



## Military Police awarded for risking lives to rescue four Iraqi National Guard Soldiers

*Sgt. Lynne Steely  
18th Military Police Brigade Public Affairs Office*

**CAMPLIBERTY, Iraq** - It was a Labor Day to remember for three Soldiers from the 108th Military Police

Company out of Fort Bragg, N.C. They were awarded medals of valor by the Multi National Corps-Iraq Commander, Lt. Gen. John R. Vines, in a ceremony on Camp Liberty September 5.

“We’re here to recognize the valor of these three brave non-commissioned officers that stand in front of us,” said Vines.

In the early morning hours of April 30, Staff Sgt. Javier Echols, Sgt. Matthew Acosta and Sgt. Zachariah Collett, as part of squad Warlord 11, were patrolling a Main Supply Route when an Improvised Explosive Device detonated nearby. An Iraqi National Guard transport vehicle filled with

Iraqi Soldiers was hit by the blast.

Echols, who received the

arrived on the scene.

Acosta received the Bronze Star Medal with Valor, and

“In support of the Iraqi National Guard Soldiers, these three Americans risked everything they had, their lives, to protect and defend them,” Vines said.

Vines also commended the men and women of the Armed Forces for their continuing commitment to defend liberty.

“Americans will be able to sleep safely at night, be able to congregate

on Labor Day, at rallies and to go to football games and all the other things that they do in their daily lives only so long as there are men and women such as yourselves. Your’re epitomized and represented by the great Soldiers standing in front of us today, and I ask you to join me in a round of applause for them,” said Vines.

Silver Star for his bravery, led his team in the rescue of four Iraqi National Guard Soldiers who were wounded in the explosion. Amidst a dangerous crossfire between insurgents and ING Soldiers, the trio managed to move the wounded to safety and administer medical aid until an evacuation helicopter

Collett, the Army Commendation Medal with Valor for their fearless efforts to rescue, treat and evacuate the wounded during the small arms attack.

After presenting the Soldiers with their medals, Vines expressed his admiration for their courage and applauded their actions.



*From left to right Echols, Acosta and Collett listen as MNC-I Commander, Lt. Gen. John R. Vines speaks at their awards ceremony September 5.*

# BRIGADE BRIEFS

## • October Birthdays

- 01- SFC Francisco Gonzalez
- 09- CPT Stephen Kyle
- 10- PFC Luis Trevino
- 25- LTC James Smith
- 30- PV2 Lacey Wuthrich

• If anyone would like a Vigilant Times commemorative book featuring all issues from the past year, please let me know by Oct. 15. A CD is also available with all issues in PDF format.  
**lynne.steely@us.army.mil**

• Congratulations on a job well done to those who ran the Army ten-miler on October 2.

• The HHC awards ceremony is scheduled for November 1.

• As we are moving out of the trailers in the next two weeks, please consider leaving unwanted items for the incoming unit. Remember what it was like 10 months ago?

## Countdown

As of Oct. 1

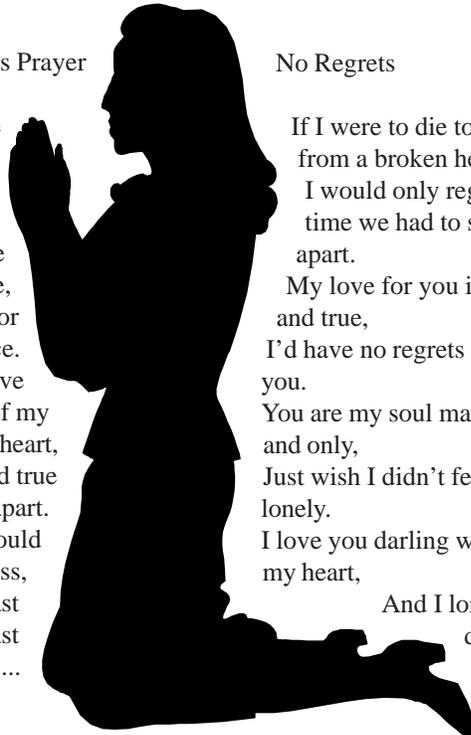
# 34

more days until we transfer authority to the 43rd MP Brigade

# POET'S PLACE

## A Soldier's Wife's Prayer

Now I lay me down to sleep,  
 I pray the Lord my soul to be at peace.  
 And if I should die before I awake,  
 I pray the Lord for one last embrace.  
 From the man I've loved with all of my heart,  
 Who is faithful and true although we're apart.  
 Even in heaven I could never feel bliss,  
 Without one last touch.....One last kiss.....



## No Regrets

If I were to die tomorrow from a broken heart,  
 I would only regret the time we had to spend apart.  
 My love for you is so deep and true,  
 I'd have no regrets for loving you.  
 You are my soul mate, my one and only,  
 Just wish I didn't feel quite so lonely.  
 I love you darling with all of my heart,  
 And I long for the day that we're never apart.

Poems by Kathy Brown, wife of Master Sgt. Mark Brown, 18th MP Brigade Liaison Officer, Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

## VIGILANT TIMES

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**Col. James Brown.....Brigade Commander**  
**Maj. Rob Simmons.....Public Affairs Officer**  
**Sgt. Lynne Steely.....Photojournalist/Public Affairs NCOIC**

## COMMANDERS CORNER



*By Col. James B. Brown*  
*18th Military Police Brigade Commander*

Dear  
 Friends,  
 Families,  
 and Com-  
 rades of the  
 18th  
 Military  
 Police  
 Brigade!



The Fall is definitely here with temperatures now dropping occasionally below 100 degrees...this is great news for many here as the cooler temperatures also indicate a coming redeployment back to families and home. As we near the end of mission, it is critical that we be EVER VIGILANT to ensure that we complete all missions and tasks to the EVER VIGILANT standard with an eye always focused on winning the last battle...not the one before the last! We additionally are re-stressing SAFETY in all things to ensure that as we pack out and redeploy equipment and train and certify our replacements, that we ensure our Soldiers safely conduct all redeployment activities. We have been very blessed in the safe conduct of all operations so far and we hope to do everything possible to keep it that way.

This past month went by in a blur, but when we stop to consider all that has taken place it is truly remarkable to see how our Soldiers continue to selflessly serve and fight to win this war. One of the first key events of this past month was the awarding of another Silver Star in the 18th MP Brigade! This time it was for saving lives in combat--when SSG Echols of the 108th MP Company courageously sought out and rescued four critically wounded Iraqi Soldiers who were still under

enemy fire. LTG Vines, the commander of the 18th Airborne Corps and the Multi National Corps-Iraq, personally presented the award to SSG Echols as well as valor awards to key members of his squad. The continued heroism of our Soldiers is an inspiration to us all. We also welcomed the arrival of the Advance Party of the 1-504 Parachute Infantry Regiment from the 82d Airborne Division to Fort Suse where we are opening a new facility for the detention of security detainees. Unfortunately, we also lost several heroes in the 18th MP Brigade with the loss of SSG William A. Allers III of the 617th MP Company near Camp Ashraf, and SGT Steve Morin, Jr. and Airman First Class Elizabeth N. Jacobson of our Force Protection team from Camp Bucca. The loss of our heroes stabs at our hearts and causes us to reflect on the true costs of freedom. These great Soldiers and Airman are heroes who we will continue to honor with our continued service and commitment to achieve victory. Recently, we released 1,000 detainees just prior to Ramadan. The Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister personally came to Abu Ghraib to speak to the Detainees. He himself had been imprisoned in Abu Ghraib during the time of Saddam Hussein's regime. He was very encouraged to see the care that we give the detainees and I was further encouraged to hear the detainees telling the Deputy PM that they were very thankful for the medical care, hot food, air conditioning, and positive treatment that the Americans had given them during their detention. The Deputy PM also told the detainees that he was a member of the coalition and

he was thankful for what his American comrades have done for Iraq...it was so encouraging to see and hear his thankfulness for the efforts of our Soldiers. We are now days away from a very historic referendum in Iraq--the vote to approve the Constitution, or to reject it and call for another one to be written. Regardless of the outcome, the decision now belongs to the Iraqi people and THAT is a tremendous sigh of progress. This past year has brought so many significant improvements in Iraq--our Soldiers have been at the forefront of fighting and securing many of them. We have much to be proud of, but in humility we will continue to serve our Nation and look forward to returning home to our families who have continually sacrificed so much for us while we are away at war. I want to pass a special thanks to my wife Cindy, CSM Shelley's wife Hyon and Chaplain Tom Evans' wife Terrie for visiting our wounded comrades along with MAJ Geoff Stewart, CPT Mike Capps and SFC Tim French of the 18th MP Brigade Rear Detachment--your personal touches and thanks to our heroes medically evacuated to Germany for care is one of the greatest measures of love and service. One of the greatest strengths in the 18th MP Brigade is its amazing group of committed spouses who have continually supported each other and our Soldiers here in Iraq throughout this past year. We are greatly looking forward to returning home and beginning the reintegration process with our families. Until then, we shall remain EVER VIGILANT in Iraq!

**EVER VIGILANT!**

**Col. Jim Brown, VIGILANT 6**

# PROMOTIONS AND REUPS



*Sgt. David Jones was promoted to Staff Sgt. on September 1 by Maj. Bryan Patridge and Col. James Brown.*



*2nd Lt. Stephen Lemelin was promoted to 1st Lt. September 17 by Maj. Andy Johnson (left), and Capt. James Allen.*



*2nd Lt. Steven Speece was promoted to 1st Lt. on Sept. 27. Here he poses with Company Commander, Capt. Wayne Ludwig.*



*Spc. Danelle Cavin reenlisted September 6 for six more years. Capt. Frank Sperl administered the oath.*



*Sgt. Cecil Gregory reenlisted September 6. Chief Warrant Officer 3 Craig Schuster administered the oath.*



*Sgt. Matthew Davis reenlisted September 23. Capt. Wayne Ludwig administered the oath.*

## MEETING OF THE MINDS

Unit commanders of the 18th Military Police Brigade gathered at the Joint Visitor's Bureau on Camp Victory for a commander's conference September 19. Issues discussed included Soldier safety, standards of discipline and reunions with family upon redeployment. Guest speakers were Multi National Corps-Iraq Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis Carey and Brig. Gen. Daniel Bolger, commander of the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team.



## GOT MILK?

Got milk? Chief Warrant Officer 3 Craig Schuster is sure going to need some to wash down all those Snickers bars. Schuster won 816 Snickers bars in a drawing held at the Camp Victory PX September 2. The object of the raffle was to guess how many candy bars were in the box. Schuster won with a guess of 807. He entered his guess on September 1 before leaving for Camp Bucca for a few days. A representative from Aafes called his office while he was gone to say he had won the chocolatey prize. Comrade, Master Sgt. Thomas Francis, called him to inform him of his win. "I thought he was pulling my leg," said Schuster.

Upon his return to Camp Victory, Schuster claimed his winnings, which he shared with his fellow brigade comrades.





*Pfc. Luis Trevino acts as a detainee on the run after being seen by a guard taking a prohibited item.*



*The guard, played by Pfc. Courtney Townes, demonstrates what happens to detainees who break the rules. Cuff 'em!*

## Look out Hollywood!

### 18th MP Brigade production has an unusual audience

**Sgt. Lynne Steely**  
**18th MP Brigade Public Affairs Office**

**CAMP VICTORY, Iraq**—Okay, so maybe it won't end up on the silver screens of Hollywood, but the latest video production from the 18th Military Police Brigade will definitely have a "captive" audience.

The film, spearheaded by Maj. Andy

Johnson, the 18th's Civil Affairs Officer, is to be used as a visual aid at Iraqi detention facilities run by the brigade. The intent is to explain to new detainees who is in charge, give a clear explanation of the rules at the facility and clarify the judicial process. It was suggested after a Psychological Operations Assessment Team did an evaluation of the detainee camps.

as a more effective way of communicating. "We want to emphasize to them that they are not prisoners but detainees. They haven't been convicted of a crime and their case will go through the judicial process to determine whether or not they will be released," said Lemelin. The behaviors they exhibit during their stay at the compound are documented and could mean the difference between release or a longer than expected stay.

With the help of a few Soldiers turned actors for a day, different scenarios were acted out to illustrate to the detainees how their actions, positive or negative, will determine what happens to them during their stay at the compound.

Soldiers demonstrated such behaviors as rioting, theft, harming other detainees and starting fires as well as examples of positive behavior like picking up trash. The brigade will be handing off detainee operations to the 43rd MP Brigade in November, but according to Lemelin, the film can be easily reconstructed as new units take over and can be updated as necessary.

Coming to an Iraqi detention facility near you!



*1st Lt. Stephen Lemelin explains to the actors how to play out their next scene. Left to right: Spc. Lamika Fisher, Trevino, Lemelin and Pfc. Manuel Gomez.*

According to 18th MP Civil Affairs Officer and film director 1st Lt. Stephen Lemelin, more than 50 percent of the detainees are illiterate. This can make it difficult to get through to them. The film is seen



Spc. John Marten, A Battery 1/623 FA

*Soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and firefighters from Forward Operating Base Abu Ghraib pose for a photo during a remembrance ceremony.*

## Remembering their own

*Sgt. Lynne Steely*

*18th Military Police Brigade Public Affairs Office*

**ABU GHRAIB, Iraq-A** crowd of Soldiers, airmen, sailors, marines and civilians stood solemnly as a procession of firefighters carrying the American flag, Color Guard and fire engines began a remembrance ceremony at Forward Operating Base Abu Ghraib September 11.

The ceremony was held to remember and honor those who lost their lives in the World Trade Center tragedy on Sept. 11, 2001, and to serve as a reminder to those here fighting the Global War on Terrorism why they're here.

It was an especially poignant day for members of the

306th Military Police Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Uniondale, N.Y. Several of the battalion's Soldiers are New York City police officers who responded to the attack on the World Trade Center in 2001. Several police officers and N.Y. court officials lost their lives in the tragedy.

The Abu Ghraib fire department paid tribute to the over 300 firefighters who perished while trying to rescue those trapped inside the towers.

Several guests contributed modest words, poems and songs in tribute to the fallen as the American flag flew at half staff in the background.



Sgt. Lynne Steely

*A somber procession of firefighters and Soldiers began the days ceremony.*

*Abu Ghraib firefighters fold the American flag at the end of the ceremony.*



Sgt. Lynne Steely

# Around Camp Victory



*The sun rising over lost lake on Camp Victory taken from the 18th MP Brigade headquarters.*



*Soldiers from the 503rd MP Battalion try their hand at fishing; caveman style.*



*Beware of dog...*



*A sign posted along a main route on Camp Victory.*



*A robot used for IED reconnaissance frequently seen roaming EOD Alley during testing.*

*This vehicle parked at the PX on Camp Liberty looked worthy of a photo.*



*For those unaware that we are in the desert, here is a sign to alert them of the road conditions.*



*A mere glimpse at some of the beautiful architecture that Iraq has to offer. This photo was taken at Camp Slayer which adjoins Camp Victory.*



## Daylight Saving Time

Daylight Saving Time in the U.S. ends this year on October 30, the last Sunday of the month. The purpose behind it is to make better use of daylight and to save energy. By turning our clocks ahead one hour in the spring, daylight is extended for one extra hour in the evening. A study done by the U.S. Department of Transportation shows that DST cuts the entire country's electricity usage by about one percent each day.

Several studies in the U.S. and Britain have also found that DST reduces net traffic accidents and fatalities by close to one percent.

The idea of daylight saving was first conceived by Benjamin Franklin while an American delegate in Paris in 1784.

DST has been used in the United States and in many European countries since World War I.

In the European Union, Summer Time begins and ends at 1 am Greenwich Mean Time. It begins the last Sunday in March and ends the last Sunday in October.

On August 8, 2005, President George Bush signed the Energy Policy Act of 2005. This Act changed the time change dates in the U.S. Beginning in 2007, DST will begin on the second Sunday of March, and end the first Sunday of November.

DST is not observed in all of the U.S. and its territories

including Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, most of the Eastern Time Zone portion of the state of Indiana, and the state of Arizona (except for the Navajo Indian Reservation, which does observe).

### Strange Facts

A man, born just after 12 midnight, DST, circumvented the Vietnam War draft by using a daylight saving time loophole. When drafted, he argued that standard time, not DST, was the official time for recording births in his state of Delaware in the year of his birth. Thus, under official standard time he was actually born on the previous day--and that day had a much higher draft lottery number and allowed him to avoid the draft.

In September 1999, the Palestinian West Bank was on daylight saving time while Israel had just switched back to standard time. West Bank Palestinians prepared time bombs and smuggled them to Arab Israelis, who misunderstood the time on the bombs. As the bombs were being planted, they exploded--one hour too early--killing three terrorists instead of two busloads of people, the intended victims.

([www.webexhibits.org/daylightsaving](http://www.webexhibits.org/daylightsaving))

## Columbus Day - Oct. 10

Columbus Day is celebrated annually on the second Monday in October to commemorate the day Christopher Columbus arrived in the New World in 1492.

The first recorded celebration of Columbus Day in the USA was held by the Tammany Society in New York in 1792 marking the 300th anniversary of Columbus's landing in the Bahamas. Columbus was an explorer and trader who crossed the Atlantic Ocean and reached the Americas on



October 12, 1492 under the flag of Castilian Spain.

Columbus landed in the Bahamas and later explored much of the Caribbean, including the isles of Cuba and Hispaniola, and the coasts of Central and South America. He never reached the present-day United States.

Columbus's voyage led to a lasting recognition of the New World, the Columbian Exchange of species such as tomatoes, potatoes, maize, and horses, and the first large-scale

colonization of the Americas by Europeans. To this day

Columbus remains a controversial figure. Some view him as responsible for the deaths of hundreds of millions of indigenous peoples, exploitation of the Americas by Europe and slavery in the West Indies. Others honor him for the massive boost to Western expansion and culture. Italian Americans hail Columbus as an icon of their heritage.

([en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org))



## Staff Sgt. William A. Allers III June 4, 1977-Sept. 20, 2005

Staff Sgt. William A. Allers III of the Kentucky Army National Guard 617th Military Police Company based in Richmond, Ky., was killed September 20 when his vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device. Allers was born in Baltimore, Md. on June 4, 1977. He grew up in Fallston, Md. with his father, William Jr., mother, Janet and older brother David. Allers attended Fallston High School and competed at the state level in track and field, winning medals for both the 220 and 440 meter relays. Allers enlisted in the Army shortly after graduating from high school and completed training as an Armored Cavalry Scout on Oct. 10, 1995. His first duty assignment was with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company 3/67 Armored Regiment where he performed duties as a gunner, earning the Army Commendation Medal. Transferred to C-4/7 Cavalry at Camp Gary Owen, Korea, Allers was awarded

the Army Achievement Medal and his first of two Army Good Conduct Medals. Allers reenlisted in September 1998 and in 1999 was assigned to D-1/16 Cavalry at Fort Knox, Ky., where he served as a team leader. He was soon promoted to Squad Leader and was awarded two Army Achievement Medals, a second Army Good Conduct Medal and the Army Superior Unit Award. Allers completed his Active Duty enlistment in September 2003 and joined the Kentucky Army National Guard where he was assigned to the 617th MP Company. In August 2004, he completed training as a military policeman. Allers deployed to Iraq with the 617th on Oct. 2, 2004 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

He is survived by his wife Beth, his son Gregory, 8, his daughter Brittney, 7, and unborn child expected in October. Allers was awarded the Purple Heart, Bronze Star Medal and Combat Action Badge posthumously.



Sgt. Lynne Steely



Sgt. Lynne Steely

*A buglar plays taps.*



Sgt. Lynne Steely

*Comrades pay their last respects to Allers at a memorial service held at Camp Liberty, Iraq September 23.*

# TRICK OR TREAT

On October 31, people all over North America and parts of Western Europe celebrate Halloween. It falls on the eve of a holy day in the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches called All Saints' Day. Originally a pagan festival of the dead, All Saints' Day was established by the Catholic Church in the 9th century to honor Christian saints. All Souls' Day, a holy day established by the Catholic Church in the 10th century to help purify the spirits of the dead, is also closely linked to Halloween.

## Origins

Halloween is historically related to similar folk holidays celebrated in other countries. The Day of the Dead, a Mexican holiday, blends Roman Catholic and Native American traditions about the souls of the dead. On the Day of the Dead, Mexicans decorate their homes with playful imagery of animated human skeletons, leave offerings of food for wandering spirits, and tend the graves of their deceased relatives.

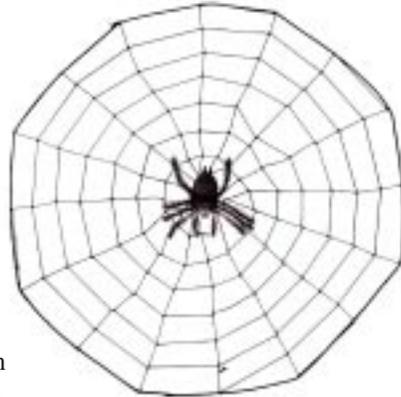


## History in the U.S.

Attitudes toward Halloween varied widely among the various European groups that settled in North America. New England was initially settled by English Puritans, members of a strict Protestant sect that rejected Halloween as a Catholic and pagan holiday. However, other British colonists successfully transplanted Halloween traditions in southern colonies such as Virginia and Maryland. Irish immigrants helped popularize Halloween traditions throughout the United States in the mid-19th century. As belief in many of the old superstitions waned during the late 19th century, Halloween was increasingly regarded as a children's holiday.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, young people often observed Halloween by perpetrating minor acts of vandalism, such as overturning sheds or breaking windows. Beginning in the 1930's Halloween mischief gradually transformed into the modern ritual of trick-or-treating. Eventually, Halloween treats were plentiful while tricks became rare. Nonetheless,

the tradition of Halloween pranks still survives. In some areas, the night before Halloween is called Mischief Night, and vandalism often reaches dangerous levels. In Detroit, Michigan, Mischief Night provided the occasion for waves of arson that sometimes destroyed whole city blocks during the 1970's and 1980's.



## Modern Customs

As most Halloween festivities are based on folk beliefs regarding the supernatural and spirits of the dead, Halloween decorations typically feature imagery such as witches, werewolves, vampires and ghosts.

The most celebrated Halloween decoration is the jack-o'-lantern. Its name is derived from a character in British folktales. According to these tales, the soul of a deceased person named Jack O'Lantern was barred from both heaven and hell and was condemned to wander the earth with his lantern.



("Halloween," Microsoft ©Encarta® Online Encyclopedia 2005)

### Check out these "spooktacular" Halloween websites

For lots of great information on everything Halloween from printable activities for the kids, games and downloads, to eerie music, books and screensavers. Hope you have some time! [www.halloweenmagazine.com](http://www.halloweenmagazine.com)

Download Jack O'Lantern Laboratory to create your own pumpkin carving stencils. It's a trial version and the full version is only \$9.95. Tons of fun for the kids! [www.softshop.com/Download\\_jol.asp](http://www.softshop.com/Download_jol.asp)

What would Halloween be without scary movies? Order practically any horror flick online. [www.horrormovies.com](http://www.horrormovies.com)

# BATTALION NEWS



*Photo courtesy of the 306th MP Battalion*

Capt. Robert Distefano, legal officer for the 306th MP Battalion achieves new heights during a high jump competition at Forward Operating Base Abu Ghraib September 23.



*Photo courtesy of the 306th MP Battalion*

Tae Bo creator Billy Blanks speaks with Soldiers from the 306th Military Police Battalion about the benefits of his total body fitness system during a visit to Forward Operating Base Abu Ghraib September 22. Banks has traveled around the world teaching his program to U.S Armed Forces in Bosnia, Kosovo, Serejevo, Greece, Africa, Germany and Italy. Banks has also made appearances in 18 films including Kiss the Girls and Bloodfist, and several television shows.

## *Farewell to comrades...*



*Sgt. Norma Hill has helped keep our computers, internet, phones and radios working throughout the deployment but the time has come for her to move on to bigger and better things. Sgt. Hill has been selected for Officer Candidate School and needs to leave early to spend time with her family and prepare for school. You can do it Sgt. Hill!*

*This is a second year in Iraq with the 18th MP Brigade for Spc. Alma Ortiz who has continued to serve her country and the 18th with pride. Spc. Ortiz has processed hundreds of awards for the Brigade and was selected to go back to our headquarters in Germany early to help prepare for our redeployment. Thanks Spc. Ortiz!*



*...and friends*



## CONNECTIONS

*By Lt. Col. Thomas Evans, Brigade Chaplain*

### Reunion

The hardship of separation is almost over. The dream that everything will be wonderful as soon as we're back together again has carried us for months. But, a new challenge is in front of us.

Now we have to take two different "normals" and merge them into a new "normal."

If I can imagine it, back home a normal day may have looked something like this.

Wake up early for a few minutes of quiet before

the children wake up, or before you have to wrestle the children away from their pillows. The chaos of breakfast ends and you send children off to school. Laundry, preschoolers, pets, wash dishes, make beds, emails to keep the connections up, wonder what your spouse is doing right now (in their time zone), vacuum, pick up toys, groceries, children back from school want snacks, tell the kids to turn the television down, neighbor kids knocking at the door, phone calls, wonder what day this is, supper, baths, bedtime and maybe some quiet

minutes before you close out the day "alone again." You can't wait for your Soldier to come home to share your world.



Down here, normal looks more like this. Wake up early, physical training, walk to the chow hall, eat a breakfast prepared for you, throw away all the residue, walk to the bus stop, wonder what day this is, go to your work station, solve problems, prepare reports, answer the phone, ride to lunch, eat a meal prepared for you,

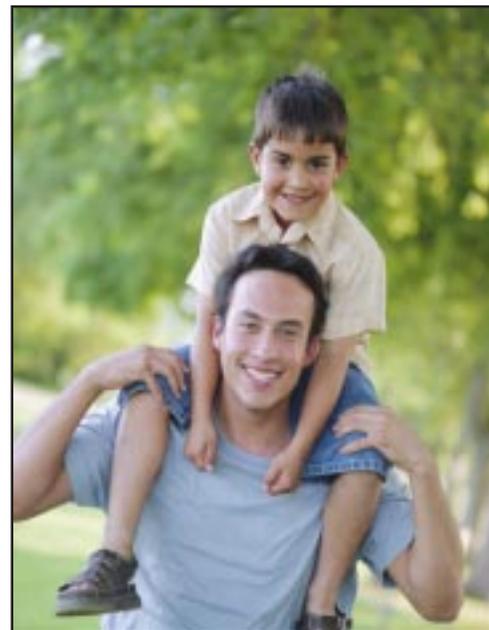
throw away all the residue, ride back to work, more of the same, learn that everything you were working on isn't needed anymore, start a new project, email your family, wonder what they are doing right now (in their time zone), hear another loud boom, attend the briefing, learn about a new set of requirements, ride to supper, eat a meal prepared for you, throw away all the residue, wonder what to do with your time off if you have any, close

out the day "alone again." You can't wait to get back home again.

Our "normals" are very different. This is where the challenge begins. As we reunite, the outcome will be a "new normal." It won't be his, and it won't be hers. **The awkward transition from where you are now to where you will be then might be the hardest part of this deployment.**

The experts say that it will take half as long as you were separated to recover from your separation. Regular people will take six months to settle into their new normal.

The harder you push to hurry that process, the more traumatic the experience will be. Relax. This is a long process. Don't insist on having it your way. Remember what I said last month? In marriage, nobody wins if somebody loses.



Just one of many wonderful letters of support that we receive. This one is from Adrienne Gaskins on behalf of her company The Wilson Daily Times and the community of Wilson, N.C.

## THE WILSON DAILY TIMES

P.O. Box 2447  
2001 Downing Street

Wilson, N.C. 27894-2447  
252-243-5151

Your Community Connection

Thursday, Aug. 19, 2004

Dear Soldier,

I hope and pray that this letter finds you well and at peace. Thank you so much for your sacrifice during the Iraqi War.

Our cause is a noble one with a dream that suppressed citizens around the world can learn and live in a land like ours — America, a land where ultimately civility should rule.

Not only do I appreciate your serving in the military, but also I'm thankful that your family is willing to 'lend you out' for a few months or even years. Hopefully, they recognize the important sense of duty that you have shown by signing up to serve in the U.S. military.

My company, The Wilson Daily Times in Wilson, NC, has started a campaign to send you guys little tokens of gratitude from our community. The goodies of personal products and snacks are just small gifts of how we feel about you and how we stand behind you.

While there are some who are opposed to war, we don't live in a utopian or perfect society. And as human beings, we should strive for it.

I know that deep down inside, the majority of the Iraqis are appreciative of our presence in their native land.

So again, thank you. Please remain safe and remember that we Americans 'got your back.'

Sincerely,  
Adrienne Gaskins  
State Editor  
The Wilson Daily Times  
P.O. Box 2447  
Wilson, NC 27894-2447

# TIDBITS

## Financial Insider

### **Thrift Savings Plan-**

If you haven't already begun to tuck away all that extra money you've been earning during deployment, it's never too late to start. The Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) is a Federal Government-sponsored retirement savings and investment plan. The TSP is a defined contribution plan. The retirement income you receive from your TSP account will depend on how much you have contributed to your account during your working years and the earnings on those contributions. You can contribute up to 10 percent of your basic pay each pay period to your TSP account as soon as you are a member of the uniformed services. You may also contribute from one to 100 percent of any incentive pay or special pay (including bonus pay) you receive, up to the limits established by the Internal Revenue Code.

If you plan to make the military a career, The TSP can provide you with a supplemental source of retirement income in addition to your uniformed services retired pay. Just \$40 per month can add up to \$20, 959 (at 7% interest per year). To participate in TSP you must sign up with your service.



## Websites

**How you can help victims of hurricane Katrina from across the globe**

Donate money by check or credit card  
[www.americares.org](http://www.americares.org)  
[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

**Get the latest hurricane updates**

The National Hurricane Center  
[www.nhc.noaa.gov](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov)  
[www.hurricanetrack.com](http://www.hurricanetrack.com)



## Legal Tips

### **Claims-**

With redeployment right around the corner, many Soldiers and their families will be getting ready to relocate. With all those belongings moving across the country or across the ocean, the possibility of something becoming damaged or lost increases. Many have also had belongings entrusted to the care of others in storage while deployed. A lot can happen over the course of a year.

Congress has passed laws governing payment to you for losses as a result of your military service. You may have a claim against the government if:

- ✓ **Your property, including privately owned vehicles, is lost, damaged, or destroyed while transported or stored under government orders. This includes fire, acts of nature and unusual occurrences.**
- ✓ **Your property is stolen from government quarters, from private quarters located outside the U.S, or from an authorized storage place.**

If you need to file such a claim contact your nearest post claims office. You must file DD Form 1840R within 70 days of delivery of the property. For more info read Army Regulation 27-20.



## **Help for our four-legged friends**

Many animals were left behind or separated from their owners in the wake of Katrina. Help the rescue and relief efforts by your contribution.

**The Humane Society of the United States**

[www.hsus.org](http://www.hsus.org)

**The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals**

[www.asPCA.org](http://www.asPCA.org)

**The American Kennel Club**

[www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org)

