



BATTLE SIGHT



Issue 006

30th Brigade Combat Team

01 August 2004



Published twice each month for the Soldiers and families of the 30th BCT. Questions or comments concerning this news letter can be sent to the Public Affairs Officer, Capt. Matthew Handley
matthew.handley@us.army.mil

If you would like to submit stories or digital photographs for consideration for publication in the Battle Sight, contact Master Sgt. Mike Welsh michael.welsh3@us.army.mil

Photo journalist
Cpl. Matthew Putney
matthew.p.putney@us.army.mil

Information Operations Maj Tony Quinn
tony.quinn@us.army.mil

Public Affairs Guidance for dealing with the media

- Always check to see if the media rep is credentialed. If not credentialed, suggest they contact the 1ID PAO, Maj. Debra Stewart at the DIV HQ.
- Never discuss current or future operations. Topics such as Force Protection and ROE are off limits.
- Everything is on the RECORD when talking with the media.
- Stay in your lane and only discuss what you know and NEVER speculate.
- Be prepared by knowing three things you can say about yourself and three things about your job.
- Avoid using any military jargons. Keep it plain and simple.
- If you do not know the answer, then just say you do not know. NEVER lie to the media.
- Set the record straight if the media has the facts confused.
- Have your chain of command notify the PAO about the interview.

Remember, if we do not tell the story, the media will be forced to write it on their own. We can be proud of what we are doing for OIF and the sacrifices our families are making. Let the world know that you are making a stand and what you are willing to defend.

Cover; Sgt. Steven Flowers (next to vehicle) and Sgt. Tommy Edwards, both with E Troop, 196th Cavalry, secure the outer cordon of the government building in Tuz, Iraq. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO).



An Isolated Infantry Battalion - Defending a Key Terrain Feature

Written by Major Ralph A. Kerley

Advanced Infantry Officer's Class #1 - 1949 - 1950



Mortain

This small French village became the focus of a German counterattack on the evening of August 6, 1944. Operation Lüttich, as it was called, was ordered by Hitler with the intention of splitting the American forces between Hodges' First Army and Patton's newly formed Third Army. The Germans needed control of the vital road network around Mortain to allow a drive to Avranches on the coast. The Germans would later state that their failure to complete the separation of the American forces was a "turning point" in the battle of the western front. This failure was caused by the determined resistance of Old Hickory at Mortain.

The disposition of Old Hickory's troops around Mortain was as follows. On the eastern side of the town stood a tall hill, elevation 314. Hill 314 had been recognized by the Americans as a vital defensive position early on and was held by the 2nd battalion, 120th Infantry. The 1st of the 120th was on the west of Mortain holding hill 285. Two platoons of the 120th's company F, a platoon of the 120th's antitank company, along with 3rd platoon of Company A, 823rd Tank Destroyer Battalion had established what would prove to be a crucial roadblock at L'Abbaye Blanche where they could cover the road junctions north of Mortain. Meanwhile, the 117th Infantry was in place at St. Barthelmy, approximately two miles north of Mortain. The 119th Infantry was to the northwest near Le Mesnil-Adelée.

The Germans made significant gains in the early hours of the attack, actually capturing the village of Mortain. However the Nazis failed to gain control of the crucial high ground around Mortain. Such was the disposition in the initial stages of the attack.

Although they held Mortain, they had not gained control of the roads they so desperately needed. The directed artillery fire from Hill 314 prevented this. The 120th held the hill and despite being completely cut off from resupply and relief these infantrymen withstood the repeated assaults of combined German artillery, armor and infantry assaults.

The most important function of the battalion's stand was the continuing ability to call accurate artillery fire from the massed guns of ten artillery battalions, 120 tubes in all. The drive around Hill 314 became an artillery duel relying on forward observers like Lt. Robert Weiss on the hill with the 120th. However, due to the inability to resupply the besieged troops, the F.O.'s were running out of battery power for their radios. Despite multiple attempts to fight through the German positions surrounding the hill no penetration could be made.

The situation became so desperate that artillery resupply (packing plasma, dressings, and medicine in artillery shells normally used to fire propaganda leaflets and firing them into the 120th's position) of medical supplies was attempted, with little success. Airdrops were also attempted. After struggling through amazing amounts of beauracracy at corps level, the divisional G-4 was able get some C-47 drops but most of the supplies ended up in German hands, and most importantly, no radio batteries made it through. Even the light artillery spotter Piper Cubs attempted to get through, but they were driven off by heavy German fire. Radio calls were limited to fire missions, and then only the briefest of information could be transmitted.

The plight of the 2/120th on 314 remained grave. They held out against more German attacks and most of the men were certain they would be overrun. Many veterans of the battle stated that the Germans could have walked right through them several times. It even progressed to the point that an SS officer presented a surrender ultimatum to Lt. Kerley, commanding Co. E. Kerley declined the offer, and at 2015 hours on the 9th the Germans attempted to make the doughboys pay for their insolence. The SS attacked yet again, yelling "surrender!" as they ran over the American foxholes. The resulting fight was so bitter that Kerley was forced to call in artillery on his own position to finally repulse the attack.

This situation continued until the troops on Hill 314 were finally relieved the morning of August 12th by elements of the 35th Infantry Division. The story of the battle is ripe with tales of heroism, sacrifice and determination by regular soldiers. However the drama at the individual level may be overshadowed by the theater level significance of the division's stand in Mortain.

The fact that the 30th Division held out against such a major attack is amazing in itself. Additionally it was important that the German forces were fixed at Mortain, allowing the air strikes, artillery barrages, and tank hunting infantry teams to exact a terrible toll on the strongest divisions the Germans had in the region. The German losses in this failed attack were remarkable.

Remarkable as well was the opportunity the attack gave the Allies. By leaving the 30th unrelieved at Mortain, General Bradley was able to fix the Germans on this bait and begin an encirclement of the entire German Army Group B. Via Ultra intercepts the Allied high command knew the Germans were not going to retreat from the battle with the 30th. Bradley then developed operation Totalize designed to circle from the south with Patton's troops to meet Montgomery's striking from the north to Falaise.

(Historical information found at the 30th Infantry Division Association website, <http://trampsteamer.com>)

AROUND AO HICKORY



1Lt. Robert Cook (squatting), A Company, 230th Forward Support Battalion, observes Soldiers on the firing line at FOB Caldwell. (Photo by Cpl. Matthew Putney, 30th BCT PAO)



Maj. Gen. William Ingram, Adjutant General North Carolina National Guard, surprised Soldiers from B Company, 1st Battalion, 120th Infantry, when he dropped into the platoon living area at Forward Operating Base Roughrider. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Sgt. Kerry Rouse, Headquarters Headquarters Company, 30th Brigade Combat Team, works with the Commo Team on Magic Mountain. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Command Sgt Major James Marley, 1st Battalion, 120th Infantry, coordinates with an outgoing convoy preparing to depart FOB Bernstein. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Spc. Michael Farley (left) and Spc. Andrew Sopala, both with C Battery, 1st Battalion, 113th Field Artillery, keep alert while pulling tower duty at FOB Caldwell. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Cpl. Clayton Moore, E Troop, 196th Cavalry, carries a container of confiscated fuel in Tuz, Iraq. In response to a local government request, the Multi National Force has been on the lookout for distributors of bootleg petrol in the market area. (Photo by Master Sgt Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Cpl. Glenn Moore (left), Sgt. Calvin Paynter (center), and Sgt. Chad Johnson, all with Headquarters Headquarters Company, 30th Brigade Combat Team, replace the hand guards on the M-16A2 rifle with the M-5 Rail Adaptor System. The new hand guards feature a rail system that permits the mounting of optics and also offers a forward hand grip. (Photo by Cpl Matthew Putney, 30th BCT PAO)



Spc Soudasak Khammanyvngsa, (known as K-Man) provides security with the M-240B machine gun during combat patrols in Tuz, Iraq with E Troop, 196th Cavalry, 30th Brigade Combat Team. Khammanyvngsa is attached to E Troop from the 1st Battalion, 113th Field Artillery. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)

Iraq - Diyala irrigation canal project

Written by Master Sgt Mike Welsh,
30th BCT Public Affairs

FOB COBRA, Iraq – “It’s very rewarding to know that you can make a difference”, said Capt. Hazel Williams, B Battery, 1st Battalion, 113th Field Artillery. Williams was part of a medical assessment team that came to the remote village of Docker, near Qara Tapa in northeastern Iraq.

Williams is a National Guard officer from North Carolina assigned to the Task Force Thunderbolt FOB (Forward Operating Base) Cobra. Williams handles several responsibilities at Cobra, one of those being the point man for coordinating contract work and purchases within the local community.

During the community outreach project at Docker, Williams was searching for potential laborers needed for the upcoming Multi National Forces irrigation canal contract in the eastern area of the Diyala Province. “I needed about 100 men for the project and I got a few more than I needed to sign up”, said Williams.

“My intent is to try to hire all of these men and find a way to pay them. This irrigation project will last about 75 days”, continued Williams. Funding for the project, like many others, comes from Multi National Forces funds that are spent on improving the Iraqi infrastructure and whenever possible using local labor and contractors.

Diyala is an agriculture region in Iraq and the network of irrigation canals are critical for the farmers. However, years of neglect has left the canals in need of repair and overgrown with weeds. “The weeds and grass are creating a lack of water flow for the farmer’s fields”, added Williams.



Irrigation canal water flow for farmers will benefit from a Multi National Force project being funded in Eastern Diyala. Iraqi workers from the Qara Tapa region and local contractors will remove grass and objects now blocking many of the canals. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)

The rate and effects of unemployment in this remote area are evident. Young men between the ages of 18-25, that are not working are prime recruits for militant extremist in Iraq. “When we can hire them and give them a job, we are giving them another choice”, said Williams.

Williams is also the Fire Support Officer for Task Force Thunderbolt, which puts the responsibility of accurately placing artillery and mortars rounds on hostile target acquisitions. However, being a National Guard Soldier, Williams also has a great deal of professional finance experience with the Wachovia Bank in Charlotte, NC. Practically on a daily basis Williams finds himself using his bank skills as the Coalition and Iraqi people rebuild their new country.

“A lot of news shows violence in Iraq, however there are lots of good projects that don’t make the news. Projects like renovation of schools for example” stated Williams. “We are also starting a trade school to help offer masonry training and that will provide local contractors with skilled labor” replied Williams.

Growth and prosperity are choices Iraqi citizens are free to make now. Multi National Force projects like these managed by Williams are destined for success as Iraqi community leaders add their support.



Capt. Hazel Williams, B Battery, 1st Battalion, 113th Field Artillery, reviews a list of job applicants provided by an Iraqi government official for an upcoming project improving irrigation canal water flow. Funding for the 75 day project will be provided by Multi National Forces funds destined for infrastructure improvements in Iraq. Key to this project is the hiring of local Iraqi labor and contractors. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Spc. David Wallace, G Battery, 2nd Battalion, 202nd Air Defense Artillery, prepares to depart FOB Caldwell, Iraq. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Spc. Daniel Bayan, G Battery, 2nd Battalion, 202nd Air Defense Artillery, with the M-249 SAW machine gun prepares for a security escort mission. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



2LT. Nathan Westby, G Battery, 2nd Battalion, 202nd Air Defense Artillery, gives the detailed convoy brief to Soldiers, Air Force personnel, and other DoD members, for a convoy movement from Forward Operating Base Caldwell. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)

G 202 Leads the way with Convoy Security Mission



Vehicles are lining up for a convoy mission. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Spc. Robeson, 230th Military Intelligence Company, mans the M-2 50cal. machine gun during a convoy operation with the 30th Brigade Combat Team. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)

Medical assessment success in Qara Tapa

Written by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh,
30th BCT Public Affairs NCO

FOB COBRA, Iraq - Deliberately the serials of military vehicles from the Multi National Forces (MNF), 30th Brigade Combat Team (BCT), rolled into a small village near the town of Qara Tapa in northeastern Iraq. Children lined the streets as the Soldiers on a planned Medical Assessment mission poured into the austere trades school carrying cases of medical supplies, clinical equipment, and good will intentions.

The mission - determine the condition of the children, evaluate health care needs, and offer clinical treatment for local residents, and assess the overall needs of this community.

“Our objective today was to bring some of the MNF medical resources and medical personnel to this area”, said Maj. Michael Campbell, a medical doctor from the Virginia Army National Guard assigned to C Company, 230th Forward Support Battalion (FSB).

“We saw approximately 150-200 patients today. That included everything from environmental problems to more serious chronic illnesses such as asthma”, continued Campbell.

Adding to the ranks of the MNF was a group of three Iraqi nurses from the local clinic in Qara Tapa. “The Iraqi nurses rotated around from physician to physician. They joined in on some of the assessments and they did some special need projects”, added Campbell.

Support for the mission was pulled from a variety of MNF resources within the 30th BCT. The cast included a Physician Assistant, Medics, and one Medical Doctor from C Company 230th FSB, Specialists from the 415th Civil Affairs (CA) Battalion, a Tactical Psyop Team from the 7th Psyops Battalion, and security from C Company 252nd Armor Battalion.

Who plans and coordinates such an undertaking like this, going into a remote community that speaks a different language, and setting up an instant medical clinic? The answer is Capt. Timothy Dukeman, 415th CA Battalion, attached to the 30th BCT.

“Predominately, Civil Affairs is the planning cell in the military for these types of projects”, said Dukeman. Dukeman had to coordinate this effort with MNF assets located at several Forward Operating Base locations, however it appears it paid off very well.

“There are 700-1,000 people living in this village. Seeing 200 patients today is a significant part of the population”, stated Dukeman. “We also donated an ambulance to Qara Tapa about a week ago. I’m already looking forward to going back to this area”, continued Dukeman.

Using a building that serves as a trade school, the MNF quickly moved in and organized

the medical assessment screening process. “We had two adult stations, one pediatric station, and a makeshift pharmacy” said Maj. Kenneth Shedarowich, C Company, 230th FSB. Shedarowich is a Physician Assistant attached to the 30th BCT from E Company, 540th Main Support Battalion, California Army National Guard.

“I worked in the pediatric area and saw approximately 20-30 children with various illnesses ranging from basic anemia to moderate to severe malnutrition”, added Shedarowich.

It would seem like divine fate that this team of medical professionals was in this village on this particular day. “The very last patient that came in was a young boy that was very ill, severely dehydrated” continued Shedarowich. After a rapid assessment, IV fluids were started and antibiotics administered as the medical team facilitated the translators to obtain medical history information from the boy’s mother.

The totality of the boy’s medical history and what appeared to be septic shock prompted Shedarowich and Campbell to start the rapid process for a MEDIVAC aircraft. A hospital with a higher level of care was needed. Without the MEDIVAC the medical team did not expect the young boy in septic shock to survive.

“The 31st CASH(Combat Area Surgical Hospital) in Baghdad received the young boy and he was transferred to the ICU. The next day he was still in the ICU and stable”, added Shedarowich.

Towards the end of the medical assessment, after the last Iraqi civilian was seen by the medical team, an assortment of packaged food supplies was generously passed out to the Iraqi people. Additionally, the remaining medical supplies not expended were taken to the medical clinic in Qara Tapa for eventual use by the local Iraqi citizens.

The future of Iraq is going to be determined ultimately by its own people. As progress continues to spread across Iraq, the opportunity for the MNF to switch from kinetic actions to humanitarian and infrastructure support will be intensified.

“I think we need to be here, we are making a difference. Improvements in Iraq are not going to all happen overnight. In time they (Iraqis) will eventually be able to sustain themselves. What we are doing here is well worth it”, concluded Shedarowich.



Children from Qara Tapa gathered around the Multi National Soldiers. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Multi National Forces Soldiers conducting a routine medical assessment in Qara Tapa, Iraq, rapidly identified a young boy in critical condition that required a MEDIVAC airlift. Medical specialist from C Company 230th Forward Support Battalion, along with the 415th Civil Affairs, 7th Psyop Battalion, and parts of C Company 252nd Armor participated in the event, treating over 150 patients in one day. (Photo by Master Sgt Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Sgt. Jerard Thomas, Headquarters Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 252nd Armor, escorts a young boy during a medical assessment. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Sgt. Mayara Williamson, C Company, 230th Forward Support Battalion obtains medical history from a citizen of Qara Tapa during a medical screening. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



C Company, 252nd Armor Soldiers unload medical supplies. (Photo by Master Sgt Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Multi National Force Soldiers from 252nd Armor arrive in a village near Qara Tapa for a medical assessment mission for Iraqi civilians. (Photo by Master Sgt Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)

Iraqi Army continues making progress

Written by Master Sgt Mike Welsh,
30th BCT PAO

FOB CALDWELL, Iraq - Steady growth and rapid progression seems to be the status of the 3rd Brigade, Iraqi Army, based out of the Kirkush Military Training Base.

The 3rd Brigade is composed of Iraqi Soldiers from the 5th, 6th, and 7th Battalions, all which have achieved a high level of confidence incident to completing the military training program conducted by the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team (CMATT).

“For just about three months our job working with these guys has been to provide coaching, teaching, mentoring” stated Maj. Pete Fedak, CMATT, who has been working with the 6th Battalion. Fedak and his training team are attached to CMATT from the U.S. Army Combat Maneuver Training Center, located in Germany. “The most important mission in this country is training the Iraqi Security Forces” continued Fedak.

Demonstrating commitment and resolve in support to the Iraqi Army training program facilitated by CMATT, the 3rd Brigade was paid a visit last Thursday by Gen. Peter Pace and Lt. Gen. David Petraeus.

Pace is the U.S. Armed Forces Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, making him the second highest ranking general in the U.S. military. Petraeus recently returned to Iraq after being selected by President Bush to lead the mission of training Iraq’s Security Forces, which includes Civilian Police training for the Iraqis.

During the meeting at the 6th Battalion, Coalition officers discussed the operational aspects associated with training Brigade size units at KMTB. Maximizing training resources and assuring the development of NCOs (Non Commission Officers) were just a few of the topics discussed.

Soldiers from the 6th Battalion started conducting military operations in the Diyala Province recently, as the 3rd Brigade expands its role in the security of Iraq. Missions conducted by the 6th Battalion have included traffic control check points; dismount foot patrols, and cordon and search operations.

Working with the 6th Battalion and CMATT has been an Iraqi citizen hired as a translator. According to the Iraqi translator, “The new Iraqi Army wants to build a relationship with the people. They have the same culture, the same custom as the people. What they want is for the people to trust them when they see the Army coming. This Army will protect them”. (Per his request, the translators name was withheld for security reasons).

Ultimately, the safety and security of Iraq is going to rest on the shoulders of the Iraqi citizens, not the Coalition Forces. Iraqi Security Forces are extremely critical in the success of Iraq’s security and the recent undertaken by Soldiers from the 3rd Brigade are an excellent example of what the future can bring.



Gen. Peter Pace (left) and Lt. Gen. David Petraeus (middle) meet the Executive Officer, for the 6th Battalion, Iraqi Army, at Kirkush Military Training Base. The meeting included lunch with the Iraqi Soldiers and provided an opportunity for the leaders to discuss the continuing success of the Coalition Military Training Team.



Soldiers with the Iraqi Army, 6th Battalion, conduct a cordon and search mission in a small village in eastern Diyala. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Iraqi Army Soldiers pass in review during their graduation at the Kirkush Military Training Base. Mentoring and training for the Soldiers was provided by personnel from the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Vehicles are checked by Iraqi Soldiers from the 6th Battalion, during a traffic check point operation setup on a highway in eastern Diyala. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)

Nassr Academy holds ING graduation

Written by Master Sgt Mike Welsh,
30th BCT PAO

FOB CALDWELL, Iraq – Last Saturday, a platoon size formation of Iraqi men graduated from the Iraqi National Guard (ING) Recruit Training course at the Diyala Nassr Training Academy. The academy and training takes place at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Caldwell near Kirkush.

These Iraqi men have joined the ING and are making the conscious choice to serve their country, knowing that the threat of contact with a brutal insurgent force is very real. “In the long run, I think these guys will determine the success of the country” said Capt. Jack Midyette, Headquarters Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 113th Field Artillery. Midyette and his team of Soldiers have taken on the mission of training a new generation of Iraqi heroes.

There is a waiting period of about 30 days or so from the time a Soldier joins the ING and attends the academy in Tikrit. “The new ING guys have not been to the academy, but they have the responsibility of manning traffic checkpoints, participating in security patrols” continued Midyette. Recognizing the need for initial training the Nassr (Nassr is the Iraqi word for Victory) Academy was established. “This course is sort of like a military orientation for the Soldiers. Hopefully this training can help save a Soldiers life” said Midyette.

During the 10 day Recruit Training course, the Soldiers receive a variety of training taught by the cadre from the 1st Battalion, 113th Field Artillery. “The 10 day course will cover things such as weapon familiarization, map reading, basic medical task, and convoy operations” said Capt Tim Mangum, Headquarters Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 113th Field Artillery. “We have to get them as a developed as a trained force so that they can effectively take over the checkpoints” added Mangum. “We are close with these guys. These are our Iraqi brothers” concluded Mangum.

Local residents in the Diyala Province can expect to see more and more ING patrols as the mission of security becomes a full time Iraqi responsibility. Additionally, the 3rd Brigade of the Iraqi Army has started conducting military operations in the Diyala regional area.

The foundation for a peaceful Iraq was established with the Transfer of Sovereignty last June. When the right time arrives, Coalition Forces will depart Iraq and the future of this new country will ultimately depend on its very own citizens and security forces.



Brig. Gen. Dan Hickman (left), Commander, 30th Brigade Combat Team (BCT) congratulates Iraqi National Guard (ING) Soldiers that have just completed the first Recruit Training course at the Nassr Academy. ING Soldiers attend the orientation Recruit Training program prior to reporting for Basic Training. Members of the 1st Battalion, 113th Field Artillery, 30th BCT, conduct the instruction at FOB Caldwell in Iraq. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT)



After graduating from the new Nassr Academy at FOB Caldwell, two Iraqi National Guard Soldiers congratulate each other on their success. The Iraqi National Guard is part of the Iraqi Security Force structure and plays a key role across all of Iraq. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Lt. Col. Mark Strong, Commander, 1st Battalion, 113th Field Artillery, congratulates Iraqi National Guard Soldiers graduating from the newly established Nassr Academy. The Nassr Academy will provide initial training for the Iraqi National Guard, Iraqi Police, and the Department of Border Enforcement.

Civil Military Operations in AO Hickory



Two of the community leaders for Balad Ruz, Chief of Police Dawood Mohammed Aziz (left) and Mayor Mohammed Maroof (center), met with Lt. Col. Gregory Wilcoxon, Commander, 1st Battalion, 150th Armor, and several Civil Affairs representatives from Task Force Mountaineer to discuss security related issues in eastern Diyala. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Task Force Thunderbolt hosted a Regional Security Council working group at Forward Operating Base Cobra. The meeting was attended by Brig. Gen. Dan Hickman, Commander, 30th Brigade Combat Team, and several local Iraqi government leaders. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Capt. Robert Bungarder, Commander, E Troop, 196th Cavalry, talks with an Iraqi contractor at the City Government Building in Tuz. Multi National Forces personnel and local government workers coordinate with citizens and contractors from a customer service help desk. "The goal since the transfer of power is for the Iraqi government to run things and we provide mentoring" said Bungarder. (Photo by Master Sgt Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



(Left to right) 1st Lt David Moxley, G Battery, 202nd Air Defense Artillery, Sheik Abdulla, and Maj Lowell McKinster, Headquarters Headquarters Company, 30th Brigade Combat Team, complete the final payment to the Sheik Abdulla for renovation cost of the al-Naqashbaudy Mosque in as-Sadiyah. The total cost of the project was \$25,000, which was funded by the Coalition with appropriations for Iraqi infrastructure improvements. (Photo by Master Sgt. Mike Welsh, 30th BCT PAO)



Never to be forgotten by those privileged to serve beside him.
Those that knew him saw a dedicated Soldier,
a proud father, and a devoted son.

Sgt. DeForest L. Talbert
C Company, 1st Battalion, 150th Armor Battalion
KIA on 27 July 2004, Bald Ruz, Iraq

Connections back home

Written by Cpl. Matthew Putney,
30th BCT Public Affairs

FOB Caldwell, Iraq- The 279th Signal Company from Gunterville, Alabama is the communication platform assisting the 30th BCT (Brigade Combat Team). B Company, 279th is tasked with providing the Soldiers of AO (Area of Operation) Hickory constant and reliable communications. With an AO roughly the size of Connecticut, maintaining combat readiness through good communication is essential.

“Trying to keep up with my Soldiers has been a little difficult at times. They are spread throughout the AO at ten different locations. I know they are doing their jobs and doing them well, because of good strong NCO (Non-Commissioned Officer) leadership”, said 1st Sgt. Johnny Whisenant, B Company, 279th Signal.

“I have been with some of these guys for 30 years. I want them to know that I’m there to help them in anyway that I can”, continued Whisenant. “I know my senior NCOs are doing all they can to take care of the Soldiers at various FOBs”, added Whisenant.

Sgt. Jacob Hicks of Headquarters Headquarters Company (HHC), 279th Signal, out of Huntsville, Alabama is a 35J (Computer Automations Systems Technician). Hicks who has been in the National Guard for four years, all with the 279th, repairs and trouble shoots the telephones, secure lines

and microwave receivers used by the 30th BCT. “In my civilian job I do almost the same thing, I repair and maintain computers and telecommunication equipment,” said Hicks.

Another 279th Soldier with a very important job is Staff Sgt. Julius Moore. Moore is the NCOIC (Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge) of the MWR (Morale, Welfare, Recreation) phone and computer center. With 27 computers, 9 Segovia phones and 24 AT&T phones the center offers the Soldiers a choice in ways to communication with loved ones.

“Keeping the Soldiers of the 30th BCT in touch with family and friends is a very important task”, says Moore. “We see between 500 and 600 Soldiers a day and they seem to be happy with the phone and internet service. If there is a problem it is usually not on our end”, stated Moore with a smile.

“We have acquired new satellite equipment that our Soldiers are quickly coming up to speed on,” said Capt. Allen D. Cheek, Commander, B Company, 279th Signal. This technology has helped replace the “line of site” equipment. The unit supplies route coverage to the MSRT (Mobile, Subscriber, Radio, Terminal), as well as the CNR (Combat Net Radio), and DNVT (Digital Nonsecure Voice Telephone).



Sgt. Jacob Hicks, Headquarters Headquarters Company, 279th Signal Battalion, repairs a SINGARS radio mount at Forward Operating Base Caldwell. (Photo by Cpl. Matthew Putney, 30th BCT PAO)

Back home in Alabama support for the 279th has been tremendous. The unit has been able through their communication assets to send phone messages back to WKSB radio in special events as well. Their next special event is the Blue Ribbon distribution. One gold star is placed on a blue ribbon for each family member that is deployed. The ribbon is then hung on the Soldiers home.

“So far the family support group has kept family members up on everything going on; we are very pleased” said Capt. Cheek.



Staff Sgt Maurice Williams (left) and Master Sgt. J.P. Cole (right), both with Headquarters Headquarters Company, 230th Forward Support Battalion, had their Oath for re-enlistment administered in the Brigade Tactical Operation Center at FOB Caldwell by Brig. Gen. Dan Hickman (center), Commander, 30th Brigade Combat Team. (Photo by Capt. Matthew Handley, 30th BCT)

EXTENSIONS and BONUSES

Get the correct facts and all of the most current information on how to continue your military career and learn about incentives from the Recruiting and Retention team, located at FOB Caldwell. Sgt First Class Shawn Streussnig and Sgt First Class Robert Weartherly are the Retention NCO team. You can contact them by DNVT at 646-1043.

CALL 646-1043