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EVEN AT REMOTE DESERT BASES, SOLDIERS CAN'T ESCAPE THE LONG ARM OF V CORPS DENTISTRY

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FORWARD OPERATING BASE BRASSFIELD-MORA, SAMARRA, Iraq — Typically, if you have a toothache you make an appointment and visit the dentist. Simple enough.



CAPT PAULA SYDENSTRICKER
Capt. Nathan Carlson and Spc. Alisha Allen of V Corps' Charlie Company, 299th Forward Support Battalion repair a Soldier's tooth at Forward Operating Base Brassfield Mora, Iraq.

Simple, that is, until you're deployed to a remote site in the desert. That's when the dentist has to come to you.

A pair of Soldiers with the 299th Forward Support Battalion at Logistical Support Area Anaconda recently visited this remote base to treat troops who suffered from dental problems.

Most FOBs here are fairly close to one of the three base camps -- Speicher, Danger and Anaconda -- that have full-time dentists, explained Capt. Nathan Carlson, a dentist with V Corps' Charlie Company, 299th FSB.

"Most camps are close, but this one you have to get on a special convoy and most Soldiers think they can wait out the toothache," said Carlson.

Carlson admitted that Soldiers here may have serious problems with their teeth, but don't seek treatment because of the trouble it takes to get to a base camp that has a dentist.

Carlson and his assistant can take x-rays, replace fillings, make basic tooth repairs and even pull teeth "in the field." The dental duo will stay at the base camp for about a week before returning to Logistic Support Area Anaconda in Balad. They plan to repeat the mission every two or three months. This is the only base camp that gets this special treatment.

"This camp is unique, because this is the first time that we have gone out to the troops," he said.

Spc. Alisha Allen, a 299th FSB dental assistant, said she was glad to help the troops, and relieve a little pain in the process.

Carlson agreed, saying that the remote environment makes dentistry in the field a little harder than working in the rear, but being to help Soldiers is worth the effort.

"Dentistry in the field is more of a challenge than it would be normally," he said. "To be able to come here and help a Soldier who has a real problem makes it all worth it."

