

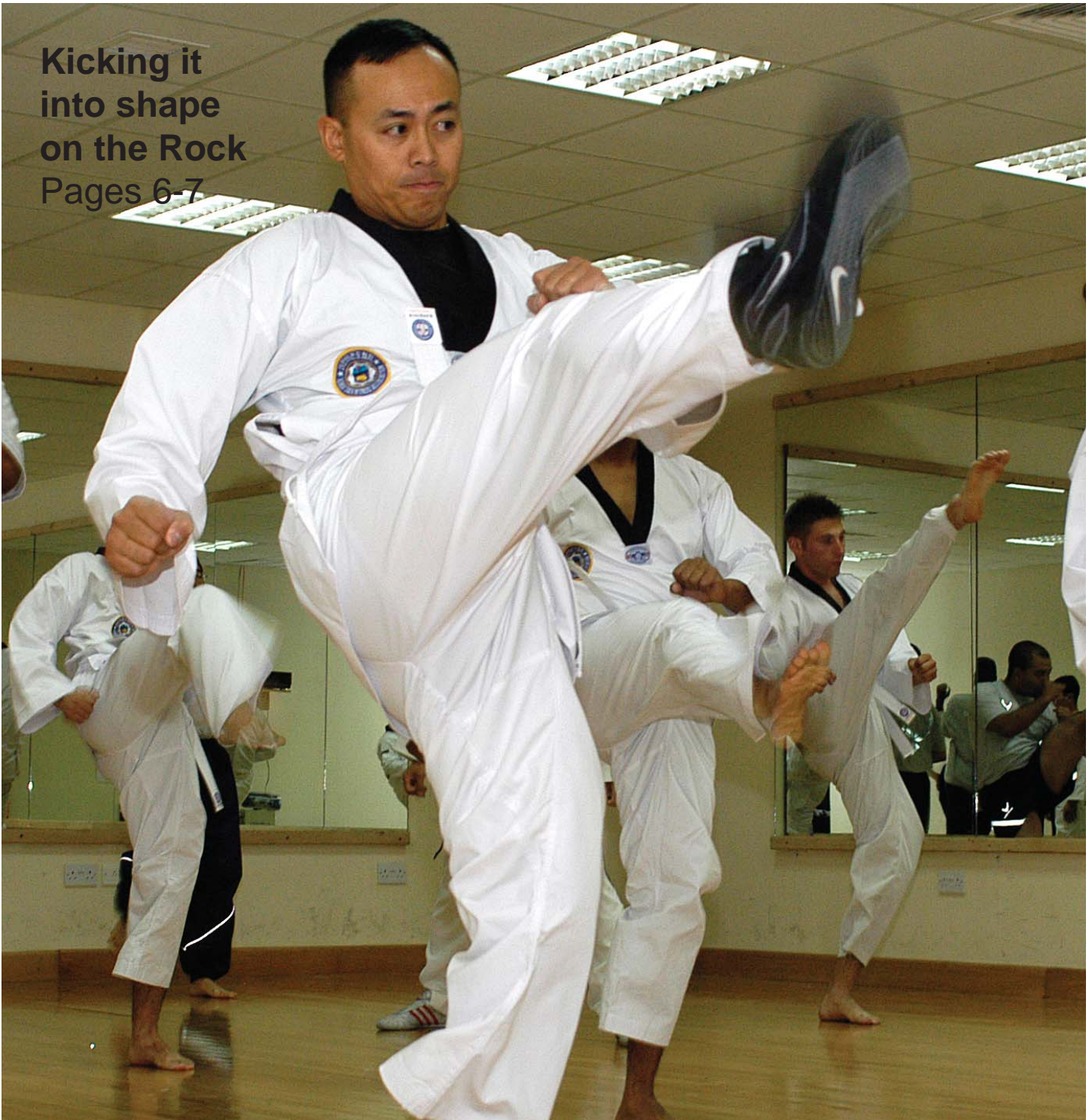
ROCK SLATE

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**Kicking it
into shape
on the Rock
Pages 6-7**



Service is a privilege

Lt. Col. DAVID A. KAWECK

386th ECES Commander

In my nearly 20 years of time on active duty, in Air Force Reserve, and in the Air National Guard, I have heard people refer to their military service in a variety of ways. Some believe it's a duty, other view it as an obligation, and still others think it's some sort of right.

I can assure you first and foremost, military service is a privilege and one that should never be taken for granted. Unfortunately, I learned that lesson the hard way. In September 1992, after serving a little more than six years on active duty, I received an unexpected and unwelcome telephone call one morning. The individual on the other end of the line said, "Captain Kaweck, I'm sorry to inform you that you have been selected for involuntary separation by the FY92 Reduction in Force (RIF) Board." I was dumbfounded to say the least. I thought to myself; certainly there must be a mistake. I was a good officer, there were no black marks in my record, my OPRs were solid, and I had just been competitively selected for an Air Force-sponsored Masters Degree program. The truth of the matter however, was the information was accurate. My downfall was I had simply taken my military service for granted.

For a while after my separation, I was angry at the Air Force because I felt I had been treated unfairly. Eventually though I overcame those feelings and came to the realization military service isn't a right, it's a privilege. A privilege by definition is a special position or advantage granted to or enjoyed by an individual or group of individuals. There are a couple key phrases in that definition, "special position" and "granted to an individual." None of us have an inherent right to serve in the military.

It's a privilege; a special position that we've been entrusted with, and one we must continually earn through our actions.

In the past military service was sometimes seen as an alternative or last resort; an opportunity to get out of Smallville, USA; an option for those who weren't quite college material or an alternative for young men and women who had gotten into trouble. Today, nothing could be farther from the truth. Entry into the Air Force and retention in the Air Force is now more competitive than ever. Just staying out of trouble isn't enough to guarantee your continued service. I'm a living testament to that fact. Today, you have to want it, work for it and earn it. How do you earn it? You earn it by living the core values. I know that sounds a little cliché but I believe it's true.

You have to demonstrate your integrity by being a man or woman of your word and by making the right choices instead of the easy choices. You have to ensure your actions and decisions are based on the right motives; not what's in your own best interest but what's in the best interest of your flight, your squadron, your Air Force. Finally, you have to constantly strive for excellence; in your appearance, in your personal development, in your professional development, in your approach to customer service, in literally everything you do. If you choose to do those things, you can feel secure that they have a place for you in tomorrow's Air Force. Choose not to and you can start updating your resume.

I'd like to leave you with a quote about service from the well known author and preacher Norman Vincent Peale, "A man who lives for himself is a failure; a man who lives for others is a true success." Military service is a privilege and one that should never be taken for granted.



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4th Corps Soldiers get lift from 386th AEW

Spc. Chris Jones

40th Public Affairs Detachment

SOUTHWEST ASIA (AFPN) -- Pvt. 1st Class Michael Sirrine is on his first deployment but knows plenty about being in the desert. A native of Tuscon, Ariz., he noticed as soon as he arrived in Kuwait, "it's just like home, with less cactus."

Before boarding an Air Force C-130 Hercules in early September for Balad, Iraq, Private Sirrine and fellow Soldiers from the 4th Corps Material Management Center at Fort Hood, Texas, spent time at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, for some final training. From improvised explosive device training to convoy live fire, the Soldiers honed their combat skills.

Once training is complete, units forward deploy either by

ground or air. Part of the U. S. Army Central mission in support of the warfighter is getting Soldiers in and out of Iraq and Afghanistan as quickly and safely as possible.

For troops flying into Iraq, the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing is USARCENT's primary air link. But the missions are never the same, said Maj. Jonathan Watson, a pilot attached to the 386th AEW.

Taking flights instead of ground convoys is a faster and generally safer route to Iraq, and for Army Staff Sgt. Chris Haney, "it's a big burden off my chest knowing we're getting there a lot faster, and my Soldiers are more out of the way of a possible ambush."

Sergeant Haney, who is on his third deployment to the Middle East, said "the important thing is

just to get there and get on with your mission."

"It's a much safer way to get them (to Iraq) than a convoy," said Air Force 1st Lt. Varun Purohit, a flight navigator. "Bringing them home obviously feels better than taking them over, of course, but it's good to know that when we take them, at least they are safer than by ground."

For flight crews of the 386th AEW, no two missions are exactly the same. Aside from sending troops to Iraq and bringing them home, the unit drops off cargo around the theater of operations, transports detainees and sometimes evacuates wounded Soldiers from combat, said Major Watson.

"If you can fit it in the back (of the aircraft)," said Major Watson, "we've carried it." A native of Sperryville, Va., the

major has been deployed to the Middle East for 30 of the last 46 months during a span of eight deployments.

During this time, he has flown to many nations in the Central Command area of operations, including Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Jordan, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Djibouti, Jordan and Turkey.

"We fly pretty much anywhere, anytime," he said. But the primary mission remains Iraq and back. "Flying them in feels good," said Major Watson, "but it also reminds you to keep on your toes."

"We do get shot at, and you realize that you have 50 to 70 folks counting on you and your crew to get them there safely, so you keep your eyes peeled for threats," he said.

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General visit ...



Air Force/Capt. Jeff Clark

Lt. Gen. Kunio Orita, Commander of the Japanese Air Support Command, accepts a gift from 386th Air Expeditionary Wing Vice Commander, Col. Charles Hamilton. General Orita visited the Japan Air Self-Defense Force here and during his stay he met with Colonel Hamilton and other commanders whom he presented with silver plaques.

Chaplain's Assistants provide support, sanctuary

Staff Sgt. Ian Carrier

386th Public Affairs

Spiritual support has always been an integral part of military operations. In the Old Testament book of Joshua, Levite priests accompany the Israelites' military and political expedition into Israel, carrying the Ark of the Covenant. In today's military, chaplains need expert support to carry out their mission. This is where chaplain's assistants come into the fight.

By definition, a chaplain's assistant applies integrated support processes to ensure the free exercise of religion in the Air Force. They manage and implement support processes essential to executing Air Force Chaplain Service's core competencies – religious observances, pastoral care, and advice to Air Force leadership regarding spiritual, religious, ethical and moral concerns. Manages and applies personnel, logistics, and professional resources to support chapel-based, unit, medical and deployed ministries. Provides direct support for chaplain professional ministry. Applies religious sensitivities to support the distinctive spiritual needs of the pluralistic military community.

During the regular Monday through Friday schedule, chaplain's assistants carry on with business like any other squadron in the Air Force, conducting readiness training, doing paperwork, etc. On Saturday and Sunday, they provide worship support



Air Force/Staff Sgt. Ian Carrier

Airman 1st Class Kristine MacKeown, 386th Air Expeditionary Wing Chaplain's Assistant, in the Rock Chapel Sanctuary.

with such tasks as setting up and tearing down the sanctuary and working sound and audio-visual equipment. The job in a

deployed environment is not much different than the job at a home station, according to Tech. Sgt. Brian Ruggiero, Rock Chapel NCOIC.

Another aspect of the job is providing security for the chaplains. Chaplains are considered non-combatants. In combat zones, chaplain's assistants carry weapons like most other service members, and may be called upon to respond to hostile fire.

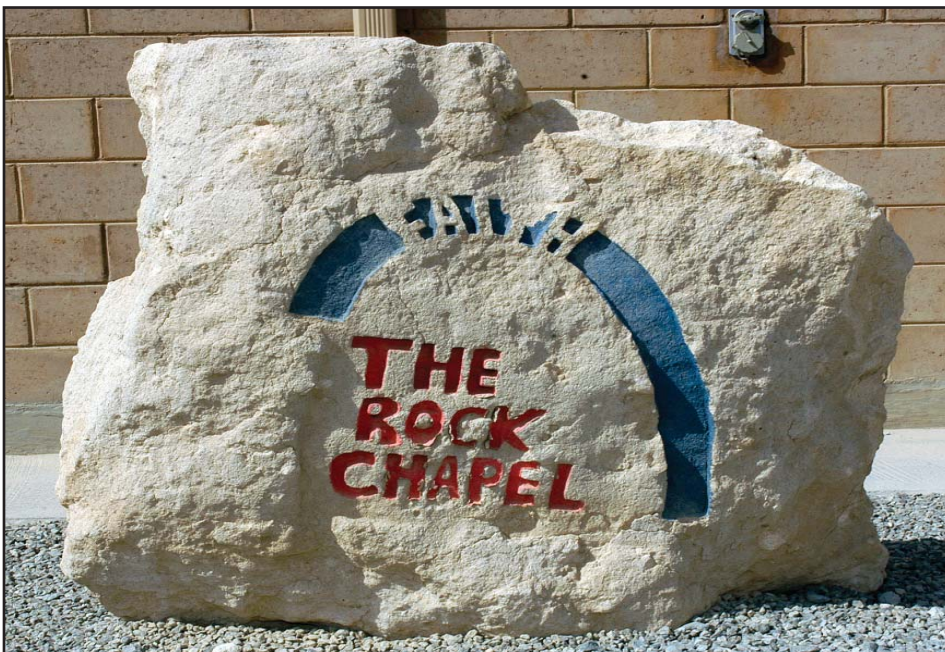
Chaplains assistants also coordinate travel arrangements for the chaplains.

"Without us, chaplains aren't traveling," said Sergeant Ruggiero.

On a more personal level, it is up to the chaplain's assistants to ensure the Chaplains are providing spiritual support. They are here to help provide a place of worship for the other Airmen, which in turn will ideally help morale.

Airman 1st Class Kristine MacKeown has her own take on the job, saying:

"If I can make one person smile a day, that's my goal."



BAND OF BROTHERS



Capt. Joseph Schmidt, 386th Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron Red OIC, briefly visits with his brother, Army Maj. Paul Schmidt, on the flightline here. Paul had a short layover on his way home after a yearlong deployment in Iraq.



Army Sgt. Austin Sleep and his older brother (by 15 years) Tech Sgt. Warren Sleep, 386th Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron readiness NCOIC, got to see each other briefly when Austin passed through here on his way back to Balad.

STANDARD(S) ISSUE



INCORRECT: The USCENAF policy supplement for the correct wear of the Air Force physical training uniform states that white socks must be worn and they must be ankle or calf-high socks. No socks or ankle socks so low they can't be easily seen are unacceptable.



CORRECT: The above picture shows the MINIMUM amount of an ankle sock that should be shown when worn with the Air Force physical training uniform. The sock may go from here up to the calf of the leg and small conservative logos are allowed.



Good for body, mind, international relations

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Ian Carrier

386th AEWPA

Being deployed with coalition forces can be a great opportunity to interact with people from other cultures.

One of those opportunities here at the Rock presents itself in the form of a tae kwon do class. Tae kwon do is

a combination of traditional Chinese, Japanese, and Korean fighting styles.

According to Wikipedia, tae kwon do is also the world's most practiced martial art, the national sport of Korea, and an Olympic event.

For the past four months, the classes here have been taught by 1st Lt. Kim Hyo Hyoem, an intelligence officer with the Korean 58th Airlift Wing.





Lieutenant Kim is a third degree master in Korea where he trained and taught in his university tae kwon do club. He also taught in church as a tae kwon do missionary member.

According to Lieutenant Kim, tae kwon do is helping to foster international relations.

"We have had a lot of students from the Japan Air Self-Defense Force and the U.S. Air Force. It's a good experience for body, and a good opportunity to learn Korean culture."

Adrainna Cardona, a civilian computer draftsman here at the Rock, has been in the class for the past four months. She enjoys the discipline and the fitness aspect of the martial art, she has lost 15 lbs. since starting the class.

"The first thing I think of in the morning is 'I have to stretch, I have to practice.' It has become a way of life," said Cardonna.

This is the first time she has been around Koreans, but she says she is learning the culture, language and the customs. She plans to keep on with tae kwon do when she leaves here.

"Every time I like it more, every time I'm hitting harder and harder," she said.

Tae kwon do class is held every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday from 6-8 p.m. at the gym. Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend.



386th Air Expeditionary Wing Rock Solid Warriors



**Staff Sgt.
Mandy L. Florio**

386th Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron, Fuels Section
2A654 Aircraft Fuel Systems Specialist

Home unit/base: 43rd MXS, Pope AFB, N.C.

How do you support the mission here? My primary responsibility here at Ali Al Salem is helping ensure that the aircraft are mission capable by performing any necessary maintenance on the aircraft fuel system. Fuel Systems Technicians operationally check fuel components for serviceability, as well as repair or remove and replace any necessary malfunctioning parts. We also repair fuel leaks to mission capable status, and perform priority response when dispatched to aircraft minutes away from beginning a mission. My secondary support to the mission in a larger scale is my involvement in the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Team here in the AOR. When on-call as a trained Victim Advocate, I can be called to respond to a sexual assault incident here or anywhere in the AOR. If I am the closest V.A. to the location of an incident, I can be temporarily forward deployed to that base to respond and assist a victim of sexual assault.

How many times have you deployed and what makes this one unique? This is my second deployment, and this one is unique because it is my first as an NCO. I've realized that there is a great deal of responsibility deploying as an NCO. You have to look out for not only yourself, but your troops as well.

How does your job differ in a deployed environment vs. home base? Unfortunately, we do not have all of the job-related comforts of home-station. At home, we crawl around in fuel tanks while the aircraft sits in a climate-controlled facility at a comfortable 70 degrees. Here, we have to crawl around in those same tanks in the 110 degree or hotter outdoors, with all of our protective equipment on. It makes for an unpleasant work-environment sometimes, but when you see a plane that you just recently fixed launch on a mission, it makes it all worthwhile.



**Staff Sgt.
Andre Miller**

386th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron
3E451 Utilities Journeyman

Home unit/base: 126 ARW, Scott AFB, Ill.

How do you support the mission here? Basically, I support the mission by troubleshooting issues that deal with water distribution and plumbing. Most recently, my shop was faced with solving several base wide water outages and main breaks.

How many times have you deployed and what makes this one unique? This is my first deployment, and it's unique because the job taskings are not what I expected. Being in a desert location, I was pleasantly surprised by the extensive water supply system already in place.

How does your job differ in a deployed environment vs. home base? Back home, I am responsible for working job orders that are basically preventative maintenance and minor repair. Here, I've seen more serious issues that require much more involved troubleshooting. Also, the problems associated with this water system have made it necessary for me to expand my skill set.