



# Park Rises from Carnival Rubble

**BAGHDAD** — “As I drove by the Army canal every day, I saw this park, and I said this is something we can do to help the citizens,” said Col. John Hort, commander of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division.

Dover Park, as it is known by Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers, sat abandoned for years; located in the Qahira neighborhood of the Adhamiyah District of Baghdad, its carnival rides were unusable and the land was overgrown with weeds.

“It was your typical abandoned park here in Iraq,” said 1st Lt. Rosita Rodriguez, a civil affairs team chief with Company C, 404th Civil Affairs Battalion, attached to 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, MND-B.

Thus, the mission to rehabilitate the park became Rodriguez’s mission. Two months later, the refurbished park was completed and handed over to the local neighborhood council, Oct. 28, 2008.

“This is our first park in Qahira. We never had one before,” said Mohamed.

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A father pushes his son on a swing as other children play at the grand opening of Dover Park in the Qahira neighborhood in the Adhamiyah District of Baghdad, Oct. 28, 2008. Photo by Sgt. Jerry Saslav, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division Public Affairs.

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**KIRKUK** — Instead of coping with lingering fevers and other ailments that could be potentially lethal, Iraqis in this rural province now have access to timely healthcare thanks to a partnership between the local Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) and Iraqi health authorities.

Providing mobile health services has long been a dream of doctors and medical officials in Kirkuk. Now, efforts by the Kirkuk PRT and Coalition forces have turned this dream into reality.

The result is a new traveling medical clinic that recently began serving rural villages in Kirkuk. Previously, the citizens

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During a routine late-October security patrol in the town of Rutbah, U.S. Marine Cpl. Joseph Shutta gives stuffed animals to children outside their family home. The Marines distributed more than 100 stuffed animals while patrolling the area. U.S.M.C. photo.

## Marines Reach Out to Iraqi Kids

**RUTBAH** — When people typically think of Marines on a combat patrol in Iraq, the last thing that comes to mind is the image of fluffy stuffed animals.

However, with the help of a grass-roots organization in the United States, the Marines of 2nd Battalion, 25th Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 5, spread American goodwill to the children here recently.

The Marines distributed more than a hundred stuffed animals while patrolling the streets of this impoverished town of about 20,000 in western al-Anbar province.

“The [stuffed animals] help to connect us to the local children and for them to view us in a positive light,” said Capt. Tim Leonard, 30, a Stamford, Conn., resident who is serving as the battalion’s communications officer. “We are fortunate that people back in the states have donated the

stuffed animals to benefit the children of Iraq.”

The gesture is key in building relationships between Coalition forces and the Iraqi civilians in Rutbah, most of whom have had little interaction with the Marines and Sailors.

“By engaging the local population and giving out stuffed animals to the children, we show the people that we are here to help them to rebuild their community and assist them in their efforts,” explained Leonard, a reserve Marine on his second tour here, with more than seven years in the Corps. “Humanitarian assistance is increasingly important for us, and any measure of good will is well received.”

Sara Khalid Rafa’a, 11, a native of Rutbah, received two stuffed animals from Marines while walking home from school with her friends. These were the only

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## Detainees Released in Babil Cross Bridge to ‘New Iraq’

**FOB KALSU** — Thirty-four Iraqi detainees were released from different regions of northern Babil, Oct. 31, making 430 the total number of detainees released by 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

“Much has changed in Babil province in the year since many of you have been detained,” said Lt. Col. Michael Getchell, commander of 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, to nine detainees released by his unit here. “I ask you to stand on the bridge and walk to the future, embrace the change and not look back at the past.”

Getchell told the detainees that the symbolism of the bridge represented Iraq ... one side was the old Iraq filled with violence; the other side is the new Iraq representing a growing security force and a growing economy.

“The new Iraq is an Iraq where disputes are settled by discussion, not violence,” Getchell continued. “The new Babil province is a province secured by the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police; it is no longer [secured] by the Coalition forces. This is a great day for not only

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Spc. Michael McMiller pulls security at the Saddam Mosque, Al Zarai, Iraq, Oct. 30, 2008. Photo by SSgt. JoAnn S. Makinano.



Sgt. William Allen examines an ill Iraqi man, Hammam Al Alill, Iraq, Oct. 28, 2008. Photo by SSgt. JoAnn S. Makinano.



Sgt. Patrick Heyman on a police station roof, Hammam Al Alill, Iraq, Oct. 28, 2008. Photo by SSgt. JoAnn S. Makinano.