

# ARMY RESERVE

MAGAZINE

VOLUME 49, NUMBER 2



## OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

Transforming While Mobilizing (Part II)

A Soldier's Journal

Scenes From the Desert





# MAGAZINE

# ARMY RESERVE

Since 1954.

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## ON THE COVER

Army Reserve Sgt. Paul T. Abernathy, a squad leader in the Bridgeport, W. Va.-based 459th Multi-Role Bridge Company, turns his head to hear an order during a firefight in the town of Al Gharraff in central Iraq. For the full story, see *An Arab-American at War in the People* section. (PHOTO: SGT. FRANK N. PELLEGRINI, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO)



## INSIDE BACK COVER

Soldiers from the 411th Civil Affairs Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Danbury, Conn., deliver meals to displaced families living in the former Al-Rashid military complex. (PHOTO: SPEC. RYAN SMITH, 372ND MPAD)

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**SUBMISSIONS** · *Army Reserve Magazine* invites articles, story ideas, photographs and other material of interest to members of the U.S. Army Reserve. Manuscripts and other correspondence for the editor should be addressed to Commander, U.S. Army Reserve Command, Attn: Public Affairs (ARM), 1401 Deshler Street, SW, Fort McPherson, GA 30330-2000, telephone (404) 464-8500 or dsn 367-8500. All email submissions should go to [usarmag@usarc-emh2.army.mil](mailto:usarmag@usarc-emh2.army.mil). All articles *must* be submitted electronically or on disk or CD. Unsolicited manuscripts and photographs will not be returned. Query by letter.

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## News Briefs

### HOW TO AVOID MONEY PROBLEMS WHEN RETURNING HOME

**A**lthough Federal law mandates that active duty military personnel receive special consideration when it comes to their jobs and financial obligations, some employers and creditors do not know, understand or comply with the regulations. As a result, Army Reserve soldiers, among other military members, can find their return to civilian life complicated by lost jobs or unexpectedly high bills.

The lesson returning service members should know is this. If creditors do not follow the rules, soldiers should get legal assistance to make them comply. First, soldiers should ask their local judge advocate general attorney to write a letter explaining how their rights as a service member were violated. If that doesn't remedy the situation, soldiers should then consider suing in Federal court for the relief to which they are entitled. While judge advocates cannot take these cases, there are volunteer attorneys all over the country who will. The ombudsman service of the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve will help locate a lawyer.

Federal law also protects returning service members whose employers are unwilling to put them back on their jobs. The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) has lots of case law supporting it. And the law is clear that service members are entitled to return to the jobs they previously held. Service members also must be treated for seniority and pension purposes as if there had been no time away for military service.

The service member who believes he or she has been wronged has the right to take the employer to court and seek back wages, penalties and legal fees. However, the best course of action is to first talk to the employer. Sometimes, there can be a misunderstanding. But, if that doesn't work, the service

member should turn to his or her unit's judge advocate attorney. If that fails, then he or she should ask the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve for a legal referral.

Situations where the issues are not always clear mainly involve layoffs. The law's reference to layoffs uses seniority — a common union benchmark — as the basis for deciding whether a military person still has a job. Employers who lay off workers can lay off a military person on active duty if that person would have been laid off anyway determined by his or her seniority date.

However, most layoffs today are not determined by seniority. Take, for example, the 35,000 people laid off by Boeing, many of whom were Army Reserve soldiers. Boeing had no system of seniority, so it was difficult to determine whether a job was really gone.

In this kind of situation, the law places the burden of proof on the employer. Therefore, if a soldier comes home to no job and the reason is unclear, the employer is required to bear the expense of any legal action to determine if the company is on solid ground.

Further, some returning soldiers are finding that, while they may have a job to come home to, they missed out on raises while they were on active duty. Companies that give only merit increases are, in many cases, telling returning service members that they aren't entitled to raises because they weren't around for annual performance reviews.

This issue currently is being litigated and it is expected that the courts will decide that employers must give an affected employee an amount that reflects previous performance experience. So, in other words, a worker who had been a stellar performer in the past would be entitled to a raise reflecting that, even though he or she was on active duty. For more information, visit <http://www.esgr.org>.

### ARMY RESERVE CELEBRATES 95TH BIRTHDAY

Who can be in the Army Reserve, where and how they serve, and what they can do have changed many times in the long march of the Army Reserve from 1908 to 2003. There have been numerous changes in uniform, structure, equipment, leadership, terms of service, doctrine and even name.

Army Reserve soldiers have served, fought and even died in an ever-changing and ever-increasing list of places: along the U.S. and Mexican border; in Flanders fields and the Meuse-Argonne; at a Civilian Conservation Corps camp in Pennsylvania; on Bataan, Omaha Beach and Okinawa; near the Chosen Reservoir; at Chu Lai, Grenada, Panama, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Somalia, Haiti, Central America, Bosnia, Hungary, and Kosovo; at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon; and in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, the Philippines, Guantanamo Bay and Iraq.

Throughout it all, however, one thing has not changed — the fundamental concept that the Army Reserve would be comprised of American patriots whose professional skills were not routinely required by the Army during peacetime, but were recognized as being absolutely critical during mobilization or other military crises.

Ninety-five years after its birth, this combination of devotion to country, readiness to serve, unique professional qualifications, and immediate responsiveness in support of crises remains the fundamental principle for all Army Reserve soldiers and units. And, no matter where the future sends Army Reserve men and women, they will remain wedded to this foundation.

To learn more about the Army Reserve's long and distinguished history, visit <http://www.army.mil/usar/ocar/95thstory.html>.



## THE EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY MEMBER PROGRAM

If you have a family member with a special healthcare or educational need, enrollment in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) is mandatory if you are an active duty soldier. This includes soldiers in the Active Army; Army Reserve soldiers and National Guardsmen in the Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) program; and Army Reserve soldiers on active duty for more than 30 days.

The program is designed to assist soldiers who have family members with special healthcare or educational needs. In addition, the Army's EFMP is designed to decrease the time a soldier is unavailable for duty due to issues dealing with exceptional family members.

Army Regulation (AR) 608-75, dated October 15, 2002, provides a detailed description of everything EFMP families need to know. Once a family is enrolled, the appropriate personnel manager will consider the special needs of a soldier's family members during any future assignment selection process.

Soldiers initiate enrollment in EFMP by contacting their nearest Army Medical Treatment Facility EFMP case coordinator. The family's healthcare provider will then be asked to complete a Medical Summary (DA Form 5962-R) and/or Educational Summary (DA Form 5291-R). These forms can be found on the U.S. Army Publishing Agency Web site (<http://www.usapa.army.mil>) or by contacting the appropriate Army Medical Treatment Facility.

If a soldier is determined to be eligible for EFMP, an approval memorandum signed by the EFMP physician will be attached to the forms and forwarded to the Full-Time Support Management Directorate (FTSMD). Enrollment is then recorded in the AGR Management Information System (AGRMIS) for use

by the soldier's personnel manager during reassignment. Soldiers are responsible for updating their EFMP enrollment as the needs of their exceptional family members change or every three years, whichever comes first.

### Accommodations and Implications

The Office of the Chief, Army Reserve (OCAR) Permanent Change of Station Policy, dated December 4, 2002, states that FTSMD will consider current approved EFMP enrollment during reassignment as contained in AR 608-75. Personnel managers will do their best to match grades and occupational specialties with valid personnel requirements in locations where the exceptional family member's needs can be met.

Soldiers who are enrolled will still be subject to worldwide assignment and may be called upon to serve an unaccompanied tour. However, special education needs will be taken into consideration. Assignments within the 50 states and territories will not be based on the educational needs of children. Questions about EFMP assignment processing should be directed to the soldier's FTSMD personnel manager.

Further, enrollment in the EFMP will not have a negative impact upon on a soldier's career. Information concerning enrollment in EFMP or any data used in the program will not be made available to selection boards.

### Additional Information

Additional information can be obtained through <http://www.armycommunityservice.org>, a Web site that provides useful tools, addresses, case studies, and frequently asked questions. Further, soldiers who live near an Army post can contact their local Army Community Service (ACS) office for further assistance.

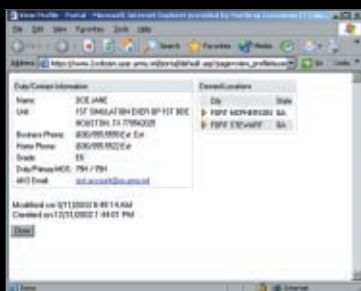
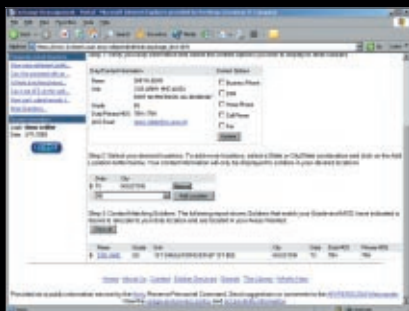
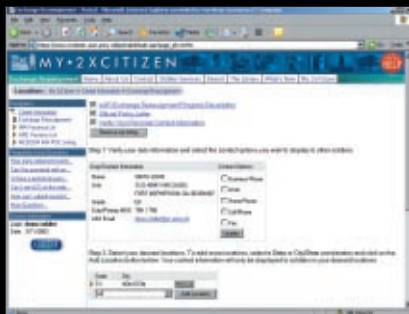
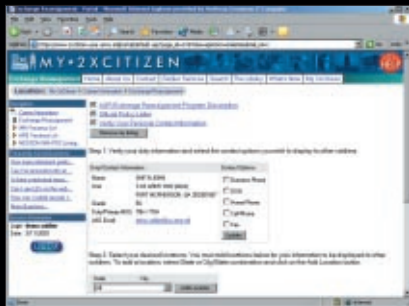
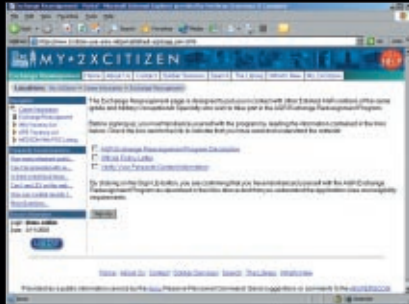


## IRAQ FACTS

- ★ **Background:** Formerly part of the Ottoman Empire, Iraq became an independent kingdom in 1932. A "republic" was proclaimed in 1958, but in actuality a series of military strongmen have ruled the country since then, the latest being Saddam Hussein. Territorial disputes with Iran led to an inconclusive and costly eight-year war (1980–88). In August 1990, Iraq seized Kuwait, but was expelled by US-led UN coalition forces during the Gulf War of January–February 1991. Following Kuwait's liberation, the UN Security Council (UNSC) required Iraq to scrap all weapons of mass destruction and long-range missiles, and to allow UN verification inspections. Continued Iraqi noncompliance with UNSC resolutions during the past 12 years resulted in the US-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003 and the ouster of the Saddam Hussein regime. Coalition forces remain in Iraq, helping to restore degraded infrastructure and facilitating the establishment of a freely elected government.
- ★ **Location:** Middle East, bordering the Persian Gulf between Iran and Kuwait.
- ★ **Area Comparative:** Slightly more than twice the size of Idaho.
- ★ **Border Countries:** Iran; Jordan; Kuwait; Saudi Arabia; Syria; Turkey.
- ★ **Climate:** Mostly desert; mild to cool winters with dry, hot, cloudless summers; northern mountainous regions along Iranian and Turkish borders experience cold winters with occasionally heavy snows that melt in early spring, sometimes causing extensive flooding in central and southern Iraq.
- ★ **Terrain:** Mostly broad plains; reedy marshes along Iranian border in south with large flooded areas; mountains along borders with Iran and Turkey.
- ★ **Natural Hazards:** Dust storms; sandstorms; floods.
- ★ **Population:** 24,683,313 (July 2003 est.)
- ★ **Life Expectancy at Birth:** Total population, 67.81 years. Female, 68.99. Male, 66.7 years. (2003 est.)
- ★ **Infant Mortality Rate:** Total: 55.16 deaths/1,000 live births. Female: 48.95 deaths/1,000 live births. Male: 61.09 deaths/1,000 live births. (2003 est.)
- ★ **Ethnic Groups:** Arab 75%–80%; Kurdish 15%–20%; Turkoman, Assyrian or other 5%.
- ★ **Religions:** Muslim 97% (Shi'a 60%–65%, Sunni 32%–37%); Christian or other 3%.
- ★ **Languages:** Arabic; Kurdish (official in Kurdish regions); Assyrian; Armenian.

SOURCE: The Central Intelligence Agency's World Factbook, updated August 1, 2003.

# REASSIGNMENT ONLINE



## EXCHANGE REASSIGNMENT WEB PAGE GOES LIVE

Effective January 15, 2003, the U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Command's Full Time Support Management Directorate (FTSMD), with the help of the 2xCitizen (<https://www.2xCitizen.usar.army.mil>) webmasters at the Northrup Grumman Corporation, launched the AGR Exchange Reassignment Web page on My2xCitizen. The Web page is designed to enable Active Guard and Reserve soldiers in the ranks of sergeant and staff sergeant to find soldiers like themselves who want to exchange assignments free of charge.

To use the site, soldiers must do the following:

- ★ Go to the 2xCitizen Web page (<https://www.2xCitizen.usar.army.mil>) and click on the link titled, "AGR"
- ★ From the left-hand side menu, click on "Exchange Reassignment"

The site includes the OCAR memorandum that explains the program and describes eligibility requirements, as well as allows soldiers to download a sample Exchange Reassignment request packet and view procedures for submitting their packets to FTSMD.

Once soldiers determine they are eligible, they can then click on the link found at the top of the page titled, "Exchange Advertisement and Search Tool," which will enable them to logon to My2xCitizen. Once logged on, soldiers must verify that they have read and understood the program's policies and procedures, as well as update their contact information. Qualified soldiers can then begin searching for other soldiers interested in "swapping" assignments.

The site automatically will use the information provided by eligible soldiers to begin finding matches. At the bottom of the page, all soldiers who have expressed a desire to be in a particular soldier's current duty location will be listed as possible matches. In other

words, soldiers will be able to see all soldiers interested in their assignment. For example, if a soldier were assigned to a unit in Houston, Texas, a listing of all soldiers who have been to the site and entered a desire to transfer to Texas or Houston, Texas, will be listed at the bottom of the page.

Further, when soldiers enter their own geographical preferences, they can click on a button to limit the list of soldiers appearing at the bottom of the page to only those soldiers in their preferred geographical area. In other words, the list of soldiers appearing at the bottom of the page will be further defined to show only those soldiers who desire the soldier's assignment AND currently are assigned in one of the areas the soldier desires to be transferred to.

FTSMD encourages all soldiers to use the program after ensuring that all policies, procedures and eligibility criteria are understood and have been met. Again, only soldiers in the ranks of sergeant and staff sergeant will be able to access this valuable tool.

## ARPERSCOM INTRODUCES NEW ACTIVE GUARD AND RESERVE (AGR) STREAMLINED ACCESSION PROCESS

No longer will soldiers have to wait six to 10 months to find out if they have made the grade for the Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) program. On January 7, 2003, the Chief, Army Reserve (CAR) approved a streamlined accession process, which will have the effect of trimming months off the old process.

Under the new streamlined AGR transitioning process, the goal is to have a 90-day turnaround time for notifying soldiers they have been selected for the AGR program. According to the U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Command (ARPERSCOM), they plan to make the transition to the new process happen immediately.

Interested soldiers must submit fully completed AGR entrance packets to: Commander, ARPERSCOM, ATTN: ARPC-PSV-BB (AGR Entrance Board), 1 Reserve Way, St. Louis, MO 63132-5200.

The packet will need to include physical exam results (from within the last five years) and an HIV test result (from within the past six months) for it to be considered complete. This is a major change from how the accession process was conducted previously.

The ARPERSCOM commander will ensure that a sufficient number of AGR Entrance Boards are conducted to preclude the need for any special (off-cycle) boards. An AGR Entrance Board will convene when there is a minimum of 200 to 300 AGR applications submitted to ARPERSCOM's Personnel Actions and Services Directorate. While the new board process began in February 2003, the new packet requirements will not be implemented until June 2003.

The Full-Time Support Management Directorate (FTSMD) will advertise projected unit vacancies by grade and military occupational specialties for enlisted soldiers, and by areas of concentration and functional areas for officers. Soldiers interested in the AGR program must be available for worldwide assignment.

FTSMD accession/transition teams will conduct local background checks on all soldiers prior to publishing initial permanent change-of-station orders. In addition, FTSMD will continue to serve as the lead coordinating organization for the implementation of the streamlined accession process.

For more information on the AGR program or to request an application packet, visit the 2xCitizen Web site at [http://www.2xCitizen.usar.army.mil/soldierservices/programs/agr/agr\\_program.asp](http://www.2xCitizen.usar.army.mil/soldierservices/programs/agr/agr_program.asp), or call 1 (800) 325-4118.

## U.S. ARMY RESERVE IMPLEMENTS COGNOS TO MONITOR AND ANALYZE OPERATIONAL READINESS

The U.S. Army Reserve has implemented a business intelligence (BI) solution from Cognos to provide thousands of military officials and administrators with instant and secure Web access, and the ability to report on the status of all troops and assets. With Cognos, commanders and staff have the integrated information they need to effectively plan and manage unit resources. Reserve leaders can readily access information in a variety of key areas — personnel, training, assets, resource management, logistics, maintenance, parts inventory, etc. — all of which will enable them to see exactly where units stand and to ensure units are always battle-ready.

“Using Cognos, more than 19,000 individuals can now access and work with information to improve the effectiveness of their units,” said Lt. Col. David C’de Baca, U.S. Joint Forces Command, U.S. Army Reserve. “Military leaders and administrators can gain instant awareness of troops and assets, and target resources precisely for maximum cost-effectiveness.”

With Cognos, Reserve officers and administrators can access critical status information when and where they need it. This ability — to perform deep analyses and to gain up-to-date status of operations across all units — should enable threats to be pinpointed early and resources to be reallocated quickly and easily to respond in times of crisis.

## ARMY AND ARMY RESERVE AGREE TO MERGE CIO SHOPS

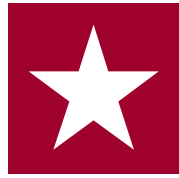
The Army and Army Reserve have signed a memorandum of agreement that calls for integrating the Army Reserve's CIO staff into the Army CIO organization. The move was prompted by a desire to better align IT operations and support, and demonstrates both parties' commitment to the transformation of the Army and to a common, single Army enterprise.

Daniel Weiner, II, Army Reserve CIO, said, “The merger does not require any cutbacks, including my own position, and instead will result in significant efficiencies in technical, operational and human resources.”

Under the memorandum of agreement, the Army Reserve will continue to be responsible for command, control, communications and computers/information technology (C4/IT) planning, programming, budgeting and execution support for all related appropriations. The Army CIO will continue to provide strategic guidance and policy oversight to ensure that Army Reserve C4/IT requirements are integrated and validated with the Army's financial management process. The Army Reserve regional CIO will retain authority for the Army Reserve virtual region, and all Army Reserve major command CIO functions and responsibilities will remain with the Army Reserve CIO in coordination with the Army Reserve Command CIO.

“The Army Reserve counts communications and signal technology as one of its core competencies,” said Lt. Gen. James R. Helmly, Chief of the Army Reserve. “In today's security environment, where the speed and quality of IT affects actions on battlefields, the Army Reserve's two theater signal commands — the 311th and the 335th, are an integral part of today's force.” **AR**





# Transforming While MOBILIZING

PART TWO



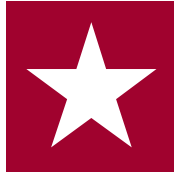
*Interview with Lt. Gen. James R. Helmly  
Chief, Army Reserve  
(Part II of II)*

**Army Reserve Magazine (ARM):** Traditionally, the Army Reserve has been heavily concerned with combat support and combat service support. One of the things being discussed now is having some of the combat arms functions come into the Reserve. What is your opinion on this? Is this something the Army Reserve can do and do well?

**LTG Helmly:** The history of the Army Reserve dates back to 1908, when the Army Reserve was established in law principally to act as a support and leader-rich organization. For example, the Army Reserve formed the core of the Reserve Officers Training Corps. This led to our being able to produce a whole cadre of capable officers pre-WWII. The Army Reserve also ran the Civilian Conservation Corps. Those kinds of things.

During the Cold War years, the Army Reserve stood up several separate brigades — three I believe. And we had several separate combat battalions stationed around the world — tube, artillery, infantry, and armor. Then, of course, during the war years of WWII and Korea, we had Reserve divisions within the Army structure. The 81st, for example, started out as the 81st infantry division in WWII.





*I am very comfortable  
with where we are today,  
which is heavily invested  
in combat support  
and combat service support.*

*We're growing both the AGR  
and MilTech programs.  
And we are changing the way  
we manage the AGR program.*

**ARM:** So, I imagine, the Army Reserve has some degree of inherent expertise in combat arms already.

**LTG Helmly:** We do. And I am very comfortable with where we are today, which is heavily invested in combat support and combat service support. In the future, I believe we will explore the establishment of more military police units. And, as we finish out the activation, we are standing up two new black hawk helicopter units. We also have some work going on right now not to grow the size of our aviation force, but to grow its readiness and strength. That consists primarily of our two attack helicopter battalions, our two black hawk units, several fixed wing units, and several Chinooks.

We plan to establish more biological detection and surveillance units. And we probably are going to inactivate some maintenance units, such as water. Further, we will grow the readiness of our watercraft and transportation fleets. And, in the future, I think we will see ourselves more heavily invested in multi-component units and integrated formations — establishing more echo companies or shadow units if you prefer. These echo units, which will have no equipment, will assist the Active component aviation units, allowing them to man their aircraft at higher crew ratios during wartime.

**ARM:** Similar to the way the Air Force Reserve does that.

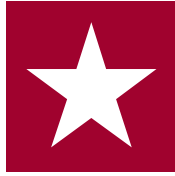
**LTG Helmly:** People often point to the Air Force Reserve as a tremendous success story. However, we are more integrated with the Active component of the Army than the Air National Guard, and we are about as integrated as the Air Force Reserve. And we will remain heavily committed to our medical force. We need to do a better job of readying, preparing and retaining soldiers in that very important portion of our force.

**ARM:** You bring up an interesting point. The Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard have about 23 percent full-time manning because they are so heavily integrated. Are you looking at additional AGR full-time people to get the Army Reserve to that level?

**LTG Helmly:** We're growing both the AGR and MilTech programs. And we are changing the way we manage the AGR program. We are building a lifecycle model, and we will manage it against predictable, patterned career development — albeit with a lesser number of PCS moves than an Active component soldier will have.

But today, we have the lowest level of full-time support of any of the Reserve components. And I don't see that changing. There is just too much politics involved and too much ground to be made up. However, just to give you an example of how important we consider this to be, we are harvesting RPA dollars to buy out full man-years of the AGR ramp increase, and we're growing that every year.

We also are looking at changing the MilTech program in one slight way. We want to use our MilTechs more in training, instruction and management functions as opposed to straight functional performance. One example is the way in which we are moving MilTechs into AMSA shops. We are exploring moving more MilTech positions into the units rather than running supporting functions like AMSA shops.



*We will not deny soldiers training.  
We will send them to required and  
authorized training.*

*The issue is the break mobilization  
causes in soldiers' ties with their  
civilian employment.*

**ARM:** You state that you are harvesting RPA money to pay for additional full-time support. What does that mean to traditional Army Reserve Soldiers? Does it mean they will have fewer opportunities, or is it merely a reflection of the fact that you have extra RPA money because so many people have been mobilized?

**LTG Helmly:** There is never extra RPA money. Certainly, we are avoiding some costs due to the numbers of soldiers we have mobilized. But all of that is accountable. In some cases, the money will be taken back from us by the Army OSD and OMB. Having said that, however, we are reducing the amount of RPA dollars we provide to commanders for extra tours of duty, etc.

We will not deny soldiers training. We will send them to required and authorized training. But you can't have your cake and eat it too. People want more full-time support, and I have to pay for that somehow. And I have to grow our levels of full-time support. So another thing we are doing is trying to harvest spaces that are outside the Army Reserve and bring them back inside the Army Reserve command and units.

**ARM:** What is your view on double-tapping and back-to-back mobilizations. How do you think that is going to affect the Army Reserve in the long run?

**LTG Helmly:** Obviously, it is going to hurt us. Predictability, again, is the key. I just stumbled across a case yesterday where a young man — a linguist — was mobilized for 179 days. We demobilized him on January 23, and now we are mobilizing him again. This is inexcusable. I have sent a very strong message to the Department of the Army that, in my judgment, it is better to mobilize soldiers for one-year periods. Soldiers will then have a greater degree of certainty that we will not have to come back to them.

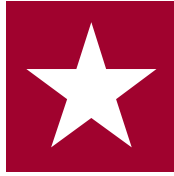
We have gotten ourselves into a mess because, instead of looking at mobilization holistically, we have done it incrementally and in pieces. So, we end up mobilizing soldiers for Guantanamo Bay for a year regardless of the fact that we have a deployment policy of 179 days. And, then, when I have to rotate them out of Guantanamo, I have to find other soldiers to backfill them. In Kuwait, we have soldiers under three different statuses. We're under PSRC for 179 days in Bosnia and Kosovo.

I want 179 days — the same as the Active component. I'm fighting for that. I'm saying, "Let's get it done and then bring the soldiers home with a greater degree of certainty that we're not going to have to mobilize them again."

Where soldiers go, while important to them and their families, is not the issue. The issue is the break mobilization causes in soldiers' ties with their civilian employment — whether they are working in private practice as doctors, lawyers, engineers, photographers, etc. or working for someone else. Regardless of soldiers' grades or employment status, we are interrupting their daily income that goes directly to paying the mortgage, car, kids' dental bills, education, clothing, everything. And soldiers cannot manage their resources predictably if we continue to start and stop all the time.

**ARM:** Are we fundamentally changing the nature of the Army Reserve? It seems that, depending upon what MOS and what unit soldiers are in, we're almost at the point where they are not really Army Reserve soldiers any more.

**LTG Helmly:** They are Army Reserve soldiers. However, we have gone through a metamorphosis here. For a very long time during the Cold War years, we never mobilized Army Reserve soldiers. We didn't even use Active component soldiers all that much. We didn't need to deploy them to operational missions.



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*We are being challenged.  
But we will meet that  
challenge with success.*

Following Vietnam, however, we had a small two- to three-week operation in Grenada. Then we had a small operation in Panama. And then things took off. We went off to a large operation in the Persian Gulf, and then a large part of the Army went home. At that point, the size of the Army came down and we have pretty much stayed at that size ever since. However, our involvement has increased.

Initially, we kept one battalion task force on the ground in Kuwait. Beginning in the late 1990s, it was up to a brigade task force in Kuwait. Then we went to Bosnia and stayed there. And we went to Kosovo and stayed there. And now we are engaged in a war. And the difference with this war is that it is a war of indeterminate length. It is around the world. It is not conducted all in one theater with large masses of manpower, but rather in many theaters around the world with smaller numbers.

We are in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan. We are in Kuwait, Qatar, Ethiopia — up to tens of thousands of soldiers. But our force is structured to meet masses of manpower in one particular theater of operation — not several theaters. So we're mal-structured. We're malformed. That is the reason why we have to attack our structure.

However, the nature of Reserve service as a purely one weekend a month, two weeks in the summer training group of soldiers that never gets mobilized over a 20–30 year period is over. That is not the world we live in. And that is not what our soldiers want. Most of our Reserve soldiers want to participate. They want to participate, but in a way that also allows them to manage their civilian careers and lives. And I believe that is achievable.

It is going to take internal transformation within the Reserve and some hard fights in Washington in order to force that change. But we need to change to properly organize, man, train, sustain, mobilize and manage our Reserve forces for this new environment. And we need to do it with some degree of predictability.

We have to do it. We have to do it because we are in a world that has changed faster than our ability to change with it. And because we will remain at war in some country even after Iraq because there will never be a shortage of “bad guys.” And because it is our turn in the box the same as it was for the generation of WWII.

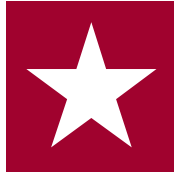
We are being challenged. But we will meet that challenge with success. It will require sacrifice by every citizen in the country — not only the members of the Armed Forces. But I have every degree of faith that our soldiers in the Army Reserve are up to that challenge. I know I am up to it and I expect everyone else to be up to it.

But will it be neat? Will it be clean? Will it be comfortable? It will be none of those. It will be hard work. It will be most uncomfortable. But we can change our force. We will get to a model — set a structure such that, for predictable missions like the sustainment of Balkan rotations, Guantanamo, etc., we will not have to mobilize a Reserve soldier for more than a nine-, ten- or 12-month period out of a six-year window. And, when you consider that, it means most soldiers with a five- to six-year window will change grades if we're doing our job properly. They will get promoted. So we may not even have to mobilize the same soldiers that amount of time if we get our structure in order and start to manage it correctly.









*...[Within] their first five years of service in today's Reserve, we will probably mobilize them for a six to 12-month period.*

*I intend for our people to be able to be schooled as leaders as they grow through grades...*

*Their job is to go to the unit of assignment, train, lead it and help make it better.*

**ARM:** What would you tell 18 year olds who are considering joining the Army Reserve right now?

**LTG Helmly:** First of all, there are the obvious things — pay for training, and commissary and px privileges. More importantly, however, we'll teach them technical skills. We'll allow them to grow in stature, responsibility, maturity, and leadership skills and experience.

Second, and on a more practical level, I'd tell them that the odds are that, within their first five years of service in today's Reserve, we will probably mobilize them for a six- to 12-month period. Thereafter, if they're fortunate, we won't have to mobilize them for more than a six- to 12-month period more than twice during the rest of a 20-year career.

Finally, I would tell them that I want them to stay more than 20 years and serve. But, if they do that and grow in grade and stature, more will be expected of them. If they want to become a sergeant first class, a chief warrant officer, or a field grade officer, for example, they are going to have to plan on some extra days, attend meetings and planning conferences, and take on additional schooling.

I also would tell them we are breaking the model. That we intend to school them in the future through ANOC, BNOC, first sergeant's course, CGSC, advanced course, war college, etc. However, while they're going to those schools, we are going to pay them and they won't have to be in a unit at that time. That's the Individuals Accounts piece of the package. They're going to be put into that just the same as the Active component.

Now, they might ask how that's going to work. Well, I don't know yet. But I'm charging on to get that changed because I know our people deserve that. I intend for our people to be able to be schooled as leaders as they grow through grades similar to the Active component in that they be allowed to get their training pay, but don't have to be in a unit at the same time. I want to do away with this idea that soldiers need to find their own slots in units. I don't want soldiers to find slots. I want to find slots for them. I want them to stay in the Army Reserve. That's my job. Their job is to go to the unit of assignment, train, lead it and help make it better. **AR**

This interview took place on March 14, 2003.

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[Left] "Their job is to go to the unit of assignment, train, lead it and help make it better." Lt. Gen. James R. Helmly, Chief, Army Reserve, March 14, 2003.

PHOTO COURTESY OF FT. DIX



# TWO WEEKS IN THE DESERT:

## *A Soldier's Journal of the March to Baghdad*



Members of the 459th Multi-Role Bridge Company construct a floating bridge over the Tigris River on the outskirts of Baghdad.

PHOTO: SPEC. CORY MEYMAN, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO

*By Lt. Col. Gerard Healy,  
U.S. Army Reserve PAO*

**M**ARCH 19TH: nothing is easy in the desert. Not with 20 pounds of gear strapped on. The flak vest goes on top of the desert camouflage uniform. The load bearing equipment (LBE) goes on top of the vest. The utility belt attached below the vest includes two canteens of water and a nine-millimeter pistol. The protective mask is strapped across the flak vest. And, on top of it all, goes the water pouch.

As a member of the Army Reserve Public Affairs team, I am traveling with the 459th Multi-Role Bridge Company from Bridgeport, West Virginia. But this day, we are in Kuwait, just south of Iraq, sitting around a campfire while darkened figures of soldiers toss wood and trash into the flames.

Pride and professionalism are evident in this unit. Earlier in the day, we learned the unit had placed second out of a field of 22 in a European bridge-building competition. Their professionalism also is evident in the quiet surrounding the camp.

Outside the camp, however, beyond the boats and bridge parts mounted on large vehicles, there are voices. Someone is yelling for a first sergeant. Someone else loudly asks for a Sergeant Brown. In contrast, the quiet within the 459th area is almost unnerving.





Soldiers of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force respond to sporadic sniper fire in the Iraqi town of An Nasiriyah.

All soldiers are in full battle gear. No head is without a Kevlar helmet, and no weapon is more than an arm's length away.

Capt. Timothy Vanderborne moves purposely around the perimeter of the camp. As the commander, he performs the last minute checks and talks often to First Sergeant Bell. There is a question of enough water. Bell heads out into the dark to contact a neighboring unit. Later, he reports the water problem is solved.

Vanderborne, at five feet seven inches, is not tall. However, even in the dark, his movements are easily monitored. He moves with energy, propelling himself forward with quick steps. At close range, his M-16 rifle is slung at a 45-degree angle across his chest, and a rubbery contraption that surrounds and holds his glasses distinguishes him from other soldiers.

"I want to get it done," he says, echoing the comments of his soldiers. By "it," he means the war with Iraq. The soldiers have been at Camp Hammer for eight days. These few words reveal their impatience.

"I've been waiting 12 years," says one soldier standing by a wooden table outside a field cooking shelter. "I wasn't at Desert Storm, but I'm here now. Let's do it." Heads nod in agreement.

"I just wish we came here earlier," says Vanderborne as he surveys the camp from his jeep. "At Arifjan, the soldiers were losing their focus a bit. You could see it in their eyes. They're sharp now."

As the commander of the 172-person unit, Vanderborne is responsible for everything the unit does or fails to do in the coming battle. When asked if the current situation or his responsibilities cause him concern, he flashes a quick smile. "This?" he asks. "This is nothing. Back home I manage a chemical plant."

Vanderborne and his entire company are members of the Army Reserve. Last October, they learned of their deployment. Four months later, they arrived in Kuwait. The 459th includes construction workers, college students, truck drivers, a school counselor, a policeman, and even a bartender.



Soldiers of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force protect a passing convoy in the Iraqi town of An Nasiriyah.



Marine Cobra gunships circle a neighborhood in the town of An Nasiriyah.

*The big news of the day is that, surprisingly, no one seems to mind the chemical suits. The charcoal-lined, thick texture of the suits works well in keeping out the desert's cold night air.*

Camp Hammer is in the process of being disassembled. Erased from the desert landscape. Later, long rows of vehicles will begin a northwest trek — not yet into enemy territory, but closer to the coming fight.

It is now beyond the President's deadline, and America is at war. So, the men and women of the 459th begin the move toward Baghdad. Standing between them and Saddam Hussein's home lies the Euphrates River. Before the end of the month, the members of the 459th may well bridge it.

Since leaving Camp Hammer, it is hard to measure time in hours and days. There is driving time, which is almost continuous, and there is sleep time. In between, there is the time spent sitting by the side of the road wondering if there will be any sleep time.

**March 20:** Today, at 5 p.m., the unit witnessed several energy-boosting events. First, was the sighting of numerous rockets traveling in clusters northward, sent on their way by Multiple Launch Rocket Systems. Next, was the clear view of what appeared to be a SCUD missile, arching directly over the camp before suddenly disintegrating into the desert air. Finally, was the word to don our chemical suits.

**March 21:** The big news of the day is that, surprisingly, no one seems to mind the chemical suits. The charcoal-lined, thick texture of the suits works well in keeping out the desert's cold night air.

At 8 a.m., the convoy moves out again, creeping northwest at about 10 miles per hour. Like the desert path, the day seems to go on forever. It is a day spent in what could, quite arguably, be the longest traffic jam in modern history. At 10:15 a.m., we arrive at a desert pass. A long fence that warns of electric shock stretches to both sides of the east-west horizon. Thirty meters of the fence is torn away. And, on a sign on the near side of the fence, the words are enough to cause even the bravest soul a moment of reflection. It reads, "Welcome to Iraq."

On the other side of the fence and down the road apiece, two gentlemen in long flowing robes tend their sheep and wave to the convoy. About six miles further, a man of about 20 approaches the convoy with three children. A young girl gestures toward her mouth for food, and several soldiers hand over Meals Ready to Eat (MREs). About another mile down the road, tents are patched together with various styles of cloth.

*In the distance, the sounds of battle are clearly audible... the thumping sounds of artillery smashing into the ground have become routine.*

By afternoon, the immense line of vehicles has taken its toll on the hard-packed desert dirt. Almost impenetrable with a shovel earlier, the main road now has been ground into a substance almost as fine as talcum powder. And at least three of the unit's vehicles get stuck. At 6:18 p.m., we arrive at a resting position. The three vehicles would rejoin the unit days later to the sound of loud applause.

**March 22:** Twice during the night, the unit prepared to move out. However, at the last minute, stood down. At 6:30 a.m., we are underway. By two o'clock in the afternoon, we are 50 miles into Iraq.

During the night, we received a mission to assist other units stuck in the sand. Traveling is slow across the desert, and several times we must pull over to the side of the road to allow other units to go forward. By 6:30 p.m., we pass through another assembly area that is in the early stages of development. Marine Cobras land and take off while we continue on our way.

**March 23:** The convoy reaches a main highway today. The thought of leaving large swirling dust storms behind significantly boosts morale. However, with all of the traffic headed north and none going south, travel remains slow. After 22 hours of on and off driving, the unit finally gets to sleep at 5:15 a.m. Three hours later, we are up and met with the announcement that we will now proceed south. It is a stunning pronouncement for a group that is visibly exhausted. At 5:30 p.m., the unit moves out.

The mission is to travel south, link up with a separate Marine element and then proceed north again on another route. In the distance, the sounds of battle are clearly audible. We are too far away to hear the sound of small arms fire, but the thumping sounds of artillery smashing into the ground have become routine. Tanks and armored personnel carriers race past us during the night. And, as our convoy pulls to the side of the road, Marine Cobra helicopters roar overhead, moving quickly north. Shortly after 1:30 a.m., tired soldiers fall asleep.

**March 24:** By 7 a.m., most of the unit has finished eating, and spend the day collecting much-needed rest as plans for following operations are reworked. Others attend to equipment. At 3 p.m., the unit gets word of a mission. We will go around An Nasiriyah where fighting has been reported. At 9 p.m., the convoy moves out, changing direction during our travels to go to another holding site where there was sniper activity the previous night. We now learn that the unit will go through the embattled city after all. Explosions echo through the night from the area of the city we will enter.

A convoy in the desert.



PHOTO: LT. COL. GERARD HEALY, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO

**March 25:** "A lot of sitting and a little bit of driving, but no sleep," a soldier says as he passes a truck. The convoy has been moving since 3:15 a.m. At 7:45 a.m., maps of An Nasiriyah are passed out revealing where the convoy may expect to encounter small arms fire or artillery rounds.

At 8:15 a.m., we pass artillery placements 100 meters in from the road on the west. Further along, large Iraqi military trucks litter the road. Just beyond a "Welcome" sign, we





move slowly toward black smoke emanating from an open fire outside oil storage tanks. The city appears peaceful, but poor, and villagers look on curiously as Cobra helicopters fly overhead.

At 9:00 a.m., the convoy crosses a river. On the other side of the bridge is a large color portrait of Saddam Hussein, smiling in welcome to the soldiers. Immediately, gunfire breaks out. It is small arms fire — single shot rifles and machine guns. An Iraqi troop carrier still smokes off to the side of the road.

Soldiers battle dust storms in the desert.

*...a truck from behind sounds three loud blasts from its horn signaling possible chemical contaminants in the area. Convoy members don their masks. Fifteen minutes later, the “all clear” message is given.*

Suddenly, two Cobra gunships fly over the convoy, angling toward the city and firing upon a target beyond the houses in our view. To the right of the convoy is open terrain. To the left, rows of Marines in firing positions — some in vehicles, others lying on the ground. They also open fire, their rounds going between the vehicles in the convoy to land upon houses about 300 meters away. Shots from two single-shot rifles come from the city while the convoy moves slowly onward. Further ahead, Marine placements are dug in on both sides of the road. Sporadic fire continues while the convoy crosses a second bridge and exits the city.

At 10:40 a.m., a truck from behind sounds three loud blasts from its horn signaling possible chemical contaminants in the area. Convoy members don their masks. Fifteen minutes later, the “all clear” message is given. For the next several hours, the convoy continues its “stop and go” pace, passing over a small canal that rises majestically out of the dusty and desolate horizon. Above us, a dusty cloud of brown rises about 300 meters into the desert air. At several points, we stop while the Marines continue onward, gazing neither right nor left but rather at their weapons, which they have managed to keep miraculously clean.

At 4:00 p.m., the convoy passes numerous dead bodies on the road. Bullet-ridden buses sit idle by the side of the road. Just beyond this point, Marines stand guard on about 30 thin prisoners. They sit on the ground, their hands behind their backs, looking at no one directly. The next day, we learn that the buses loaded mostly with men, but some women and children as well, had just passed through a checkpoint when they began firing upon the troops.

By 7:00 p.m., we finally get to sleep. Strong winds blow a sandstorm through the camp when suddenly the sound of large artillery rounds is heard about 300 meters away. “Sergeant Lambert,” a soldier yells. “Are those incoming or outgoing?” No answer. Again, “Sergeant Lambert,” this time with more urgency. “Are those rounds incoming or outgoing?” Finally, “Outgoing. It’s okay. They’re outgoing.” Tired soldiers, only slightly relieved, struggle with sleeping bags in the dark amidst the sandstorm.

**March 26:** Iraqi interpreters familiar with the area tell both the Marines and the Army Reserve soldiers that the former mayor of a nearby town is a general in the Iraqi Army. He is suspected of organizing the resistance to Americans in a nearby town. Civilians approach the interpreter and tell him that there are small arms weapons and missiles within the town and that it is not safe for the convoy. Later, a crowd begins to approach the convoy. It is quickly turned away. However, the group of 40 to 60 people begins to approach again. This time, warning shots are fired. Several civilians are injured. A Marine major explains that the civilians, despite several warnings, boarded a truck known to contain weapons.

As we continue north, a pattern is established in which the Marines will leap frog ahead of the convoy to secure towns. Once secured, the convoy can move forward. The convoy moves about 60 miles this day in relative peace. Of the five towns we pass, only one reveals a gathering of civilians. A group of about 50 young teenagers gather by the road to wave at the passing convoy. The convoy rests from 9 p.m. until midnight and again from 3 a.m. until 7 a.m.

**March 27:** Today, we learn we are to stay in place for two days while the Marines secure a town known to include an element of the Iraqi Republican Guard. Throughout the day, the sounds of firing and artillery can be heard. Helicopters frequently are seen landing and leaving.

During the night, soldiers conduct security of the perimeter — two hours on, two off. As some of the soldiers prepare for bed, outgoing artillery booms from less than 1000 meters away. Two rockets are launched that arc high in a northwesterly direction to fall silently beyond the horizon. Hours later in the darkness past midnight, three flashes of light emerge, the ground shakes and the loud cacophony of bombs is heard to the west.

**March 28:** This day is spent quickly digging foxholes large enough to accommodate two-man fighting positions. At 3 p.m., a large furor across the perimeter sends soldiers scrambling toward the road. Two buses and two small cars have been stopped along the ridgeline. The situation is similar to earlier breakthroughs that led to ambushes. An Iraqi interpreter boards the bus. He learns the bus contains enemy prisoners of war being sent south. Later, soldiers man their foxholes and listen as more artillery is heard hitting a town they may soon pass through.

**March 29:** Soldiers conduct security in two-man fighting positions throughout the night — three hours on and three hours off. Security is still the main concern. The perimeter is tightened to make way for more incoming Marines. Fighting positions are filled back in and new ones dug into the barren landscape to adjust for the new perimeter.

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Supplies are airlifted into the desert.



**March 30:** Soldiers fill in foxholes and take down communications equipment to prepare to move to another location. The unit does not move. Foxholes are rebuilt.

**March 31:** There is an early wake-up during the night when seven mortar rounds land near the assembly area. A Marine runs into the area shouting, “Get in the foxholes. They walked those rounds right down the road. That’s how they start — first with mortars. Then they follow them in.” Later, the Marine Regimental headquarters estimate the mortars at 1.7 kilometers from the 459th’s tactical operations center.

**April 1:** We awake at 5 a.m. and the unit begins lining up for movement at 5:30 a.m. Navy Construction Battalion (SEABEES) provide security for the unit as it moves westward and north closer to Baghdad. **AR**

As of April 2003, the 459th Multi-Role Bridge Company from Bridgeport, W. Va., had 172 soldiers in Iraq. The unit is comprised of Army Reserve soldiers from W. Va., Ohio, and the Pittsburgh, Pa., area.

On April 7, 2003, the 459th built two floating bridges over the Tigris River while under fire from Iraqi troops. This allowed advancing U.S. Marine elements to attack the center of Baghdad.







## People in Focus

### IN HONORARIUM

**O**n the morning of September 11, 2001, Mary Ill was at work focused upon her television set like millions of other Americans. She knew her husband, Staff Sergeant Frederick J. Ill, Jr., a captain in the New York City fire department, was probably at the World Trade Center in the thick of the rescue work. What she didn't know was that, when he kissed her goodbye that morning, it was the last time she would ever see him alive. Ill lost his life saving others and died as he had lived — as a brave and caring civilian and a proud member of the Army Reserve.

On September 11, the 77th Regional Support Command (RSC), also known as the Statue of Liberty Command, lost six Army Reserve soldiers, including Ill. In April of this year, the 411th and Company A of the 854th Engineer Battalion dedicated the Bullville U.S. Army Reserve Center to Ill. The ceremony was led by Maj. Gen. Richard S. Colt, Commander of the 77th RSC, and Brig. Gen. James Snyder, Commander of the A/854th. Bullville is approximately 80 miles from New York City in the Catskill Mountains.

Each of the Army Reserve soldiers with the 77th RSC lost during the attack on the World Trade Center has been memorialized with buildings dedicated in their honor.

[Left] Sfc. Janis Albuquerque, with the 352nd Civil Affairs Command, an Army Reserve unit from Riverdale, Md., stops to speak to an elderly beggar woman sitting on the sidewalk in the market district of Sulaimania, Kurdistan in northern Iraq.

PHOTO: SPEC. CHAD D. WILKERSON, 372ND MPAD

### AN ARAB-AMERICAN AT WAR

Most U.S. soldiers traveling the road to Baghdad look out their windows in wonderment at the ancient towns and ambling goat herds that dot the way north. Not Sgt. Paul Abernathy. “I look and think, I have cousins who live just like this,” he said.

The 23 year old Abernathy, a squad leader in the Bridgeport, West Virginia-based 459th Multi-Role Bridge Company, hails from Cuddy, Pennsylvania, just outside Pittsburgh. But his mother's side of the family is Syrian and, for Abernathy, who has spent many a summer visiting family and friends in Syria, Operation Iraqi Freedom is a collision of the two worlds he knows so well.

Abernathy admits his service in this war has divided some family hearts. “They love America and they know how terrible it is for Iraqis to live under Saddam Hussein. But they don't support this war. They just don't think it is America's issue to settle,” he said. “Fortunately, they know what it is to be in the military. They're anti-war without being anti-soldier. They know soldiers don't make decisions. We just carry them out.”

For a sergeant at war, that means taking care of the soldiers under you — a job that Abernathy's squad says their unfailingly personable leader does exceedingly well.

“Sarge is always looking out for us,” said Pfc. Dustin Wazzelle. “He really cares about how we're doing. He's our sergeant, but he's also like our friend. That's important when you're going through the things we have out here.”

Certainly, the 459th's road to Baghdad has not been an easy one. It has been a halting, often grueling tour of the sights and sounds of war — days of death and destruction, nights of vigilance and fear. Not to mention, many days without a shower.

Ask Abernathy what he's proudest of accomplishing, and he will tell you about one thing. “Every evening, before the sun goes down, we sit down and



PHOTO: SGT. FRANK N. PELLEGRINI, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO

Sgt. Paul T. Abernathy, an Army Reserve soldier from Cuddy, Pa., serving in Iraq with the W. Va.-based 459th Multi-Role Bridge Company, flashes a smile during an informal platoon meeting in a bivouac area in central Iraq.

have our dinners together. I think that's really important,” said Abernathy. “We just hang out and talk about whatever is on our minds. I think it helps keep everybody going.”

“I think he's the best leader we have,” said Spc. John Berger. “Out of the whole unit, our squad is the closest, and that's because of him.”

Because of Abernathy's background, his soldiers also get an education — in where they are, what they're seeing, and what they'll be facing as the 459th journeys north. He's the company's unofficial translator when an Iraqi civilian approaches his unit, its unofficial strategist when it comes to enemy behavior, and its designated political analyst when they listen to a BBC broadcast.

“I sure know a lot more about ancient Mesopotamia than I did before,” added Berger. “I know that not everybody here is Muslim, but religion is important

to people here. And I know that the best reason why we are here is for these kids we see waving to us by the side of the road — for these people that Saddam Hussein has been holding down for so long.”

Abernathy is nearing the end of his enlistment, and he figures his time with the Army Reserve is almost done. He wants to put his understanding of the Arab world and its plight to use with a graduate degree in international relations and, after that, maybe enter the seminary.

“I’ve always believed in America, and I understand what we’re trying to do,” said Abernathy. “I also know that, as scared as we are in combat, it doesn’t approach the fear that people who live here have had to endure under Saddam Hussein’s regime.

“Early on, when we first crossed the border into Iraq, we stopped by the side of the road to refuel. An old Bedouin walked up and, when he saw my face, he came up to me and said ‘Arab-American, Arab-American.’ We exchanged a few words and, before he left, he pointed

Sgt. Paul T. Abernathy, an Army Reserve soldier from Cuddy, Pa., serving in Iraq with the W. Va.-based 459th Multi-Role Bridge Company, keeps an eye on the perimeter, pulling security while the other members of his squad check on their vehicles and get some rest.



PHOTO: SGT. FRANK N. PELLEGRINI, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO

north and said to me in Arabic, ‘Go get him. Go get Saddam.’ That made me feel good.”

## THE MAN WHO BROUGHT WATER TO UMM QASAR

In the desert, few resources are as valued as water. And that is certainly true in and around Umm Qasar. Everywhere one goes in that area, children still mass on the sides of the road to repeat over and over again one of the few English words they know — “water.” So, it’s not surprising to hear Maj. Jim Thorpe, a resident of Grand Island, New York, and a member of the 402nd Civil Affairs Battalion from Tonawanda, New York, referred to reverentially by local residents as “the man who brought water to Umm Qasar.”

Umm Qasar had been without water for several days when Thorpe and his five-man team arrived on March 20th. Attached to the British Army, they worked quickly through military channels to arrange transport of two water tankers from Kuwait. The next day, he and his team were distributing water to Iraqi citizens.

As word spread, they soon found it necessary to work from behind rows of concertina wire during the water distribution. It was a potentially dangerous situation that required holding back crowds of thirsty Iraqi citizens while maintaining order. But they managed to pull it off without incident.

A few days later, a man walked into Thorpe’s office, claiming that he owned five water trucks. Instantly, Thorpe saw the possibility for controlling the water distribution and arranged for the man to get all of his tankers filled with water from Kuwait.

“With water a top priority, I worked out a plan with the man where a third of the water would go to the hospital and schools, and would be given out free of charge. The remainder would be sold at the pre-war minimum price throughout the city. This way, the man with the

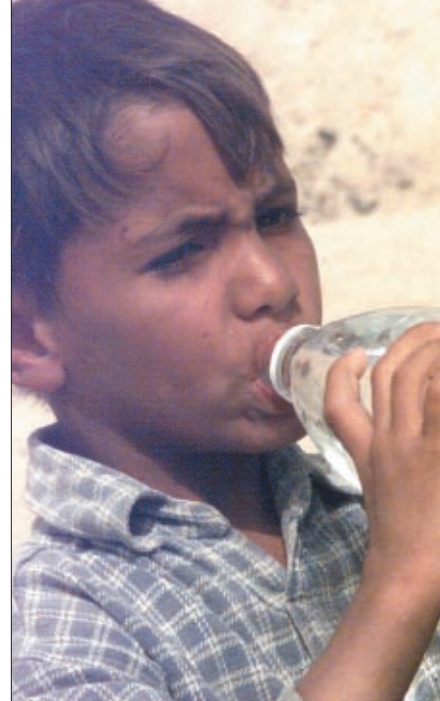


PHOTO: SPEC. CORY MEYMAN, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO

A local Iraqi boy takes a drink of water brought to Umm Qasar with the help of the Army Reserve’s Maj. Jim Thorpe and his 402nd Civil Affairs Battalion.

tankers could be paid for his fuel, time and effort,” said Thorpe. “Two days later, I had 20 tankers outside.”

Eventually, the system Thorpe devised included 27 water tankers, and the crowd problem disappeared. Weeks later, he and his team were able to turn over water distribution management to a local Iraqi businessman, referred to by Thorpe as an interpreter attached to the British Army.

“It felt great,” added Thorpe, reflecting on his accomplishment. “I love this job. It’s an ongoing adventure.”

Thorpe concedes that the water situation in Umm Qasar is still not completely resolved. However, several



PHOTO: SPEC. CORY MEYMAN, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO

Maj. Jim Thorpe of the Army Reserve’s 402nd Civil Affairs Battalion discusses water delivery to Umm Qasar with three local Iraqi citizens.



non-governmental agencies have now reached the town and are working on getting even more water distributed.

As for Thorpe? The man who brought water to Umm Qasar and his five-man team have moved on to another Iraqi city in need of immediate civil assistance.

## VOLUNTEER DOC AIDS RESCUED AMERICAN POWS

When seven recovered POWs came through a Kuwait hospital, the military medical staff operating there coyly referred to them as their “special guests.” They protected their celebrity patients from media and other unwanted attention with guards, code words and extra-tight security while the former POWs awaited their flight to Germany.

But the hospital leadership group could not shield the surgeon who treated the recovered former POWs.

“No good deed goes unpunished,” Dr. (Col.) Johnathan Woodson joked as a photographer snapped pictures of him leaving the hospital.

A former commander of the Army Reserve’s 399th Combat Support Hospital, Woodson left his private practice and gave up his command just to treat troops coming back from the front. And, while he could be back home in Canton, Massachusetts, he chose to extend his tour of duty at the combat zone hospital. According to him, his greatest pleasure has been in dealing with his seven “special guests.”

“I have been thoroughly uplifted by my contact with them. Seeing their spirit, their courage, and their high morale. Hearing their stories of bravery under very dire circumstances. How they banded together to support one another. And how resilient they’ve been in terms of coming back and being integrated into a normal life.

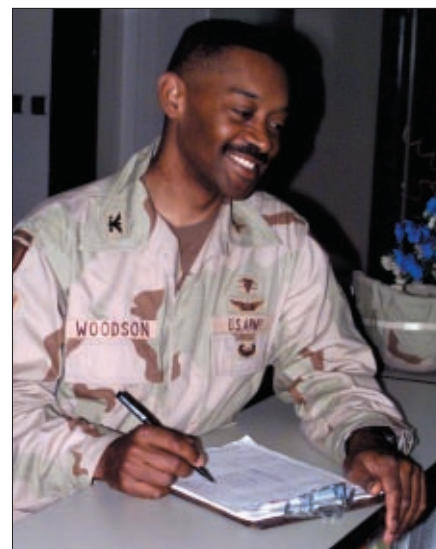
“They’re intelligent. They’re humorous. They clearly support each other and want to be together. And it’s been a pleasure and an honor to take care of them. It’s the highlight of a career,” said Woodson.

The 865th Combat Support Hospital unit that deployed from its home bases in Utica, Syracuse and Niagara Falls, New York, to run the military wing of the hospital is supported by rotations of “90-day docs” like Woodson from units all over the United States. The rotation is short to decrease the hardship of military service on the doctors and their patients back home.

Woodson certainly would have qualified for a shorter duty tour, but instead volunteered to serve as deputy commander of clinical services with the 865th, guaranteeing him a full tour of duty in the Gulf.

“The soldiers out here put everything on the line for us. So, it’s a very small effort for me to be there for them as they come home. If you look at the time I might serve on active military duty, that’s maybe 18 months over a 35-year career,” said the veteran of recent service in Kosovo. “In total, that’s relatively little.”

“We’re certainly very happy to have him in both positions. He’s a sharp doctor and a great soldier,” said Col. Kevin Pehr, Commander of the 865th. “He’s smart. He’s personable. He cares about his



Col. Johnathan Woodson, the surgeon who treated the seven rescued U.S. POWs, smiles as he chats with a fellow staffer at the 865th Combat Service Support hospital in Kuwait.

patients. He’s even a good organizer. There really isn’t anything bad I could say about him.”

“Here’s a guy who left a lucrative private practice and gave up a command of the highest-rated combat support hospital in the country just to come and treat soldiers. That’s the best part of working in the Army medical field. It’s where the heroes are,” said 1st Lt. Mike Olivieri, the officer in charge of inoculations at the hospital and one of the part-time medical PAOs. **AR**



Staff Sgt. Dawn Tal of the 865th Combat Support Hospital in Kuwait, aids in diagnosing Staff Sgt. Jayme McKenna.

PHOTO: SPEC. CORY MEYMAN, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO

PHOTO: SGT. FRANK N. PELLEGRINI, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO





# SCENES FROM THE DESERT



**A**rmy Reserve soldiers have faced a number of deployments in all of America's major — and most of its minor — military operations. They have been used almost constantly in Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, Cuba, and now in Afghanistan and Iraq.

As of July 15, 2003, almost 62,000 Army Reserve soldiers were mobilized — primarily because they have critical skills and because tensions still run high throughout the Persian Gulf and elsewhere.

From providing invaluable logistical support to restoring order and maintaining the systems that enable a society to function properly, Army Reserve soldiers always can be counted on to do their jobs with a high degree of both professionalism and commitment. These stories capture some of their experiences as they occurred during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

## GETTING THE GEAR OUT OF THE REAR

Thanks to the 66 members of the Army Reserve's 1184th Transportation Terminal Battalion from Mobile, Alabama, soldiers with the 101st Airborne, one of America's elite fighting forces, did not have long to wait before they were reunited with the Humvees, heavy trucks, Blackhawk helicopters, and other equipment that would be their lifblood in the field. Since November 12, the 1184th has been stationed at a port in Kuwait, bringing their hometown stevedore spirit from the Gulf of Mexico to the Persian Gulf. Their mission — to make sure the countless tons of equipment arriving there get off the ships and into the hands of those who need it as safely, securely and quickly as possible.

Since their arrival, the 1184th, whose motto is "doing it right," has amassed quite a record, helping the U.S. military move more necessary cargo through the port than it moved through two ports in the last Gulf War.

"We've offloaded 28 ships, which is maybe 40,000 pieces of cargo taking up more than two million square feet of space," said Col. Janet Cobb, Commander of the 1184th.

"In the space of 22 hours alone, we moved 731 pieces. That's a lot of stuff. But we've got a really good, experienced team. We were over here for Desert Storm doing the same work."

The 1184th was the last Army Reserve unit to come home from the Gulf in 1991 and, this time around, they were one of the first called to duty. They are on one-year orders and, like most others in the desert, they don't know when they will be headed home. But, according to Cobb, spirits are high and they take pride in being such a vital — if unsung — part of their country's participation in this war.

Spec. Richard Abercrombie was a pre-school photographer before he was mobilized and, for him, one of the hardest parts of this deployment has been the culture shock.

"We were ripped away from our jobs and our homes. And, being a southern boy, the redneck-meets-Middle East thing has been pretty strange," he said. "But, when I need some motivation, I only have to think of 9/11. My company had offices in the World Trade Center and I shudder every time I think of having to explain to pre-schoolers the terrorist attacks that occurred."

"Sometimes I feel like a glorified parking lot attendant. We're here to make sure everybody gets what they need, and then we run and hide," added Abercrombie smiling. "But it helps to remember that, without us doing our job, others wouldn't be able to do theirs."

Maj. Dan Arzonico is a software developer in his civilian life, and he doesn't mind telling you he took a "pretty big pay cut"



Spec. Richard Abercrombie, a traffic management coordinator with the 1184th, manages some traffic as vehicles roll off the GYSGT Fred W. Stockham and into the rolling stock staging area at the Kuwaiti port of Shuaiba.



Maj. Dan Arzonico, a vessel officer with the 1184th, shows off two of his reasons for wanting to go home — his daughters, Emily and Amy. While in Kuwait, Arzonico helps coordinate force protection at the Kuwaiti port of Shuaiba.



Sfc. Kenneth Johnson, a vessel supervisor with the 1184th waves a seven-ton truck off the GYSGT Fred W. Stockham and down the off-loading ramp at the Kuwaiti port of Shuaiba.

PHOTOS THIS PAGE: SGT. FRANK N. PELLEGRINI, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO

to be deployed to Kuwait. But he says he has only three reasons he wants to go back to Mobile — his daughters Emily, 11, and Amy, 5, and his wife Nancy, who heads up the unit's Family Readiness Program at home. He has one reason for being here. "That flag you see flying on the ships that come in here."

Arzonico is a vessel officer with the 1184th, but for this mission he is tasked with overseeing the 598th Transportation Terminal Group, managing force protection at the pier and off-loading area. He knows the importance of keeping this port up and running.

"Our unit helps the troops get their equipment and get out there. It makes me feel proud," said Arzonico.

Sgt. Melvin Polk was a full-time Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) administrative clerk with the 1184th back in Mobile, but there isn't much use for paperwork here. Instead, he uses one of the Army's newly adopted Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) scanners to record each UPS-labeled item — from Humvees to five tons of heavy equipment transport vehicles.

"It's not my specialty, but with everything going on these days and with so much at stake, I'm here helping out the best I can," said Polk.

## FLORIDA ARMY RESERVE SOLDIER MAKING "LARGE" CONTRIBUTION

As the salty water of the Persian Gulf along Kuwait's shores laps at the sides of the U.S. Army Landing Craft Utility (LCU) ship "Hormigueros," Spec. Joseph Large is on board to make sure it is seaworthy and capable of delivering supplies to the troops on the ground. This Army Reserve deck hand enlisted when he was 32 years old, feeling a call to duty even though he was comfortable in his own real estate business in St. Augustine, Florida.

"I just felt the need to join. It was my time to pay my country back for all of the freedoms it has provided me," said Large.

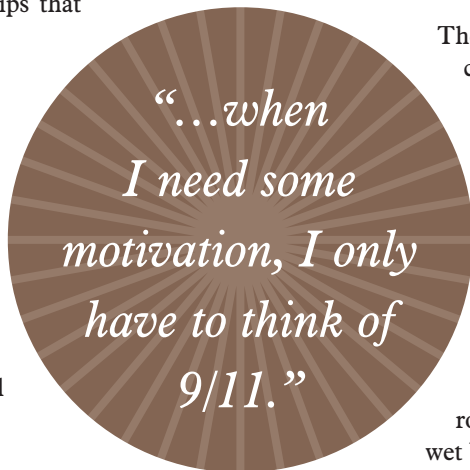
Large chose to be on board an Army boat for his job because he loves the water. And, when he's asked why he's not in the Navy, he simply reminds people that the Army has more boats, they're just smaller.

Members of the LCU are cross-trained in all areas of boat operation, so Large is well-versed in every aspect of the craft's engineering operations.

"You never know what you're going to end up doing. In the morning, you could be navigating the ship. During the day, you could be tying lines down on the deck. You have to know a little bit of everything to keep the craft going," added Large.

The Hormigueros' current mission is to ferry containers from larger ships, which are too weighed down to cross shallow waters, into the port. And, according to Large, the work can become treacherous when the wind and seas get rough. However, the crew is experienced and has had no problems getting the job done.

"Large, as well as the rest of us, have the will, experience and ability to get things done," said Spec. Vincent Passero, Large's roommate on board the LCU. "None of us are wet behind the ears."



Army Reserve Spec. Joseph Large of St. Augustine, Fla., checks the navigational charts aboard the Hormigueros, an Army Landing Craft Unit that unloads ammunition and supplies at Kuwaiti ports.



PHOTO: SPEC. CORY WEYMAN, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO



## TEXAS TORNADO HITS KUWAIT

“Kuwait is a lot like home — hot, dusty, sweaty. Put in a long-horn, a cactus, and maybe a country bar, and I’d be happy,” said Cpl. Bryan Register from Killeen, Texas, who went through Fort Lewis, Washington, to help fill out the rolls of A Company, 5/159th Aviation Regiment, attached to the 12th Aviation Regiment for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In the Army Reserve, Register is a power-train mechanic — basically an expert on the rotors, transmission and everything else used to get power from the engines to the blades of helicopters. It is a job not unlike his civilian position with DynCorp, where he is responsible for inspecting and repairing the fiberglass components that make up the blades of a helicopter.

“That’s the great thing about being a Reservist,” said Register. “At DynCorp, we support the military, and I’ve probably had my hands on some of those very birds right there. Now that I’m called up and working on Chinooks, it makes you feel like you’re even more involved in what we’re trying to do here.”

Register seems to do it all — striding from bird to bird on the tarmac, climbing up on top of the monstrous machines to tinker with power trains, and keeping his crew at top efficiency. His new unit even has chosen him to be a member of what in a Chinook unit is like a squad of combat medics — the lean, mean, hard-charging DART team.

“Downed Aircraft Recovery Team (DART) is pretty much what it sounds like,” added Register. “When a bird goes down in the field, 16 of us fly in on another Chinook and try to do the quick fixes that will allow us to fly it back to where we can get it fixed completely. It’s the kind of mission the unit hopes it never has to do. But in a combat situation, with people shooting at them, it happens.”

Register loves his work and, despite the lack of country bars, he’s glad to be doing it in wartime.

“I missed the first Gulf War, so I’m glad to be a part of this one. I believe it’s a war we need to fight, and I get to help the troops out there fight it,” said Register. “I know if I was one of those guys getting shot at, I’d sure hope the people back in the rear were busting their butts to make sure I got the food and ammunition I need to stay alive. It’s definitely the kind of mission that gives you the warm and fuzzies when you think about it.”

But Register will be glad when he can get back home to his longhorns, cacti and cold beverages in the Lone Star state. He already knows that the first thing he’ll do when his plane touches down in the U.S. is get his trusty Dodge pickup truck out of storage and put some of the money he’s saved into fixing it up — a new exhaust system, new tires and rims, and even some power train work.



PHOTO: SGT. FRANK N. PELLEGRINI, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO

At a port in Kuwait, Cpl. Bryan Register inspects the tape that protects the blades of a CH-47D Chinook helicopter from the swirling desert sands.

## SOUTH FLORIDA ARMY RESERVE SOLDIERS BUILD POW CAMP THEY WILL GUARD

When the 724th Military Police Battalion arrived at the coalition’s temporary holding facility at Camp Bucca, Iraq, a plan already was in place for a nearby semi-permanent facility. The only problem was that it hadn’t been built yet. So the 18 soldiers assigned to guard part of the new facility found themselves put to work laying down the very concertina wire fence line they would soon be patrolling.

“You know the joke about what MP stands for — ‘multi-purpose.’ You name it, we do it. We’re out here pulling shifts in the towers and along the perimeter, waiting for this camp to be done so we can start doing what we came here to do. And now they want us to build the thing ourselves,” Spec. Jose Lopez grumbled cheerfully.

Lopez, a deputy sheriff for Broward County, Florida, was exaggerating a bit. Engineering units with heavy equipment would



Sgt. 1st Class Alfonzie Brown of Moorehaven, Fla., pounds a picket as Spec. Yolanda Isaac, a physical therapist in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., waits at the ready with a coil of concertina wire.

take care of the major construction. However, it was up to his squad to get the work started. And his sergeant considered a little construction work to be good for morale.

“I’ve got 18 soldiers under me who are going to be responsible for watching as many as 1,500 Enemy Prisoners of War (EPWs). Guarding EPWs is difficult, pressurized work. These guys have been waiting for this for months — from home to Kuwait to here. I think a little manual labor like this helps burn off some of the stress and gets them ready to go,” said Sgt. 1st Class Alfonzie Brown from Moorehaven, Florida.

“Of course, I’m a little more used to this kind of work,” added Brown, who is the maintenance man for the Glades County



Spec. Jose Lopez, a sheriff’s deputy in Broward County, Fla., and a colleague put up some concertina wire along a yet-to-be-built fence line as Army Reserve soldiers with the 724th Military Police Battalion find themselves pitching in to build the new EPW facility they will be guarding.

School District, as he pounded in pickets for the fence line. British forces turned control of the camp over to the 800th Military Police Brigade, which has now handed responsibility for this part of the camp to the 724th.

“We’ve been trained for this, and there are lots of prisoners over in the temporary facility. However, you never know what it’s really going to be like until you’re the one dealing with them every day,” said Spec. Yolanda Isaac with the 724th, a physical therapist from Fort Lauderdale, Florida. “Will they make it harder for me because I’m a woman? That’ll probably be the biggest challenge. But I’m just going to do what I have to do to get my job done. I won’t be mean to them, but I won’t let them be mean to me either.”



PHOTO: SGT. FRANK N. PELLEGRINI, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO



A guard with the 320th Military Police Company from St. Petersburg, Fla., mans a makeshift outpost at Tallil Air Base in central Iraq, watching as prisoners of war are transferred onto buses for transport to the coalition's internment facility near Umm Qasar.

“Most of the prisoners are pretty compliant,” said Lt. Col. Lee Coulter, the 724th commander of the camp. “They realize they are protected here. They get food, water, and medical care — even cigarettes. And they know they won’t be here forever. When you think of how most people in Iraq have been living, it’s not surprising that we have some people come here saying they’re soldiers and wanting to get in.”

For Brown, everything about this mission — from the scorpions to the sandstorms to the fence building in the hot desert sun — is an experience to be cherished.

“I’ve been in the military for 27 years, and this is the first time I’ve been deployed,” said Brown. “I’m thrilled. This is history in the making. Everything I see, everything that’s happening, will be in a history book someday. Our country is doing the right thing in this war, and we’re out here doing our part. Some of these young guys may not fully appreciate it right now. But they will.”

## ST. PETE ARMY RESERVE SOLDIERS GUARD CAPTURED IRAQI AIRBASE

Three weeks after a fierce battle between Iraqi loyalists and the U.S. Army’s 3rd Infantry Division forces resulted in the capture of “Bush International Airport,” Army Reserve soldiers with the 320th Military Police Company from St. Petersburg, Florida, were called upon to guard the base. Located in Tallil, the airbase is strategically situated halfway between Baghdad and the Iraq-Kuwait border, an ideal way station for Iraqi pris-

PHOTO: SGT. FRANK N. PELLEGRINI, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO



Pfc. Theresa Roman of the 320th Military Police Company from St. Petersburg, Fla., uses a battery-powered fan to help battle the heat atop a second floor guard post at Tallil Airbase in central Iraq.

oners of war captured during the fighting. It also acts as a bustling supply connection for U.S. troops stationed throughout the war-torn country.

“We do accountability for prisoners more than anything else. Counting heads and making sure everybody goes where they are supposed to,” said Lt. Matt Garcia, the unit’s executive officer and a Tampa insurance salesman. “We also have some military intelligence people upstairs just in case anyone important comes through. And we help when the planes and helicopters stop here to refuel or unload.”

So far, things have been pretty quiet. However, that doesn’t mean the members of the 320th can relax. Recently, there was a firefight about a mile beyond the perimeter of the airbase when several Iraqis attempted to ambush some Marines who were entering the base from the north with a load of prisoners. Fortunately, the Marines successfully captured the Iraqis, who were then led into the airbase in their own vehicles.

“With all of the prisoners of war coming through here, I’m getting an education — in the culture, the people, and the language. It’s the kind of experience that will help me down the road,” said Sgt. Emiliano Carrero, a Puerto Rico native and Orlando, Florida, resident, who never intended to be an Army Reserve soldier. After eight years in anti-terrorism with the Marines, Carrero switched to the Army in an attempt to get into a Special Forces unit. His unit got called to Iraq just before he was slotted to join the Special Forces.





Lt. Judy Hall, 3rd platoon leader for the unit, views the experience somewhat differently. “Would I rather be at home with my daughter? Sure,” said the Clarksville, Tennessee, transplant. “But my country called and this unit needed a lieutenant. So, I’m here to do whatever they need. If they’d just give me a mop, I could do wonders with this place!”

## DESERT DJ PLAYS FOR IRAQI POWS

Ben Watkins was a disc jockey mixing music tracks for his local state college’s radio station this time last year. These days, he is still mixing tracks. However, this time he is doing it for the Enemy Prisoners of War (EPW) camp in Iraq. Watkins, an Army Reserve specialist from Mankato, Minnesota, is part of the 13th Psychological Operations Battalion from Arden Hills, Minnesota. His mission in the EPW camp is to record simple instructional messages to help the prisoners understand and follow the rules of the camp.

“I was a DJ for weddings, parties and the college. I also did radio advertising. Growing up in the nineties helped because I learned half of this stuff simply by being around video game consoles and stereo equipment all the time,” said Watkins.

At the camp, Watkins records tracks of his own voice in Arabic telling the prisoners what to do, where to go, and how to respond in the event of an emergency. He also helps design posters and handbills to support his recorded messages. A theater major in college, Watkins first learned about the Army when one of his fellow actor friends, who also is an Army recruiter, said he thought Watkins’ skills would make him an ideal candidate for psychological operations. So, the summer

Army Reserve Spec. Ben Watkins of the 13th Psychological Operations Battalion dubs a tape the EPW camp in Iraq will use to disseminate information to the detainees.

following his college graduation, Watkins completed both his basic and advanced individual training. Two weeks later, he was deployed to Kuwait to help out with the war effort. His skills and enthusiasm have earned him praise.

“His experience in the theater, as well as his audio technology skills and his grasp of audio editing help out the group a lot,” said Staff Sgt. Joe Boz. “In addition, he does his job with enthusiasm, and that’s great too.”

According to Watkins, the messages he records are not about controlling the prisoners, but about relieving the prisoners’ stress and the anxieties that come from being in unfamiliar surroundings. He also is using his talents to help out the other soldiers in his group. One activity involves designing a slide show video on his computer to send back home to the families of his battalion so they can see what it is like in Iraq.

At night, Watkins runs a makeshift movie theater, playing movies pooled from the other soldiers on an outdoor projection screen where sound is projected through speakers so that both American and British soldiers can enjoy the movies and relax.

While he may be a world away from mixing music and acting in plays, Watkins is using his talents to make life easier and more comfortable for the prisoners in Iraq. It is a job he finds rewarding — and, of course, there is nothing a born performer likes more than a captive audience.

PHOTO: SPEC. CORY MEYMAN, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO

## MEMBERS OF THE 354TH STRIKE IT RICH

Army Reserve soldiers from the 354th Civil Affairs Brigade from Riverdale Park, Maryland, have struck it rich. In a compound that had been home to Special Republican Guard officers, the soldiers found at least \$4 million in crisp U.S. bills that had been hidden in sealed compartments in an L-shaped bunker.

“I’m just awed,” said Col. Dave Blackledge, Commander of the 354th, which had just arrived in Baghdad to assess war damage, and support relief and reconstruction efforts. “I guess we can rebuild Iraq now,” he joked.

According to a statement written in Arabic and witnessed by five men whose signatures attested to the contents of the compartments, the money was hidden on March 16, just three days prior to the start of the war.

*Several soldiers said their interests were piqued by the small wire cages that lined two sides of the bunker...*

Capt. Krispian McCullar of Virginia Beach, Virginia, and 1st Sgt. Dale Blosser of Mt. Sidney, Virginia, were the first to break through the five-inch thick wall made of brick and mortar that housed the currency — 40,000 tightly packed and bank-wrapped \$100 bills.

Several soldiers said their interests were piqued by the small wire cages that lined two sides of the bunker, apparently to hold small guard dogs or chemically sensitive birds. They also were puzzled by the presence in the enclosed courtyard of a new glass-walled room that seemed to be a guardhouse. The cages and guardhouse all suggested close surveillance of the bunker and its contents.

After everyone was given the opportunity to fondle the money, Col. Blackledge rounded up every packet and made sure the box went to a secured location.



PHOTO: SPEC. CORY MEYMAN, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PIO

## ARMY RESERVE SOLDIERS RESCUE VALUABLE ART IN BAGHDAD

Aided only by flashlights and a few Iraqi civilians, members of the Army Reserve’s 308th Civil Affairs Brigade from Homewood, Illinois, successfully rescued more than 350 paintings from the basement vaults of the Iraqi National Museum of Antiquities in Baghdad.

“This museum is the equivalent of the Smithsonian in the United States,” said Col. Vincent Foulk from Urbana, Illinois. “The paintings all are from the modern era, created by artists such as Hofaid Al-Drobi, Laila Alattar and Albed-Alkader Alrasam, and many are considered masterpieces.”

The paintings were put in the basement when the museum’s curators feared they might be stolen during rioting. The museum already had been ransacked several times since the war began, with vandals stealing or destroying many valuable artifacts. There even was evidence that looters had tried to remove toilets, breaking them en route as they struggled to get away.

So the curators were greatly relieved when the members of the 308th offered to let the Iraqis use their vehicles and soldiers to help move the paintings to the Saddam Cultural Center, where they would be protected from further damage.

Col. Joseph Rice from Glendale, Colo., along with members of the Army Reserve’s 308th Civil Affairs Brigade, helps transport paintings from the Iraqi Museum of National Antiquities in Baghdad.



After documenting the paintings, they were loaded onto a Light Medium Transportation Vehicle and driven to the Cultural Center, accompanied by an armed guard. The members of the 308th also helped Center workers, who openly wept when a particularly valuable and undamaged painting was displayed to the curator, unload the artwork.

“We feel safe now that our art is being protected by the soldiers,” said Donny George, curator of the Cultural Center. “At first, we were afraid Iraqi soldiers and looters would just burn the place down. Now, with the arrival of the American soldiers, we are getting the help we need.”

“We had no problem volunteering for this mission,” said Spec. Jennifer Pritchard from Dixon, Illinois. “I feel honored to be able to help save a part of this country’s culture.”

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Spec. Cory Caranza, an ambulance medic with the Army Reserve’s 437th Medical Company, shuts the door of his ambulance while waiting to transport a patient outside a hospital in Kuwait.



PHOTO: SGT. FRANK N. PELLEGRINI, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO

## RETURNING BAGHDAD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT TO THE STATUS QUO

The 490th Civil Affairs Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Abilene, Texas, is moving toward returning Baghdad International Airport to the Iraqi people — an important step in helping Iraq regain its footing as a normal, thriving city.

“When we first came here, the terminal was in very bad shape. Most rooms were in disarray,” said Maj. Kevin Countie, Commander of the 490th. “There was no power or water, and the support vehicles were in a bad state.”

Members of the 490th quickly cleaned up the area and restored electricity and water. More importantly, they restored many of the ground support vehicles used to assist the arrival and departure of civilian aircraft. Aided by Iraqi civilians employed by the airport, the 490th has repaired many of the cargo-handling vehicles, air conditioning trucks, airfield tugs, and water and lavatory trucks.

Fortunately, the 490th has several soldiers with civilian experience in aviation maintenance. Staff Sgt. Raymond Baker, the 490th’s public works team’s non-commissioned officer in charge, works for Eagle Aviation in Abilene as an aircraft technician. In addition, he has training in automobile maintenance, which has proved especially valuable for repairing the ground support equipment essential to restoring civil aviation operations at the airport.

The short-term goal is for Baghdad International Airport to be able to support limited operations, including local Iraqi flights, regional Middle Eastern flights, and international carriers, such as British Airways, which had flown into Baghdad in the past.

The first flights are being limited to government or business-related flights in support of civilian-managed humanitarian assistance operations. However, the unit’s long-term goal is for the airport to again serve the Iraqi civilians who wish to fly in and out of Baghdad.

“As soon as the airport restores its civil aviation operations, a lot more humanitarian aid will be able to come in,” said Baker, “which will speed the job along and get us home faster.”

## ARMY RESERVE SOLDIERS TRANSPORT SEVEN RESCUED POWS

Spec. Cory Caranza is part of the four-man ambulance crew that transported seven recovered American POWs from a Kuwaiti hospital to a plane that would take them to Germany. For him, all of the passengers were a high priority.



“In the time that we’ve been here, we’ve transported thousands of patients — with gunshot wounds, shrapnel, sucking chest wounds, broken limbs,” said Caranza, an Army Reserve ambulance medic with the 437th Medical Company from Riverside, California. “Being an ambulance medic requires steely nerves, a cool head and lots of training.”

It helps that this Army Reserve medic, like most others in his company, has seen it all before. Back home in Redlands, California, Caranza is a full-time ambulance medic, as well as a full-time student in fire technology trying to rise to the top of the stack of applications for the San Diego Fire Department.

Sgt. Sergio Delgadillo also is an ambulance medic at home in Orange County, California, where he handles all kinds of medical transfers.

“Out here, our mission is to do the same things we do at home. So, we’re well-trained and experienced. That helps a lot,” said Delgadillo. “The only difference is the schedule.”

“Back home, you work a 12-hour shift. When you’re done, you’re done. Out here, it’s 24-7. You’re off when no one is calling for you,” he said. “Our very first mission here, we’d just gotten our ambulances, and we had a run that started at 11 a.m. and was supposed to be over by 1 p.m. Next thing we knew, two hours had turned into a twenty-four hour ordeal.”

Spec. Andre Cisneros, a student in Riverdale, California, said, “You’re always waiting, always listening for the radio. It can wear you out. But what keeps you going is that everyone is relying on you.”

Members of the 315th PsyOps Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Upland, Calif., distribute safety information to the Iraqi people.

And while a patient is a patient is a patient, what makes it special for these Army Reserve soldiers is that the patients relying on them are fellow soldiers.

“You’re out here because your country needs you,” said Spec. Paul Nakamura. “But you love it because the troops need you. We’ve seen a lot of casualties, a lot of people in pain. But when they see us, they’re happy. They know they are getting out of there.”

“We see the most hard-core soldiers at the weakest moments, and we’re there to help. It’s an honor for me to be out here. Not many people can go home and say, ‘I’ve been to Iraq, been to Kuwait, came out here and fought for something better.’ I can,” added Caranza.

This story is in honor of Spec. Paul Nakamura, who died in June during an enemy attack on his vehicle.

## ARMY RESERVE SOLDIERS HELP ENSURE PUBLIC SAFETY

In the battle-torn city of Baghdad, distributing important public safety information to its more than five million residents can be a difficult, if not daunting, act. However, this has not deterred the members of the 315th Psychological Operations (PsyOps) Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Upland, California, from getting the job done.





Army Reserve soldiers provide aid to homeless children in Iraq.

“Our mission basically is to encourage mine and unexploded ordnance (UXO) awareness primarily through leaflets, posters and face-to-face communication,” said Sgt. Stephen Ray Cook, an assistant team leader with the 315th.

The leaflets, two-sided flyers containing computer-generated illustrations of various types of UXO and instructions on what to do if you encounter it, are being distributed to individuals of all ages. Children, in particular, who are at the highest risk from UXO hazards, have become a major focus of the mission.

“We want to make the civilian population aware of the dangers of UXOs and mines left behind from the conflict in order to avoid any future civilian casualties,” added Cook.

“They are the ones who are suffering, and that’s why we are here,” said Staff Sgt. Tomas Brousseau, team leader for the 315th. “I am glad to be serving here. I think it definitely is a worthwhile mission.”

## ARMY RESERVE SOLDIERS WORKING TO HELP HOMELESS IRAQI CHILDREN

A U.S. Army Reserve civil affairs team, with the assistance of mental health soldiers, is working to help homeless orphans in Baghdad. However, according to Cpl. Stacey Simms from Rochester, New York, who is serving with the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion from Greensboro, North Carolina, the task has proven both rewarding and frustrating.

Shortly after fighting was over, passersby noticed a group of about two dozen children playing around a pool in a traffic



Homeless Iraqi children play in a pool in the middle of a traffic circle in Baghdad.

circle. The children, laughing and having fun, seemed oblivious to the thousands of people who work and live in the densely populated area. But what appeared at first to be a happy, peaceful scene soon turned into a nightmare as people realized the children were homeless and living on the streets around the traffic circle.

The children, ranging in age from about 6 to 16 years, were not only homeless, but orphans as well. Many had been living in orphanages before the war, but had been released or managed to escape during the fighting in Baghdad. They had been on the streets almost two weeks before their plight was brought to the attention of the civil affairs soldiers.

Simms immediately contacted the U.S. Army’s 113th Medical Company from Stanton, California, another Army Reserve unit stationed in Baghdad that specializes in combat stress control. Among other specialties, the unit includes psychologists and social workers, all trained to deal with these kinds of situations.

Together, members of the 422nd and 113th questioned the children with the aid of locally hired Iraqi translators in order to determine if, in fact, the children were homeless, and to place as many of them as possible in orphanages where they would at least receive shelter and food. After contacting five local orphanages, Simms was able to find only two that would agree to take a few of the children — but only for a period of one week. Administrators at the orphanages were concerned that the children might be delinquents who would cause disruption within the orphanages. Simms and his team also made arrangements to deliver donated food and other supplies to the orphanages.

In another act of kindness, Simms and the combined team of soldiers from the 422nd and 113th also rounded up more than a dozen more children, who they transported to a U.S. Army compound for further evaluation. Once at the compound, the children were provided with food and water, and were met by various Army Reserve psychologists and social workers. Sadly, most of the children did not know their last names, who their parents were, or even how old they were.

It was clear that life on the streets had been rough for these children. One young homeless girl was pregnant, and did not know who the father of her expected child was because she had been raped. This was the second time in her short life that she had been raped.

A second young girl had a dislocated shoulder, and her sister, Aswan, had a hairline fracture of her right arm. When asked through a translator what she would want if she could have anything at all, she replied, “To live with the Americans.”

Unfortunately for these children, there are no facilities in Iraq to house them. And, even those children who were placed for a week in the two orphanages expected to be out on the streets within a matter of days because they feared a repeat of the beatings they were forced to endure in other orphanages throughout their childhoods.

“I would rather be free, even if I have to live in the streets,” said one child. It’s a reality that is difficult for Simms and the other soldiers to bear.

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Cpl. Stacey Simms of the Army Reserve’s 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion from Greensboro, N.C., coordinates donation efforts to Iraqi orphanages.



PHOTO: SPEC. CHAD D. WILKERSON, 372ND MPAD

## IRAQIS THIRST FOR WATER AND INFORMATION

Sgt. John-Paul Kilanski, an Army Reserve soldier with the 822nd Military Police Company from Arlington Heights, Illinois, is in charge of security at the front gate of Camp Bucca, the coalition’s new internment facility for Enemy Prisoners of War (EPWs) captured in Operation Iraqi Freedom. His job is supposed to be pretty simple — protect the EPWs and the U.S. Army Reserve soldiers charged with their care from the forces of Saddam Hussein outside.

However, the war is almost over and the enemy doesn’t come around much anymore. What Kilanski is dealing with these days is more of an occupational hazard — maintaining order among the Iraqi men, women and children who come to the gate for information about family and loved ones.

“One of them says he has a letter from a colonel promising him information about who he is looking for. I’m trying to get somebody to come out. But they’ve got to stay away from the gate. I don’t want a vehicle driving out and running one of them over,” said Kilanski, who his fellow soldiers refer to as a soft touch.

In the meantime, a translator with the Free Iraqi Forces has come forward with language skills, as well as three bottles of water. But with temperatures reaching 105 degrees in the shade, three bottles of water are hardly enough. Many in the crowd are desperate for food and water.

Staff Sgt. Daina Carauskas joins Kilanski at the gate — bringing with her a few more bottles of the unit’s own limited supply of

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Staff Sgt. Daina Carauskas of the 822nd Military Police Company from Arlington Heights, Ill., daubs the chin of an Iraqi girl suffering from dehydration outside the gates of the U.S. Army Reserve run EPW internment facility near Umm Qasar, Iraq.



PHOTO: SGT. FRANK N. PELLEGRINI, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAO





Sgt. John-Paul Kilanski of the 822nd Military Police Company from Arlington Heights, Ill., does his best to deal with a crowd of Iraqi civilians outside the U.S. Army Reserve run EPW internment facility near Umm Qasar, Iraq.

water. Soon, she and Kilanski are deep in conversation with the English-speaking Iraqi spokesman explaining what is going on inside the gate.

Six thousand prisoners, at last count, are being held in the camp, which is being changed over from British to American control. This means six thousand faces must be photographed and six thousand identification tags created. Eventually, six thousand International Red Cross family notification cards will be mailed out to concerned Iraqis, such as those outside these gates, letting them know their loved ones are alive, well and getting the care called for by the Geneva Convention.

“I can tell you that whoever is inside is being cared for,” says Carauskas. “They’re getting food, water and medical care. But the notification process takes time. We’re doing our best.”

To help pacify the growing crowd of Iraqis, Carauskas passes around a piece of paper on which they can write down the names of the people they want to know about. The paper quickly

darkens with printed names. However, as the day wears on, the list is not enough. More in the crowd ask for food and water as the sun continues to cover the area with relentless heat.

Suddenly, there is a shout from the back of the crowd where a man sits on the ground cradling a small girl’s head in his lap.

“She’s dehydrated. Come with me,” says Caraukas, as she leads the father and daughter to the shade and Kilanski ducks into the guard post to dig out a bottle of water from his own allotment for his 12-hour shift. As the girl revives, Kilanski heads back down the road to deal with the crowd.

“I wish we could do more,” he says. “But there just isn’t enough for everyone inside and all of them out here too. At least, not yet. We are just doing the best we can.”

## ARMY RESERVE SOLDIERS HELP DISTRIBUTE DONATED GOODS TO ORPHANAGES IN BAGHDAD

The Iraq office of DHL Worldwide Express, working with members of the Army Reserve’s 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion from Greensboro, North Carolina, has donated more than \$20,000 worth of food, bottled water and other supplies to five orphanages in Baghdad. The goods were transported in two cargo trucks furnished by the 422nd, who also helped load and unload the trucks.

The donated goods included staples such as rice, beans, sugar, salt and some canned meats, as well as milk, bottled water, tea, disposable diapers and cleaning supplies. They even threw in a few new toys and soccer balls for each orphanage. The total cargo weighed 12 tons and completely filled two 40-foot containers.

According to Cpl. Stacey Simms, the 422nd’s civil affairs team leader, who was assisted in delivering the goods by Staff. Sgt. James Muldoon and Spec. Denise Brundige, the staff and children at each orphanage were clearly happy to receive the donated food and other supplies.

“Some of the directors of the orphanages were very surprised to see us pull up with these two big trucks,” said Simms. “Others said they were really relieved because they were running low on food, drinking water and supplies for the children.”

*The donated goods included staples such as rice, beans, sugar, salt and some canned meats, as well as milk, bottled water, tea, disposable diapers and cleaning supplies.*



Sgt. Ryan Roa with the 411th selects children's clothing to be donated to a local Baghdad hospital.



Other Army Reserve soldiers helping out in the effort included Staff Sgt. Doug Hopkins, Spec. Robert Paul and Spec. Eric Harvey, all with the 422nd, as well as Capt. Hugh Reusser and Capt. Suellyn Mahan, both from the 113th Medical Company (combat stress control) from Stanton, California.

Since the war, operations at orphanages throughout Baghdad have been hampered by a lack of electricity, safe drinking water, and many other necessities. But thanks to the efforts of Army Reserve soldiers all around the country, public utilities are starting to work again, the Iraqi population is getting back to work, and the country gradually is returning to a state of normalcy.

## BRINGING A SMILE TO A CHILD'S FACE

Some say that bringing a smile to a young child's face is the most gratifying experience on earth. That is just what the members of the Army Reserve's 411th Civil Affairs Battalion from Danbury, Connecticut, did for the children at the Al Radu Children's Hospital in Baghdad, when they arrived with much-needed items such as diapers, clothing and toys.

"This is the whole reason we are here," said Sgt. Ryan Roa, a member of the 411th. "It feels great when you can put a smile on a child's face."

The children, all bed-ridden and under the supervision of their mothers, were clearly delighted with the gifts.

According to Roa, the unit had been assisting the hospital for about a month and a half when they were asked to deliver the more than \$500 worth of items purchased for the children out of discretionary funds from the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment. In addition, the unit has been handling other forms of civilian assistance, such as distributing food, reporting missing persons, setting up neighborhood advisory counsels, restructuring the police force, and coordinating garbage collection.

"This is the whole reason we went into civil affairs. To help people," added Roa, who described the unit's primary mission as to act as a liaison between the civilian population and the military.

"It feels great when you can put a smile on a child's face. I think that's what everyone wants to do."

Sgt. Ryan Roa with the 411th and an interpreter negotiate the price of children's clothing the unit is buying to donate to a Baghdad children's hospital.





Iraqi firemen respond gratefully to receiving an emergency \$20 payment.

## ARMY RESERVE SOLDIERS FROM THE 422ND EVALUATE BAGHDAD'S FIRE DEPARTMENT

As military operations in Iraq shift from combat to stabilization activities, Army Reserve soldiers with the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion from Greensboro, North Carolina, are conducting assessments of, and coordinating support for, various agencies in Baghdad. Among the members of the 422nd making a real contribution is Maj. Brent P. Gerald, a captain in Greensboro, North Carolina's Fire Station 11 Hazardous Material Special Team and an expert in evaluating potentially hazardous fire conditions.

During a meeting with Dr. Ali Saeed Sadoom, General Manager of Civil Defense of Iraq, Gerald learned that 13 of the city's 25 fire stations were operable and, of the normally 700 fire department employees, more than 430 had returned to work. Three of the city's ladder trucks and 30 of its 96 tanker pumpers also were available. So, is Baghdad going to burn? "No," says Gerald.

"This city does not have a lot of fire-load — things that can burn. There is very little extra space in homes and, therefore, few storage items that could prove hazardous. In addition, the houses are made of cement," adds Gerald.

Most of Baghdad's approximate 2,200 fires last year occurred in refineries and power facilities. And, fortunately, almost all of those facilities were isolated from the general population. So, does that mean all is well with the Baghdad fire department? Not necessarily.

According to Sadoom, probably the biggest problem facing the city's fire department these days is providing payment for the fire fighters.

"The average entry level pay for a fire fighter in Baghdad is \$3 per month. And, while the fire fighters have received checks for this month, what good are the checks when the banks are closed?" asked Sadoom.

While Gerald said that some emergency funds might become available for the fire fighters, that decision would be made through diplomatic channels based, in part, on reports such as the one Gerald will be filing based on his review.

A father of two, Gerald said he is enjoying his time in Iraq. "It's good to be able to do this. I feel great about working on something that relates to my civilian profession and something that is so exciting and rewarding."

**A \$20 emergency payment was given out to each of Baghdad's city firefighters on May 8, 2003, by the soldiers from the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion.**



Army Reserve Maj. Vincent Crabb of the Greensboro, N.C.-based 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion looks on as two Iraqis working in the new Baghdad Police Department bend over a map of the city.

## CIVIL AFFAIRS TEAM TRAINS NEW BAGHDAD POLICE

For civil affairs soldiers, the whole idea is to be soldier-diplomats, to act as the instructive and transitional link between war-fighting military commanders and the civilian population, which eventually must be left to its own devices. The invading 3rd Infantry Division is still in charge of Baghdad's security. The job of the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion from Greensboro, North Carolina, is to enable it to someday withdraw in good conscience, in good faith, and with good feelings all around.

Currently, members of the 422nd are assisting interim Baghdad police chief, Gen. Zuhair al-Ne'amy, in bringing order back to Baghdad. Ne'amy has the word "interim" in his title for two reasons. First, in democracies, a city's police chief is appointed by an elected mayor. Ne'amy was installed in the position by the Marines and kept on by the 422nd, and the U.S. military does not want to give the impression that it is calling the shots here.

Second, Military Intelligence is still conducting a background check on Ne'amy. The 422nd knows full well that anyone who carried a badge under Saddam Hussein may not be the kind of cop they want policing the new Iraq. However, with looting and crime still rampant, they know there is little time to waste. Ne'amy had the faith of the Marines and has been regaled as a "good man." For now, that has to be enough.

As for the hundreds of former police officers lining up every day to be rehired, the 422nd knows that membership in Saddam's party was compulsory. Not every former cop is a bad cop, and circumstances simply don't permit the 422nd to risk merely casting them aside.

Capt. Timothy Popek and Capt. Mike Self, 422nd soldiers who are both police officers back in the Greensboro area, are in charge of deciding which applicants get a chance to start fresh.

"We talk to people we've learned to trust, people who have been with us since we got here," said Popek, a Guilford County policeman back home. "Our two bodyguards here were with us for our first bank robbery, shooting right along with us. When they say someone's all right, we believe them."

However, applicants have quickly surmised that the way to get in with the Americans is to finger someone else, and the word-of-mouth screening method rapidly has become confusing.

"Everyone's pointing at everyone else," said Self. "A lot of it comes down to intuition. It's really got to be what they do from here that matters. Then we'll take it case-by-case."

"I don't really know exactly what police culture they had here before," added Self. "We just want to impress upon them the idea of trust. If you're not regarded as being honorable and trustworthy, you're in the wrong business."



“The public hates the police here,” Popek said. “And the police know it. Some of these guys will take off their uniforms right outside the gate and walk around in civilian clothes. Then they walk back in here and put their uniforms back on.”

So one of the 422nd’s very next priorities is new uniforms, which hopefully will help convey to the public that things are different now.

Another difference is the military accompaniment all new police officers are bringing on their patrols. Recently, members of the 519th Military Police Battalion from Fort Polk, Louisiana, began going out on patrols with the new Iraqi policemen, training them in the techniques and tactics that MPs bring to similar peacekeeping and civil-order missions.

Like the 422nd, the 519th wants to train the new police force to make its own decisions in the field. However, they also are empowered to impose their own policing standards on their Iraqi partners — arresting anyone, including the officers themselves, who get out of line.

The arrival of the MPs also has enabled the civil affairs crew to concentrate on the new station house. Baghdad’s new central

police station is its former police academy — a dusty, dingy, white-walled building with low ceilings and long corridors, a facility where neglect and looting have taken their toll. The phones and computers have been stolen, the light fixtures torn from the ceilings, and the doors removed and windows broken. However, every day, another office gets cleaned up.

Another problem being confronted is pay. From the translators and the bodyguards to police officers and even Chief Ne’amy, every Iraqi back on the job is working for free. And even Baghdad’s new “finest” cannot be expected to choose integrity over food forever. The 422nd hopes to cut through some of the red tape by using confiscated cash from robberies, etc. to pay wages as well as fund other activities.

“The funds also could be used in a reward system to pay citizens who bring in ill-gotten gains and to pay for information on where criminals are hiding,” said Popek. “In addition, there’s the basic stuff of policing — communications, computers, bars for the new station’s windows and locks for its doors, and new light fixtures — that any force policing a city of five to seven million would be lost without.”

We’ve got a wish list that we’re bringing to the ORHA (the White House’s recently appointed Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance) to sign off on,” added Popek. “That’s all you can do — go through channels and bring your requests. That’s the way it’s got to be done.”

In the meantime, Popek, Self and the other members of the 422nd are concentrating on what they can do with what they’ve got — taking applications and encouraging the growing ranks of Iraqi police officers to keep working on faith and doing what they can for themselves. Progress is evident.

*Like  
the 422nd, the  
519th wants to train  
the new police force to  
make its own decisions  
in the field.*

Interim Baghdad Police Chief Zuhair al-Ne’amy, followed by an entourage of officials, walks through the parking lot of the new Baghdad Police Department.



[Right] Army Reserve Capt. Timothy Popek of the Greensboro, N.C.-based 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion demonstrates an American-style police stop on the streets of a Baghdad neighborhood, holding an imaginary gun on his Iraqi bodyguard while his translator and another bodyguard look on.

PHOTOS THIS SPREAD: SGT. FRANK N. PELLEGRINI, U.S. ARMY RESERVE PAC







## TRACKING SERVICE MEMBERS INJURED IN BATTLE

One of the worst aspects of war is the inevitable casualties that result. Tracking those casualties is the responsibility of the 3rd Personnel Command (PERSCOM) Casualty Area Command (CAC), which must submit a report of all current casualties each day to the Casualty and Memorial Affairs Operation Center, a part of the Army Personnel Command in Alexandria, Virginia.

“The CAC reports to the Department of the Army, which notifies the service member’s next of kin,” said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Sharon Price, a military personnel technician with the Army Reserve’s 678th Personnel Services Battalion, Detachment 4, from Louisville, Kentucky, who is a contract specialist with the Army Corp of Engineers in her civilian life. “It is important that, within 24 hours, the report goes forward to the Department of the Army so that the next of kin can be informed in a timely manner.”

CACs are divided into primary and alternate commands, with the primary CAC responsible for the initial reporting of a casualty, while the alternate CAC adds supplemental and progressive information not in the original submittal. Progressive reports are done every five days until the person has become an NSI, or non-serious injury.

“The primary CAC for the Central Command area of responsibility is located at Camp Doha, Kuwait. Established by 3rd

PERSCOM in early 2002, it is responsible for tracking casualties from Afghanistan to Djibouti, Africa,” said Staff. Sgt. Torrey Moore, a 3rd PERSCOM soldier with eight years of service, who works as a computer technician and manager of a Double Quick convenience store in Indianola, Mississippi.

According to Moore, the CAC has processed more than 750 hostile casualty reports and 2,000 non-hostile reports, mainly dealing with accidents and illnesses since Operation Iraqi Freedom began.

CAC also has responsibility for casualty and patient tracking. In casualty tracking, all casualties more severe than NSI are tracked and reported to Brig. Gen. Sean Byrne, Commander of 3rd PERSCOM.

According to Price, casualty tracking also involves keeping units informed about the status of injured troop members, as well as helping injured service members keep track of their personal belongings.

Patient tracking keeps tabs on patients in Level 3 and Level 4 hospitals, which are progressive care facilities that offer procedures such as lab work, surgery, dental treatment, and physical therapy as opposed to simple healthcare antidotes. Patient tracking continues as patients are moved out of theater — usually to Landstuhl, Germany, or Rota, Spain — and then onward to their home unit where tracking stops.

Spc. Donia Gullion reads over a memo while working casualty tracking for 3rd PERSCOM in Kuwait.



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Sharon Price annotates a document as part of her work at the alternate casualty area command in Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.



PHOTOS THIS PAGE: STAFF SGT. THOMAS ORME, 3RD PERSCOM



The first U.S. military Jewish chapel service is held at Baghdad International Airport in May led by Lt. Col. Mitchell S. Ackerson, brigade chaplain for the 220th Military Police Brigade.

“There have been days when I didn’t want to come in because I didn’t want to see the casualties from the night before,” said Spec. Donia Gullion, a personnel specialist with the 678th and business marketing major at Indiana University Southeast. “You just have to separate yourself and keep in mind that we are tracking for units and reporting to families about their members.”

## RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES ASIDE

The first U.S. military Jewish chapel service was held in May at Baghdad International Airport. Eight Jewish worshippers attended the Sabbath morning service.

“It’s part of our American way to say that, whatever faith group you are, you have the right to worship,” said Lt. Col. Mitchell S. Ackerson, brigade chaplain for the 220th Military Police Brigade, an Army Reserve unit from Gaithersburg, Maryland. “I think that is part of why we are here.”

Ackerson, who was in Saudi Arabia during the first Gulf War organizing chapel services for soldiers, said the services usually are a morale-boosting experience for the soldiers.

“For many of them, it’s definitely a plus,” he added. “They get to go to services, and we read letters from Hebrew schools and Jewish day schools throughout the United States that echo the warm feelings of all Americans around the world for our soldiers.”

According to Ackerson, when the soldiers are forward deployed, it often is difficult for them to have religious services, especially in minority religions where there are fewer chaplains. So, these kinds of services provide a strong boost to morale. They also offer a sense of community.

“It is important to identify with your community, and these weekly services are a good way for the soldiers to meet and get to know the rest of their Jewish soldier community,” said Ackerson. “I believe people should have the right to pray, wherever they are and regardless of their faith. So, we are just doing our job — taking care of the soldiers’ needs the best that we can.”





Sgt. Joe Washington of the 755th Adjutant General Postal Detachment helps a customer at the Army's postal facilities at Camp Arifjan.

## GETTING THE MAIL OUT

While combat units continue to battle sporadic enemy elements in and around Baghdad, 3rd Personnel Command (PERSCOM) soldiers battle to stay ahead of the mountains of mail flowing in and out of Camp Arifjan, Iraq. The work is all part of an elaborate mail distribution system set up to deliver between seven to 11 cargo plane loads of mail weekly to soldiers deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The Camp Arifjan Army Post Office (APO) currently provides mail services for more than 17,000 soldiers, which amounts to approximately 40,000 pounds of mail daily. That is the equivalent of about three completely loaded 40-foot trucks. In addition, the facility also provides postal finance services.

“We provide support for mailing packages, letters and buying stamps,” said Capt. Treva West, Adjutant General Postal Detachment commander for the 755th, an Army Reserve unit from Texarkana, Texas. “And, while we don’t do money orders yet, we plan to in the future.”

On any single day, there can be more than 70,000 pounds of mail passing through Camp Arifjan, coming into the APO via airplane, DHL-Direct truck delivery and other APOs for intra-theater transit.

“People should understand how hard these soldiers work,” added West. “Seeing the mounds of mail, you would think it was an insurmountable task. But we get it done every day.”

Working in two shifts, 28 soldiers from the 755th are being assisted by about 30 soldiers from 3rd PERSCOM and by several mail clerks from the 800th Military Police Battalion from Uniondale, New York. For Cpl. Charles Nash, a personnel specialist with the 3rd PERSCOM from Jackson, Mississippi, the work is not a problem.

“For me, it’s comfortable because I worked for UPS back home. It’s good training for understanding the postal system,” he said.

Recently, mail being sent back to the United States has increased dramatically, with postage sales rising from an average of \$2,500 to more than \$4,000 daily. This is a result of the decrease in fighting, and soldiers having more time to write letters.

With the high flow of soldiers in and out of Camp Arifjan, West notes that it is important for units to leave a forwarding address that will allow his soldiers to expedite the flow of mail.

“Whether the unit is moving north to Iraq or redeploying to the States, they should fill out a change of address card. Also, to cut down on the amount of ‘locator’ mail, soldiers should let their family members know their new addresses,” said West.

Locator mail, or mail sent to units that have since moved on, can still be routed to its proper destination using a computer locator database designed by Capt. Jeffrey Clements, a member of the 755th and a computer programmer in his civilian life. The software is continuously updated when units move, requiring a new routing scheme for mail to reach the relocated soldiers.

## JUST ONE OF THE GUYS — AN IT GUY THAT IS

Army Reserve Maj. Edward McGowan is one of those IT guys. The ones who know everything and anything there is to know about computer networks and system configurations. However, in McGowan's case, he also knows a whole lot more. As the information management officer at 3rd Personnel Command (PERSCOM) in Jackson, Mississippi, it is his job to ensure that all of the information technology used in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom operates smoothly.

It is a job full of bits and bytes. First, there is the massive personnel database known as ROAMS (Replacement Operations Automated Management System), into which every person who arrives in theater is entered. Then there are the secure Web sites that 3rd PERSCOM constantly checks to arrange the transportation necessary to get replacement troops from home, casualties returned to duty, and just about everyone else wherever they need to go. And there is the email — both classified and garden-variety — that keeps everybody in touch with everybody else.

Ordering components, building networks, keeping systems up and running — all of this is the responsibility of McGowan and guys like him. And it is a job that makes them rather popular.

"They call us the smart guys. They all know our names. We're always in great demand," joked McGowan.

"We're truly dependent upon the computer networking systems to do our job," said McGowan's boss, Lt. Col. James Mason, supervisor of replacement operations for 3rd PERSCOM and a Europa, Mississippi, high school principal. "If you don't know at least a little about computers, there are very few places left for you in today's military. And, without people like McGowan, the military's almost not going to function."

McGowan is more than qualified for his job. A computer sciences graduate from Jackson State University who interrupted work on his M.B.A. to go to Kuwait, McGowan manages the information systems at Education Service Foundation, a major provider of student loans based in Jackson. He also runs his own one-man consulting business, Information Technology and Systems Consulting, Inc., from his home.

None of that, however, prepared him for what he faced upon his arrival in Arifjan in February — an empty office in an empty building.

"In my business, I subcontract most of the work — find out what a company needs and set it up with the right vendors," said McGowan. "Here, though, this place was just being set up. I basically built our system from scratch — ordered the parts, ran the cables, configured the satellite phones, hooked up the laptops. Pretty much everything."

These days, McGowan's work primarily involves maintaining the systems — ensuring everything works. But with new units continually arriving that need to be integrated into the system, McGowan still needs to keep the connections coming.

"The good thing is that I've learned a lot about management here. That's going to help me with my M.B.A.," added McGowan. "It's been a great experience in that way."

According to Brig. Gen. Sean Byrne, commander of 3rd PERSCOM, everyone who arrives in theater is scanned into the system and, when they move, the database is updated so that everyone back in the rear can have access to where they are and who they are.

"We've got more than 99 percent accountability of everyone here — Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, civilian contractors, civilian media, Department of Defense employees, everybody. The technology, as well as our IT guys, have made all the difference," said Byrne.

"When I get back to my business, I'd like to do some consulting work for the military. I know exactly what they need," added McGowan. "After all, there's more than one way to serve your country." **AR**



*"The good thing is that I've learned a lot about management here. That's going to help me with my M.B.A... It's been a great experience."*





**UNITED STATES TRANSPORTATION COMMAND**

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17 April 2003

**Lieutenant General James R. Helmly**  
**Chief, Army Reserve**  
**2400 Army Pentagon**  
**Washington DC 20310-2400**

**Dear General Helmly**

**As our forces press toward victory, I remain inspired by a clearly unbeatable team: the United States Army Reserve and the United States Transportation Command. The stellar performance and inspirational leadership of our military men and women are unmatched. They offer the world hope for a brighter future. No doubt, I share your pride in their indomitable spirit, determination, and drive as they fight to provide hope for a reticent people. Your soldiers are magnificent warriors and true heroes.**

**At home, half a world away, the Reserve men and women of the Military Traffic Management Command (MTMC), along with their active duty teammates and commercial partners, are succeeding at challenges as never before. In recent operations, MG Dunwoody's team has performed superbly! Mobilized units with scores of Individual Mobilization Augmentees--totaling over 1000 personnel--and Annual Training volunteers have played a key role in MTMC swiftly projecting combat power and brilliantly maximizing the efficiency of our constrained transportation pipeline. In the past three months alone, MTMC has moved more than 12 million square feet of combat power in support of Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM--an astounding 50% of the overall movement, and a number that is sure to increase in the future. The remarkable efforts of MTMC and its commercial partners have contributed greatly to the mission success of the United States Transportation Command.**

**Our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and coast guardsmen carry forth the strength of our nation, the banner of freedom, and the hope of the future. Thank you for your personal leadership, and the incomparable teamwork of your talented men and women. First on-scene and last to leave, our award winning professionals will deliver victory--one team, one force, one fight! Godspeed.**

**Sincerely**

**JOHN W. HANDY**  
**General, USAF**  
**Commander**

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PHOTO: SPEC. RYAN SMITH, 372ND MPAD

**Soldiers from the 411th Civil Affairs Battalion**, an Army Reserve unit from Danbury, Conn., deliver meals to displaced families living in the former Al-Rashid military complex.





## IN THE NEXT ISSUE



# REBUILDING



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