaningful and of great importance in winning the war against terrorism.

Thanks again and may God bless each and everyone of you and your families!

Respectfully,
-Jack Hagopian
Lt. Col., USAF
Huntsville, Ala.

(Editor's Note: These messages of appreciation and support for soldiers in Operation Iraqi Freedom were e-mailed to the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Public Affairs Office. We will run them as space permits.)

October court martial report

There were three courts-martial conducted at the Mosul Civil Military Operations Center this month. There will be additional trial terms in November, December and January and they are all currently scheduled to be conducted in Mosul. The October results of trial are as follows:

On Oct. 15, a general court-martial found Staff Sgt. Alberto Lozano, A Company, 326th Engineer Battalion, guilty of robbery and false official statement. He was sentenced to a bad conduct discharge, reduction to E-3 and confinement for thirty months.

On Oct. 16, a special court-martial found Sgt. 1st Class Herbert Murphy, B Battery, 2-44 ADA Bn, guilty of violat-

ing a lawful general order by wrongfully consuming alcohol, wrongfully manufacturing alcohol, and wrongfully transferring alcohol, and by retaining non-official issue weapons for personal use. He was sentenced to reduction to E-1 and 179 days of confinement.

On Oct. 17, a special court-martial found Pfc. Nathaniel Gonzalez A Company, 1/327 Infantry, guilty of aiding and abetting, unlawful entry, misbehavior as a sentinel and violation of a lawful general order. He was sentenced to reduction to E-1, a bad conduct discharge and ten months confinement.

(Editor's Note: Contributed by the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Staff Judge Advocate Office.)

Greeting program underway for soldiers

SAN ANTONIO (AFPN) -- The Army and Air Force Hometown News Service is offering its free print holiday greeting program to servicemembers worldwide. The program, now in its fourth year, will be open for submissions Oct. 1 through Nov. 25.

An important change for this year's program is open access to the program by individual servicemembers.

The print greeting program is a fully electronic Internet program that allows any servicemember to send a formatted holiday greeting to relatives through the Hometown News Service here. After processing, the HNS staff e-mails the greetings to newspapers serving the relatives' community. The program is free to both the servicemember and their community newspaper.

"We have more than 1,000 hometown newspapers signed up for newspaper holiday greetings, and they each cover several ZIP code areas," said Gerry Proctor, HNS chief of marketing. "Each form can generate several releases. The greetings are distributed according to ZIP codes and state. When the servicemember puts in their ZIP code ... the computer ... distributes a release for every subscribing newspaper covering that area."

"Complete and correct information is vital," Proctor said. "Submissions without a ZIP code or with an incorrect ZIP code go nowhere."

Besides having several releases generated from each form, the servicemember can input multiple forms as well.

"Each person can submit as many greetings as (he or she wants)," Proctor said. "You can send holiday greetings to your parents, in-laws, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles and anyone who is a relative as long as you have their city, state and ZIP code."

Program information and forms are accessible on HometownLink at [<http://hn.afnews.af.mil>] from any government computer system.

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Memorial held for three MPs killed in Karbala

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

KARBALA, Iraq -- Lt. Col. Kim S. Orlando stepped out of his armored humvee and walked down a dingy, lamp lit street toward a small group of rifle-wielding criminals standing at the corner of an alley.

Flanked by a security detail, Orlando approached them intending to talk, hoping to find a diplomatic means to disarm them. He spoke the greeting known across the Muslim world, "As-Salaam Alaikum." *Peace be upon you.*

A man carrying an AK-47 emerged from the group and gestured to the MPs to lay down their arms. But Orlando did not come to surrender. After a moment of irreversible tension, the man aimed his rifle at Orlando.

The firefight that followed left Orlando

and two other military policemen dead, and three others wounded. They were there that night as part of joint operations with the Iraqi police forces they trained and mentored. In subsequent operations with the 1st Armored Division and the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, the MPs cleared that section of Karbala, captured more than 30 detainees, and effectively drove any enemy that remained from that group into hiding.

Orlando, commander of the 716th MP Battalion, and Staff Sgt. Joseph P. Bellavia and Cpl. Sean R. Grilley of the 194th MP Company, were honored by fellow soldiers Tuesday in separate ceremonies.

In the amphitheatre at Babylon, where the battalion is headquartered with the Multinational Division South Central Iraq, Orlando's helmet, identification tags, boots and photograph stood before the assembled who remembered his life and with it the contributions he made.

A native of Nashville, Tenn., Orlando

served 21 years in the Army both as an enlisted soldier and an officer. He is survived by his wife Sherry, their two sons, Gregory and Jason, and his father Robert.

Speakers at the ceremony included Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, commander of the 101st Airborne Division, Capt. George Shaffer, battalion chaplain, Orlando's executive officer, Maj. Brian Feser, and his senior noncommissioned officer, Command Sgt. Major Michael Hayes.

Notably present were General Ricardo Sanchez, Combined Joint Task Force 7 commander, Iraqi police chiefs from cities Orlando's MPs work in, and coalition commanders from various countries, including Poland.

"He was one of those rare individuals who realized he was living what he was destined to do, and was making the most of every minute of it," said Hayes, who served with him daily throughout Opera

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Sgt. Robert Woodward

Spc. Baker of the 716th MP Battalion salutes the helmet of his fallen commander, Lt. Col. Kim S. Orlando, during a memorial ceremony Tuesday in Babylon, Iraq. Orlando died in a gunfight in Karbala Oct. 16 while attempting to disarm a rogue sheikh's militia. Baker was the gunner in Orlando's armored humvee that night.

Small Wisconsin town makes big impact on Mosul school

by Pfc. Thomas Day
40th PAD

The town of Spencer, Wis., with its one stoplight and 2,000 people, is truly a place where everyone is everyone's neighbor. So when one officer e-mailed his parents looking for support for a local school, word traveled quickly.

Capt. Mark Hayry, 1-377 Field Artillery Regiment, a unit from Fort Bragg, N.C., attached to the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) here in Mosul, has worked with the Ihlailla primary school, located just three miles down the road from his battalion's tactical operations center, since early this past summer. The school had been ruined by years of neglect under the former regime.

Under the 101st Airborne Division Commander's Emergency Relief Program, the school was brought back to life in July with \$8,000 in Coalition funds. The students returned to school Oct. 1 to a new school and nearly double the enrollment.

Hayry's mother Pam, a teacher at the Spencer Public Schools (all grades are confined to one, two-story building), and father Bruce, the town's postmaster, went to work rounding up supplies when their son told them about the impoverished school.

"The school project was mentioned in church the following Sunday and on Monday she received a phone call from a local newspaper. The paper interviewed her about the school project and immediately after the paper was published, collection boxes were set up in all the local banks in Spencer, (and surrounding towns) Marshfield, Colby, Abbottsford and Unity," Hayry said.

Local churches also began collecting goodies for the school. The women of Hayry's United Methodist Church in Spencer made more than 130 tote bags for the students.

Small and some not-so-small businesses around the area began to get involved too, according to Hayry. "Wiskerchen Cheese donated \$1,000 for shipping costs, Land O' Lakes provided boxes and material to package and ship supplies."

Soon students in the Spencer schools were packaging crayons donated by Crayola, coloring books, pens and pencils, chalk, erasers, puzzles, balls and "anything else you can think of that belongs in a school" for Mosul, Iraq.

"A lot of the kids that are packing some

of the stuff up...they're pretty excited about it," Hayry said.

Not as excited as the kids that received the stuff. Hayry and a group of the 1-377 Field Artillery soldiers made a surprise stop at the school to deliver the goodies Saturday. School looked more like the running of the bulls in Pamplona -- free-for-all mobs broke out as soon as the soldiers handed the students the supplies. At one point, whiffle bats donated to the

school were used by the teachers to suppress the pandemonium.

Hayry could not take a step without looking down to avoid kicking a youngster. Flowerbeds at the entrance of the school were trampled. Thankfully, no children were harmed in the melee.

The fun and excitement has just begun, according to Hayry. More tote bags and more goodies are on their way, courtesy of his hometown.



Pfc. Thomas Day

Capt. Mark Hayry, 1-377 Field Artillery Regiment, hands out school supplies, including a coloring book, to the students of a Mosul primary school. The supplies were donated to the school from Hayry's hometown of Spencer, Wis., at volunteer drop-off points throughout the town of 2,000.

The war is over... but the training never stops



Spc. Joshua Hutcheson

Staff Sgt. Scott Benge, howitzer section chief, C Battery, 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and the rest of his crew fire off smoke rounds during their unit's first live-fire training since the end of combat operations

by Spc. Joshua Hutcheson
101st Abn. Div. (Aaslt.) PAO

During the war last spring, field artillery units provided their infantry brethren with support as Coalition forces made their way across the country, spreading freedom as they went.

In Operation Iraqi Freedom, members of C Battery, 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) supported all three of the 101st Brigade Combat Teams, by supplying indirect fire on buildings, counter fire against mortar positions and suppressive fire, said Staff Sgt. Scott Benge, howitzer section chief, C Bat. 3rd Bn., 320th FA.

According to him field artillery soldiers had a large impact during the course of the war.

"I don't think the war would have went

as fast without us," Benge said. "It shows that artillery is important to the military and we can be used for urban combat."

Once the combat operations ended, the need for howitzers diminished. So the soldiers of C Battery were put on another mission, the force protection of the division main headquarters, said Capt. Steven Fahlenkamp, commander, C Bat., 3rd Bn., 320th FA.

Protecting the headquarters includes guarding all the entry control points, manning the guard towers and acting as a quick reaction force in case of attacks, Fahlenkamp said.

During down time from their current mission the field artillery soldiers train on their guns. They practice without live rounds, called dry fires, and also do occupation drills, where the teams practice setting up their guns and getting them ready to fire in the quickest time possible while still being able "to accu-

rately place rounds on target," Fahlenkamp said.

The soldiers of 320th FA had their first live-fire training exercise since the end of combat operations, in the desert south of Mosul last week. Given coordinates by forward observers relayed by the fire direction center, the howitzers fired off high explosive, smoke and illumination rounds for two days.

"It's important," Benge said. "Because you never know when they'll send you back out to the firing point. So it's good to keep up on skills."

Training to maintain their skills is vital to the field artillerymen.

"We learn the standard, we train to the standard and we are the standard," Benge said. "I think that we're the best in the business."

"This is the best fun you could ever have out here," said Sgt. Christopher Clay, gunner, C Bat., 3rd Bn. 320th FA.

Ingenuity: The Army way

Mechanics demonstrate that necessity is the mother of invention

by Spc. Joshua Hutcheson
101st Abn. Div. (AAslt.) PAO

How do soldiers deal with equipment problems? What do they do when they need to accomplish a mission and don't have the right tools for the job?

Simple. They build what they need.

In this case, mechanics from the 101st Corps Support Group worked with mechanics from 3rd Corps Support Command, 584th Maintenance Company and the 602nd Maintenance Co., to build a piece of equipment that is used constantly by soldiers deployed to Iraq: a fixed gun mount for nearly every vehicle.

THE BEGINNING

The origins of the new M6L gun mount began shortly after the end of combat operations in Operation Iraqi Freedom. At that time there was an Army wide shortage of gun mounts.

"The Army was having real problems delivering the M6 mount it currently has in production," said Sgt. 1st Class Samuel Greer, maintenance noncommissioned officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 101st Corps Support Group. "The availability just wasn't there. We couldn't get enough in theater."

The 101st wasn't the only unit having problems trying to fill their gun mount quota. In Baghdad, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Wayne Glass, 602nd Maintenance Co., needed gun mounts for the vehicles that convoyed and patrolled between the capital of Iraq and the western city of Fallujah.

When the Army supply system was unable to meet his needs he decided to design and build his own vehicle gun mount. Glass

faced challenges trying to build the mounts in Baghdad.

"When they tried to work in Baghdad, they'd get shot at. It was just impossible to do anything there," Greer said.

During a meeting with the leadership of 3rd COSCOM, Glass made the proposal for his new gun mount. He requested to go to safe environment to mass-produce the mount and for people to help him work.

Col. Gerald Dolinish, commander, 101st CSG, attended the meeting. Dolinish volunteered the services of his soldiers and the coalition-friendly, Kurdish-populated area in northern Iraq, north of Mosul, Greer said.

GIVING THE CREATION LIFE

Glass arrived in Mosul with his designs and met with Greer and the other senior mechanics of 101st CSG. The team went through the designs, ripping out what they didn't want, and adding what they felt would make the mount easier to use, generally reshaping the plans, Greer said.

"We looked at it, figured out what we liked and disliked about it, then we'd chop stuff off and look at it again. Basically what we did was chopping, looking, chopping, looking, until we got exactly what we wanted," Greer said. "We tried to come up with something that's more of a soldier-friendly mount."

The design team went through their revision and redesign process six times until they were satisfied with their prototype. But the process didn't end there; even after the original prototype was built there were more changes made to the mount, Greer said.

With a prototype built the team was able to see what worked and what didn't. They were able

to readjust parts until everything worked the way they wanted.

Before the team was completely satisfied, the mount was tested at a weapons range.

Using a previously made contact from an earlier mass-production project, the inventors took their prototype and designs to a trade company in Dohuk that was able to handle cranking out the large number of mounts required to satisfy the needs of

the 101st and 3rd COSCOM.

"We knew we had a reliable (company) that could handle it, who could make the (mounts) in a short period of time. Our biggest concern was time," Greer said.

The agreement between the mechanics and the trade company was to produce 200 gun mounts a week. Production began Aug. 5.

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Spc. Joshua Hutcheson
Spc. Derek Henrie, mechanic, 584th Maintenance Company, loads his M249 machine gun onto one of the gun mounts designed and built in Iraq for a third of the cost of military-produced mounts

Alabama engineers pave way in Iraq

by Capt. Danny Curtis
877th Engineer Battalion

Congestion, confusion, inefficiency... these words were often used to describe the South Gate entrance at the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Logistics Support Area here in Mosul, known as LSA Diamondback.

However, that all changed once the Alabama Army National Guard's 877th Engineer Battalion (Combat Heavy), was assigned the project of upgrading the entrance.

Members of the 877th were tasked specifically to provide a more efficient and safe area for U.S. troops. Before the project started, the entrance was congested causing traffic jams to form. This placed soldiers in danger of attack while stuck in traffic jams outside the gate. These traffic jams also formed inside the gate, forcing soldiers to wait long periods of time before their convoys were able to exit. Along with the congestion, large quantities of dust were a major problem as well, causing visibility problems during periods of heavy traffic.

"The project was designed to increase the security of everyone entering and exiting the gate as well as helping to restore the day to day lives of the local people of Iraq," said Capt. Wendell Miles of Adamsville, the Commander of Headquarters Support Company,

877th Engineer Battalion.

Once the mission was assigned it was determined that it would proceed as a four-phase project. The first phase of the project was to conduct thorough recons of the site and ensure proper planning was done before the start of the mission. During this step all parts of the mission were analyzed to determine the order in which the project would continue.

The second phase of the project was the clean up phase. This phase was critical because large amounts of rubble and debris were a major part of the overall congestion problem. During this time we removed unused buildings, abandoned equipment to include a large civilian heavy equipment transport trailer, and several hundred cubic meters of rubble and debris outside the entrance that had accumulated over numerous years.

HSC, 877th Engineer Battalion's new Hydraulic Excavators, or HYEXs, proved extremely valuable for the clean up phase.

"This mission would have taken a lot longer and we would not have done as good a job without the HYEXs," said Sgt. Brent Gunter.

Phase three consisted of preparing the sub-base for the upcoming asphalt. This phase included soldiers and equipment from all parts of the 877th Engineer Battalion with overall guidance by HSC. The first thing that had to be done was the removal of a layer of soil so crushed rock could be put back in its place. This task

was accomplished using graders and loaders as well as 20-ton and five-ton dump trucks.

Once the top layer of soil was replaced with gravel it was tilled, graded, and compacted to form a stable layer on which asphalt could be placed.

The final phase of the operation was the actual paving of the newly upgraded entrance and the street immediately outside. For this part of the operation, 877th personnel shifted to a quality assurance/control role while working with a local Iraqi asphalt contractor. For all the individuals involved, working with Iraqis was the most rewarding part of the mission.

"I really enjoyed working with the local Iraqi people and was very interested in the different techniques they used to complete certain tasks," said Staff Sgt. Danny Atkinson of Guin, Ala., the project NCOIC.

This phase of the mission went well, but slower than initially expected due to erratic post-war asphalt supply.

"The project expedited the entry process for all military vehicles while simultaneously increasing the ability of gate security personnel to perform inspections on non-military vehicles," said 1st Lt. Eric Harbin from Parrish, Ala., HSC, 877th Engineer Battalion's Executive Officer. Harbin also said he thought the project "minimized the military impact on the local commuting traffic of the people of Mosul."



Soldiers from the Alabama Army National Guard 877th Engineer Battalion (Combat Heavy), attached to the 101st Airborne Division, worked long hours to improve the security and access to LSA Diamondback, which houses the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Division Rear Command Post.

Signal soldiers start book drive for Mosul University, present 1,200 books

by Pfc. Chris Jones
40th PAD

A book drive spurred by Company A, 501st Signal Battalion, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) led to the donation of 1,200 textbooks and novels to Mosul University, a school which had many books destroyed under the censorship of the former regime.

While at Mosul University on a project to restore a computer lab, Capt. James Riley, Co. A. commander, met with a professor, and they discussed the possibility of rebuilding the school's library. Riley then called his former college, Vermont's Norwich University, and spoke with the school's president, Dr. Richard Schneider. In a matter of days, Schneider started a book drive which had citizens of Central Vermont flooding the mail system with books on science, history, philosophy, psychology, computer science and economics, as well as a few novels.

"The response was overwhelming," Riley said. "[Vermont] libraries, schools and bookstores all pitched in."

Riley and his team began boxing and categorizing the books as they began racing to Iraq.

"The military facilitated this," Riley said during the presentation ceremony Thursday night, "but this came from American citizens, helping Iraqi citizens – educators in America helping educators in Iraq."

Many of the books in the university were destroyed or heavily censored, Riley said.

"You'd see a lot of books that asked, 'if Saddam has five apples and he loses two, how many apples does the great Saddam have left? [Iraqis] didn't really want to read those anymore,'" Riley said.

Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, 101st commander, presented Dr. Jazeel Al-Jomard, Mosul University vice-chancellor, with an economics book. Petraeus, once an assistant economics professor at the U.S. Military Academy, said he hopes to one day see a thriving, completely self-reliant Iraq.

"I present this economics book to vice-chancellor Al-Jomard with hopes that the Iraqi people will grow to prosperity," Petraeus said. "This country is blessed with great resources. Now with new books come new possibilities."

Accepting the textbook, Al-Jomard said, "We want our university to be independent and powerful. Soon, we are going to start a new future, and we will never forget who backed us up. We will never forget what our friends have given us."

According to Petraeus, 900 more books will soon arrive from a university in Wisconsin.

"I hope [Iraqis] can find some truth in these books, some history they probably didn't see before," Riley said. "They've been fed a view of the Americans, Westerners and others outside their little area that probably wasn't altogether accurate."



photos by Pfc. Chris Jones

(Above) An Iraqi man reaches for an English literature book, one of 1,200 donated to Mosul University by citizens of Vermont through coordination of the a company in the 501st Signal Battalion, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). A ceremony was held Thursday night at the university for the book donation. (Below) Iraqis browse through the selection of books.



Currency exchange kicks off for Iraqi people

by Pfc. Chris Jones
40th PAD

Banks all across Iraq were stuffed Oct. 15 with citizens looking to replace the old Iraqi dinar with the new Saddam-absent currency in what is being called the largest currency exchange in world history.

Banks in Mosul, Northern Iraq's largest city, began the exchange at approximately 8 a.m. Most stayed open until 6 p.m. 2nd Lt. Paul Kreger of the 502nd Infantry Regiment Fire Support Element estimated that on the first day alone, 20 billion Iraqi dinar would be exchanged into the new dinar, which is smaller, without the picture of former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein in the center, which was the staple of the

previous dinar.

Despite the heavy traffic, banks in Mosul, Northern Iraq's largest city, had generally short lines, a result of efficient transactions from three months of steady planning by Coalition Forces. A Rafidain Bank downtown, for example, was given nine billion dinar for the exchange, yet the bank's line barely stretched the length of the building.

"Months and months ago we tried to prepare for this, and now everything is going quickly," said the bank's manager, Qutyba Saleh, who appointed 20 bankers for the first day of the exchange. "We got tired of the old regime, and all the times our currency's value would change. We hope this exchange will leave our old problems behind."

The currency exchange, which 3rd Bde. Fire direction officer Maj. William Mason calls the largest in history, was governed

by the Iraqi Ministry of Finance with guidance from Coalition Forces.

Security at the banks was of the highest priority, said Capt. Scott Todd, 3rd Bn., 502nd Inf. Regt. personnel officer. Todd oversaw reconstruction efforts for one of Mosul's 12 Rasheed Banks. Capt. Muhammad Yones, an Iraqi police officer, led a team of security guards at the bank, carrying the task of maintaining order despite the millions of Iraqi dinar which flowed in and out of the building on just the first day, with billions more in the upcoming week.

Throughout the first day, bank employees across Iraq dipped bunches of the old Iraqi dinar in a maroon-colored liquid, marking them as forfeit.

After each dip, the dark red hue of the liquid made the face of Saddam Hussein appear covered in blood.

"Things are changing," Saleh said.



photos by Pfc. Chris Jones

(Above) An Iraqi bank worker arranges stacks of old currency that were being exchanged for the new dinar by Iraqi citizens. (Inset) A bank worker marks the old currency with red ink which makes them forfeit and worthless.



Sgt. Robert Woodward

A military policeman plays "Amazing Grace" on bagpipes in an amphitheatre in Babylon, Iraq, Tuesday during a memorial ceremony for three soldiers from the 716th Military Police Battalion who died in a Karbala gunfight Oct. 16 while attempting to disarm a rogue sheikh's militia.

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tion Iraqi Freedom. "He led from the front and held nothing back. I will miss him. I will miss his sense of humor. I will miss his infectious smile. I will miss his contagious positive attitude. But most of all I will miss my commander."

In Karbala, the MPs of the 194th formed up at dusk to remember two fellow MPs, Bellavia and Grilley.

A native of Harvard, Mass., Bellavia entered the Army in 1995 and served in the 536th MP Company, Korea, before coming to the 716th MP Bn. at Fort Campbell, Ky. A 2nd Platoon team leader, he was also a graduate of the Pathfinder and Air Assault schools. He is survived by his wife Christine, his father Joseph, and his brother Jonathan.

A native of San Bernardino, Calif., Grilley joined the Army in

2001 and served in the Joint Security Area at Camp Bonifas, Korea before reporting to Fort Campbell and the 194th MP Co. He was a team leader in 2nd Platoon and, although a graduate of the Special Forces Assessment and Selection process, he chose to stay with his unit to deploy to Iraq. He is survived by his wife Luciana, his father James, and his mother Susan Tyjenski.

During the ceremony, Sgt. 1st Class Michael Straub and Cpl. Raymond Taeger recounted their time working with Bellavia and Grilley, respectively, remembering their dedication, courage and example, and were grateful for the companionship and gifts that came with knowing them.

On the faces in formation, tears reflected in the fading light of day. Intermittent sobs broke out as soldiers fought to retain composure. As the ceremony concluded, 1st Sgt. Troy Wallen took roll call, choking out the names of the fallen.

No one answered.

MOUNTS from page 6

"The first week we wound up producing around 100 (mounts). The second week we produced about 150, and then we got full scale with 200 in the third week," Greer said.

For the production of the 1,392 mounts needed by Coalition forces, the trade company opened up an entirely new factory to produce the mounts.

Setting up the factory and hiring new workers "poured almost three quarters of a million dollars into the local economy," Glass said.

FOR ONLY A THIRD OF THE PRICE

By using local materials and workers, the Kurdish company was able to build each gun mount for \$500, and delivered them to the soldiers for another five dollars, Greer said.

The military-produced M6 gun mount costs \$1,460 per unit. Purchasing the M197 adaptor, necessary if a soldier wants to mount his M249 machine gun, is an extra \$480. The total cost can be rounded out to a little less than \$2,000 for each mount.

"We're able to save about \$1,500 a shot on these things," Greer said.

With the 1,392 mounts built locally, (hence the L in the name) the design team of the mount has succeeded in saving the Army approximately \$2.1 million, he said.

The Tank and Automotive Command approved production of and named the mount M6L.

THE DESIGN

"The beauty of the mount is that it comes with a SAW adaptor," Greer said. "The mount comes as a complete package. There's no need for special adaptors."

The M6L is capable of supporting the M2HB .50 caliber machine gun, as well as the M249 and M240 machine guns.

The base plate to the gun mount is larger than the plate for the M6. A layer of steel covers the entire floor of the vehicle, and bolts to the existing holes in the truck, Greer said.

"The biggest reason we pushed for the large plate is for blast protection," Greer said. "The soldier's now standing on 8 mm-thick steel."

A problem many soldiers found with the

M6 gun mount is that the constant stress on holes they had to drill to secure the mount caused damage to the body of the vehicles. Using the existing holes makes the mount more secure and stable.

The larger base also has a series of holes in it to allow mobility. The gun mount is attached to a smaller plate that sits on the larger base plate and can be positioned in the middle of the rear portion of the vehicle if it's mounted in a troop carrying truck. Or it can be moved all the way to the back for command-style Humvees, Greer said.

The M6L mount is mobile in other ways too. It can be raised or lowered for the comfort of the gunner, or removed entirely if it's not required for a mission.

"You can remove the seven bolts, (to disconnect the gun mount) in about three or four minutes. The base plate stays on the truck because you can mount any kind of a load right on top of it no problem and your blast protection's still there," Greer said.

Other features on the M6L include an ammo basket and a security ring upon which soldiers can attach themselves to keep from falling out of moving vehicles.

An added safety feature is the depression adjustment. It's a portion of the mount's shaft which keeps the muzzle of the weapon from dipping too low so that "a gunner can't accidentally shoot the guys in the front of the vehicle," Glass said.

A GUN MOUNT BY SOLDIERS, FOR SOLDIERS

Soldiers' needs were the first consideration for the designers of the M6L. During every step of the creating process they were primarily concerned with safety and making the gun mount user-friendly.

"Everything we had to do, we had to really think about soldiers getting up and using (the M6L)" Greer said. "Soldiers can tell you best what works for soldiers, I honestly believe that."

Production of the 1,392 gun mounts was completed the first week of October. The blueprints were then taken to Camp Arifjohn in Kuwait for future production.

"The mount has demonstrated its versatility in combat operations," Dolinish said. "It's a suitable if not superior mount, through the efforts of a number of units."

The inventors of the M6L don't want any kind of special recognition for their contribution to the safety of thousands of soldiers in the United States Army.

They didn't design the gun mount to cut corners and save money. They created the M6L because they saw a need for a better piece of equipment and a chance to do what mechanics do best: build things.

The Judge Says...

Items of legal interest to soldiers

Q: What is a pre-nuptial agreement? Is it a good idea?

A: *A pre-nuptial agreement, also commonly called an ante-nuptial agreement, is a contract made between a man and a woman who are about to marry. It sets out what property owned by the parties will remain separate after marriage, and how property will be divided in the event of death or divorce.*

Pre-nuptial agreements are most common used when one of the parties is significantly wealthier than the other, to ensure that the marriage is not being undertaken simply to inherit a large estate or file for divorce shortly after the marriage.

While most military clients are not significantly wealthy, there are times when a prenuptial agreement may be in a client's best interest. If there are large assets, or children from a prior marriage or relationship, a prenuptial agreement can be a helpful tool to protect that property and/or those persons.

Prenuptial agreements can be very complex, and drafting one may be beyond the scope of legal services that the Army can provide. Before hiring a civilian attorney however, speak to a legal assistance attorney to deter-

mine if such a document is right for you.

Q: Do I need a fire-proof box?

A: *People are often told they need a fire-proof box to store their legal documents.*

Fireproof boxes protect paperwork if there is a fire, but home-destroying fires are rare events.

Such boxes can be expensive and are often stolen when homes are robbed, as they are frequently used to store other valuables. Simply keep your documents in a safe and secure place.

Preventive law tip of the week:

You would know if you making an international telephone call, wouldn't you? Not always.

Most of the time when you call outside the United States, you have to dial a "country code" prefix first.

But there are dozens of area codes in the Caribbean that are actually international calls from the United States, such as 664 (Montserrat), 758 (St. Lucia), and 809 (Dominican Republic).

Be wary of calling area codes you do not recognize. These calls can cost a lot more than you would think!

Man on the Street

What Arabic words have you learned while in Iraq?



“Shukran (Thank you).”
- 1st Lt. Cecil Overstreet,
431st Civil Affairs Battalion



“Ashonek (How are you).”
- Cpl. Adam Mahlandt,
318th Psychological
Operations Company

“Alobahker (you’re welcome).”
- Maj. Brian Strandlund,
431st CA Bn.



“Habibi (sweet heart).”
- Sgt. Thomas Baker,
431st CA Bn.



“I learned all the bad words.”
- Spc. Lucas Abbott, 431st
CA Bn.



“Im Shaala (God willing).”
- Staff Sgt. Maril Payne,
101st Airborne Division
(Air Assault) G-3 Office