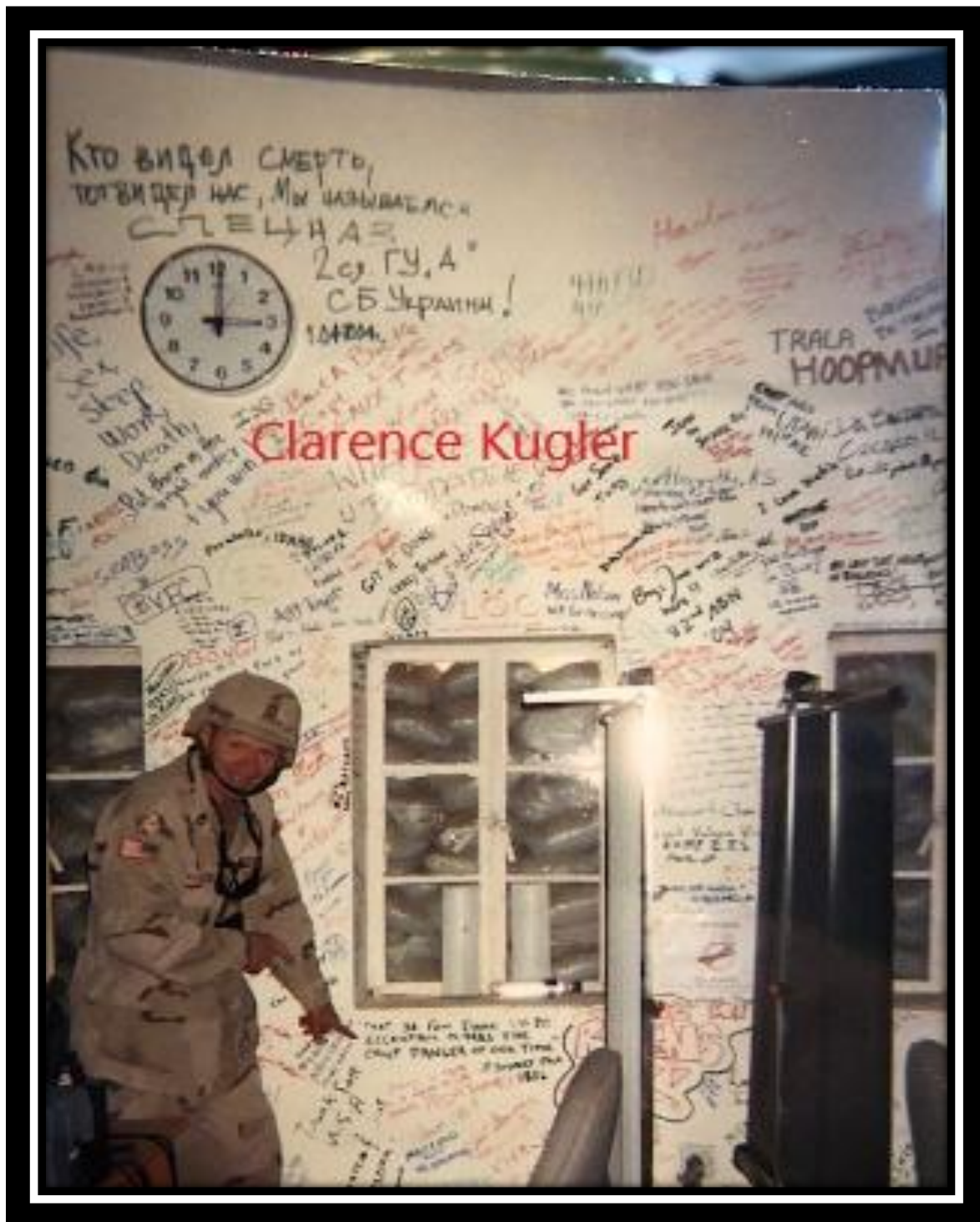


**Clarence
Kugler**

Iraq



After being out of the military for many years as a CPT, I returned to the Army Reserves as an NCO working in public affairs for a Civil Affairs BN in Miami. I thought if I was going to be in combat again it would be in Cuba and there would be rum and cigars in victory. I was wrong, my Spanish speaking BN was activated

in DEC 2003 and we sent to Baghdad. In FEB 04, I was a 59 year SFC and told I needed to get a special ID to work in Saddam's palace in The Green Zone. I reported to a small security building outside the palace to get my picture ID. At the time, there was a ladder in the room with a multitude of unopened paint cans on the floor. I asked the NCO in charge if I could write something on the wall before the painting began and he readily gave me approval. I wrote, to protest the rule of Saddam, what English Philosopher John Stuart Mill wrote in the mid 1850's, "That so few dare to be eccentric marks the chief danger of our time."

I returned to the office in NOV 04 to return my ID just before coming home and saw that there were a good many eccentric soldiers getting ID cards with a very eccentric NCO in charge of the operation. Indeed, a picture is worth a thousand words.



Farrah the Lion's Day Off

By

CPT Clarence Kugler

On 1 DEC 03, my Miami based Civil Affairs Army Reserve unit was activated for deployment to Iraq to replace a civil affairs unit from Virginia. By the end of JAN 04, we were sent to Ft. Bragg, NC to deploy directly into Iraq and bypass the normal week of preparation in Kuwait.

On 31 JAN, the night before our departure, the Army's Civil Affairs Command Sergeant Major (CSM) came into our briefing room and he was visibly angry

(not an unusual emotion for a CSM) when he said, "I don't want you soldiers causing the trouble over there that the clowns you are going to replace got into". CSM then related the horror story of his civil affairs soldiers holding a promotion party at the Baghdad Zoo. During the party, one of the soldiers reached into a cage and offered an endangered species white tiger a steak. The tiger, belonging to Saddam's son Uday, grabbed the soldier's arm and began dragging the soldier through the bars of the cage. In response, a member of the civil affairs party took out an unauthorized pistol and shot the tiger dead. Frankly, I could not tell if the CSM was more upset about the unauthorized pistol used, the soldier needing surgery to replace the bone in his forearm, or the killing of an endangered species animal. Suffice it to say, he made the point; no more zoo promotion parties.

By JUL 04, I was acting as the public affairs person for our unit which required going out on missions with soldiers and writing articles for publication in the States. The articles defined the helpful missions we participated in for and with the Iraqi people. The articles contained the names of the soldiers and they listed hometowns of the soldiers. The articles featured such stories as supplying medical equipment to hospitals, giving back packs and equipment to schools, providing training to fire fighters, supporting different orphanages with clothing and equipment, opening a gas station to the public, providing artificial limbs to the public to name just a few. The home town newspapers of the soldiers mentioned in the articles published the articles giving folks back home some positive information of what our soldiers were doing to improve the lives of the Iraqi populace.

Our unit worked directly under the Commanding General (CG) of the 1st CAV Division out of Ft. Hood, Texas. In my military duties, I have always attempted to emulate the persona of Ensign Pulver in the book, "Mr. Roberts". Jack Lemmon played the character in the movie by same name. Ensign Pulver attempted to never be seen by his commander, thus avoiding any supervision that might lead to his being verbally chastised or killed. Thus, I was bewildered when I was informed the 1st CAV CG was reading my articles and ordered me to go out to the Baghdad Zoo and write "a favorable article on our veterinarian successes at the zoo." The order required a convoy of about 15 armed soldiers, avoiding combat perils, to get me to the zoo with a camera and a pen.

Upon our arrival at the zoo, I linked up with 1st CAV veterinarians in order to guide me around. My first stop was to interview the zoo director, Aadil Musa, in his office with a 1st CAV officer present. Mr. Musa was in the process of giving me the zoo's history when the chief veterinarian of the zoo, Dr. Wasseem, rushed into the office yelling "Farrah is loose, Farrah is loose". I had no idea who or what he was upset about but very intrigued when the 1st CAV officer became stone faced while looking me in the eye saying, "Kugler, are you ready to go on the most dangerous mission you are going to be given in Iraq?" A secret to success in the Army is when you have no concept of what it is you are being asked to do; give the appearance of being eager to do it. I replied in my best gung ho voice, "Roger that, Sir". I was then informed that Farrah was a 28 year old 12 foot long female lion and she was running around the zoo and, at the age of 59 and with only months away from retirement, I was going on a U.S. Army sanctioned combat lion hunt with the express purpose of capturing and not shooting the lion.

Along with zoo workers, military and civilian veterinarians, I took 6 of my armed soldiers and we began looking for Farrah. When we located her, she was lying atop a 10 foot high stone wall surrounding the zoo. If Farrah went on the other side of the wall, she would be running around downtown Baghdad. To avoid this calamity, zoo workers were outside the fence with poles attempting to get Farrah back into the zoo grounds. While they were doing this, Dr. Wasseem was assembling what looked like a cross bow to shoot a foot long anesthesia loaded needle/cylinder into her hind quarters. Dr. Wasseem went outside the wall and when I took my camera out to shoot a picture of Farrah, my concentration was broken when I saw the foot long projectile go above the head of Farrah and land about two feet in front of my right boot. If I had been hit, I doubt if I would have been eligible for a Purple Heart but a medical evacuation to a hospital in beer drinking Germany might have been in the works.

After two sleep inducing projectiles hit her, Farrah slowly slipped off her perch and I literally had a lion by the tail when six of us hoisted Farrah onto a lowboy to transport her back to her cage. The most terrifying aspect of the operation was the fact Farrah came back to life about 15 seconds after we

lifted her back into her cage. No one wants to be in the vicinity of an unhappy lion during a wakeup call.

I did, along with the rest of my unit, receive the Army's Humanitarian Award at the conclusion of our tour of duty in Iraq. I am sad to say the Army has no specific award for a successful lion hunt that ends with not killing the lion.

Ecuador

My wife, Ali, refers to my Army Reserves Civil Affairs time from 1989 to 2005 as me being, "In the poor man's Club Med." During that time, I made a dozen active duty trips to Central and South America while engaging in a wide range of civil affairs missions. I told Ali civil affairs missions were akin to the missions of the Peace Corps, with a bit of beer drinking, in attempting to make the lives of our neighbors better. In early 1996, I was standing in the Sunday early morning formation of my unit listening to the Commander's announcements when he stated, "The veterinarians (vets) are looking for a volunteer to go on a 2 week Air Force (AF) medical aid trip to Ecuador. Our unit will be providing the vets to the AF. Interviews for the job are being held in the personnel office."

I entered the personnel office for my interview with only a mild hope of being selected. I was the oldest soldier in my unit at age 51 and unsure if my age would be held against me. There were only two interview questions posed to me. The first, "Are you afraid of large animals?" I replied I wrestled heavyweight for Denison University in Granville, Ohio. The second question, "Do you like beer?" I think my affirmative answer to the beer question was more significant in my selection than the large animal one.

Two weeks later, I was an untrained vet assistant aboard a C-130 sitting in a web cargo seat headed to Quito, Ecuador. From Quito, we were bused into the jungle to an Ecuadorian Special Forces training base. Not far from the base were villages supporting the construction of an oil pipe line bringing oil out of the jungle to cities. Our mission was to provide medical and vet aid to the families and animals of the farmers and oil workers who lived in and around the villages.

My first night at the jungle base was a memorable one for me. The base had an Olympic size outdoor pool which was open for night swimming. I was doing laps in the pool and I was surprised to see what I thought were seagulls

swooping down to get water from the pool. I asked one of the base soldiers if the seagulls remained in the jungle year around. He remarked there were no seagulls in the jungle and what I was witnessing were bats with six foot wing spans swooping into the pool for their nightly drinks. The bats were not as alarming as the two six foot snakes swimming in the pool with me. Welcome to night life in the jungle; lucky for me there was a cooler full of bottled local beer to quell swimming creature fears.

The first week, I went from never having injected anything other than a water melon with vodka to injecting hundreds of cattle with shots to protect them from rabies coming as a result of bat bites at night. Another problem for the cattle, for which we had no cure, was the warble. These looked like large pimples over the hide of the cows which were the homes of fly larva. When squeezed, the larva emerged looking like worms. I thought I was being kind to the animals by getting the worms out of the warbles until I was informed not to squeeze them because in doing so a poison could be released resulting in sudden death.

The most unique if not most unpleasant duty I was given was done with a plastic glove that went from my finger tips and ended in my right arm pit. I was instructed to enter the stern of a selected cow to remove the manure clogging their drain. Needless to say, I felt on days I put the gloves on I earned my pay. Not all animal work is pretty.

I had many learning moments working with cattle; one is that a cow can kick sideways. I learned this when I was about to inject one and she kicked shattering the wooden board of the railing I was standing on. Had the kick hit my shin; I might be drawing disability to this day.

The most impressive sight I witnessed during my vet duties was the day we attempted to give rabies shots to a small herd of Brahma cows protected by an extremely large bull. I was cowardly hiding behind a six foot cattle fence awaiting directions from my boss on how we were going to get the bull away from the herd when the bull charged us at the fence. To my utter, pardon the pun, surprise the bull jumped directly over us sending us scurrying through the fence boards which enabled us to safely give the cows shots. Who knew a Brahma bull could leap over a 6 foot fence?

At the end of our mission, I knew a lot more about animals than I knew before being selected for vet duty. I also learned a lot about people living in the jungle. They appeared to be as thankful for the medical aid we gave their families as they were for the aid we gave to their animals. My time in the

jungle was one of my most memorable periods of time in my Army experience.



Iraq

Just after being activated on 1 DEC 03, my 478th Civil Affairs BN was sent to Ft. Hood, Texas by buses from Miami, FL for convoy training. One might have thought the bus ride itself would have sufficed. On a positive note, I did not have HBO and the buses played the entire series, "Band of Brothers" which filled us with patriotic enthusiasm for our deployment to Iraq and thankful snow would not be an issue.

We moved onto Ft. Benning for weapons training with our barracks being located out on the range amidst a snow storm. M-16 qualification was held in the snow storm with orders being only those soldiers qualifying could return to the warm buses. I was among the first 3 soldiers allowed to return to bus warmth. Not that I hit anything much, I noticed the targets were not going down due to the frozen conditions. I remember a snow flake lodged in my aiming hole rendering it impossible to see the target. Still, I fired off all my rounds and was given credit for hitting all the targets as the instructors had no more desire than the soldiers to remain in the

cold. Younger soldiers, for me that would be anyone under 58, awaited their targets falling and failed to empty their magazines. They remained stranded in the snow for further pain and suffering until daylight ran out.

We then flew off to Ft. Bragg for uniform and equipment distribution. The unit presented a visual incongruity to the bystanders when we walked in another snow storm to our Iraq bound planes in our desert camouflage uniforms. When we arrived in Iraq in FEB 04, we were informed that we were going to be located in the "Green Zone". I thought this color indicated the area was safe. In reality, the zone was the only green area in Baghdad from the air. Saddam used the area for his main palace and for the homes of his generals while diverting water from the Tigris River into canals running through the area supporting vegetation. We were not immune from daily mortar or rocket attacks.

I had been investigating allegations of discrimination following safety activity for OSHA in private businesses for some 35 years when the Commander told me that I was going to be the Sergeant in charge of the Baghdad Assistant Center located in an office in the Baghdad Convention Center. Our mission would be to investigate complaints from citizens against the actions of the coalition forces and make recommendations to aid the citizens in resolving their concerns. I worked under a female Major with four female interpreters. The interpreters were chosen by the civil affairs unit we replaced. All the females were Catholics who wore non-traditional Muslim clothing.

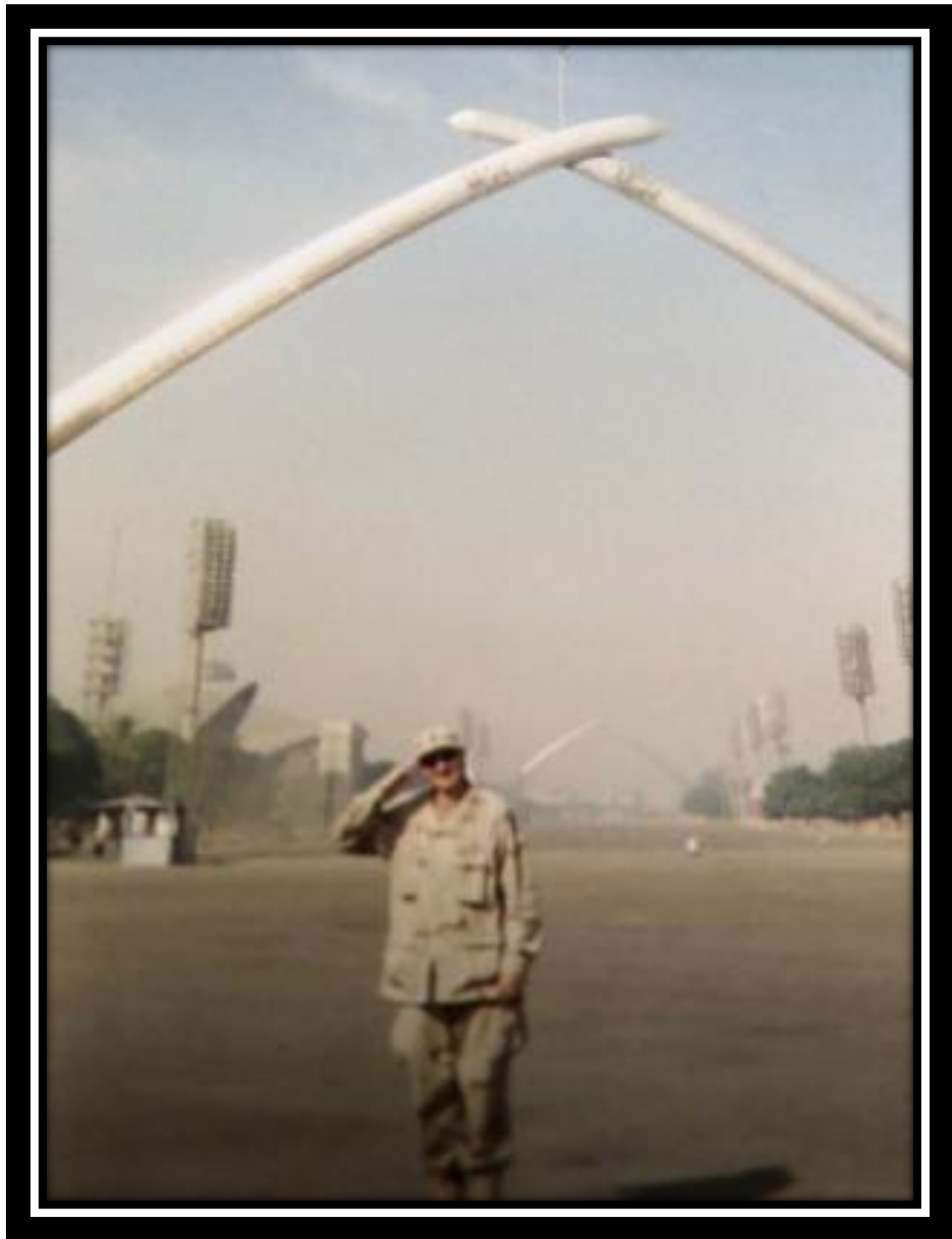
The Center was guarded by members of the Washington State National Guard. I was required to take the office personnel to lunch across the street at a hotel each afternoon. The regular greeting I would get from the WA guards was "How is the harem today, Sarge?" I realized that an additional duty I was given was to act as a chaperone for my group at lunch to thwart the advances of young soldiers. The team was regularly briefed at lunch and they seemed to enjoy the doings of my family back home.

A good friend I played lacrosse with in college, now living in Weston, CT, sent me an article from his local newspaper. The article was about a local lawyer activated to Iraq who was serving in the Judge Advocate branch of the Army (legal). There was a picture of the soldier and gave his background stating that he played college lacrosse. The article stated the soldier was acting as a judge in complaints filed by Iraqi citizens. I put the article on the office bulletin board thinking the chances of running into the soldier would be very remote.

Several weeks later, an allegation was made in my office by a family that I found to be credible. A father claimed he was taking his youngest son to a hospital for treatment when he encountered a coalition road block at a rotary. He said he was looking at the oncoming traffic to the rotary and did not see or hear the soldiers ordering him to stop. He claimed he stopped his car after a short period of time and a soldier questioned him for identification and for his purpose of travel. He stated the soldier, in expressing displeasure with him, shot his rifle into the trunk of his car. The bullet went through the trunk and through the back seat killing his 7 year old son who was sitting between his two other children. The family spread the story around their neighborhood and it prompted demonstrations at one of the Zone gates. I believed the family's account and I recommended the family be awarded the coalition limit of \$2,000 for a negligent fatality. I was told that I should present the family's case in front of the judge.

I recognized the judge immediately when he came into my office for the hearing which did not have any of the family present. The judge did not know about the article on my bulletin board that was written about him. I gave him the article as I thought Providence had willed it to me to

give to him to assure a favorable ruling. The judge thought the incident was so outrageous that he awarded the family \$4,000. It is my belief the money was secondary to the family to the validation that their son's life was unjustly taken through no fault of their own. When I presented the family with the \$4,000 in cash, the mother gave me a small St. Christopher's medal as a thank you for my efforts on their behalf. Later, I was told Muslims regard any religious medal, no matter what religion, to be sacred. It seems to me, to this day, that Providence may very well have intervened in the judgment given the family. I keep that St. Christopher medal in my bedroom today as a valuable possession from my service in Iraq.







FIF

It was just another early November Thanksgiving Army Reserve drill weekend in 2002. Saturday would entail decorating the drill hall for the Sunday turkey lunch which would allow soldiers with family members present to leave early. The weekend began with the normal unit formation in the motor pool parking lot. The Commander stated that the following soldiers should report to the medical office immediately after the formation. He read off the names of a dozen soldiers, including me; the oldest, at 58 years, and lowest ranking member of the group.

In the medical office, the Commander stated, "You men have been selected for a secret mission, destination to be determined, length of mission unknown. Your activation orders will be distributed to you at the end of today's drill and you will report here next week to be briefed on your mission." As he spoke, I wondered how difficult it was going to be to get booze in Afghanistan and what difficulties I would face in getting retirement paperwork in a combat zone. What was not told to us was that our government had been rounding up Iraqi exiles to be trained by U.S. forces to take up positions in Iraq as liaisons between the American military and the Iraqi population. The exiles were to be called The Free Iraqi Forces (FIF). We were all eager following 9/11 to go on a mission that could provide defense to our country in a fight against terrorism. The following year, upon the request of the coach, I would address the Deerfield Beach High School football team in my uniform and tell them that my military goal was to "make terrorism an away game" which appeared to make sense to the football team sitting in the stands.

Shortly after receiving our orders we were informed of our mission to be conducted at an old Soviet Air Force base, named Camp Victory for the training, in southwestern Hungary where in winter it snowed just about every day in freezing temps. More than \$90 million was earmarked to train and equip as many as 3,000 Iraqis from the U.S. and Europe for deployment to Iraq.

Our group was sent to a naval air station in Pensacola, FL for instructor training, onto Ft. Benning for weapons training, and finally to Ft. Bragg for Special Forces artic clothing that started with two layers of silk underwear. We arrived at the training site, after a 2 day stop in the Heidelberg, Germany area in which we drank a lot of beer and took a castle tour. We arrived in Hungary to a snow storm on 7 JAN 03. After a week of interacting with the selected FIF, most U.S. members coming from the Michigan area, I remarked to a young soldier just how polite the volunteers were to me. The soldier said, "That's because you're old. Muslims are very respectful of age." I appreciated the FIF respect given to me, especially for the birthday cake in FEB.

Our instructors provided basic military skills to the FIF such as map reading, basic weapons knowledge, and civil affairs training designed to enable the FIF to effectively to work with civilians in a combat environment. I provided classes designed to familiarize the group in working with the press in giving interviews on camera.

A highlight for me of my time at Camp Victory was a visit to the base from the USO which included retired football player, Ben Davidson; all 6 feet 8 inches of him. Ben had won an NFL Championship in 1961 playing under Vince Lombardi but gained his fame playing for the AFL champ Oakland Raiders. Most of our soldiers were too young to have actually seen him play. I, on the other hand, had seen him play on TV and I was a big fan of his Miller Lite ads with John Madden and Rodney Dangerfield. Shaking hands with Ben was like shaking hands with a grizzly bear as his right hand enveloped both of mine. We had dinner together and he informed me that he was no stranger to adventure off the field as he and another Raider, Tom Keating, had taken a motorcycle trip from LA to the Panama Canal and back.

In April 03, the FIF was sent off to Kuwait for the invasion of Iraq. The Hungarian government had stipulated that none of the trainers could be sent to combat as we were considered non-combatants when allowed to serve in Hungary. We ended up training less than a hundred members of the FIF before the program was shut down and we were sent back to Ft. Bragg in April 03. One newspaper called the FIF "The Million Dollar a Man Army." I would again be activated for deployment to Iraq in December 03. I found my time working with the FIF in Hungary very valuable in understanding Iraqi culture which made me comfortable in my civil affairs in Iraq starting in FEB 04.







On 1 December 2003, the 478th Civil Affairs Battalion (CA BN) of Perrine, FL was activated for support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The "Boots on the Ground" for our CA BN on Iraqi soil was 2 February 04. Our time in Iraq ended in late October 2004. At the time, I was interviewed on television by CNN and identified as the oldest soldier in the combat zone. Our 150 soldier unit had one other Vietnam veteran beside me.

Our unit was lucky in that it sustained no fatalities during our tour of duty; however, our soldiers faced life threatening moments involving exposures to rocket, mortar, and improvised explosive devices on a regular basis. A dozen or so of our soldiers received Purple Hearts as a result of performing missions in the Iraq countryside and I was on hand to photograph and make a write up for publication on each of the awarded soldiers.

On mortar attacks, you often heard the pops of the mortars being launched but you had no idea where they were going to land. Best to seek cover when you hear a pop. Rockets were much bigger but kinder in the sense you could hear the motor of the rocket driving it by you. It was said if you didn't hear that motor you had a very good chance of not hearing much else in life. I remember coming out of the mess hall one evening and looking up at what I thought was a drone when it went over the mess hall and loudly exploded behind a 20 foot pre-formed concrete wall located just behind the mess hall.

One morning at about 5am I had borrowed an officer's cell phone that enabled soldiers to call home. The call would go to a station in upstate NY and then be relayed to my home in Florida. After speaking for a few minutes and getting the hometown news, I told my wife I had to take the phone back to my room and get on with my morning run before the 8am formation. As I was placing the phone on my room desk, I heard a loud explosion just outside my building. When I went to the front gate, Major Rodriguez informed me that the bus bench I had been talking on had taken a direct hit from a mortar. That was the last early morning phone call I made out in the open with the belief the Iraqis had mastered triangulating cell calls for their mortar aiming.

A month later, I was working in my office in the Baghdad Convention Center when a rocket landed in the parking area just outside our office windows. The force of the rocket landing collapsed the plywood and plastic wall that had replaced the original rocketed wall in the office and knocked my boss and myself backwards off our chairs. My boss had blood coming from her ears and lucky for me I had been bending over at the time of the explosion while taking a disc out of a drawer. Never the less, I was sent to the combat hospital and later, after further testing, I was issued hearing aids. I have to admit that I do not wear the hearing devices and I required the television to be so loud that my wife gave me earphones to wear that augment the sound of the television and permit telephone conversation with relatives.

Our unit's mission was mainly to work with the Iraq civilian population in dealing with civic problems that arose from the coalition invasion of their country. Our unit provided aid in the way of clothing and school supplies to the Baghdad Home for the Deaf (BHD) which was located on the other side of the Tigris River from the Green Zone. In addition, one of the projects of our motor pool soldiers was to repair a confiscated bus for donation to the BHD so that students could be transported around the city. A week before we were scheduled to leave Iraq in late October 2004, the bus work was completed and needed to be delivered to the school.

As the public affairs soldier assigned to the battalion, I was going to go out on the delivery mission to photograph the bus turnover and write an article for an Army publication of the event.

Major Uharriet was the officer assigned to the mission and he approached me just after our safety briefing and asked, "Sergeant Kugler, how would you feel about driving me in the lead hummer on the mission." I replied, "Major, how do you feel about having the oldest soldier in the Army driving you on your last mission in Iraq?" He kindly replied, "I'm fine with it." I said, "Me too, let's go." The Major and I would be in the lead hummer followed by a bus and two hummers.

The attention getter for me when leaving the Green Zone on a mission into the center of Baghdad was always the verbal order from the Commander of, "Lock and load." (Dorothy was no longer in Kansas.) The order normally came as we were midway on the bridge on the Tigris heading into downtown Baghdad. We were in our bus convoy north alongside the Tigris when 3 rockets went whooshing some 15 feet directly over my head in the lead hummer. The rockets continued rising over the river while finally landing somewhere in the Green Zone. It was the most frightening moment I had in combat in either Vietnam or Iraq and thankfully the moment went quickly. But the moment remains with me sometimes in my dreams 16 years after the incident.

We made the bus delivery without any further incident to a grateful BHD staff. After having tea and the obligatory slice of celebratory cake, we headed back to the Green Zone happy to complete our mission without injury. The incident became even stranger for me when we returned to our living area and

discovered that one of the rockets fired at us landed across the street from our residence knocking out all the frontal windows in the building.

When our unit departed Iraq, we landed in Kuwait to turn in equipment and to take our plane back to Ft. Bragg to be released from active duty. At that time, we were allowed to take a picture with a statue head taken from one of the many statues of Saddam that had been torn down during our initial entrance into Iraq. I thought the photo op would make a good cover for my 2004 Xmas card to combat buddies. My wife opted for a more traditional Xmas card look for friends and relatives.



Happy
Holidays

Baghdad Marathon

U. S. Navy Captain Henry Domeracki, a daily runner, was stationed in the Green Zone of Baghdad in 2004 with me. Like me, he had run double digit marathons in the States prior to his deployment to Iraq. In 2003, 35 nations were a part of the Provisional Coalition Authority designed to aid in bringing independence to Iraq. Captain Domeracki believed that if a marathon was held in the Green Zone it would go a long way to increasing the fitness of soldiers, while in training, and provide a morale booster for soldiers. As a Runner's World Magazine article on the marathon noted, "T-shirts were designed, medals ordered, and trophies made using broken pieces of marble and granite from a bombed-out building." However, two weeks before the race which had 150 soldiers scheduled to run, the race was officially canceled due to safety concerns. Captain Domeracki did not give up and he put out an e-mail memo that anyone wishing to participate in the unauthorized "Baghdad International Freedom Marathon" would only need to show up at the starting line on August 20, 2004 to be entered. The memo indicated armed soldiers would be present on the two loop course in the Green Zone and support vehicles would be on hand to provide drinks and food to runners.

I showed up, despite not gaining approval from my commander, in the dark for a 5am start along with 34 other soldiers to participate in the marathon. A month after the race, Runner's World Magazine photographers showed up to take pictures for their publication. I showed up for the photo op and did my best to grimace as though I was actually running hard for the photo shoot. For a runner with significant lack of running speed issues, I was very humbled to be seen in 3 separate photos in the March 2005 edition of the magazine.

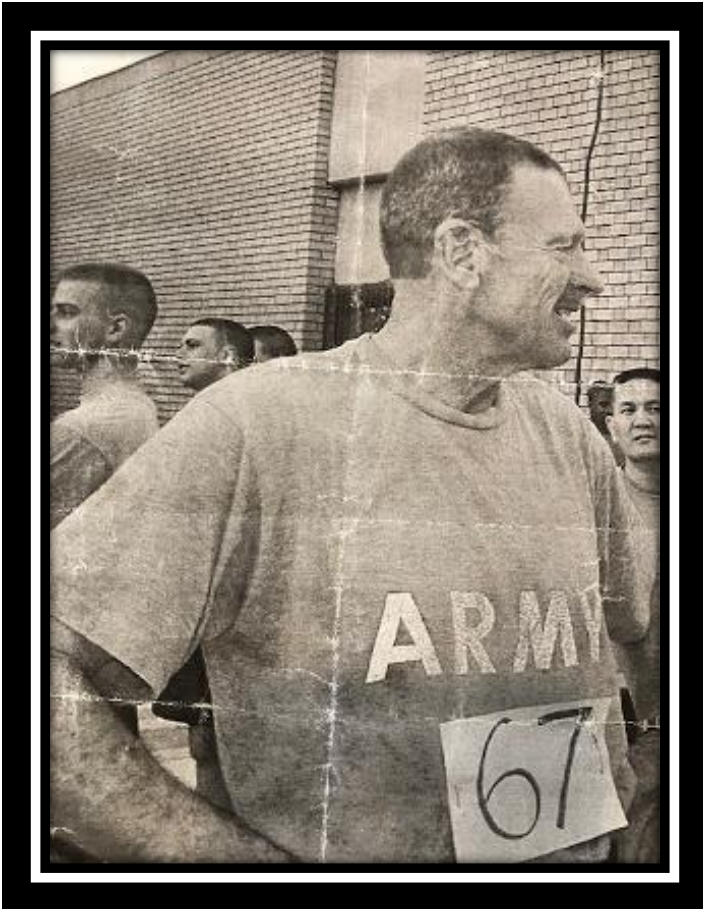
A week after the photo shoot, I was on a morning run out by the Green Zone parade field where there were two sets of giant crossed swords held in hands taken from a model of Saddam's hands. Once again, I was doing my morning run without seeking permission with the thought that seeking forgiveness would be easier to obtain than permission. I was running in the dark when a younger Marine (all Marines were younger than me) in his PT gear passed me on the right at a good speed heading to the perimeter of the Zone. It was good to see someone else on my road as I often encountered wild dogs that banded together in the night searching for food. I found that by stooping down pretending to pick a stone often sent them scurrying. If the dogs continued to work in a pack in the daylight, they would be shot by the MP's.

As I followed the Marine, I saw car lights on the road about a half mile ahead of me which I had never encountered before during my runs. As I ran towards the lights, I saw the Marine fighting with 3 civilians who appeared to be attempting to put him in the trunk of the car. I charged the group yelling and waving my arms as the Marine ran towards me leaving his assailants. The attackers jumped in the car and drove off. The Marine had a bloody head resulting from being hit in the head by a board from one of his attackers. He used his fists to fight back until my arrival on the scene. I put one of his arms over my shoulder and walked him to the hospital for attention. During our walk to the hospital, he informed me, remarkably, he was a Captain and his job in country was keeping account of Marine injuries and Marine treatments. I told him I hoped he could spell his name right in his report after being hit in the head. He told me that he was going to put my name in for an award for responding to his hand to hand combat. I told him I appreciated his thought but since I did not have permission to be out running, an award would most likely put an end to my morning runs and get me an old fashioned "ass chewing" from my commander. A short time later, I was invited by the Captain to his Marine promotion

to Major ceremony where I did get applause from the assembled Marines for my contribution to the Major's appearance at his ceremony. I later found out from a newspaper article he was awarded the Purple Heart; an award I was delighted not to get.

I should add that I never raced out to the Green Zone perimeter again. I confined my unauthorized morning runs to the edge of the Tigris River which were far less adventuresome but kept me meeting my height/weight requirements. Hey, we were served lobster every Friday; sometimes war is not hell





One of my duties, in 2004, while working in Iraq was working for the public affairs office of the 1st Cav Division that replaced the 2nd Armor Division. I accompanied news media members; (film makers/photographers/press journalists) in their coverages in and around the area of operations of greater Baghdad. All operations required at least 3 hummers and usually about a dozen armed soldiers. We wore earplugs, armor vests, and sun glasses for some safety while driving.

I was in Iraq 4 months when I was summoned by the 1st Cav to meet with a female documentary film maker, Laura Poitras, and accompany her around the greater Baghdad area while she was filming for almost a month. At that time, I did not suspect Laura would be nominated for an Academy Award for her documentary Iraq film "My Country, My Country". Furthermore, Laura would win the Academy Award outright award for her documentary 2014 film, "Citizenfour", which is based on Ed Snowden's government adventures which provided a light into the amount of involvement/spying our government can get involved with in our daily lives.

By the Army's standards, Laura was considered a radical. I have to applaud her for being fearless in entering hostile areas to film. The only problem with her filming is that I was along with her and somewhat concerned about tripping off an improvised explosive weapon (IED) during our adventures. In addition, the electric lines above the roads were massive spider webs of wires that I felt could fall down at any time and electrocute me. This probably stemmed from my 29 years of working for OSHA, at the time, and having witnessed many aftereffects of electrocutions. Laura was kind enough give me a full frame of credit at the end of the movie for my film assistance. She would have been better off with C. B. DeMille but the Army only had C.B. Kugler for film work at the time.

In Vietnam, I was assigned to a trucking battalion. It is important to remember that in the Army what you are trained to do is not always what you end up doing. Until you know what you are doing it helps to be enthusiastic in your new job as the Army is usually forgiving towards new assignment mistakes. During my time in the Vietnam battalion, I alternated taking turns with several other officers leading convoys each week. The closest I came to convoy danger was trying to pay civilians for a water buffalo that our convoy hit and killed. I sort of threw a wad of piasters (paper money) at the mob heading towards me (all the piasters I had for such an encounter) and sped away in my jeep. However, in Iraq there was, for me, a pucker factor in driving around the city that I never quite got over during my tour as I witnessed car explosions.

About two months before heading home, I was assigned to accompany a writer from Forbes Small Business Magazine to several startup businesses that the Army had funded in Baghdad to aid the country in economic development. The reporter centered her story on three separate operations; a bakery, a toy store, and milk bottling operations which required us to drive in the city for coverage. I suggested to the reporter that we ought to be taking pictures at the various sites and she told me that the story would not require such. She was wrong. The reporter left the country and Forbes routed a Getty photographer to me to be taken to the very same places their reporter visited. We were about an eighth of a mile from the bakery when an explosion erupted in front of us; I do not know if the bakery was hit but I stopped and treated the soldiers to ice cream and we headed to the toy store for pictures. I remember a favorite saying of my Australian mother, "I don't boil my potatoes twice", and I thought we

were lucky to have lived through a second visit to the bakery. Soon I was back in South Florida facing I-95 traffic to work each day and not worried about the dangers of civilian life but knowing they are there.

