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**Regional****Guardsmen help rebuild school for Iraqi children***By Star Courier staff*

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- When Battery F, 202nd Air Defense Artillery, comes home next spring, they will be remembered by one Iraqi community.

The Galva National Guard unit came across what was left of a run down school and spent their spare time over the next several months building a new one which was supplied with the help of family, friends and others back home.

Here is the story from Battery F commander, Maj. Mike Kessel:

I have mentioned in past updates about the school we were building. Well, the school is now open and, though it is no longer in our area of operations, some of the soldiers of F/202 were able to return recently to visit the new Al-Amel "Good Hope" school and hand out new school supplies to the students.

Allow me to give you a quick history of what has happened to get us to this point. After taking over the zone in April, we spent much of the first several weeks learning the major routes and, as you will recall, battling many insurgents. One day, during their routine patrol, 1st Platoon happened upon a small, rundown structure next to a dirt canal road. The structure appeared to be a school of some type and further investigation by the platoon revealed it was. Sgt. 1st Class Remick, the 1st Platoon Sergeant, along with our interpreter, found and spoke with the headmaster, Mr. Hadi Naeel. Hadi was very receptive

to the patrol and gave SFC Greg Remick and his platoon a tour of (what was left of) their school.

By the end of the mission, 1st Platoon returned with numerous pictures of the school and a burning desire to build a new one. The school had no doors or windows and much of the roof was thatched. Because it had not been built up off of the ground it routinely flooded during rainy season. The desks were barely holding together. We came to discover that the school was actually only about five years old, but because Saddam refused funding, the villagers had scraped their meager resources together to keep the school going.

As we worked with the battalion civil military operations staff for funding, SFC Remick, owner of Remick Construction in Victoria, began drawing up a new school design.

Once the funding was approved, SFC Remick began working with the local contractors on the construction. The funding appeared and disappeared many times before final approval and demolition of the old school started in July.

With the school's funding secure, many soldiers started letting families and friends back home know about the project. Families, civic organizations, soldiers' employers, churches and schools began sending us new school supplies. Every day we had more and more boxes of school supplies for the children piling up.

On Oct. 13, soldiers who were not patrolling were busy packaging all of the school supplies along with new back packs that were donated by an unknown company to the Army to hand out to the children.

Then, on Oct.14, a group of soldiers went to deliver the supplies and tour the new school.

Headmaster Hadi said he would never forget what F/202 ADA had done, not just because we built a new school for the community, but because we cared enough to improve the educational environment in which their children will learn in the future. He stated we did something for them that Saddam Hussein would have never done.

When some would have you believe that there is nothing good going on over here, rest assured there

are minor miracles every day.

Soldiers all over Iraq have similar stories and communities from all across America are supporting those efforts just as everyone here did. Abraham Lincoln once said, "The philosophy of the classroom in one generation, is the philosophy of government in the next." I believe that is true and hopefully, with the combined efforts of the soldiers of F/202 and the great citizens of Illinois, we have helped to make that philosophy, both now and tomorrow, great.

Thank you!

n SPC Dustin Hill, of Wyandot, is still in critical condition at Brooke Army Medical Center, San Antonio, Texas. He is scheduled to have additional surgeries this week for skin grafting. He has had a rough couple of weeks as major problems developed, but he is a fighter and with the miracles of the Great Physician, he is beginning to improve slightly every day, according to his mother.

SPC Hill was injured in the explosion of a suicide car bomb while on patrol last month.

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Henry County Court

- Jeremy Spellious, 17, of Andover, pleaded guilty to Class A misdemeanor possession of drug paraphernalia and was fined \$750. The charge was filed Sept. 9.

Galva Police blotter

Incidents