

OrdnanceReports

News updates from around the world



October 2003



This publication is produced by the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps Communications Coordinator. The purpose of this publication is to provide professional development information and news about Ordnance units and activities around the world. Direct your correspondence to Ed Starnes at 410-278-2415 (DSN 298-2415), or email edward.starnes@ocs.apg.army.mil.

Army recognizes outstanding maintenance

by Pfc. James Cornwell

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Sept. 30, 2003) – Members of the eleven winning units and eleven runners-up for the “Chief of Staff, Army Award for Maintenance Excellence” were honored Sept. 26.

“The Ordnance Corps says you get the job done ‘on the line, to the line, on time,’ and that’s what you’ve done, and I’m very proud of what you’ve done,” said Maj. Gen. Claude V. Christianson, assistant deputy chief of staff, G-4, as he addressed the winners and runners-up.

“The Army needs more people like you. We need you to set the standard that others can look at and follow, strive to exceed if they can,” Christianson said.

The winning units came from a variety of disciplines, including infantry, air defense artillery, military intelligence, and finance.

The objectives of the AAME program are to evaluate the status of total unit maintenance operations; recognize outstanding unit level accomplishments and initiatives; and promote competition at the major command, headquarters, Department of the Army, and Department of Defense level.

The program is designed to evaluate unit-level maintenance operations at brigade, battalion, company, battery, troop and equivalent organizations.

Units compete in four major component categories: active Army, U.S. Army Reserve, Army National Guard and Table of Distribution and Allowance organizations. Within the four major categories, units compete in one of three sub-categories based personnel density.

The winners for fiscal year 2002 are:

Army Reserve

Small Category

Winner: 332nd Engineer Company (Dump Truck) (FORSCOM)

Runner-up: HHD, 787th Support Battalion (CORPS) (FORSCOM)

Medium Category

Winner: 383rd Quartermaster Co. (FORSCOM)

Runner-up: 826th Ordnance Co. (FORSCOM)

Active Duty

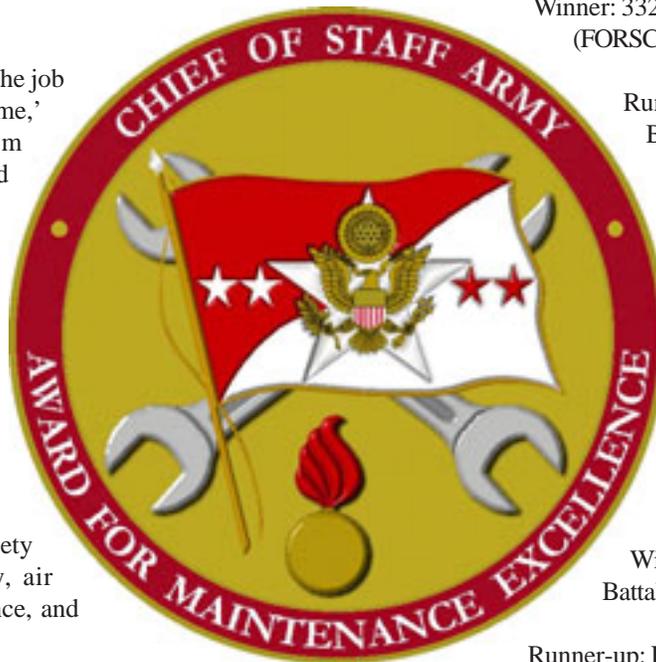
Small Category

Winner: HSC, 1st Military Intelligence Battalion (USAREUR)

Runner-up: HHC, 8th Military Police Brigade (EUSA)

Medium Category

Winner: Maintenance Troop, Regimental Support Squadron, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment (FORSCOM)



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**Army unit takes
DOD Phoenix Award**
see page 6 . . .

Chief warrant officer promotion selection boards to reconvene

October 10, 2003

The Acting Secretary of the Army has approved a recommendation to reconvene the Fiscal Year 2003 CW3, CW4 and CW5 Promotion Selection Boards. After the Selection Boards recessed there was a discovery of possible irregularities in the board process.

Governed by both law and Army policy, the selection board process is a fair and equitable process with many safeguards to ensure high standards are maintained. Reconvening the boards, in this case, is necessary to ensure every eligible officer receives proper

consideration and to maintain those standards.

Historically, promotions from the CW3, CW4 and CW5 warrant officer promotion selection lists begin in October. Reconvening the boards will cause the new promotions to be postponed. However, the promotion lists will be exhausted no later than September 30, 2004.

For more information on the FY03 CW3, CW4 and CW5 Promotion Selection Boards, visit <https://www.perscomonline.army.mil/select/ofwoprom.htm>.

Army recognizes outstanding maintenance continued

Runner-up: 70th Transportation Company, 28th Transportation Battalion (USAREUR)

Large Category

Winner: 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) (FORSCOM)

Runner-up: 112th Signal Battalion (Airborne) (USASOC)

TDA Army

Small Category

Winner: HQ/A Battery, 2nd Battalion, 6th Air Defense Artillery (TRADOC)

Runner-up: Maintenance Activity Vilseck, GSC-Europe (USAREUR)

Medium Category

Winner: 205th Military Intelligence Battalion (INSCOM)

Runner-up: 58th Transportation Battalion (TRADOC)

Large Category

Winner: 527th Military Intelligence Battalion (INSCOM)

Runner-up: 52nd Signal Battalion (NETCOM)

National Guard

Small Category

Winner: 210th Finance Battalion (MSARNG)

Runner-up: Service Battery, 2nd Battalion, 138th Field Artillery (KYARNG)

Medium Category

Winner: 731st Maintenance Company (NCARNG)

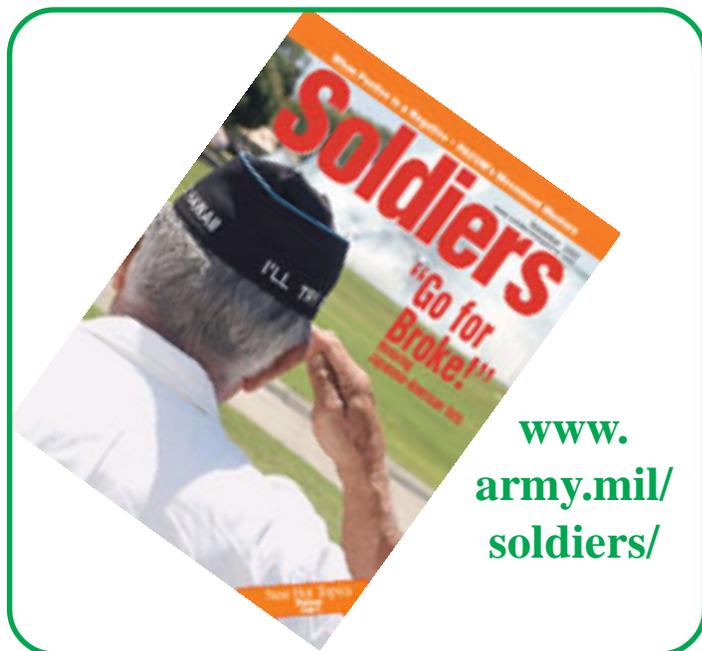
Runner-up: 1344th Transportation Company (ILARNG)

Large Category

Winner: 527th Engineer Battalion (Combat Heavy) (LAARNG)

Runner-up: 232nd Corps Support Battalion (ILARNG)

(Editor's note: Information from a V Corps Public Affairs Office release was used in this report. Pfc. James Cornwell supports Operation Tribute to Freedom with the 107th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Florida National Guard.)



www.army.mil/soldiers/

www.goordnance.apg.army.mil

www.goarmy.com

Mechanics demonstrate necessity is the mother of invention

by Pfc. Joshua Hutcheson

MOSUL, Iraq (Army News Service, Oct. 23, 2003) — Soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division have modified the current M-6 gun mount and contracted with local businesses to build 1,392 mounts that will hold the crew-served machine guns the division uses.



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

“Everything we had to do, we had to really think about soldiers getting up and using (the M6L)” Sgt. 1st Class Samuel Greer said. “Soldiers can tell you best what works for soldiers.”

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

“The Army was having real problems delivering the M6 mount it currently has in production,” said Greer, maintenance noncommissioned officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 101st Corps Support Group, 101st Airborne Division.

Using a previously made contact from an earlier mass-production project, the inventors took their prototype and designs to a trade company in Dohuk that was able to handle cranking out the large number of mounts required to satisfy the needs of the 101st and 3rd COSCOM.

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

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

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

Setting up the factory and hiring new workers “poured almost three quarters of a million dollars into the local economy,” Chief Warrant Officer Wayne Glass, 602nd Maintenance Co., said.

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

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

“We’re able to save about \$1,500 (a piece) on these things,” Greer said.

The 101st wasn’t the only unit having problems trying to fill their gun mount quota. Posted in Baghdad, Glass needed gun mounts for the vehicles that ran between Baghdad and Fallujah.

Because the Army supply system couldn’t meet his needs Glass decided to make his own mount.

Col. Gerald Dolinish, commander of the 101st CSG, volunteered the services of his soldiers and the Kurdish-populated area in northern Iraq to manufacture the mount, Greer said.

Glass arrived in Mosul with his designs and met with Greer and other senior mechanics. The team went through the design and revised the design six times until they were satisfied with their prototype, Greer said.

The design team of the mount has succeeded in saving the Army approximately \$2.1 million, he said.

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

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

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

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

A problem many soldiers found with the original mount is that the constant stress on holes they had to drill to secure the mount caused damage to the body of the vehicles. Using the existing holes makes the mount more secure and stable.

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Former POW learns value of military training

by Donna Miles, American Forces Press Service

FORT CARSON, Colo., Oct. 8, 2003 - Just 10 months after he went off to Army basic training at Fort Sill, Okla., in May 2002, U.S. Army Pfc. Patrick Miller got a first-hand lesson in the true value of military training.

Like many of his fellow soldiers, Miller acknowledges he never thought he'd have much use for the classes he received about being captured by the enemy. As a combat support soldier assigned to the 507th Maintenance Company at Fort Bliss, Texas, he assumed that if ever had any experience with prisoners of war, it would be as the captor — not as the captured.

That all changed after Miller's unit deployed to Southwest Asia in February. He was part of a convoy navigating through southern Iraq in late March that took a wrong turn and got ambushed by Iraqi troops.

During the firefight that followed, Miller said he had too much adrenaline pumping through his bloodstream to be afraid. "I wasn't worried about anything but getting everyone out to safety," he said.

Nine U.S. soldiers died in the skirmish, and Miller and four of his fellow soldiers were captured, taken by a truckload of Iraqis to an outpost in Nasiriyah. They were held there for 21 days before their rescue by the Marines.

Miller, now assigned to the 2nd Transportation Company, 68th Corps Support Battalion, 43rd Area Support Group here, said the events of his capture and POW experience "really didn't sink in" for several days.

He said he can't talk about his treatment by the Iraqis because the

Mechanics demonstrate necessity is the mother of invention continued

The base can also be moved around depending on the type of humvee, said Greer.

It can also be raised, or lowered, for the gunner's comfort or removed entirely if it's not required for a mission.

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

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

(Editor's note: Spc. Joshua Hutchison is a journalist with the 101st Airborne Division's Public Affairs Office in Iraq.)



Army Pfc. Patrick Miller, a former prisoner of war in Iraq, understands first-hand the importance of military training. Photo by Donna Miles

case remains under investigation, but acknowledges it "wasn't pleasant." He and his fellow POWs lived on small rations of boiled chicken and rice — "not a lot," he said, "but enough to survive."

He recalls that it felt "degrading" when the lights of an Iraqi television camera glared into his face, but said he felt a tinge of relief as well. "They were putting us on TV, so I knew they wouldn't do anything to us," he said.

His biggest source of comfort, he said, was being able to hear coalition forces moving closer and "just hoping that they'll find you and that they won't (mistakenly) drop a bomb on you."

Three weeks after his capture, Miller and six other American POWs got their wish. The Marine Corps' 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion was moving north for an attack on Tikrit when Iraqis tipped them off about the POWs.

Following a heroic rescue mission, the Marines flew the newly freed POWs to an airfield in southern Iraq, then transferred them to a C-130 transport plane that flew them to Kuwait.

Miller said he received medical care at a U.S. military hospital in Kuwait before being flown to Landstuhl Army Medical Center in Germany. Finally, on April 19, he and six other former POWs returned to Fort Bliss for a rousing welcoming ceremony at Biggs Army Airfield.

Despite his harrowing experience, Miller said he tries not to think about it, although he admits that "later down the road, I might."

Not surprisingly, he's become a big advocate of more training in how to handle yourself if you're captured. "Everybody needs it," he said.

His advice to fellow soldiers? "Don't joke around when it comes to training. You never know. Even if you're combat support, you just might have to use it."

Guard unit balances maintenance, support duties

by Capt. Theodore A. Sobocienski, 726th Maintenance Battalion

TALLIL AIR BASE, IRAQ — At the corner of Massachusetts Avenue and Yawkey Way, very few things resemble the Back Bay Fens of Boston, but the soldiers from the 726th Maintenance Battalion try not to notice. Simple things like naming the dusty streets of Tallil Air Base in Iraq can be very therapeutic.

The Natick-based Massachusetts Army National Guard unit, with the help of the 110th Maintenance Company out of Ayer, has been keeping the base of about 15,000 troops operating by maintaining weapons, communications equipment and vehicles. They have also assembled support teams that traverse war-torn Iraqi roads to recover damaged and disabled vehicles.

“This is the first time the unit is changing from a maintenance mission to a support operations mission,” said Maj. Mark C. Favazza, a Georgetown native and maintenance officer for the unit. “It’s challenging having to balance maintenance, quartermaster and supply missions.” The 726th covers almost 600 miles of open roadways, with teams stationed at stops all along the main supply route from Kuwait.

Arriving in early May, the unit has had to get used to bulletproof vests, loaded weapons and canteen water that quickly becomes

undrinkable due to the heat. Fortunately, the soldiers have improvised, wrapping moist socks around their canteens to keep them cool and naming the blast-crated streets to keep their spirits high.

The unit has found a way to modify almost everything they have touched. Their office at the base now boasts new front and back porches, picnic tables circle the buildings, and they made improvements to the floors, power system and lights.

“The soldiers are doing great,” said Lt. Col. William Callahan, commander of the 726th. “I’m proud of the part the battalion has played in Operation Iraqi Freedom.”

Since arriving at the base, the battalion has completed over 200 maintenance job orders, and recovery teams have already conducted over 20 missions into areas of Iraq that are still considered hostile.

For the Marines also stationed at the base providing close air support in the area, the unit’s work has been vital to their success. It is a high profile job that the unit likes doing.

“Members of the battalion are proud to be doing their wartime mission,” said Callahan. “It’s a highly positive experience, being here in Iraq and helping out.”

Iowa Guard unit repairs anything mechanical, electrical

by Sgt. Greg Heath, 4th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — For soldiers at Bagram Air Field, if anything mechanical or electrical breaks down there is only one place to take them.

The challenges of keeping everything up and running falls into the laps of a small army of mechanics, electricians and metal workers from the 3654th Maintenance Company from the Iowa Army National Guard.

In their direct service maintenance unit, the 64 citizen-soldiers work on jobs ranging from repairing night vision goggles and Mark-19 Grenade Launchers, to overhauling humvee engines and bringing offices’ and tents’ broken air conditioners back to life.

“We’re all inclusive; we have all the shops you would have in a peacetime environment in one company,” said 3654th Maintenance Company commander Capt. Chad Stone.

The company encompasses a multitude of different maintenance functions, to include light and heavy wheel maintenance, an allied trade shop (metal work), communication equipment repair, generator repair and armament repair shops, to list a few.

Basically the maintenance company can lend a hand for almost any type of mechanical or electrical need a unit would have, according to 3654th Maint. Co. 1st Sgt. Larry Kientz.

The company was mobilized in Iowa in March and after spending

two months at Fort Riely, Kan., being validated for active duty, they arrived at Bagram Airbase in late June.

Along with 11 planeloads of equipment, the Iowa National Guard soldiers also brought a lot of experience with them to Afghanistan.

“As a National Guard unit, we’re unique in that the jobs that a lot of our people do here are the jobs they do back home in everyday life,” said Kientz.

Many of the soldiers in the unit are full-time technicians who work for the Iowa National Guard maintaining military equipment back at their home stations. “It’s pretty easy for us to keep on top of things,” said full-time technician Staff Sgt. Scott McKenzie, radio repair and electrical supervisor, adding that with all the other technicians they can help teach the younger soldiers.

Often the only thing holding them back is lack of parts to do the job.

“It’s hard for us to get all the parts we need here because Iraq has higher priority right now,” Stone said.

“Some days we’re busy, but some days we’re just waiting for parts and we can’t do anything,” said Spc. Rowland Valderrama, 3654th Maint. Co.

Even with the lack of parts, the unit has completed over 300 job orders in a little of a month in country. Sometimes to finish a job they

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2003 Phoenix Award winner announced

Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld has announced that the 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized) at Fort Stewart, Ga., is the 2003 winner of the Phoenix Trophy. The Phoenix Trophy is symbolic of the “best” of the Department of Defense field-level maintenance units.

The award was made Wednesday night, Oct. 29, during an awards banquet held in conjunction with the 2003 DoD Maintenance Symposium and Exhibition in King of Prussia, Pa. Diane K. Morales, deputy under secretary of defense for logistics and materiel readiness, and Navy Vice Adm. Gordon Holder, director for logistics, joint staff, presented the award on behalf of Rumsfeld.

The 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), nicknamed the “Cottonbalers,” was extremely busy during fiscal 2002, completing several demanding exercises and a “real world” deployment for Kosovo Force Operation (KFOR). Deployed as a mechanized infantry battalion supporting the NATO

KFOR for six months, this unit performed superbly. It deployed with 54 pieces of assigned equipment and drew 512 pieces of rolling stock in Kosovo as part of the mission support requirement. Operating under extremely difficult circumstances, this unit’s dedicated efforts resulted in an exceptionally high readiness rate of 97 percent for the fiscal year.

Five other units also received secretary of defense awards in recognition of outstanding achievements in military equipment and weapon system maintenance. In the small category, Strike Fighter Squadron Eight One, Naval Air Station, Oceana, Va., and the 74th Fighter Squadron, Pope Air Force Base, Fayetteville, N.C., were winners. In the medium category, Shore Intermediate Maintenance Activity, Mayport Naval Station, Mayport, Fla., and Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 12, Marine Corps Air Station, Iwakuni, Japan, took home awards. The large category winner was Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 14, Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, N.C.

Navy EOD experts awarded Army medals

by James W. Crawley, Staff Writer, San Diego Union-Tribune

CORONADO – Each colorful ribbon on a military uniform tells a story.

But seven Navy explosives experts honored with medals yesterday have a tale of a different stripe – Army green.

The men – one officer and six enlisted sailors based in San Diego – received awards not from the Navy, but the Army, for their service in Iraq.

Assigned to an Army battalion, the members of Explosives Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 3 spent months hunting and destroying unexploded mines, shells, missiles and other explosives left behind by defeated Iraqi forces.

Besides the dangerous job of handling explosives, they endured heat, sand, mortar fire and the kidnapping and murder of two Army soldiers guarding them.

Two of the sailors received Bronze Stars from the Army and five earned Army Commendation Medals for their work. The medals were pinned on during a ceremony at the unit’s headquarters at the Naval Amphibious Base.

While Bronze Stars look the same for all the services, the eagle-eyed will notice the difference between the Army and Navy Commendation Medals. While Navy ribbons have two broad vertical stripes, the Army version has five narrow white stripes on the ribbon.

And the medal ribbons are Army green, not Navy blue.

“They recognized us as one of them,” said Petty Officer 2nd Class Brian Lehtinen, who earned a Commendation Medal.

The unit spent two tours in Iraq before returning here in August. First, they followed the Camp Pendleton Marines into Iraq’s

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Iowa Guard unit repairs anything mechanical, electrical continued

just have to get a little creative.

“Back home you had the luxury of having every tool and every part and everything you needed to get the job done,” said heavy wheel mechanic Staff Sgt. Noel Isaac, 3654th Maint. Co. “Here you have to improvise just to keep things up and running. A lot of people will just put stuff on hold while they wait for a certain part to get in, but our guys will take the initiative and come up with a plan to make a needed part, fabricate it from scratch or plan another way to make it work. It just shows how dedicated these guys are to their job.”

As National Guard soldiers, they know sometimes people will have preconceived notions about what they are capable of accomplishing.

“I don’t think we’ve had to prove anything,” Stone said. “I think that there were some people initially that had some misconceptions about what a National Guard unit could do compared to an active duty unit but once our soldiers got in the shops all those stereotypes were thrown to the wayside.”

“If we weren’t a good unit we wouldn’t be over here,” added Sgt. Richard Ford, heavy-wheeled mechanic, 3654th Maint. Co. “I know every morning at our formations they tell us that other units are talking about us already and saying we’re doing a good job, and that makes us feel pretty good.

by Capt. King Y. Kao, 13th
Maintenance Company

13th Maintenance Company conducts “Deep Maintenance”

The 13th Maintenance Company, 3-2 Air Defense Artillery Battalion, recently conducted its Deep Maintenance Program – an uninterrupted, two-week period when a unit focuses on servicing its organic equipment in order to sustain deployment readiness and ensure all equipment is to minimum operable standard.

During Deep Maintenance, organic vehicles received an operator level Preventive Maintenance Check and Service, a road test and a steam cleaning prior to the mechanic’s inspection.

The motor sergeant and operator conducted the initial inspection. Deficiencies were annotated and necessary parts were ordered. Mechanics and operators fix the deficiencies as parts are received.

“The ultimate goal is to have a vehicle that is close to or in 10/20 standards,” said Sgt. 1st Class Donald Blossom, motor sergeant for 13th Maint.

In addition to vehicles, inspections were conducted on generators, weapons and masks. Weapons were cleaned and gauged. Masks were cleaned and tested for serviceability.

Other tasks conducted during Deep Maintenance included the PMCS of radios, inspection of tents and camouflage nets and the servicing of heaters. The ISU-90 equipment containers and MILVAN containers were also cleaned, inventoried and had their respective load plans validated.

Since Deep Maintenance is an uninterrupted activity, the 13th Maintenance Company was not assigned any additional taskings or additional duties during their Deep Maintenance timeline. Only the commander or first sergeant could excuse absences from the motor pool in order to maximize participation.

“During Deep Maintenance, we are focused on Deep Maintenance only. No details, no duties, no appointments unless its an emergency. That way, you can have 0900 until complete,” said Blossom. “We have a schedule where we have a certain amount of trucks and trailers each day, and we will work until we have everything that we had [scheduled] before we depart.”

Three formations were held each day and platoon sergeants were required to carry accountability cards of all soldiers in their platoon. Issues that have a significant

impact on the thoroughness of a Deep Maintenance program primarily involved budgeting funds. During the end of fiscal year, funding for parts is streamlined to allow only those parts that are mission essential to be ordered on top priority. All other parts that do not “deadline” a vehicle, or make a vehicle inoperable, are prioritized by the greatest need until normal budgeting procedures are back in effect.

“I thought it would be difficult conducting Deep Maintenance on

our organic equipment while providing direct support maintenance for five firing air defense artillery batteries, one

headquarters and headquarters battery, and a combat support hospital,” said 1st Lt. Dave Fessen-becker, 13th Maint. Co. executive officer, “but we made it happen due to our noncommissioned officer leadership and the hard work and late hours put in by

the our soldiers.”

Navy EOD experts awarded Army medals continued

Rumaylah and Az Zubayr oil fields, checking hundreds of wells, gas-oil separation plants and miles of pipelines for booby traps and explosives.

They were set to head home when the Army asked for their assistance near Baghdad.

Despite their time with the Marines, the sailors said the time with the Army in Iraq was eye-opening.

“The war’s still going on,” said Petty Officer 1st Class Jason Kennedy. “No one (back in the United States) knows what’s going on over there.”

The unit was often mortared, but no one was injured or killed.

Its commanding officer, Lt. Grant Geisen, added, “It’s the end of major combat but it’s not the end of the war.”

The most troubling event was the June abduction and killing of two soldiers who were guarding the quarry near Balad where the local unit was exploding captured ordnance.

The sailors searched for the soldiers and checked their abandoned vehicle and several buildings for booby traps. The GIs’ bodies were found several days later.

“After that, it hit home that we were in a hostile environment,” Geisen said.

For nearly three months, five days a week, the men stacked tons of munitions, attached explosives and exploded the pile.

“We’d make it go away,” quipped Geisen, who received a Bronze Star for exceptional duty in Iraq. They destroyed 318,000 pounds of explosives.

The sailors were awed by the amount of munitions left by the war.

“There’s so much ordnance there, they could outfit 16 armies,” Geisen said.

Two other local bomb disposal detachments are in Iraq now, assisting Army crews, the sailors said.

Bradley mechanic recounts helicopter crash in Iraq

by Gina Cavallaro, ArmyTimes

BALAD AIRFIELD, Iraq — Pvt. 1st Class Scott Alan Timm says he doesn't know how long he was unconscious. What he does remember is what he saw just before the 12-ton CH-47 Chinook helicopter he was riding in slammed to earth.

"I remember seeing a missile hit the right rear turbine. I thought it was an RPG (rocket-propelled grenade)," said the 24-year-old soldier from Mechanicsville, Iowa. Timm is a Bradley Fighting Vehicle mechanic with the Fort Carson, Colo.-based 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment's 3rd Squadron, which has been in Iraq since April.

He was on his way to Camp As Saliyah in Qatar for four days of Army-sponsored leave when anti-U.S. insurgents attacked the aircraft Sunday. The strike killed 16 soldiers on board and wounded 20.

Lying on an X-ray table here at the 21st Combat Support Hospital, his bandaged face and head badly bruised and lacerated, Timm on Sunday recalled the incident as doctors prepared him for surgery.

The helicopter had been about five minutes into the flight, he said, and was flying at an altitude of about 200 feet. Though he was lucid, Timm's recollection of the moments before and after he blacked out was fragmented.

"The helicopter started bucking wildly in the back, then there was this big fireball, and everybody was trying to get out. I had some guy's foot under my left hand," Timm said before he was wheeled off to surgery.

Down the corridor in another room, another soldier caught in the attack was being examined for internal injuries. Sedated and breathing steadily, his chest rose and fell under an olive drab wool blanket. His face was caked with dried blood.

Timm and his fellow soldier were among seven taken by air ambulance to the 21st Combat Support Hospital. Some were then flown on to Germany for treatment Monday.

The Chinook attack was the worst single attack on U.S. troops since the war in Iraq began March 19.

Witnesses said the helicopter, one of two ferrying soldiers to Baghdad International Airport, was brought down by two shoulder-fired rockets.

Not all the soldiers killed or wounded have been identified. So far, the Defense Department has identified soldiers deployed from Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Sill, Okla.; and Fort Carson. The three-member crew was part of the 12th Aviation Brigade.

The soldiers were bound for flights that would take them out of the country on Army leave programs.



Near Fallujah west of Baghdad yesterday, a crane lifts wreckage of an Army Chinook helicopter that was struck by one or more missiles. Sixteen soldiers were killed and at least 20 injured. (AP photo)

Soon after the Chinook crashed west of Iraq's capital city, the doctors, nurses and support staff here were on alert. They were told about the incident through the military's secure Medical Casualty Care and Communication network, a medical chat room through which the Army's four hospitals and 12 surgical teams in Iraq communicate.

With 84 beds, 12 doctors, 40 nurses and support staff, the 21st Combat Support Hospital is one of the Army's biggest field hospitals in Iraq.

The victims were suffering head trauma, cuts and fractures, "more of what you'd see in a severe automobile accident," said Maj. Beverly Beavers, operations officer at the hospital.

Some of the injured had undergone surgery and were flown to Landstuhl Army Medical Center in Germany.

"My thoughts are with their families," said Maj. Robert Curee, 37, of Little Rock, the hospital's communication officer.



www4.army.mil/ocpa/news/index.php

Training, instincts and wrestling experience pay off for 1st Armored Division Ordnance soldier

by Staff Sgt. Conrad College, 372nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

BAGHDAD, Iraq — When quick action is required in an emergency situation, a soldier often doesn't have time to think. The soldier's training and instincts take over.

Pfc. Jessica Lynn Nicholson, 21, a 1st Armored Division soldier with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 40th Engineer Battalion, 2nd Brigade, Division Engineers, found out how true that adage is recently when she was working at a security checkpoint in Baghdad. The reason she, a tracked-vehicle mechanic, was assigned to the checkpoint was to search women.

"But, that day (about 9 a.m. on June 7) there were a lot of people gathering at this checkpoint and it was very busy. So, I was asked to search some men, too," said Nicholson.

"While other soldiers were searching a car, the driver had stepped out of the car and I was searching the driver. He didn't have any weapons on his person," she said.

"The other soldiers checking the vehicle at first thought it was clear. Then one of the soldiers thought that something didn't seem right. So, he searched the car again," she added.

During the second search, the soldier spotted a grenade hidden behind the visor on the driver's side. The soldier shouted, "Grenade!"

"I immediately got man down on the ground, face down, and I remember pressing his face into a sandbag," Nicholson said.

She continued to hold him down until other soldiers came over and zip-cuffed the man.

The man then claimed he had the grenade because he was going to turn it in to the U.S. soldiers. But they did not believe that story, because he had not mentioned it, or indicated anything like that, until after the soldiers had found the grenade and after he had been subdued and was handcuffed with the plastic zip-strips.

"I really don't remember exactly how I got him on the ground, but it was practically instantaneous," she said, blushing. "I don't remember the details of putting him down. I just remember, suddenly, I had him down on the ground with his face pressed into a sandbag and I kept holding him there."

She said the man then started crying and someone said he might have been embarrassed because it was a shame for a man in Iraq to get beat up by a woman.

She later recalled that she had done some wrestling at Beatty High School in Beatty, Nev., and that experience, plus her Army training, gave her the right stuff to subdue the Iraqi man. Nicholson, 5'6" and 120 pounds, said she had wrestled against boys in high school, because the boys and girls were not separated for wrestling, so, throwing a man down was nothing new to her.

Asked the size of the Iraqi man, she said, "He was about my height, but heavier. I would say he was a little out of shape."

Asked if she had grown up as a tomboy, Nicholson said, "No, I was even a cheerleader for a little while. I guess I kind of grew up out in the middle of nowhere," she said, "and I just always had to do whatever needed to be done."

She grew up in Silverton, Idaho, and, when she was 15, her family moved to Winnemucca, Nev. She said she has also boxed with some of the men in her company.

Asked if she wore boxing gloves, she replied, "Oh yes, of course, we had boxing gloves. I wouldn't want to hurt them."

She is the daughter of Jim and Kris Nicholson of Winnemucca, Nev. She has been in the Army for a year and a half. Nicholson's weapon is an M-249 SAW (Squad Automatic Weapon), which she carries with her everywhere she goes. She has nicknamed her SAW, "Camille." "It's my baby," she said.

The citation on her Army Commendation Medal certificate says, "This is to certify that the Secretary of the Army has awarded the Army Commendation Medal to Private First Class Jessica L. Nicholson, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 40th Engineer Battalion, for valor and courage in the face of enemy actions while assigned to the 40th Engineer Battalion. Her decisive actions at a security checkpoint prevented the enemy from endangering the lives of her fellow soldiers."



U.S. Army Pfc. Jessica Lynn Nicholson, 21, a 1st Armored Division soldier with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 40th Engineer Battalion, 2nd Brigade, was recently awarded the Army commendation medal "for valor and courage in the face of enemy action" in Baghdad, Iraq. U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Conrad College

Japanese EOD at work

Plans being made to defuse WWII-era bombs found on Okinawa

by David Allen, Stars and Stripes

NAHA, Okinawa — During World War II, U.S. bombs rained on Okinawa in what has been called the “Typhoon of Steel.”

Some of those bombs still pose a threat — such as the 550-pound bomb uncovered Monday in a Nishi district condominium construction site.

A Japan Ground Self-Defense Force spokesman said Tuesday that the bomb was found in a residential area near a school, government office and a hotel. It still had a fuse and could detonate if mishandled.

A construction worker digging a trench with a power shovel discovered the ordnance 2.5 feet underground, he said, noting it was 4 feet long and a foot in diameter.

Self-Defense Force members cordoned off the site and are working with city and prefectural officials to set a date to evacuate the area and dispose of the explosive.

Ground Self-Defense Force ordnance disposal experts determined there was little danger normal vibrations in the area would detonate the bomb.

In March 2002, when a similar-sized bomb was removed in another Naha district, 30,000 people — about 10 percent of the city’s population — were evacuated.

Ordnance soldiers capture Iranian infiltrator

On October 15 Explosive Ordnance Disposal personnel assisted in the capture of an Iranian infiltrator. Maj. Kevin Deremer, Sgt. 1st Class John Landry, Sgt. Sherwin Jacobs, and Spc. Lewis Gomez, 79th Ordnance Battalion (EOD); Spc. Tanner Catrett and Pfc. Phillip Blackmon, 760th Ordnance Company (EOD), participated in the capture.

The Iranian infiltrator scaled a 20-foot wall to enter Victory Camp in Baghdad and entered the 79th Ordnance Battalion’s supply room. He took a set of Army DCUs, a Intterceptor Body Armor Vest, and a DNVT telephone. He put the DCUs on and walked out into the camp area, thinking he could just walk out the front gate.

But, before he could get to the front gate, the Ordnance soldiers apprehended him. When they realized their prisoner was Irania and only spoke Persian-Farsi, the called upon 1st Lt. Nathaniel Garza, 79th Ordnance Battalion, to question him.

Garza, a former Army enlisted Persian-Farsi linguist, interrogated the prisoner for about 20 minutes and then the prisoner was taken away by the Camp Provost Marshal.

The prisoner, before he was taken away, told the Ordnance soldiers that he had made a mistake by scaling the wall.

Ground Self-Defense Force officials said they expect about the same number to be evacuated when they dispose of the bomb found Monday.

The disposal process usually entails gently removing fuses and carefully transporting explosive devices to a safe storage area on a Self-Defense Force base.

Bombs are subsequently detonated underwater.

That’s scheduled to happen Nov. 18 when an area near Miyagi Seawall — and Kadena Air Base — will be evacuated for detonation of a 1,100-pound bomb found 550 yards offshore in water about 70 feet deep.

A spokesman for Japan’s Maritime Self-Defense Force said all water activity in a 990-square-foot area will be prohibited and diving restricted in a 3.5-mile area. The area will be evacuated from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. for the scheduled detonation, the spokesman said.

Bomb-disposal experts frequently are called on to defuse and dispose of unexploded ordnance dropped on Okinawa during the 83-day battle for the island between U.S. and Japanese forces in 1945.

Makoto Kawaida, Ground Self-Defense Force chief public relations officer, said uncovering and clearing the 2,500 tons of unexploded munitions believed to be buried on Okinawa will take decades.

“A total of about 50 tons of unexploded bombs are discovered and destroyed each year on Okinawa,” he said.

“It is very common on Okinawa to unearth bombs at a construction site,” he said.



Former POW now a corporal--Former POW Joseph Hudson sees happier days during his recent lateral promotion from specialist to corporal Oct. 9 in a small ceremony in front of his fellow 3rd Battalion, 6th Air Defense Artillery Brigade soldiers. His former squad leader, Sgt. Daniel Candelaria, 507th Maintenance Company, and current squad leader, Sgt. Dustan Taylor, C Btry., 3rd Bn., 6th ADA Bde. pinned on his new stripes.

by Lisa Horn, Stars and Stripes

The Army Continuing Education System has launched a Web site to help military members and their families determine state residency requirements for in-state college tuition.

State residency requirements vary for in-state tuition eligibility for military personnel and their families.

“Just because you own a house in [a particular] state doesn’t necessarily give you residency in that state,” said Emily Gourdine, guidance counselor at Heidelberg High School in Germany. “Some states have a military clause, but not all of them do.”

In July 2002, an Army education summit was held to address issues regarding residency requirements for soldiers and their family members. It was agreed at the summit that these issues applied to all the services, not solely the Army. Later in 2002, at the Army Family Action Plan’s annual conference, the in-state tuition initiative was voted the No. 1 issue.

“The Army took it on as an initiative ...,” said Michael Tevnan, education specialist at the U.S. Total Army Personnel Command. “In fact, all the services are actually working to ensure states have a common policy.”

As part of the initiative, states were asked to consider their residency requirements under three criteria, Tevnan said.

They are: in-state tuition for soldiers and family members within the state of legal residence; immediate in-state tuition for soldiers and

Web site helps determine residency requirements for in-state tuition

family members in their state of assignment; and continuity of in-state tuition once residency has been established

“One of the neat things is that this initiative has made a lot of states look into their laws,” Tevnan added.

The states’ status are shown on the in-state tuition Web site, which can be accessed by logging onto the Army Continuing Education System site at www.armyeducation.army.mil/InState/index.htm and then following links to “In-State Tuition” and “State Summary.”

Twenty states meet all three criteria.

However, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, South Dakota, Vermont and Virginia have policies unfavorable to the military or have no policies at all, Tevnan said.

For example, Virginia does not allow servicemembers to be considered for in-state tuition unless they give up residency in their home states and become Virginia taxpayers, Tevnan said. Illinois, however, leaves the in-state decision up to the schools themselves.

Since the initiative began last year, Georgia and Texas have changed their policies to meet all three criteria. Eight states are currently reviewing the possibility of meeting all three goals.

“I think the site is fantastic for the students I work with who struggle with the in-state and out-of-state tuition issue,” Gourdine said. “Too many of my students got caught up in this.”



We don’t have to learn our lessons the hard way through accidents. We can also learn from close calls, near misses, and minor mistakes both our own and those of others. This is an opportunity for us to share experiences with each other. They can be long or short, recent or from the past. Share your lessons learned with Joey, as well as all of the Army. Send your story to me at

U.S. Army Safety Center, ATTN: “Joey”
Bldg 4905, 5th Ave
Fort Rucker, AL 36362-5363

or fax DSN 558-3003 (334-255-3003), ATTN: “Joey”. You can also e-mail me at joey@safetycenter.army.mil.

'Operation Salute' offers free park admissions

by Donna Miles, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Oct. 20, 2003 - Service members and their families have until Nov. 11 to take advantage of a highly popular program that offers free admission to Anheuser-Busch theme parks.

Thousands of service members and their families have already taken advantage of "Operation Salute," which offers free tickets to Busch Gardens in Tampa, Fla., and Williamsburg, Va.; SeaWorld in Orlando, Fla., San Antonio and San Diego; and Sesame Place in Langhorne, Pa., according to Anheuser-Busch officials.

On Sept. 5, Air Force Lt. Stephen Braddy became the 100,000th military guest to visit SeaWorld Orlando through the program. And although unable to give updated numbers about just how many additional service members have visited the parks, an Anheuser-Busch official said it has been "a lot."

Anheuser-Busch launched Operation Salute in May to honor military members for their role in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"It is our privilege to offer our parks to the men and women of our armed forces and their families," said Patrick Stokes, president and chief executive officer of Anheuser-Busch. "It is a small gesture of thanks for the hardships endured every day by our soldiers and those closest to them," he added.

"The men and women in our armed forces have made tremendous sacrifices, risking their lives and being separated from their families during the war," agreed August A. Busch III, chairman of Anheuser-Busch. "We wanted to express our deep gratitude for their service, and this gives those who serve and their families some needed relaxation and enjoyment."

The free admission is offered to all active duty military, ready and standby reservists, U.S. Coast Guardsmen, National Guardsmen, coalition forces serving with U.S. troops in Operation Iraqi Freedom and foreign military personnel servicing with U.S. units.

Up to four of the service member's immediate family members also qualify for free admission tickets through the program, even if the service member is unable to accompany them.

To get the free tickets, requesters must visit their local morale, welfare and recreation ticket office to get an application form. Completed forms are redeemable at park ticket windows. Military identification cards are required.

As an extension of the program, Anheuser-Busch recently announced plans to donate its nonalcohol brews — O'Doul's and O'Doul's Amber — to service members in Iraq and Afghanistan. The company also will donate its 180 Energy Drink and 180 Sport vitamin-enhanced water and more than 18,000 pieces of sporting equipment.

Anheuser-Busch also donated \$1 million to create the Intrepid/Anheuser-Busch Fallen Heroes Fund, which will provide scholarships to spouses and children of U.S. and coalition forces



Air Force Lt. Stephen Braddy, with his son Timothy, receives a one-flipper salute from Shamu the killer whale for being the 100,000th military guest at SeaWorld Orlando through Operation Salute, Sept. 5. The program provides free park admission to military members and their families. Photo by Chris Gotshall, courtesy of SeaWorld Orlando

killed during the war in Iraq. The company also is matching its employees' contributions to the United Service Organizations through Veterans Day.

"Operation Salute is exactly what we mean at the USO when we talk about the incredible power of 'Thank You,'" said Edward A. Powell, USO president and chief executive officer. "It is an extraordinary example of a company's recognition of the sacrifices our military makes on behalf of all Americans."

Anheuser-Busch officials the company has a 150-year history of supporting the U.S. armed forces. Nearly 1 million service members and their families visited the company's parks without charge following the first Gulf War and during the Anheuser-Busch Salute to America's Heroes, a 9-11 tribute that included all branches of the U.S. military.

Travelers may donate frequent-flyer miles to troops on R&R leave

by K.L. Vantran, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Oct. 27, 2003 – Travelers can donate frequent-flyer miles to help troops on leave from Iraq reach their destinations through Operation Hero Miles.

Service members participating in the two-week "rest and recuperation" leave program are flown free to Rhein-Main Air Base, Germany, or Baltimore-Washington International Airport by the Defense Department, but must pay for connecting flights from and back to those ports. The Atlanta and Dallas-Fort Worth airports are scheduled to be added to the program Nov. 1, said Rhonda Paige, chief of strategic communications, G-1, Army Well-Being Division.

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Blood donations halted from personnel deployed to Iraq

by Sgt. 1st Class Doug Sample, USA, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Oct. 21, 2003, — A parasitic disease being spread by sand flies in Iraq has prompted officials who oversee the military's blood supply to implement a one-year donor deferral for military personnel serving in that country.

The reason for the deferral is a form of the disease Leishmaniasis, which causes sores or lesions on the skin, and which in its most serious form can cause death.

Since 2002, military health officials have reported 22 cases of the disease, with the majority being reported this year.

"It's a cautious deferral; we're erring on the side of safety," said Lt. Col. Ruth Sylvester, director of the Armed Services Blood Program Office.

"People who actually get the disease are permanently deferred," she explained. "The issue with those who are exposed is that there is an incubation period before any symptoms appear — the deferral will prevent them from unknowingly donating blood."

According to the Armed Services Blood Program office, the parasite that causes the disease has been proven to survive in blood products stored under standard conditions for up to 25 days, and at least six cases of transfusion-transmitted cases of the disease have been reported.

Sylvester, who said she is not a physician but understands the disease, said there are two types of Leishmaniasis. The most

Travelers may donate frequent-flier miles to troops on R&R leave continued

More than 200 soldiers arrive at BWI daily as part of the R&R program, said Lt. Col. Robert Hagen, Army spokesman.

"I think Operation Hero Miles is a fantastic program," said Hagen, who has been the on-site public affairs officer at BWI since the R&R program began Sept. 26. He said he's even donated his miles to the cause.

Launched by Maryland Congressman C.A. "Dutch" Ruppersberger, whose district includes the Baltimore airport, the Hero Miles Web site lists participating airlines and provides information on how to donate frequent-flier miles and how soldiers can receive complimentary tickets.

Delta, Southwest and Alaska Airlines/Horizon Airlines have joined the operation.

"I am getting a phenomenal response to Operation Hero Miles," said the congressman in a press release. "So many Americans want to donate their frequent flier miles to help our men and women in uniform in Iraq so they can spend quality time with their family and friends here at home. I am confident that other airlines will want to join this effort to help our soldiers risking their lives for our country."

common, but less serious, form is cutaneous Leishmaniasis, which causes lesions on the skin that may look like a volcano with a raised edge and center "crater" and may be covered with a scab, she said. "All of the military cases so far have been cutaneous," she added.

However, she said the more serious form of the disease — visceral Leishmaniasis — can affect the internal organs of the body, such as the spleen and liver, and can lead to death.

Sylvester said military people who have been infected with the disease are being treated at Walter Reed Army Medical Center here, where doctors have set up a special treatment program just for the disease. People infected with the disease undergo a three-week drug regimen that "will eliminate the disease and take care of the infection," she said.

"I don't believe there is cause for alarm," Sylvester emphasized. "We had 22 cases in the last two years with all the people we've had deployed in Afghanistan and Iraq and throughout the entire Central Command area. So it's a very small number, given the total number of people deployed."

But she did express concern about the disease's impact on the number of eligible military blood donors. The latest deferral is just one of many the military's blood program is now facing, she said.

In recent years, the Armed Services Blood Program had to defer donors due to malaria risks around the world, and also had to defer people who might have been exposed to a variant of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease — better known as "Mad Cow" disease — or who lived in certain parts of Europe for specified time periods between 1980 and 1996.

"When we lose these donors, we have to bring in more donors," Sylvester said. "We have to find donors who have not traveled, not been deployed, and haven't lived in Europe. It's imperative that we find donors who have not deployed, and we're focusing our efforts on bringing those donors in."

Sylvester noted that the military has plenty of eligible donors to draw from, and she encouraged military and DoD personnel, as well as family members, to donate blood on a regular basis by scheduling appointments with local DoD donor centers. Where DoD does not have donor centers, she encourages donations to local civilian agencies.

"In the DoD blood program, we only touch a very small percentage of the population that we draw from — about 20 percent of the eligible donors," she said. "So there are plenty of donors out there. The challenge is to get them in the door and to get them to donate."



VETERANS DAY 2003

Veterans Day is a solemn day to honor and recognize all who have served our Nation in war and in peace. This year, hundreds of thousands of our men and women in uniform and Department of Defense civilians have the distinction of serving in wartime. Counted among them is the largest number of reservists and guardsmen activated since the Korean War.

The War on Terrorism is like no other war we have ever fought – and it is far from over. We will prevail, but it will require our patience, our full commitment, and the will to win against an enemy who tries to create fear and destroy freedom.

We have seen tremendous displays of courage, dedication and sacrifice to defeat the terrorists who are targeting the United States and our allies with hatred and intolerance. This tradition of outstanding service links this newest generation of Veterans to the lives and legacies of those who have served and defended our Nation with honor and dedication during previous times of threat.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff and I join our fellow Americans in paying tribute to all of our Veterans, the sacrifices they have made and the courage they have displayed in defending freedom and security around the world.

RICHARD B. MYERS
Chairman
of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

