

AnacondaTimes

DECEMBER 5, 2007

PROUDLY SERVING LSA ANACONDA



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton

Ground units, air missions

Units support aviation mission on ground

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Photo by Spc. Thomas Keeler

Islanders make history

Virgin Island Soldiers perform PSD mission

Page 8



Photo by Pfc. Gaelen Lowers

Improving the future of Iraq

Soldiers take school supplies to Iraqi children

Page 10



Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini

Sgt. Vincent Watkins, Golf Company, 26 BSB, searches a civilian vehicle at the north entry control point here Thanksgiving morning. For the Soldiers of 1-9 FA, it was business as usual.

Soldiers keep Anaconda safe, even through holiday season

by Spc. Jay Venturini

Anaconda Times staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq - When Thanksgiving rolls around on the calendar, body armor, searching vehicles and guard towers aren't in the equation for most. However, for some Soldiers here the job of keeping LSA Anaconda safe doesn't stop for holidays.

As most Americans sat down with their families to a hearty meal and slept through football games, Soldiers of Golf Company, 26th Base Support Battalion (BSB) were

manning the entry control points (ECPs) and guard towers here, searching vehicles and checking local national credentials.

"It's a part of the job. We all know what we signed up for," said Pfc. Shavar Ford, Golf Company, 26th BSB. "I am honored to man the towers on Thanksgiving to keep my fellow Soldiers safe."

The schedule didn't change, body armor wasn't any lighter nor did the mission get any less dangerous. The Soldiers' weapons were still locked and loaded, ready for anything as

civilians and vehicles trickled into the ECPs.

While their fellow service-members packed chow halls eating traditional Thanksgiving Day meals and watching football on the big screens, these Soldiers ate their meals at their dusty checkpoints out of the same styrofoam containers they see everyday.

Despite working under poor conditions on one of America's treasured holidays, the morale of the Soldiers was high and they still found things to be thankful for.

"I thank God that I am out

here," said Pfc. Chaz Robertson, Golf Company, 26th BSB. "This is why we are Soldiers and have to Soldier hard. I am honored to be here serving with my fellow Soldiers."

"I'm thankful for being here at LSA Anaconda. There are a lot worse places I could be," said Ford.

After another long 10 hour shift of manning the ECPs, the Soldiers went back to their rooms to relax and rest up to do the same the following day, ever thankful for the chance to serve.

Legal Assistance supports LSAA Soldiers

by Spc. William J. Estrada

719th MCB

While you are here, your spouse finds the perfect dream house, you find the vehicle of your dreams, or you simply want to receive your tax return before you redeploy. These are a few of the matters which legal assistance, located in the Consolidated Legal Center (CLC) here can help you with. The CLC takes care of over 9,500 clients a year, including executing powers-of-attorney, wills, providing consumer protection, Financial Liability Investigation of Property Loss rebuttals, notaries, advice about divorce, and many other legal issues that may arise for deployed servicemembers and their families.

Many Soldiers may be

unaware the legal assistance office is able to support them on issues happening over 8,000 miles away. Consumer protection is extremely important for the young Soldier who is deployed because they do not want poor credit haunting them when they redeploy. Legal assistance can assist with creditors that neglect or fail to properly apply the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act.

Roughly half of the clients that come through CLC are in need of a power of attorney. A power of attorney gives their designated agent back home the ability to take care of legal matters in their behalf. Powers of attorney vary anywhere from vehicle possession, to temporary custody of a child. The powers granted

in a power of attorney can be powerful and can easily be abused. This is especially relevant to people who grant their agents a general power of attorney. More often than not, the damage has already been done before the power of attorney can be revoked. As a result, individuals sometimes lose all of their hard earned assets. This is why servicemembers are briefed on the powers a general power of attorney allows before one is prepared here.

Another service we offer is free notarization. Our paralegals and attorneys are authorized to notarize documents. You may schedule an appointment or come on a walk-in basis.

Even though, as a Soldier, you are entitled to an 18-month tax extension while



Web Image

deployed overseas, you may still want to file your tax return. Beginning in February, the CLC will offer a tax center for those who want to file for the 2007 tax year. Refunds will be directly deposited into your savings or checking account and will be one less worry upon re-

deployment. Last year, the tax center filed over 500 returns. More information on the opening of the tax center will be revealed in early 2008.

Take advantage of what the 316th ESC CLC has to offer. We will do our best to assist you.

Provost Marshal Office: Weekly police blotter

Week of Nov. 19- 24

The PMO conducted: (168) security checks, (22) traffic stops, issued (11) DD Form 1408 Armed Forces Traffic Ticket, registered (50) vehicles on the installation, (19) Common Access Cards were turned in to PMO, and (3) lost weapons were reported.

The PMO is currently investigating: (2) assault cases and (1) case of Larceny Government/Personal Property and (2) General Order #1 violations.

PMO Recommendations: VEHICLE OPERATIONS

LSA Anaconda Regulation 190-5: Personnel riding in vehicles without fixed seats, benches

or side rails may ride in the bed of the truck after all cab seats are utilized. They must be seated on the floor of the vehicle bed. Riding on the wheel well is not authorized. Personnel riding in the back will not lean against the tailgate.

Personnel riding in vehicles with fixed seats or benches mounted inside the vehicle bed may ride on them only if there is a safety strap (troop strap) across the tailgate area to preclude personnel from falling out. If there is no functional safety strap across the tailgate area, then personnel must sit on the floor of the vehicle bed.

All personnel riding in a tactical vehicle, regardless of seating position, must wear a Kevlar helmet, not a hard hat.

by: Air Force Staff Sgt. Mark Hill, PMO



Courtesy photo

Two of the best teams collided Saturday night for the first Mortar Bowl Championship: Team Five-o and Team Flatliners. There was a lot of action, trash talking in your basic Army vs. Air Force Super Bowl. Approximately a hundred spectators were on the sidelines. When all was said and done, Team Five-O from the Provost Marshal Office, 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron and Criminal Investigation Command won the game, ending their season with a 13-1 record.

ANACONDA TIMES

316th ESC Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Gregory E. Couch

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Chief, Consolidated Press Center
Maj. Christopher E. West, 316th ESC
christopher.west@iraq.centcom.mil

Deputy Public Affairs Officer
Capt. Kevin McNamara, 302nd MPAD
kevin.mcnamara@iraq.centcom.mil

Anaconda Times Chief Editor
Sgt. 1st Class Neil Simmons, 302nd MPAD
neil.simmons@iraq.centcom.mil

Design Editor
Spc. Jennifer L. Sierra, 302nd MPAD
j.sierra@iraq.centcom.mil

Staff Writers
Staff Sgt. Dave Lankford, 316th ESC
david.lankford@iraq.centcom.mil

Sgt. Jasmine Chopra, 302nd MPAD
jasmine.chopra@iraq.centcom.mil

Spc. Jay Venturini, 316th ESC
jason.venturini@iraq.centcom.mil

Spc. Thomas Keeler, 316th ESC
thomas.keeler@iraq.centcom.mil

Distribution
Sgt. Peter Bishop, 302nd MPAD
peter.bishop@iraq.centcom.mil

Contributing Public Affairs Offices

332nd Air Expeditionary Wing
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1st Sustainment Brigade
CJSOTF-AP

Army Leadership winter safety message

As we prepare to celebrate the upcoming holiday season, we send our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the men and women who are serving around the world and to their families. Each of you are making sacrifices to defend our Nation and our way of life, especially those brave Soldiers and civilians currently deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. Thank you.

Historically, during the holidays, the Army loses approximately 15 to 20 Soldiers to preventable and devastating accidents. With the exception of combat fatalities, privately owned vehicle accidents continue to be the number one area in which we lose Soldiers. Alcohol is a major contributor to vehicle accidents. Across America, alcohol related accidents kill 71 people and injure 2,000 more every day. That's over 25,000 deaths per year.

As you prepare to celebrate the holidays, I ask each of you to take time to carefully plan your activities and remain mindful of

the hazards that routinely accompany holiday celebrations. Recognize the special hazards associated with the changing weather and take the precautions necessary to protect yourself and your

family. I want each and every member of our Army team to return safely to their formations after this holiday break.

Deployed members of the

Army team may face different hazards, as they miss sharing these holiday breaks with their families, and they also must remain vigilant and safe.

I encourage leaders at ev-

ery level to employ tested and proven accident preventive measures to protect our Soldiers, civilians, and family members. Leaders and supervisors must address each member of their command to increase awareness as individuals prepare their travel plans and holiday activities.

The Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center stands ready to provide additional accident prevention information and tools to assist you in this effort, at <https://crc.army.mil>.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish each member of our Army team, a wonderful, joyous and peaceful holiday season. Army Safe is Army Strong.

Worship services

PROTESTANT – TRADITIONAL

Sunday 7:30 a.m. Air Force Hospital Chapel
 9:30 a.m. Provider Chapel
 10:30 a.m. Freedom Chapel (West Side)
 11 a.m. Castle Heights Chapel (4155)
 5:30 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel (H-6)
 7:30 p.m. Air Force Hospital Chapel

PROTESTANT – GOSPEL

Sunday 11 a.m. MWR East Building
 Noon Freedom Chapel (West Side)
 2 p.m. Air Force Hospital Chapel
 3:30 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel (H-6)
 7 p.m. Provider Chapel

PROTESTANT – CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP

Sunday 9 a.m. MWR East Building
 10 a.m. TOWN HALL(H-6)
 2 p.m. Freedom Chapel (West Side)
 2 p.m. Castle Heights Chapel 4155)
 6:30 p.m. Eden Chapel
 7 p.m. Freedom Chapel (West Side)
 9:30 p.m. Freedom Chapel (West Side)
 Wednesday 8 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel (H-6)

PROTESTANT – LITURGICAL

Sunday 9 a.m. EPISCOPAL Freedom Chapel
 11 a.m. LUTHERAN (Chapel Annex)
 3:30 p.m. EPISCOPAL (Tuskegee H-6)

PROTESTANT --MESSIANIC

Friday 8:30 p.m. Freedom Chapel (West Side)

PROTESTANT—PRAYER SERVICE

Saturday 7 a.m. Signal Chapel

PROTESTANT—SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

Saturday 9 a.m. Provider

PROTESTANT—CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday 2 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel (H-6)

ROMAN CATHOLIC MASS

(Sacrament of Reconciliation 30 min prior to Mass)

Saturday 5 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel (H-6)
 8 p.m. Freedom Chapel(West Side)

Sunday 9 a.m. Tuskegee Chapel (H-6)
 11 a.m. Provider Chapel

Mon-Fri 11:45 a.m. Provider Chapel

Mon-Sat 5p.m. Tuskegee Chapel (H-6)

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MEETING

Sunday 2p.m. MWR-West Side

LATTER DAY SAINTS-(LDS)-(MORMON)

Sunday 1 p.m. Provider Chapel
 3:30p.m. Freedom Chapel (West Side)
 7 p.m. Tuskegee (H-6)

JEWISH SHABBAT SERVICES

Friday 7 p.m. Signal Chapel

ISLAMIC SERVICE

Friday Noon Freedom Chapel (West Side)

PAGAN/ WICCAN FELLOWSHIP

Thursday 7 p.m. Eden Chapel

BUDDHIST FELLOWSHIP

Tuesday 7 p.m. Eden Chapel

Pool, pop corn, poetry promotes Soldier readiness

by Sgt. Jasmine Choprs

Anaconda Times staff

CAMP TAQADDUM, Iraq-
A visit to the rippled desert dunes of Al Taqaddum might have some Soldiers wishing they could click the heels of their boots and yell, "There is no place like home." To make the Martian-like landscape here feel a bit more like "home sweet home," Soldiers at this largely Marine-controlled base have built better buildings, improved the quality of the gym they work out in, constructed a mini movie theater, and have even created their very own coffeehouse in the belly of a bunker.

The result of all these Soldier-driven projects has been increased morale, better standard of living and mission accomplishment, said Lt. Col. Jason R. Vick, commander of the 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion (CSSB).

Part of the 264th CSSB's mission includes providing Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 13 heavy equipment transporters and operators on convoys as well as field service teams which make showers and laundry services possible to other Marines and they in more primitive outposts. Among their most important duties is helping troops in positions in the west by re-supplying them with everything they need to sustain their operations and stay in the fight.

Marines at Camp Taqaddum typically serve seven months here while Soldiers usually serve 12. In the case of the 264th CSSB though, Soldiers were extended to a 15-month deployment, which they will have complete by the end of November.

"Since the Marines usually serve shorter tours, quality of life issues aren't as bothersome as they are for Soldiers serving the significantly longer 15-month tour," said Vick.

"Given the long tour, we decided to evaluate how Soldiers lived, where they slept, where they spent their free time. We wanted to provide the best conditions possible," he said.

When units first arrived, there was so much debris here they called it "Rubble City." About 200 Soldiers lived in bunkers, but leaders in the 264th CSSB coordinated for better housing. Air conditioning was put in buildings that previously had none, and motor pools were improved. On their free time, Soldiers built decks and walkways and the

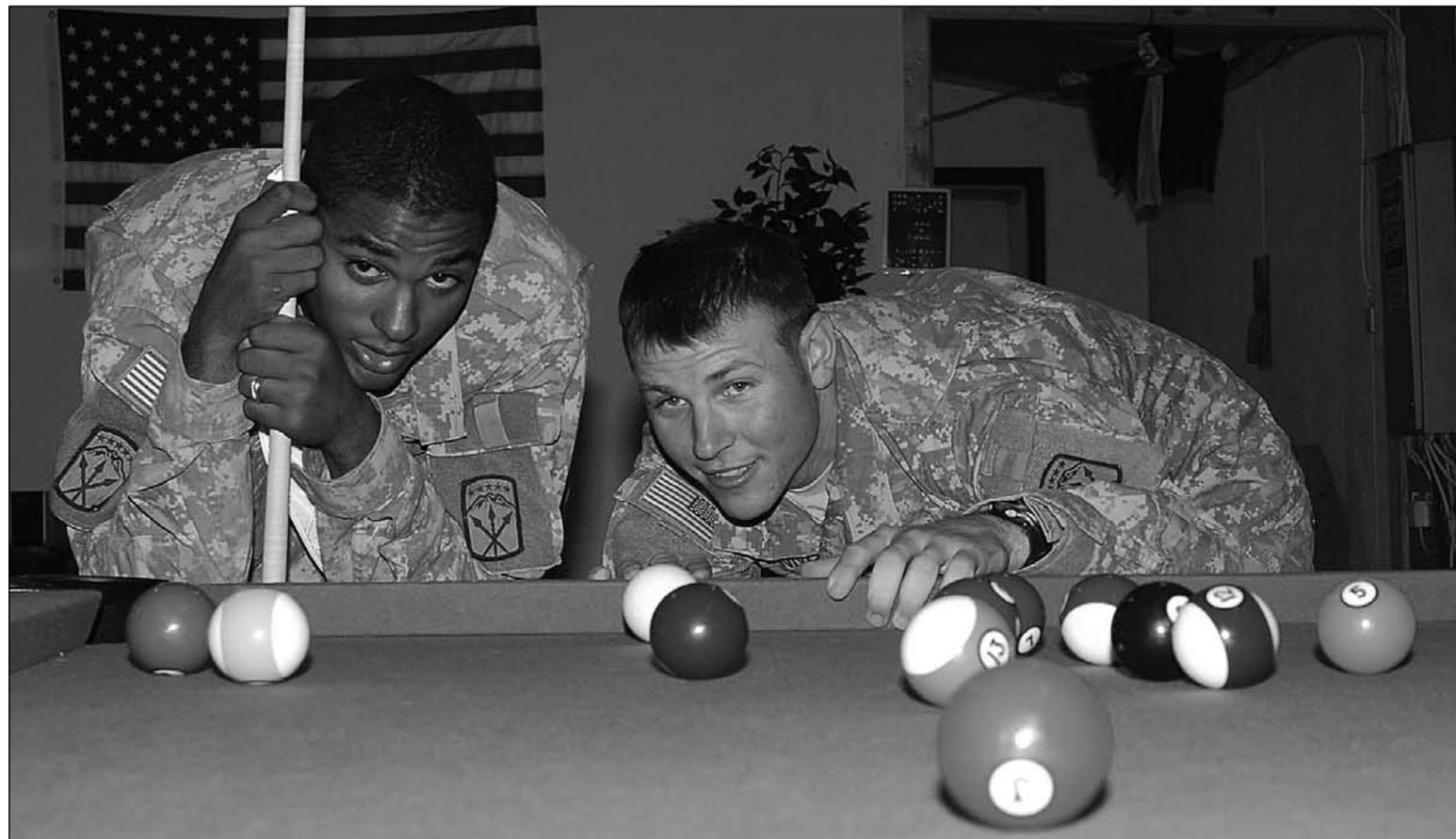


Photo by Sgt. Jasmine Chopra

Pfc. Michael Ellison (left), a truck driver, and Cpl. Christopher Shannon, an infantryman, both with the 40th Transportation Company, play a game of pool Oct. 14 at a morale, welfare and recreation facility built by Soldiers. The pool table arrived Oct. 13.

656th Transportation Company, an Army Reserve unit, built a morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) center from the ground up.

"My Soldiers are at risk of danger everyday," said Vick. "They needed a place to unwind. I read an article in a scholarly journal about the importance of how Soldiers having a place to relax can improve Soldier readiness and mission success," said Vick.

The MWR facility the Soldiers built themselves is just such a place, according to Spc. Hailey Deyo, an ammunition specialist with the 63rd Ordnance Company.

"This place means a lot to me," said Deyo. "To have space to hang out with friends, play pool or cards, watch a movie, eat pop corn, listen to music; it helps me feel closer to home."

For Cpl. Christopher Shannon, an infantryman with the 40th Transportation Company, the MWR facility helps reduce homesickness and even helps him manage anger, he said.

"It's like a little oasis," said Shannon.

Another place Soldiers created to provide a bit of home and relaxation is a coffeehouse in a bunker. The coffeehouse has couches, many books and even features a professional café quality La Marzocco espresso machine.

Coffee enthusiast, Maj. Jeffrey Kemp, the executive officer for the 264th CSSB, spends

some of his free time late at night roasting coffee beans for Soldiers and Marines to enjoy. Cappuccinos, mochas, lattes and other beverages at the coffeehouse are free; only donations are requested. Soldiers volunteer their free time to staff, manage and clean the facility. Recently an Internet and phone café has been added in the bunker. Thanks to the Freedom Call Founda-

tion, a non-profit organization, servicemembers here can now enjoy free calls and Internet to anywhere in the world.

"Starbucks has nothing on this place," said Sgt. Jason Molina, Vick's driver with the 264th CSSB.

Vick is pleased his troops have places here they enjoy, he said.

"Of all things I worry about, it's not, 'will my Soldiers be

able to do the mission?' They wash clothes, repair vehicles, provide lots of transportation support, weapons support, heavy equipment stuff. It's a very diverse mission and they are doing it well everyday. But what concerns me is there well-being. The Soldiers are doing everything that has been asked of them. These quality of life initiatives help keep them doing and feeling their best."

Moving cargo in Al Asad Air Base



Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude

Spc. Devon Garza, a cargo specialist with the 169th Cargo Transfer Company, operates a 4K-forklift at the central receiving and shipping point on Al Asad Air Base, Iraq. Garza is near the end of her tour and looks forward to her return home.

Support companies sustain aviation mission on ground

by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton

12th Combat Aviation Brigade

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq- An aircraft without fuel makes a really nice static display. Just like a broken Humvee or a weapon without bullets; even the best pilot in the Army can't do his mission without support.

It's that support, provided by a Forward Support Company (FSC), that keeps the weapons loaded, the Humvees running, the Soldiers fed and aircraft from becoming multi-million dollar paperweights.

In Task Force XII battalions, they are the "Echo Companies," and they're part of a large maintenance machine that keeps operations flowing smoothly.

Their mission, though, is unique. While other maintenance companies focus on keeping the aircraft in flight, the FSC's take care of the missions on the ground.

"These great Soldiers continually repair night vision goggles, weapons, trucks, forklifts and the list goes on," said Chief Warrant Officer William Poole, the Task Force XII brigade maintenance officer. "They may not seem important because (they don't work on) aircraft; but without them nothing can happen."

Maintenance is only the tip of the spear with the FSCs. The companies include the battalion's distribution platoons that transport everything from mail to ammunition. They also include the food service workers for each unit. Here in Iraq, they play a major part in running the Forward Arming and Refueling Points (FARP).

"We're maintenance, we're beans



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton

Spc. Christopher Rodriguez, a water treatment specialist from E Co., 5th Bn., 158th Aviation Regiment, unloads a case of flares used on the battalion's UH-60 Black Hawks. Spc Rodriguez works in the company's distribution platoon.

and bullets," said E Co., 2nd Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment (Attack) 1st Sgt. David Miles. "If it's support related, we do it."

Each of the flight battalions in Task Force XII have FSCs. Three of them are co-located on Logistics Support Area Anaconda, but all of them work together.

"I know all the motor sergeants from the FSCs," said Sgt. 1st Class Dennis Mills from E Co., 5th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment.

"There are lots of times when we need a part, or they do; we always help each other."

The concept of FSC is relatively new; brought about by the Army's recent transformation to a modular force. The idea was to take maintenance and

support that was traditionally handled at several echelons and condense the capabilities into one company in each battalion.

This concept made battalions more mobile and, because all the maintenance was done in one location, reduced the amount of time required to get equipment back to the operating force.

The idea is not without its challenges though, said 1st Sgt. Miles.

"A big thing in our company is a lot of small career fields, like communications repair, are only slotted for junior Soldiers," he said. "So we have to be creative to find ways to get them trained and developed in their jobs."

"I'm a mechanic," said Miles. "I didn't know how a FARP worked, or an ammunition holding area. I had to go learn how all this stuff worked."

It also allows the Soldiers to learn tasks outside their own jobs.

"We have a lot of generator mechanics, but not a lot of generators," he said. "We do have a

lot of trucks though, so they get to learn those skills as well as our own. We cross train everybody to work on everything. I've learned a lot from these guys, and hopefully we've learned from each other."

Though the FSCs don't get a lot of glory, most of them seem to realize that not getting much attention usually means they're doing their jobs.

"The bottom line is if we're doing our job, the rest of the battalion can do theirs," said E Co., 5-158th's Staff Sgt. Scott Gaiski. "It takes a special breed of person to come down here and turn wrenches all day."

"Everything starts on the ground; even in aviation," said, Chief Warrant Officer Anthony Adams, the 5-158th battalion maintenance officer. "Sometimes people forget just how important our jobs are, but our commanders do a good job of refocusing people when they lose sight of the importance of ground maintenance."

And the support Soldiers know that, with or without the fanfare, they have to continue to do their jobs.

"Sometimes I feel like I'd rather be where the action is," said Pfc. Jonathan Hrachovina, an E Co., 5-158th wheeled vehicle mechanic. "But these guys need vehicles and supplies to go into action. That's where we come in. I'm proud of what we do."



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Seaton

Forward Support Company Soldiers assigned to E Co., 2nd Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment (Attack) take a break from repairing an axle on a Humvee. The Soldiers are part of the support element that takes care of ground maintenance for each battalion on LSAA.

Combat Stress Control

785th Medical Company (CSC)

433-2402

- Individual counseling by appointment or walk-in
- Command referrals
- Services for combat and operationally stressed soldiers

RELAXATION TECHNIQUES

MONDAY TO SATURDAY
3:30 TO 4 P.M.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

MONDAY AND THURSDAY
10 TO 11 A.M.

HOME FRONT ISSUES

MONDAY AND THURSDAY
5 TO 6 P.M.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

WEDNESDAY AND SATURDAY
11 A.M. TO NOON

ANGER MANAGEMENT

TUESDAY AND FRIDAY
11 A.M. TO NOON

ANXIETY AWARENESS

WEDNESDAY
3 TO 3:30 P.M.
SATURDAY
10:30 TO 11 A.M.

SLEEP HYGIENE

MONDAY AND THURSDAY
6 TO 6:30 P.M.

GOAL SETTING

MONDAY AND THURSDAY
11 A.M. TO NOON

DEPRESSION AWARENESS

WEDNESDAY
2 TO 3 P.M.
SATURDAY
10 TO 10:30 A.M.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

TUESDAY AND FRIDAY
10 TO 11 A.M.

RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

WEDNESDAY
9 TO 11 A.M.

for more information,
email:
tammy.phipps@us.army.mil

433-2402

Gazebo built in memory of fallen Soldier

by Spc. Thomas Keeler

Anaconda Times staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – Back in the United States, he's a contractor and a grandfather. In Iraq, he's the father-in-law of a young Soldier who was killed helping Iraqis earn their independence.

Master Sgt. Edward Hetman, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the night shift for the 719th Movement Control Battalion (MCB), organized the construction of a new gazebo outside of the MCB's headquarters on the East side here. When the gazebo was finished, Soldiers in the battalion had another idea.

"With Veterans Day approaching, we thought it would be a good idea to dedicate the gazebo to Master Sgt. Edward Hetman's son-in-law," said 1st Lt. Virginia Emery, chaplain for the 719th.

Cpl. Ty Johnson, of Elk Grove, Calif., was with the 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, and in 2005 he was helping Iraqis prepare for an election of a 275-member Iraqi Council of Representatives.

"He was a commander's driver for the 101st, and he was privileged enough to carry those 40,000 ballots from the elections," said Hetman, and that mission – delivering ballots – convinced Johnson he needed to re-enlist.

"He realized how important it was to be doing what he was doing," said Hetman.

On April 4, 2006, while returning to Forward Operating Base Bernstein after a routine mission in northern Iraq, an improvised explosive device detonated near his Humvee, killing him. He was 28.

"The hard part is explaining



Photos by Spc. Thomas Keeler

(Above) Chaplain Virginia Emery with the 719th Movement Control Battalion recites a prayer Nov. 11 at the dedication of the new Ty Johnson gazebo outside the MCB's headquarters. Johnson, the son-in-law of Master Sgt. Edward Hetman of the 719th MCB, was a corporal with the 101st Airborne Division when he was killed by an IED blast April 4, 2006.

(Below) Master Sgt. Edward Hetman (right), noncommissioned officer in charge of the night shift with the 719th MCB, sets the stenciled plaque in place with help from Sgt. 1st Class Omar Delgado, first sergeant with the 606th MCB.

"I was hoping that, with no rank on there, when they turn this place over to the Iraqis, they look at it and not see a military person, but a person."

Master Sgt. Edward Hetman
719th MCB

real rough shape," said Hetman of the old gazebo. "So we tore it down, and I decided to do some drawings. This is what I do at home."

Hetman made up the name plaque himself, with only the words "Ty Johnson Gazebo" on it. Members of the 719th

signed the back of the plaque before it was fastened to the entrance of the gazebo.

"I used a stencil set and some chisels and just sat at my hooch and chiseled it out," he said.

"I was hoping that, with no rank on there, when they turn this place over to the Iraqis,

they look at it and not see a military person, but a person," said Hetman.

Hetman still feels the loss.

"That's why I'm here. If I'm not here, then somebody else has to take my place. I don't want to put anybody else at risk," he said.



Vice Chairman of Joint Chiefs visits LSAA

by Spc. Thomas Keeler

Anaconda Times staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – Marine Gen. James E. Cartwright, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, paid a short visit to servicemembers here at the Sustainer Theater Nov. 22.

Cartwright, on his fourth stop of the day, addressed the troops for just a few minutes before introducing the evening's entertainment.

"They're performing tonight to transport you some place else for a short period of time," said Cartwright to a mostly full auditorium.

The entertainers on this USO's Thanksgiving Troop Visit included Wilmer Valderrama, the actor who played Fez on That '70s Show, artist Mayra Veronica, and comedian Russell Peters. The three entertainers traveled with the vice chairman and visited Afghanistan, Djibouti and Germany on the trip. Peters, a stand-up comedian,

was on stage for almost a half hour and pulled no punches.

Audience members were offered the chance to meet the entertainers after the show and take photographs on stage.



Photo by Spc. Thomas Keeler

Marine Gen. James E. Cartwright speaks to servicemembers at the Sustainer Theater here Nov. 22.

to his son and daughter when they finally get old enough to understand," said Hetman.

Hetman got some help constructing the gazebo from two fellow Soldiers with the 606th Movement Control Team (MCT): Sgt. 1st Class Omar Delgado, first sergeant of the MCT, and Sgt. Lawrence Selear, operations supply NCO with the MCT.

"When we first came here, the thing that was here – the thing, I say – was in

'CSI in the sky': Joint team assesses battle damage

by Tech. Sgt. D. Clare

332nd Air Wing Expeditionary

BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq -- Anytime an aircraft takes battle damage, it's a big deal for members of the Joint Combat Assessment Team (JCAT). Whether it's a helicopter that took a hit or a downed aircraft, the team responds.

"Every threat has its own signature. When we train to be on JCAT, we learn how these threats affect aircraft and look for tell-tale signs of damage," said Capt. Francis Marino, a JCAT assessor.

"Metal that is twisted might indicate damage from a crash, other signs of damage could be indicative of real battle damage," said Navy Lt. Shawn Denihan, the JCAT Forward officer in charge here. In the case of a catastrophic aircraft incident, the team helps determine whether mechanical failure or enemy fire caused a crash.

Conducting forensic examinations comparable in scope to crime scene investigations, the team travels throughout the area of responsibility collecting data that saves lives and helps war fighters to adjust their plans and operations.

"We say that if you took an airplane, put it in a box, shook it up, and tossed it on the floor, you'd start to understand what a crash scene looks like," said Denihan. "We have to be able to pick up the pieces and find



Air Force Photo by Tech. Sgt. D. Clare

(Above) Capt. Francis Marino, JCAT, photographs the rotor base of an Army MH-60 Black Hawk helicopter here under the guidance of Navy Lt. Shawn Denihan, the JCAT Forward officer-in-charge. The photographs will be used with other data as the team investigates battle damage that occurred to another MH-60 over the skies of Iraq.

(Bottom Right) Navy Lt. Shawn Denihan, JCAT officer-in-charge, simulates the likely angle of attack the enemy used to fire upon an Army MH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, as Capt. Francis Marino, a JCAT assessor takes photographs. By recreating the enemy attack, the team is able to aid intelligence efforts in Iraq and help leaders make informed decisions about operations in the area of responsibility.

out what we're looking at and identify the source of aircraft damage."

From the angle of entry and exit of an enemy's bullet and an air crew report, they can

identify with astounding accuracy where an insurgent stood when he fired on an aircraft and what weapon was likely used. If a new anti-aircraft armament were to be employed

against coalition aircraft, the team would be the first to identify a new threat, Denihan said.

JCAT assessors work closely with the intelligence community as they collect information and contribute to a database that identifies trends on the battlefield and shapes operations. Their joint status helps them interact with each branch in Iraq. Members are selected who have a strong background in aviation and engineering.

"As an engineer, the chance to get operational experience and interface directly with the war fighter is invaluable," said Marino, who is deployed from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. "This is informa-

tion we can express in a technical and engineering sense that will shape the way we do business for a long time in the future.

"This capability transcends beyond this conflict. Every service has an aviation component and the information we are collecting will be an incredible asset to the aeronautical engineering community in terms of designs and influencing how air crew survive," said Navy Commander Kevin Askin, JCAT Forward's officer in charge for Iraq. Askin and Denihan are deployed Naval Reserve members from Naval Air Systems Command, Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md.

Guided Bomb Unit secured to fighter jet



Air Force Photo by Staff Sgt. Joshua Garcia

BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq -- Staff Sgt. Jeremiah Lagestam, a 332nd Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Aircraft Maintenance Unit weapons loader, secures the tailfins of a Guided Bomb Unit 13. The GBU-13 is one of the three main munitions used by fighter squadrons here.



Virgin Islands escort platoon contributes



Photos by Spc. Thomas Keeler

(Above) Command Sgt. Maj. Stacey E. Davis speaks with Sgt. 1st Class Agustin Estrada (center), support operations noncommissioned officer in charge with the 17th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion (CSSB) at FOB Q-West, about the operation of the recently-opened convoy support center and combat logistics patrol readiness center. Davis was on a routine battlefield visit with Command Sgt. Maj. Charlie Lane of the 17th CSSB.

(Below) Sgt. Michael Wheeler with the 651st PSD performs preventive maintenance checks and services on his humvee prior to an escort mission.

by Spc. Thomas Keeler

Anaconda Times staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – Every brigade-level commander keeps his own personal security team on standby. For 316th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) (ESC) Command Sgt. Maj. Stacey E. Davis, the security detail is a platoon-sized element from not the Army Reserve, but from the National Guard – the Virgin Islands National Guard.

The 28 Soldiers of the 651st Personal Security Detail (PSD), headquartered in St. Croix, Virgin Islands, mobilized and began training with the 316th ESC in March at Fort Bragg, N.C. The PSD is part of a larger element from the U. S. Virgin Islands and is led by 1st Lt. Alphonso John and Sgt. 1st Class Roy Vialet.

Out of about 100 Virgin Islands Soldiers deployed now in Iraq, 22 of them are in the 651st PSD. The Virgin Islands National Guard consists of about 700 Soldiers total.

Convoy security for the 651st PSD was a skill learned first at Fort Bragg. Convoy security is the PSD's primary mission, and includes escorting and protecting the command sergeant major.

Most of the Soldiers with the 651st PSD have a background in maintenance or ordnance.

"We had to learn all of this from scratch," said Sgt. Michael Wheeler, whose primary military occupational specialty (MOS) is machinist. Wheeler has served in the Virgin Islands National Guard for five years.

Most of the Virgin Islanders, including Wheeler, have been drivers, gunners, and have done whatever else has been asked of them on this deployment. Wheeler and the others in the PSD are

"Our general wanted us to contribute to Operation Iraqi Freedom, so we got put on this security detail. How many people in the world can say they've been to Iraq?"

Sgt. Michael Wheeler
651st PSD

always smiling and keeping each others' spirits high.

"Our general wanted us to contribute to Operation Iraqi Freedom, so we got put on this security detail," said Wheeler. "How many people in the world can say they've been to Iraq?"

The three-month mobilization at Fort Bragg included two months living and acclimating at the training site's forward operating base (FOB). While there, the PSD went through a five-day High Risk Personnel Course, which demands an extraordinary level of physical and mental fitness. The course helped prepare them to escort the command sergeant major over the most dangerous roads in the world. The PSD has performed their mission without incident.

The PSD now runs as many as five or six escorts in a month, for up to five days at a time. Soldiers within the unit are continuously training and improving themselves.

"To gain experience outside the wire, we go on missions with other units, like QRF (quick reaction force) missions," said Sgt. Felipe Rivera, whose first MOS is light wheeled mechanic.

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Rivera e break at the erman.

"I came television found an A

Seeing th ated an imp

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"There a cruited," sa charge of home. "I w back to the

Vialet pl now make with the un

"These g and we've nothing ab Tracker. W right now t

Wheeler Soldiers ha unit is doin of them be

"All the on the FOB "But we're



oon s small part to history

ing PSD work now, and I love it," said
enlisted in 1984 and took a seven-year
e end of his enlistment to become a fish-
home one day from fishing, turned the
on, was warming up some food, and I
rmy movie," said Rivera.
ne Vietnam-era film at that moment cre-
eulse in him.
ered if I still had a chance to get back in
ary," he said, paging through the phone
d the recruiter's telephone number.
I in, and who do I talk to? Sergeant Vi-
as the recruiter," said Rivera.
are a number of guys in our unit I re-
aid Vialet, noncommissioned officer in
the PSD and readiness NCO when at
as a recruiter for 10 years before I came
unit."
ayed a role in selecting the Soldiers who
up the PSD, and he says he is pleased
it's cohesion and performance.
guys are really professional, really good,
come a long way," he said. "We knew
out convoys, nothing about Blue Force
e had to learn everything on the go. And
they're doing really, really great."
points out although other Virgin Islands
ve deployed in the past, he is aware his
ng something no commander has asked
fore – convoy security.
rest of the units come, they usually stay
B, do some kind of FOB detail," he says.
creating history, man."



Photo by Spc. Thomas Keeler

Spc. Enoch Smith with the 651st PSD loads machine gun ammunition prior to an escort mission Nov. 7 to FOB Q-West. Smith manned the turret on this mission; Soldiers of the PSD rotate tasks every mission.

Soldiers help further Iraqi education

by Pfc. Gaelen Lowers

3rd Sustainment Brigade

FOB Q-WEST, Iraq – A Soldier's primary mission in Iraq is to combat the terrorist threat, but there is a second mission that often goes untold.

The mission is to better the lives of Iraqi people and Soldiers of Bravo Battery, 5th Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery as well as Soldiers of 332nd Rear Operations Center (Area Support Group), Wisconsin National Guard demonstrated that Nov. 7. They ventured into the town of Jurn, Iraq and distributed shoes and school supplies to children in two separate schools.

"This is a place where we've done cordon searches in the past," said 1st Lt. John May, Bravo Battery, 5-82nd FA and convoy commander on the mission. "We wanted to go there and show that every time we come [to Jurn] its not to bother [them]. We're here to do good things too and hand out some goodies."

The Soldiers first stopped at a boy's school where they handed out pencils and small stuffed animals for the kids. Maj. Lisa Loomer, the 332nd ROC base operations officer for the Mayor Cell, commented on the reaction the Soldier's and she got from the boys at the school.



Photo by Pfc. Gaelen Lowers

Maj. Lisa Loomer, 332nd ROC base operations officer for the Mayor Cell, hands out school supplies and stuffed animals to some Iraqi children during a humanitarian mission to the town of Jurn, Iraq Nov. 7.

"Little boys are pretty rambunctious no matter where you are," said Loomer. "It was fun to watch them and what they were doing."

Next the Soldiers went to the girl's school located next door and gave out pencils, art

supplies and stuffed animals. The girls were more reluctant to approach the male Soldiers but Loomer made the transition easier by taking off her helmet and interacting with the children.

"I think it was good for

the girls," said Loomer. "After a while they became more comfortable."

Although the Soldier's came down and helped hand out the supplies, they let the teachers and Iraqi adults do most of the distribution.

May said it is important for the Soldiers to go out and do these humanitarian missions because it shows the civilians that Soldiers are there to help them and teaches the Soldiers they are not always out to hunt for the bad guys. It's important to show Soldiers not all Iraqis are insurgents and they need

their help.

"It was very nice to be able to go out into the country to see what we're working towards," said Loomer. "Its good for [the Iraqi people] to see us in a more humanitarian role."

Overall Loomer believes the mission was a success.

"There were no problems," Loomer said. "Just listening to the Soldiers of the 5-82 talk, I could tell they were very satisfied with how well the mission went."

"Hopefully years from now they will take that and keep it with them."

1SB Soldiers interact with Texas school children via VTC



Photo by Pfc. Andrea Merritt

(Right) Staff Sgt. Walter Gilliard, who works plans in the support operations section of the 1st Sustainment Brigade, answers a question asked by a fifth grader at Negley Elementary School who wanted to know what and when the Soldiers ate. "We eat pretty good out here," said Gilliard and then he went on to describe the food.



Photo by Pfc. Gaelen Lowers

Iraqi children smile after receiving school supplies and stuffed animals during a Coalition Forces humanitarian mission to the town of Jurn, Iraq.

Soldier's family takes part in Iraq reenlistment

by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude

1st Sustainment Brigade

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Spc. Ralph Egbert, an information systems analyst for the 1st Signal Company, Special Troops Battalion said “I promise” and added six years to his current enlistment as his family looked on from Fort Riley, Kan., via the Internet Nov. 6.

Egbert is deployed to Camp Taji, Iraq for 15 months and decided he'd like to continue his career in the Army, but really wanted his family to be part of it.

“My wife didn't get to see me when I got promoted so this gives her a chance to see me,” said Egbert.

The ceremony took place at the Freedom Call Center (FCC). The FCC provides Virtual Teleconferencing for Soldiers and their families free of charge and as a result Tracy, Maggie and Karli Egbert were able to watch.

In addition to his family, several dozen of his fellow signal Soldiers witnessed the administering of the oath by their Company Commander, Capt. Rubin



Photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude

(Above) Capt. Rubin Neypes, the commander of the 1st Signal Company, administers the enlistment oath to Spc. Ralph Egbert of the 1st Signal Company, Special Troops Battalion.

Neypes. “I am grateful to know that there are Soldiers like Spc. Egbert that maintain a passion to serve our country, and our Army. I am honored to share this experience with him and I am even more pleased that his family can be apart of his reenlistment ceremony,” said Neypes.

America's warrior

by Sgt. Jasmine Chopra

A snapshot of servicemembers in the Global War on Terrorism

Name: Spc. Melissa Richardson.

Job title: ammunition specialist.

Unit: 63rd Ordnance Company.

Stationed at: Al Taqaddum, Iraq

Hometown: Annandale, Minn.

Age: 21.

Why I joined the Army: For God and country.

Pastimes: Keeping in touch with family and friends through the Internet and spending time outdoors camping, hiking and boating.

One life-changing event: Coming to Iraq

The person/persons I admire most: My parents. Family is really important to me.

The one thing I would change about the Army: A little more pay would be nice.

What makes a good leader: Caring about your Soldiers' well-being.

What makes a good Soldier: Being a person people can rely on and doing your job well even if you might not like it.

Best thing about being a Soldier: Meeting new people from all over the world.

Values: Personal courage. Feeling fear is not a problem as long as you have personal courage and face your fear instead of running from it.

If I wasn't in the Army I'd be? Wishing I was a Soldier while going to college.

Goals: I want to jump out of planes. Then I want to get my college degree.



Photo by Sgt. Jasmine Chopra

Do you have a story idea?

Contact the Anaconda Times

anaconda.times@iraq.centcom.mil

Medical TF host Iraqi Army lieutenant, MNSTC-I health affairs officer

by 2nd Lt. Chris J. Patterson

56th Multifunctional Medical Battalion

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq—Iraqi Army 2nd Lt. Ali Faesal Alkhalil, warehouse manager and accountable officer of the Taji National Depot, recently visited Task Force (TF) 32nd Multifunctional Medical Battalion's (MMB) medical logistics warehouse here. Ali was eager to interact with the U.S. Soldiers and was impressed with the arrangement of TF 32 MMB's Mission Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE). "I am hoping in the future we get more (personnel and equipment) to fill our MTOE," he stated. "I [also] have an idea [for] the division of the Officers and NCOs that belong to my unit."

Accompanying Ali was U.S. Army Maj. James Cole, the health affairs officer in charge of the Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq (MNSTC-I), medical logistics section, stationed at the International Zone just south of Taji. Legitimizing the Iraqi Armed Forces is an ongoing mission essential task during Operation Iraqi Freedom. MNSTC-I, headquartered at Phoenix Base, Baghdad, fosters relationships with Iraqi Security Forces and assists in transitional operations amongst numerous Coalition and Iraqi partnerships. Cole's section provides initial medical infrastructure to Iraqi joint



Photos by 2nd Lt. Chris J. Patterson

(Above) 2nd Lt. Ali Faesal Alkhalil spends times inventorying with outgoing Alpha Company, 32d MMB Soldier Sgt. Luis Carrera (left) and incoming 591st Medical Logistics Company Soldiers Spc. Alger Patton (center) and Spc. Fanaafi Sua (top).

(Below) 2nd Lt. Alkhalil and Maj. James Cole, health affairs OIC of the Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq, visit TF 32 MMB's medical logistics warehouse during the transfer of authority to TF 56th MMB.

forces, and ultimately oversees purchasing and distribution of Class VIII medical supplies to Ali's warehouses in Taji.

While MNSTC-I is the primary Class VIII liaison to the Taji National Depot, Cole encourages Ali's gradual shift to other, non-Coalition Force, suppliers. "Not only are we bringing supplies into

their system, but they're also bringing supplies from their sources into their system," he explains. "That's a big accomplishment. As we're

building them up, they are slowly but surely developing (themselves)."

TF 32 MMB's medical logistics warehouse acts as the

conduit for all external shipments to the Taji National Depot. Cole and Ali work in tandem to order appropriate medical provisions, individual medicine and medical equipment sets such as Trauma, Air and Ground Ambulance, and Sick Call sets. The two have developed an efficient partnership, allowing Ali the leverage to make important decisions with minimal guidance. Cole commended Ali's performance, stating, "Lieutenant Ali is doing such a good job, we (MNSTC-I) are very hands off."

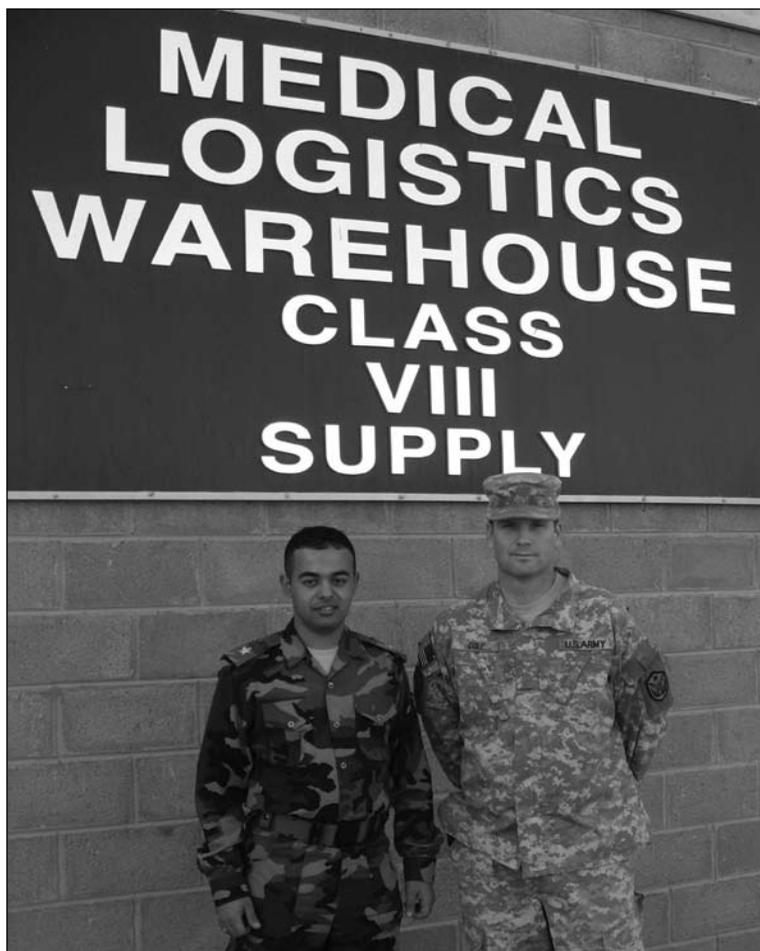
Nov. 12 marked Ali's one year anniversary as an Iraqi Army Officer and his graduation from Baghdad University's College of Pharmacy. He hopes to steadily recruit more school-trained soldiers to his medical logistics team. Despite his lack of numbers, however, Ali has witnessed much progress within his organization during the previous year and is looking forward to furthering his partnerships with Coalition Forces. "My coming here was to take some experiences from the U.S. Army, and when I go back, reflect some of [them] in our Army."

Sweat off brow ensures Soldier safety on deadly Iraqi roads



Photo by Sgt. Jasmine Chopra

CAMP TAQADDUM, Iraq— Staff Sgt. Gerney Jones of Blackstone, Va., a senior mechanic with Alpha Company, 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, repairs electronic equipment from an armored security vehicle Oct. 14. Properly maintaining vehicles minimizes breakdowns which can be especially dangerous for Soldiers who travel on the deadliest roads in Iraq. Jones has 26 years of experience repairing many different types of military vehicles.



Upcoming sports on AFN

Wednesday 12/5/07

College BB: Kansas St. vs. Notre Dame live 3:00 a.m. AFN/sports
Detroit Red Wings @ Montreal Canadiens live 3:30 a.m. AFN/xtra
College BB: USC vs. Memphis live 5:30 a.m. AFN/sports
Milwaukee Bucks @ Los Angeles Clippers live 6:30 a.m. AFN/xtra
College BB: North Carolina @ Pennsylvania replay 12:00 p.m. AFN/sports
New Jersey Nets @ Cleveland Cavaliers replay 9:00 p.m. AFN/sports

Thursday 12/6/07

College BB: Georgetown @ Alabama live 3:00 a.m. AFN/sports
Phoenix Suns @ Toronto Raptors live 3:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
Los Angeles Lakers @ Denver Nuggets live 5:00 a.m. AFN/sports; replay 11:00 a.m. AFN/sports
College BB: West Virginia @ Auburn live 5:30 a.m. AFN/xtra
College BB: Syracuse @ Virginia replay 8:00 a.m. AFN/xtra

Friday 12/7/07

Chicago Bears @ Washington Redskins live 4:00 a.m. AFN/sports; replay 2:00 p.m. AFN/sports
Denver Nuggets @ Dallas Mavericks live 4:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
Miami Heat @ Portland Trail Blazers live 6:30 a.m. AFN/xtra
College BB: LSU @ Villanova replay 11:00 a.m. AFN/sports

Saturday 12/8/07

Chicago Bulls @ Detroit Pistons live 3:00 a.m. AFN/sports
College FB: Division I subdivision championship live 4:00 AFN/xtra
Utah Jazz @ San Antonio Spurs live 5:30 a.m. AFN/sports; replay 11:00 a.m. AFN/sports
College FB: Division II championship semifinal #1 live 8:00 p.m. AFN/xtra

College BB: Arizona @ Illinois live 8:00 p.m. AFN/sports
College BB: Dayton @ Louisville live 10:00 p.m. AFN/xtra
College BB: Michigan @ Duke live 10:00 p.m. AFN/ssports

Sunday 12/9/07

College BB: Purdue @ Missouri live 12:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
College BB: Kentucky @ Indiana live 12:00 a.m. AFN/sports
College BB: Marquette @ Wisconsin live 2:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
Boxing: Floyd Mayweather vs. Ricky Hatton live 5:00 AFN/sports
College FB: Division II championship semifinal #2 live 5:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
College BB: Pittsburgh @ Washington replay 9:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
Philadelphia 76ers @ New York Knicks replay 11:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
Anaheim Ducks @ Nashville Predators replay 1:30 p.m. AFN/xtra
NFL FB: Teams TBD live 9:00 p.m. AFN/sports
NFL FB: Teams TBD live 9:00 p.m. AFN/xtra

Monday 12/10/07

NFL FB: Teams TBD live 12:00 a.m. AFN/sports
NFL FB: Teams TBD live 12:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
New Jersey Nets @ Washington Wizards live 3:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
Indianapolis Colts @ Baltimore Ravens live 4:15 a.m. AFN/sports
Golden State Warriors @ Los Angeles Lakers live 5:30 a.m. AFN/xtra
College BB: George Washington @ Virginia Tech replay 8:00 a.m. AFN/xtra

Tuesday 12/11/07

Boston Bruins @ Buffalo Sabres live 3:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
New Orleans Saints @ Atlanta Falcons live 4:30 a.m. AFN/sports; replay 2:00 p.m. AFN/sports; replay 9:00 p.m. AFN/sports
Milwaukee Bucks @ Sacramento Kings live 6:00 a.m. AFN/xtra

SUSTAINER REEL TIME THEATER

(Schedule is subject to change)

Wednesday, Dec. 5
 5 p.m. Michael Clayton (R)
 8 p.m. Rendition (R)

Thursday, Dec. 6
 5 p.m. Enchanted (PG)
 8:30 p.m. Why Did I Get Married (PG-13)

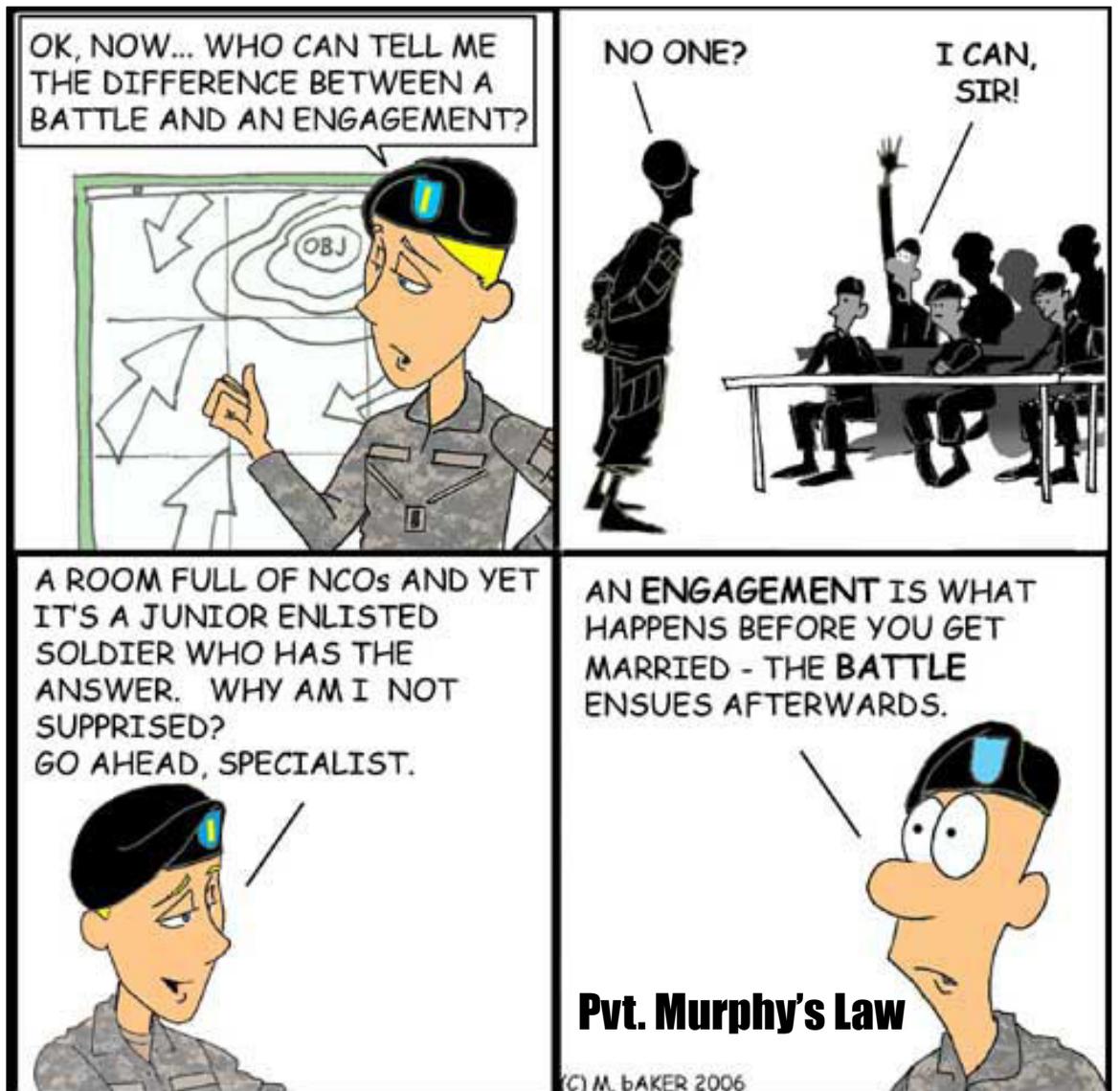
Friday, Dec. 7
 2 p.m. The Comebacks (PG-13)
 5 p.m. Gone Baby Gone (R)
 8:30 p.m. This Christmas (PG)

Saturday, Dec. 8
 No Movie- Reserved for Harvest Music Festival

Sunday, Dec. 9
 2 p.m. This Christmas (PG)
 5 p.m. The Comebacks (PG-13)
 8 p.m. Gone Baby Gone (R)

Monday, Dec. 10
 5 p.m. The Comebacks (PG-13)
 8 p.m. This Christmas (PG)

Tuesday, Dec. 11
 5 p.m. This Christmas (PG)
 8 p.m. 30 Days of Night (R)



Pvt. Murphy's Law

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ANACONDA ACTIVITIES

INDOOR POOL

1-Mile practice day: Saturday- 9 a.m. and 8 p.m.

Swim Lessons

-Beginners: Tuesday – 7 p.m.

-Intermediate: Thursday – 7 p.m.

-Both: Sunday – 7 p.m.

Crazy Distance Day: Friday – All day, all levels

Endurance and pacing:

Wednesday- 4 p.m.

EAST FITNESS CENTER

Basketball League: Monday-Friday – 7 p.m.

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu: Monday, Wednesday, Friday – 8 p.m.

Kyu Kyu Kempo: Sunday- 2 p.m.

Modern Army combatives:

Tuesday and Thursday- 8:30 p.m.

Open court volleyball: Sunday- 6 p.m.

Shotokan Karate Do: Thursday- 6:45 p.m., Saturday- 8:30 p.m. and Sunday- 5:30 p.m.

Soo Bahk Do: 6 p.m.

Step Aerobics: Monday, Wednesday, Friday – 5:30 p.m.

Wrestling & physical fitness class: Tuesday- 6 p.m. and Saturday- 7 p.m.

Swing dance: Sunday- 7:30 p.m.

EAST RECREATION CENTER

8-ball tourney: Monday- 3 p.m. and 8 p.m.

9-ball tournament: Wednesday- 3 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Game Console Tourney: Thursday- 8 p.m.

Country Dance Class:

Thursday- 7 p.m.

Dominoes: Friday- 8 p.m.

Karaoke: Monday- 8 p.m.

Model building: Sunday- 1 p.m.

Poetry/open mic: Sunday- 7:30 p.m.

Poker tourney: Sunday- 6 p.m.

Salsa dance class: Saturday- 8:30 p.m.

Swing dance: Tuesday- 7p.m.

Ping pong tourney: Tuesday- 3 p.m. and 8 p.m.

WEST RECREATION CENTER

8-ball tourney: Wednesday- 1 p.m. and 8 p.m.

9-ball tournament: Monday- 1 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Dungeons & Dragons: Saturday- 8 p.m.

Friday nights in Balad: Friday- 8 p.m.

Foosball: Tuesday- 1 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Green Bean karaoke:

Wednesday and Sunday- 8 p.m.

Ice Ball Tourney: Thursday- 4 p.m.

Ping pong tourney: Tuesday- 1 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Salsa dance class: Thursday- 8:30 p.m.

Spades, Chess and Dominoes: Friday – 1 p.m.

Texas hold 'em: Saturday- 1 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Game Counsel Tourney: Thursday- 1 p.m. and 8 p.m.

WEST FITNESS CENTER

3-on-3 basketball tourney: Saturday- 7:30 p.m.

6-on-6 volleyball tourney: Friday- 7 p.m.

Aerobics: Monday, Wednesday, Friday- 7 p.m.

Body by Midgett Toning Class:

Tuesday, Thursday - 7 p.m.

Dodge ball Game: Tuesday- 7:30 p.m.

Furman's Martial Arts: Monday, Wednesday, Sunday- 1 p.m.

Gaston's Self-Defense Class: Friday, Saturday- 7 p.m.

Open court basketball: Thursday- 7 p.m.

Open court soccer: Monday, Wednesday - 7 p.m.

Zingano Brazilian Jui Jitsu:

Tuesday, Thursday- 8:30 p.m.

CIRCUIT GYM

Floor hockey: Monday, Wednesday, Friday – 8 p.m.

U.S. Army All-American Bowl selection tour underway

by Army Community Relations

Courtesy Story

High school senior football players await their fate as the Army travels the nation to name 84 players for its All-American Bowl, an all-star game held January 5, in San Antonio, Texas.

Those selected for the bowl will follow in the footsteps of some of the country's top college and professional players and have the elite opportunity to highlight the skills and values they share with Soldiers in the United States Army.

Players are selected by a committee of national recruiting experts and are placed on the East or West team. The 138 stops on the selection tour bring Army representatives to each player's high school, where a game day jersey is presented before the player's peers, parents, coaches, athletic directors and principals. This important opportunity allows the Army to communicate the important tie be-

tween athletes and Soldiers - their strength, dedication, teamwork and values.

To track all of the Selection Tour stops through early December, visit www.usarmyalmericanbowl.com.

As an added bonus, the Army will inaugurate its U.S. Army All-American Marching Band program, which recognizes the integral role band members play in the traditional, high-school football experience. Ninety-one outstanding marching musicians from across the country were selected to participate in the 2008 All-American Bowl, and each will have the opportunity to showcase his or her talents before a national audience.

As a tribute to our men and women in uniform, more than 80 Soldiers from across the country will be honored as part of the week-long schedule of festivities for the 2008 Army All-American Bowl. These Soldier Heroes, who are doing the "heavy lifting" for our nation," are the strength of the nation - the ultimate instrument of national resolve. These brave men and women represent the hundreds of thousands of Soldiers currently serving around the world. The honored Soldiers and football players will be paired and participate in a series of events together during game week, illustrating their shared ideals of leadership, courage and strength on and off the field. In additions, Soldiers will be honored during pre-game activities for their commitment and service.



Wounded warriors to keep bonus

by J.D. Leipold

Army News Service

WASHINGTON – Soldiers who become ill or are wounded while on active duty are entitled to keep all recruitment bonuses due them.

The Army reiterated that policy today, after a Wounded Soldier inadvertently received a letter from the Army that stated he would be required to pay back any enlistment money he received.

"If you are ill or were injured while on duty, the Army will not ask you to repay any portion of your recruitment bonus," said Brig. Gen. Mike Tucker, assistant surgeon general for Warrior Care and Transition. "This money will stay in the hands of our Soldiers."

Army policy prohibits what is described as "recoupment" when it would be contrary to equity and good conscience, or would be contrary to the nation's interests. Those circumstances include, for example, "an inability to complete a service agreement

because of illness, injury, disability or other impairment that did not clearly result from misconduct."

The general said Soldiers who have received letters from the Army asking for repayment of a recruitment bonus should contact the Wounded Soldier and Family Hotline to report the issue as soon as possible.

"If there's a problem, we are going to fix it," Brig. Gen. Tucker said. "We are committed to honoring our Warriors and Families in transition."

The hotline is staffed by subject-matter experts 24 hours a day, seven days a week to help speed the resolution of issues pertaining to wounded Soldiers and their families. Callers will receive responses within 24 hours. For those who reside within the United States, the hotline can be reached at 800-984-8523.

Soldiers and families may also call from overseas assignments via the Defense Switch Network 312-328-0002 and within the U.S., 328-0002.

Thanksgiving Day games promote joy during holiday season



Photos by Sgt. Jasmine Chopra

(Above) Chief Warrant Officer Darrin Ingram, an Apache Longbow pilot with 2nd Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment (2-159 ARB), hits the softball hard during the 13th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion sponsored, "Turkey Classic" Nov. 24 here. The object of the challenge was to hit as many softballs as possible out of the field. Competitors were given 10 tries. Ingram came in second to his protégé, Pfc. Juan Ayon, an Apache helicopter mechanic also with the 2-159 ARB.

(Below) Pfc. Juan Ayon holds the trophy he won during the 13th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion sponsored "Turkey Classic" batting competition. The classic featured softball matches as well as a batting competition.

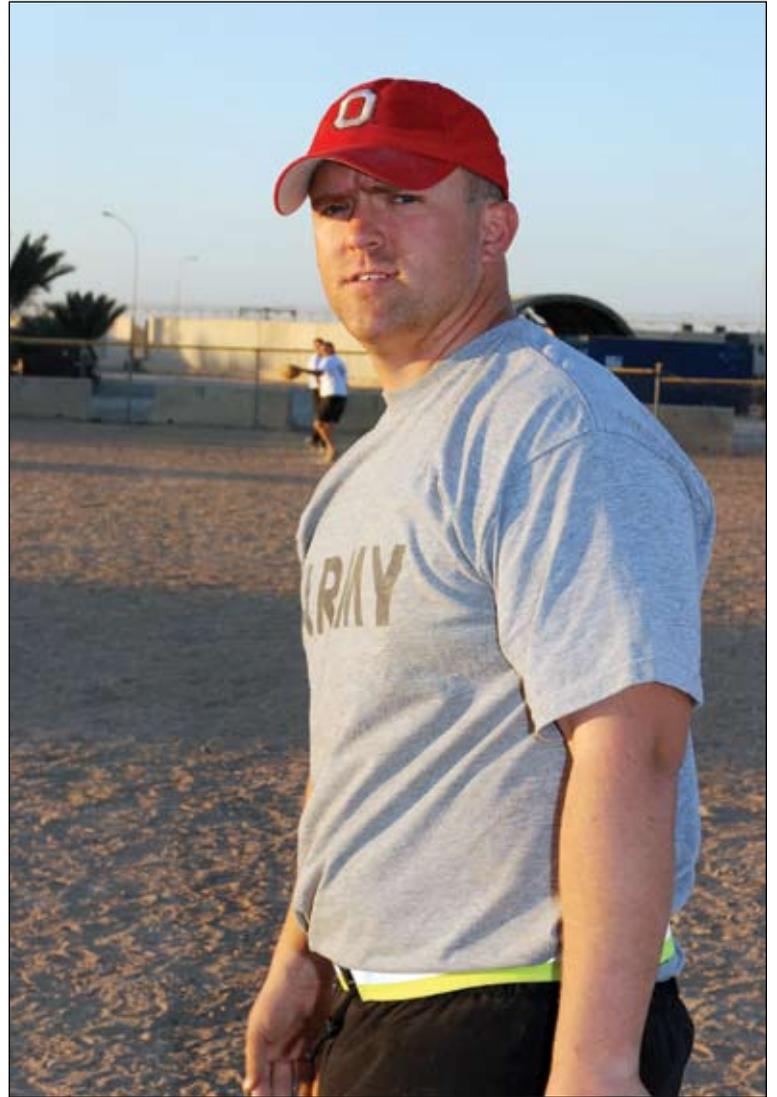


Photo by Sgt. Jasmine Chopra

Capt. Max Donaldson, the logistics officer for the 13th CSSB, wears the baseball cap of his Alma Mater, Ohio State University, during the "Turkey Classic." Donaldson serves as the pitcher for the 13th CSSB "Benning Bombers" during the regular softball season.



Photos by Sgt. Jasmine Chopra

(Above) Banding together during a timeout, members of the Air Force flag football team knock fists to encourage one another before resuming the match.

(Below) While Soldiers and Airmen here work together seamlessly on missions everyday, on the field, it was all out competition during a Thanksgiving night flag football match.



Aaron Tippin tours, rocks LSA Anaconda



Photo by Spc. Thomas Keeler

Air Force Capt. Kerri Fulgham, a pilot with the 4th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, explains the fire-power of an F-16 Fighting Falcon jet to country singer Aaron Tippin during his tour of Balad Air Field.



Photo by Spc. Thomas Keeler

(Above) Tippin steps out of the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected fighting vehicle. (Below) Tippin performs his famous song, "Kiss This" for more than 600 servicemembers.



Photos by Spc. Jay Venturini

(Above) Tippin hands a signed guitar to drawing winner Chief Warrant Officer Eric Weber, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, during his concert at the Sustainer Theater. (Below) Tippin pulled out his guitar to perform his patriotic song, "Where the Stars and Stripes and Eagle Fly."

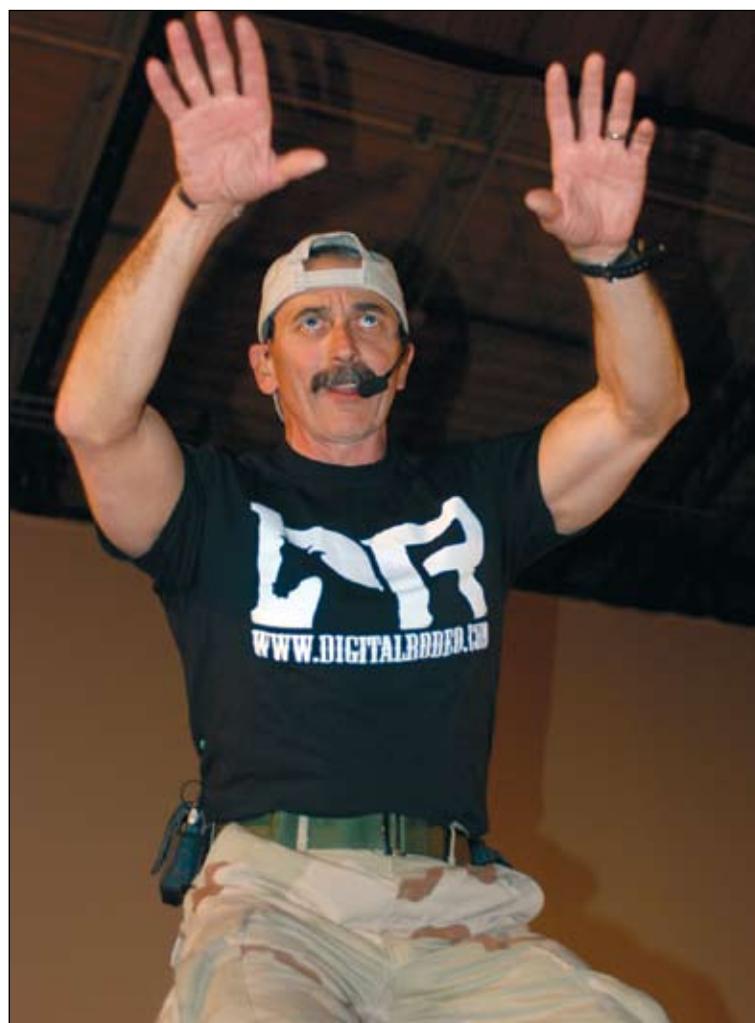


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