



NORMANDY NOW

29th Combat Aviation Brigade – Task Force Normandy

DESERT BLADES. CAMP BUEHRING, KUWAIT.

THE WINGS OF AN EAGLE

By Sgt. Thaddeus Harrington,
29th Combat Aviation Brigade
Public Affairs

The man who broke the sound barrier visited troops at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, to thank fellow aviators for their service.

Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Charles “Chuck” Yeager broke the sound barrier on Oct. 14, 1947, flying a Bell X-1 aircraft named “Glamorous Glennis” at 662 mph.

During that mission, the Bell X-1 aircraft exited the belly of a B-29 in flight at an altitude of 40,000 feet. That flight propelled then Capt. Yeager into the history books.

Pilots of the 29th CAB were on hand to meet the man who made aviation history.

Yeager’s military career began as an enlisted Soldier in 1941. Under the flying sergeant program, he received his pilot wings and an appointment as a flight officer in 1943. He flew more than 50 combat missions, downing 11 aircraft. Yeager was shot down over France on his eighth mission, but he



evaded capture and escaped with the help of the French Underground.

Yeager completed his wartime service and returned to the states. Once stateside, he engaged in various test projects and evaluated German and Japanese fighter aircraft brought back from World War II.

Yeager flew the X-1 until 1949. He eventually exceeded 1,000 mph at 70,000 feet and was the first American to make a ground takeoff in a rocket-powered aircraft. In 1953, he became the first man to fly two-and-a-half times the speed of sound.

Yeager is a man of many firsts. In 1963, he became the first pilot to make an

See Sound Barrier on Page 13

NORMANDY NOW

Commander:

~Col. David Carey

Command Sergeant Major:

~Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Beyard

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~ Staff Sgt. Patrick Falls

~ Staff Sgt. Jonathan Lovelady

~Spc. Matthew Magreta

~1204th ASB UPAR

Commander's Corner



Another successful month has passed, and our Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen continue to achieve new heights. In the coming months, we will bid farewell to old friends as they complete their mission and welcome new members to the team. It is with pride that we will bid farewell later this month to the 2515th Naval Air Ambulance De-

tachment. Since their arrival in 2005, the MEDEVAC detachment from the Pacific Theater provided superior coverage to southern Iraq and Kuwait. During the past few months, their experience and ability in overwater flight and deck landings have been key to the training of 29th CAB aviators. I wish each and every Sailor on board, fair winds and following seas. It has been an honor to serve with you.

The 1-111th GSAB's support to Exercise Eager Lion and the Jordanian Deployment Program is first-class. I had a unique opportunity to visit our Soldiers last week. Everyone is motivated, and the Jordanians are very happy to have us in their country. Our Soldiers will support the MEDEVAC missions in Eager Lion, while the Command Aviation Company will train Jordanian crewmembers in Assault Helicopter Operations.

In the coming days, a team will travel to Saudi Arabia for the Desert Hawk

final planning conference. Desert Hawk will challenge our Soldiers to deploy in-theater, establish operations and conduct partnered missions. I anticipate this mission will be a resounding success. As you can see, we have a great deal happening. The coming months are filled with new opportunities for success. I know that we are prepared, and I am certain that we will continue to accomplish the mission.

In closing, I would like to wish a happy belated Mother's Day to all. As always, we are grateful for the overwhelming support of our Families and friends. It is personally comforting to know that our husbands, wives, sons and daughters are keeping the home front operating as successfully as we're completing our missions here.

Thank you all for your continued hard work, dedication and love to our nation.

"29, Let's Go!"

David Carey
"Normandy 6"

Command Sgt. Maj.



The "heat" is upon us as we enter the last third of our deployment and prepare to return home. Temperatures have already reached 114 degrees! Enforcement of published safety and related standards should be foremost in your mind as we enter the final months of deployment. Now is not the time to become complacent. I want each and every one of

our Soldiers to return home to their loved ones in better condition than when they deployed last summer. With your help, we can do it.

Ensure you are taking care of yourself in this heat. Maintaining proper hydration and eating healthy foods are essential. Doing so will get your body the proper vitamins and minerals needed to operate in this type of weather. Use sun block and wear the proper personal protective equipment. Consider adjusting your physical training schedule to a different time of the day when it is cooler. No Soldier wants to become a heat casualty. Remember to always keep an eye on your buddy and make sure they are doing the right thing.

We are completing final preparations for our 29th CAB NCO/Solder of the Year Best Warrior Competition. Our units have been identifying their competitors and the event will take place here at Camp Buehring from May 20-22. The competition will include a 6+ mile road march with a

35-pound ruck sack, weapons qualification, Army Physical Readiness Test, land navigation, hands-on warrior tasks, plus a final board. The best NCO and Soldier in the 29th CAB will be identified in the June edition of Normandy Now.

Our regional exercises also continue. Our units are working alongside the armed forces of Kuwait, Jordan and Saudi Arabia to build enduring partnerships. These operations exercise our capability to deploy forces and operate in field conditions. I am very proud of the ability of our Soldiers and leaders to adapt to change and make the best of whatever situation comes our way.

Remember, U.S. citizens wake up each day enjoying freedom. Our Soldiers are making the ultimate sacrifice by defending those freedoms. I am proud to serve with each and every one of you. History will show that you were part of something very special. Thanks to you, your Families and loved ones for what you do.

"29, Let's Go!"

Thomas Beyard
"Normandy 7"



Service Member of the Week

Spc. John Del Castillo

B Co., 1204th Aviation Support Battalion

Spc. John Del Castillo is an integral team member of the aircraft maintenance platoon. He also fills a critical vacancy and cross trains in order to better support the aircraft maintenance platoon.

He consistently strives to improve his knowledge of aircraft systems to include component removal, inspection, troubleshooting and installation. His positive attitude and high level of motivation has contributed greatly to the aircraft maintenance platoon's success. This success enhances the overall mission for B Co. by fostering a cooperative and proactive environment. Simultaneously, while improving his technical and tactical abilities, he increased his Army Physical Fitness Test score to 297.

Del Castillo has demonstrated selfless service by organizing a bible study group to help improve and maintain the spiritual strength of his colleagues.

Pfc. Sherokee Bloodworth

E Co., 1-108th Assault Helicopter Battalion

Pfc. Sherokee Bloodworth is an outgoing and driven Soldier. She is always ready to assist and never complains no matter how dirty or how long the job takes. She is also eager to learn and volunteer when needed. Bloodworth's dedication and devotion helped bring vehicles from 10 percent mission capable to 90 percent mission capable in five months.

She is a combat lifesaver and a qualified .50 caliber machine gunner. Bloodworth is an outstanding mechanic and is a credit to the 108th Assault Helicopter Battalion, the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade, the Army National Guard and the United States Army.

Due to her attention to detail and outstanding pride in her job, she was selected for Soldier of the Week.

Spc. Joshua Atanovich

Headquarters Support Co., 1204th Aviation Support Battalion

Spc. Joshua Atanovich works in the Sustainment Automation Support Management Office supporting the brigade operations with Logistics Information Systems. He ensured that the systems worked and had full communications with supporting networks. His attention to detail and thoroughness allowed him to coordinate with nine different units to perform updates on their systems. His work caused minimal downtime, allowing operations to continue.

Atanovich has also coordinated with Field Service Representatives to resolve issues that were beyond his abilities to repair. He worked many hours to update 38 Standard Army Maintenance System-1E/2E in one week, enabling the maintenance sections to continue operations.

Atanovich also finds time to maintain and improve his physical fitness, resulting in a 298 on his Army Physical Fitness Test.

LS2(AW) Manny De Jesus

2515th Naval Air Ambulance Detachment

Logistics Specialist 2nd Class Manny De Jesus was the first Sailor selected as Service Member of the week. He is part of the 2515th Naval Air Ambulance Detachment.

He distinguished himself in the planning and execution of the unit's Pack-Up Kit inventory from April 23-26, 2012, in preparation for the disestablishment of the detachment. His tireless efforts were pivotal in the inventory of four Pack-Up Kits valued at \$11 million each. These kits provide the 2515th NAAD the required parts to maintain six helicopters and provide continuous medical evacuation coverage.

His superb attention to detail allowed the inspection team to inventory more than 3,000 items in only three days. His expertise was specifically mentioned by the inspection team as exceptional.

De Jesus' dedication to duty reflects great credit upon himself and contributed greatly to the overall mission success for both the 2515th NAAD and the 29th CAB.

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**Service
Member of
the Week**

**Cpl. Dominique
Taylor**

**Headquarters and
Headquarters Co.,
3-159th Attack
Reconnaissance
Battalion**

As a newly appointed corporal and the sole administrative representative for the 3-159th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion advanced party arriving in Kuwait, Cpl. Dominique Taylor led the battalion efforts in conducting relief-in-place tasks with two separate battalions. She quickly and efficiently learned the processes for mail, awards, emergency leave, the reception of Red Cross messages and various other requirements for Camp Buehring.

She consistently puts the needs of other Soldiers above her own and is dedicated to accomplishing all missions and tasks assigned. Her unparalleled competence, dedication to the mission, thoroughness and ability to effectively communicate, constantly increases the effectiveness of the organization.

2-58th Airfield Operations Battalion



On April 19, 2012, (1) Pfc. Steven Dobrozsi was promoted to specialist; (2) Spc. Raponzea Sellers and (3) Spc. Christopher Flores were promoted to corporal and; (4) Spc. Shayla Baxter and (5) Sgt. John Pryor were awarded an Army Achievement Medal.



1-126 General Support Aviation Battalion



Spc. Deanna McFadden and Spc. Brooklyn Barnes were promoted to sergeant during Rhode Island Governor Lincoln Chafee's visit on April 17, 2012.

Headquarters & Headquarters Co., 29th CAB



On May 2, 2012, (1) Pfc. Melissa Green and (2) Pfc. Peter Hollands were promoted to specialist; (3) Spc. Clifford Cannedy was promoted to sergeant and (4) Sgt. Jeffrey Hooper was promoted to staff sergeant.

(5) Spc. Melissa Green re-enlisted into the Maryland Army National Guard for six years on May 3, 2012. (6) Sgt. John Bednarcik was promoted to staff sergeant and (7) Sgt. Jeremy Pryor extended his enlistment for a year on May 11, 2012.



TOP ARMY GUARD GENERAL VISITS TROOPS

By Sgt. Thaddeus Harrington,
29th Combat Aviation Brigade
Public Affairs

The Director of the Army National Guard rubbed elbows with National Guard Soldiers at Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

Lt. Gen. William Ingram Jr., referred to himself as a “five-month-old general,” as his visit came five months and one day after he assumed the duties of director and was promoted to lieutenant general on Nov. 28, 2011.

“It felt great to be recognized by Lt. Gen. Ingram,” said Sgt. Alvin Brookshire, a member of the 1204th Aviation Support Battalion, who received the general’s coin. “It helps me to remember that high-level decision makers do care what goes on at the lowest level, and that if you work hard, someone will recognize it.”

Ingram spent time with troops from the 29th Combat



Aviation Brigade as well as other units here on Camp Buehring.

“Congress has seen fit to change the law and make the Army National Guard available for non-contingency operations,” said Ingram. “If we’re needed, we can be called up to do whatever we need to do.”

As the director, Ingram guides the formulation, development and implementation of all

programs and policies affecting the Army National Guard. The Army Guard is a force of more than 350,000 Soldiers throughout 54 states, territories and the District of Columbia.

Ingram previously served as the adjutant general of North Carolina for more than nine years.

He is the 19th director and the third three-star general to assume the position of director. The first director of the Army National Guard was Army Maj. Gen. Raymond Fleming, who served from 1948 to 1950.

“After 9/11, there was a question in everybody’s mind. Can the Guard do what we need them to do in case of emergencies? And the answer was ‘absolutely,’” he added.



GOVERNORS GRACE GUARD MEMBERS

By 1st Lt. Carley Salmon, 1-126th
General Support Aviation Battalion,
Unit Public Affairs Representative

Rhode Island Governor Lincoln Chafee checked up on Task Force Liberty Soldiers of the Rhode Island Army National Guard during his recent whirlwind tour of forward-deployed U.S. Military bases.

Chafee's April 17th visit was his first to Kuwait since 2004, when he was a U.S. senator.

Chafee's visit started at U.S. Army Central Command, where battalion representatives presented him with an Operational Update Brief and U.S. Army Central Command area of responsibility familiarization. He met with Brig. Gen. Karen LeDoux, ARCENT head of logistics, and Brig. Gen. David Clarkson, 1st Theater Sustainment Command deputy commanding general.

After his visit to Camp Arifjan, Chafee and the Task Force Liberty command group traveled to Camp Buehring to meet with Rhode Island National Guard members. Chafee met with Soldiers and posed for a photograph in front of a Blackhawk helicopter before receiving an operation brief of the task force.

The governor also made a point to pass on his condolences for the loss of fellow Rhode Island Soldier, Sgt. Dennis Weichel, who was killed in Afghanistan recently.



Two Task Force Liberty Soldiers had the honor of being promoted during the governor's visit. Spc. Brooklyn Barnes and Spc. Deanna McFadden were both promoted to the rank of sergeant while Chafee looked on and congratulated them.

Chafee spent the majority of his time engaging Soldiers and checking on their welfare. He asked about their day-to-day activities here in Kuwait and offered to make personal phone calls to Soldiers' Family members back home to give

them an update.

His visit at Camp Buehring ended at dinner with Task Force Liberty Soldiers, where he attempted to get to know each one he encountered. Soldiers showed him pictures of the ranges on which they had trained, and he was intrigued by the troops' encounters with camels.

Chafee's travels continued to Afghanistan to visit Rhode Island Soldiers stationed there, and a stop in Germany before returning home.

SOUTH DAKOTA GOVERNOR DENNIS DAUGAARD



South Dakota Governor Dennis Daugaard, visited with Soldiers in C Co. 1-189th Aviation Regiment, at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. During his visit, Gov. Daugaard met each Soldier individually and spoke on current events in the state.

AIR JORDAN: MAKOS PARTICIPATES IN OPERATION EAGER LION

1st Battalion, 111th Aviation Regiment (General Support Aviation Battalion) is spearheading the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade's involvement in Jordan as part of Exercise Eager Lion 12. The exercise includes more than 15 countries from five different continents and more than 10,000 participants.

The exercise scenarios are designed to portray realistic, modern-day security challenges and are designed years in advance to fulfill collaborative training goals.

Chief Warrant Officer Christopher Tenaro will relay the unit's experiences for the next two issues of Normandy Now as they continue to represent the 29th CAB's history-making activities throughout the region.

**Chief Warrant Officer
Christopher Tenaro, 1-111th
General Support Aviation Battalion
Unit Public Affairs Representative**

As the sun rose upon Jordan, a U.S. Air Force C-17 landed packed full of 29th CAB Soldiers.

A group of passengers were on board in addition to one UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter and two pallets of equipment. Advanced party personnel met the Soldiers and began unloading the aircraft.

The enormous C-17 was off-loaded within two hours and departed for another mission.

Another C-17 carrying additional personnel and two UH-60 Blackhawks arrived later that day. The unit began to assemble

the aircraft after it was unloaded.

The main body of Soldiers travelled to the Joint Training Center, located near Al Zarqa, where they unloaded their equipment and established their living quarters.

The next morning, crews and maintenance personnel arrived at King Hussein I to complete the aircraft assembly and fly the Blackhawks to the unit's permanent base at the Prince Hashim Royal Brigade's, King Abdulla II Airbase. It is



here that we would conduct operations. The assembly and test flying of the aircraft went well. We were met by a Jordanian MD-530F, the U.S. Army equivalent of the MH-6 Little Bird, to escort us to their base.

Upon our arrival, we received an area orientation and proceeded to settle into our mission.

We established our operations and maintenance areas and prepared to conduct operations. Then, we were introduced to our Jordanian counterparts, thus beginning our partnership.

We established a plan to conduct our joint training and now begin our new mission and partnership with the Jordanian Blackhawk squadron.



WARRIORS. COMBATIVES PLAY.



**By Sgt. Thaddeus Harrington,
29th Combat Aviation Brigade
Public Affairs**

Capt. Michael Jenkins, 29th Combat Aviation Brigade logistics officer, destroyed his competition recently, to take first place in a Modern Army Combatives tournament in Kuwait.

Eight fighters, in all, from the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade competed in the tournament on April 28, 2012. These warriors traveled to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, to math their skills against the best fighters in this theater.

“We weighed in and everyone met their target weight. Nobody had to cut weight,” said Capt. Michael Jenkins, assistant logistics officer for the 29th CAB and a Mixed Martial Arts instructor as well as a fierce competitor.

The Normandy Soldiers put their skills to the test competing in their weight class. There were six weight classes for placement from lightweight (138 lbs. and under for males, and 151 lbs. and under for females) to heavyweight 211 lbs. and over for males, and 232 lbs. and over for females.)

If a Soldier was a pound too heavy for their weight class they had to cut the extra weight by exercising, usually biking. If not, they were placed into a different weight class.



“You don’t want to be the lightest guy in your weight class,” added Jenkins.

In Camp Arifjan’s Zone 1 Gym, Soldiers competed in three matches of different weight classes simultaneously. The tournament began

with grappling, using a combination of mixed martial arts. Afterwards, the finalist competed in Pankration, a Greek fighting style blending open hand boxing and wrestling.

“I love competing. [But] this competition gave me more pleasure because I was coaching,” said Jenkins. “Spc. [Trenton] Palmer had no prior experience and ended up placing fourth in his weight class. He did exceptionally well for his first competition. That made me proud.”

Jenkins teaches Jujitsu and MMA in the aerobics tent at Camp Buehring during his free time. Soldiers trained with him for the past few months. Some had a background in different fighting styles, and some had no experience at all.

Of the eight participants, Palmer from the 1-108th Assault Helicopter Battalion and Spc. Matthew McGee from the 1204th Aviation Support Battalion placed fourth, Spc. James Payne from the 1204th ASB placed second, and Jenkins placed first, each in their respective weight class.

AIRFIELD EXERCISE ON A SUNNY DAY

By Master Sgt. Sean Shea,
2-58th Airfield Operations Battalion,
Unit Public Affairs Representative

Exercise, Exercise, Exercise!

Disaster struck Udairi Army Airfield, Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

On that sunny, cloudless day, a Tactical Unmanned Aerial System lost control and clipped a helicopter flying nearby.

The helicopter spiraled to the ground. Moments later, in a mass of steel debris, the TUAS crash-landed into parked helicopters.

Air traffic controllers in the tower guided aircraft away from the impacted areas. All flights into Camp Buehring were placed on standby or re-directed.

Within minutes, emergency crews in fire trucks and ambulances raced out to the flight line to assist the helicopter crews.

The fire personnel worked to extinguish the burning helicopters. The injured crew members were transported to the nearby Troop Medical Center.



Ambulances transported the severely injured to a different base for medical treatment.

Endex, Endex, Endex!

After the exercise ended, the crew members of the downed helicopter collected in a briefing room to drink water.

Chief Warrant Officer Jay Johnson, airfield safety officer, organized the exercise to test the emergency response units on the airfield. This scenario allowed these emergency units to work out any issues they may have with responding to an accident.

Johnson also used this event to work on communication among the different entities on the airfield.

The Udairi AAF Fire Department, the Provost Marshal's Office, the 2515th Naval Air Ambulance Detachment, the 1st Battalion, 111th General Support Aviation Battalion, the 1st Battalion, 151st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, and Udairi AAF Flight Operations participated in the exercise.

"This exercise makes the whole airfield safer," said Johnson. "This means that when a real incident happens, the first responders will be that much quicker in saving lives and equipment."

Johnson plans on conducting another training exercise. The follow-on exercise will build on lessons from the first one, and it will attempt to improve on any issues.



DARKHORSE FARP: REFUELING THE FLEET

Courtesy of 1204th Aviation Support Battalion, Unit Public Affairs Representative

The Fuel and Water platoon of A Co., 1204th Aviation

Support Battalion assumed their fourth Forward Arming and Refueling Point mission of the deployment at Patton Army Airfield, Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

During the current operation, the company's Petroleum Supply Specialists

and Water Treatment Specialists have refueled almost 80 aircraft using in excess of 16,500 gallons of fuel.

The operation is ongoing and has had no significant safety incidents. The success of the mission has resulted in an efficient and valuable asset to the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade. These

Soldiers have performed their duties to the utmost of their abilities and have remained positive and motivated throughout each of their missions.

The Fuel and Water platoon recently relieved E Co. 151st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, when the South Carolina Army National Guard unit redeployed.

Spc. Erik Thomas operates the Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Tanker during A Co.'s hot refueling operations at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.



A Co., 1204th Aviation Support Battalion, conducts a four-point hot refuel to support the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.



Spc. Glenn Hartke (right) and another member of A Co., 1204th Aviation Support Battalion, prepare to refuel a Navy UH-60 Seahawk during refuel operations at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.



Members of A Co., 1204th Aviation Support Battalion, Fuel and Water platoon conduct refuel operations at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. (Back Row) Pfc. Devin Sparks and Spc. Erik Thomas (Front Row) Spc. Deann Angel, Spc. Joe Portwood, Spc. Joe Moorman, Sgt. Robert Beavin, and Spc. Glenn Hartke.

ARCENT U! INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CLASSES FOR SOLDIERS

Courtesy of 1204th Aviation Support Battalion, Unit Public Affairs Representative

C Co., 1204th Aviation Support Battalion enhanced its military and professional information technology skills by sending Soldiers to U.S. Army Central Command University, in Kuwait over the past four months.

ARCENT University's mission is to provide signal Soldiers the background training necessary to operate network switching technology and remain current with automation duty positions using the latest software roll-outs and updates.

Several Soldiers have jumped at the opportunity to attend the free classes, which include Microsoft SharePoint, Interconnecting Cisco Networking Devices, Cisco Voice, Certified Information Systems Security Professional, and Promina, among several others.



The courses ARCENT University offers are both expensive and in high-demand within civilian sectors. These challenging classes prepare the Soldiers to install and configure computer and network devices, serve as network administrators, network technicians, network installers, and help desk technicians within the IT field.

C Co. has sent 33 Soldiers to this training so far. Out of those 33, 11 have gone on to obtain professional certifications. They will enhance the overall capabilities of the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade and the National Guard, while gaining the opportunity to advance their civilian IT careers.



Some descriptions of courses C Co. Soldiers have attended along with brief descriptions.

- **Information Technology Infrastructure Library** –

The most adaptive approach to IT service management in the world. It provides framework for identifying, planning, delivering and supporting IT services.

- **Cisco Voice** – Lays out the foundation of telephone network systems.

- **Fiber Course** – Provides technicians with basic optical fiber theory and design criteria. It also provides Soldiers with the required skills to properly maintain installed cables.

- **Certified Information Systems Security Professional** –

Provides Soldiers with the knowledge to establish themselves as a computer credible security professional.

- **Security +** – Ensures Soldiers will be able to apply the knowledge of security concepts, tools and procedures to react to a security incident.

- **SharePoint** – Covers the creation of web pages to include the layout formatting procedures.



From the Chaplain

by Chaplain (Capt.) Johnnie Hutson



Soldiers in this photograph (from left to right) are Chaplain (Capt.) Johnnie Hutson, Spc. Mandy Ebert and Chaplain (Maj.) William Butler.

Perspective. We talk a lot about being focused, and that is a good thing. In order to be focused positively, we must first have a positive perspective.

Webster's Dictionary defines perspective as: "A view of things in their true relationship or importance."

It's very important to realize that having a positive view of things in their true relationship or importance will enable us to take that wide variety of "things" and narrow it down so that you can focus positively.

When we don't have God's perspective, we tend to be very negative and find it very difficult to focus at all. With proper perspective from God, we can do anything He has called us to do and do it well.

It's like an upside-down triangle, the top being the perspective of God, which is broad, and the bottom being us where we are focused.

I would encourage you today to establish your perspective based on God's word. Allow it to shape and form your life into what God has called you to be.

It's hard to be negative when you understand that God has a purpose, plan and a time for everything in your life.

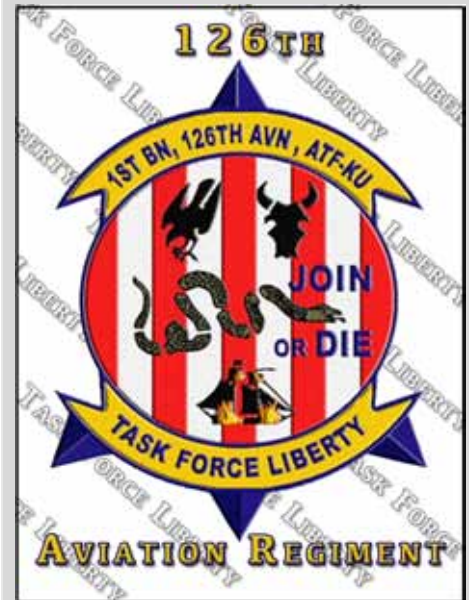
Become focused by having God's perspective and enjoy the peace of God in your life like you never have before!

Chaplain Hutson



JOIN OR DIE

1-126th GSAB



The 1-126th General Support Aviation Battalion first entered into federal service for the Global War on Terror in 2004. The battalion formed the core of Taskforce Dragonwing. It was comprised of 457 Soldiers, 24 UH-60 and 12 CH-47 aircraft.

The unit performed operations throughout the Iraq Theater of Operations, flying an average 336 of hours per week.

By the end of the tour, the unit had conducted more than 1,900 air missions, transporting more than 66,000 passengers and 5,100 tons of cargo.

... CONTINUED SOUND BARRIER

emergency ejection in a full-pressure suit at 8,500 feet.

The 1983 movie “The Right Stuff” depicts Yeager’s famous flight. In 2005, President George W. Bush promoted Yeager to major general on the retired list.

“As a teenager, I read Chuck Yeager’s autobiography, and was immediately inspired to become a military aviator,” said Chief Warrant Officer Albert Isennock. “His daring and brave life story is one that I’ll tell for many years. I’m fortunate to have had the opportunity to meet him.”



Ballad of Balad Sounds on Buehring

By Staff Sgt. Patrick Falls,
1-111th General Support Aviation Battalion



Country music star Toby Keith performed for hundreds of service members at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, April 26, 2012. The singer has participated in more than 200 United Service Organization events. Fifteen lucky service members, selected by their respective units, received front row seats to see the performance.

“I’m a huge Toby Keith fan,” said Spc. Melissa Green, an aviation operations specialist in the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade. “I didn’t get to meet him, but he pointed at me during the concert. That made my deployment.”

THREE'S A CROWD: TWO CLOWNS AND A DUMMY

**By Spc. Matthew Magreta,
1-111th General Support Aviation
Battalion, Unit Public Affairs
Representative**

Comedienne Del Harrison and ventriloquist Willie Tyler had service members falling out of their seats laughing in front of the United Service Organization stage recently at Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

“Armed Forces Productions, USO Tours, and talent agencies bring out the entertainment,” said Morale, Welfare, and Recreation coordinator, Roy Contee.

A native of New Orleans, and professional comic for seven years, Harrison started the evening off. Nicknamed “life of the party,” she has been featured in television, movies and radio.

Much of her routine covered popular culture, gender stereotypes, racial differences, sex and other “taboo” subjects.

Her performance relied heavily on interaction with the audience, while drawing on life experiences and personal observations.

“15 years of marriage,

you appreciate this break,” said Harrison in reference to a married female Soldier in the crowd.

humor in today’s “modern” family. She referred to “deadbeat dads” as generous boyfriends.



Harrison is no stranger to the military and has an uncle and cousin who served in the Persian Gulf War and Operation Iraqi Freedom, respectively.

As this was her first time entertaining the troops, she truly appreciated the opportunity.

“I don’t get to see them that often. The military is so high-class; I roll well with them,” said Harrison.

Regarding differences between the military and civilian audiences, Harrison was flustered by the demographics.

American comic clubs have traditionally been sexually diverse with couples and women making up a good portion of the crowd.

Acting playfully with the audience, Harrison did not hold back in her judgment as she belittled a Soldier who was not attentive.

“She took the phone right out of my first sergeant’s hand!” said Sgt. 1st Class Joshua O’Handley, A Co., 4th Battalion, 118th Infantry Regiment.

Married for three years, Harrison discussed the dating scene and the

“In clubs back home, 75 percent of the people are women. Here all men, one girl. I have to adjust my humor as some jokes are strictly meant for females,” said Harrison.

“I couldn’t believe it. It was for someone else. No

liquor in Kuwait. Doing loads of drugs over here I guess,” said Harrison.

After Harrison’s routine, ventriloquist Willie Tyler took center stage with his dummy, Lester. Born in Alabama and raised in Detroit, Tyler has been an entertainer for five decades.

Tyler got his start on the “Merv Griffin Show,” “The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson,” and touring with the Motown greats. He has been a successful comedian and actor and has appeared in TV series, movies, talk shows and commercials.

“Watching him on TV years ago; he’s a good entertainer. I give him a lot of credit for coming out here,” said Sgt. 1st Class Walter Meshenberg, 4-118th.

Tyler’s routine revolved around the banter between himself and Lester, along with several musical interludes. Tyler tried to relate to the audience by drawing on life experiences for material.

Tyler and Lester discussed kids, religion, crime, holidays, professional sports, celebrities, airlines and rising gas prices.

“I have my standard piece, but I have observational humor everyone can relate to,” said Tyler.



A fan of R&B and Motown, Tyler and Lester sang musical numbers from “The Temptations,” “Ben E. King,” “Train,” and the “Blues Brothers.” Although they relied less on interaction from the crowd, Tyler & Lester did have one audience member assist them on stage. The chosen Soldier had to mimic Lester’s arms according to the arranged skit.

“I was sitting in the wrong section. Don’t sit up front. It was weird, but I liked it. I like comedy,” said

Sgt. Tonya Brinson, 29th Combat Aviation Brigade.

The biggest reaction from the audience came from Tyler and Lester’s rendition of the classic Abbott & Costello bit, “Who’s on First?”

This was Tyler’s first appearance in Kuwait even though he has done USO tours in Japan, South Korea and Okinawa. Tyler also served in the Air Force from 1958-1962. He reached the rank of Airman First Class while stationed at Wheelus Air Force Base in Tripoli, Libya.

“The Soldiers are definitely better-off than in my day,” said Tyler. “Internet, Skype, e-mail. We had only letters, and that took two weeks.”

Service members were able to get autographs and pictures with the entertainers during a meet and greet following the show.

“This is my sixth or seventh show. I try to hit every one of them. I enjoyed myself tonight. He was a good comedian. Good, clean humor,” said Spc. Steven Whitt from Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 4-118th.

The 1-107th Airfield Operations Battalion, 29th Combat Aviation Brigade, is making great strides in improving airfield capabilities in Afghanistan. U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemasters are now able to land at Forward Operating Base Farah for the first time in over a year. The 1-107th has been working with the Air Force and local contractors to make improvements and ensure the runway meets certification standards. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jonathan Lovelady)



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