



The Rail Gunner Weekly

41st Fires Brigade



1-21 FA



2-20 FA



589th BSB



HHB

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Generals take in sights on walkabout

By Sgt. Daniel T. West
41st Fires Bde. PAO

Senior 10th Mountain Division leaders removed their armor and toured markets in al Kut with provincial Iraqi Security forces leadership as a tangible display of security in Wasit province, Nov. 3 and 4.

Maj. Gen. Michael Oates, 10th Mountain Division Commander and Brig. Gen. Jefforey Smith, 10th Mtn. Div. Deputy Commanding General for Support joined Maj. Gen. Abd al-Hanen Hammood Faisal, Provincial Director of Police, Brig. Gen. Abed Gabr Mazloun, commander of the 32nd Iraqi Army Bde. and Col. Dick Francey, 41st Fires Bde. commander and commander of Coalition Forces in Wasit, for the tour and lunch in local restaurants.

Iraqi security forces took the lead providing security for both tours, which passed without incident. "It was an honor to walk downtown without weapons or body armor, and with Iraqi security," said Haneen. "We sent a message that the security situation in Kut is good, and anyone can go downtown and enjoy a walk in safety."



Above: Maj. Gen. Michael Oates, 10th Mtn. Div. commander, samples the goods offered by a bakery in a downtown al Kut market as Maj. Gen. Abd al-Hanen Hammood Faisal, Wasit Provincial Director of Police, Brig. Gen. Abed Gabr Mazloun, 32nd IA Bde. commander, and Col. Dick Francey, 41st Fires Bde. commander look on during a tour of an al Kut market, Nov. 4.

Right: Maj. Gen. Michael Oates greets Iraqis outside a shop while walking with provincial ISF and CF leadership in an al Kut market, Nov. 4.



*Photos by Sgt. Daniel T. West
41st Fires Bde. PAO*



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Martial arts expert teaches classes on FOB Delta

By Sgt. Allison Churchill
41st Fires Bde. PAO

Nearly 50 U.S. Soldiers and 100 Salvadoran Soldiers safely scuffed each other up Nov. 7 at Leader Gym under expert guidance.

Grand Master John Pellegrini, who developed "Combat Hapki-do" for the military and police taught two classes of basic defense moves.

"You won't always have a weapon with you," Pellegrini told his students as he explained the benefits of knowing self-defense.

Pellegrini began teaching his style of the martial art, which focuses on self-defense, in 1989. He said having the skill set helps Soldiers physically, through the exercise involved in practicing, and psychologically, through knowing they can get through dangerous situations.

The style gained popularity among military members. Command Sgt. Maj. James Redmore, Multi-National Division – Center's senior enlisted leader, said he started studying martial arts on his own almost 20 years ago, and began working with Pellegrini five years ago. He and his personal security team assisted the grand master during the practical exercise portions of the classes.

Pellegrini said the students did well and caught on quickly. Military members tend to take the classes more seriously than civilians, said the former Italian army paratrooper.

The martial artist compared the technique to using one's body as a shield and spear – avoid getting hit and deflect the momentum onto the attacker.

"You'll hear big guys say they can take a hit – but why would you want to?" Pellegrini asked while instructing the American Soldiers. He said it's much easier to survive if you don't get hurt or wind up on the ground.

Several Soldiers said they had looked forward to the class.

"I signed up a month ago," said Bakersfield, Calif., native Spc. Ricardo Orozco, work order clerk, Company A, 589th Brigade Support Battalion, 41st Fires Brigade. He said he had looked forward to learn self-defense.

For Sgt. Enrique Collazo, of Orlando, Fla., the opportunity to learn directly from Pellegrini was an honor. The operations battle noncommissioned officer, 41st Fires Bde., earned a black belt in tae kwon do when he was 15 and continues to study martial arts.

"I don't get to meet a grand master every day," said Collazo.

Between the classes, Pellegrini attended a luncheon in his honor at Gunner Inn East Dining Facility.



Above: Grand Master John Pellegrini (right) imparts wisdom on martial arts enthusiast Sgt. Enrique Collazo during a Combat Hapkido class on FOB Delta Nov. 7.

Photo by Sgt. Allison Churchill, 41st Fires Bde. PAO

Below: Capt. Humberto Cruz Redmore during a combatives training course held at the FOB Delta gym, Nov. 7.

Photo by Sgt. Daniel T. West, 41st Fires Bde. PAO

For more photos, please see page 4.



Safety Corner: Walk safely in America and Iraq

By Kenneth Dickerson
41st Fires Bde. Safety Officer

I was considering topics for this week's column when my laptop gave the signal I had new e-mail.

I had received a Preliminary Accident Report on a 21-year-old 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, at Fort Drum, N.Y., who was hit and killed by oncoming traffic when he crossed an interstate on foot.

The really sad part is the Army has lost four Soldiers this year in this way, as opposed to zero last year.

The other incidents:

An 11th Air Defense Artillery Bde., Fort Bliss, Texas, Soldier was killed in a pedestrian accident in El Paso Nov. 1 just before 2:30 a.m. The 23-year-old specialist was crossing the street -- not in a crosswalk -- when he was struck by a 2002 Chevrolet Silverado. The Soldier was taken to a local medical facility where he later died.

A 1st Maneuver Enhancement Bde., Fort

Polk, La., Soldier was killed in a pedestrian accident near Leesville, La., Oct. 18 just before 2 a.m. The 31-year-old corporal was in the outside lane of the road when he was struck by a vehicle.

A 17th Fires Bde., Fort Lewis, Wash., Soldier was killed on post in a pedestrian accident Oct. 17 at 5:45 a.m. The 21-year-old sergeant dismounted his vehicle at an unlit intersection and moved into the roadway where he was struck by a car. He was not using reflective gear or a flashlight.

What can we learn from these deaths? Three out of four were at night, two were in heavy traffic volume areas and one did not have the proper gear on while on the job.

None of these Soldiers seemed to be aware of their surroundings. We can blame the drivers of the vehicles for not being attentive, but these deaths could have been avoided by simply thinking STOPP:

Stop before going into the road.

Think: is it worth the risk; could I take a safer route; is there an alternative?

Observe: look both ways before crossing.

Plan: If you need to cross the road, use a crosswalk when possible. If a crosswalk isn't available, remember that you will lose every time if you think that cars will stop for you!

Proceed only after taking the above advice into account.

These tips will protect you everywhere. While doing a routine drive around the FOB I saw a group of five Soldiers walking: two on the sidewalk, three in the road.

The command group, force protection and myself do what we can enforce speed limits and vehicle safety.

But please use the sidewalks when available. They're safer than the road and will keep you from getting super muddy when it rains.

If you have to walk in the road, walk toward traffic, wear reflective gear, carry a flashlight and stay alert.

Surviving all the other possible dangers of deployment just to be hit by a car would be a waste, don't you think?

Specialist makes re-enlistment memorable

By Sgt. Allison Churchill
41st Fires Bde. PAO

Spc. Darlene Poole wanted her re-enlistment to be different, she said. Everyone does their ceremony on the ground, so she decided to go up.

So with help from 41st Fires Brigade retention noncommissioned officers, the production load list clerk in Company B, 589th Brigade Support Battalion, 41st Fires Brigade, re-enlisted on a Utility Helicopter-60 Blackhawk Nov. 7 over FOB Delta.

A stroke of luck helped out. After the first attempt was canceled, 41st Fires Bde.'s Command Sgt. Maj. Kelvin Hughes secured permission to use the bird that carried Command Sgt. Maj. James Redmore, Multi-National Division – Center, to FOB Delta on for a different mission.

“It was so much fun,” said Poole, of Norfolk, Va. She said her friends weren’t surprised by the idea she came up with something “crazy.”

It was a fitting ceremony for someone who joined the Army to see the world and help pay for college. In the two years she’s been in the Army, she’s already been stationed at Camp Carroll, South Korea, and is now in her third month in Iraq.

She also took the school option in her re-

enlistment, which she said will make it easier for her to pursue her business and mortuary affairs degrees. Someday, Poole said, she plans to open a funeral home for low-income families.

“I always wanted to help people see their loved ones go out well,” she said.

Poole also looks forward to helping junior Soldiers as a noncommissioned officer in the future. Although she isn’t promotable yet, Poole said she’s been inspired by many of the leaders she’s met during her Army service. One NCO who left a strong impression was Staff Sgt. Lynn China Crayton, whom Poole worked with in 2nd Battalion, 1st Air Defense Artillery, in Korea.

“She would make a bad Soldier into a good Soldier,” Poole said of her former boss.

Poole’s leaders in 589th BSB have been impressed with her since she joined the unit in September.

“The Army’s a good fit for her – I think she’d be a good leader. She’s very strong,” said



Spc. Darlene Poole is re-enlisted by Belmar, N.J., native 1st Lt. David Stevens, executive officer, Co. A, 589th BSB, while flying over FOB Delta in a Blackhawk. After the “ceremony” the pilot made the trip more exciting with a few stunts.

Photo by Sgt. Allison Churchill, 41st Fires Bde. PAO

Sgt. 1st Class Ruben Bermea, of San Antonio, Poole’s platoon sergeant.

Bermea added when Poole is asked to perform a mission, she doesn’t hesitate and does the task with a smile.

Poole said despite her interest in mortuary affairs and forensic science, she sees another re-enlistment in her future. She said she already planned a way to top her first.

“Next time, I’m going to jump,” she said.

Surgeon’s Section

By Col. Italo Bastianelli
41st Fires Bde. Surgeon

Smokeless tobacco is known by many names: dip, snuff, chew and spit, to name a few. But it definitely shouldn’t be known as harmless. The harmful drug nicotine makes tobacco highly addictive and smokeless tobacco is no exception. In fact, the amount of nicotine found in a dip of chewing tobacco is 3 to 4 times the amount delivered by a single cigarette.

Unfortunately, the use of smokeless tobacco by service members is skyrocketing. Some Soldiers become so addicted to nicotine that they chew when they can’t smoke. Just like many addictions, smokeless tobacco takes away a victim’s money and health. Chewing tobacco is associated with dental, mouth and stomach problems from the chemicals in the smokeless tobacco, as well as increasing risks for heart problems and cancer.

Users that can’t get through the day without chewing tobacco are addicted to nicotine. According to studies from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nicotine addiction can be as tough to break free of as an addiction to heroin or cocaine. It is never too early to quick the habit. See your primary care provider or visit <http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/factsheets/smokelesstobacco.htm> for more information on smokeless tobacco facts and to get on the healthy road to recovery.

Rear-D Safety Day

Tell your loved ones back in Texas: the Rear Detachment is holding a Safety Day Nov. 22 at 41st Fires Bde. Headquarters from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Your family can have the car inspected by Rail Gunner Soldiers before long trips for Thanksgiving.

Your family can also enjoy hamburgers and hot dogs or possibly win a \$25 gas card.

Chapel Services

Chapel 1

Sunday	
General Protestant	0900
Latter-day Saints	1030
Gospel Service	1315
Tuesday and Wednesday	
Bible Study	2000

El Sal Chapel

Sunday	
Catholic Mass (Spanish)	0900
Protestant (Spanish) (Building 12B)	1000
Catholic Mass (English)	1630
Thursday	
Bible Study	1930
Saturday	
Catholic Mass (Spanish)	1900

TMC

Thursday	
Bible Study	1930

Veterans’ Day Bike Race

The 41st Fires Brigade Medical and Unit Ministry Teams are sponsoring a bike race on Nov. 11 at 11 a.m. at the softball field next to the Mayor’s Cell in support of Veteran’s Day.

Each five-person team must provide their own bikes and safety equipment. Each team member must ride during the race.

Triple Canopy guards prepare to switch out



Triple Canopy guards pose with Command Sgt. Maj. Kelvin Hughes, 41st Fires Brigade at the Mayor's Cell after a ceremony Nov. 8.

The 17 guards were assigned to other venues for five months before completing the last seven months of their year-long contracts at FOB Delta, said Frank Collins, Triple Canopy site manager.

The guards filled several important security roles FOB Delta in several ways: perimeter tower sentry, FOB entry controller and internal key location entry controller.

The guards have worked while taking indirect and small-arms fire at times, Collins said.

After returning to Uganda, the guards will have two weeks off to enjoy with their families, Collins said. If they decide to sign another contract with Triple Canopy, they can do so after that vacation.

Two of the guards have already opted to renew their contracts without taking a break. By doing so, they have guaranteed they will remain at FOB Delta.

The guards said it was an honor to work with American Soldiers.

Photo contributed by 1st Lt. Vanessa Hooper-Yan

Soldiers practice self-defense in Combat Hapkido class



Above: Navy Chief Ryan Hamilton and Sgt. 1st Class Andrew Pastusic, electronic warfare officers for 2nd Battalion, 20th Field Artillery Regiment, 41st Fires Brigade, safely fight each other after instruction from Grand Master John Pellegrini at Leader Gym Nov. 7.

Photo by Sgt. Allison Churchill, 41st Fires Bde. PAO



Top right: Soldiers of El Salvador's Battalion Cuscatlan practice moves during a combatives training course held at Leader Gym Nov. 7.

Photo by Sgt. Daniel T. West, 41st Fires Bde. PAO



Bottom right: Spc. Sergio Dixon, 2-20 FA chaplain's assistant, and Spc. Zil Shah, joint network node operator, 324th Network Support Company, 41st Fires Bde., practice self-defense tactics during the Combat Hapkido class.

Photo by Sgt. Allison Churchill, 41st Fires Bde. PAO

OUTSIDE THE WIRE



Top left: 2nd Lt. Tanyia Bryant, HHB 41st Fires Bde., offers a baby a distraction from the wait at the Point of Entry into Iraq from Iran Nov. 5. Bryant was part of a small group of Soldiers who accompanied Col. Dick Francey, brigade commander, to a meeting at the POE.

Bottom left: Spc. Jeremy Elliott, HHB 41st Fires Bde., poses for a photo in an office at the POE. Elliot and several other Soldiers at the brigade are currently working at the POE.

Top right: Spc. Brian Winger, Btry. B, 2-20 FA, stands ready for quick reaction force mission on Combat Outpost Shocker Nov. 5. The brigade commander and his personal security team stopped at the COP for lunch after visiting the POE.

Middle right: Staff Sgt. George Amankwaa welcomes people into Iraq at the POE Nov. 5.

Bottom right: Pfc. Andrew Hillsman and Pfc. Geoffery Hatten, HHB, pose next to the wall separating Iran from Iraq while the brigade commander attends his meeting Nov. 5.

*Photos by Sgt. Allison Churchill
41st Fires Bde. PAO*

