

Commando Update

Volume 1 ~ Issue 1

2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division

December 2009

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2-10 Mtn. Div. takes on partnership role



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jennie Burrett

By Sgt. Jennie Burrett
2nd BCT PAO, 10th Mtn. Div., MND-B

BAGHDAD – The Soldiers of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division took over partnership responsibilities with Iraqi Security Forces in eastern Baghdad during a transfer of partnership ceremony, Nov. 15.

The ceremony at Joint Security Station Loyalty marked the end to the yearlong deployment for Paratroopers of 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division.

Col. David M. Miller, of Evanston, Ill., the commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, and Command Sgt. Maj. Joe Montour, of Amarillo, Texas, salute the colors after they have been uncased; signifying the moment when the responsibility of the mission transferred from 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division to 2nd BCT 10th Mtn Div. during a transfer of partnership ceremony, Nov. 15.

“I would like to take a moment to thank...the entire Panther team for the hard work they put in to making our transition a success. Congratulations on all you’ve accomplished and for everything you have done in setting the foundation for what we will do with our ISF partners.” said Col. David M. Miller, of Evanston, Ill., the commander of 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div.

The Panther brigade served a 12-month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and will now return for the holidays to Fort Bragg, N.C.

“The transition of partnership between the Panthers and Commandos with our ISF Partners is a renewal of the friendship and commitment of the American people

See ~ BCT TOP Ceremony ~Pg. 4

2-10 Mtn. Div. takes on partnership role

By Sgt. Jennie Burrett
2nd BCT PAO, 10th Mtn. Div., MND-B

BAGHDAD, Iraq – The command sergeant major of the Maneuver Center of Excellence, from Fort Benning, Ga., visited Soldiers from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, Dec. 3.

Command Sgt. Maj. Earl Rice met to discuss the quality of training Soldiers receive coming out of the U.S. Army’s main infantry training center, and to talk about senior leader’s thoughts on improvement.

“The Maneuver Center of Excellence ~ CSM of MCE Visit ~Pg. 4



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jennie Burrett

Command Sgt. Maj. Earl L. Rice, the command sergeant major of the Maneuver Center of Excellence from Fort Benning, talks to Command Sgt. Maj. Carl Ashmead, of Fairfield, Idaho, the command sergeant major of 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, and the rest of the 2-14 IN Senior Noncommissioned Officers about the Soldiers who come out of Fort Benning and what can be improved with their training before they get to the infantry line units.



**Dear Commando Soldiers,
Family members and friends,**

With the kick-off of this, our first newsletter of the deployment, it is with great pride in all of you I report we are off to a great start in all respects.

The Brigade Combat Team has the responsibility of providing security as well as support to government and economic efforts in an area including most of East Baghdad and a very large rural / agricultural area east of the city.

To do this we are partnered with two Iraqi Security Divisions. Within those Divisions, 2-14IN, 4-31IN, 1-89CAV

and 2-15FA are partnered with Iraqi Brigades. They are training, coaching, providing support for and conducting operations with those brigades.

Our Brigade Special Troops Battalion is conducting a number of enabling tasks, not the least of which is route clearance missions that keep the roads safe for us and the Iraqis.

Our Support Battalion is providing the first class logistics support it always does to all our efforts despite the huge swath of ground we are responsible for.

As always, our Soldiers, led by great Non-Commissioned Officers are the central reason for our success.

Our Rear Detachment and Family Readiness Groups are also doing a spectacular job. In many ways their responsibilities are more challenging than those of us forward deployed. They must insure accurate information is received and sent between forward and rear. They must process new and late deploying Soldiers. They must represent the Brigade with the Division and Garrison commands. The list is endless.

I commend all involved in both of these groups in accomplishing all you already have in the initial stages of this deployment.

Our Commando Vision statement

says that Soldiers and Families are the Core of our Strength. It is no surprise to me we are off to such a good start; our Soldiers and Families are the reason.

As we go forward, our goal is to help the Iraqi Security Forces secure their population before, during and after the coming elections and then transition security fully to them. As we do this, we should keep the "Commando 6" in mind:

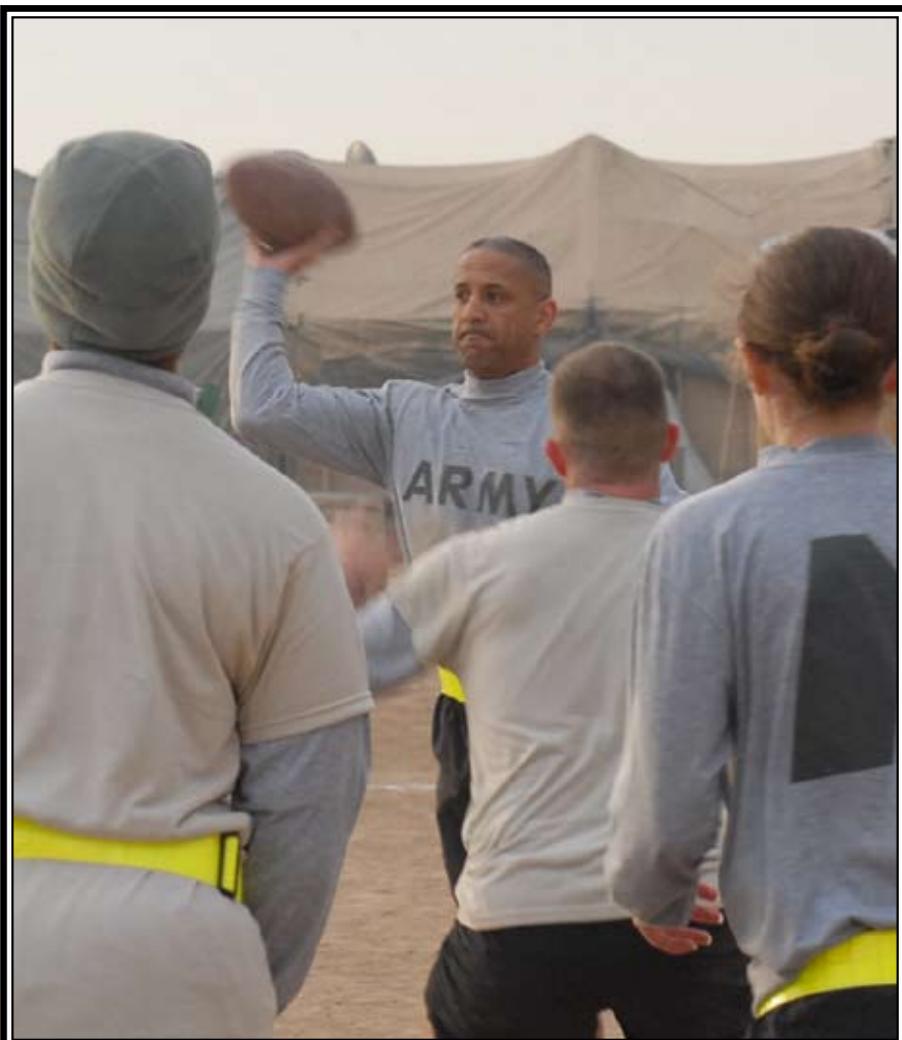
- Physical Fitness
- Execute the Basics
- Standards
- Commanders Command and NCOs run units
- Teamwork
- Do the Right Thing

IF we stay focused on these principles, we'll accomplish all asked of us, both forward deployed and at home. We are just getting started, and we have a long way to go. Keeping these principles in mind will help us stay the course and accomplish our mission in accord with our motto;

COURAGE and HONOR!

I'm proud to serve with you.

**Commandos / Clime To Glory!
Col David Miller**



Left: Col. David M. Miller, the commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, throws the football during an ultimate football game played between the Headquarters and Headquarters Company officers and noncommissioned officers called the Turkey Bowl Nov. 25 on Contingency Operating Site Hammer.

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jennie Burrett

Below: Col. David M. Miller, the commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, takes a photos with Brig. Gen. Adnan Wadi Muhsin, the acting commander First Federal Police after a meeting at the first federal police headquarters in Joint Security Station Shield on Dec. 1.

U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Earl Dean





**Notes from an Old Warrior
Dear Commando Families and Friends,**

All Commandos are on the ground here in OE Commando. The men and women of this great organization find themselves once again doing what we have trained very hard to do.

This brigade was fortunate to have transitioned with a unit that worked very hard and built a relationship not only with the people of Iraq, but they also built a solid partnership with the Iraqi Army and Federal Police.

This partnership has been taken to the next level by our Soldiers and has started

paying off for the teams here on the ground. Our Soldiers have the ability to fight that has been proven many times over.

Now they will take on a completely different role in mentoring and continuing the training needed for the country of Iraq to finalize its new chapter in their history.

The area our Soldiers are operating in has local concerned citizens phoning in tips and pointing out people who have been known to carry out attacks on ISF and Coalition Forces in the past.

I have full faith that the battalions within the brigade will be successful in the mission. I am just as proud of the men and women of this organization as I was just over a year ago when I came back to 2BCT and am honored to serve by their side.

Life here is not bad. We have everything you could want. There is very little that you would really need to spend money on here, but I know we will. There are four meals served every day, an ice cream/desert bar most people would kill for, and gyms that are available 24 hours a day. Though some gyms are a little small in some areas, there are plans to improve them.

There are also MWR facilities that, though they may also be a little old, all battalions are working with the technicians to get new equipment, and as they stand right now provide the ability to maintain communications with families and friends back home.

Families, we recognize it has not been easy for any of you. Fathers have missed birthdays and the births of children. Husbands and wives have missed wedding anniversaries and many holidays.

I would like to thank all of you for supporting what your Soldiers do. I know it is not easy, but you do it, and both Col. Miller and I thank you all for what you do and the support you provide to your Soldiers, Battalions and the BCT.

I know there have been many rumors floating around about who will get to take leave and who will not. Until told differently by our higher headquarters, the Environmental Morale Leave plan will remain in full swing. We will begin our leave program within the next few days.

Also, as it stands today, we are here for one year, and all Soldiers will take EML. The intent for all Soldiers to know when they would be coming home and for that information to be conveyed to the families prior to them leaving will remain in full effect.

Again I am extremely proud and honored to serve with this great team and would like to wish all our Families and friends back home and throughout the nation a very Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Courage and Honor / Climb to Glory!
CSM Joe Montour



BCT TOP Ceremony ~Pg. 1

the people of east Baghdad and the Mada'in," said Col. Timothy McGuire, of Alamo, Calif., and commander of the 3rd BCT, 82nd Abn. Div. "As my Soldiers and I return to our families, we look forward to telling the story of our Iraqi partners to our fellow Americans."

The mission of Fort Drum, N.Y. based Soldiers is to support the ISF and Government of Iraq to secure the population, defeat the enemy, and further develop their government and economic structures.

"The Commandos of 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. are eager to partner with you [ISF] and support your efforts to provide a bright future for Iraq," said Miller. "We are committed to your vision and the success of your mission."

The 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. has six subordinate battalions: the 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment; 4th Bn., 31st Inf. Regt; 1st Squadron, 89th Cavalry Regt; 2nd Bn., 15th Field Artillery Regt.; 2nd Bde. Special Troops Bn. and 210th Bde. Support Bn.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jennie Burrett
Above: A joint color guard, comprised of U.S. and Iraqi Soldiers, presents the United States and Iraq flags along with the brigade colors for the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division and the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division during the transfer of partnership ceremony, Nov. 15.

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jennie Burrett
Left: U.S. and Iraqi Soldiers were present at the transfer of partnership ceremony between the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division and the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, Nov. 15., as they salute a joint color guard, comprised of U.S. and Iraqi Soldiers, presents the United States and Iraq flags during National Anthem.

CSM of MCE Visit ~Pg. 1

excellence command sergeant major visited 2nd Brigade today in the continued pursuit of excellence, to help us know and understand we are smarter than we were yesterday, but not as smart as we will be tomorrow," said Command Sgt. Maj. Joe Montour, of Amarillo, Texas, the brigade's top enlisted leader. Rice came to speak to senior non-commissioned officers on what is going on at Fort Benning and what NCOs need to do when they get a new Soldier from Fort Benning. According to Rice, purpose, di-

rection, and motivation are what the Soldiers who come directly out of training at Fort Benning need from their NCOs to build them up from the baseline the cadre at Fort Benning set for the Soldiers during training. Some of the topics discussed during the meetings ranged from physical fitness to Ranger school for the Soldiers. The main discussion was based on what the NCOs thought the Soldiers needed to know before they are sent to their first permanent duty station.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jennie Burrett
Command Sgt. Maj. Earl L. Rice, the command sergeant major of the Maneuver Center of Excellence from Fort Benning, talks to the Noncommissioned Officers of 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division Dec. 3 at Contingency Operating Site Carver about Soldiers that come out of Fort Benning and what is offered for their training before and after they graduated from Fort Benning.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jennie Burrett
The 2nd Brigade Combat Team Command Security Team stay proficient on all weapon systems from the So-caliber machine gun to the 9 mm pistol as they fire at the Besmaya Range located just outside Contingency Operating Site Hammer.

Commando of the Month-- Spc. Matthew Mortensen

By Sgt. Jennie Burrett
2nd BCT PAO, 10th Mtn. Div., MND-B

Hearing the gun fire, feeling like he had just been hit with a hammer in the shoulder and not knowing if he had actually been shot were some of the first things that went through the mind of a Soldier in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division Dec. 10.

This situation describes what Spc. Matthew Mortensen, of Olathe, Kan., went through when he was injured by sniper fire while on a presence patrol in Baghdad.

"I was probably two feet from my door of my truck when I heard gun fire and it felt like someone just cracked me in the right shoulder blade with a hammer," said Mortensen.

The presence patrol, which was conducted to search a neighborhood which is a historical site for weapons caches, rockets and mortars, consisted of mounted and dismounted elements. As the dismounted element moved, the mounted element went from check point to check point providing security for them. Having reached the last check point, Staff Sgt. Manoj Prasad, the platoon sergeant for the command security team, and Mortensen dismounted to maneuver the trucks into a static security position,

when shots were fired.

Prasad said Mortensen ran over to him saying he thought he has been hit.

"I saw a bullet hole in his shirt, and when I cut it open all I could see was blood," said Prasad. "I looked for an exit wound and couldn't find one."

Mortensen is the combat medic for the 2-14 CST. Combat medics are responsible for providing first aid and frontline trauma care on the battlefield with the primary role to provide medical treatment to wounded soldiers. Being the medic on scene, Mortensen provided first aid care to himself after he was injured until he reached the Joint Security Station Loyalty aid station.

"After I was shot, I had my platoon sergeant examine for a wound and he found one on my right shoulder blade," said Mortensen. "Then I jumped into the truck, threw off my kit because I couldn't reach my right side with my kit on. After I took it off, I started cleaning up some of the blood with gauze then I used the package for the gauze and created a pressure dressing over the wound just in case it penetrated my chest cavity. I didn't know what happened to the bullet so that was the only thing I was really worried about"

After the initial treatment of his

wounds Mortensen was medically evacuated to JSS Loyalty. Mortensen kept his composure throughout the event and provided Prasad with the proper medevac procedures for entering the JSS. They deployed the VS-17 panel, like Mortensen told them, and made their way from the Entry Control Point to the medical facility.

The day following the incident, Mortensen was awarded a Purple Heart and a Combat Medical badge while he was in the hospital at Victory Base Complex.

The Purple Heart is awarded to those who have been wounded or killed while serving on or after April 5, 1917 with the U.S. military. The

Combat Medical Badge is a decoration of the United States Army which was first created in January 1945. The badge is awarded to any member of the Army Medical Department, pay grade Colonel or below, who are assigned or attached to a medical unit (company or smaller size) which provides medical support to a ground combat arms unit during any period in which the unit was engaged in active ground combat.

Mortensen was sent back to the United States for rehabilitation and recuperation. He anticipates after spending a month back in the States he will return to his platoon in Iraq sometime in February.



Spc. Matthew Mortensen, of Olathe, the combat medic for the 2-14 command security team, shows high spirits after he was shot in the shoulder by sniper fire while on a presence patrol in Baghdad Dec. 10.

4-31 Infantry secures COP Carver on base defense patrol

By Maj. Timothy Hyde
2nd BCT PAO, 10th Mtn. Div., MND-B

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Soldiers from 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division conducted a base defense patrol around Contingency Operating Post Carver Dec. 16.

The patrol, led by 1st Lt. Daniel Obst, of Buffalo, N.Y., the platoon leader for 2nd Platoon, C Company, 4-31, was conducted to prevent attacks on the COP.

"It gives us the knowledge of what's out there around the COP," said Obst. "That way, if we see something weird, we'll know it's not supposed to be there."

This patrol was conducted by 1st Squad, 2nd Platoon, C Company, and was one of the regularly scheduled patrols around COP Carver and was made up of Soldiers who had been on every patrol the squad had gone on to a Soldier who was only on his second patrol.

While they are out on patrol, the Soldiers of C Company interact with the surrounding farmers as much as they can to build relationships with them to get them to take a stake in making the area a safe environment not only for the Soldiers, but also for them.

"If they see and watch us, I think it's a little bit less of a burden on them. Like it'll help them out," said Spc. Jimmy Aguilar, of San Antonio, T.X., a Soldier in 1st Squad.

Keeping this base of operations safe from enemy attacks has allowed the battalion to focus on their mission, which is to assist the local Iraqi Army unit in providing security for the Salman Pak area.

Like the other units throughout the 2nd BCT area of operations, 4-31 has partnered with the local Iraqi Security Forces to advise and assist them while they conduct the operations needed to secure the population.



U.S. Army photo by Maj. Timothy Hyde
Staff Sgt. Alexis Rodriguez, of Saginaw, Mich., a squad leader in C Company, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, observes an Iraqi civilian running from a Base Defense Patrol around Contingency Operating Post Carver Dec. 16.

Commandos do Shadow Run with Tamarac, Fla.

By Spc. Rebecca Schwab
2nd BCT PAO, 10th Mtn. Div., MND-B

BAGHDAD – Some people might not associate the words “fun” and “run” in the same sentence, but 2nd Brigade Combat Team Soldiers were in good spirits as they kicked off their Thanksgiving day with a competitive five-kilometer run Nov. 26.

It was still dark outside when about 350 participants began the “Turkey Trot” run on Contingency Operating Site Hammer. A few hours later, when it was dawn in Tamarac, Fla., civilian runners “shadowed” them by running in their own Turkey Trot.

Charlene Nevadomski, special events manager for the city of Tamarac, Fla., said about 1,500 runners took part in the shadow run. It’s the city’s 29th year doing the Turkey Trot, and the second year that they did it in conjunction with troops overseas.

“We hung the flags of COS Hammer and Forward Operating Base Victory,” Nevadomski said. “It’s a nice connection to our troops. I’m sure they are missing home during the holidays.”

Capt. Elizabeth Lopez, 2nd BCT’s medical planning officer, said doing the run together helped create a sense of connection between troops deployed overseas, and family and friends back home.

“It makes us think about our families who are back home, doing the same things,” she said. “It’s a little bit more of a holiday, instead of going to work and [doing] the same thing every day.”

Pete Turner, a human terrain research manager and liaison for the event, said he was happy to find a way to do something for Soldiers while they are here.

“It’s great to have a piece of home here in Iraq on a holiday like Thanksgiving,” said Turner, a native of Tamarac. “People [in Tamarac] want to do whatever they can for the troops, but they don’t have access to them, so it’s a chance for



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jennie Burrett
Col. David M. Miller, the commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division sprints through the finish line of the Thanksgiving five-kilometer “Turkey trot” run Nov 26 on Contingency Operating Site Hammer.

the city to reach out as a community.”

Winners of the Turkey Trot on COS Hammer included first place runner Air Force Capt. Michael Holl, 2nd Brigade’s air liaison officer, followed by Pfc. Jeremy Ogrizovich and Pfc. Matthew Kitch, both infantryman with the 2nd BCT Command Security Team. Capt. Kelly Leugers, logistics officer for the 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, won first place for female runners, with Capt. Elizabeth Lopez coming in second and Capt. Justine Peters third.

“It was a good run, good competition,” Ogr-

izovich said. “The support was very awesome, to see the brigade commander, brigade sergeant major, all the battalion commanders and battalion sergeants major, out there running. It was good stuff.”

Col. David Miller, the commander of 2nd BCT, said the team spirit displayed in the run was the same spirit that allows the brigade to accomplish its mission.

“That’s the spirit it takes to get out there on the other side of the wire, and bring the win home for the American people, the Iraqi people, and the Middle East,” he said.



Left: Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, play ultimate football to kick off the Thanksgiving festivities the day before Thanksgiving. Deployment didn’t stop the Commandos Brigade from continuing the tradition set last year of the Turkey Bowl.

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jennie Burrett

Below: Col. David M. Miller, a native of Evanston, Ill., the commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division and Command Sgt. Maj. Joe Montour, of Amarillo, Texas, the command sergeant major of the 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. stand with the winners of the Turkey Trot on COS Hammer including (from left to right) third place male runner Pfc. Matthew Kitch, third place female runner, Capt. Justine Peters, second place female runner, Capt. Elizabeth Lopez, second place male runner Pfc. Jeremy Ogrizovich, first place female runner, Capt. Kelly Leugers, and first place male runner Air Force Capt. Michael Holl.

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jennie Burrett





U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jennie Burrett

First Sgt. Alan Robison, the first sergeant of B company, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, and Pfc. Gregory Dipuccio, a Soldier in B company, 2-14 IN, 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn, prepare to serve their deep fried turkey to the Soldiers at Joint Security Station SUJ on Thanksgiving Day.

Commandos celebrate Thanksgiving in Iraq

By Sgt. Jennie Burrett
2nd BCT PAO, 10th Mtn. Div., MND-B

“Today’s thanksgiving meal is a remembrance to the Soldiers for what they have at home.”

BAGHDAD – The Soldiers of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, celebrate Thanksgiving Day with a full array of traditional foods and activities on Nov. 25 and 26 across the 2nd BCT operational environment.

The Commando Brigade took time to reflect during Thanksgiving Day.

“When you think about the holiday seasons in general not just Thanksgiving, you think about the contributions we make to a higher purpose, and certainly being here serving in Iraq trying to help the Iraqis experiment in a free government and a new life for their country; what that means to peace in the middle east and piece in the world and being a part of that is very much a part of contributing to a larger high purpose,” said Col. David M. Miller, a native of Evanston, Ill., the commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division.

There are 13 locations that 2nd BCT Soldiers are located and all of them served a full

Thanksgiving meal to include turkey, ham, potatoes, gravy, vegetables, candy yams, and a variety of deserts.

“Today’s thanksgiving meal is a remembrance to the Soldiers for what they have at home,” said Sgt First Class Mayrineth Campbell, a food service noncommissioned officer in Headquarters and Headquarter Company, 210th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division.

“We make it as homely as possible with the decoration and the food. We made it as traditional as possible; so the Soldiers although

they are away from home can at least have a place to relax and enjoy camaraderie with the rest of the Soldier and just have a nice day.”

The other events the Commandos participated in to celebrate Thanksgiving included an ultimate football game, and a five-kilometer “Turkey trot” run on Contingency Operating Site Hammer.

According to Miller, the ways to start the Thanksgiving holiday is with physical fitness, competing healthily and afterward celebrating good competition and good sportsmanship together.



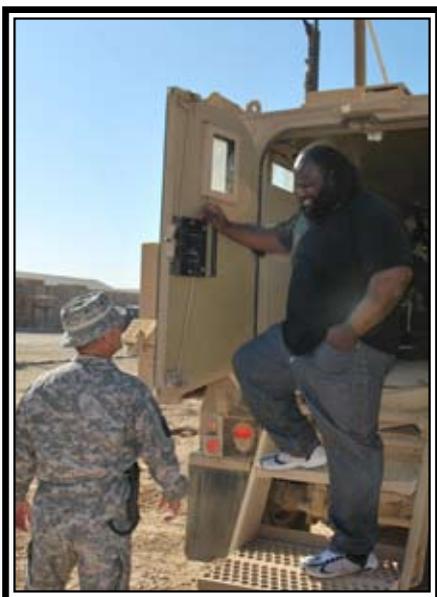
Lt. Col. Heyward Hutson, the commander of 2nd Battalion, 15th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, serves Thanksgiving Dinner to the Soldiers following the tradition in the United States Army for senior leaders to serve the Thanksgiving meal, at Joint Security Station Zafaraniya.

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jennie



World Wrestling Entertainment Superstars Visit 2BCT Soldiers

*U.S. Army photo by
Georges Aboumrad*



Command Sgt. Maj. Joe Montour (left), the command sergeant major of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, jokes with World Wrestling Entertainment Superstar Mark Henry as he exits a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle at Contingency Operating Site Hammer, Dec. 3. Seven World Wrestling Entertainment Superstars visited Soldiers at three 2nd BCT installations.



Above: The World Wrestling Entertainment Superstars who visited the Soldiers and signed autographs, Dec. 3 in Iraq.



Left: Command Sgt. Maj. Joe Montour, the command sergeant major of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, at Contingency Operating Site Hammer, welcomes some of the World Wrestling Entertainment Superstars who visited the Soldiers, Dec. 3.



Above: World Wrestling Entertainment Superstars visit Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, at Contingency Operating Site Hammer Dec. 3. Wrestlers get ready to meet and greet Soldiers as well as sign autographs and take photos with the Soldiers.

Left: Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, gathered at Contingency Operating Site Hammer, east of Baghdad, Dec. 3, for their chance to meet some of the World Wrestling Entertainment Superstars, a morale boost that helps Soldiers who are deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Photos From Home!



“Everything I Needed”

An unknown soldier wrote this a century ago:

*“I asked for strength and,
God gave me difficulties to make me strong;*

*I asked for wisdom and,
God gave me problems to solve;*

*I asked for prosperity and,
God gave me brawn and brain to work;*

*I asked for courage and,
God gave me dangers to overcome;*

*I asked for patience and,
God placed me in situations where I was forced to wait;*

*I asked for love and,
God gave me troubled people to help;*

*I asked for favors and,
God gave me opportunities;*

*I received nothing I wanted.
I received everything I needed;*

My prayer has been answered.”

The problems, issues and struggles of life are most often taken as obstacles holding us back from accomplishing what we really need to do, or are they? Could it be that the very opposite is actually true if seen from another perspective? I argue that this is just the case indeed!

Albeit difficult and almost always inconvenient, our low times along the bumpy journey of life also happen to be the very means through which we learn the most about ourselves, others and why we're here on earth in the first place.

If you're honest, you've probably had an experience or two like this. At the time you might have thought that the entire universe was going to implode right on your head, and dreaded every second of the ordeal. Long after it was over, however, you might have looked back and said to yourself, “I'm a better man or woman for this experience.”

The Christian New Testament scriptures remind us that, “All things work together for good for those that love God and are called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28). Take care, therefore, to view the trials and tribulations of life through the eyes of faith that reveal educational treasures that could never be accessed by any other means.

COMMANDOS!



Iraqi Federal Police commander briefs 2BCT 10 Mtn. Div. commander on operational environment

By Sgt. Jennie Burrett
2nd BCT PAO, 10th Mtn. Div., MND-B

BAGHDAD – The commander of the 8-2 Iraqi Federal Police Brigade briefed and gave a tour to the commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division on the current operational environment in the area of operation of the 8-2 IFP Brigade, Nov. 17.

During the tour Brig. Gen. Ali Ibrahim Daboon, the 8-2 IFP Brigade commander, showed Col. David M. Miller, a native of Evanston, Ill., the commander of 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. around two of the 8-2 battalion headquarters in the compound, an Iraqi checkpoint, and the Obeiti market. Miller was briefed on topics ranging from what the general thinks he will need for the upcoming election to what the people in the area need.

Ali wants to see the Iraqi people unite with the Iraqi Security Forces and the American forces. He also wants to support the Iraqi people by providing the services they need; as the security situation

is getting better, and they look forward to democracy and freedom in Iraq.

The tour gave Miller better situational awareness on the current standing of the area in which 8-2 brigade is responsible for.

“I walked away with a much better understanding of what General Ali’s unit is capable of doing, what is going on in the environment, and how they [8-2 IFP Brigade] are conducting full spectrum operations to stabilize; not just to defeat the threat but make a better living condition for the population,” said Miller. “So we as the newcomers of the team have elevated our situational awareness of what is going on and how we can be value added to help enable and assist his [Ali] brigade in what they are doing.”

The 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. has been working alongside of the 8-2 IFP Brigade since NOV. 10 after replacing the 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jennie Burrett
Brig. Gen. Ali Ibrahim Daboon, the commander of the 8-2 Iraqi Federal Police Brigade, discusses the area of the Obeiti market with Col. David M. Miller, the commander of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, and Lt. Col. John Petkosek, a native of Chardon, Ohio, the commander of 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Regiment, 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. after a tour Nov. 17. The Obeiti market is a site that was fixed-up, paved, and lit with solar lights to be a market for the Iraqi people.

Arch of Ctesiphon assessment by 2BCT, 10MTN

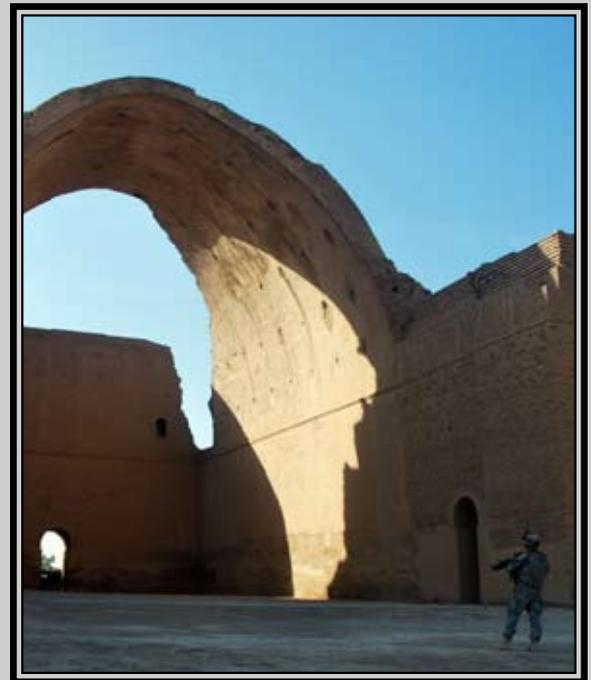


U.S. Army photo by Spc. Rebecca Schwab

Lt. Col. Michael Shimmers (left), of Alexandria, Va., the deputy commander of 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, shows Lt. Col. Michael Davey (right) the area surrounding the famous Arch of Ctesiphon during a site assessment mission Nov. 8 in Salman Pak, Iraq. Shimmers and Davey, the deputy commander of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, along with Iraqi officials, discussed plans to renovate the arch’s surrounding area during the visit. Plans include building a fence, planting grass and trees, and repairing the existing structures in order to help restore national pride and bring tourism to Iraq.

Below: A Soldier assigned to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, stands guard near the Arch of Ctesiphon, one of the oldest free-standing arches in the world, during a site assessment mission, Nov. 8 in Salman Pak, Iraq, located in the Mada’in region outside Baghdad. Built by the Parthian Persians in the sixth century, the arch spans 75 feet and is 110 feet high, and is built entirely of baked brick. U.S. and Iraqi officials discussed plans to improve the grounds surrounding the arch in order to attract tourism and restore national pride.

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Rebecca Schwab



1-89 CAV supports Federal Police in island mission

By Maj. Timothy Hyde
2nd BCT PAO, 10th Mtn. Div., MND-B

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Soldiers from 1st Squadron, 89th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division supported their partnered Iraqi Federal Police unit in a clearing operation of an island in the Tigris River, here, Dec. 11.

The operation was to prevent the trafficking of enemy weapons and personnel across the river and into the rural areas east of Baghdad.

"We had to coordinate with the 1st Air [Cavalry Brigade] for transportation and close air support, [explosive ordinance disposal] for any found ordnance and

military K-9 units to help search for ordinance," said Capt. Joshua Dailey, of Monmouth, Ore.

To prepare for the operation, the American troops conducted training and rehearsals with their FP counterparts. The training included coordination for close air support, Soldier formations while conducting the clearing operation, and "sack load" training for loading and unloading personnel and equipment on and off the aircraft.

The American Soldiers then observed the FP unit as they conducted the search of the island to deter the use of the island as a cache point or way point for movement of personnel or weapons.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jesse Gross
Soldiers from B Troop, 1st Squadron, 89th Cavalry Squadron, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, provide security for members of the Iraqi Federal Police as they conduct a deliberate clearance, Dec. 11, of an island in the Tigris River which was suspected of being used as weapons and personnel way point for insurgent forces in the area.

2-10 MTN., ISF combine to secure polling sites

By Sgt. Jennie Burrett
2nd BCT PAO, 10th Mtn. Div., MND-B

BAGHDAD – As the Iraqi elections draw closer, U.S. and Iraqi forces are focusing on providing security for citizens and polling stations, here, in the capital. Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division combined with Iraqi Federal Police to move concrete barriers and cement blocks for increased security measures during the upcoming election at polling sites in the New Baghdad district, Dec. 7.

Although movement in the city is restricted for U.S. forces under the current Security Agreement; they are still able to provide assistance through partnership with the Iraqi forces. "Everything we do on a daily basis is partnered with the Iraqis, with the Iraqis in the lead," said Capt. Tad Granai, of Providence, R.I. "It's been a great working relationship with incredible improvement that's taken place in a very, very short amount of time. We'll continue this partnership

until we leave."

Iraqi FP Col. Alwan Shakir, appreciated what the Americans are doing in support of the people of Iraq.

"I thank our friendly forces for the great support that they are providing to [the people of Iraq]," said Shakir.

Supporting the Iraqi government and helping the Iraqi people are the main concerns of the 2BCT Soldiers currently serving in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"We are really excited we get to help the Iraqi government by making sure the elections go well," said 1st Lt. Robert Makuch, of Scottsville, N.Y.

"We are here to support the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi Police by making sure these elections go safely. Our main concern is keeping the Iraqi voters safe so that they feel safe enough to go out and vote and have a good turnout for the elections."

The combined partnership preparation will continue for the upcoming elections in the beginning of 2010.



U.S. Army photo by Georges Aboumrad
A Soldier in 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division guides the placement of barriers in New Baghdad, Dec. 7. American and Iraqi forces are placing concrete security barriers for the upcoming elections to provide security for the people.

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*Public Affairs Officer
Maj. Timothy Hyde*

PAO NCOIC

Sgt. Jennie Burrett

PAO Staff

*Spc. Rebecca Schwab
Georges Aboumrad*

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