



The Expeditionary Times

Proudly serving the finest Expeditionary service members throughout Iraq

Vol. 4 Issue 19

September 22, 2010

www.armyreserve.army.mil/103rdESC

Resilience



Former POW now helps Soldiers

Page 4

Cook-off



Teams wage tasty competition

Page 5

Live Music



Hammer of the Broads performs

Page 6



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Lukas McWhorter

Army firefighters with the 60th Ordnance Company, 110th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 224th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), prepare to fight a fire Sept. 1 at Contingency Operating Station Garry Owen, Iraq.

A night to remember for firefighters

STORY BY
CAPT. DAVID HANKINS
60TH ORDNANCE COMPANY

CONTINGENCY OPERATING STATION GARRY OWEN, Iraq—

Sept. 1 was a milestone for Soldiers throughout Iraq and marked the official transition from Operation Iraqi Freedom to Operation New Dawn.

For Soldiers with the 60th Ordnance Company, 110th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 224th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), stationed at the fire department at Contingency Operating Station Garry Owen, Iraq, the day was one that will be remembered for a long time.

The Crash Fire Rescue Team with the 60th Ord. Co., a small team detached from the company to run the first ever fire department at COS Garry Owen, promoted four of their own that day. They also took the opportunity to show off their skills as they responded to a fire.

“Any day you promote a Soldier to the rank of sergeant, is a good day,” said Cpt. David Hankins, commander, 60th Ord. Co., and a Bozeman, Mont., native. “Today we are promoting four new sergeants. Despite being in one of the most specialized jobs in the Army with a very competitive promotion rate, these sergeants have proved they have what it takes to excel.”

The ceremony began much like any other with the reading of the promotion certificate and pinning on new rank. Firefighters, however, have their own promotion traditions.

“Whenever a firefighter is promoted, they are

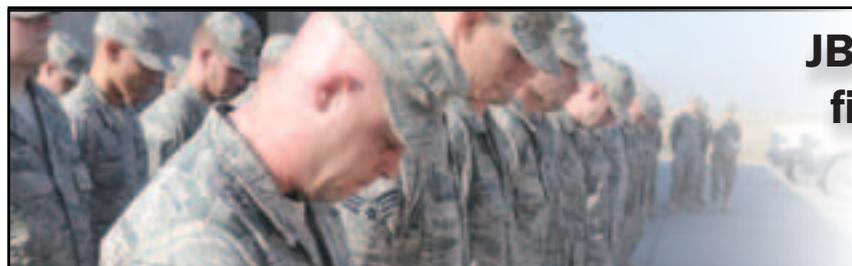
washed down with a fire hose,” said Staff Sgt. Brandon Harris, fire station chief with the 60th Ord. Co., and a Memphis, Tenn., native. “Since today’s promotion was [for] sergeants, they had to recite the NCO creed at the same time.”

Sgt. David Perez, a firefighter with the 60th Ord. Co., and a Methuen, Mass., native, said he had a hard time reciting the creed with all the water spraying in his face. Smiling, he added, “Every time I opened my mouth, it filled with water. I got through it though.”

After the ceremony, the team finished their day with a class on the promotion system, reviewing what the rest of the specialists on the team need to do to achieve the next rank. They thought their day was done, but they received a surprise later that evening.

“We were lying in bed when we heard the

FIREFIGHTERS cont. page 12



JBB remembers the fallen, and a former firefighter recounts his experience on 9/11

Page 8

Where do you read your Expeditionary Times?

Joint Base Balad :
318-483-4603

COB Adder:
318-833-1002

COB Taji:
318-834-1281

Al Asad Air Base:
318-440-4103

COB Speicher:
318-849-2501

**For distribution, contact
the 103rd ESC PAO at
Joint Base Balad, Iraq**

e-mail: escpao@iraq.centcom.mil

Self care is important, simple

CAPT. CHARLENE CHENEY
261ST MMB CHAPLAIN



Right before takeoff, flight attendants advise passengers, in the event of an emergency, to place their oxygen mask on before helping anyone else. They are not promoting selfish and narcissistic behavior. They are ensuring that you are putting yourself in the best position to take care of you, which in turn enables you to help and take care of your loved ones and those around you.

The technical term for this concept is "self care." It is a simple concept, but for some it is not simple to implement into their daily lives. The reason self care is the "word of the day" is because people who work as caregivers or in high-stress environments are usually not very good at practicing self care.

Deployed soldiers are at risk for neglecting to take the best care of themselves mentally, emotionally, and spiritually, because we are working in a high-stress environment. Every soldier is a leader/caregiver, and we are experiencing and having to adjust to a lot of transitions and changes that deviate from our normal way of life.

Stress, anxiety, lack of interest or energy, feelings of hopelessness, and burnout are some signs that you may be in need of better self care habits. If these sound like feelings that you may be experiencing, fret not; this article will offer some reminders on how to practice self care.

» Create a sense of sanctuary:

Sometimes peaceful moments happen in your life, other times you have to work hard and plan to make the peaceful moments appear. Some people spend small fortunes to create a sense of sanctuary in their lives, but you can create a sense of sanctuary for free!

Situate your CHU: Creating a sense of sanctuary can be as simple as moving some furniture. Situating the two clothes lockers in the center of your CHU as room dividers, enables you to have a sense of privacy and a place where you can go to be alone and have some "me time." Before doing this, it is advised that you discuss the furniture movement with your CHU-mate.

Meditate: Meditating can create a sense of sanctuary within yourself. Meditating can be as simple as finding a quiet place to clear your mind or plan your day, using prayer beads, chanting psalms or affirming thoughts to yourself, or having a conversation with your higher power.

Go to a sanctuary: If you are having a hard time creating a sense of sanctuary in your life, but need a peaceful place to clear your mind. Check with your local chaplain or chap-

lain's assistant to see the times that the chapel is open without services taking place. The chapel is a wonderful place to sit in silence and to communicate with yourself or your higher power.

» Laugh and have fun!

Recreation is a form of re-creation. Recreation rejuvenates the body, revives the soul, and reduces stress. Sometimes we have to make time in our lives to have fun and create laughter. The MWR and the USO offer a multitude of interesting and exciting things to do for fun. These are wonderful places to pick up a fascinating book, play a game, meet new people, and learn a hobby. If the MWR and USO are not your cup of tea, gather some friends together and start a sports team, book club, or card game.

» Talk to someone

Many times, the solution to a problem is as simple as sharing your problem with a trusted friend. Sometimes talking to somebody and sharing your thoughts is a great way to relieve stress and gain a new perspective or helpful insight. Allowing others that you trust to care for you is a form of self care. The chaplain is great and trusted to talk to when you want to ensure that your conversation will be kept confidential.

» Forgive and practice acceptance

Forgiving is a wonderful investment in yourself. It will cost you nothing, but will give you peace of mind. That is priceless! A wise person once shared that holding onto a grudge is like swallowing poison and hoping that the person you are angry with is harmed. The only person that hurts when you hold onto a grudge is you.

Remember as you forgive that it is a process that takes time. You might not be able to fully forgive instantly. Depending on the offense against you, that is perfectly healthy and normal. Take baby steps, if you must, to begin the process.

Also, make it a point to forgive yourself for mistakes that you have made. A lot of times, we are our own worst critics. We fail to forgive ourselves and hold ourselves back when others have moved past our mistake. Try to embrace your mistake as a learning opportunity. Practicing forgiveness as a form of self care enables you to move past hurts, onward toward healing, and onto becoming a happier you!

» Search the Internet for Tips on Practicing Self Care

If you did not see anything that resonated with you, do an Internet search on "self care" and "self care articles." The Internet offers a plethora of free and low-cost self care ideals. Perhaps you will find an idea that is more suitable to your desires, tastes, and needs.

Whatever you decide to do, take care of you! Happy self care practicing!

EXPEDITIONARY TIMES

103rd ESC Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Mark W. Corson

Expeditionary Times is authorized for publication by the 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary). The contents of the Expeditionary Times are unofficial and are not to be considered the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, including the Department of Defense or Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Expeditionary Times is a command information newspaper in accordance with Army Regulation 360-1 and reviewed by the ESC G2 for security purposes.

Expeditionary Times is published weekly by the Stars and Stripes central office, with a circulation of 3,500 papers.

The Public Affairs Office is located on New Jersey Avenue, Building 7508, DSN 318-433-2154. Expeditionary Times, HHC 103rd ESC, APO AE 09391. Web site at www.dvidshub.net.

103rd ESC PAO, Managing Editor
Maj. Angel R. Wallace
angela.wallace@iraq.centcom.mil

103rd ESC PA NCOIC
Sgt. 1st Class Raymond P. Calef
raymond.calef@iraq.centcom.mil

103rd ESC Operations NCO
Sgt 1st Class J.D. Phippen
gerald.phippen@iraq.centcom.mil

103rd ESC Layout and Design
SpC. Emily A. Walter
emily.walter@iraq.centcom.mil

103rd ESC Staff Writers
Sgt. Jessica Rohr
jessica.rohr@iraq.centcom.mil

SpC. Adrian Muehe
adrian.muehe@iraq.centcom.mil

Pvt. Zachary Zuber
zachary.zuber@iraq.centcom.mil

Contributing public affairs offices
3rd Sustainment Brigade
224th Sustainment Brigade
256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team
278th Armored Cavalry Regiment
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing

For online publication visit:
www.dvidshub.net
keyword: Expeditionary Times

Contact the Expeditionary Times staff at:
escpao@iraq.centcom.mil

103rd ESC G2, Security Manager
(318) 433-2155

Mission Statement: The Expeditionary Times Staff publishes a weekly newspaper with the primary mission of providing command information to all service members, partners, and Families of the 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) team and a secondary mission of providing a means for units on Joint Base Balad to disseminate command information to their audiences.

The Weekly Standard: Anonymous complaints

MAJ. ERIC VERHOEF
103RD ESC DEPUTY IG



"All that's necessary for the forces of evil to win in the world is for enough good men to do nothing."

-Edmund Burke

In recent weeks, our offices have received several anonymous complaints. While everyone is authorized to do so, it is not the most effective way to address an issue or concern. I can sympathize with those who fear reprisal for bringing an issue to the attention of the IG.

Fear can be debilitating, but also serves as a roadblock to conflict resolution.

Anonymous complaints are often too vague and leave us with more questions than answers. In order to address issues, the IG needs information, such as names of individuals involved, potential witnesses, applicable dates and times, and what the complainant wants to see happen with the situation.

Should you still wish to submit a complaint anonymously, please make sure you include as many details as possible. And remember that anonymous complaints also prevent us from letting you know what we have done to resolve the issue.

As mentioned in last week's publication, the IG has a duty to protect an individual's confidentiality to the maximum extent possible. While IGs will never promise confidentiality, we will always endeavor to maintain it.

All we ask is that, if possible, you give us a call or come by one of our offices to discuss

Inspector General Contacts

Joint Base Balad (103rd ESC):
DSN 433-2125

Lt. Col. Jeffrey Schneider (*Command IG*)
Maj. Erik Verhoef (*Deputy*)
Master Sgt. Arnett Cooper (*NCOIC*)

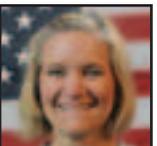
Adder/Tallil (224 SB):
DSN 433-2125

Speicher (103rd ESC):
VOIP 4332125

your concerns. Simply speaking with an IG does not commit you to filing a complaint. And you can trust that we will do our absolute best to protect your confidentiality while also working to address your concerns. All that being said, the IG office does take anonymous complaints very seriously.

Combat Stress: How to quit using tobacco for good

MAJ. LORIE L. FIKE
85TH COMBAT STRESS CONTROL



Has tobacco addiction taken control of you? Do you want to stop smoking cigarettes or stop chewing tobacco but are unsure how?

Overcoming any addiction is difficult.

The first step in overcoming your tobacco addiction is to determine why you smoke or chew. Ask yourself, "What physical, emotional or social benefits do I gain from tobacco?" Once you understand why you smoke or chew it will be easier to determine how and what you need to change in order to stop.

Tobacco cessation is stressful both physically and mentally. Many individuals will experience withdrawal symptoms such as craving, tension, irritability, lightheadedness and increased coughing. Plan ahead and problem solve how you will handle possible scenarios that could thwart your cessation efforts. Be prepared with replacement options

such as low calorie gum or candy when tobacco cravings hit you. Increase exercise and find other leisure activities to engage in that will keep your mind off tobacco.

Many individuals will have trigger situations that tempt them to smoke or chew. Determine what your trigger situations are and make a plan to target and avoid your triggers.

Now that you have decided that tobacco cessation is the right decision for you, you need to decide on a "Quit Date" and decide on a method. There are three primary methods you can try.

First, you can go cold turkey. You stop smoking or dipping altogether. Another method is tapering. Tapering involves reducing the amount of tobacco you use over about a one week time frame until you reduce the amount to zero cigarettes or chewing tobacco. Lastly, you can try postponing. Postponing involves delaying the time at which you start to smoke or chew each day. For instance, you postpone your first cigarette until 8 a.m. on Monday, then until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 12 p.m. on Wednesday, and continue until you have no more time left in the day to smoke. Once you have

successfully stopped smoking or chewing, live tobacco free. Do not be tempted to try just one, because one leads to two which leads to four which eventually leads to a pack a day.

In conjunction with the methods above, nicotine replacement, such as gum or patches, or prescription medications like Zyban, are also an option. Over-the-counter options are available at the PX. However, Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and civilian personnel may attend a smoking cessation class and attend an appointment with a prescribing provider to obtain nicotine replacement products or prescription tobacco cessation medications.

If you are interested in attending a class, the Combat Stress Control Clinic, located in the Joint Medical Clinic, offers the Smoking/Tobacco Cessation class every Saturday at 9:00 a.m. Seats are limited to six personnel per week so please call the CSC clinic at 483-3385 in advance to reserve your seat.

Additional resources on Smoking/Tobacco cessation are available at www.cdc.gov/tobacco, www.surgeongeneral.gov/tobacco/ or www.tobacco-cessation.org/

Mark your calendar! Upcoming events at JBB

THE 103RD ESC PRESENTS...



Lolapalooza

LIVE PERFORMANCES FROM THE FESTIVAL,
RECORDED JUST FOR YOU!

FEATURING:

THE LAY ZONERS
GREEN DAY
BLUES TRAVELERS
DEVO

SEPT. 23
7:00 PM
SUSTAINER THEATER

START TIME: 5:30 a.m. at Holt Stadium

**ARMY
TEN-MILER**

10/16/10

JOINT BASE BALAD

Registration is through the 103rd ESC Public Affairs Office on JBB from Sept. 25 - Oct. 14
ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST RECEIVE AND WEAR A RACE BIB FOR TRACKING PURPOSES
Questions, or looking to volunteer? E-mail us at escpao@iraq.centcom.mil

Team-building activity improves environment

STORY AND PHOTO BY
STAFF SGT. CHERLANDA MCKEAVER
15TH TRANSPORTATION COMPANY

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, Iraq— Soldiers with the 15th Transportation Company, 110th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 224th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), decided Aug. 28 to support Operation New Dawn by cleaning up the same staging lanes they depart from on every mission at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

Since taking on this team-building exercise, the unit decided that it will become a weekly event, officially called “Adopt a Ditch.” The Soldiers will be armed with gloves, reflective belts and trash bags to ensure that the lanes will continue to be clean when they roll out.

“Police call” has been a staple in the military for a long time. Like any other event or mission in which Soldiers are engaged, there needs to be active engagement in keeping areas clean and in proper order. Safety plays a large part in ensuring that the staging lanes are clear.

“I couldn’t be more proud of the intuitive thinking behind this project,” said Staff Sgt. George Warren, a platoon sergeant with the 15th Trans. Co., and a Hampton, Va., native.

“When trying to come up with a team-building exercise for the squad, the focus was not on something that would be chosen by the most popular vote, but rather something that would eventually show that teamwork is an important foundation to one’s overall well-being, both on and off the road,” said Staff Sgt. Cherlanda McKeaver, a squad leader with the 15th Trans Co.

“I am really enjoying the opportunity to be able to do something different,” said Pvt. Bryon McFarland, a heavy wheeled vehicle operator with the 15th Trans. Co., and a Jasper, Texas, native, said he enjoyed the opportunity to be able to do something different.



Soldiers with the 15th Transportation Company, 110th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 224th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), clean their mission staging lanes during a team-building exercise called “Adopt a Ditch,” Aug. 28 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

First Lt. Daniel Reep, executive officer of the 15th Trans. Co., and an Oxford, Miss., native, added that Soldiers will remain motivated for the exercise in the future.

“The squad’s reaction has been a pleasant surprise to the unit’s leadership,” said Reep. “The Soldiers have all taken a positive stand on the exercise. Although some of the Soldiers were skeptical at first, they now have a sense of pride and accomplishment.”

Former POW visit Taji, gives insight on resilience

STORY AND PHOTO BY
CAPT. EFREM GIBSON
1ST INFANTRY DIVISION

CAMP TAJI, Iraq— “Certainly, it’s a homecoming of sorts,” said Brig. Gen. Rhonda Cornum as she described her first visit back to Iraq 19 ½ years to the day she was released as a prisoner of war.

The catalyst for her return to Iraq was an invitation. Currently serving as Director of Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) for the Army, Cornum, a Dayton, Ohio native, was the guest speaker for the grand opening of the Taji Warrior Resiliency Campus Taji, approximately 15 miles north of Baghdad.

The center is operated by the Enhanced Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, and is the first of its kind in Iraq. Cornum was thankful for the brigade’s invitation, because it was an opportunity to speak to soldiers about resilience.

The CSF concept was not around in 1991, but Cornum demonstrated great resilience back then, surviving eight days in captivity by Iraqi forces. The goal of CSF is to improve a soldier’s resilience by focusing on five dimensions: physical, emotional, spiritual, social, and family. Cornum credits her spiritual strength for getting her through her time in captivity.

“I had great confidence in the Army and felt what we were doing [in Iraq] was right,” said Cornum. “I also believed that if I stayed alive long enough, the Army would come and get me.”

The general also felt being able to put it all in perspective was a key factor that helped her stay alive. Cornum’s experience as a prisoner of war has helped her realize there is a need for CSF. She is able to personalize the teachings of CSF and relate them to a



Brig. Gen. Rhonda Cornum, Director of Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) for the Army, enters the Taji Warrior Resiliency Campus. She was the guest speaker at the grand opening of the campus, the reason she returned to Iraq 19 ½ years after she was released from captivity as a POW.

real-life incident she has experienced.

“No matter how grave or mundane the situation is, I always try to take a disadvantage, and turn it into an advantage” she stated. “I live my life every day like that.”

Although she was glad to be in Iraq again, Cornum does not consider the trip to be

closure for her.

“It was an event; I don’t look for closures to events, they just end,” she said. Cornum added that she was happy she had come back to Iraq to demonstrate that a person can return to the scene of a bad experience and be ok. She said she does not even hold animosity

toward the men who held her captive.

Besides being a guest speaker, Cornum had other plans while she was in Iraq.

“See the country and all of the progress,” Cornum said. “The last time I was here, I was blindfolded in the back of a truck so I didn’t see much.”

Teams cook up mouth-watering competition

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. JESSICA ROHR
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— A mouth-watering aroma filled the air as the cook-off competition between Soldiers and Airmen finally kicked off.

The 332nd Expeditionary Force Support Squadron, 332nd Expeditionary Mission Support Group, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing, hosted the Iron Chef Grill Competition Sept. 12 behind Sami's Café at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Both teams had a culinary genius on board. Team Army, the "Cactus Chefs," was made up of food service specialists from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary). Spc Nate Dewey, an Indianola, Iowa, native, and Spc. John Blecker, a Des Moines, Iowa, native, were lead by Pfc. Jacob Paul, a Letts, Iowa, native, and an American Culinary Federation certified sous-chef. Team Air Force, the "Grill Masters," was lead by Staff Sgt. Frederick Carter, kitchen monitor with the 332nd EFSS, and a Tampa, Fla., native, who studied at the St. Augustine Culinary Arts School, and worked as a culinary specialist in the Navy for eight years. His partner was Master Sgt. John Ward, a contracting office representative with the 332nd EFSS, and a Grey, Ind., native.

"[The Cactus Chefs] entered the competition because it's not something we get to do on a regular basis," said Paul. "Being in the DFAC [dining facility] all day gets a little boring. This lets us come out here and do something different, have some fun and do what we do back home: make some good food."

Each group got three full slabs of ribs to create three different masterpieces. Each team prepped the night before, marinating the meat overnight. Once the clock started ticking, the teams were given two hours to prep, cook and plate their meals. Each team was judged on taste as well as presentation of each plate.

"For most people, if the food looks good, they are going to eat with their eyes," said Carter. "If it looks good, they are going to know it tastes good."



From left: Spc. John Blecker, an Indianola, Iowa, native, and Spc. Nate Dewey, a Des Moines, Iowa, native, manage the grill as Pfc. Jacob Paul, a Letts, Iowa, native, prepares mangoes during the Iron Chef Grill Competition Sept. 12 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. All three Soldiers are food service specialists with the 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Bradley Huber, food service technician with the 103rd ESC, and a Saint Paul, Minn., native, entertained the crowd with commentary during the competition, asking the chefs questions and giving play-by-play, along with the final score.

Col. Laura Wisch, chief of knowledge management with the 103rd ESC, and a Manassas, Va., native; Senior Airman Amber Eady, contracting office technical representative with the 332nd EFSS, and an Alexandria, Va., native; and Tech. Sgt. Alundra Gibbs, Morale Welfare and Recreation fitness core with the 332nd EFS, and a Tampa, Fla., all had to make the ultimate decision as they judged the competition.

"Being a judge was every woman's dream: Get catered to

and served by men," said Gibbs.

"It was fun to eat foods [prepared by] different people," expressed Eady. "One team was extremely spicy with every meal, where the other one had just enough where you felt it, but you weren't gasping for air because your lips were burning."

In the end, judges gave first place to the "Grill Masters" by one point. Overall, having a good variety of flavors, not just spicy ribs, helped them achieve the victory.

The competition was followed by the Cincinnati Bengals vs. the New England Patriots football game displayed on the big screen, along with free food provided by Popeye's, giving the evening a well rounded ending.

103rd Soldiers lead the way in Air Force Half Marathon

STORY BY
PVT. ZACHARY ZUBER
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— Two Soldiers with the 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) showed off their speed and endurance on Sept. 13 during the Air Force Half Marathon along the streets of Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Lt. Col. Jess McNeely, assistant chief of staff G7 with the 103rd ESC, and a Wichita, Kan., native, and Spc. Emily Walter, public affairs print specialist with the 103rd ESC, and a West Des Moines, Iowa, native, won their respective divisions of the race that was organized by the 332nd Expeditionary Force Support Squadron, 332nd Expeditionary Mission Support Group, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing.

"I've been doing community track meets since third grade, and I've been running for as long as I can remember," said Walter, who finished in 1:26. "It's something that I love to do, and the feeling of accomplishment is something that is unlike any other feeling...."

Both runners say they enjoy the solitude that comes with distance running and the



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Marianne Lane

From left: Lt. Col. Jess McNeely, assistant chief of staff for G7 with the 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Wichita, Kan., native, and Spc. Emily Walter, public affairs specialist with the 103rd ESC, and a West Des Moines, Iowa, native, receive their plaques for winning the Air Force Half Marathon Sept. 13 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

time that it allows for personal reflection.

"I enjoy running long distances. The best part for me is having time to think," said McNeely, who completed the race in 1:21. "There is a 100-mile race in Kansas called



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Marianne Lane

the Heartland 100 that I have run for the past 4 years.... the most recent I ran in 17 hours and 2 minutes."

The 13.1 mile race is a stepping stone for Walter, who said she wants to eventually

compete in ultra-marathons, similar to what McNeely has run. For now, half marathons like this one are a good starting point, said Walter.

"I think in a of couple years I will start seriously training for a full marathon, but I think I'm still a little young and it takes a lot of time and dedication," said Walter.

"Ultra marathons take place in all these different places in the world and I would like to make that a reason to travel and run in all the different places and different environments," she added.

Running marathons requires more than just shoes and daily jogging. Preparation for long distance runs requires changes to every part of daily life, including specific diets, schedules and training plans, said McNeely.

More than 500 competitors took part in either the half marathon or the 10K race, which began at 4:30 a.m. to allow plenty of time for completion. It was held in conjunction with the Air Force Marathon, which is run on the same day in the United States.

"The enthusiasm, the number of people, and the fact that nobody got hurt was amazing to me," said Staff Sgt. Jenny Moore, the fitness and sports noncommissioned officer-in-charge with the 332nd EFSS, and a Brooklyn, N.Y., native, who was in charge of organizing the run. "There will be more of these runs in the future."



Dyna Shirasaki, lead singer for the all-female Led Zeppelin tribute band, Hammer of the Broads, inspires the audience as Tina Wood plays lead guitar during their performance Sept. 11 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

Hammer of the Broads rocks COB Adder

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SPC. GLEN BAKER
224TH SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, Iraq—

The all-female Led Zeppelin tribute band, Hammer of the Broads, rocked the Adder Commons stage near Memorial Hall during a concert held Sept. 11 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

Hammer of the Broads is made up of lead singer Dyna Shirasaki, lead guitarist Tina Wood, bassist Andrea Zermeno, and drummer Nikki Lane Taylor. All four band members are Los Angeles natives (or as Zermeno says, “La-la land!”).

The band described what performing their music for the Soldiers meant to them.

“It’s a little thing that we can do and give back and say thanks for everything that [the Soldiers] do,” said Shirasaki. “After doing a number of these tours, you realize how difficult it is and how much they have to sacrifice in order to do what they do, and they do it for the love of their country. We really want to show our appreciation, so we come out and do these tours and try to break up the monotony of their deployment. It really means a lot to us, what we do.”

Sgt. Steven Spence, an operations noncommissioned officer-in-charge with the

3rd Battalion, 29th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Advise and Assist Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, and a Wilmington, N.C. native, said that he enjoyed Hammer of the Broads’ performance.

“I do Community Relations Team projects and Provincial Reconstruction Team missions,” said Spence. “I’ve been a Led Zeppelin fan since I was in high school.” He said that the first song the band performed, “Good Times, Bad Times,” was his favorite.

Pfc. Zechariah Scott, a Soldier with the 3rd Bn., 29th Fld. Art. Regt., and a Des Moines, Iowa native, said that it meant a lot to him that the band traveled a long distance to perform.

“It’s really great when people show their appreciation for the troops, especially flying all the way here,” said Scott. “A 20-hour flight – it’s just amazing to play for us in 120-degree weather. I thought the music was great. I thought they represented Zeppelin really well.”

Zermeno described how the band formed. “I was in a Led Zeppelin tribute band with the drummer, Nikki,” said Zermeno. “They needed a bass player, so I came in place of the old one. And that band broke up. Then Nikki and I brought in these two, Dyna and Tina, who I’d been playing with for many years. That’s how it formed.”

The band members explained why they chose to play in a Led Zeppelin cover band instead of another cover band.

“I never thought of doing it myself,

although I’ve been a huge Led Zeppelin fan forever,” said Taylor. “These girls found me on MySpace and started pestering me until I finally got together with them and started playing and I’m like, ‘Ooh, this is fun.’ It was the previous girls who started the Led Zeppelin project and needed a drummer and they found me. I started playing the music and then we ended up replacing our bass player with Andrea. It was kind of already formed, but if it was my choice now to say, ‘Hey, I’d be in a tribute band,’ it would definitely be Led Zeppelin if I had to pick one.”

The band members gave advice to those who are thinking about playing in a band or performing onstage.

“Practice, practice, practice,” said Taylor. “Be good at your part. Otherwise your band won’t be able to be great. You’re only as good as your weakest link.”

Shirasaki also provided insight to aspiring musicians: “Play from the heart,” she said. “It’s all about feel.”

Wood said being relaxed is important, as well. “No matter how it’s going up there, you want to make it look like you’re having a good time, even if you’re having the worst night of your life,” she said. “The audience feeds off your vibe. If you look like you’re having a bad time, they’re having a bad time. You’re acting as well as performing.”

Shirasaki had a final message for Soldiers: “We love our troops. Stay safe. Hurry up and get the job done and come home soon.”



Tina Wood plays lead guitar in the all-female Led Zeppelin tribute band, Hammer of the Broads, during their performance for service members on Sept. 11 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq. The concert was one of the several tours of this kind that the band has done.

Service members race, remember Sept. 11, 2001

STORY AND PHOTO BY
1ST LT. NATHAN LAVY
224TH SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, Iraq—



Hundreds of service members gathered for a 10K race in the early morning Sept. 11 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq, in the spirit of competition to honor the memory of those lost during the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

“We gather today to honor the lives of those killed in the attack nine years ago,” said Brig. Gen. Randal Dragon, the deputy commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division and senior mission commander on COB Adder. “This is our way to honor them. Take a moment to reflect on your service and everything you’ve done in the service of our nation.”

Sgt. Gregory Jackson, a psychological operations noncommissioned officer with the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, and a St. Louis, Mo., native, was the fastest male who completed the race, in just under 40 minutes.

“When I learned of a half marathon that I am going to run when I go on R&R [rest and recuperation leave] soon, I adjusted my training for it,” said Jackson. “The 9/11 10K acted not only as a great training run, but also as a great way to remember those fallen on that tragic day nine years ago.”

To Jackson, winning the race was special and different from any of his others.

“I am a sponsored runner back home and I run in quite a few races every year,” he said. “However, to race on 9/11 is an event where I dig a little deeper and push a little harder.

I know neither I, nor anyone else, can run fast enough or push hard enough to erase the events of that day. But at least once a year we can show in our own way the motivation and determination that has grown from the rubble of the World Trade Center.”

That day, Jackson also re-enlisted for an additional six years in the Army.

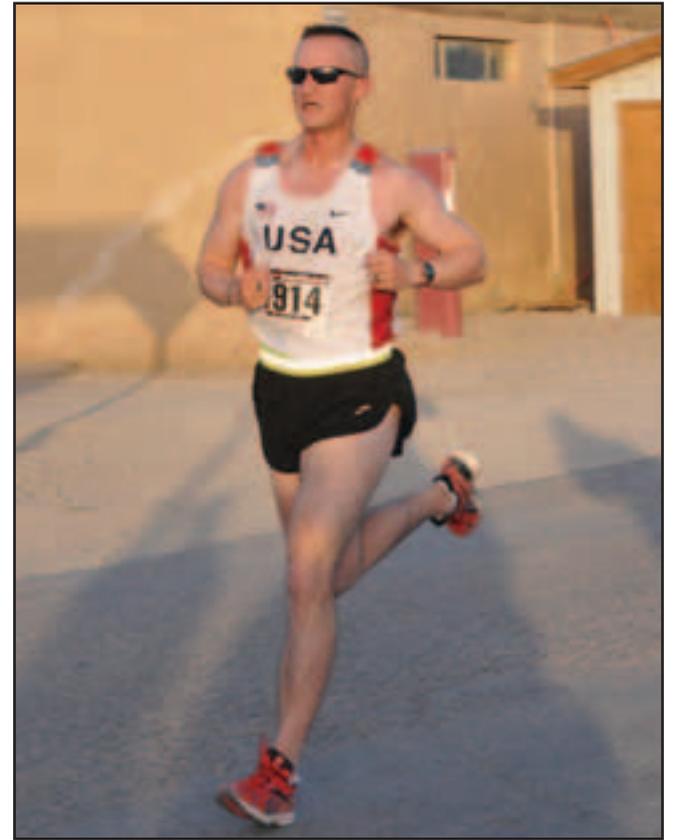
Sgt. Janelle Drennan, an intelligence analyst with the 201st Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, from Fort Lewis, Wash., was the fastest female, finishing just seconds behind Jackson.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Sandy Andrade, a transportation movement request officer-in-charge with the 224th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Sacramento, Calif. native, was the first place female in the 36 to 45-year-old age group, finishing in just over 51 minutes.

“I’m here in Iraq for my second tour because of what happened that day,” said Andrade. “I will always remember where I was and what I was doing 11 September 2001.”

The event was hosted by the Soldiers with the 28th Combat Support Hospital, 807th Medical Command (Deployment Support), from Fort Bragg, N.C. In addition to recognizing the individuals who placed in the top three in their respective age groups with door prizes and trophies, there was a raffle of various signed sports equipment and memorabilia, free goodie bags, T-shirts, and hats.

“I’ve participated in several other runs here on COB Adder, and this run was very nicely organized,” said Andrade. “They had ice cold water before the run even started. They had lots of door prizes. Awesome job by the 28th Combat Support Hospital.”



Sgt. Gregory Jackson, a psychological operations non-commissioned officer with the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, and a St. Louis, Mo., native, sprints, finishing 1st place at the 9/11 Memorial 10K race Sept. 11 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

Comedians bring humor, entertainment to JBB

STORY AND PHOTO BY
PVT. ZACHARY ZUBER
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq—



If the saying is true that laughter is the best medicine, then the Lone Wolf Comedy Tour brought plenty of doses to service members Sept. 16 at the east Morale, Welfare and

Recreation Center at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Bill Dykes, Scott White and Derek Vana generated laughs from the JBB residents, who saw the last show of the tour. The comics have enjoyed the opportunity to provide a break from the daily grind during their trip.

“This was our last stop on the tour, and we have gotten to see a lot of places that don’t normally get visits,” said Derek Vana, a Bucks County, Penn., native. “The troops deserve a chance to relax and it has been great to be able to give that to them.”

The audience at JBB was laughing through the entire two-hour performance. For some it was just a welcome change of pace from working their normal, daily duties.

“It was an interesting show and it was fun,” Staff Sgt. Gregory Ryan, a chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear noncommissioned officer with the 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Goodhue, Minn., native. “It gets like ‘Groundhog Day’ around here, and this breaks it up a bit and lets you do something different.”

The comics have felt a lot of value from being able to provide entertainment to U.S. forces throughout Iraq, and have had a great



Derek Vana, a comedian from the Lone Wolf Comedy Tour, and a Bucks County, Penn., native, performs for service members Sept. 16 at the east Morale, Welfare and Recreation center at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Vana and two other comedians, Bill Dykes and Scott White, stopped at JBB last, prior to heading back home.

time during this tour, said Vana.

“Traveling with the same two guys the whole time has been different and our relationship has been great through this,” said Vana. “Usually, this is the point of a tour

where you hate the people you’re working with.”

Entertaining troops has been a humbling experience, and one that has hopefully been just as valuable to his audience, said Vana.

“This has been my goal since I started doing stand up in 2001, and it’s great to do,” said Vana. “If I got home next week and they asked me to come back again a month later, I would come back in a heartbeat.”

REMEMBERING

9/11,

STORY BY
SGT. JESSICA ROHR, SPC. ADRIAN MUEHE,
AND PVT. ZACHARY ZUBER
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— September 11, 2001, will always be a day of prayer and remembrance for the heroes and civilians that were killed in attacks at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and on Flight 93.



Residents of Joint Base Balad, Iraq, attended several events throughout the day in remembrance of those who lost and/or gave their lives on that unforgettable day.

The events kicked off early in the morning with a 5K walk/run at Holt Stadium, organized by the JBB Force Support Squadron. The first 200 runners and 25 walkers that crossed the finish line received commemorative T-shirts.

“Being that I am from Brooklyn, New York...this run in remembrance of 9/11 means a lot,” said Capt. Richard Smith, Logistics Civil Augmentation Program officer, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Brooklyn, N.Y., native. “I knew a lot of people that were in Manhattan the day it happened, and a lot of my friends and childhood classmates helped out at ground zero, while I was stationed in Germany.

“There are different ways for people to remember...As Soldiers, Airmen, Marines, and [Seamen], being overseas, this is our way to mourn the past and celebrate the things we have accomplished from then to now,” added Smith.

Shortly after the run, service members and civilians gathered at the fire station for a ceremony to remember the rescue workers who were killed while responding to the attacks.

“Of the 3,212 people who died in the attacks, 343 firefighters and 60 port authority and New York City police offi-

cers were lost,” said Senior Airman Mathew Naquin, the narrator for the event, a firefighter with the 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, 332nd Expeditionary Mission Support Group, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing, and a Houma, La., native. “These men and women laid down their lives while attempting to save the lives of others.”

During the ceremony, Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen paused for a moment of silence, while a bell was rung to traditionally honor those who died while serving that day. After the moment of silence, the flag was lowered to half staff where it remained for the day.

“It is my fellow brothers that have fallen,” said Naquin. “It’s just a way to pay respect to all our fallen heroes and our future heroes. It’s something that I believe in, that I’m passionate about, and it’s the least I can do to honor my fellow firefighters.”

At noon, members of the 103rd ESC gathered in the Sgt. Audie Murphy Room at the Oasis dining facility for a prayer luncheon. The luncheon began with the national anthem sung by members of the JBB Community Chorus. Prayers were offered for the fallen and those left to remember them. Brig. Gen. Mark Corson, commanding general of the 103rd ESC, and a Maryville, Mo., native, spoke to those who gathered about the importance of the day.

“It is appropriate that we take this time on 11 September of every year to remember all those who suffered so grievously on that day,” said Corson during his speech. “We are not finished, and thus I leave you with the thought that we must continue to sacrifice, and as they said in Vietnam, ‘Charlie Mike’: Continue the Mission.”

Service members and volunteers gathered in the afternoon at the United Service Organizations building to pay tribute to the heroes that serve back home. A memorial flag was signed and will be sent back to the states to let them know they are not forgotten.

“As we stand here and remember the fallen of 9/11, we also continue on with our current mission here in Iraq,” said Col. Christopher Craige, vice commander of the 332nd AEW, and a Falls Church, Va., native, during his speech at the USO. “It is a mission that, in some ways, was borne out of the 9/11 tragedies, but a mission also that allows for hope in the future – a hope for a better Iraq, and stability in a challenging environment.

“Let us never forget the sacrifice and honor of those here in Iraq, and let’s never forget the sacrifice and honor of those on 9/11.”



‘It is appropriate that we take this time to remember those who suffered so grievously on that day.’

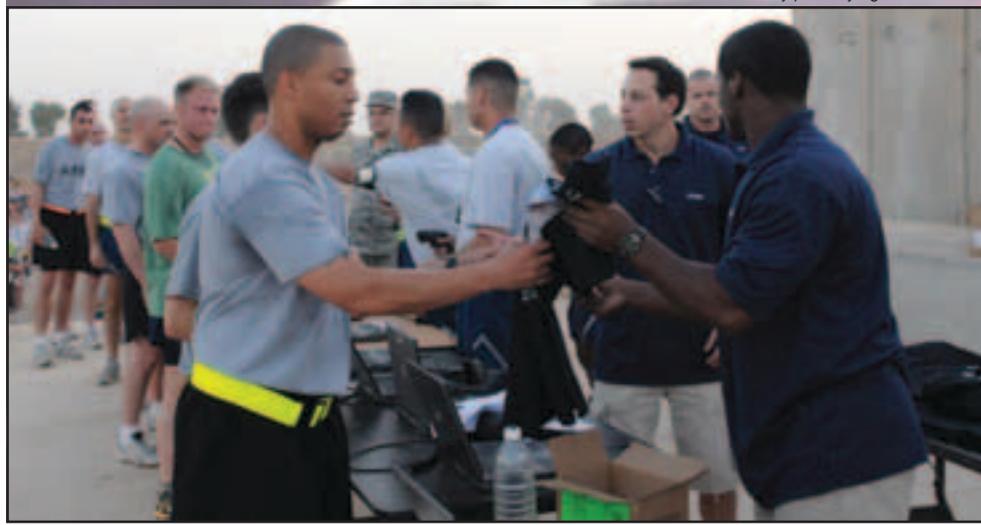
-Brig. Gen. Mark Corson

U.S. Army photo by Spc. Adrian Muehe

Airmen bow their heads in front of the east Joint Base Balad, Iraq, fire station in a moment of silence on Sept. 11 during a ceremony honoring rescue workers who perished during the attacks of 9/11.

Capt. Richard Smith, Logistics Civil Augmentation Program officer with the 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Brooklyn, N.Y., native, receives his commemorative T-shirt after completing the 9/11 Remembrance 5k run/walk Sept. 11 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jessica Rohr



LIVING WITH THE MEMORIES

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. GAELLEN LOWERS
3RD SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— Looking up, John Castillo could feel the chunks of concrete falling all around him. He sprinted forward and dove underneath a fire truck just before the tower collapsed, encasing the truck and sealing him in a tomb of rubble for two and a half days.



“Everything was going in slow motion,” he said. “I was scared to death.”

Spc. John Castillo, arms room clerk with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), survived the worst terrorist attack ever to happen on United States soil.

He was an officer in the 13th Precinct of the New York City Police Department during the Sept. 11 attacks. He was working the corner of 19th Street and 3rd Avenue when he and his partner noticed a plane that was flying low.

“So she’s saying, ‘Look at the plane,’” said Castillo. “And I say, ‘Eh, it’s probably going to LaGuardia.’”

The next thing they knew, the plane had hit the first tower of the World Trade Center.

“I thought it was an accident, truthfully,” Castillo continued. “A bad accident, but I never thought it was what it was supposed to be, war or a terrorist attack.”

Castillo said it seemed to take seconds to run to the site of the World Trade Center, their adrenaline pumping through them so hard that time seemed to stand still.

Almost immediately, Castillo, the New York City Fire Department and other NYPD officers moved floor by floor, evacuating the building, rescuing hundreds before receiving the call on their radios to evacuate themselves.

“When I was in the building, I heard the loud bang, but I didn’t know it was a second plane that hit,” he said. “I only knew because as we were running out, one of the firefighters had said that a second plane had hit the building.”

The towers had already begun to crumble once they reached the lobby. Castillo was one of the few who made it out alive, but not before being trapped beneath hundreds of square feet of rubble, weighing down the fire truck that saved his life. He suffered a fractured skull and ribs, as well as a broken arm and leg.

“I was scared to death, I have to admit,” he continued. “I had a lot of dreams and went in and out of consciousness. I said to myself that this is going to be a bad way to die.”

Castillo said he thought of his son Carlito, who was one year old at the time, and his daughter Israil Kare, who was two. He thought he would never see them again. He thought of his mother and the rest of his family and friends, but mainly, Castillo thought about water.

“All I could really think about is how thirsty I was,” he said. “I thought I was going to die of thirst. I had a dream. I had a dream of me in the park drinking water out of a water fountain. What it was, in reality, was a German shepherd licking my mouth. It was the greatest feeling I have ever felt, getting that moisture in my mouth.”

Rescue workers, volunteers and emergency responders

‘I was living my life asleep. But on that day, I woke up.’

—Spc. John Castillo



Spc. John Castillo, arms room clerk with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), sits in the STB arms room at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Castillo survived the 9/11 attacks after being trapped underneath a fire truck for over two days.

worked around the clock to save as many as they could, but in the end, could only save a fraction of the people from the site.

“I lost all of my people,” said Castillo. “I can think of more than 200 that I can personally name that I knew. We lost a lot of people.”

There were a total of 2,996 deaths, according to the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. A total of 411 emergency workers who responded to the scene died as they attempted to rescue people and fight fires. The FDNY lost 341 firefighters and two paramedics. The NYPD and Port Authority lost more than 60 officers.

After being rescued, Castillo underwent six months of intense physical therapy and retired from the police force with a full pension, but the nightmares continued.

“The beginning was bad; I had dreams,” he said. “There was a lot of hatred. I was angry.”

Those events eventually led to him wanting to join the military.

“I called a recruiter just to see how things would be, just to talk,” he recounted. “I remember his name was Sgt. Castillo, same last name as me. I think that’s what helped make up my mind, like an omen or something.”

So on March 20, 2008, John Castillo became 39-year-old Pvt. John Castillo.

“I wanted to finish [the war],” he said. “I felt like I was there for its start, so I needed to see the end.”

After Advanced Individual Training at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., he reported to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd STB, 3rd Sust. Bde., at Fort Stewart, Ga., for his first duty station. He was later sent to armorer school for two weeks, where he learned the ins and outs of his company’s armory and all the weapons located there. He started out

as the company’s assistant armorer, and eventually became the primary armorer once the unit deployed to Joint Base Balad, Iraq, in April of 2010.

Now as the company’s only armorer, he is the lone hand receipt holder for more than \$1 million worth of weaponry, ammunition, night scopes and other various pieces of equipment, said 1st Sgt. Paul R. Robinson, first sergeant for HHC, 3rd STB, and a Bennettsville, S.C., native.

Being an over-40-year-old specialist never phases Castillo. He said it’s just one of those things you get used to. “It’s funny, I guess,” he said jokingly. “I’m the old man.”

His fellow Soldiers respect him and his knowledge of the arms room, said Spc. Florence Whitehead, supply clerk for HHC, 3rd STB, and a Fayetteville, N.C., native.

“Castillo knows the arms room really well and wants you to know as much as he knows,” said Whitehead. “He is very helpful and a great teacher.”

Robinson said that he is an extraordinary Soldier and has the full trust and confidence of the entire brigade.

“We couldn’t ask for anyone else better,” said Robinson. “There’s only one percent of Americans who are serving right now. I think it is the ultimate sacrifice and shows the true character of an individual.”

For many, the events of Sept. 11 are a dream, the lasting memory of a tragedy long ago, but for Spc. John Castillo, those events will replay forever in his mind. Those events directly shaped the course of his life and will always remind him of the day that he stopped taking life for granted and really started living.

“It’s like waking up from a dream,” he said. “It was like a wave of relief. It was like a pain that you always had and it stopped hurting. I was living my life asleep, but on that day I woke up.”

Soldiers, firemen raise flags, honor fallen comrades



STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. TRESA L. ALLEMANG
199TH GARRISON COMMAND

CAMP VICTORY, Iraq— Each U.S. flag, raised one at a time, flew for nine minutes, 11 seconds on Sept. 11, at the Baghdad, Iraq, fire station. Both deployed Soldiers and firemen paused from their daily routine to honor the fallen on the nine-year anniversary of the terrorist attack that devastated America.

The fire department located on Camp Stryker of the Victory Base Complex lowered their flag and joined U.S. troops in flying their flag in memory of those who made the ultimate sacrifice on and after Sept. 11, 2001.

Staff Sgt. Jarret Mouton and Sgt. 1st Class Kelly McFarlain, both from Lafayette, La., and both from Louisiana's 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 224th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), along with the firemen, carefully raised, lowered and folded each flag after the allotted time.

"Taking the time to honor those who have fallen reminded me what their lives stood for," said Mouton. "Their actions showed that they held true to the conviction that we share... that we will defend our friends, family and country at all costs from our enemies."

The firemen and Soldiers, like so many others on the anniversary of the terrorist attack, reminisced the day that would forever weigh heavy on the hearts and minds of the American people.

"It was humbling to witness the footage of the sacrifices made that day by our country's protectors: policemen and firemen, as well as the civilians and military who were involved," said Mouton. "Their actions proved that we still have a great number of heroes and true-hearted people who strive to make America what it has always been, and should always be: the land of the free and the home of the brave."

Ricky W. Boykin, a fireman at Camp Stryker, stressed

that, although 9/11 was indeed tragic, it is important to keep focus on the lives saved by those who gave their own to do so.

"They made the ultimate sacrifice," said Boykin, who was the fire chief of the Summerfield Fire District Inc., in North Carolina at the time of the attacks. "Those 3,300 people saved over 45,000 people that morning, all within three hours. That is an accomplishment that is hard to achieve in a lifetime."

McFarlain, who was also a fireman on 9/11, in Broussard, La., and now serves as a sheriff for the mayor's cell on Camp Stryker, wears a bracelet on his right wrist engraved with the name of a close friend and fallen comrade, Staff Sgt. Robert Chiomento, who volunteered to deploy to Afghanistan in 2006.

"On days like today, he is one of the ones I think of more heavily," said McFarlain. "The bracelet serves as a reminder of his sacrifice, and also serves as my encouragement. I haven't taken it off since 2006."

He said he and Chiomento worked together at the Noncommissioned Officers Academy in Ball, La., when Chiomento said he just didn't feel fulfilled anymore.

"He stepped out of his comfort zone to join his comrades on the battlefield," added McFarlain. "Though he lost his life, his bravery inspired me to step out of my comfort zone and do the same."

Boykin said that in his 34 years of service, he has presided over many funerals of the fallen. This makes it difficult to explain why he and his brothers advance toward danger when others retreat, but he summed it up with the word "preservation."

"We can't forget that we are still reaping the benefits of those who made the ultimate sacrifice many years ago," said the Streamwood, Ill., resident, as he spoke of previous wars. "Just as our future generations will reap the benefits of those who sacrifice today. One must have to have a great deal of respect for life to do a job like this. Our fallen brothers gave it all on that day, and New York showed us why they were the best...they gave the ultimate sacrifice to preserve the lives of others."

Sgt. 1st Class Kelly McFarlain and Staff Sgt. Jarret Mouton, both Louisiana Guardsmen and Lafayette, La., natives, along with firemen at Camp Stryker, Iraq, carefully fold an American flag after it was flown for nine minutes, 11 seconds on Sept. 11, the 9-year anniversary of the infamous terrorist attack.

Retention brief reminds Soldiers of career options

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. GAELN LOWERS
3RD SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— The 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), held a retention briefing Sept. 9 for the Soldiers at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, to help inform them of options available in their military career.

"The purpose of the brief was to put out current retention policies, procedures, the fiscal year 2011 reenlistment window, explain bonuses, options, the BEAR Program, explain transferring or enlisting into the Army National Guard or United States Army Reserve, and answer any questions the Soldiers had," said Master Sgt. Michael Harris, noncommissioned officer-in-charge of retention for the 3rd Sust. Bde., and Richmond Hill, Ga., native.

Attendees were informed about the options available to them if they decide to continue their Army careers.

"It is important to inform the Soldiers of the opportunities the Army and Reserve components have to offer, so they can make an informed decision to stay in the Army, transfer or enlist in the reserve component, or [leave the Army]," said Harris.

Sgt. Brandi Brooks, strength management

NCO with the 3rd Sust. Bde., and a Harrisburg, Pa., native, said she learned quite a bit about options that are available.

"I really learned the specifics about the various retention programs that the Army has to offer," she said.

According to the brief, the Army must keep 560,000 Soldiers active at any one time, which is called "in strength." Army retention helps meet that goal by retaining current Soldiers while recruiters help by replacing retiring and separating Soldiers with new recruits.

When the Army's "in strength" exceeds what is allotted, retention will often cut certain options, which leaves Soldiers with less choices and bonuses when it comes time for them to re-enlist.

One option that Soldiers rarely hear about is the ability that they have to cash-in up to 60 leave days during their career, said Harris.

With the amount of time Soldiers spend deployed these days, many Soldiers have accumulated an abundance of leave days. Soldiers can turn in these days for a check, but only up to 60 days in one's entire career.

Soldiers who attended the brief left more informed and better prepared to make decisions regarding retention and their Army careers.

After talking to Soldiers after the brief, Harris said he believes they received a lot of good information that will help them to plan their futures.



Master Sgt. Michael Harris, noncommissioned officer-in-charge of retention with the 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Richmond Hill, Ga., native, talked to Soldiers at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, during the 3rd Sust. Bde.'s retention brief Sept 9, and reminded them to speak to their career counselors about continuing their Army careers.

"I believe the Soldiers took away that this information will enable them to make the best possible decision on their Army career," said Harris.

Combat patch represents service deployed overseas

STORY AND PHOTO BY
SGT. GAELN LOWERS
3RD SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq— More than 125 Saber Soldiers were awarded their shoulder sleeve insignia-former wartime service, during a ceremony held Aug. 9 at the headquarters of the 289th Quartermaster Company, 13th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

The origins of the SSI-FWTS date back to World War II. Since 1945, the intent behind the wear of the SSI-FWTS, known as the "combat patch," was to recognize Soldiers' participation in combat operations.

"We had a lot of people volunteer to come over with us, and a lot of them are first-time deployers, so this is a big event for them," said Capt. Anjeanette Lawson, commander

of the 289th QM Co., and a Charleston, S.C., native.

The company's primary mission is to run and maintain the JBB amnesty yard, where units can bring leftover equipment, spare parts and other gear to redistribute, reintegrate or destroy to help reduce the amount of equipment in northern and central Iraq.

They are also in charge of the fuel farm, the container repair yard, the central issue facility at Victory Base Complex, and the Central Distribution Center, to name a few, Lawson said.

"Our main mission over here is taking care of Soldiers," said Lawson. "We want to make sure to take everyone home that we brought out here."

First Sgt. Robert Rivas, first sergeant for the 289th QM Co., and a Belle Glade, Fla., native, said the ceremony was significant for first-time deployers.

"This is a one-time event," he said. "It's important to them and their families. We made sure to record it because it won't happen for them again."



Capt. Anjeanette Lawson, commander of the 289th Quartermaster Company, 13th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Charleston, S.C., native, places a combat patch on 1st Lt. Samuel Malone, executive officer of the 289th QM Co., and an Omaha, Neb., native, during their combat patch ceremony held Aug. 9 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Ceremony recognizes service, provides lasting memory



Command Sgt. Maj. Patrick Thompson, senior noncommissioned officer with the 394th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Lincoln, Neb., native, gives a combat patch to 1st Sgt. David E. Bride, first sergeant with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 394th CSSB, and a Sloan, Iowa, native, at a ceremony held Aug. 27 at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq.

STORY AND PHOTO BY
STAFF SGT. CONSTANCE OBERG
394TH COMBAT SUSTAINMENT SUPPORT BATTALION

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq— Soldiers with the 394th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), received their combat patch during a ceremony held Aug. 27 at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq.

Approximately 75 Soldiers were awarded the combat patch, which is given to Soldiers serving in a combat zone for more than 30 days.

"This is my first deployment," said Pfc. Eric Douglas, an intelligence analyst with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 394th CSSB, and an Omaha, Neb., native. "I am proud to finally wear a combat patch on my right shoulder."

Douglas's sentiment was echoed by Sgt. 1st Class William Anderson, support operations noncommissioned officer-in-charge with Headquarters and HHC, 394th CSSB, and a Dodge, Neb., native.

"It's a good thing for Soldiers to be recognized for serving their country," said Anderson. "It shows we have served like our grandfathers before us. It puts you on a different level. I feel people back home look at you differently."

Capt. Roy Stiff, commander of HHC, 394th CSSB, and a Greenville, Miss. native, said Soldiers will always remember the combat patch ceremony.

"The patch ceremony was a successful benchmark," said Stiff. "It will be something that they will always be able to reflect on in years to come."

Supply section distributes equipment, ensures smooth transition

STORY BY
SGT. JORGE ANAYA
40TH QUARTERMASTER COMPANY

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, Iraq— Commanders in every unit can agree that a strong supply section makes a unit's transition in and out of theater an easier process.

The supply section with the 40th Quartermaster Company, 110th Combat Service Support Battalion, 224th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), demonstrated that, despite having a limited number of personnel, they still got the job done throughout their deployment at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

The unit's supply section deals directly with accountability by ensuring that all paperwork is prepared and equipment is laid out. This allows the company commander to conduct inventories before signing and accepting the transfer of costly items into the unit's hand receipts.

"Our job is to ensure every piece of equipment is accounted for," said Staff Sgt. Laurie Aaron, a supply sergeant with the 40th QM Co., and a Detroit, Mich., native. "We double-check everything, because if we miss something, that means that someone will have to pay for it. Government prices are pretty high when it comes to equipment."

"By performing my job correctly, it alleviates the commander of additional stress and ensures that we are looking out for the Soldiers."

Aaron also said that carefully observing inventory ensures that units are receiving

mission-capable equipment.

"In the supply section, we also turn in unserviceable equipment and clear it from the Soldiers from any further responsibilities," said Spc. Gloria Adams, a supply clerk with the 40th QM Co., and a San Diego, Calif., native.

"There are still so many areas in which we support the company, such as submitting work orders for anything that is broken in the living areas and at work," added Adams. "With August being very hot, I can see how difficult it would be to work inside a building without a working air conditioner."

Adams said that her main area of duty deals with the Army Direct Order program, which provides Soldiers with replacement gear in order to keep their uniforms serviceable while deployed.

"Besides equipment, we also manage ammunition," said Pfc. Kyle Calkins, a

supply clerk with the 40th QM Co., and a Yuba City, Calif., native. "We make sure ammo is distributed among Soldiers. All the things that the supply section provides to the company require an account, which is why all the steps have to be taken beforehand to ensure we are able to support and provide."

Calkins said that he believes that one of the hardest parts about supply is conducting research because there are so many stock numbers that resemble different types of parts. Conducting proper research assists in cutting order time to a fraction.

The 40th QM Co. supply section does more than its share to provide unit support. Supply section Soldiers have been working nonstop, preparing for the future redeployment of the 40th QM Co., and ensuring a smooth transition for the unit when they leave COB Adder and make their way back home.



Tips on finding the video camera right for you

PVT. ZACHARY ZUBER
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



This week in the tech corner, I will be providing as much advice as I can offer on handheld video cameras. For my example models, I chose what is available at the east PX; however, there are many other options online as well.

Most people on JBB can probably remember a time when the video camera for sports or holidays was a hulking monster that rested on a shoulder and still used tapes. Those days are long gone, and as the selection in the PX shows, the biggest challenge you might face with today's cameras are losing them too easily.

The PX currently offers three brands and four models. To be fair they might have more or less at any time, but that is what I saw this morning. The higher end (read more expensive) models are from Panasonic, Sanyo, and JVC.

Most of these offer similar features, with the main difference being the zooming ability and the storage space offered. While storage space is definitely a plus, I have never really understood the advantages to being able to count individual nose hairs from 20 yards, so zoom doesn't mean much to me.

The biggest difference of all is that the Sanyo:

A) comes in a non-black color, and
B) claims to be waterproof, though I wouldn't push the limits of that with somet

hing that costs nearly 400 dollars. Of the three, the Panasonic has the highest customer satisfaction rates, with the JVC coming in at a close second.

My final advice will be fairly simple. If you think you need waterproof, the Sanyo is worth consideration, otherwise try one of the many other options. Another other helpful tip I have is to always look for OIS, or optical image stabilization, which counteracts any shaky hands.

FIREFIGHTERS cont. from page 1

They geared up and moved out, arriving on scene within minutes of the attack.

"We arrived on scene quickly, but by the time we got there, the tent was already engulfed in flames," said Harris. "Once we learned that nobody was inside the tent, we went into defensive mode, restricting the fire to just that tent, and protecting the surrounding structures."

Not long after arriving, the firefighters were forced to take cover when ammunition inside the tent began to cook off, striking the structures and t-walls around them.

"I heard that first pop and realized that maybe I wanted to put a wall between me and that tent," said Spc. Chase Snodgrass, a firefighter with the 60th Ord. Co. and a Spencer, Ind., native. "It took about half an hour for them all to cook off."

The firefighters were almost done containing the fire when they heard another rocket coming in overhead. They briefly hit the dirt, then kept fighting.

"We are combat firefighters," said Harris. "We work in the most demanding environment in the world. We have to expect anything and everything on this job. It doesn't matter what is thrown at us, we're going to stay on the scene and fight the fire."

Spc. Daniel Fuller, a firefighter with the 60th Ord. Co. and a Flint, Mich., native, was on cleanup crew when he noticed smoke coming from a nearby tent.

"It's a good thing I noticed the smoke," he said. "We'd already lost one tent with everything in it. It would have been a shame for more Soldiers to lose everything."

After cutting into the tent, the team found a smoldering mattress that was just catching fire. After putting out the fire, Harris declared the scene cleared.

"Today was a good day," said Harris. "We contained the fires quickly and nobody got hurt."

After such an eventful day, the Soldiers with the 60th Ord. Co. crash fire rescue team will forever remember the beginning of Operation New Dawn.

Word on the Street

What is your Super Bowl prediction?



"My Super Bowl prediction is the Dallas Cowboys because there is no other team better."

Staff Sgt. Alton Day, the battalion equal opportunity noncommissioned officer with the 13th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Dallas, Texas, native



"My Super Bowl prediction is that the Bears will go all the way this year, finally...It's never happened so I keep holding out that it is going to happen one day."

Spc. Paul Aguilera, an information system specialist with the 13th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Chicago, Ill., native



"My Super Bowl prediction is the New England Patriots, because they are red, white and blue."

Spc. Phyllip Robertson, a support operation TMR clerk with the 13th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Holyoke, Mass., native

THEATER PERSPECTIVES

“...It is necessary to ensure reforms in the judiciary, legislative and executive powers. As well as the security files and Iraq’s relations with its neighbors.”

Iraq Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi on forming the Iraqi government

“The biggest and most important change that happened during the recent years in Iraq is the capability of the Iraqi security forces.”

Brig. Gen. Jeff Buchanan, USF-I spokesman, on the capabilities of the Iraqi Security Forces

“U.S. soldiers were right there the whole time, advising and assisting the ISF every step of the way.”

Col. Malcolm B. Frost, commander of the 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, on the effectiveness of U.S. Forces supporting a complex, Iraq-led operation in Diyala Province

“We affirmed the depth of strategic ties between Syria and Baghdad... There have been (anti-Syrian) statements by Iraqi figures, but that’s behind us now.”

Abdul Hamid al-Zuhairi, Prime Minister Maliki’s leader of delegation, on Syria-Iraq relations

“It was not a religion that attacked us that September day - it was al-Qaida, a sorry band of men which perverts religion.”

President Barack Obama on the commemoration of 9/11

AFGHAN FEMALE GOES THE DISTANCE

Meet Robina Jalali, also known as Robina Muqimyar: Olympic athlete and, now, Afghan political figure. As a woman born and raised under the Taliban in Kabul, Afghanistan, Jalali was home schooled when schooling for females was forbidden, and she participated in the 2004 and 2008 Olympics as a 100-meter sprinter. Now, she is running for a seat in the Afghan parliament as an independent, advocating equal rights for women and youth. Jalali is going the distance for herself and her country, so that the future may hold more stories like hers.



Robina Jalali

- Competed under the name Robina Muqimyar
- One of the first two women to represent Afghanistan in the Olympic Games
- Participated in the 100-meter sprint in the 2004 and 2008 Olympics
- Is now running for a seat in the Wolesi Jirga, the lower house of the Afghan parliament
- Intends to promote school athletics and equal rights for women and youth in Afghanistan if she wins a seat in the election this month
- Faces threats from the Taliban, but says she will not let it keep her from running in the election
- “If I caved to fear and left the country, what would happen to all the Afghans who were left behind? What kind of role model would I be?”

-Jalali

Photo derived from Life Magazine

Sudoku

Level: Hard

The objective is to fill the 9x9 grid so each column, each row and each of the nine 3x3 boxes contains the digits from 1 to 9 only one time each.

Last week's answers

5	9	2	8	4	6	1	3	7
4	3	1	5	7	9	8	2	8
8	7	6	1	2	3	9	5	4
3	6	9	4	8	1	2	7	5
1	4	5	7	6	2	3	8	9
7	2	8	9	3	5	4	1	6
9	1	3	6	5	8	7	4	2
2	8	7	3	9	4	5	6	1
6	5	4	2	1	7	8	9	3

			3					7
5				9		4	3	
			8	4				9
9						3	7	8
	7						2	
4	3	2						1
2				8	9			
	5	1		2				6
8					6			

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

1. There are more of this animal in the world than people.
2. The average hen will lay how many eggs per year?
3. What is a group of geese on the ground called? What is it called when they're in the air?
4. What is the underside of a horse's hoof called?
5. Why can't cows go down stairs?
6. What is the longest recorded flight of a chicken?

1. Chickens 2. 2273. Gaggle; Sken 4. A Trog 5. Because their knees cannot bend properly. 6. 13 seconds

JBB Worship Services

CONTEMPORARY

Sunday 10:30 a.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)
7 p.m. Freedom Chapel (West side)

Wednesday 8 p.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel

GENERAL

Sunday 9 a.m. Provider Chapel

GOSPEL

Sunday 11 a.m. MWR East Building
12 p.m. Freedom Chapel (West side)
12:30 p.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel
7 p.m. Provider Chapel

LITURGICAL (Lutheran Setting)

Sunday 5 p.m. Provider Chapel
5 p.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

LUTHERAN

Sunday 8 a.m. Provider Chapel Annex

TRADITIONAL

Sunday 10:30 a.m. Freedom Chapel
2 p.m. Air Force Hospital Chapel

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

Saturday 10 a.m. Provider Chapel

LATTERDAY SAINTS

Sunday 1 p.m. Provider Chapel
3:30 p.m. Freedom Chapel
7 p.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel

ROMAN CATHOLIC MASS

Sunday 8:30 a.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel
11 a.m. Provider Chapel

12:30 pm. Air Force Provider Chapel

Saturday 8 p.m. Freedom Chapel (West side)

Mon-Fri 11:30 a.m. Provider Chapel

Confessions: Sunday 8-8:30 a.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel or by appointment

JEWISH SHABBAT SERVICES

Friday 6 p.m. Gilbert Memorial Chapel (H-6)

PAGAN/WICCAN FELLOWSHIP

Thursday 7 p.m. Provider Chapel Annex

Saturday 7 p.m. The Shack (Bldg 7556)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

PLEASE CALL:

Gilbert Chapel 443-7703

Provider Chapel 483-4107/4115

Freedom Chapel 443-6303

***Current as of Sept. 22, 2010**

JB BALAD ACTIVITIES

INDOOR POOL Swim Lessons: Mon., Wed., 6 p.m. Tue., Thu., Sat., 6:30 p.m. Aqua Training: Tue., Thu., 7:30 p.m., 8:30 p.m.	Edge Weapons & Stick Fighting Combative Training: Tue., Thur., Sat., 8-10 p.m. EAST REC- REATION CENTER 4-ball tourney: Sunday 8 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Monday 8 p.m. Open Court Volleyball: Sunday 6 p.m. Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri., 5:30-6:30 a.m. Yoga Class: Mon., Friday, 6-7 a.m. Step Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Fri., 5:30 p.m. Conditioning Training Class: Mon., Wed., Fri., 7:15-8 p.m. Brazilian Jui-Jitsu: Mon., Wed., Fri., 8-9 p.m. Abs-Aerobics: Tue., Thu., 6-7 a.m., 5-6 p.m.	Caribbean Night: Friday 8 p.m. Chess & Dominoes Tourney: Friday 8 p.m. Salsa Class: Saturday 8:30 p.m. Poker: Saturday 7:30 p.m. H6 FITNESS CENTER Spin: Sunday 9 a.m. Swing Class: Tuesday 8 p.m. Table Tennis: Tuesday 8 p.m. Plastic Models Club: Wednesday 7 p.m. 9-ball tourney: Monday 8 p.m. Dungeons & Dragons: Thursday 7:30 p.m. Poetry Night: Thursday 8 p.m. 6-ball tourney: Thursday 8 p.m.	8 p.m. Friday 9 p.m. CC Cross Fit: Mon., Saturday 10:30 p.m. Cross Fit: Mon., Wed., Fri., 5:45 a.m., 7 a.m., 3 p.m., 6 p.m. Tue., Thu., 7 a.m., 3 p.m. Saturday 7:30 p.m. H6 FITNESS CENTER Spin: Sunday 9 a.m. Mon., Wed., Fri., 2 a.m., 4 p.m., 10 p.m. Midnight Soccer: Tue., Thu., 8 p.m. Yoga: Wednesday 8 p.m. MACP Level 1: Friday 8 p.m. 5 on 5 Basketball: Saturday 8 p.m. H6 RECRE- ATION CENTER Bingo: Sunday 8 p.m. Texas	Hold'em: Mon., Fri., 2 p.m., 8:30 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Tuesday 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Ping-pong tourney: Tuesday 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Spades: Wednesday 8 p.m. Salsa: Wednesday 8:30 p.m. 9-ball: Thursday 2 a.m., 8:30 p.m. Officer Poker: Thursday 8:30 p.m. Dominoes: Saturday 8:30 p.m. Darts: Saturday 8:30 p.m. WEST REC- REATION CENTER Green Bean Karaoke: Sun., Wed., 7:30pm 9-ball tourney: Monday 8 p.m., Friday	Ping-pong tourney: Tuesday 8 p.m. Foosball tourney: Tuesday 8 p.m. Jam Session: Wednesday 7:30 p.m. 8-ball tourney: Thursday 8 p.m. Guitar Lessons: Thursday 7:30 p.m. Game tourney: Thursday 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Enlisted Poker: Friday 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Officer Poker: Saturday 1 p.m., 8 p.m. Squat Competition: Saturday 8 p.m. WEST FIT- NESS CENTER 3 on 3 basketball tourney: Saturday 7:30 p.m. 6 on 6 volleyball tourney: Friday	7 p.m. Aerobics: Mon., Wed., Friday 7 p.m. Body by Midgett Toning Class: Tue., Thu., 7 p.m. Dodge ball Game: Tuesday 7:30 p.m. Furman's Martial Arts: Mon., Wed., Sun., 1 p.m. Gaston's Self-Defense Class: Fri., Sat. 7 p.m. Open court basketball: Thursday 7 p.m. Open court soccer: Mon., Wed., 7 p.m. Zingano Brazilian Jui Jitsu: Tue., Thu., 8:30 p.m. CIRCUIT GYM Floor hockey: Mon., Wed., Fri., 8-10 p.m.
--	--	---	--	---	--	--



UPCOMING SPORTS ON AFN



Wednesday 09/22/10

MLB: Tampa Bay Rays @ New York Yankees, Live 2 a.m. AFN Sports

MLB: Texas Rangers @ Los Angeles Angels, Live 5 a.m. AFN Xtra

MLB: San Francisco Giants @ Chicago Cubs, Delayed 10 a.m. AFN Sports

COLLEGE: College Football Live, 10:30 p.m. AFN Sports

Thursday 09/23/10

MLB: Tampa Bay Rays @ New York Yankees, 2 a.m. AFN Sports

MLB: Atlanta Braves @ Philadelphia Phillies, Live 2 a.m. AFN Xtra

MLB: Chicago White Sox @ Oakland Athletics, Delayed 10 a.m. AFN Sports

Friday 09/24/10

MLB: San Francisco Giants @ Chicago Cubs, Live 2 a.m. AFN Xtra

COLLEGE: Miami @ Pittsburgh, Live 2:30 a.m. AFN Sports

MLB: San Diego Padres @ Los Angeles Dodgers, Live 5 a.m. AFN Xtra

MLB: Texas Rangers @ Oakland Athletics, Delayed 3 p.m. AFN Sports

2010 FedEx Cup Second Round, Live 8 p.m. AFN Sports

Saturday 09/25/10

COLLEGE: TCU @ SMU, Live 3 a.m. AFN Xtra

MLB: Cincinnati Reds @ San Diego Padres, Live 5 a.m. AFN Prime Pacific

COLLEGE: College Football Live, 7 p.m. AFN Xtra

Sunday 09/26/10

UFC: UFC Countdown, 3 a.m. AFN Xtra

UFC: UFC Fight, 4 a.m. AFN Xtra

UFC: UFC Fight, 5 a.m. AFN Xtra

NFL: NFL Total Access, 8 a.m., AFN Xtra

Monday 09/27/10

SPORTS TBD

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

'The Sports Lounge': Predictions, recaps

BY SGT. 1ST CLASS RAY CALEF
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



Funny things about predictions. They can certainly make you look foolish. Last week I made my picks of NFL teams to make the playoffs, including wild card teams. Looking back at the first weekend, that word "foolish" comes screaming like a bad call on a replay at a Bears-Lions game.

Twelve teams make the playoffs in the NFL. There were a total of ten games involving teams I predicted to win playoff spots. The Saints-Vikings and the Ravens-Jets were essentially pushes (unless they would have tied in overtime games), as I was going to lose a team no matter what. But in the other eight games, I finished just 4-4. Wow. Thank goodness I never got in to gambling.

I will continue with the charade of picks for two reasons. It's a long season, and many other "experts" had the same picks as I did. Misery loves company.

Let's look at the National Football Conference. Based on those picks from last week, the Vikings would have home field for the NFC. Dallas would be the second seed, and both teams would have a first round bye. The wildcard round would consist of the following match-ups: New York (Giants) at San Francisco, and Green Bay at New Orleans.

Now, as much as it would pain me to have to, it is the lesser of two evils for me to pick the Packers over the Saints in that wildcard game. I really should see someone about the lack of love I have for New Orleans, so much so that I would choose the Packers over the Saints. Actually, I believe the Packers are a legitimate Super Bowl contender, and will win in the Superdome, 27-24.

The other NFC wildcard matchup would pit the Giants at San Francisco. After last week's disappointment, I hope the 49ers right the ship. Mike Singletary is too good of a coach to not win the NFC West. That being said, I think the Giants and Eli Manning eke out a close 16-13 win, making the road teams 2-0 in the playoffs.

The divisional round is where it will get interesting, as the Giants will travel to Minneapolis to take on the Vikings. After last year's rocking of the Cowboys in the Metro Dome, I say look for more of the same from the Vikings. By this time, Brett Favre will be looking like the Hall of Fame quarterback he is, and I expect the Viking defense to be clicking. 28-17 Vikings.

Green Bay-Dallas would be an intriguing matchup. I would have to give the Cowboys the edge, however, at recently built Cowboys Stadium and their 100,000 plus fans. Home field advantage in the playoffs is huge. It will be close, however, as I believe on paper these two teams are nearly even; 24-20 Cowboys.

That would set up a rematch of last year's divisional playoff game between the Cowboys and Vikings. These two teams will meet in Minnesota in a few weeks with much less at stake. Call me a homer, I have admitted it in other issues, but I think home field advantage gives the Vikes their first NFC Championship since the 1976 season, when they later played, and lost, in Super Bowl XI. Vikings advance, 20-17.

And now, NCAA football from last weekend. Not too many surprises, Oklahoma bounced back from their poor performance against Utah State and beat Florida State convincingly, 47-17. Ohio State survived what was coined as a tough game for them, beating Miami of Florida rather handily, 36-24.

The real news was the upset James Madison, pulled over once-highly regarded Virginia Tech. This upset didn't just affect the Hokies from Blacksburg. This upset resounded across the country all the way to the mountains of Idaho. Boise State's cakewalk to the Bowl Championship Series national championship game just got a lot tougher, as their win over the Hokies last week looks much less impressive in the eyes of the voters, who play a big part in the qualifications process for BCS seeding.

The BCS conferences in had to breathe a slight sigh of relief after James Madison pulled the upset. Next week, we will predict the American Football Conference playoffs, as well as see how this week's college games play out.

'Sorcerer's Apprentice' leaves much to be desired

BY SGT. 1ST CLASS J.D. PHIPPEN
EXPEDITIONARY TIMES STAFF



Nicholas Cage gets kind of a bad rap sometimes. You either like him, or you hate him. There isn't usually an in-between.

I have seen some of his movies like "National Treasure" and "Gone in Sixty Seconds" that I thoroughly enjoyed.

Others, such as "City of Angels" and "Ghost Rider," were not all that impressive.

In his latest film to hit the box office, "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," Mr. Cage plays a sorcerer living in a Manhattan antique store. After a young boy stumbles into his store and unknowingly releases sorcerers from days gone by, Balthazar

Blake (Cage) knows he must try to defeat those sorcerers and protect the city from being overtaken.

But time goes by (10 years to be exact), and not much has really happened. That young boy, who is now a college physics geek, again comes into contact with Balthazar. Because of "destiny" or some other twist of fate, Dave is the one that holds the potential power to put a stop to the plans of the evil Maxim Horvath (played by Alfred Molina).

But the problem is that Dave has a love interest that he is finally making progress with. At first, she is not impressed by his "geekness," but she soon gets more heavily involved in the story.

After receiving a crash course in the art of sorcery, Dave learns to tap into the power he holds just in time to assist Balthazar and keep New York, and the rest of the world,

from falling prey to Horvath.

There were actually a few moments that featured some decent special effects. But there were also some moments that were somewhat dark/evil. The plot was adequate, and I am sure that kids from the Harry Potter generation will probably enjoy the film.

In my mind, this was not Cage's best effort. I give him a 4 out of 10 for acting. The movie as a whole is probably only worth a 4 out of 10 as well.

I like going to movies that evoke strong emotion—either "I liked that film a lot," or "that was one of the worst movies ever." This one didn't fit into either category.

This is a forgettable film that, overall, wasn't all that impressive. I expected better out of Cage and Walt Disney both.

PVT MURPHY'S LAW



Wednesday September 22
5 p.m. Reserved for a concert

Thursday September 23
5 p.m. Charlie St. Cloud (PG -13)
8 p.m. Resident Evil: Afterlife (R) 1st Run

Friday September 24
6 p.m. Dinner for Schmucks (PG-13)
9 p.m. The Town (R) 1st Run

Saturday September 25
2 p.m. The Other Guys (PG-13)
5 p.m. The Town (R) 1st Run
8 p.m. Step Up 3D (PG-13)

Sunday September 26
2 p.m. The Town (R) 1st Run
5 p.m. The Other Guys (PG-13)
8 p.m. Dinner For Schmucks (PG-13)

Monday September 27
5 p.m. Step Up 3D (PG-13)
8 p.m. The Town (R) 1st Run



U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Tresa L. Allemang

Sgt. 1st Class Kelly McFarlain, and Staff Sgt. Jarret Mouton, both Louisiana Guardsmen and Lafayette, La., natives, along with firemen on Camp Stryker, Iraq, carefully fold an American flag after it was flown for nine minutes, 11 seconds on Sept. 11, the nine-year anniversary of the terrorist attack on the U.S.

U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Tresa L. Allemang



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Lukas McWhorter

ABOVE: Spc. Chase Snodgrass, an Army firefighter with the 60th Ordnance Company, and a Spencer, Ind., native, takes cover while ammunition cooks off during a tent fire Sept. 1 at Contingency Operating Station Garry Owen, Iraq.

LEFT: Sgt. 1st Class Kelly McFarlain, and Staff Sgt. Jarret Mouton, both Soldiers with the Louisiana Army National Guard's 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 224th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and Lafayette, La., natives, render a salute to the American flag Sept. 11 at a fire station at Camp Stryker, Iraq, to honor their fallen comrades on the anniversary of the terrorist attack on the U.S.