



Photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Elisandro T. Diaz

Sailors from Special Boat Team 22 and service members from Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Panama and Peru participate in a hot extraction training exercise as part of PANAMAX 2011. PANAMAX focuses on the defense of the Panama Canal with participants from 17 countries and involving more than 3,500 personnel throughout the U.S. Southern Command.

## ARSOUTH, Colombian army, partner nations, kick off PANAMAX 2012

By Lt. Col. Antwan C. Williams  
ARSOUTH Public Affairs

Members of U.S. Army South, along with armed and security forces from 17 nations, officially kicked off the annual U.S. Southern Command-sponsored Fuerzas Aliadas PANAMAX exercise taking place simultaneously in San Antonio, Miami, Fla., Suffolk, Va., and in Panama Aug. 6 through 17.

Commonly known as PANAMAX, the exercise brings together sea, air and land forces in a joint and combined operation focused on defend-

ing the Panama Canal from attacks by a violent extremist organization as well as responding to natural disasters and pandemic outbreaks in various locations.

More than 50 Colombian military personnel travelled to Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston and are leading the land component portion of the exercise for the second year in a row.

ARSOUTH led this portion every year prior to 2011. Brazilian military forces are leading the maritime

See PANAMAX, P12

## Indiana community leaders support Vibrant Response 13 exercise

By Sgt. Lee Ezzell  
ARNORTH Public Affairs

For some, a major military training event could be a burden on the local communities that surround training events. Others may see the increase in traffic or the increase in noise associated with military training as burdensome.

And although a small percentage of a community may not necessarily be happy when a military exercise comes near their

area, such is not the case for the county and business leaders of Jennings County, Ind.

The business and county leaders said they truly looked forward to the July 26 kickoff of Vibrant Response 13, which is projected to infuse an estimated \$6.5 million of business into the surrounding communities.

VR13 is a U.S. Northern Command major incident exercise, led by U.S. Army North, which has brought together more

than 9,000 service members and civilian employees to face the daunting task of providing aid to their fellow Americans in the aftermath of a simulated 10-kiloton nuclear detonation in a major Midwestern city.

The local communities provide support through services, such as fuel purchases and equipment rental. The estimate doesn't include the additional funds resulting

See VIBRANT, P9



Mike Rozsypal, director, Vibrant Response 13 exercise control group forward, briefs Jennings County community leaders on the concept and events of the Vibrant Response 13 exercise Aug. 3 at the exercise control forward headquarters, Muscatatuck Urban Training Center. More than 9,000 service members and civilian employees participated in the exercise.

Photo by Sgt. Lee Ezzell



### Editorial Staff

502nd Air Base Wing Commander  
Brig. Gen. Theresa C. Carter

Public Affairs Officer  
Karla L. Gonzalez

Editor  
Steve Elliott

Associate Editor  
L. A. Shively

Writer/Editor  
Lori Newman

Layout Artist  
Joe Funtanilla

**News Leader office:**  
2330 Stanley Road  
Building 122, Suite C  
Fort Sam Houston  
Texas 78234-5004  
210-221-1031  
DSN 471-1031

**News Leader Advertisements:**  
Prime Time  
Military Newspapers  
Ave E at Third Street  
San Antonio, Texas 78205  
(210) 250-2519  
(fax) 250-2570

**News Leader email:**  
usaf.jbsa.502-abw.mbx.  
fsh-news-leader@mail.mil

**News Leader online:**  
www.samhouston.army.mil/PAO

This Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents of the News Leader are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government or Department of Defense. It is published weekly by the 502nd Air Base Wing and Fort Sam Houston Public Affairs Office, 2330 Stanley Road, Building 122, Suite C, Fort Sam Houston, Texas 78234-5004; 210-221-0615, DSN 471-0615. Printed circulation is 10,000. Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation, or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user or patron. If a violation or rejection of this equal opportunity policy by an advertiser is confirmed, the printer shall refuse to print advertising from that source until the violation is corrected. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the Director of Public Affairs. The News Leader is published by Prime Time, Inc., Military Newspapers, Ave E at Third Street, San Antonio, Texas 78205, (210) 250-2519, a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. government, under exclusive written contract with the 502nd Air Base Wing and Fort Sam Houston Public Affairs Office. The civilian printer is responsible for commercial advertising. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the U.S. Air Force. Stories and photos for publication consideration may be e-mailed to usaf.jbsa.502-abw.mbx.fsh-news-leader@mail.mil by close of business Friday.

# To the Airmen of the United States Air Force

Earlier today (Aug. 10), I was sworn in as the 20th Chief of Staff of our Air Force. It was a pretty humbling experience.

Since I haven't met most of you, I thought my first move as CSAF should be to say hi.

You'll probably get tired of hearing me say that "every Airman has a story," but it's true, and I'm no different.

My story starts with family. My dad, who was the greatest patriot, officer, and leader I've ever known, taught me that no rank or title would ever be as important as the unit patch I wore.

Today, I wear the Air Force patch, and my family has grown to 690,000 active, Guard, Reserve, and civilian Airmen, all serving as part of an unbeatable Joint team.

YOU are what makes our Air Force the best the world has ever known!

Thank you for your service, your sacrifice, your dedication and commitment. Most of all, thank you for the privilege of serving beside you and your families.

Betty and I are so honored to represent you and will do everything in our power to do it in a way that makes you proud.

From Tooey Spaatz's drive and vision in 1947, to General Norty Schwartz's steady hand and thoughtful leadership over the past four years, our Air Force has benefited from strong Chiefs of Staff throughout its rich heritage.

I wish I could tell you I bring the same IQ and talent level to the job as



they did, but that would be a stretch. So I just promise you I'll do my very best, every day, every task just like you do.

You need to know that



I care about each of you, your mission, your training, your equipment, your professional development, your career, and your family. My job is to prove it to you.

I'll get back to you after I've had a chance to sit down with Secretary Donley and benefit from his wise counsel. I'll let you know what my focus areas will be and where I think we're headed.

In the meantime, you take care of the "Fly, Fight, and Win" part... and I'll ensure that "Integrity, Service, and Excellence" aren't just buzz words I use in speeches.

**MARK A. WELSH III**  
General, USAF  
20th Chief of Staff

## Edwards Aquifer Level

in feet above sea level as of Aug. 14

**CURRENT LEVEL \* = 638.6'**

\*determines JBSA water conservation stage

Normal - above 660'      Stage III - 642'  
Stage I - 660'              Stage IV - 640.5'  
Stage II - 650'              Stage V - 637'

For water restrictions, visit <http://www.502abw.af.mil>.



## Weekly Weather Watch

	Aug 16	Aug 17	Aug 18	Aug 19	Aug 20	Aug 21
San Antonio Texas	100° Partly Cloudy	98° Partly Cloudy	98° Partly Cloudy	93° Isolated T-Storms	94° Scattered T-Storms	94° Isolated T-Storms
Kabul Afghanistan	93° Sunny	94° Sunny	95° Sunny	95° Sunny	95° Sunny	94° Sunny

(Source: The Weather Channel at [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com))

## Did you know?

One of the best things about ICE is that people can let service providers know when they do a great job, not just for poor service.

It takes 5 minutes or less to submit a comment at <http://ice.disa.mil>.



## News Briefs

### 502nd MSG Customer Workshop

Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston and the 502nd Mission Support Group hold a customer workshop from 8 a.m. to noon Aug. 29 at the Region 20 Conference Center, 1314 Hines Ave. The workshop will cover a general overview of base operations support from each of the functional squadrons, support agreements and the reimbursement process. The target audience includes unit and organization resource managers, planners, and others who participate in the Inter-Service Support Agreement and/or Base Operations Support reimbursement processes. Call 221-2546 or 221-0564 for more information or to register.

### Discovering Employee Work/Life Balance

Learn positive methods to deal with stress and anxiety nutrition, massage, acupuncture, stretching, personal fitness, depression awareness, yoga, financial management, tobacco cessation. Seminar takes place 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Aug. 31 at Roadrunner Community Center, Building 2797, 2010 Stanley Road. Open to all military and Department of Defense civilians, as well as spouses. For more information, call 221-0133.

### Army's Funded Legal Education Program

The Office of the Staff Judge Advocate General is accepting applications for the Army's Funded Legal Education Program, where active duty commissioned officers, second lieutenant through captain, may attend law school at government expense. Interested officers should review Chapter 14 of AR 27-1 (The Judge Advocate General's Funded Legal Education Program), to determine their eligibility. Review the AHRC website for branch specific contact information at <http://www.hrc.army.mil> or contact their local Staff Judge Advocate for more information: Army North and Fort Sam Houston at 221-0484, Army South at 295-6325; Army Medical Department Center & School at 295-9893 or Army Medical Command at 221-8400.

### Suicide Intervention Skills Training Offered

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) is currently being offered for Joint Base San Antonio active

# Welsh 'humbled' to serve as Air Force chief of staff

By Tech. Sgt. Shawn J. Jones  
Air Force Public Affairs Agency

The Air Force chief of staff flag passed to the service's 20th chief in a ceremony at Joint Base Andrews, Md., Aug. 10.

Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, a 36-year Airman, stepped into the position, taking over for Gen. Norton Schwartz, who also retired from the Air Force during the ceremony.

"Mark is respected throughout the Air Force for his exceptional leadership and ability to connect with Airmen," said Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley.

Raised in an Air Force family, Welsh said he found a role model in his father, a decorated combat pilot.

"Today, I think he'd be proud of me," Welsh said. "And any day a kid can make his dad proud is a great day."

Welsh, a native of San Antonio, Texas, emphasized the need for Airmen to understand the importance of the other services in joint operations, but also said Airmen shouldn't underestimate the combat capabilities of their own service in winning today's fight.

"No one else can bring what we bring to the fight, and any real warfighter knows that," he said. "Don't ever doubt yourself or this service."

Welsh also addressed his

stance on issues affecting the well-being of Airmen.

"When it comes to Airman resiliency, suicide prevention, and sexual assault prevention and response, I believe you're either part of the solution or you're part of the problem," he said. "There is no middle ground."

Welsh also said the Air Force must shape the future and that will require innovative thinking and different approaches to problems, along with modernization.

Welsh was nominated by the president May 10 and confirmed by the Senate Aug. 2.

In his previous position as the commander of U. S. Air Forces in Europe, he was in charge of Air Force activities in an area of operations covering nearly one-fifth of the globe.

Welsh, a 1976 graduate of the Air Force Academy, has served in numerous operational, command and staff positions, such as commandant of cadets at the U.S. Air Force Academy, vice commander of Air Education and Training Command and associate director for military affairs at the Central Intelligence Agency.

"When I became a squadron commander, I felt excited. When I became a wing commander, I felt proud. When I became a major command



Photo by Scott M. Ash

Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley (right) swears in Gen. Mark A. Welsh III as the 20th Air Force chief of staff, assisted by Welsh's wife, Betty, during a ceremony at Joint Base Andrews, Md., Aug. 10.

commander, I felt privileged and a little bit old," he said.

"Today, when I was sworn in as chief of staff of the Air Force, I felt humbled to be given the honor of leading its incredible Airmen."

His experience includes nearly 3,300 flying hours, most of which came in the A-10 Thunderbolt II and F-16 Fighting Falcon.

As the ceremony ushered in a new chapter in Air Force history, it also served as the final chapter for Schwartz's four years as the service's senior uniformed leader and his more than 39 years of military service.

"Anyone looking for an example of Air Force core values need look no further than Gen. Norty Schwartz," Donley said.

"Thank you for your lasting contribution to our Air Force and the character and quality of your service."

Defense Secretary Leon Panetta presented Schwartz with the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, which is awarded to service members who perform exceptionally meritorious service in a position of great responsibility.

"The Air Force has afforded us an honorable and rewarding journey for the entirety of our adult lives," Schwartz said.



Photo by Lori Newman

Peter Law, 502nd Air Base Wing historian, admires the new mural depicting San Antonio's rich military history. The mural consists of four 4-by-8-foot panels and is hung in the upstairs hallway in the 502nd Air Base Wing headquarters on Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston.

## New 502nd ABW HQ mural depicts city's military history

By Lori Newman  
JBSA-FSH News Leader

A newly-designed mural depicting the history of the military in San Antonio adorns the upstairs hallway in the 502nd Air Base Wing headquarters on Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston.

"We wanted to embrace the history of all the locations since Joint Base San Antonio is one

big base now," said Peter Law, 502nd Air Base Wing historian.

Law worked with the Fort Sam Houston Museum, Air Force resources and the Army Medical Department Museum to help compile the photographs for the mural.

The JBSA-Randolph Multimedia Center designed and built the four 4-by-8-foot panels that

## News Briefs

from P3

duty members, civilians, and family members. The training will be held on the last Thursday and Friday of every month. Call 221-1696 to register, as seating is limited. T4T trained instructors are also needed to facilitate the course. People who have successfully completed the T4T training can also call 221-1696.

### Army Benefits Center Civilian Notice

On Fridays through Sept. 21, the Army Benefits Center Civilian counselors will not be available by phone between noon and 6 p.m. The ABC-C website will be available at <https://www.abc.army.mil> to make transactions thru the Employee Benefits Information System. In addition, the automated phone line will be available for employees to make transactions that do not require counselor assistance.

### New training support center to open

The Army Support Activity, Fort Sam Houston, will open a new training support center in October on Garden Road. The new TSC will replace the old facility located in the warehouse section in Building 4196. The new facility will house a variety of training aids to include, graphic training aids and simulators for training. An additional update to the new facility will be modern classroom space for conducting hands-on training, as well as classroom-type instruction. For more information, call 221-1927.

### Army Candidate School Structure Interview Panel

The Military Personnel Branch of the 502nd Force Support Squadron will conduct an Army Officer Candidate School Structure Interview Panel Board at 8 a.m. Oct. 24 in Room 117B of Building 2263 on Stanley Road. All Soldiers must have a bachelor degree. There is also a new age requirement, as Soldiers cannot be over the age of 28. For a complete listing and checklist of the OCS requirements and forms, visit <https://www.hrcapps.army.mil/site/protect/branches/officer/Operations/Accessions/OCS/index.htm>. All OCS applicants must see their S1/G1 prior to submitting their OCS packets. All packets must be turned in by Oct. 16. For more information, call 221-0885.

# BAMC volunteers fill vital role in health care mission

By Mike Dulevitz  
BAMC Volunteer Services

Brooke Army Medical Center's health care mission is growing by leaps and bounds, and as it grows, so does the hospital's need for volunteers.

BAMC supervisors create positions and duties so that volunteers can work together with staff to meet the health care mission in their work areas.

There is no work pool at BAMC. Each volunteer has a specific purpose and function as they work various shifts, performing specific duties at the medical center.

It is this environment that gives BAMC volunteers a sense of community and belonging, said Jessica Veilleux, chief of BAMC's Office of Volunteer Services. It was this vision that drove her to create and guide the program over the past 19 years.

"People who join us to volunteer often have

a compassion born out of their own life experiences," Veilleux said.

"Every hospital needs additional kind and friendly people on their health care team so the insecurities of illness or injury can be transformed into healing. Our volunteers' compassion and people skills are critical to the health care mission."

The BAMC volunteer program is for those who truly want to give back to the military and the San Antonio community at large, Veilleux said.

It's not a job to be taken lightly, she added. It is not to be used as a means to employment or a stop-gap between jobs, or a school supplement; nor is it to be used as a "required community-service" endeavor. It takes personal commitment and is selective.

It asks for a continued commitment from those who have served in all walks of career life and seek a life of service



Photo by Mike Dulevitz

Volunteer information desk greeter Ed O'Boyle helps a visitor to San Antonio Military Medical Center navigate the hospital. Greeters are often the first person a patient, family member, visitor or vendor meets.

after. For those who enter the program, it is a meaningful way to give back.

It's an easy task to ask volunteers why they are here. They are almost 500 strong.

"All of the volunteers of BAMC do it for all types of reasons," said retired Chief Master Sgt. Jerry Jarvis, the ward listener coordinator for the Nursing Department.

"For me it's the pay. That's right, the pay! When you walk into a

patient's room and you tell them I just stopped by to say hello, their smile is all the pay you need," Jarvis said.

The program also can be a venture for a husband and wife team whose careers of service gave way to lives of service. Bob and Joy Moore have been BAMC volunteers since 1991.

"We have not been hospital volunteers previously, but it seems the right thing to do," Joy said. "Being patients

at SAMMC, volunteering keeps us informed on the workings of the hospital."

Bob, a Caremobile driver, said he volunteers for two reasons: "People need our services, and I feel that I owe it to SAMMC for the wonderful medical service that we enjoy."

Having volunteers to bolster the work force means a great deal to the command team and staff, said Col. Noel Cardenas, BAMC deputy commander for administration.

"Our BAMC volunteers are a staff multiplier as it provides a valuable resource that augments our staff with a level of expertise that we are unable to get through our civilian personnel resources," he said. "BAMC could not perform our day-to-day mission without the selfless service of our volunteer force."

"I am truly grate-

See BAMC, P8

## San Antonio Military Medical Center recognizes youth volunteers



Photo by Kelly Schaefer

Volunteers Ryan Teich and Haley Richards label IV bags in the post-anesthesia care unit at the San Antonio Military Medical Center. The volunteer program brought 66 high school teens with more than 35 assigned supervisors throughout the medical center.

By Marsha Huffman  
BAMC Public Affairs

A group of teens were recognized and honored for their volunteer services this summer at San Antonio Military Medical Center Aug. 6.

The ceremony, hosted by Brooke Army Medical Center volunteer services coordinator Michael Dulevitz, along with Col. Noel Cardenas, SAMMC deputy commander for administration, acknowledged their commitment and administrative support to their respective departments.

"Next year, we plan on increasing the numbers so we can be bigger and better," Cardenas added.

The program, started by the Office of Volunteer Services, brought 66 high school teens with more than 35 assigned supervisors throughout the medical center.

"The supervisors and staff of BAMC step forward each year to open their doors to the youth volunteers to provide a hands-on experience for young teens who are interested in the medical field," Dulevitz said.

"After their experiences here, they make better choices in their potential medical career path after high school."

A soon-to-be 11th grader at Trinity Christian Academy, Aralexia Hargrove was one of the 66 teens that were recognized during the ceremony.

In her first year volunteering, Hargrove served at SAMMC's ear, nose and throat clinic, where she gained knowledge on how an endoscopic throat exam was performed.

See TEENS, P9

# Hotels For Heroes program helps families of wounded warriors travel

By Lisa Daniel  
American Forces Press Service

Families of wounded warriors already are benefitting from a program that started in July to make it easier for them to travel with their loved ones for medical treatment.

The Department of Defense and the Fisher House Foundation have teamed up to oversee the Hotels for Heroes program, which allows the American public to donate their unused hotel reward points to families of wounded warriors so that they might stay for free in hotels around the country while their family member receives medical treatment.

“The family members of our wounded heroes

should never have to stress about the financial burden of travel,” said David Coker, president of the Fisher House Foundation, at a July 16 ceremony. “We are honored to help facilitate the process and are confident that the American public will help make this new program a success.”

Cindy Campbell, the foundation’s vice president for community relations and media affairs, said Aug. 7 that the program already has provided 60 nights of lodging for military families.

“We’re very fortunate in that many of the hotel chains banked a lot of points for us,” she said. “That has allowed us to go ahead and get started. And a lot of people already have donated

points, but we are going to go through these quickly.”

Sadly, Campbell said, “there is a huge demand” from families who must travel to locations without one of the 57 Fisher Houses, or where they are full. The houses near large military medical centers fill up quickly.

The program’s sponsors are optimistic, given the success of its sister program, Hero Miles, that has allowed them to give away more than 30,000 plane tickets since it was created in 2003, Campbell said.

The annual need for hotel rooms “is a very substantial six-figure number,” she said, “so this is really going to help us out.”

Jessica Allen, whose

husband, Army Staff Sgt. Charles Allen, is recovering from a roadside bomb, used Hero Miles to fly herself and her two daughters back and forth to her husband’s hospital bed during his recovery and rehabilitation.

“Hero Miles saved our family from a crushing expense – and gave our daughters the chance to be with their dad when he was in the hospital and learning to walk again,” Allen said at the program’s launch ceremony.

“Hotels for Heroes will do something similar, and I am thankful to all the people who have and will donate their unused hotel points to benefit our military families.”

Six major hotel companies – Marriott, Wyndham, Best Western, Starwood, AmericInn and Choice Privileges Hotels – are participating in the program.

The program fills a

void, Campbell said, in allowing the American public to give back. “It’s a very simple way for business travelers while they are racking up so many hotel points, to give back,” she said.

People can donate points by going to their hotel rewards club website, which has a tab for Fisher House donations.

Fisher House Foundation is best known for the network of comfort homes built on the grounds of major military and VA medical centers. The Fisher Houses are donated to the military and Department of Veterans Affairs, and families can stay in the houses while a loved one is receiving treatment.

Additionally, the foundation ensures that families of service men and women wounded in Iraq or Afghanistan are not burdened with unnecessary expense during a time of crisis.

## MURAL from P3

comprise the mural.

The time line begins in the early 1800s and chronicles military achievements up until today.

“The history of San Antonio’s military heritage began with the U.S. Army’s arrival at the Alamo in 1845 and if you look at [San Antonio’s] history as a whole you will see that it’s constantly evolving to the needs of the military,” Law said.

The mural highlights the birth of aviation with the first military flight on Fort Sam Houston to the need for Kelly Field and Brooks Air Force Base followed by the creation of Randolph and Lackland Air Force Bases.

“Joint Base San Antonio is one installation now and this panel covers all its rich history,” Law said.

# 'Caveman' serves his country by training military

By Staff Sgt. Corey Baltos  
ARNORTH Public Affairs

When Mike "Caveman" Spina was a teenager growing up in the late 1960s, the resident of Seymour, Ind., wanted to join the military and serve his country.

However, after being classified "unfit for military service," he thought his dream was dead.

Now, 40 years later, his dream has finally come true: he is finally able to serve his country.

This time, by helping the military train for their missions, which has been his calling for the past six years as "Caveman," as he is known to his colleagues, he has traveled throughout the country as a civilian role player for military training exercises.

His road to providing his valued service is one

that helped him overcome the loss of his wife.

"My wife passed away from cancer seven years ago," Spina said. "After her death, I stayed in the house for about six months and didn't leave until my children urged me to get out of my cave and start living again."

Armed with a new philosophy in life, his role-playing role commenced.

Spina has traveled all over the country assisting the military in exercises. Initially, his roles were to help prepare the Soldiers for their deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan where he would dress up as a mullah, or other Iraqi or Afghan leaders, to try to draw the Soldiers to him.

"The Soldiers called me 'Little Osama' because, with the turban and my beard, I looked

like a shorter version of Osama bin Laden," Spina said.

"Before the training mission started, I would watch videos of bin Laden and other terrorists. I would study how they walk, their gestures and their facial expressions, so I could make it more realistic for the Soldiers."

He said he put his heart and soul into the role playing because he knew the training could help save the Soldiers lives or the lives of others.

"Caveman has been a very good role player," said Maj. Shawn Morton, U.S. Army North's displaced civilians manager for Vibrant Response 13. "I worked with him during Vibrant Response 11 and 12 as a role player - and he was always spot on. I could give him a

script and he would fall into the role very well."

Vibrant Response 13 is a major incident exercise conducted by U.S. Northern Command and led by U.S. Army North.

Spina said he remembered one exercise in particular that highlighted the need for training and the roles the "role players" play.

During a training scenario at Camp Atterbury, Ind., Soldiers were tasked with entering an unknown village where suspected "bad guys" were operating out of. They didn't know who or where they were among the populace.

"My job was to start walking around the village and stare at them," he explained. "Not say anything, just look at them.

"Pretty soon, they were all looking at me and not



Photo by Staff Sgt. Corey Baltos

Mike "Caveman" Spina speaks with Sonja Latshaw about role players during Vibrant Response 13. During the exercise, the role players portray "displaced civilians" in the aftermath of a "simulated" nuclear attack on a major Midwestern city. Spina, who has worked as a role player for military exercises around the United States for the past six years, is one of the team leaders for the civilian role players during the exercise.

at anything else," Spina said. "They didn't see the car bomb or the bad guys. Ninety percent of them got "killed" because they forgot to remain

aware of their surroundings."

Once the exercise was over, the depth of what

See **CAVEMAN, P8**





**Photo by Staff Sgt. Corey Baltos**  
Mike "Caveman" Spina has worked as a civilian role player for various military exercises throughout the country.

## **CAVEMAN from P6**

had occurred affected him profoundly – and he started crying.

"These men and women were going to a foreign country to help the people over there and root out the bad guys. We need to train our troops in such a way to keep them alive and also keep the good people alive."

That, he explained, is why it is so important for him, and his fellow roles players, to help them succeed in their training missions.

"We help train the Soldiers to make the right decisions so they can come back alive."

With the cessation of military activities in Iraq and a changing role of the military in Afghanistan, Spina now finds himself participating in more Homeland Security and Defense Support of Civil Authorities missions.

The missions differ greatly from those of the traditional war-fighter roles and there is a great variety of scenarios. Instead of terrorists, car bombs, Ak-47s and improvised-explosive devices, he now plays roles themed in man-made or natural disasters.

"I have assisted in tornado response training and earthquake rescue training here," he said, "and others like this one – revolved around an attack inside America."

The role players for Vibrant Response 13 are contracted from a company based at El Cajon, Calif., and Caveman was selected as a team leader due to his knowledge and experience, said Tom Latshaw, vice president of Lexicon Consulting Inc.

"We hired "Caveman" a few months ago because of his experience as both a role player

and a team leader," he said. "We hired him as a team leader during VR13 because of his knowledge of this type of exercise. He has done an excellent job keeping the role players in check and making sure every mission is conducted to our high standards. The military is fortunate to have "Caveman" here to help train them.

Although he was never able to serve his nation in "uniform," he said he is proud to help serve his nation's uniformed personnel.

"It always bothered me that I was never able to serve my country in the military, but now I am serving my country by helping the military prepare to help the American people or fight overseas," Spina said.

"I love doing this, and I will keep doing it as long as I can," Spina said.

## **BAMC from P4**

ful to the gift that our volunteers provide, which consists of military retirees, their spouses, their family members or even individuals from the San Antonio community who love to give back to Army Medicine by serving selflessly; my sincere thanks to all of our volunteers for being a part of the BAMC Team," the colonel added.

Volunteers are an integral part of Brooke Army Medical Center and are involved in every aspect of the health care mission, said Cindy Burke, social worker for the Bone Marrow Transplant Unit.

"They not only support our staff in providing assistance in clerical duties and as couriers throughout the hospital, but they are also valuable in visiting with our patients who are in our clinic for long

periods of time receiving blood transfusions or IV fluids.

"They seek ways to make our patients as comfortable as possible whether it's getting a warm blanket or pillow for them or picking something up for them to eat from the grab and go," Burke said.

Volunteer positions include – but are not limited to – caremobile drivers; information desk greeters; BAMC Ambassadors; patient transport aides; ward clerk positions; patient library aides; outpatient, inpatient and release of information records clerks; dermatology clinic greeters; radiology clerks; pediatric gastroenterology and neurology filing clerks; and occupational health clerks.

For more information on becoming a BAMC volunteer, call 916-5388 or 916-5381.

## VIBRANT from P1

from food purchases and lodging expenses by the individual service members.

Some businesses even find themselves in the “enviable” position of being busy enough to sell out of their products for the day.

Kathy Ertel, executive director Jennings County Economic Development Commission, shared a story about the manager of a local fast food chain who called her and asked for advice because the restaurant was so busy it sold all of its available meals.

Ertel said going without a burger for the day is fine for her and that the community enjoys the benefits of the business that comes with the exercise. She said it also serves as a potential draw for perspective businesses since it shows



Photo by Sgt. Lee Ezzell

Jennings County community leaders listen to a briefing on the concept and events of the Vibrant Response 13 exercise Aug. 3 at the exercise control forward headquarters at Muscatatuck Urban Training Center. More than 9,000 service members and civilian employees participated in the exercise.

what North Vernon and Jennings County can do for them, adding that “Army North plays a key role in that.”

The community support is more than just an economic one but also a patriotic one as well said Chris Ertel, vice president for the Indiana Bank and Trust, who is distantly related to Kathy Ertel.

Chris said he and his

fellow leaders were committed to supporting the Soldiers and understood the important roles they would be called upon to perform if such an actual event were to occur.

“Be careful what you ask for – because you are going to get it,” he said to Lt. Col. R. Dale Lyles, site commander Muscatatuck Urban Training Center and surrounding areas, in

speaking of the support the leaders garner for the troops and the mission.

Chuck Carson, president of the North Vernon Municipal Airport board, said he is a strong advocate of the military presence in Jefferson County. Carson recently contributed his efforts in the creation of a contingency operating base on the airport grounds.

He said renovations to the airfield provide it the capabilities for a C-130 transport aircraft to take off and land.

The contingency operating base, he explained, is being used temporarily as a forward operating base during the Vibrant Response 13 exercise.

The support the leaders and residents of North Vernon and Jennings County display is evident.

Mike Rozsypal, director, Vibrant Response 13 exercise control group forward, said that, occasionally, he is asked whether he thought the exercise could be moved to a different location.

“The level of community support we get going out there is just phenomenal every time we train there,” concluded Rozsypal, adding that the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center has the premier facilities for conducting training for the exercise.

## TEENS from P4

“It was really interesting seeing it (endoscopic throat exam),” she said. “I found out that I’m not queasy to certain things.”

Sarah Hughes worked in the pulmonary clinic and aspires to be either a veterinarian or work in the medical field.

Hargrove and Hughes praised the people in their departments for their warmth and friendliness.

“Everyone liked my hard work while I was there, so it made me happy,” Hughes said.

Both teens will be enrolling in the program next year.

For more information about the volunteer program, call the BAMC Office of Volunteer Services at 916-5388.

# Civilians answering the call: Gone to the dogs in Afghanistan

Military installations have many not in uniform fighting the war on terrorism, quietly giving back to veterans, or sustaining military families on the home front. This is the first of a series looking at civilians supporting the mission.

By L.A. Shively  
JBSA-FSH News Leader

“Good guys 14, bad guys zero,” wrote Jon Harris in a recent “Dispatch from Downrange,” published in the Gonzales Cannon, describing a failed attack where



Harris and Jack are surrounded by packages of marijuana and hashish they found on Forward Operating Base Sharana in eastern Afghanistan.

insurgents tried to penetrate a small base adjacent to his in eastern Afghanistan.

Harris wrote that the assault began when a vehicle exploded at the front gate followed by a ground offensive that kept Coalition Forces busy far into the night.

“Several (insurgents) wore suicide vests that worked properly,” he noted wryly.

Security was doubled at his base and teams were prepared to assist, but the strike was over in a few hours. None of the insurgents survived and the good guys went unscathed.

A civilian battling the war on terrorism, Harris currently serves as a patrol and narcotic detection dog handler at forward operating base Sharana, in Paktika Province, Eastern Afghanistan. Partnered with Jack, a 4-year-old German Shepherd, they guard the FOB and hunt for illicit drugs alongside military dog teams.

Harris shares stories of his mission in Afghanistan with his community through his column. His connection to Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston is through his wife, Dr. Katherine Harris, who serves as the customer service officer for the 502nd Mission Support Group-Fort Sam Houston Interactive Customer Evaluation system.

Recently appointed as site lead at Sharana, Harris liaisons between the Army and his employer, trains and supervises five detection teams, and is kennel master. He is responsible for all administrative duties and reports, as well as finding narcotics and providing security to the base.

He said it can get chaotic with long days and even longer nights, but his background has prepared him well for the austere, risky environment.

A SWAT team sniper, hostage negotiator and undercover cop with Harris County, Texas, for 12 years, he left the



Harris surveys a training area he and his partner Jack will use for honing their abilities to find concealed illicit drugs. Training is a daily routine to ensure each team member is at the top of his abilities.

force to enlist with the U.S. Army military police. In the Army, Harris specialized in intelligence gathering and learned Russian and German.

He served as the senior noncommissioned officer at Checkpoint Alpha, an historic crossing between Berlin, Germany, and the West. He also served as the rear detachment commander for deployed military police during Desert Storm and chief of criminal investigations at Fort Dix, New Jersey.

In 1995, Harris retired from the Army and returned to Texas where he qualified as both a drug and explosive detection dog handler for the Gonzalez County constable's office. The longing to deploy bit him again. Harris resigned from law enforcement, acquired a position as a

contractor with a detection service and left for Afghanistan last year.

He said his work with the dogs is therapeutic.

“I suffered from (post-traumatic stress disorder) after a bad incident as a police officer,” Harris explained.

While clocking speeders, Harris' police cruiser was hit on the driver's side by a vehicle traveling an estimated 80 miles per hour. Harris said he never saw it coming.

The impact totaled the cruiser, injuring Harris and his canine partner Buddy. But Harris feels that it was Buddy who saved his life – the kennel and its infrastructure kept the vehicle from collapsing onto its occupants during the crash.

“From then on I simply didn't want to

work without a dog,” Harris said. He took his passion for working with canines to Afghanistan.

If there are no security alerts, a typical day at Sharana begins with an early morning routine between partners. Harris is awakened when Jack drops his Kong toy on his head, letting him know it's time to get up.

“Jack is somewhat of a goof,” Harris said. “He would play with his water bucket by turning it over and wearing it on his head, while running around inside the kennel. Funniest thing I ever saw.”

Spinning inside the kennel injured Jack's tail, so Harris decided to keep his partner in the room with him. It's been a win-win arrangement for both Harris said.



Harris and Jack with fellow teams in uniform in Afghanistan.

Working with Jack may be fun in some respects, but there is always inherent danger in their job, so detection training is constant. Finding hidden drugs in cargo and vehicles is extremely exacting Harris said. Thousands of vehicles are searched each month across the FOBs.

“The handler has to be able to recognize when (his dog) is on odor, not chasing that last cat that walked that way,” Harris said. “You are a team and are tested and certified as such.”

Traveling as a team, Jack even looks like a Soldier in his own gear: a Kevlar vest, Doggles (canine eye goggles) and mutt-muffs (canine ear muffs).

“Military flights don't tend to be very quiet, and a dog's hearing is so acute that I want to protect it,” Harris said.

Jack was not Harris' first dog in Afghanistan. He was originally partnered with another German Shepherd, Uzo, who had been in country for four years.

“If you count it in dog years, he had been fighting the Taliban for 28 before he was assigned to me,” Harris said. “The many, many searches were taking a toll.”

Uzo was retired and eventually adopted by a family with two special needs children. Buddy, Harris' police dog, lives with Katherine at their home in Harwood, Texas.

Though Harris has been in Afghanistan for one year, he extended for another. He said working with Jack is helping him recover from his accident while a police officer.

“I hate being away from my wife of 30 years, but I love being with the dogs,” Harris said. “Yes, my life has gone to the dogs.”



Jack decked out in his Doggles in front of a U.S. Army AgustaWestland Apache helicopter, ready for action.

## **PANAMAX from P1**

component portion for the first time this year.

This year, in addition to the United States, Brazil and Colombia, hundreds of participants from Argentina, Belize, Canada, Chile, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay and Peru will take part in the overall exercise.

“The multinational staff shows the full interoperability of our forces and partner nations,” said Maj. Gen. Simeon G. Trombitas, U.S. Army South commanding general.

The simulated land component portion of the exercise will take place at ARSOUTH headquarters, while other portions of the exercise will take place in Florida, Virginia and Panama.

In addition to SOUTH-



**Photo by Sgt. Tamika Exom**

U.S. and Colombian military personnel work alongside one another inside the joint tactical operations center during PANAMAX 2012 at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Aug. 10. PANAMAX is an annual U.S. Army South and U.S. Southern Command-sponsored multinational exercise series that focuses on ensuring the defense of the Panama Canal. Personnel from 17 nations, including the United States, participated in simulated training scenarios from various U.S. locations.

COM and Army South, other U.S. armed forces commands participating in the exercise include Marine Forces South, Special Operations Command South and Naval

Forces Southern Command with ships and a contingent of ordnance, mobile diving, logistics and security forces personnel.

“PANAMAX develops

and sustains relationships that improve the capacity of our emerging and enduring partners’ security forces to achieve common desired goals,” Trombitas said.

“This annual exercise fosters mutual cooperation and understanding among participating nations.”

The Panama Canal is considered one of the

most strategically and economically crucial pieces of infrastructure in the world. It is critical to the free flow of trade worldwide and the region’s economic stability is largely dependent on the safe transport of several million tons of cargo through the canal each year.

This major multinational exercise has grown dramatically since 2003, when Panama, Chile and the United States conducted the first exercise.

PANAMAX provides opportunities for the participating nations, along with Army South to join efforts to counter threats from transnational criminal organizations, while providing for humanitarian relief and security of the Panama Canal as deemed necessary by the Government of Panama and other nations in the region.

# Four San Antonio Recruiting Battalion Soldiers recognized for separate lifesaving efforts

By Bart A. Keyes

San Antonio Recruiting Battalion  
Public Affairs

Four Soldiers from the San Antonio Recruiting Battalion were recognized for performed lifesaving efforts in their local communities during a ceremony at the Dodd Chapel on Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston July 18.

Maj. Gen. David L. Mann, U.S. Army Recruiting Command commanding general, presented each Soldier with the Army Commendation Medal.

On Dec. 1, 2011, while using an ATM at a local bank, Sgt. 1st Class Class Jorge Arraiga noticed a lady who appeared to be having a seizure.

He rushed to her side and cleared her airway by placing a pen between her teeth. He also made sure she was stabilized and remained with the woman until an ambulance arrived.

When asked if he felt he was a hero, Arraiga's response was: "No, I saw someone in distress and I followed my training."

On July 12, 2012, Staff Sgt. Amy Goninan witnessed a woman slip and fall in a local pool and also the woman's foot was lodged in the filtration system of the pool.

Goninan found the woman was unresponsive, so she quickly instructed a passerby to grab her first aid kit and medical bag from her car, so she could start

treatment of the fallen woman.

Goninan determined that the woman needed to be moved to a trauma hospital and when emergency medical services personnel arrived, they concurred with her diagnosis and transported the injured woman to the hospital.

"I was just doing what any Soldier would do ... helping someone in distress," Goninan said.

On June 11 2011, while traveling in a funeral procession, Staff Sgt. David Gonzalez saw that a vehicle hit one of the escort police officers. He immediately got out of his car and rushed to the officer's aid. After securing the scene, Gonzalez asked others to block

traffic in both directions and had someone call 911.

Gonzalez provided basic lifesaving treatment to the injured officer and ensured he was stable until EMS arrived. The officer has since returned to full duty. After his recovery, he immediately contacted Gonzalez to thank him for saving his life.

While at a recreational gun range on Oct. 23, 2011, Sgt. 1st Class David A. Mendoza witnessed an individual get accidentally shot in the arm with a handgun. Mendoza came to the victim's aid and observed excessive bleeding, then took rapid actions that likely saved the man's life.

He removed the man's



Photo by Lisa Masters

San Antonio Recruiting Battalion commander Lt. Col. David A. Grant looks on as Maj. Gen. David L. Mann, U.S. Army Recruiting Command commanding general, presents the Army Commendation Medal to Sgt. 1st Class David A. Mendoza for a lifesaving action.

shirt and applied a tourniquet. Using his medical bag, Mendoza started treating the gunshot wound. He evaluated the individual's condition and determined he needed to

be airlifted to the nearest trauma center.

"I did what I was trained to do and saw someone in distress," Mendoza said. "I just did what had to be done."

# INSIDE THE GATE

## Hunting Permits

Annual Camp Bullis hunting permits are on sale, call 295-7529.

## Varsity Sports – Players & Coaches' Needed

Male and female DOD cardholders, at least 18 years of age not participating in an academic athletic association may try-out for a JBSA-Fort Sam Houston varsity sports team. call 808-5710 or call 808-5707 for details.

## Safety Seat Clinic

Aug. 16, 1-3 p.m., Fire Station on Schofield Road, call 221-0349.

## Sponsorship Training

Aug. 16, 2-4 p.m., Roadrunner Community Center, Building 2797, call 221-1372 or 221-9698.

## Furniture Sale

Aug. 20, 1-6 p.m., front entrance of the Powless Guest House in the parking lot. Items include couches, chairs, desks, dressers, lamps, artwork, headboards, microwaves and mini-refrigerators. Call 357-2705 ext. 2006 for information.

## Debt Liquidation

Aug. 20, 2-4 p.m., Roadrunner Community Center, Building 2797, call 221-2380.

## Excel Level 3

Aug. 21, 8 a.m.-noon, Roadrun-

ner Community Center, Building 2797, call 221-2518 or 221-2705.

## Key Caller Training

Aug. 21, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Roadrunner Community Center, Building 2797, call 221-1829 or 221-0946.

## Coupon Class

Aug. 21, 2-4 p.m., Roadrunner Community Center, Building 2797, call 221-2380.

## Access Level 1

Aug. 22, 8 a.m.-noon, Roadrunner Community Center, Building 2797, call 221-2518 or 221-2705.

## Army Family Team Building Level 2

Aug. 22 and 23, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m., Dodd Field Chapel, call 221-2611 or 221-0918.

## Family Readiness Support Assistant Training

Aug. 22 and 23, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Roadrunner Community Center, Building 2797, call 221-1829 or 221-0946.

## Positive Parenting Enrichment

Aug. 22, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Roadrunner Community Center, Building 2797, call 221-0349.

## Web Based/Self Paced Financial Readiness

Aug. 22, noon-4 p.m., Roadrunner Community Center, Building 2797, call 221-1612.

## Access Level 2

Aug. 23, 8 a.m.-noon, Roadrunner Community Center, Building

2797, call 221-2518 or 221-2705.

## Bowler Appreciation Week

Aug. 25-31, all games will \$1.75 at the Fort Sam Houston Bowling Center, call 221-4740.

## Fall Youth Bowling Leagues

Aug. 25, noon-2 p.m., Fort Sam Houston Bowling Center, register Youth Bowling Leagues, ages 5-19. Leagues start Sept. 1 at 10 a.m., call 221-4710 or 657-1363.

## 3-D Archery Shoot

Aug. 25-26, animal targets are placed at varied distances throughout the wooded course at Camp Bullis. Registration is 8-10 a.m. open to all ages. The cost is \$15-16 for competitive and \$10 for non-competitive.

## Dog Days of Summer 5K Fun Run/Walk

Aug. 25, 7 a.m., Jimmy Brought Fitness Center, call 221-1234.

## Youth Sports Registration

Youth Football registration deadline is Aug. 26, season began Sept. 6. Youth Soccer registration deadline is Sept. 9, season begins Sept.10. All youth must have a current physical prior to registering. Register at Parent Central, call 221-4871.

## Protestant Women of the Chapel Fall Kick-Off

Journey with Jesus, Aug. 29, 9:30 a.m.-noon, Dodd Field Chapel, call 221-5010.

**See INSIDE, P15**

# OUTSIDE THE GATE

## Military Appreciation Days in Seguin

The city of Seguin will offer military members and veterans free or discounted admission to several local attractions. Visit <http://visitSeguin.com> for information.

## Warrant Officer Association

The Lone Star Silver Chapter of the U.S. Army Warrant Officer Association will meet at 5:30 p.m. Aug. 20 at the Longhorn Café, 1003 Rittiman Rd. All active duty, retired, Reserve, National Guard warrant officers and family members of current or retired warrant officers are invited. Call 221-7327 or 475-2565.

## Free Missions Baseball Tickets

Service members and their

families are invited to the Military Appreciation Night Aug. 22, 7:05 p.m. as the San Antonio Missions take on the Frisco Rough Riders at Nelson W. Wolff Stadium. Free vouchers are available at the MWR ticket office at the Fort Sam Houston Community Center in Building 1395. The ticket office is open Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. For more information, call 226-1663.

## Freedom Festival

Lytle VFW Post 12041 will host the second annual Freedom Festival Sept. 8 at John Lott Municipal Park in Lytle, Texas. The festival will kick off with a Freedom Walk beginning at 9 a.m. at the park pavilion. Festival hours are noon-11 p.m. with food vendors, crafts and music. Call 830-709-0250 or visit <http://www.lytlevfw.org> for more information.

## Texas Economic Development Council Job Fair

A job fair will be held Sept. 23 at the San Antonio Convention Center, Exhibit Hall 103AB, 200 East Market St. Early admissions for veterans is 9:30-10:30 a.m. General admission for all job seekers is 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Company recruiters and hiring managers representing more than 50 companies, including Halliburton, National Oilwell Varco and Thomas Petroleum, will be at the event recruiting for a wide variety of energy-related jobs including engineers, geologists, geoscience managers, truck drivers, oil technicians and more.

## Dinosaur Stampede

The San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston, will feature a life-size dinosaur exhibit Sept. 1 to Dec. 31. Call 207-3255 or visit <http://www.sabot.org> for more information.



**For Sale:** Pilates performer exercise machine, excellent condition, manual and illustration chart, \$50; Graco playpen, excellent condition, \$40; baby changing table, white, metal and wood, \$35; Little Tykes backyard gym with slide, \$40; grey bookcase, excellent condition, \$25. Call 684-8966 or 505-0656.

**For Sale:** 1996 Nissan Maxima, four-door, white, five-speed, cold air, great tires, AM/FM CD, around 200k miles, in use daily, maintenance records available as well as consult with mechanic, does need two repairs, \$2,399. Call 659-6741.

**For Sale:** New Rascal electric wheelchair with detachable legs, instruction manual included, \$700. Call 661-3765, leave a message if necessary.

## INSIDE from P14

### Is Your Child A Target for Bullying?

Aug. 30, 1:30-3:30 p.m., Roadrunner Community Center, Building 2797, call 221-2962 or 221-0600.

### Car Buying Strategies

The Financial Readiness Program will offer a car buying strategies class from 2 to 4 p.m. Aug. 30 at the Roadrunner Community Center, Building 2797. Call 221-2380.

### Harlequin Dinner Theatre

"Legends of Las Vegas," runs

Thursday-Saturday through Sept. 29 at the Harlequin Dinner Theatre. Dinner served at 6:15 p.m. with an 8 p.m. curtain. Call 222-9694 for tickets and reservations.

### 32nd Annual Combat Medic Run

Sept. 29 at MacArthur Parade Field, open to all DOD cardholders, MWR patrons and the San Antonio community. Race categories include a 5K Individual walk/run, a 5k Guidon Team and a 5K 28-Soldier Formation. Register at <http://bit.ly/RaceRegistration> by Sept. 23. Call 221-1234 or 808-7510.

### Before and After School Care

Register your child, grades K-12, for before and after school care at Parent Central, 221-4871. Warriors in Transition and their family members should register at Soldier Family Assistance, Building 3936 Acubo Barracks or call 916-6377.

### School Liaison Office

The School Liaison Office can assist patrons in registration, provide information about the local school system and community, educate parents on school policies, procedures, programs and schedules and home schooling.

Call 221-2214/2256 or visit [www.fortsammwr.com/youth/slo.html](http://www.fortsammwr.com/youth/slo.html).

### Parent Central Customer Service Hours

Parent Central will assist walk-in patrons from 8 a.m.-noon and 2-4 p.m. for registration and 12:30-1 p.m. for out processing and payments. Call 221-4871.

### Armed Forces Action Plan

The Armed Force Action Plan Conference will be held Nov. 13-16. People can submit issues and/or volunteer to participate in this annual event. Call 221-2336.

VISIT NEWS LEADER ONLINE: [HTTP://WWW.SAMHOUSTON.ARMY.MIL/PAO](http://www.samhouston.army.mil/pao) OR [HTTP://WWW.JBSA.AF.MIL](http://www.jbsa.af.mil)