

# *Soldiers of the Gauntlet*

720<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion Newsletter – August

## Photo of the Month



SFC Paul Chace, MP, 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company instructs two Iraqi Police officers on weapons retention techniques.

## *Soldier Profile*

SSG Jason Dungan is a squad leader with the 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company. Dungan, who married his wife three months prior to deploying, has been in the Army for 12 years. He earned a Bachelor's degree in criminal justice from Columbia College in Columbia, Mo., and plans to go to law school following his Army career. As a squad leader, Dungan said his most important task is pre-combat inspections. This includes making sure all vehicles have been properly inspected, briefing his team leaders, and ensuring that all his soldiers have the proper equipment, as well as enough food and water for the mission. He is extremely proud of his soldiers' performance in Iraq. "Considering the environment we are in and the tasks we are giving them, they have been absolutely amazing. They have performed far beyond anybody's expectations."



SSG Dungan  
San Antonio, TX

## Building Democracy

Iraqi Police reform is one of the most important parts of making Iraq a free and democratic society. In Tikrit and the Salah Al-Dein province, 720<sup>th</sup> MP Battalion soldiers are leading this reform process.

Battalion soldiers are teaching Iraqi policemen principles and techniques of democratic law enforcement in classroom lectures and activities, as well as during joint planning and execution of missions. They have spent long days in hot, crowded rooms interviewing and screening every potential Iraqi policeman. They have helped distribute new uniforms and equipment to the Iraqi police force, and contributed to repairs and up grades to their police stations.

The Iraqi police in Tikrit are now taking more initiative as law enforcers for their country, city and people. They are leading raids, apprehending criminals and confiscating weapons. Citizens of Tikrit are beginning to trust their police force with information about suspected Saddam Hussein loyalists and the location of hidden weapons.

The result has been a decrease in criminal and terrorist activity against Iraqi civilians and coalition forces in Tikrit and the Salah Al-Dein province.

The 64<sup>th</sup> MP Company is now providing support to the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in three locations; Samarra East Airfield, Balad and Samarra. Their missions include providing convoy escorts, EPW security, combat patrols and joint Iraqi police/MP patrols.

Though everyone is looking forward to our return home, it is exciting to be part of building a democracy for people who for decades have only known oppression.

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## *Soldiers of the Gauntlet*

# From the Commander's Foxhole

"Our Soldiers"

About one month ago, a retired MP Colonel sent me a document describing the "average American soldier." I do not know who the author was, but the descriptions of the soldiers reminded me of our mighty "Soldiers of the Gauntlet" and I'd like to share it with you. It read something like this:

The average age of the military soldier is 19 years. Normally short haired, tight-muscled kids who, under normal circumstances are considered by society as half child, half adult. Not yet dry behind the ears, not old enough to buy a beer, but old enough to die for their country. They never really cared much for work and they would rather wax their own car than then wash their father's; but they have never collected unemployment either. They are a recent High School graduate; and were probably an average student, pursued some form of sport activities, drive a ten year old jalopy, and have a steady girlfriend/boyfriend that either broke up with them when they left, or swears to be waiting when they return from half a world away. They listen to rock and roll or hip-hop or rap or jazz or swing and 155mm Howitzers. They are 10 or 15 pounds lighter now than when they were at home because they are working or fighting from before dawn to well after dusk. They have trouble spelling, thus letter writing is a pain for him, but they can field strip a rifle in 30 seconds and reassemble it in less time in the dark. They can recite to you the nomenclature of a machine gun or grenade launcher and use either one effectively if they must. They can dig foxholes and latrines and can apply first aid like professionals. They can march until told to stop or stop until they are told to march. They obey orders instantly and without hesitation, but they are not without spirit or individual dignity. **(see Commander on page 6)**

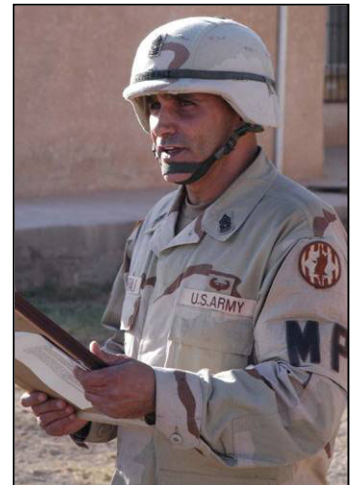



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## From the Battalion Command Sergeant Major's Foxhole

Soldiers, Family and Friends: The "Soldiers of the Gauntlet" diligently and proudly continue our mission to stabilize the country of Iraq, a nation that has suffered through decades of rule by a ruthless dictator. As you may know, some of our fellow professionals have decided to reenlist and, in some cases, decided to extend their tours of duty in Iraq. I would like to share the following thoughts about the professional men and women who endure this task our Nation has called upon us to accomplish.

Our Army, rich with history and supported by the selfless service of patriots has recently celebrated its 228<sup>th</sup> birthday, serving the American people in peace and war. The all-volunteer Army has constantly served the American people with vigilance, dedication, and selflessness for the past 30 years. Today, the young sons and daughters who fill the ranks of this proud organization have voluntarily agreed to serve our great Nation, and they have done so with pride. The traditions of commitment, dedication, determination, and character continue in the Gauntlet family. We are neither forced nor compelled to serve except by commitment to our fellow citizens and our Nation.



We defend our way of life by protecting America's security and our Nation's interests. We answered the Nation's call to serve, fight, and prevail during this war. This is our non-negotiable contract with the American people. Organizations like our own will remain the preeminent land war fighting force in the world.

We are Soldiers, and being a Soldier is a very honorable profession. We serve as the ultimate guarantors of the American way of life. For many of us, the Army *is a way of life*, a life-long calling to provide a necessary and useful service. To that end, it instills a nobility of purpose within each soldier and provides deep personal meaning to all who serve. **(See CSM on page 9)**

## *Soldiers of the Gauntlet*

# Iraq Police Reform

by PFC Jason Phillips, 89<sup>th</sup> MP Brigade PAO

The Iraqi police force in Tikrit, Iraq, led by soldiers of the 720<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion, is currently undergoing a reform process that is designed to make it capable of enforcing law and order for the city's people.

Under the Saddam Hussein regime, the army or various security forces such as the Fedayeen Saddam provided iron fisted security in the country, leaving the police little or no role to play as law enforcers.

That has changed under the U.S. led Coalition Provisional Authority, and now the police have become a key part of securing peace and stability in Iraq.

“Probably the most important thing we are doing right now is building up the police into a legitimate force so that they can provide security for their own people,” said Cpt. Christopher Kasker, assistant operations officer, 720<sup>th</sup> MP Battalion, who is in charge of coordinating the battalion's police reform missions in Tikrit and the surrounding province.



Iraqi police officers participate in a small group discussion during a Transition and Integration class Aug. 21 in the Tikrit Iraqi Police HQs.

The reform process in Tikrit includes rebuilding and refurbishing the main police station, as well as giving the police new uniforms to wear and new equipment to use. It also includes joint patrols and raids in which Iraqi police and 720<sup>th</sup> MP Battalion soldiers have worked side by side, a valuable on-the-job training experience for the police officers.

But at the core of the process is the Transition and Integration Program, a three-week course designed by the CPA that all Iraqi police officers are required to attend.

“The goal of the course is to open up the minds of the Iraqi police to new philosophies of policing,” said Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Michael Robledo, battalion operations sergeant, 720<sup>th</sup> MP Battalion, who is the lead instructor for the course in Tikrit.

“We teach them how to work as police officers in a democratic society, and give them new standards to live and work by as police officers,” he said.

The course includes classes on human rights, international law and prohibitions against torture, as well as on firearms safety, interview techniques and patrol procedures. Classes are taught by an English speaking instructor and an Arabic speaking translator.

The police students participate through discussions, small group exercises and hands on training. At the end of the three week course, they have gained knowledge and skills that will make them better police officers, said Robledo.

“There is still a long way for them to go,” he said. “But I think this is the first step in the right direction to improve the police force in Iraq.”



SGT Matthew Dusenbery, MP, 401<sup>st</sup> MP Company, looks on as two Iraqi Police officers clear confiscated weapons during a raid Aug. 23 northeast of Tikrit.



## *Soldiers of the Gauntlet*

### 411<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company

by CPT Omar Lomas, commander

Greetings from Tikrit, Iraq!! I can't believe that it has been a month since my last newsletter; how fast time seems to be flying. I am very glad to continue to report that every one of us here in Iraq is doing just fine. As our mission here continues, the soldiers remain motivated and ready to accomplish anything that comes their way. The work here in Iraq has been steady and at times fast paced. It certainly keeps us very busy.

Lately our primary mission has been to "rebuild" the Iraqi police and their police stations through the use of police reform teams. Our soldiers are responsible for gathering all the former police, screening them, training them, and putting them back on the streets to take care of themselves. This is just another way that we are helping the Iraqis rebuild their country. The 3rd Platoon "Rough Riders" have been leading the charge as our police reform team by having gathered and screened over 1500 Iraqi police. They have certainly kept themselves very busy.

Fourth Platoon "Peacemakers" have also been very busy. They have taken on the mission of conducting all of our fuel and supply escorts as well as providing the combat patrols through the city of Tikrit.

Second Platoon "Black Sheep" continue their mission to provide our security here at Camp Iron Horse. They too have done a tremendous job at keeping us safe.

Finally, 1st Platoon "Rottweilers" hold steadfast and ready as our general support platoon ready to jump at any division tasking that comes our way.

I have to tell you that although our platoons have been very busy, our Grizzly Motorpool has been a hot bed of activity this past month. Our mechanics have been very occupied with maintaining our fleet of vehicles. They serviced over 38 pieces of equipment in a period of about 15 days! Sergeant West and his team worked long hours turning wrenches under a maintenance tent in the heat of the day. They put a lot of hard work into these services and I am very proud of them and the support they bring to the Grizzly team.

Another section that has been hopping is our PAC section. SGT Bauder and SPC Young have been typing awards, orders, and evaluation reports **(see 411<sup>th</sup> on page 9)**



SPC Andrew Fifield, MP, 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company, receives a coin from LTC Poirier for his work with the data base used by the battalion to track Iraqi Police screening. Many 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company soldiers have spent long hours imputing information into this data base – a dull, but vital part of the Iraqi Police reform process.

### HHD 720<sup>th</sup> MP Battalion

by CPT Christopher Church

Greetings from Tikrit. Another month has gone by here in Iraq and morale is still high. Everyone in the detachment keeps plugging away despite being separated from family and friends. Your soldiers are doing great things for their country each and every day. Everyone here, whether they are supply clerks picking up rations or working in the S-3 shop directing the fight, is working hard to bring stabilization to northern Iraq. When your loved ones aren't out on missions they are able to watch television on our newly acquired satellite television, or if they like a little more physical recreation they can get a weight workout in Gauntlet gym. We are now dining in luxury with three meals a day at the new Brown and Root dining facility. One thing that keeps on rising here is the temperature. In the last two or three weeks it has gotten up to 120 degrees with a 150-degree heat index. It's looking up though; once we get past August the temperature should get a little more livable.

This month we have said goodbye to some familiar faces and hello to some new ones. We have lost our Detachment Sergeant, 1SG Guthrie and his wife Tammy, and are gaining a new one in SFC Thompson and his wife Leontine. SFC Thompson is moving over from the 411<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company. 1SG Guthrie didn't go far though; he took over for 1SG King at the 64<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company. Some of the others who have left are SPC Myesha Bailey, Sergeant Pamela Herbert, and Sergeant Marlo Vaughn. They have returned home to move on to a new duty assignment and will be greatly missed. In the past month we have added Captain Jeff Withers and 1LT Aaron McKivigan, SFC Reginald Turner and SSG Benjamin Nudo to the Detachment family. In the weeks to come soldiers will get the opportunity to get some Rest and Relaxation. Some will get to go to Qatar and others will go to our MWR Palace here in Tikrit. Either way they will get some down time from missions and be able to relax. On behalf of all the soldiers of the detachment we are grateful for the support we have gotten from everyone back home and look forward to hearing from you whether it be from an E-mail, letter or a phone call.



SPC Cameron Carter, supply specialist, HHD, guides an AC unit off a truck at Samarra East Airfield.

## *Soldiers of the Gauntlet*

### 401st Military Police Company

by CPT Mark Blair, commander

The month of August has been a very busy month for the 401<sup>st</sup> MP CO. The company has switched completely to a law enforcement mission with the primary objective to stand up the various Iraqi police departments around the region. We have made great strides with the Iraqi police officers in the towns of Tikrit and Bayji. Our ultimate goal is, of course, giving the Iraqi police officers complete autonomy in their roles as law enforcement officials in their country. We have begun and continue to do many joint patrols with them throughout their jurisdictions. They have been extremely responsive to our soldiers' very professional mentorship and guidance. We are in the process of standing up certified police academies to ensure that adequate standards, professionalism, and esprit de corps are firmly implemented throughout Iraqi police officer ranks.

The 401<sup>st</sup> MP CO has been a great security asset to the many pay sites for former Iraqi Army officers and soldiers. A stipend or allowance is currently being paid to the former soldiers as monetary compensation or temporary solution in lieu of a pension for the now defunct Iraqi Army. This is an extremely important program in maintaining viable and proactive relations with the Iraqi people and the former military. There is a certain criminal element that exists in Iraq who would like to disrupt these sites, as they are one of the many stepping-stones in the peace process between the Iraqi people and the Americans. Our military police soldiers provide the necessary protection for these pay sites to ensure that the lawful distribution of money goes to its just recipients.

As before, there is still no definitive word on when we will redeploy, yet. As soon as we know, we will let all of you know. Many of you have heard that the Department of Defense has proposed a two-week block leave period for soldiers deployed to Iraq. If approved by the Secretary Of Defense, this will undoubtedly be a very sought after and much needed break for these soldiers. They have done all they have been asked to do and then some. You all will be duly notified on the status and the details of this block leave as soon as it comes to fruition. Remember that your soldiers and loved ones miss you very much and are thinking of you always. Continue to keep them in your prayers... "Always First!"



A 3<sup>rd</sup> platoon, 401<sup>st</sup> MP Company vehicle and an Iraqi Police truck rumble through the desert on the way to a raid northeast of Tikrit Aug. 23.

### 64<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company

by CPT Juan Nava, commander

I would like to thank our FRG for sending this photo. It truly makes the pain of being separated a little more bearable when we know that our loved ones continue to support us. The fifth month of our stay here in Iraq passes as the Guardians Of the World continue our mission in support of 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 4<sup>th</sup> ID. Forward Operating Base "Paladin" as it is called here at Samarra East Airfield, Iraq, has shown some measurable improvements. With washing machines, a replacement DVD player, and the arrival of Environmental Control Units, we look forward to controlling the temperature inside the hanger to make the living conditions easier for the soldiers. We have stopped conducting "combat" patrols, however the area we operate in still has many dangers. Your soldiers continue to perform in an outstanding and professional manner. The dislocation of the platoons within the company has provided a challenge to make the satellite phone available for everyone. We will continue to refine this system to allow the most soldiers possible an opportunity to call you on the Army's dime.

It seems we have survived the hottest weeks and months of the summer here in Iraq. The temperature is noticeably a good 30 degrees cooler than a couple of weeks ago. The 120's are more preferable to the 152 that has been our record high. Refrigerators, freezers, and microwaves have allowed our soldiers to improve their food options. I encourage families to continue to send those items for your soldiers. I know they appreciate them.

The Guardians would like to wish our best to 1SG Johnny C. King. As First Sergeant departs us he takes a big part of our hearts. It was great serving with you, Top. We all wish you the best. We also had to bid farewell to 1LT McKivigan (gone to the S4 shop), SFC Turner (gone to the S3 shop), and several soldiers who are going to ETS or PCS here soon. To all, we wish you and your family the best and we're proud to have served with you. God loves a Guardian, and all of you will always be Guardians. Additionally, the 64<sup>th</sup> MP Company would like to welcome 1SG Charles H. Guthrie back. After a short (14 months) stay in HHD, he has returned to the Guardians to assume the position as the First Sergeant. We want to welcome him, his lovely wife, Tammy, and their two children, Hannah (11), and Drew (8), back to the company.

We're all doing fine and look forward to the letters and phone calls we are able to share. Keep us in your prayers as we pray for all of you, "Until We ALL Come Home."





## *Soldiers of the Gauntlet*

### From the Chaplain

by CH (LTC) David McMillan, 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade/4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division

*“Be strong,” says the Lord, “and work; for I am with you.” – Haggai 2:4*

I was reading the devotional the other day called “Courage to Continue” and it reminded me that it is easy to get discouraged. This short verse from the prophet Haggai encourages us to persevere in our work because God is with us. We all need to be reminded of that!

As I travel about Iraq as the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade Chaplain, I see many Military Police from the 720<sup>th</sup> MP Battalion. I would like to be able to stop each MP and say “Thanks!” to them personally. I don’t always do that since I am on the way somewhere. MPs are very special soldiers and are people who often go unrecognized by others. Having served as the 89<sup>th</sup> MP Brigade Chaplain back in 2000, I know first hand what MPs do. You are subject to special stresses and long hours as you go about your missions.

Through the devotional I read, God encouraged me to have courage for the work. Keeping in mind that God is always with us gives us the courage to continue through difficulties – even if we go unrecognized sometimes!

So whatever you are feeling and doing right now, please remember God is with you and your family back home cares about you. These are the best reasons to hang in there and not give up! God’s Blessings.



### Commander from page 2

They are self-sufficient. They have two sets of fatigues: they wash one and wear the other. They keep their canteens full and their feet dry. They sometimes forget to brush their teeth, but never to clean their rifles. They can cook their own meals, mend their own clothes, and fix their own hurts. If you're thirsty, they'll share their water with you; if you are hungry, their food. They'll even split their ammunition with you in the midst of battle when you run low. They have learned to use their hands like weapons and weapons like they were their hands. They can save your life - or take it, because that is their job. They will often do twice the work of a civilian, draw half the pay and still find ironic humor in it all. They have seen more suffering and death than they should have in their short lifetime. They have wept in public and in private, for friends who have fallen in combat and are unashamed.



SFC Michael Robledo,  
HHD, 720<sup>th</sup> MP BN, with an  
Iraqi policeman.

They feel every note of the National Anthem vibrate through their bodies while at rigid attention, while tempering the burning desire to 'square-away' those around them who haven't bothered to stand, remove their hat, or even stop talking. In an odd twist, day in and day out, far from home, they defend their right to be disrespectful. Just as did their Fathers, Grandfathers, and Great-grandfathers, they are paying the price for our freedom. They are American Fighting Soldiers that have kept this country free for over 200 years. They have asked nothing in return, except our friendship and understanding.

Remember them, always, for they have earned our respect and admiration with their blood.”

I’m convinced the author was writing about soldiers of the 720<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion. They make me proud and honored to be on their team. They are the hardest workers I know. They are fierce, yet they love humanity. They hate to lose. They are proud, flag-waving Americans, led by the most professional Non-Commissioned Officers ever. And they have the best families and friends on Earth. I’ve heard journalists question if the Army really has the right to take your soldiers away from you for so long, but you’ve never questioned it. Instead, you’ve been supportive and proud of your soldier. Thanks for your support so that your soldier could be a part of this great Gauntlet team!

David J. Poirier, LTC, MP - Gauntlet 6



SPC Heather Sheppard, 64<sup>th</sup>  
MP Company.

*Soldiers of the Gauntlet*  
**Soldiers' Voices**



SFC Ameer Campbell, HHD, 720<sup>th</sup> MP BN

*To my little man Corey Ray*

“I love you and hope you are happy, healthy and safe. I’ll come home as soon as I can. Love always – Momma.”



SFC Carter Criger, 64<sup>th</sup> MP Company

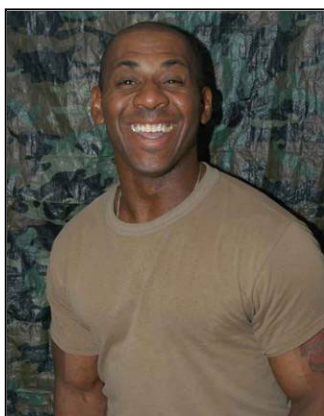
*To his family*

“Just want to say hello to my wife and son Casey. I love and miss you both.”

CPT Johnny Sellers, HHD, 720<sup>th</sup> MP BN

*To his family*

“To my lovely wife and two beautiful daughters, I love you and miss you guys so much. Not a day goes by that I don’t think of you. I love you.”



SFC James Thompson, HHD, 720<sup>th</sup> BN (*formerly of 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company*)

*To his family*

“I want you all to know that I am doing fine. My adopted family, 4<sup>th</sup> Platoon ‘Peacemakers’ have kept me busy physically and emotionally! I really miss my beautiful wife, Tina, and daughter Shonna, and my strong son Master James “JT” Thompson. I love you all and look forward to getting back to you. Last but not least, Mom – it’s all because of you...I love you!

### *Soldiers of the Gauntlet*



SSG Rocknee Gardner, 401<sup>st</sup> MP Company  
*To his wife and sons*

"I miss you all more than you know. I worry about you constantly. Keep the windows and doors locked. Be safe. I love you all and can't wait to come home."



1LT Larkin Frazier, HHD, 720<sup>th</sup> MP BN

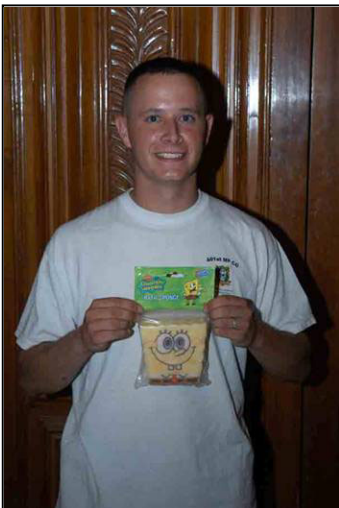
*To his family*

"Hello, Aixa, Ciani, Anjelika and Jazmin. I miss you all. Have a great school year."

SPC Deliverance Bard

*To family and friends*

"This is a picture of me. Thought you could email it to everyone. Hope you like it! I love you and miss you all!! Love, Dee."



SPC Joseph Palazzo, 401<sup>st</sup> MP Company

*To Heather*

"I love you with all my heart...and so does Sponge Bob!"



## *Soldiers of the Gauntlet*

### 411<sup>th</sup> from page 4

for the soldiers who have departed and those departing. It seems that the paperwork never stops and our PAC section has done a tremendous job keeping it flowing through the right channels.

First Sergeant Hodges has also been extremely busy in improving our quality of life. Some of the new improvements include two new company showers, one new refrigerator and six new freezers. These items play a big part in keeping the units motivation high and are a "cool" addition to the unit. In addition to these improvements the First Sergeant has also ensured that our parking area received some badly needed gravel to keep the sand down. We had our whole parking area, motor pool, and new MWR area graveled thanks to the efforts of the First Sergeant and the Battalion S4.

Perhaps the biggest motivating factor for the Grizzlies has been the arrival of Brown and Root (a contracted food service company). Thanks to them, our soldiers now have three hot meals a day that they can enjoy in a cool fest tent. Meal items include cold drinks, salads, 3 choices of meats, vegetables, and starches. All the soldiers are excited about the hot chow that no longer has to come out of an MRE bag.

We have also began sending soldiers to Qatar and to the MWR Palace here in Tikrit for Rest and Relaxation (R&R). Soldiers spend up to 5 days at either location and let loose in an effort to get some rest and enjoy themselves. We have had one trip to each location and have several more coming later this month and in September. Our troops really enjoy these trips as it helps them to get away for awhile and unwind in a more relaxed environment.

As I just mentioned we have had some of our soldiers depart Iraq in order to PCS, ETS, or Retire. I would like to thank them for their service to the 411th MP Company and I wish them well in their future endeavors. Although it was only for a short period of time, I am proud to have served with such fine soldiers and Americans. These soldiers include: MSG Harris, SFC Lunceford, SSG Story, SSG Russo, SGT Conant, SGT Patenaude, SGT Fisher, SGT Thurman, SPC Martin, SPC Sanchez, SPC Fields, SPC Smith, SPC Geddis, SPC Jones, and SPC Moore.

Just as some of our soldiers depart, we gain new soldiers into the Grizzly family. I would like to welcome: SFC Dozier, SSG Desmond, SSG Hicks, SPC Evans, SPC Grizzle, PFC Decurtis, PFC Cabaday, PV2 Walker, PV2 Jones, PV2 Milliron, PV2 Murray, PV2 Kramp. These soldiers are a very welcome addition to our Speed and Power Company as are their spouses and family members.

We have also had some newborn additions to our Grizzly families. Our congratulations go out to SPC and Mrs. Locurto on the birth of their daughter, Haylee and to SGT and Mrs Diggs on the birth of their daughter Gabrielle.

Once again I will ask that you please keep our soldiers in your prayers. We still don't have word of when we are coming home so until then we will continue to make you all proud and continue to help this country get back on its feet. Your (our) soldiers are doing great things here and they are doing it all with great pride. I ask that you please continue to support them by writing, emailing, and sending them packages. Keep your spirits up and we hope to be back with you soon. SPEED AND POWER!!

CPT Luis Omar Lomas "GRIZZLY 6"

### CSM from page 2

The consequences of failure in our profession—both for the Soldier and the Nation—are more dire than those in any other. Sacrifice and selfless service in the face of hardship are part of the contract. We are and will remain one of the most esteemed institutions in the Nation and an attractive profession for future Citizen-Soldiers.

The Commander and I are proud of each and every Soldier in this organization for his or her service, and we commend those who have extended their tours to remain in theater with their comrades during this endeavor. For the Soldiers who have reenlisted to remain with The Army Family, your commitment and service is valued. Additionally, we bid farewell and sincerely thank those Soldiers who have served with distinction and elected to end their terms of service.

William A. Generali, CSM, US Army - Soldier



HHD 720<sup>th</sup> MP Battalion – Tikrit, August, 2003

*“Wars may be fought by weapons, but they are won by men.” - General George S. Patton, Jr.*

# *Soldiers of the Gauntlet*

720<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion Newsletter photo supplement – August 2003

## *Heroes of the Gauntlet*



SFC Audrey Smith, cook,  
411<sup>th</sup> MP Company  
*...at the 411<sup>th</sup> MP  
Company HQs in Tikrit*



PFC Bryan Purcell, MP,  
64<sup>th</sup> MP Company  
*...in his vehicle's turret  
before a night patrol in Ad-  
Duluiyah.*

## Heroes



SPC Nathaniel Champlain, MP,  
HHD 720<sup>th</sup> MP Battalion  
*...in the Tikrit Iraqi Police  
Headquarters. Champlain is  
LTC Poirier's driver.*

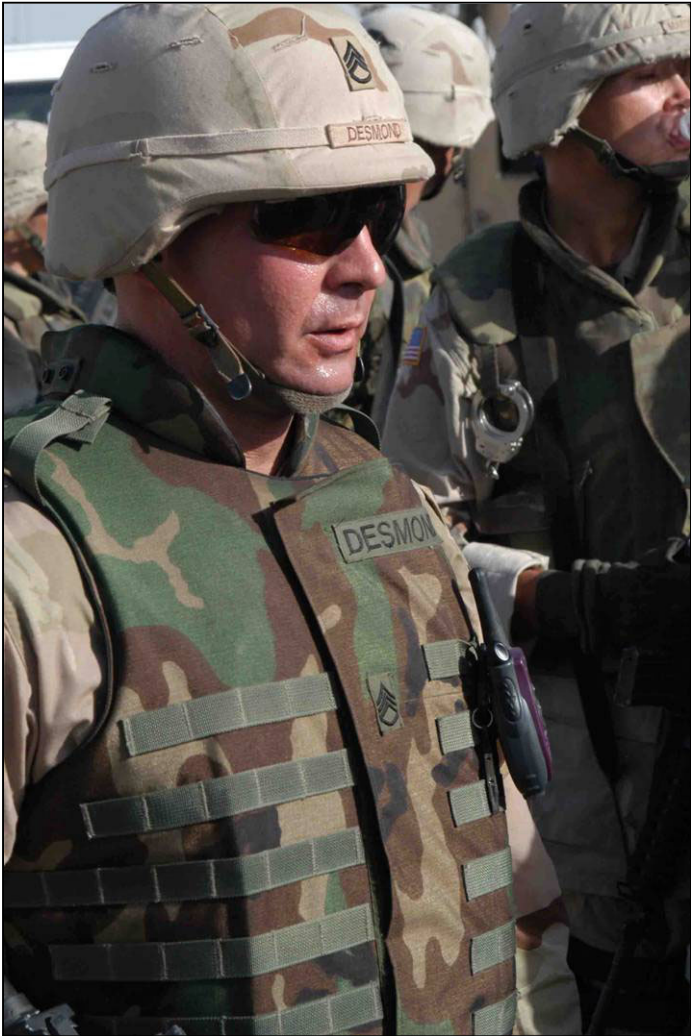
“Red” Al Childress, civilian  
*...Red served with the 720<sup>th</sup> MP BN  
from April – August 2003. He was a  
representative from Textron, the  
company that built the Armored  
Security Vehicles. He not only helped  
with ASV maintenance, but contributed  
as a handyman in a variety of projects  
that improved living conditions for  
battalion soldiers. Red is a veteran of  
the Vietnam War in which he served  
three tours as a “tunnel rat.”  
Before he left Iraq, he was awarded a  
Certificate of Appreciation and a 720<sup>th</sup>  
MP Battalion plaque.*





# Heroes

SSG Marilyn Johnson, property book NCOIC,  
HHD, 720<sup>th</sup> MP Battalion  
*...in the S4 shop in Tikrit.*



SSG Todd Desmond, MP,  
411<sup>th</sup> MP Company  
*...on a raid north of Tikrit.*

## Heroes



SSG Donnie Jones, MP  
401<sup>st</sup> MP Company  
*...in a village north of Tikrit.*



SPC Jeffrey Cook, MP  
401<sup>st</sup> MP Company  
*...on a raid north of Tikrit.*



# *Soldiers of the Gauntlet*

720<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion Newsletter photo supplement – August 2003

## *Iraq Police Reform*

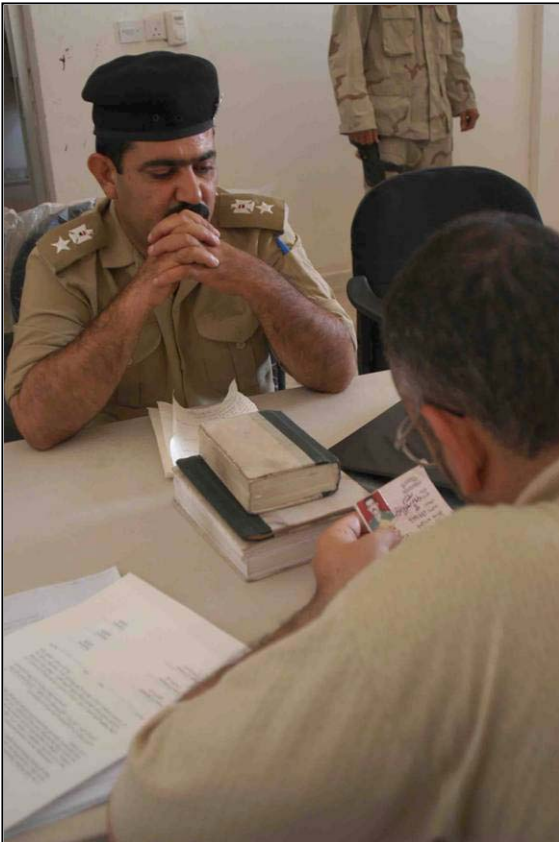


Reforming the Iraqi Police begins with a screening process. Individuals who held significant political or military positions under the Saddam Hussein Regime are not allowed to become a part of the Iraqi Police force.

Above, SGT Gary Rigsby, MP, 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company looks on as a police officer is interviewed in Ad-Dawr.

Left, an Iraqi Police officer's ID card is checked in Tikrit.

Right, two former Republican Guard officers are led away in Tikrit by SSG Michael Merzke, MP, 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company, after being denied positions in the Iraqi Police force.





## Iraq Police Reform



Iraqi Police officers that pass the screening process are then issued new uniforms. These uniforms replace the green uniforms worn by the police under the Saddam Hussein regime.

In addition to issuing new uniforms, the 720<sup>th</sup> MP Battalion is assisting the Iraqi Police in obtaining new radios, weapons and vehicles as well as upgrading their police stations with telephones, new furniture and a variety of repairs.

Above left, SGT Scott Seli, MP, 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company, measures an Iraqi policeman for his shirt size.

Above, PV2 Brian Milliron, MP, 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company, assists an Iraqi policeman with his uniform fit.

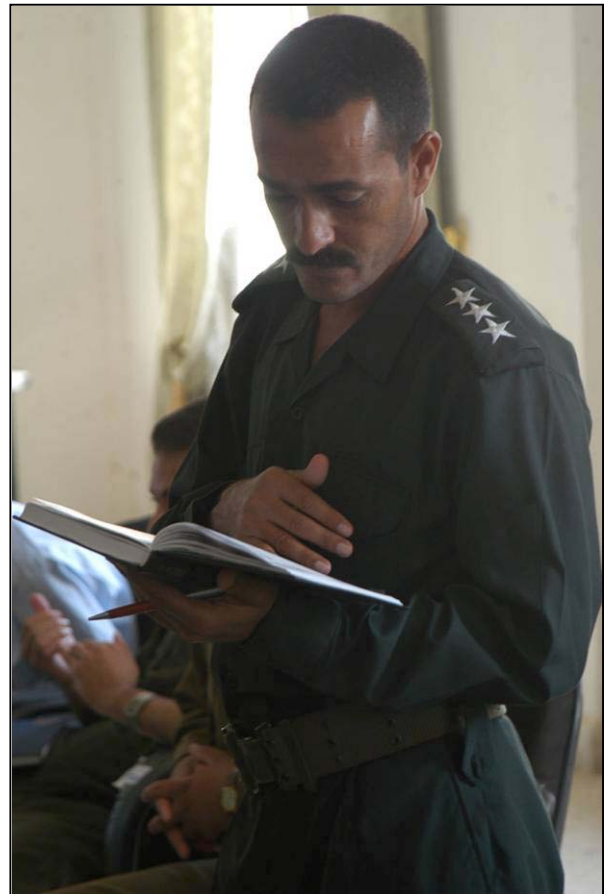
Left, an Iraq policeman tries on his new uniform for the first time as CPT Omar Lomas, commander, 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company looks on.

### Iraq Police Reform



The Transition and Integration program is a three week course that teaches Iraqi police officers the fundamentals of democratic police work. It includes lectures, small group activities and discussions, and hands on training.

Upon completion of the course, police officers are presented an official diploma during a graduation ceremony.





## Iraq Police Reform



The last step in the Iraq Police reform process is joint operations. Throughout August, 720<sup>th</sup> MP Battalion soldiers and Iraqi police have planned and executed joint raids and patrols. The Iraqi Police have gradually taken a larger leadership role in the operations, with MPs participating in a support and observation role.

Because of their work with the 720<sup>th</sup> MP Battalion, the Iraqi Police are now better equipped and trained. The result has been a decrease in criminal and terrorist activity against civilians and coalition forces in and around Tikrit.





# *Soldiers of the Gauntlet*

720<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion Newsletter photo supplement – August 2003

## *Daily life improvements*



The new Kellogg Brown and Root Dining Facility in Tikrit.  
*SFC Perrin, HHD 720<sup>th</sup> MP BN*

The AAFES PX in Tikrit. A new laundry service is now located in the same building as the PX.  
*SGT Ibarra, 64<sup>th</sup> MP Company*



## Daily life improvements

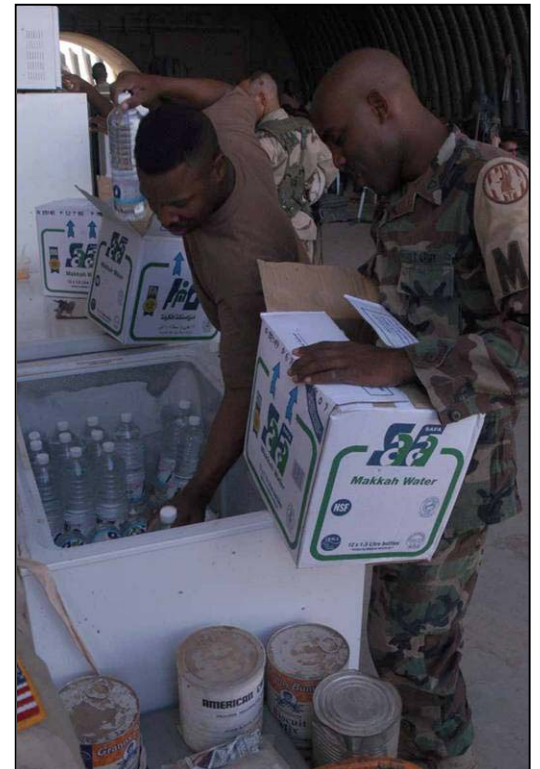
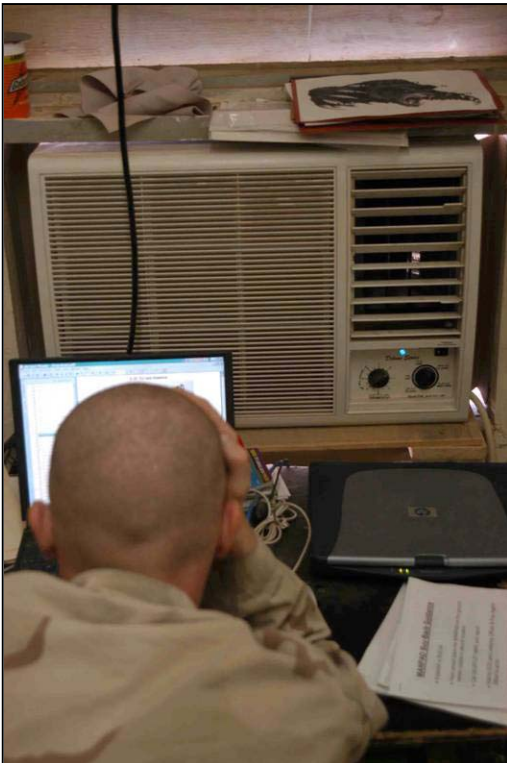
Clockwise from right...

Fans at Samarra East Airfield  
A 64<sup>th</sup> MP Company soldier

A cooler at Samarra East Airfield  
SSG Streat (left), PFC Thompson  
(right) both with the 64<sup>th</sup> MP Co.

Air conditioning in the 411<sup>th</sup> MP  
Company TOC  
SSG Carter, 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company

August temperatures were the  
hottest of the summer in Iraq, as  
the thermometer at Samarra East  
Airfield shows (center).  
Throughout the battalion, fans,  
coolers, ice chests, refrigerators  
and air conditioning helped  
soldiers stay cool.





## Daily life improvements



The Ironhorse Recreation Center in Tikrit offers four day R&R for TF Ironhorse soldiers.

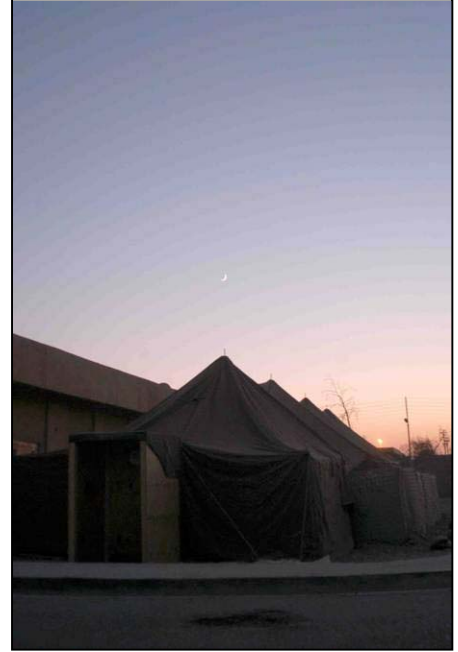
The Recreation Center has a swimming pool, movie theater, ping-pong and billiards tables, cyber café, PlayStation room as well as outdoor basketball and volleyball courts. In addition, the center makes bicycles and fishing gear available to soldiers for use around Forward Operating Base Ironhorse.

An AT&T phone tent is set up just outside the Recreation Center.

*Ssg Hicks, 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company (above)*



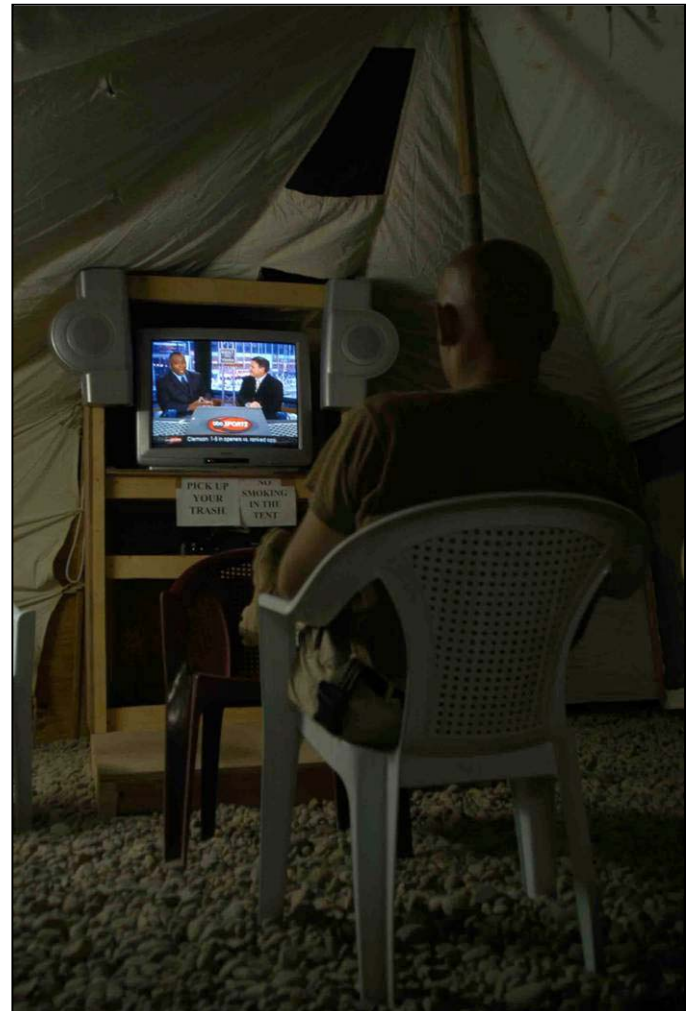
## Daily life improvements



An iridium phone, one of several used by soldiers throughout the battalion to stay in touch with their families.

*PFC Bilig, 401<sup>st</sup> MP Company*

The MWR tent beside the 411<sup>th</sup> quarters (above right). The tent includes a television with a satellite connection (right). *SGT Seli, 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company*





## *Soldiers of the Gauntlet*

720<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion Newsletter photo supplement – August 2003

# *It happened one day in Tikrit*

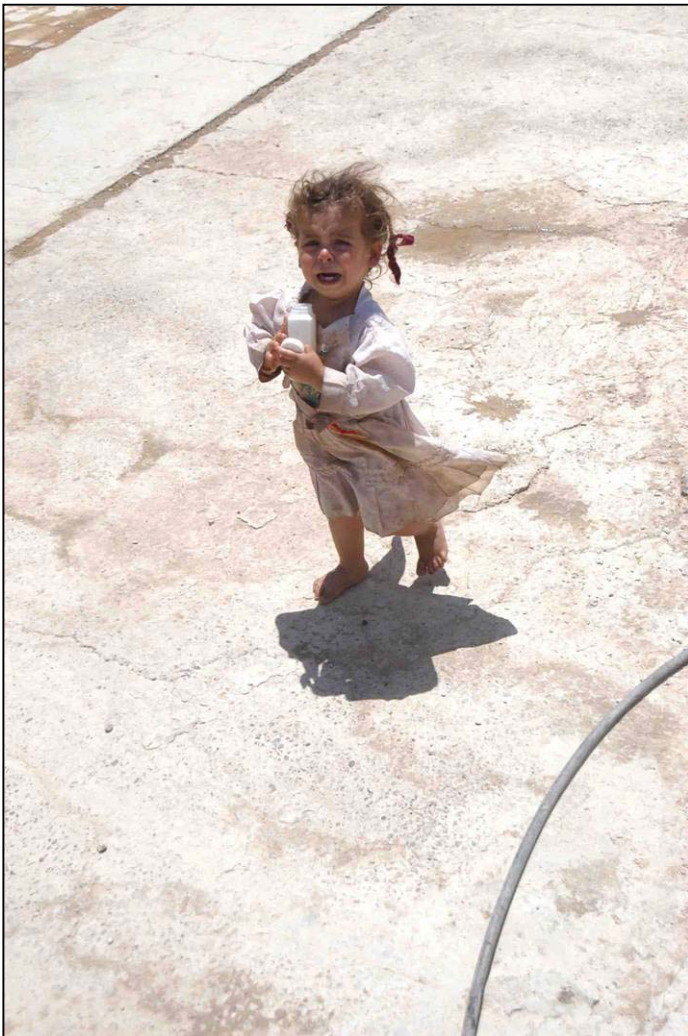


One day in Tikrit, some big, tall soldiers came to the gate of my house...

... and came inside where I live to talk to my papa and uncles.



I didn't want to be  
picked up by the big, tall  
interpreter...



...and I didn't want my  
picture taken by the big,  
tall photographer...



*It happened one day in Tikrit*



...and even though all the soldiers wanted was to talk to my papa and uncles about how to make my house safe...  
...and even though all my brothers, sisters and cousins wanted to watch them talk while they were outside...





*It happened one day in Tikrit*

...all I wanted was my mama.





# *Soldiers of the Gauntlet*

720<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion Newsletter supplement – August 2003

## Soldiers' Voices

### 411th Military Police Company



Left to right, PV2 Kevin Murray, SPC Brad Christopher, PFC James Smith

PV2 Murray

*To his Dad, Mom and family*

“I just wanted to say I love you and miss you all. Thanks for all the support and prayers. Kate, Mel, Sadie, Jen and Brennon I love you guys and can't wait to see you again. Keep praying for me. I love you.”

SPC Christopher

*To Christina and Hailey*

“I love you and miss you so much. I can't wait to see you Hailey. Take care and I will see you soon enough.”

PFC Smith

*To Mark*

“How are you doing? I'm doing great. I'm sorry I'll miss your wedding. I'm praying for you.”

PFC Patrick Weber (left), SPC Adam Abbott (right)

PFC Weber

*To Mom, Dad, Jonathan, Alison and all my friends and family*

“What's up guys? I'm doing fine, but I can't wait to get back. I love and miss you all. Thanks for your support. I couldn't do it without you guys. Love, Patrick.”



SPC Abbot

*To Mom, Dad and family*

“Thank you all for all the support and prayers. Much appreciation. I'll be home soon. I love you and miss you all.”

## Soldier's Voices – 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company



SPC Crystal Grizzle (left), SPC Joseph Lomas (right)

SPC Grizzle

*To Mom, Frank, Grandma, and all my family and friends*

“Hi! I’m doing great! I love and miss you all. Thanks for all your thoughts and prayers. God bless all – Love always, Crystal.”

SPC Lomas

*To Julio and Rose*

“I love you and miss you. I’ll be back as soon as I can. Take care!”

SPC Nathan Deary

*To Mom and Dad*

“Hi, Mom and Dad! I miss you very much and I hope to hear from you soon! Keep me in your prayers and keep the mail/packages coming! I love you!”



PV2 Brian Milliron

*To Jim and Kathy*

“Hey, guys! How are you doing? I am doing fine. Just wanted to tell you guys I was doing OK and that I miss y’all. I’ll drop you a line soon. Love y’all.”

PFC Jennifer Sperber

*To Mom, Dad, Donna, kids and family and friends*

“I love and miss each and every one of you! I think of you always and can’t wait to get home. I’m living well and doing good. Happy Birthday Dad!”





## Soldier's Voices – 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company



SPC Andrew Fifield

*To Erin and Melanie*

"I'm doing well. I love you both very much. You're in my thoughts and prayers daily."

1LT Mary Newell (left), SFC Kimberly McGhaney-Reed

1LT Newell

*To Mom, Dad, Granny, Anita, Tereh, family and friends*

"Sorry I missed you last time Anita! But you know my thoughts are always with all of you. I miss all of you very much and can't wait to come home and visit with you all. David – spend some time with Mom and Dad. Tereh – thanks for keeping me entertained – even over here."

SFC McGhaney-Reed

*To Art and Daryl and my family*

"I miss you all a lot. Thanks for all your support and I hope to see you soon. Keep praying for us. I love U."



SGT Gary Rigsby

*To Steph and the kids*

"I am doing fine and everything is OK. Tell Andrew I can't wait to cut the grass and for him to be a big boy for mommy. Love, Gary."

PFC Christopher Paul

*To Mike, Dortha, A.M., and family*

"I am doing great, I miss you all very much. Take care. See y'all soon!"



## Soldier's Voices – 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company



SPC Mark Vidal

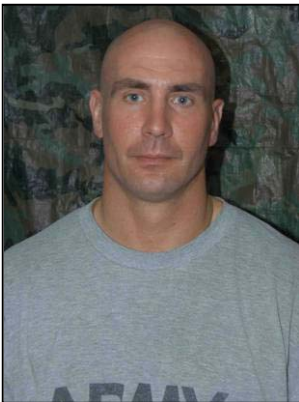
*To Jen*

“Hey, baby! I love you and miss you. Thank you for being there when I need you. I am constantly thinking about you and Ari. Take care and God Bless. I love all of you. *ONE LOVE*”

PV2 Karen Rowley

*To Scott, Sharon, Stephen, Emma, Karee and Don*

“Miss you all so much, and I can’t wait to see you all soon. Love you all!”



From SSG Todd Desmond

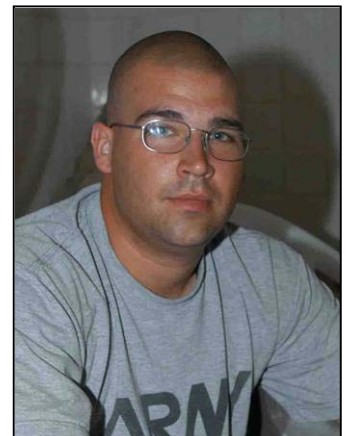
*To Kristen and Paige*

“I love and miss you both. See you soon. Love Todd/Daddy. P.S. tell Ceasar Hi!”

CPL James Gross

*To my wife, mother and father*

“I love you all. I will see you soon!”





## Soldier's Voices – 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company



PFC Joshua Lavon King

*To Tameka*

“I’m safe – so be safe. I hope to see you soon.”

SSG Robert Lanier

*To my wife and daughter*

“I love you and miss you both. I hope to see you soon. I send all my love to both of you. Love, Bob.”



PV2 Michael Livesy

*To his mom and dad*

“Well guys, I am doing better than I thought I would. I hope I am home soon. I love you both. To the rest of the family, I love you guys too. I’ll see you soon. God be with me. Speed and Power! Love, Michael.”

SPC Christopher Lortz

*To Cori, Fina, Gabi*

“I love you and miss you all. I will see you soon. Love, Chris/Daddy.”



## Soldier's Voices – 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company



SPC Kyle McGaughy

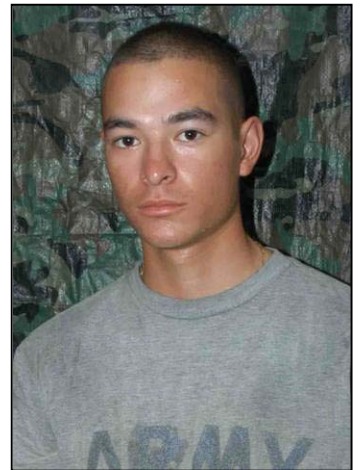
*To Angela*

“Thank you for all of your support and standing by me through these times. I love you – I miss you.”

SPC Andrew Pastrano

*To those who care (family)*

“Let everyone know I’m good and safe and that I’ll be home later. That’s all I can really say!”



PFC Jason Teklinski

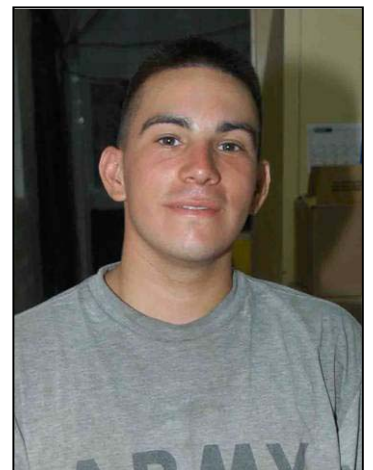
*My family*

“Just wanted to let you know I’m safe. Take care and I love you all.”

SPC Michael Vargas

*To Daniel and Eva*

“Por mi familia who has been in my mind, heart and soul from birth – Thank you for support but most of all your love.”





## Soldier's Voices – 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company



SPC James Wade

*To Judith*

“Just wanted to say I’m safe and I’ll be home soon. I love you.”

PFC Steven Bach

*To Kim*

“I’m safe and I will be home soon.”



SPC Anita Zubia

*To her mom, dad and daughter*

“I love you and miss you all. I’m doing good. See you soon! Take care, God bless, hugs and kisses!”

## Soldier's Voices – 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company



1<sup>st</sup> Squad, 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon

SSG John Davis

*To Cynthia Ann*

“What can I say, Baby? You are the reason I strive to be the best and you and only you that keeps me going day in and day out. You are my life and my best friend. I love you.”

SGT Joe Shelby

*To Katrina*

“I love you sweetie, and can’t wait to see you. Don’t worry, I’ll be home before you know it. Love, Joe.”

SPC James Bacon

*To Destyni*

“Baby, I love you so much and miss you more than anything. This is almost over. I can’t wait to be back home with you. You are my everything – I love you.”

CPL Robert Sparks

*To AnneJ*

“I love you pretty girl and I miss you more than anything! I can not wait to get home to you, Johnny and Jenna. You guys are my everything and all that makes me happy. I’ll be home soon. I love you!”

PFC Joel Morera

*To Ana*

“Hey sweetheart, I promise as soon as I get back, you won’t be lonely anymore. You’re always in my heart. You give me the strength to get through every day and every night. I love you!”



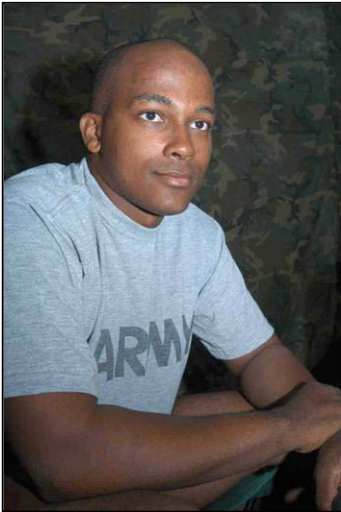
## Soldier's Voices – 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company

(1<sup>st</sup> squad, 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon continued)

PFC Elsa Perez

*To Sigfredo*

“Hey sweetie, it’s me – your one and only love. Remember whenever you get lonely, just stare at the stars at night and remember I’m on the other side thinking about you. I miss you and love you with all my heart. I’ll be home soon.”



SPC Adrian Butler

*To his mom*

“To mom with love from Iraq - I wish you were here! ☺ Love Always, Adrian.”

PV2 Andrew Jones

*To his family*

“La Nae – Hey Sweetie! Everything is good on this end. This is just a note to tell you I love you. Mom and Dad I just want to say I love you too.”



PFC Nathan Martinez

*To his family*

“Bendician Ma y Pa, los quiero mucho y a todos mis hermanos los quiero mucho y los extraño mucho – espero verlos pronto.”

**Soldier's Voices – 411<sup>th</sup> MP Company**

SFC Milton Nation

*To Lori*

“I miss you all with every passing day! I can not wait to see our little girl Alexandria! I’m doing fine and being safe. I love you with all my heart! Love, Milt.”



## *Soldiers of the Gauntlet*

720<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion Newsletter supplement – August 2003

# Soldiers' Voices

## 401st Military Police Company



SPC Wesley Don Blalack (left) PFC Keith Lee Fisher (right)

*To our families*

“We love you guys. Be home soon!”

SPC Brandon Cleveland (left)

*To my Mom and Dad*

“I miss and love you all. Be home soon. Don't forget about me.”

PFC John Dorsey (right)

*Tom LeighAnn Benson*

“Hey mommy, I'm doing fine. Love you and enjoy the cool weather.”



From bottom left to right:

SPC Joshua Thompson, SPC Jeff Cook, SPC Jesse Deets

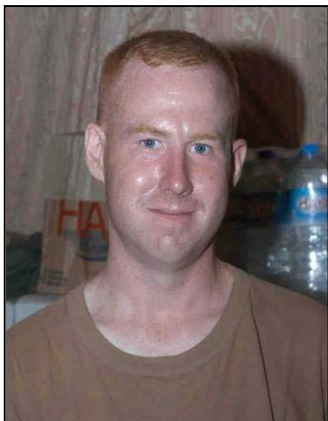
From top left to right:

SPC Joe Palazzo, SPC Brandon Cleveland, SGT Matt Dusenbery

*To our families*

“Greetings from Iraq – the A.D.D kids.”

## Soldiers' Voices – 401<sup>st</sup> MP Company



SPC Thomas D. Collins

*To Mom, Dad, Missy and May*

“Love you all. Hope I’ll be home soon – Love, Tom.”

PFC Mandie Drews

*To Mom, Dad, friends and family*

“Hi everyone! I love you and miss you all! I’m doing fine and I’ll see you all when I get home! Lots of love!”



SGT Jonathan Cintron

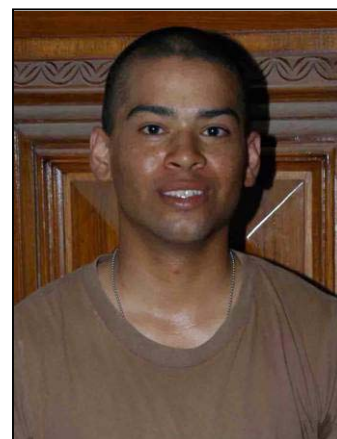
*To my wife and son*

“El tiempo veula, ya nos vemos...Los Amo.”

PV2 Michael Alexander Gorge

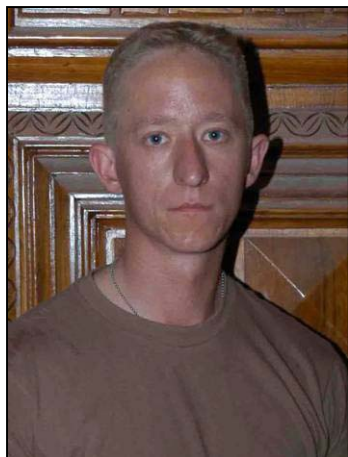
*To Bible Baptist Church*

“Can’t wait to come home and worship with you all. Thank you for your prayers and all your gifts.”





## Soldiers' Voices – 401<sup>st</sup> MP Company



SPC Jason P. Goulet

*To Judi Goulet*

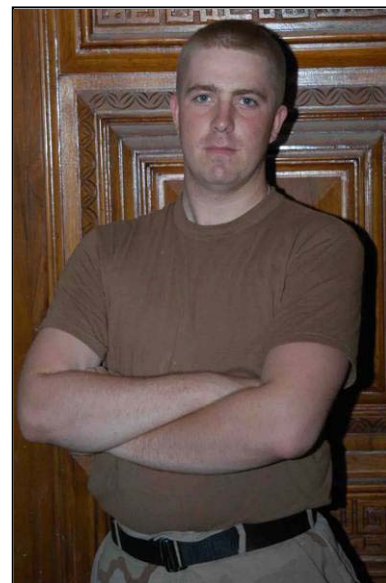
“Hey babe! I miss you and think about you the majority of the day. Love you. Can’t wait to get home.”

SPC Edward Harden

*To Kelly and Dylan*

“I love you and miss you guys. Can’t wait to get home and see you.

- Love, Ed “Daddy”



PFC James Hawkins

*To Mom and Jay*

“I love you and miss you. I’ll see you soon.”

SPC Debra Howard

*To Gary and Susan Howard*

“Hi, Mom and Dad! I miss you guys very much! I love you and the whole family with all my heart! See you when I get home.”



## Soldiers' Voices – 401<sup>st</sup> MP Company



PV2 John Paul Jones

*To Dad and Brandy and Tracy*

“Love you. See you soon. Miss you.”

SGT Leonardo Limon

*To Elizabeth and Leo Sr. Limon*

“Hello, can’t wait to see you both again. I love you both a lot.”



SPC Marie Madsen

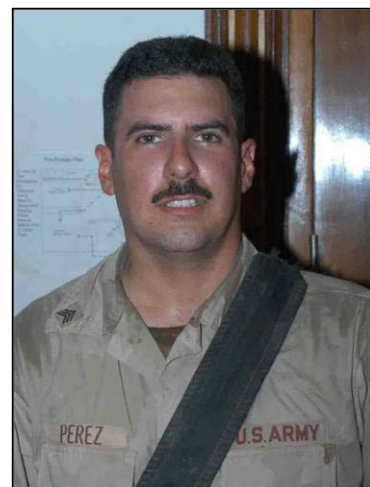
*To George*

“Dear George – I love you and miss you a lot and can’t wait to see you . I’ll be home soon. Love, your girlfriend Marie.”

SGT Mark J. Perez

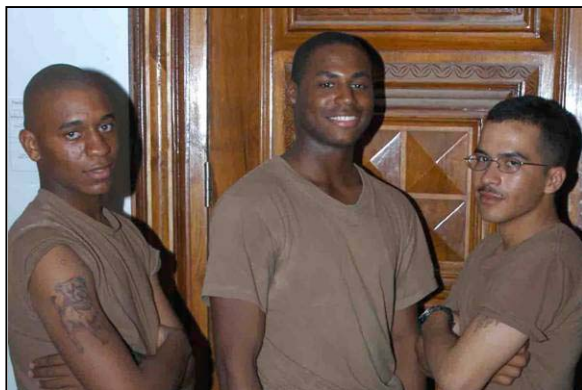
*To Carla, R.J. and Diego Perez*

“Hi, babe – how are you? I’m fine. Miss you all and think of you always. Can’t wait to get home. Love you and miss you alot.”





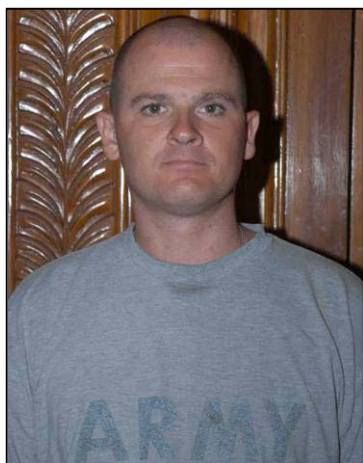
## Soldiers' Voices – 401<sup>st</sup> MP Company



PFC Ronald Glass (left)  
*To my family*  
 “Hi.”

SPC Merrill Lance (middle)  
*To all my family*  
 “I love you. See you soon.”

PV2 Andres Perez (right)  
*To Margo...*  
 “Love you and see you soon.”  
*...and my family*  
 “I love you all.  
 - your son and brother Andres.”



SFC Derek Smith

*To Vanessa, Tyler and Austin*

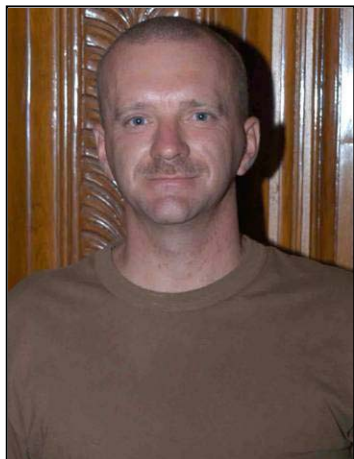
“I think of you always – miss you and love you. Boys, be good for your mother.”

SPC Kellie Venable

*To Mable Rose*

“Dear Mable Rose – I love you and miss you. I will see you soon.  
 - Love, Momma”



**Soldiers' Voices – 401<sup>st</sup> MP Company**

SPC Roy Ward

*To Lamanda Ward*

“Happy Anniversary!”