



Garcia helps save fellow soldier's life

by Norris Jones
Gulf Region Central District
US Army Corps of Engineers

Baghdad, Iraq— Four 60mm rounds blasted Forward Operating Base Loyalty south of Sadr City at 7:20 p.m. July 29.

SFC David Garcia says he and the staff took cover in their concrete bunker when they heard a young soldier from the 101st screaming for help in a nearby parking lot.

“I surprised myself on what happened next,” Garcia says. “It must have been the Army training but the next thing I know I’m racing for our first aid kit and then dashed across the street.

“I cut away the soldier’s t-shirt and there was a huge open chest wound from the shrapnel. I’ve never seen anything like that and I hope I never do again.

“He was bleeding really bad and had a lot of trouble breathing. I applied a trauma dressing but it wasn’t working. I remembered they said in the

Combat Life Saving Class to use anything to seal the wound. While others gathered to help, I ran across the street, got some duct tape and a plastic sheet protector and when we put that on he started doing a lot better.” They loaded him on a stretcher and rushed him to the Troop Medical Clinic (TMC).

Garcia says the soldier, apart from the chest wound, had to have reconstruction surgery on his liver but is reportedly doing fine at Walter Reed Hospital.

This is Garcia’s second straight year being deployed. He was recalled to Kosovo last year. He’s a member of the 578th Engineer Battalion out of Santa Fe Springs, CA, where he and his wife Teresa reside. For his civilian career, he’s a foreman for ARB Inc., a world-wide pipeline construction company headquartered in Lake Forest, CA. Regarding the episode, SFC Garcia says, “I surprised myself. I really did.”

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SFC David Garcia on duty at Camp Loyalty, Baghdad, Iraq

Qadisiyah Resident Office, Camp Echo Iraq

Spotlight on CPT Jake Espinoza



CPT Jacob H. Espinoza is currently assigned to the Qadisiyah Resident Office, Camp Echo Iraq with the following responsibilities and duties:

Project Engineer: responsible for overseeing the work for an assigned engineering contract. Manages the project cost schedule and the Iraqi Quality Assurance Engineers. Responsible for any and all issues relating to the specifications, designs, submittals, or schedule of the assigned engineering project(s).

Construction Representative: responsible for site administration of the contract and primary point of contact for the Contractor and Customer. Tasked with providing Quality Assurance and safety monitoring of the construction activities by direct and frequent observation of the construction, materials, and workmanship.

Liaison Officer (LNO):

- Promotes cooperation between the Qadisiyah Resident Office (QRO) and the Contractor/Customer.
 - Uses communications in accordance with the QRO's procedures.
 - Facilitates comprehension of the QRO's intent and orders.
 - Expeditiously informs the QRO of upcoming missions, tasks, and orders of the Contractor and Provincial Iraqi Government Representatives.
 - Monitors and schedules the level and extent of protection the QRO needs as it arrives, disembarks, and prepares for contract/engineering operations.
 - Opening of channels of communications that will become routine later.
- Local tactical intelligence products otherwise unavailable to the commander



Faces from around Iraq



1LT Jessica Secor poses with Country singer Toby Keith during a free concert in Baghdad. 1LT Secor is assigned as an Intelligence Officer for the Division.



MAJ Chuck Lyda poses in front of an incoming sandstorm in Northern Iraq. MAJ Lyda is the Operations Officer for the Gulf Region Northern District.



MAJ Steve Martinelli reviews one of his many engineering projects in the field. MAJ Martinelli is a Resident Engineer, working with the 101st Airborne Division on projects in Baghdad.



MSG E.B. Cain is caught in a rare moment at his desk at the Division HQ. MSG Cain is the Division Vehicle Maintenance NCO, and frequently travels to the Districts to insure the fleet is operating at 100% capacity.



MG McCoy presents LTC King's new silver oak leaf cluster.



MSG Dale Dupree gives a cigar lighter for the special occasion.



CDR Keith White, COL Deb Lewis, MG William McCoy, LTC David King.



COL Michael Herman



CDR White & MSG Freeman



LTC David King cuts the cake following his promotion ceremony Sept. 8 officiated by MG William H. McCoy Jr., Commander Gulf Region Division.

King promoted to Lt. Colonel

MAJ David King was promoted to Lt. Colonel during a special ceremony Sept. 8 officiated by MG William H. McCoy Jr., Commander Gulf Region Division. MG McCoy praised LTC King's leadership saying he "keeps everything moving in the right direction to accomplish the mission."

LTC King deployed with the California National Guard's 40th Infantry Division's HHD Engineer Brigade in May 2006 for a one-year tour in Iraq and is GRC's Chief of Operations and Plans. He's involved in GRC's reconstruction efforts that total over 1500 completed and ongoing projects totalling nearly \$3 billion in work. The 50-year-old enlisted in the Army in 1975 when he was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division for a 3-year tour. He earned his commission in 1988 and has served as both a Logistician and an Engineer. He and his wife Patricia have four children and their home is in Suisun, CA.

The DANCON March

On July 3rd twelve Gulf Region Division soldiers, including six from the California National Guard completed the 20 kilometer (12.5 mile) Dancon road march. The march has been a tradition since 1972 when it first started as the Danish contribution to the mission in Cyprus (UNFICYP). During every peacekeeping mission since then, every Danish contingent has arranged its own DANCON March. This march took place in the Baghdad International Zone, and took approximately 4 hours to complete. At the completion of the mission, marchers were awarded the “Baghdad DANCON Medal” by the senior presiding Danish Officer.



At the start of the DANCON March. 4:00 AM and only 96 degrees. California National Guard members include: MSG E.B. Cain, COL Michael Herman, LTC Robert Spano, SFC David Garcia, SFC Javier Garcia (not pictured SFC David Johnson)



MSG E.B. Cain is awarded his DANCON medal by the presiding Danish officer



Mission Complete!!! 4 hours later and 10 degrees hotter, a tired but happy group of team members cross the finish line.



An assortment of DANCON medals from other marches.

Time Completed

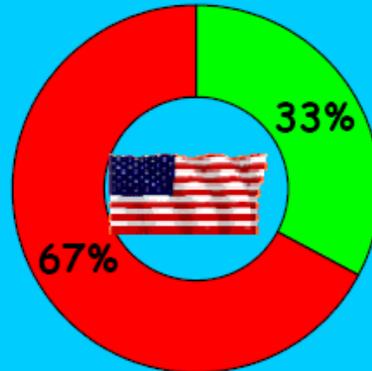
17.12 Weeks
119.81 Days
2,875.44 Hours
172,526.65 Minutes
10,351,599 Seconds

Time To Go

35.03 Weeks
245.19 Days
5,884.56 Hours
353,073.35 Minutes
21,184,401 Seconds



Time In Baghdad



Time Completed
Time Remaining

Is the glass 1/3 empty or 2/3 full?



Sage Johnson was born on August 15th in Sacramento

Parents SFC David & Becky Johnson are doing well, and are elated with the birth of their first child. SFC Johnson was able to see his daughter for the first time on a video teleconference between Baghdad, Iraq and Kaiser hospital in Sacramento, and was walking around in a high hover for the rest of the week, as he talked about the joy of being a new father. SFC Johnson will hold his daughter for the first time when he heads home on leave this fall. **Welcome Sage, you are the newest Sunburst Sapper!!!!**

A Message from The Brigade Commander



COL Herman, Deputy Commander GRD and
Dr. Abdul Latif J. Rashid
Iraq Minister of Water Resources

It is hard to believe the Sunburst Sappers are already one-third of the way through our tour here. Each month in Iraq brings new challenges and new successes in the work we are here to do, in our personal lives, and in the lives of the Iraqi people. When we arrived in May we witnessed an Iraqi governmental shift with Nuri al-Maliki elected as the Prime Minister, and we watched as many new people were appointed to ministerial positions. We are now watching the birth of a new, stable government that hopes to unite the people so that life here becomes better. The Corps' effort to help create a better life for the Iraqis is moving in the right direction. Restored oil facility projects are starting to have a positive impact on the Iraqi oil industry. The Facilities and Transportation Sector reports that all of their design-build border fort and fire station programs are completed. This will improve border security and the safety of the Iraqi people. Over 800 school projects are also finished and enrollment has risen every year, reversing more than a decade of decline and offering evidence of increased prosperity for the Iraqis.

The Electric Sector has had their share of successes as well. So far this summer, the national average of electricity generated per day is 13 hours, with an average of nine hours per day in Baghdad. The average level of electricity generated in August was about 5,000 megawatts per day, which surpasses the pre-war average of 4,200 megawatts. [By way of comparison, California is about the same size as Iraq and has about 20% more people, but generates about 45,000 megawatts on a peak day!] The Water Sector is having an impact on people's lives and health by making potable water available through small Iraqi-wide projects that include wells; collection and distribution systems; and storage tanks as well as through the large, on-going water treatment projects at Nasiriyah and Erbil.

Why do I tell you all of this? Well, in part it is to help you understand the magnitude of the effort here. But even more, it is to help you understand the impact our Sunburst Sappers are having upon a devastated and broken country. They are spread throughout every province, working in every sector, exposing themselves to hot, dusty, miserable conditions in order to deliver these projects. And they are doing it without complaint, and in a manner which makes every one of us proud to be a California Guardsman. For every story we are able to include in this newsletter, there are another ten waiting to be told. We are living and writing our own history, and telling a story that's as solid as the infrastructure we are building.

Delivering Progress - - Building Peace!

COL Michael Herman

Sunburst Sappers!