



Victory Times



Telling the Multi-National Corps - Iraq story

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Photo by Lee Craker, Multi-National Corps—Iraq Public Affairs Office

Col. Mark Ritter, G3, Multi-National Corps—Iraq, right, administers the oath of enlistment to Sgt. Steven Hall, C3 executive administrative assistant, MNC-I, who re-enlisted while flying in a UH-60 Blackhawk over Victory Base Complex April 21.

As re-enlistments rise, policies change

BY RENE L. EVERAGE
Multi-National Corps—Iraq
Public Affairs Office

U.S. military service components are doing great business. They are all presently manned

at capacity, having reached their end-strength objectives. This boon in personnel has resulted in several retention policy changes, from stricter reenlistment windows to the decreasing or elimination of bonuses for certain

military occupational specialties.

As of April 24, all Soldiers must be within their re-enlistment eligibility windows to re-enlist.

“The re-enlistment window

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Make time an ally, not an enemy

Gain perspective through reflection to beat hard times

BY CHAPLAIN (CDR.)
STAN W. FORNEA

Multi-National Force—Iraq
Deputy Command Chaplain

Time is a very important commodity and a gift to be used wisely. There is a sense in which we are captured by time. We cannot control it, even though sometimes we attempt to manipulate it. Since time always prevails, a resourceful use of time may be our only real option.

Time can be an enemy for some. In fact, many of our critical life issues deal with unresolved situations from the past or fears for the future. We can become prisoners of the past, and its grip can be difficult to break. Even though the key is to try and forgive and/or celebrate the past and move on, it is not an easy discipline to follow.

The future can also hold us captive. Many people seem frightened and potentially paralyzed by its possibilities. I read



Courtesy photo by FreeFoto.com

about a report of 1,000 people who were asked at the beginning of the year to list their 10 biggest concerns for the future. At the end of the year, those same people were interviewed, only to discover that more than 90 percent of the things they worried about never happened.

This leaves us with the present. Since today is really all we have, the key is not to be incarcerated by the moment but rather to live and cel-

ebate it. Maybe a helpful approach could be found in the power of connectivity. If we redeem each day, it can begin with right connections.

First, we should be rightly connected to ourselves. We need to know who we are and appreciate this gift of today. We need a proper and healthy understanding of our own value, significance and worth. No one should be able to rob that from us.

Second, we would profit from being rightly connected to others. There are times we may feel individually invincible; however, life proves to us that we need one another. Healthy friendships and family ties can help us properly process who and where we are in time.

Third, life benefits from being rightly connected with God. However we define our spirituality or understand faith, it makes a positive difference in the lives of many people today. Faith serves as a filter and resource to help view life within a perspective that is bigger than our own.

So, make the most of today, live in the power of being gifted and share the day with someone else.



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Re-enlistments on the Rise

RE-UP, from page 1

opens up when a Soldier gets within 24 months of ETS (expiration, term of service), and it closes three months prior to ETS,” said Sgt. Maj. Michael D. Burns, the Retention Sergeant Major for Multi-National Force—Iraq and Multi-National Corps—Iraq.

Previously, deployed Soldiers got exceptions so they could re-enlist without regard for their window. The Regular Army, or “needs of the Army” re-enlistment option, allowed a Soldier to add time to his or her term of service; the Current Station Stabilization option guaranteed a Soldier up to 12 months at his or her home-station upon redeployment.

There also was a time when a Soldier could wait until the last day of their contracts to re-enlist. That’s no longer the case, Burns said. As of April 1, Soldiers who don’t re-enlist three months before their ETS are re-enlistment ineligible, unless they get an exception from the commander of Human Resource Command, Retention and Reclassification Branch.

Many servicemembers were already past their three-month windows when the April 1 restriction went into effect. To accommodate them, Soldiers who are scheduled to transition out of the Army before Oct. 1 or those currently under stop-loss provisions have until June 30 to re-enlist without a waiver. Soldiers are considered to be under stop-loss when they are kept on active duty beyond their contractual ETS date.

Other MOS-specific policy changes also become effective April 24. Soldiers serving in over-



Photo by Lee Craker, Multi-National Corps—Iraq Public Affairs Office

Staff Sgt. Karim Clarke, center, retention non-commissioned officer for C Company, Special Troop Battalion, I Corps, discusses the packet of a possible re-enlistee with Staff Sgt. Joe Maynor, left, career counselor, Multi-National Force/Corps—Iraq, while Sgt. Sincere Vannarath, a potential career counselor, observes the process.

strength specialties could formerly opt for Regular Army or Army Training re-enlistments. Now, they’ll be restricted to the Army Training option, which likely would require a change to a less-staffed MOS.

Changes in the selective re-enlistment bonus program mean fewer Soldiers qualifying for smaller amounts. “Bonus amounts will be reduced by approximately 23 percent,” Burns said. The new bonuses also come with 24 months of additional obligated service. Previously, most Soldiers incurred as little as six months AOS for the bonus.

Staff Sgt. Jason Farquharson and Sgt. Joseph McIntyre, both of C Company, Special Troops Battalion, I Corps, decided not to take any chances. Farquharson, a signal support systems specialist and McIntyre, a nodal network system operator/maintainer, re-enlisted on April 20, ensuring

they’d get bonuses at the current higher amounts.

After 11 years in the military, Farquharson says his motivation isn’t financial. “The opportunity to lead and train Soldiers of tomorrow,” he said, is what influenced his decision to reenlist. For him, the bonus money was just that.

Retention policy changes are driven by a variety of influences that ultimately come down to the needs of the Army. Recruiting and retention programs have been so effective that they years ahead of expectations.

“The end-strength that we’re at now,” said Burns, “we weren’t supposed to be at until 2011.”

“Times are changing,” said Burns, who expects further tightening of the re-enlistment process. “It is highly recommended that those wanting to re-enlist should do so (as soon as possible) to preclude the possibility of lost options and entitlements.”

Un-retired Soldier has seen it a

BY SPC.
CHRISTOPHER M. GAYLORD
13th Public Affairs Detachment

Lt. Col. Jim Nicholson, head of special projects, Document and Media Exploitation, likes to put things together. But he's not an engineer or a mechanic. Rather, he refers to his craft as the "human puzzle."

Many probably wonder what Nicholson is doing in Iraq when they pass him on the street. When he retired from the Army Reserve seven years ago, he likely would've wondered the same thing. He has survived thyroid cancer, had two knee operations, and has an irregular heartbeat and hearing loss. Not to mention that he turns 67 next month.

With his contagious smile, he exudes a certain happiness rather unfamiliar to Victory Base Complex, but many wouldn't peg Nicholson for the man who in 1973 helped shut down Philadelphia's "Black Mafia," a large criminal organization that committed extortion and gruesome murders throughout the city.

After graduating from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1964 with a bachelor's degree in journalism and spending a few years in Marine Corps public affairs, Nicholson put his innate writing and acquired investigative abilities to the ultimate test.

Meeting with several informants who risked their lives

to expose the Black Mafia's practices, Nicholson pieced together evidence that later led to the degradation of the group by state police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

"They [the Black Mafia] had complete control of large parts of the cities, but were invisible on the radar. The few people who suspected it just looked the other way," said Nicholson, a Gloucester City, N.J., native who came out of retirement in 2008 at the request of a Navy captain with whom he had worked in Panama, more than 15 years ago.

Between 1969 and 1978, Nicholson reported on roughly 25 investigations, leading to crackdowns on cab companies, shoddy construction firms, crooked New Jersey state police and corrupt politicians throughout Philadelphia and New Jersey.

And he really enjoyed himself.

"Every reporter is basically an investigator. I just found out early I enjoyed the human puzzle," Nicholson said. "You're helping clean up some of the mess that's around."

Shortly after his extensive reporting stint, Nicholson embarked on the most fulfilling point in his career: writing for the obituaries section of the Philadelphia Daily News.

After receiving the assignment from the paper's assistant managing editor, who decided to stand up the long-overdue obituaries section, Nicholson



Lt. Col. Jim Nicholson, head of special projects, obituary columnist, has returned to the Army at organized crime. A best-selling book published

dove in head-first, applying innovative tactics to obituaries that were previously unheard of.

"Nobody had ever devoted in a major city newspaper 20 column inches to a plumber," Nicholson said. "It broke all the rules, but it was exactly what touched the nerve of people."

He developed immense pride in his work.

"A good life, even though it's not dramatic or high profile, still should be recognized," he said.

all before – and investigated it



Photo by Spc. Christopher M. Gaylord, 13th Public Affairs Detachment

, Document and Media Exploitation, who has a colorful past as an investigative reporter and at the age of 66. He left retirement to fill a slot as a human intelligence officer with experience in called “Black Brothers, Inc.” was based on Nicholson’s 1970s investigation into the Black Mafia.

“These people are the ones holding it all together out there: these guys who do your dry cleaning and pick up your trash, and teach your kids. They’re the mortar holding the bricks together.”

Nicholson simultaneously served as an Army Reserve counter-intelligence officer and completed five separate tours in Panama in the 1980s and ’90s, where he set up intelligence units, conducted undercover recon missions and directed

military raids and operations.

His return to military service last year was an honor for Nicholson. He vied for a much-needed slot as a human intelligence officer in a new anti-corruption unit. He had to regroup, however, when the unit disbanded and its responsibilities were dispersed to several other units.

Still, Nicholson fills a gap in the Army doing something he loves: working on special intelligence projects for

high-ranking commanders.

He also has the opportunity to do something else he loves. “My implied task here is mentoring,” he said. “To try and unload what little I know to the next iteration of intelligence people coming up.”

“He is a great mentor and teacher. I have never met a person so patient with others,” said Lt. Col. Joyce Griggs, one of Nicholson’s fellow intelligence officers at DOMEX, who added she is always inspired by his “can do” attitude.

But with the acceptance of such a rewarding assignment, Nicholson had to give up something. He temporarily left behind his wife of 35 years, Betty—currently in the late stages of Alzheimer’s—for whom he has been the sole caregiver the past 11 years.

His love for Betty is evident in his warm facial expressions and soft tone of voice when he speaks about her. “She sits in a padded rocking chair, she eats the food we eat, and she has her music. It’s the best possible life she could have,” Nicholson said with a smile, adding that he can’t wait to return and continue to care for her.

Looking back on his life’s work, Nicholson admits that although he is nearing the end of the investigative work for which he has always had a passion, he has been blessed.

“I’ve been very fortunate in my several careers,” he said. “But nobody gets to be a cowboy forever.”

Memorial on Base

Soldiers remember 'the six million'



Equal opportunity personnel hosted an annual Holocaust remembrance at Al Faw Palace April 21 to give troops and civilians a deeper understanding of genocide's costs and causes. Attendees listened to Holocaust-inspired poems written by troops and Above, Capt. Amman Starr, optometrist, 166th Medical Detachment, performs a musical selection while attendees view a slideshow portraying Holocaust tragedies. At right, Soldiers hold candles lit in honor of the nearly six million Jewish victims of Nazi atrocities during World War II.

Photos by
Christopher M. Gaylord
13th Public Affairs Detachment



ATTENTION VBC:

CID is looking for highly motivated, self-driven Soldiers who want to pursue a career in Law Enforcement.

Listed below are the prerequisites for becoming an agent and also a link to the USCIDC homepage. The link will give you the tools you need to start the process; it also contains a list of frequently asked questions that might assist you in your decision-making process.

If you have an interest in becoming a U.S. Army special agent, then please contact Sgt. 1st Class Davis via email or DSN 835-1451 to discuss your qualifications. Thank you!

CID home page (with instructions on how to start preparing your packet):

http://www.cid.army.mil/join_CID.html

PREREQUISITES

(Enlisted, Reserve and National Guard)

- U.S. citizenship
- Minimum age of 21
- Maximum grade of E-5 (non-promotable)
- Minimum of two years of military service but not more than 10
- Minimum of one year of military police experience or two civilian police experience (a waiver of this prerequisite may be considered if favorably endorsed by the local CID office)
- Minimum of 60 college credit hours from an accredited institution (a waiver of up to half of this prerequisite may be considered if favorably endorsed by the local CID office; 31B/E may request waiver to 15 semester hours)
- Minimum ST score of 107 or higher, ST score of 110 or higher if tested prior to Jan. 2, 2002
- Pass the Adult Basic Education (TABE) test (level A w/Spelling) with a total battery grade level of 12.9 (applicants holding an associate or higher degree and applicants from the reserve component are exempt from this requirement)
- Meet the height and weight standards prescribed in AR 600-9 and pass an Army Physical Fitness Test) within the last six months
- Physical profile 22221 or better
- Normal color vision (may be waived if applicant can distinguish between green, red and amber)
- Must possess a valid driver's license
- Ability to speak and write clearly
- Ability to deploy worldwide
- 36 months of service obligation on completion of the Apprentice Special Agent Course
- Suitable character established by a Single Scope Background Investigation leading to a Top Secret clearance
- No record of having less than an honorable discharge
- No record of Lost Time
- No civil court or court martial convictions
- No record of mental or emotional disorders
- No record of unsatisfactory credit

Operating Hours

Coalition Cafe DFAC
CLOSED
FOR MAINTENANCE
Sports Oasis DFAC
Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Dinner 5 - 8:30 p.m.
Midnight Dining 11 p.m. - 1 a.m.

Education Center
8 a.m.-midnight

Camp Liberty Post Exchange
8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Fitness Center
Open 24 Hours

Victory Main Post Office
Monday-Sunday 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Saturday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

MNF/C-I Unit Mail Room
Customer Services/Mail Call:
3-6 p.m.

Al Faw Palace Post Office
Wednesday and Sunday
12:30-5:30 p.m.

Golby Troop Medical Clinic
Sick Call
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon

Dental Sick Call
Monday - Friday 7:30 - 10:30 a.m.
Saturday 9 - 10:30 a.m.

Mental Health Clinic
Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. - noon

Pharmacy
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon;
1 - 4:30 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon

Worship Hours

Victory Chapel (Bldg. 31)
Thursday
7:30 p.m.....*Latter Day Saints Seminary*
Friday
6:30 p.m.....*Jewish Shabbat Service*
Saturday
11 a.m.....*7th Day Adventist Service*
8 p.m.....*Catholic Mass*
Sunday
7 a.m.....*Liturgical Protestant Service*
2 p.m.....*Latter Day Saints Service*
4 p.m.....*Episcopal/Lutheran Service*

Mini Chapel (Bldg. 24F)
Tuesday
7:30 p.m..... *Latter Day Saints Service*
Wednesday
7 p.m.....*Men's Fellowship*
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
11:30 p.m.....*Roman Catholic Mass*
Friday
1 p.m.....*Muslim Prayer Service*
8 p.m.....*Women's Fellowship*
Saturday
5 p.m.....*Eastern Orthodox Service*
Sunday
8 a.m.....*Eastern Orthodox Service*
10 a.m.....*Protestant Sunday School*
3 p.m.....*Church of Christ Service*
7:30 p.m..... *Latter Day Saints Service*

Hope Chapel (Bldg 24B)
Monday
12 p.m.....*Charismatic Prayer Meeting*
Sunday
8:30 a.m....*Collective Protestant Service*
10 a.m..... *Roman Catholic Mass*
12 p.m..... *Gospel Service*
6:30 p.m....*Contemp. Protestant Service*

Warrior Chapel (Camp Liberty)
Friday
6:30 p.m.....*Victory Base Open Circle*

MNC-I Chaplain's Office:
485-3743

Corps has its own rock 'n' roll band of brothers

BY SGT. LINDSEY BRADFORD

Multi-National Corps—Iraq

Public Affairs Office

At the bottom of an empty pool, covered by a circus-like tent, you will find the heartbeat of I Corps: the 56th Army Band.

That curious structure on Camp Victory is also where Sunburn, the self-proclaimed rock music connoisseurs of the 56th Army Band, will call “home” for the next 11 months. It’s where they discuss what material they like, transcribe music to play at their concerts and rehearse every day.

Their mission: Bring live music to servicemembers on Victory Base Complex and beyond.

“Our main focus and purpose is to play for the troops,” said Staff Sgt. Michael Johnson, Sunburn’s musical support team leader, pianist and background vocalist and an Ellensburg, Wash., native.

Johnson’s backup in the band includes drummer and percussive-effects engineer Sgt. David Champagne, a native of Houston; Sgt. Jason Lane, team leader, bassist and background vocalist from Valdosta, Ga.; lead vocalist and lead guitarist Spc. Mike Nelson from Scarborough, Maine; and Spc. Ron Hart, a sound engineer hailing from Powell, Wy.

The bandmates said deployment has brought them a welcome change in gears. While at Fort Lewis, Wash., Sunburn played a lot of recruiting events

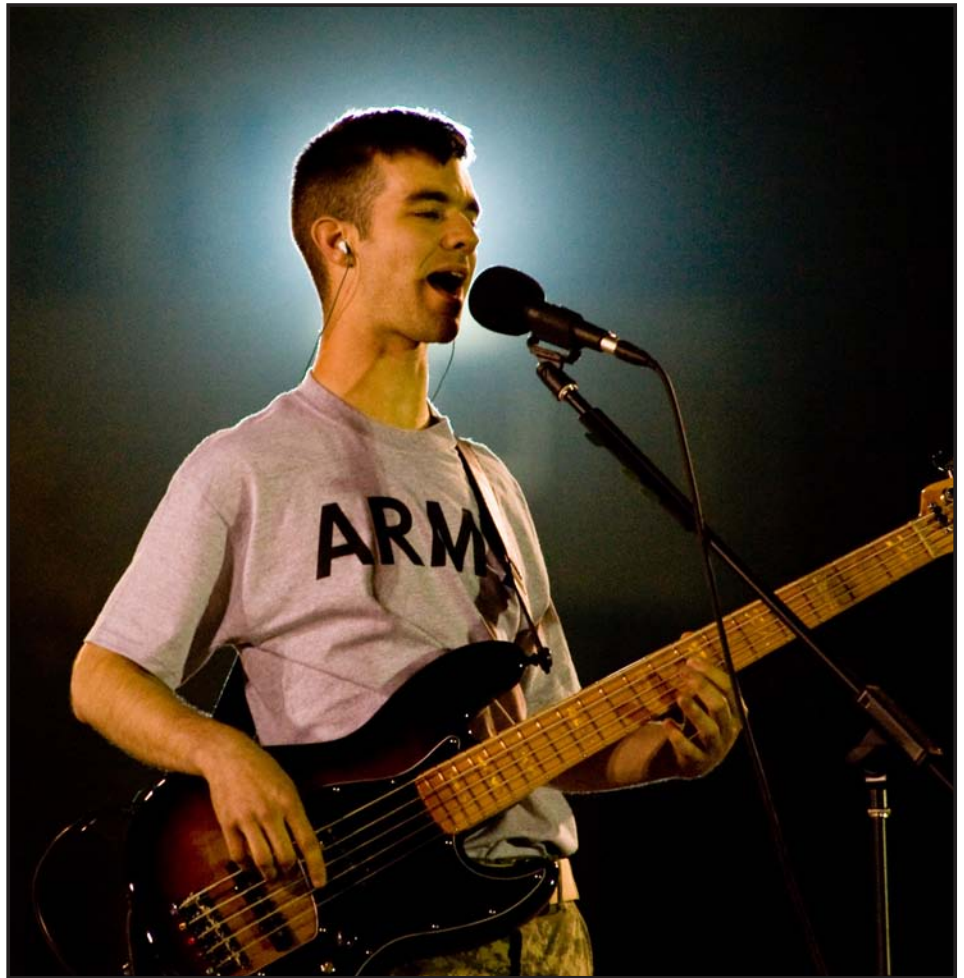


Photo by Lee Craker, Multi-National Corps—Iraq Public Affairs Office

Sgt. Jason Lane plays the bass line and backs up lead vocalist Spc. Mike Nelson of Sunburn, the 56th Army Band’s rock group, at the troupe’s first concert on Camp Victory April 17.

to show prospective Soldiers what being in an Army band was all about.

“Now we are deployed and our mission has shifted focus,” Johnson said. “We are here to build morale, encourage people and help them to feel like there is a little piece of home (in Iraq).”

In addition to playing for President Barack Obama during his visit to Al Faw Palace earlier this month, Sunburn held its first concert on the Victory main stage April 17.

“They were really jamming out,” said Sgt. Jennifer Miller, an Elyria, Ohio, native in the crowd. “They sounded great.”

That kind of reaction seemed to be shared by all in attendance; some servicemembers were dancing, some were singing and others were cheering for more.

“We want to let people know we are here for them,” Lane said.

On this night, Camp Victory’s troops heard that message loud and clear.