



# SOUND OF LIBERTY

# LIGHTNING STRIKES



**The 101 Reaches Kuwait And Beyond**  
 by SPC Rich Gilberto

CAMP BUEHRING, KUWAIT - Touching down in the middle of the night, the Soldiers of the main body of the 101st Expeditionary Signal Battalion finally completed an 18-hour trip across seven time zones to assemble at the “Camp Buehring Gateway” for in-processing briefs, bag pickup, and room assignments.

The arrival was the result of extensive planning begun not long after the Battalion returned from its last deployment to Afghanistan in 2013. The 300-plus Soldiers would be flown off into their assigned duty stations over the next two weeks; vehicles and signal equipment shipped from the states had arrived with advance parties several days prior. Once everyone had fallen in on their duty stations the process of taking over from the previous unit, the 115th ESB out of Alabama, would begin. *(Continued on Page 6)*

In  
 This  
 Issue:

**2**  
 Command Staff  
 Messages

**4**  
 Mosaic: Kuwait and  
 the out-sites

**7**  
 RIP/TOA  
 Ceremony

**8**  
 Alpha Company  
 Feature

**12**  
 Awards and  
 Promotions



# FROM THE BATTALION COMMANDER



Greetings from sunny and sandy Kuwait!

A lot of great work is being done by the men and women here in Kuwait and other sites in and around the region. We are currently supporting named operations in seven countries at a total of 21 sites providing world class communications support to the Warfighters and our allies. Over the last several months we have moved \$88M worth of equipment from local Armories in New York to airfields, ports and bases in Kuwait, UAE, and Jordan, allowing us to validate the majority of our equipment and to finally assume our mission. Moving Soldiers and equipment safely from NY was a huge task that required the synchronization of ships, aircraft, and other transportation assets to ensure success. LT Tapia and his team of UMOs (Unit Movement Officers) SSG Laureano, SSG Odar, SGT Berke and SGT Alvarez did a fantastic job coordinating the Battalion's efforts and making sure we arrived safely, able to complete our mission.

Getting to this point for the battalion has taken an enormous amount of hard work and no Soldier could accomplish much without the support that they receive. The success that we realize could not have been accomplished without the family members and friends of the 101st Expeditionary Signal Battalion. Thanks to each of you for the wonderful support that you continue to provide our

Soldiers.

Starting with this edition of our FRG Newsletter we are going to highlight a company and their Soldiers. First in the chute is A Co, led by CPT Cronin and 1SG Tremblay.

Respectfully,

Ian Seagriff  
LTC, SC, NYARNG  
Commander, 101st Expeditionary Signal Battalion



# FROM THE COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR



I hope this message finds you in good health and good spirits. Back in the day, I used to write four to five letters per week to family and friends. While you can never be too busy to write a letter home, I'm happy we have this newsletter as an outlet to keep our friends and families informed. As we hit three months away from home, we're finally settling into our locations across the Middle East. Even though we're spread around, we have Soldiers taking basic leader course, combat lifesaver course, and technical courses to improve their skills. There are plenty of opportunities for self-improvement on the civilian education side as well through the University of Maryland University College and Central Texas College we have student-Soldiers working on their Bachelors and Masters degrees on their off-duty hours.



This issue of the newsletter is focused on Alpha Company, with Soldiers located on out-sites in Iraq and Bahrain. I recently took a trip to check in on the Soldiers in Iraq and found them in good spirits and engaged in valuable work for maintaining communications equipment throughout their areas of responsibility. Each site is unique unto itself, with the opportunity to work alongside military of other branches and nations, and our Soldiers are adapting and facing challenges in a positive way.

Given the progress we've made so far, our outlook for the mission and our experiences during our time here is very positive. I look forward to continuing to relay that positive message each month.

Until next time,

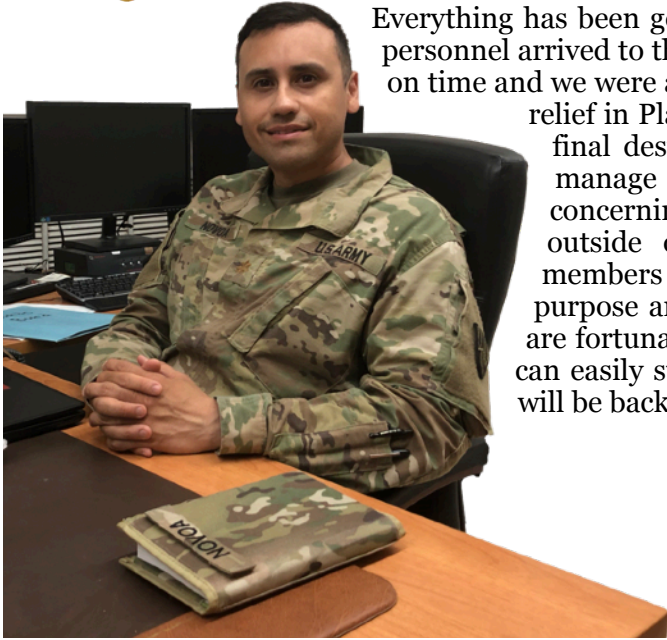
**Sound Of Liberty!**

David Santiago  
CSM, NYARNG  
Command Sergeant Major, 101st Expeditionary Signal Battalion





# FROM THE BATTALION EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Everything has been going well for the Battalion. All the advanced party and main body personnel arrived to theater with no issues. All of our essential equipment arrived exactly on time and we were able to maneuver everything to their proper location to conduct the relief in Place with 115th ESB. We have pushed all our personnel out to their final destinations. I feel confident in the teams that we have sent out to manage those sites. The unit leadership has done a lot of analysis concerning the mission and we are already seeing the benefits from this as outside organizations recognize our Soldiers for their efforts. Family members should feel proud of their Soldiers. Everyone here has task and purpose and is important to the success of the mission. That being said, we are fortunate enough where most of our battalion are in locations where they can easily stay in touch with their loved ones back home. Stay strong and we will be back in New York before you know it. God Bless!

Thank you,

Bernie A. Novoa  
MAJ, SC, NYARNG  
Executive Officer, 101st Expeditionary Signal Battalion

## UNIT MINISTRY TEAM

CHAPLAIN (MAJ) BRIAN PIDKAMINY - CPL BRENNAN DELANEY, CHAPLAIN'S ASSISTANT



From our hearts, the Unit Ministry Team (UMT) would like to thank you for all of your continued support from home. We have now been here for a little over a month in Kuwait and we are really settling in and improving on all of the things that the team before us had started.

Firstly, we have decided to capitalize on opportunities at the main post chapel by preaching some wonderful spirit-filled grace messages between the Gospel and the Contemporary services on Sundays. We typically welcome about 80-or-so Soldiers and civilians at each of the services. Corporal Delaney has even volunteered his free time to play in the worship band for the Gospel service. This Battalion is well represented at the main post chapel.

Secondly, the newly named "CHAPEX" free shoppette run by the UMT has now grown into the best site on the post. Because we have been so blessed, some of the supplies are even shared at other units on the base. Thanks to all of the support from home and the many various non-profit & ministry organizations, there are fresh supplies of health & beauty care, as well as snacks for any who come to visit. The UMT has also purchased a Keurig coffee machine for visitors and for fellowship. CPL Delaney is now organizing mailing lists in order to get CHAPEX supplies out to our folks separate from our Kuwait location.

Thirdly, we represent a positive and supportive team available for counsel, fellowship or just small talk for anyone who comes.

We miss you and love you!!! I want to leave you with this thought:

When it comes to your faith and your spirituality... **(1 Timothy 6:11-12 (NKJV) The Good Confession)** - But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. <sup>12</sup> Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.





# Sun & Sand

The main body of the 101st touched ground in Kuwait on 3 May 2018, starting the clock on a nine-month mission to maintain communications readiness throughout the Middle East. But all work and no play makes a dull newsletter. With karaoke, poker tournaments, gym classes, salsa dancing, and plenty more recreational activities, here are some photos of 101 Soldiers finding that work/life balance over 6500 miles away from home.

For more photos, events, and other updates, go to [www.nysignal.org/kuwait2018](http://www.nysignal.org/kuwait2018)









# Can't Stop The Signal

(Continued from page 1)

The beauty of a deployment for National Guard Soldiers is having the opportunity to focus on the job full-time and become a subject matter expert. Through immersive, real-world experience Soldiers find their strengths and gain a perspective of how their performance affects that of the Battalion. In turn, they gain an understanding of the Battalion's vital role in Operation Inherent Resolve - Spartan Shield. While maintaining equipment and readiness may not sound critical, this maintenance ensures that the United States and coalition forces are able to respond quickly to any threat in the Middle East, using communications equipment tested and cleared by the 101.

Outside of Kuwait, companies have sent select teams to work on specialty projects throughout the Army Central Command (ARCENT.) Representing the Battalion in Iraq, Afghanistan, Jordan, Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, these teams operate Expeditionary Network Enterprise Centers (ENECs) to

provide support for critical systems and keep their out-sites connected.

This support is not restricted to Army personnel. In Union III, SFC Herard Joseph and SPC Tristan Serrano work alongside contractors and coalition forces to keep the network up and running while the site hosts US Congressional delegations and diplomats to the embassies of Baghdad. In having to serve every level of command, they have firsthand knowledge of the high value of good customer service, which they strive to provide each day.

SFC Joseph, a French Canadian, has made several friends in the French and Canadian military forces present on the base, and he is happy to say the French Soldiers have brought him into their fold "as one of their own."

In the off-hours, there are plenty of opportunities for entertainment and self-improvement. Soldiers have enrolled in college courses and certification classes. Others have dedicated themselves to CrossFit, spin, yoga, or solo training at the several available gyms. At night, the MWR and USO host regular events such as bingo, karaoke, poker tournaments, and other special events for the Soldiers to unwind.

There is another kind of education that comes with travel away from the familiarity of the western world; that despite the many cultural differences, there are many commonalities. In Iraq, the Soldiers work surrounded by the busy modern city of Baghdad. In Kuwait, Soldiers can go to malls and shop at American stores alongside the locals. Afghanistan, sometimes made to look like a wasteland, has beautiful green terrain and a variety in the weather. The locals root for sports teams, take their children to school, and have dreams and aspirations similar to any American.

Settled in and working hard, the 101 Soldiers can find affirmation in their mission to support safety and security efforts in areas that are now a little less foreign than they were two months before.



(from top) A familiar flag flies over the Battalion Tactical Operations Center; CSM Santiago looks out the window of a Blackhawk helicopter during a visit to out-sites in Iraq; Soldiers from Headquarters Company pose with the newly-updated sign at the Battalion ALOC.







# Relief in Place, Transfer of Authority Ceremony

**On Saturday, May 19, the Alabama Army National Guard's 115<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Signal Battalion successfully completed a nine-month deployment in support of Operation Spartan Shield and was replaced by the New York Army National Guard's 101<sup>st</sup> Expeditionary Signal Battalion out of Yonkers, NY.**

The ceremony, called "Relief In Place, Transfer Of Authority" or RIP/TOA, featured guest speaker COL Kevin Griggs, the Commander of the 160<sup>th</sup> Signal Brigade, the 101's immediate higher authority for the deployment. With both Battalions side by side, each commander addressed the mass formation from a stage flanked by the flags of every US state and territory. The feature of the ceremony is the casing of the 115<sup>th</sup>'s colors for the journey home, and the uncasing of the colors of the 101<sup>st</sup> as they assume the roles and responsibilities of their predecessors for the next nine months in support of Operation Spartan Shield.







# LIVIN' THE DREAM

Alpha Company, based out of Peekskill, has taken on a mission requiring Soldiers in Iraq, Bahrain, and Kuwait. Despite this, they remain as close as ever.





# CPT Andrew Cronin, Commander

A Company is doing a great job and is focused on completing the missions that we were sent here to accomplish. Since our Company is spread out across ten different locations in three different countries, our Junior Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers have been given an incredible amount of responsibility and they have responded to the task. Our senior leaders in the company continue to impress me every day and it is clear that we have a number of rising stars within our ranks.

Our Soldiers in Iraq and Bahrain have been providing tremendous Computer and Networking Support to our allied Military and Civilian Forces at their respective locations. One site in Iraq processes over 400 service desk tickets in a typical week. Our Signal Soldiers at Camp Buehring have been training on their equipment and have been improving their proficiency in their Military Occupancy Specialties (MOS) and basic Soldiers skills so that we can be ready to support any new mission that comes our way. Our maintenance Soldiers have been working to get our equipment in top shape. Our Soldiers have really impressed me with their work ethic and positive attitudes.

A Co Soldiers are doing a really good job taking care of each other since we are all away from our friends and family. In Camp Buehring, we had a birthday party for two Soldiers that were missing home and in Bahrain there was a Father's Day Brunch for the dads in the group. Soldiers are also getting good opportunities for personnel growth. Most sites have access to college classes as well as IT industry training certifications. Everyone is also working hard at their personnel fitness and nutrition while deployed. SPC Pandazis won a power lifting competition in Bahrain and SPC LeBron won a 5K race in Kuwait. I look forward to see all the great things we will accomplish over the next 8 months.

**Livein The Dream!**



# 1SG Anthony Tremblay, First Sergeant

I am beyond proud of what the Soldiers of A Company have accomplished, and the great things it is clear they are going to accomplish for the duration of our deployment. The first 30 days in Theatre has been a culmination of all that these incredible Soldiers have done in the past 24 months preparing to get here; it is clear that their training and self-preparation has them fully ready to exceed mission expectations.

Our Soldiers have taken over significant communications missions in Iraq and Bahrain ensuring a seamless transition of authority from A Co 115th ESB to us. This critical mission ensures communication between the warfighters across Southwest Asia can continue without interruption and with the highest quality service possible. The Soldiers in Kuwait have been continuing to train to perform necessary functions on our traditionally assigned mission critical communications equipment and are prepared to replace those in other countries at a moment's notice.

Many Soldiers in the company are taking college classes and getting additional skills certification training such as A+, Net+ and Sec+. These training opportunities will provide the Soldiers in A Co more opportunities to excel, not only in their military careers, but their careers when they return home and into the civilian workforce.

**Livein' The Dream!**





# Alpha at the Out-Sites



SPC Pandazis shows off the scenery while representing A Co at an out-site in Bahrain.

## BAHRAIN

by SPC Pandazis

As an expeditionary signal battalion, certain teams are created and sent out around theater to provide signal support to accomplish the mission. A small detachment from Alpha Company led by LT Vaughn and SFC Carson are providing 24/7 communications for the 5-52 Battery in Bahrain. SSG Marshall and SSG Tietz can be both credited with increasing mission readiness by sharing their extensive knowledge in signal operations and cross-training their Soldiers.

While the country of Bahrain may have some scenic spots, the A Co Soldiers won't be found tanning on the beach. A regular workday requires a good deal of time spent outdoors in heat category V conditions with hot winds while trying to stay hydrated.

Admittedly, the austere conditions fell short of our expectations of good "Army living," but the disappointment was short lived. Seeing each branch working effectively, respectfully gave us a renewed vigor in our mission; focusing on the job has allowed us to identify and use our strengths

while working together on our weaknesses. Working alongside Sailors, Marines and other Soldiers has allowed strangers to become friends and battle buddies to become family.

## ERBIL

by SPC Cuccolo

Here in Erbil, Iraq, A. Co. 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon Soldiers provide a wide range of IT support across the base. These services include account creations, computer re-imaging, basic troubleshooting, and much more to ensure mission readiness in Erbil and within the 101 ESB's other areas of operation.

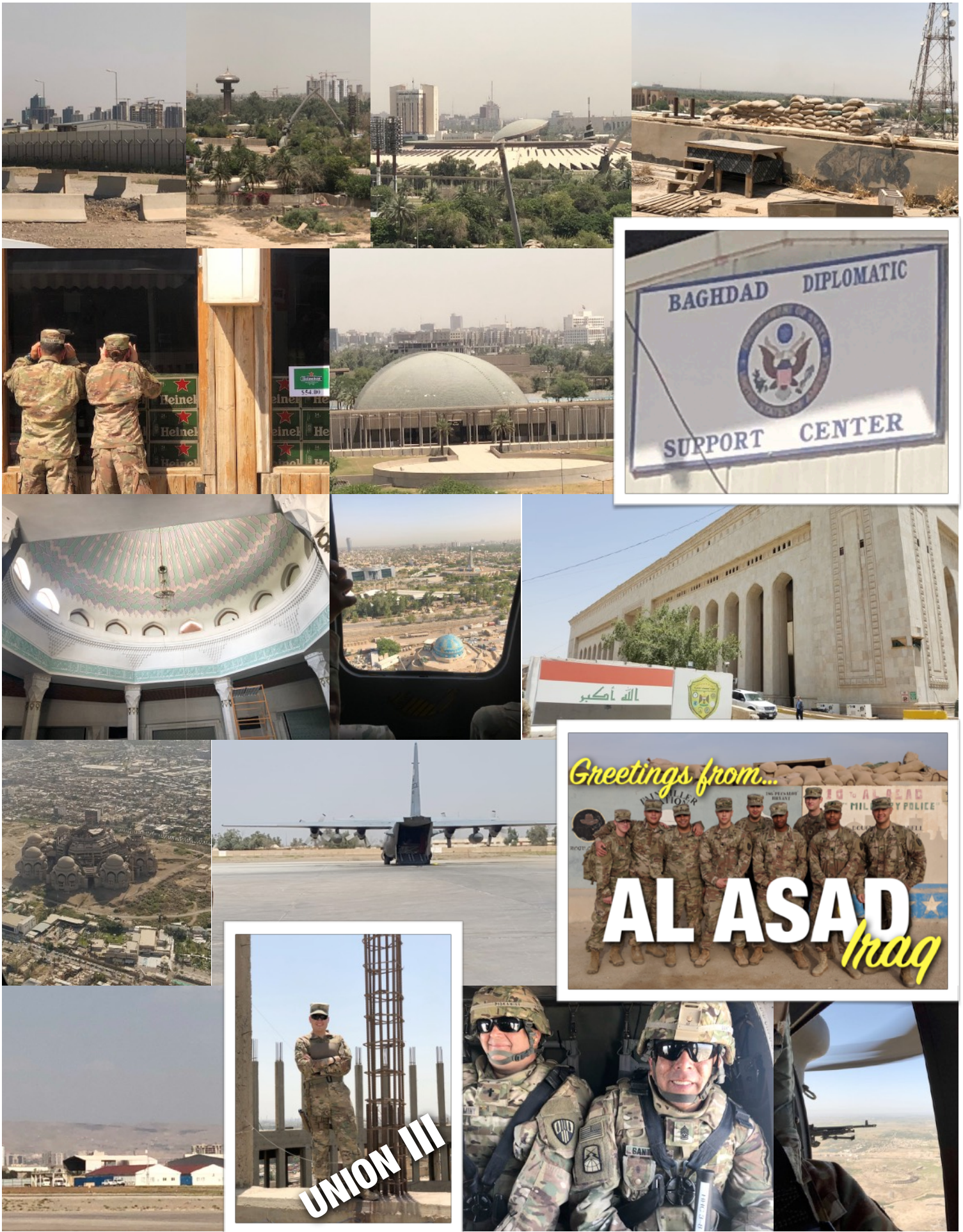
After approximately one month of work at the Expeditionary Network Enterprise Center in Erbil, site OIC SGT Martin and NCOIC SPC Gibson have maintained and developed important relationships with their ENEC counterparts in order to meet customer needs, as well as all mission requirements. In addition to providing signal services for U.S. personnel on Erbil, we also are responsible for managing services for coalition forces.

By representing the 101 and the New York Army National Guard by providing top-quality service and support, the Soldiers in Erbil are working hard and "Livin' the Dream."



Specialist Cuccolo shows that out-sites in Iraq have more than just T-walls and sandbags.







Send a letter or package to a Soldier via USPS for the cost of shipping to Manhattan:

[Rank] [Name]  
[Company], 101st ESB  
APO, AE 09330

Want to send a quick gift? Green Beans coffee shops exist at almost every post. To send your Soldier a gift card, all you need is their personal email address. Just go to [www.greenbeanscoffee.com](http://www.greenbeanscoffee.com) and choose "Coffee Cards" to get started. The value of the cards will include an extra 10% credit!



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO...

MAY					
SGT Alexis Bruno	18	SPC Richard Gilberto	30	SGT Aminu Abubakar	6
SGT Richard Vela	19	SGT Craig Scott	30	SPC Edlyn Johnson	8
CPL Amanda Whitehead	25	SPC Benjamin Casilla	31	PV2 Yaileny Gonzalez	9
SGT Davonte Johnson	27			SPC Peter LeBron	10
SPC Prem Nair	27	JUNE		SGT Omar Diaz	11
SSG Nelson Feist	29	SGT Ivan Arroyo	1	SSG Victor Levisaca	13
SPC Anthony Gist	29	2LT Fernando Bisoño	2	PFC Justin Giordano	14
SGT Omolade Adeleye	30	2LT Michael Buck	3	SPC Kenneth McCarthy	15
		2LT Stephen Rolston	3	SPC Ryan Roberts	15

## AWARDS



### Army Commendation Medal

1LT Justin Dishart (A Co)



### Army Achievement Medal

1LT Albert Ames (HHC)  
SGT Bron Lowe (A Co)  
SPC Shaquille Daley (B Co)  
SPC Timothy Bethune (C Co)  
SSG Cerone Samuel (C Co)

## RECENT PROMOTIONS

-  SPC Tara Feliciano (C Co)
-  SPC Tarel Morton (C Co)
-  SPC Angel Ramos (C Co)
-  PFC Yaileny Gonzalez (A Co)