

AnacondaTimes

May 7, 2008

PROUDLY SERVING LSA ANACONDA



Photo by Spc. Andrea Merritt

Skilled Mechanics

IA proves it has what it takes to fix vehicles

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Photo by Spc. Charlotte Martinez

Building Bridges

74th, IA build a bridge to improve local Iraqi needs

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Photo by Staff Sgt. Les Newport

TF Troy teaches

IED task force keeps Soldiers informed on evolving threats

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Photo by Spc. Charlotte Martinez

Country music sensation Toby Keith shakes hands with servicemembers in the crowd during his performance at LSA Anaconda April 28 as part of his 'Biggest and Baddest' United Service Organization tour. Keith said this is his sixth overseas trip and he encourages other performers to do tours as well.

Toby Keith entertains troops at LSAA

by Spc. Charlotte Martinez

Anaconda Times Staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – After being stranded in Fallujah because of dust storms and almost cancelling the remainder of his tour, the Big Dog Daddy himself arrived here, April 28, to finish his “Biggest and Baddest” USO tour.

“By the time I got here,” said country music star Toby Keith, “it was already dinner time, so I got to visit the USO and met with some of the airborne guys (who were) out patrolling and (missed) the show. They (were) out protecting the perimeter.”

Keith’s first stop was the home of the 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment to visit Soldiers who would not make it to his show.

Upon arriving at the 2-320th, Keith took part in a re-enlistment ceremony for five Soldiers.

“I’m an honorary attendee to some of these re-enlistments and I will stand and hold the flag or they will just want me to be present while they’re re-upping,” Keith said. “I’ve (been part of) several on this mission here, (as well as) Afghanistan too. The re-up rate of some of these units is ex-

tremely high.”

After the re-enlistments, Keith helped the 2-320th raffle off three guitars to Soldiers, which he autographed before presenting.

Next Keith stood with the Soldiers in their section assignments for photos and signed autographs on everything from patches to personal guitars.

After visiting the 2-320th, Keith moved on to the USO facility, where he was given a short tour of all the amenities the USO offers Soldiers.

“(The USO) is a great facility,” Keith said. “They really take care of the servicemen over there.”

Keith jokingly said that the only two other places he got to see were the dining facility and the inside of his hooch.

Brig. Gen. Gregory E. Couch, commanding general of the 316th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), introduced Keith before his performance, but only after joking with him about which college team he should root for.

See **TOBY**, Page 8

Provost Marshal Office: Weekly police blotter

Week of 21-27 April

The Provost Marshal Office conducted: (187) Security Checks, (20) Traffic Stops, issued (ten) DD Form 1408 Armed Forces Traffic Tickets, registered (162) vehicles on the installation, and responded to six Traffic Accidents. Twenty five Common Access Cards were reported lost, and six individuals were barred from LSA Anaconda.

The Provost Marshal Office is currently investigating: Three GOI violations.

If you have any information about any of these crimes, please contact the crime stoppers line at 433-8602 or notify the Military Police Investigations at 443-6190

PMO Regulation 190-5: Vehicle Registration is accomplished at the PMO Pass and Registration Office, located in building 4253. Personnel must have completed paperwork and documentation, before receiving or updating a

vehicle registration.
(1) Non-tactical vehicles
(2) Contractor vehicles
(3) Non-standard military commercial designed vehicles (NMCDV) when approved by the Garrison Commander and Garrison Safety via an exception to policy letter.

Only the categories of personnel/vehicles listed above are authorized to obtain vehicle registration. "Visitor" or "Day" passes are not issued on LSA Anaconda/Balad AB. Privately owned vehicles are not authorized to be registered on LSA Anaconda.

Crime Prevention: Report all suspicious activity and crimes immediately to the Provost Marshal Office Law Enforcement Desk. Dial 911 for emergencies and 443-8602 for all others.

By Air Force Tech Sgt. Mirta Jones

Golden T-Wall Award

COB ADDER, Iraq – Company Commander Capt. Keith Wilson accepts "The Golden T-Wall" Award for his company's outstanding efforts during the 7th Sustainment Brigade Run from Brig. Gen. Gregory E. Couch, commanding general of the 316th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) April 25.



Photo by Spc. RJ Gilbert



Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Nathan Gallahan

A beetle runs away after being discovered hiding in cargo headed to the United States.

Creepy crawlies kept contained

by Air Force Staff Sgt. Nathan Gallahan
407th Air Expeditionary Group Public Affairs

ALI BASE, Iraq– Keeping creepy crawlies contained within Iraq is one of the biggest reasons Airmen from the 407th Provost Marshal's office inspect the bags and equipment of every Airman, Soldier, Sailor, civilian or other coalition force personnel heading home.

"We're at the center of the program overseeing more than 90 inspectors assigned to Contingency Operating Base Adder, which inspects the cargo of more than 10,000 personnel and several million pounds of incoming and outgoing cargo," said Airman 1st Class Cody Colston, 407th PMO military police Airman, deployed from Royal Air Forces Lakenheath, United Kingdom. "The Provost Marshal's office act as the lead customs agent for the base; we inspect anything and everything going through here."

The Provost Marshal's office also manages and certifies Army and Navy customs inspectors for the program.

The Airmen search for contraband items, such as war trophies, and living creatures trying to hitch a free ride back to the United States.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, the U.S. loses approximately \$22.9 billion each year in crops lost to alien pests, such as the Khapra Beetle, which the PMO Airmen are trained to find; these beetles have been known to single-handedly cause more than \$23 million in agricultural losses a year.

"One of the biggest reasons we do this is because we're keeping foreign life from

being imported into the United States," said Tech. Sgt. Benny Pierce, 407th PMO investigator, deployed from Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

Airmen are looking for all life within the cargo, including insects like camel spiders, black- and yellow-legged scorpions and sand flies. They are also checking to make sure all the cargo is clean, because soil from Iraq can harbor seeds of invasive species of plants, which reportedly cost the U.S. \$138 billion and three million acres of lost land yearly.

Foreign insects and plants, however, pose only a small threat to land and agriculture, in comparison to the damage that could be caused to entire ecosystems if snakes, such as the desert horned viper or black desert cobra made it back to the homeland.

"If foreign snakes got in, they could eradicate entire species of birds," said Senior Airman Darren Taylor, 407th Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron entomologist, deployed from Hickam AFB, Hawaii. "If they got into the United States, they could have a huge effect on agriculture and native wildlife."

That's why the military police Airmen spend up to 120 man-hours a week completing these inspections.

"When our Airmen arrive, they go through a four-hour customs class to get trained up on how to do these inspections and a practical application certification," said Capt. Kevin Lombardo, 407th Provost Marshal's office provost marshal, deployed from Peterson AFB, Colo. "We want to be environmentally friendly for our ecosystem back in America and prevent the contamination of foreign life and organisms."

Iraqi Soldiers prove to be skilled mechanics

by Spc. Andrea Merritt
1st Sustainment Brigade

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – As U.S. forces continue to transition more authority to Iraqi Security Forces, there is a higher level of expectation for all aspects of their self-sufficiency; even maintenance.

At the level-three maintenance shop on Taji, 80 Iraqi Soldiers have proven themselves to be skilled mechanics, who can handle most of the vehicle maintenance issues for the Iraqi Army units on the camp.

In order to be a level-three mechanic, the Iraqi Soldiers must show a certain aptitude for the job.

"Of course, every single mechanic has to prove himself as a skilled and experienced mechanic; then, we will bring him to the level-three shop," said Col. Mohammed Abdalwahab, the maintenance company commander for the Iraqi Army Maintenance Program.

The mechanics are specially-trained to repair or replace engines, transmissions, brake clutches and drive shafts, which is a much larger job than that of a level-one or level-two mechanic.

"At level one, they fix only simple defects like brakes, fuel, oil hazards and replacing tires; simple things," said Mohammed. "Every single unit can depend on its own staff to fix these simple defects."



Photo by Spc. Andrea Merritt

Two Iraqi Soldiers of the 6th Motorized Transportation Regiment, who work in the level-three maintenance shop on Taji, work to repair a camshaft on a light-wheeled vehicle April 22.

"Level two is to replace the windshield, radiator, carburetor, alternator, headlights and starters. (The) second level is for the motorized transportation regiments," explained Mohammed. The degree to which the Iraqi Soldiers at the level-three maintenance shop perform their duties has even been noticed by their U.S. Army counterparts.

"I think we've seen some excellent mechanics come through; the Iraqi Soldiers are receiving great training, hands-on, in a variety of vehicles," said Chief Warrant Officer Keith Hammit, the



Photo by Spc. Andrea Merritt

An Iraqi Soldier, who works at the level-three maintenance shop, works to repair the clutch on a five-ton truck.

"All I am looking for is to serve my country and my people, and support them with capable vehicles, (so) that my Soldiers and the Soldiers in other units in the Iraqi

Army can do their job to protect the country and the people (from) the terrorists and insurgents," said Mohammed.

Worship services

PROTESTANT – TRADITIONAL

SUNDAY 7:30 A.M. AIR FORCE HOSPITAL CHAPEL
9:30 A.M. PROVIDER CHAPEL
10:30 A.M. FREEDOM CHAPEL (WEST SIDE)
11 A.M. CASTLE HEIGHTS (4155)
5:30 P.M. GILBERT MEMORIAL (H-6)
7:30 P.M. AIR FORCE HOSPITAL CHAPEL

PROTESTANT – GOSPEL

SUNDAY 11 A.M. MWR EAST BUILDING
NOON FREEDOM CHAPEL (WEST SIDE)
12:30 P.M. GILBERT MEMORIAL (H-6)
7 P.M. PROVIDER CHAPEL

PROTESTANT – CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP

SUNDAY 9 A.M. MWR EAST BUILDING
10:30 A.M. GILBERT MEMORIAL (H-6)
2 P.M. CASTLE HEIGHTS (4155)
8 P.M. EDEN CHAPEL
7 P.M. FREEDOM CHAPEL (WEST SIDE)
9:30 P.M. FREEDOM CHAPEL (WEST SIDE)

PROTESTANT – LITURGICAL

SUNDAY 9 A.M. EPISCOPAL FREEDOM CHAPEL
11 A.M. LUTHERAN (CHAPEL ANNEX)
3:30 P.M. GILBERT MEMORIAL

PROTESTANT -- MESSIANIC

FRIDAY 8:30 P.M. FREEDOM CHAPEL (WEST SIDE)

PROTESTANT – SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

SATURDAY 9 A.M. PROVIDER CHAPEL

PROTESTANT – CHURCH OF CHRIST

SUNDAY 3:30 P.M. CASTLE HEIGHTS (4155)

ROMAN CATHOLIC MASS

(SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION 30 MIN PRIOR TO MASS)
SATURDAY 5 P.M. GILBERT MEMORIAL (H-6)
8 P.M. FREEDOM CHAPEL (WEST SIDE)
SUNDAY 8:30 A.M. GILBERT MEMORIAL (H-6)
11 A.M. PROVIDER CHAPEL
11 A.M. AIR FORCE HOSPITAL CHAPEL
MON-SAT 11:45 A.M. PROVIDER CHAPEL
THURSDAY 11 A.M. AIR FORCE HOSPITAL CHAPEL
MON, WED, FRI 5 P.M. GILBERT MEMORIAL

LATTER DAY SAINTS-(LDS)-(MORMON)

SUNDAY 1 P.M. PROVIDER CHAPEL
3:30 P.M. FREEDOM CHAPEL (WEST SIDE)
7 P.M. GILBERT MEMORIAL (H-6)

JEWISH SHABBAT SERVICES

FRIDAY 6 P.M. GILBERT MEMORIAL (H-6)

ISLAMIC SERVICE

FRIDAY 12:30 P.M. PROVIDER CHAPEL (WEST SIDE)

PAGAN/ WICCAN FELLOWSHIP

THURSDAY, SATURDAY 7 P.M. EDEN CHAPEL

BUDDHIST FELLOWSHIP

TUESDAY 7 P.M. EDEN CHAPEL

PROTESTANT – SPANISH NON-DENOMINATIONAL

SATURDAY 7:30 P.M. PROVIDER CHAPEL

EASERN ORTHODOX- DEVINE LITURGY

SUNDAY 9 A.M. CHAPEL ANNEX

*Please note, schedule is subject to change.

ANACONDA TIMES

316th ESC Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Gregory E. Couch

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Mission Statement: Produce a weekly newspaper that provides the command leadership team a means of disseminating command information to servicemembers on Logistical Support Area Anaconda and subordinate 316th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) units throughout Iraq. Contents of the paper will target enlisted servicemembers, officers, and civilian staff as well as primarily highlight the mission and experiences of 316th ESC units and personnel, with a secondary objective of detailing the activities of the LSA Anaconda community.

Indiana National Guard gets down to business

by Staff Sgt. Les Newport

76 Infantry Brigade Combat Team

Bakir, Iraq - Army leaders are making the most of security gains made by local Iraqi leaders by moving forward with a plan to drive more economic opportunity toward Iraqis.

The initiative, Iraqi-Based Industrial Zone, has been used in other parts of Iraq to support small and large business owners in their efforts to secure contracts with coalition forces.

Lt. Col. Patrick Thibodeau, operations officer for the Indiana National Guard's 76th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, said the program is more about changing an environment that has until recently favored insurgents who work to destabilize Iraqi government and coalition efforts.

"This initiative is not going to solve all of their problems," said Thibodeau, "but it starts us down a path of change by creating real economic opportunity. Insurgency will continue as long as the environment stays the same."

Thibodeau had good reason to be optimistic, if cautious. The response to a recent invitation to discuss the program at a local community center drew a much larger crowd than he had anticipated.

Well over 100 business and community leaders met in Bakir, an Iraqi village nestled in the Tigris river valley

and in the shadow of coalition forces' largest military base in northern Iraq, and listened patiently as Army and Iraqi officials discussed new opportunities.

The presentation had all the hallmarks of a small-town America chamber of commerce meeting. Leaders of Logistical Support Area Anaconda outlined services and materials they needed to support the more than 30,000 coalition personnel at the installation.

"This program is going to take a considerable amount of time and resources to implement. But it doesn't really take as much as it takes to utilize foreign nationals," said Thibodeau, a reference to the logistical support that comes from outside Iraq by way of costly airlifts or on dangerous supply routes.

The concept of a commerce zone adjacent to LSA Anaconda is attractive for many reasons.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Les Newport

Security for business owners and their employees, easy access for installation contracting officers and the prospect of providing coalition personnel an opportunity to patronize local vendors are but a few advantages leaders point to.

Thibodeau also emphasized that Coalition Forces do not want to be the sole consumer of IBIZ suppliers and service providers. The initiative's long-term goal is to support Iraqi businesses to grow and become vital drivers of change in the

"(This initiative) starts us down a path of change by creating real economic opportunity. Insurgency will continue as long as the environment stays the same."

Lt. Col. Patrick Thibodeau
76th Infantry Brigade Combat Team

region.

"We are being very selective and forward thinking, and plan for the day when we leave," he said.

Although resources and support will be directed to support the initiative, coalition forces are expecting local business leaders to invest capital. Army leaders want to partner with existing vocational training programs to develop training for electricians, plumbers, carpenters and other high-demand trade skills.

Most telling is the level of support the initiative is receiving from local commands. "This initiative has absolutely everybody behind it. We understand this can go nowhere without unity of effort."

Planners are drawing on a number of resources; engineers, civil-military affairs and finance contracting officers, among oth-



Photo by Staff Sgt. Les Newport

Top: Iraqi business leaders talk after an Iraqi-Based Industry Zone conference in Bakir, Iraq. The leaders attended the conference to learn more about doing business with the installations of coalition forces. The initiative has growing support as security has improved. Left: Col. Courtney Carr discusses opportunities with an Iraqi business owner.

ers from LSA Anaconda, to support the effort.

"The active component has a really good handle on the contracting and they have already made a significant impact, making sure we can be very accurate in what we say to the business owners," said Thibodeau. "We can't afford miscommunication."

Additionally, he said the National Guard Soldiers of the 76th IBCT are bringing a unique perspective that can provide critical insight to drive success of the program as well.

"Many of these guys work for small businesses, or are small business owners," he said. "They understand the challenges, the frustrations that come with it."

Thibodeau said he could not look past the fact that Col. Courtney Carr, the 76th commander and LSA Anaconda garrison commander, is the executive director

of the economic development board of the city of Columbus, Ind.

"I don't know when you've had somebody with that level and mix of experience, a business leader, brigade commander and West Point grad," said Thibodeau.

Thibodeau said the Army is in the process of regaining institutional knowledge of counterinsurgency operations that was lost during the Cold War, and although it has been a challenging and often costly process, it is a process the Army is embracing.

He points to Lt. Col. John Dunleavy of the 2nd Battalion 320th Field Artillery Regiment, as the kind of leadership that is making a difference. Dunleavy's unit operates in the surrounding countryside, working to improve security, build relationships and support local government; classic counterinsurgency.

Dunleavy's rapport with the local leaders was evident as he wrapped up the meeting with a translated joke, a high-stake risk that paid off.

"If you have gained nothing else from this meeting," Dunleavy announced in a measured gait to allow the translator time, "you will at least have had lunch."

The room laughed.

But Dunleavy continued, "I want to say something important. The time of the insurgent has passed."

Dunleavy then paused to let the point sink in and then added: "The time for your opportunity is now.... Now, let's eat!"

Dunleavy was rewarded with nods of agreement, a banquet provided by a local caterer and a genuinely enthusiastic session of networking and business card exchange that lasted well into the afternoon.

Building bridges to improve relations, economy

by Spc. Charlotte Martinez

Anaconda Times staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq - Soldiers of the 74th Engineer Company, along with eight Iraqi engineer soldiers, continue to work on a Mabey-Johnson float bridge to cross the Tigris River and join the cities of Baiji and Kirkuk, April 25 in an effort to continue to improve the local area.

"Working with the Iraqis is a new experience," said Spc. Calvin Barber, a bridge crewmember specialist with the 74th. Barber said this was the third day of building the bridge and that it seems that the Iraqi engineers have their job's down.

The bridge the Soldiers are constructing is a Johnson float bridge, which is made to go across nearly any sized wet gap, said Staff Sgt. Brian White, who is also a bridge crewmember with the 74th.

"The purpose of the bridge is to maintain and improve the transportation network along the Tigris River," said 1st Lt. Jeremiah Manning, a construction engineer with the 20th Engineer Brigade. "This is vital to the economic health of Iraq because it facilitates oil, agriculture and commercial and civilian traffic throughout Multi-national Division-North."

"The Iraqi engineers are from a school

in Taji," White said, "and they seem quite knowledgeable on the Johnson float bridge. They have trained on it, but this is the first one these guys are helping to build."

White also said that once the engineers are trained and are comfortable building the bridge, they will be able to take their knowledge back to the engineer school and train other engineers.

This will eventually allow the Iraqis to build the bridges that are needed all over Iraq, which will also help improve the local economy, White said.

"There are two or so platoons working on the bridge," Manning said. "We are expecting to have it finished by May 1."

"Once the bridge is complete, another unit will come in and 'redress the approaches' and the project will be complete," said Manning. "The Iraqi government then plans to come in and pave the roadway at a later date with asphalt cement."

"The building of this bridge helps to reinforce economic development and improve the relationship between Coalition Forces and the Iraqi government," said Canadian Brig. Gen. Nicholas Matern, who was at the construction site for the bridge representing the Multinational Corps-Iraq commander.



Photo by Spc. Charlotte Martinez

Members of the 74th Engineer Company continue to work on the Al Fatah bridge in Baiji, April 25, to go across the Tigris River. The bridge will open new economic opportunities around Baiji.

'Punisher' partners with Muthanna IHP

by 1st Lt. Nicholas Klein

1st B5TB PAO

AS SAMAWAH, Iraq - After weeks of coordination with the Iraqi Highway Police leadership in As Samawah, Iraq, the Combat Outpost 6 Punisher Route Security Team partnered with the Muthanna IHP, training them from April 22 through April 26.

During the seminar, the IHP were trained on basic leadership, pre-mission planning, operational targeting, react to small arms fire attack, react to improvised explosive device attack, personnel and vehicular search techniques, traffic control point operations, first aid, establishing a cordon, and basic rifle marksmanship.

A total of 56 IHP participated in the training throughout the week.

The training was considered a great success by the IHP and COP 6 Soldiers

"The practical exercises we did every day really showed us that they got something out of the classes" said Spc. Joseph Capen.

The challenges of language barrier and cultural differences were overcome through creative planning and motivational techniques used by the RST instructors.

The IHP were attentive, quick to learn

and seemed grateful for the training. The relationship between the IHP and the Punisher RST Soldiers has become one of mutual respect and friendship far above what it was previously. The sharing of daily meals, the professionalism of the training, and the camaraderie of the IHP and soldiers has established a bond of friendship that will only help to keep Muthanna province safe and secure.

This is one more phase in the partnership to secure freedom of movement along a major supply route in Muthanna. This training followed the establishment of three IHP checkpoints with standardized signs, checkpoint materials and associated infrastructure and builds upon a relationship which will ultimately enable a full-time partnership between the U.S. and Iraq with the scheduled opening of the Joint Security Site at COP 6.

At the same time the training of the IHP was being completed, 1st BCT, 82nd Airborne Commander Frederic Drummond was meeting with Lt. Col. Saleem Ya Ali Falih, provincial joint operations center officer in charge, to finalize-plans for PJOC integration at the JSS and discussions on operational and intelligence sharing between all ISF and Coalition Forces in the province.



Photo by Spc. Thomas Keeler

Sgt. Steve Harrop, a mechanic with the 182nd Engineer Company (Sappers) hauls a grill back to his housing unit April 22.

Uparmor gator

by Spc. Thomas Keeler

Anaconda Times staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq - The previous unit abandoned it as junk. A few Soldiers from the new unit took the diesel fuel out of the tank and replaced it with mogas - regular gasoline. Voilà - a fully functional all-terrain vehicle.

This was the birth of the "uparmored gator" created by Sgt. Steve Harrop, a mechanic with the 182nd Engineer Company (Sappers).

"I had to put in the windshield to drive it on the road, and it escalated from there," said Harrop.

After the windshield and the strobe light underneath, Harrop installed a gun turret, a radio tracker and antenna, a jammer in front, a weapons rack in the back, and more - everything required to go out of the road.

He of course got help from his "crew" - two other mechanics in the motor pool, Spc. Rone Peoples and Spc. Jorge Rodriguez.

Harrop's non-tactical vehicle is used not only for moving personnel and parts around the motor pool, but also as a shuttle for distinguished visitors. As this article went to press, Harrop was tasked with escorting country singer Toby Keith to the stage for his April 28 evening performance.

SHOUT OUT!!!

TELL YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS HOW MUCH YOU MISS THEM

Contact the 316th Public Affairs Office for scheduling.

E-mail Lee.Fowler@iraq.centcom.mil



Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini

Capt. Matthew Geiman, 24th Medical Detachment optometrist, gives a Soldier an eye exam at the Phipps Medical Clinic optometry office here. Geiman and his staff average 35 patients per day, many walk out with new eyewear

Soldiers can now have new glasses in about an hour

by Spc. Jay Venturini

Anaconda Times staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – Being in a combat zone, there are things that a Soldier needs, and needs quickly. For most mission essential items, the Army is able to accommodate an expedient request, but in the past it would take weeks to receive one of the most important essentials, prescription eyewear.

Now Soldiers can get a new pair of glasses or protective eyewear inserts within one hour at the Phipps Medical Clinic optometry office.

“A Soldier can walk in, get a screening and walk out with a new pair of glasses in about an hour,” said Capt. Matthew Geiman, 24th Medical Detachment optometrist.

“It takes a Soldier from ‘not mission capable’ to ‘ready to roll’ that quickly where it used to take weeks.”

Making glasses in theater is a new concept that has only been in operation for seven months. Since the operation started, hundreds of Soldiers have received new glasses within the hour time-frame.

“These things are not indestructible,” said Geiman. “Accidents happen and glasses break. Now, instead of keeping that Soldier in the barracks for weeks waiting for new glasses, he will not miss a beat by getting new glasses the same day.”

The style of glasses has also improved in the pre-

vious months. When Soldiers think of Army issued eyewear, they usually picture the big framed monstrosities commonly known as “birth control glasses,” due to their ugly appearance. However, the optometry clinic here doesn’t even make that style of glasses; instead they offer a variety of styles for Soldiers to choose from.

Some of their most common customers are Soldiers from outlying forward operating bases who pass through here. However, Geiman and his team are willing to take his services on the road to those outlying FOBs.

At the FOBs, the team does mass vision screening, take down prescriptions and when they return here they make the glasses and mail them to the unit.

“We go to the outlying FOBs about once a month or when there is a request from a unit,” said Geiman. “We have the capabilities to be at one of those FOBs very quickly.”

Despite having the ability to receive civilian style glasses, many Soldiers continue to wear their contact lenses in theater. This is not only strongly discouraged, but is also against Army Regulations.

“It is way too dirty over here to wear contacts,” said Geiman. “We have around ten Soldiers come in here every week with eye injuries due to wearing contacts. It’s just not worth it.”

With a Soldier’s vision so vital to mission readiness, having a quick turnaround time with eyewear could be the difference in a mission’s outcome, said Geiman.

Army specializes ammunition training

by Spc. Thomas Keeler

Anaconda Times staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – In response to the demands of the war and the transformation to a modular force, the Army has recently revised the ammunition 89 series career management field, establishing the military occupational specialty 89A – Ammunition Stock Control and Accounting Specialist to supplement the basic 89B – Ammunition Specialist that had been offered until last year.

Behind the new MOS structure is an improved automated tracking system, the Standard Army Ammunition System – Modernization, which lets commanders track ammunition stock in real time. The SAAS was developed in the early 1970s, but the system showed deficiencies during Desert Storm. The Army then began development of SAAS-MOD.

“You lose it if you don’t train on [SAAS-MOD] every day,” said Sgt. Ryan Williams, an ammunition specialist with the 962nd, who has been through the training. “It’s a very perishable skill.”

The 89A course is currently offered to warrant officers and non-commissioned officers, and an abbreviated version of the new course is currently given to all Soldiers who complete the standard 89B – Ammunition Specialist course. Eventually, a full seven-week course will be offered at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., for all Army Soldiers.

IA, US provide much needed aid



Photo by 1st Lt. Jonathan J. Springer

Sgt. Jason Sherman, a noncommissioned officer with Alpha Battery, 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, and an Iraqi Army Soldier, hand out toys to local children in Zuhari, Iraq, April 29.

by 1st Lt. Jonathan J. Springer

Anaconda Times staff

Zuhari, Iraq – Soldiers from Alpha Battery, 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), and Iraqi Soldiers from 4th Battalion, 4th Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division, spent a day together dropping off humanitarian aid supplies in the village of Zuhari April 29.

The village, which lies southeast of Balad, has around 300 people and lacks clean water, medical supplies, and consistent electricity.

“This was a great opportunity to show the people of Zuhari that we truly care for their well-being. I think that by working together, the Iraqi and U.S. Soldiers made a huge difference for some really great people during this mission,” said Capt. Adalberto Rodriguez, battery commander for Alpha Battery, 2-320th FAR.

During the HA mission, IA and US Soldiers handed out hundreds of shoes, shirts, pants, hygiene and sanitary items, schoolbooks, book bags, and soccer balls, as well as food and water for the children. Also, medics from the 2-320th FAR were on hand to give much needed medical attention to the people of Zuhari.

“It’s one of our priorities to do as many of these HA drops as we can while we are deployed; these types of operations have a great impact on the local community,” said Rodriguez.

Fostering good relations between Coalition Forces, Iraqi Security Forces, and the local populace is vital in the battle for democracy in Iraq, and Rodriguez believes HA missions are an imperative component to winning this war.

“The more times we can do this kind of thing, the more we build confidence between the people and their government. This is becoming more of an Iraqi-led type of operation, and that’s what we want,” said Rodriguez.

Fluffy friends make impression on LSAA

by Spc. Charlotte Martinez

Anaconda Times staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – Soldiers everywhere have them. They come in all shapes, sizes, colors and they all have a different meaning behind them. Some Soldiers get them from family members or friends, while others get them to be a new addition to their unit.

Stuffed animals are a unique part of deployments, and believe it or not, some are held in very high regard. The 1203rd Engineer Battalion has one such ‘mascot’ for their recovery team and maintenance section.

Mr. Chicken, as he is called by the Soldiers, was given to Chief Warrant Officer Jeff Martin, who is a maintenance technician for the battalion, by Spc. Terry

Black a member of the 1203rd, who got the chicken from a box in the chaplain’s office.

From there, the rubber chicken was glued to a magnet and now rides on the front of Martin’s vehicle, which is the lead vehicle in the 1203rd’s recovery team convoys.

“The chicken has been with us since around Easter and rides with us every mission we go on,” said Martin.

To the members of the team, the chicken has both a good and bad luck charm to it.

“Whenever the chicken is on the front of Chief’s vehicle, we know for sure we are going on a mission that day, even if there is not one planned, it happens somehow,” said Spc. John Bailey, who is a combat recovery wrecker driver and welder for the 1203rd. “The chicken normally rides on the inside of the truck, and if that’s the case, it is going to be an okay mission.”

According to Martin, the chicken has even located an improvised explosive device while out on a mission with the Soldiers.

“He was on the front of the truck when we discovered the IED,” said Martin.

Recently, the chicken was held hostage by the “Motor pool Mafia,” who were holding the chicken ransom for a pizza party, volleyball game and extra time off from Martin.

Martin said he received numerous pictures of the chicken tied up, gagged and put in numerous torturous places, for example, underneath a truck tire.

Martin said he would look for the chicken during the unit’s physical fitness time, where they would run extra distance just to look for the chicken, in hopes the

mafia would return it safely.

After several failed attempts, Martin’s chicken was finally returned sometime April 24, though the investigation is still pending, joked Martin.

Martin said he is happy to have the chicken returned to him and it has been placed on his vehicle where it belongs and has already gone back to completing missions with the 1203rd.

Believe it or not, Martin’s chicken is not the only bird on LSA Anaconda.

Capt. Penny Zamora, a public affairs officer with the 215th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, carries around a stuffed eagle which represents the Heritage Christian School, where she is the Director of Transportation.

Zamora said Mr. Eagle was given to her by the students of Heritage Christian School and has followed her everywhere since her deployment started.

The eagle has been to New Jersey, Kuwait and now Iraq, where he has met several dignitaries and had several photo opportunities with them, said Zamora.

“Mr. Eagle has had its picture taken with people such as Gen. Petraeus, the Vice President of the United States and Toby Keith. I just want to show the kids of Heritage that I think of them daily and I want them to be a part of a very unique experience,” Zamora said. “It puts a different perspective on Iraq, as well as makes a great ice breaker.”

“It’s really funny when you ask someone to hold a stuffed eagle and take a picture with it,” said Zamora, “I have gotten positive reactions every time, and so far, everyone wants to take a picture with Mr. Eagle.”



Photo by Spc. Charlotte Martinez

“Mr. Chicken” is tied up during his capture by the “Motor Pool Mafia”. He has since been returned, however, the ‘investigation’ of his disappearance is still pending.

Zamora said she posts all the pictures of the eagle on her blog and is very proud to see all the people he has made friends with. She said it will make great memories, not only for her, but for the students.

“The students, staff and faculty at Heritage have been very supportive of my coming to Iraq and all of my adventures here,” she said. “Mr. Eagle’s travels bring Iraq and the stellar accomplishments and sacrifices of our great American Soldiers closer to

home. As General Petraeus masterfully orchestrates the rebuilding of this nation to bring “Iraq Back,” perhaps the students of HCS can follow this historic journey through Mr. Eagle.”

Not only do the Soldiers of LSA Anaconda get the Iraq experience, but so do some of their ‘fluffy friends’ who have come along for the ride. These are just two of many, but every friend has its own story to tell, just like every Soldier.

Peace, Prosperity, Poultry in Hawr Rajab

by Sgt. David Turner

2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div.

FORWARD OPERATING BASE KALSU, Iraq - Two Iraqi poultry farmers received 3,000 chicks each April 27 in a bid to jump-start their industry in Hawr Rajab, a rural community south of Baghdad.

The farmers, Mohammed Hussein and Amman Kameers, accepted the chicks from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division and the Baghdad-7 embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team.

“It’s meant as a start-up packet,” said Mike Stevens, the ePRT agriculture adviser. “It’s just to cut back on their input costs so they can make a profit and become self-sustaining.”

Poultry farming in Hawr Rajab, once a thriving industry, suffered at the hands of insurgents. Stevens said insurgents came to the area and stole chickens and destroyed chicken coops as a way to threaten the farmers.

“We had a lot of losses,” said Sheikh Majid Wiese, chairman of the local farmers union. “Since we started

working with the (Sons of Iraq) and coalition forces, we’ve gotten rid of those insurgents. Now we’re gearing toward agriculture.”

Distributing chicks to farmers is just one part of the program, said Stevens. In the coming months, the 2nd BCT and the ePRT will distribute feed and more than 12,000 egg-laying chicks to Hawr Rajab farmers. They are also working to secure funds to complete refurbishment of the al-Ra’ad Poultry processing plant in Hawr Rajab, which could provide much-needed jobs to the region.

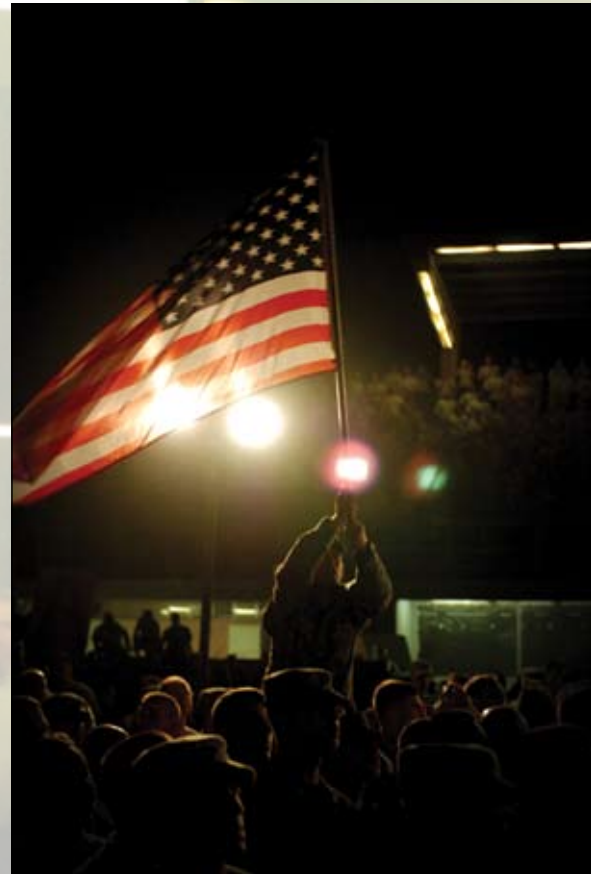
Increased capacity in poultry farming is intended to have a trickle-down effect in the local economy, Stevens said. Hatcheries in Baghdad will be able to sell more chicks to farmers, who in turn can supply more poultry products to local markets.

“Providing these chicks will help to increase our capacity about 25 percent,” said Raad Abd Jalel Rashed, a poultry representative of the farmers union. “If we can get up to 50 percent, we will be able to be on our own and not need any assistance from anybody else.”



Photo by Sgt. David Turner

First Lt. Michael Falk, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, currently attached to 2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., rescues a chick while poultry farmers load 6,000 of them onto trucks in Hawr Rajab, April 27.



An American Soldier waves the American flag during Toby Keith's hit tribute song, "American Soldier."

Toby, from Page 1

Keith performed many of his well known songs, including "I love this Bar," "Who's Your Daddy," "Whiskey Girl," "Beer for my Horses," "I Wanna Talk about Me," and many other favorites.

Keith also sang his the military favorite, "American Soldier," which erupted the crowd in cheers.

"I never wrote anything (servicemember related) until 9-11 and I knew that all of our service people would be going overseas to seek justice for the American people that died in 9-11," Keith said. "So I wrote 'Courtesy of the Red, White and Blue.'"

"After coming over here that first year," Keith said of his first performance for troops overseas, "I was inspired to write 'American Soldier.'" Keith said the "Soldier's song, 'American Soldier,'" is a tribute to the men and women he saw while he was over here.

"My father was in the Army, so I've always had a great amount of respect for all veterans, but I've got a real fondness in my heart for the Army," Keith said.

Keith described "Courtesy" as a gung-ho, moral-type song to battle march with and succeed in the tasks in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"You see the (Soldiers) on (television), they have their helmet on, they have their battle rattle on, all their gear. They look like a number and a name," he said. "When they come back (to the states) and they take all that off, you see they're just working people. They go back and teach school and work as electricians and post office (personnel) and stuff like that. So it inspired me to write a tribute to them."

According to Keith, some of the people back home don't completely understand what a Soldier is.

"They're warriors and they have a tremendous love of country," he said, "and the direction the country needs to go in and protecting what their forefathers have fought for and all I see is a warrior when I see these (Soldiers) that are very patriotic."

Keith said he plans on returning to Iraq and Afghanistan as long as there are troops here. He also encourages other performers to follow his lead. He and his crew try to dedicate two weeks a year to perform wherever the troops are.

"(We dedicate ourselves) to really go out into the forward bases and try to set an example for the other entertainers and the world," Keith said. "If Toby will go there and live through it and make it back, maybe other



entertainers will visit some green zones; it'll kind of break them in and get them over here."

Keith said he tries to set a benchmark and an example for others to at least get them to visit hospitals or work their way to going out to the green zones. He said it's a learning experience.

Keith's performance ended with Soldiers rocking the vehicles and honking the horns until he came back and did one last song as an encore. Couch even came back and thanked Keith for giving a great show.

Keith said he loves touring overseas to Iraq and Afghanistan because he gets to see and do things that a typical civilian would not get to do. He said he's been to Balad approximately three times, Fallujah three or four times, Baghdad six or seven times, Tikrit and Mosul as well as in Afghanistan to Kandahar and Bagram, several times each.

"Though I have been so many times, I stay in the same place and sometimes in the same room I was in last time I was there," he said. "I still learn something every hour that I didn't know. I talk to 50 or 60 high ranking generals and I ask lots of questions, they expect me to."

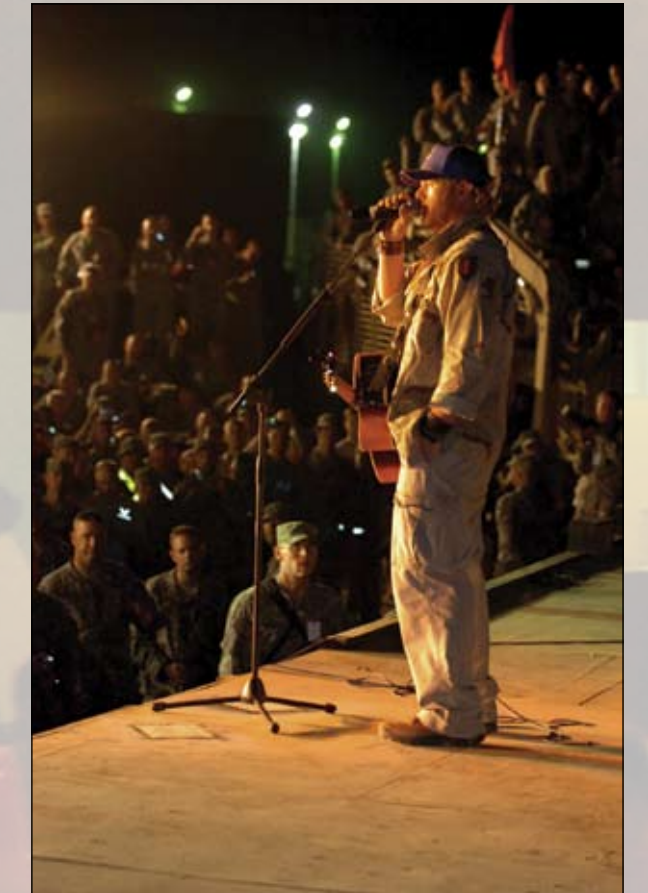
Keith said those generals give him great answers and supply him with the facts he uses to take back to the states to try and disarm the media's negative outlooks.

Keith said he also enjoys getting to fly in everything from a Blackhawk to a C-17 and shooting weapons at different forward operating bases, depending on how remote they are.

"I have fired everything from a .50 caliber machine gun to launch mortars in test ranges and do stuff that you can't do anywhere except here," Keith said. "It's a great adventure for us."

Even with hours of waiting through the dust storms and show cancellations on other bases, Keith still managed to put on what some Soldiers have called "one of the best performances here." The Big Dog Daddy said he comes overseas out of the love in his heart for Soldiers.

"(Servicemembers) can make this kind of money anywhere," Keith said. "But they're here for all the right reasons. So when I see them, I see a hard working person that has a tremendous amount of respect for (their) country, who is willing to put (their life) on the line for it."



Servicemembers watch as Toby Keith performs here during his 'Biggest and Baddest' tour.



Toby Keith performs for servicemembers at LSA Anaconda April 28 during his USO tour overseas to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Keith is presented a tee shirt from members of the 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment.



Toby Keith signs autographs for the Soldiers while at LSA Anaconda.



Pay day



Photo by Capt. Penny Zamora

AL ASAD, Iraq – An Iraqi soldier places his thumbprint on documents to show receipt of a paycheck. Soldiers of the 7th Military Transition Team have successfully trained Iraqi Soldiers of the 7th Motorized Transportation Regiment to process pay documents. Volunteer Soldiers from the 316th Expeditionary Support Command are serving as advisors in MIT teams to help transition the Iraqi Army into self-sustainment in several areas including maintenance, food service and logistics sustainment. Soldiers from the 316th lead the way in this effort.

Twins share the load for SLCR missions

by Spc. Andrea Merritt

1st SB PAO

PATROL BASE MURRAY, Iraq – In a combat environment, thoughts of family and friends back home can help keep Soldiers motivated to continue their mission.

For one Soldier, his motivation has been by his side for most of his military career.

Pfcs. Eric and Edwin Wilber, both shower, laundry, and clothing repair specialists with the 549th Quartermaster Company, 68th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, are not only brothers, but twins, who serve together.

The Orlando, Fla., natives enlisted in the Army more than a year ago. After they completed basic training and advanced individual training, they were stationed at Fort Carson, Colo., in the same unit, same company and same platoon.

Shortly after their arrival to Fort Carson, their unit, the 549th Quartermaster Co., deployed to Camp Liberty, Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“It helps to have family out here. Just to know that he’s going through the same stuff that I’m going through and can relate, it helps me out,” said Eric.

During the course of their deployment, Eric and Edwin were



Photo by Spc. Andrea Merritt

Orlando, Fla., native Edwin Wilber, a shower, laundry and clothing repair specialist with the 549th Quartermaster Company, 68th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, folds clothes April 1. Edwin is part of the SLCR team at Iskandariyah, and his twin brother Eric, who is also a shower, laundry and clothing repair specialist with the 549th Quartermaster Co., 68th CSSB, is based at Patrol Base Murray.

separated and sent to support shower, laundry and clothing repair missions in different areas that did not have shower or laundry facilities.

The 68th CSSB has SLCR teams in eight different locations in Iraq that service thousands of Soldiers in the Multi-National Division – Baghdad and Multi-National Division – Central area of operations.

While Eric was sent to support the SLCR mission at Patrol Base

Murray, Edwin was sent to Iskandariyah.

“It was a really emotional time in my life. I had never been separated from my brother. I always had him with me,” Eric said.

Although the separation was a bit hard at first, Eric has grown to see a bright side to the situation.

“Honestly, I think it’s better because it helped me grow as an individual,” said Eric. “I can finally be identified as a person and not just as a twin.”

Success: Not Just a big-fish tale

by Sgt. David Turner

2nd BCT, 3rd Inf. Div.

FORWARD OPERATING BASE KALSU, Iraq - Members of the Baghdad-7 embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team (e-PRT) visited a fish farm south of Baghdad April 26, to assess progress in its development.

The farmer, Abdul Jabar Abid Kasim, received a \$2,500 grant from the ePRT to improve production on his farm, which is now showing noticeable signs of development.

Until recently, Kasim’s operation yielded just enough fish to feed his family and others in the community. Now he’s looking forward to selling his fish in commercial markets and growing his operation.

The micro-grant provided ready cash for Kasim to repair his water pump and buy expensive, high-protein feed, which has already paid dividends in larger, healthier fish, said Capt. Christopher Flores, ePRT fish farm advisor and personnel-actions officer for 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

vision.

“It’s taken off a year of overhead for him,” said Flores, whose passion for recreational fishing led him to work with the ePRT.

“Fishing is all science,” Flores added. “It’s been my number-one passion since I was a kid, so I know all about fish farming and how they grow.”

Kasim’s farm lies in the al-Buaytha loop of the Tigris River, an area with a long history of fish farming. Currently, many farms do not produce enough fish to make it a commercially robust business. However, with increased involvement in the local agricultural union and the assistance of micro grants, some farmers are getting the help they need to grow.

Nineteen fish farms in the area have received one-time ePRT grants so far; most of them received the maximum of \$2,500. Farmers like Kasim are identified to receive grants by their local representative in the agricultural union.

“He understands this is a one-time micro grant,” Flores said. “He said if he does well

enough he should have enough to buy another pond.”

With this year’s first harvest, Kasim plans to sell 1,500 kilograms of his carp to the Baghdad market. He then intends to use profits to buy a better pump to improve water circulation, which makes for healthier, faster growing fish.

In addition to improving his yield, Flores said Kasim’s real success is in how he did it by working with his local agricultural union.

“He was able to convey his needs to his local union, which is Iraqi-led, and that union was able to work with the ePRT,” he said. “The process was there. An Iraqi helped another Iraqi. It’s boosting his confidence in his government if he can get something done with his local union.”

The payoff for Flores was in visiting the farm to check progress and finding a happier farmer.

“He was happy to see us,” he said. “He invited us to stay and wanted to cook lunch for us.”

And what was for lunch? Fresh fish, of course.



Photo by Courtesy Photo

Capt. Christopher Flores, ePRT fish farm advisor, holds a 45-day old carp from a fish farm in al-Buaytha April 26. An ePRT micro grant enabled the farmer to buy fish from a Baghdad hatchery to improve his farming capacity.

Recruiter rides

by Staff Sgt. Les Newport

76 Infantry Brigade Combat Team

TIKRIT, Iraq - Staff Sgt. Derek Olson, 27, of Worthington, Ind., is a squad leader in Alpha Co., Task Force 151, a unit of the Indiana National Guard’s 76th Infantry Brigade Combat Team. The platoon conducts convoy security missions in northern Iraq from Contingency Operating Base Speicher near Tikrit, Iraq.

Olsen and his squad had a familiar face on a recent mission, 1st Lt. Andrew Wood, 32, Coal City, Ind., who is the executive officer of Alpha Co., and is ironically the reason most of them are serving in the military.

“It’s not every day your recruiter gets to be a part of a combat mission with you,” said Olsen.

As the unit waited for a movement order in a COB Speicher convoy staging area, Wood smiled and pointed to Soldier after Soldier that he recruited.

“I was recruiting Spc. (Justin) Keller’s girlfriend at the time and he came in with her to see what she was getting into,” said Wood. “He said he would never join.”

Wood said Keller’s girlfriend, Chasity, who is now Keller’s wife, didn’t join. But he felt confident that Keller was cut out for the National Guard.

It was Keller’s turn to smile as Wood

recounted how it took some time to recruit him. It’s evident that all the Soldiers are comfortable with their decisions.

“These guy’s are all friends and a lot of them went to high school together; I even went to high school with some of them,” said Wood.

The unit is armored in the small Indiana town of Linton, and Wood said recruiting has never been particularly difficult, evidenced by the Indiana National Guard’s nation-leading recruiting efforts over the last several years.

“I think there’s a lot of talk about how Americans take things for granted, but I give them more credit than that,” said Wood. “These guys don’t take anything for granted. They are some of the best people in the world, and the National Guard is their way of giving back.”

Wood said he was not sure if the casual observer would notice how close-knit the unit is, but said if they spent any time with them, they would soon learn.

“It’s kinda the culture the unit has, even new guys are accepted pretty quickly,” said Wood. “There are no clicks. There’s no time for that.”

Wood expects this deployment to bring the same results prior deployments have brought, a closeness that builds on the friendships already there and shared experiences that will last, in Woods’ words, a lifetime.



Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini

Spc. Shane Babcock, Bravo Company, 76th IBCT, and local nationals place a broken workout bench on to a semi truck during the “kick it to the curb” campaign to celebrate Earth Day, April 22. The event was to ensure Anaconda stays as trash free as possible.

Anaconda celebrates Earth Day by Kicking trash to the curb

by Spc. Jay Venturini

Anaconda Times staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – Everyone knows the saying, “leave a place better than how you found it.” However, some Soldiers put those words to action as they implemented the “kick it to the curb,” campaign to celebrate Earth Day, April 22.

With kick it to the curb, the residents here were urged to put all the broken or damaged items from their offices and rooms on Anaconda’s road curbs, to be picked up and properly disposed.

“The response was massive,” said Capt. Lynn Thompson, 76th Infantry Brigade Combat Team garbage officer in charge. “We have filled more than 22 (light medium tactical vehicles) and four semi trucks with junk.”

More than 70 people took part in the event, including 50 local nationals. It took more than two full working days to collect all the trash. The trash included everything from broken wall lockers and desks to electrical equipment.

While a lot of the items collected will simply be destroyed, many items such as metal or wood can be sold or recycled. Military items collected will be fixed and put

back into the supply system. Residents are welcome to go to the burn pit and take any wood that is available.

Looking forward, Thompson encourages the residents of Anaconda to continue the good work and keep the trash where it belongs in the dumpsters.

“We have a good system on Anaconda,” said Thompson. “Soldiers just need to remember that the dumpsters are only intended for normal, everyday trash, not broken furniture.”

It is the individual units’ responsibility to dispose of larger items by taking them to the burn pit or other appropriate locations on post.

“I am more than willing to teach units the proper procedures to get rid of their junk,” said Thompson. “It really isn’t that hard.”

Despite Earth Day coming just once a year, the residents here are asked to do their part to keep Anaconda as clean and trash free as possible, because every day is Earth Day.

Earth Day is held annually around the world during springtime. It is a tradition intended to inspire awareness of and appreciation for the Earth’s environment founded by peace activist John McConnell in 1969.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Les Newport

1st Lt. Andrew Wood (left) and Staff Sgt. Derek Olsen (right) discuss details of a logistical convoy security mission with Spc. Justin Keller, 26, Crane, Ind.. The Indiana National Guard Soldiers are members of the 76th Infantry Brigade Combat Team and completing the remainder of a year-long deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Do you have a story idea?

Contact the Anaconda Times

anaconda.times@iraq.centcom.mil

TF Troy keep Soldiers up to speed

by Staff Sgt. Les Newport
76 Infantry Brigade Combat Team

LSA Anaconda, Iraq- Soldiers of the 293rd Infantry Battalion know the supply routes of northern Iraq as well as anybody. The Indiana National Guard unit has taken on a lion's share of convoy security missions out of Logistical Support Area Anaconda. But according to Capt. Shaun Dwyer, Delta Company, 293rd Inf. Bn., there is always more to learn.

"If we're not out running missions then we're training, (rehearsing) evacuating casualties, and like we're doing today, training for IEDs," said Dwyer.

Dwyer and several other members of the battalion attended a three day master course at Anaconda's Sgt. Germaine L. Debro IED training lane conducted by Task Force Troy, a multi-national, multi-service task force responsible for gathering intelligence on IEDs and getting it to those who need it most.

Chief Petty Officer Matthew Broderon has been assigned to Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal for more than eight years and is a member of Task Force Troy mobile training team. Broderon said the highest learning curve occurs when students conduct team on team training.

"The big thing (is) to get them to think more like the enemy for

placement," said Borderson, "so next time they go out on a route they are thinking like the enemy."

Borderson said his team also provides the latest trends of insurgent behaviors, and the expectation is that units will develop their own procedures for responding to threats.

"To get them to see the indicators of a possible IED and stop the convoy before they actually hit one-that's our ultimate goal," said Borderson.

The point is not lost on Dwyer, who said it will be his job to take what he learns from Task Force Troy back to his unit. Installations provide training areas, aides and intelligence briefings to give units the greatest chance of completing security missions successfully.

"Everday the enemy is evolving, changing their tactics," said Dwyer "(Task Force Troy) is getting us every little tidbit of information and we're passing it down."

But Borderson warns the greatest risk is complacency. "It's human nature to be comfortable, comfortable in your surroundings, to train the same time everyday, to eat the same time everyday," said Broderon. "It's common sense and awareness. If a place 'smells' bad, then they need to react."



Photo by Staff Sgt. Les Newport

Sgt. Michael Buck of D Co., 293rd Inf. Bn. checks communications equipment prior to navigating an IED reaction course at the Sgt. Germaine L. Debro IED training lane here. Buck is a member of a convoy security team and will take what he has learned from Task Force Troy back to his unit.

Another challenge for trainers is to keep information relevant while keeping it safeguarded. After the training, Borderson took the time to review video tape that had been collected during the ex-

ercises to ensure that no sensitive information would be inadvertently disclosed.

Staff Sgt. Dustin Gothrup, also a student in the IED class, said the information was valuable and

needed to be passed down, but carefully.

"The more we know about them, the better," said Gothrup, "but we don't want them to know what we know."

Counselors learn to ease mental burden for their Soldiers

by Spc. Jay Venturini

Anaconda Times staff

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – Being in a combat environment for long periods of time will take its toll on anyone. However, when the stresses become more than a person can handle, many Soldiers are afraid to go to the people who can help ease their burden.

Because of this, mental health personnel here offered a class for people who may encounter this situation often, such as chaplains, to show them how to properly evaluate and react to these type situations.

"Some of these Soldiers are on their third, fourth, or even fifth deployment over here; that isn't easy on anyone," said Capt. Tammy Phipps, 785th Medical Company occupational therapist. "This class gives techniques to help the Soldiers work through their situations and then get them back in the fight."

The class is relatively new, having only three iterations thus far. Phipps encourages anyone who is in a counselor role to take the course.

"I highly recommend taking the class, especially for chaplains and medics," said Phipps. "How you treat an individual Sol-

dier's situation may be the difference between him becoming a danger to himself and others."

At many of the outlying forward operating bases, these counselors may be the only mental health resource available.

However, Phipps and others make routine trips out to those FOBs, and are able to get to them quickly in emergency situations.

"We make a monthly trip to FOBs like O'Ryan and Paliwoda and offer our services," said Phipps. "However, when an emergency arises we can be out to the location within 24 hours."

With this war moving past the five year point, more and more Soldiers have and will continue to serve multiple deployments, which puts more strain on them not only as Soldiers, but their overall being as well. It is vital to address these stressors, and resolve them so the Soldiers can be fully mission capable.

"You wouldn't send a Soldier out on a mission with a broken arm. A Soldier that has things in his mind that will distract his attention from the mission is the same thing," said Phipps. "It is so important to have these Soldiers fully mission ready, both physically and mentally."

Anaconda raft race



Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – Teams battle for position during the Anaconda Raft Race at the outdoor pool, April 27. More than 40 teams participated in the event after crafting their rafts using only water bottles, parachute cord and duct tape.

MESSAGES FROM HOME



To CPT David W. Brines,
Happy Birthday My Lovey Dovey!!!!
hehe... We miss you and love you so much!!!
Kisses from home.
Love Desi, Lexi, Mindi and Dixie

CW4 Bailie: Time's almost up, baby. We miss you and love you. Get home soon!
Jen, Nick, Hutch & Dani

I would like to give a shout out to all the troops who are putting their life on the line to make mine and my family's better. Most of all I would like to give a shout out to my cousin Ida Belinda Shavers! I miss you girl! Looking forward to your safe return home.
Angelique Berry

James Dansby,
Know that you're in our prayers! We're awaiting your safe return. God bless & take care. --The Castano Family



We love you, Jonathan Goode/Daddy!! You are our hero! We look forward to being a family again!! Love the GG's

Messages From Home

Show your Soldier how much you miss them by sending messages, pictures, or poems in the Anaconda Times newspaper.

Contact the 316th Public Affairs Office to print your message.

E-mail Anaconda.Times@iraq.centcom.mil

ASIAN PACIFIC HERITAGE MONTH 5K FUN RUN

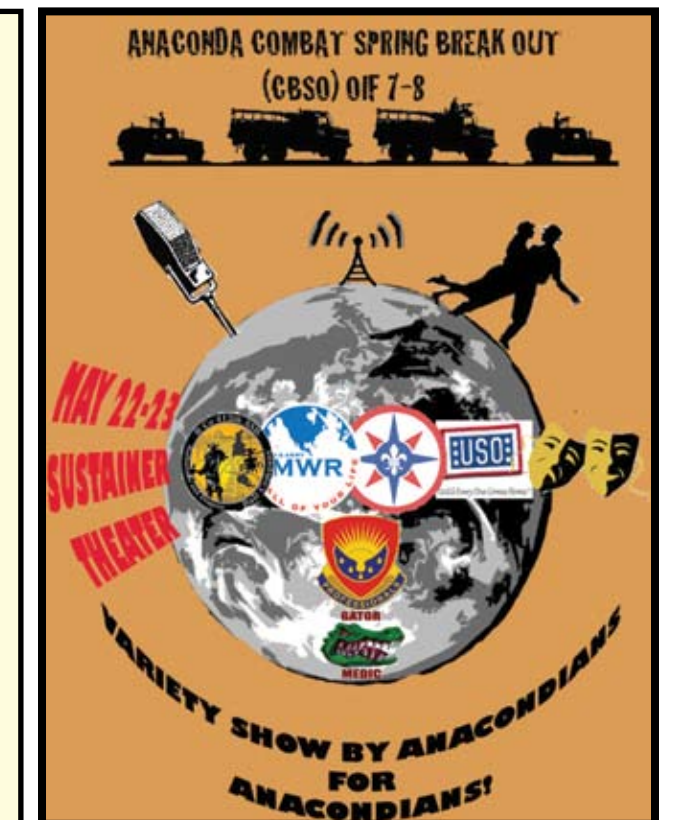
When: May 18, 2008
Time: 6 a.m.

Where: Holt Stadium

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CPT MCNUTT christopher.mcnett@iraq.centcom.mil



America's warrior

A snapshot of servicemembers in the Global War on Terrorism



Spc. Jeffery Winston Barnes

Full name and rank: Spc. Jeffery Winston Barnes.

Unit: 54th Quarter Master Company.

Job Title: 92 Mike (Mortuary Affairs).

Time in service: 2 years.

Age: 30.

Hometown: Houston, Texas.

Pastimes (Hobbies): Poetry, working out, reading and art.

Lesson Learned: Enjoy everyday as

The one thing I would change about the Army: It's system of selecting leaders.

The one thing I think the Army got right: Benefits.

What makes a good Soldier: Ambition, determination and strong tolerance.

What makes a good leader? The abilities to be both a good follower, and leader.

Unusual fact about you: I stay motivated in life.

Motivations in life: My health, wife, step daughter, mother and grandparents.

Goals: Happiness and self goal achievement.

Hardest part of my job here: Trying to keep my younger teammates flying straight.

Best part of my life: I appreciate life as well as its ups and down.

if it was your last one.

Why I joined the military: To prove to myself that I could go above and beyond, and better myself.

ANACONDA ACTIVITIES

INDOOR POOL
Aqua Training: Tuesday and Thursday- 7:45 p.m.

EAST FITNESS CENTER
Basketball League: Monday-Friday - 7 p.m.
Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu: Monday, Wednesday, Friday - 8 p.m.
Kyu Kyu Kempo: Sunday- 2 p.m.
Modern Army combatives: Tuesday and Thursday- 8:30 p.m.
Open court volleyball: Sunday- 6 p.m.
Shotokan Karate Do: Thursday- 6:45 p.m., Saturday- 8:30 p.m. and Sunday- 5:30 p.m.
Soo Bahk Do: 6 p.m.
Step Aerobics: Monday, Wednesday, Friday -

5:30 p.m.
Wrestling & physical fitness class: Tuesday- 6 p.m. and Saturday- 7 p.m.
Swing dance: Sunday- 7:30 p.m.

EAST RECREATION CENTER
8-ball tourney: Monday- 3 p.m. and 8 p.m.
9-ball tournament: Wednesday- 3 p.m. and 8 p.m.
Game Console Tourney: Thursday- 8 p.m.
Country Dance Class: Thursday- 7 p.m.
Dominoes: Friday- 8 p.m.
Karaoke: Monday- 8 p.m.
Model building: Sunday- 1 p.m.
Poetry/ open mic: Sunday- 7:30 p.m.

Poker tourney: Sunday- 6 p.m.
Salsa dance class: Saturday- 8:30 p.m.
Swing dance: Tuesday- 7p.m.
Ping pong tourney: Tuesday- 3 p.m. and 8 p.m.

WEST RECREATION CENTER
8-ball tourney: Wednesday- 1 p.m. and 8 p.m.
9-ball tournament: Monday- 1 p.m. and 8 p.m.
Dungeons & Dragons: Saturday- 8 p.m.
Friday nights in Balad: Friday- 8 p.m.
Foosball: Tuesday- 1 p.m. and 8 p.m.
Green Bean karaoke: Wednesday and Sunday-

8 p.m.
Ice Ball Tourney: Thursday- 4 p.m.
Ping pong tourney: Tuesday- 1 p.m. and 8 p.m.
Salsa dance class: Thursday- 8:30 p.m.
Spades, Chess and Dominoes: Friday - 1 p.m.
Texas hold 'em: Saturday- 1 p.m. and 8 p.m.
Game Counsel Tourney: Thursday- 1 p.m. and 8 p.m.

WEST FITNESS CENTER
3-on-3 basketball tourney: Saturday- 7:30 p.m.
6-on-6 volleyball tourney: Friday- 7 p.m.
Aerobics: Monday, Wednesday, Friday- 7 p.m.
Body by Midgett Toning Class: Tuesday, Thursday - 7 p.m.
Dodge ball Game: Tuesday- 7:30 p.m.
Furman's Martial Arts:

Monday, Wednesday, Sunday- 1 p.m.
Gaston's Self-Defense Class: Friday, Saturday- 7 p.m.
Open court basketball: Thursday- 7 p.m.
Open court soccer: Monday, Wednesday - 7 p.m.
Zingano Brazilian Jui Jitsu: Tuesday, Thursday- 8:30 p.m.

CIRCUIT GYM
Floor hockey: Monday, Wednesday, Friday - 8 p.m.



STUPID STATE LAWS

Ever wonder just how dumb things can be? Does your state have dumb laws? Read on and find out. The next few weeks, the Anaconda Times will have a series of dumb and stupid laws for each state.

Many of the laws have been verified, but many have been taken from sources which do not include law citations. The laws cited below have been taken from news groups, web sites and city governments. Remember, something had to have happened to get these laws passed. Some laws have been repealed, but not all; some are still on the books.

Oklahoma

- Females are forbidden from doing their own hair without being licensed by the state.
- Oklahoma will not tolerate anyone taking a bite out of another's hamburger.

Oregon

- One may not bathe without wearing "suitable clothing," i.e., that which covers one's body from neck to knee.
- Canned corn is not to be used as bait for fishing.

Pennsylvania

- You may not sing in the bathtub.
- Ministers are forbidden from performing marriages when either the bride or groom is drunk.

Rhode Island

- Any marriage where either of the parties is an idiot or lunatic is null and void. -SECTION 11-40-1.
- It is considered an offense to throw pickle juice on a trolley.

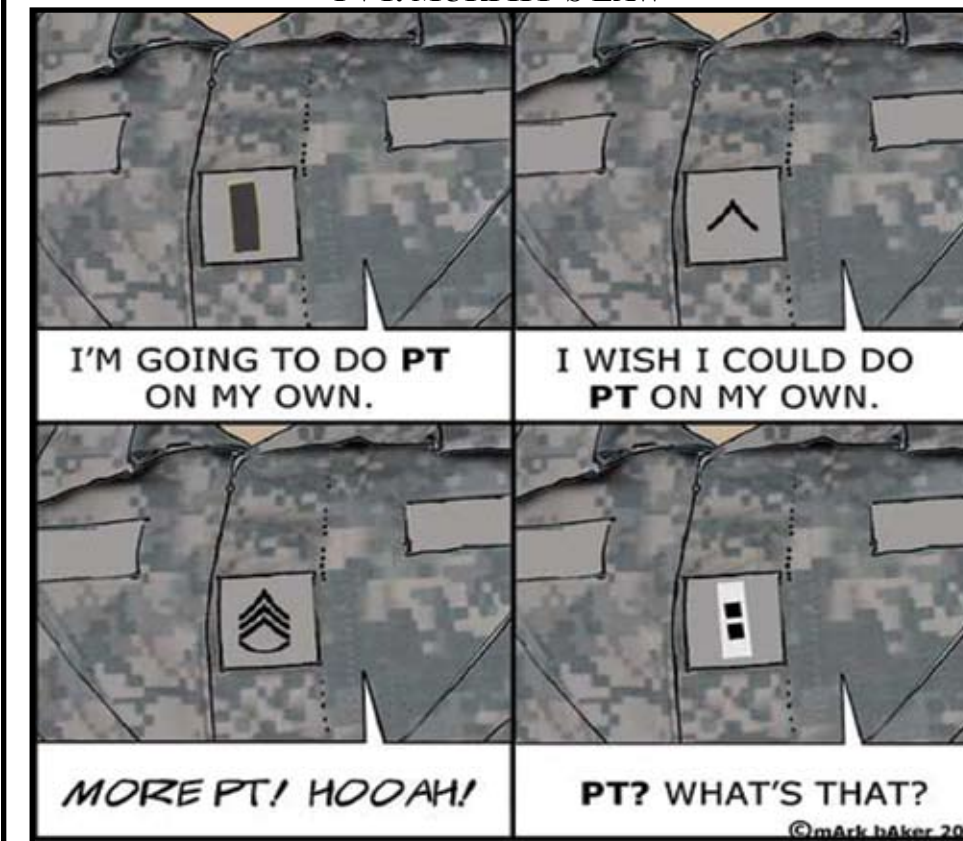
South Carolina

- Fortune tellers are required to obtain a special permit from the state.
- By law, if a man promises to marry an unmarried woman, the marriage must take place.

South Dakota

- Movies that show police officers being struck, beaten, or treated in an offensive manner are forbidden.
- No horses are allowed into Fountain Inn unless they are wearing pants.

PVT. MURPHY'S LAW



SUSTAINER REEL TIME THEATER

Movie Times

- Wednesday, April 7
5 p.m. Shutter
8 p.m. Definitely, Maybe
- Thursday, May 8
5 p.m. Never Back Down
8 p.m. Forgetting Sara Marshall
- Friday, May 9
2 p.m. Penelope
5 p.m. Drillbit Taylor
8 p.m. Iron Man
- Saturday, May 10
2 p.m. Meet the Brown's
5 p.m. Iron Man
8 p.m. Drillbit Taylor
- Sunday, May 11
2 p.m. Iron Man
5 p.m. Penelope
8 p.m. Meet the Bown's
- Monday, May 12
5 p.m. Penelope
8 p.m. Iron Man
- Tuesday, May 13
5 p.m. Iron Man
8 p.m. Drillbit Taylor

(Schedule is subject to change)

Movies Coming Soon

- Leatherheads
- Superhero
- Speed Racer
- Run Fat Boy Run

Movie Synopsis

Meet the Brown's



Prolific playwright Tyler Perry adapts his popular stage play of the same name in this family-oriented comedy concerning a desperate mother who connects with the family she never knew. Brenda is a single Chicago mother of three who has been struggling for years to keep her kids off of the streets. Suddenly let go from her job with no warning of, the eternally optimistic mother begins to experience a suffocating sense of hopelessness for the very first time in her life. When Brenda receives a death notice claiming that the father she has never met has passed away, she quickly gathers up the kids and sets out for Georgia to attend the funeral. Upon arriving in the Deep South, the once fretful mother is pleasantly surprised to discover that there is a whole side of the family she never knew existed. A crass but good-natured clan that welcomes Brenda and her children with open arms the Browns' lazy summer afternoons and frequent trips to the county fair offer a much-needed contrast to the stress of surviving in inner city Chicago.

Iron Man



From Marvel Studios and Paramount Pictures comes Iron Man, an action-packed take on the tale of wealthy philanthropist Tony Stark (Robert Downey Jr.), who develops an invulnerable robotic suit to fight the throes of evil. In addition to being filthy rich, billionaire industrialist Tony Stark is also a genius inventor. When Stark is kidnapped and forced to build a diabolical weapon, he instead uses his intelligence and ingenuity to construct an indestructible suit of armor and escape his captors. Once free, Stark discovers a deadly conspiracy that could destabilize the entire globe, and dons his powerful new suit on a mission to stop the villains and save the world.

Penelope



A kindly aristocrat suffering from an unsightly curse breaks free from her extravagant, prison-like estate to seek adventure and discover her true self in a romantic, modern-day fairy tale directed by Mark Palansky and starring Christina Ricci, James McAvoy, Peter Dinklage, and Reese Witherspoon. Generations ago, a witch placed a curse on the Wilhelm family that would result in the next girl being born into the clan having a porcine snout -- and now young Penelope (Ricci) has fallen victim to the vengeful hag's unsightly grudge. When tabloid reporter Lemmon (Dinklage) runs a misleadingly frightening photograph of the kind-hearted Penelope, her parents, Jessica (Catherine O'Hara) and Franklin (Richard E. Grant), lock the girl away in a sprawling mansion. Though it is said that the curse can be lifted if a man of Penelope's status takes her hand in marriage, every man who lays eyes on the girl takes flight at first sight, never to return -- until the arrival of Max (McAvoy), that is. An unrepentant gambler with a heavy heart and an ulterior motive for meeting Penelope.

Drillbit Taylor



Ryan, Wade and Emmit attend their first day at high school, and they're pumped until they meet up with Filkins, a school bully who comes off like a little Hannibal Lecter. Before they become completely engulfed in Filkins' reign of terror, they seek out some protection by placing an ad in Soldier of Fortune magazine. Their best response and the cheapest comes from Drillbit Taylor (Owen Wilson), a down-on-his-luck soldier of fortune who lives a homeless--he likes to say home-free--existence on the beach. He enrolls them in some physical and mental training.

Upcoming sports on AFN

Wednesday 5/7/08

NHL: playoffs Philadelphia @ Montreal game 7 (if necessary) live 2:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
NBA: playoffs second round live 2:00 a.m. AFN/sports
NBA: playoffs second round live 4:30 a.m. AFN/sports
NHL: playoffs Dallas @ San Jose game 7 (if necessary) live 5:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
MLB: Milwaukee @ Florida replay 10:00 a.m. AFN/sports
MLB: Chicago Cubs @ Cincinnati live 7:30 p.m. AFN/sports

Thursday 5/8/08

NHL: playoffs (if necessary) live 2:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
NBA: playoffs second round live 2:00 a.m. AFN/sports
NBA: playoffs second round live 4:30 a.m. AFN/sports
MLB: Texas @ Seattle live 5:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
MLB: Cleveland @ New York Yankees replay 10:00 a.m. AFN/sports

Friday 5/9/08

MLS: Chicago @ DC United live 2:30 a.m. AFN/xtra
NBA: playoffs second round live 3:00 a.m. AFN/sports
NBA: playoffs second round live 5:30 a.m. AFN/sports
MLB: Washington @ Houston replay 3:00 p.m. AFN/sports
PGA: Players Championship second round live 8:00 p.m. AFN/sports

Saturday 5/10/08

NHL: conference finals live 2:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
NASCAR: Nationwide Series: Diamond Hill Plywood 200 live 2:30 a.m. AFN/xtra
NBA: playoffs second round live 3:00 a.m. AFN/sports
MLB: Chicago White Sox @ Seattle live 5:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
MLB: Colorado @ San Diego live 5:00 a.m. AFN/prime
NBA: playoffs second round live 5:30 a.m. AFN/sports
MLB: Cincinnati @ New York Mets live 8:00 p.m. AFN/prime
PGA: Players Championship second round live 9:00 p.m. AFN/sports
MLB: Arizona @ Chicago Cubs live 10:30 p.m. AFN/xtra
MLB: New York Yankees @ Detroit live 11:00 p.m. AFN/prime

Sunday 5/11/08

NASCAR: Sprint Cup Series: Dodge Challenger 500 live 2:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
NHL: conference finals live 2:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
NBA: playoffs second round live 3:15 a.m. AFN/sports
NBA: playoffs second round live 6:00 a.m. AFN/sports
MLS: Colorado @ Houston replay 8:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
MLB: St. Louis @ Milwaukee replay 10:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
PGA: Players Championship third round replay 1:00 p.m. AFN/sports
AFL: Colorado @ Utah replay 1:00 p.m. AFN/xtra

AFL: New York @ Los Angeles replay 3:30 p.m. AFN/xtra
MLB: Toronto @ Cleveland live 8:00 p.m. AFN/prime
PGA: Players Championship final round live 9:00 p.m. AFN/sports; replay 1:00 p.m. AFN/sports
NBA: playoffs second round live 10:30 p.m. AFN/xtra
MLB: Philadelphia @ San Francisco live 11:00 p.m. AFN/prime

Monday 5/12/08

NHL: conference finals live 2:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
MLB: Boston @ Minnesota live 3:00 a.m. AFN/sports
MLB: Atlanta @ Pittsburgh replay 7:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
MLB: New York Yankees @ Detroit replay 10:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
MLB: Los Angeles Angels @ Tampa Bay replay 5:00 p.m. AFN/tra
TENNIS: Italian Open men's final replay 7:00 p.m. AFN/sports

Tuesday 5/13/08

NHL: conference finals live 2:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
NBA: playoffs second round live 2:00 a.m. AFN/sports
NBA: playoffs second round live 4:30 a.m. AFN/sports
MLB: Houston @ San Francisco live 5:00 a.m. AFN/xtra
MLB: Boston @ Minnesota replay 10:00 a.m. AFN/sports
AFL: Philadelphia @ Georgia replay 8:00 p.m. AFN/sports

Servicemembers take a swing at softball at LSAA



Photo by Spc. Ryan Hohman



Photo by Spc. Ryan Hohman



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Photo by Spc. Ryan Hohman

Top: Wreckers first-baseman Spc. Jeff James, a member of the 1203rd Engineer Battalion, stretches out to catch a ball to get the second out in a softball game against the Hooligans, made up of Soldiers from the Higher Headquarter Command 63rd Expeditionary Signal Battalion, May 4, at the softball field here.

Left: The Hooligans pitcher Staff Sgt. Chue Cha lobs in a pitch to make the count two balls and two strikes.

Top: The Wreckers' third-baseman Spc. Richard Batchoor stands ready for the next pitch.
Left: A servicemember with the Hooligans softball team winds up to hit a pop fly to center field.



Photo by Spc. Ryan Hohman

Top: The Wreckers short-stop Warrant Officer Ben Moore fields a ground ball in the fourth inning.
Right: The third-base coach from the Hooligans waves his runner home after a hit to the outfield



Photo by Spc. Ryan Hohman