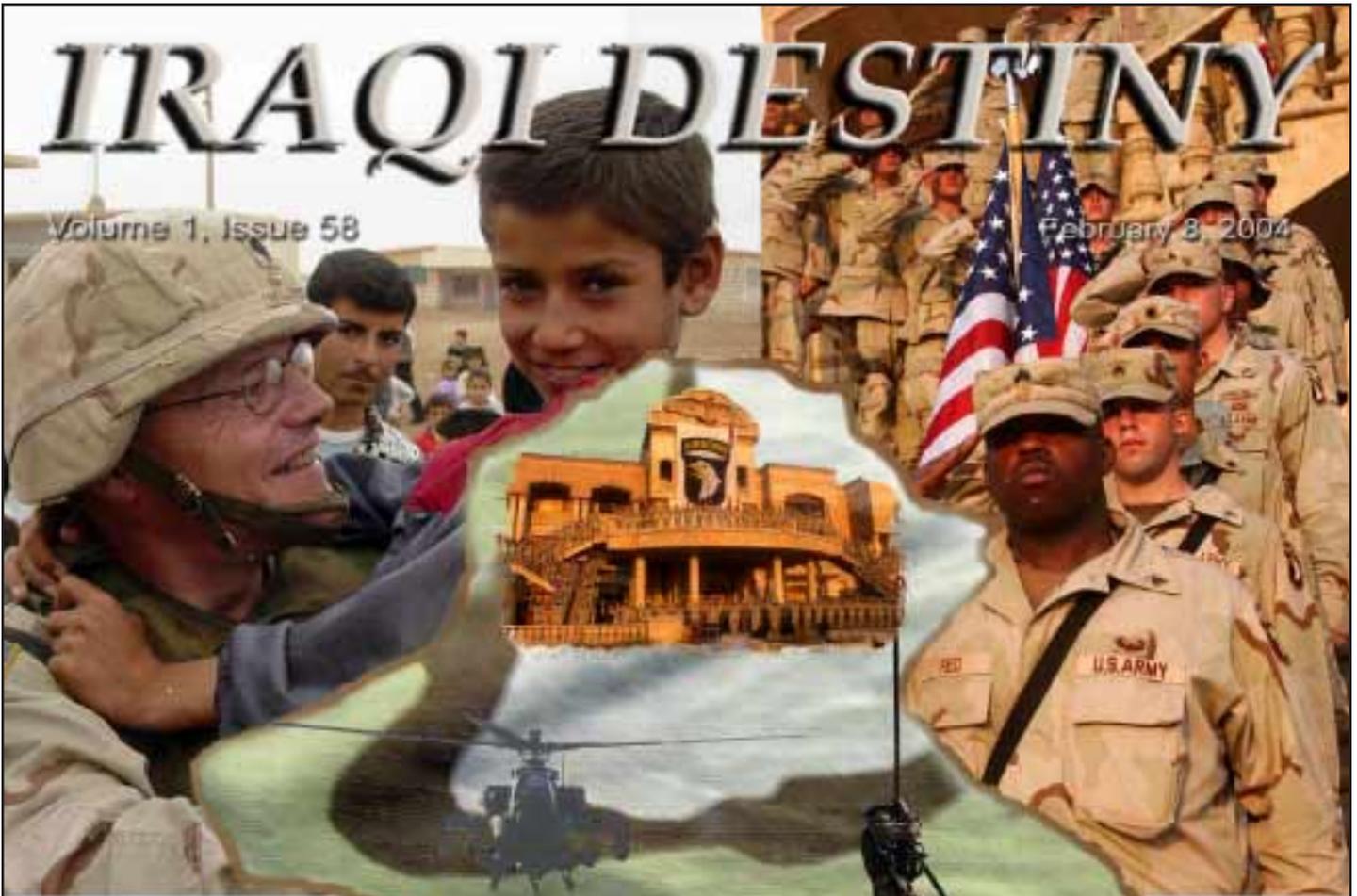


# IRAQI DESTINY

Volume 1, Issue 58

February 8, 2004



***All good things...***



***101st mission complete  
in Northern Iraq***

## Commentary

# The *Iraqi Destiny* comes to a close

In response to the redeployment of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and supporting units, the *Iraqi Destiny* will celebrate this, the last issue, with a look back at our year.

Another chapter in the history of the 101st has been written and will be soon coming to a close as the men and women of the division make their way back to Fort Campbell and reunite with their loved ones who have been waiting these long months for their return.

Our team of Army journalists has been with the division since we received the deployment orders to Kuwait. We said good-bye to our families, uncertain if we would ever return.

We flew to the sandy deserts of Kuwait and waited for our time to fight.

It came.

Across the berm, on convoys and air assaults, we covered the war. We were in the streets of An Najaf, Karbala, Al Hilla and finally Baghdad, with the troops on the front lines, covering the operations, sometimes even fighting alongside our comrades-in-arms.

When hostilities were declared to be over, we changed our focus, as everyone did, to humanitarian aid. We photographed the smiling faces, the interaction of civilians and servicemembers and we showed the world that a lethal combat force could also be kind and giving.

Then the 101st moved to Mosul, the second largest city in Iraq. It was here that we would have our greatest accomplishments. The Screaming Eagles took a city in shambles and restored it, breathing new life into the people and the infrastructure. We established government, electricity, water and faith in the new Iraq.

We rooted out resistance, Saddam loyalists, terrorists and two of the biggest threats to the Iraqi people: Uday and Qusay Hussein, the maniacal sons of Saddam.

With the capture of Saddam in mid-December, the threat and fear of the Hussein family coming back into power has been averted.

We have covered humanitarian aid, combat operations and raids. We have smiled with the Iraqi people when their problems were eased by the efforts of this division.

We breathed a collective sigh of relief as more and more insurgents were captured and weapons caches confiscated.

We covered memorials when those of our ranks have fallen, sacrificing their lives for the cause of freedom. We have shed tears for our comrades and given their families and loved ones visual representation of the goodbyes from the places they fell.

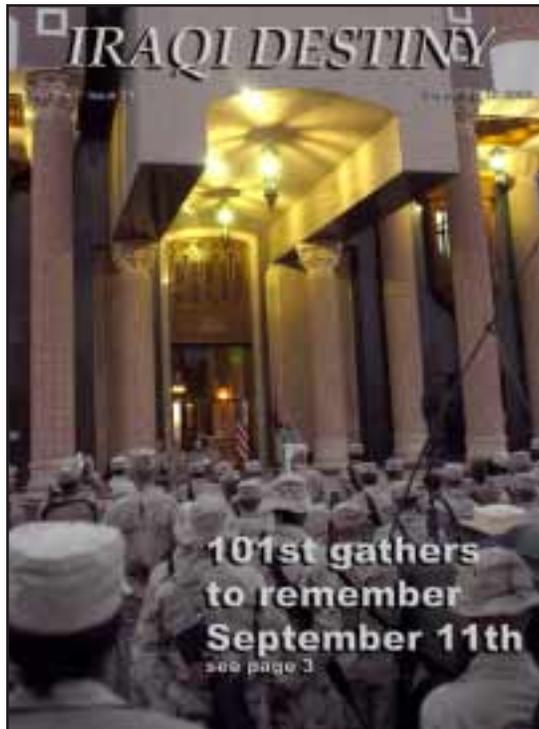
We, the staff of the *Iraqi Destiny*, journalists representing the 101st, have prided ourselves with telling the story from the front lines and from the streets of Iraq and relaying this experience to others.

Distribution over the Internet has also given the people back home a better picture of the events that do not get reported on by the international media.

For those who have read our publication over these long months, we thank you. Our purpose has been to inform and if you have been reading the *Destiny*, we have accomplished that mission.

Now, we will prepare to return to our families along with the rest of the 101st. Thank you for reading and enjoy the last issue.

*Spc. Joshua M. Risner*  
**Editor, *Iraqi Destiny***  
*40th Public Affairs Detachment*



### Iraqi Destiny Staff

**Commanding General**  
 Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus

**Div. PAO**  
 Maj. Hugh (Trey) Cate

**NCOIC**  
 Staff Sgt. Mark Swart

**Editor**  
 Spc. Joshua M. Risner

**Journalists**  
 Pfc. Thomas Day  
 Spc. Joshua Hutcherson  
 Pfc. Chris Jones  
 Sgt. Robert Woodward

This Army funded newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army overseas. Contents of the "Iraqi Destiny" are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). The "Iraqi Destiny" is produced by the 40th Public Affairs Detachment, Fort Campbell, Ky. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Public Affairs Officer. It is published weekly, on Thursday afternoons, by the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Public Affairs Office, Unit 96176, APO AE 09325-6176. Contact us at: [joshua.risner@us.army.mil](mailto:joshua.risner@us.army.mil) or at DNV (320) 581-0725.

# May



Spc. Joshua M. Risner



Pfc. Thomas Day

(Clockwise from above) Puyallup Wash. native Spc. Allan Rivard, Company C, 37th Engineer Battalion, teaches a group of Iraqi children the macarena May 29 in Mosul. Staff Sgt. Ron Henry of Baxley, Ga., Headquarters, Division Support Command, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) sings some gospel tunes with a little help from Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Toon of Havelock, N.C., HHC DISCOM, and Spc. Laura Brazeil, 101st Soldier Support Battalion. Soldiers were performing as a part of the Memorial Day celebrations at a 101st airfield. Below, Iraqis participate in Task Force Neighborhood, which focused on restoring civic pride in the local communities of Mosul.



Spc. Joshua M. Risner

# June



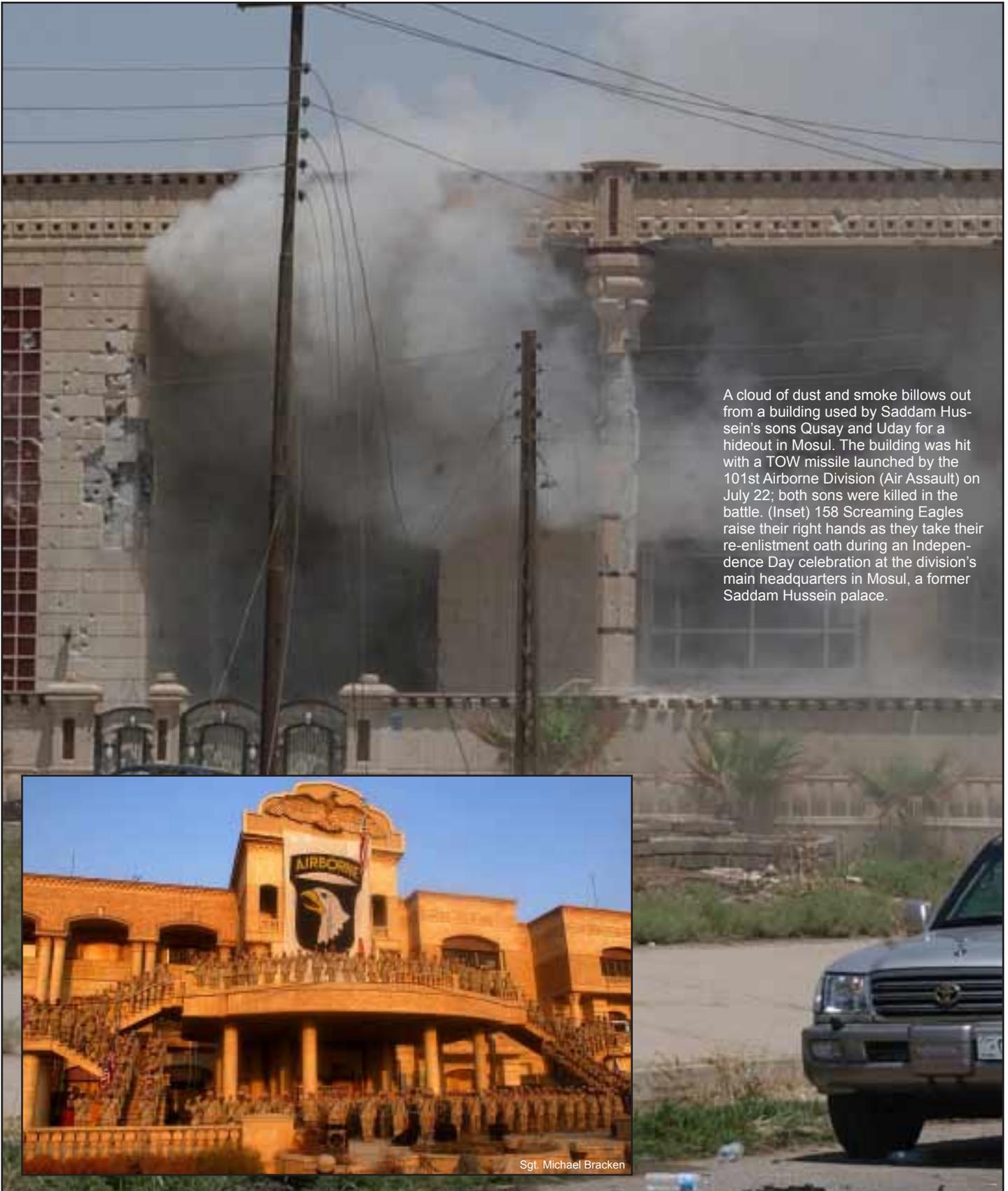
Spc. Joshua M. Risner

(Above) Col. Joseph Anderson, commander, 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, (Air Assault) answers questions and addresses the issues facing the people of Mosul during a radio interview. (Right) Capt. Donald La Rue, an Arizona reservist with the 109th Medical Company and attached to 2nd Battalion, 44th Air Defense Artillery Regiment of the 101st Airborne, has a Joint Iraqi Security Company trainee demonstrate the first aid skills he was taught by U.S. forces. Kurdish and Arab Iraqis were jointly trained by 2nd Battalion, 44th Air Defense Artillery Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, to become the first self-sufficient and multi-ethnic local military force.



Pfc. James Matise

# July



A cloud of dust and smoke billows out from a building used by Saddam Hussein's sons Qusay and Uday for a hideout in Mosul. The building was hit with a TOW missile launched by the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) on July 22; both sons were killed in the battle. (Inset) 158 Screaming Eagles raise their right hands as they take their re-enlistment oath during an Independence Day celebration at the division's main headquarters in Mosul, a former Saddam Hussein palace.

Sgt. Michael Bracken

Sgt. Curtis G. Hargrave

# August



Spc. Blake Kent

(Above) Soldiers of the 3rd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne, get a taste of Ranger School and practical training in leadership and squad movement on the same terrain previously occupied by Iraqi troops. The troops faced long patrols, the real world threat of possible enemy attack and heat reaching 120 degrees Farenheit. (Below) Former Iraqi Swim and Dive team members make use of the newly opened Olympic Pool facility in Mosul, Iraq.



Sgt. Ty Stafford

# September



Pfc. Chris Jones



Spc. Blake Kent



Spc. Joshua M. Risner

(Top) Soldiers duke it out in the second round of a boxing match at the Boxing Smoker, an event where troops face off in the ring. 2-44 ADA organized the event and Don King helped finance it. (Above) Maj. Nathaniel Balentine, 431st Civil Affairs Battalion, paints the face of an Iraqi child during the day's festivities. Soldiers and civilian employees volunteered their time to help facilitate the event. (Left) The Sabalauski Air Assault School temporarily relocated from Fort Campbell to the Qayarrah West installation in northern Iraq. The Fort Campbell training team pinned on wings for students in weekly classes through December.

# October



Pfc. Thomas Day

(Above) 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) Division Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin Hill talks with Bruce Willis during his visit with the 101st. He also put on a show for the troops in Tallafar. (Right) Screaming Eagles vie for the title of Best Costume at the Halloween 10k Race Friday. Cpl. Jason Walters (far right) of Dayton, Ohio, 6-101st Aviation Regiment, won the contest with his clown suit. (Below) Two signaleers with the 501st Signal Battalion display the patch the battalion's troops have sewn to their kevlar. The symbol was worn by the battalion in World War II. The lightning flash in the center of the box was added to reflect the technological enhancements essential to military communication.



Pfc. Thomas Day



Pfc. Chris Jones

# November



(Left) A student at the National Guard Marksmanship Training Sniper Course takes aim at a target 700 meters away with his M-24 Sniper Weapon System. The course took place in the open prairies of northern Iraq for select members of the 101st Airborne Division (Alr Assault). (Below) Soldiers with the 21st Combat Support Hospital team carry a sand-bagged litter through a trench at the combat medic challenge. The cold, waist deep water didn't deter them from pushing on and completing the station.

Spc. Joshua Hutcheson



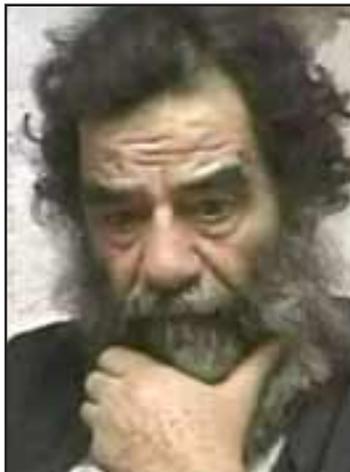
Spc. Joshua M. Risner

# December



Staff Sgt. David Bennett

(Above) A member of 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, lifts a Styrofoam lid covering the hole where former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein was discovered hiding Dec.13 in the village of Ad Dawr. (Left) Robin Williams, star of stage and screen, entertains 101st troops in Mosul during a USO tour. (Below) Saddam Hussein is interrogated shortly after his capture.



Courtesy photo



Spc. Joshua M. Risner

# January



Spc. Joshua Hutcheson



Staff Sgt. Mark Swart

(Above) Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, and B Company, 501st Signal Battalion, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) prepare to hook a humvee up to a CH-47 Chinook helicopter. The 501st slingloaded equipment from a remote outpost on top of a mountain in preparation for redeployment. (Left) A row of OH-58 Kiowa helicopters are lined up at Shuaiba Port in Kuwait for redeployment.

# February



Maj. Gen. David H. Petraeus, commanding general, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and Division Command Sgt. Maj. Marvin Hill, furl the colors of the division during the transfer of authority ceremony held Feb. 5. (Inset) Chief Warrant Officer 2 Brandon Smith of Milwaukee, Wis., 501st Signal Battalion, meets football and baseball great Bo Jackson during Jackson's handshake tour in Kuwait.

Pfc. Thomas Day

Sgt. Robert Woodward

## Parting Thought

# *Iraqi Destiny*: Casing our colors a mix of emotions

by Staff Sgt. Mark Swart  
40<sup>th</sup> PAD NCOIC

It's finally over. After representing the Coalition in Northern Iraq since last April, the Screaming Eagles have officially transitioned their authority in Nineveh province and are heading home to prepare for their next rendezvous with destiny.

And with the departure, we close out this magazine with Issue 58. With a name like *Iraqi Destiny*, it's pretty clear that this publication could only tell the story of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division (Air Assault). Any other unit naming their publication the *Iraqi Destiny* would be as unfitting as naming their brigades "Bastogne", "Strike" or "Rakkasans."

Although I've worked on a number of Army publications, this is the first time I've ever known one for its entire existence. And watching it grow, adapt and change has been an incredibly rewarding experience.

The first issue was a humble two-page version, put out in early May by the 22<sup>nd</sup> Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, a Fort Bragg, N.C., unit attached to the 101<sup>st</sup> and stationed in downtown Mosul in what is now Nineveh Governor Ghanim Al Basso's office building.

For the first few weeks, production was fast and furious, with several issues a week going out. With a demand for the stories around the world, the circulation of the electronic version quickly surpassed the actual print version.

As the operation progressed, the unit later moved to the Ninevah Hotel, the division's new Civil Military Operations Center. And by late summer, a change of mission by the 22<sup>nd</sup> MPAD led to the handover of the *Destiny* to the 40<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Detachment.

As technical and software issues with local printers stumped our hopes of having the magazine printed locally, we realized that our target audience was perhaps better served by the electronic distribution.

After all, the troops in Northern Iraq know what they do every day. And they get outside news from satellite television, Stars and Stripes, and the Internet, just to name a few sources.

Instead of just reaching them, we saw our electrons reaching their families, friends and fans of the division around the world.

Currently, our electronic mailing list has more than 300 addresses, several of which post the *Destiny* to their websites. Many comments from readers back in the U.S. have praised us for

telling the "good stories," and often lambasted the civilian media for focusing on primarily the mounting death toll.

But unfortunately, there were a lot of memorials for us to cover as well. Something that, no matter how many I cover, never get any easier. During a stretch in the fall, we had three front pages in a row devoted to memorial services. It is a painfully close reminder that the fight is far from over in Iraq.

Our hearts (and frequently our tears) went out at the ceremonies, just thinking of all of the family and friends of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. Soldiers are generally young people, with years and years ahead of them, and often with young families.

There is nothing I can say that can ever fill the void I know each of them left.

But despite the tragedies, the mission continued.

Over the months, we saw and covered the formation of a new government in the province, the rebuilding of schools and infrastructure, new friendships and cooperation between previously warring Iraqi ethnic groups, and the ongoing combat missions against terrorism.

But the stories that really garnered the most feedback from our readers were the personal stories of the individual American servicemembers – people who came into Iraq as combatants, but just as quickly put their hearts and souls into making Iraq a better place for the residents and their children.

We may not have all been Boy (or Girl) Scouts, but I know that the stories we told represent only a small fraction of the good news stories that happened in Iraq during the 101<sup>st</sup>'s tenure there. The thought of getting home is great, but I know

that I have made a number of Iraqi friends who I will miss and think of frequently in the years to come.

For our last three issues, we have published from Kuwait as we cover the redeployment and transition of power to our replacements.

To the men and women of the 101<sup>st</sup> and all of its attached units, thanks for all that you have done. From deployment, to combat, to stability and support operations, you have lived the stories that history is made of, and allowed us the honor of telling them to the world.

But as meaningful as the stories have been, I know they'll be better once we are safe at home again, surrounded by our loved ones and enjoying the freedoms we have spent the last year defending!

Air Assault!

