



Volume 3, Number 20

386th Air Expeditionary Wing

June 23, 2006

Rock boxers ready to put their dukes up

Staff Sgt. Ryan Hansen
386th AEW/PA

Get ready to rumble!

The 386th Expeditionary Services Squadron is set to host its quarterly Fight Night at 6:30 p.m. June 30 at the Rock Amphitheater.

The event brings together amateur boxers from across base as well as military installations around the area.

"Attendees can expect a great show," said 1st Lt. Elias Guerra, a protocol officer with the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing, a former amateur fighter that has been helping to train all the hopeful boxers. "The sparring sessions have been drawing small crowds and this gets the team even more excited for the actual Fight Night."

The 386th ESVS started advertising the event as soon as AEF 1/2 started rolling into the theater. They invited anyone with even a tiny bit of interest in putting on the gloves to come out for a training session.

"We started off with about 40 folks," Lieutenant Guerra said. "But right off the bat, we let every one know that this was for real."

The field was quickly whittled to around 20 potential boxers through attrition and conflicting work schedules. Those who did survive have been going through some hard training in rough conditions.

"It takes a lot of courage to even get in the ring, but to do it out here, in these conditions ... is commendable," said Master Sgt. Manuel Perez, superintendent of the Rock Flex Recreation Center for the 386th ESVS, and Fight Night boxing trainer. "They go through two hours or more each day, at a minimum of four days a week."



Air Force/Staff Sgt. Jonathan Pomeroy

Airman 1st Class Jose' Rodriguez, 386th Expeditionary Communications Squadron, takes a cut at Staff Sgt. Raymond Acosta, 386th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, during a sparring session recently.

"We focus on learning the basic punches, basic defense and offensive combinations and strategies," Lieutenant Guerra said. "Then we drill, drill, drill and finish it up with calisthenics, push ups and sit ups, or sprints."

With so little time to prepare for the event, no training time is wasted. Every part of the schedule is done for a reason.

"We try to do as much as possible outside to get used to actual Fight Night conditions," Lieutenant Guerra said. "We also do full-contact sparring two-to-three times per week to apply the lessons learned and develop conditioning."

Boxers for the upcoming event have every type of background. Some have quite a bit of experience while others have none.

"We are matching them up as evenly as possible," Sergeant Perez said. "Most of

these guys have no experience, so they are all starting from scratch."

Female boxing fans will not be disappointed either as they will be represented at Fight Night. Two Air Force females have been training for the big event and the Navy is expected to bring a contingent of female boxers to the ring.

"(This is) something they will be able to tell their children and grandchildren, you can't take this experience away from them ever," Sergeant Perez said. "How many people can say the actually fought in a real live boxing match in their military careers? I am honored to be one of their trainers, it makes me feel good to know I am able to teach them a little of what I know."

"I hope everyone comes out and sees what these guys have worked so hard for," Lieutenant Guerra said.

Stronger Together

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Eugene Schnipke
386th AEW wing chaplain

Author Anne Bryan Smollin tells the story of an old African king who gathered his people and gave them a short, sturdy stick. The king instructed them to break the stick. With little effort, they all snapped their sticks in half. "This is how it is when a soul is alone without anyone. It can be easily broken."

Next the king gave everyone another stick and said, "This is how I would like you to live. Put your sticks together in bundles of twos and threes. Now, break these bundles in half."

The people surrounding the king followed his instructions and tried to break the bundles. But they failed.

"No one can break the sticks when there are two or more in a bundle," the king said. "We are strong when we stand with another soul. When we are with others, we cannot be broken."

In his book *Bowling Alone* author Robert Putnam says today, more Americans than ever bowl, but instead of bowling in leagues which, just a few years back, were a very popular activity, they now choose to bowl alone. Through extensive sociological research he shows that significant changes in work, family life, the shift from rural communities to suburban neighborhoods, roles of women, technology, and so on have contributed to a significant decline in what he calls "social capital." This has had a negative affect on both people and communities. So today neighbors don't know each other, organizations that once served the community in a variety of ways have an aging membership and struggle to recruit new members. Fewer people care about the political landscape and less than fifty percent make the effort to vote. Unfortunately, people today report feeling more isolated and alone despite the fact that we have more ways than ever to be connected.

The military being a smaller reflection of the civilian population tends to experience some of the same realities. I think of organizations like the Air Force Sergeants Association, Company Grade Officer's Council, or the Top Three. Even here in a deployed location where some of the usual duties and responsibilities of family life, school, or other activities are curtailed, I am pretty sure organizations such as the Rock Bottom council or the Rock Solid 5/6 would welcome additional members.

Why join an organization? Because we're stronger and can do more good together! To cite one example, in 1967 the Air Force Sergeant's Association found that over 50,000 widows of enlisted men were living in poverty. With the assistance of former Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen. Michael Ryan and his wife, a group of active duty and retired NCO's set out to address this problem. They established the Air Force Enlisted Village, which has made a huge difference for widows in need.

Putnam concluded that the more connections people make the better. Some studies indicate that those who have lots of friends, relatives, and other social ties often have fewer illnesses and tend to live longer. Being part of groups, organizations, and communities can range from such things as teams to job related groups to churches as well as service activities associated with them. These connections are a contributing factor to stronger, more resilient, and healthier people. They also bring improvements to our communities, our Air Force, and our country. Margaret Meade said, "Don't think that a small group of awakened individuals cannot change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

We live in an increasingly fast paced, challenging, and continually changing world, but you can make a difference. Why not start here!



**386th Air Expeditionary Wing
Editorial Staff**

Col. Timothy L. Hale
386th Air Expeditionary Wing
Commander

Capt. Tom Crosson
386th Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs Chief

Staff Sgt. Ryan Hansen
386th Air Expeditionary Wing
Rock Slate Editor

This funded newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services overseas. Contents of the "Rock Slate" are not necessarily the official views, nor endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force.

The 386th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs staff prepares all editorial content for the "Rock Slate." The editor will edit or re-write material for clarity, brevity or to conform with the Associated Press Style Guide, local policy and Air Force style as required by Air Force Instruction 35-101.

Unless otherwise noted, all photographs are U.S. Air Force photos. The "Rock Slate" may use news and information from the American Forces Information Service, Air Force Print News and other sources.

Contributions for the "Rock Slate" can be made directly to the 386th AEW Public Affairs Office or through e-mail to: 386aew.pa@salem.af.mil.

The editor can be reached at 442-2312. Submit contributions by 4 p.m. Thursday, one week prior to publication.

The "Rock Slate" can be viewed electronically by clicking the "Rock Slate" link at <http://intranet.salem.af.mil>.



Mark the date...

Wing Change of Command

**9:30 a.m. Tuesday, July 4
At the Passenger Terminal**

Colonel Hale gives his final commander's call

Staff Sgt. Ryan Hansen
386th AEW/PA

The leader of the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing talked to his Airmen one final time during two commander's calls June 16 at the Rock Auditorium.

Col. Timothy Hale, who relinquishes command July 4, talked about the base's history, its future, the importance of the unit's mission and how everyone here is a strategic Airman and is an important part of the overall Air Force mission.

"We've been here since 1992 in one form or another, we're still here and we'll continue to be here for a very long time," he said. "Our generation's calling is to end the Global War on Terror, this base is a strategic hub for that and you're all a key part of it."

Colonel Hale talked about the positive changes that have been made throughout his year-long tour at the facility and what the future holds.

"The face of the base looks 100 percent different right now than it did a year ago when I got here," he said. "Between the number of people we've moved out of the tents, the amount of asphalt we've laid down and the amount of dust that used to hang over – the physical face of the base has really changed and we'll continue to



Air Force/Staff Sgt. Ryan Hansen

Col. Timothy Hale, 386th Air Expeditionary Wing commander, addresses his troops during a commander's call June 16 at the Rock Auditorium.

improve it."

The commander said the positive changes to the infrastructure could not have been made without the help of our grateful hosts.

"More than half the people in this room were under 10 years old in 1990 when the first Gulf War broke out," Colonel Hale said. "The Kuwaitis we work with here on a daily basis remember it very well. They understand why we're here because they lived through it and they're strong supporters of us because of it."

He said another reason for the improvements and overall mission effectiveness that he's seen has been because of

our coalition partners.

"The Japanese Self Defense Force is here doing a tremendous job performing a mission for the first time outside of a self defense mode since World War II. This is historic and you're a part of it," he said. "And the (Republic of Korea) Air Force is here supporting the ROK Army in North Central Iraq. They control that area, train the Iraqis and their air force is here to support them and doing a phenomenal job."

The colonel then said he wanted to remind attendees that the mission of the 386th AEW goes beyond the fence line of the base. The unit has Airmen all around the theater

performing incredible missions.

"You need to be aware of the folks we have wearing the 386th patch that are away from the installation," he said. "We have them at Kuwait Naval Base, at Camp Bucca in Iraq and we have them driving convoys out of Camp Arifjan to all parts of Iraq.

"Your brothers and sisters are out there taking care of business," he continued.

Finally, Colonel Hale reminded everyone that what they do right here has an effect on not only all of those Airmen performing those missions down range, but also back home in the states.

"Our aircraft here are in essence performing convoy mitigation," he said. "We've kept 27,000 busses off the road by the number of people we've flown and we've kept 12,000 trucks off the road by the number of aircraft we've flown out of here. That's why our mission here is so important, why every mission counts and that's why I'm so into mission effectiveness."

And he reminded them of the cold realities of the job.

"This is very serious business," he said. "If we don't do things right, if we don't have 100 percent mission effectiveness ... we'll lose members. This is no joke, this is a real world mission."

VA data theft: Airmen may check status at AFPC

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas - All active duty, Guard and Reserve Airmen can check the Air Force Personnel Center Web site at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil> to see if their personal data was compromised in the Veterans Administration data theft.

This is an additional effort on behalf of the Air Force to ensure affected Airmen are aware their information was compromised.

For the latest information on this issue and for more information on how to protect against identity theft, visit <http://www.firstgov.gov>.

VA Data Theft

- For more information please visit the Air Force Personnel Center's website at: www.afpc.randolph.af.mil.
- And for more info on how to protect yourself, please visit: www.firstgov.gov.

Take time to know emergency leave rules

An understanding of intricacies can save time, end frustration

Being away from home for an extended period of time often places considerable stress on Airmen and their families.

That stress is compounded when a deployed Airman faces a family emergency back home. In order to take care of Airmen and their families, the Air Force has an emergency leave program which permits Airmen, who meet specific criteria, to take chargeable leave in order to handle family matters during a crisis.

While the emergency leave program is something that no Airman wants to utilize during a deployment, a good understanding of the process and the specific situations when emergency leave is authorized will help mitigate misunderstanding and frustration during a time of personal crisis.

The emergency leave program is governed by Air Force Instruction 36-3003, The Military Leave Program. Section 6.5 in AFI 36-3003 specifically states that emergency leave is "granted for personal or family emergencies involving the immediate family." Immediate family is defined by the instruction as the Airman's spouse and Airman's (or spouse's) parents, step-parents, children, stepchildren, siblings, sole surviving blood relative and in-locos-parentis.

For the purpose of granting emergency leave, in-loco-parentis is defined as a guardian who acted in place of a parent and stood in place of the member's par-

ent for at least five years before the member became 21 years of age or entered military service. In addition, the in-loco-parentis guardian must have provided a home, food, clothing, medical care, and other necessities, and provided moral, disciplinary guidance, and affection.

In order to be granted emergency leave that involves an in-loco-parentis, the Airman must sign a statement attesting to a person's in-loco-parentis status. A person is not in-loco-parentis if he or she baby-sat, provided day care services, or gave financial help such as a home where the parent also lived. A grandparent or other person normally is not in-loco-parentis when the parent also lived at the same residence.

Airmen approved for emergency leave are entitled to personal emergency transportation from Southwest Asia to the Airmen's designated leave address. If the Airmen elects to travel to an alternate location, the travel cost must not exceed the cost of travel between here and the member's designated leave address. All excess costs must be covered by the Airman.

All requests for emergency leave should be made through your immediate supervisor. Supervisors and commanders develop a staff action package which is routed through the group commander, the wing Personnel Support for Contingency Operations office (PERSCO), then to the wing commander for final approval. Although AFI 36-3003 states that unit commanders are the approval authority for emergency leave requests, AOR guidance designates the

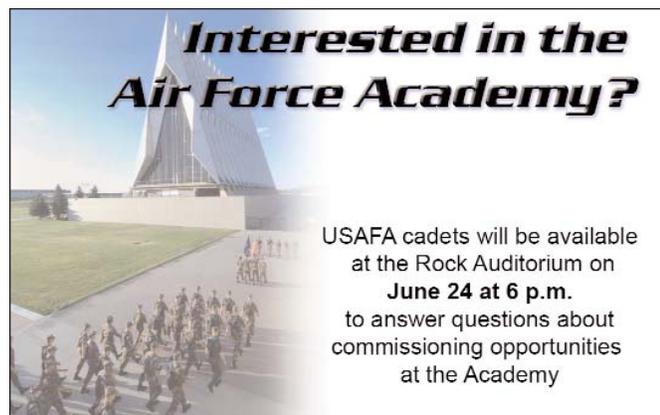
wing commander as the approval authority due to the potential impact each emergency leave request has on our mission capability. The commander has some discretion in approving emergency leave requests that fall outside the parameters of AFI 36-3003, however, exception to policy requests for emergency leave are unlikely to be approved due to the wing's combat mission and manning situation.

Col. Timothy Hale, 386th Air Expeditionary Wing commander, recently addressed emergency leave, saying, "I am mindful that a family emergency is a difficult thing and can be a very emotional time in a person's life. I realize that this situation is magnified during a deployment away from home and family members. While I sympathize with an Airman's situation during a crisis, it is my duty to follow the Air Force guidance regarding emergency leave."

Colonel Hale added that in circumstances where the emergency leave program doesn't apply to an Airman's particular situation, there is a large support network of squadron-mates and the services of our chaplain team here to assist the Airman in their time of need.

A family crisis is a difficult event and can be a very emotional time in a person's life, particularly during a deployment. Familiarity with the Air Force's emergency leave program will assist an Airman in the event they are faced with family emergency.

More information about the Air Force Emergency Leave Program and local emergency leave procedures can be found in AFI 36-3006 and 386th AEW Instruction 24-101



Interested in the Air Force Academy?

USAFA cadets will be available at the Rock Auditorium on **June 24 at 6 p.m.** to answer questions about commissioning opportunities at the Academy



Rock Solid 56
Wednesday's @ 1600
at the Chapel

All E-5's Selects to E-6's,
and all services welcome to attend.

Precautionary steps can help prevent heat injuries

Capt. Thai Le
386th EMDG

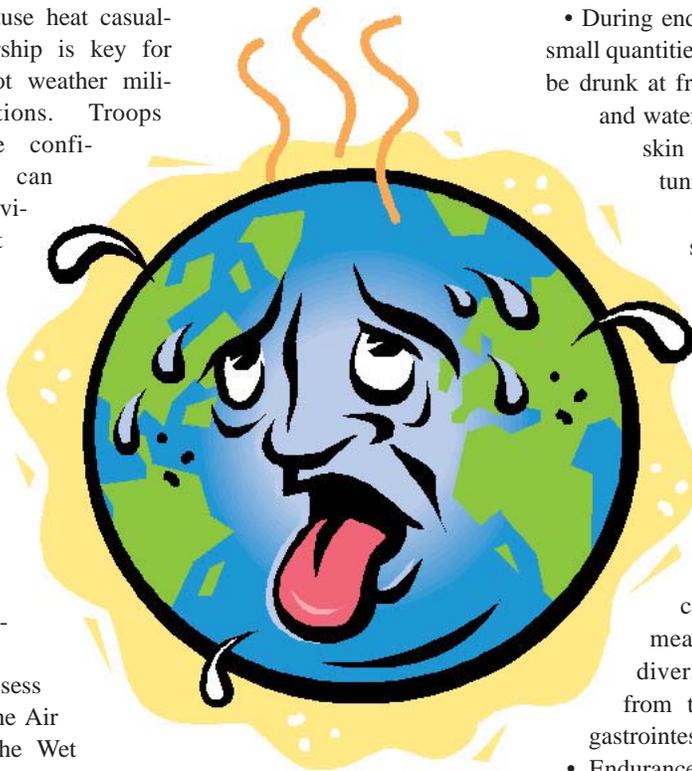
Troops deployed here from April to September will experience heat stress that requires some management for successful mission accomplishment.

Excessive heat stress will degrade mental and physical performance capabilities and eventually cause heat casualties. Leadership is key for successful hot weather military operations. Troops should have confidence they can master the environment through the use of preventive measures. Leaders must learn their unit's capabilities and manage heat exposure relative to the provided guidance.

To better assess heat stress, the Air Force uses the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature index to mark levels of environmental stress. The WBGT index takes into account four basic parameters; air temperature; mean radiant temperature, air speed and absolute humidity. All 4 basic parameters mathematically integrated into a single temperature called WBGT. The WBGT temperature is used to determine the heat categories and therefore the work-rest cycles.

Bioenvironmental Engineering personnel from the

386th Expeditionary Medical Group are responsible for taking daily WBGT measurements. During the summer months when the forecast indicates air temperature at least 85F as a daily high, the BEE takes WBGT measurements at a minimum of six times, evenly spaced, from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. The base intranet web



page has the current WBGT information and the command post sends messages every time the WBGT category changes.

The following general precautionary measures are to be applied when working or exercising in the heat:

- Clothing should be lightweight, loose fitting and preferably natural fiber. Dress and equipment increase the risk of heat illness by

increasing workload and by reducing the body area available for the evaporation of sweat. In hot environments, loose fitting clothing is to be worn, particularly at the neck and wrists to allow air circulation. Furthermore, appropriate headgear is to be worn, in addition to the use of sun block to prevent sunburn.

- During endurance exercise small quantities of fluid should be drunk at frequent intervals and water sprayed on the skin at every opportunity.

- The use of sweat inhibiting deodorants should be avoided.
- Personnel should not exercise in the heat immediately after a glucose or high carbohydrate meal due to the diversion of blood from the skin to the gastrointestinal tract.
- Endurance events should be cancelled if the WBGT index exceeds category 1-2.

Leaders need to ensure their troops are acclimated to working in hot weather environments. It takes 10 to 14 days of repeated exposure to hot environments to acclimate. Other factors which place a person at risk are: lack of sleep, poor fitness, overweight, minor illness, taking medications, prior history of heat illness, skin disorders such as heat rash and sunburn which prevent effective

Heat Stress

Common Signs, Symptoms

- Dizziness
- Headache
- Nausea
- Unsteady walk
- Weakness or fatigue
- Muscle cramps

Serious Signs, Symptoms

- Hot body, high temperature
- Confusion, agitation
- Vomiting
- Involuntary bowel movement
- Convulsions
- Weak or rapid pulse
- Unresponsiveness, coma

Immediate Actions

- Stop activity
- Allow casualty to rest in shade
- Loosen clothing
- Take sips of water
- While doing the above, call for a medic to evaluate the troop. Medic will monitor temperature and check for mental confusion. If no medic is available, call 117 for ambulance.

Immediately call 117 for ambulance for emergency transport while doing the following.

- Lay person down in shade with feet elevated until ambulance arrives
- Undress as much as possible
- Aggressively apply ice packs or ice sheets
- Pour cold water over casualty and fan
- Give sips of water while awaiting ambulance (if conscious)
- Monitor airway and breathing until ambulance arrives

ive sweating, and age greater than 40 years.

When leaders make the effort to follow heat stress control measures, everybody wins. Troops stay healthy and the mission gets done.

For any additional questions or concerns, please contact the bioenvironmental engineering office at 442-2790 or 941-4637.

One of a Kind

A small mission support detachment is part of Air Force history

Staff Sgt. Ryan Hansen
386th AEW/PA

KUWAIT NAVAL BASE, Kuwait — No where in the world can you find Airmen performing their mission in the same type of atmosphere as you can here with Detachment 1 of the 586th Expeditionary Mission Support Group.

These 34 Airmen are running an entire military installation for the Army right on the shores of the Persian Gulf. This is the first unit in the history of the Air Force to perform such a mission.

"I'm very honored to be leading this group of Airmen," said Lt. Col. Tim Henke, 586th EMSG Det. 1 and camp commander. "They have proven that they are not only willing, but very capable to perform a combat support mission and operate a joint base."

The place they operate and maintain for the Army is known as Camp Patriot. It is the only U.S. camp in Kuwait located entirely with-

in the host nation's installation.

Although Camp Patriot is officially an Army installation, more than 75 percent of its permanent party personnel are from the Navy.

"We've really leaned hard on the flexibility of Air Force blue to survive," said Chief Master Sgt. R. Wayne Barron, senior enlisted leader for the 586th EMSG Det. 1 and Camp Command Chief. "Nothing like this has ever been done in the Air Force and it's really a neat opportunity."

This is the second rotation of Airmen to perform this mission at Camp Patriot for the Army. The mission they are performing is known to Soldiers as a Tailored Logistics Element. The detachment includes civil engineer, logistics, mission support and services flights.

"Basically we're like a mini-mission support group," said Capt. Tom Giles, mission support flight commander for the 586th EMSG

Det. 1. "We have almost all the same elements as a traditional mission support group but with a lot less people."

The detachment provides command and control of the installation, manages all the base infrastructure, plans and executes all construction and maintenance projects, provides billeting and manages all Army contracts that deal with base support.

"Because the Air Force has focused on becoming more light, lean, and lethal since the end of the cold war, we all pride ourselves on living up to the concept of agile combat support, or being able to create, protect, and sustain airpower across the spectrum of operations," Colonel Henke said. "This focus on being agile is serving us well here at Camp Patriot. We've adapted to a new organization that accomplishes a mission none of us saw coming a few years ago — directly supporting the U.S. Army by operating one of their own bases.

The Air Force culture of continuous improvement is serving our customers here just as well as it does back home," he added.

The first group of Airmen to step up for the Army and run Camp Patriot arrived in August 2005. They really set the groundwork for this team through their "learning on the job."

"Our predecessors made sure we knew what we were getting into as far as manpower needs and things like that," Chief Barron said. "They really made sure we had the right people to do all the jobs that we have to do here."

Camp Patriot is a key strategic installation for Operation Iraqi Freedom. It supports more than 20 different units from all four services and the Coast Guard.

"(This is the) most diverse mission I've seen in my career," Colonel Henke said. "The statement that we're an AF unit, running an Army camp, in support of the US



Navy, on a Kuwaiti Navy base has become our bumper sticker.”

This team of Airmen went through one month of pre-deployment combat skills training at Fort Sill, Okla., before they arrived here for their six-month rotation. One of the goals of the training was for them to become more familiar with “Army speak” and to make the transition to this unique mission easier.

“During our time here we’ve really had to work to understand and learn things that are unique to the Army,” Chief Barron said. “We’ve really had to learn basically a whole new language.”

But Airmen at Camp Patriot believe they have made a difference even with all the various challenges.

“We’ve done quite a few things to improve the base’s infrastructure to include camp security and quality-of-life,” said Capt. Drew Clewett, civil engineer flight commander. “One of the larger projects we’ve accomplished is to replace the calling center, laundry and post office tents with trailers. But you name it and we’ve done it.”

“We came in and right away went to work on the fitness center,” said Capt. Dan Giannavola, services flight commander. “Sure we’ve had some growing pains, but we’ve overcome them and I think we have a really nice facility for troops to enjoy.”

And they’re not done yet. Currently the detachment is working on what’s known as downtown KNB. The plan is to relocate quality-of-life facilities to make them more



Courtesy photos

(Top) Materiel and equipment for use in the AOR are unloaded at KNB. (Left) Chief Master Sgt. R. Wayne Barron, senior enlisted leader for the 586th EMSG Det. 1, talks to one of his Airmen during their one month of pre-deployment combat skills training at Fort Sill, Okla., before they arrived here for their six-month rotation.



Air Force/Staff Sgt. Ryan Hansen

A ship from the U.S. Army heavy boat fleet docks for maintenance at the Kuwait Naval Base.

accessible to the living quarters.

“It’s going to be really nice when it’s all done,” Captain Giles said. “This place already has a small town feel to it. Everybody knows everybody and everyone is always willing to step up and help whatever the challenge is, but that will just add to it.”

Thankfully, their hard work and dedication haven’t gone unnoticed either.

“At the end of the day

we’ve improved the quality of life here for everyone,” Chief Barron said. “Almost daily troops come up to me from others services and other countries and say thanks.”

So while the Air Force’s contingency makes up less than one percent of the base populace, their impact is truly felt and seen throughout the installation.

“We’ve improved the mission capability of this base dramatically since the Air

Force stepped into the camp command cell job 10 months ago,” Colonel Henke said.

“Some people like to associate the Air Force closely with quality of life issues, but that’s just a small part of the overall picture,” he added. “It’s really a quality of mission support issue (to include) better maintenance, infrastructure, force protection, operating procedures, teamwork and quality of life, which all together, produces better combat capability.”



(Top left) Staff Sgt. Jason Glefke, Senior Airman Adam Millard, and Airman 1st Class Donalynv Smith, firefighters with the 386th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, arrive at the scene and get their gear on during a C-130 egress training exercise here June 14. (Left) Staff Sgt. Jason Glefke, and Airman 1st Class Donalynv Smith, unravel hoses shortly after arriving.



(Right) Staff Sgt. Duane Nicol, prepares to enter the C-130 Hercules in search of surviving aircrew members. (Far right) Sergeant Nicol, prepares to enter the aircraft. Firefighters from the 386th ECES regularly go through different exercises and scenarios to stay proficient and up-to-date in with their training.



(Left) Sergeant Glefke holds the hose as Airman Smith, assists during the egress training exercise. (Top) Senior Airman Alfonso Soto, helps Airman 1st Class Christopher Dickerson, carry "victim" Senior Airman Bradley McCroskey out of the aircraft.

Namsadang-nori



Namsadan-nori is a national art form in Korea. It is one of the most popular plays currently going in the country.

On June 14 the Republic of Korea Air Force brought this special event to base for a one time performance at the Rock Auditorium.

Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marine and other coalition forces in attendance were treated to a total artistic performance package that included music, physical activity, mask dancing and puppet plays.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Jonathan Pomeroy



Airmen use lessons learned 10 years after attack

Staff Sgt. Phyllis Duff

Air Force Print News

SAN ANTONIO (AFPN) -- It was around 10 p.m. on June 25, 1996, when Staff Sgt. Alfredo Guerrero went to check the security post on the rooftop of an eight-story Khobar Towers apartment building at Dhahran Air Base, Saudi Arabia. He asked the sentry on watch if everything was OK.

Below them, residents in the rooms were settling in for the night. Most were with the 4404th Wing -- protectors of the "no fly zone" in Southern Iraq in support of Operation Southern Watch.

Some Airmen were writing letters or calling home. Some were playing cards or shooting pool in the recreation room. Others were showering and some were already asleep. For many, there were only a handful of days left on their tour before the "Freedom Bird" would fly them back home from their deployment.

As the two security policemen talked, Sergeant Guerrero noticed an olive drab gas truck following a white Chevy Caprice. Winding their way through the parking lot, the car came down the fence line and parked, flashing its headlights. The truck nudged its way up to the perimeter fence. A two-lane street ran between the fence and the building.

Two white-robed men wearing the traditional red and white checkered head-dress got out of the truck and ran to the car.

Sergeant Guerrero's heart jolted. The sedan peeled out and was soon out of sight.

"At that point I knew that something pretty big was about to happen," Sergeant Guerrero said.

In a split second, he radioed the control center about what was happening. As he called for an evacuation of the apartment building, his sentry was on it, running for the rooftop door. A second sentry, who had been guarding the other side of the building, followed suit.

Fists pounding doors and scuffling boots echoed down the corridor of the eighth floor.

"We need to evacuate! Get out now!" the sentries yelled.



Courtesy photo

Nineteen Airmen died and hundreds were injured in the terrorist attack at Khobar Towers in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, on June 25, 1996. The front of Bldg. 131 was blown off when a fuel truck parked nearby was detonated by terrorists.

The doors crashed open and a growing group of Airmen scuttled down the stairwell to the seventh floor.

In the apartment building next door, an Airman lay down to sleep. He pulled a scratchy Army blanket over his head to keep out the meat-locker cold of his air conditioned room.

"Just two more weeks and I'll be home," then Staff Sgt. Bob Oldham thought to himself, his eyes getting heavy.

Then there was a massive boom. The explosion rocked Sergeant Oldham's room and he froze. He thought the floors were collapsing as the intense sounds reverberated through the apartment complex.

The blast blew away the whole face of Bldg. 131. The explosion's massive force twisted Sergeant Guerrero around. He checked himself to see if he was still alive.

"Everything went pitch black -- I couldn't see anything, couldn't hear anything," Sergeant Guerrero said. As the dust set-

tled, "I was looking at the lights of downtown Dhahran," from where seconds before a concrete wall had stood.

All around him was wreckage. The wounds on his face didn't faze him as he pulled bits of furniture and masonry off an Airman who a minute ago had been right behind him helping with the evacuation. Pulling the Airman to his feet, he put his arm around his shoulder and led him down the seven flights of stairs.

Sergeant Oldham sat up in bed and went to get up.

"Ow!" he said as a shard of glass dug into his barefoot heel. "I decided it was time to grab some shoes and my dog tags and get the hell out of there," said the former active-duty supply troop.

Outside, those who could help the wounded and tended to the dead. The sergeant witnessed the rows upon rows of seriously wounded and bleeding. He attributes organization and everyone's will "to keep it together" as a key factor in minimizing the death toll.

"Self-aid and buddy care, an annual

training, is what saved the victims. It'll save your life and that's the bottom line. You'd be surprised what comes back to you -- how to apply bandages, splint an arm, treating for shock," said Sergeant Oldham, now a master sergeant with the Arkansas Air National Guard.

After the tragedy, with three hours still left on his shift, Sergeant Guerrero went back to his post and continued his vigilant watch.

"People were looking at me like I was a ghost or something," he said.

"As cops, we do this kind of stuff all of the time, and 99 percent of the time nothing ever comes of it," Sergeant Guerrero said. "Eventually it's going to count. That's why motivation and practice -- doing what you're supposed to do -- is so important."

Then on July 3, 1996 -- while still deployed in Saudi Arabia -- Sergeant Guerrero received the Purple Heart Medal and Airman's Medal for his heroic actions from then Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Ronald R. Fogleman.

Security forces troops who come across him today know the sergeant is the hero who they've studied about in their career development course books and training.

It has been a decade since the tragic terrorist attack on Khobar Towers. The target? Americans. Nineteen Airmen died in the blast and hundreds of servicemembers -- including Saudis and those from other countries -- were wounded.

The tanker truck, packed with an estimated 5,000 pounds of plastic explosives, blasted the face off Bldg. 131, ripping the concrete face off the building housing America's troops. It left behind crater 35 feet by 85 feet.

And it left countless scarred hearts.

The attack changed the way the Air Force viewed force protection. On June 21, 2001 -- almost five years to the day after the tragedy -- Attorney General John Ashcroft announced the indictment of 14 people on charges of murder and conspiracy in connection with the attack.

Antiterrorism took the forefront in the Air Force.

"The mentality of the Air Force has changed. Everything has changed," Sergeant Guerrero said. "I was glad to be a part of that. We've gotten so much better since that incident."

Because of the attack, the Air Force developed the Level II Antiterrorism course, increased stand-off distances, and improved communication.

"It's just sad that 19 people had to die for us to change our mentality," the sergeant said.

So Sergeant Guerrero believes that force protection is everybody's business.

"It doesn't matter who they are. Everybody's a sensor now. There aren't enough cops out there to see everything. It's everybody's responsibility to report what's going on," said Sergeant



Courtesy photo

A memorial was created at the former Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia.

Guerrero, who is from Modesto, Calif., and is now stationed at Barksdale Air Force Base, La. He teaches antiterrorism there and abroad.

The main focus of antiterrorism efforts is to make people a harder target to reach, said Tech. Sgt. Bryce Van Devender of the 37th Security Forces Squadron's anti-terrorism department at Lackland AFB, Texas.

"The Air Force makes people less of a target by implementing random access measures, doing vulnerability assessments, giving awareness training, forming force protection and threat working groups, and creating structured emergency plans," the sergeant said.

But Sergeant Van Devender said no amount of precaution will eliminate the

threat to American servicemembers, no matter where they serve.

"There always will be a threat from international terrorists, criminal threats, foreign intelligence, domestic terrorists and so on," he said. "The world is always changing and terrorism along with it. With the United States going to war against terrorism we have to be aware of the threat at all times and make ourselves as unpredictable and uninviting as possible."

In a commentary that ran on Air Force Print News in January 2006, (www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID123014601), Col. Brad Spacy, Air Force headquarters security forces and force protection commander, said the Air Force needs to truly embrace the "every Airman is a warrior" culture. Airmen must enlist the whole force in defending an air base.

"All Airmen must be trained and equipped to man 'battle stations,' and leaders must be prepared to lead them in the ground fight," the colonel wrote.

Colonel Spacy reminds Airmen that the whole Air Force team will have to ensure the base remains protected from penetrative attacks and insider threats, and be ready to respond when called upon.

"This is the reality of the world today," he said.

Ten years after the fateful attack, Sergeant Oldham, of Shawneetown, Ill., still thinks of the tragedy in Dhahran as surreal.

"You never expect something like that to happen to you," he said. "I wasn't expecting a terrorist attack, for God's sake."

Since the deadly attack, Sergeant Guerrero has lived being totally aware of his surroundings -- all the things the antiterrorism courses teach. He has instilled the practices into his day-to-day life, even when he books an airplane flight.

Sergeant Guerrero said people have to open their eyes and be more aware of their surroundings. They no longer have a choice.

"We simply can't walk around with blinders on," he said. "You're a target. Be cautious in what you do. Be observant. Know your threats. Train for the inevitable."

386th Air Expeditionary Wing Rock Solid Warriors



**Airman First Class
Jonathan Maas**

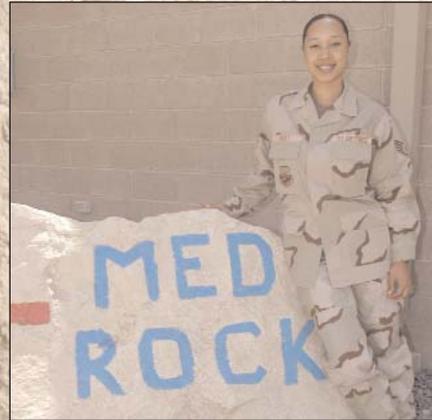
386th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron
Readiness Journeyman

Home unit, base: 20th Civil Engineer Squadron, Shaw Air Force Base, S.C.

How do you support the mission here? I provide detection, defense, reconnaissance, warning, reporting, and response of chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high yield explosives. I'm a member of the Plans and Operations section of the ECES Readiness flight where I maintain, update and rewrite operating instructions and checklists pertaining to the operational readiness of the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing. I am also a Computer System Administrator, which keeps me busy too.

How many times have you deployed and what makes this one unique? This is my second deployment, but this is the fourth base I have been deployed to. This base is a safer environment than many other locations which provide us some additional liberties and the facilities are better here than the other locations I have been. I have also been able to see some of my friends here that I haven't seen in a couple years, which is a nice bonus.

How does your job differ in a deployed environment versus home base? At Shaw I'm assigned to the training section, where I'm responsible for planning, scheduling and conducting CBRNE training as well as HAZ-MAT awareness training. Here I'm working in a section that's new to me. Learning a new part of the job in this environment is challenging yet rewarding.



**Staff Sgt.
Sadithea Vigay**

386th Expeditionary Medical Group
Aerospace Medical Technician

Home unit, base: 88th Medical Group, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio

How do you support the mission here? I help ensure that the Rock is always "Fit to Fight". EMEDS also known as "Med Rock" is where you'll find me. Some of the key tasks that I perform are patient care, ambulance response, administer immunizations, process lab work, and a crowd favorite medical out-processing. Mainly I serve by keeping you healthy so that everyone's mission can be accomplished.

How many times have you deployed and what makes this one unique? This is my first deployment and it couldn't have come at a better time! I found out that I was accepted into the Airman Education Commissioning Program about two weeks into the deployment. I have the opportunity to complete my degree by way of a full scholarship while still receiving my military pay and benefits. Upon graduation I will be a commissioned officer. This is one of the many great programs that the Air Force has to offer. I highly recommend looking into these programs!

How does your job differ in a deployed environment versus home base? In my opinion, the deployment setting is much different because you have more responsibility and a decreased margin for error. Being multi-tasked during this deployment has taught me to appreciate the work others do. The greatest learning experience that I've gained from this deployment is that overall everyone's job is crucial to a mission whether it is simple or complex.