

284th BSB – Friedberg, Giessen

Bank staff reaches out to customers

By Alexandra Williams
284th Base Support Battalion
Public Affairs Office

When news of soldiers not having anyone to send them care packages while deployed to Iraq reached the staff of the Giessen Community Bank they felt prompted to initiate their own care package delivery service.

“We want every customer to be more than just a customer,” said Sue Ellis, Giessen Community Bank manager. “We want to reach out to them and give them what we call the Bank of America spirit.”

“We know of people who have nobody to turn to, and we want to show them that we are here for them,” said bank employee Angela Dotson.

The staff brings in canned food, snacks and personal hygiene items, and once a week they pack and send several care boxes to Giessen-based soldiers.

“Those care packages are being sent to soldiers we know. We randomly pick whom we send a package to. So far the units have not given us any additional names, but maybe they’ll start doing so,” she said.

Efforts make a difference

Ellis recently received proof the bank staff’s efforts make a difference in the life of a deployed soldier, she said. “One day a soldier came back to Giessen on emergency leave and stopped by the bank. Actually we had just prepared a box for him. When we told him that, he

had tears in his eyes because he was so touched. He said ‘You just don’t understand how much that means,’” Ellis said.

On another occasion Ellis, who also volunteers at a USO office, met an Air Force soldier. “He told me that he had been deployed since January of last year. First he went to Afghanistan, came back and then deployed to Iraq. I asked him, ‘What helps keep you guys going?’ and he said that it is the packages and letters the soldiers receive,” she said.

Positive effect

She also noticed the program’s effect on her staff. “They remain positive and stay strong for our customers. Though their husbands are deployed, they continue to move on. Nobody fell apart, they have a good attitude to support the community.”

Ellis said she admires the generosity of her employees. “Besides supporting the bank’s program they also send packages to their husbands and to other soldiers who need help,” she said.

“My husband tells me on the phone what his buddies need and then I send it to them,” said Alisa Kraft, whose husband Sgt. Matthew Kraft serves with 1-36th Infantry. Occasionally she also gets together with a neighbor and bakes sheets of cookies to send down-range.

“I am sending care packages to my husband and to his single friends. Usually he gives me a list of candy



Photo by Alexandra Williams

Tami Hibbs (left) and Sue Ellis of the Giessen Community Bank pack a care package to be sent to Iraq. The bank staff sends food and snacks to customers not receiving mail from anybody.

they’d like to have, and then I also send random stuff,” said Heather Manno. Her husband, Capt. Mark Manno, is assigned to 2-3rd Field Artillery, which supports two orphanages in Baghdad. “I also contribute to that project,” she said.

Tami Hibbs’ husband, Spc. Eric Hibbs of the 527th Military Police Company, has been deployed since February. “I am sending him food and snacks, and he tells me what his single friends need. I just want to help as much as I can so I am supporting the bank project as well,”

she said.

Angela Darbonne, whose husband Staff Sgt. Ryan Darbonne serves with 1st Brigade, also sends packages to her husband and donates boxes of items to the bank. “It’s my husband’s third deployment. His previous deployments were to Desert Storm and Macedonia. I know that receiving those boxes in the mail means a lot to soldiers,” she said. “But working on those projects also lifts the spirits of all spouses, not only the bank staff. There is a much better atmosphere now, and we all feel united.”

Anyone interested in supporting the bank’s program can drop off items at the bank during normal hours of operation.

“We recommend items such as beef jerky, sunflower seeds, peanuts, chewing gum, dried fruits, vitamins, Gatorade powder, personal hygiene items or pretzels,” Ellis said. Individuals who do not have access to the installation can call the bank at civ (0641) 402-7820. “We will pick up the items at the gate — that is not a problem. Items don’t have to be packed either. We will do that.”

Community spotlight

Mail call in Butzbach

Residents of Butzbach’s Roman Way Housing may now have their mail delivered to the Butzbach Outreach Center every Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday between 2-2:30 p.m. Accountable mail cannot be delivered. To arrange for mail delivery call your community mailroom no later than noon of the day you want your mail delivered. CMR 452 in Giessen can be reached at mil 343-6558 and CMR 453 in Friedberg can be reached at mil 324-2107.

Sending support downrange

Anyone interested in supporting deployed soldiers can drop off either a letter, snacks or care packages addressed to “Any Soldier” at the 284th Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office in Building 115, Room 200, on the Giessen Depot. For more information call the PAO office at mil 343-1600.



NOW workshop

Newcomers Orientation and Welcome workshops pro-

vide tools to get out and about in Germany. During the two-day workshop participants will learn details about the community and its agencies, and go on a surrounding area tour. Free child care is provided when registered in advance. The next workshop takes place Sept. 16-17 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Army Community Service in Giessen. For details call Patricia Harper at mil 343-6910.

Financial management classes

ACS hosts **Money and Credit Management** classes every second Tuesday of the month from 10 a.m. to noon in Giessen and every first Friday of a month from 10 a.m. to noon in Butzbach. **Checkbook Management** classes are held every second Wednesday of the month from 10 a.m. to noon in Giessen. For details call Zachary Bonaparte in Giessen at mil 343-8075 or Janie Smith in Friedberg at mil 324-3714.

Translator service in Butzbach

The Butzbach Outreach Center provides German translating service every Wednesday from 10-11 a.m. to help with those mind-boggling letters or calls to local vendors. For details call civ (06033) 925 329.

Multi-Cultural Support Group

The ACS in Giessen hosts a multi-cultural support group

meeting every third Thursday of the month. This workshop is designed to give support and assistance to foreign-born spouses. For more information call Patricia Harper at mil 343-6910.

Parent and Me Playtime

Parents and children up to age five can enjoy some quality time together doing crafts, playing games and having stories read to them during the weekly Parent and Me Playtime every Friday in Giessen from 10 a.m. to noon and every Wednesday in Friedberg from 10 a.m. to noon. For details call Martha Pinion in Friedberg at mil 324-3710 and Tamara Smith in Giessen at mil 343-8076.

Hearts Apart lunch

Army Community Service hosts Hearts Apart lunches in Giessen, Butzbach and Friedberg. Everyone is invited to join the group for a light lunch, conversation and information sharing. Hearts Apart will be held in Friedberg every fourth Friday of the month at 11:30 a.m., in Giessen every third Thursday of the month at 11:30 a.m. and in Butzbach every first Tuesday of the month. For more information call ACS in Giessen at mil 343-7618, in Friedberg at mil 324-3465 and in Butzbach at civ (06033) 925 329.

284th BSB – Friedberg, Giessen

Gunners keep Baghdad orphanages up and running

By Alexandra Williams

284th Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

While patrolling the streets of Baghdad is the primary mission of the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery, soldiers of the Gunner battalion have also been hard at work maintaining operations at two Iraqi orphanages.

The battalion was tasked by 1st Armored Division officials to keep the state-run al Najat orphanage, home to 28 girls and 12 boys, and the Catholic St. Hannah orphanage, home to 14 girls age 6-14, functioning and to lend a helping hand whenever needed.

“The mission is part of the 1st AD Chaplain’s Orphanage Sponsorship Program. There are five orphanages in the 1st AD, 1st Brigade Combat Team zone, and two of them are in our area of responsibility,” said Chaplain (Capt.) Doug Hoover of 2-3rd FA, who returned to the battalion’s headquarters in Giessen on emergency leave.

Know-how and fuel

An initial assessment provided the battalion with details on what kind of support was needed. “Large organizations like the Red Cross from the United Arab Emirates donated generators and buses, something those orphanages heavily rely on. But they had no fuel and oil to operate those. Neither do they have the knowledge of how to maintain the machines or how to drive the new buses,” Hoover said.

“We are now supporting them with fuel, oil and mechanics. Our battery commanders are involved not only in providing supplies, but also in keeping the orphanages functioning,” he added.

Another problem the battalion has eliminated was a garbage dump adjacent to the orphanage. “The dump was not only used by residents, but also by the hospital located beside the orphanage. The trash has not been removed in months and it was all over

the street. We found regular hospital supplies, but also body parts. It was very unsanitary and we determined to get rid of it,” Hoover said.

“We hired Iraqis to remove the trash. Our battalion could have done that, but we thought this way locals have a chance to earn some money,” he said. Funds to hire locals are made available through 1st Brigade and are part of the sponsorship program, he said.

“Now we plan to build playgrounds. The paperwork was just taken to the neighborhood advisory council for approval,” Hoover said.

The battalion also receives support for the project from the families of soldiers in Germany and the United States. “Many soldiers told their families about the orphanages and we received clothes and toys from them. Even church groups in the States sent us items. It gives them a sense of taking care and being part of our mission, and that makes them feel good,” he said. “The children who participated in this year’s summer vacation Bible study did a sock drive, and now I can take back boxes of socks. The support is really overwhelming.”

The personal interaction of the soldiers makes a big difference for the orphans, Hoover said. “The staff never take the children outside of the orphanages, I believe for safety reasons, so they are not used to seeing or interacting with male adults. Now they have a chance to talk to them. They also learn that Americans are not the bad people they maybe have learned before. That’s important for the future. Those children will become adults who know that Americans are their friends.”

Contact with the children has also become important to the soldiers. “I visit the orphanages on a regular basis, and I always make sure I take about six to eight guys out there who need a break, a morale booster. Battery commanders are also encouraged to send guys who are obviously down, de-

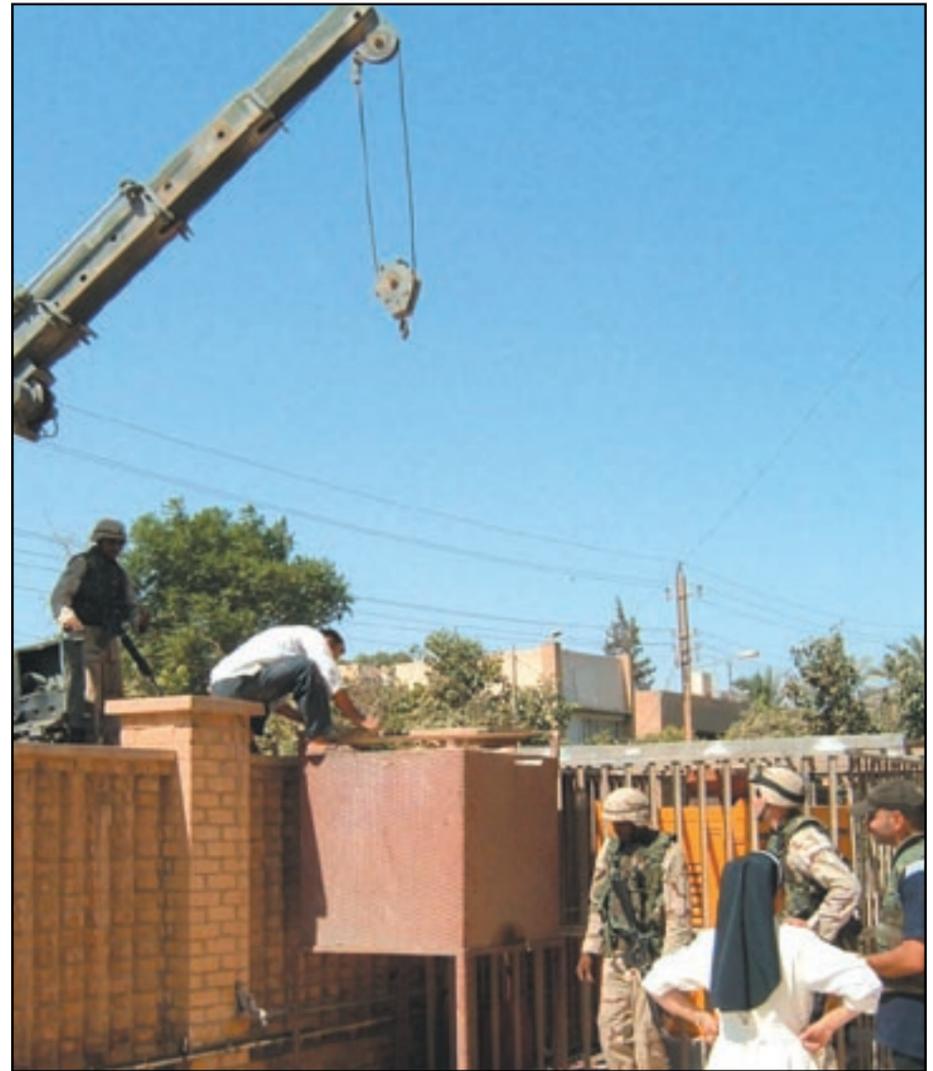


Photo by Lt. Col. William Rabena

Soldiers of the 2-3rd FA install a fuel tank at the St. Hannah orphanage for girls in Baghdad. The battalion supports two orphanages in their area of responsibility.

pressed, to the orphanages. The children will cheer them up. They sing for them and they play games together. The soldiers teach the children how to count in English. It’s a time for them to forget about patrolling and raids,” he said.

“The soldiers really love to work there. It lifts their spirits because it’s the right thing to do. They always like to come back because there they can do something that’s worth their while,” Hoover said.

Soldiers of the 2-3rd FA rear detachment said they are also impressed with the project.

“The project is great. It’s nice to see that the American Army cares so much about children who have been orphaned,” said Spc. Justin Vandenberg, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2-3 FA.

Spc. George Coleman of Service Battery agreed. “I think it’s great. The battalion and the families are helping them out, and hopefully they’ll keep the program going,” he said.

“Any religion says that one should always help widows and orphans. But we are not doing it for religious reason, but because it is the right thing to do,” Hoover said.



Photo by Lt. Col. William Rabena

Children of the St. Hannah Orphanage in Baghdad look on as one of the girls gives Chaplain (Capt.) Doug Hoover a kiss in appreciation for the support his battalion gives to the children and their home.



Photo by Chaplain (Capt.) Doug Hoover

Iraqi workers and a Gunner battalion soldier discuss maintenance issues at the Baghdad orphanages.

284th BSB – Friedberg, Giessen



German paramedics perform first aid on victims of a simulated attack with sarin gas on the Friedberg community mail room Aug. 23. Photo right: fire department staff take samples of an undetermined powder to determine its chemical composition.



Ray Barracks exercise tests force protection

Story and photos by Alexandra Williams
284th Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

An unconscious man lying outside of Friedberg's community mailroom, a woman lying on the floor of the CMR's lobby, more individuals inside the building either appearing to be dead or still twitching with cramps lying on the floor among scattered papers and vomit.

This was the scenario that awaited Military Police and German emergency service staff on the morning of Aug. 23 when they were called to an "incident" on Ray Barracks.

The scenario was part the annual weapons of mass destruction training exercise conducted by the 284th Base Support Battalion.

"We want to test the ability of military and local German emergency services. We want to see how well they work together and if they know what to do," said Tim Rothenburg, force protection officer of the 284th BSB.

"We will evaluate their actions today so we can see what needs to be improved."

About 150 emergency vehicles from the German volunteer fire department and ambulances arrived within 10-45 minutes of the initial alert. The teams came from Friedberg, but also surrounding areas such as Karben and Bad Nauheim.

"Our fire station called the Friedberg German fire station. We did not tell them whom else to call. We just want to see what happens," said Rothenburg.

To keep the exercise as realistic as possible observers watched every move of the emergency teams and looked for "fatal" mistakes.

"If somebody went inside the mailroom unprotected we marked him or her as injured because in a real situation this is what happens. That's an important part of the training," said Rothenburg.

Besides caring for the injured the teams had to find out

what chemicals were involved in the attack. "We simulated a sarin gas attack," said Rothenburg. "The teams had to take samples and try to determine the chemicals involved."

After approximately three hours the exercise was ended after the teams narrowed the possible chemicals down to three.

"I was very pleased at the successful execution of our WMD exercise. The professional support that our host nation friends brought to the exercise scenario was invaluable. It was a great expression of joint German-American emergency personnel coming together to thwart a situation that is all too possible in this day and age of uncertain threats to our communities," said John Durden, director of the 284th BSB S-2/3 office.

"We should and must continue training exercises of this nature in an effort to increase our ability to protect our personnel and facilities," he said.

Community spotlight

Case lot sale in Bad Nauheim

The Bad Nauheim Commissary hosts a Worldwide Case Lot Sale Sept. 19 and 20. For more information call Tina Lewis at mil 324-3544.

Hispanic Fiesta Sept. 20

The 284th Base Support Battalion Equal Employment Office and Equal Opportunity Office host an Hispanic Heritage celebration Sept. 20 from noon to 6 p.m. at the elementary school in Butzbach. Everybody is invited to attend. For more information call Jacqueline Young at mil 343-8422.

Outdoor Rec trips

In recognition of the Morale

Welfare Recreation Funky Chicken Month, Giessen Outdoor Recreation center hosts a trip to the **Wächtersbach ceramic factory** and chicken farm restaurant, where the chicken is served on a sword, Sept. 6. The bus departs at 7:30 a.m. and returns at 5 p.m. A trip to the **Bad Dürkheim wine fest** takes place Sept. 13. The bus leaves at 10 a.m. and returns at 10 p.m. For more information call Outdoor Rec at mil 343-8202.

Giessen crafts

The Giessen Arts and Crafts shop hosts a **Lollipop class** Sept. 16. For \$5.50 you can learn how to make your own candy. A **Cross Stitch class** is scheduled for Sept. 16 from 3-5 p.m. A **Crochet class** will be hosted Sept. 23 from 4-5 p.m. For details call mil 343-6445.

Car service specials

The Giessen Auto Skills Center offers a 10 percent discount on car detailing in September. Tune-up workshops are held Sept. 9, 13 and 23 from noon to 6 p.m. Fees are \$18. An oil change class is scheduled for Sept. 13 starting at noon. Cost is \$12. Customers must bring their own oil and filter. Preregistration is required. For details call Iosua Moli at mil 343-7050.



Job search workshop

The Army Career and Alumni Program hosts a two-day Job Search

Workshop Sept. 16-17 from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Participants learn details about the entire job search process, enabling them to apply those principles to their own careers. Spouses of transitioning soldiers are encouraged to participate. The ACAP office also hosts mandatory pre-separation counseling by appointment for all soldiers within one year of their ETS or two years of retirement. For more information call Claire Sowinski at mil 324-9332.

Fitness center update

The Giessen Miller Hall Fitness Center hosts a **10-man basketball tournament** Sept. 6-7. Cost is \$175 per team. Individual awards will go to the top two teams, and first, second and third place winner receive

team awards. A **10-mile run** and **3-kilometer Family Walk** are scheduled for Sept. 20 at the Schiffenberg Castle near Giessen. Fees for the run are \$15 including a T-shirt and \$10 without a shirt. The Family Walk is free. **Free aerobics** including spin classes and cardio kickboxing classes are offered in the Giessen and Friedberg fitness centers and Butzbach's Roman Way Housing. Call the Giessen fitness center at mil 343-7520 or the Friedberg Fitness Center at mil 324-3155 for times and type of classes.

Bulk trash pickup

The next bulk trash pickup for all housing areas in the 284th Base Support Battalion will take place Sept. 5.

Helping your child have a successful year

By Debra Hammer

284th Base Support Battalion Army
Community Service

It's that time of year again — time for backpacks, school supplies and learning. A new school year means new school clothes, new friends, learning new things and a predictable structure in a child's world.

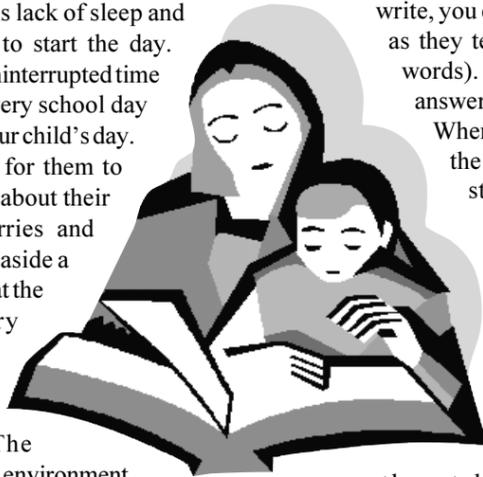
Structure is always important, but during a deployment it brings a sense of relief to many children. The relief comes from having studies to keep their growing minds stimulated as well as a built-in support system of friends going through the same rites of passage.

How to help

Parents can support their child by encouraging his or her success and minimizing any type of failures. Here are a few tips on how to help: ✎ Get to know your child's school and your child's teacher. ✎ Join your school's Parent Teacher Association. When you invest in your child's school it shows your child the importance of his or her education — for today and always. ✎ Make sure that your child has all the school supplies required. ✎ Ensure your child gets eight or more hours of sleep every night and a good break-

fast to start the day. Enough sleep is very important. Adults can function on fewer than eight hours of sleep; most children cannot, and when sleep deprived they become lethargic in class. Some children are viewed as having behavioral problems when possibly the issue is lack of sleep and or food (fuel) to start the day.

✎ Set aside an uninterrupted time at the end of every school day to hear about your child's day. It is important for them to know you care about their successes, worries and anxieties. ✎ Set aside a place and time at the end of every school day for your child to get busy on homework. The most conducive environment is one with adequate lighting, quiet, chair/table and an adult present to assist and encourage. Remember, you may be able to tune out the sounds of children having fun on the playground after school, but more than likely your child will not be able to tune



out the music of laughter and fun. Decide now how you will deal with this and avoid conflict. ✎ Ensure your spouse downrange knows about your child's education. Have your child to write a "Back To School" letter to the absent parent (if they are too young to

write, you can write this letter for them as they tell you all about it in their words). Here are some questions to answer for the deployed parent:

When does school start? Who is the child's teacher? How many students are in the class?

What do your child's new backpack or clothes look like? What is your child's favorite part of the school day? What does your child's study area look like at home? You can also take pictures of the school, classroom and study

area at home to keep the involvement of your deployed spouse active.

Check out youth activities offered in the 284th BSB

Many after school activities are offered in

the 284th Base Support Battalion to help further your child's sense of accomplishment. Contact your school, the Chaplain's Office at mil 343-1570 and CLEOS at mil 343-8216 for more information about sports, support groups and other activities.

Remember, your child's success in school depends on you. College may seem many years away, but know that today you are helping to lay a solid foundation of success for your child's future.

If you would like to learn more about how to help your child succeed in school, parenting, families coping with deployment, child development, discipline techniques or sibling rivalry contact the New Parent Education and Support Program at your local Army Community Service center.

This is a free and confidential educational and support service for service members and their families.

NPESP offers many services and programs to assist you and your children.

The staff will be happy to share this information through outreach visits and home and/or office visits.

For more information call ACS in Giessen at mil 343-7618/7619.

1st AD engineers help rebuild Iraqi waterline

Pumping station essential to provide constant water supply to Iraqi agricultural communities

By Sgt. Mark Bell

372nd Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment

The al Jadriyah Irrigation Pump Station, located on the Tigris River in Iraq, reopened with a ceremonial opening of its water gates, thanks to members of the 1st Armored Division.

A young Iraqi boy and Brig. Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, 1st AD commander, jointly pushed the button

"Today's ceremony also symbolizes a return to the ideals the people of Iraq long ago taught the rest of the world."

to start the pumps providing water for the city's agriculturally rich southwest region.

Residents of the agricultural communities near the pumping station will now have a reliable source of irrigation and drinking water, thanks to help from Company A, 16th Engineer Battalion; 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment; and the U.S. Army Reserve's Headquarters Company, 439th Engineer Battalion.

The pumping station feeds all the major water reservoirs surrounding Baghdad International Airport. The engineers found that

two of the three main water pipes supplying fresh water were badly damaged by both looting and years of neglect, and restored the pumping station to supply water to area farmers who rely heavily on the al Jadriyah water for their crops and livestock.

"Iraq's 'fertile crescent' — the flood plains of the great Tigris and

Euphrates rivers — history tells us it is here the birth of civilization occurred," said Capt. H.W. Darville,

Company A, 16th Engineer Battalion, commander. "Easy, available water gave rise to agriculture, and agriculture brought together different people who worked together to build a secure and prosperous future."

Darville added that in recent years, water in Iraq was used not for the advancement of civilization, but as a tool for one man to control Iraq's people and as a luxury often reserved for Saddam Hussein and his closest friends.

"Today's ceremony also symbolized a return to the ideals the people of Iraq long ago taught the

rest of the world," he said, "where the natural wealth of a nation is used by and for its people — working together to build a secure and prosperous future for all."

Funded by 1st AD, the emergency repairs included work on the station, irrigation canals and several small water treatment plants. All major repairs to the pumping station, which is part of the Blackhawk Irrigation Project, will be paid with Commander's Emergency Response Program funds, with minor repairs and irrigation canal cleanup projects being paid using CERP money from the division's Engineer Brigade and the 82nd Airborne Division's 2nd Brigade.

CERP funds allow commanding officers to spend money on projects that will provide rapid community improvements in their areas of operations. Brig. Gen. Fred D. Robinson Jr., the 1st AD commander at the time the project was started, authorized an initial \$95,000, with an additional \$175,000 to complete the project.

"The ultimate goal of the project is to provide a constant supply of water to the agricultural communities of southwestern Baghdad," said Darville.

"Completion of this project will ensure that water remains available for agriculture and drinking purposes in the area for many years to come," he said.

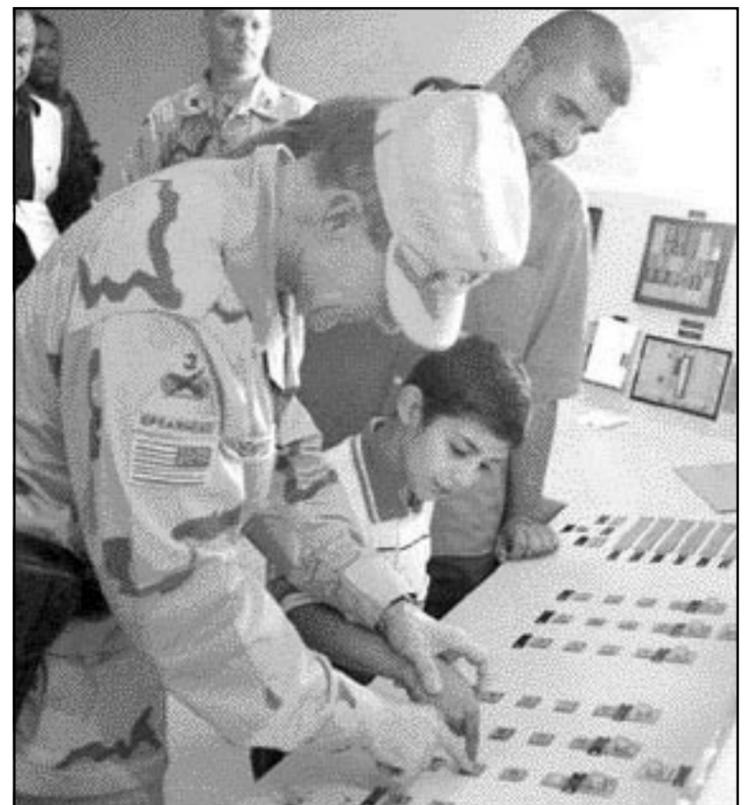


Photo by Sgt. Jacob H. Smith

With the help of an Iraqi youth, 1st AD commander Brig. Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, restarts the al Jadriyah Irrigation pumping station at a reopening ceremony last month.

The irrigation project was much larger than anticipated, Darville added. After talking with local farmers and getting an idea of where coalition forces could best be used, water concerns were a very close second to security, he said.

The consensus among area farmers was that, "security will protect

us, but having no water will kill us," he said.

"We knew right away that water was going to be our biggest concern. By getting water to their farms and communities, we are bridging that gap of trust, and in return, they will be able to help us provide a safer and better Iraq," he said.

414th BSB – Büdingen, Hanau

Around the community ... Around the community

Hispanic Heritage Month 5K Fun Walk / Run

There will be a free 5-K Fun Walk /Run for family, children and pets Sept. 6 at the Pioneer Fitness Center. Register at 9:30 a.m. and start walking at 10 a.m. Certificates will be presented to all participants. For more information call mil 322-8197.

Hispanic Heritage Month Flag Football Midnight Madness

Participate or come to watch an evening of flag football Sept. 12-13 starting at 6 p.m. on Pioneer Kaserne. Registration is \$150 per team (no refunds) and all proceeds will be donated to the Hanau Red Cross. A maximum of 15 players per team is allowed. Awards will be presented to the first, second and third place teams and the first and second place individuals. Participants must be 18 years of age or older. For more information call mil 322-8205/1760.

Third Fiesta Grande

The Hanau Community will celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month Oct. 4 at the Pioneer Fitness Center. Activities begin at 10 a.m. and continue all day. Traigan y donen para probar un plato de comida tipica de su pais. Enjoy food, folk dances, children's games, door prizes, displays and music. Everyone is encouraged to bring their favorite Spanish dish for sampling. For more information contact Sgt. 1st Class Gayden at mil 322-8012, Donna.gayden@104asg.army.mil or Mr. Torres at mil 322-8197, torrese@hanau.army.mil.

Hispanic Heritage Month Soccer Midnight Madness

Soccer teams will compete on the evening of Sept. 26-27 at Pioneer Kaserne starting at 6 p.m. Registration is \$150 per team (no refunds). A limit of 15 players per team is allowed. Awards for first, second and third place teams and first and second place individuals.

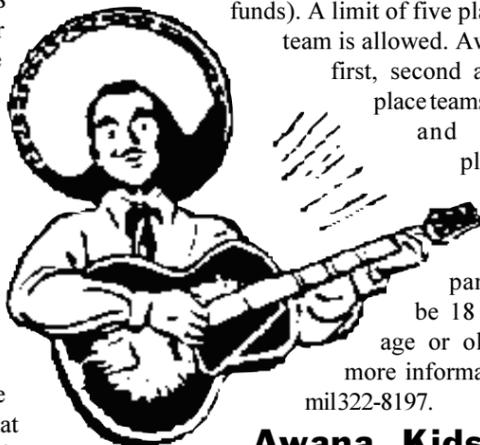
Participants must be 18 years of age or older. For more information call mil 322-8197.

Hispanic Heritage Month Softball Midnight Madness

Play softball all night, Sept. 5-6 at Pioneer Kaserne starting at 6 p.m. All proceeds will be donated to the Hanau USO. Registration is \$150 per team (no refunds). A limit of 15 players per team is allowed. Awards for first, second and third place teams and first and second place individuals. Participants must be 18 years of age or older. For more information call mil 322-8725.

Hispanic Heritage Month 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament

Compete in a 3 on 3 basketball tournament Sept. 20 starting at 10 a.m. at Pioneer Fitness Center. Registration is \$75 per team (no refunds). A limit of five players per team is allowed. Awards for first, second and third place teams and first and second place individuals. Participants must be 18 years of age or older. For more information call mil 322-8197.



Awana Kids Club

Awana Kids Club begins again on Sept. 16. It meets each Tuesday from 6-7:30 p.m. at Argonner Elementary School. Each week the children play games, sing songs, memorize Scripture and have some good, clean fun. Awana is open to all children in kindergarten through sixth grade. It is a ministry of the 414th BSB Protestant chapels. For information call Vickie Horton at civ (06181) 569-0670.

ACAP workshop

The Army Career and Alumni Program will conduct two-day pre-separation briefings and job assistance workshops in Building 11, Room 302, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sept. 9-10 and Sept. 23-24. Call mil 322-8356 or civ (06181) 88-8356 to sign up.

Civilian Fitness Program

The fall 2003 open enrollment



Command Sgt. Maj. Michael L. Buxbaum

New Command Sgt. Maj. for 130th Engineers

Command Sgt. Maj. Michael L. Buxbaum took responsibility of the 130th Engineer Brigade in a ceremony at the Logistical Support Area Anaconda Gymnasium in Balad, Iraq, July 31 as Command Sgt. Maj. Sergio Riddle moved on to become a company commander at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Hood, Texas.

Buxbaum's most recent assignment was as Command Sgt. Maj. for the 54th Engineer Battalion in Bamberg.

for the 104th ASG Civilian Fitness Program is going on now. This program allows Department of the Army full-time civilian employees to participate in physical exercise for up to three hours per week during duty hours. The program is a one-time opportunity and is limited to six months. To register go to www.104thasg.hanau.army.mil/Fit/Program.htm. Download and read the memorandum of instruction, complete the enrollment packet, then call to schedule your fitness assessment. For more information call Lori Pineda at mil 322-9509 or civ (06181) 88-9509.

New library hours

Beginning Sept. 8 the Pioneer Library will extend its weekday hours to 8 p.m. The library is open Monday to Wednesday 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., Thursday noon to 8 p.m., Saturday and Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Mondays after a federal holiday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Story hour volunteers

Preschool story hour volunteers are needed to do crafts and read books to children every Thursday morning from 10-11 a.m. at Pioneer Library. Call Christi Bayha at mil 322-9657/8942 to help.

IACS new hours

The Installation Access Control System office in Building 24 on Pioneer Kaserne has new hours. They are open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., closing for lunch from 1-2 p.m. (The office closes 30 minutes before lunch.) Access roster requests

will be processed in Building 24 and must be submitted 72 hours in advance. Call mil 322-9008/9009, civ (06181) 88-9008/9009 for details.

Telephone changes

Fliegerhorst Kaserne telephone cutover changes are now in effect. The civilian in-dial for Fliegerhorst has changed from civ (06183) 51-last three digits, (sample: civ 06183 51-700 connects to mil number 7700) to the new civilian in-dial: civ (06183) 51-last four digits (sample: civ (06183) 51-7700 connects to mil number 7700).

All newly installed mil lines will have the mil prefix 322-6XXX. The civilian in-dial will be civ (06183) 51-6XXX.

King Oscar anchovies recalled

King Oscar anchovies rolled fillets, UPC 03480000095, in the 2-oz. tin are the subject of a local recall by military food inspectors. Routine inspections at DeCA Europe's Central Distribution Center revealed that tins from several cases of the product were swollen and leaking. Inspectors have not yet isolated the cause of the problem, but suspect the extremely hot weather may be a contributing factor. Commissary patrons who have purchased this product are urged to return it for a full refund.

No more lunch

The International Club lunch has been discontinued. Construction

is commencing on the Frazer Coffee Shop which is scheduled to open soon.

Power outages

Due to necessary maintenance and repair work on transformer stations there will be electrical power outages at:

- ◆ Fliegerhorst Kaserne, but not in family housing — Sept. 3, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- ◆ Fliegerhorst family housing area — Sept. 4, 8 a.m. to noon.
- ◆ Fliegerhorst NATOV/tank farm — Sept. 4, 8 a.m. to noon.

As a precaution it's recommended that you disconnect all sensitive electrical appliances such as computers, televisions, video recorders, stereo equipment and microwave ovens during the entire power outage period. The Directorate of Public Works staff apologize for the inconvenience and said they appreciate the support.

Spouses Education Assistance Program

Do you want to further your education or start on a college degree? The Spouse Education Assistance Program is a need-based education assistance program designed for Army spouses residing with active duty soldiers. The program provides up to \$400 per academic term and up to \$2,000 for the academic year. For more information contact ACS at mil 322-8965 or Army Emergency Relief at mil 322-8097.

Steam train

Enjoy an historical steam train ride on Sundays or German holidays through October. The train departs from the city of Bad Orb train station at 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 2:30 p.m. and 4 p.m. The travel time is about one hour.

Reservations for groups can be made. For more details go to: www.bad-orb.de/dampfkleinbahn.

Holiday Greeting Program

Send your own personal holiday television greetings to your family and friends back home.

The Holidays Greeting Team will videotape your short holiday message and send your greeting to subscribing television stations in the areas where your family lives. To be filmed come to the field next to the Pioneer Fitness Center on Sept. 12 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Bring the children and dogs too.

Get the latest community news on the web at www.hanau.army.mil

Video brings families together

By Dennis Johnson
414th Base Support Battalion
Public Affairs Office

On Tuesday Aug. 12 a few lucky family members of the deployed 2nd Battalion, 501st Aviation Regiment, based at Fliegerhorst Kaserne were able to connect for five pre-

vious minutes of face-to-face time with their loved ones downrange thanks to video-conferencing technology. The families gathered outside the headquarters building, the women chatting and relaxing in the shade of the broad leafy trees while the children expended their pent up energy running around

and playing until it was time to talk to Dad.

Staff Sgt. Steven Walker, who was helping to coordinate the times and the families, said 24 people signed up from the 4th Brigade Aviation Division. "When they have the video conferencing equipment available downrange, we get notified. Last time, our first time this service was available, we only had two days notice and really had to scramble to get it organized. This is our second opportunity. The times are unpredictable; it all depends on the mission downrange and whenever the equipment is not being used for the mission. The staff downrange holds a lottery to see which soldiers will get some time with their families. Those with serious family issues may get preferential treatment, if there's a sickness in the family or something like that. Then we work with the Family Readiness Groups to contact the spouses up here. It's a good morale booster. Wives are happy to see their husbands and the husbands are really happy to see their wives and kids. Too bad it can't be longer, we only have five minutes depending on how many show up. If someone doesn't show you might be able to have a few extra minutes. We wish it could be longer," said Walker.

One wife who was lucky enough to get a five minute conference was Candi Hardin of South Carolina whose husband, Aaron of the 2-501st Aviation, has been in Iraq since April. "My husband is at Baghdad International Airport, he's a crew chief of a Blackhawk helicopter." With the temperatures here nearly as high as Baghdad, she joked with Aaron, "I

don't sympathize with you at all because of the heat here, at least you have air-conditioning." But she certainly sympathizes with him about the dangers involved with flying around Iraq and being away from his family. Hardin has been able to communicate with her husband by video conferencing just one other time. "It's better than past wars, I guess, with phone calls, emails and all this advanced technology," said Hardin. Her children John, 4, and Ashlyn, 3, are coping well with Dad being away, but being on television is something else. "John was really nervous about Dad being on TV, but as long as Dad is alive, he's OK. He knows more than most 4-year-olds. He knows where Dad is, what dad is doing and who he's after." Ashlyn has other interests. "Her dad talked to her on the phone yesterday and she was fascinated with the desert cats. Her dad told her that they had tall skinny cats nearby in the desert and she wanted to know, 'Why does he have cats in his desert? Can he bring one home? Can he pet them?' I asked him if he could get a picture of one, but he says they're quite rare to see. She cries for him a little bit, and when John gets in trouble, he wants his dad," said Hardin. As most spouses during times of deployment, Hardin is keeping busy. "I went on an Outdoor Recreation trip to Poland, without the kids, a friend looked after them for me, thankfully, because everything in the stores was breakable. I also went home for my sister's wedding and the kids start pre-school soon. Like the others here, I'm just taking care of everything."



Photo by Dennis Johnson

Ashlyn, John and Candi Hardin share five minutes with father and husband, Aaron.



Photos by Dennis Johnson



A photographic look at the Community Connection Fair

Visitors to the 414th Base Support Battalion's Community Connection Fair enjoy a host of activities, demonstrations and opportunities to learn about their local community. Yoga, karate and fire safety were among the highlights of the information fair held on Fliegerhorst Kaserne Aug. 23.

Büdingen Green Thumb Days

ACS worker shares plant know-how

By Dennis Johnson
414th Base Support Battalion
Public Affairs

Rick Krenz has always been an avid gardener, growing plants outside, inside and all around the house wherever he might be. He actually enjoyed helping his father with the yard while other teenagers just grumbled about mowing the lawn. In high school Krenz was a member of the Future Farmers of America, but his concentration was on ornamental and flowering plants rather than sheep and cattle.

When Krenz moved to Büdingen last year he immediately began filling his family's apartment on Armstrong Kaserne with containers of plants. "We got some from people PCSing who were looking for a good family to adopt their plants. Nearly every flat surface in our home has a plant on it and every outside ledge has a window box on it too," said Krenz.

"In May 2003 I was hired by Hanau Army Community Service as an outreach coordinator and assigned to the Büdingen office. My boss at the time, Mike Hamm, and the staff members held weekly meetings to brainstorm new ways to serve our community. I suggested that I offer a class on container gardening and he said, 'go for it.' With that, Green Thumb Days were born. We held the first Green Thumb class on the fourth Friday of May and six women signed up. It dealt with which houseplants are the most successful to grow if your thumb isn't very green. I don't believe that anyone has a brown thumb

although many may make that claim. It was part lecture with handouts and partly a question and answer session. Many women in the class already had a great knowledge of a variety of plants, but their fear of failure was keeping them from the joy of sprouting a new plant. I brought in a number of my houseplants to prove the point that there are many easy-to-grow houseplants available," said Krenz.

On June 2 Krenz moved to the ACS office inside the Outreach Center on Wolfgang Kaserne. The ACS officer for the 414th Base Support Battalion, Pam Belanger, saw the potential in this class and gave Rick the OK to keep holding it. The Green Thumb class met again on June 27 at the Family Outreach Center in Büdingen although fewer women could attend due to a conflict with a program offered by the chapel.

"Many of the women who couldn't attend expressed regret, but I believe taking care of your kids is more important than your plants," said Krenz. The second class dealt with transplanting plants from old containers to new ones. "Even though this sounds simple to some, for others it is fraught with peril. I taught the women in the class to place special emphasis on protecting the roots and the crown of the plant. These women learned to score feeder roots on older plants to stimulate new root growth and that sometimes it's OK to cut a few roots off. We discussed how to rejuvenate an older plant that still has plenty of room in its current container by removing most of the old potting mix and replacing it with new," said Krenz.

One woman suggested that it would be great if her children could do this, and from that idea, Green Thumb Kids was born. Krenz held



Photo by Dennis Johnson

Rick Krenz and his Green Thumb Kids investigate a termite ridden tree.

the first meeting of Green Thumb Kids on July 16 with 17 youths attending. Green Thumbs Kids was offered weekly throughout the summer to the children of Büdingen at the Family Outreach Center and to the children of Hanau in Building 9 on Pioneer Kaserne. These classes were open to children in first grade and older.

"I chose first grade as the youngest because these kids have been exposed to a classroom and to learning, even though some of the learning in this class is just playing with dirt. I tailored the classes for the older kids too and I assigned homework in the form of mathematics and science. Mostly the math dealt with measuring, graphs and predictions of growth based upon the known facts of a particular plant. This also shows the older kids that math has

actual real world applications and is not simply meant to torment them. And I always allowed ample time for questions and answers at each class too," said Krenz.

Generally something said or asked in the class determined the topic of the next class, such as information on which plants are suited to the different seasons. With children the emphasis was on the basic questions. Why do we have plants? What makes a plant a weed, and why do some plants attract butterflies? The topics are nearly endless.

"Parents had to spend a little bit of money for their kids to participate, just for materials; however, no child will ever be turned away," said Krenz. "I encouraged parents of the younger children to attend and assist their child with their projects.

We also tried to go outside during every class too. Lessons are learned all around us and I would like to plan a walking field trip in and around Büdingen."

The Green Thumb Kids program will end with the start of the school year unless the children request that it continue. "There are just too many demands on the kids' time during school days," said Krenz. The adult Green Thumb program was also forced to end due to scheduling conflicts. "If anyone with a knowledge and love of plants would like to take over the adult Green Thumbs program, please contact me. These programs are just too much fun to let fall by the way," said Krenz.

For more information or to volunteer call Rick Krenz at mil 322-5308 or civ (06181) 88-5308.



Photo by Dennis Johnson

Krenz explains a seed sprouting project to Kiarah Bonebrake.