

‘Ready First’ Brigade sponsors student forum

By Azhar Jasim, 1st BCT Correspondent

Baghdad, Iraq – As a follow-up to the successful Student Forum held at the Palestine Hotel in December, the Ready First Combat Team met with Iraq’s future leaders at its second student forum Feb. 23.

The meeting took place at the College of Languages on the Bab Al Muadham campus of Baghdad University.

Col. Peter Mansoor, 1st Brigade Combat Team commander, 1st Armored Division and a panel of experts from the brigade and the division staff were on hand to answer students’ questions.

The meetings goal was to increase the flow of information between the coalition and to the Iraqi public. The intent was to allow the future leaders of Iraq to learn more about the current events in Baghdad and plans for the future.

Lt. Col. Sharon Riley, the Division’s senior legal advisor, and Lt. Col. John Kem, 16th Engineer Battalion commander also participated in the evening’s discussions.

A large number of students were present and eager to ask questions of the panel.

Their questions covered topics which included Iraq’s upcoming national elections, discussions of the meaning of federalism, the movement of Coalition forces to the periphery of Baghdad, and local infrastructure improvements.

The meeting also covered issues concerning the College itself and the future of educational institutions in the new Iraq. Important issues were deliberated and many students had the chance to ask questions.

Mansoor greeted the students and introduced the panel. He told the assembly that sovereignty would transfer to Iraqi control June 30.

He said the meeting this was a good opportunity to discuss issues of concern to the students.

One student, who was present at the last forum, asked Mansoor why the new Iraqi constitution would not be based on the laws of Islam.

“Iraq has many religious groups and to base the government on Islam would be to ignore the others,” he explained. “The Islamic faith will be completely respected, as it has in the new constitution of Afghanistan. But there are many Christians living in Iraq. Respectfully, they should not be governed under Islamic law.”

One group of students came apparently to ignite issues concerning student behavior on campus. The



A student from the College of Languages on the Bab Al Muadham campus of Baghdad University addresses participants at an open forum sponsored by the 1st Brigade Combat Team Feb. 23. The meeting covered topics of interest to the students and provided an opportunity for two-way communication between students and U.S. Army leaders. Courtesy photo.

group, calling itself the “League of Students for Moral Conduct,” claimed that they should be the sole protectors of the school. The Iraqi Police Service or Facilities Protective Service officers were not needed, members of the organization said.

Riley explained that students in the school should focus their interests on learning and not law enforcement.

Judging from the speakers’ comments, it became clear to participants that the organization was not concerned about crime, but rather wanted to control student behavior on campus – especially the behavior of female students who choose not to abide by the traditional Islamic code.

“What you are doing is wrong. It is not your place in a free society to intimidate other students into acting in the manner you think is right,” Mansoor said. “If the students are not breaking the law, then they are free to act as they choose. Who is to say that your moral code is any more right than theirs?”

According to the participants, the forum went well.

In addition to students, members from the local press were present and a local television station had a chance to conduct interviews with the students and Army leaders.

The brigade is planning another student forum for later in March.

NEWS...

Iraqis Still Undecided on Interim Gov't

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) - Iraqi leaders must still decide on the form of a new government to take power June 30 despite approval of an interim constitution at the end of a protracted and sometimes stormy debate, officials said Monday.

Members of the Iraqi Governing Council agreed to the interim constitution before dawn Monday - two days after the deadline. It establishes a bill of rights and cements compromises on the structure of a future presidency and the role of Islam.

Rebels, U.S. Marines Enter Haiti Capital

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) - Rebels rolled into the capital Monday and were met by hundreds of residents dancing in the streets and cheering the ouster of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

U.S. Marines and French troops secured key sites. People clapped and waved as they yelled "Good job!" and called out the name of key rebel leader Guy Philippe. The convoy first rolled through Petionville, a wealthy suburb, before moving into the heart of Port-au-Prince.

Closing Arguments Begin for Stewart

NEW YORK (AP) - Martha Stewart knew going into a meeting with federal authorities in 2002 that she would lie about her sale of ImClone Systems stock, a prosecutor said Monday in closing arguments at her trial.

"She would conceal from the FBI and the (Securities and Exchange Commission) the true reason for her sale," said Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Schachter. "Martha Stewart would lie."

Kerry Focuses on Bush Rather Than Edwards

BALTIMORE (AP) - On the eve of the biggest primary day in the Democratic race, front-runner John Kerry on Monday stuck to criticizing President Bush while a lingering rival, John Edwards, tried to persuade Super Tuesday voters he still has the best chance to win the presidency.

"There's a better way to make America safe than this president has chosen," Kerry said in Baltimore before traveling to Ohio and Georgia, just two of the states he hopes to win in a Super Tuesday sweep. "This president has, in fact, created terrorists where they did not exist."

Thought for the day...

Encouragement

Any man's life will be filled with constant and unexpected encouragement if he makes up his mind to do his level best each day.

-- Booker T. Washington

Meanwhile back in the States...

Cops Caught Issuing Tickets As a Contest

PORTERDALE, Ga. (AP) -- A contest between two police officers in a small Georgia town to see which one could issue the most traffic tickets was stopped by a judge who overheard the apparent winner talking about it, the mayor said.

Part-time Porterdale police officers Erin Cox and Frank Jackson wrote about 150 tickets in January, which was significantly higher than in previous months, Mayor Paul Oeland said.

Some tickets were for minor offenses including not reporting an address change to the state or having defective equipment on a vehicle, it was first reported in The Covington News.

The contest was revealed when City Court Judge C. David Strickland overheard the officers talking about it recently. Oeland said "Jackson indicated he had won the contest."

"I think it was sort of bragging rights," said Oeland, a lawyer. "They would make a traffic stop for a legitimate reason and then try to find anything else they could possibly write a ticket for."

The mayor added: "It is not anything that we as a city support."

Both officers were asked to resign by Friday by City Manager Tom Fox, Oeland said. They have been with the department less than a year, he said.

Neither could be reached Friday. There was no answer at the police department.

Library OKs Phones, Bans Wooden Shoes

HOLLAND, Mich. (AP) -- If there was any question about this west Michigan community's Dutch heritage, consider that it's now OK to have a cell phone in the city library - but wooden shoes remain banned.

The Herrick District Library Board voted Thursday to reverse its ban on cell phones, while deciding to keep the traditional Dutch shoes off-limits.

"We do get a lot of traffic (in wooden shoes) coming through here, but it's only during Tulip Time," library spokesman Gary Pullano told The Holland Sentinel. "We're located near an area where there is Dutch dancing going on. People tend to come into the library."

The weeklong Tulip Time festival celebrates the Holland area's Dutch heritage. The 75th annual festival will be held in May.

Library director Tom Genson said that in the past, staff members have had to tell patrons to remove the shoes when they were too noisy. A similar policy has been adopted for cell phones.

"The cell phones aren't the problem, it's the people who are using them," Pullano said. "If staff members come across someone who is using their cell phone loudly, they will be asked to go to the foyer area to use it."

Today in History...

March 2, 1836: TEXAS INDEPENDENCE PROCLAIMED

(HISTORYCHANNEL.COM) During the Texas Revolution, a convention of American Texans meets at Washington-on-the-Brazos and declares the independence of Texas from Mexico. The delegates chose David Burnet as provisional president and confirmed Sam Houston as the commander in chief of all Texan forces. The Texans also adopted a constitution that protected the free practice of slavery, which had been prohibited by Mexican law. Meanwhile, in San Antonio, Santa Anna's siege of the Alamo continued, and the fort's 185 or so American defenders waited for the final Mexican assault.

In 1820, Moses Austin, a U.S. citizen, asked the Spanish government in Mexico for permission to settle in sparsely populated Texas. Land was granted, but Austin died soon thereafter, so his son, Stephen F. Austin, took over the project. In 1821, Mexico gained independence from Spain, and Austin negotiated a contract with the new Mexican government that allowed him to lead some 300 families to the Brazos River. Under the terms of the agreement, the settlers were to be Catholics, but Austin mainly brought Protestants from the southern United States. Other U.S. settlers arrived in succeeding years, and the Americans soon outnumbered the resident Mexicans. In 1826, a conflict between Mexican and American settlers led to the Fredonia Rebellion, and in 1830 the Mexican government took measures to stop the influx of Americans. In 1833, Austin, who sought statehood for Texas in the Mexican federation, was imprisoned after calling on settlers to declare it without the consent of the Mexican congress. He was released in 1835.

In 1834, Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, a soldier and politician, became dictator of Mexico and sought to crush rebellions in Texas and other areas. In October 1835, Anglo residents of Gonzales, 50 miles east of San Antonio, responded to Santa Anna's demand that they return a cannon loaned for defense against Indian attack by discharging it against the Mexican troops sent to reclaim it. The Mexicans were routed in what is regarded as the first battle of the Texas Revolution. The American settlers set up a provisional state government, and a Texan army under Sam Houston won a series of minor battles in the fall of 1835.

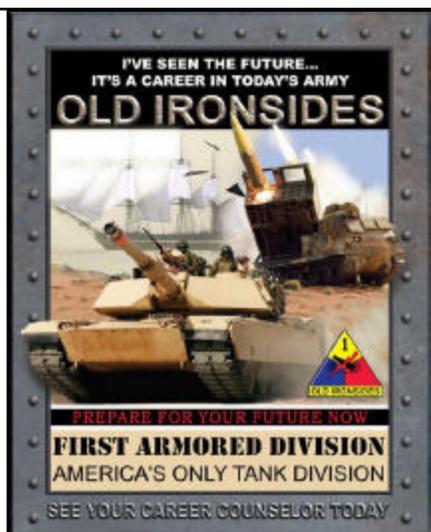
In December, Texas volunteers commanded by Ben Milam drove Mexican troops out of San Antonio and settled in around the Alamo, a mission compound adapted to military purposes around 1800. In January 1836, Santa Anna concentrated a force of several thousand men south of the Rio Grande, and Sam Houston ordered the Alamo abandoned. Colonel James Bowie, who arrived at the Alamo on January 19, realized that the fort's captured cannons could not be removed before Santa Anna's arrival, so he remained entrenched with his men. By delaying Santa Anna's forces, he also reasoned, Houston would have more time to raise an army large enough to repulse the Mexicans. On February 2, Bowie and his 30 or so men were joined by a small cavalry company under Colonel William Travis, bringing the total number of Alamo defenders to about 140. One week later, the frontiersman Davy Crockett arrived in command of 14 Tennessee Mounted Volunteers.

On February 23, Santa Anna and some 3,000 Mexican troops besieged the Alamo, and the former mission was bombarded with cannon and rifle fire for 12 days. On February 24, in the chaos of the siege, Colonel Travis smuggled out a letter that read: "To the People of Texas and All Americans in the World.... I shall never surrender or retreat.... Victory or Death!" On March 1, the last Texan reinforcements from nearby Gonzales broke through the enemy's lines and into the Alamo, bringing the total defenders to approximately 185. On March 2, Texas' revolutionary government formally declared its independence from Mexico.

In the early morning of March 6, Santa Anna ordered his troops to storm the Alamo. Travis' artillery decimated the first and then the second Mexican charge, but in just over an hour the Texans were overwhelmed, and the Alamo was taken. Santa Anna had ordered that no prisoners be taken, and all the Texan and American defenders were killed in brutal hand-to-hand fighting. The only survivors of the Alamo were a handful of civilians, mostly women and children. Several hundred of Santa Anna's men died during the siege and storming of the Alamo.

Six weeks later, a large Texan army under Sam Houston surprised Santa Anna's army at San Jacinto. Shouting "Remember the Alamo!" the Texans defeated the Mexicans and captured Santa Anna. The Mexican dictator was forced to recognize Texas' independence and withdrew his forces south of the Río Grande.

Texas sought annexation by the United States, but both Mexico and antislavery forces in the United States opposed its admission into the Union. For nearly a decade, Texas existed as an independent republic, and Houston was Texas' first elected president. In 1845, Texas joined the Union as the 28th state, leading to the outbreak of the Mexican-American War.



Time is running out for special Reenlistment bonuses

More than 1,650 soldiers have taken advantage of the deployed force reenlistment bonus since October. Soldiers must understand the bonus is no longer available to them once he or she redeploy to home station.

The most frequently asked question from soldiers is "how long am I eligible for the reenlistment bonus?"

The answer is simple: once a soldier leaves Iraq, Afghanistan, or Kuwait, the lump sum tax-free bonus no longer exists.

As we begin to redeploy, our Career Counselors and key retention personnel will become much less accessible as they will be spread thin throughout Iraq, Kuwait, and Germany.

Soldiers eligible for this incentive are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity well in advance of their expected redeployment date. Soldiers should contact their Career Counselors who are standing by to assist our Iron Soldiers in continuing to serve proudly and "Stay Army."

LOOKING FOR EVEN MORE CHALLENGES? LOOK INTO THE U.S. ARMY SPECIAL FORCES.

The SF Recruiter is in theater until March 30. The 1AD Division Reup Team will host the Special Forces Brief at the Soldier Support Center classroom (2nd floor) on March 5 at 10 a.m.

For more information about the Special Forces recruitment program or any other reenlistment opportunity, contact your career counselor.

The Old Ironsides Report March 2, 2004

mvafn.net TV SCHEDULES: TUESDAY, MARCH 02, 2004

As of: Monday, March 01, 2004 10:05:12 PM

Start Time	SPORTS	ATLANTIC	SPECTRUM	PACIFIC	NEWS	Start Time
00:00		HEADLINE NEWS	MONSTER GARAGE : - NASCAR STREET SWEEPER	TODAY		00:00
00:30	THE HOT LIST	TONIGHT SHOW WITH JAY LENO			HEADLINE NEWS	00:30
01:00	AROUND THE HORN		A FAR OFF PLACE		LESTER HOLT LIVE	01:00
01:30	PARDON THE INTERRUPTION	THE LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN				01:30
02:00	SPORTSCENTER			SESAME STREET	HEADLINE NEWS	02:00
02:30		ACCESS HOLLYWOOD			NBC NIGHTLY NEWS	02:30
03:00	AFL - NEW ORLEANS VOODOO @ LAS VEGAS GLADIATORS	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG EAST: SETON HALL @ UCONN	ROCKET POWER : - THAT OLD SKATEBOARD/ FOLLOW THE LEADER	DRAGON TALES : - HIDE AND CAN'T SEEK/ THE ART OF PATIENCE	ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT	03:00
03:30			THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS	WHEEL OF FORTUNE	CBS EVENING NEWS	03:30
04:00			THE SIMPSONS : - ONE FISH, TWO FISH, BLOWFISH, BLUE FISH	THE DR. PHIL SHOW	COUNTDOWN WITH KEITH OLBERMANN	04:00
04:30			THE COSBY SHOW : - THEO AND THE COCKROACH			04:30
05:00		MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG XII: TEXAS @ OKLAHOMA STATE	J.A.G. : - SECOND ACTS	THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW	HANNITY & COLMES	05:00
06:00	ESPNEWS		THE PRACTICE : - JUDGE KNOT	NBC NIGHTLY NEWS	THE NEWSHOUR	06:00
06:30	THE SPORTS REPORTERS			JUDGE JUDY		06:30
07:00	SPORTSCENTER	HEADLINE NEWS	CELEBRITY PROFILES : - ELLE MCPHERSON	ACCESS HOLLYWOOD	BET NIGHTLY NEWS	07:00
07:25				GUIDING LIGHT		07:25
07:30		ESPNEWS			NIGHTLY BUSINESS REPORT	07:30
08:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - MWC: UTAH @ BYU	HEADLINE NEWS	MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON		LARRY KING LIVE	08:00
08:13				GENERAL HOSPITAL		08:13
08:30		HEADLINE NEWS				08:30
09:00		SESAME STREET		ARTHUR : - BUSTER'S BREATHLESS/ THE FRIGHT STUFF	NEWSNIGHT WITH AARON BROWN	09:00
09:30				DISNEY'S DOUG : - DOUG'S OLDER WOMAN		09:30
10:00	SPORTSCENTER	DRAGON TALES : - HIDE AND CAN'T SEEK/ THE ART OF PATIENCE		THAT'S SO RAVEN : - DISSIN COUSINS	PAULA ZAHN NOW	10:00
10:30		WHEEL OF FORTUNE	EBERT & ROEPER AT THE MOVIES	THE AMANDA SHOW		10:30
11:00	MOTORCYCLE RACING - THQ WORLD SUPERCROSS GP (125CC) ATLANTA	THE DR. PHIL SHOW	ROCKET POWER : - THAT OLD SKATEBOARD/ FOLLOW THE LEADER	JEOPARDY!	NIGHTLINE	11:00
11:30			THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS	HEADLINE NEWS	NAVY/MARINE CORPS NEWS	11:30
11:46		THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW				11:46
11:52				PACIFIC REPORT		11:52
12:00	MOTORCYCLE RACING - THQ WORLD SUPERCROSS GP (250CC) ATLANTA		THE SIMPSONS : - ONE FISH, TWO FISH, BLOWFISH, BLUE FISH	ESPNEWS	HARDBALL WITH CHRIS MATTHEWS	12:00
12:30			THE COSBY SHOW : - THEO AND THE COCKROACH	HEADLINE NEWS		12:30
12:35		GUIDING LIGHT				12:35
12:52				PACIFIC REPORT		12:52
13:00	PARDON THE INTERRUPTION		J.A.G. : - SECOND ACTS	SMALLVILLE : - PRECIPICE	THE O'REILLY FACTOR	13:00
13:17		GENERAL HOSPITAL				13:17
13:30	SPORTSCENTER					13:30
14:00	NBA FASTBREAK	HEADLINE NEWS	THE PRACTICE : - JUDGE KNOT	BRING IT ON	CNN DAYBREAK	14:00
14:30	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG EAST: SETON HALL @ UCONN	JUDGE JUDY				14:30
15:00		TODAY	CELEBRITY PROFILES : - ELLE MCPHERSON		GOOD MORNING AMERICA	15:00
16:00			MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON	HEADLINE NEWS		16:00
16:22				PACIFIC REPORT		16:22
16:30				TONIGHT SHOW WITH JAY LENO		16:30
17:00	SPORTSCENTER	ARTHUR : - BUSTER'S BREATHLESS/ THE FRIGHT STUFF			HEADLINE NEWS	17:00
17:30		DISNEY'S DOUG : - DOUG'S OLDER WOMAN			CHANNEL ONE	17:30
17:45					ABC WORLD NEWS THIS MORNING	17:45
18:00	REAL SPORTS WITH BRYANT GUMBEL	THAT'S SO RAVEN : - DISSIN COUSINS			THE EARLY SHOW	18:00
18:30		THE AMANDA SHOW	EBERT & ROEPER AT THE MOVIES	ACCESS HOLLYWOOD		18:30
19:00	SPORTSCENTER	JEOPARDY!	ROCKET POWER : - THAT OLD SKATEBOARD/ FOLLOW THE LEADER	THE ONE		19:00
19:30		HEADLINE NEWS	THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS			19:30
20:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG XII: TEXAS @ OKLAHOMA STATE	ESPNEWS	THE SIMPSONS : - ONE FISH, TWO FISH, BLOWFISH, BLUE FISH		FOX NEWS LIVE	20:00
20:30		HEADLINE NEWS	THE COSBY SHOW : - THEO AND THE COCKROACH	MASK OF ZORRO		20:30
20:45						20:45
21:00		SMALLVILLE : - PRECIPICE	J.A.G. : - SECOND ACTS		FOX NEWS LIVE	21:00
22:00	ESPNEWS	BRING IT ON	THE PRACTICE : - JUDGE KNOT		FOX NEWS LIVE	22:00
22:30	NHL - TAMPA BAY LIGHTNING @ COLORADO AVALANCHE					22:30
23:00			CELEBRITY PROFILES : - ELLE MCPHERSON	ESPNEWS: THE HOT LIST	HEADLINE NEWS	23:00
23:30				HEADLINE NEWS	CNN'S INSIDE POLITICS	23:30