41st FB Medic enjoys being ‘one of the guys’

Spc. Allison Churchill
41ST FIRES BDE.

FOB DELTA—Private First Class Serena Norman took ribbing from her father and three older brothers, all combat arms Army veterans, when she decided to follow their footsteps into the military. Her family expected her to be the one to go straight to college in pursuit of a medical degree.

Instead, she’s found a happy medium providing medical coverage for more than 60 of her brothers-in-arms at Joint Security Station Five.

Norman, of Company C, 589th Brigade Support Battalion, 41st Fires Brigade, supports Battery A, 2nd Bn., 20th Field Artillery Regiment, 41st Fires Bde. and the Iraqi Policemen who rotate through the JSS.

“We’re one big happy family,” said Norman of the crew.

Norman proved herself to the “Renegades” on early patrols.

“She never complained, and always helped out when we needed – you couldn’t ask for a better medic,” said Bolline, Ill., native 2nd Lt. Anthony Mathis, Btry. A platoon leader.

In August, when the Renegades and IPs took over JSS-5 after the Georgians were called back home, Norman joined them and set up shop.

She teaches combat lifesaver classes to the American Soldiers and IPs, holds sick call, provides medical support on patrols and assists with details.

Norman said the camaraderie she finds between the Renegades and IPs always motivates her. She gets a kick out of knowing the guys all have different backgrounds and music preferences, but come together while deployed.

“They’ll do anything for each other. It’s exactly what I thought the Army would be,” she said

The Los Alamos, N.M., native is torn between the adrenaline rush she feels when treating medical trauma and not wanting to see any of “her guys” injured. Norman instead finds fulfillment through knowing the Iraqis are learning valuable skills from the Americans, such as holding patrol briefs and taking CLS bags on patrols.

“I felt so good after teaching the Iraqis CLS,” she said. “I smiled for about a week afterward.”

She’s also inspired by the initiative the Renegades take to setting up their living space.

When she first arrived they were setting up their air conditioners; she, in turn, built a locking cabinet for the aid station.

“If we don’t do it, who is going to?” Norman asked.

Norman said she still plans to become a doctor, most likely a trauma surgeon, after completing her military service.
Iron Soldier achieves U.S. citizenship in Iraq

PFC. MICHAEL SCHUCH, SPC. JOSHUA RAMEY
2ND BCT, 1ST ARMED. Div.

FOB HAMMER—For Pfc. Wislet Genelus of Company B, 40th Engineer Battalion, the path to U.S. citizenship is finally complete— at the age of 40.

Born in Jean-Rabe, Haiti, Genelus has been on the front lines of political turmoil for 23 years.

Genelus’ parents moved to Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. shortly after he was born, while he spent the first 15 years of his life living with his aunt in Haiti.

“Growing up, I wasn’t aware of what caused the turmoil that surrounded us, but the kids were only allowed to go to school and church,” Genelus recalled.

“The last five years I was there, I remember there were demonstrations all the time. People were trying to overthrow the dictatorship.”

At age 15, Genelus moved with his parents, where he spent the next nine years finishing school in the U.S., while working as a taxi driver.

In 1993, Genelus was drawn back to Haiti by the memory of the friends and family he had grown up with. Upon his return, he worked with the Haitian National Police for eight years.

“In 2003, while I was a police officer, that’s when (the political situation) got really bad,” explained Genelus. “The government began to crack down on all opposition.

“There was no justice, only government rule. You couldn’t say what was on your mind and everyone was afraid. We were the police; the strong-arm of the dictator.”

Genelus left Haiti shortly after the crackdown on resistance began—this time permanently.

“Private First Class Wislet Genelus, shortly before servicing route clearance vehicles at FOB Hammer.”

“The crackdown began with us,” he continued. “I couldn’t handle that stuff. I had lived nine years in the United States, and I was expected to do things that were unbelievable.”

Genelus joined the U.S. Army in 2006 as an engineer and was later assigned to the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division.

Genelus was assigned to the 40th Eng. Bn., where he began training for the route clearance missions he would be asked to perform.

In April, he deployed to the southeast Baghdad Province in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, where he performed nearly 100 missions in just the first five months.

“The work isn’t really that much different than the police work (in Haiti),” Genelus remarked. “The Army is what I like to do; it’s about providing security.”

While stationed on Forward Operating Base Hammer, Genelus began to research the steps required to attain U.S. citizenship. After consulting his chain of command, Genelus used channels in the Army to apply for citizenship and was approved.

In early September, Genelus was officially proclaimed a U.S. citizen, pending a written test and receiving the Oath of Allegiance to the U.S., upon his return from Iraq.

Genelus is not alone in his attempts at U.S. citizenship while deployed to Iraq, as two fellow Soldiers from the 40th Eng. Bn. joined him in the quest.

“Private First Class Alvin Ramirez-Somarriba, of Miami, and Spc. Cauldric Dasent, from the U.S. Virgin Islands, are currently awaiting the results of their applications for citizenship.”
Flu season is here; Soldiers catch immunity


TF MOUNTAIN HALLOWEEN COSTUME CONTEST

Friday 31 Oct 08
Prizes awarded to top three costumes
All costumes worn will be in good taste!

Dear Soldier Letter

dear soljers

SBIG bglare the bgs

I $ lover

POC - SGA LTR DIV S Troy
What three flavors are included in Neapolitan ice cream?

Trivia of the Week

“My wife and two dogs. I miss spending time with all three of them and acting like a kid,” said 1st Sgt. Christopher Van Houten, of Evan Mills, N.Y., 10th Mountain Division Band first sergeant.

“Harvest. I miss picking corn and cutting sunflowers,” said Sgt. Anthony Hendrich, trombone player for 10th Mountain Division Band and native of Oneonta, N.Y.

For the answer to today’s puzzles, go to:

www.taskforcemountain.com

Crossword

ACROSS:
1. On the table, with a knife and fork?
4. Comes before a fall
7. Utilize
8. Type of beer
9. Particles of a molecule
10. Letter address ...
11. Movement to rhythm
14. Faithful
17. Weight measure
20. Put down on paper
23. Sash
24. Written slander
25. A not too serious auto collision
26. Honey maker
27. Word of apology
28. A root vegetable

DOWN:
1. Tomatoes, cucumber, lettuce etc.
2. Keyboard instrument
3. Hospital worker
4. Jewel; from an oyster?
5. Elephant tusk material
6. Artist’s stand
12. Fuss
13. Sealed container for beans, peas, soup etc. etc.
15. Hand operated boat propeller
16. To play a role
17. On the hands
18. Colour
19. Sound enhancing system
20. Cleans with a cloth
21. Likeness
22. US national bird

Word Search

PIHSNEIRFRODIPUCAL
VDHSURACCFBALENDC
NYNTIAEASOLCTOYMV
SRNENSNLYEHOIERIE
TLEDISFAONTWSARB
REYSLRRECTCTLEUEI
AWSERIFONAIACRIRR
EESEEELLRSOOMBSC
HCNSAYTRONUNEDS
TGDNOTOPTIPGASFNA
ENYEAARLGCFEHIT
EISDUMBRELOVEDBIG
WLODRPOAFFECTIONP
SREMMLFRENTRAPAR
EAYCNAFOREVERLIKE
ROROTIUSDNOTIOVED

Valentine’s Day

Admirer
Adore
Affection
Attraction
Beau
Beloved
Boyfriend
Candies
Candy
Chocolates
Couple
Crush
Cupid
Darling
Date
Dear
Devotion
Fancy
February
Flame
Flowers
Fondness
Forever
Friendship
Gift
Girlfriend
Hearts
Jewelry
Like
Lovelbirds
Lovers
Partner
Proposal
Relationship
Restaurant
Romance
Roses
Sentiment
Suitor
Sweetheart

What do you miss most about home?

Photo by Spc. Sophia R. Lopez

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