

ANACONDA TIMES

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Special Recruiter Assistance Program

By the U.S. Army
Recruiting Command
*Special Recruiter
Assistance Program*

Word is, the U.S. Army is the best-trained, best-equipped army in the world and the Special Recruiter Assistance Program is designed to deliver that message.

Soldiers who have served in Operations Enduring Freedom or Iraqi Freedom are eligible to convey messages like our military successes in Iraq and Afghanistan are an advancement in the Global War on terrorism.

And we know this global war isn't over. We will continue to engage in challenging training that will prepare us for the next call to defend liberty and freedom, at home and throughout the world.

As a Soldier, I am committed to defending our Nation. Our Army has been successful throughout history because of its heritage, unique culture and the great leaders and Soldiers with whom I am proud to serve.

Our Ethos and values form our foundation as Soldiers; we put the mission first, refuse to accept defeat, never quit and never leave behind a fallen comrade.

"An Army of One" recognizes that each and every Soldier makes a difference — for themselves, their families and our Nation. I am important to the team.

It's not always an easy job, but it's worth it. Although many of the great things we're doing get no publicity or media attention - we're doing the right thing and we're making a profound difference in the lives of so

see RECRUITER, page 2



Photo by Pfc. Leah R. Burton

Spc. Alberto Esquilin, 266th Ordnance Company from Al-Taquaddum, tries on the summer weight NOMEX aviator gloves while James Giles, fielding specialist, looks on.

Time rapidly running out for RFI

By Pfc. Leah R. Burton
Staff writer

Wednesday is the last day Soldiers have to acquire combat equipment from the Rapid Fielding Initiative here.

Soldiers, who need a size that wasn't available at the time of their issue, should return Monday through Wednesday to check on the shortages.

After Sept. 15, the facility will move to Kuwait so that the staff can catch Soldiers coming into country for the first time or returning from rest and relaxation leave, who may have missed their opportunity to get outfitted.

"Basically, RFI is a way to get the latest equipment to the Soldier faster than ever before," said Maj. John C. Cisney, Army liaison to the civilian contractors issuing the gear.

Normally when the Army develops new equipment, a stockpile builds up before the average Soldier sees the gear.

"With this program, we get it to the Soldier as fast as the manufacturer can put it out," Cisney said.

The equipment that Soldiers should receive includes winter and summer desert boots, glove system (summer and winter aviator gloves), hydration system, fleece bib and jacket and the Advanced Combat Helmet.

"The things the Soldiers most enjoy are the boots. They're a lot more comfortable than the standard issue boots," Cisney said.

The ACH is about one-half of an inch shorter at the base

than the Kevlar, allowing more freedom of movement. It has been argued that the shortness of the ACH exposes more of the Soldier's head and neck to injury.

"It's a trade-off," Cisney said. "We can wrap the Soldier 100 percent in Kevlar, but we won't have as functional a Soldier. If the Soldier has to get in the prone or look up, he or she can do so with the new ACH."

Brigade Combat Teams have priority in the issuing of the ACH. Eventually, all Soldiers will receive the new helmet as well as all other RFI.

In addition to these items Soldiers receive silk-weight long underwear, goggles, cold weather cap, combat belt, ballistic eye protection, and moisture-wicking socks and T-shirts.

RFI issues two different types of goggles, one type that fits over prescription eyeglasses and one type that doesn't. Female Soldiers receive moisture-wicking sports bras, as well.

"It was a special need. Females have to buy their own bras," said Cisney. "This is a way to standardize the issue process and defer the cost to the female Soldier. I've gotten a lot of positive feedback on the sports bras."

BCTs will also receive additional combat related equipment to include door rams, grappling hooks, battle ax, assault ladder and close combat optics. All echelons above brigade receive just enough heavy combat related equipment to outfit a quick reaction force.

The program was started in 2002 in Fort Belvoir, Va., to offset the cost to the individual Soldier of purchasing much

see RFI, page 16

SRAP enlists veterans' facts

Q. What is the Special Recruiter Assistance Program?

A. The program is a way to offer Soldiers who have served in the front lines an opportunity to share their experiences to local communities in their own words. This program will allow families, friends, local organizations and leaders to hear first-hand accounts of the war through the voices of their hometown heroes. Additionally, this special program will promote Army awareness while supporting the Army's recruiting efforts through media and organizational events, as well as Future Soldier functions.

Q. Who is eligible to participate in the SRAP?

A. Enlisted Soldiers who are currently located in CONUS and have served in Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom may request to participate in the special recruiter assistance program. In addition to being a veteran of either of the aforementioned operations, Soldiers must also meet HRAP criteria outlined in AR 601-2 (Army Promotional Recruiter Support Programs), chapter 7.

Q. How can Soldiers apply to participate in the program?

A. OEF and OIF enlisted Soldiers who want to participate must submit their applications online at www.usarec.army.mil. All requests will undergo a screening process by the United States Army Recruiting Command's enlisted standards division and security branch. This process will take at least seven days to complete. USAREC's HRAP manager will notify Soldiers who pass the screening via email. This e-mail will also include the name and address of the recruiting company where the participants will perform their SRAP duty. Upon receipt of notification, these Soldiers must have their requests (DA Form 4187) approved by the first lieutenant colonel (O-5) in the Soldier's chain of command. The DA 4187 will be faxed to HQ USAREC at 502-626-0943 and upon receipt a DD Form 1610 will be completed by the USAREC program manager and sent to the email address of the Soldier and unit personnel section, as provided on the DA Form 4187.

Q. Will SRAP participants be in a TDY status?

A. SRAP participants will serve in a temporary duty status for a period up to 14 days and may claim reimbursement for travel expenses and per diem allowance for the period of TDY. Further, the TDY may be taken in conjunction with ordinary leave. USAREC has been allocated funding for this initiative and is responsible for managing the program.

Q. What will Soldiers assigned to SRAP do when they report to duty?

A. The OEF and OIF Soldiers will report to the designated recruiting station commander on the day the SRAP commences in their desert camouflage uniform with a DD Form 1610 authorizing SRAP participation. SRAP soldiers will work not less than 40 hours per week during their tour. Additional information regarding this program can be found at the Web site www.usarec.army.mil.

RECRUITER, from page 1
many people worldwide.

Operational Points to Remember:
Avoid comparing your unit's capabilities and contributions with those of other units, sister services, allied forces and components.

Do not identify deployed or classified operating locations or specific countries that are prohibited from release because of host nation sensitivities.

Avoid speculation on performance success of particular weapons systems and numbers of "kills."

Avoid providing estimates, numbers or vivid descriptions that may be shocking to nonmilitary individuals of individual kills they made.

Don't speculate on the philosophical, political or strategic aspects of combat operations in Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom.

Do not discuss specific operational or sensitive details about mission profiles, tactics, techniques or procedures, specific targets, sensitive deployment locations, battle damage assessment, collateral damage, and information about ongoing or future operations or intelligence activities.

Do not discuss matters under investigation, to include incidents of possible fratricide.

Avoid political discussions and participation in political activities or events while in uniform or during official SRAP duties.



Safe home for Arab women

By Maj. Cindi Feldwisch
Air Force Reserve

Good things can come out of the rubble of war and one thing is the first Safe House for battered and abused women in Baghdad, Iraq. The Safe House opened its doors to care recipients in April.

For the first time, Iraqi women now have a place to escape from physical or sexual abuse. Often, social services for Iraqi women are limited, especially for women over the age of 18. If a woman is younger than 18 years and in need of help, Iraqi orphanages generally take responsibility. On a case-by-case basis, orphanages have taken in women over the legal age, but this is only a temporary solution.

Culturally, Iraq is very different from the United States where battered women have the option to leave the abusive situation and create their own independent life. In Iraq, the battered woman and her children are returned to the family.

"In Iraq, the family structure is so important that it cannot be ignored. Family is the focus," said Maj. Martha Boyd, senior consultant, Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs-Iraq Reconstruction Management Office.

The Safe House opened at an undisclosed location within the city limits of Baghdad for the protection of the clients and staff. The home welcomes women in the most desperate of situations. The home also "provides hope in this country that domestic violence does not need to be tolerated" Boyd said.

The home can host up to 16 women if need be, but the ideal capacity is no more than eight people in order to provide individual attention from the staff.

The shelter is open and staffed seven days week, 24 hours a day under tight security.

The Safe House not only provides temporary protection but also educates the family that abuse is not acceptable. If an Iraqi woman is raped, the shelter can also protect her from honor killings – an acceptable cultural practice in some parts of Iraq. To date, five women, including one client with five children, have taken advantage of the Safe House staying up to two weeks before returning home.

Boyd's hope is that the Safe House and others like it will continue to provide care and counseling to victims of domestic violence for years to come.

This project is the brainchild of Capt. Stacey Simms, United States Army, who worked for the 352nd Civil Affairs Command while deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Simms began this project under the guidance of the Coalition Provisional Authority and working in conjunction with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. The project was handed over to Boyd in February 2004.

Boyd is charged with ensuring funding for the Safe House and its employees. With the transfer of power to the Interim Iraqi Government, the women's shelter has fallen under the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs. The Safe House operates on a \$75,000 annual budget, which includes payroll. Several non-government organizations are assisting in providing financial support, management expertise and material resources to keep the house open until permanent funding can be established.

To learn more about the Safe House, you can contact Boyd at Martha.boyd@central.iraq.centcom.mil.

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Just your average superheroes

By U.S. Navy Reserve
Lt. j.g. Ryan P. Anderson
Defense Contract Management Agency

Superheroes are common elements of dreams, hopes and childhood fantasies. I had dismissed the idea and figured I would never be lucky enough to be in the company of one of these mythical figures. Then it happened. It was the most unlikely place at the most unlikely time.

Before they deploy to Iraq, all Defense Contract Management Agency employees are required to attend a one-week preparation course at Fort Bliss, Texas, or Fort Benning, Ga. In this short time, they sign for survival gear and receive training on basic first aid and standard military operating procedures. They go to the firing range for instruction on the use and care of firearms, and back to the classroom to learn the intricacies of donning chemical, biological and radiological protective gear.

It's a whirlwind week, but there are still many hours to sit and think about where you are going and what you will be doing. It is during one of these periods that I realized that I was in the company of a mythical figure ... a real-life super hero. In fact, I was surrounded by dozens of them.

They were mothers, fathers, sons and daughters. They were men and women from nearly every state in the union. They didn't wear capes or the proverbial superhero masks; instead they wore flack jackets and Kevlar helmets. They didn't carry secret decoder rings to summon supernatural powers - instead, they carried pictures of their loved ones to give them the inspiration and incentive to protect and defend.

The most remarkable characteristic this group of

people shared is that they all started out as common Americans who distinguished themselves by standing up and volunteering to give everything in the face of adversity.

There were no parades, and the city mayor was not present. No stages, and no welcome committee, just a bus traveling through the Texas desert on its way back to the classroom carrying its precious cargo of truly brave, and very real, superheroes.

The mission of DCMA Iraq, where these heroes were bound, is to oversee and administer government contracts and act as clutch between the customer and the contractor. DCMA Iraq is responsible for nine task orders with a combined value of more than \$6.6 billion.

Forty-one truly remarkable people expertly administer these task orders. They come from military, government and civilian backgrounds. They range in age from 26 to 60 and hail from just about every state between California and Maine.

Demographically speaking, these people have very little in common. However, they do share one important quality that enables them to expertly accomplish such a massive task with so few people: courage. Courage is the common bond that makes the "troops" of DCMA Iraq able and willing to rise to any challenge. They not only meet expectations, but far surpass them on a daily basis. Here are a few of their stories.

Najaf, Iraq, is a frustrating work location, thanks to incessant bombing and enemy fire that often continues through the night and well into the next day. Still, business is uninterrupted, because Soldiers have to eat and repair their equipment. Tom Healey, DCMA's resident quality assurance representative, sits at his desk at all hours to ensure contractors are performing as charged. He also sends constant updates of conditions in Najaf "up the chain."

Bruce Gasper, a DCMA QAR from another camp in Iraq, learned of the wearisome conditions in Najaf and wrote a letter to the DCMA Southern Iraq commander, volunteering to relieve Tom Healey from the stressful conditions for a while. The commander of DCMA Southern Iraq passed Gasper's proposal on to Healey, who responded by offering a heartfelt thanks for the offer — which he declined. His reason? "I'm no different from the guys we support — 24/7 and ready to go at all times. I'm glad I'm at [Najaf]. No one could ask for a better job. My only disappointment is that I can only stay for another 179 days."

Another small camp in Iraq is home to three DCMA employees. These employees are responsible for, among other things, the life support functions of the camp. For the past couple of months, there had been substantial breaks in communication that affected the camp's ability to receive food on a consistent basis.

Despite best efforts by all involved, the problem persisted. These DCMA personnel more than once provided primary and assisted convoy support to bring food trucks from a choke point to the camp. These challenges were dangerous at best, but not insurmountable. These are men and women who offered to perform services well outside of their charged duties. They did so with professionalism and a surprising degree of expertise in a field they had little experience in.

The most extreme display of heroism by all DCMA Iraq employees is their complete absence of any expectation for formal recognition. Despite daily performance by these 41 folks that can easily be considered "above and beyond the call of duty," none expect or desire awards.

The brave men and women of DCMA Iraq make this sailor's dream of meeting a "real superhero" come true every day.



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

Pvt. Murphy's Law

Airborne!
The 4th Point of Performance:
Prepare to Land





Left Shoulder Diary

70th Regional Readiness Command

Compiled from
Unit History

The 70th Regional Readiness Command shoulder sleeve insignia is characterized by a representation of Mount Hood and a green fir tree below a white axe with handle cropped set on a scarlet axe head measuring three and one-fourth inches in length and two and seven-sixteenths inches in width, worn with blade up.

The division is known as "The Trailblazer Division" represented by the axe head, which was used in the early days to blaze the trail through the wilderness represented by the mountain and the tree, and is representative of the aim of the organization to overcome all obstacles in the path to its military objective.

The insignia was originally authorized June 15, 1943 for the 70th Division (Training). The insignia was re-designated for the 70th Regional Support Command. It was re-designated for the 70th Regional Readiness Command July 16, 2003.

The 70th Regional Readiness Command began as the 124th U.S. Army Reserve Command Dec. 13, 1967. The official designation as the 124th ARCOM was made March 1, 1968, and it was assigned to the Sixth U.S. Army March 8, 1968. The 124th ARCOM was assigned the mission of preparing its subordinate units to mobilize and perform wartime tasks.

Prior to the formation of the 124th ARCOM, the subordinate reserve units had been controlled by 10th Corps of the active Army. Part-time reserve officers had been under command of the active Army officers. When 10th Corps was deactivated, the 124th ARCOM was created as the new headquarters for all reserve units.

The 124th ARCOM, by direction of the U.S. Army Reserve Command, began reorganization in 1995, changing from an Army Reserve Command to a Regional Support Command. In 1996, the 124th RSC was inactivated and took up the name and heritage of the 70th Division (Training) and became the 70th Regional Support Command.

All Regional Support Commands were re-designated to Regional Readiness Commands in late 2003.

Shortly thereafter, elements of the unit deployed to LSA Anaconda and other areas of Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Soldiers of the 70th RRC provide combat support in terms of medical care and engineering needs for operations in theater.

Civilian of the Week

Glenn P. Lee, KBR's Central Issue Facility manager, is no stranger to the armed forces. Born in Fort Bragg, N.C., he grew up as a military dependent and now calls San Antonio, Texas, home.

He's been working as a logistics manager for KBR since 1999 and has deployed to Macedonia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Afghanistan.

Lee arrived on LSA Anaconda in late June and has supervised a complete facelift to all the CIF warehouses.

Prior to his KBR experiences, Lee worked as an operating room specialist on a four-year enlistment in the Army with the 82nd Airborne Division.

Even with his many years of experience, Lee still encounters logistical demands.

"The most challenging part of my job is keeping an adequate stock level," he said.

He always keeps his radio on him so that his staff can reach him.

With Soldiers constantly in and out of the facility at all times of the day and night, Lee is always on duty, and he embraces the obstacles.

"I do it for the challenge," said Lee. "It's a challenge starting from scratch in every place I go."

He considers conducting business with Soldiers the most rewarding part of his job.

When he does have downtime, Lee enjoys reading, watching movies and working out.

With his many deployments, his family has been very supportive, he said.

"If I had a message to send home to family and friends it's that I love them and miss them. It is dangerous, but the military support is awesome, so don't worry," Lee said.



Glenn P. Lee

U.S. Postal Service non-mailable items

Flammable or combustible liquids and solids to include cigarette lighters

- Oxidizing substances and organic pesticides
- Corrosives
- Radioactive material
- Magnetized material
- Dry ice
- Pistols, revolvers, weapon parts and other firearms
- Knives, bayonets and other sharp instruments
- Intoxication liquors
- Matter emitting obnoxious odors
- Controlled substances
- Drug paraphernalia
- Lewd and pornographic matter
- Military equipment and TA-50
- Live tobacco products
- Fireworks
- Sand, gravel, marble, plaster or other material from buildings
- Pork and pork products
- Animals and insects - dead or alive

49th MCB keeps supplies moving in Iraq

By Sgt. Ann Venturato
Assistant editor

Back in the U.S. the latest traffic information would be a touch of the radio dial away, but here in Iraq the 49th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control) keeps Soldiers informed about the latest traffic information before they leave for their next destination.

With its 31 Movement Control Teams spread throughout Iraq, the 49th MCB controls all ground, rail, and air movement in country.

With MCT's that range anywhere in size from division support teams that have seven people to a port movement control team that has 18 people, the 49th MCB has more than 400 personnel spread out in Iraq to help control the movement in theater.

"They are located in every major node in Iraq," said Capt. Sarah Oden, 49th MCB battle captain. Oden's job is to help keep track of all the movements.

"The MCT's are located at every border entry where we have people coming in from other countries, all the convoy support centers and the major forward operating bases."

The 49th MCB has MCT's as far South as Um Qasr, far north as the Turkish border, and as far west as the Jordanian border.

They track about 250 convoys a day across theater, that equals about 3,000 vehicles a day.

The MCT's mission is to track convoys coming in and out of their area.

They are also responsible for moving equipment in and out of their area.

There are different types of movement control teams. Including port movement teams, air movement teams, cargo movement teams as well as highway regulating teams.

The 386th MCT in Baghdad has the mission to track the flow of all personnel who come in and out of Baghdad International Airport.

Because of the air movement success over the last seven months, more than 6,000 trucks have been off the roads which has also kept more than 34,000 Soldiers off the roads.

The 49th MCB controls the air movement of C-130's, C-141's, C-23's, C-17's and C-5's throughout Iraq. It has an air movement operation called "Spearhead Aviation" which involves the transportation of Soldiers and supplies on C-23's.

"We get more than 600 requests per month for Sherpa support," said Chief Warrant Officer Veronica Marshall, 49th MCB mobility warrant officer.

More than a million pounds of cargo has been moved



Photos courtesy of 49th Movement Control Battalion

Spc. Amanda Fisher, Capt. Craig Macina and Spc. Antonio Gayton, Soldiers with the 133rd Movement Control Team, check on incoming and outgoing supplies at the port operations at Umm Qasr, Iraq in March.

by using the Sherpas, Marshall said.

Besides air movement, MCT's also control rail movement.

The rail is run by Iraqi Rail System but it is supported by the MCTs to control the movement of supplies in their area, said Lt. Col. Susan Davidson, 49th MCB commander.

Our success in rail movement has varied in past months because of bridges being blown out, she said.

"We have had rail movement success in the Marine Expeditionary Force area around Baghdad," Davidson added.

Whether rail, air, or land, the 49th MCB has made a success of controlling supplies.

"It has been great for me. Back in garrison we don't do a whole lot of movement control because of the freedom of movement there," Davidson said. "Here it is a different story because everything has to be controlled, as well as monitored."

The highway traffic section is the hub that helps control the various combat logistical patrols on the roads. With the use of technology, the section keeps up with the latest road conditions so convoys going out and those on the highways know about any changes that might affect their travel.

Their job is to let combat logistical patrols know which routes they should be taking for safest travel.

"We know how something that has happened is going to affect a convoy getting ready to roll out," Davidson said.

The status of the highway conditions is very important for the combat logistic patrols out on the roads.

"We communicate with every convoy that is out there," said Sgt. 1st. Class Rodger Flicek, S-3 NCOIC, 49th MCB. "There have been times when we have had to find alternate routes for the convoys on the roads

because bridges have been blown out."

The 49th MCB keeps track of all traffic routes throughout theater. The constant monitoring allows them to keep track of what supplies are moving and where the supplies are at.

"We have to make sure that we have visibility on it so the warfighters out there are actually getting their supplies when they need them," Flicek said. "If the convoys don't get there then the mission has failed."

By controlling the movement of the combat logistic patrols in a safe and timely manner, it helps ensure that the mission will be accomplished.

"We are always completing a mission," Flicek said. "Sometime we aren't the most well liked organization because we do control very tightly what is moving on the highways, but we are very professional at what we do."

"Our concern is not only making sure that commodities get there but to also make sure that the truck drivers out on the roads get from point A to point B in the safest manner they can," Flicek said.

"We measure success not only by the commodities that get there but knowing that no one was injured in the process," Flicek added.

Communication is the key to the mission success. The MCT's provide combat logistic patrols with an accurate picture of what is happening in theater.

"We try to keep up with everything but sometimes it can get hectic," Flicek said.

There is always something moving in theater that needs to be tracked by 49th MCB Soldiers. The Soldiers work long hours to keep track of all the movement going on in Iraq.

"Our mission here will never stop until we go home," Davidson said, reflective of the battalion's motto, "We never stop."



A Soldier from the 258th Movement Control Team helps load a C-23 with supplies for transportation in Al Taqaddum, Iraq in April. The Sherpa is used to transport Soldiers and supplies throughout Iraq.

Service members return to duty after receiving treatment at Army burn center

Staff Sgt. Michele Mitchell's journey here to the Defense Department's only center committed to treating burn victims began in late April, when she was riding in an up-armored Humvee near Baghdad as part of a five-vehicle convoy dispatched to pick up troops.

The 571st Military Police Company medic, who deployed to Iraq with her unit from Fort Lewis, Wash., recalls sitting in the back seat, directly behind the driver, "scoping" the area for aggressors as the convoy traversed through a series of checkpoints.

What Mitchell's scope didn't detect was a hidden improvised explosive device in the roadway that sent shrapnel blasting through her vehicle and caused it to burst into flames. The explosion and fire mangled Mitchell's arm and left both legs with extensive burns.

"It just ripped me up," said the veteran of 10 years, who said she "knew something was wrong" immediately but never actually saw her injuries until weeks after the incident.

After being airlifted to Logistics Support Area Anaconda, in Balad, Iraq, then to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, Mitchell was quickly transferred here, to the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research's Burn Center.

The center, which opened in 1947, treats burn patients from every military service, as well as veterans. And as the only burn center in central Texas, it also serves as the regional burn center for civilian burn victims, explained Lt. Col. Lee Cancio, a surgeon at the center for the past 10 years.

But of all the center's patients — typically several hundred a year — Cancio said none pull at the center staff's heartstrings more than service members injured in the line of duty, particularly in combat.

"We're here because we want to take care our injured combat casualties," he said. "It's difficult work, both physically and emotionally, but the entire staff takes great satisfaction in being able to help these men and women who have served their country."

Since the start of the war on terror, 129 service members have been medically evacuated from Iraq and Afghanistan to be treated for severe burns at the center. Nearly half have been accompanied during their flights to Fort Sam Houston by the burn center's five-person flight team, which ensures the patient is stable and begins lifesaving treatment immediately.

"The war has increased our workload quite a bit," said Cancio.

Initially, many burn victims from Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom were injured through preventable accidents, including those involved with burning human waste, he said. Later, after an aggressive education program helped reduce those injuries, Cancio said, rocket-propelled grenades became the No. 1 cause of burns in Southwest Asia.

But today, roadside bombs like the one that Mitchell said left her legs looking "like burned hamburger meat" are the leading cause of severe burns in Iraq.

Regardless of their cause, burns inflict tremendous damage to the body. Infection threatens exposed tissue. Skin can't retain



Photo by Donna Mills

Rumiko Cahill, a physical therapist assistant at the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research's Burn Center, helps Army Staff Sgt. Michele Mitchell, left, stretch her fingers to increase their flexibility as she heals from injuries received in Iraq.

fluids, sometimes threatening to shut down the kidneys. Body temperatures plummet, causing patients to shiver from cold, even when under heat lamps. Lungs often are damaged by fire, smoke and chemicals.

"This is probably the worst kind of injury a person can endure," said Staff Sgt. Dave Waymon, a licensed vocational nurse at the center for almost five years. "The treatment is long, extensive and painful for the patient."

And while the pain of the injury can be unbearable, the treatment can sometimes feel worse. Staff members at the center say the hardest part of the job isn't working 12-or-more-hour shifts in wards heated to 85 to 100 degrees.

It's knowing that everything they do for a patient, however therapeutic, inflicts

even more pain. Dressing changes, dead tissue removal, antibiotic cream applications and skin grafts — all necessary to fight infection and speed up healing — can be unbearable. Spray from a shower nozzle can feel like bullets against charred flesh.

When a new patient is admitted to the center, one of the first steps is to remove any dead skin or hair from the wound that can harbor bacteria and lead to infection, Waymon explained.

"The whole time they're here, that initial bath or shower is the most painful," Waymon said. "I explain to (the patients) what I'm going to do and why I have to do it, and tell them that I will give them pain medicine and do my best to minimize the pain."

Treatment for burn victims generally takes far longer than for other trauma patients — typically one to two days for every 1 percent of the body burned, according to Maj. Louis Stout, head nurse at the center. For some patients, hospital stays can last months.

Five months after her injury, Mitchell is well along the path to recovery, but still undergoing treatment at the burn center.

The center staff say the job brings tremendous personal gratification as well.

"One of the satisfactions is telling a patient, 'You're fine. Go back to your unit and have a good life,'" Cancio said.

Of the 129 servicemembers admitted to the unit with burns received in Iraq and Afghanistan, all but 15 are back on active duty, although some are still on convalescent leave or have duty restrictions.

American Force Press Service

Marine ordnance crews 'Bats' keep Hornets ready for combat actions in Iraq

Around the clock, the F/A-18D Hornets of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (All Weather) 242, Marine Wing Support Group 37, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, are constantly armed and ready to respond to any call to support Marine ground units in Iraq.

Maintaining that state of perpetual readiness has not been an easy task.

The squadron's leadership credits the resolve of their ordnance Marines for helping deliver a high level of productivity in the harsh desert environment here.

"All of our marines and sailors are very hard workers," said Sgt. Maj. Charles H. Oldham, sergeant major,

VMFA(AW)-242. "But the ordnance Marines in particular have been working some long hours in awful heat conditions."

After spending a day with the Bats' ordnance ground crewmembers, one can see why marines have a lasting reputation for their zealous professionalism, dedication, and commitment to their mission.

"Since our arrival in Iraq a few weeks ago, we have maintained an extremely high operational tempo," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Thomas M. Andersen, ordnance officer, VMFA(AW)-242. "Within a few hours of being on deck we had ordnance loaded and standard combat load munitions were being employed in support of marines on the ground.

Working 12-hour shifts, with occasional overlap, the enlisted members of the squadron's ordnance shop are largely new to the squadron, but their recent accomplishments belie their experience level.

"They have really come together remarkably as a team and are one of the best crews I have ever seen," said Master Sgt. Charles Frick, squadron ordnance chief.

Frick added that the marines in his shop have no margin for error. When the alert is called they have only one shot to have Hornets reloaded for a new mission in a matter of minutes.

So far, 'Bats' ordnance crews have accomplished every mission assigned to them, either on time or with time to spare.

Gunnery Sgt. Anthony J. Garcia, ordnance staff non-commissioned officer-in-charge, VMFA(AW)-242, said that the young marines in his shop have "geled" superbly.

He also mentioned that they demonstrate a rare eagerness to understand new things and they take the initiative to read publications to learn as much as they can about their job.

Before deploying to Iraq earlier this month, a few of the ordnance shop's lance corporals had to stay behind due to manpower constraints, according to Andersen.

There were no volunteers.

During their work shifts, the ordnance crews have little time to rest. If they do have a short break in between flights, the marines are either having a quick bite to eat, cleaning their weapons, doing pull-ups, studying or doing something related to their job. They are constantly occupied with work-related activities, but they also like to crack light-hearted jokes.

The shop's younger marines come from diverse backgrounds and from different states across the country. Yet they share a positive work ethic and an understanding of their role that manifests itself on the flight line of this former Iraqi Air Force base in western Iraq.

"We know that what we do out here affects the grunts on the ground in other parts of Iraq, so we take this job very seriously," said Lance Cpl. Ruben R. Giner, ordnance technician, VMFA(AW)-242.

Events in Iraq throughout August saw the 'Bats' flying more than 900 hours compared to a monthly training average of 400, according to Andersen. The demands of such a busy combat environment often taxes the human spirit, but the youthful vigor of VMFA(AW)-242's ordnance crew might never lead one to believe it.

Marine Corps News Service



Photo by Cpl. Paul Leicht

Lance Cpl. Brian Twigg, ordnance technician, VMFA(AW)-242, and a native of Woodland, Calif., completes the disarming of a Maverick missile under the wing of a F/A-18D Hornet at Al Asad, Iraq, Sept. 1.

Combat-weary warriors get help for combat related stress before exiting Iraq

Some marines who have served in Iraq for the last six months may be carrying extra baggage back to the United States in the form of combat stress.

Two Navy doctors who share a tiny office built into the backroom of the camp chapel, aim to keep the carry-ons to a minimum as the I Marine Expeditionary Force's deployed troops prepare to hop on planes and hand the reins of the Al Anbar Province over to another team of Marines.

It's not your typical psychiatrist's office. The classic black leather couch has been replaced by a floppy canvas camping chair, and the imposing walls in the cramped room are made of unfinished plywood.

A lot of talking goes on within those walls. The doctors help young men and women who are trained to use force as their voice during combat identify and cope with the stress of a war-time deployment.

Iraq has no shortage of stress for troops. The constant threat of attack during frequent all-night supply convoys puts support Marines, like those with the 1st Force Service Support Group on edge no matter how many miles they have covered on the highways here.

"Whether it's your first mission or your 100th, the stressors are the same," said Maj. Mark A. Lamelza, the commanding officer of 3rd Battalion, 24th Marine Regiment's Weapons Company, which has helped provide security for some 1st FSSG convoys.

One mortar or roadside bomb attack can send a wave of emotion through a marine that could last months, he added.

"You're shocked, and when that wears off, you're pissed at the unseen enemy lurking in the shadows," he said. "Many marines see that as a dishonorable way to fight."

The "unseen enemy" can prowl in marines' minds, also, if they aren't given a chance to recover.

Oftentimes a simple prescription of "three hots and a cot," and some time to decompress, is all it takes to relieve the stress, said Capt. William J. Hocter Jr., a psychiatrist and one of the doctors.

The rotating cast of doctors here has seen about 190

patients since the I Marine Expeditionary Force replaced the Army's 82nd Airborne Division in Iraq in March 2004. Six patients were sent back to the states, but the doctors do everything they can to help without having to detach individuals from their unit, said Lt. Cmdr. Eric E. Cunha, a clinical psychologist and the other half of the combat stress team.

In a culture where many wear their hearts in a sheath and a knife on their sleeve, few marines look for the help needed after experiencing combat. In fact, according to Hocter, three-fourths don't seek treatment.

"Most of the time they are brought in or referred to us by a concerned person," Hocter said

One way the doctors identify people with possible problems is by holding post-deployment health assessments of troops headed home. Navy corpsmen working for the doctors walk homeward bound troops through a series of questions about the state of their mental and physical health.

Certain questions in the brief are designed to help identify people who may want to talk to one of the doctors, said Hocter.

"About 1 percent of the people get flagged during the PDHA," he said. "They come to us and we either say, 'this is just a combat thing,' or something deeper."

Postponing an appointment could lead to more issues, said Hocter. The symptoms, like nightmares, depression, anxiety and flashbacks, build on each other and can gradually become worse.

"We expect them to be experiencing this a little bit, but when it's uncontrollable, it becomes a problem," said Cunha.

About half of the patient traffic that has moved through the office has been Army Soldiers burdened with 13-month deployments, said Hocter.

Many of them are national guardsmen who were forced to transition from part-time soldier to full-time warrior, leaving families and careers behind to work long hours in a dangerous environment.

Even active-duty marines scheduled to rotate out after about six months are feeling the effects of combat stress



Photo by Staff Sgt. Bill Lisbon

Lt. Cmdr. Eric E. Cunha serves as a clinical psychologist with the Marine Corps' 1st Force Service Support Group, where he talks with service members who show signs of combat stress at Camp Taqaddum, Iraq, on Sept. 3, 2004.

from long, dangerous work days here.

It helps, said Lamelza, to break up the workload and give troops an opportunity to relax between missions.

"We're running a lot of operations every day, so we're always looking to give marines something to do to keep them fresh so they don't burn out," said Lamelza.

"Balancing missions with welfare of Marines is something every command needs to do," added Lamelza.

Many marines are on their way out of Iraq now and being replaced by fresh faces.

Before they leave, they also sit down in groups and listen to a brief given by a chaplain, who tells them what emotional changes they can expect upon returning and the best way to deal with what they have seen and been through.

If unsettling memories from the deployment keep nagging at them even after veterans return home and settle back into everyday life, there are doctors available at Navy hospitals and through veterans programs in the states to help, said Cunha.

Marine News Service

New water analyzing machine offers smaller, lighter, faster water testing in field

More than a dozen researchers gathered at the U.S. Army Center for Environmental Health Research at Fort Detrick, Md., Aug. 25 to see an award-winning water analyzer that cuts in a third the time it takes to tell if water is contaminated.

Demonstrated by David Putnam, a microbiologist and immunologist, the machine, called the coliform analyzer, meets its early goals of rapidly analyzing bacterial contaminants in water while being simple to operate and smaller and lighter than the normal water analysis setup.

"The device takes conventional methods and improves on them with electronics and computers to enhance the entire process," said Thomas Gargan, of Geo-Centers Inc. at USACEHR, who has provided oversight of the machine's progress since 2000. "It's simple, straightforward and very innovative."

The shoebox-sized machine, with its blinking colored lights, cuts the weight of conventional analyzers to eight pounds while providing quick answers on whether water is contaminated.

Further, the machine provides continuous progress reports for up to eight samples, which can be run simultaneously,

and gives definitive results in eight hours instead of the 24 hours it normally takes. The machine can be used to test drinking water, source and surface water, treated water and recreational areas.

During the demonstration, Putnam used super-contaminated water, so attendees saw results right away as the machine updated its results.



Photo by Karen Fleming-Michael

David Putnam, a microbiologist and immunologist, demonstrates a machine called the coliform analyzer, which rapidly analyzes bacterial contaminants in water, is simple to operate, and is smaller and lighter than the normal water-analysis setup.

"In conventional tests, lots of organisms are present and it doesn't matter which one — it takes a day to find out. You wouldn't know until tomorrow," Putnam said. "The only way to approach it right now is to cover the range and see what you've got."

His machine looks for the presence of both total coliform bacteria and E. coli. The presence of E. coli in a water sample indicates the water is contaminated by fecal matter, and can make drinkers ill.

The procedure is relatively simple, so even people with little training can prepare samples for testing. The user takes a sample, which can be gathered in the kit's six-liter wine-box bag, and runs the water through a filter that grabs particles. The operator then injects the filter's particles into a special media that encourages only coliforms to grow.

As soon as the sample and media are put in the Coliform Analyzer, the machine begins reporting what's in the sample.

"Almost immediately, the operator can know if the sample has contaminants that could pose a danger to drinkers," Gargan said. "And by the end of eight hours, the operator will know if the sample contains coliforms as well as how many."

Military preventive-medicine specialists routinely work behind the scenes to sample water in the field to make sure it's fit to drink, said Paul Knechtges of USACEHR, who manages a program to develop devices to detect contaminants in water and food. Having a light, portable, rapid analyzer can make their jobs much easier, he said.

"We trust that when we turn on the tap, we get good water, and 99.9 percent of the time the (test) results are negative," Knechtges said. "But it's the .01 percent that's going to cause a water-borne disease outbreak. You don't want it to happen during operations."

Military preventive-medicine teams routinely make decisions on which water is best, and this machine can help them determine which source of water is cleanest.

"There's a saying that in preventive medicine, the better job you do, the more invisible you become. But in the field you become a VIP," he said. "I used to have docs and nurses come up to me and ask if the water was all right to drink. That's a big responsibility."

Army News Service

Movie Schedule

Sustainer Reel Time Theater

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

Sept. 12

3 p.m. Anacondas
6 p.m. A Cinderella Story
9 p.m. Sleepover

Sept. 13

3 p.m. A Cinderella Story
6 p.m. Spiderman 2
9 p.m. Catwoman

Sept. 14

3 p.m. Anacondas
6 p.m. Catwoman
9 p.m. A Cinderella Story

Sept. 15

3 p.m. Catwoman
6 p.m. Anacondas
9 p.m. Sleepover

Sept. 16

3 p.m. A Cinderella Story
6 p.m. Catwoman
9 p.m. Anacondas

Sept. 17

3 p.m. Paparazzi
6 p.m. Paparazzi
9 p.m. Paparazzi

Sept. 18

3 p.m. Thunderbirds
6 p.m. Paparazzi
9 p.m. The Bourne Supremacy



Thunderbirds



Paparazzi

Weekly Religious Schedule

Roman Catholic Mass

Sunday 8:30 a.m. 185th Task Force Tent
Sunday 11 a.m. Anaconda Provider Chapel
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)

Church of Christ

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

Protestant-Praise and Worship

Sunday 9 a.m. Sustainer Indoor Theater
Sunday 9:30 a.m. 185th Task Force Tent

Protestant-Liturgical

Saturday 7 p.m. Tuskegee Chapel

Protestant-Gospel

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

Lutheran

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

Protestant-Contemporary

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

Protestant-Traditional

Sunday 9 a.m. Eden Chapel (bldg. 4148)
Sunday 9:30 a.m. 31st Combat Support Hospital
Sunday 9:30 a.m. Anaconda Provider Chapel
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

Islamic Prayer

Friday 1:30 p.m. Anaconda Chapel Tent

Christian Orthodox

Sunday 11 a.m. 185th Task Force Tent

Latter Day Saints

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

Jewish Prayer

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

Movie Synopsis for Sept. 12 - Sept. 18

Paparazzi

PG-13, Drama, 85 min
Duane Davis, Dennis Farina

They are the key players in the public's insatiable appetite for information and photos about their favorite stars. They are hunters who trail their prey at all hours of the day and night. For rising action superstar Bo Laramie (Cole Hauser), a quartet of paparazzi is at first an annoyance, then an ever-disturbing presence. But when they threaten his family's safety, it will be the last mistake they ever make. One night, while trying to get "the shot," they force Bo and his family into a high-speed car chase that ends in a terrible accident, sending Abby into intensive care and 6-year-old Zach into a coma. Veteran Los Angeles police detective Burton (Dennis Farina) believes Bo's version of the accident, but when Burton can't make the case against the photographers, Bo seeks vengeance on his own. And the paparazzi start falling ... one by one.

Thunderbirds

PG, Science Fiction, 87 min
Bill Paxton, Anthony Edwards, Ben Kingsley

When dangerous situations exceed the limitations of ordinary military and international security forces, the world calls upon the high-tech assistance of International Rescue—a mysterious band of fearless adventurers and their fleet of vehicles known as: Thunderbirds! Tracy Island is home to entrepreneur and former astronaut Jeff Tracy (Bill Paxton) and his five sons. It is also the headquarters of International Rescue. Master criminal The Hood (Sir Ben Kingsley) has breached island security, intent on commandeering International Rescue's fleet of five highly advanced vehicles. Deploying Jeff and his four eldest sons on a mission, The Hood finds his plans obstructed by Jeff's youngest son Alan (Brady Corbet), who will do anything to save the Tracy family and the Thunderbirds.

Anacondas

PG-13, Action, 99 min
Eugene Byrd, Morris Chestnut

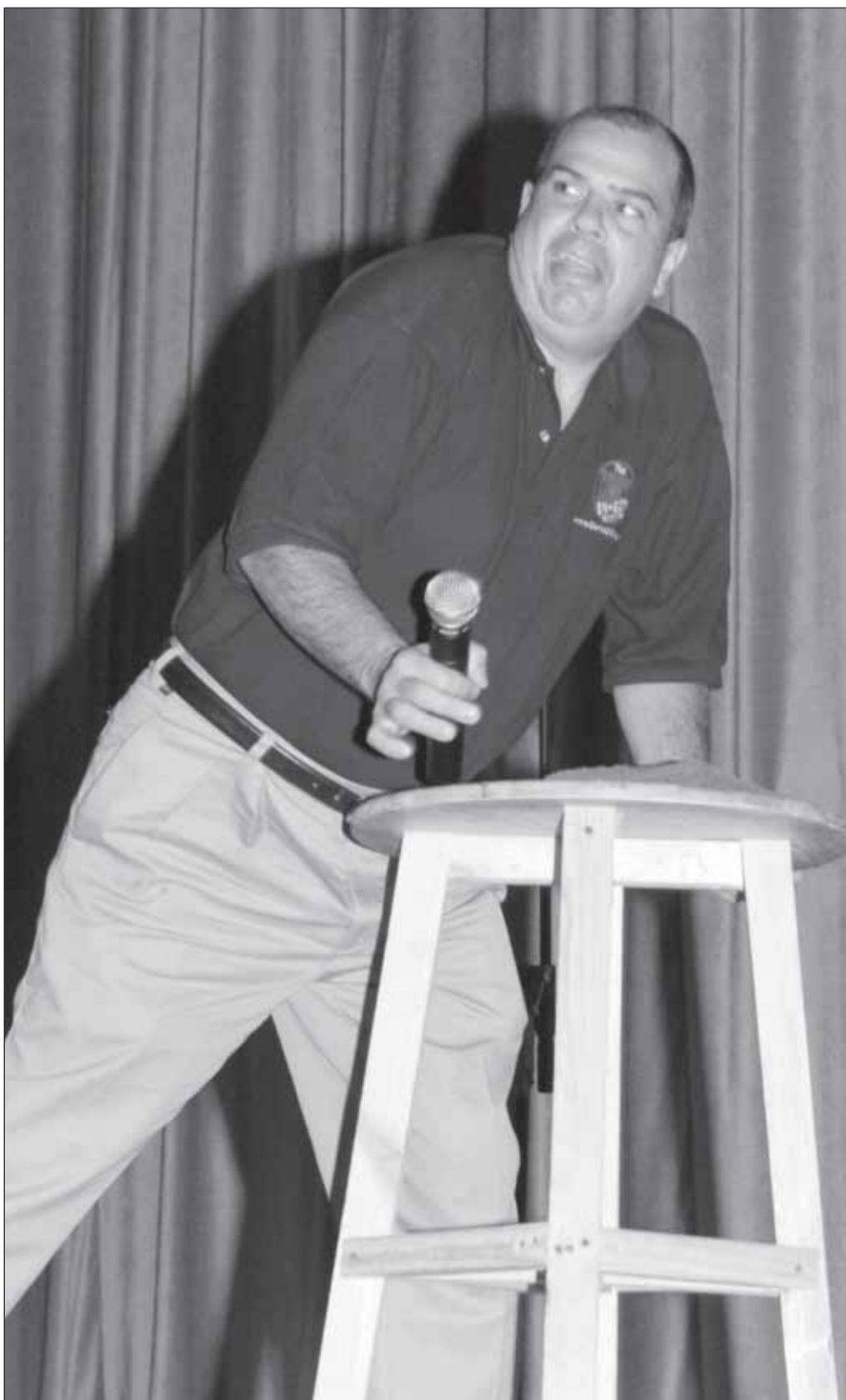
A scientific expedition is assembled by a powerful pharmaceutical company to search for a rare black orchid in the deep recesses of the jungles of Borneo. They are in search of a flower named the Black Orchid. Reports say that this flower can lead to a longer life. Their hope is that the orchid can be used to unlock the secrets of youth and immortality. What they soon discover is that the orchid is already being used by a denizen host of giant snakes to augment their strength, size and vitality—not to mention their appetites. Now the scientists must find a way out of the rainforest by outsmarting, outrunning and outliving the anacondas.

A Cinderella Story

PG, Comedy, 95 min
Hilary Duff, Jennifer Coolidge

Cute but geeky high-school student Samantha Martin (Hilary Duff) is knocked off her feet by her father's untimely death, which leaves his diner and Samantha's well-being in the care of Nora (Jennifer Coolidge), Sam's thoroughly wicked stepmother. Not one to take on such menial tasks as dishwashing and mopping floors, Nora exploits Sam's dependence as a method of hoisting any dirty work off her own shoulders. Samantha's life is irrevocably changed by a makeover of epic proportions and a sudden electronic correspondence with a mysterious young man. Due to a misplaced cell phone and a series of fateful coincidences, Samantha and her Prince Charming develop a romance through e-mails, and ultimately promise to meet face-to-face at the biggest school dance of the year. Of course, getting there doesn't go smoothly, and Samantha may miss her chance to meet her dream date—none other than Austin Ames (Chad Michael Murray), the most popular boy in school.

Comics bring laughter to service members



Photos by Pfc. Leah R. Burton

Comics on Duty World Tour comedian Jim Labriola demonstrates his impression of Floridians to a packed Sustainer Indoor Theater Sept. 2.

By Pfc. Leah R. Burton
Staff writer

With everything from tourist advice to personal insight on how to end road rage, five comedians, who performed at the Sustainer Indoor Theater Sept. 2, kept the audience in stitches.

The Comics on Duty World Tour performed two shows, each two hours long, to a packed movie theater and visibly appreciative service members.

The comedians, Jim Labriola, Drake Witham, Nathan Timmel, Curtis Fortier and Danny Bevins, traveled all over Iraq via UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters, a new experience for the comedians.

"We're having a great time. We've been on Blackhawks and C-130s, flying all over the place. I was onstage earlier this week when I heard a 'BOOM!' And everyone in the audience didn't move at all, but I jumped about three feet in the air," said Witham.

Witham beguiled the Soldiers with career advice and loved ones' reactions to his decision to perform in Iraq.

"When I told my family, we were coming over to Iraq, they weren't too jazzed about the idea because there's a war going on," Witham said.

He made the point that people take risks everyday, so this tour was the least he could do. "One guy said to me, 'Hey, I could walk out in front of my house and get hit by a bus.' Really? Could you? I can get you a schedule." Witham said.

Witham said that he takes a passive aggressive attitude with most of the jobs he's had.

"My motto is if I've got to answer phones, it's going to suck for you, too," he said.

Some of the comedians are no strangers to military audiences and have been on countless other deployed and overseas comedy tours.

"I've done military tours before. I find them very enlightening. I love talking to [Soldiers]. I love talking before shows, after shows, between shows. During shows, yell something out. I'll embarrass you, but yell something out," Timmel said.

Timmel offered some valuable tourist advice for the annoying, talkative person on an airplane.

"I suggest Compton. It's nice in the summer. Wear red," Timmel said.

Timmel gave the male Soldiers relationship advice.

"A gentleman is supposed to spend the equivalent of three months of his yearly salary on a ring. So guys, when you get engaged, go down to part-time, volunteer, something," Timmel said.

All of the comedians were well received, but Bevins, a former airborne infantryman, was the big hit of the evening.

"I joined the Army because I was tired of my parents telling me what to do." Bevins said. "I was in the Army for four years. I went in an E-1, came out an E-1. I made E-4 twice, and I know why, Article 15s. I got four of them. I used to frame them, put them on my wall."

After ridiculing his time in the Army, Bevins gave credit where it was due.

"The people I really feel sorry for are the NCOs, especially E-6 and above," Bevins said. "Because they can never just say something once."

Through all of the performances, the theater echoed with the laughter of Soldiers and Airmen.

"Tears came to my eyes today. I loved it. We came from Camp Cobra, so it was refreshing to be able to see it," said Staff Sgt. David Rujasz, 252nd Armor.

At the end of the show, the comedians autographed photographs for the Soldiers and gave away Comics on Duty World Tour memorabilia.

The comedians share the same parting thought for the Soldiers, a 100 percent appreciation for them and all they do.

The Comics on Duty World Tour is produced by Richard Davis of the Davis Entertainment Group for the entertainment of the military community. It has performed more than 1,300 shows worldwide, employing only national headline comedians.

The tour encompassed 10 days and 12 shows in places such as Camp Patriot, Camp Victory, Forward Operating Base Cook and many others with LSA Anaconda being the final show.



Service members laugh at the various comedic styles of the Comics on Duty World Tour comedians, who performed twice, each show lasting two hours.

Building bridges with drinking water

By Pvt. Chelsea Mack
81st BCT Public Affairs

In a country filled with lush vegetation, rivers and canals, it is hard to believe that the Iraqis have been forced to live without potable drinking water, but in two days more than 700 cases of bottled water were delivered to local villages here, courtesy of the 81st Brigade Combat Team.

"The water here hasn't been working for quite a long time," said Capt. Will Turner, Company A commander, 579th Engineer Battalion. "The filtration and decontamination system was damaged and doesn't work – it's useless. The gauges are broken, the pipes have been stolen, and there is dirt in the reservoir."

To make matters worse, most of the Iraqi villagers bathe in the canals and rivers surrounding their villages. They also draw their drinking and cooking water from these sources.

"This [clean] water helps because we drink dirty water," Hassen Musaheen Hassan, a local Iraqi villager, who also works at the North Gate of LSA Anaconda, said. "It is pure water, which we don't have. This whole area doesn't have pure water."

Clean, potable water is desperately needed by the local Iraqis who live in the villages surrounding Logistical Support Area Anaconda.

"The first day of the mission we visited three villages and delivered 390 cases of water," said Spc. Tamara

Snyder, Preventive Medicine, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 81st BCT. "The second day we distributed 345 cases of water among four villages."

On day two of the water-drop mission, Preventive Medicine Soldiers provided a five-ton truck and six pallets of water.

"The back of the five-ton [truck] is filled with water; filled with it," said Capt. Penny Chencharick, environmental science officer, 81st BCT. "This is water that was going to expire for the U.S. Armed Forces. We just went through the proper channels that allowed us to distribute it."

The continuation of humanitarian missions, like the

water drop, reinforces a positive relationship and leaves a lasting impression long after the mission is completed.

"Of course we appreciate the [water drop]," said Sheik Waddi, a leader in one of the local villages. "[It] shows friendship, just like brothers."

The mission enhanced Iraqi-U.S. relations and boosted the morale of the Soldiers who participated in the mission.

"Water over here is as precious as gold," Martin said. "The one thing that bothers me is we couldn't give them [Iraqis] enough. When you see the way the people were clamoring for the water, it was as if we handed them a 100 dollar bill."



Photos by Sgt. Michael T. Gaul



Military vehicles carry clean water to Iraqis in need.

Villagers gather around the 81st Brigade Combat Team's truck delivering pallets of water.



81st BCT Soldiers unload more than 700 cases of potable water.

Protecting goodwill missions an asset

By Pvt. Chelsea Mack
81st BCT Public Affairs

Task Force Tacoma provided force protection for a water drop mission to a local Iraqi village; they were not just convoy escorts providing security, because of the relationship the task force Soldiers had formed with the local villagers they were valuable emissaries.

"We [third platoon] have two villages we are responsible for," said 2nd Lt. Matthew Doxey, a team leader for Company A, 579th Engineer Battalion. "We find out what they need and coordinate with the G-5."

TF Tacoma patrols the area outside of LSA Anaconda. They act as liaisons between the local Iraqis and the U.S.

Armed Forces and have, over a period of time, established a rapport with the local people, giving the local population a sense of security.

"TF Tacoma wanted to use the water to enhance their relationship with the [Iraqi] villagers." Said Sgt. 1st Class Jack Martin, Civil Affairs, 81st Brigade Combat Team.

The 81st BCT's Civil Affairs Office and Preventive Medicine section of Headquarters and Headquarters Company united with TF Tacoma and soldiers from the 210th Iraqi National Guard Battalion conducted the two-day water drop mission in August.

"It was good to actually go out and make a few people smile," said Sgt. Carter Skillman, TF Tacoma. "I think it's a nice way to win their [Iraqi citizens'] hearts and minds."

Iraq Prospects 'good' Myers says

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The ceasefire brokered in Najaf was a good sign for the Iraqi interim government, the top U.S. military leader said while in Nashville, Tenn., Aug. 31, adding that the long-term prospect in Iraq “is very, very good.”

Joint Chiefs Chairman Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers told the regional Chamber of Commerce meeting that the government led by Prime Minister Ayad Allawi used all angles to help end the fighting in the region.

The bottom line is that radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr’s militia is out of the Imam Ali Mosque, and the forces of the interim government are in the Shiia holy site.

The Iraqi government looked at all aspects of the situation in Najaf and used political, diplomatic and military options in the situation.

Myers said that Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani was key to solving the problem in the city, but it was a learning experience for the interim government.

“There’s still going to be challenges (in Iraq),” the chairman said during a media availability following the speech. The area west and north of Baghdad – the so-called Sunni Triangle – is still a tough area and presents many problems to the Iraqi government and the supporting

coalition, he said.

The Iraqi security forces in and around Najaf, Sadr City and other hot spots did much better in the recent spate of fighting than they did in April and May, when Sadr’s militia launched similar attacks. “There are still a lot of Iraqi security forces that need to be trained, that need to be equipped and get the proper leadership,” he said. “Those that have been trained and equipped and were in this endeavor did very, very well.”

He said in April and May the performance of the Iraqi police, the Civil Defense Corps – now the Iraqi National Guard — and the Iraqi army was uneven, but tending toward poor. He said that while some units did well, others broke and ran or did not show up at all.

In the recent fighting, it was still uneven, but tending toward good, Myers said. The chairman said the return of sovereignty to the Iraqi people was one big difference for the security forces.

“They now know they are fighting for the Iraqi government, they have clear lines of authority, and they felt that this was for their people,” he said.

The coalition has sped up training of the Iraqi security forces. Army Lt. Gen. David Petraeus is now responsible for all Iraqi training.

NATO has signed on to aid in the effort. “As soon as that can happen, the better,” Myers said. “We’ve got a full-court press on, on building Iraqi security forces.”

Chaplain’s Corner

By the Chaplain Section
13th Corps Support Command

The word “home” is rich with meaning. It means different things to different people. To a baseball player, the home is the object of his ambition. While he’ll do all he can to reach first and second bases, home is the ultimate objective. Getting home is so important that ballplayers will take chances to make it there. Some batters will even attempt to steal a base if it means they can get closer to home.

Sound familiar? For Soldiers stationed or deployed in far off lands, the word home evokes powerful emotions.

It’s been said that home is where the heart is, where loved ones reside, where one has a greater degree of freedom. Being away from home for an extended period of time only serves to make people appreciate and miss it that much

more. Granted, we are surviving here, but this is not home.

On a larger scale, this earth we live on no matter where on the planet is only temporary. This is the place God has placed us in order to fulfill his plan for us until the day when we are called home, to the grace and majesty of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Every second we breathe, every task we undertake, every smile we flash in the general direction of someone who really needs it puts us closer to the home we’ve been destined for since birth.

So, when we find ourselves longing for more than what we know as home, we should remind ourselves that we have not reached our true country, our final home and place of rest.

The Kingdom of Heaven awaits all who accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, live by His commandments and look to Him for forgiveness of sins.

ANACONDA PROVIDER CHAPEL

Sunday 9:30 a.m.

Traditional Protestant

Sunday 11 a.m.

Roman Catholic Mass

In its new location
at the corner
of New Jersey
and Hawk Avenues



Question of the Week

What is your favorite song and why?



Staff Sgt. Jim Corrigan
81st Brigade Combat Team

“Angel Flying Too Close to the Ground,” by Willie Nelson. It comforts me when I think about how I got my heart stepped on. Thank God she’s not over here.”



Lt. Col. Miciotto Johnson
2nd Brigade Combat Team

“Dance with My Father,” by Luther Vandross. It reminds me of my father.”



Airman 1st Class Michelle Jones
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing

“She Will be Loved,” by Maroon 5, because my husband dedicated it to me.”



Spc. Angela Miller
30th Brigade

“The Dance,” by Garth Brooks, because it tells about life in general.”



Spc. Amy Wapnowski
81st Brigade Combat Team

“God Bless the USA,” by Lee Greenwood. It makes me feel proud.”

*Phely
Wright*

*appearing here
Sept. 16 - 17*



Wherever ya go there ya are

AFN Iraq plays music from gold disks, industrial compilations, provided by an independent distributor. AFN Iraq does not possess original CDs.

As the station grows, so does the AFN Iraq library. Hopefully in time more requests will become available. Broadcast stations are:
Baghdad 1Kw on 92.3 and 107.7 FM
Kirkuk, 200w on 100.1 and 107.3 FM
LSA Anaconda (Balad, Iraq) 250w on 107.3 FM
Mosul, 1Kw on 105.1 FM
Q-West, 250w on 93.3 FM
Sinjar, 250w on 107.9 FM
Tallil, 200w on 100.1 and 107.3 FM
Tikrit, 1Kw on 93.3 FM

The music is Adult Contemporary based on the area of operation and the generalization of the audience. AFN Iraq uses the top40 AC for the most commonly played songs along with individual discretion from the broadcasters.

To make an announcement contact broadcasters@baghdadforum.com to get your information on the radio. The chief of Command Information must approve command information before it clears for the air. Provide two weeks time so that the announcements can be approved and put into programming.



Personal Security

Watch your belongings and sensitive articles, they could disappear. Secure all weapons, personal items, doors and wall lockers.



10 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.

Stay Vigilant!

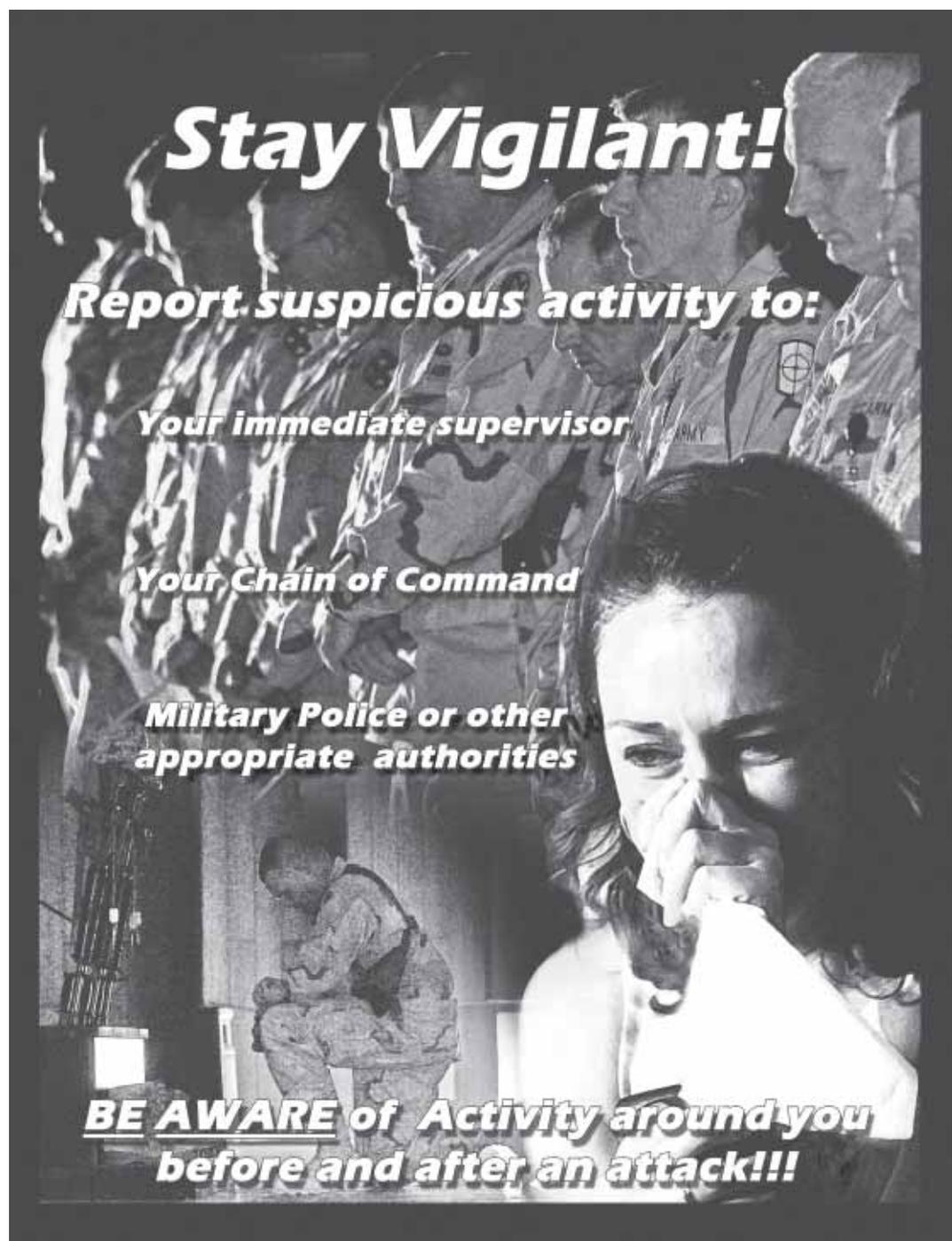
Report suspicious activity to:

Your immediate supervisor

Your Chain of Command

Military Police or other appropriate authorities

**BE AWARE of Activity around you
before and after an attack!!!**



Olympic hopeful represents U.S. in Iraq

By Pfc. Mathew McLaughlin
10th Mountain
Division Public Affairs

While our country's Olympians represented the United States in Athens, Greece, one Olympic hopeful is representing his country in Iraq.

Spc. Nathan Thoreson, Company D, 110th Military Intelligence Battalion, is a multiple-national and state-wrestling champion. He is currently serving with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team (Commandos), 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), where he tries to balance his passion for wrestling with his duty to his country.

"I've been wrestling since I was four," he said. "My goal was to compete in the Olympics ever since I was a kid. The All-Army wrestling team provides me [with] a direct route to the Olympics."

Thoreson won 21 national championships in four wrestling styles from age 5 to his sophomore year in high school. The Pensacola, Fla., native was also a three-time state champion in high school and finished his high school career with a 114-3 record, with 101 of his victories by fall.

He joined the Army planning to continue his wrestling career, but also because it was his patriotic duty, he said.

"I was tossing the idea of

joining the Army for a while," Thoreson said. "My brother is in the military at Fort Hood. After Sept. 11, it finalized my decision. I started basic training on Halloween 2001."

Sgt. Quentin Fuller, Co. D, 110th MI, is a fellow wrestler and knows from experience Thoreson's abilities on the mat. Fuller said, although he is not qualified to measure Olympic-level talent, he is confident Thoreson has what it takes.

"He is not the type of guy that goes around bragging, but from what I hear, his chances are pretty good," he said. "He's light years better than me. I outweigh him by 30 pounds and he just has his way with me."

Time was not on Thoreson's side for the 2004 Olympics. He missed two full years of training as a result of his long Advanced Individual Training. Thoreson trained with the All-Army wrestling team for 45 days before the national championship. Although he was greatly out of practice, he was still able to impress the team.

"When I wrestled with the Army team, I was one of the youngest wrestlers there," he said. "I was pleased with my performance, but you always wish you can be at your best when the coach is watching."

Among the onlookers were Rob Herman, All-Army and current Team U.S.A. wrestling coach, who encouraged Thoreson to join the Army and to try out for the All-Army

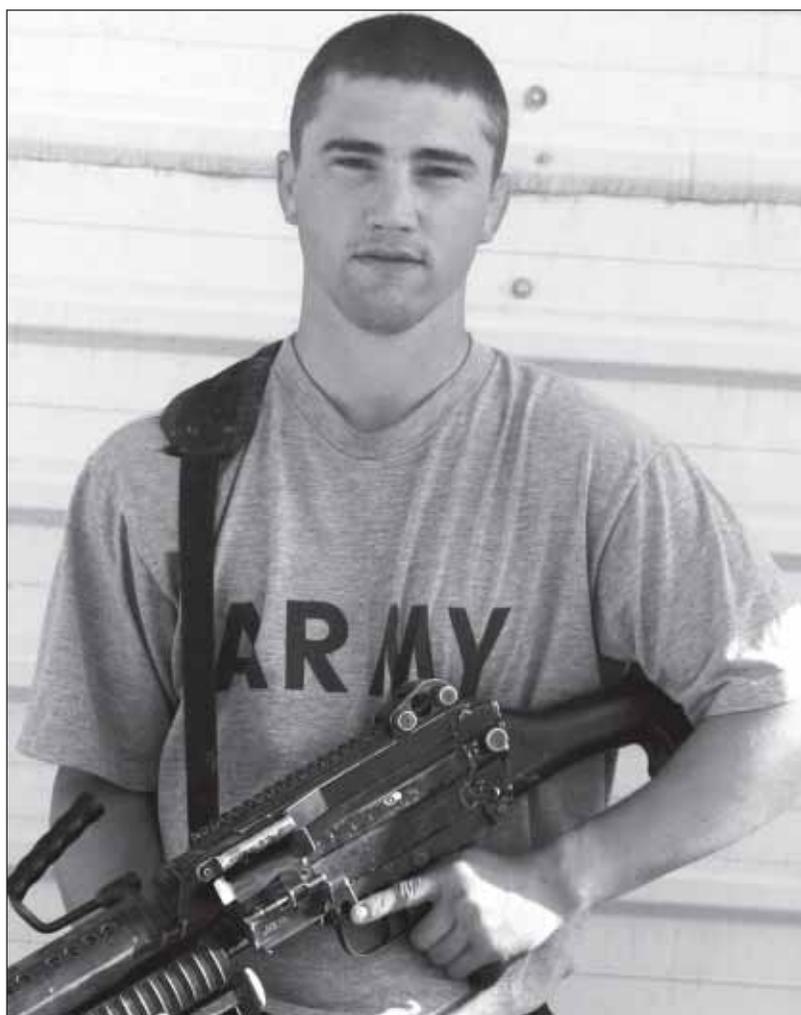


Photo by Pfc. Mathew McLaughlin

Spc. Nathan Thoreson, a Soldier with Company D, 110th Military Intelligence Battalion, 10th Mountain Division, hopes to wrestle in the next Olympics. He has been wrestling since he was 5 years old.

team. Thoreson said Herman has expressed numerous times his interest to see Thoreson compete in the 2008 Olympics.

"He said several times he believes I can make the Olympic team," he said. "It's something we both feel can definitely happen."

Because the season was almost over, the coaches couldn't offer him a spot until the next season.

Later, Thoreson found he would be deployed to Iraq. Thoreson was not greatly disappointed with missing the 2004 Olympics and is looking

toward the future.

"I have no problem missing the opportunity this year," he said. "I have four years to prepare for Beijing. I understand why we're here. What we're doing is important. After Sept. 11, I hoped to be deployed to contribute. I'm glad to be in a combat zone. I think I might have regretted joining the Army and only wrestling."

Thoreson has done more than just wrestling in the Army, Fuller said. Thoreson applies his passion of wrestling into his everyday military regimen.

"He's a great Soldier," Fuller said. "You have to have a certain amount of self-discipline to be a good wrestler. To be as good as he is, you have to have extraordinary discipline."

Much of Thoreson's work as a military intelligence Soldier requires personal accountability. He often spends hours alone in a Humvee deciphering information from a satellite. Thoreson said he loves wrestling because of its individual aspects.

"It's an individual sport," he said. "Once you're out there, there is no one else to blame but yourself. In that way it's great training for life."

Thoreson said he is proud to represent his country as a Soldier in Iraq. He is proud to have had the experience. Maybe he will someday represent his country in a red, white and blue wrestling singlet instead of a desert uniform.

The LSA Anaconda Fitness Center is open 22 hours each day Closed for cleaning 2 to 4 a.m.



Check out the MWR Sports Lounge for pool tournaments

tournaments





Sgt. Zoua Xiong, 29th Signal Battalion, tries on the NOMEX aviator gloves at the LSA Anaconda RFI facility Sept. 2.



David Clawson, a fielding specialist from the LSA Anaconda RFI facility, hands Spc. Alberto Esquilin, 266th Ordnance Company, his new desert boots Sept. 2.



Gary Rutkowski, a fielding specialist from the LSA Anaconda Rapid Fielding Initiative, fits Esquilin for the new Advanced Combat Helmet.

RFI, from page 1

needed gear that the Army didn't provide.

"The Army decided that Soldiers should not be spending out of their own pockets. These are things that every Soldier should have, and the Army should be providing them," Cisney said.

The mission of RFI is to outfit the entire operational Army by the end of fiscal year 2007. So far, the organization has gone from fielding 2,000 Soldiers in fiscal year 2002 to 120,000 in fiscal year 2004.

The 82nd Airborne Division received its first 15 items from RFI in November 2002. Based on feedback from the Soldiers, PEO Soldier made some changes to the original list of equipment and completed the issue to the 82nd ABN Division, as well as the 101st Air Assault Division and 10th Mountain Division in fiscal year 2003.

Program Executive Officer's RFI is set to depart LSA Anaconda for Camp Doha, Kuwait. After Wednesday, units that have not been outfitted must go to Camp Doha, Kuwait, or have a mobile sizing team come to their location and size Soldiers where they live. The team then goes back to the warehouse and organizes individual Soldier kits and ships them or delivers them to the units.

"We don't want to miss anybody," Cisney said.

Soldiers who redeploy without having been issued RFI should look for it at their home station.

RFI is on Sustainer Road within the fenced in compound just past Sustainer Circle. The business hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday.



Xiong tries on the new boots. The boots are the most popular item among Soldiers, according to Maj. John B. Cisney, Army liaison to the civilian company issuing the gear.

Photos by Pfc. Leah R. Burton