

# AnacondaTimes

May 21, 2008

PROUDLY SERVING LSA ANACONDA



Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini

## Keeping the blood flowing

153rd Med. Det. keeps the blood banks full

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Photo by Air Force Senior Airman Eric Schloeffel

## Take a bite out of crime

Four-legged Airmen prove to be a valuable asset

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Web Image

## Celebrating Asian Pacific Americans

A look at their contributions

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Photo by Spc. Charlotte Martinez

1st Lt. Carl Kusbit, a medical consultant with Provincial Reconstruction Team- Anaconda, examines a newborn infant during a medical assessment of displaced family members May 8 in the city of Atab.

# Medical assessment keeps locals healthy

by Spc. Charlotte Martinez

Anaconda Times staff

**LSA ANACONDA, Iraq**—A medical consultant for Provincial Reconstruction Team- Anaconda, 1st Lt. Carl Kusbit, attached to the 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, traveled to the city of Atab to conduct a medical assessment on displaced family members May 8.

Kusbit said there have been approximately 20 to 30 cases of measles and typhoid outbreaks in the last three weeks and he wanted to ensure some of the outlying cities have been getting their vaccinations.

"I heard there were almost 80 people living in three huts," Kusbit said, "and my first question was, 'are there kids that haven't been

getting vaccinated?'"

Kusbit checked the children to ensure they were not only getting their vaccinations, but that they were also well nourished and otherwise healthy.

Kusbit said members of the PRT's expertise range from medical to business. Their job is to get into the Iraqi communities to teach the citizens what they need to know in order to grow their communities.

Kusbit also said he not only goes into the communities to see what the people need, but he has also been to the local hospitals to see what they need. His goal is to teach them how to use their government and their system to help themselves.

Kusbit is also currently working with the Balad hospital to see what needs to be done to

expand the hospital and its trauma center.

"We're not always going to be here," he said, "so it is important to teach the Iraqis how to go from their job field to their government to get the things that they need."

Kusbit said that while he was checking out the displaced family members, he found several pregnant women who were in generally good health.

"Other than small living spaces, health-wise, the children looked healthy and well nourished. Everyone did - from the newborn babies to the older family members," he added.

Kusbit's next task is to write a report with his findings to send to his command in Tikrit in hopes that they can get more medical support in Atab as well as surrounding areas.



Provost Marshal Office: Weekly police blotter

Week of 28 April -4 May

**The Provost Marshal Office conducted:** 178 security checks, 22 traffic stops, issued 14 DD Form 1408 Armed Forces Traffic Tickets, registered 187 vehicles on the installation, and investigated four traffic accidents. Twenty-two Common Access Cards were reported lost. Two stray rounds were found.

**The Provost Marshal Office is currently investigating:** Two GO1 violation, six larceny and two assaults.

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

Persons whose driving privileges are suspended or revoked (for a violation or an ac-



Photo by Spc. Thomas Keeler

**LSA ANACONDA**—Spc. Andrew Scardina (left), a cook with the 316th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), supervises a dining facility inspection here May 9. Soldiers with the 155th Medical Detachment, including Sgt. Daniel White (right) a preventative medicine specialist with the 155th Med. Det., perform monthly inspections of each of the dining facilities here, dining facilities.

*“The Holocaust stands as a tragedy for Europe, for the Western civilization and for the entire world.”*

Sgt. Sonia Thornhill  
3rd Sustainment Bde.

Holocaust survivors remembered

by Spc. Gaelen Lowers

3rd Sustainment Brigade

**CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq** – The 3rd Sustainment Brigade and Contingency Operating Base Q-West hosted the Holocaust Days of Remembrance program May 3, with the theme, “Remembering the Tragedy: Celebrating the Survival.”

The program opened with the American and Israeli national anthems, followed by a brief history of World War II and the Holocaust.

“There is no specific date the Holocaust began,” said Sgt. Sonia Thornhill, support operations, 3rd Sustainment Bde., and narrator for the Days of Remembrance program. “The general time period assigned to the tragedy is from 1933 to 1945.”

Thornhill continued by saying that years before any nation declared war, many Germans were already instilling fear in the Jewish population by denying them their rights as citizens and inflicting threatening laws upon them, such as the mandatory

wearing of a yellow Star of David. All Jewish people were required to sew the star on their outer layers of clothing in November 1938. Failing to wear the star meant risking death.

Despite the dark and malicious intent behind forcing Jewish people to wear the yellow Star of David, today, they use it as a symbol of hope. The star still serves as a reminder for the Jewish people.

Though the Holocaust was a devastating event, many amazing works of art and gallant people arose from the ashes of destruction and went on to make astounding contributions to the communities they made their new homes.

“The Holocaust stands as a tragedy for Europe, for the Western civilization and for the entire world,” said Thornhill. “We must remember the facts of the Holocaust and work to understand these facts. The voices of the dead and the Holocaust survivors have become a growing chorus in our time as we take up the responsibility of remembering, of teaching our children, and of bearing witness to the world.”



Photo by Spc. Gaelen Lowers

**Staff Sgt. Michele Duncan, 3rd Sustainment Brigade, lights the 3rd candle of seven representing the more than one million children slaughtered by the Nazis for the Holocaust Days of Remembrance program with the theme, “Remembering the Tragedy: Celebrating the Survival” at Contingency Operating Base Q-West May 3.**

153rd Med Det saves lives by distributing blood throughout Iraq

by Spc. Jay Venturini

Anaconda Times staff

**LSA ANACONDA, Iraq** – One thing no person can live without is blood. No where is this more apparent than for servicemembers serving here. For this reason, the Army keeps hospital and medical clinics stocked full of various blood elements.

However, because blood is constantly being used to save lives, keeping it on those shelves can be a daunting task. That is why the sole mission of the 153rd Medical Detachment is to distribute it to 24 different installations throughout Iraq.

“We have the most vital mission in country,” said Spc. Lamar Elwell, 153rd Med. Det. laboratory technician. “We ship out red blood cells, platelets and plasma all over the country to Soldiers who desperately need it. We save lives everyday.”

The 153rd’s office is manned 24 hours a day, seven days a week by personnel who are always on call for emergency shipments.

“We have to be ready for anything,” said Elwell. “Sometimes an emergency request comes in and we quickly get it ready and we load it on a Blackhawk on its way out.”

The blood is shipped from the United States to Bahrain, which is the distribution point for Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait and Africa. From Bahrain it is shipped here to be distributed throughout the country.

Before the blood is shipped, however, it goes through a battery of tests to ensure it does not contain and diseases or contaminants that would harm the recipient.

*“We owe it to the Soldiers who will get this blood to have them get it clean and free of harmful contaminants.”*

“Everything is triple checked for diseases and the donor is asked several questions pertaining to their lifestyle and habits,” said Elwell. “They get it to where they are 99.9 percent sure the blood is clean.”

The different elements of blood have strict temperature shipping guidelines, and when these are not followed, it results in the entire container being destroyed.

The platelets and plasma are shipped frozen, packed in dry ice and must stay around negative 16 degrees Celsius, while the red blood cells are packed in wet ice and must stay between one to 10 degrees Celsius.

Each shipment of blood is shipped to a different forward operating base, every individual package is inspected for leaks or cracks. If any are found, the package is destroyed due to the risk of possible contaminates.

“We have to be absolutely sure that no contaminants came in contact with the blood while in shipment or while on our shelves,” said Spc. Wyndi Mitchell, 153rd Med. Det. laboratory technician. “We owe it to the Soldiers who will get this blood to have them get it clean and free of harmful contaminants.”

With blood being an especially precious commodity in Iraq, the 153rd understands the importance of their job.

“Despite all the advancements in medical technology, it’s all useless without blood being ready,” said Elwell. “I know that through my job I have saved countless lives, and I couldn’t be prouder.”



Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini



Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini

**TOP: Spc. Michael McNaney, 153rd Medical Detachment laboratory technician, prepares red blood cells for transport by placing them into a container filled with wet ice. For red blood cells to be useable, they must stored and transported between one to 10 degrees Celsius.**

**LEFT: Spc. Wyndi Mitchell, 153rd Medical Detachment laboratory technician, scans the barcodes of a shipment of red blood cells before she ships it to another forward operating base. The 153rd ships different blood elements throughout Iraq on a daily basis.**

ANACONDA TIMES

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

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Anaconda Times is a command information newspaper in accordance with Army Regulation 360-1.

Anaconda Times is published weekly by the Stars and Stripes central office, with a circulation of 5,000 papers.

The Public Affairs Office is located on New Jersey Ave. building 4136, DSN 318-433-2154. Anaconda Times, HHC 316th ESC, APO AE 09391. Web site at www.dvidshub.net

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1/82nd Brigade Combat Team  
7th Sustainment Brigade  
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing  
20th Engineer Brigade  
55th Sustainment Brigade  
402nd Army Field Support Brigade  
507th Corps Support Group  
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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.

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 5P.M. GILBERT MEMORIAL

**LATTER DAY SAINTS-(LDS)-(MORMON)**  
SUNDAY 1 P.M. PROVIDER CHAPEL  
3:30P.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

EASRERN ORTHODOX- DEVINE LITURGY

SUNDAY 9 A.M. CHAPEL ANNEX

*\*Please note, schedule is subject to change.*



## Four-legged defenders sniff out trouble

by Air Force Senior Airman Eric Schloeffel  
506th Air Expeditionary Group

**KIRKUK REGIONAL AIR BASE, Iraq** -- Prompted by only a few words of command by his handler, military working dog Charlie sprints ahead and aggressively thrusts to attack a simulated enemy during a recent training session here.

For Charlie, a deployed German Shepherd, this attack is as large a priority as if it were a real insurgent attempting to harm coalition forces. Despite temperatures hovering close to 100 degrees, Charlie makes no bones about pushing his paws to the limit for the seemingly small reward of some praise from his handler.

"The dog sees everything he does here as a game," said Tech. Sgt. Patrick Carroll, 732nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron military working dog handler. "Even when the dog does have a big find, the dog never sees it as a work. Seeking a reward and praise from their handler is the primary reason the dogs do the work for us."

While these military working

dogs may be unable to comprehend their important contribution to the Global War on Terrorism while playing "the game," their capabilities are vital to the safety of coalition forces both inside and outside the base perimeter.

Air Force dog handlers at Kirkuk are assigned to either the 506th or 732nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadrons. Both squadrons have separate kennels and missions.

The 506th ESFS military working dog team conducts missions with the goal of protecting the more than 5,000 Coalition Force personnel who reside at the base. While working inside base confines, 506th ESFS military working dogs conduct frequent patrols and assist security forces Airmen at entry control points.

"Explosive detection is one of the main things we do with the dogs," said Staff Sgt. Kevin Nelson, a 506th ESFS military working dog trainer. "The dogs are also trained to protect, deter, identify and apprehend any unauthorized personnel or contraband. Basically, the dogs prevent anything from getting on base that

isn't supposed to be here."

The 732nd ESFS team typically works with the U.S. Army's 1st Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, during the brigade's missions outside the wire in the city of Kirkuk and in surrounding areas.

Similar to the 506th ESFS, the 732nd ESFS military working dog team is also frequently on the lookout for explosives during their missions. The team is composed of Airmen filling in-lieu of taskings, that being U.S. Army positions that were augmented to the Air Force.

"Everything we do in this capacity is outside the wire," said Carroll, who is deployed from Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii.

The 732nd ESFS team conducts a wide range of missions that include raids, cache and vehicle searches. The team's missions can last for more than 10 days outside the wire, Carroll said.

While Carroll is not new to the military working dog career field, he feels his current deployment is unlike anything he's ever seen.

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Photo by Air Force Senior Airman Eric Schloeffel

Staff Sgt. Kevin Nelson, 506th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron military working dog trainer, practices techniques with his dog Charlie during a recent training event. Air Force dog handlers at Kirkuk are assigned to either the 506th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron or 732nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron.

## Small maintenance crew keeps trucks moving

by Spc. Michele Meadows

1st Sustainment Brigade

**CAMP TAJI, Iraq** -- If you've been in Iraq for more than a day, you've noticed you can't look anywhere without seeing some sort of moving vehicle; it's a giant truck stop in the desert.

When the maintenance crew of the 297th Inland Cargo Transfer Company, a unit attached to the 41st Transportation Company, 165th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, arrived to Camp Taji seven months ago, they fell in on a large group of vehicles and equipment, many of which were broken.

Not ones to cry over spilled milk, the crew rolled up its sleeves and went to work fixing the non-functional vehicles and equipment.

"My guys have put in a lot of hours at the shop and have done an excellent job as far as keeping our overall readiness rating above 95 percent," said Sgt. Casey Tucker, a Portland, Tenn. native and shop foreman for the 297th ICTC.

Since the small maintenance crew has been together, they have repaired every piece of equipment that has come their way, making sure it runs the way it's supposed to. They even double check one another's

work, ensuring it's done right.

"It's better to have at least 18 eyes instead of two...We all check behind each other to do the job right the first time," said Staff Sgt. Douglas Darden, a Fayetteville, Texas native and motor sergeant for the 297th.

With extreme temperatures quickly approaching, a new set of challenges are on the minds of the maintenance crew -- equipment overheating.

One piece of equipment that's critical to the 297th ICTC's mission is the Kalmar, a large crane-like device used to move con-exes. Without the Kalmar, their mission

would suffer.

"The Kalmars are an electrical nightmare when it comes to the heat," said Spc. James Meadows, a Fort Walton Beach, Fla. native and Kalmar expert for the 297th.

Meadows has proven himself as a reliable mechanic through his work with the Kalmar and has transferred that knowledge and experience to other types of equipment

as well.

Because their company is one of the only cargo companies on post, if the vehicles aren't running, the entire base would feel the impact. Keeping equipment like the Kalmar running is a main focus for the maintenance team.



Photo by Spc. Michele Meadows

(From left to right) Spc. Jimmy Reffitt, a Parkville, Ky. native and Spc. James Meadows, a native of Fort Walton Beach, Fla., look on as Sgt. Casey Tucker, a native of Portland, Tenn., shows them how to change a transmission control valve on a M10,000 May 9.

There are eight Soldiers who make up the maintenance team and they perform the same mission a company-sized platoon would normally do.

"I haven't seen any maintenance section that can do what we can do. We have the knowledge; we have the experience. There may be some late hours, but we get the job

done," Darden said.

"The team does not understand the meaning of 'can't,' nor do they ever give up," said Tucker. "These guys, they come up with outside-the-box stuff just to keep the mission running, and it's truly a sight to see. They just find a way to make it happen."

## Lets get together



Photo by Spc. Charlotte Martinez

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq -- Brig. Gen. Gregory E. Couch, commanding general of the 316th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), talks to subordinate commanders from Al Asad, Taji, and here during a commander's gathering held at the Holt Stadium outdoor pool May 10.

## 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](mailto:Lee.Fowler@iraq.centcom.mil)

## Students learn how to survive

by Spc. Jay Venturini

Anaconda Times staff

**LSA ANACONDA, Iraq** -- As a member of the United States military, it is each individual's responsibility to be prepared for anything thrown their way, especially the ability to protect themselves in combat.

For that reason, a combative group has formed to offer a different view of combatives that the Army doesn't teach.

"The intent of our combatives training group is to offer an alternative to those other methods of training currently being offered locally," said Sgt. 1st Class Gustavo Reina, 402nd Army Field Support Brigade

it seems that violent attacks are becoming the norm back home," said Reina. "A properly violent, non-sport response is definitely called for in the defense of our loved ones or ourselves."

The benefits of the class are not confined to the realm of war, but can be used anywhere when the skills are required.

"Our focus has always been on practical skills that are designed to incapacitate or terminate

*"Your mindset and attitude are what will win you the fight, everything else is just tools."*

Sgt. 1st Class Gustavo Reina  
402nd Army Field Support Brigade

the adversary and our goal is to instill useful skills that can help both our servicemembers and civilians to survive the rigors of both the battle field and the streets back home," said Reina.

Although you may not always have a weapon to defend yourself, there is one weapon that you will always have at your disposal.

"While we will be doing a lot of weapons training, the mind is the ultimate weapon," said Reina. "Your mindset and attitude are what will win you the fight, everything else is just tools."

Through this class, servicemembers and civilians alike are learning valuable skills that could save their lives one day.

"The main goals are prevailing and surviving an attack," said Reina. "If this training saves one person along the way, I've done my job."

The group meets at the aerobics room in the eastside gym Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays at 8:00 p.m.

## Regional Contracting Office hosts Business Exposition

by Staff Sgt. Les Newport

76th Infantry Brigade Combat Team

More than sixty Iraqi and other third-country businesses recently crowded a U.S. military recreation hall for the Anaconda Business Exposition. Displays, computer presentations and business-card-armed representatives filled aisles and booths of the event.

Sponsored by the Regional Contracting Office of here, ABEX gives local Iraqi business leaders an opportunity to meet and develop professional relationships with other contractors as well as contracting officers of LSA Anaconda.

Jasim Al Sarraf, host nation business advisor for the RCC, organized the event and works to ensure that Iraqi businesses have a level playing field when it comes to securing coalition contracts.

"There was a good feeling for the Iraqi companies," said Al Sarraf.

raf. "It's going to help in getting (Iraqi business) easy access."

Al Sarraf wanted the exposition to supersede the standard meet-and-greet usually associated with economic outreach programs of the past.

RRC offered two business workshops to provide participants with tools for success when working to earn coalition contract bids.

The first workshop, Construction Issues, focused on basic and standard requirements for construction projects and how contractors can prepare to meet those requirements. Al Sarraf said miscommunication has been a source of frustration in the past.

The second workshop, Pitfalls in Contracting, focused on the details of submitting paperwork and certifications for a contracting bid. Al Sarraf said both workshops will go a long way to help



Staff Sgt. Les Newport

1st Lt. Daniel Lotz of the 76th Infantry Brigade Combat Team speaks with vendors at the Anaconda Business Exposition held here

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# Soldier keeps positive outlook despite stop-loss

by Spc. Andrea Merritt  
1st Sustainment Brigade

**CAMP TAJI, Iraq** – As one Soldier’s military obligation was nearing its end, he decided he was ready to transition from the Army life he had known for the past four years to civilian life.

With only a few months left on his contract, Spc. Nathan Collins, an all-wheel vehicle mechanic with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Special Troops Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, was prepared to hang his hat. That was until he was faced with the reality of being stop-lossed.

Collins, who was originally scheduled to complete his military commitment in August 2007, learned his unit would be deploying to Iraq in September 2007 for a 15-month rotation, and he would be going with them.

“My initial reaction was I should be getting out, going home. I had served my time ...It was frustrating,” admitted Collins, a Clarkston, Mich., resident.

His wife, whom he had already spent much of his time away from due to a previous overseas assignment and deployment, also shared his sentiments.

“My wife was upset to say the least, but she’s knows my commitment to (the military) and that if I sign up for something or do something, I’m going to see it all the way through. She understood that,” Collins said.

On top of everything else, shortly after Collins found out he would be deploying again, he also found out his wife was pregnant with their first child.

“The due date for her was in November 2007, so it was pretty mixed emotions knowing that I was supposed to deploy and be away from my wife, which was hard enough as it was,” he said.

“Then, to find out shortly after that we would be having a child and I possibly was not going to be able to be around for raising my daughter was really hard to deal with; but I got through that, and I’m just taking it one day at a time,” Collins added.

Fortunately, Collins was able to take Rest and Recuperation leave in November 2007 and make it home in time for the birth of his daughter, Jacklyn.

“I got home three to four days before that. I was there to actually see the birth and take my wife to the hospital and help her through that,” Collins said proudly. “Having my first child was a huge, huge, great experience. It definitely changed my life.”

Although being stop-lossed has caused Collins to delay his original plans of getting out of the military and attending a two-year automotive technology program in Chicago, he remains focused on completing the mission ahead of him.

“I take it just one day at a time, just one job or just one mission at a time. Once I complete working on one truck, I find another truck, another job, another task that needs to be done to continuously stay busy and not think about it,” he stated.

In his off-duty time, Collins occupies himself by playing video games, communicating with his wife and family back home, and spending time with his friends.

“I try to keep a happy, upbeat environment and my friends help me do it for the most part. They’re glad that I’m out here.

I’m out here for them,” Collins said. “If they need someone to their left and to their right to help them out with something, then they come to me and I do the same with them.”

Despite his situation, Collins’ attitude continues to be noticed by his supervisors and co-workers, who describe him as a knowledgeable mechanic and an important asset to the team.

”As far as his work ethic, he is always professional and loyal to all within the motor pool. He is a very hard worker and always gives over 100 percent when accomplishing a task or service,” said Staff Sgt. Cesar Cobena, a native of Puerto Rico and the maintenance supervisor at the 1st Sust. Bde. Motor Pool.

“Working with Collins is excellent. He knows his stuff and he teaches me a lot of stuff. All the (noncommissioned officers) and supervisors look up to him as getting the job done. He’s one of the top guys,” said Spc. Timothy Cameron, an all-wheel vehicle mechanic with HHC, STB, 1st Sust. Bde., who was also stop-lossed and can relate to Collins’ situation.

“It doesn’t really get to him. He doesn’t complain about it everyday. I, pretty much, was in the same situation, but I ended up re-enlisting anyway. I kind of know what he’s going through almost getting out of the military and deploying to Iraq,” added Cameron, a native of Minnetonka, Minn.

Presently, Collins is at the halfway point of his 15-month deployment and looks forward to the day he finally gets home.

“My plans now are just to finish out my time here until whenever we get back and do our re-integration (training). After the



Photo by Spc. Andrea Merritt

**Spc. Nathan Collins, an all-wheel mechanic with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Special Troops Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, conducts preventive maintenance checks and services on a humvee May 14.**

re-integration is over with, to go back home to my wife, my daughter, and to the home we just bought and just enjoy that. I will find a job somewhere and kind of take it one step at a time,” he said.

Collins also had a few encouraging words for others who may be in his shoes. “Stay positive, always think positive and just take it one day at a time, one mission at a time. Don’t get depressed by it, just have a good outlook on things. Make the most of the situation,” he concluded.

## Army Corps of Engineers continues to rebuild Basra

by Sgt. 1st Class C. J. Sheely  
Anaconda Times Staff

**BASRA, Iraq** – From founding and operating the United States Military Academy at West Point to flood control projects across America, the Army Corps of Engineers has played a major role in shaping the world.

The first Engineer officers were appointed on June 16, 1775 by George Washington, and the Engineer branch was established as a permanent and separate branch March 16, 1802.

From the beginning, the Corps has worked on major military construction projects and civilian sites throughout the world.

The Gulf Region South District, Basrah Area Office, is currently working on over 40 projects to help rebuild the future of Iraq.

Such projects include a water treatment plant, a courthouse in Tannumah, Sadr teaching hospital, Abo Al Khaseeb Votech Center and a new Children’s Hospital, which will operate primarily as a cancer treatment facility.

“It helps the economy and it gives the Iraqis a nice product that puts money in the private sector so they can recover from the damages of war,” said Randall Lewis, a project architect with the GRS. “The sites are built with almost 100 percent Iraqi workers.”

One of the largest projects, and the first hospital of this level of care since the 1970s, is the Basra Children’s Hospital which incorporates nine Iraqi engineers and four Army Corps of Engineer civilian employees working as a team.

Recent military operations in the region have cut into the workforce according to Lt. Cmdr. Neil Underwood, resident engineer on the project,

“We went from 1,000 workers prior to military operations to approximately 200 now,” Underwood said. “We have a fifth of the workforce on site.” Underwood does not expect major delays on finishing the project; however, he does say the drop in workers affects scheduling for some of the work being done.

While some workers have

returned to their homes in other cities during military operations, those who stayed are provided safety on the site. The Iraqi construction firms have hired an Iraqi security company to keep criminal elements out of the site. In addition to the security group, the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police are clearly visible on the streets around the hospital.

When completed, the hospital will have 94 beds and state-of-the-art cancer treatment equipment. An additional 32-room resident building for doctors and nurses, with several support buildings on the site, is planned for construction. Staffing of doctors, nurses and administrators is scheduled to begin in January 2009 and the hospital is projected to be ready for patients in February 2009.

From rebuilding water treatment facilities to the total construction of a Children’s Hospital, the Corps of Engineers is pulling from over 200 years of experience in both military and civilian construction projects to continue a long tradition in shaping the future by building the present.



Photo by Air Force Senior Airman Julianne Showalter

**Servicemembers exit a C-130 Hercules here, May 10. The 777th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron personnel estimate they have prevented approximately 10,000 convoy vehicles and about 27,000 servicemembers from traveling along improvised explosive device laden Iraqi roads since the squadron stood up in January 2006.**

## Balad servicemembers mark milestone in decreasing convoys, saving lives

by Staff Sgt. Ruth Curfman  
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing

**BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq** -- Deployed servicemembers from the 777th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron have prevented approximately 10,000 convoy vehicles and about 27,000 servicemembers from traveling along improvised explosive device laden Iraqi roads since the squadron stood up in January 2006.

To get these people and vehicles moved quickly and safely throughout the Iraqi theater of operations, members of the 777th

*“We provide precision combat aerial delivery of cargo and passengers into austere environments in support of warfighter and humanitarian requirements.”*

Lt. Col. Bradley Hoagland  
777th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron

EAS have relied on airpower.

“The convoys are still facing a lot of threats out there,” said Tech. Sgt. Eric McNeish, the 777th EAS flight engineer, deployed from Little Rock Air Force Base,

Ark. “By providing air transport of much needed supplies, equipment or people, we are able to keep more vehicles and people off the roads and lessen their chances of encountering improvised ex-

plosive devices, direct gun fire or other harmful situations throughout these regions.”

The C-130 Hercules aircraft, which the 777th EAS uses for its missions, is known as the work horse of the Air Force fleet. The Hercules is capable of taking off and landing from rough, dirt landing strips and is the prime transport aircraft for delivering personnel and equipment into hostile areas.

“We provide precision combat aerial delivery of cargo and passengers into austere environments in support of warfighter and humanitarian requirements,” said Lt. Col. Bradley Hoagland, 777th EAS commander, deployed from Little Rock Air Force Base, Ark.

“We only need about 3,000 feet on an unimproved landing surface in order to land and takeoff, which makes the C-130 the most beneficial airframe for this mission right now,” said Capt. Jesse Caldwell, 777th EAS aircraft commander, deployed from Little Rock AFB, Ark. “This is just one reason that we utilize the C-130 for these ‘Hub-N-Spoke’ missions.”

The Hub-N-Spoke concept, which the unit’s missions are based on, means Balad Air Base

is the logistical supply hub for the flights providing transport to people and cargo. The crew loads the aircraft with cargo and people from this hub and transport them to other locations within Iraq, otherwise known as the spokes. The squadron personnel also have the ability to perform airdrops when needed.

Whether it is dropping cargo from the air or flying supplies and personnel to various airfields, the 777th EAS personnel depend heavily on working directly with other branches of the military to make it all happen.

“We are truly an integrated joint squadron comprised of people from all four branches of the military,” Hoagland said. “We are able to work seamlessly together to accomplish the mission successfully. Although we all have our own way of doing things, we bring all of the expertise together which makes for a great working relationship.”

Not only do the unit servicemembers work together to make airlift successful, they also are able to talk directly to the people affected by their mission -- the forces on the ground.

“If we can save one person by taking them out of harm’s way, we have achieved our goal of making a positive impact,” Caldwell said. “We have been able to talk directly with the people that are on the ground and gain a better understanding and appreciation for what the other person needs to make this operation run more smoothly.”



Photo by Air Force Senior Airman Julianne Showalter

**Airman 1st Class Nicholas Ellwood, 777th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron loadmaster, communicates with pilots in the cockpit during start up before a combat mission here May 7.**



# Leadership, diversity, and harmony: The spirit of Asian Pacific Americans



Courtesy Image  
Two soldiers in the 100th Infantry Battalion repair engine of a 5x6 Army truck while training at Camp Shelby, Miss. in 1943.



by Maj. Christopher E. West

Anaconda Times staff

**LSA ANACONDA, Iraq**—During the month of May, we honor and celebrate the millions of Asian Pacific Americans whose contributions have helped make our nation a strong, vibrant, and free society. Asian Pacific Americans represent many nations and ethnicities spanning all of the Asian continent and the Pacific islands of Melanesia (New Guinea, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Fiji and the Solomon Islands), Micronesia (Marianas, Guam, Wake Island, Palau, Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Nauru and the Federated States of Micronesia) and Polynesia (New Zealand, Hawaiian Islands, Rotuma, Midway Islands, Samoa, American Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Cook Islands, French Polynesia and Easter Island). Each has its own culture, heritage, language, and experience.

More than 15 million Americans claim Asian or Pacific ancestry. Asians are the third largest minority group—and the second fastest-growing group—in America, according to the United States Census Bureau. The largest population of Asians is in California, with nearly 5 million, followed by New York, Texas and Hawaii. Hawaii has the highest percentage of Asians in its population, 56 percent, followed by California with 14 percent.

Asian Pacific Americans were the last group of immigrants to flood the shores of America with the first group (i.e., Japanese) arriving in 1843. Regardless of their point of entry, Asian Pacific Americans have excelled in all occupations, from business to academia to the arts.

Until World War II, there had been little effort to document the contributions of Asian Pacific Americans to our collective history and culture. However, prominent individuals were evident from their arrival here and continue to surface to this very day. Notable figures include martial arts icon and cinema actor Bruce Lee, the infantrymen of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT) who fought in World War II, and author Maxine Hong Kingston, a National Book Critics Circle Award winner.

From a military perspective, the accomplishments of Pacific Asian Americans are countless and legendary. A classic example would be the extraordinary feats of the 442nd RCT of World War II, the most highly decorated military unit in the history of the United States Armed Forces. The gallant Soldiers of this outfit were the recipients of 21 Medals of Honor, 52 Distinguished Service Crosses, 560 Silver Stars, 4,000 Bronze Stars, and 9,486 Purple Hearts.

Despite the prejudicial treatment and forced internment camps they endured because of their ethnicity, the unit, composed mostly of Japanese Americans, proved a self-sufficient fighting force, which fought with uncommon distinction in Italy, southern France, and Germany.

People of Asian Pacific ancestry have held numerous command and staff positions of increased responsibility in every branch of our nation's armed services, to include Chief of Staff of the United States Army. In each instance, they have served with utmost notoriety and achievement. Without question, their efforts have helped shape our nation's character and have added to our success and prosperity as well as has helped to make us a leader in the world.



Courtesy Image  
34th Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army (1999-2003), Gen. Eric K. Shinseki.



Courtesy Image

Members of the "Go for Broke" 442nd Regimental Combat Team who fought during World War II. They were awarded 21 Purple Hearts and have been nicknamed the "Purple Heart Battalion."

Asian Pacific Americans continue to courageously answer the call to defend freedom as members of our Armed Forces. Their selfless service, whether here in war-ravaged Iraq, Afghanistan, or wherever duty may call, continues to help preserve the ideals of our country's founding fathers as well as to assist all oppressed people who yearn to experience a form of government and a way of life, which is truly of the people, for the people, and by the people.

Like most commemorative months, Asian Pacific American Heritage Month originated in a congressional bill. In June 1977, Representatives Frank Horton of New York and Norman Y. Mineta of California introduced a House resolution that called upon the president to proclaim the first ten days of May as Asian Pacific Heritage Week. The following month, Senators Daniel Inouye and Spark Matsunaga, both from the state of Hawaii, introduced a similar bill in the Senate. Both were passed.

On October 5, 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed a Joint Resolution designating the annual celebration. Twelve years later, President George H.W. Bush signed an extension making the weeklong celebration into a month-long celebration. In 1992, the official designation of May as Asian Pacific American Heritage Month was signed into law.

The month of May was chosen to commemorate the immigration of the first Japanese to the United States on May 7, 1843, and to mark the anniversary of the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869. The majority of the workers who laid the tracks were Chinese immigrants.

This year's theme, "Leadership, Diversity and Harmony—Gateway to Success," honors the many contributions citizens of Asian and Pacific Island ancestry have made to our nation. Through their patriotism, entrepreneurship, creative expressions, and strong values of love and family, they have helped to strengthen our social institutions and enrich our communities for the better.



Courtesy Image

Medal of Honor recipient and United States Senator (Hawaii) Daniel Inouye.



Courtesy Image

A Japanese American Selective Service man learns to "hold and squeeze" a rifle at the Reception Center in Hawaii.



Courtesy Image

Bruce Lee



# Three Soldiers offer perspectives on driving humvees in Iraq

by Spc. Thomas Keeler  
Anaconda Times staff

**LSA ANACONDA, Iraq** – Training, training, training.

That’s the advice Staff Sgt. Michael Shuhayda, a command group driver with the 316th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), gives for drivers new to theater and ready to take on the fight.

Shuhayda, a reservist, racked up thousands of miles driving convoys for the 298th Transportation Company from 2004 to 2005.

“You can say you’re used to driving on these roads, but then you can’t, because you can never get complacent,” he said.

“First of all, it’s safety,” said Spc. Zachary Rinck, an engineer with the 116th Engineer Co. of the Utah National Guard. Rinck earned his driver’s badge for his work driving combat logistics patrols out of Forward Operating Base Q-West, reaching 8,000 miles before the end of his deployment, mostly in a humvee.

Rinck, who is on his first deployment, showed enough talent for the task that his commanders let him drive the rover vehicle on about half of his missions.

Driving as the rover vehicle on a combat logistics patrol meant driving outside the order of march – moving independently up and down the line of trucks, often against traffic, in order to monitor the status of the foreign national cargo trailers in the convoy.

The rover’s job is much like that of a

sheep herder’s – keeping each trailer in line behind the other and moving towards the objective.

“The real training comes out on the road,” said Rinck.

But conditions on the roads have not always been so amenable.

As the rover vehicle, Rinck drives over portions of the road that the scout vehicle in the main convoy hasn’t driven over; in other words, the rover vehicle is also the scout vehicle in a sense.

“I’m alerted by [holes in the road] because I’m always passing trucks and don’t want to drive right over them,” he said.

There are many ways of avoiding improvised explosive devices on the road, and techniques, tools and intelligence to minimize the threat are improving.

“The best way to avoid an IED blast [early in the war] was to drive as fast as the truck could go, creating a situation where the speed of the vehicle was difficult to judge,” said Shuhayda.

“It’s been said that you can’t outrun an IED, but it’s been proven that you can,” said Pfc. Harold Evans, a driver with 215th Brigade Support Battalion out of Ft. Hood, Texas.

On his previous deployment, his convoy passed over a command wire IED on his very first mission. The bomb blew up late.

“We just kept going,” said Evans.

“We used to go as fast as a truck could go,” said Shuhayda.

Shuhayda noted, however, that high rates of speed increase the risk of rollovers, especially in poor driving conditions or on dirt roads or over canal roads.

“A rollover can happen in an instant,” agreed Rinck.

The increase in armor makes for a heavier truck and effectively reduces speeds to some extent. And with the uparmor and jamming equipment, encountering IEDs has become more manageable.

At the start of the war, too few trucks had adequate protection against attacks, and Soldiers took it upon themselves to protect themselves and their trucks. Shuhayda remembers using items as diverse as sandbags and old flak vests, sticking them inside his door or anywhere else he felt vulnerable.

“You were allowed to do whatever you could to your vehicle to uparmor it,” he said.

Eventually, suggestions for improvements made it from the Soldiers on the front lines back to the manufacturers in the states, which has resulted in a safer vehicle.

Shuhayda offers a similar situation from a previous engagement.

“It goes back to World War II, when (U.S. forces) were trying to break the hedgerows through Normandy, and (they) put hedge-row cutters on the front of the tanks,” said Shuhayda. In July 1944, after the beachheads were secured, the march against the German retreat began to bog down because of the thick hedges through which the allies were forced to advance their armor. Sherman tanks got tangled in the bushes demarcating the farmers’ fields, and explosives to clear the brush proved impractical.

“It was a young sergeant who came up with the idea for the hedge cutters,” said

Shuhayda.

Because the two sharp cutting blades sticking out from the front of the Sherman tank resembled two long tusks, Sgt. Curtis G. Culin had created what was even then called a rhino. Most importantly, the device worked.

But equipment and technology are no good without proper training and teamwork.

“I’d say the gunner is the key part to getting the truck back and forth safely,” said Rinck. “He’s the eyes all around the truck.”

“You’ve got too many blind spots,” said Evans.

“If you’re a driver, you’re not just thinking about yourself,” said Shuhayda. “There are three or four other guys you’re thinking about.”

Not to mention the preventive maintenance checks and services.

“You can never stress it enough,” Shuhayda said of PMCSing your vehicle, whether in theater or back in the United States.

“I think people make too big a deal about crazy driving back home,” said Evans, who said his biggest complaint comes from his wife for driving too slow.

“Some people get intense, trying to dodge trash bags and everything,” said Evans. “I don’t get that into it, I guess.”

Rinck said he thought, based on media reports from home, that the security situation in Iraq would be a lot worse than it is.

But as many of his fellow Soldiers have assured him, the security situation has actually gotten much better as the war has progressed.

“And I think the next time I come over, it will be a lot better than it is right now,” he said.

# Local knitter starts small to make big difference

by Spc. Charlotte Martinez  
Anaconda Times staff

**LSA ANACONDA, Iraq** – When you picture someone knitting, you think of a grandmother-like figure sitting in an oversized plush armchair with miles of yarn and two long needles as she knits a sweater or scarf to give to you for some holiday event.

What you wouldn’t typically imagine are Soldiers sitting around, drinking coffee and getting to know one another while performing this past-time. Well, one Soldier has that exact idea and she has big plans for it.

Sgt. Abra Stout, a Blackhawk maintenance mechanic supervisor with the 412th Aviation Support Battalion, loves to knit and she wants to start a group based off of Debbie Stoller’s book, “Stitch ‘N Bitch,” which Stout said is all about knitting and getting to know one another.

Stout picked up her love of knitting while she was on leave a couple of years ago when she said she was determined to try one new thing a week. So, she walked into the store, went to the book section, saw a how-to book on knitting with all the supplies she needed and hasn’t stopped since.

Now Stout would like to use her hobby

in a noble way – helping the injured children of Iraq.

“I want to get a group of people together to start making blankets and toys for kids over here in the hospital,” she said.

Stout said she was unaware there were children in the hospital here until someone mentioned it to her one day. Now she wants to combine her passion for knitting, along with the help of fellow Soldiers, to make the children as comfortable as possible.

“I want to start small,” Stout said. “Then, if we can get enough people to-

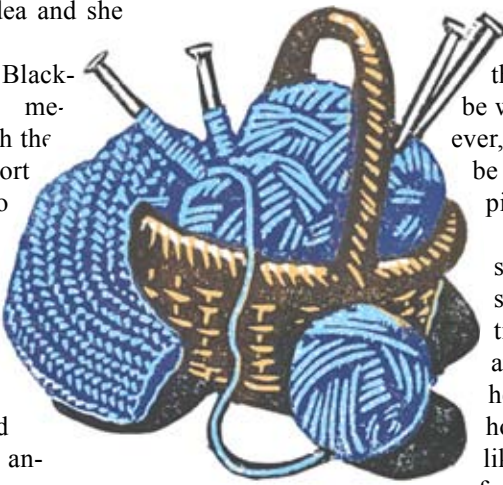
gether and enough donations for things like yarn, may be we can grow. However, my main focus will be the kids in the hospital first.”

Stout said since she has been here, she has been knitting baby blankets and beanie caps for her friends’ kids back home, but would now like to start knitting for the people here.

She said the group doesn’t have to be just females, nor does it have to be strictly for people who knit.

“If you crochet, or if there are people that want to learn how to do either, bring on the needles,” she added.

For more information, you can contact Stout on her Army Knowledge Online e-mail address, abra.stout@us.army.mil.



# Al Samawah Hospital residents build knowledge, friendship

by Spc. RJ Gilbert  
7th Sustainment Brigade

**COB ADDER, Iraq** – Employment in the same profession is not unlike being of the same species: there are usually far more shared similarities than there are distinguishing differences.

It is precisely such similarities which have served as the catalyst for a blooming working relationship between Al Samawah Hospital staff and Col. Thomas P. Dove, M.D., the 7th Sustainment Brigade surgeon, and COB Adder Medical staff.

May 6 allowed for the furtherance of that working relationship as residents from Al Samawah Hospital attended lectures, for the third time, held by COB Adder medical staff at the COB Adder Medical Training Facility.

“(The residents) were lectured in valvular heart disease, pacemakers, kidney disorders and head trauma by medical spe-

cialists from the 213th ASMC and 7th SB,” said Dove.

However, the gathering was almost halted before it could even begin.

The day prior to the medical engagement, Al Samawah Hospital residents “had an argument with their manager because 20 (personnel) wanted to come for the training,” said Khalid R. Kridy, a Provincial Reconstruction Team member and Samawah native.

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**DOG,**  
from Page 4

“People can tell you what you’re getting into, but after leaving that gate you realize it’s different than anything you’ve ever seen,” he said.

“But I build on each and every mission, and it’s been satisfying to help assist the Army mission with Air Force canines.”

Carroll credits fellow Soldiers in helping his transition into the Army’s working environment.

“The Army has made me very comfortable incorporating the dogs into their mission,” said Carroll, who volunteered for this ILO tasking. “I’ve been working with canines for more than 12 years now, but nothing comes close to what I’ve seen here. Working outside the wire with the Army has been a very rewarding opportunity.”

In order to accomplish such a wide variety of missions both on-and-off-base, dog handlers rely on the keen senses of their canines, said Tech. Sgt. Andrew Esparza, a 506th ESFS kennel master.

A dog’s sense of smell is far more advanced than a human’s, said Esparza, who is deployed from Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz. “In comparison, humans can’t distinguish the individual ingredients when we smell a pizza. When a dog smells pizza, they can smell the cheese, pepperoni, oregano and all of the other ingredients individually.”

Each handler typically has his or her own assigned dog during a deployment. These dogs often travel with their handler from the U.S., and spend much of their deployment patrolling and sharpening their skills.

Since handlers spend so many of their

*“You can’t help being attached to the dogs - they depend on you.”*

Staff Sgt. Kevin Nelson  
506th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron

being attached to the dogs. They depend on you,” he said. “You are completely responsible for the dog’s health and safety, but you also always have a partner that will lay down their life for you. These dogs aren’t scared of guns, knives or anything else; they are extremely loyal,” Nelson added.

“For us, a dog is similar to another person on the team, the dog is treated the same as if they are an Airman because the dog won’t be any good at his job if we don’t take great care of him,” he further remarked.

Carroll’s dog sleeps in his bedroom, thus making their relationship a constant endeavor.

“There is definitely a bond that forms when you live with a dog every day for six months,” Carroll said. “My dog, Jack, makes the time away from my family not as bad.”

While military working dogs will never receive retirement checks or re-enlistment bonuses for their abilities to sniff out weapons caches, these canines are a vital and valued capability in the deployed environment.

“These dogs are basically tools that we use to help save lives,” Carroll said. “I know for a fact that my dogs have found weapon caches that would’ve otherwise been used against Coalition Forces. Whether it’s protecting the base from within or going off base, these dogs play a major part in helping to keep us safe.”

except for the new ones that Dr. Dove gave us.”

If using the timeless adage of “judging a tree by its fruit” is the means of measuring the success of the working relationship between Al Samawah Medical staff and COB Adder Medical staff, it appears that the fruits are plush and nourishing: in other words resoundingly successful.

“The relationship (between COB Adder medical staff and Al Samawah Hospital staff) has changed (Al Samawah medical staff’s) view of American forces and troops in Iraq,” said Kridy.

“People think that Americans are here as an occupying force. I have never seen an occupying force who only tries to make the quality of life better for the country that they occupy. It is not occupation. It is a kind of great support which no one in the world can get, only Iraq. The troops and the multinational forces in Iraq are here to help.”

hours with the dogs, the commonly known bond between man and his best friend often forms, said Sergeant Nelson, who is deployed from Hill AFB, Utah.

“You can’t help

by Jim Hinnant  
Army News Service

**CAMP AS SAYLIYAH, Qatar** – Posters showing a battle-weary combat Soldier adorn the walls of the Stryker Battle Damage Repair Facility here. “Remember – everything we do affects this man. He and his buddies will be the first to pay for our mistakes,” the posters warn.

The team of dedicated contractors working here in support of 1st Battalion, 401st Army Field Support Brigade has worked with that thought constantly in mind, said Tim Armstrong, Qatar site manager for General Dynamics Land Systems Division.

“As of April 19th, we have returned 123 Stryker Combat Vehicles, each with varying degrees of battle damage, to service with units in Iraq,” said Armstrong.

Walk the floor of the repair facility, crowded with vehicles in various stages of work, and it quickly becomes clear that more than just repair work is done here.

Webster’s New World College Dictionary defines the term refurbish as “to brighten, freshen or polish up again.”

That is the state these vehicles

are in when they leave Qatar.

In fact, according to Armstrong, Strykers leaving here are the equal of vehicles coming off the production facility floor at Anniston Army Depot. “When we are finished, Soldiers get a vehicle and have no idea that it has been damaged (in combat),” said Armstrong. “That’s psychologically important.”

A lot of work goes into making sure vehicles go out of the SBDRF in near-showroom condition, said Armstrong.

Damaged Stryker vehicles undergo a limited technical inspection in Iraq prior to shipment.

ment to Qatar, so the team here knows generally what will need to be done for each vehicle well before it arrives.

“There’s not a lot of information on the “SW’s” of the damage. We don’t focus on that – we focus on the repairs needed,” said Armstrong.

A healthy parts supply, with approximately 5,000 line items and 1,500 lines of bench stock on hand ensures the work goes smooth-

ly and with a minimum of disruption to parts outages.

There is also obvious attention to efficiency. According to Armstrong, where possible the components from a vehicle are removed, refurbished and returned to the same vehicle.

Quality control checks are performed on each vehicle throughout the repair process; these checks are heaviest in the “final assembly” phase where the interior of each re-

ceives final touches, to include fresh paint and protective plastic on the deck.

In final assembly, the power pack is reinstalled, all systems are checked and the vehicle is finally rolled out for a road test and installation of slat armor.

The GDLS team’s operation is at steady state here. In fact, during the visit for this story, four “June assembly” vehicles were already in the pre-assembly phase.

Current production calls for six SCVs to leave the repair facility each month, but there is discussion of a possible increase, according to members of the 1st Battalion staff.

An interesting, albeit sobering, event occurs occasionally, when a vehicle that has been through the program shows up here again for repair - giving the team here the chance to do a sort of “after-action” quality check.

“Our guys get to see the work they have done that has gone through the fight,” said Armstrong. “They can see how their work held up.”

“This is personal,” he said. “They spend so much time on each Stryker that the vehicle takes on a personality of its own...some guys even name them.”







Photo by Staff Sgt. Les Newport

Iraqi business owners enter a coalition forces recreational hall for the Anaconda Business Exposition. The expo was sponsored by the Regional Contracting Office of Logistical Support Area Anaconda.

EXPO, from Page 5

both sides succeed.

According to Al Sarraf, Iraqi contractors may become frustrated with the process if they don't have enough information to make sure their bids will at least be considered.

"(The workshops) were full," said Al Sarraf. "They need to know how to work with us. Understanding is very important; when they understand, they won't be upset if RCC doesn't accept a bid."

Visitors were welcomed to the exposition by a newcomer to the greater Anaconda business community.

Representatives of the Iraqi-Based Industrial Zones initiative manned a booth prominently situated near the front entrance for the hall. 1st Lt. Daniel Lotz, vocational training project officer and a battle captain for the 76th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, helped greet vendors as they arrived.

"After the overwhelming response to the Bakir (IBIZ) conference, I came along to help with ABEX," said Lotz, referring to an open meeting with business leaders last month.

IBIZ is a comprehensive initiative to help Iraqis develop industrial and service support zones in the relative security near coalition installations. The Bakir conference drew an unexpectedly warm reception and generated enthusiasm on both sides of the security fence surrounding Anaconda.

Lotz was not surprised by the numbers of participants at ABEX since vendors had to preregister, but he admitted he was impressed with breadth and depth of businesses represented. As project officer in charge of supporting vocational education, Lotz was looking for opportunity, both

near and far term.

"We want to partner with existing vocational schools and businesses, and help them develop a plan that doesn't depend on Anaconda in order to succeed," said Lotz. "But we also want to be able to take advantage of opportunities here too, and the sooner the better."

Lotz efforts will be measured in his ability to work with local business and trade schools to train and place Iraqi workers in stable positions associated with IBIZ.

Lotz believes the Anaconda IBIZ team of the Indiana National Guard's 76th IBCT will be able to make the kind of contribution needed to support Iraqi's bid for a more peaceful and prosperous future.

"We're citizen Soldiers with a lot of experience doing just this sort of thing back home," said the mechanical engineer and departmental supervisor for Parker Hannifin in southwest Michigan.

Al Sarraf agreed with Lotz' assessment of early returns, predicting the IBIZ initiative will bring not only more local involvement, but also much-needed resources for ABEX. According to Al Sarraf, the limited amount of space available for ABEX restricted the number of participants.

He also said heavy security measures limited the amount of time and resources local Iraqi businesses could expend, accounting for sparse displays and booth presentations. He envisions IBIZ facilities providing a middle meeting ground where both programs can continue to grow.

"It's going to help in getting easy access," said Al Sarraf, "and provide more time (for the exposition)."

Lotz agreed, saying there will be challenges, but that if all the Iraqi business community needs is space and time, then that's a high-class problem.

Soldiers compete at truck rodeo

by Sgt. Jennifer Schweizer  
1st Sustainment Brigade

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – The competitors stared each other down as they prepared to mount their mighty steeds and engage in battle for top bragging rights at the rodeo – the truck rodeo that is.

Such was the case as the Soldiers of the 515th Transportation Company, 165th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, which provides support throughout the Multi-National Division – Baghdad area, took advantage of an opportunity to show off their skills during the unit's inaugural truck rodeo here May 7.

"The main purpose for this event is to build cohesion, morale and esprit de corps within the unit and platoons," said 2nd Lt. Travis Michelena, an Ooltewah, Tenn., native, who serves as a platoon leader with the 515th Trans. Co. and the event's organizer.

"I figured it would be fun and a way for Soldiers to get their minds off the deployment," he continued.

The rodeo was a timed event in which the competitors were required to conduct proper preventive maintenance checks and services before heading out to the course. Awaiting them were eight obstacles, and their chosen paths to victory were outlined by cones to mark the trail.

The object of the rodeo sounds simple enough – to make it through each event in the shortest time possible. The rules seemed simple enough as well. Drivers faced a time penalty for hitting cones. The time penalty was added to their total time,

and the drivers could earn a time deduction for their ability to shorten their distances from the cones during their turns.

"I feel good about this event. It gives the Soldiers an opportunity to come out and show their skills" said 1st Sgt. Norvell Tillman, a native of Bruce, Miss., who is the senior enlisted leader with the 515th Trans. Co.

Altogether, ten Soldiers stepped up to the challenge to compete in the truck rodeo, with two Soldiers from each platoon vying for top honors.

Spc. Malcolm Barker, a native of Tupelo, Miss., said despite the fact he had not had to chance to practice on the course before the competition, he felt confident as he watched his fellow competitors.

"After watching the first two (competitors), I felt pretty confident – they were kind of messing up," said Barker.

His tone changed a bit after following his turn – he spoke of the difficulty of the course. The bottom line, he said, was that he was glad to have had the opportunity to compete.

Claiming top bragging rights for the day was Sgt. Rudy Ancheta, a native of Honolulu, Hawaii. Ancheta blazed through the course in the now-record time of 8 minutes, 48 seconds. Although he has been working at a battalion staff job for the past four months, he said it's vital to keep up his driving skills.

"It's my job to learn how to drive this truck and be able to do it whenever called upon," said Ancheta, who also claimed top honors during a truck rodeo hosted by the 28th Transportation Battalion in Germany.

"I guess it's in my blood," he laughed.

*"It's my job to learn how to drive this truck and be able to do it whenever called upon."*

Sgt. Rudy Ancheta  
515th Transportation Company

316th Soldier takes oath of enlistment again



Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – Sgt. Frank Mims, Headquarters and Headquarters Company supply noncommissioned officer, 316th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), take the oath of enlistment as he is reenlisted by Brig. Gen. Gregory E. Couch, commanding general of the 316th ESC, May 5

MESSAGES FROM HOME



SGT Rolland Frazier  
76th IBCT Mayor Cell S-1  
Baby, I just wanted to let you know how proud we are of you and everything you do for us back home and for our country. Tyler and I miss and love you greatly, and look very much forward to your return home to us! You're a wonderful husband and I couldn't have asked for better. Stay strong and keep up the good work...we'll be right here waiting with open arms when you return! You're always in our prayers! We love you very much!  
~ Barbi and Tyler



TO MY SON  
SPC McDONALD JOSHUA  
THE FAMILY IS SO PROUD OF YOU AND LOVE YOU  
CANT WAIT UNTIL YOU AND ALL THE 76 BRIGADE  
COMES HOME LOVE YOU MOM

PROUD ARMY MOM



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

America's warrior

A snapshot of servicemembers in the Global War on Terrorism



Petty Officer 2nd Class Shilo Leonard

Pastimes (Hobbies): Surfing the Internet.  
Life changing moment: When I enlisted in the Navy.  
Lesson Learned: Never joke with anyone about extending.  
Person I admire the most: My step-dad for raising me and my sister.

Full name and rank: Petty Officer 2nd Class Shilo Leonard.  
Unit: Alpha Company 55 Air Defense Artillery.  
Job Title: Fire Controlman 2nd Class.  
Time in service: Six years, seven months.  
Age: 25.  
Hometown: Deweyville, Texas.  
Family: Ginger Curl (mom) and Clearance Curl (step-dad).

Why I joined the military: Boredom at home and my lack of money.  
If I wasn't in the Navy I would be: There is really no telling what I would be doing.  
The one thing I would change about the Navy: The requirements for advancement in rank.  
The one thing I think the Navy got right: Its selective reenlistment bonuses.  
What makes a good Sailor: Keeping your mouth shut and doing as you are told.  
What makes a good leader? Looking out for your people.  
Goals: Keeping enough money so I never have to do this stuff again.  
Unusual Fact about my self: I have no bones in my pinky toes.  
Hardest part of my job here: Communicating with people back home.  
Best part of my life: I get to travel to a lot of places.



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.

**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.

*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



SUSTAINER REEL TIME THEATER

Movie Times

Wednesday, May 21  
Closed due to preparation for Spring Dance Show  
Thursday, May 22  
8 p.m. Spring Dance Show  
Friday, May 23  
2 p.m. Spring Dance Show  
8 p.m. Spring Dance Show  
Saturday, May 24  
2 p.m. Leatherheads  
5 p.m. Superhero Movie  
8 p.m. Prince Caspian  
Sunday, May 25  
2 p.m. Stop Loss  
5 p.m. Prince Caspian  
8 p.m. 21  
Monday, May 26  
5 p.m. Nim's Island  
8 p.m. Prince Caspian  
Tuesday, May 27  
5 p.m. 21  
8 p.m. Stop Loss

(Schedule is subject to change)

Movies Coming Soon

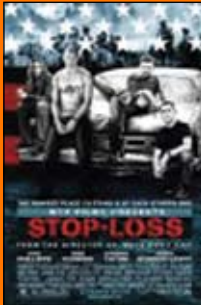
The Ruins  
Street Kings  
Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull

Movie Synopsis

The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian



The adventure continues as producer/director Andrew Adamson teams with screenwriters Christopher Markus and Stephen McFeely to tell the tale of the dashing Prince Caspian (Ben Barnes) -- who sets out to defeat a tyrannical king who has overtaken Narnia and secure his rightful place on the throne. One year has passed since the events of The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, and now the kings and queens of that land have returned to make a shocking discovery. Though by their calendars it has been only 12 months since their last voyage into Narnia, the four children are agast to realize that 1,300 years have passed in the wondrous alternate universe. The Golden Age of Narnia has come to an end, and now the malevolent King Miraz rules over the land without mercy or compassion. Miraz is determined to ensure that the power stays in his bloodline, even if that means killing his nephew Prince Caspian so that Miraz's own son will be next in line for the throne. Fortunately Prince Caspian has the Narnians on his side, and with a little help from the kings, the queens, and some loyal old friends, he may be able to ensure that peace and prosperity are restored on the once-beautiful realm of Narnia.



Decorated Iraq war hero Sgt. Brandon King makes a celebrated return to his small Texas hometown following his tour of duty. He tries to resume the life he left behind. Then, against Brandon's will, the Army orders him back to duty in Iraq, which upends his world. The conflict tests everything he believes in: the bond of family, the loyalty of friendship, the limits of love and the value of honor.

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Ben Campbell (Jim Sturgess) is a shy, brilliant M.I.T. student who needing to pay school tuition finds the answers in the cards. He is recruited to join a group of the school's most gifted students that heads to Vegas every weekend armed with fake identities and the know-how to turn the odds at blackjack in their favor. With unorthodox math professor and stats genius Micky Rosa (Kevin Spacey) leading the way, they've cracked the code. By counting cards and employing an intricate system of signals, the team can beat the casinos big time. Seduced by the money, the Vegas lifestyle, and by his smart and sexy teammate, Jill Taylor (Kate Bosworth), Ben begins to push the limits. Though counting cards isn't illegal, the stakes are high, and the challenge becomes not only keeping the numbers straight, but staying one step ahead of the casinos' menacing enforcer: Cole Williams (Laurence Fishburne).



Nim's Island

A young girl living on a tropical island with her scientist father is left to fend for herself after her dad's boat leaves him stranded far away and careless tour companies wreak havoc on the secluded paradise in directors Mark Levin and Jennifer Flackett's adaptation of the popular children's book by author Wendy Orr. Realizing that she will need adult assistance if she truly hopes to save her home, the resourceful youngster soon begins exchanging e-mails with the author of a book she has been reading. Nim's Island stars Little Miss Sunshine's Abigail Breslin, as well as Jodie Foster and Gerard Butler.



STUPID STATE LAWS

Ever wonder just how dumb things can be? Does your state have dumb laws? Read on and find out. In the upcoming 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.

Washington

- It is illegal to pretend that one's parents are rich.
- It is illegal to attach a vending machine to a utility pole without prior consent from the utility company. Furthermore, if permission is granted, the vending machine may not be less than twelve feet from the ground.

West Virgina

- When a railroad passes within 1 mile of a community of 100 or more people in it, they must build a station and stop there regularly to pick up and drop off passengers.
- A person may be placed in jail for up to six months for making fun of someone who does not accept a challege.
- If you wear a hat inside a theater, you may be fined.

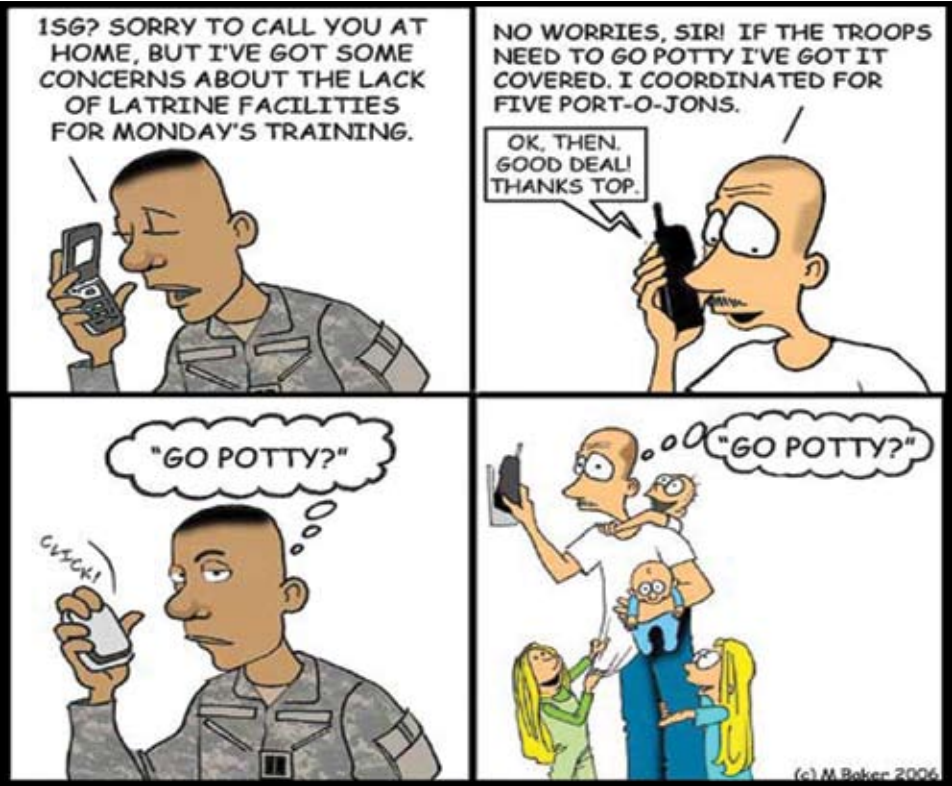
Wisconsin

- While all cheese making requires a license, Limburger cheese making requires a master cheese maker's license.
- Margarine may not be substituted for butter in restaurants unless it is requested by the customer.

Wyoming

- You may not take a picture of a rabbit from January to April without an official permit.
- All new buildings that cost over \$100,000 to build must have %1 of funds spent on art work for the building.
- Citizens may not take showers on Wednesdays.

PVT. MURPHY'S LAW



Upcoming sports on AFN

Wednesday 5/21/08

NHL: playoffs Pittsburgh @ Philadelphia game 6 (if necessary) live 2:30 a.m. AFN/xtra  
NBA: playoffs conference finals live 3:30 a.m. AFN/sports  
MLB: Cincinnati @ Los Angeles Dodgers live 5:00 a.m. AFN/xtra  
MLB: Arizona @ Florida replay 10:00 a.m. AFN/sports  
MLB: St. Louis @ San Diego replay 5:00 p.m. AFN/sports

Thursday 5/22/08

NHL: playoffs Dallas @ Detroit game 7 (if necessary) live 2:30 a.m. AFN/xtra  
NBA: playoffs conference finals live 3:00 a.m. AFN/sports  
MLB: St. Louis @ San Diego live 5:00 a.m. AFN/xtra  
MLB: Seattle @ Detroit live 8:00 p.m. AFN/sports

Friday 5/23/08

NHL: playoffs Philadelphia @ Pittsburgh game 7 (if necessary) live 2:30 a.m. AFN/xtra  
NBA: playoffs conference finals live 3:30 a.m. AFN/sports  
MLB: Cincinnati @ San Diego live 5:00 a.m. AFN/xtra  
MLB: Arizona @ Florida replay 10:00 a.m. AFN/sports  
MLS: Houston @ San Jose replay 8:00 p.m. AFN/sports

Saturday 5/24/08

NBA: playoffs conference finals live 3:00 a.m. AFN/sports  
MLB: Boston @ Oakland live 5:00 a.m. AFN/prime  
MLB: Philadelphia @ Houston replay 10:00 a.m. AFN/sports  
MLB: Kansas City @ Toronto live 8:00 p.m. AFN/xtra

MLB: Seattle @ New York Yankees live 8:00 p.m. AFN/sports  
MLB: New York Mets @ Colorado live 10:30 p.m. AFN/prime  
MLB: Arizona @ Atlanta live 11:00 p.m. AFN/sports  
MLB: Los Angeles Angels @ Chicago White Sox live 11:00 p.m. AFN/xtra

Sunday 5/25/08

NBA: playoffs conference finals live 3:30 a.m. AFN/sports  
MLS: New England @ Columbus replay 8:00 a.m. AFN/xtra  
NASCAR: Nationwide Series: Carquest Auto Parts 300 replay 10:00 a.m. AFN/xtra  
BOXING: Ricky Hatton vs. Juan Lazcano replay 10:00 a.m. AFN/sports  
AFL: Colorado @ San Jose replay 1:00 p.m. AFN/xtra  
MLS: Chivas USA @ Colorado replay 4:00 p.m. AFN/xtra  
INDYCAR: Indianapolis 500 live 8:00 p.m. AFN/sports  
MLB: Seattle @ New York Yankees live 8:00 p.m. AFN/prime  
MLB: San Francisco @ Florida live 8:00 p.m. AFN/xtra  
PGA: Crowne Plaza Invitational at Colonial live 11:00 p.m. AFN/prime  
MLB: St. Louis @ Los Angeles Dodgers live 11:30 p.m. AFN/sports

Monday 5/26/08

NASCAR: Sprint Cup: Coca-Cola 600 live 12:00 a.m. AFN/xtra  
MLB: Los Angeles Angels @ Chicago White Sox live 3:00 a.m. AFN/prime; replay 10:00 a.m. AFN/sports

NBA: playoffs conference finals live 3:15 a.m. AFN/sports  
NCAA: Lacrosse Championship live 8:00 p.m. AFN/sports

Tuesday 5/27/08

AFL: Georgia @ New Orleans live 3:00 a.m. AFN/xtra  
NBA: playoffs conference finals live 3:30 a.m. AFN/sports  
MLB: Boston @ Seattle live 5:30 a.m. AFN/xtra  
MLB: Texas @ Tampa Bay replay 10:00 a.m. AFN/sports  
TENNIS: French Open day 3 live 7:00 p.m. AFN/sports







Photo by Spc. Ryan Hohman

# Soldiers heat up the gridiron

**Top:** Delta Dawgs quarter-back receives a hike during the second half of the Semi-Finals at Kileen Field May 15.

**Right :** A soldier with the 2nd Battalion 320th Field Artillery Regiment rushes with the ball to get a first down in a wild card game.

**Bottom:** Sgt. Aaron Forbes discuss with the team captains of the Delta Dawgs and the Spearheads a call made during a game.



Photo by Spc. Ryan Hohman

by Spc. Ryan Hohman

Anaconda Times staff

**LSA ANACONDA-** You stretch out your arms as you see the ball coming over your left shoulder. Next you hear cheers from the people watching in awe from the sidelines as you catch the ball. "Touchdown," exclaims a watching referee as you reach your destination, one step closer to victory.

This excitement is just one of the few reasons why Sgt. Aaron Forbes, a member of the 240th Quarter Master Company, started the flag football league here.

"Excitement, morale and teamwork-this is what it's all about," said Forbes.

Forbes, a certified football referee, based out of Bamberg, Germany, did not know exactly what to expect when he started asking around to see if anyone wanted to play organized football.

"It started out by word of mouth, then from there we moved on to flyers," he said. "Once we got some teams together, we went to the (Morale, Welfare and Recreation) center and reserved the field and equipment."

With six committed teams on the schedule, their first 90-day season was underway.

"Once we got the field, we laid down some chalk and went at it," said Forbes.

The first season proved to be an extremely fun event for everyone.

"It's good to get everyone together to play and meet different people from different jobs," said Spc. Hernando Figueroa, a member of Task Force 261st Multi Functional Medical Battalion.

The season also proved to be a learning experience for Forbes. He started to get complaints about people interrupting business at local buildings to use their restrooms and sometimes the games would last longer than expected and it would get too dark to play.

"I had to go sign for porta-johns and light kits so that we could continue to play out there," Forbes said.

Once the first season ended, word of mouth continued to spread and more teams signed up for the next season.

"We went from six teams to 20 teams almost over night," he said.

With more teams also came more involvement from the players and their counterparts back home.

"Teams started to get sponsors like Wal-Mart and Bank of America from back home to pay for their jerseys and equipment," said Forbes.

With the second season winding down and the finals next week, the league shows no sign of slowing down for the next season.

"We have seven new teams for next season bringing the total number of teams to 27," Forbes remarked.

*"Excitement, morale and teamwork-this is what it's all about"*

Sgt. Aaron Forbes  
240th Quarter Master Company



Photo by Spc. Ryan Hohman