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# THE Desert Talon



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Photo by Master Sgt. Eric Reinhardt

## Night moves

Soldiers get a lift to their next mission courtesy of "Big Windy," B Company, 5-158 General Support Aviation Battalion. For more images of Task Force 49's CH-47 Chinook company in action, see *Page 5*.

## Task Force 49 slated to move

*Task Force 49 PAO*

LSA ANACONDA, Iraq – The headquarters of Task Force 49, Multi-National Corps – Iraq's aviation brigade, will move this summer to support a realignment of aviation assets in Iraq.

According to the plan, approved by MNC-I Commander, Lt. Gen. Lloyd Austin III, the move will occur over the next two months, placing Task Force 49 in charge of the combat aviation brigade for Multi-National Division – Center at Baghdad International Airport.

The Fort Wainwright, Alaska-based headquarters element was originally deployed to Logistics Support Area Anaconda, Balad in the fall of 2007, replacing Task Force XII, which moved on to Taji to lead the Multi-National Division – Baghdad aviation brigade.

Task Force XII will return to LSA Anaconda to resume its command of MNC-I's combat aviation brigade.

The headquarters element of Task Force 49 is scheduled to be back in Alaska no later than Dec. 15.

### Task Force 49 in Balad *As of May 22, Task Force 49 units had:*

Flown 62,185.5 hours;  
Performed 9,546 missions;  
Moved 191,905 passengers;  
Moved 19,182,196 pounds of cargo

## TF49 Asian-Pacific Month events draw thousands

BY MASTER SGT. ERIC REINHARDT  
*Task Force 49 PAO*

Nearly 2,000 Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors, Marines and civilians at LSA Anaconda got an authentic taste of Polynesian culture May 24, with a poolside luau courtesy of Task Force 49.

The brigade spearheaded LSA Anaconda's Asian-Pacific Islander Heritage Month observance in May, which included a 5 km fun run May 18 and the luau at the post's outdoor pool.

The 412<sup>th</sup> Aviation Support Battalion organized the run, which drew about

500 servicemembers and civilians from all across LSA Anaconda.

According to the pool management's tally, a total of 1,946 people attended the luau.

"I forgot I was in Iraq for a few hours," was an oft-heard sentiment after the event, which included two whole roasted pigs, a full array of authentic Hawaiian dishes, and a live band playing an eclectic mix of music from all around the Pacific.

Task Force 49 had some uniquely qualified experts keeping it real:

**See Asian-Pacific, Page 6**

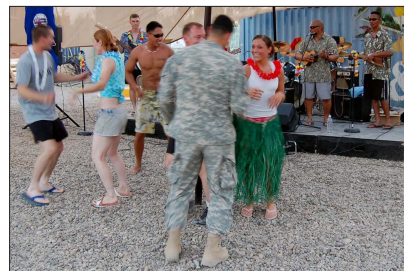


Photo by Master Sgt. Eric Reinhardt

Task Force 49 Soldiers dance to island music May 24 at the brigade's poolside luau. More Asian-Pacific month photos on *Page 6*.

# Talon 6 sends . . . Another chapter awaits TF 49

## Friends and family members of Task Force 49:

It's time again to change the calendar to a new month. We have successfully hit the six-month mark in the deployment. You can be very proud of your Soldiers for all of the milestones they have accomplished to date. The amount of personnel and material transported and the combat missions completed keeps growing as the Task Force continues to support combat operations throughout Iraq. The numbers are very impressive and it's your sons, daughters, husbands and wives making it happen. Their efforts to launch, recover and launch aircraft around the clock is what makes us successful. It's their strict adherence to standards and safety procedures that makes this all possible. The professionalism and teamwork they demonstrate on a daily basis is amazing. I am genuinely honored to command such an outstanding organization.

In the upcoming months Task Force 49's headquarters will be transitioning its duties and responsibilities back to the 12<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade here at LSA Anaconda. Senior Army commanders here in Iraq have decided that Task Force 49 will move to Baghdad International Airport, or BIAP, as it's called. At BIAP our headquarters will command and control an aviation brigade that supports Multinational Division - Center. Our mission and the Soldiers' daily activities will remain much the same for the most part. The major difference is Task Force 49 will be supporting a division-sized element rather than a corps. The staff is busy working out the details of the future move, but I can assure you, your loved ones will be moving into adequate work and living areas - maybe a little more austere than Balad, but nevertheless certainly livable. In the coming weeks the leadership will provide our Soldiers a new mailing address to pass along.



I would like to give special thanks to the 412<sup>th</sup> Aviation Support Battalion and the 5-158<sup>th</sup> General Support Aviation Battalion for hosting LSA Anaconda's Asian-Pacific Heritage month. This was a first-rate event and was even more special due to the support from the Hawaii National Guard Soldiers of Bravo Company, 2-147 Assault Helicopter Battalion. The highlight of the observance was the luau, which included traditional Hawaiian food, music and cultural-heritage events. I overheard many Soldiers talking about how great it was to "escape Iraq" for a few hours. The only thing that could have made it better would have been having our loved ones with us to enjoy the camaraderie.

As we move forward to face a new and changing mission, I have heard some compare our mission over here to a chapter of a book. As we turn the page, and prepare to hand off the mission to our brothers and sisters in Task Force XII, we will establish the conditions for a smooth transfer of authority; as they did for us on our arrival. As we enter this new chapter, I am confident that we will meet the challenges ahead with the same professionalism and dedication that has made us such an effective combat multiplier for MNC-I.

To the entire Task Force 49 team, thank you for all that you do. I am proud to serve with you and I sincerely appreciate your selfless service to our nation.

**One Team! Arctic Talons!**  
Col. Chandler C. Sherrell  
Commander, Task Force 49

## Editor's note

# Documenting the history of TF49 at LSA Anaconda

As Task Force 49 prepares for a new phase in its deployment, it looks like the next edition of *The Desert Talon* will be the last one we publish here at LSA Anaconda.

In addition to the next paper, we will also continue to document the unit's history in Balad and build our photo archives.

Some of that documentation will likely be used in the unit's annual historical report.

We encourage your contributions to both endeavors.

We welcome your photos, especially those showing the brigade's Soldiers doing the great work they do every day. Realize that pictures which may seem ordinary to you now will certainly gain significance as time goes on.

Give us a call or e-mail us with your story ideas, send us photos or just stop by and let us know what your unit is

up to. Our office is in Bldg. 4022, right next to Catfish Air. Our phone number is at 483-2079.

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*This issue of The Desert Talon and back issues can be found on the Task Force 49 website at:*  
[http://www.wainwright.army.mil/49TF/BDE\\_WEB/](http://www.wainwright.army.mil/49TF/BDE_WEB/)

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# Talon 7 sends . . . Hitting the halfway point

Task Force 49 has hit the six-month mark in Iraq! In that time our Soldiers have moved thousands of troops and millions of pounds of supplies to the fight and have made the brigade a crucial asset to MNC-I and Operation Iraq Freedom. I applaud each and every one of you for the outstanding work you do every day. All of you play an important role in keeping our aircraft in the sky and taking the fight to the enemy.

Even though we have passed the halfway mark, the next few months promise to be even busier, with the headquarters of Task Force 49 moving to BIAP and Task Force XII returning to LSA Anaconda. That will bring new missions and new challenges to overcome, and I know our Soldiers are up to the task. In the past few months you have all shown an amazing ability to adapt and excel, no matter what challenges come our way. I am confident that you will continue to uphold the same high standard you have established in Balad.

Col. Sherrell and I had the honor of presenting battlefield promotions to five of the Task Force 49's outstanding Soldiers. The battlefield promotions are a one-year pilot program introduced by the Army on April 1 to recognize exceptional Soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. It's an outstanding way to recognize true leadership ability and potential. The Soldiers we promoted were already performing well above the ranks they held, so these promotions are certainly well deserved.

Even though our OPTEMPO has been at an all-time high, the brigade still found time for some much-needed morale events. Task Force 49 was



tasked to spearhead all of the events for LSA Anaconda's observance of Asian-Pacific Heritage Month, including a 5k fun run and a luau. Both events were a success and went off without a hitch.

The 5k run brought out approximately 500 runners from all over LSA Anaconda – Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors, Marines and civilians. The 412<sup>th</sup> Aviation Support Battalion did a great job putting the event together. Kudos to Task Force Ready for organizing the excellent luau on May 24. They had some truly expert support from the Hawaii National Guard Soldiers of B Company, 2-147 Assault Helicopter Battalion. The company's Soldiers cooked an amazing amount of authentic Hawaiian food – including two whole pigs – provided a live band and put up decorations their Family Readiness Group and friends

back home sent them just for the event. Thank you to Task Force 49 Equal Opportunity Advisor, Master Sgt. Kirk Simpson, for his outstanding leadership of these events.

Because we are at the biggest logistics hub in Iraq, we continue to receive high-level visits. This month Gen. Benjamin S. Griffin, the commander of the Army Materiel Command, Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Mellinger and key members of the AMC staff visited our headquarters for a briefing on Task Force 49's contributions to the fight.

After half a year we have settled into our roles and know our duties inside-out, but don't let that lull you into complacency. Be aware that when complacency sets in, the potential for accidents increases. Leaders, don't let your guard down. Continue to maintain the same high safety standards that have sustained us for the past six months.

It's good to see many of our Soldiers getting the opportunity to reset with some well deserved R&R. The time on leave goes by quickly, but a change in scenery and time with loved ones are important factors in keeping our Soldiers fit to fight. As always, we greatly appreciate the strong support of our families and friends back home. Thanks for all that you do for our Warriors as we continue the fight.

May God bless you, your families, our Soldiers and our great Nation.

## Talon 7 Out!

CSM Richard A. Mitchell  
Command Sergeant Major  
Task Force 49



Photo by Master Sgt. Eric Reinhardt

## Four-star visit

Task Force 49 Commander, Col. Chandler C. Sherrell, welcomes Gen. Benjamin S. Griffin, commander of the Army Materiel Command, to the brigade headquarters. The AMC is responsible for the Army's materiel readiness, including materiel development, logistics power projection and sustainment. During their visit Gen. Griffin, AMC Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Mellinger and key members of the AMC staff received a briefing on Task Force 49's contribution to the fight in Iraq.

# TF 49's fixed-wing unit shoulders heavy load

By MASTER SGT. ERIC REINHARDT  
Task Force 49 PAO

One of the first things you see as you enter Task Force Hawk's headquarters is its mission statement framed prominently in the hallway.

It, of course, describes the unit's charge to provide fixed-wing aviation support to Multi-National Corps – Iraq combat aviation brigade.

It also leaves spaces for the Task Force Hawk operations cell to regularly pencil in updated statistics on the unit's accomplishments to date. The day *The Desert Talon* stopped by it read:

- Total passengers moved: 25,987
- Total cargo moved: 9,088,036 pounds
- Total trucks off the road: 908
- Total Soldiers off the road: 45,400

Though rotary-wing aircraft make up the bulk of Task Force 49's stable, the brigade's fixed-wing unit, Task Force Hawk, shoulders much of the workload.

Task Force Hawk has moved tens of thousands of passengers and millions of pounds of cargo since its arrival last November.

"We're the workhorse of theater movements," said Task Force Hawk Commander Lt. Col. Craig Jack. "We're a reliable source of transportation."

The unit takes particular pride in keeping Soldiers and convoys off the roads and out of harm's way.



File photo

A Task Force Hawk C-23 Sherpa crew loads medical supplies. As of May 11, the task force had moved more than 9 million pounds of supplies throughout the theater of operations.

"We've got a small crew here," said the unit's acting Command Sergeant Major, 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Michael Mendoza, "but we keep thousands of trucks and Soldiers off the road and safe from dangers like IEDs."

Task Force Hawk is a forward element of the 244th Aviation Brigade based at Fort Sheridan, Ill. As part of

Task Force 49 in Iraq, it's the only Army fixed-wing unit in theater.

Perhaps its most visible mission is VIP transport. Task Force Hawk's UC-35 passenger jets and C-12 turbo-props fly military brass and distinguished visitors throughout the Middle East, to Africa and many points in Europe.

The heavy lifting is done courtesy of Theater Aviation Company 6 and its fleet of C-23 Sherpa transport planes, or "boxcars," as they're called, owing to their starkly utilitarian design.

The company's roster includes Active- and Reserve-Component Soldiers from 10 states, hence its motto "Out of Many, One."

One common thread that binds them is a combined wealth of flying experience, according to TAC 6 Commander, Maj. George Wingblade.

"I'd say altogether, they have 150 years of flying experience – easily," he said. "That depth of experience is what has made this company successful."

That kind of skill has helped pilots and crews master the daily challenges of flying combat missions in Iraq, bad weather and adapting to new procedures, according to Wingblade.

Civilian contractors from DynCorp International and M7 Aerospace maintain the aircraft.

Keeping the aircraft in perfect running order in Iraq is a constant challenge, according to C-12 Mechanic Jay Taylor.

"The work isn't much different from civilian aviation, but you have to deal with more extreme conditions like dust and heat," Taylor said.

Even so, the unit's facilities have greatly improved since Army fixed-wing units first set up shop in Balad, according to Lt. Col. Jack, who is on his third tour here. The unit now has hard-stand office space in its hangar.

"Last time I was here we were here, our headquarters was in wooden huts," he said.



Photos by Master Sgt. Eric Reinhardt

(Above) Spc. Pamela Scott, Pfc. Douglas Smith and Sgt. Kelly Hein handle a constant stream of calls in the Task Force Hawk flight-operations section.

(Right) M7 Aerospace maintenance contractor Jose F. Rivera checks controls on a Task Force Hawk's C-23 Sherpa.







(Left) Staff Sgt. Glen Waters, a crew chief with B Company, 5-158th General Support Aviation Battalion, readies for an air assault mission.

(Below) At a combat outpost, crew members load up supplies for the Soldiers they will take to a remote site.

Photos by Master Sgt. Eric Reinhardt

## Big Windy on the frontlines

Since arriving in theater last summer, B Co., 5th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, better known throughout Task Force 49 as "Big Windy," has flown more than 800 missions, clocking over 8,335 flight hours. They have moved 64,845 passengers and about 9.5 million pounds of cargo in their time at LSA Anaconda.

Big Windy's missions range from general support to air assault, moving Soldiers and supplies in and out of remote areas for combat missions, as they did the night *The Desert Talon* went along for a ride. The company has flown more than 200 such missions in its time at LSA Anaconda.

"Flying on [air assault missions] is exciting and it gives you a sense of accomplishment compared to some of the other less glamorous missions that we fly," said 1st Lt. Balint Simsik, CH-47 pilot and assistant operations officer for B Company, 5-158th General Support Aviation Battalion. "It's an extraordinary mission set that most units don't get to perform. It's exciting and you feel as though you're directly participating in the war effort."



Pilot-in-command, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Dave Ramsey, second from left, briefs his crew before an air assault mission. From left, Pfc. Xaysanakhone Voravong, door gunner; Cpl. Evan Templeton, flight engineer; Staff Sgt. Christopher Norris, crew chief; Chief Warrant Officer 2 Eddie Perrone, pilot.





# Asian-Pacific Heritage Month



Photos by Master Sgt. Eric Reinhardt

(Top left) Runners leap from the starting line of the Asian-Pacific Heritage Month 5 km Fun Run May 18 at Holt Stadium. About 500 people took part in the run, sponsored by the 412th Aviation Support Battalion. (Top right) Soldiers from B Company, 2-147 Assault Helicopter Battalion carve up a freshly roasted pig May 24 at the brigade's Asian-Pacific Heritage Month Luau, organized by the 5-158th General Support Aviation Battalion. (Bottom right) The Stars and Stripes and the Hawaii state flag wave over the luau. (Bottom left) B Company, 2-147 Soldiers do a traditional Hawaiian "haka" war dance with accompaniment from the company's house band.

## Asian-Pacific

### Continued from Page 1

members of the brigade's B Company, 1-147 Assault Helicopter Battalion, from the Hawaii Army National Guard.

The unit includes a restaurateur, musicians versed in the Aloha State's traditional music, and many veterans of luaus back home.

In addition to island music, the band EFP, made up of Soldiers from 2-159 Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, entertained the crowd with some classic-rock anthems.

"The bands and the food really made the event," said the luau's organizer, Sgt. David Shafer, of the 5-158th General Support Aviation Battalion. "The Hawaiians did a lot. At one point, I tried to volunteer and help them out with food, but they said 'don't worry

about it. This is what we do all the time back home.'

Sgt. 1st Class Lawrence Mochizuki is a Black Hawk crew chief in Iraq, but in his civilian life, he runs a restaurant on the island of Hawaii (or "The Big Island" as it's called to avoid confusion with the state as a whole.)

Mochizuki used a homemade marinade and a roasting box for the pigs, and was able to get many of the key ingredients from his company's Family Readiness Group and friends back home.

"The biggest challenge was acquiring fresh food products such as vegetables and not having a kitchen to work in," he said. "All of the food and accessories that we needed to make the luau a success were sent from home in time for the event. This event had not even a quarter of food that would be served at a luau back home in the islands."

He said the event was a good morale builder for his company.

"Our soldiers willingly gave up personal time to take part in the preparation of the luau. We never thought 1,942 individuals would attend this event," Mochizuki said.

Despite the overwhelming crowds, Mochizuki and crew managed to prepare enough food to last well into the event.

"We were looking at about 900 people showing up – when I got the final count of 1,946 it was a little shocker," Shafer said. "Still, we didn't start running out of food until about two hours into it – and that's after a lot of people went back for seconds."

Good weather also had a role in drawing a big crowd, Shafer added.

"We had blue skies and clear water," he said. "We couldn't have asked for a better day."





Photo by Ronald H. Toland Jr., U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach PAO

Family members, civilians and local nationals of U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach set the armed forces record May 14 at Illesheim Army Airfield, Germany, for the world's largest yellow ribbon formation - 1,358 people. The previous record of about 800 was set in October 2005 at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

## Ansbach breaks record with show of support

*U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach PAO*  
ANSBACH, Germany – An outpouring of support for deployed Soldiers from Ansbach, Germany turned into a record-breaking phenomenon May 14 at Illesheim Army Airfield.

Soldiers, family members, civilians and local nationals of the U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach community joined to set the unofficial armed forces record for the largest yellow ribbon formation – a mass of 1,358 people.

The previous record of about 800 people was set by the Marines of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar,

Calif., in October 2005. The unofficial record is not registered with Guinness World Record.

The event, orchestrated by U.S. Army Garrison Ansbach, featured a concert by country singer Granger Smith, prize drawings, children activities and food sales.

It was about more than breaking a record, according to Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation officials.

"It's about the community, getting the community together and of course about the soldiers who are deployed and are getting deployed," said Case Malloy, FMWR recreation division chief.

Family members said they embraced the opportunity to come together and show unified support to their soldiers deployed in harm's way.

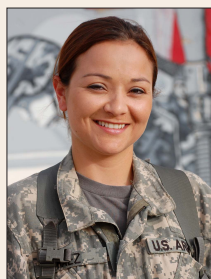
"The Yellow Ribbon event sort of gives us an opportunity to get together and show our support, not only of our spouses down range, but also of each other," said Leeann Swartz, whose husband is deployed to LSA Anaconda, Iraq with 5-158th Aviation Regiment.

"This is one of the big events that bring us together. It's like one more milestone toward getting through the end of deployment. It was great, I loved it! I think it's fantastic."

## Flight surgeon society honors TF49 doctors

Two Task Force 49 medical officers recently earned top honors from the Society of U.S. Army Flight Surgeons for their service at the brigade's Troop Medical Clinic.

Capt. Abigail Raez, of the 412th Aviation Support Battalion was awarded the 2007 Theodore Lyster Flight Surgeon of the Year Award.



Capt. Abigail Raez

The award honors the "Flight Surgeon or Aeromedical Physician Assistant in the Active or Reserve Component who has made the most significant contribution to Army Aviation Medicine during the year as observed by his or her fellow Flight Surgeons, Aviators, or Chain of Command," according to SoUSAFS criteria.

"Dr. Raez is an incredibly dedicated physician who recently completed her board

certification while deployed to Iraq, seeing patients and helping stand up the field TMC which supports nearly 10,000 Soldiers and civilians in LSA Anaconda, Iraq," wrote 412<sup>th</sup> Aviation Support Battalion Executive Officer Maj. Daniel Bartlett in his recommendation letter to the society's awards committee.

The society awarded a 2007 Outstanding Achievement Award to Capt. Eric Jacobsen, of the 5-158 General Support Aviation Battalion, currently serving in Basrah.

# Hang in there, like Clint 'Scrap Iron' Courtney

CHAPLAIN (CAPT.) CODY VEST  
2-159 ARB Chaplain

It's springtime and baseball season is well underway. Ready for a baseball trivia question?

Who is Clint Courtney?

If you're unsure, don't bother requesting the answer from the Baseball Hall of Fame. Clint never even came close to making that honor. In fact, it's very doubtful that his picture appeared on any bubble gum cards.

This guy wasn't a legend in his own time – not even in his own mind. He was only a memory maker for his family, and a few die-hard fans who were inspired by his tremendous fortitude. Clint played catcher for the Baltimore Orioles in the 1950s.

## How he got his name

During his career he earned the nickname of "Scrap Iron," implying that he was hard, weathered, tough.

Old Scrap broke no records – only bones. He had little power or speed on the base paths.

As for grace and style, he made the easiest play look rather difficult. But



Chaplain  
Cody Vest

armed with mitt and mask, Scrap Iron never flinched from any challenge. Batters often missed the ball and caught his shin. Their foul tips nipped his elbow. Runners fiercely plowed into him, spikes first, as he defended home plate. Though often doubled over in agony and flattened in a heap of dust, Clint Courtney never quit. Invariably, he'd slowly get up, shake off the dust, punch the pocket of his mitt

once, twice, then nod to his pitcher to throw another one.

The game would go on and Courtney with it – scarred, bruised, clutching his arm in pain, but determined to continue. He looked like a POW with tape, splints, braces, and other kinds of paraphernalia that wounded people wear.

Some made fun of him — calling him a masochist. Insane. Others remember him as a true champion.

I'm going to make a guess about why ol' Scrap Iron hung in there in the midst of the pain and suffering. Do you have a guess? I don't think it was for money. Remember, in the 1950's baseball players didn't make millions playing, nor did they get mega bucks on advertisement endorsements.

## For the love of the game

I think he played for the love of the game. This guy really loved baseball and he was willing to go through the suffering just to be able to play.

It's tough being deployed and I think it's even tougher being the spouse of a deployed soldier. We get our bumps and bruises during separation, but why do we continue to "put up with it?" I think it is love. Love for our

country, love for our fellow soldiers. Spouses do it because of the love of their soldiers.

Let's not forget why we do what we do. Let's regain our focus.

Instead of focusing on the problems and pain in the deployment, let's focus on the "love" that gave us the opportunity to be here.

"Let's not forget why we do what we do. Let's regain our focus."

# Souvenirs from Iraq - Sometimes you can't take it with you

By CAPT. JOSEPH WILKINSON  
Task Force 49 Trial Counsel

Some of our readers are coming close to a redeployment, and I hope all of us are getting there eventually.

This is a little reminder about what you can and can't take home with you (or send home ahead of you).

For "war trophies" the answer is simple: you can't. War trophies are items captured from the former Iraqi military or left behind by the former Iraqi government, not us, and we cannot take them home with us.

Legitimate souvenirs are something else – items that you purchase from the PX or other vendors such as at the bazaar.

These aren't war trophies, and you may be able to bring them home – provided you don't violate General Order No. 1, DOD policy, or customs regulations in the process.

Obviously, if you're not allowed to possess something *at all*, you're not allowed to take it home – so forget about privately owned firearms, alcohol, pornography, archaeological treasures, photos of enemy casualties, animals, drug paraphernalia, or unexploded ordnance. (A hookah isn't drug

paraphernalia – it's designed for tobacco, after all.)

If you purchased an item from a vendor, but it used to be military equipment, you can still bring it home if you get approval from your company commander.

This doesn't include firearms, ammunition, or shell casings (those are strictly forbidden) but it does include bayonets and nonlethal items such as helmets, insignia, flags, and posters.

You have to fill out (and your Company Commander has to sign) DD Form 603-1, you can download a copy of this form at the following link: <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/eforms/dd0603-1.pdf>.

## Rules on other items

■ Cuban cigars are forbidden because they can not be imported legally into the United States. Don't try taking them home.

■ Sand, rocks, plants and insects to include scorpions and other things like that are forbidden.

■ Safety hazards are forbidden – in particular, cigarette lighters can't go on the plane, checked or carry-on,



Capt. Joseph  
Wilkinson

except for disposable lighters. You can bring up to four books of matches in a carry-on bag. You can bring liquids, gels, and aerosols, but only in containers weighing 3 ounces or less.

■ Prescription drugs – You can only bring them if your own name is on the prescription. Keep them in the bottle with your name, and do not mix different kinds of pills in one container – if you do, customs will seize them.

## Customs inventory

With respect to your movie collection, if the movies are copies you purchased at the Iraqi Bazaar, you can only bring one copy of each film home with you.

It's also important to note that customs will inventory your belongings item by item, i.e., if you have 100 books and movies, your fellow Soldiers will have to wait while the customs official inspects every single one of them. You can save time by mailing home personal items.

Safe travels, everyone!



# XO dethroned, flees to Cancun

By MAJ. JAMES JONES

Former Task Force 49 Executive Officer

Here ye, Here ye, thy time has come. Let it be known across the land that the XO has been dethroned. It has been deemed that the title that hath been bestowed upon my head hath now been taken away. For a job well done you may say. Nay, for a heavier burden that which comes fraught with many a late night, yea upon me will be bestowed the office of the OPORD, Realm of the Repeated Ringing (phone), the Throne of the Terrible Tasking, the Mantle of Mission, the Bastogne of Battle Captains, the Den of DTU, the Consumer of Caffeine. If you haven't figured it out, I am changing jobs, but not until I get back from R&R – in CANCUN, BABY! I will be selling my "Ex-XO Gone Wild" video when I return, \$19.99 for the unrated version, cash only please.

## Dear Ex-XO,

I heard you just had your 40<sup>th</sup> birthday. How does it feel to be old? It must suck.

- Capt. Sedlacek

## Dear Miss "I think I'm younger than I

**really am":** I thought it would too; but as I was drinking my eighth margarita, staring out at the beautiful white sand and watching all of the truly young ladies walking by my chair showering me with looks that could only be interpreted by drunk old guys as "that guy is hot and I really want some of that," I came to the conclusion that when I'm drunk it really doesn't matter how old I am, 'cause the ladies all love me. I'm actually thinking about getting a leopard-skin banana hammock (Speedo), 'cause all of the old guys have 'em and, as their junk sags, it actually makes them more attractive to the ladies.

## Dear Ex-XO

I was wondering if knowing how to speak Spanish is a must when going on vacation to Cancun.

- Pvt. Pasty White Gringo

Dear PWG: I have found that my D-plusers in Spanish class have come in very handy here. When conversing with the local populace, for instance. Example:

"Hola, Como esta su mama es muy grande"

Which means, "Hello how are you?" Locals here don't appear to be very personable in the morning though – especially after I greet them.

"Me juevos es muy poquito!"

Which means: "I would like some eggs with breakfast." They must really like their eggs here, because they're always laughing and joking when I order them. The cooks are so crazy.

"Quein es tu papi?"

"Where is your father little girl?" Most girls here must not like their fathers, because they always run away screaming.

I am thinking about starting up Spanish lessons for all Soldiers when I return from Mexico. I think I have truly found my calling. **[Editor's note: We consulted someone who speaks a little Portuguese, which we've heard is a bit like Spanish, to verify the phrases above: "Hello. How is your very large mother?" My eggs are very small" and "Who's your daddy?"]**

## Dear Ex-XO,

I have been trying to lose some weight and was wondering if you could recommend some diet that would not leave me hungry, yet ensure I show weight loss.

- Capt. Big Boned in Balad

**Capt. Fatty:** May I recommend the Chaplain Vanderjagt Balad Diet and Workout Routine.

## The Diet:

- If the menu card above the dish does not have the calories listed, the food has no calories and therefore you can eat all you want.

- If the card says the deep fried stick of butter has only 15 calories then it does. Who are you to question?

- Gravy is not in any food group and therefore has no calories and can be put on top of anything.

- If it's your birthday, any calories you eat do not count. This also applies if it's someone else's birthday. All you have to do is prove someone was born on that day.

## The Workout

- Weight loss is cumulative. If you lose a pound today, gain a pound tomorrow and then lose the same pound the next day you have lost 2 pounds. You only count the loss!

- If you work out and your body is sore, you don't have to work out again until you're no longer sore.

- If you work out it's mandatory that you add another meal to your day.

- Walking to the DFAC is considered a workout. Hopefully these tips have been helpful.

## Please send your questions to:

Maj. James Jones

"Ask the Ex-XO"

HHC TF 49

APO AE 09391

Or email them to: hawktwosix@yahoo.com



Ask the Ex-XO

## "Ask the Ex-XO" Caption Contest! Big Prizes!\*

\*not really  
Come up with a nifty caption for this photo and e-mail it to Task Force 49 PAO at: [eric.reinhardt@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:eric.reinhardt@iraq.centcom.mil) If our panel of amateurs deems it brilliant, we'll run it in the next edition of The Desert Talon. Deadline is June 14.

