

## Medical care top priority for Alabama troops

*National Guard unit at 97 percent CLS qualification*

By Sgt. Joshua Salmons  
4TH SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

With all the inherent hazards of war, access to adequate medical care is paramount to saving lives, whether on convoys or on camp.

Battery B of the 1st Battalion of the 117th Field Artillery Regiment takes this truth to heart and not only has a 97 percent Combat Life-Saver qualification record for its personnel, but also has an impressive on-site medical care facility that operates out of a supply trailer.

The command emphasis on medical training from the Andalusia, Ala., National Guard unit has led to nearly every Soldier being CLS qualified, and an additional 16 personnel having attended the Ranger First Responder Course, according to Staff Sgt. Jeff Birge, battery senior medic.

What originally was used as a supply closet has grown, piece by piece into a compact aid center for the

Andalusia, Ala., National Guard unit, complete with cardiac drugs, incubation equipment and a defibrillator.

"It's one of three places on Taji where a patient can be defibrillated," said Birge. The battery has enough supplies and equipment on hand to treat everything but the most serious injuries, allowing patients to be stabilized during the crucial first minutes after injury while waiting for an ambulance. "Those minutes could mean life or death if this trailer wasn't here."

"[The trailer] is a lot more than a Band-Aid station," said Staff Sgt. Scott Burk, laughing. Burk is a driver with the battery who is also called upon to assist with the medical goings on due to his civilian paramedic experience. He helps monitor the wet-bulb thermometer and posts the heat categories as they change throughout the day, among other duties.

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Staff Sgt. Jeff Birge performs a check on a defibrillator the unit has on hand in its aid center on Camp Taji June 28. Birge is a combat medic with Battery B, 1st Battalion of the 117th Field Artillery Regiment, an Alabama National Guard unit based in Andalusia, Ala.  
Photo by Sgt. Joshua Salmons



## A Chaplain's Prayer

# Fog obscures physical, psychological goals

The California coast was shrouded in fog that 4th of July morning in 1952.

Twenty-one miles to the west on Catalina Island, a 34-year-old woman waded into the water and began swimming toward California, determined to be the first woman to swim the distance. Her name was Florence Chadwick and she had already been the first woman to swim the English Channel in both directions.

The water was numbing cold that July morning and the fog was so thick she could barely see the boats that accompanied her.

Millions watched on national television as several times sharks got near her and had to be driven away with rifle shots.

As the hours ticked away, she continued to swim. Fatigue had never been an issue for her in these types of swims...it was the bone-chilling cold of the water.

More than fifteen hours later, numbed with the cold, Florence asked to be taken out of the water. She couldn't complete the swim. Her mother and her trainer who followed alongside in a boat told her not to quit because they were

nearing land. But when Florence looked toward the California coast, all she could see was the dense fog.

A few minutes later...at fifteen hours and fifty-five minutes...she was taken out of the water. It was not until hours later, when her body began to thaw, that she felt the shock of failure. In an interview with a reporter she said, "Look, I'm not excusing myself. But if I could have seen land, I might have made it."

She had stopped her swim only a half mile from the California coast! Later she was to reflect that she had been licked not by fatigue or even the cold. Rather, the fog alone had defeated her because it obscured her goal. It had blinded her reason, her eyes, and her heart.

That swim was the only time Florence Chadwick ever quit. Two months later she swam the same channel and again fog obscured her view, but this time she swam with her faith intact...recognizing that somewhere behind the fog was her destination. Not only was she the first woman to swim the Catalina Channel, but

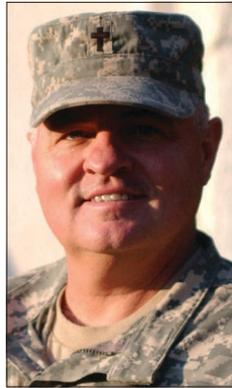
she beat the men's record by two hours!

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This compelling story provides prodigious insight as we approach the end of our deployment. It is easy to get our eye off the mission and become distracted by the peripherals and blinded by the "fog of war." The "fog of war" pertains to those philosophies which degrade, misinform, and confuse our purpose. We should be reminded that our purpose to bring peace and freedom to a people who have suffered too long is both noble and just. We are here to overcome evil and inculcate a foundation of peace. Further, we should not let anyone derogate our sacrifices and honorable endeavors. As we approach our own "coast line," tired and weathered, we must not let the fog of misguided opinion and the pessimism of shark-like naysayers obscure our view. We must faithfully and tirelessly drive on with character and strength focused unflinchingly on our goal.

*"So let's keep focused on that goal, those of us who want everything God has for us. If any of you have something else in mind, something less than total commitment, God will clear your blurred vision—you'll see it yet! Now that we're on the right track, let's stay on it."*

(Philippians 3:15-16, THE MESSAGE)



Maj. Gary Bragg  
BRIGADE CHAPLAIN

## The WRANGLER

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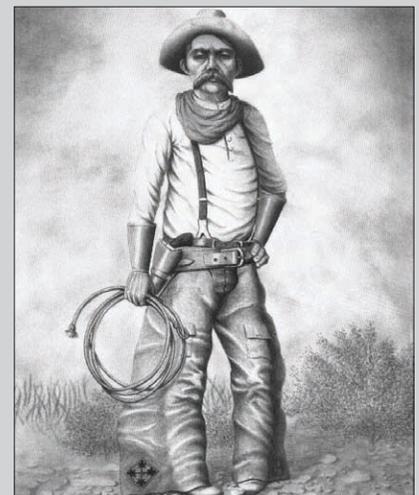
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# Choose any color so long as it's tan

*STB troops operate Taji warehouse where personnel can exchange worn out boots, gear*

By Staff Sgt. Monika Comeaux  
4TH SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

The line of Soldiers waiting for service is out the door, and the pile of used boots behind the counter is growing by the minute.

It is just an average day at the Taji Organizational Clothing and Individual Equipment (OCIE) Warehouse.

The warehouse is run by five Soldiers, three from the 428th Quartermaster Company and two from the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Special Troops Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade. The items kept in the warehouse are T-shirts, uniforms, socks, boots, hats and gloves, just to mention a few.

"We are basically the middle-man; we just have enough to keep you going through your one year," said Pfc. Gregory Southerland, originally an ammunition specialist with STB, 4th SB. Since he arrived to Iraq, he has been working in the warehouse, helping customers, processing paperwork, restocking shelves and conducting inventories.

The warehouse crew sees dozens of Soldiers come through their doors every day.

"It is a great idea to have an OCIE warehouse here on Taji," said Pfc. Adonis Baskerville, an automated logistics specialist

The best part is getting to interact with everyone. You feel good that you can send them out with what they need to do their missions.



Sgt. Carlos Riggins, the NCOIC of the Organizational Clothing and Individual Equipment Warehouse at Camp Taji, pulls a pair of new boots off the shelves to allow a customer to try them on. Riggins is with the Special Troops Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, and this is the first time he has worked in an OCIE warehouse. **Photo by Staff Sgt. Monika Comeaux**

with Company E, 3rd Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment. Although Baskerville is not a unit supply clerk, he is the signature-card holder for his company at the OCIE warehouse, and as such, a regular customer.

Warrant Officer Dionne Strambler also thinks it is a good idea to have the organizational clothing items available for the troops locally. "It keeps Soldiers off the road and keeps them focused on what they should be doing instead of

minor things such as trying to get uniforms," she said. Strambler is the property book officer of the 4th Sustainment Brigade, and oversees the OCIE warehouse.

Soldiers working in the warehouse are upbeat about their mission. "The best part is getting to interact with everyone," said Southerland. "You are trying to help the Soldiers. You feel good that you send them out with what they need to do their missions."

Most Soldiers or unit representatives need to direct exchange boots or uniforms. Now that it is summertime, everyone wants summer boots and the summer version of the desert combat uniforms, said Sgt. Carlos Riggins the NCOIC of the warehouse, who is a unit supply



Navy Lt. Keith Littrel teaches a class about Improvised Explosive Devices to Soldiers from the 189th Corps Support Battalion on Camp Taji June 20. Littrel is an electronic warfare officer assigned to the Joint Crew Composite Squadron 1, attached to the 189th as a part of a joint Navy and Army partnership to ensure proper training and maintenance of warlock devices. **Photo by Sgt. Joshua Salmons**

# Navy takes aim in IED fight

*Electronic warfare specialists lend skill sets to train, equip Soldiers to face threat*

By Sgt. Joshua Salmons  
4TH SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

The unit patch is an off color compared with similar patches, their ranks may seem a little different and they use terms

like 'shipmates'; but the Navy personnel arriving in units throughout theater are every bit a part of Operation Iraqi Freedom as the branches traditionally attributed to the conflict in country.

Navy personnel from the Joint Crew Composite Squadron 1, formed specifically to join the Army's fight in defeating IEDs, have been arriving to units of the 4th Sustainment Brigade for the past several weeks.

"We're glad to be here; we're glad to help," said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Lonnie Sharp, the brigade's

lead electronic warfare officer for its counter-IED section. He and Navy Chief Petty Officer Sharie Randall form the team that works with other Navy personnel at the brigade's subordinate battalions throughout the Baghdad area of operations.

While Soldiers already receive basic operating instructions on the proper use of CREW systems, the Sailors' specialized skill sets will allow them to go into further detail on the finer points of the equipment's operation and maintenance.

"We bring the [technical] expertise to the counter-IED fight," said Randall. "Our training will help them gain confidence in their systems and will help them maintain the equipment."

By holding classes and explaining how to do simple things like tighten wires and

clean antenna connections, the Sailors hope to keep CREW systems on the roads longer, where they are saving lives.

There are plenty of myths surrounding

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One of the purposes for the Navy augmentation is to train Soldiers on the proper use and maintenance on several existing Counter Radio-controlled Electronic Warfare (CREW) devices, or "Warlocks" as they are also known.

## Some Medical Advice

# That bites! *Iraq also home to deadly snakes, scorpions; Troops should take care when around animals*

The recently circulated picture of the snake caught on a glue board at the Taji Furniture Warehouse has reminded many people that there are other hazards around us besides the insurgents.

Now is the perfect time to get smart on these creatures living amongst us. Venomous snakes and scorpions represent a potentially serious threat. Although total numbers of bite and sting casualties will likely be very small, victims are at risk for sustaining serious injury, disability, and possible death.

Seven venomous snake species and four venomous scorpion species found in Iraq are capable of inflicting life-threatening wounds.

Six of Iraq's venomous snakes are classified as true vipers. Their fangs are designed to be very long so they can penetrate deeply yet be stored against the roof of the mouth when not in use. Vipers are distinctive because of their heavy bodies, short tails, and a triangular shaped head. A bite by any of these seven snakes is considered a medical emergency requiring antivenin therapy. Snakes, especially pit-vipers, can be very well-camouflaged creatures. Some live in trees. Many venomous snakes are nocturnal, doing their hunting at night.

These snakes produce venom that causes severe damage to blood cells and tissue of bite victims. Perhaps the most deadly member of this group is the saw-scaled viper, which is found throughout Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula. The desert black snake/desert black cobra also is widely distributed in Iraq. This snake's venom can disrupt the human central nervous system, hampering both respiration and heart functions.

If bitten, it is important to stay calm, remove restrictive jewelry and clothing, immobilize the bitten limb and get to medical attention as soon as possible. Usually, a period of in-hospital observation is required to determine if the bite resulted in passage of venom. If worrisome signs



Capt. Kara Escajeda  
PREVENTIVE MEDICINE OFFICER

or symptoms are present, antivenin is used to counteract the effects of the bite. There are two types of antivenin in use today. They are derived from antibodies created in the blood of a horse or sheep when the animal is injected with snake venom. In humans, antivenin is injected either through the veins or into muscle, and it works by neutralizing snake venom that has entered the body.

### How NOT to Treat Snakebites:

Though U.S. medical professionals may not agree on every aspect of what to do for snakebite first aid, they are nearly unanimous in their views of what not to do. Among their recommendations:

No ice or any other type of cooling on the bite. Research has shown this to be potentially harmful.

No tourniquets. This cuts blood flow completely and may result in loss of the affected limb.

No electric shock. This method is under study and has yet to be proven effective. It could harm the victim.

No incisions in the wound. Such measures have not been proven useful and may cause further injury.

### Here is how to lower your risk:

Leave snakes alone. Many people are bitten because they try to kill a snake or get a closer look at it.

Stay out of tall grass unless you wear thick leather boots.

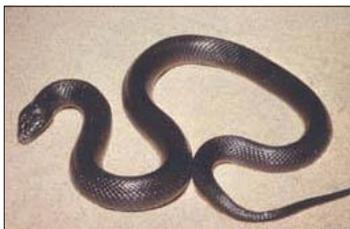
Keep hands and feet out of areas you can't see. Don't pick up rocks or debris unless you are out of a snake's striking distance. A snake can strike half its length.

What do you do if you encounter a snake? Just walk around the snake, giving it a little berth—six feet is plenty.

Leave it alone and don't try to catch it.



SAW TOOTH VIPER



DESERT BLACK SNAKE

**HOOAH!**  
I'M CHARGING DOWN TO THE REENLISTMENT OFFICE

**STAY ARMY**  
SEE YOUR CAREER COUNSELOR TODAY

# Striker fuel yard troops pump it out

*Bulk farm stores, issues millions of gallons of most essential fuels to VBC customers*

By Spc. Henry Bull  
282ND QUARTERMASTER COMPANY

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq – Since arriving to Iraq in early April, the 282nd Quartermaster (QM) Company from Montgomery, Ala., has been tasked to support several units and operations throughout the greater Baghdad area.

Also tasked to operate and maintain a bulk fuel farm with an overall capacity of 1.9 million gallons, the 282nd ensures availability of fuel for retail points, diesel powered equipment, and both military and civilian vehicles.

The platoon command team of 1st Lt. Alice French and Sgt. 1st Class Jerome McBurrough of the 282nd QM ensures the farm meets customer demands while at the same time maintaining the environmental and safety standards of not only the military but also of the installation.

Two of the soldiers making a difference at the fuel farm are Spc. Thomas Newkirk, and Sgt. Kennie Gray.

“One of our daily duties is to make sure that each 350 GPM (gallons per minute) pump is properly checked and inspected,” said Newkirk. “This is to ensure that there isn’t any corrosion, leaks on the pumps, and that the system functions properly. We also submit weekly samples of fuel to Sather Air Force Base for numerous tests.”

There are three types of fuel stored and maintained at the bulk fuel



Sgt. Kennie Gray and Spc. Thomas Newkirk conduct preventative checks on equipment at the Camp Striker bulk fuel yard before pumping fuel for customers. *Courtesy photo*

farm: JP-8, MOGAS and DF-2. The majority of the military’s tactical vehicles rely heavily on JP-8, so of the fuel types, it is the one that is most critical. In fact, on one busy day approximately 220,000 gallons of JP-8 was issued at the yard. MOGAS is used mainly for civilian vehicles and gasoline powered equipment while DF-2 is used mainly for generators.

Kellogg, Brown and Root (KBR) lends a much appreciated hand in the bulk fuel operation by receiving and issuing the fuel. KBR personnel work along side the 282nd to ensure

the bulk-fuel farm is managed effectively and safely. Along with the actual management of the fuel farm is the fuel transactions tracking and documentation. Without the detailed accurate information from the fuel farm, the customers and units of the greater Baghdad area would not get properly allocated fuel sourcing.

Safety is a priority to this operation. Ensuring that all pumps and filter separators are grounded and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) such as goggles and coveralls are just a few of the measures that keep the fuel team and its customers safe.

When asked why this particular task is essential to the military’s overall mission, Gray stated, “Fuel is very important because there is not a single mobile operation that can run without it. Without fuel, there’s no fight.”

**Someone on the  
other end of that  
line...**

**is watching you.**



**ALABAMA** FROM Page 1

In fact, several personnel in the battery that are in the medical field at home lend a hand when they can to the training and medical needs of the battery. The battery is home to several paramedics and registered nurses.

"A medic can be spread out on a convoy," said Sgt. Victor Staples, one of the battery's "official" medics. "Something can happen on one vehicle and I might not be able to get to it in time."

Having such a widespread number of Soldiers able to perform first aid on injuries on and off the forward operating base makes the battery medic's lives easier.

It is true that war-time injuries are unique, but the civilian medical experience of the individuals available to the battery is equally important in first aid.

"Trauma is trauma," noted Birge. "Civilian and Army care starts with the same steps. It doesn't matter if someone is a 'medic.' You just do the steps."



Sgt. Victor Staples searches through medical supplies stored in the unit aid center on Camp Taji June 28. Staples is a combat medic with Battery B, 1st Battalion of the 117th Field Artillery Regiment, an Alabama National Guard unit based in Andalusia, Ala. **Photo by Sgt. Joshua Salmons**



Pfc. Gregory Southerland, originally an ammo handler with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Brigade Troops Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade talks to customers at the OCIE Warehouse. Most Soldiers come in to direct exchange boots or Desert Combat Uniforms. **Photo by Staff Sgt. Monika Comeaux**

**WAREHOUSE** FROM Page 3

specialist with STB, 4th SB.

The warehouse can hardly keep up with the demands. The most common boot sizes like size six and a half wide or size seven go fast.

Riggins, like Southerland, has a very outgoing personality and enjoys his customer-service oriented job. "The most fun about the job is getting to meet a lot of people," he said. They also both agree that the worst part of the job has been dealing with the heat lately, since the large warehouse does not have air conditioning.

The Soldiers in the warehouse feel especially good about their job when they are helping a Soldier who is in desperate need. Riggins recalls a time when a Soldier's vehicle was attacked, and most of the gear he had with him in the vehicle was destroyed. "We issued him a good majority of his stuff right away. He was really happy," Riggins said.

The warehouse crew is eager to help their fellow Soldiers, although they have fewer items on hand than a regular Central Issue Facility would have. All they ask is that customers either come in on a first come, first served basis between 8:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. from Monday to Thursday, or by appointment at all other times.

## A Few Legal Pointers

# Divorce costly, involved process

*Not the easy fix some think; Soldiers need careful legal preparations before filing*

With the high levels of stress and the pressure from deployment, divorce is one of those legal events everyone experiences, whether personally or through a friend or family member. This article will provide an overview of the process. Divorces can only be granted by civilian judges and while the specific procedures vary from state to state, the process is generally the same.

### Residency Requirement

Every state has a residency requirement that must be met before the state will exercise jurisdiction over a divorce, i.e., hear the plea. Texas requires one spouse to live in the state for at least 6 months (includes deployment if you deployed from Texas), and in the county you file in for 90 days. Note that you do not have to be a legal resident of Texas, but you must have lived in the state and county for the prescribed amount of time. The state that “granted” the marriage always has jurisdiction and the ability to grant a divorce regardless of residency.

### Waiting Period

All states have a mandatory waiting period that can range from 60 days to one year depending on the circumstances. This is the amount of time from the date you file your petition in court and the day the judge actually hears the case and grants a final divorce. Some states require a mandatory period of separation before they will grant the divorce. For example, Virginia requires six months of separation and wait time before a divorce will be granted if the parties do not have children. If there are children, the mandatory separation time is one year. Getting married is quick and simple – getting divorced is not. Some states have legal separations and these are court determined,



**Capt. Melissa Van Buhler**  
JUDGE ADVOCATE

meaning that the court will officially decree by order that the parties are legally separated. However, in Texas, there is no such thing as legal separation—parties are either married or divorced—there is no in between and therefore no need for separation agreements.

Lastly, if one spouse is pregnant, all states require that you wait until after the child is born to file for divorce.

### Support, Custody, and Division of Property

In addition to granting a divorce between the spouses, the court will often take up the issues of support (child support and spousal support), custody of children, and division of marital property.

#### Property

States view marital property under two different theories—community property or separate property. Texas is a community property state meaning all property bought or acquired during the marriage belongs equally to both parties. This includes debts as well. Separate property is anything acquired before the marriage or by gift or inheritance and belongs

to that spouse alone. All but six other states are separate property states and divide all marital property based on equitable distribution – not automatically 50/50 split like the community property states. Some factors used to divide property include length of the marriage, each spouse’s contributions to the marriage, the value of the property, and the economic circumstances of each spouse. A Soldier’s retirement pension is considered marital property even if the Soldier has not reached retirement eligibility and therefore can be divided by the court. The court will use a formula which awards the other spouse a percentage of the Soldier’s pension based upon the number of years of marriage while the Soldier was in the military.

### Custody and Support

Either parent may be awarded custody of minor children and custody decisions are based entirely upon what is best for the child—not the parents. There are also different kinds of custody—legal custody and physical custody. Parents may have joint legal custody of children (meaning they both have legal rights to the child), but the parent the child lives with has physical custody, and the other parent has visitation. Visitation can be specified by the court or settled by mutual agreement by the parties. Custody arrangements are never final and can always be reopened when circumstances change.

Child support in Texas, as in all states, is set by statute and followed strictly by the judge. In other words, the judge has no latitude

All states have a mandatory waiting period that can range from 60 days to one year depending on the circumstances.

to deviate from procedures set forth by that state’s legislature in determining the amount of support. Texas uses a percentage of net resources to calculate support. One child is entitled to 20 percent of net resources, two children

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Spcs. Nelson Cuestarosa and Luis Gasca process paperwork and awards while at Logistical Base Seitz. Both are human-resource specialists with the 590th Field Service Company.  
Photo by Sgt. Joshua Salmons

# Field service admin troops wash away personnel woes

By Sgt. Joshua Salmons  
4TH SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

LOGISTICAL BASE SEITZ, Iraq—While deployed, Soldiers may not think about the laundry and other services the 590th Field Service Company provides. Even fewer think about what it takes to keep the paperwork piles for the Fort Drum unit clean as well.

In a dusty corner of Logistical Base Seitz, Spcs. Nelson Cuestarosa and Luis Gasca type away, filling out forms and entering data into their laptops.

“We handle all the admin, promotion, finance and mail [needs] for the company,” said Gasca, a 22-year-old Harlingen, Texas, native.

Tracking 103 Soldiers through their deployment can be a daunting task, but the specialists double check each other to make sure nothing is neglected.

“If the squad leaders or commander misses anything, we’ll work to get it straightened out,” said Cuestarosa, 23, who hails from Arecibo, P.R.

“It’s a lot of responsibility to put on two up-and-coming Soldiers,” said 1st Sgt. John Brockington, company

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## NAVY FROM Page 4

CREW systems and how they interfere with other Army systems. Sharp and his teams hope to correct these misgivings about the counter-IED devices.

“I hear stories all the time about Soldiers turning [CREW devices] off,” Sharp said. “It really concerns me that Soldiers aren’t using their systems at all, or are using them incorrectly. When CREWs don’t work, it’s usually something easy to fix, it’s just that Soldiers have never been told how to do it. We’re here to help fix that.”

“There’s enough stress on patrols without worrying about the equipment,” Randall said. “Soldiers should just have to worry about doing their jobs. Let us worry about the wires and if things are working right.”

While correctly functioning CREW systems are important, so too

is teaching Soldiers to spot the various types of IEDs out on the roads. The best sensor on the battlefield is a situationally aware Soldier, Sailor, Airman or Marine, said Sharp.

Sharp and his teams will serve year-long tours alongside their Army counterparts.

With the ever-changing technologies of IEDs and the equipment that fights them, having experts on the technologies that drive those pieces of equipment will help brigade Soldiers tremendously.

“From the Navy we can see different points of view,” Randall said. “It will take all branches working together to overcome the enemy.”

“If you teach someone how something works, they’ll believe it,” Sharp added, about his team’s training. “These [CREW systems] are a very important weapon in today’s battlefield and really can save lives. I hope we can show the Soldiers that.”

## DIVORCE FROM Page 8

are entitled to 25 percent, etc. Texas also takes into account non-taxable benefits received by Soldiers such as BAS, BAH, and combat pay. When determining child support most states consider the income of both parents, and one parent cannot choose unemployment to place a larger burden on the other parent.

Alimony, also called spousal support or maintenance, is also available depending on the circumstances of the marriage. States that recognize periods of legal separation may grant temporary orders of spousal support while the divorce is pending. If there is no temporary order, Soldiers are still required to provide support to their family in accordance with Army Regulation (AR) 608-99 until the divorce is final or the court issues its own support order.

To obtain alimony in Texas, a spouse must fall into one of two classes: a spouse must have been married for at least 10 years and have insufficient property or employment skills to support him or herself; or the other spouse must have been convicted or that there is evidence of family violence within two years prior to filing for divorce or during the divorce proceedings.

### Annulment

A common question Soldiers ask is how to achieve an annulment—the answer is annulments are rare and are not granted on the basis of buyer's remorse—i.e., you chose to get married and made a poor choice. Annulments are granted based upon fraud, duress, or force. They may be granted if one party was under the influence and was unable to legally give

consent. They may also be granted if one party is mentally incompetent (again, not able to legally give consent), or one party is permanently impotent. The bottom line is if you both chose to get married and no one was holding a gun to your head (literally), the marriage is legally sound and you must seek a divorce.

### Legal Assistance Services

Military attorneys are not permitted to represent Soldiers in civilian court, and therefore you must either hire a civilian lawyer or represent yourself to obtain a divorce. The legal assistance offices at Fort Hood have a program to assist Soldiers representing themselves in court and you may inquire to see if you qualify. The divorce must be uncontested, you must not have any children of the marriage, own any real estate, generally be in the rank of E5 or below, and your spouse must be willing to cooperate fully in the process. You must still appear in court and file papers.

### Preparation

If you think you are headed for divorce, there are a couple of things you can do to get ready. You should revoke all powers of attorney given to your spouse and notify all businesses that may have relied upon the power of attorney. You should close all joint accounts and obligations. Leave enough money to cover outstanding debts (do not leave your spouse high and dry) and let your spouse know you are closing the account, but you must begin the process of closing out joint obligations. Consider making changes to your SGLI, will, and family care plan.

You cannot fully disinherit your spouse in your will if you are still married, but as soon as your divorce is final, you should remove your spouse from your will.

## Going on Emergency Leave?

*Don't forget,*



*you **MUST**  
have civilian  
clothes to be  
able to fly  
out!*

## ADMIN FROM Page 9

first sergeant. "But they take care of us; they are the brains behind this operation."

Their close work relationship also carries over to their off time.

"We're brothers at everything," Gasca joked. They enjoy going to the gym, running and taking part in basketball and softball tournaments on the rest of the Victory Base Complex.

Cuestarosa even plies his hand at carpentry and is responsible for the cubicles his command uses in the 590th tactical operations center. Although Gasca doesn't share in his battle buddy's woodcutting skills, he helps with the cleanup, he said, laughing.

While this is the first deployment for Cuestarosa, Gasca was deployed to the Baghdad International Airport for Operation Iraqi Freedom I. He said things have improved quite a bit.

"Things are a lot better now. There is plumbing and air conditioning. It's a lot easier

over here this time."

Speaking of air conditioning, when asked if the Soldiers missed the cooler climes of Fort Drum, both shook their heads "no."

"I definitely still don't miss that place," said Cuestarosa, telling stories about the sub-zero temperatures of the Army post near the Canadian border.

Even with the heat and sand, Gasca said he still prefers this to the mountains of snow and bugs waiting for them back home.

"Having to go home and shovel snow is never fun," he commented. "And 40 below [zero temperatures for] PT isn't either."

Now that the 590th is nearing their final few months in Iraq, work for the company's administrative Soldiers has picked up, as more and more awards are processed.

"They're working hard to make sure everyone gets the credit they deserve," said Brockington. "They run a great shop and are really top-notch guys—very deserving individuals."