



MOUNTAINEER DEFENDER

Magazine of the West Virginia National Guard

Fall/Winter 2004



W.Va.'s Home Team:
National Guard CERF team
first in nation to validate
as WMD first responders

Inside:

- Hurricanes bring flooding to state
- Black Hawk crew gets international award
- Meet the Air Guard's new Chief of Staff
- GI's in desert shop at "Wong-Mart"



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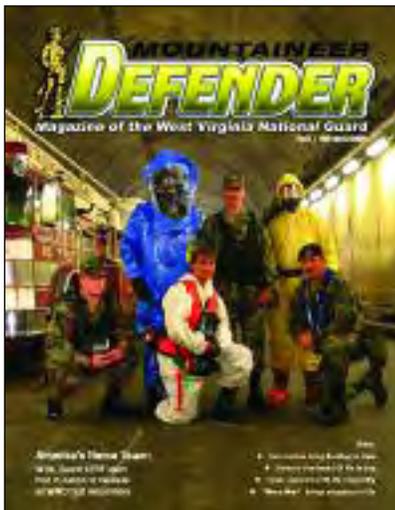


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On the cover:
WV CERF Team
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W.Va. CERF team members take a break from training at the Center for National Response (Memorial Tunnel). Pictured are: (Standing, left to right) Staff Sgt. Mark Wallace (CST-ARNG), Lt. Col. Larry Wheeler (ARNG), Commander, W.Va. CERF, and Spc. Ronald Payne. Kneeling are (left to right): Spc. Gabriel Boggs, Maj. Kim Sencindiver (ANG), and Master Sgt. Kevin Smith (ANG).

Photo by Maj. Todd Harrell, 196th MPAD



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Active duty troops praise WV Guard; family support is key to Guard's success

IHAD THE OPPORTUNITY to go to Iraq in September and visit West Virginia Guard members serving alongside coalition forces in some of the most dangerous areas in the region. Words cannot express how proud I am of our soldiers and airmen.

Everywhere I went commanding generals told me what a great job our people were doing escorting convoys, providing security and documenting all of our nation's military and humanitarian accomplishments.

I am very proud that our soldiers are representing the state in such an outstanding manner, and I am equally proud of the work that is being done here in West Virginia to support those soldiers. I can tell you that the soldiers in Iraq were very pleased with the support from fellow soldiers and airmen left

behind in West Virginia. Troops from other states are amazed that we continue to support deployed soldiers in such an outstanding manner, even though our members are on Title 10 and controlled by active duty forces.

But the support for deployed troops is only part of the equation. We must also support families of deployed members.

As I travel the state, I continue to hear from families about Tricare concerns, pay issues, and their problems contacting deployed soldiers in cases of family emergency. I am asking

every member of the West Virginia National Guard to get personally involved in solving any family problems as they occur. The best way to support our soldiers overseas is to support their families right here at home.

The holidays have come and gone. Let's be

"I'm asking every member of the West Virginia National Guard to get personally involved in solving any family problems as they occur. The best way to support our soldiers overseas is to support their families right here at home."



Maj. Gen. Allen E. Tackett
West Virginia Adjutant General

thankful for all we have. Our organization is strong, our soldiers are proud, and our families are behind us every step of the way.

West Virginia's National Guard is the best organization in the U.S. military. Together, we can overcome the challenges facing us in the coming year. May God bless our troops and families.

Command Sergeant Major, WVARNG

Proud of accomplishments

IT IS TIME to close out TY04, a remarkable year, a year that will make history for the WVNG.

We have deployed and redeployed many of our National Guard members. We have fought floods and cared for the citizens of West Virginia.

The accomplishments of our Guard members are too great in number and magnitude to list here. Yet, immediately we open TY05 knowing there is no relief in sight.

We are successful because of the quality of people who serve! It is a time when every member, every family member, and every employer associated with the WVARNG should hold their heads high and be proud of their performance and sacrifices in

this War on Terrorism.

We must all remember those who are still in harms way and the anguish suffered by their loved ones. Keep them in your thoughts and prayers.



Bruce Coleman

Each of you has displayed personal patriotism and your dedication to our way of life. For that I thank you. My wife, Linda, and I are proud to call you our friends.

We would like to send you all the best wishes for the coming year.

Command Chief Master Sergeant, WVANG

Thank those who serve

MY EARLIEST memories of war are in December 1951, when a young airborne soldier who lived across the road left home in his dress uniform with his duffle bag. I asked my Dad where the soldier was going. Dad said, "Korea."

That was 53 years ago. For half a century now, I've seen young people in uniform risk the ultimate sacrifice while serving.

I've thought about those that went off to battle and never came home. I'm reminded of soldiers like Private 1st Class Frank Jarrell of St. Albans, who lost his left arm in World War II, and the C-130 aircrew killed in Vietnam. Just a few weeks ago, we stood in formation as Maj. Gen. Tackett pinned Purple Heart medals on 167th Airlift



Dan Chandler

Wing Staff Sgts. Derek Brown and Brad Runkles for injuries they received while in Iraq. More than 80 million U.S. citizens have served

during our nation's history.

Today, America's sons and daughters have helped liberate Iraq and Afghanistan and taken a stand against global terrorism.

Please take time to thank those who serve for all they do for our great nation and the world. Also thank the family members for their support.

I humbly thank each of you for wearing the uniform!

To CERF AND PROTECT



Photo by Maj. Mike Cadle, HQ, WVANG

CERF decontamination team members check a victim for chemical exposure during the unit's First Army Evaluation in August at Westwood Middle School in Westover, W.Va.

DENSE FOG HUNG LOW over the grounds of Westwood Middle School, obscuring bodies scattered around the school's football stadium. Terrorists detonated a bomb containing a suspected nerve agent during a vice-presidential political rally at the school Aug. 5, wounding hundreds of attendees and straining the response capabilities of state and local first responders.

West Virginia's newly formed National Guard weapons of mass destruction disaster-response team swung into action, helping local emergency management agencies restore order and responding to victims' cries for help.

It was just an exercise, but these types of scenarios help U.S. Army officials evaluate the capabilities of the nation's 12 newest WMD response teams, officially known as Chemical, Radiological, Nuclear or High-Yield Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package — CERFP.

Army evaluators had high praise for West Virginia's team, calling it the "largest team effort we have seen in all our evaluations."

Inspectors rated the team "Green" — Army code for mission ready — on 25 of 26 tasks, and the remaining task qualification can be achieved easily through additional training, according to Lt. Col. Larry Wheeler, the team's commander.

WV GUARD TEAM IS FIRST TO VALIDATE AS WMD REGIONAL RESPONDERS

By Maj. Mike Cadle

HQ, West Virginia Air National Guard



Photo by Master Sgt. Sherry Claus, W.Va. CERF

A CERF medic stores a backboard used to transport victims to a medical treatment area.

CERFP was formed in March, drawing about 150 Army and Air Guard members from across West Virginia. Team members spent nearly every weekend and the two weeks before the evaluation honing their skills in four primary areas — command, search and extraction, decontamination and medical treatment.

Army validation meant West Virginia's CERFP was the first of 12 teams nationwide to be certified in all four response areas.

Similar teams will be fielded by Guard units in Massachusetts, Missouri, Texas, Pennsylvania, Florida, Colorado, California, New York, Illinois, Washington and Hawaii. Each of the 12 units is assigned to a Federal Emergency Management Agency region of the country. West Virginia's CERFP will operate in FEMA Region III, responding to disasters in, Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia.

"The possibility of further attacks in the national capital region underscores the need for additional WMD response capabilities," said Col. Bill Aldridge, chief of staff for joint Army and Air National Guard headquarters. "The Guard has to change to stay ahead of the nation's enemies."

CERFP is not the only unit in the West Virginia National Guard capable of combating

terrorism. The state's 22-person Civil Support Team was formed about three years ago, giving West Virginia its first military team dedicated solely to WMD response. The CST and CERFP will work hand-in-hand when responding to WMD events, as evidenced by the exercise at Westwood Middle School.

CST members were first on the scene, "assessing the situation, advising incident commanders and first responders, and assisting



Photo by Maj. Mike Cadle, HQ, WVANG

A First Army evaluator (center) watches closely as CERF decontamination team members check a victim for chemical contamination.

them in bringing additional military and civilian assets to the incident," said Lt. Col. Mike Kitts, commander of West Virginia's CST at the time of the evaluation.

Meanwhile, CERFP's search and extraction team was removing victims from the stadium area to a triage station set up on the hillside

overlooking the school. Volunteers from nonparticipating units portrayed — some quite realistically — the attack's victims.

"Please help me find my baby. I can't find my baby," one victim wailed, as rescuers led her to the triage point.

"I can't breathe. My chest hurts so bad," gasped another victim.

Maj. Kim Sencindiver, a nurse in the Martinsburg-based 167th Airlift Wing, worked triage, marking patients with color-coded tape to depict their medical condition — green meant the individual was walking wounded; yellow was for those whose wounds could wait; red meant victims needed immediate care; and black and white was for those with fatal wounds.

Sencindiver said her priority was to get patients into decontamination and medical treatment processes as quickly as possible, while making those with fatal wounds "as comfortable as possible until the inevitable."

Victims were moved from triage into the decontamination tent, where clothes were cut off and shower facilities made available to those who could wash themselves. Nonambulatory patients going through decontamination on gurneys were scrubbed down by decon specialists in biohazard suits. After decontamination, victims were checked with handheld monitors to make sure all

Please see **CERFP, Page 6**



contamination was gone. Local ambulance

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services then transported victims to area hospitals for treatment.

Guard leaders monitored the entire process closely, setting up a command tent about 50 yards from the "hot zone," while military police established a cordon around the area to prevent curious spectators from entering the area and also becoming contaminated.

Wheeler said Guard leaders were there to support local officials. "Our command staff has to maintain communication with the on-scene commander in order to coordinate Guard response," he said. "[Guard members] bring specialized skills to the fight that may not be available with local or state resources."

With validation comes the possibility of deployments, according to Maj. Ron Garton, the CERFP public affairs officer. Garton said the team could be called upon to support events ranging from Bridge Day to the presidential inaugurations.

Aldridge understands that deployments are inevitable, but says the West Virginia CERFP is ready. "We train so we can deploy," Aldridge said, praising the efforts of the team. "This was a highly successful exercise that demonstrates the Guard's ability to respond to terrorist incidents. That should be great comfort to the citizens of West Virginia."

Hurricanes ravage W.Va.

VA and KY Guards help WV troops clean up after Ivan, Frances unleash floods

By Staff Sgt. Cheryl Hackley

National Guard Bureau



Photo by Maj. Todd Harrell, 196th MPAD

Wheeling Island Stadium was covered with several inches of mud and grime after heavy September rains caused the Ohio River to overflow its banks.

WHEELING — Two weeks after Spc. Charles Robinson was sworn into the West Virginia Army National Guard, he was already serving on state active duty. While thousands of Florida National Guardsmen aided their state in cleaning up after Hurricanes Charley, Frances and Ivan, West Virginia activated troops for flood cleanup duty when Ivan and Frances caused severe storms that led to flooding in eight counties.

"We're bringing all the necessary supplies to the disaster areas," Robinson, a truck driver, said during his flood duty. "We've got a lot of bleach, brooms, mops, water and buckets from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. All this is necessary to sanitize the flooded areas."

Across the counties, 1,500 soldiers and airmen from West Virginia and Kentucky — who volunteered for this deployment — did their part. Jobs varied from picking up trash in front-end loaders, driving 5- and 10-ton trucks to landfills, repairing vehicles, distributing supplies, flying supplies and state officials to flood sites, and traffic control. Virginia also provided equipment, and Connecticut and Maryland offered to help, placing resources on

stand-by in case they were needed.

The devastation in Northern West Virginia was so bad because, while flooding of the Ohio River was anticipated, the tremendous amount of rainfall caused flash flooding in locations that were unprepared. Local officials called it the worst flood since the 1930s.

Ohio County was hardest hit, and more than 300 soldiers were stationed there assisting in the cleanup. It also was the main distribution point for supplies to the other counties. Ohio County was where Robinson worked.

"Every morning, there is a line of semi-trucks waiting to drop off more supplies," he said. Supplies were hauled out to distribution sites almost as quickly as they arrived. FEMA paid for the landfill fees and the thousands of cleaning supplies the Guard distributed.

On Wheeling Island, nearly every house's front yard was stacked with debris for the troops to pick up and haul to landfills.

"We really couldn't do it without them," Wheeling resident Joyce Piefer, who lives next to the river, said at the time. "We appreciate all they are doing, but I just don't think there are enough of them for all the work that needs to be done."

The West Virginia National Guard is a strong, but small force. It has 6,200 soldiers and airmen, of which 1,300 are on federal active duty supporting the global war against terrorism. And much of the equipment they needed for cleanup efforts was kept in Iraq after the West Virginians returned from nearly a year and half there.

West Virginia has activated 75 percent of its total force for state or federal duty. So the help from surrounding states was necessary to get the cleanup mission done.

"They would have done the same for us," added Sgt. Thomas Dalton, a Kentucky engineer. "Especially if a lot of our troops were deployed overseas like theirs are."

Robinson faced the possibility of dropping out of college for the fall semester because of the call-up, but he didn't mind. "Folks have a real hard time recovering after something like this," he said. "It's important that I am here to do my part. You should see their face when we show up. It really makes me feel like a hero."

Winning hearts and minds

Army Guard commander says Korea still vital to U.S. interests

By Joseph C. Atkins
Mountaineer Defender

While most Americans focused in recent months on the Nov. 2 presidential election and the fighting in the Middle East, Charleston's Brig. Gen. John E. Barnette flew to the Far East to practice warfighting against an old foe, North Korea.

Barnette, commanding officer of the West Virginia Army National Guard, is also the wartime assistant chief of staff for personnel, or G1, for the Eighth U.S. Army, the permanent American ground force facing North Korea.

During a North Korean aggression against the South, Barnette would provide advice and guidance to Lt. Gen. Charles C. Campbell, Eighth Army's commanding officer and deputy commander of U.S. Forces Korea, on all matters related to military and civilian personnel.

Barnette, a 1969 West Virginia State College graduate goes to the Korean Peninsula three times a year, usually for about three weeks each time, for all-service warfighting exercises. "We perform all the wartime functions of replacing troops, dealing with casualties," Barnette said. "We practice in a wartime scenario. "If war would break out in Korea, I'd mobilize and assume G1 duties."

These exercises are necessary because war has broken out before. North Korean tanks and troops invaded the Republic of Korea to the south on June 25, 1950. Thirty-seven bloody months later, an armistice was signed that ended the fighting, allowing most of the 302,000 U.S. forces and roughly 40,000 troops from the 16 other U.N. nations to go home.

Today, about 37,000 Americans are part of the multinational U.N. Command of 700,000 forces facing a roughly equal number of communist forces above the 1953 cease-fire line, the 38th Parallel.

Anyone who pays even a little attention to international news knows that, oftentimes, anarchist



Brig. Gen. John E. Barnette

elements in South Korea take to the streets of Seoul to protest the U.S. presence in that country and foment instability. Barnette said that public display of resentment does not extend into the South Korean military.

"Our relationship with the Republic of Korea army is very good," he said. "They appreciate us, and our working relationship is excellent. They are motivated [to protect their national security]."

And the United States still remains motivated to protecting South Korea from another communist invasion. With the Soviet Union now dead and al-Qaida and other terrorist groups making the headlines, it might seem old-school, even quaint, to still be standing up against communism. But it's still there, and still a threat to world peace and U.S. national security.

"We have a strategic interest in that part of the part of the world," Barnette said. "It's vital to us to keep stability." As with all Guard members, maintaining (or establishing) stability is what pulls Barnette away from civilian life.

Today, the civilian Barnette owns Cornerstone Development, a consulting firm that provides training and counseling in strategic leadership.

Judge/general uses civil affairs to help Horn of Africa Muslims

By Joseph C. Atkins
Mountaineer Defender

Fighting the war against Islamic terrorists is not limited to guns, grunts, pilots and bombs. Changing the way Muslims view Americans has its own importance.

That's where soldiers like Brig. Gen. W. Craig Broadwater come into play.

Broadwater's civilian uniform is the robe of U.S. district judge for Northern West Virginia. In his West Virginia Army National Guard uniform, the 53-year-old West Virginia University graduate is the state's assistant adjutant general for installations and homeland security.

In early March, he returned from more than a year's deployment, mostly in the Horn of Africa, where his assignment with U.S. Central Command was dealing with pay and personnel records issues for mobilized reservists and Guardsmen.

But, as deputy commander of Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa, at Camp Lemonier, Djibouti, he also worked closely with the locals.

"One of our missions was to make sure a more positive image of us was projected to the Islamic population in the Horn of Africa," Broadwater said. "We renovated schools, medical clinics, [and provided] veterinary, medical and civil affairs programs, where we'd meet with people in villages."

Under the West Virginia general, soldiers sent from Special Operations Detachment Europe, provided these programs in Djibouti, Kenya and Ethiopia.

"We were very proactive in putting the best foot forward for us," he said. "They [the civil affair programs] were very well received."

Broadwater said the fondest memory of his long deployment was the camaraderie between GIs, Marines, airmen and sailors, including Navy SEALs.

The Horn can be a dangerous place, especially for Americans.

"It was designated as a combat zone," Broadwater said. "The Marine Corps commander and I understood that transnational terrorist



Brig. Gen. W. Craig Broadwater

networks were operating in the area, so we took proactive responsibility for our own security."

Those terrorists were exactly the reason the Americans were deployed to that area.

"What we were trying to do was prevent the re-emergence of Islamic radicals in the Horn of Africa — [to keep terrorists from] thinking they might find safe havens there," Broadwater said.

So the Americans worked hard to win the hearts and minds of the locals before Islamic terrorist propaganda and intimidation could contaminate them.

"There were some indications that there were some emerging problems in the area," Broadwater said. "Transnational networks looked like they were going to be starting in the area."

Part of that work was military-to-military training with African national forces, the general said, "To make sure they were able to head off their own homegrown terrorist problems.

"Civil affairs gave us the opportunity to get our foot in door," he added. "It was a significant part of what we were doing

"No one questioned [whether you were] reservist or active duty, but whether you were up to the job," the general said. "Everyone fully accepted you for what you were."



Photo by Chief Warrant Officer 3 Ronald Eagle, 201st FA
 (l to r) Staff Sgt. Darwin Stemple of Terra Alta, Spcs. Terry Srout of Purgitsville and Steven Parrish of Mannington, and Staff Sgt. Charles O'Brien of Terra Alta were presented Purple Heart medals at Camp Cedar for injuries sustained when the soldiers' convoys were struck by improvised explosive devices.



Photo by Chief Warrant Officer 3 Ronald Eagle, 201st FA
 Maj. Gen. Tackett talks with soldiers from Service Battery, 201st FA in the mess hall at Camp Cedar during his visit to Iraq in September. Standing are (l to r): Staff Sgt. Jackson Knotts of Tunnelton, Tackett, Staff Sgt. Donald Cathell of Rowlesburg and Sgt. Chris Cathell of Morgantown.



Photo courtesy of Staff Sgt. Andrew Rouse
 Staff Sgt. Andrew Rouse, guidance and control systems specialist in the 130th Maintenance Squadron, stands at the ceremonial South Pole during a recent trip to Antarctica supporting Operation Deep Freeze.



Maj. Gen. Tackett thanks soldiers in September. Maj. Jeff Perkins.



Photo by 196th MPAD
 (l to r) Sgt. 1st Class Nancy McMillan, Spc. Sherree Casper and Capt. Paula Sydenstricker of the 196th MPAD celebrate Christmas in Tikrit, Iraq.



Reprinted courtesy of Charleston Magazine
 Brothers 1st. Lt. James Shy and Staff Sgt. James Shy of the 130th Airlift Wing were featured in the Winter edition of the Charleston magazine for their service in the War on Terrorism.



Photo courtesy of 146th Medical Co.
Coalition soldiers remove the wounded from a medical evacuation flight provided by the 146th Medical Company operating in Bosnia.

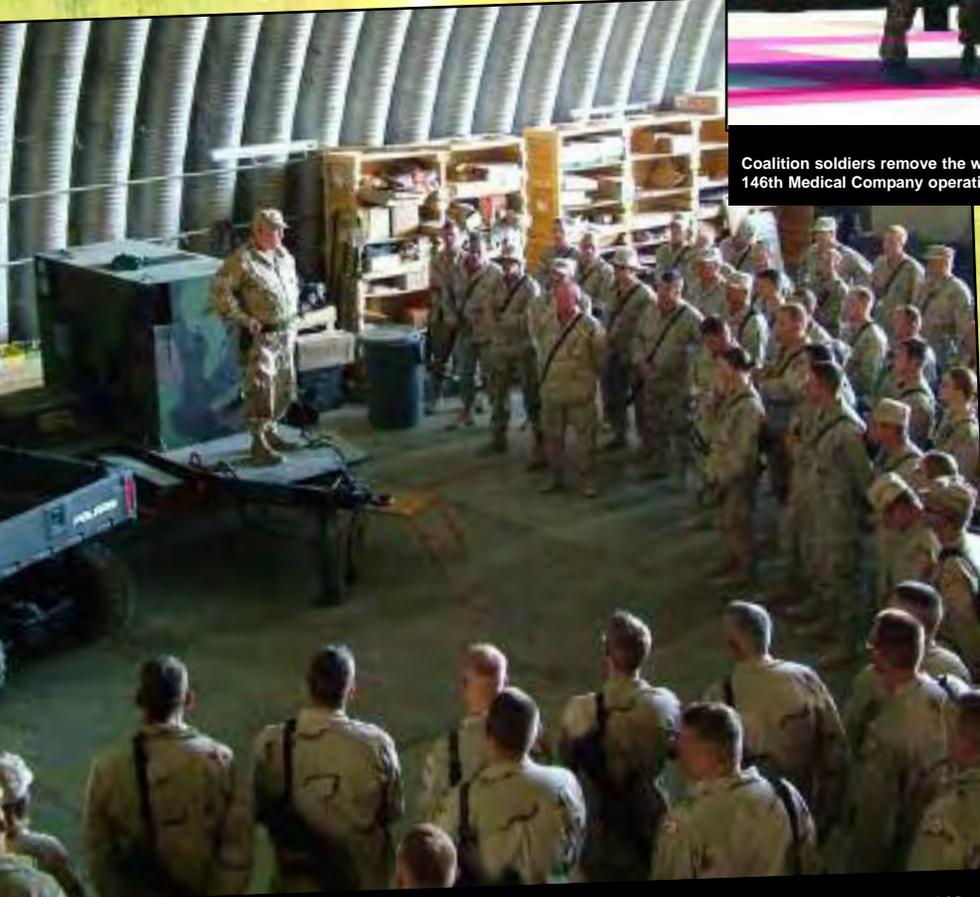


Photo by 3664th MC

Members of the 3664th Maintenance Company for their outstanding work during a command visit to Iraq in 2004. The 3664th commander, stands at Tackett's right at rear of vehicle.



Reprinted courtesy of Charleston Gazette
West Virginia's newspapers have been quick to print articles detailing the accomplishments of National Guard soldiers serving overseas. The Charleston Gazette printed this article from Capt. Max Wilkinson of the 1092nd Engineer Battalion.



Master Sgt. Michael Lambert, Chief Warrant Officer 3 and State Command Sgt. Maj. Bruce Coleman chat during Coleman's September trip to visit soldiers serving in Iraq. Photo by 3664th MC Donnie Grimmett



Photo by 196th MPAD
Maj. Gen. Tackett and State Command Sgt. Maj. Coleman with members of the 196th MPAD in Tikrit, Iraq. Standing are (l to r): Sgt. Roland Walters, Capt. Paula Sydenstricker, Tackett, Master Sgt. Bob Powell, Coleman. Kneeling are (l to r): Spc. Sherree Casper and Sgt. 1st Class Chuck Joseph.

Black Hawk crew gets international award

By Cadet Ken Hammond
1st Battalion, 150th Armor (Rear Det.)



Photo by 3664th Maintenance Company

Brig. Gen. Frank Grass, Deputy Director of Army National Guard with award recipients Chief Warrant Officers 3 Carlos Godbey and Robert McClure, Staff Sgt. Jonathan Burge and Sgt. 1st Class David Baldwin.

The crew of a West Virginia Army National Guard Black Hawk helicopter received an international award for rescuing three people during devastating flooding that struck Lincoln County in 2003.

"It was the first live hoist rescue we had ever done," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Carlos Godbey about the operation that won him and his crew from the 146th Medical Company of Parkersburg the

William J. Kossler Award for excellence in helicopter aviation.

Co-pilot Godbey, pilot Chief Warrant Officer 3 Robert McClure, medic Sgt. 1st Class David Baldwin and crew chief Sgt. John Burge rescued a woman and two children from a deuce-and-a-half trapped in the swollen Mud River during a nighttime rescue on Nov. 12, 2003.

Hoist-rescue operations are inherently difficult. McClure said this November night was so dark that, even with night-vision goggles, they could hardly see the mostly submerged truck beneath them. The crew men wondered if, given the wind, water, power lines and trees as obstacles, the rescue should even be attempted.

"Dropping the penetrator down to the truck was like threading a needle," Godbey said, "so I left it up to my crew chief, Sgt. John Burge, to make the choice."

Burge's choice was to go for it, and all three victims were pulled out of the raging water. Three men who also were trapped in the truck escaped using ropes to get to the river bank.

The Kossler Award has been presented annually since 1951 for outstanding achievement with helicopters. Kossler was a U.S. Coast Guard aeronautical engineer and early advocate of helicopter use in the Coast Guard. Past recipients have ranged from British Airways for advancing helicopter use in commercial aviation in 1978, to Soviet military and civilian helicopter pilots during the Chernobyl nuclear disaster in 1986, to 101st Airborne crews in 2002 during Operation Anaconda in Afghanistan.

"It really felt good to be recognized, with a great sense of accomplishment and pride," Godbey said of the international recognition.

Earlier this year, Black Hawk maker Sikorsky also honored the crew for its work that night.

Add-on armor mission saves lives



Photo by 3664th Maintenance Company

3664th MC soldiers Sgt. Eric Layne and Spc. David Simmons prepare a vehicle to receive the add-on armor kit.

FOB ROUGHRIDER, Iraq - For soldiers of the 3664th Maintenance Company the mission in Iraq is an important one. In addition to providing direct support level maintenance, the unit also installs add-on armor kits and air conditioning on HUMVEEs. These kits consist of doors, body panels, back plates and ballistic windows.

The soldiers recognize the importance of their work as they repair vehicles shot and hit by improvised explosive devices (IED's).

The A&A Platoon has completed over 1600 add-on armor kits in two locations, but the mission is not over yet. Another 200 kits are due in. It is the consensus of the platoon that if one life is saved, the effort and time spent are worthwhile, and seeing the results of attacks on some of the vehicles the unit is repairing gives the soldiers an indication that many lives have been saved.



Photo by 3664th Maintenance Company

3664th MC mission of retrofitting vehicles with add-on armor kits is saving lives. This HUMVEE detonated an improvised explosive device (IED) shattering the windows, but all passengers survived.

It's all relative in W.Va.

Serving National Guard is a family tradition for many

By Joseph C. Atkins
Mountaineer Defender

Everyone in the service knows about the military "family." But in the National Guard, it's more than an institution of support for loved ones of deployed service members.

Fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, aunts and uncles and cousins serve together in the National Guard. Maj. Gen. Allen Tackett, West Virginia's Adjutant General, said it usually happens like this: "If you have a family member come into the Guard, and they're happy, they encourage other members of the family to do the same."

Most of the time, Tackett said, Guard members are part of the community, and they're stationed where they live, so family members can witness firsthand whether the Guard member is putting them on or not.

Tackett said he got in the Guard through one of his cousins. And sons often follow their fathers into the Guard. Tackett said it's just as natural to them as following their fathers into any other career field.

"We have a lot of father-son teams," he said. "In fact, I'm one of them. My son wanted to be a pilot, so he went into the Air Guard. "He's a lot smarter than I am, though," the Special Forces veteran added. "Because he chose to fly airplanes, and I jumped out of them."

Some daughters follow their mothers into the Guard, too. Master Sgt. Cindy S. Cundiff and Senior Airman Tomeka D. Cundiff are a good example.

Cindy joined the Guard as a senior at Madison's Scott High School in 1977. She and Tomeka, the oldest of Cindy's three children, work in Air Guard Personnel on the Charleston base.

"I've been in for two years," Tomeka said. "I was raised around it. I know what a good life it is. I love it, and I'll more than likely stay in until I retire."

One could say the military is in her blood. She's named after her father, Tom, a retired Air Guard technical sergeant. Her grandfather is retired Air Force. There's also a cousin who is a civil engineer for the Air Guard.

Of course, serving in the Air or Army Guard since the 9/11 terrorist attacks against the United States has added an aspect that once was rare for Guard members: extended overseas deployments. And many West Virginians are in the fight. Two of them are



Photo courtesy of Redman family

"My boys saw an opportunity to better themselves and serve their country," said Master Sgt. Roger Redman (center), of his sons Airman 1st Class Dustin Redman (left) and Staff Sgt. Andy Redman.

Diana Heaney's sons, 25-year-old sergeant Toby and 22-year-old specialist Troy. They are attached to the Army Guard's 201st Field Artillery of Fairmont, now deployed to Iraq.

The past few months have been very stressful for Heaney, who does information services for Fairmont General Hospital.

"It's been pretty difficult, especially with it being my two oldest boys," she said. "And I lost my dad recently - it was quite sudden - and the boys were not able to come back for the funeral."

How does a mother cope with having two sons fighting a war half a world away?

"I try to avoid the major news on TV, and go by what my boys tell me. And they tell me they are needed there." "I love the fact that we can e-mail each other," she said.

"The first thing in the morning, I send an e-mail, saying, 'Good morning. How are you?' And I tell them I hope they have a nice day," Heaney said. "It's kept us a lot closer."

21st-century technology does indeed make the thousands of miles of separation seem like a lesser barrier.

"Troy's wife just had a baby in March," Heaney said. "He came home in July for R&R, but he missed the birth. With digital cameras and e-mail, he was able to see a picture of his daughter right after she was born."

Other family members in the 201st include father and son Donald and Christopher Cathel; and brothers William and Shawn Dahlheim, Jeff and Rodney

Braithwaite, and Brian and Daniel Nalps.

Father-and-son teams in West Virginia's 1st Battalion, 150th Armor include: Sgt. 1st Class Lawrence D. Bane and his son, Spc. Lawrence D. Bane II; Command Sgt. Maj. Lawrence R. Vance and son Spc. Benjamin M. Vance; and Staff Sgt. L. Joe Fouts Jr. and son Spc. Jeremy V. Fouts.

"Having my son so close makes missing the rest of the family a little easier," said Lawrence Vance of Charleston, who also served in Korea. "The best part is the personal time you spend together, and the worst part is seeing your son leave the relative safety of the forward operating base to go out on a mission."

Spc. Bane said it's good to have Dad here when life in a combat zone gets the younger Bane down. "It is a great honor to be deployed with my father," he said. "In my darkest hours, home doesn't seem as far away because I know I can look to him for comfort and support. The Lord has blessed me greatly in bringing my father and me together for this."

The 3664th Maintenance Company out of Point Pleasant includes father and son Sgt. 1st Class Brian Russell and Sgt. Ryan Russell; husband and wife Sgt. Eric Layne and Spc. Janette Slater; brothers Sgt. James and Spc. David Anderson; stepfather and stepdaughter Sgt. 1st Class James Gheen and Sgt. Shari Wright; and stepbrothers Sgt. Dee Richards and Spc. Curtis Cook. The unit also has four sets of cousins serving in Iraq.

GI life at Camp Navstar

Home in the desert

By Chief Warrant Officer 3 Ronald Eagle
201st Field Artillery Battalion

Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 201st Field Artillery seem in high spirits after 12 months on active duty supporting the Iraq war.

Most of the West Virginians stationed at Camp Navstar, along the Iraq-Kuwait border, are from C Battery out of Hinton and Ronceverte.

The weather at Navstar delivers a daily high of a blistering 130 to 140 degrees to a nighttime low in the 80s, with no rain in sight. And dust storms make for blinding driving conditions at times.

Camp Navstar has little recreation to offer a soldier, but Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) has set up four tents for off-duty activities, including a small library, game tables and televisions with PlayStation 2 and X-box systems. Other tents have ping pong tables, a big-screen TV broadcasting sports channels and a big-screen projection TV playing movies on DVD. A large trailer houses a weight room with nearly 20 machines and benches, along with a cardio



Photo by Chief Warrant Officer 3 Ronald Eagle, 201st Field Artillery

The basketball court at Camp Navstar is located outside the front doors of the camp's two MWR tents, one holding a big-screen TV for DVD movies and one housing ping pong tables.

room with stationary bicycles and running machines.

Charlie Battery also has its own Internet café, which was purchased with donated funds that the unit readiness group received from Southeastern West Virginia businesses. The 201st set up the system next to its living area.

Navstar has a tent as its chapel. The post exchange is in a trailer and the laundry, highly valued by soldiers, is in a series of trailers.

The dining facility is also housed in a trailer. The chow hall has two serving lines and offers a variety of foods. The main line usually offers three main-course dishes. There's a short-order line, too, with hot dogs, hamburgers, French fries and such. There is a salad bar and a dessert bar, which includes hand-dipped ice cream. Relative to back home, the living arrangements are substandard, but they're a

vast improvement over previous conflicts.

The soldiers say one of their best morale boosters has been the R&R leave program that started in June, where soldiers return home for 15 days. The two-day trip can be exhausting, but soldiers say that once they step foot on U.S. soil again, any jet lag is erased. C Battery leaders hoped to get R&R for all their soldiers.

West Virginians are involved in several humanitarian missions around Camp Navstar. These projects are good for morale and the relationship with the Iraqi people.

The battalion hopes to get Commanders Emergency Relief Program (CERP) Funds to restore an Iraqi school north of Camp Cedar. Iraqi contractors will be hired to do the work. A medical clinic will be part of the school and will be staffed by an itinerant doctor to treat the school children and the local community.

Iraqis in rural areas feel 'West Virginia hospitality'

By Capt. Jimmy Thornton and Capt. Allen Martin
201st Field Artillery Battalion

Soldiers from the West Virginia Army National Guard's 201st Field Artillery Battalion provide security for about 250 miles of the main supply route, or MSR, in Southern and South-central Iraq.

These security forces from "First West Virginia" operate in small teams with two or more specially equipped HUMVEEs. The soldiers often are on the road 10 to 12 hours a day, during which time the temperatures can rise above 130 degrees.

Despite the demanding security mission, the soldiers also offer what limited personal time they have to help Iraqi civilians. One of these humanitarian missions was led by Capt. Allen Martin, commander of the 201st's B Battery, who recently took a trailer full of food and water to a farm village of about 70 Iraqis on the MSR.

When the West Virginians pulled up, Iraqi children gathered round

to collect what they could. Many of the 201st's soldiers had brought care packages for the locals. It was obvious to the West Virginians that the Iraqi villagers appreciated what had been done for them.

"These good deeds happen because the soldiers of the 201st put forth the extra effort to make them happen," said Capt. Jimmy Thornton, the battalion's operations officer. "It's a touch of West Virginia hospitality."

Among those making that extra effort were Staff Sgts. Richmond and Jones, security team leaders for the 201st, who were among the first volunteers for the humanitarian mission to the village.

U.S. soldiers know that most Iraqis are decent, good-hearted people who want peace and order in their homeland, Thornton and Martin said. Locals oftentimes warn the West Virginians about rebels and terrorists being seen near their village. This cooperation, much of it sparked by West Virginia hospitality, led to the capture of several criminals and lessened crime along the MSR, the soldiers said.

'If you stock it, they will come'

GIs at Iraq forward operating base get one-stop shopping at 'Wong-Mart'

By Spc. Sherree Casper
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

FOB ROUGH RIDER, MANDALI, Iraq — It might not be open 24-hours-a-day like its civilian inspiration, but Wong-Mart provides just as much convenience to soldiers here.

A takeoff on retail giant Wal-Mart, Wong-Mart is the product of several innovative soldiers on this forward operating base. They saw a need and filled it.

"If you stock it, they will come," one soldier said.

No doubt.

And stocking the shelves at Wong-Mart is no problem. In fact, soldiers regularly volunteer to pitch in and unload items in record time from trucks that arrive about twice a month, brimming with everything from potato chips to DVD players.

"It's not a one-person operation; it's a lot of team effort," said Sgt. 1st Class Kevin R. Wong, who oversees the improvised post exchange that bears his name. Wong is a member of the West Virginia Army National Guard, based in Beckley.

"It's a whole-FOB effort," he said. "They work very hard. Soldiers chip in to unload the trucks and get the merchandise stocked."

From sundries to sweets to microwaves and digital cameras, the small PX offers an array of much-sought-after goods.

Wong-Mart averaged about 45 customers an hour during its first day. Wong said average daily sales run between \$5,000 to \$6,000. The busiest day netted more than \$12,000.

Sitting behind the "check-out" counter, Spc. James R. Smith makes change for a purchase. The 36-year-old chaplain's assistant hails from Welch, where he is a minister. He likes providing the service to fellow soldiers, so he volunteers to man the metal money box. Customers at Wong-Mart have the option of paying with cash, check or credit card.

"Welcome to Wong-Mart," Smith pipes up to a soldier entering the PX.

Sometimes patrons come in the wrong end of the tent, but that's no big problem. Smith will give them traffic directions with a smile.

Wong said he also gets regular help in the PX from Spc. Chris Whitt and Sgt. Victor Campos. Campos has even offered painted rocks in the PX - free of charge, of course.

Sgt. John Bellamy, a cook with Headquarters, 1st Battalion, 150th Armor, made the wooden "Wong-Mart" sign that



Photo by Spc. Sherree Casper, 196th MPAD

Spc. Kevin Wong of Charleston, W.Va., stocks the innovative post exchange at FOB Rough Rider that bears part of his name as "clerk" Spc. James R. Smith looks on.

greet customers at the tent's entrance.

Spc. Frank Turley, a tanker with C Company, 1st/150th, grabs a bottle of Febreeze, a case of Gatorade, a can of Pringles and a pickle before making his way to the checkout counter. "They've got what we need here," said the Charleston resident.

Looking around during his brief shopping



Photo by Spc. Sherree Casper, 196th MPAD

Spc. Frank Turley, a tanker with C Co., 1st Bn, 150th Armor Regiment, pays Spc. James R. Smith for his purchase at Wong-Mart.

excursion, Spc. Joshua S. Bish eyed a case of Sprite. A Princeton resident assigned to A Company, 1st/150th, the tanker reached for his wallet. "It's pretty good, especially the cheese dip," Bish said of the selection of merchandise.

A truck convoys several hours to Baghdad International Airport about twice a month, and items are purchased from AAFES. In turn, the goods are sold for the same price to soldiers at Rough Rider. No profit is made.

"The money we bring in is the amount we spend on the next trip," Wong said.

Wong, an assistant operations sergeant with Headquarters, 1st/150th, said \$30,000 in impress funds through AAFES started the ball rolling for the small forward operating base's PX.

A stocking clerk for the supermarket chain Kroger, Wong has more than 29 years with the company. He said he often has the same headaches with those that stock the PX here as those back home. "It's just as hectic trying to get the guys to stock like items alike," he said.

Before Wong-Mart opened, soldiers didn't have access to any type of "Pogey bait" while at Rough Rider. Capt. Donald Rakes suggested to the battalion executive officer, Maj. Roy Bourne, that a PX be created for soldiers at one of the most remote FOBs in Task Force Danger. The rest, as they say, is history.

Wong keeps patrons happy by making sure the eight shelves, cooler, freezer and a large wooden pallet in the center of the tent are chock full of "essentials," from Gatorade to Snickers bars. If soldiers don't find what they want, they can always put in special requests.

"Whatever shows up most frequently we try and get," Wong said. "We can't please everyone, but we do the best we can with what they [AAFES] have available," Wong said. "If they've got it, we'll have it here."

To the families of deployed service members

I CANNOT BEGIN TO EXPRESS my deep gratitude with mere words, but I shall try. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for the sacrifices you are enduring for my freedom to live the way I choose. I am married to the man I fell in love with, I have a daughter I love and am very proud of, and I have a granddaughter who lights up my world. My husband and I live in our own home. We own vehicles we are free to use to go to work, to go to church, to visit friends and family, to go shopping, or to travel to a place of choice. At the end of the day, we sleep in a comfortable bed, in peace instead of fear, and wake to enjoy each new day.

All of this and more is thanks to your husbands, wives, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters or other family members who have been deployed. Those brave, unselfish soldiers who are away from home for many months at a time protecting my family's freedom and safety; protecting millions of families' freedom and safety. What an awesome responsibility.

It is also thanks to all of you left behind to keep homes running smoothly and repeatedly explaining why mommy or daddy can't be home. I am married to a military man and have gone through separation during annual training and state duties for floods, fires and snow. My husband was in Vietnam and Operation Desert Storm, although I did not know him then. I can only begin to understand the difficulties, challenges and loneliness you face each day.

Our soldiers protect all people, whether they are Democrats, Republicans, Christians, Muslims, Jews or atheists. They protect all men, women and children, regardless of their race, sexual preference, dollar value or age; black or white, gay or straight, rich or poor, young or old. We are all under the protection of our soldiers. It's not political or for personal gain. It is American pride and the deep-rooted desire to keep our country the land of the free and the land of opportunity. It is their heart-felt desire that our children, and their



Brenda Hart

children, will be able to enjoy the same freedom, safety and choices that other generations have enjoyed.

Without you, the families, none of this could happen. The families of the Army National Guard, Air National Guard, Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines who had their lives turned upside down deserve our unending thanks. All of you were forced to change your daily routines and learn new things. Perhaps a mom had plumbing or car problems and had to find someone to help. What about that dad who is at a loss looking for someone to create a dance costume? And children may not even begin to know how to express the way they feel, but mom or dad need to know how to look for those unknown signs of distress.

All families of a deployed soldier feel loneliness and a fear of the unknown, but have to face each day as if there are no uneasy hours. I wonder if any of the rest of us can even imagine facing the reality of sleeping alone for 365 days in a row.

It is my sincere prayer that each of your soldiers comes home safely, and very soon, with their missions successfully accomplished. Probably none of you will ever be famous by today's standards, but you are the very fiber that strengthens this country. You are the glue holding your families together during very stressful times. You deserve the same honor and pride that your soldiers deserve. I am only one voice, but I am sure many join me in saying thank you and God bless your family.

Always,

Brenda Hart, president,

Family Readiness Group, HHB 1/201st FA, ARNG

WV Air Guard gets new chief of staff



Photo by Maj. Mike Cadle, HQ, WVANG

Butler's mother, Peggy, and Adjutant General Allen Tackett promoted Col. Butler to brigadier general before a crowd of family and friends at the Charleston air base.

CHARLESTON - Col. Terry L. Butler was promoted to brigadier general and appointed as the West Virginia Air National Guard's chief of staff during a ceremony May 2 at the 130th Airlift Wing base in Charleston. A reception in the Coonskin Armory War Room followed the ceremony.

As chief of staff, Butler is the principal advisor to the Adjutant General on all matters related to the West Virginia Air National Guard and is responsible for operation of the Headquarters administrative function, including coordination of state-level communication with the National Guard Bureau.

Butler began his military career in 1968 with the U.S. Army, logging over 700 combat flight hours in Vietnam. He joined the West Virginia Army National Guard's 146th Medical Evacuation Company in 1972, serving until his appointment as an officer in the Air Guard in 1974. Butler flew more than 5,100 hours during his Air Guard career, mostly in the C-130 Hercules aircraft. He left the West Virginia Air Guard in 1991, later holding several positions at National Guard Bureau before returning to the West Virginia Air Guard. His last assignment at National Guard Bureau was Air National Guard advisor to Air Force Programs, Headquarters Air Force in Washington, D.C.

Butler has been awarded numerous military decorations for outstanding achievement, including the Meritorious Service Medal (two devices), Air Medal (14 devices), Aerial Achievement Medal and Air Force Commendation Medal (one device).

Butler assumes the position vacated by Brig. Gen. V. Wayne "Speedy" Lloyd, who retired in April after 37 years of service in the West Virginia Air National Guard.

News you can use

Grades key to continued tuition assistance

Students must submit a copy of their official grade report to the Education Encouragement Program office at the end of each semester. Reports can be faxed to 304-561-6307 or mailed to Adjutant General's Department, ATTN: Kathy Kidd, 1703 Coonskin Drive, Charleston, WV 25311. Failure to submit grades may result in denial of future requests for tuition assistance.

Retiree COLA increase

The COLA increase for 2005 for those receiving federal retired pay, including VA disability compensation, SBP survivor annuities, and Social Security programs is 2.7 percent. Some retirees will only receive a partial COLA based on the date entered into service. For more information, go to: http://www.military.com/resources/resourcescontent/o.13964.57826-mil_status_retired-1.00.html

Tricare Online

Tricare Online is a web site that provides personalized services for Tricare beneficiaries worldwide. Site features include online enrollment, information on claims, general health information, and more. Contact your unit Tricare representative for more information.

DOD says myPay best source for tax statements

Service members, military retirees and defense civilian employees can access tax statements quicker than waiting on paper copies by accessing myPay at <https://mypay.dfas.mil>. Contact your Accounting & Finance Office for more information.

BAH rates to increase

Pentagon officials added \$2.5 billion to the defense budget for troop housing allowances for 2005, increasing by about 9 percent funds made available to members living off base. The boost will cut to zero the amount of money a typical active duty service member has to pay out-of-pocket for housing, based on average housing costs. Check with your Accounting & Finance Office for more information.

Guard triples enlistment bonuses

Guard members who reenlist and prior and non-prior service members who enlist in the National Guard may receive up to \$15,000 in cash bonuses. Contact your Recruiting & Retention Office for more information.

Retirement pay options

Service members can choose between two retirement plan options when beginning their 15th year of military service. Members who entered the service after July 31st, 1986 and are approaching the 15-year point of their career must decide whether to accept the High-3 retirement plan or elect the REDUX plan and receive a \$30,000 lump-sum career status bonus (CSB). Each plan has merit and determining which best suits your needs will depend on your individual goals and circumstances. For more information, see your unit personnel section.

Spouses to Teachers Program

DOD has established a pilot program to assist spouses interested in pursuing a teaching career. The project is limited to six states right now, but could grow pending an evaluation of interest and activity. California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Texas and Virginia are the pilot states. Call 850-452-1320 for more information.

USPS offers free packaging material for military families

The United States Postal Service is offering free packing materials to spouses and families of military members who are deployed overseas. Kits include 10 boxes, packing materials, priority mailing tape and mailing labels. Call 1-800-610-8734, press 1 for English, and then 3 for an operator). Normal postage rates apply.

Air Force honors spouses with spouse pin

Air Force officials are recognizing the contributions and sacrifices of spouses with the Air Force spouse pin. Airmen and civilian employees can register for a spouse pin and letter through a Web-based program at www.yourguardiansoffreedom.com.

Free anti-virus software for DOD employees

DOD Web sites offer free anti-virus software intended for use on members' home computers. Software is licensed for DOD employees, both military and civilian. For more information, go to ftp://ftp.cert.mil/pub/antivirus/home_use.htm.

Military discount Web site

Check out the Web site at 4militaryfamilies.com for discounts available to military families. The site also has links to charitable organizations that support military members and families and general reference information about issues specific to military families.

Help troops call home

DOD has authorized AAFES to sell prepaid calling cards to any individual or organization that wishes to purchase cards for deployed troops. Cards do not expire and there are no added charges or connection fees. To donate a prepaid calling card, go to www.aafes.com. Click the "Help Our Troops Call Home" link.

'Check floating' is now a thing of the past

Service members should no longer try to "float" a check until payday. Some people write checks a few days before payday, thinking that by the time the check hits the bank, a paycheck will have been received and there will be money in the account to cover the checks. However, a new law allows banks to debit a person's checking account within minutes after processing, which might cause those unaware of the law to bounce checks, resulting in bounced check fees. Check with your bank for more information.

Disney on Ice Tickets

Service members may present their military I.D. and receive a \$5 discount per ticket to the Disney on Ice presentation of Beauty and the Beast appearing Feb. 9th-13th at the Charleston Civic Center. Ticket pricing is \$21, \$17 & \$13 per person before discount. Admission is free for children under two years of age. For credit card orders or more information, call (304) 269-7444.



Photo by 1st Battalion, 201st Field Artillery

Sgt. Barry Hunter, gun team truck commander of Bravo Battery, 1/201st Field Artillery, returns from conducting a sweep of Main Supply Route Tampa near Al Mu'aytyah, Iraq, in June 2004.

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