

THE Dog Face Daily

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Serving Task Force Marne

Salvadoran forces celebrate 184th birthday

SGT. 1ST CLASS STACY NILES
214TH FB

FOB DELTA – The Salvadoran Cuscatlán Battalion, X rotation, celebrated the “Day of the Salvadoran Soldier,” here May 7.

The day recognized the contributions of the Salvadoran soldiers for preserving the freedom of their country and the democratization of others. It also served to commemorate the 184th year of the Salvadoran armed forces.

“We must remember our history,” said Col. Walter Arévalo, commander of the Cuscatlán Battalion, referring to the civil war El Salvador endured more than 15 years ago. “It’s important that we remember the contribution of those who have come before us. The work we do here is important in helping those who are suffering because of the insurgency in Iraq.”

The celebration featured a five-kilometer run, a unit prayer service, a wreath-laying ceremony, a bayonet charge and machete fighting demonstration. The battalion also competed against other Coalition partners in sporting events.

“These types of activities increase morale,” Arévalo said. “The ceremony offered an opportunity for our soldiers to hone their skills and for us to demonstrate the type of soldiers we have.”

The soldiers are proud to show their skills and of their service.

“Like everyone else, I am happy to be celebrating the anniversary of the armed forces of El Salvador. It is a very important day for every Salvadoran,” said 1st Lt. Walber Alfredo Rivas Rivas, a member of the Cuscatlán commander’s close security detachment.

“I am really proud to belong to the armed forces of El Salvador because it is an institution that the Salvadoran people truly rely on and trust,” Rivas said.



Sgt. 1st Class Stacy Niles

Soldiers from the Cuscatlán Infantry Company perform rifle-drill moves during the “Day of the Salvadoran Soldier” ceremony at FOB Delta, Iraq.

“It’s really great to be here in Iraq. It is a place I have the opportunity to do my best and bring honor to the armed forces of El Salvador.

“The ceremony gave us a chance to show the different skills we have gotten from all the training we go through,” he said.

“Since we don’t have a lot of high tech resources we have to make double the effort to be very good in traditional military skills,” he added.

In addition to the ceremony, Arévalo used the day as an opportunity to show his appreciation to his soldiers for the work they are doing.

“You have to do things to improve the morale of the soldiers,” Arévalo said.

“I gave them some small gifts, but

it is a way to say thank you for what they do and the sacrifices they make,” he added.

To date, five soldiers from El Salvador have died during the battalion’s peacekeeping support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and 32 have been wounded, Arévalo said. The Salvadoran army participated in the only known instance of hand-to-hand combat in Iraq while stationed in Najaf in 2004. El Salvador lost one soldier in that engagement, Pvt. Natividad Mendez, the first the battalion lost.

The Salvadoran armed forces were created May 7, 1824, though their origin began in the colonial Spanish era when Salvadorans acted on patriotism and nationalism to protect their country.

Captains of the battle watch over aircraft within battalion

PFC. MONICA K. SMITH
3RD CAB, 3RD INF. DIV.

CAMP STRIKER – Just as Apaches keep watch over ground troops, the battle captains of 1st Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, watch over their Apaches, tracking and controlling all aircraft within their battalion.

“We manage the aviation assets and how they’re employed in our battle space, mission sets, (area of operations), assist with S3, and we take any orders that come down from brigade,” said Capt. Michael Milas, one of three battle captains in 1-3rd Avn. Regt., 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division. “The biggest thing we do is ensure the aircraft are where they need to be.”

The three battle captains – Milas, Nick Holten and Troy Gillett – along with fire support officer, Capt. Luke Slinker, work 12-hour shifts to provide 24-hour support to their Apache crews who fly missions in Multi-National Division – Center, and MND-Baghdad, in addition to VIP escort and supporting the Georgian Brigade in Forward Operating Base al-Kut.

When the battle captains arrive for work, the previous shift’s captain briefs them on the day’s mission sets and significant activities from the past 12 to 24 hours.

“We get a good feeling of what’s going on and then we begin briefing crews on their mission sets,” said Milas, from Hawthorn Woods, Ill. “It ... serves a specific purpose for the ground unit and as an aviation unit; we do it because that’s what’s requested.”

Each shift briefs five or six crews. The rest of their day includes coordinating with ground units, updating



Pfc. Monica K. Smith

Captain Michael Milas, battle captain for 1-3rd Avn. Regt., works in the battalion tactical operations center at Camp Striker, Baghdad.

information and preparing the next day’s mission requests. Once requests are accepted, it is the battle captain’s responsibility to work out a timeline while de-conflicting and prioritizing missions.

“We manage the flight,” said Gillett, from Houston.

“Everything is set the day prior so today we’re getting ready to execute, or we wait for bad things to happen so we can react,” he added.

When troops are in contact, the Apaches ensure Soldiers on the ground have the support they need to make it through the fight.

“Whenever we’re overhead, the en-

emy doesn’t fire on our troops,” Milas said.

Gillett said the enemy understands that when troops are in contact, aircraft are sent to their aid.

“They know there’s going to be something coming overhead to blow them up,” Gillett said.

“They’re not going to stay and fight,” he added.

When a mission is underway, the battle captains must stay alert and focused on the task at hand. Because of their responsibility, captains are specifically chosen to fill their positions.

“You have to ensure that your judgment and decision making abilities are more mature,” Milas said. “There are a lot of moving parts and you have to make quick decisions without jeopardizing the flight crews and at the same time provide the ground troops the support they need.”

The battle captains have three enlisted Soldiers working with them as well. These Soldiers man the radios and the command post of the future (CPOF), a multi-monitor set that allows for complex operations.

“We listen to the internal frequencies, give the current position of aircraft and provide other information the battle captain may need,” said Spc. Charito Alonzo, from North Shore, Hawaii.

Alonzo says 90 percent of the information they brief to crews are provided by these enlisted Soldiers. They provide this information to the battle captains who prioritize and organize it for execution.

“They give us the puzzle piece and we decide where it goes,” Gillett said.

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THE Dog Face Daily

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3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Abn. Division (Assault)

4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division

3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division

214th Fires Brigade

7th Sustainment Brigade

720th Military Police Battalion

354th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Soldier spends another Mother's Day away from daughter

SGT. JASON STADEL
2ND BCT, 3RD INF. DIV.

FOB KALSU – This Mother's Day is nothing new for Staff Sgt. Lasheeka Lee. She had the same type of Mother's Day three times before: away from her 12-year-old daughter, Kristen.

"I've been to Korea three times," said Lee, a medic in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. "This time it was a little harder leaving her because she knew I was going to Iraq."

Kristen watches the news and is old enough to know a deployment to Iraq is not the same as going to Korea, Lee said.

"She didn't want me to go, she was scared," said Lee, a native of Brooklyn, N.Y.

Although she has missed four of 12 Mother's Days with her daughter, Lee said she has a great relationship with Kristen.

"My mom didn't really raise me," the single mother said. "I was adopted and I always promised myself I'd be there for my kids. I may not always be with her because of my job, but my daughter

understands that I do what I do for her."

Lee said because the Army offers such great benefits for families she has decided to stay in the military until she reaches her 20 years of service. Lee has been in the Army for 13 years.

"I stay in for her, and I know she appreciates what I do for her."

Lee tries to speak with her daughter as often as possible to mitigate the effects of being away for so long.

"She says I'm a cool mom," Lee said with a smile. "She's a good kid; she gets all A's and started cheerleading this year. I always tease her about having a boyfriend. Even though I've been gone a lot we have a great relationship."

Lee is hopeful she will be able to speak with her daughter this Sunday and have the best Mother's Day she can.

"I'm going to be thinking about how I wish I was with her. I just keep reminding myself that I'll be home soon and we're going to make up for lost time," she said.

When asked what would be a perfect Mother's Day present, Lee answered: "I hope everyone over here is safe, and I want to be with my daughter."



Courtesy Photo

Staff Sergeant Lasheeka Lee and her daughter, Kristen, pose for a picture while she was on vacation in November. This Mother's Day will be the fourth that Lee and her daughter have spent away from each other.

CAPTAINS

From previous page

Because of their hard work, battalion Soldiers often send messages of

appreciation to the Apache crews who protectively fly over ground units.

"They'll say over the radio, 'tell the Viper guys 'Thanks,''" Alonzo said. "A couple even stopped by."

Gillett said he finds fulfillment in being able to support the ground troops.

"There's nothing more satisfying than helping out the ground units who are in need," he said.

Safety Thought of the Day

Portable Fire Extinguishers

- Portable extinguishers are designed for fighting small fires.
- Do not relocate the extinguisher from its designated location.
- Fire extinguishers should be mounted approximately waist high and should never be left free-standing or used as door stops.
- It is recommended that a fire extinguisher be located every 75 feet within the work area, and 1 per office & living area.
- Ensure fire extinguishers are inspected monthly for serviceability.
- Exchange the fire extinguisher immediately after each use or if unserviceable.
- Remember PASS:
 - Pull the pin.
 - Aim the fire extinguisher at the base of the fire.
 - Squeeze the handle.
 - Sweep from side to side.
- Ref: TB 5-4200
200-10 & 29 CFR
1910.157



File photo

Headline Highlights

'70's ticket; SpongeBob in Colo.; outlaw veggies; WWI vet

Woman pays off 1976 parking ticket issued in Mich.

CALUMET, Mich. (AP) – Police in this Upper Peninsula town had forgotten about the \$1 parking ticket written on Sept. 1, 1976. But the woman who had found it on her windshield hadn't.

The ticket, a \$20 bill and a note arrived at police headquarters last month in a plain white envelope with no return address.

The note read: "I always had good intentions of paying it. I put it aside and every once in a while I would come across it and said 'someday I'm going to pay it.' Now I think it's time."

The fine for an unpaid meter violation increased to \$5 after 72 hours, said Police Chief David Outinen, but it hadn't increased beyond that. He told The Daily Mining Gazette of Houghton that he couldn't remember someone making good on an unpaid ticket after so much time.

The woman apparently hopes her payment closes the matter. "Please don't try and track me down. I am a respectable lady," she wrote.

SpongeBob SquarePants image painted on historic cabin

MONUMENT, Colo. (AP) – The U.S. Forest Service is looking for the "SpongeBob fanatics" who painted the cartoon character on the chimney

of a historic building.

The 10-foot tall painting of Nickelodeon character SpongeBob SquarePants is on a cabin in the Pike National Forest that used to be the Forest Service's tree nursery until it was abandoned in the 1930s. Forest Service law enforcement officer Tom Healy says the incident is part of an increase in vandalism in the area.

Officials say whoever painted the cartoon on the chimney brought four colors of paint and that it was a time-consuming venture.

Healy says it will cost several thousand dollars to wipe the animated yellow sea sponge's image from the site.

Chef wants to outlaw out-of-season vegetables

LONDON (Reuters) – Celebrity British chef Gordon Ramsay said restaurants should be fined if they serve out-of-season fruit and vegetables.

"I don't want to see asparagus in the middle of December. I don't want to see strawberries from Kenya in the middle of March. I want to see it home-grown," he said after raising his concerns with Prime Minister Gordon Brown.

"Fruit and veg should be seasonal. Chefs should be fined if they don't have ingredients in season on their menu," he told the BBC on Friday.

Ramsay, whose London restaurants include Petrus and The Savoy

Grill, said Britain had become a nation of lazy eaters who followed trends and fads rather than substance.

"There should be stringent laws, licensing laws, to make sure produce is only used in season and season only," he added.

Canadian WW1 vet to become a Canadian citizen

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (Reuters) – Canada's last known surviving veteran of World War One is becoming a Canadian citizen, the government said on Friday.

John Babcock, 107, was born in Canada but became a U.S. citizen in 1946 and had to give up his status as a British subject - as Canadians were designated before Canada's own citizenship act came into force a year later.

Canadian officials recently visited Babcock at his home in Spokane, Washington, to give him an award, and he told them he was interested in being granted citizenship in his birth country.

"This means the last known soldier to serve Canada in the First World War will forever be a Canadian," Prime Minister Stephen Harper said in a statement.

Babcock was only 15 years old and lied about his age when he joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force. He moved to the United States in the 1920s.

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from Sudoku Easy Presented by Will Shortz

Solution to yesterday's puzzle:

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| 5 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 9 | 6 |
| 9 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 8 |
| 2 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 7 | 4 |

ARABIC QUESTION OF THE DAY

Is the place guarded? il-mah-kan ma-hah-roos?