

DDC employee, Soldier returns from Iraq

By Lori Spiegel, DDC Command Affairs

You don't have to read a newspaper or watch the news to hear a Soldier's story in Iraq—you just have to make a trip to the Defense Distribution Center's (DDC) headquarters building and talk to Julia Furniss.

Last fall, Petroleum Supply Specialist Staff Sergeant (SSG) Furniss traded in her camouflage uniform and returned to her job at DDC as a Supply Management Specialist in the Logistics Operations Directorate working with Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC).

Prior to that, she spent one year in Mosul, Iraq, where she served with the 814th Quartermaster Company in the United States Army Reserves (USAR). The Company consisted of Soldiers from Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Virginia. Its mission was to provide fuel supply, water, and maintenance for troops in Iraq.

Prior to shipping to Iraq, SSG Furniss spent three months training at Fort McCoy, Wis. The weapons training and the confidence course were among her favorites, but once in Iraq, the rest of her training came in great use. There she supervised a bulk fuel site, provided security as part of a gun truck convoy, participated in a fuel mission, and managed an inventory of food and water supplies. Her missions took her to Abu Ghraib and Baghdad, among other places.

The gun truck convoys—missions which lasted from overnight to 16 days, at times escorting 100 or more trucks—were memorable to SSG Furniss. She spent much time getting to know her comrades, and still keeps in touch with four Soldiers

from her unit. She still remembers the times her unit would stop to watch the helicopter displays of "firefights" at night.

"You get used to the improvised explosive devices, mortar attacks, and small arms fire," said SSG Furniss. "During Ramadan, which is nearly the entire month of October, insurgent activity increases."



Always ready for the next mission is SSG Julia Furniss.

Furniss enlisted in the USAR in December 2000. She will spend six years in the active reserves and two years in the inactive ready reserves to fulfill her eight year tour. Her main incentive to join was the tuition assistance it offered, which helped her pay for college. Since she wanted to live in the Harrisburg area, she was offered three job choices—cook, water treatment, and petroleum supply.

Although she grew up in New York, where most of her family still lives, she made the move to Pennsylvania to attend Messiah College. In July 2003, Furniss was accepted for a summer student hire position at DDC. Upon her graduation in May 2004 at Messiah College with a Bachelor's of Arts in Psychology, she landed a full time position at DDC.

Last Christmas, SSG Furniss spent the holidays with the 814th Quartermaster Company in Mosul, Iraq. This year, she looks forward to spending the holidays with her parents, older sister, nephew, and two younger brothers in New York.

Julia Furniss would like to relate the



SSG Furniss prepares for a gun truck convoy.

following message to all of her co-workers who showed support during her year-long stay in Iraq:

"I would like to thank my co-workers who faithfully supported me with prayers, e-mails, and monthly care packages throughout my deployment. Thank you for your support and encouragement."



Iraqi children eager to meet SSG Julia Furniss.

DDPH employee receives warm welcome home

By Lori Spiegel, DDC Command Affairs

Agustin's duty began in November 2004 in Williamsburg, Va., where he trained for six weeks in self-defense, combat life saving, chemical and biological defense, and weapons skills. To him, it just seemed like another boot camp.

At the end of January 2005, Agustin headed to Camp Doha, Kuwait, and served eight months with the Navy Customs Inspection Battalion, Forward Oscar Battalion, Bravo Company. He was one of nearly 500 Naval Reservists who had been mobilized for a new mission in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The mission, which was previously performed by Air Force personnel, was taken over by the Navy. It involves the inspection of military equipment returning from the war zone to the United States. The Reservists worked as customs inspectors—checking tanks, trucks, and other pieces of equipment, as well as patches of dirt