



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Lt. Col. Daniel Williams is in Baghdad training and building the Iraqis' capacity for media. "It's what I love to do," he says.

Penn Yan man in Baghdad: Don't give up on Iraq

Lt. Col. Daniel Williams serves in a key position helping coalition officials deal with the media.

By GWEN CHAMBERLAIN

Courier Express

PENN YAN — There may be no place on Earth today where effective communication is as important as it is in Iraq.

While the ins and outs of military public affairs may not be the most critical issue many Americans think about during this tumultuous period in Iraq, it may soon become more interesting to people in the Penn Yan area.

That's because a Penn Yan native — Lt. Col. Daniel Williams — is helping the multi-national forces handle media inquiries and is assisting Iraqi leaders build the skills they need when they face the glaring public eye as the world watches their every motion.

While politicians debate the future of U.S. involvement in Iraq, Williams speaks plainly about the U.S. military role in the conflict.

"The Iraqi people have not given up on themselves, and we shouldn't, either," he said. "They keep going to work, going through the red zone to and from work. There is just a tenacity in their voice and their desire."

The Iraqis have learned if they move en masse and work from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., they are generally safe.

"So they get a lot done in a short time," he says.

He says a major corner is being turned with the current military surge:

"The enemy is running," Williams said. "Those guys are running for their lives."

He said the successes are happening corner by corner and block by block.

Williams appears to easily summarize the U.S. military's role as he considers the politically charged debates going on at the national level.

"As a military, for 232 years we have been led by civilians: elected officials," he said. "They told us our mission, and we have to do it. We'll continue to do it until they say something else."

"One thing we need to remind ourselves as a nation is that in World War II, 34 percent of the gross national product was spent on the war," Williams continued. "During Vietnam, it was 14 percent. Now, as big a debt as it is, (the cost of U.S. involvement in Iraq) it's still less than 5 percent of the GNP and it has not caused anyone to miss a meal, a gallon of gasoline, plant a victory garden or any of the other hardships."

Williams, who is three and a half months into his second tour in Iraq, is the public-affairs officer responsible for the media outreach for the multi-national security transition command in Iraq.

In addition to coordinating media engagements for six U.S. general officers, two British general officers and officers from Finland and Australia, he assists with the training and equipping of the Iraqi Ministry of Defense, Joint Military Headquarters and Ministry of the Interior (which includes the Iraqi National Police and the provincial police forces) media teams — the top level Iraqi military and domestic spokespeople.

He is a senior media advisor to Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, and is responsible for helping the Iraqi government establish strategic communications plans from the top of the government down. He also is responsible for the publication of the Advisor, an eight-page newspaper about the ongoing activities of the Iraqi military and police forces.

And if that isn't demanding enough, most of his work is done through an interpreter.

"My roles are to ensure that we engage the media with our activities and ensure that we tell of the successes and failures and allow our public the opportunity to look at what we are doing so they are as well informed as we can possibly make them," Williams writes in a recent e-mail.

During a later telephone interview, he said training and building the Iraqis' capacity for media is "fun."

"It's what I love to do," he said.

Williams, who has been in the U.S. Army 24 years, graduated from Penn Yan Academy in 1974. He said some former classmates might remember him from the wrestling team, and many who attended school at Penn Yan Academy will remember his father, Ronald Williams, an English teacher.

He met his wife, Celeste, when he was stationed in Germany.

"I joined the Army in 1983 with the intent to only serve long enough to gain a marketable skill and then get out," he wrote. "However, after going through basic training, I realized that I really like the Army. I like the order and the discipline; I like the aspect of being able to succeed on my merits and knowing that a good job well done was rewarded."

"I continued to serve because I believed that I could make a difference and now I serve because I am involved in a cause that is greater than me. If I can help the Iraqi people build a safe and secure future for their nation, then my time and my efforts are well spent."

When Williams returns to the United States next May, he will work at the U.S. Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pa.

When it's time for retirement, he could probably land any comfy post in a Washington, D.C., public relations firm. But he already knows that's not what he wants.

Protesters push Kuhl on Iraq

At least two people were charged with trespassing after refusing to leave the congressman's Fairport office Monday.

Messenger Post

FAIRPORT — Roughly 75 people protested against the war in Iraq Monday in front of the local office of Rep. Randy Kuhl, R-Hammondsport.

Although much of the protest was held outside, five people staged a sit-in inside the congressman's office, refusing to leave until Kuhl, who represents the 29th Congressional District, agreed to change his stance and oppose the war.



KUHL

with trespassing Monday afternoon and it was unclear if more arrests had been made, because a Messenger Post reporter was kicked out of the police station after requesting an interview on videotape.

Kuhl wasn't at the Packett's Landing office. But his spokesman, Bob VanWicklin, responded to the event late

"We're here as long as it takes," said Mike Connelly, a member of Declaration of Peace Organization. "My hope is for people protesting, now that they see this as the next step. We are in deep trouble."

At least two of the protesters were charged with trespassing Monday afternoon and it was unclear if more arrests had been made, because a Messenger Post reporter was kicked out of the police station after requesting an interview on videotape.

Monday by saying Kuhl "wishes the Iraq war would end tomorrow, too. But that is not his decision."

Regarding the sit-in, VanWicklin said, "We respect their right to protest. We hope they respect our right to run our office, as well."

Protesters were from various anti-war and peace groups. Matt Reed, who helped organize the demonstration, is a member of Americans Against Escalation in Iraq. He said the rally was part of a national effort, targeting lawmakers who seem to support the war based on their voting record.

"We are putting pressure on the congressman, who openly says he is against the war yet he consistently votes in line with the Bush administration," Reed said.

► CANANDAIGUA: ROLLER GIRL



STAFF PHOTO/RIKKI VAN CAMP

Madison Shepard masters the use of a rolling pin covered in paint as she concentrates on making a work of art during a day camp at the YMCA for 3-, 4- and 5-year-olds.

Teen pleads not guilty to murder

The victim was shot down near his family home in Geneva late last month.

By JULIE SHERWOOD

Messenger Post Staff

GENEVA — Tremaine Green, 19, who was charged with second-degree murder in the death of 17-year-old Elvin Manuel Cruz, has pleaded not guilty to the charge in City Court.

Green is being held without bail in Ontario County Jail and will appear in court again at 9 a.m. on Aug. 13, according to Geneva City Court.

Since the case is a felony, it



CRUZ



GREEN

will eventually go to Ontario County Court.

Green, of 34 Dixon Ave., was charged with second-degree murder and for violating his probation and failing to appear in court, Lt. John M. Cataline announced in a press release.

Police did not indicate where Green was found. He

played varsity football for Geneva High School last fall.

Mr. Cruz was 17 and lived at 112 Genesee St., Apt. 4 with his mother, Maria. He was gunned down in front of a home at 78 Genesee St. at about 4 a.m. July 29. Dispatched to the scene after neighbors reported hearing gunshots, police found him lying on the sidewalk.

Mr. Cruz was a student at Geneva High School, but transferred to the Red Jacket Education Center, a facility for kids with emotional or behavioral issues. He attended the BOCES school in Shortsville from 2003 to 2005.

Julie Sherwood can be reached at (585) 394-0770, Ext. 263, or at jsherwood@mpnewspapers.com.

Brief

Messenger Post

Phelps welcomes new business

PHELPS — The Phelps Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Aug. 1 for Phelps' newest Main Street business.

BB's Pizzeria, located at 114 Main St., opened for business in July. Owner Josh Jackson brings 16 years of pizza-making experience to the business which offers a wide delivery area and extended business hours seven days a week.

BB's Pizzeria can be reached at (315) 548-2026.

Present at the ceremony were a number of local business representatives and Chamber of Commerce members..

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Blueberry Plants for sale.
Maple syrup made on the farm,
Blueberry soap, napkins, mugs, notecards, etc.

**Please bring a sturdy box or plastic pail
to take the berries home.**

From Canandaigua: Take 5 & Rt 20 east to Kearney Rd.
Turn right, go 10 miles. Kearney becomes E. Swamp in Gorham.
From Geneva: Take 5 & Rt 20 west to Kearney Rd.
Turn left, go straight for 10 miles. Kearney becomes E. Swamp in Gorham.
From Penn Yan: Take Rt. 14A north to Benton Corner.
Turn left on Havens Cons. Rd. Go 4 miles to E. Swamp Road. Turn right.
We are the second farm on the left.

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