

---

# IRAQI DESTINY

---

Volume 1, Issue 5

May 4, 2003

---

## BANG!!!

### *Unexploded ordnance are not fireworks*

---

Spc. Blake Kent  
22nd MPAD

---

**A** sparkly flare goes up in the Mosul night sky, followed by the giggles of children. It isn't the 4<sup>th</sup> of July or New Years, but local children playing with the unexploded ordnance they found in their back yard.

Soldiers from the 37<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion and the 725<sup>th</sup> Explosive Ordnance Demolitions Company have begun the destruction of UXO that have been found around Mosul and surrounding communities.

Capt. Thurm Bowen, Diarsburg, TN., Bravo Company, 37<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion said, caches of rockets, tank rounds, RPGs, and artillery rounds of every kind have been coming in by the truck-load from around Mosul.

"There are over 100,000 artillery rounds, 23,000 RPG rockets and 8,200 tank rounds in our current stock," Bowen said.

The UXOs are dismantled and destroyed in minimal amounts of about 10,000 pounds of explosives daily at a secluded area near the Mosul airport, where they will not disturb nearby villages and communities.

"We are very concerned with minimizing the impact on local villages," Bowen said. We don't want to break any windows or anything like that."

Two successions of explosions occur daily, at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Currently there are nine explosions per day, but Bowen says they plan to build up to no more than 20 explosions a day, all supervised by EOD for safety.

Mortar rounds and RPGs are destroyed first because they are the most usable munitions for paramilitary groups, Bowen said.

Patrols are finding UXOs on a daily bases.

"Patrols have been picking up rounds in schools, and other local community buildings," said Staff Sgt. Mike Ascott of Giles County, TN, 37<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion.

Now locals have begun putting the RPG rockets and whatever else they find out in the street like it was waiting for the trash man to come and pick up. I guess we are the trash men — getting rid of it all."

"It's scary too," Ascott said, "The locals are stripping the brass casings off the mortars and selling the brass on the black market. We've been finding a lot of these with the fuses still in the casing. Our concern is that it only takes about five pounds of pressure to set it off."

According to Staff Sgt. Lemont Wesley Price Jr., Virginia



*Courtesy photo by Command Sgt. Maj. Gravely*  
This boy was playing with a UXO when it went off. He suffered 3rd degree burns on his hands, chest and face.

Beach, VI, 37<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, "The local children have been taking apart the UXOs they find and lighting parts of them like sparklers."

The 37<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion and 725<sup>th</sup> EOD continue their destruction of UXOs on a daily biases, except for Fridays.

# ABC is what they need

*Pfc. Mary Rose Xenikakis  
22nd MPAD*

**A**, B, C, — one, two, three!  
Education is a key to the success of a new democracy. Americans know the root of success and democracy is in the education of its people.

The 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault) mission in Mosul, Iraq, is to protect and help establish a new government for the people of Iraq.

When the war began, schools throughout Iraq closed but they reopened April 27. Getting the children back into the schools is showing to be the easy part. Supplies we take for granted in the United States like pencils, paper and books are the challenge.

Soldiers from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault) have

been working with the U.S. Army’s civil affairs to provide humanitarian assistance to the local schools of Mosul. They have been going to several of the schools while they’re on patrol to give the head masters of these facilities supplies. They have also been collecting information about other needs they may have.

“Many of the families can’t afford school supplies for their children, so we’ve been giving what we can,” said 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Luke Wittmer, 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, B Company, 2/502 Bn, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault) platoon leader.

There are many soldiers like Wittmer who have been going out into the Mosul area and giving donations like school supplies. Full units have been donating money to buy school supplies so the children can return to class as soon as possible.



*Photo By Pfc. Mary Rose Xenikakis*

*A little boy watches soldiers walk by during a presence patrol in Mosul, Iraq*

**See “ABC” page 3**

## Chaplains Corner

Live as though every positive thing you do will start a chain reaction, the culmination of which is so beneficial you cannot even imagine. Live as though even the smallest kindness, passed along from one person to another, can change the world for the better.

Live as though every good thing you do is multiplied many times over before surely and eventually returning to you. For that is indeed the way life can work.

You have a far greater influence than it may seem over people and events, even those far removed from you. Because the way you act toward others gets passed along in ever increasing numbers.

Think about how you do it yourself. If someone has been kind and considerate to you, you’re far more likely to act with kindness toward others, and many of them will do the same.

If in one hour you were to spread kindness to just three people, and each of them did the same, and the process continued to repeat itself, the results would be astounding. It would take less than 24 hours for that kindness to be spread to every person in the world.

Spread your kindness and consideration freely and respectfully to others. And the positive benefits will go farther than you can possibly imagine.

Contributed by Chaplain (Maj.) Mark E. Thompson  
2nd BCT Chaplain

### ***Iraqi Destiny Staff***

**OIC**  
Maj. Charmaine Means

**NCOIC**  
Staff Sgt. Eric Hendrix

**Editor**  
1st Sgt. Ken Heller

**Staff**  
Spc. Blake Kent  
Pfc. Mary Rose Xenikakis

*This Army funded news page is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army overseas. Contents of the “Iraqi Destiny” are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, a U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). It is published three times a week by the Public Affairs Office, HHC-2 Bde (CMOC-PAO), Unit 96044, APO AE 09325-6044. Contact us at: ken.heller@us.army.mil*

# Soldiers building bridges in more than one way

Pfc. Mary Rose Xenikakis  
22nd MPAD

**T**he U.S. Army is not only building bridges between the American and the Iraqi people, they're building bridges to drive across too.

Task Force Bridge, a bridge building mission headed by the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault), worked from April 28 to Thursday placing a dry support bridge across the Tigris River between Mosul and Al Khazer.

The four lane bridge was damaged during the war by Saddam's regime in an attempt to keep other forces from crossing over it. Since the bridge was damaged, it's



Photo By Pfc. Mary Rose Xenikakis

Soldiers walk a ledge, April 30, under a bridge that was built by the U.S. Army. The soldiers are supporting Task Force Bridge by assessing and building bridges so the Army can open a road between the cities of Mosul and Al Khazer.



Photo By Pfc. Mary Rose Xenikakis

Soldiers with Task Force Bridge assess the damage that Saddam's regime did to the bridge that crosses over the Tigris River. Task Force Bridge has been building and repairing bridges so the Iraqi people can have the use of the main roads throughout Iraq.

been hard for the people in the surrounding areas to commute through that span of the road.

"Stability and support operations are our mission to get this country back on its feet," said Maj. Christopher D. Lestochi, commander of Task Force Bridge.

"What we're doing is making the road safe for people who travel on it."

The dry support bridge that was built is a one of a kind.

Lestochend said, "This is the first time we've put this bridge into operational use. There's been a lot of training with it, but the bridge has never been put to the test.

"It took about three months of training to be able to put the bridge up in this timely manner," said Staff Sgt. Anthony J. Scott Merriman, 74<sup>th</sup> Engineer Company, a native of Middletown, OH. "It's a great bridge. It took practice

and teamwork to build this bridge."

Now that these bridges are up and operational, the Iraqis people will be able to move back and forth to neighboring towns conducting business and commerce.

A native of Al Khazer, Jassim Muhemed said this bridge is very important for people who live in the two cities. It's the main bridge between the two towns.

"We're building this for them," said Staff Sgt. Steven Herman, 74<sup>th</sup> Engineer Company, a native of Reminderville, OH. "This is a good way to show we're here for them; not to take over their country."

During the building of these bridges, the soldiers of Task Force Bridge made many friends and connections in for the future.

These soldiers are not just promising a good future for the Iraqi people; they are making the difference by showing them with their actions.

## "ABC" continued from page 2

"Handing out school supplies is a great way to show them we're not as bad as we were made out to be. It shows we're not here to harm anyone, and that's a good thing," said Staff Sgt. Jerry Hunter, 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, B Company, 2/502 Bn., 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault) weapons squad leader.

The donations given to the children throughout the community are given out of the kindness of the soldier's hearts. Soldiers here in Mosul are doing more than their part in the effort to make a better future for the children of Iraq.



*Photo by Spc. Blake Kent*

*Spc. Benjamin Smith, Birmingham, AL., Delta Company, 801st MSB, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), watches the tracks as train begins unloading supplies.*

## Tidbits

Recently, a statutorily mandated increase of \$75 per month for all soldiers receiving Hostile Fire Pay/Imminent Danger Pay was implemented. The new monthly Hostile Fire Pay/Imminent Danger Pay rate of \$225 is effective from October 2002.

The new rate will be paid retroactively to all soldiers who were receiving Hostile Fire Pay/Imminent Danger Pay since October 2002.

A problem was encountered when the system program was run to update soldiers pay accounts with the new rate.

The problem resulted in an error which may have affected your April 2003 End of Month (EOM) pay. If your account was affected by the problem, the error would be reflected on your April Leave And Earnings Statement (LES). Your federal wages year to date may be incorrect.

We (DFAS) are currently in the process of reviewing your Master Military Pay Account (MMPA). If your account was affected by the problem, the appropriate input will be made to correct year to date wages.

Questions or concerns related to this matter can be directed to email address: [dfas-in.systems@dfas.mil](mailto:dfas-in.systems@dfas.mil)

## Arabic Expressions

*Here are a few useful phrases translated from Arabic to English to make your all expense-paid vacation in Iraq a little more comfortable.*

Arabic	=	English
Na-am	=	yes
La	=	no
Sah	=	right
Gah-lat	=	wrong
Gha-li	=	expensive (price)
Ma-endi	=	I don't have
Ma-aref	=	I don't know

## Doc's Dissertations

### Snakes

*There are 46 species of venomous snakes in the Middle East. Avoiding a snake bite is easier than treating it, here are some precautions.*

- ◆ Eliminate garbage and litter from areas frequented by humans.
- ◆ Avoid sleeping on the ground.
- ◆ Be aware of snakes' natural hiding places.
- ◆ Do not go out of your way to kill a snake.
- ◆ Do not handle live or dead snakes.



*Photo By Pfc. Mary Rose Xenikakis*

*Blackhawk helicopters land in Baghdad to pick up soldiers with the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and transfer them to Mosul Airport, Iraq, on April 22, 2003.*



*Photo By Pfc. Mary Rose Xenikakis*

*Two girls carrying bread in the town of An Naseriyah, Iraq on April 17.*