

Guardsmen go to work in Wiesbaden

New York engineers build on training opportunity

By David Ruderman
104th Area Support Group Public Affairs Office

Spending two weeks in Germany last month was anything but a summer vacation for 18 National Guard soldiers from upstate New York. Working in and around Wiesbaden, the soldiers of Company A and Company B, 204th Engineer Battalion, built a pavilion on Wiesbaden Army Airfield and upgraded Military Working Dog facilities on Mainz-Kastel Storage Station before returning to the United States July 26.

“We’ve got a group construction program,” said engineering technician Klaus Herbst of the 221st Base Support Battalion Directorate of Public Works, which organized the 204th’s stay in the community.

“We had our own estimators going out doing estimates about what materials they needed. It’s perfect. We told them what needed to be done and they were directly able to do what we wanted.”

Well, maybe not immediately. It took a few days to surmount a small number of logistical glitches before the engineers could put their skills to work. “I was told that when they came they would have tools, USAREUR drivers licenses and housing ready,” said Herbst, but that wasn’t the case. Jumping on the situation the 221st BSB squared the engineers away, organizing transportation, tools and billets in Hainerberg Housing.

“You’ve got to be able to roll with the flow,” said Sgt. Russ Hall of Company B, 204th, as he hoisted wooden joists for the pavilion being built behind Building 01543 on Wiesbaden Army Airfield.

“We didn’t have tools so they supplied us with the tools,” said Sgt. Harold Brainard



Photo by Karl Weisel

New York National Guardsmen construct a new pavilion on Wiesbaden Army Airfield.

of Company A.

“They’re doing good work. The labor is for free. You only have to get the materials,” said Herbst.

“These guys have been a big benefit to the community,” said Maj. James M. Beatty, troop construction program officer for the 412th Engineer Command (Forward). “I work to bring reservists and National Guard soldiers over from the States. It’s a good training opportunity for them, a chance to do hands-on construction overseas, plus it challenges them to do other things to prepare for mobilization and deployment which ensures that they are ready when called. Providing training is what it’s all about.”

For many of the soldiers, who are headquartered in Walton, N.Y., the annual two-week training was a first time in Europe.

“It’s been a nice experience to get to come over here and work as a team,” said Hall, who works as a contractor mechanic at an Army facility in Binghamton, N.Y. “You get to brush up some skills that you haven’t used in a

while.” The upsides of the deployment included exercising teamwork and seeing a project through to completion, he said.

“I’m not a carpenter, I’m a mechanic,” said Pfc. Randelle McUmbler, a college student from Downsville, N.Y., as she helped hoist joints of wood for the pavilion. “I expected there would be more people. I didn’t expect to be the only girl in the group, but it’s all right. I get along. Some of these guys, three of them, I went to high school with,” she said.

“It’s lovely. Coming to Germany turned my whole mind around about Europe,” said Spc. Larry Fisher, an apprentice electrician from Rome, N.Y., who worked on the pavilion. “It’s a beautiful country, the architecture and all. The guys don’t really talk, but the women are friendly.”

“I came over last year in a tanker unit. After 20 years of doing combat related stuff I thought I’d do something more trade oriented,” said Spc. John Dertinger of Roscoe, N.Y., as he worked a power saw at the MWD facility. Coming to Wiesbaden was also something of a homecoming for Dertinger, who

was born there when his father was assigned to the Air Force in the 1960s. “I still have family here. My aunt lives in Frankfurt, and my other aunt lives in Wiesbaden. It’s the first time I’ve been back in 40 years,” he said.

As one crew labored on the pavilion on the airfield another on Mainz-Kastel built structures for the MWD kennel and training facility. Constructing a set of stairs for dogs to train on, the engineers built two sets of large steps that looked like the stairway to a gallows or chopping block. Was that for Osama bin Laden?

“We could guillotine him,” said Sgt. Robert VanDerwerker from Richmondville, N.Y. The joke had its roots in some real life experience for the 204th Guardsmen — many of whom were mobilized to New York City immediately after the 9-11 attacks on the World Trade Center, and have been on the front line of the global war against terrorism since it started.

“Grant you, we were only there for security, but we were one of the very first,” said VanDerwerker. “We were there two or three days after it went down. Nine o’clock in the morning it happened — by 2 o’clock at work I got called to pack my bags.”

“Within six hours after it happened (we moved out),” said Spc. Thomas Miller. “The next day we were on our way down to Camp Smith [near West Point, N.Y.]. “I was right down at Ground Zero, helping the New York Police Department guarding subways and stuff. I remember looking at it from across the street and thinking to myself, ‘Man, did they do a good job bringing it down.’ It was a sight that I will take to my grave. Pictures that you see on television don’t do it justice.”

VanDerwerker said he enjoyed working as part of a team to bring the project to completion with a group of multitalented soldiers. “It’s just a pleasure, the things you can do with the guys that are here.” A Wiesbaden Military Police soldier drew the plans for the training stairs, he said. “Thank God he had what we needed. The plans we came with from home station were no good. We had to throw them out and start from scratch. Logistics are a little tough to come by, compared to what we’re used to back home, but we make do and it’ll be fine when we leave — mission accomplished.”

The engineers worked hard, but had a chance for a little sightseeing over the intervening weekend of their two-week stint. Hall took a cruise on the Rhein River and saw the castles and vineyards. “It’s been enlightening being in Europe,” he said.

“I think all I saw was the beer garden,” said McUmbler.

“I went to Wiesbaden and got bombed — and met some German chicks,” said Fisher.

“Me and one of the guys went on a boat ride up the Rhein River,” said VanDerwerker. “That was a nice ride. Ten or 12 of us went there. It was good to see a little more of Germany.”

How did they feel about the prospect of going home? “I’m kind of looking forward to it. If we had to stay longer I’d do it. It’s been a pretty good trip,” said VanDerwerker.



Photo by Karl Weisel

Spc. John Dertinger works on a new Military Working Dog training area at Mainz-Kastel.

221st BSB – Wiesbaden, Wackernheim, Dexheim

Cecilie Rivera (from left), Stephanie Fernandez and Catherine Martinez work on stick puppets and other projects during summer camp.



Wiesbaden youths enjoy arts and crafts, sports, trips and more



A parachute provides hours of entertainment for summer camp participants at the new Hainerberg School-Age Services center. Activities range from games to regular trips.

Oodles of fun at summer camp

Story and photos by Karl Weisel
104th Area Support Group Public Affairs Office

Visit the new School-Age Services center in Wiesbaden's Hainerberg Housing and you will be overwhelmed by the wide range of activities in progress throughout the expanded facility. With summer camp in full swing, children are enjoying activities ranging from arts and crafts to trips, water sports to a host of games and outdoor adventures.

With a larger first- through fifth-grade population than older students, the SAS and Teen Center recently swapped locations in Hainerberg Housing providing the younger children with more room, which is especially appreciated during the summer.

"It's a huge improvement — much more space," said Kenyon Spence, a Wiesbaden School-Age Services program assistant.

Having more space and a host of activities to keep youths entertained and occupied is vitally important — particularly while many parents are deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, he said. "It's an important service to the community. Parents have to work, and they know this is a safe place where their kids can come."

Parents are invited to join their children at the SAS on Fridays to gain a better insight into activities at the center during Camp Adventure and to talk about their concerns. "We usually have a lot of small talk, but some people are a little more open. In this job in

particular, people should talk a lot more," said Spence, describing how children sometimes feel more comfortable discussing problems and issues of concern with SAS members than their family, when a family is separated by the deployment of one or more parents. "Here the kids' personalities are free to come out."

"The children have more space and they now really have the opportunity to socialize, play games and have more team building," said Betty Huebner, Wiesbaden SAS director.

"Our children have a lot of aggression right now because one or both parents are deployed," she said. "You can tell when a child is sad because he's missing Mom or

Dad." The SAS staff and summer camp interns make it their job to take the youngsters' minds off any family concerns they may have, she added. "We've also done programs to keep the children in touch with their parents such as making T-shirts and bracelets to send to their parents in Iraq. It gives them that release."

The SAS entrance hall is decorated with messages and drawings by the participants for their deployed parents.

University interns augment the SAS staff in providing a well-rounded summer camp curriculum, said Amy Cuebas, SAS training and programming specialist. "They come with their own program and standards, but it's designed by the Army," she said. The students get experience and college credit for their work at the Wiesbaden center. Students from Northern Iowa and Oregon universities are serving at the Wiesbaden facility this summer.

Cuebas added that the regular SAS staff is also consistently encouraged to seek greater challenges and education. "We have a good incentive," she said. "We increase their salary as they complete the training modules."

The 90-150 Wiesbaden youths taking part in Camp Adventure on any given day say they enjoy the many different activities featured throughout the summer. "It's kind of fun, if you don't get into trouble," said Catherine Martinez, as she worked on an arts-and-crafts project with her friends Cecilie Rivera and Stephanie Fernandez. "The free field trips are the best thing about it."

"We love lunch," added Fernandez.

Students get a chance to help out in the kitchen and serving line. "It's a great thing — an opportunity for them to play a role," said Spence.

"We also made a movie about the news and I did the weather," said Rivera.

The Hainerberg SAS is open from 5:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information about Youth Services and SAS programs in Wiesbaden and Dexheim call or stop by your local facility.



Starr Jones (center) and fellow summer camp participants serve lunch to Amber Norris (front of line) and other diners at the Hainerberg SAS.

Engineer sees Iraq from 9-11 perspective

Wiesbaden civilian from New York proud to have played a role in war effort

By Grant Sattler
Europe District Public Affairs Office

Duty in Iraq brought back memories of the events of Sept. 11, 2001, for one Wiesbaden-based Army civilian in Iraq.

Working as an architect deployed with a Forward Engineer Support Team from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Europe District, Fernando Bautista spent four months in Iraq helping plan 17 airfields, including Balad Airfield where V Corps Rear is now located. The long-time New Yorker helped assess all of the airfield's buildings for safety and usefulness, and generated floor plans for existing buildings.

It's not just the contribution of his team to the war effort that makes Bautista proud, he said. It is the sense that he has in his way helped strike back for the terrible attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, particularly the attack on the World Trade Center.

"I'm a New Yorker, and I feel great about it," he said.

Like most New Yorkers, Bautista

is still coping with memories of the events of Sept. 11, 2001. A building designer for seven years with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New York District, Bautista was one of a group of architects and engineers working feverishly on final deadline for a complicated facility design that day.

"We were working around the clock, by the second, because the fiscal year was coming to a close," Bautista said of his group working on the 20th floor of 26 Federal Plaza. They heard a big bang and felt a shake, but members of the architectural section kept working. They were completely intent on the task

at hand. The section lead was miffed and hung up the phone on what he thought was a minor incident when a friend called with news that the Twin Towers seven blocks away had been struck by an airplane.

The friend called again, and as the realization that the interruption was of real importance dawned, the section lead asked Bautista to go to the other side of the building and see what was happening.



Fernando Bautista, an architect with a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Forward Engineer Support Team, assesses structures on Balad Airfield. Balad was abandoned after the Gulf War and many structures damaged by bombing or neglect needed to be razed or repaired.

"I could see the upper floors of the North Tower, and the gaping hole between the 80th and 100th floors," Bautista said. He reported what he'd seen, was handed the chief architect's personal camera and headed outside into a surreal scene. He headed toward the Twin Towers and snapped a few photos as emergency vehicles sped by. "We are used to a rush hour, but this was 100 times worse; it was crazy."

Bautista would not learn until days later that one of the fire trucks carried the fiancée of a niece of his to what would be his last emergency response. Christopher Santora would perish as a hero with the first fire fighters to enter the North Tower.

Out of film Bautista returned to 26 Federal Plaza to find it already

evacuated, and his identification, wallet and keys locked in the office. He found himself compelled to return to the Twin Towers and had approached to within two blocks when the South Tower was struck.

"We were just standing still, watching the development of this catastrophe," he said. Then the first of the towers collapsed. "Then came a very tall, thick cloud trying to find a way out through the streets at a roller coaster speed," Bautista said. Realizing he should run for his life, he turned. "I saw everybody going uptown — three, maybe four thousand people going the same direction." In his flight he tripped and was trampled, severely injuring an ankle.

After a painful half-day hike out of Manhattan and across the Williamsburg Bridge to his home in

Astoria, Queens, he found his spare keys in the garage, sought medical aid and lived off of his collection of pocket change until the city began to function two weeks later.

The Corps' New York District worked out of an alternate location for a time and then returned to 26 Federal Plaza. Life slowly returned to the way things had been before. "But things were different," Bautista said.

He became restless for a change and after a year elected to take a position with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Wiesbaden where he had served twice before on temporary duty assignments.

"I was in the American Arms on Jan. 13, 2003, and two months later got into an apartment," he said.

It was then that he read an email soliciting volunteers to participate in the District's Field Force Engineering program.

"I said 'wow, this is the best way for me to revenge these guys,'" he said. "I said to the chief architect, 'Even if I have to wipe the floors, will you let me go?'"

Two days later Bautista was selected to join a Forward Engineer Support Team. His household goods were delivered March 16, and the next day he and a team of five were deployed to Kuwait, arriving at Doha March 20, just as combat began.

"I really experienced being a part of the greatest Army in the world," Bautista said. "We were supporting our troops. And now I also feel I accomplished something personal doing something for the Army."

Although he did not directly take up arms in the fight against terrorists and those who support them, Bautista said he feels he contributed with his laptop computer and dedicated labor.

"It has been one of the greatest things I have done in my professional life," Bautista said. "I am an American. I am a New Yorker. I had to do something."

221st BSB –Wiesbaden, Wackernheim, Dexheim

Community news notes ... Community news notes

BK gas station

The BP station in Bad Kreuznach on Bosenheimer Landstrasse which accepted Army and Air Exchange Service gas coupons has closed. AAFES customers in Bad Kreuznach can now fill up their tanks at the Aral station on the same street and use AAFES coupons. (Courtesy of Ruth Wagner, AAFES-Europe)

National Night Out Aug. 5

The 221st Base Support Battalion hosts its second annual Safe Neighborhood Awareness Program National Night Out Aug. 5. This year's theme is "Stop Juvenile Delinquency." The event will kick off with fun and games, music, food and drinks at Wiesbaden's Hainerberg Shopping Center. To take part in the events register with the community volunteer coordinator at Army Community Service in Hainerberg Housing or with the SNAP coordinator in Building 1023W, Room 4 (basement), on Wiesbaden Army Airfield. Help prevent crime and juvenile delinquency in your neighborhood. Call mil 337-6209 for more information.

Used clothing sale

Wiesbaden Area Teachers of Children at Home will host a used curriculum and children's used clothing sale Sept. 16 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. The event will be held at the Army Community Service Cafeteria in Hainerberg Housing. Call Kellie Coombs at civ (0611) 238 4722 for more information.

Kontakt fun

Join the Kontakt German-American friendship club for its dining out evening at the Casa Europa in Mainz-Kastel Aug. 15. Or consider making new friends with Kontakt at the Miniature Golf Tournament Aug. 17 at 2 p.m. at the miniature golf course at Strassenmühle in Wiesbaden-Dotzheim. Deadline to sign up for either event is Aug. 6. Call Evelyn Zierer at civ (0160) 655 5976.

Educators needed

Central Texas College seeks instructors to teach courses in criminal justice and early childhood development. The University of Phoenix, which will be offering master of education and master of business administration graduate degree programs, seeks teaching staff. Minimum requirements are a masters or Ph.D. in these fields of study and at least five years experience. Call the Wiesbaden Education Center at mil 337-5559 or 7435 for details.



ACAP update

The Army Career and Alumni Program offers Pre-separation Briefings and Job Assistance Workshops Aug. 5-6 and Sept. 2-3 in Wiesbaden. Call mil 337-5709 or civ (0611) 705-5709 for details. A Veterans Affairs Benefits Briefing will be held Aug. 28 in Wiesbaden from 9-11 a.m. Call mil 337-9332 for more information.

PWOC events

Protestant Women of the Chapel hold a Dog Days of Summer

Potluck Brunch Aug. 7 and Chapel in the Park Aug. 14 at the Hainerberg Chapel from 10-11:30 a.m. Reserve child care through Aug. 7. Call mil 337-1570.

Force protection training

The 221st Base Support Battalion Force Protection Office and 66th Military Intelligence Brigade will conduct Antiterrorism, Force Protection Awareness and Subversion And Espionage Directed against the Army briefings Aug. 6, 13 and 20 from 2-3p.m. at the Taunus Theater at Wiesbaden's

Hainerberg Shopping Center. All soldiers, Department of Defense civilians and local national employees are required to attend the training once a year. Family members age 16 and older are highly encouraged to attend. Participants should coordinate with their chain of command to select a date. For more information call civ (0611) 705-6462.

Ford Summer Jam Aug. 16

The Wiesbaden Army Airfield will be the site of free summer event including volleyball, monsterball, basketball, children's games, best-

dressed pet contest, yoga, bike safety checks, a rock-climbing wall, live band, giveaways, a dunking booth, food vendors and more Aug. 16 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Just Single Parents

Join the Single Parent Support Group to meet friends, share ideas and provide support to other single parents every first and third Wednesday of the month from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Dexheim Army Community Service. A free lunch is provided. Call mil 334-5716 to let them know you are coming.

Community cares about single soldiers

Local merchants ship basic necessities downrange

By Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

222nd Base Support Battalion
Public Affairs Office

Yes the soldiers are gone, Baumholder is empty and if it weren't for all the road graders, back hoes, dump trucks, steam rollers and other assorted construction equipment belonging to contract firms renovating Baumholder from top to bottom, the installation would echo like a ghost town in an empty canyon.

The absence of soldiers also means an absence of cash flowing into the local community, and merchants are feeling the pinch from a lack of American clientele.

Businessmen and women are reporting a decrease in sales of approximately 70 percent since the U.S. soldiers were deployed to Iraq, according to information appearing in a local German newspaper.

But these same merchants are displaying some of the strongest support for the deployed soldiers. Sigrid Zimmer, for example, owner of the BerghofHotel, together with Nathalie Carrillo and Tina Olsen, military family members, have started an initiative which Zimmer hopes will be emulated by other merchants in the city of Baumholder and surrounding communities.

The three are sending care packages to single soldiers stationed in Iraq which include the bare necessities. Snacks, cosmetics, socks, postcards, books, batteries and even toilet paper are included in the pack-

ages.

"All of this is missed by them," said Zimmer, explaining that packages are earmarked specifically for single soldiers because "many of them haven't received a letter or package within the last two months."

Olsen's husband, Sgt. Maj. Brian J. Olsen, a member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, who is currently sta-

tioned in Iraq, informed his wife of this unfortunate dilemma. Olsen passed this on to Zimmer and it inspired her to begin her initiative.

Naturally the first packages went to the single soldiers of HHC, 2-6th Infantry.

Zimmer said she hopes the initiative does not die out. "I hope that other businesses will take care of other units," said the businesswoman. She has already confirmed the Sunshine-Grill as the next business which would like to help. Pro Baumholder, an organization of local merchants, was also approached with this proposal.

The program has picked up momentum. Donations have started coming in and Carrillo has volunteered to be the "donations coordinator" for the Baumholder military community. The initial shipment of donations was collected, sorted and packaged at the BerghofHotel. The packages were carefully inspected to ensure that unauthorized items were not included. Now that Baumholder has a volunteer to coordinate all donations, a collection point has been established at the Wetzel Family Readiness Group building.

Donations are coming in from

merchants and private citizens alike. Wolfraw Lief-Hotz, for example, manager of the E-Nahe Center in Birkenfeld, has stepped forward and donated an entire pallet of toilet paper. Winfried Hassdenteufel, owner of Hassdenteufel Photo in Baumholder, initially wanted to make this donation. Since Hassdenteufel has a satellite outlet at the E-Nahe Center, he approached Lief-Hotz and requested to purchase an entire pallet of toilet paper. Curious about the peculiar request, Lief-Hotz asked Hassdenteufel why he needed so much toilet paper. When Hassdenteufel explained the reason, Lief-Hotz told Hassdenteufel to keep his money because he would make the donation. You could say the toilet paper changed hands before it reached its final destination.

On a smaller scale, 80-year-old Irmgard Wahl from Heimbach was so moved by what was printed in the German media about this program that she decided to prepare a couple of packages herself. Carrillo personally drove out to the generous woman's home to collect the packages.

Other merchants and individuals who have already contributed packages and items to be included in the packages are: Tropical Heat, M. Werle Taxi No. 86/53, Getränkequelle Fritsch, N. Abbas, Westrich Apotheke, Quelle Shop, Pro Baumholder and Hassdenteufel Photo store. In all about 188 packages have been sent and more are on their way.

Businesses and people who are interested in participating may contact Zimmer at civ (06783) 1011.



Photo by Bernd "Bernie" Mai

Sigrid Zimmer (left to right), Tina Olsen and Nathalie Carrillo sort donated items and prepare packages to send to single soldiers stationed in Iraq.

Civilians lauded for dedication to command

Commander recognizes outstanding support

"Your faithfulness, loyalty and professional work performance deserve my full respect and appreciation," said Lt. Col. Todd A. Buchs, 222nd Base Support Battalion commander, during a recent personnel assembly which doubled as a length of service ceremony.

Before Buchs honored the employees who were present to celebrate their length of service anniversaries he brought the gathered work force up to date about construction projects completed within the past months and pointed out current and planned projects for Baumholder.

A presentation on the screen of the Wagon Wheel Theater, where the assembly was held, titled "Baumholder 2010," depicted completed construction such as the barracks renovation, for which about \$163 million were invested in the past years, and the modernization of the driving range

at the golf course. The renovation of a School-Age Services building and the renewal of the streets in Wetzel Housing were also addressed.

Ongoing construction measures such as the renovation and modernization of the railhead, which is estimated at \$2.5 million, the new main gate and motor pool for the 1st Armored Division Artillery as well as the renewal of the kindergarten were also pointed out by Buchs.

Buchs also pointed out that the military community has received the green light for the construction of a new bowling center, a project which will also cost several million dollars.

Buchs then commented about the future of Baumholder. "The decisions about the future of the U.S. military installations in Germany will be made at higher levels. The pending and already approved construction measures are indicators which give me hope that the U.S. installation in Baumholder will remain," he said.

Buchs then turned to honoring the employees for their length of service by saying, "Your dedicated service and individual accomplishments have contributed immeasurably to mission success within the Baumholder community." The award recipients were called on stage and received their certificates from Buchs.

Willi Boehmer and Heinz Kirsch were honored for the greatest longevity of service, having recently completed 40 years of employment with the U.S. military.

Length of service

Other employees honored for their service to the U.S. military are:

35 years: Dieter Bohrer, Werner Braun, Otto Christmann, Hans-Jürgen Dreher, Melitta Kariégus, Walter Zang, Roy Pizarro.

30 years: Dorothea Brandstetter, Hans-Peter Cullmann, Hans-Dieter Hiebel, Peter Kronenberger, Alois Peitz, Norbert Poes, Wolfgang Scherer, Günther Schramm, Karin Wild.

25 years: Thomas Becker, Hans Peter Colesie, Heinz Daniels, Manfred Eisenhut, Klaus Frankfurter, Emil Ginkel, Karl Hübner, Gerhard Huwer, Hans Otto Kunz, Jürgen Landgraf, Bernhard Mensch, Hand Dieter Moosmann, Manfred Nickel, Ursel Purkhiser, Charles Quick, Hans Walter Steffen, Thomas Stephani, Norbert Stuber, Karl-Heinz Trein, Susanne Umlauf, Peter Wagner, Benno Wahl, Roland Weingart.

20 years: Robert Baumgardt, Petra Becker, Dieter Bock, Michael Braun, Nikolaus Braun, Udo Bussmann, Eugene Cluch, Benjamin Estela, Kurt Heinrich, Klaus Heyd, William Johnson, Klaus Küntzer, Michael Kurz, Judith Lang, Marshall Milner, Andrea Parker, Peter Pohlmann, Lothar Pontius, Harry Quint, Gabriele Reedy, Ernst Ruth, Arnold Scheit, Eckhard Schneider, Thomas Schneider, Gerd Schwarz, Karla Schwenk, Nathaniel Watson, Michael Zimmermann, Claudia Weber, Erwin Schug, Wolfgang Veek.

Female soldier fills infantryman's role

Searches Iraqi women in response to Muslim cultural sensitivities

By Spc. Ryan Smith

372nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

The debate has gone on for years: should women serve with combat units in the military?

If the question asks whether female soldiers are up to the challenge and rigor of infantry duties, one woman serving in Iraq would answer with a definite "Yes."

Spc. Melissa Kranning, a petroleum supply specialist attached to Company A, 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, is serving in what is regularly an all-male combat unit. Although not assigned to the infantry unit, she and two other women soldiers are attached to the unit for duty in Baghdad.

Women soldiers serving with infantry units have become a necessity because of religious and cultural beliefs in Iraq. Soldiers serving as gate guards must search female civilians coming through the gate to ensure that someone does not smuggle a weapon or explosive device onto the compound.

While on patrol women soldiers search female crime suspects. The people who Kranning most frequently searches are Muslim women who do not wish to be touched by men they do not know.

Kranning, age 20, from Minerva, Ohio, deployed to Iraq

with her unit, the 47th Forward Support Battalion, a 1st Armored Division unit out of Baumholder. When offered the opportunity, she volunteered to be attached to 2-6th Infantry.

Kranning's home unit is assigned to the Baghdad International Airport. Many of the 47th FSB's missions do not require the soldiers to leave the installation.

"I get to go out and see the city," said Kranning. "That's something a lot of people in my unit don't get to do."

Kranning also found that life with an infantry unit is much different from what she is used to.

'Totally different world'

"It's a totally different world. They have a different way of thinking. They have a 'go out and get them' kind of attitude," she said.

As far as duties are concerned, Kranning does not see a distinction between herself and the other soldiers in Company A.

Her job is to search women for weapons coming through the gate while she's on duty there and to prevent or stop any crime while on patrol. If women are suspected of a crime, Kranning searches them.

"She's a hard worker," said Staff Sgt. Julio Fortis, Kranning's squad leader. "She sticks with us in the extreme heat and on long road marches while we're on patrol. She doesn't fall out."

"The way she works, there should be females in the infantry," Fortis said.



Photo by Spc. Ryan Smith
Spc. Melissa Kranning mans a checkpoint in Baghdad, Iraq.

Building Iraqi self-reliance in Salhiyah

By Spc. Ryan Smith

372nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Community representatives and 1st Armored Division soldiers met together for dinner and discussed important community issues in Baghdad recently.

Members of a neighborhood advisory council from the Salhiyah neighborhood in Baghdad met with soldiers from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, to discuss a variety of issues, including security and repairs to municipal services such as

electricity, said Capt. Scott C. Nauman, Company A commander.

The meeting was the second between the neighborhood advisory council and the company. During the first, Nauman said, the community representatives identified problems within Salhiyah, the neighborhood for which the unit is responsible.

Lack of electricity, water, sewage and trash removal are the top problems, he said.

The intent of the meetings, however, is not only to identify the problems, but also to

look for solutions.

Nauman's goal is for the community leaders to be able to take responsibility for solving their own problems within the neighborhood.

It's not always an easy process. One of the suggestions made by a member of the council was to have the Office of Coalition Provisional Authority purchase a separate generator for everyone in Baghdad, a city of five million people.

The meetings produce results, Nauman

said. Security in the neighborhood has gotten considerably better and illegal gasoline sales and traffic problems typical throughout Baghdad have been reduced in Salhiyah.

The Company A soldiers are continually working with Salhiyah's residents to improve the community.

Though there are many problems to be solved, Nauman said he views each improvement as a success.

"You eat an elephant one bite at a time," he said.

Post notes

CYS activities this month

Baumholder Child and Youth Services travels to Holiday Park Aug. 30 with youths in sixth- through 12th-grade. Sign up by Aug. 22. Cost is \$30. Be sure to bring additional spending money. Call mil 485-7276 for details. A variety of swimming instruction classes are being offered including synchronized swimming, water polo, stroke improvement and water safety. The cost is \$45 for eight classes. Classes meet Wednesdays and Fridays at the Baumholder indoor swimming pool. Dance classes are available for children ages 3-8 for \$30 per month. Swimming lessons are also held for infants to 18 years and cost \$45 for eight sessions.

Chinese goju karate

Learn Chinese goju karate from sixth-degree black belt master instructor Thomas Felder. Classes meet Tuesday and Wednesday from 6-7 p.m. at the Baumholder American High School and on Monday and Thursday from 6-7 p.m. at the Neubrücke Gym. Adult lessons are also available. Call mil 485-7003 for details.

Pizza, pool at Rudy's

Rudy's pool tournaments get under way at 8 p.m. on the

first and last Wednesday of every month. Prizes will be awarded. The club prepares American-style pizza with thick crust from dough made fresh daily. Area delivery is available. Call mil 485-8602 for details.

Happening on area links

A Junior Putting Tournament, free and open to golfers ages 7-17, will take place at the Rolling Hills Golf Course in Baumholder Aug. 8 from 5-7 p.m. The 2003 Club Championship will be held Aug. 16-17 starting at 9 a.m. This is a stroke-play tournament. The overall low gross score determines the champion. The entry fee is \$40 and includes food and prizes. Nonmembers pay greens fees. To participate sign up by Aug. 13. Golfers can try to beat the golf pro during a Labor Day weekend extravaganza Aug. 30 at 9 a.m. Players receive a 100 percent handicap in the stroke-play game. Entry fee is \$25. Nonmembers pay a greens fee. Sign up by Aug. 28. Call mil 485-7299 for details.



NAF positions available

The 104th Area Support Group Nonappropriated Fund Contracting Office continuously hires instructors and concessionaires in the Baumholder area. Teach dance, music and voice, martial arts, crafts, aerobics or personal training.

Concessionaires deliver massage, card and comic, food and beverage, Imbiss, fest and other services. Forward resumes via email to robert.fornal@104.mwr.army.mil or by mail to 104th ASG Contracting, Aschaffener Strasse, Pioneer Kaserne Building 5, Room 408, 63457 Hanau.

Tuition assistance available

Army Tuition Assistance can pay up to 100 percent of tuition expenses for soldiers. There is an annual fiscal year cap of \$4,500 and a per semester hour cap of \$250. Call the Education Center at mil 485-8891 for information.

YS coaches sought

Baumholder Youth Services needs coaches for all ages and sports. The perks are free training, certification and discounts for coaches with children in the program. Contact Baumholder Central Enrollment Registry in Building 8743 on Smith Barracks or civ (06783) 6-7003, mil 485-7003 for details.

Auto skills classes

The Baumholder Auto Skills Center offers the following classes:

- Aug. 8 — Learn to Fix It, 5-6 pm.
 - Aug. 14 — Auto Detailing for Winter, 4-5 p.m.
 - Aug. 22 — Auto Safety Checks, 5:30-6:30 p.m.
- Call in advance to reserve a place in the class.

Youths catch big league training session

Learn ins, outs of national pastime from MLB envoy

By Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava
222nd Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

Baumholder youths whose sights are set on someday making it to the big leagues recently had a taste of being coached by an envoy from Major League Baseball.

Some 60 children age 6-18 received coaching in baseball basics from Eric Barron, a four-year college baseball veteran from California State University at Hayward. He's also an assistant coach there who is currently assigned to the baseball club in Saarlouis.

The Envoy Program is one of a number of development programs operated by Major League Baseball that focuses on promoting the game of baseball around the world. Introduced in 1991 the Envoy Program has sent professional baseball coaches to more than 50 countries. The program's main goal is to develop the playing of baseball in countries throughout the world.

First in USAREUR

The Envoy Program is fairly new to military youth. "This is the first year that I know that something like this has been conducted," said Seven A. Ferguson, Youth Services director. "It was offered to locations throughout USAREUR and we snapped it up for our youth right away," he said.

To bring this program to military youth, James Pierce, director of international market development for Major League Baseball, worked with Installation Management Agency officials who passed the offer down

to individual installations. Military youth programs also took place at Landstuhl, Schweinfurt, Stuttgart and Vilseck.

The Envoy Program at Baumholder was held July 14-15 at Iron Soldier Field. Barron and the Youth Services staff taught basic and some advanced techniques of the game.

Barron focused on teaching the youths the basics of pitching, fielding, throwing, position responsibilities, batting, bunting, base running, proper fit of equipment, breaking-in a new glove and offensive and defensive strategies. There was also time for questions and answers. Players were split up in groups

age 6-12 and 13-18 years old so that youth would reap as much benefit from Barron's coaching as possible.

Afterward the youths, hot, tired and dusty, insisted that Barron autograph baseballs, gloves and whatever other items they could lay their hands on.



Photo by Ignacio "Iggy" Rubalcava

Eric Barron, a Major League Baseball envoy, explains the next drill to a group of teens during one of the training sessions he conducted for Baumholder youths.

Exceptional Family Member myths dispelled

Commentary by Robert C. Sheely
Exceptional Family Member Program

The child was the best student in his class; the man looked like a pro athlete; and the woman was active in many community activities. To the casual observer these individuals lived the lives that many of us admired and envied.

These individuals all had one thing in common; they had special needs that required enrollment in the Exceptional Family Member Program. The child had asthma, the man a chronic orthopedic disorder and the woman was recovering from cancer treatment.

These are but examples of certain conditions that fall under the criteria for an exceptional family member. These individuals lived their lives despite their special needs, not because of them.

Many people feel that enrollment in the EFMP is detrimental to a military career, social status or have feelings of guilt or low self-worth because of a special need.

On the contrary, enrollment ensures that the next duty assignment can support the medical and educational needs of family members.

The military takes great care in the assignment process to match service members with the necessary facilities to care for their families.

Mission comes first

This is not a guarantee that the service member will never have an assignment that would not be able to support the family; the needs of the Army must be a priority.

As for physical disabilities, some of our greatest leaders

suffered from them — Franklin Roosevelt, polio, John F. Kennedy, chronic back pain resulting from military injuries.

These individuals lived their lives despite their disabilities and were not limited by them.

There is no stigma associated with EFMP enrollment. In the Baumholder community we have more than 700 diagnoses that meet the criteria for EFMP; that is more than eight percent of the family member population.

This does not include the number of individuals who have not enrolled for whatever reason. As a military community we should set the example of being tolerant toward others not only in race, culture and religious affiliation, but also in regard to physical, developmental and emotional needs.

If anyone has questions or concerns call the Baumholder EFMP office at mil 485-8188 or civ (06783) 6-8188.

Job corner

CYS jobs open

The 222nd Base Support Battalion Child and Youth Services is hiring program assistants to work in Baumholder, Strassburg and Neubrücke. Entry-level pay is \$8.20 per hour and includes free training. Call mil 485-6566 or civ (06783) 6-6566 for details.

MWR Job Fair

Morale, Welfare and Recreation holds a job fair the second Wednesday of every month at the Rheinlander. Doors open from 9-10 a.m. to scope out jobs, fill out applications and conduct interviews. Call mil 485-1550 for details.

CDC assistants

The 104th Area Support Group has immediate program assistant

vacancies at all Child Development Centers. Hours can be on a flexible or regular part-time schedule. Employees receive a 20 percent discount on child care fees and free training. Opportunities for advancement exist. Submit an application to your local civilian personnel office or via email to hanaunef@chrma.hq.usareur.army.mil. For details call civ (06181) 88-1630 or mil 485-1630.

Clearing munitions in Baghdad

Story and photo by Capt. Josh N. Stephenson and 2nd Lt. Louis Rodriguez
Battery C, 1-94th Field Artillery

The soldiers of Battery C, 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery, know their way around the city of Baghdad.

Since starting its part of Operation Iron Bullet in July the battery has transported thousands of rockets, warheads, mortars and artillery shells to secure holding areas outside the city.

Battery C soldiers roll to sites within the city daily to police up dangerous ordnance from urban areas.

Once loaded the ammunition is taken to the holding areas where it is sorted, packaged and sometimes destroyed.

Soldiers have to be ready to adapt to changing situations. Sometimes initial assessments of an area can underestimate the total quantity of munitions in the neighborhood. Sometimes soldiers find new stockpiles of previously undiscovered ordnance.

Neighborhood residents, once they discover Americans are re-



Soldiers of Battery C, 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery, load a missile onto a truck for shipment. The battery has been gathering unexploded munitions throughout Baghdad during Operation Iron Bullet.

moving bombs from their children's backyards, often point out additional sites of unexploded ordnance.

Occasionally they can be too helpful. Interpreters working with the battery ask the residents to refrain from bringing unexploded

objects directly to the soldiers.

Gathering the unexploded munitions is not just a matter of going to a site and throwing the ordnance

onto a truck. In some cases the enemy has taken the opportunity to booby-trap sites in an attempt to kill U.S. soldiers as they clear the city of these dangerous tools of warfare.

Before removing any shell, rocket or mortar, the ammunition is inspected and cleared. If anything looks different, funny or out of place, Explosive Ordnance Disposal soldiers rush in to clear the site to ensure that Charlie Battery soldiers work in a relatively safe environment.

Disaster averted

On one occasion, while removing 280-mm rockets from a site, a grenade was found lodged between containers with its pin pulled — a disaster in waiting.

The plot was foiled, however, by Spc. Mark Fisher's attention to detail. He discovered the booby trap and raised the red flag. His sharp sight and quick reaction saved the lives of fellow soldiers and members of the community.

Every day is a test for the Charlie Battery soldiers, but such is life throughout the 1st Armored Division.

Education center

Central Texas returns

Central Texas College returns to Baumholder with courses including Crime in America, Curriculum Resources for Early Childhood Programs and Introduction to Automotive Technology. Call mil 485-7557 for information.

Adult Ed teachers sought

The Adult Education Program seeks teachers for its

English as a Second Language, conversational German and sign language programs. Call mil 485-8891 for details.

NCO-ER course offered

The Army's Advanced Skills Education Program offers the "Preparing the NCO-ER Course" at Baumholder Aug. 11-15. Call mil 485-7757 for more information.

Maryland semester begins

Registration for the University of Maryland's fall semester is under way. See the Maryland representatives in Build-

ing 8332 to register. An academic adviser from the University of Maryland will visit the Baumholder Army Education Center Aug. 20. To make an appointment call mil 485-6178.

German and ESL courses

Baumholder's Adult Education Program offers **Conversational German I** on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9-11 a.m. and from 6-8 p.m. Call mil 485-8891 for information.

A free **English as a Second Language** course is being offered at the Army Education Center Wednesdays and Fridays from 11:30-12:30 a.m. Call mil 485-7557 for details.

Going on around Baumholder

Astronaut visits

Community members can meet Dr. Guion Bluford Jr., the first African-American man in space, at the Sembach Air Base Youth Program Center Aug. 8 at 9:30 am.

Rugby players needed

The U.S. Forces Europe Rugby Football Union is seeking players. Those who make the grade will play for a select rugby team to be the European representative for the 2003 USA Rugby National Military Club Championship as well as other tournaments.

For information call mil 379-5121, 370-7944 or civ (06221) 57-7944 by Aug. 22.



Learn to fly

A weekend paragliding course is offered by Baumholder Outdoor Recreation. This two-day introduction course costs \$155 and includes three hours of classroom instruction, paragliding, transportation and gear. The next course dates are Aug. 30-31.

Get a 'headstart'

Headstart classes are offered again weekly from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Wednesdays at the education center.

The classes are open to family members and soldiers and offer students an opportunity to learn some of the German language and participate in a field trip to Trier.

Anyone interested in attending must register by noon on the Friday of the week before the class by calling Donna Stone at mil 485-7574.

Child care is the responsibility of the parents as it is not provided by course coordinators. Students must complete all classroom work to participate in the field trip to Trier and receive a certificate.

Transportation to the education center and lunch are also the responsibility of the student.

Outdoor Rec

The following Outdoor Recreation trips are offered in August:

Aug. 10 — **Lego Land**, \$45 adults, \$25 children

Aug. 12 — **Sea kayaking**, \$20

Aug. 15-17 — **Hiking in the Swiss Alps**, \$225-285

Aug. 23 — **Six Flags Belgium**, \$65-225

Aug. 24 — **White-water kayaking**, \$79 adults

Aug. 28 to Sept. 1, **Austrian Adventure Weekend**, \$365.