

ANACONDA TIMES

Vol. 1, Issue 26

Proudly serving Logistics Support Area Anaconda

August 1, 2004

'Freedom Calls' offers free video conferencing

By Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

Army Spc. Joshua Strickland thought he was in big trouble when his commanding officer personally escorted him to a facility he'd never heard of at Camp Cooke in Iraq under the pretense of signing some papers.

The young soldier got even more nervous when his tight-lipped commander led him behind a door that read, "Authorized Personnel Only."

But there, on a television screen, were 16 members of Strickland's family, gathered around a large-screen TV at his brother-in-law's home in Valdosta, Ga., waiting for Strickland to help celebrate his daughter Shelby's first birthday.

Thanks to 21st-century technology and the Freedom Calls Foundation, Strickland got to sing "Happy Birthday" to the daughter he hadn't seen in seven months and to watch her toddle toward the TV screen for the first time and utter her first "da-da."

He looked on excitedly as Shelby blew out her first birthday candle, then chatted with his wife Dorothy and other family members he hadn't seen since deploying to Iraq with the 1st Battalion, 25th Aviation, 25th Infantry Division.

"It was just amazing," said John Harlow, executive director of the Freedom Calls Foundation, which made the July 14 visit and others like it at Camp Cooke possible. "It gives me a lump in my throat every day."

Another deployed soldier is scheduled to see his newborn son for the first time via a videoconference at Camp Cooke's Freedom Calls Foundation Facility — with the segment to be aired live on ABC's "Good Morning America," Harlow said.

The facility, the first of its kind in Iraq that offers service members free videoconferencing so they can stay in touch with their families, is made possible through private donations to the Freedom Calls Foundation.

Harlow said plans call for three additional facilities in Iraq and two in Afghanistan, and possibly five more facilities after that depending on donations.

In addition, the foundation plans to install the videoconferencing capability at Army posts in the United States for families who don't have a broadband Internet connection at home, and at military hospitals so troops can interact with their newborn children and new moms hours after birth.

Harlow said the capability is shortening the miles between deployed troops and their families and helping ensure deployed service members don't miss out on important family events.

"Soldiers are now able to not only see, but participate in, milestone family events such as the birth of a new child, first communions, high school graduations, birthdays, weddings and anniversaries over the

see CALLS, page 4



Photo by Pfc. Abel Trevino

A Stryker combat vehicle from 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, escorts military flatbed trucks loaded with Korean equipment and vehicles to Irbil.

U.S. troops aid ROK in move

By Pfc. Abel Trevino
Staff writer

U.S. Soldiers, Marines and Airmen successfully completed the task of moving Republic of Korea Army troops, vehicles and equipment from Nasiriyah to Irbil from July 18 to 21.

Ninety-two military engineers from the ROK Army's Irbil Facility Preparation Team were escorted by Alpha Troop, 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment on an 800-kilometer route that took them through the middle of Iraq toward the Green Line.

The Green Line delineates an area of northern Iraq, which is primarily Kurdish and has operated autonomously from the Iraqi government since 1991. The ROK Army engineers are preparing a hospital site in Irbil, north of the Green Line at the foothills of the eastern mountains.

Getting the soldiers there was a joint effort, including Soldiers from the Army's 513th Transportation Company, 16th Military Police Brigade and 1st Infantry Division, as well as Marines and Airmen.

"There was a lot of coordination between all the corps and area support groups under the 13th [Corps Support Command]. The staff maintained flexibility throughout because there were so many changes. [But] the vision didn't change," said Lt. Col. James Carroll, Chief of Operations for 13th Corps Support Command. "It was a pretty fluid battlefield. [Units] were

able to react quickly and efficiently; Soldiers understood the mission and were able to adapt."

The coordination was noticed on the frontline of the convoy.

"I was rather impressed with the way it came together," said Sgt. 1st Class Ashton B. Cannon from Alpha Troop, 1st Sqn., 14th Cav. Regt. "The Marine Corps provided additional guntrucks we hadn't counted on. I was quite impressed with how it all worked."

Cooperation between the coalition partners contributed to the mission's success.

"The mission went well. The troopers did a fine job," said Capt. Luther Ron Johnson, Alpha Troop, 1st Sqn., 14th Cav. Regt.

Before leaving Nasiriyah, while loading the Korean vehicles and equipment onto flatbed trailers, the 513th Transportation Company faced the last-minute challenges of planning: more vehicles were to be hauled via truck instead of driven. Reacting quickly, the company rectified the problem allowing the convoy to leave without delay.

Flexibility and the ability to overcome small problems helped the ROK army arrive at their destination in a safely and on time.

"We made it there safe. We made it back safe," said Spc. Charles Pineda, a forward observer for Alpha Troop.

Units such as the 1st Sqn., 14th Cav. Regt. and the 16th MP Bde. are normally the security element for convoys, but with their resources

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Reserve Dentists "Fill" Void

by Master Sgt. Jack Gordon
U.S. Army Reserve Public Affairs

Waging war in the frontline against cavities, Army Reserve dentists, dental specialists and dental support staff Soldiers are on the go here, treating tooth decay and more.

"Most of the dentists here are Reserve soldiers," said Col. Donald Moore, the commander of the 380th Medical Company (Dental Support), from Memphis, Tennessee. "Some come from their private practices or are instructors at dental schools, so they bring a great deal of experience in the dental field to the soldiers serving here in Iraq. They're providing excellent health care we may not have otherwise had."

Most Reserve dentists rotate on 90-day tours of duty like most professionals in the Army Reserve's healthcare corps. With some 23,000 troops assigned here, dentists have their hands full with the teeth of those Soldiers who require dental care.

"The majority are emergency procedures, but a lot of fillings, removals and root canals too. We also have dental hygienists, so getting your teeth cleaned is a luxury here," Moore said.

Colonel John Summers retired from his private dental practice in 2000 and began working as a general dentist in the South Carolina State Department of Corrections. He has remained in the Army Reserve, however, and now serving here.

Summers indicated that although there are differences between working here at the Anaconda Dental Clinic and practicing back in the United States similarities also exist.

"No matter where you go, dentistry is still dentistry, and teeth are still teeth," Summers said. "The equipment we're using here is not the same as what we're used to at home, this is older equipment but it's what the unit deployed with."

Summers said the dental chairs and machinery are not quite cutting-edge, but they are more than adequate to get the mission accomplished.

"It was a challenge but we've adapted to it. The greatest challenge is in the working environment, there's a lot of dirt and dust," Summers said, adding that the workload was constant, with dentists seeing an average of 30 patients per day.

Summers said he has served in other overseas locations in Europe and Central America, but he's proud to be serving here now.

513th Trans. Co. loads up

By Pfc. Abel Trevino
Staff writer

In the 120-degree desert heat of Tallil Air Base on July 18, the 513th Transportation Company along with Republic of Korea soldiers, loaded American military flatbeds with Korean vehicles and equipment for a three-day trip to Irbil on the border of the Green Line in northeastern Iraq.

The Green Line delineates an area of Northern Iraq, which is primarily Kurdish and has operated autonomously from the Iraqi government since 1991.

With an eye for safety, the 513th Trans. Co. Soldiers secured the vehicles and equipment to the flatbed trucks with heavy chains. The Soldiers will check the chains at every stop to ensure they are still tightly bound.

"We'll have to stop and assess our chains in the middle of the convoy," said Spc. Noah Lockhart of the 513th Trans. Co. "Each time we stop, we check our load."

Soldiers opted to use heavy chains instead of cargo straps to decrease the risk of the load loosening and shifting along the trip.

"Chains don't break," explained Sgt. 1st Class Dan Dohm from the 570th Movement Regulation Team.

Chains are more durable than straps and allow for better tension, especially for trips of that distance, he said.

The trip is long and the Soldiers anticipated it to be eventful.

"At first, I was [psychologically] good about it," said Spc. Vincent Harris. "But now, everybody has talked about how dangerous it is, and I'm a little shaky."

Other Soldiers prepared for the dangers by reflecting on past experiences.

"[I'm not nervous], I've been in dangerous situations before. So, I just want to get this stuff over there," said Spc. Maria Yanez.

Getting the equipment ready for transport brought different aspects of difficulty to the Soldiers.

"The most difficult part is organization," Lockhart said. "There are a lot of last-minute changes."

Those changes included adding several flatbed vehicles, which also required additional personnel, and more preparation.

Korean soldiers assisted the loading team by driving vehicles onto the trailers and tightening chains.

The 513th Trans. Co. Soldiers appreciated the extra assistance provided by their Korean counterparts.

"They [the Korean Soldiers] have been helpful," Yanez said.

The mutual cooperation between American and Korean soldiers loading and securing the vehicles guaranteed the safety of the equipment on the trip.



Photo by Pfc. Abel Trevino

Spc. Maria Yanez, 513th Transportation Company, and a Republic of Korea soldier chains the vehicles being transported to Irbil to the military flatbed trucks, which will haul them north.

ROK, from page 1

being used for the movement of the Korean army, the 172nd and 167th Corps Support Groups took their place to continue providing security for convoys at LSA Anaconda.

"Not only did we provide lift assets to move the ROK army, while that lift was taking place, we had guntrucks take the place of [security elements] because [the security elements] were moving the ROK," Carroll said. "[The mission] is important not only because we pushed the ROK movement north, but [the 13th COSCOM] was able to push our sustainment and reorganize and continue to function while moving the ROK."

More than 1,000 Republic of Korea soldiers are expected to move into the Irbil province providing humanitarian aid and support for Iraq.

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Anaconda Times is a command information newspaper in accordance with Army Regulation 360-1.

Anaconda Times is published weekly by the Stars and Stripes central office, with a



circulation of 5,000 papers.

The Public Affairs Office is on New Jersey Ave. in building 4136, DVNT 537-3028. Anaconda Times, HHC 13th COSCOM, APO AE 09391. Web site at www.mnf-iraq.com/coalition-news/publications/anaconda.htm Contact Sgt. Annette B. Andrews via e-mail at annette.andrews@us.army.mil

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Pork free items make proper gifts for Muslims

Dear Editor,

Some of my responsibilities require for me to work with the local nationals a great deal. I've also been on three Medical Civil Action Programs.

In dealing with the local nationals and in talking with other troops who also have this job, I've realized that we all reward them for doing such a good job by giving them various gifts, to include food and candy.

My concern, in regards to being a Muslim myself, is to educate our troops on the different key words, which identify a product containing pork.

These words are as follows: *Gelatin* (exception if there is a letter K with a circle around it on the package), the word *Shortening* by itself (if it says vegetable shortening it is okay for them to consume), and the last word is *Lard*.

I understand that this whole experience of being deployed to Iraq is probably the first time most of the troops have been around Muslims and exposed to Al-Islam (The Religion).

The troops in my unit are surprised when I point out to them the different types of food candy which contain pork. I think an article would educate many

and help us in our efforts to respect the beliefs of the Muslims in the Middle East.

Sgt. Tanya Abdul-Karim Williams
118th Medical Battalion

Anaconda Times online
www.mnf-iraq.com/coalition-news/publications/anaconda.htm

Iraqi Arabic: phonetics

Stop
Surrender
Drop your weapons
Hands up
Do you speak English?
Do not resist
Do not move
No talking
Speak slowly
Calm down
Please
Thank you
Good bye
Hello
Help
Good
Bad
Latrine
Food
Medicine
Shelter
Water
Do you need...?
We are Americans

keff
isstesslem
illkee assilah
erfa yedake
Techni inglezia
laatkawoom
laatet-harrak
uskoot
tekelem alla mahel
ehda'a
arjuke
shukran
ma'a sala'ama
marhaba
mussa adda
jay-yed
ghare jay-yed
twallete
ekel
dowa
melja'a
my
tureed...?
nahnoo amrika'an

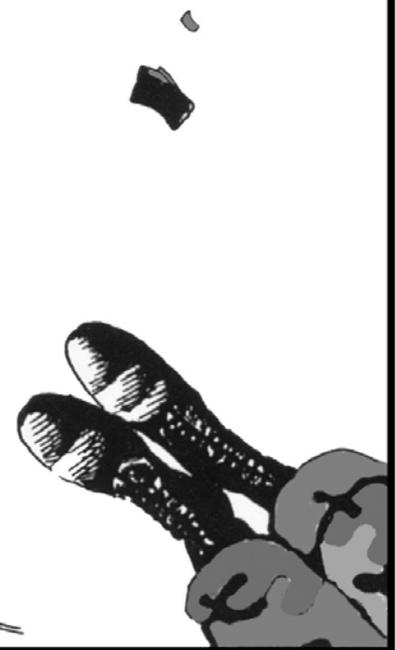


Pvt. Murphy's Law

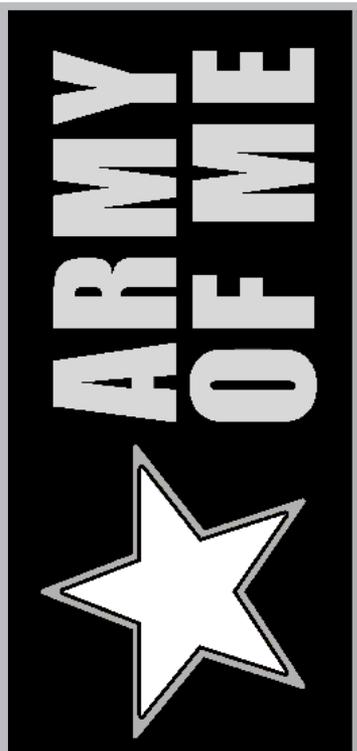
Airborne! The First Point of Performance:

Check Body Position and Count.

ONE THOUSAND!
TWO THOUSAND!
THREE THOUS--
DANG!
THERE GOES
MY WALLET!



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by Aaron Thacker
send e-mail to:
aaron.thacker@armyofme.us



When they said
"Friday Fun Day"
I didn't know they only
ment for the NCOs.

HA HA HA!
HA HA HA!
HA HA HA!

PUSH, PRIVATE!

www.armyofme.us



Left Shoulder Diary

89th Regional Readiness Command

Compiled from
Unit History

The 89th Regional Readiness Command shoulder sleeve insignia is characterized by a blue disc one and five-eighths inches in diameter and within a white circle three-sixteenths of an inch in width with a white letter "W" formed of curved lines three-sixteenths of an inch in width and joining the circle, all within a one-eighth of an inch red border.

The insignia was originally approved for the 89th Division Oct. 25, 1918, by telegram but not officially announced by the War Department until June 23, 1922.

The 89th Infantry Division was created at Camp Funston, Fort Riley Aug. 27, 1917, and deployed to France in 1918 during World War I.

Official explanations say that this patch designated the "Middle West" Division, as it can, in one aspect be read as an "M", and in another, as a "W". The unofficial explanation is that the "W" patch, created during World War I, pays tribute to the first three commanders of the 89th Division, Major Generals William Wright, Leonard Wood, and Frank Winn.

The unit took part in World War I campaigns to include Lorraine, St. Mahiel and Meuse Argonne in the post war period, after which the unit was inactivated.

The division was reactivated as part of the newly created Army Reserve in 1921 and recalled to active service in 1942 at Camp Carson, Colo.

The division landed in France at Le Havre Jan. 21, 1945. It engaged in several weeks of pre-combat training before moving up the Sauer River into the jump-off positions east of Echternach March 11, 1945.

The next day, the offensive began and the division plunged across the Sauer and across the Moselle. The division crossed the Rhine between the towns of Kestert and Kaub. The next objective was Friedrichroda, the core of the Nazi Redoubt in Thuringia. The city was secured by April 8. The division continued to move eastward toward the Mulde River, capturing Zwickau by April 17. From April 23 to VE-day, the division saw only limited action, conducting patrols and pulling general security.

The division was re-designated the 89th Division (Training) in 1959, re-designated the 89th U.S. Army Reserve Command in 1973.

More than one-third of the ARCOM was activated during Desert Storm/Shield. From Sept. 1990 to July 1991, 2,500 activated Soldiers set aside civilian life and left home to serve their country.

In 1996, the 89th ARCOM was re-designated the 89th Regional Support Command.

In 2003, all Regional Support Commands were re-designated to Regional Readiness Commands.

Civilian of the Week

Alphonsa Oliver, a Portsmouth, Va., native and American Red Cross team leader here, is the senior station manager for Naval Base Yokosuka, Japan.

Since his arrival at LSA Anaconda he has been responsible for ensuring that the American Red Cross mission is carried out, providing emergency communications and interfacing with the command to make sure they understand the American Red Cross mission.

"I can't do it alone, though," Oliver said. "I have two other managers who are equally qualified to carry out our mission.

Telling service members in combat that their mother is ill or that their grandmother died is by far the most challenging part of his job, Oliver said.

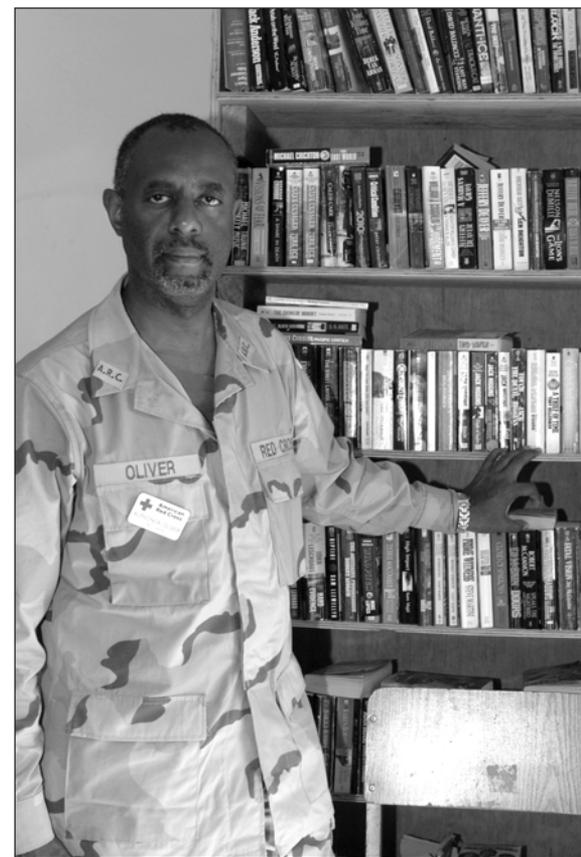
"It's a challenging job, one that not everyone wants, but the Red Cross has been doing this job for a long time," he said. "Being away from your family is also very difficult."

With the stressful job of often relaying very bad news, Oliver finds peace and refuge in his friendships with the service members here.

"Having the Soldiers, airmen and sailors as friends makes our job easier. Since I've been here, we've been embraced as family by the LSA Anaconda community," Oliver said. "When they see the American Red Cross here, they see the American people supporting them. It's very important to support our troops and our nation in these troubled times."

Although Oliver likes being here and helping service members, he misses his wife, children and friends.

"I miss my normal way of existing. When you come over here, it's like another world. I think



Alphonso Oliver

that's why Americans should never take freedom for granted," he said.

His family is supportive, even though they worry about him.

"They don't particularly like that I'm here. I missed my daughter's graduation and a few other family events, but they know how important my job is," Oliver said.

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Freedom Calls Network."

Shortly after the facility opened to 12,000 soldiers at Camp Cooke last month, Spc. Michelle Soto, from the California National Guard, used the facility to attend her daughter's high school graduation.

Participating virtually by videoconference, Soto got to watch her daughter receive her diploma.

Soto then talked with her family for almost two hours.

Army Staff Sgt. Shadow Evans used the facility to create her own family milestone.

Arriving at the facility in an up-armored Humvee rather than a limousine, she exchanged wedding vows via videoconference with Sgt. Richard Everton, in Durango, Colo.

But Ed Bukstel, director of operations for the Freedom Calls Foundation, said the facil-

ity isn't just for major family events.

He said deployed troops and their families can use the capability to talk about the little things in life, such as a child's camp experience that day, that too often go unshared during a parent's deployment.

"They can talk just like they would over the dinner table," Harlow added, "in spite of the fact that their soldier is 10,000 miles away in a war zone."

Harlow said the service is transforming the nature of deployments, bringing families together in a way never before possible.

"Throughout history, tours of duty in wartime have served to separate

families," he said.

Thanks to state-of-the-art technology provided through the Freedom Calls Foundation, he said, "though families may be separated by war, they need not be estranged by it."

More information about the service is available at www.freedomcalls.org.



Courtesy photo

Dorothy Strickland holds up her daughter, Shelby, so the baby's father, Army Spc. Joshua Strickland, can wish her a happy birthday via videoconference from Camp Cook, Iraq.

Smoking: it's a hard habit to break

By Sgt. Ann Venturato
Assistant editor

After enjoying a meal at the dining facility, you walk slowly down the steps when the craving hits you; the need for a cigarette is upon you.

You tap a cigarette out of your pack and cup your hand by your mouth to light up and sigh with relief as the nicotine fumes fill your lungs.

The nicotine fix has been appeased for the moment.

Nicotine is number 94 on the most addictive drug list with only two drugs more addictive than nicotine.

It is one of the harder drugs to quit.

"It is very hard. It is even harder to quit smoking while being deployed. We normally

average a person's stress level to be doubled or tripled in country compared to when they were back home," said Sgt. Sherman Granger, mental health section, 118th Area Support Medical Battalion.

Granger is one of the instructors for the smoking cessation class here.

The smoking cessation classes are held at the Troop Medical Clinic at 3 p.m. every Monday and Wednesday and are open to service members and civilians.

"A lot of Soldiers (in past classes) have said that the reason they started smoking was because of the deployment," said Granger.

"Three soldiers from my last smoking cessation class all started smoking again in country because of the stress of the deployment," added Granger.

It is harder to quit during a deployment because of the boredom as well as the stress but it can be done, although it requires a lot more mental strength than anything, said Granger.

Staff Sgt. Judy Dale, a medic with 151st Aviation Battalion, one Soldier who quit smoking while she was deployed.

"I started smoking real heavily over here," said Dale, who had started smoking more because of the deployment and was smoking two packs of cigarettes a day.

Dale was smoking more because she had more time on her hands and was associating with the smoking crowd.

"I wanted to quit for health reasons," said Dale. "I didn't think it could be done but it can be done. You have to be motivated to quit smoking."

The smoking cessation class can help people who are interested in kicking the habit by

offering them the tools to successfully quit smoking.

Some smoking cessation tools that are available here are: Advising the person to taper down on how many cigarettes they smoke; prescribing nicotine patches or nicotine pills (Zyban); Nicotine pills such as Zyban helps with the cravings.

According to Granger, smokers have a 30 percent greater chance of successfully giving up tobacco with the assistance of Zyban.

"But each person is different. Some people have quit cold turkey even out here in this stressful environment. It is situational, depending on the person," said Granger.

Smoking is how some Soldiers cope with the stress.

Granger advises his students in the smoking cessation class to find more positive ways to deal with the stress in their lives instead of smoking.

Stress can be alleviated by participating in

sports or focusing on activities that provide diversions from daily routine of being in the war zone. The key is to learn to relax without the use of tobacco.

"Also they need to get away from patterns such as hanging around people who smoke, doing things that remind you of smoking, like drinking back in the rear. Drinking is highly correlated with smoking," said Granger, "Get rid of things that remind you of smoking like a lighter, ashtrays, that carton of cigarettes that you didn't finish before you decided to quit smoking, Skoal cans for those who chew tobacco."

One of the biggest factors in quitting is to set a reward system. Money saved from not buying tobacco products can go toward the purchase of expensive but much desired items like a new car or taking a vacation. If a person smokes a pack of cigarettes a day for 30 years, that adds up to \$65,000 at current cigarette prices.

Smoking shortens your life span, takes away oxygen from your body, and increases your chance of getting cardiac arrest, especially in this heat, said Granger.

"Thirty days after you quit smoking your lung capacity increases by 30 percent more," said Granger.

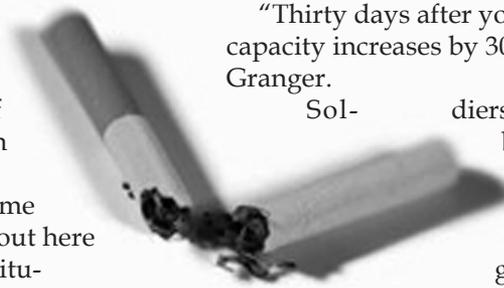
Soldiers and civilians alike have benefited from the smoking cessation class here.

"It has turned out to be a really good program," said Pfc. Amy

Paulin, a mental health specialist with the 118th Area Support Medical Battalion said. "It is pretty amazing to see Soldiers in a combat environment who to have tried to quit."

While trying to kick the habit people should eat balanced meals, get enough rest and exercise because a balanced life will enhance the body's ability to deal with stressors, Granger added.

**commit to
quit**



Secretary of Defense message to troops on why we fight in Iraq

More than 15 months ago, a global coalition ended the brutal regime of Saddam Hussein and liberated the people of Iraq.

As in all conflicts, this has come at a cost in lives. Some of your comrades made the ultimate sacrifice. For your sacrifices, our country and the President are deeply grateful.

In a free, democratic country we have vigorous debates over important public policy issues – none more heated than a decision to go to war.

But this should not distract us from the mission at hand or lessen the magnitude of your accomplishments.

The threat we face must be confronted. And you are doing so exceedingly well. Indeed it has been an historic demonstration of skill and military power.

On September 11, 3,000 citizens were killed by extremists determined to frighten and intimidate our people and civilized societies. The future danger is that, if the extremists gain

the potential, the number of casualties would be far higher. Terrorists are continuing to plot attacks against the American people and against other civilized societies.

This is a different kind of enemy and a different kind of world. And we must think and act differently in this new century.

These extremists think nothing of cutting off innocent people's heads to try to intimidate great nations. They have murdered citizens from many countries – South Korea, Japan, Spain, the United Kingdom and others – hoping to strike fear in the hearts of free people.

Theirs is an ideology of oppression and subjugation of women. They seek to create radical systems that impose their views on others. And they will accept no armistice with those who choose free systems.

They see the governments of the Middle East, the United States and our stalwart allies all as targets.

Consider the background. In the

span of 20 years, Hussein's Iraq invaded two neighbors, Iran and Kuwait, and launched ballistic missiles at two more.

He employed poison gas against soldiers in Iran and against Kurdish villagers in his own country.

The United Nations and the U.S. Congress shared the view that Saddam's regime was a threat to the region and the world. Indeed, in 1998, our Congress passed a resolution calling for the removal of the regime. And over the years the U.N. passed 17 resolutions condemning Saddam's regime and calling on him to tell the UN about his weapons programs. He ignored every one.

Information gathered since the defeat of Saddam's regime last year confirms that his last declaration to the United Nations about his weapons programs was falsified. The U.N. resolutions had called for "serious consequences" should Saddam not comply.

He did not.

The President issued a final ultimatum to Saddam to relinquish power to avoid war. Saddam chose war instead.

By your skill and courage, you have put a brutal dictator in the dock to be tried by the Iraqi people and restored freedom to 25 million people.

By helping to repair infrastructure, rebuild schools, encourage democratic institutions and delivering educational and medical supplies, you have shown America's true character and given Iraq a chance at a new start.

But most importantly, your fight – and ultimate victory – against the forces of terror and extremism in Iraq and the Middle East will have made America safer and more secure.

You are accomplishing something noble and historic – and future generations of Americans will remember and thank you for it.

*Donald H. Rumsfeld
Secretary of Defense*

Army launches 'Operation Blue to Green' to keep retention high

Separating Sailors and Airmen may soon be able to "go Army" with a new recruitment program.

Under "Operation Blue to Green," officially approved July 19, the Army will provide the opportunity for members of the Navy and Air Force to transfer into the Army and retain their rank.

The Navy is planning a force reduction of 8,000 in FY-05, and Air Force, 22,000, in the near future to better shape each services' manning structure for current and future operations, according to officials. Airmen and Sailors electing to transfer to the active Army may be afforded the opportunity to leave their current service early in order to meet Army training requirements.

"(The Air Force doesn't) want to leave any career field with an insufficient inventory as a result of force shaping and accession reduction efforts," said Col. Mike Hayden, chief of Air Force Military Policy. "We don't want to create problems in the future similar to the one we are seeing now as a result of downsizing of the early 1990s. We want to ensure we have the right number of Airmen, with the right skills, at the right time."

And it and the Navy want to offer those who are separating the opportunity to continue to serve on active duty with their current job skills in the Army via Blue to Green.

The Air Force currently has about 20,000 more Airmen than its authorized endstrength.

The Navy, while not overstrength, is shaping a smaller workforce. Both are primarily using voluntary separations and retirements from overmanned specialties to reduce their endstrengths.

It is important to note that those Airmen and Sailors who opt to enter the Blue to Green program must qualify for an honorable discharge, officials said.

The Army staff has been working on the program since February. Blue to Green is designed to give

Sailors and Airmen who are impacted by the force shaping an opportunity to continue serving in the military. Marines and members of the Coast Guard are eligible also, but must complete their current duty obligations.

The primary targeted group is service members from grades E1-E4.

They will keep their same rank if they transfer over to the Army. E-5s will have their eligibility determined by Human Resources Command.

For officers in other services who transfer to the Army, their prior-service time will count against their military service obligation, said Chief Warrant Officer Al Eggerton, a force integrator with G1.

The Army is looking for officers across the board. The higher the officer grade, the fewer the positions available. Officials also encourage warrant officers to apply.

Operation Blue to Green would allow Airmen and Sailors to coordinate enlisting in the Army and schedule their training date before they leave their respective service.

Steed said the desired goal for the future would be to create a seamless transition that would allow for leave and pay to roll over when they join the Army.

Prior to the new program other service members had to exit their service and then enlist in the Army. Brig. Gen. Sean Byrne, director of military personnel policy G-1, said the Army is working so there will be no break in service and Montgomery G.I. Bill.

Already 240 Sailors and Airmen have gone to www.goarmy.com where they have clicked on the Operation Blue to Green link, answered the questionnaire and indicated intent to transfer.

Prior to Operation Blue to Green when Sailors and Airmen enlisted in the Army, they had to go to the Army's nine-week basic training. If they enlist

through Operation Blue to Green, these service members will only attend a four-week Warrior Transition Course where they are taught basic combat skills.

Training and Doctrine Command created a list of basic skills these new Soldiers will need to have.

These skills will be taught by instructors, not drill sergeants and the new Soldiers will be treated as non-commissioned officers. After the WTC, if the service member has a skill that can convert to an Army MOS they will be assigned to a unit; if not they will go to Advanced Individual Training.

Officers will not be going to WTC, but some may need to attend an Officer Basic Course depending on their grade and experience, officials said.

As an incentive to draw Sailors and Airmen to enlist in the Army, bonuses are being offered to those who have skills that convert to an Army military occupational specialty.

The bonuses offered are Selective Reenlistment and Broken Service Selective Reenlistment. There are 120 Air Force specialty codes that will transfer into 37 Army MOSs and the Navy has 112 ratings that will transfer into 42 Army MOSs according to Col. Norvel Dillard, chief of the recruiting and retention division, G-1. Additionally, he said the Army is looking into seeing if other skills will transfer.

In order to qualify for Operation Blue to Green, the Sailor or Airman must be eligible for re-enlistment, be physically fit, meet Army height and weight standards and have an approved DD Form 368.

"What we are trying to do is take the lead within the Department of Defense on manning and maintaining manpower within the military," Steed said.

The Army's recruiting goal for FY05 is 80,000 new Soldiers. Of that number, the Army hopes to recruit about 7,300 prior service troops.

Army News Service

Low carbohydrate diets are making a impact with Marines

Carbohydrates, widely accepted by many as the enemy of any weight-loss plan, are essential for the active Marine lifestyle, according to nutritionists and dietitians at the Naval Hospital, Camp Pendleton.

The popularity of low-carbohydrate diets, such as the Atkins and South Beach Diets, have skyrocketed due to their quick results in reducing weight and body fat.

"These diets were designed as quick weight loss diets, and are very successful," said Wendy Van Wootten, a dietitian at the Naval Hospital's nutrition clinic.

Low-carb product sales have increased more than 30 percent in the last six months, due to all of the media attention," said Sabrina Nappa, a sales associate at Mainside's General Nutrition Center.

A low-carb diet, recognized as a diet comprised of less than 40 percent carbs, may reduce weight quickly, but numbers in physical fitness tests may drop as well.

"It directly affects physical performance. A low-carb diet does a disservice to the physical capabilities of the body," said Van Wootten.

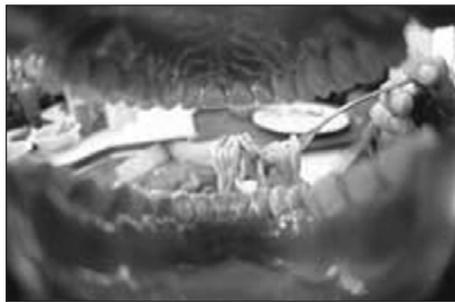


Photo by Lance Cpl. Khang T. Tran

The Atkins diet gets mixed reviews from Marines.

"When the diet is restricted in carbohydrates, it will begin losing stored water from muscle cells. As that water is eliminated, the result is the weight loss. The dieter is excited about the loss and continues to the point where it is either too boring or too difficult to continue. The weight gain returns, and the yo-yo cycle of weight loss and weight gain begins again," said Van Wootten.

Despite medical claims of the health risks associated with low-carb diets, some Marines continue to display unwavering loyalty to the low-carb solution.

Lance Cpl. Sweta A. Lamichmane, an assistant career planner for Combat Service Support Group 11, 1st Force

Service Support Group, weighed 144 pounds in February. At five feet, two inches tall, she was over her maximum weight by seven pounds. This, coupled with the desire to have a better body by summer, prompted her to get on the low-carb diet.

After four months of the low-carb lifestyle, along with physical training, Lamichmane lost 24 pounds, and improved her flexed arm hang by 34 seconds.

Different lifestyles require different caloric and carb intakes. Caloric needs also vary between different military occupational specialties.

The low-carb lifestyle is nearly impossible in a field environment, according to military and civilian dietitians.

"The nutrient-dense Meal Ready to Eat, based on a 2002 analysis, contains 1,261 calories, 43 grams of protein, 161 carbohydrates and nearly 49 grams of fat," said Van Wooten.

Not all carbohydrates are the same, and different carbs are consumed for different purposes.

"Carbohydrate sources are different depending on what type of food is consumed. Table sugar is a simple carbohydrate in that it doesn't require a lot

of digestion to break it down and get it into the blood stream. On the other hand, a slice of whole wheat bread or a cup of broccoli is a complex carbohydrate. Complex carbs require more extensive digestion, and get into the bloodstream slowly, sort of a time-released effect. Complex carbohydrates are always the preferred choice," said Van Wootten.

"If your chow hall doesn't offer you a salad bar, a non-fried entree or a starch side dish that isn't covered in gravy or butter, then I would encourage you to submit a customer satisfaction form and request that the menu include those items. Since all the chow halls operate a little differently, it is difficult for us to determine exactly what problems the menu may or may not have," said Van Wootten.

"I would recommend and encourage the individual to get over to the Naval Hospital and see one of the registered dietitians who can help that person develop a meal and exercise program that will be considerably more successful long term, than following a low-carb diet plan," said Van Wootten.

Marine News Service

Two of four quads experiencing life in Iraq

One is the older, "more mature" sister, freely giving advice and guiding her younger sibling — even if she is only senior by about two minutes.

The sisters, two of a set of quadruplets born to Joanne and Reginald L. Brown Sr., are deployed at Tallil Air Base, Iraq, together from their home units at Kadena Air Base, Japan.

Airman 1st Class Latrice Goldsby, a fire protection journeyman with the 407th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, is the second born while Airman 1st Class Shawn Brown, a force protection specialist here, is the baby of the group.

Reginald Brown Jr. is the oldest and the only male of the quads while Jocelyn Brown's birth falls between the two Airmen.

From the time they were born 21 years ago, the quads had never spent more than a few weeks away from each other. That changed when the two sisters decided to join the military.

Military service is not a tradition with the Brown family; so the Airmen said it was no surprise when their sister and the rest of the family were a little taken aback by their plans to enlist.

"At first it was a shock," Ms. Brown said, "just the thought of them going into the military. Lattice and Shawn were very good students and always

earned the better grades out of the quads; so I really didn't understand why (they would join the military)."

Airman Brown acknowledges she was the driving force behind that decision.

"After I graduated from high school, I didn't want to go to school full time anymore and thought by joining the military I could work and go to school," she said.

Airman Brown's plans swayed Airman Goldsby to join — not for the schooling or the experience — but because she "didn't want Shawn to have to go by herself," she said smiling.

The sisters signed up with the same recruiter in Frederick, Md., enlisting as open general candidates and went off to basic training together at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

There they were assigned to the same flight which made basic training easier, Airman Goldsby said, "knowing you were going through it with someone you were close to."

After graduation, the sisters went their separate ways with Airman Goldsby heading to technical school at Goodfellow AFB, Texas, and Airman Brown moving over to another unit at Lackland for career training as a supply troop.

While in technical school, Airman Goldsby was notified she was heading



U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Debbie Aragon

Airmen 1st Class Shawn Brown (left) and Latrice Goldsby are sisters and deployed here from Kadena Air Base, Japan. Except for technical schools, the sisters have been together throughout their military careers. They are two of a set of quadruplets.

to Kadena, and Airman Brown was destined for Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C. Thanks to an assignment switch with another Airman, however, Airman Brown arrived at Kadena ahead of her sister.

It might seem strange to some to be stationed together and then deployed with your sibling in a combat zone, but the sisters said it seems normal.

"After everything else, having her here with me seems like the way it should be," Airman Goldsby said.

Even though they are deployed together, contact is limited.

"We don't get to spend much time

together because I work long hours with force protection," Airman Brown said, "but we get together for things like combat bingo or dinner. When I have a day off we spend time together too."

"It means a lot being away from home and overseas," Airman Goldsby said. "It's good to have that face-to-face contact with your sibling. You know how they're doing, and you can go check on them when you want to."

Although they are thankful they are deployed here together, the sisters remember the two quads they left behind.

"Reginald doesn't tend to worry so much," Airman Brown said, "but Jocelyn, she worries."

"She took it really hard when we left," Airman Goldsby said of their sister. "The girls are very, very close, and we try to stay in contact with her often."

But, now that it has been some time since her sisters enlisted, she said it is obvious to her why they made the choice to join the Air Force.

"The military is helping them to achieve their goals," she said. "I think it's a great experience for them. They're able to see how other cultures adapt and use the resources they have to survive."

Air Force News

New program cuts red tape for severely disabled Soldiers

A new Army program will help severely disabled soldiers and their families cut through red tape so they can more easily tap into services available to them through the military and Department of Veterans Affairs.

The Disabled Soldier Support System — DS3 for short — gives wounded soldiers an additional way to seek out the help or information they need until they can return to active duty or receive a medical retirement from the Army.

Acting Army Secretary Les Brownlee told Pentagon reporters today DS3 will help "ensure that no Soldiers fall through the cracks" as they recover from their wounds and transition to the next stage of their lives and careers.

Brownlee said he hopes DS3 will serve as a pilot for the other military services.

In the meantime, he said the Army program will help all severely disabled service members, regardless of the uniform they wear. "We won't turn anybody down," he said.

Rather than introducing a new service, DS3 serves as a clearinghouse for host of services already available through the Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs, Army officials explained. This gives disabled Soldiers a single starting point for help with their financial, administrative, medical, vocational and other needs. It also helps them sort out the medical and vocational entitlements and other benefits for which they qualify.

The program's Web site went live May 1, and program staff can be reached toll-free at (800) 833-6622.

Anthony J. Principi, secretary of veterans affairs, said DS3 will eliminate any barriers Soldiers may

encounter as they move from care and services provided by the military to that provided by VA.

"I don't believe in red tape," Principi said. "If (soldiers come) to the Veterans Administration, we're going to take care of them and we'll worry about the paperwork later."

Of more than 12,000 Soldiers who have been wounded or injured during Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, 198 are considered severely disabled, meaning a medical board has determined that they have a 30 percent or greater disability, Army officials explained. These disabilities may involve loss of a limb or eye or paralysis.

Staff Sgt. Jerry Cortinas, a Special Forces Soldier who lost his left hand and has limited use of his right arm after being attacked by a rocket-propelled grenade in Afghanistan, said DS3 helped him sort out the services available to him.

"I was basically lost," he said. "I didn't know what direction to start walking to get the help I needed."

DS3 "supports the Soldier 100 percent," Cortinas said. "This program is a really positive thing to help our past, present and future soldiers," as well as their families.

Rebecca Sides, wife of now-retired Sgt. James Sides, said the program helped her through one of the most difficult times of her life.

Her husband, a flight medic with the 571st Medical Company, had just come out of a coma after a helicopter crash that left him submerged in water. He still suffered the aftereffects of brain bruises, a broken humerus, a collapsed lung, a stroke and short-term memory problems.

The family lost its military housing and Sides'

military income, leaving Rebecca to carry the brunt of the burden to move the family to Wynne, Ark., find a new job and help the couple's two young boys adapt to their changing circumstances.

"This program offers us a place to go when we need help," Rebecca said.

Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Briscoe, a Special Forces Soldier still being treated at Walter Reed Army Medical Center for combat injuries he received in Iraq, said he was particularly impressed that the DS3 staff sought him out — not the other way around.

"The top leadership came to me, the Soldier, to ask if I had any needs or concerns," said Briscoe, who lost the bottom half of his right arm and received extensive injuries to his left arm in Iraq in October.

Briscoe said he plans to tap into the services offered by DS3 as he goes through the medical board process.

He hopes to be able to continue his military service in some capacity for the next three years to serve out a full 20 years, but acknowledges that "it's really good to know that DS3 will be there if I have to transfer out."

Principi said the DS3 program will help repay, at least in part, the tremendous debt the American people owe to its disabled soldiers.

"These Soldiers have provided enormous service to the nation," agreed Brownlee. "They may have lost a leg or arm or eye, but they haven't lost their spirit or courage."

"And whether they leave or stay in the Army, they and their families know that they remain a part of the Army."

American Forces Press Service

Pool opens with a splash

By Capt. Catherine Wilkinson
13th COSCOM Deputy PAO

Six Soldiers dove into the newly refurbished outdoor swimming pool here July 24 as leaders from around the post cut a ribbon signifying the opening of the latest LSA Anaconda Morale, Welfare and Recreation facility.

Brig. Gen. James Chambers, 13th COSCOM and LSA Anaconda commanding general, delivered the opening remarks and said that it is the American nature to always improve things, adding that the 13th COSCOM is going to leave LSA Anaconda better than they found it.

"LSA Anaconda is a paradise within a battlefield," Chambers said.

The outdoor pool is a 50-meter, Olympic-quality pool. It has seven lanes, a 10-meter diving platform, a three-meter springboard and holds 800,000 gallons of water. It is a

deck-level pool, which makes for fast race times. The deck slopes to the water surface and is the same type of pool that Olympic athletes train and compete in.

Gerald Warner, the KBR project manager who oversaw construction and refurbishment of the facility, first saw the pool last year as what he described as a horrible hole in the ground. He said he is proud to have played a part in bringing it back to life.

"I think its great," said Staff Sgt. Adam Preston, a Soldier assigned to the 407th Quartermaster Detachment. "I helped to purify the water for the pool and it was worth every second we worked overtime to get it ready."

"It makes it better to be here at LSA Anaconda," added Spc. Timothy Key, from the 226th Medical Logistics Battalion.

The outdoor pool is the latest MWR facility to open at Anaconda and joins the indoor pool, movie theater,

outdoor track, MWR tent and post gymnasium as the centerpiece of leisure for not only LSA Anaconda, but for all of Iraq.

All pool visitors must comply with pool staff guidance and adhere to the rules of the facility, which include proper attire and no rough horseplay. Speedos and bikinis are not allowed.

The outdoor pool is open from 6 a.m. to noon and from 6 p.m. to midnight. The pool is closed during the heat of the day to prevent people from overexposure to the sun and heat, but the hours will be adjusted as sunshades and umbrellas are added to the facility.



First Military Intelligence Battalion's Pfc. David Barner shields the sun with a towel as he and coworker Spc. Julius Kimmie sit poolside waiting for the opening of the Olympic-quality facility July 24.



A swimmer soars through the air after leaping from one of the pool's three high dive platforms.



Brig. Gen. James Chambers, 13th COSCOM and LSA Anaconda commanding general, and Gerald Warner, KBR project manager, cut the ceremonial ribbon, officially opening the newly refurbished outdoor pool at LSA Anaconda.



Volleyball takes center stage in the shallow end, where basketball hoops also line the poolside.



Six soldiers celebrate the pool opening by taking an inaugural dive as the ribbon-cutting ceremony concludes July 24.

Movie Schedule

Sustainer Reel Time Theater

Daily Shows: 3 p.m., 6 p.m., and 9 p.m.
(schedule is subject to change)

Aug. 1

3 p.m. The Stepford Wives
6 p.m. The Chronicles Of Riddick
9 p.m. I, Robot

Aug. 2

3 p.m. The Chronicles Of Riddick
6 p.m. The Stepford Wives
9 p.m. Harry Potter And The
Prisoner of Azkaban

Aug. 3

3 p.m. I, Robot
6 p.m. Harry Potter And The
Prisoner of Azkaban
9 p.m. The Stepford Wives

Aug. 4

3 p.m. Breakin' All The Rules
6 p.m. I, Robot
9 p.m. The Chronicles Of Riddick

Aug. 5

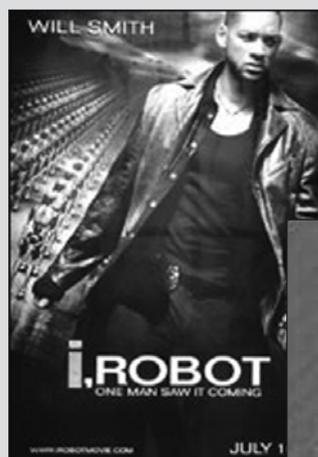
3 p.m. The Stepford Wives
6 p.m. The Chronicles Of Riddick
9 p.m. I, Robot

Aug 6

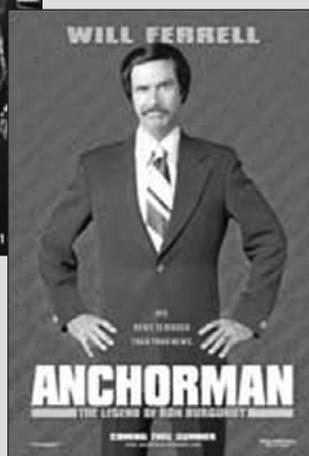
3 p.m. Catwoman
6 p.m. Catwoman
9 p.m. Catwoman

Aug 7

3 p.m. Around The World In 80 Days
6 p.m. Catwoman
9 p.m. The Terminal



I, Robot



Anchorman

Weekly Religious Schedule

Protestant-Traditional

Sunday 9 a.m. Eden Chapel (bldg. 4148)
Sunday 9:30 a.m. 31st Combat Support
Hospital
Sunday 10:30 a.m. Sapper Chapel (bldg. 4091)
Sunday 11 a.m. Eden Chapel (bldg. 4148)
Sunday 11 a.m. 185th Aviation Group Chapel

Protestant-Praise and Worship

Sunday 9 a.m. Sustainer Indoor Theater
Sunday 9:30 a.m. 185th Task Force Tent
Sunday 11 a.m. Eden Chapel (bldg. 4148)

Protestant-Gospel

11:30 Sustainer Indoor Theater
7 p.m. Eden Chapel (bldg. 4148)

Church of Christ

Sunday 11 a.m. 1/142nd Chapel Tent

Islamic Prayer

Friday 1:30 p.m. Anaconda Chapel Tent

Latter Day Saints

Sunday 9:30 a.m. Anaconda Chapel Tent
Sunday 7 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel

Protestant-Contemporary

Sunday 7 a.m. Sustainer Indoor Theater
Sunday 9 a.m. Tuskegee Chapel
Sunday 5:30 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel

Protestant-Liturgical

Saturday 7 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel

Lutheran

Sunday 8:30 a.m. Cherokee Chapel (bldg. 4002)
Sunday 2 p.m. 185th Task Force Tent

Roman Catholic Mass

Sunday 8:30 a.m. 185th Task Force Tent
Sunday 10 a.m. Sustainer Indoor Theater
Sunday noon 31st Combat Support Hospital
Monday 9 a.m. PPI Dining Facility
Monday 7 p.m. PPI Dining Facility
Saturday 7 p.m. Eden Chapel (bldg. 4148)

Jewish Prayer

Saturday 6:30 p.m. Eden Chapel (bldg. 4148)

Christian Orthodox

Sunday 11 a.m. 185th Task Force Tent

Movie Synopsis for Aug. 1-7

I, Robot

PG-13, Science Fiction, 175 min
Will Smith, Chi McBride, Alan Tudyk

In the future presented in the film, humans have become exceedingly dependent on robots in their everyday lives. Robots have become more and more advanced, but each one is preprogrammed to always obey humans and to, under no circumstances, ever harm a human. So, when a scientist turns up dead and a humanoid robot is the main suspect, the world is left to wonder if they are as safe around their electronic servants as previously thought. Will Smith stars as Del Spooner, the robot-hating Chicago cop assigned to the murder investigation. Bridget Moynahan, Bruce Greenwood, James Cromwell, and Chi McBride also star.

The Chronicles of Riddick

PG-13, Science Fiction, 119 min
Vin Diesel, Thandie Newton, Karl Urban

Director David Twohy and star Vin Diesel return for this sequel to the 2000 surprise hit "Pitch Black." Riddick has spent the last five years on the move among the forgotten worlds on the outskirts of the galaxy, eluding mercenaries bent on collecting the price on his head. Now, the fugitive finds himself on planet Helion. Exiled to a subterranean prison where extremes of temperature range from arctic nights to volcanic days, Riddick encounters Kyra, the lone survivor from an earlier chapter in his life. "The Chronicles of Riddick" is the first film in a planned trilogy of "Pitch Black" sequels centering on Riddick.

The Stepford Wives

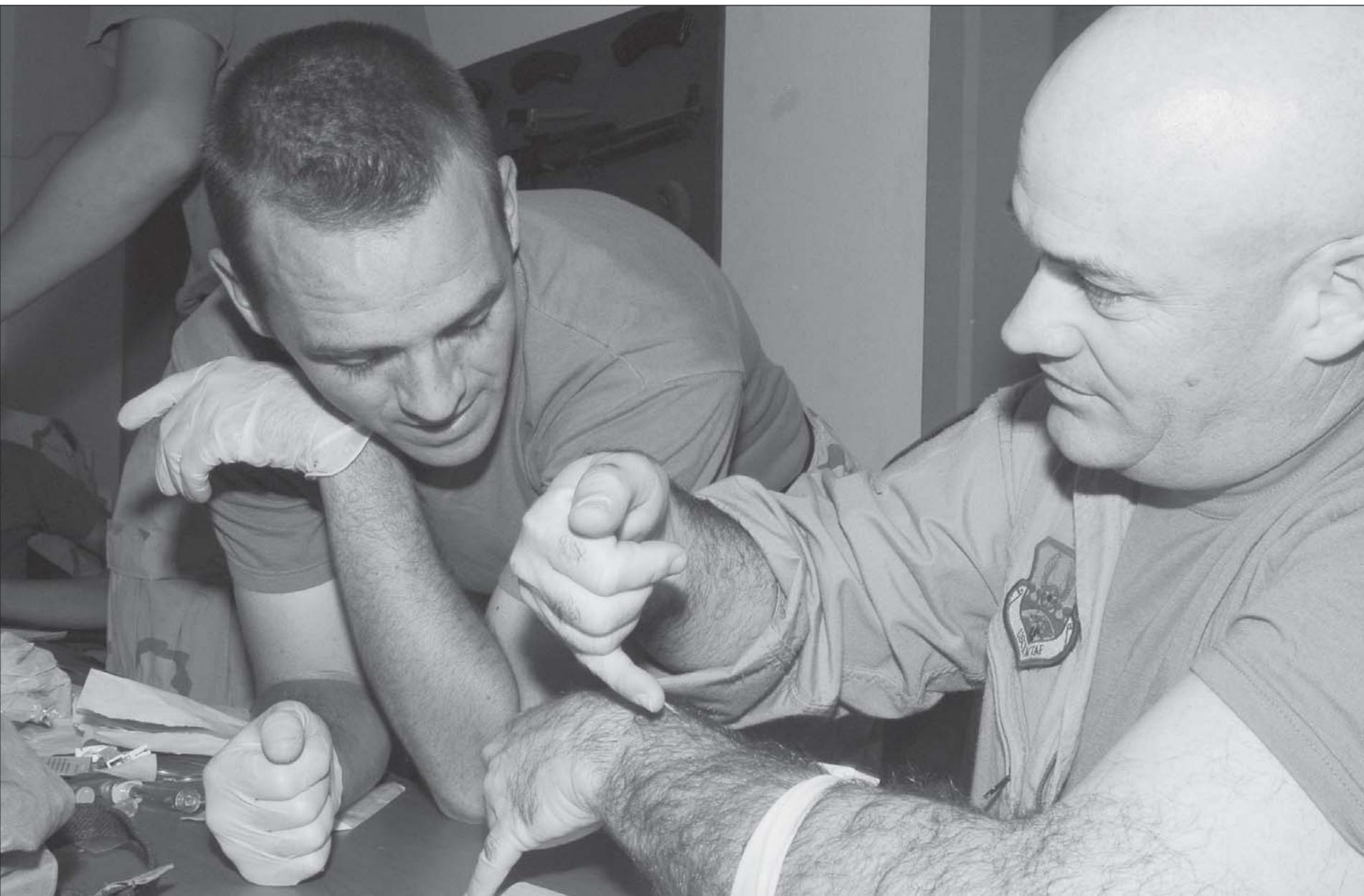
PG-13, Comedy, 93 min
Nicole Kidman, Matthew Broderick

Director Frank Oz and screenwriter Paul Rudnick re-team for this reimagining of Ira Levin's novel The Stepford Wives. Instead of a straight adaptation, the filmmakers have gone for a dark comedy with musical elements sprinkled in. Nicole Kidman stars as Joanna Eberhart, a young woman who, along with her husband, Walter (Matthew Broderick), has just moved into the quaint suburb of Stepford. After meeting some of their new neighbors, Joanna begins to suspect that something mysterious is afoot in the town, as all of the women, save her new best friend, Bobbie (Bette Midler), seem to have the same insipid personality.

Catwoman

PG-13, Action, 104 min
Halle Berry, Benjamin Bratt

Patience Philips (Halle Berry) is excruciatingly shy, quick to take blame, and, not surprisingly, more than a little depressed at the end of the day. This comes to somewhat of a screeching halt when Patience inadvertently becomes a human guinea pig for the revolutionary anti-aging product that Hedare is in the last stage of developing; she not only lands herself in the middle of a corporate conspiracy of gargantuan proportions, but on the city police force's most wanted list. Equipped with a new feline prowess, Patience is a different person come nighttime — more accurately, a catwoman.



Staff Sgt. Cohen Young

Master Sgt. Michael Strickland (right), 64th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron, shows Airman 1st Class Jacob Green, 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, the best way to insert an intravenous needle. Sergeant Strickland is deployed here from the 347th Medical Group at Moody Air Force Base, Ga., while Airman Green is deployed here from the 28th Security Forces Squadron at Ellsworth AFB, S.D.

First sergeants give blood for training

By Staff Sgt. Jason Lake
332nd AEW Public Affairs

Members of the 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron received life-saving medical training recently on the arms of Balad's first sergeants.

More than half a dozen Balad first sergeants rolled up their sleeves and "took one for the team" to give a half dozen patrolmen intravenous therapy training for severe dehydration or trauma.

Master Sgt. Michael Strickland, 64th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron, and medics from the 332nd Contingency Aero-medical Staging Facility, taught the security forces Airmen proper techniques for finding a vein in a patient's arm while the first sergeants served as the guinea pigs.

Master Sgt. Robert Foley, the 332nd ESFS first sergeant and organizer of the event, said the training was essential for his troops - especially out here in the desert.

The first sergeant deployed from 325th Mission Support Squadron at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., said on patrols, his troops are exposed to extreme temperatures inside their Humvees.

On an average summer day here, the vehicles easily get hotter than 115 degrees inside, and the

protective equipment the troops wear only adds to the heat stress, Foley explained.

Foley said that in the past few weeks there have been a few cases of dehydration out in the field, so he enlisted some volunteers to help sharpen the medical skills of his troops.

"It's very difficult to start an IV on dehydrated patients," Foley explained. "Our combat life savers wanted to increase their proficiency in starting IVs



under adverse conditions such as dehydration."

The first sergeant said he had a good idea where to look for volunteers - his first sergeant colleagues.

"As first sergeants our job is to help our people," he said. "In this case, by lending our veins we show (the troops) we have faith in their abilities."

Master Sgt. Nancy Clegg, first sergeant for the 332nd CASF volunteered her arm for the training.

"I told them that they would get four tries out of me," she said with a hint of sarcasm.

The Airman training with Clegg got the IV to take on the fourth try.

Afterward, Clegg, who is also a medical evacuation technician by trade, said she would have lent her arm as long as it took to help.

"These guys are the ones that go outside the wire and protect us while I work behind my desk," she said. "If I can help them by lending them my arm, then they can stick me almost as much as they want."

Senior Airman Irene Atkins, one of the Airmen who received the training, said she learned an easier way to get the needle into a vein.

Airman Atkins and a few others also conducted combat lifesaver training with the Army here in February.

"It was good practice," Atkins said. "This kind of training is important because we don't want to lose one of our own. It's as hot as an oven out there and we don't want anyone to get sent home."

Staff Sgt. Jason McQuarrie, another trainee deployed here from the 4th Security Forces Squadron at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C., said the training could also be useful when he rotates back to the states. Being a first responder back home, Sergeant McQuarrie said the training here could help save someone suffering from severe dehydration or trauma after a major accident.

"You never know when you're going to use it," he said.

Air Force ROTC cadet deploys to Balad for summer vacation

By Staff Sgt. Jason Lake
332nd AEW Public Affairs



During summer break, most college students plan to go on nice vacations at the beach or hang out with friends.

But for one University of New Mexico student, summer break meant a deployment here.

Derek Huffaker, a full-time student and traditional Guardsman serving with the 150th Fighter Wing's Civil Engineer Squadron at Kirtland Air Force Base, is also a cadet at the university's Detachment 510 Reserve Officers' Training Corps.

The senior airman from Kansas City, Kansas, said he got word about his three-month deployment just as the spring semester began.

"At first, I thought I was going somewhere else, but then I found out I was going to Balad," Airman Huffaker explained. "I was excited, nervous and anxious all at the same time, but I didn't know anything about Balad before I got here."

Airman Huffaker's ROTC commander, Maj. Michael Richmond, said that it is rare for an ROTC cadet to get deployed prior to graduation.

The ROTC cadet deployed here just a week after finishing final exams.

"I didn't get to see the summer break, but I definitely got to see a lot of sun," he said sarcastically.

During the month that he has served here, Airman Huffaker has worked on various construction projects such as the new office spaces for the Predator team.

Currently, he is working on a quality of life project - building a stage and recreation area between the 332nd Communications Squadron and the 332nd Operation Support Squadron.

The five-year Guard veteran said the work has been intense, but also rewarding.

"I knew this was going to be a heavy contingency, but there was much less infrastructure here than I expected," he said. "It's been hard working 12 hour days seven days a week - especially since the job is labor intensive."

Airman Huffaker said he knows his experiences here, as an enlisted Airman, will help him develop into an experienced officer when he graduates from the university next year.

"Having prior enlisted experience will give me better insight about the people serving under me," he explained. "I'll know what it's like for them because I've been in their shoes."

When he goes back to school later this year, Airman Huffaker plans to work on his minor course of study by visiting Nizhniy-Novgorod, Russia, for the third time. After that, he will go through a four-week officers' field training similar to enlisted basic training.

Once Cadet Huffaker graduates, he will get a conditional release from the Air National Guard and become an active duty officer.

Airman Huffaker said as an active duty officer, he wants to gain more worldwide experience and eventually get an assignment that requires the Russian he's been studying.

"I want to live anywhere in Europe or Asia," he said. "I'd like to get an foreign area officer position or work as an air attaché officer at an embassy eventually."

No matter what job he gets as an officer, Airman Huffaker said he'll be happy about at least one thing ... a bigger paycheck.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Lake

Senior Airman Derek Huffaker, 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, nails down a sheet of plywood roofing on a stage being built between the 332nd Communications Squadron and 332nd Operation Support Squadron.

Election Year Advice

As the election season swings into high gear, it is a good time to review Department of Defense directive 1344.10, political activity by service members on active duty. This directive outlines the permissible and prohibited political activities for active duty service members.

Service members on active duty are encouraged to carry out the obligations of a citizen within certain guidelines. Service members may register to vote, vote and express personal opinions on political candidates and issues, as long as they are not speaking as a representative of the Armed Forces. Making monetary contributions to a political organization and attending partisan and nonpartisan political meetings as a spectator when not in uniform are also permissible.

Signing a petition for a specific legislative action or to place a candidate's name on the ballot is permissible, as long as it is done as a private citizen and signing the petition does not obligate the signer to engage in partisan political activity.

Writing a letter to the editor of a newspaper to express personal views on public issues or political candidates is permissible as well, as long as it is not part of an organized political letter-writing campaign.

Service members on active duty may not use official authority or influence to interfere with an election. Participation in partisan political management, campaigns or conventions is also prohibited, as is participation in any radio, television, or other program as an advocate of a partisan political party.

General guidelines to follow include ensuring that attention is given to the performance of military duties and refraining from activities that may bring discredit upon the Armed Forces. Always refrain from participating in any political activity while in military uniform.

Finally, the use of contemptuous words against the officeholders described in 10 U.S.C. 888 is prohibited and can in some circumstances be punished under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. For further information about political activities, see your unit voting assistance officer, your servicing judge advocate or inspector general.

A portrait of a calvary scout

By Pfc. Abel Trevino
Staff writer

Sgt. Justin Scott Little hesitated slightly when he talked about combat. Beneath his short, chopped red hair he remembered seeing the things most people at LSA Anaconda never will, from a perspective fewer still will never experience here.

Little of Alpha Troop, 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment is the commander's gunner. His primary weapon is the mounted M2 .50 caliber machine gun.

"I like my job," said Little, a scout since he joined the Army in 2000.

His job brought him to Iraq, where he has learned valuable life-saving skills.

"I learned that the most important thing is situational awareness in my many experiences in [Operation Iraqi Freedom], to be aware of my surroundings at all times," he said.

The revelation came to him after traveling the roads of Iraq and meeting combat head on.

"[We] came under attack [under an overpass] in downtown Baghdad [targeted] with multiple forms of attacks - grenades, [improvised explosive devices], mortars and small arms fire," he said about one of the experiences he will not ever forget.

He reacted the way he had been trained.

"It's a surreal feeling, everything is [slow-motion]. You really don't think, you just react like you've been trained to during a contact," Little said.

Despite the encounters and possibilities of danger, Little doesn't consider that his greatest fear.

"My biggest fear in the whole world is heights," he said. "The Stryker is kind of high and sometimes it feels like it's going to flip and sometimes that gets to me."

Little and his Stryker unit are from Fort Lewis, Wash., but his Army career started in Germany.

Little spent three years in Germany before moving to Fort Lewis, where he spent only a month before deploying to Iraq. The arid environment of Iraq is a far cry from what Little misses most about home - the milder weather.



Photo by Pfc. Abel Trevino

Sgt. Justin Scott Little, Alpha Troop, 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, stands in front of Alpha-6, the Stryker combat vehicle he is the gunner on.

"I like to hunt, fish and camp. But I haven't really had that much time off lately," he quipped.

Fort Lewis is a choice station for Little because of its proximity to outdoor recreation and home.

"I like hanging out with friends and family," he said.

Little was one member of Alpha Troop who traveled 1400 kilometers from July 17 to 21 while escorting the Republic of Korea Army from Tallil to Irbil, north of the Green Line.

Question of the Week

What regulation violation annoys you the most?



Spc. Jacob Flores
6th Field Artillery

"Nothing really annoys me. You have rules, you need to follow them."



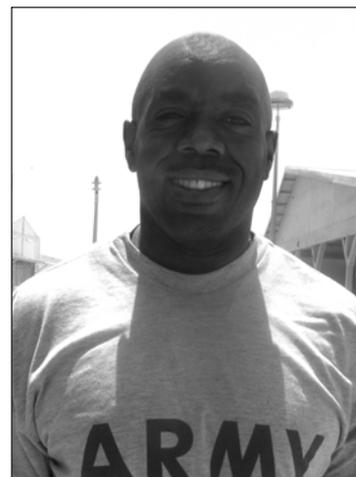
Tech. Sgt. Alan Thoma
332nd ESVS

"Air Force personnel leaving T-town and not being in the proper uniform."



Sgt. Sue Allen
31st Combat Support Hospital

"It has to be the no t-shirt on the pt track here and they're military."



Staff Sgt. Darrell Hampton
3625th Maintenance Company

"Driving a deuce and a half by yourself."



1st Sgt. Brenda Wiegert
13th COSCOM

"Uniform violations. Seeing Soldiers out of uniform annoys me the most."

Quarry platoon making "little ones out of big ones"

By Master Sgt. Jack Gordon
U.S. Army Reserve Public Affairs

The sun won't break the edge of the horizon for another few hours, but soldiers from the 277th Engineer Company's Quarry Platoon are already on the job.

Due to the heat increasing in the long days of Iraq's summer months, the relative coolness of 80 to 90 degree mornings make working at the unit's rock-crushing plant more bearable, so the Soldiers arrive about 4 a.m., just like in the Army's television ads.

"Yesterday it was 127 degrees," said Sgt. 1st Class David Cantyne, non-commissioned officer in charge of the operation. "We're working now from four in the morning until about 2 p.m. It's better for the Soldiers."

The 277th En. Co., from San Antonio, Texas, is an asphalt paving company - the rock crusher is a part of the overall mission. The Quarry Platoon is responsible for acquiring and sizing the aggregate, or stone, that will be mixed with a tar-like binding element to create asphalt.

The unit has four platoons; quarry, asphalt, maintenance and headquarters, with about 140 Soldiers assigned. Their primary mission here is paving roads and stretches of airport runways, or "topping" aprons for vehicle or aircraft placement/parking and managing dust.

The crusher resembles an almost nightmarish mechanical octopus with metal tentacles stretching far from its center, each dropping showers of newly crushed stone onto mounds of various-sized rocks to meet the paving needs of planned hard surfaces.

"The unit can take any size aggregate and reduce it according to need," said Cantyne. "Here, we don't have a quarry to blast our rock from, so we have contract gravel delivered. We buy rock less than five inches - and bring it here to crush it."

The plant's systems, although gargantuan, are actually quite refined, and able to produce crushed and washed rock in quarter-inch or three-quarter-inch sizes, as well as separating washed sand.

After getting the aggregate and blending it with the binder, the 277th Engineer Company's paving crew spreads and compacts the asphalt.

"We do the same kind of road paving you see on highways at home - we do everything but the striping," said Cantyne.

The 277th Engineer Company Soldiers are working to improve the roads in Iraq.

"Crush rock and pave the way - that's our motto," said Staff Sgt. Billy K. Steele. "We take big rocks and make little ones out of them," Steele said.

Steele said he is focused on the rock-crushing process since he feels the lack of similar attention may have contributed to some of the poor road surface conditions in Iraq. Steele also noted that there are no weight restrictions on roads here, unlike in the United States, and the wear and tear exacted by the overloaded trucks has no doubt contributed to the crumbling of many of Iraq's roads.

As the sky grows lighter in shades, it's easier to spot the platoon's Soldiers assigned to various duties on the rock crusher.

"It takes everybody working together to make this work," Steele said. "Every morning we review our plans for the day so everybody knows where they are and what they're doing."

The operation is located near the perimeter, and it would seem relatively easy to lob in a few mortar rounds, if the enemy were so inclined.

"We get occasional mortar rounds and rockets. There are people who don't want us here so they think if they keep throwing stuff at us we'll quit our jobs and go away, but we're Soldiers too," said Steele.

"We all knew what we were doing when we enlisted, but we have Soldiers who are watching and we will respond to and engage the enemy if necessary. We're alert at all times," said Steele.

A Soldier covered in dust crawled from beneath the main belt of the rock crusher and offered an early morning smile. She said the dirt and dust in the plant aren't a major concern.

"I don't mind getting dirty," said Staff Sgt. Lucia Estrada. "That's why I got this job. I like to get dirty. They [the recruiters] tried to get me into the medical field, but I asked about this job [from photographs in the brochure]. They told me it was a rock crusher and that I'd learn to blast [explosives] too, so I said 'Cool, it sounds great!'"

Estrada said she's grateful to the Army for allowing her to choose what she wanted to be.

"I enlisted in 1999 and I've been crushing rock ever since," she said. Estrada said her role at the plant embodies many functional areas, and that she's willing to do whatever has to be done to keep the crusher crushing.

"Everybody here knows how to do everything - we all know all the jobs and we do them very well," said Estrada, who admits that even with disregard to gender, she has no qualms about being physically limited.

"As a female, there are quite a few things that I have a little more difficulty doing than the other (male) Soldiers because I can't lift as much, or I can't reach as high, but like any other Soldier of my height and weight, you have to ask your buddy for help if you can't do something, especially if you can't do it safely," Estrada said.

She said her family and friends think she's crazy for her job choice in the Army and her dedication to it, but knows they support her efforts from the care packages they send. But her goals aren't really too difficult to explain.

"Seeing the whole thing run together," Estrada said, "and making the products we need, then seeing the finished product, that's what I like best."



Photo by Master Sgt. Lee D. Collier

Toxic Cooking

KBR Safety personnel recently discovered this newly made, ready-to-use barbeque grill on post. They removed and destroyed the grill before anyone could use it.

Soldiers, like anybody else, love to barbeque but here in Iraq that barbeque could get you more than the Iraqi crud or a well-done burger; it could cause acute health problems from ingestion of a toxic chemical by-product.

The product on this barrel is Lupranate, which is toxic to the human body. Some vendors will sell these empty drums to whoever requests them, but there is still a residual chemical present that could cause exposure.

Even using them for waste oils could cause a reaction, so the bottom line is do not purchase toxic waste barrels from vendors for any use.

DPW can make barbeque pits for units that request them.

If you need drums for collection of waste oil, contact the hazardous material yard for an empty drum.

Let's all have a safe and enjoyable summer here at LSA Anaconda.

Karate for Christ: combining martial arts with faith

By Pvt. Chelsea Mack
81st BCT PAO

"Ichi! Ni! San!" Lt. Col. Steven Wilson, the 81st Brigade Combat Team chaplain commands in front of his students, counting to three in Japanese.

In addition to his duties as a chaplain, Wilson is also the Sensei, or teacher, of the Karate for Christ class held at the new gym here.

Wilson teaches Shotokan karate, a style that he says is the traditional foundation for karate.

"It focuses on power. It is a little different than what you see on television; one or two hits and you are done," Wilson said.

In his class, Wilson has made an effort to focus on what he believes are the three main aspects of a person: spirit, mind and body.

"We believe God created us as whole people, spiritually, mentally and physically," Wilson explains. "We want to develop all three areas of our lives."

To many, the concept of combining religion with a skill that can kill or maim an opponent is incredulous.

To Maj. Ken Garrison, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 81st BCT, it's a plain and simple fact.

"This class has helped me spiritually," Garrison said. "Each character quality [the different forms and stances] is associated with patience and endurance, and there is a Christian scripture that goes with each one."

Garrison is one of Wilson's Senior Students, meaning he has trained, tested and qualified for both the white belt, which is the first belt a student can earn, and yellow belt.

While Garrison absorbs the spiritual aspect of the class, Maj. Alan Dorow, also a Senior Student from HHC, 81st BCT, attends the class for a much different reason.

"I like the hard, physical workout, with the challenge of learning the new moves," Dorow says.

Karate for Christ is a stimulating yet enjoyable class.

Wilson works with his pupils to teach them the three different aspects of Shotokan karate, yet he takes his role very seriously; he is not hesitant to make his students do pushups or the dreaded "bicycle" as correctional methods.

"I have recommended this class to others," Garrison says.

"It's really for anybody, you just have to be willing to work hard," added Garrison.



Maj. Thomas Muehleisen and Pfc. Thuong-em Nguyen pair up and train during a martial arts class.



Lt. Col. Steven Wilson, 81st BCT chaplain, has his students perform push-ups because they weren't counting loud enough during the class.



Pfc. Thuong-em Nguyen performs a fighting stance during the martial arts class.



Lt. Col. Steven Wilson, 81st BCT chaplain, talks to his students at the beginning of his martial arts class while holding his counting stick.

Photos by Pvt. Chelsea Mack

Heat stress

Medics share warning signs, precautions to take against desert heat

By Capt. Eric Sawvel
332nd AEW
Expeditionary Medical Squadron

The heat is once again upon us here and the typical daily temperatures can easily exceed 100 degrees Fahrenheit during the summer months.

It is important to remember that as the outside temperature rises, so rises the potential for our body's temperature to increase to dangerous levels.

This means that we must all must pay close attention for signs of heat stress illnesses and stay properly hydrated.

Take a few minutes to review the following heat stress and hydration information with your supervisors, co-workers and shop personnel.

The key to hydration is water intake.

WATER INTAKE

Adequate water intake is essential to replace the water lost through sweating, respiration and elimination.

Encourage personnel to begin hydrating several days before a lengthy or high performance exposure to hot conditions to ensure adequate hydration beforehand.

Advise personnel to begin water consumption at the recommended rate up to two hours before starting the activity when possible.

It is better to drink small amounts of water frequently (for example, one-fourth of a canteen every 15 to 30 minutes) than to drink larger amounts less frequently.

Make cool water available, when possible, for personnel to refresh their canteens.

When the activity is complete, fluid replacement should continue for approximately two hours.

Caffeinated beverages do not make up for water loss. Carbonated beverages are not as effective as non-carbonated beverages in keeping the body hydrated because of delayed absorption. Inform personnel not to exceed an hourly fluid intake of 1.5 quarts or 12 quarts daily.

CAUTION

Hourly fluid intake shouldn't exceed 1.5 quarts and daily fluid intake shouldn't exceed 12 quarts.

Rapid ingestion of large amounts of water (greater than 1.5 quarts per hour) may lead to hyponatremia (acute water intoxication: deficiency of sodium in the blood), which is a life-threatening condition that may lead to weakness, convulsions, loss of consciousness and death if not recognized and treated promptly.

For more information on heat stress recommendations and treatments, visit: <http://blab-web.blab.aorcentaf.af.mil/> and click on Heat Index.

Recommended Balad Heat Stress table (adjusted for body armor)

Time of day	heat category	light work		
		work/rest (min/min)	water intake (qt/hr)	
Sunrise to 0800	1 (none)	no limit	1/2	
0900 to 1100	3 (yellow)	no limit	3/4	
1100 to 1300	4 (red)	no limit	3/4	
1300 to 1500	5 (black)	50/10	1	
1500 to 1700	4 (red)	no limit	3/4	
1700 to 1900	3 (yellow)	no limit	3/4	
2000 to sunset	1 (none)	no limit	1/2	
Time of day	Moderate work		heavy work	
	Work/rest (min/min)	water intake (qt/hr)	work/rest (min/min)	water intake (qt/hr)
Sunrise to 0800	no limit	3/4	40/20	3/4
0900 to 1100	40/30	3/4	30/30	1
1100 to 1300	30/30	3/4	20/40	1
1300 to 1500	20/40	1	10/50	1
1500 to 1700	30/30	3/4	20/40	1
1700 to 1900	40/30	3/4	30/30	1
2000 to sunset	no limit	3/4	40/20	3/4

Heat stress warning signs, symptoms

- Early signs, symptoms
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Dry mouth
- Unsteady walk
- Weakness
- Muscle cramps
- Later signs, symptoms
- Hot body, high temperature
- Confusion, unresponsiveness, coma
- Vomiting
- Skin flushing, turning red
- Involuntary bowel movement
- Convulsions
- Weak or rapid pulse
- Actions
- Stop working or training
- Rest in the shade
- If symptoms don't improve in 15 to 30 minutes, go to the nearest medical facility
- If signs or symptoms get worse, call an ambulance
- Immediate actions
- Call ambulance for immediate transport to the hospital
- Lay down in the shade with your feet elevated until an ambulance arrives
- Take sips of water while waiting for the ambulance
- Begin active cooling if skin is hot to touch
- Undress as much as possible
- Pour cool water over body and fan