

# Nineteen years after Gulf War, vets still proud of service

By Staff Sgt. Karl Johnson

Nineteen years ago, this month, thousands of American and allied troops crossed the berm marking the beginning of the ground war in support of Operation Desert Storm.

More than a dozen of your fellow Task Force Twister Soldiers were mobilized in support of that effort.

Some ended up serving stateside or on installations in Europe. The majority deployed to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and eventually into Iraq.

“It was very strange,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Ruth Schuster, Camp Victory Sheriff. “It was very primitive and a lot different than this deployment.”

The experience for each Soldier was as individual and unique as each person and the jobs they did.

“What I remember most was the day we arrived,” explained Schuster. “We got off the plane with no supplies except what we carried on our backs. We had no tents and they didn’t have any there for us. We slept on the sand that night propped up against our duffel bags.”

Still others said they will remember the vast build up of troops and supplies and then the eventual invasion of Iraq.

“There were log[istics] bases all over the middle of that desert,” said Sgt. 1st Class LeRoy Sulley, who was in a transportation company that was tasked to resupply 1st Cavalry Division during the ground war.



The Task Force Twister Gulf War veterans gather for a picture 19 years after the start of the ground war. From left to right, top row first: Capt. Kenneth Kalsem, Master Sgt. Matthew Kirby, Sgt. 1st Class LeRoy Sulley, Chief Warrant Officer Ronna Jack, Col. Stephen Novotny, Sgt. 1st Class Paul Graham, Staff Sgt. Martha Olivarez, Staff Sgt. Herman Dailey, Maj. Steven Ross, Sgt. Maj. Ronald Hassler, Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Howard, Command Sgt. Maj. Ruth Schuster, Sgt. 1st Class Durgaprasad Emani, Master Sgt. Raul Lopez, Capt. Jeffery Campbell.

“We crossed the border just eight hours behind 1st Cav.,” said Sulley, now the HHC First Sergeant “They moved so fast and were so successful that they ended up not needing resupply.”

“We drove more than 200 miles into Iraq, waited for 36 hours and then drove back. The war was over.”

Capt. Kenneth Kalsem, a project engineer for the Directorate of Public Works, served as an armored personnel carrier driver during Operation Desert Storm.

“I was a 20 year-old private first class,”

said Kalsem. “I remember moving out into the desert in Saudi Arabia near the border of Iraq to get ready for the invasion. We didn’t get another shower until the war was over 45 days later.

“When we crossed into Iraq, we received very little resistance. Dozens of Iraqi soldiers surrendered to us. They simply didn’t have the will to fight.”

The war, by nearly all accounts, was a resounding success for the United States and its allies. But, as with all wars, there

- See Gulf War Pg. 3



## Spotlight On: CW4 Ronna Jack



By definition, a Type A personality is ambitious, competitive and driven to get things done. And as a self-described Type A personality, CW4 Ronna Jack, is all of these things.

“I get my personality from my dad - go go go,” said Jack.

Those personality traits,

while accurate, certainly don’t encompass all that Chief Warrant Officer Jack is. Many of the Soldiers she works with describe her as “the den mother.”

“I like to take care of things,” explained Jack.

“And I like taking care of people.”



That sentiment can be traced back to her upbringing in eastern Kansas where, she said, it all began for her and where she looks forward to ending up.

“I raised my three children there, and that’s where my grandchildren

are today.”

Jack described herself as a child and then as a young adult in Kansas growing up and being “just a little too wild.”

“I needed some direction,” she said. “I had thought about joining the Army before, but never got around to it.”

- See Jack Pg. 3

# The Ministry Message

## The perception of history and its importance to your future

By CH (Lt. Col.) Leonard Higgins, Garrison Command Chaplain

Whatever your age right now, if you can read this, you have a past that you can recall. Just take a few moments now and think about your past. How would you describe it? Easy, tough, slow, fast, full, mostly happy, very sad, busy, regretful, joyful, etc. etc.

How you see your past actually has a tremendous effect on how you will see the accomplishment of your present and future goals unfolding. I haven't met anyone who tells me their life has been one happy picnic. I have met many who have told me their life has been like marching through deep, sticky mud. Either way, it's not what has happened in your past, it's how you remember it. Our minds can play such tricky games with us depending on our perception. It is this perception that you carry with you, not the experience.

Let's say you experienced a marriage that ended in divorce, or you were a victim of abuse, or you lost a child, suffered betrayal, addictions, physical disability, being an outcast in high school, and on and on. This is tough, yes. During tough times, did you ask "Why me?" "What am I being punished for?" "Am I a bad person?" "What did I do to deserve this?" "I can't take it anymore!" Most likely you did. Plus we often tend to put the blame on someone else to ease our conscience.

So we have perception, questioning and/or blaming, things which factor into how you see some of the events in your life thus far. Then when it comes to goal setting and looking ahead, there will be lots of issues with your vision for your future if you haven't come to terms with your past. Your perception may be, "I've had so many



Courtesy Photo

bad things happen to me, I'm sure I won't have much good in my future." "God seems to have it in for me and I don't know why." "My marriage failed because my ex husband was a jerk." etc.

The good news is that all this can change. Try this from an article I recently read:

Let's say that all the 'bad' things that have occurred in your past are all written on individual 'tickets'. There is a machine in front of you with a slot to insert a ticket. With a shrug you think 'why not' and you stick one of your tickets in the slot. Suddenly lights flash, horns, bells and whistles sound and eventually your ticket returns to you with something written on the back. You read these words: "What was the value in this lesson?"

Now you are thinking "Whadya mean, lesson?! What does this have to do with my ex husband being a jerk? I'm not in school here!" So you insert another ticket. Lights, horns, bells, and whistles later it comes back with the very same words on the back! A few more tickets with the same result and you're now frustratingly thinking this is a dumb machine; it must be broken and throwing the tickets on the ground and stomp off.

But those words, "What was the value in this lesson?"

keep ticker taping across your brain. You try to read, try to sleep, try to watch TV, but they keep intruding. You think of your failed marriage. "Well, guess my ex husband wasn't really a jerk, we just didn't know how to talk with each other. Maybe I was over-reactive sometimes." A few hours later you think about it again and add "We really were very different in our personalities and wanted different things out of life." And later, "He was an okay guy, we just mixed like oil and water and possibly I was as much to blame." Still later, "I learned quite a bit from that marriage, that a couple should really get to know each other before making a lifetime commitment and talk about important things like finances, goals, kids, each other's families and such." BINGO! The machine wasn't broken at all.

You see, it's a "Change Your Perception" machine. It's very necessary for you to insert all your tickets for past experiences around which you have a painful perception, are questioning in any way except "What am I to learn?" and rendering yourself powerless with blaming. In fact, seeing as there really is no "Change Your Perception" machine except in your imagination, why not make your tickets as described above and write the words "Where was the value in this lesson?" on the backs? The answers may not come quickly, but if you hold the ticket in your hand and ponder occasionally, the answers will come.

No experience in your life, good or bad, is without value. Although that may sound ludicrous when you are thinking of nasty ones, as you look at the possibility of value from them, you will be amazed to find it.

Once you recognize this, the goal setting path for your life is cleared. You have become a 'forward thinker' instead of mired in the negative emotions of your past. Make this a goal for your life and your future will be brighter!

# The success and importance of black history

By Sgt. 1st Class Erica Lomax  
Equal Opportunity Leader

Have you ever wanted something so badly you simply had to buy it? Often times, people make the purchase, but don't know some of the important history behind some items. A blanket, for example, is an item that carries a unique history that many people are unaware of. In the past blankets were used to help lead slaves to freedom on the Underground Railroad. And just as blankets were important to the past, it is important that we know where we came from to understand where we are going. February is the month set aside as the national observance of black history and this is a look at why it's important.

Many different things have been said about why February was chosen as Black History Month, and most incorrect. In 1926, Americans started to recognize what would one day become Black History Month. At that time it was called "Negro History Week" and was during the second week in February. The second week in February was chosen because it marked the birthdays of two men who greatly influenced black Americans, Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.

Dr. Carter G. Woodson was one of the first scholars to value and study the many contributions made in black history. Have you heard of Jack Johnson, John Mercer

Langston, Hattie McDaniel or Dr. Mae Jemison? Jack Johnson became the first African-American man to hold the World Heavyweight boxing title in 1908. John Mercer Langston was the first black man to become a lawyer in Ohio when he passed the Bar in 1854. Hattie McDaniel was the first African-American performer to win an Academy Award for her portrayal of a loyal slave governess in "Gone With the Wind." And Dr. Mae Jemison was the first African American woman to go into space aboard the space shuttle Endeavor in 1992.

African Americans have also made many contributions to U.S. military history, having fought in every

conflict since the Revolutionary War. Up until 1862 however, African Americans were not permitted to enlist in the Army. Shortly thereafter, the 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Infantry earned its fame with a battle at Battery Wagner that inspired the movie "Glory." Other famous groups of African American service members include the Buffalo Soldiers and the Tuskegee Airmen.

Hopefully this information has enhanced your knowledge and understanding of black history. It is very important to know where you came from to help with where you are going. Understanding black history is not only important to African Americans, but to all people.



## Equal Opportunity Advisors

**Master Sgt. Natalie Sokolik**  
NIPR: 318-485-2820  
natalie.sokolik@iraq.centcom.mil

**CW3 Terry Taylor**  
NIPR: 318-485-5713  
terry.taylor@iraq.centcom.mil



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**318-485-4494**

[jamie.rogers@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:jamie.rogers@iraq.centcom.mil)

**Gulf War:**

was a human cost and some had to learn that first hand.

According to Department of Defense data, U.S. forces suffered 148 battle-related deaths. Twenty eight on the night of Feb. 25, 1991 when an Iraqi missile hit a U.S. barracks full of Army Reserve Soldiers, including Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Howard, Camp West Liberty Sheriff.

“We spent the night caring for the wounded and the dead,” said Howard. “I’ll always

remember that night.”

The Task Force Twister Soldiers who proudly served in the Gulf War do share at least one thing in common. They all said their experience helped prepare them for the rest of their Army careers.

“Having been through that, I know I can make it through anything,” said Kalsem.

“It made me a better Soldier,” explained Schuster. “It prepared me for future deployments.”

**Jack:**

“Then one day I was driving by the recruiter’s office and I just pulled into the parking lot, almost on a whim.”

More than 23 years later and she’s certain she made the right choice.

“I’ve accomplished everything I wanted to in my Army career,” said Jack. “It’s been an adventure and the Army has been good to me.”

This is Jack’s third deployment to the Middle East, her first being to Saudi Arabia during Desert Storm where she was with a hospital unit working in the motor pool. In 2004 a deployment to Kuwait brought her back to the desert where she served again in the motor pool as the maintenance officer.

And now on her third tour, Jack is serving as the contracting officer

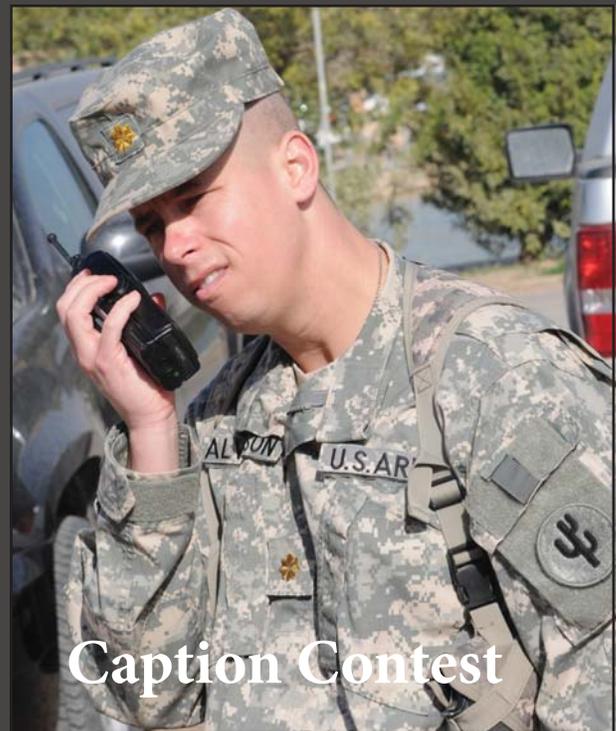
representative at the East Liberty Mayor’s Cell.

“I could not have been deployed with a better group of Soldiers,” said Jack.

As for the future, Jack said this deployment will be the last one. She plans to retire upon returning home where she has been a legal administrator for a law firm for eleven and a half years.

“I’m ready to go home and be a grandma,” Jack explained. “I look forward to taking the grand kids out camping or going on a canoe trip with my sisters.”

She’s always had a deep love for the outdoors. So when you run into Chief Warrant Officer Jack after this deployment, that’s probably where she’ll be – chasing her grand kids around the campsite or floating down a lazy river – still trying to get things done her own way.



**Caption Contest**

Maj. Brian Alverson, Camp Slayer Deputy Mayor, hard at work. What do you think about the conversation he’s having? Submit your best guess to the RING staff at [karl.johnson@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:karl.johnson@iraq.centcom.mil). The Soldier with the best caption will be recognized in the next issue of the RING.



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Task Force Twister Commander: Col. Arlan DeBlicke, NIPR: 485-2285  
 Task Force Twister PAO: 1st Lt. Christopher Averett, NIPR: 485-3016  
 Task Force Twister PA NCOIC: Staff Sgt. Karl Johnson, NIPR: 485-3016



**Top Left:** Thanks to Master Sgt. Chambers for reminding us how much we love low-brow word play. **Top Right:** Master Sgt. Sibounheuang puts the force of the entire alphabet behind this hit. **Bottom Right:** The C-RAM gun goes extra "hot" in the presence of cool jazz artist Keri Noble. **Bottom Left:** Chaplain Higgins' God Squad packs goody bags for the less fortunate. **Middle Left:** During a mass casualty exercise, with pad and pen in hand, Sgt. 1st Class Richards is an astonishingly effective protector of the force.



# Twister Pics



# The Fridge

A Task Force Community Bulletin



have something for the fridge? send it to karl.johnson@iraq.centcom.mil