



**3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command  
16<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade  
Public Affairs Office**

Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq  
DSN (NIPR) 318-827-6101  
DSN (SIPR) 302-243-5104  
[keith.anderson@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:keith.anderson@iraq.centcom.mil)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
3rd ESC Release #090522-13  
May 26, 2009

## **For two mailroom Soldiers in Iraq, the job has its ups and downs**

By Spc. Jessica Burdge,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 146<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — Mail call can be an important time of day for Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 146<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery.

The burden of securing and delivering the Soldiers' mail falls on the shoulders of Spc. Joshua Medford and Pfc. Katherine Brathovde.

The two are HHB's mail clerks, which is one of the many duties that the administrative team that they are assigned to deals with. Brathovde has been in the Washington Army National Guard for just over 14 months, and deployed with the 81<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team in September of 2008 and was assigned to HHB, 2-146<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, administration section. Brathovde resides in Lacey, Wash., and has yet to drill with her home station.

Medford, who hails from the state capital in Olympia, Wash., said he was grateful for the opportunity to deploy.

“This has been a great opportunity for me,” said Medford. “When I deliver mail to any

-more-

MAIL/2-2-2

of the Soldiers in the battery, there's always at least one person whose day I've made better. There have been times when I've seen a Soldier upset and depressed and simply by giving them their mail it turns their day around 180 degrees."

During his time on rest and recuperation, Medford had an idea for some of the Soldiers that weren't receiving mail.

"I had three Soldiers that hadn't received much of anything, and it showed," said Medford. "So I went to the store and put together three boxes for guys that I thought in my opinion weren't receiving any mail. I got married to my wife and we sent the boxes out with a picture of our wedding in each box."

For Medford this is his second deployment with the 81<sup>st</sup> Brigade Combat Team.

"Last deployment I received mail from family consistently and I've always shared with the other guys," he said. "It felt like the right thing to do."

Brathovde and Medford have counted all the mail that they have delivered to their battery. So far after six months in Iraq, the duo has delivered 2,028 articles of mail.

"Christmas time was crazy," laughed Medford. "One day I pulled in to pick up mail — I didn't bring a big enough truck — there were four pallets of mail for the Soldiers in the battery. Believe it or not, my name wasn't on the mail roster that day."

Medford and other Soldiers often have toys sent to them to give to local Iraqi children during convoys.

-more-

“My parents and my wife have sent stuffed animals for us to throw to the kids,” Medford said. “It makes me feel like I’m doing more for this country. It helps to keep the soldiers in my battery safer too while they are out on the road.”

But in their line of work, the job of delivering mail has its ups and downs.

“Granted I may have mail for a Soldier one day, but the next week or two or three they may not receive any — it still feels good that I get to give them their mail and make their day — but sometimes I just feel awful that I have to tell someone that they didn’t receive any mail when they ask. Every one of us is far from home, and I feel bad when they don’t receive anything for a while.”

-30-



Spc. Joshua Medford, mail clerk, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 146<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, 30<sup>th</sup> Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16<sup>th</sup> Sustainment

Brigade, hands a package to a Soldier. Medford, who hails from the state capital in Olympia, Wash., said he was grateful for the opportunity to deploy. “This has been a great opportunity for me,” said Medford. “When I deliver mail to any of the Soldiers in the battery, there’s always at least one person whose day I’ve made better. There have been times when I’ve seen a Soldier upset and depressed and simply by giving them their mail it turns their day around 180 degrees.” (Courtesy photo)