

ANACONDA TIMES

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Proudly serving Logistics Support Area Anaconda

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Photo by Pfc. Abel Trevino

Inside the Hatami School, an instructor looks over the students' school work May 11. The renovation of the schoolhouse is just one of the many projects sponsored by Soldiers of LSA Anaconda.

Soldiers building futures in Iraq

By Pfc. Abel Trevino
Staff writer

A local town near LSA Anaconda received much more than a new school from the Soldiers of the U.S. Army Materiel Command in partnership with the 660th Transportation Company. During a May 10 visit to Hatami Village, the service members laid the foundation for a promising future.

"We have the opportunity to go out and serve the community, and make a difference. Not only as people who helped free this country, but also with people that we can [reach], day-to-day, and show them there is an opportunity and hopefully that opportunity will be through education," said Lt. Col. Jeffrey Meo, LSA Anaconda AMC commander.

Meo discovered the Civil Affairs school project needed a sponsor and immediately volunteered AMC to take up the call.

"Our focus on this, in working with the schools, is being able to improve the educational system," Meo said about the sponsorship for Hatami School, which he had been involved in since its inception.

Although the project is only 20 to 50 percent completed, the impact it has made in the Hatami Community was noticeable with smiles and laughter from the villagers.

"It's so weird being here, not getting shot at like we're used to [while on the road]. We are actually welcome here," said Sgt. David Jindra, 660th Trans. Co.

Before the project, the supplies for teaching were in poor condition; broken desks were strewn about various rooms and courtyards, while books sat in scattered piles.

"The conditions of the schools are terrible. The conditions of the chairs, they're all broken and torn up; there's hardly anything else. And even the books, they're piled on the floor. There aren't even cabinets to put them in. My feeling is that we have a lot to do out there. There are a lot of jobs and volunteers are needed to help. The more people we can get involved, the better off we'll be," Meo said.

The newer facilities and supplies contributed to building a better future for the community, concluded Meo.

"They will be able to take the resources we provide, or assist them in, and make this a better place for their children to live and grow up. Many times the contractors themselves are from the same village," Meo said.

The sponsorship program is an opportunity for Soldiers to become further involved with the positive influence of Iraq.

"It's a chance to touch the community and build relationships, and that is the next step to improving this country: building relationships," said Meo. "The opportunity to do that, for myself, is very rewarding."

As a result of efforts by Coalition Forces and units such as the 660th Trans. Co. and the AMC, local villages are gaining a foothold for a prosperous future for their children and Iraq.

Post Office relocates to former DFAC no. 1

By Pfc. Leah R. Burton
Staff writer

The LSA Anaconda post office opened its new location on Pennsylvania Avenue in the old Dining Facility 1 May 24.

When construction began at the site of the outdoor swimming pool, the Soldiers of the 175th Adjutant General Company (Postal) had to find a different location, said Capt. Marva R. Lane, 175th AG Co. (Postal) commander.

The 175th AG Co. (Postal), headquartered out of Fort Lewis, Wash., operates the post office here.

The unit is composed of 1st Platoon, 313th AG Co., from San Juan, Puerto Rico; 1st and 2nd Plt., 350th AG Co., from Grand Prairie, Texas; and 1st Plt., 449th AG Co., from North Carolina.

The relocation was organized and supervised by 1st Lt. Jacqueline Williams, the unit's postal and finance platoon leader, and Sgt. Shemeka Wright, the unit's custodian of postal effects.

Williams and Wright had to have a wall constructed to separate post office space from non-post office space. In addition, they had to have new signs made for the front of the building and ensure the new building had power, Lane said.

After closing the old location for two days, the Soldiers moved the Integrated Retail Terminals, the tables, shelving and computers to the new building. Integrated Retail Terminals are used to weigh packages and letters.

"The Soldiers sweat blood and tears," said Lane.

Although, the building on Pennsylvania Avenue is larger and more comfortable, it's only temporary.

"We're only expected to be here for about 90 days before we move again. We're moving to building 7100. It's behind the [Morale, Welfare and Recreation] tent," Lane said.

At their new location on Pennsylvania Avenue, the 175th offers military postal services, such as free services for those sending items to Germany; free mail, 13 ounces or less, for those sending items to the States; and regular postal services, such as certified and insured mail.

Prior to the relocation, everything but MPS was offered at the post office. Customers wanting to send items through MPS had to go to a separate location. The Soldiers of 175th AG Co., now offers all of their

see MAIL, page 4

Memorializing young worker

By Sgt. Ann Venturato
Assistant editor

A fuel pump attendant killed at LSA Anaconda was remembered May 21 as an enterprising and ambitious young man working to better himself and help his family back home.

More than 250 members of the Anaconda community came to the service at Sustainer Indoor Theater to pay tribute to Raymond Natividad, who was considered a valued member. Natividad's life was cut short when a mortar round fired by Anti-Coalition Forces hit May 11 near the trailer where he had lived.

There was no rifle salute and no ceremonial guard during the memorial service, but many tears were shed as friends, relatives and coworkers paid tribute to the man who supported their efforts with his service to the community. A native of the Philippine Islands, the 25 year old was most known for his determination that motivated him to seek a job so far away from his home despite the potential risk involved.

"This was the first job that Natividad had," said Toby O'Connell, a representative of Prime Projects International, which employed Natividad. "[He] had the job since December."

Choked by tears, Natividad's cousin Ronnie DeJesus spoke briefly at the memorial service.

"I miss him," he said. "Now he is with God."

Those who knew him said that although his life was cut short, they were blessed for having known him and they'll always appreciate the memories he left with them.

He was a Soldier's Soldier

By Pfc. Abel Trevino
Staff writer

Soldiers from the 660th Transportation Company remembered Sgt. James William "Kentucky" Harlan at a solemn memorial service at the Sustainer Indoor Theater May 20.

"Sgt Harlan was a Soldier's Soldier," said 1st Lt. Caroline Hoza, platoon leader for third platoon, 660th Trans. Co. "He didn't sugar coat anything. If things were jacked up, he would say things were jacked up. He was real. He was real, and he was funny."

Harlan died four hours after a car bomb was detonated in his convoy May 15.

"He was quiet, but at the same time when he said something, it was real truthful. He didn't say a whole lot, but when he spoke it was truthful," said Spc. Steven Sharp of the 660th Trans. Co.

Harlan was known for his humor, which was situational in relation to his job, but when Harlan was working he was all about business.

"He would do anything you asked of him. I could go up to him and he would never question [me]," said Hoza. "This is a Soldier's Soldier, real as can be. He was looked up to a lot by the younger Soldiers. He was not like a father figure but kind of like a mentor."

As a mentor, Harlan often sacrificed his own personal comfort for the benefit of other Soldiers.

"He volunteered for everything. Seriously, in the last two months he had like one day off," Hoza said. "[Harlan] was always willing to go and do what was needed to get the mission accomplished. To give somebody else down time, he would put the burden on himself."

A commercial truck driver in the United States, Harlan brought his skills to LSA Anaconda as a military truck driver for the 660th Trans. Co.

"He sure could drive," Sharp said.

Harlan is survived by his fiancé, four children and two grandchildren.



Photo by Pfc. Abel Trevino

An airman salutes the memorial display for Sgt. James William Harlan of the 660th Transportation Company, at a solemn service in the Sustainer Indoor Theater on LSA Anaconda, Iraq, May 20. Harlan was part of a convoy that was hit by a car bomb May 15.

Field sanitation protects overall welfare of soldiers, units, eliminates risk of diseases

By 926th Preventive Medicine
Special to Anaconda Times

Unit Field Sanitation Teams serve as advisors to the commander and are a requirement by Army Regulation 40-5. Unit FSTs assess individual and unit

preventive medicine measures that prevent disease non-battle injuries. Teams are used to assess the medical threat for diseases and illness risks by performing the following tasks:

- Inspect the unit's water containers and trailers.
- Disinfect unit water supply.

• Check unit water supply for chlorine residual.

• Inspect unit field food service operations.

• Control arthropods, rodents and other animals in the unit's area.

• Train unit personnel in individual use of preventive medicine measures.

• Supervise the construction of field sanitation devices.

• Monitor unit personnel in individual preventive medicine measures.

The FST can assist in protecting the health of personnel. For answers about training please contact the preventive medicine section at DNV: 528-1405.

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Commentary

Respect faith, not fanatics of Islam

By Staff Sgt. Russell Bassett
Army News Service

Religion gets to the heart of what we believe and what we value, and strong emotions are wrapped around those beliefs and values. Even atheists strongly defend their right not to believe in God.

Today, one religion — Islam — is facing close scrutiny as its radical fringe terrorizes the world through violent attacks.

But is Islam itself the reason for terrorism, or is it something else? Has the backlash against terrorism created intolerance for Islam? And are those of us in the military doing enough to ensure that Muslims in uniform are enjoying the same tolerance of their faith as those from different religions?

Islam is the second largest religion in the world, totaling more than 1.3 billion believers. Less than 20 percent of the Muslims in the world are Arab, and all Arab countries have populations that believe in other religions. Indonesia has the world's largest Islamic population, 88 percent of its citizens are Muslim.

In the United States, Islam is the fastest growing religion. There are currently five to seven million Muslims who are U.S. citizens.

There is also a substantial number of Muslims in the U.S. military; between 10,000 and 20,000 U.S. service members consider themselves followers of Islam.

In the U. S. Army, Muslims are afforded the same rights to worship as any other religion.

"The Army tries to accommodate different religions," said Chaplain Hanson Boney at Fort Eustis, Va. "There have been Muslims in the Army for the past 40 years. There are times we can't accommodate religions, like in times of war, but Muslims have no harder time worshipping in the Army than any other religion."

Some Muslims are finding that the backlash against terrorism has made it harder for them to practice their faith.

Matthew Hicks, a Soldier in Company E, 71st Transportation Battalion said, "People get the wrong idea about Muslims. They think I'm a terrorist or [I'm] going to blow something up."

In 2002, Hicks changed his name from Abdulaziz Gazah so he wouldn't have to face the prejudice associated with an Islamic name. After joining the Army, Hicks also faced discrimination.

"When I was in basic," he said, "I told my drill sergeant that I wanted to attend Muslim service and he at first didn't believe me and then started harrasing me, so I stopped going to the services all together."

After that incident, Hicks decided he was not going to tell anyone he is a Muslim. He arrived on Fort Eustis and had not even told his battle buddy about his Islamic beliefs.

One of the five pillars of the Muslim faith is to pray five times a day. As an Initial Entry Soldier, it had been difficult for Hicks to find time to pray.

"I have had zero time to pray," he said. "But in the Islamic faith it is not so much that you have to pray, it's if you have the time or make the intent. It is all about your intent."

The Jacksonville, Fla., native who speaks Arabic said he joined the Army to work as a translator in the Persian Gulf. Hicks, whose parents are from Saudi Arabia, said he spent some time in that country growing up, but that he is "born and raised American."

"I am so loyal to the United States," he said. "My grandfather served in the U.S. (Army) Air Corps and even when I was in Saudi Arabia, I told everyone I was American."

Spc. David Burgos, operations clerk for the 492nd Harbormaster Detachment, who has been an active Muslim for 25 years, said Islam helped give him direction and hope.

"I came from a broken home, and when my parents divorced, I became a ward of the State," Burgos said. "The path I was walking was one of crime and drugs, and it was the light of Islam that brought me off that path."

Before joining the Army, Burgos faced prejudice because of his faith during the first Gulf War.

"There was a lot of backlash as a Muslim for me in the workplace," he said.

Like Hicks, Burgos also did not mention his beliefs during Initial Entry Training. "I wasn't sure how it would be accepted," he said.

Since then, Burgos has spent eight years on Fort Eustis, and he said working there has enabled him to actively pursue his faith.

"My unit has always been accepting," he said. "They let me go to Jumah (prayer) at 1300 on Friday and they always inquire about me during Ramadan, especially for PT."

Burgos said he has experienced no discrimination or prejudice here, even after 9-11.

"The whole year after 9-11 I had people asking me questions about Islam, but I don't believe any of them were in a negative manner," he said. "Fort Eustis has been good for me as far as being Muslim and wearing the green uniform."

Burgos said the Koran teaches peace and nonviolence.

"I have read the Koran several times and [in the Koran] Islam teaches its followers to be peaceful. Islam is all about giving life, not taking it," he said.

However, the question still remains: If Islam is such a peaceful religion, why then are there schools in such traditionally allied nations like Pakistan and Saudi Arabia that teach intolerance and hatred? And why do terrorists use Islam to justify their violent actions?

Hicks believes it has to do more with the political situation than the faith.

"(Terrorism) is not Islam," he said. "It's certain people with messed up ways. Bin Ladin's hatred comes from his hatred of the United States, not his religion."

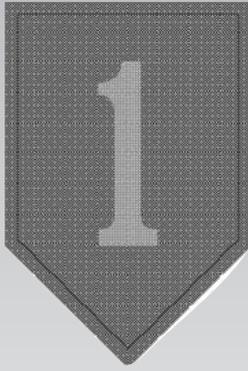
Burgos agreed.

"Some people who call themselves Muslims are angry about what is going on in the politics of their region," agreed Burgos.

(Editor's note: Staff Sgt. Russell Bassett writes for the Fort Eustis Wheel newspaper.)

Pvt. Murphy's Law





Left Shoulder Diary

1st Infantry Division

Compiled from
Unit History

The 1st Infantry Division shoulder sleeve insignia is characterized by an olive drab shield, two and one-half inches in width and three and three-fourths inches in height. A red Arabic numeral "1" one and three-fourths inches in height is set in the center of the shield. The numeral designates the division's designation.

The insignia was approved Oct. 31, 1918, as a red number 1 for the 1st Division and amended March 31, 1927, to include the olive drab background in the design. It was re-designated for the 1st Inf. Div. Aug. 19, 1942.

The "Fighting First" led the way for American troops in World War I. Names like Cantigny, Soissons, St. Mihiel and the Argonne Forest tell the story of the gallantry of the soldiers of the 1st Inf. Div., now wearing the famous "Big Red One" patch on their left shoulder.

During World War II, the 1st Inf. Div. was the first to reach England, the first to fight the enemy in North Africa and Sicily, the first on the beaches of Normandy in D-Day and the first to capture a major German City - Aachen.

The D-Day landings on June 6, 1944 provided the supreme test. In five days, the division drove inland and cleared a beachhead for supplies and troops. Driving eastward across France against fanatical resistance, the soldiers of the 1st Inf. Div. spent nearly six months in continuous action with the enemy.

After capturing Aachen, the 1st Inf. Div. still faced months of bitter fighting at places like the Hürtgen Forest and the Battle of the Bulge. When the War ended, the Big Red One had rolled through Germany and into Czechoslovakia.

The 1st Inf. Div. is the oldest continuously serving division in the United States Army.

In 1965, the 1st Inf. Div. was again selected to be the first division to deploy when they went to Vietnam. After Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, the division was put on alert for deployment Nov. 8, 1990.

The Big Red One fought through 260 kilometers of enemy-held territory in 100 hours, destroying 550 enemy tanks, 480 armored personnel carriers and taking 11,400 prisoners. Eighteen of the division's Soldiers were killed in the Gulf War.

The 1st Inf. Div. played a key role in Bosnia when they assumed authority for command and control of Task Force Eagle Nov. 10, 1996. The division's mission was to provide a covering force for the 1st Armored Division units returning to Germany and to continue to implement the military aspects of the General Framework Agreement for Peace. After intensive training, 1st Inf. Div. began deploying troops in support of the war with Iraq in 2004.

Civilian of the Week



Gina Coronado

Gina Coronado hails from Manila in the Philippine Islands and joined the LSA Anaconda community by accepting employment through Prime Projects International.

For the last four months she has worked as a custodian here.

"I came here to help support my family," Coronado said.

She worries for the safety of everyone around her, she explained. Coronado acknowledged that it's a hazardous job for civilian and Soldiers alike.

"I enjoy working here, but I get scared with what is happening outside the camp," she said. "I willingly sacrifice for my family and as much as I might want to go home, this is where I'll stay for now."

Prior to her work on LSA Anaconda, Coronado had a job as a seamstress in the Philippines where she sewed dresses and umbrellas.

No matter how difficult the situation becomes Coronado shows up for work greeting everyone with a smile. Coronado keeps in contact with her family back home by phoning them when she gets a chance.

MAIL, continued from page 1

services out of one location, Lane said.

Anyone with a valid identification card may use the services at the post office.

All packages must be inspected to ensure

that nothing illegal is being mailed. After inspection, packages are sealed and sent to the customer service window, where they are sent to their destinations priority or space available mail.

"Priority should get there quicker, but since we're overseas, it doesn't, so we just recommend that everybody send their packages SAM. It costs a lot less, and it gets there in the same amount of time," Lane said.

The cost of shipping packages varies depending on where it's being sent and the weight of the package, but they will not accept packages exceeding 70 pounds or 108 inches.

It takes about 14 days for mail to ship to the States and about 14 days for it to get here as well.

The post office is an integral part of life on LSA Anaconda. "With the internet being down sometimes, phone lines being down, Soldiers really look forward to receiving their mail on a daily basis. I would say that we are the number one morale booster on this post," Lane said.

Post Office Hours
Monday-Thursday
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Official Mail only
Tuesday and Thursday
9 a.m. to noon

The LSA Anaconda Post Office is Closed Sundays



Photo by Pfc. Leah R. Burton

Spc. Brenda Cintron, a finance clerk with the 175th Adjutant General Company (Postal) prepares a package for shipment to the States at the LSA Anaconda post office Monday.



Sgt. 1st Class Richard Gonzalez poses beside the Tigris river in Iraq.



Photos by Sgt. Daniel Crawford

Sgt. 1st Class Richard Gonzalez of the 81st Brigade Combat Team Headquarters Provost Marshal Section, dismounts his vehicle while on patrol. Gonzalez said he braced himself after a mortar attack and headed back into the open, unprotected area outside of the post exchange to help his fellow Soldiers on LSA Anaconda April 12.

Act of Heroism

Soldier faces danger after shelling

By Spc. Kathryn Spurrell
81st BCT PAO

The evening of April 12 started out normally for Sgt. 1st Class Richard Gonzalez of the 81st Brigade Combat Team Headquarters Provost Marshal Section. After dinner he walked to the AT&T Calling Center, but since the lines were long he decided instead to go to the post exchange. As Gonzalez was walking between the trailers toward the PX, he heard a whistling sound and an explosion hit the ground in front of him. The burst knocked him off his feet.

"It felt like someone was pushing me," Gonzalez said.

He immediately jumped to his feet and ran into the safety of the PX for cover. Once he was inside the entrance, Gonzalez looked back outside at all the other people who had been thrown to the ground or who were still staggering around in the street.

Gonzalez hesitated as he overcame his natural instinct to stay in the protection of the building. He braced himself, took a deep breath, and headed back out into the open to help his fellow Soldiers.

He started directing people toward the PX. One man was crawling along the side of the building, bleeding from a head wound caused by shrapnel. Gonzalez yelled at him to get up and get inside but the man was disoriented and seemed reluctant to move. Gonzalez then lifted him to his feet and helped him inside to safety.

In the hallway, he found a Soldier who was carrying field dressings and instructed him to bandage the wounded man's head. Gonzalez then ran back outside to continue making order from the chaos.

People were crowding around and blocking the entrance. Gonzalez appointed a specialist, who was standing nearby, to guard the doorway to ensure that it stayed clear.

Then an ambulance appeared as if out of nowhere, he said.

"It was like time no longer existed," Gonzalez said.

Once the wounded people had been evacuated, Gonzalez began rounding up the civilians and Soldiers that continued to crowd around the scene. He said he remembered feeling particular concern for the civilians, since they had no helmets. As Gonzalez was directing people into the safety of the PX, someone yelled incoming and everyone flattened themselves against the cement barriers in fearful anticipation of another mortar round.

But nothing happened. So after a few seconds Gonzalez resumed his task of moving people to safety. Several tailfins of the exploded mortar littered the street, so his first priority was moving everyone away from something that was still potentially dangerous.

Finally Gonzalez went back inside the PX. As he entered the building, he noticed that his hands were covered with blood.

"My first thought was that it was my blood," he said.

After removing his helmet and body armor, however, he discovered that the blood belonged to the wounded man he had helped.

While he was cleaning the blood off his hands, Explosive Ordnance Detonation specialists came to clear up the remnants of the mortar and the Military Police arrived.

With the task now in other hands, Gonzalez sent the Soldiers and civilians out of the PX and directed the employees to the reinforced area at the back of the building.

As he walked back to his company area, the reality

of the situation began to sink in. Gonzalez noticed for the first time how shaken he was.

He also realized that he could not hear.

A medical examination the next day revealed that he had suffered a perforated eardrum that will heal slowly on its own. Gonzalez' hearing is still muffled and he has lingering pain from the explosion.

"I have a headache that won't go away," he said.

After he reached the company area, the chaplain's assistant, Staff Sgt. Steve Schmidt, stayed close to Gonzalez as the hero recovered his bearing.

"I think he was outstanding, especially considering the circumstances — it could have been much worse," Schmidt said. "The Lord was watch-

ing over him."

Gonzalez has been humble about his heroism — his wife heard the story second-hand from his friend and co-worker, Staff Sgt. Alex Straub, who wrote up an account of Gonzalez' bravery and e-mailed home to his family.

"My wife was upset, concerned and relieved," Gonzalez said.

She asked him to avoid dangerous situations as much as possible in the future, he added.

"I'm just thankful that he's alive and well. He hasn't let the experience detract from his job — he still goes outside the wire on a regular basis. He's a great guy and deserves recognition," said Straub of Gonzalez' heroism.

Gonzalez responded to Straub's praise with modesty.

"You think experiences like this aren't going to happen to you. It's always going to happen to somebody else. This time it happened to me," he said.



Around the Services

Army unveils new Chinook helicopter

RIDLEY PARK, Pa. — Army special operations forces received their first MH-47G Chinook helicopter during a rollout ceremony at aircraft manufacturer Boeing's compound in Ridley Park, May 6.

The military's newest rotary-wing airframe, updated and better equipped than its Chinook predecessors, will be flown exclusively by the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne), headquartered at Fort Campbell, Ky.

To kick off the event, an older MH-47D model flew directly over thousands of Boeing employees who had gathered to watch the ceremony. Landing nearby, the Chinook discharged its cargo of three special operations Soldiers and a Ground Mobility Vehicle, which rolled slowly across the flight ramp as the door to a hangar opened and the brand-new MH-47G was rolled out.

Patrick Shanahan, vice president and general manager for Boeing Rotorcraft Systems, then handed the first set of symbolic "keys" to the modified aircraft to Chief Warrant Officer Andrew Sentiff and Staff Sgt. Michael Luna, both of the 160th SOAR.

"All of us at Boeing are extremely proud of the Chinook and its record of service with the U.S. Army, Army special operations and our allies around the world for more than four decades," Shanahan said. "The Chinook's unique capabilities show clearly why the Chinook is and will continue to be a central war-fighting asset for your armed forces."

The MH-47 is more than just an airframe, Shanahan said.

"The design and manufacturing of this aircraft (have) been a labor of love and a model of working together," he said. "Teamwork has characterized our program from the start."

Lt. Gen. Philip R. Kensinger Jr., commander of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, N.C., also spoke to the crowd.



Photo by Walter Sokalski

Boeing employees observe the company's newest aircraft, the MH-47G Chinook helicopter, during the aircraft's rollout ceremony May 6 at Ridley Park, Pa.

"Not only have we all gotten a personal introduction to our 'work horse,' but we have also had the opportunity to shake hands with everyone who helped make this possible," Kensinger said.

Kensinger reminded those gathered — civilian and military — that the aircraft itself is secondary.

"As magnificent as this aircraft is, it is only as good as the people who design it, build it, fly it, and support it," Kensinger said.

"The equipment (the 160th SOAR flies) is what gets the boots on the ground to fight the Global War on Terrorism. It is also the equipment that gets them back safely to their families," Kensinger said.

The event was more than just a presentation of USASOC and Boeing's newest collaboration. It also gave the Boeing workers a chance to understand the role of the MH-series aircraft, and it allowed those workers to speak directly to Soldiers who have been affected by the capabilities of the MH-47.

Army News Service

DoD standardizes HIV test interval

WASHINGTON — HIV testing is mandatory for Military members every two years, according to a Defense Department health policy change implemented March 29.

The Armed Forces Epidemiological Board recommended the change, which standardizes the HIV testing interval across the services, according to Dr. David N. Tornberg, deputy assistant secretary of defense for clinical and program policy, during a May 20 interview.

DoD requires HIV testing, Tornberg explained, because it is responsible for maintaining the health and well being of all service members.

Previously, Tornberg noted, HIV testing intervals varied among the armed services. The military began testing service members for HIV, he said, in the mid-1980s.

Today, "we're optimizing testing," Tornberg explained, citing medical studies that show very few people with HIV become sick with AIDS within two years of being infected.

Therefore, service members who test HIV positive under the new two-year interval, he noted, are most likely to benefit from anti-viral drugs and other treatments that help keep the disease at bay.

"We're looking to protect the individual," Tornberg said, noting that HIV-positive service members are not automatically discharged and may continue on with their military careers.

The two-year interval also enables DoD to consolidate HIV testing for deployments. For example, he noted, Guard and Reserve members are now to have been tested for HIV within two years of a mobilization of more than 30 days.

Tornberg pointed out that both male and female service members could acquire HIV, which can be transmitted sexually, through intravenous drug use or via blood transfusions.

American Forces Press Services

Army partners with cowboys

LAS VEGAS — The U.S. Army added five riders to its professional rodeo team May 15.

The original team, announced April 17 with partner Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association, consisted of three bull riders.

The Army is now sponsoring seven cowboys and a cowgirl to represent the Army in hundreds of rodeos throughout the United States and Canada.

The partnership with PRCA will allow the Army to reach out to a segment of Americans "that we were certain we were missing," said Maj. Gen. Michael D. Rochelle, commander of U.S. Army Recruiting Command.

The partnership, which will run through the end of this year with an option to renew for 2005 is "part of the overall Army team," which includes partnerships with NASCAR, Professional Bull Riding and the Arena Football League among others. But, said Rochelle, "What we are doing is, more than anything, in support of" the troops overseas.

Steven J. Hatchell, commissioner of the PRCA, expects the partnership to

be a boon to his organization as well as to the Army because, he said, traditional rodeo sponsors like alcohol and tobacco companies made televising the events problematic.

"We are a television society and this helps us with television in a significant way," Hatchell said.

Hatchell said that with the Army partnership the PRCA is planning an expansion that will lead to increased television exposure similar to that of the Professional Golf Association. Already, he said, rodeo is seventh overall in attendance for all sports and saw an increase in attendance of four percent last year — the highest of any sport.

An estimated 23 million people attended the PRCA's roughly 700 sanctioned rodeos last year. The PRCA's premier events appear on CBS, ESPN, ESPN2 and Outdoor Life Network.

The announcement of the partnership came against the backdrop of one of professional rodeo's biggest competitions, the Pace Picante ProRodeo Chute-out at the Orleans Arena in Las Vegas, where \$500,000 in prize money was up for grabs. Three of the Army's newly sponsored cowboys competed in the three-day event that ended March 15.

All three of the Army's competitors made it to the semifinal round, but only one, steer wrestler Luke Branquinho, made it to the final round of the rodeo. The PRCA has renamed the final round of its rodeos the U.S. Army Championship Round for all future rodeo events as long as the Army partnership lasts. Branquinho won in the final round and took home more than \$20,000 in prize money.

The Army's other rodeo competitors are:



Photo by Cpl. Matt Milham

Steer wrestler Luke Branquinho, one of eight Army-sponsored cowboys in the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association, leaps off his horse and onto a steer at the Pace Picante Pro Rodeo Chute Out in Las Vegas May 15. Branquinho won the steer wrestling competition and took home more than \$20,000 from the rodeo.

Trevor Brazile, who competes in tie-down roping, steer roping and team roping, won back-to-back all-around world titles in 2002 and 2003 at the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo. He was the first cowboy ever to qualify for the top of the standings in 2003.

Fred Whitfield has seven world titles — six in tie-down roping and one all-around. He will be inducted into the Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame in August.

Andy Bolich, a bareback rider, has won titles in Kalispell, Mont., and Omak, Wash.

Wayne Folmer, a team roper, is a three-time Wrangler NFR qualifier and was fourth in the world in 2003.

Cody DeMoss, a saddle bronc rider, qualified for his first Wrangler NFR and was 12th in the world in 2003. He is in second place this year and has a shot at winning the saddle bronc title.

Brittany Pozzi, a barrel racer, became the first rookie to qualify for the Wrangler NFR at the top of the standings in 2003. She finished seventh overall in her first PRCA season.

Zack Oakes, a bull rider, won RodeoHouston and the PRCA's Xtreme Bulls in Clovis, N.M. earlier this year.

Army News Service

Around the Services

Marines pass out donated school supplies in Kharma

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – Marines arrived in Kharma to a sea of smiles and waving hands from Iraqi schoolchildren May 22.

It was a sign of the distinct difference Marines of 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment are making here.

Marines visited a school in Kharma to pass out school supplies, toys and other items in an effort to further cement their relationship with the citizens of Kharma. It was the latest in a series of projects Marines conducted here and one that's showcasing 1st Marine Division's "no better friend" efforts.

"It turned out to be a good day," said Maj. Lawrence J. Kaifesh, a 36-year-old civil affairs Marine Team Leader for 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment from Chicago.

"I wanted to make sure the school supplies would get to kids who would appreciate it," added Kaifesh, a Chicago Marine.

Kaifesh and his Marines delivered more than 1,500 book bags filled with school supplies to Kharma students. The supplies were donated to the Marines to pass out from Spirit of America, a Los Angeles-based nonprofit organization.

The donations included book bags with school supplies, Frisbees, soccer balls and toys. There were also items for the city as a whole, including toys, medical supplies and fire-fighting gear.

"It's always a good thing to help people, but especially kids who are caught in the middle," said Sgt. Jose A. Orozco, a 30-year-old Los Angeles Marine with the civil affairs team.

The outreach effort to Kharma is focused to dispel any lingering hostilities that emerged while Marines fought terrorist there in April. Kharma was the site of fierce fighting, with Marines killing more than 100 terrorists.

Now, Marines brandish gifts instead of weapons, demonstrating to the Iraqi citizens their fight was against those who brought fear and intimidation and not against the local citizens, Kaifesh explained.

Still, donations in this city weren't limited to

school supplies. Medical equipment was also purchased to improve capabilities at local clinic. Two new X-ray machines, a dental chair, medical supplies were given to the Iraqis as well as renovations conducted on the clinic, Kaifesh said.

It's all part of a concentrated effort that's produced tangible results.

"A youth center and a ribbon-cutting ceremony for an Internet café was held last week," he said.

More Internet connections and a communications center are currently in the planning stages to be built in Kharma.

"We've only been here three weeks, but we've made some pretty good progress and we'll continue to do so," Kaifesh explained.

Kaifesh said that within the last few weeks, Marines fixed 11 schools and fully restored six water purification plants that will deliver potable water to the entire city.

The change in the city is drastic compared to early April when the area was engulfed in the fighting that erupted in nearby Fallujah.

"Now a month later, the ICDC and Iraqi Police are on

the streets, shops are open and the streets are bustling again," said Capt. Jamie M. McCall, a 29-year-old from Wilmington, Del.

"This town has changed dramatically, because they wouldn't look or wave at us," added McCall, the battalion's staff judge advocate. "Now they do. It's remarkable."

Kaifesh said that while not on the road searching for new developments, he keeps busy at base camp dealing with city officials and village leader. "We're meeting with council members all the time," he said. "We want to take care of these folks as much as possible."

Kaifesh and his Marines still have a tough schedule ahead of them. Progress is being made, but they are still wary of occasional attacks from roadside bombs and small-arms fire. Still, progress is being made and concrete plans are being worked for further improvements for Kharma.

"Right now we have about 200 claims and over 40 projects that are in one stage or another," he said. "We're in Phase 1, which consists of water, electricity, sanitation and healthcare."

Marine News Service

"This town has changed dramatically, because they wouldn't look or wave at us. Now they do. It's remarkable."

Marines get sweet treat in Iraq

AL ANBAR PROVINCE, Iraq – Far removed from the everyday comforts of home, the Marines and Sailors of Marine Wing Support Squadron 374, Marine Wing Support Group 37, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing serving at distant outposts received a treat when ice cream was delivered to them.

Dubbed "Operation 31 Flavors" by 3rd MAW commanding general, Maj. Gen. James F. Amos, the mission found life during a visit with Capt. Valerie L. Hodgson, Korean Village detachment officer-in-charge, MWSS-374.

"('Operation 31 Flavors') came about during a trip I took to Korean Village a little more than a month ago," the general explained. "I was talking to the Marines and asking them how things were going, so I could get a read on if they were happy or if there was anything they needed. After talking with them, to be honest, I didn't get a single Marine who said anything negative."

Ever persistent, Amos added that he asked Hodgson numerous times during his visit if there was anything her detachment needed, which she repeatedly declined. Finally, as he prepared to board his flight back to the 3rd MAW command post, the general's question hit bull's-eye.

"She looked at me and said, 'Sir, send us some ice cream,'" Amos recalled. "I said, 'Captain Hodgson, you've got it. You're talking to the right man.'"

According to Hodgson, a 35-year-old Anaheim, Calif., native, the time frame in which the frozen delicacy arrived was surprisingly swift.

"When the general came out here, it was early in spring and I figured it would take him a good long time to resolve any logistical hurdles with getting it here," she said.

"I knew that ice cream would be a huge morale boost in the heat of the summer, so I figured that by the time it got here, it would be summertime and the ice cream would arrive just in time. I did not expect to get the ice cream here as quickly as it did," she added.

The operation was divided into three phases and in addition to speed, it called for massive coordination, said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Samuel F. Pamoleras, food services officer, 3rd MAW.

"We used resources that we have in Kuwait to make this happen," he said. "We negotiated with the public warehousing company down there and received a total of 10 pallets of ice cream, with 80 containers each."

Marine News Service

Seabees Gather to Honor Fallen Comrades

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq – Dozens of Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalions 5 and 74 and members of the First Marine Expeditionary Force Engineer Group (1 MEG), gathered here May 8 to honor Seabees who paid the ultimate price for the U.S. mission in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Seven M-16 assault rifles were carefully placed, muzzle down, on the floor of the chapel here, each accompanied by a pair of desert boots and topped with a Kevlar hel-

met. Tools commonly used by Seabees were laid by the boots.

The brief memorial service began with an address by Capt. Mark Handley, 1 MEG's commodore. Handley said that there was inherent risk in Iraq for Seabees and Marines.

"These seven Seabees who lost their lives here in Iraq were directly contributing to improving the conditions for sustained peace. They served us proudly and with distinction, and they have built upon the Seabee legacy, which we all humbly enjoy," said Handley.

The commodore's address was followed by a few words from Master Chief Construction Utilitiesman Peter

Beckwith, 1 MEG's command master chief. Beckwith explained that all Seabees felt the loss of their shipmates.

Chaplain Lt. Marc Massie led the attending Seabees in prayer and read a passage from the Gospel of Luke. He also read a poem about Seabee pride and sacrifice.

The service ended when all Seabees donned their covers and saluted their fallen comrades as Taps played in the chapel. Later in the day, NMCB 14, of which the seven were members, held a separate service at a nearby camp.

The seven Seabees killed were Equipment Operator 3rd Class

Christopher Dickerson, Hull Technician 2nd Class Jason B. Dwelley, Builder 2nd Class Michael Anderson, Equipment Operator 2nd Class Trace Dossett, Steelworker 2nd Class Ronald Ginter, Builder 2nd Class Robert Jenkins, and Construction Mechanic 2nd Class Scott McHugh. All were killed in separate attacks April 30 and May 2.

1 MEG and its subordinate commands have deployed to Iraq in support of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force. Its mission is to conduct civil-military operations in an effort to help Iraqis gain self-sufficiency in a free and stable Iraq.

Navy News Service



In preparation for possible attack, Soldiers from 3rd Brigade 2nd Infantry Division (Stryker) line the sides of a supply route guarding and protecting combat logistic patrols bringing necessary supplies to and from LSA Anaconda. With the upsurge in recent attacks on convoys, the Stryker, a medium armored personnel vehicle boasting advances in weapons and technology, has proven its efficiency protecting vehicles, supplies and personnel. Since the Strykers have started escorting, there has been a noticeable decrease in the effectiveness of attacks against convoys, said Sgt. Gaylord Hillary Reese, crew member.

Photos by Pfc. Abel Trevino



A Soldier from 3rd Brigade 2nd Infantry Division cleans his SAW after escorting combat logistic patrols safely to Scania. The Soldiers act as the real weapon in the Stryker, able to respond to any attacks with immediate force.

Convoy ingenuity Strykers strike back

By Pfc. Abel Trevino
staff writer

Combat logistic patrols carrying necessary supplies, such as fuel and food have fallen under daily attacks on supply routes, resulting in the implementation of a new method of protection.

Soldiers of the 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division have successfully applied their resources escorting convoys safely to and from LSA Anaconda.

The Stryker is an armored personnel carrier that boasts a large arsenal of weaponry as well as an infantry squad that can effectively engage an enemy, said Staff Sgt. Nevin Gamble of the 3rd Bde., 2nd Inf. Div.

"It's basically a fear factor. If they see a bigger vehicle, an armored vehi-

cle, the less they tend to attack," he said.

The mark of success is in the safe arrival and departure of convoys since the Strykers have been manning security, as well as the increase in convoy traffic.

"When we first got to Scania, the yard was packed. Ever since then, you can see convoys pulling day and night," Gamble said.

The continuous movement of convoys between compounds demonstrates the success Strykers have had combating and intimidating insurgents.

"It's been a noticeable increase [in the safety of convoys] because the insurgents do not like messing with the Strykers too much," said Sgt. Justin Keith Bliven of the 3rd Bde., 2nd Inf. Div. "There is a better probability of the Strykers getting the job done [more

efficiently], than [how] the previous units before this were getting them done."

Strykers have successfully deterred Anti-Coalition Forces still determined to attack convoys.

"When we first started doing this, there was a lot of heat that the trucks were taking. There were people getting captured, a lot of people dying, they were also dropping mortar rounds. As soon as we started running with the convoys, there hasn't been too much action. We've come across some small arms fire but nothing serious. If we weren't there I'm sure it could have been worse," said Sgt. Gaylord Hillary Reese of the 3rd Bde., 2nd Inf. Div.

While the Stryker boasts advanced armor and weapons systems, it also has a keen edge on early detection of improvised explosive devices.

"The sights that are outfitted on the

Stryker can see a good distance out. Our point truck is keeping an eye out for IEDs that are a long way up the road so we can spot them a lot easier and sooner than other convoys can," said Reese.

These advantages not only make the personnel manning the Stryker safe, but also those being safeguarded in the convoy.

"The trucker personnel feel safer, probably because they don't get hit as much," Gamble said. Strykers and their manning units continue to protect convoys with the presence of heavier weaponry and armor, as well as highly trained troops prepared to face any enemy to deliver those who rely on them safely and expeditiously.

(Editor's note: This story is one part in a continuing series on convoy ingenuity and the life of military truckers.)



Strykers line in a row, ready for an immediate departure if necessary, after arriving in Scania. The Strykers are the latest resource the Army has applied to guarantee the safety of combat logistic patrols leaving and arriving to LSA Anaconda.



An Iraqi child stands in the middle of a road waving to a convoy, escorted by 3rd Bde. 2nd Inf. Div. "The trucker personnel feel safer," said Staff Sgt. Nevin Gamble, squad leader.

Movie Schedule

Sustainer Reel Time Theater

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

May 30

3 p.m. Troy
6 p.m. The Prince and Me
9 p.m. The Lady Killers

May 31

3 p.m. Jersey Girl
7 p.m. Troy
9 p.m. Secret Window

June 1

3 p.m. Troy
6 p.m. The Prince and Me
9 p.m. Dirty Dancing: Havana Nights

June 2

3 p.m. The Lady Killers
6 p.m. Troy
9 p.m. Jersey Girl

June 3

3 p.m. Jersey Girl
6 p.m. The Lady Killers
9 p.m. Troy

June 4

3 p.m. The Alamo
6 p.m. Shrek 2
9 p.m. The Whole Ten Yards

June 5

3 p.m. Home on the Range
6 p.m. The Whole Ten Yards
9 p.m. Shrek 2



Shrek 2

Weekly Religious Schedule

Anaconda Chapel

(One block west of Mosque at Hawk St. and New Jersey Ave. in Small Chapel Tent)

Friday
1:30 p.m. Islamic Prayer
5 p.m. Jewish Torah Study
6 p.m. Jewish Prayer

Saturday
1 p.m. Choir Practice (General Protestant)
8:30 p.m. Choir Practice (Gospel)

Sunday
8:30 a.m. Lutheran
10 a.m. Latter Day Saints
7 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass

Sustainer Indoor Theater

Sunday
9 a.m. Protestant (General)
10 a.m. Roman Catholic Mass
11:30 a.m. Protestant (Gospel)

31st Combat Support Hospital Church

(One block north of Turner indoor swimming pool)

Sunday
9:30 a.m. Protestant
Noon Roman Catholic Mass

Air Force Chapel

(Air Force Chapel across from PAX and Redeployment tents)

Sunday
8:45 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship
Noon Roman Catholic Mass
5:30 p.m. Protestant
7 p.m. Latter Day Saints

82nd Airborne Chapel

(Building 4148 south of AAFES Exchange)

Wednesday
7 p.m. Protestant

Saturday
9:30 a.m. Christian Orthodox
7 p.m. Roman Catholic Mass

Sunday
11 a.m. Protestant
7 p.m. Protestant

185th Aviation Group Chapel

(Across from DFAC #4 on Texas Street)

Sunday
8:30 a.m. Roman Catholic Mass
9:30 a.m. Christian Praise
11 a.m. Protestant
2 p.m. Lutheran



229th United States Army Birthday

June 14, 2004, the Army's 229th Birthday celebration on LSA Anaconda will consist of a few camp-wide events. The following are tentatively scheduled:

Army Birthday 5k Run - This will be sponsored by a volunteer unit here on LSA Anaconda and open to everyone, military, civilian and contractors.

We hope to get flyers and registration out in the upcoming days.

The dining facilities will hold a special birthday dinner of prime rib, fried shrimp and turkey with all the fixings.

Dining facilities will prepare birthday cakes. To make it a true celebration, I ask each unit that sponsors a dining facility to work with your food service sergeant and his or her team to help decorate your dining facility for this special occasion.

I will ask Corps Distribution Command to help with dining facility #2. Party favors, balloons, Army banners ... your imagination is limitless. I ask that each MSC who doesn't have a dining facility to offer your assistance to help in your favorite dining facility nearby.

The COSCOM Headquarters will have a cake cutting ceremony and a rendition of the Army Song at our nightly battle update, feel free to coordinate similar events in your units to recognize 229 years of our Army's service to the nation.

Hooah, and Happy Birthday to the U.S. Army!

*Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel Elder
13th Corps Support Command
and LSA Anaconda, Iraq*

Cuban brings pride in service to USA

By Pfc. Leah R. Burton
Staff writer

Born and raised in Havana, Cuba, Pfc. Eldis N. Lima, a petroleum supply specialist with the 424th Quartermaster Company here, has served in the armies of two different countries.

"I grew up with my mother and two sisters in a small village near Havana in a very humble home," said Lima, who is assigned to a U.S. Army Reserve unit out of Long Island, N.Y.

But 15 years ago, the Cuban government expected him to join the Communist Party upon reaching the age of 18 and he refused.

"So after that, they denied me employment, benefits - stuff like that. Once you have a different view of the political and social climate, they close doors on you. So as I grew up, I decided I wanted more respect than that," Lima said.

He, his wife and his children left Cuba in 2003 and moved to Long Island in search of that respect and more political and social freedoms than Cuba could offer them.

"[My mother and sisters] didn't want me to leave, but now they understand why I did it," he said.

Prior to serving in the Cuban army as an infantryman, the 33-year-old father of two had attended an industrial design institute and earned his associate's degree in graphic design.

He was stationed in Ceiba del Agua, Havana, Cuba, and served three years before moving to Long Island.

Upon settling into life in the United States, Lima took a job as a graphic designer and enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserve.

He said his time spent in the Cuban army prepared him for service in the U.S. Army by teaching him military discipline.

"He's had a hard time getting used to the American way of life, but overall I think it's been a good journey for him," said Capt. Louisa R. Barger, 424th QM Co. commander. "He's an excellent Soldier, one of those Soldiers who's very smart. Even though he's a [private 1st class], he's very smart. I often use him for his technical skills. His computer skills are awesome."

Lima credits his decision to enlist to both his desire to answer the call of duty and his quest for benefits for his family.

He attended Basic Combat Training at Fort Jackson, S.C., in April 2003, and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Lee, Va., in September 2003.

"In the Cuban army, the soldiers don't have an idea what they're fighting for. We have that in the American Army. I like it because you have a sense of purpose. You can be all you can be like the commercial. If you stay long enough, you can make it a career," Lima said.

Initially, however, his family wasn't as sure about his decision as he was.

"At the beginning, my wife was a little bit scared because she knew I might be sent to war, but now she's pretty confident. She supports me 100 percent," Lima said.

As a husband and father, it wasn't easy for Lima to leave upon hearing that he was being deployed.

"It was hard to leave them. They are two boys, and they were always with me," he said. "Well, since I joined the Army I knew [the United States] was getting ready to deploy troops so it didn't catch me by surprise, especially since I joined in March and that's

when the war started," he said.

On post, he works in the unit's Personnel Processing Center, because civilian contractors have undertaken the normal responsibilities of petroleum supply specialists. However, Lima is an invaluable asset to the PPC, said Barger.

Lima was granted an expedited appointment for his naturalization upon his return stateside.

"This will be a great thing for him, because he's eager to be naturalized," Barger said.

Upon redeployment, Lima has many goals for his family's future.

"I would like to stay in the Army, raise my family and hopefully help my family in Cuba," Lima said. "I would also like to go back to college."

Though Lima seems to have led a life thus far that most privates have not, he said he would still like to do so much more.

With naturalization and redeployment in his future, he said he feels he has much to look forward to in his future.

In his spare time, Lima enjoys drawing, painting, working on his laptop computer, taking pictures with his digital camera, reading, and playing dominoes with his fellow Soldiers.



Pfc. Eldis N. Lima helps Sgt. Carlos X. Melendez, the unit's maintenance NCOIC, determine which of the unit's tents need air-conditioners at their Personnel Processing Center at LSA Anaconda May 11.



Pfc. Eldis N. Lima, a Cuban native and petroleum supply specialist with the 424th Quartermaster Company from Long Island, N.Y., fills out a report in his office at the unit's Personnel Processing Center at LSA Anaconda May 11.

Photos by Pfc. Leah R. Burton

Inspector General works for good of community

By Capt. Christopher J. Czyryca
13th COSCOM IG Office

The Inspector General system in the U.S. Army was born during the Revolutionary War and began its contributions to the Army by enforcing standards, overseeing training to standard and improving readiness. This traditional contribution of the IG system is maintained today in services provided to the combined, joint military operations here on LSA Anaconda by the 13th Corps Support Command and 81st Brigade Combat Team IGs.

The IG office is in the Warrior Support Center, next to the 13th COSCOM Headquarters. IGs have the same role on LSA Anaconda as they do in peacetime - extending the eyes and ears, voice and conscience of the commander.

The IG serves as a personal staff officer to the commanding general and is charged with inquiring into and periodically reporting on the discipline, efficiency, economy, morale, training and readiness throughout the command.

The IG accomplishes this mission through three primary functions: assistance, inquiries and investigations plus inspections.

However, the most important function remains that of teaching and training to achieve and maintain operational readiness. These basic IG functions do not change during wartime.

The focus during military operations switches to high payoff issues, priorities that directly relate to readiness to accomplish the command's mission. The task and standards don't change, just the conditions.

Inspectors General have traditionally been the bridge that spans the gap of experience. The need for teaching and training soldiers at all levels on fundamental tasks, standards and the commander's intent is essential to mission success and an inherent IG function.

On LSA Anaconda, the IG will often use a sensing session to act as an extension of the commander's eyes, ears, voice and conscience. The sensing session is a two-way communication between the troops and the command.

It allows the CG to spread an understanding of his mission and intent to all service members and to collect information from all levels of the command for

use in the military decision-making process.

The continuous flow of information is efficient and impartial as IGs are not members of the chain of command.

Especially important in the teaching and training process is the IG's ability to rapidly acquire and understand the changing requirements and policy standards inherent during major operations.

The heavy workload of the IG on LSA Anaconda is largely focused on assistance.

IGs are tasked with providing responsive assistance to all service members, contract civilians, local

The bottom line for all personnel is that anyone on LSA Anaconda can present, to the IG, a matter of interest for the command.

nationals as well as the families of service members.

The 13th COSCOM IG has active duty, Reserve and National Guard IGs on its staff.

Assistance is most often sought for promotion issues, policy interpretation, standards of discipline and other soldier welfare issues.

Often requests for assistance that cannot be efficiently worked in the Iraq theater will be referred to the IGs of other commands and agencies. Requests for assistance can be referred to Reserve Readiness Command IGs for Reserve Component soldiers, State IGs for National Guard soldiers or IGs at specific agencies such as Human Resource Command, Defense Finance and Accounting Service and the U.S. Army Medical Command.

However not all requests for assistance are appropriate for the IG.

Many complaints have specific forms of redress mandated by law or regulation, courts-martial actions, non-judicial punishment, evaluations, reports

of survey and claims are examples of assistance actions that have other means of redress.

Prior to seeking IG assistance, complainants must be sure they have a real problem, not just a peeve. The chain of command should always be given a chance to solve the problem prior to seeking IG assistance, as many problems must be addressed to the chain of command for resolution anyway.

The bottom line for all personnel is that anyone on LSA Anaconda can present, to the IG, a matter of interest for the command.

"I would encourage all commanders at any level to use the Inspector General as a resource for those issues or concerns that arise that you don't have the time or resources to look into," said Lt. Col. Douglas Evans, 13th COSCOM and LSA Anaconda Inspector General. "We are here to provide assistance to you across a broad spectrum of topics. If there are Soldiers, airmen, sailors or Marines out there that have a particularly difficult issue that is not being resolved by the chain of command then stop by the Inspector General. If we don't know the answer to your issue we can usually find a person who can provide a solution."

Inspectors General may also conduct inspections. IG inspections differ from command inspections or staff inspections because they are not assessments of the unit; IG inspections concentrate on finding systemic issues and identifying the root cause of problems.

In the current contingency operations, IG inspections will usually follow a compressed schedule to provide the commander with a quick look at a suspected problem or deficiency.

The final duty of the Inspector General is to conduct investigations and investigative inquiries.

IGs use their status as fair and impartial fact-finders to discreetly inquire into allegations. The result of an IG inquiry is not usually used as a basis for adverse action but is used to determine the facts of an allegation and the suitability for follow-up investigations as deemed appropriate by the CG.

If you are located on LSA Anaconda, you have a full service IG at your disposal, available to teach and train, provide assistance, make inspections and conduct investigations and inquiries. Call 537-3114 for more information or visit our office next to the 13th COSCOM Headquarters building.

Bottled water for deployment | Bad personal hygiene can lead to health problems

Consult Preventive Medicine when selecting water source

By Preventive Medicine
Special to Anaconda Times

The use of bottled water in deployments has increased dramatically during the last decade due to its rapid availability, its logistical flexibility, and its immediate acceptability by the deployed force.

The procurement and distribution of bottled water is a viable option for providing safe drinking water to deployed forces.

However, the monetary costs and sustained logistical burden of procuring, transporting, and distributing bottled water in the field, along with managing the empty-bottle wastes make bottled

drinking water far more costly than drinking water produced from the Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Unit and other approved sources.

The risk of waterborne illnesses to soldiers drinking either bottled water or ROWPU produced water should be minimal to nonexistent if the source selection, treatment, distribution, and monitoring procedures all comply with the applicable Federal, DOD, or Army regulations and guidance.

Ensure Preventive Medicine assets are consulted when selecting or approving a source of bottled water and are fully integrated into the plan to distribute, store, and monitor bottled water supplied during all phases of a deployment.

By 926th Medical Det.
Special to Anaconda Times

Poor personal hygiene can result in major health problems for deployed soldiers.

To ensure maximum effectiveness for deployed soldiers, make sure you stress and practice good personal preventive measures.

Some measures are as simple as bathing regularly. If showers or baths are not available, use a washcloth daily to wash your genitals, armpits and feet.

Prevent dental diseases and

tooth decay by brushing your teeth and gums after meals or at least once a day. Use dental floss and rinse your mouth with potable water after brushing and flossing.

The simplest, and possibly the most overlooked aspect of personal hygiene, is hand washing. Wash your hands after using the latrines, before and after smoking and before eating to reduce the chances of a food-borne illness.

These are just a few of the ways that can reduce the major health problems that face our deployed soldiers.

Proud to provide assistance to young students

By Master Sgt. Jon Hanson
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing PAO

More than 300 Iraqi children from a small village near Balad are now benefiting from a joint Air Force and Army project to repair their school.

About 30 military members of the Air Force and Army traveled May 17 to the village to dedicate the newly repaired school plus hand out school supplies and toys to the children.

Brig. Gen. F.C. Williams, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing commander, and Lt. Col. James Mitnik, 332nd AEW Chief of Plans and Programs, cut a red ribbon across the entrance to the school along with the village sheik and school principal.

Other attendees included the village's junior sheik and two other tribal sheiks, the school staff, the contractor, translators, key 13th Corps Support Command G-5 members and 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces and Army personnel who provided security.

"The Air Force is proud to have been able to provide assistance to help rebuild the school," said Williams. "The environment here is much more conducive to learning because of the work that has been done. It makes you feel great to be part of it."

"We worked with the G-5 (13th COSCOM Civil Affairs) to make a contract to repair the school," Mitnik said. "The G-5 is the buying and paying agent. We (Air Force) did the paperwork to identify the requirement, and G-5 got three contractor quotes. We (332nd AEW/XP) picked the best-qualified contractor, and performed quality assurance of the contractor's work.

"This couldn't have been completed without the great work of Capt. Jeff Sutton (332nd AEW Manpower) and Lt. Col. Dave Hildreth (332nd AEW Ground Liaison Officer)," added Mitnik. "Jeff did all of the paperwork and Dave negotiated the contract with the G-5 and the Iraqi contractor."

The money came from the Commanders Emergency Relief Program. The project cost was \$49,407 for a complete repair of the school, said Maj. Steve

Lancaster, 13th COSCOM Deputy G-5. This included putting in new electrical wiring, adding two toilets and two septic tanks, repairing the wall around the school, adding furniture in the principal's office, adding murals on the walls, landscaping around the school and painting the entire school.

After Williams and Mitnik cut the red ribbon, the team of airmen and Soldiers walked in between two rows of excited children who were clapping and expressing their thanks.

The visit not only was to celebrate the work done on the school, but it also gave an opportunity for the group to hand out school supplies and toys sent from the Niceville and Valparaiso, Fla., communities.

Primarily five kids from three different schools organized and did the majority of work raising the supplies, said Diana Reese, who supervised the project. They also raised almost \$2,500 used for shipping and buying extra supplies to make tote bags and to ensure each bag had similar items.

"The total estimate on all the supplies they sent was over \$10,000 so far," said Reese. "They are still collecting and planning to send more."

A lot of time went into this project.

"Between the fundraisers and organizing and packing these bags, I am sure every one of these kids has several hundred hours invested," said Reese. "The five main kids gave up entire weekends to go stand in front of Kmart or Wal-Mart to raise money to cover shipping and supplies they needed to put the packages together."

Lt. Col. Craig King, 332nd AEW Chief of Safety, who is from Niceville, was especially grateful for their work since his children are able to participate.

"It's pretty cool to be able to show my kids pictures of their donations being placed directly into the hands of their Iraqi counterparts," said King.



Photo by Master Sgt. Jon Hanson

Lt. Col. Craig King, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing Chief of Safety, hands out bags of school supplies to Iraqi children during a humanitarian mission to a small village near Balad. Approximately 30 members of the Air Force and Army traveled to the village to not only dedicate the newly repaired school, but to also hand out school supplies and toys to the children.

"Seeing that sort of thing makes the Iraqi situation, and our contribution to it, seem a little more real back home - hopefully, it's something neither the Iraqi kids nor my own will ever forget."

The project was very rewarding to everyone involved.

"I felt like the trip was really rewarding. How many people can actually say that they helped to open a school in Iraq," said Senior Airman Irene Atkins, 332nd ESFS. "That's something I know that I won't probably ever do again but I had the experience, and a great one it was. Handing out all the school supplies to all the children was the best part of the trip. Seeing the smiles on their faces - who can ask for anything more."

It was said that giving is reward in itself.

"The most memorable part was giving one little boy a bag full of toys and school supplies while his dad stood behind him with joy in his eyes," Staff Sgt. Chester Daffern, 332nd ESFS. "I feel it was very rewarding because we are giving to children that don't have anything."

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

What makes you proudest about being in the military?



Petty Officer 3rd Class
Alan Miles
Naval Mobile Construction
Battalion 3

"The support from my family makes me the proudest."



Tech. Sgt. Robert Thater
2632nd Air Expeditionary
Force Truck Company

"Defending the American way of life, being a part of the mission we're on makes me the proudest."



Maj. Susan Miller
Program Manager Unmanned
Aerial Vehicle Systems

"Serving my country makes me the proudest."



Spc. Michelle Williams
226th Medical Battalion

"Serving our country, saving lives, trying to help the community makes me the proudest."



Sgt. Maj. Dennis Scott
126th Finance Battalion

"Seeing what our Soldiers do day in and day out, their willingness to adapt to any environment makes me the proudest."

Shoo fly shoo, don't let bugs bite

By Sgt. Ann Venturato
Assistant editor

It is a case of sleep tight and don't let the sand flies bite for Soldiers deployed to Iraq.

If a sand fly bites a Soldier and the bite becomes infected, that Soldier can contract leishmaniasis.

There are two kinds of leishmaniasis: cutaneous and visceral, said 1st Lt. Robert Moore, a medical entomologist with the 926th Medical Detachment.

The cutaneous version of leishmaniasis attacks the skin. Soldiers who get the cutaneous form of leishmaniasis have one or more sores on their skin that do not heal after several weeks, said Capt. Mike McMahon, a physician's assistant with the 118th Area Support Medical Company.

"Soldiers need to watch for leishmaniasis because it can persist for several weeks," McMahon said. "Soldiers need to watch for lesions even in redeployment."

The sores initially appear as papules or bumps on the skin but then form an open, flat, circular sore with raised edges. Untreated, the skin sores can last for years and leave permanent scars but are rarely life threatening.

A few cases of cutaneous leishmaniasis were reported here.

"We have had three or four suspected cases since we have been here," McMahon said. "We have diagnosed several suspected cases and have sent them to the 31st Combat Support Hospital for biopsy," McMahon said.

Visceral leishmaniasis, on the other hand, is a much more serious infection of the liver, spleen and other internal organs that can be fatal if not treated, Moore said.

People who get the visceral form of the disease become ill for several weeks; lasting up to six months after becoming infected. A high fever, weight loss and an enlarged spleen and liver are usual symptoms. Other symptoms show up in blood tests like anemia, low white cell count and low platelet count.

"The only treatment for Soldiers who contract visceral leishmaniasis is at Walter Reed Medical Hospital," Moore said. "The treatment is taking an experimental drug intravenously for 28 days."

There were 600 to 700 cases of cutaneous leishmaniasis reported and last month, and a single case of visceral leishmaniasis was reported, Moore said.

The sand fly, which is about the size of a period at the end of a sentence, lives in dark humid places coming out predominantly from dusk till dawn.

Because the sand fly is so small, it is able to get through untreated mosquito netting, Moore said.

The sand fly bite differs from a mosquito bite in

that the bite is more raised and can itch more than a mosquito bite, Moore said.

To help with the itching of the sand fly bite, Soldiers can use calamine lotion to help stop the itching, Moore said.

The key to preventing leishmaniasis is to prevent being bitten by the sand fly.

Soldiers can prevent 99 percent of sand fly bites by treating uniforms and bed nets and applying DEET to skin, Moore said. Soldiers should use the chemicals appropriately and read the directions on the label.

Moore suggested that Soldiers treat their uniforms with permethrin, apply a thin coat of DEET on their skin, treat their bed nets with permethrin and keep temperatures cool in their living areas because the cool temperatures will kill the sand fly.

If anyone develops these symptoms, seek medical help at the Troop Medical Clinic, McMahon emphasized.

Fighting for right ... to vote

By Blanka Stratford
3rd Army/CFLCC PAO

As voting season slides closer, Soldiers deployed to Southwest Asia should have the same opportunity to vote as do all other citizens of the United States.

Providing Soldiers with the ability to vote is a matter that Lewis Ingol, voting assistance officer for the Coalition Forces Land Component Command, and hundreds of other unit VOAs dispersed throughout U.S. Central Command's area of operations are working diligently to complete.

"To this date we've already distributed 50,000 (Federal Post Card Application) forms all over the [area of responsibility]," said Ingol.

An additional 150,000 forms have been requested and will be shipped to the AOR within the next week, he said. Countries included in the circulation are Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

To start the absentee voting process, a Soldier completes the Federal Post Card Application, which is commonly referred to as a SF-76, said Ingol. This form is the application for registration and the application for an absentee ballot. There is also an online version of the form obtainable at the Federal Voting Assistance Program's Web site, www.fvap.gov. All U.S. states and territories accept the FPCA and OFPCA, with the exception of the American Samoa and Guam, which only accept FPCA.

Either method of completing the form is acceptable. After filling out the form and signing and dating it, the Soldier mails it to the Local Election Official based on where he is registering to vote. To meet the mailing deadlines, Ingol said it is advisable for Soldiers to mail their FPCA no later than Aug. 15.

More detailed information on submitting an application for absentee registration is contained in the Voting Assistance Guide, a copy which is held by every VOA assigned to a military unit or installation. If a Soldier opts to register and vote, a VOA is readily available to assist the Soldier.

TEN THINGS TO HELP ENSURE YOUR ABSENTEE VOTE IS COUNTED

1. START BY CONTACTING YOUR UNIT/EMBASSY/ORGANIZATION VOTING ASSISTANCE OFFICER FOR HELP IN ABSENTEE REGISTRATION AND VOTING.

2. VISIT THE FEDERAL VOTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM'S WEBSITE AT WWW.FVAP.GOV FOR INFORMATION ON THE ABSENTEE REGISTRATION AND VOTING PROCESS.

3. ENSURE THAT YOU HAVE APPLIED FOR YOUR ABSENTEE BALLOT USING THE HARD COPY OR ON-LINE VERSIONS OF THE FPCA.

4. MAKE SURE YOUR LOCAL ELECTION OFFICIAL HAS YOUR CURRENT MAILING ADDRESS.

5. SIGN AND DATE ALL ELECTION MATERIALS.

6. FULFILL YOUR STATE'S WITNESS/NOTARY REQUIREMENTS (IF REQUIRED).

7. ENSURE THAT YOUR BALLOT OR FPCA IS POSTMARKED.

8. REGISTER TO VOTE AND REQUEST YOUR BALLOT IN A TIMELY MANNER - NOT LATER THAN SEPTEMBER.

9. VOTE - MAIL YOUR BALLOT NOT LATER THAN OCTOBER 15, 2004.

10. USE THE FEDERAL WRITE IN ABSENTEE BALLOT IF YOU ARE OVERSEAS AND YOUR STATE ABSENTEE BALLOT DOES NOT ARRIVE IN TIME TO BE MAILED BACK BY THE STATE'S DEADLINE.

Swimming for survival not just for fun

By Pfc. Leah R. Burton
Staff writer

People within the LSA Anaconda community who struggle with hydrophobia, a fear of water, may now take advantage of swimming classes offered at the Staff Sgt. Roger Clinton Turner, Jr. Indoor Pool here.

Classes are open to all service members and civilian contractors on LSA Anaconda who want to learn how to swim. Civilians can take advantage of the classes as long as their participation doesn't bump a service member out of his or her slot, said Lee Davis, MWR operations manager and pool supervisor.

The intense heat of Iraq coupled with the constant wear of body armor and Kevlar makes the pool quite popular as a refreshing and stimulating alternative for daily physical training.

The swimming lessons have not been as popular as a limited number of adults have taken advantage of the classes, Davis said. There seems to be a degree of apprehension and fear among adults who haven't learned to swim, he stated.

But with numerous instructors and small class sizes, struggling students can get the individual attention they need.

"Usually what we do is we have [the beginners] come in and actually get in the water. We go through some breathing exercises and some very simple things just to get them acclimated to the water. One of the biggest things that I constantly suggest is that they come in and practice on their own," Davis said.

The lessons follow the Red Cross curriculum. Students learn proper body positioning, stroke mechanics, total coordination and breathing. These skills encompass 10 to 12 sessions, at the end of which, students should be able to survive in the water.

"Swimming is just as much a survival skill as anything else you would do in basic training. In addition to that, your fitness level would improve," Davis said.

The pool enables people who have suffered injuries to continue their physical activity without the risk of further harming themselves.

"Swimming is probably one of the better ways of approaching fitness because not only does it do cardio but it also helps with muscle strengthening," Davis said. "There's less trauma on your joints, because you're not out jogging up and down the street. So people who have had knee problems, cartilage problems or ankle problems can get into the water and maintain a level of fitness that is more than adequate to pass their PT test."

"You have to train your muscles and get them to do what strokes you need to do and if you don't practice then you find yourself moving at a much slower rate," Davis said.

The staff at the pool has a genuine interest in serving the military members at LSA Anaconda.

"We're here to serve the troops and it's always rewarding," Davis said. "[I] develop an intrinsic feeling of having helped someone do something that they couldn't do before. And that is better than anything [I] can be paid to do."

The rules at indoor pool include wearing the proper attire. Men can wear swimming trunks or clean PT shorts. Women can wear clean sports bras and PT shorts or a one-piece swimming suit, Davis explained.

It is imperative that the attire personnel wear into the water is clean and hasn't been worn all day because these clothes introduce pollutants from the

environment that the pool's filtration system has trouble filtering, Davis continued.

With the hottest months of the year knocking on the door, the Turner Indoor Pool might be the place to beat the heat and get cool relief from the oppressive heat.

Turner Indoor Pool Schedule

Open Swim-Daily

6 a.m. to 7 a.m.
1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
5 p.m. to 6 p.m.
11 p.m. to midnight

Lap Swim-Daily

9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
Noon to 1 p.m.
3 p.m. to 4 p.m.
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
10 p.m. to 11 p.m.

Water volleyball-Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays

11 a.m. to noon

Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays

4 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Water basketball-Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays

4 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays

11 a.m. to noon

Unit PT-Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fri-

days and Sundays

7 a.m. to 9 a.m. with reservation written and submitted two weeks in advance.

Beginners and intermediate classes are scheduled for every Monday, Thursday and Saturday from 7 to 9 a.m. and 8 to 10 p.m. Registration forms are at the front desk.



Capt. Marva R. Lane of the 175th Adjutant General Company Postal, practices her breathing and kicking exercises while holding onto the side of the pool at the Turner Indoor Pool Monday.



Swimming Instructor Mary Ann Carpio, a lifeguard at the Turner Indoor Pool on LSA Anaconda, carefully guides a student through her first swimming lesson Monday.

Photos by Sgt. Annette B. Andrews



Photo by Pfc. Abel Trevino

Steve Silver and Gregory "Chipper" Wardrobe of Brickfoot, close out a two-hour set to a cover of Lynard Skynard's "Freebird" on Tuesday night. Brickfoot, a cover band out of Washington, D.C., entertains the troops on LSA Anaconda Tuesday.



Photo by Sgt. Annette B. Andrews

The Turner Indoor Pool gets into the swim with pick up games of water basketball making one of the bigger splashes on LSA Anaconda while swimming lessons gear up in the background.

May wrap up Through the lens



Photo by Pfc. Abel Trevino

Spc. Jobie Meinke, from the 512th Maintenance Company from Manheim, Germany, cuts steel to be used as armoring.



Courtesy photo

Staff Sgt. Becky Schmauch, Sgt. Manuel Olvera, Staff Sgt. Javier Flores, Staff Sgt. Cirley Rosario, Spc. Carlos Martinez and Jenny Wren a Red Cross employee, celebrate Cinco de Mayo at the MWR Sports Lounge on LSA Anaconda May 5.