



# Lightning Weekly

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APR 13, 2009

## Soldiers Train on MRAP Vehicles



Sgt. Randy Schafer, 34, of Beaumont, Texas, check with crew members to make sure he can safely lower the rear hatch.



Sgt. Randy Schafer, 34, of Beaumont, Texas, demonstrates how to safely dismount an MRAP vehicle after exiting through the emergency escape hatch.

**STORY and PHOTOS BY**  
**Spc. Daniel Nelson**  
**145<sup>th</sup> Mobile Public Affairs Detachment**

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE MAREZ, MOSUL, Iraq** – A group of approximately nine Soldiers stationed in Mosul, Iraq, at both FOB Marez and FOB Diamondback, attended a driver's training course on mine resistant armor protected vehicles between April 7 and April 10.

Since the start of the war in Iraq back in March 2003, the military has faced many environmental and tactical differences from the previous wars fought by the U.S.

Therefore, the need arose to develop a vehicle that can provide adequate safety to the servicemembers serving in war zones.

Developed to withstand an improvised explosive device, the U.S. has employed the MRAP vehicle. There are different variations

of MRAP vehicles, but the concept remains the same for all; to greater the odds of surviving an explosion and engage the enemy with fire superiority.

Every Soldier must attend a driver's training course for any vehicle that they have not operated before. This is to familiarize them with how the vehicle drives and ensure each of them can conduct a thorough preventive maintenance checks and service.

The driver's training course was given in blocks of instruction and taught by knowledgeable civilian instructors who are employed by DynCorp, the company that co-developed the MRAP vehicles.

Operating in unusual conditions, proper vehicle maintenance, use of the driver's vision enhancement, and self-recovery were the areas of focus for the course. The aim was to help prevent possible mechanical issues from occurring during operations

outside the wire, and effectively and efficiently use the vehicles winch or tow capabilities, if ever the situation were to arise.

Each Soldier had to drive an MRAP vehicle on a course that forced them to react to different terrain and obstacles while an instructor was guiding them through from the truck commander, or rights side, seat of the vehicle. In addition, the Soldiers drove a night course, which was used to get them comfortable with maneuvering such a large vehicle safely throughout different obstacles during low-light conditions.

Upon completion of the course, the Soldiers had received training required to operate both the MaxxPro and MaxxPro Plus series MRAP vehicles. The knowledge and training will better equip them to handle their missions and any unexpected occurrences on the battlefield.

**Tropic Lightning!**

# School Improvements Coming to Zaggurbanya Village

**STORY and PHOTO BY**

**Sgt. Angie Johnson**

**3<sup>rd</sup> IBCT, 25<sup>th</sup> ID Public Affairs Office**

**TUZ, Iraq** – The Banyas School in Zaggurbanya Village has no running water, zero playground equipment and a serious lack of chalk.

But that's all about to change.

Capt. Mike Keifman, the chaplain for Special Troops Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, and his Iraqi Army counterparts are charged with improving the school before the beginning of the next school year.

Keifman and his team, comprised of Soldiers from his battalion and men from the Iraqi Army's 16<sup>th</sup> Brigade, 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, visited the school near Tuz, April 2, assessing the problems and talking with teachers and students.

The 135-student school supports kids from both the Zaggurbanya Village and the neighboring Sherka Village; they teach both boys and girls from kindergarten through high school. They don't have any air conditioning units, but even if they did, there's no electricity to power them.

The headmaster, Mohammad Abdulla Salih, is full of concern for his students. It's been a long time since his school has been operating to its fullest potential – but seeing the teamwork between coalition forces and the IA increased his optimism tenfold.

"Here's what's going to happen," said Keifman. "I'm going to take this list back, work with the director general of education and the city council, and we'll work on the paperwork together. I'll help the DG submit it and once it's been approved by the ministry of education, we can get started."

This signals a move away from Iraqi dependence on the help of coalition forces. Coalition forces aren't supplying everything the school needs – the government of Iraq is, through the IA.

Building good relationships between locals and the Iraqi Army is another fundamental part of the operation; after years of oppression, many Iraqi citizens are still skittish around their military. To help establish trust, soldiers from the 16<sup>th</sup> Bde. went into Banyas' classrooms, handing out



Staff Sgt. Josh Remmark of Canton, S.D., writes the word 'cat' on a chalkboard at the Banyas School in Zaggurbanya Village, April 2 as Iraqi soldier Shwan Ibrahim Mowlud looks on.

"Iraqi Army Values" dog tags and joking with the children.

Hardi Hassan Mustafa and Shwan Ibrahim Mowlud were two of the IA soldiers mingling with the kids. They knelt and chatted, wiped dirt-smudged faces and ruffled the hair of children who, a year ago, would have run away from them because of the uniforms they wear.

Company A of the Special Troops Bn. often visits schools in the area, so the coalition Soldiers have plenty of experience dealing with local kids.

"My favorite part about this kind of mission is making the kids happy," said Pfc. Anthony Moore of Gulfport, Miss. "They're always smiling – I love the expressions on their faces."

Moore says he's seen thousands of Iraqi children, and they all ask the same thing, "Mister, give me pen! Give me candy!"

Although he doesn't always carry candy and usually gives away all the pens he's carrying, the kids are just as content to cluster around him and practice their English.

When Moore's daughter Kamani gets old

enough to ask why he was in Iraq, he plans on telling her he came to help win the hearts and minds of the people. "And you know what? I'm going to tell her it worked," he says.

Staff Sgt. Josh Remmark of Canton, S.D., was excited to have a chance to interact with the kids inside one of the classrooms. "They were all just staring at me," he said, "so I started drawing on the chalkboard and they were saying what I was drawing in English. Those kids are so smart."

"I had a t-shirt with me that was meant for some Iraqi kid," said Spc. Charles Wagner, of Fort Campbell, Ky. "I wrote the word 'elephant' on the chalkboard, and nobody could read it. So I drew a picture and this kid jumped up and said, 'Elephant!' I handed him the t-shirt, and he smiled at me. It's so cool because we're bringing something nice into their lives instead of the chaos they're used to."

"They are always so excited to see us when we go out there," said Keifman, "and that makes everything worthwhile."

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## Bara'ia Families Receive Food, Water and Farming Supplies

**STORY and PHOTOS BY**

**Sgt. Ian Terry**

**3rd IBCT, 25th ID Public Affairs Office**

**TIKRIT, Iraq** – Multi-National Division-North Soldiers delivered dozens of humanitarian aid packages to the Bara'ia neighborhood near Samarra, March 31.

Soldiers from the Spartan platoon of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, delivered several cases of Halal meals to families in the neighborhood.

"Bara'ia is an extremely impoverished area of Samarra, and local residents are not used to receiving humanitarian aid from government or coalition forces," said 1st Lt. Daniel Flynn, the platoon leader. "The last time most of these folks saw people in uniform, they were kicking down doors and arresting people."

The local citizens appeared cautious at first, but quickly warmed up to the Soldiers when it became apparent they were on scene to help.

In addition to food and water, coalition and Iraqi security forces delivered several large rolls of plastic, useful in the cultivation of crops. "It is difficult to grow here, sometimes," said Abdul Hassani, a local farmer. "This will help us very much. We are very grateful."

The Bara'ia community is home to two small shops, a makeshift soccer field, and several acres of farmland. Residents do not have access to clean drinking water, and residents draw their water directly from the Tigris River.

The nearby village of Al Rega, where a water treatment facility was recently opened, has pledged to provide assistance to neighboring villages, including Bara'ia.



Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Jones Jr., command sergeant major, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, hands a Halal meal to a young Iraqi girl in Bara'ia, Samarra, Iraq.

# LANDING ZONE NAMED AFTER FALLEN BATTALION COMMANDER



A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter sits on the newly named "Derby LZ" landing zone on Forward Operating Base Marez, in Mosul, Iraq, March 20th, 2009. The landing zone was renamed in honor of Lt. Col. Gary Derby and four members of his personal security detail who were lost to a suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device in February.

**STORY and PHOTOS BY**

**Pfc. Jared Sollars**

**145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment**

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE MAREZ, MOSUL, Iraq** – Propeller wash from a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter christened the official renaming of a landing zone on Forward Operating Base Marez, March 20.

The landing zone was renamed to honor the memory of Lt. Col. Gary Derby, former commander of the 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, who, along with four members of his personal security detail, were victims of a suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device in February. Derby and his team were en route to a combat outpost in Mosul to conduct a combined operations patrol with Iraqi security forces when the attack occurred.

Col. Gary J. Volesky, commander of 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, gathered with fellow soldiers to memorialize Derby and his team's dedication to the preservation of freedom both at home and abroad.

"We will never forget our fallen Soldiers," Volesky said. "They were great Americans who fought for the freedom of others."

Command Sgt. Maj. James Pippin, who cut the ribbon to reveal a new sign

designating the landing zone as "Derby LZ," bypassed the proverbial scissors and sliced through the ribbon with a combat knife, a gesture he felt that Derby would deem appropriate. The sign itself was erected as a reminder that fallen Soldiers should never be forgotten.

"This will be a standing memorial that shows we will never forget our Soldiers," said Volesky.



Col. Gary Volesky speaks to fellow soldiers about remembering fallen Soldiers like Lt. Col. Gary Derby and his personal security detail at "Derby LZ" on Forward Operating Base Marez, in Mosul, Iraq, March 20th, 2009. The landing zone was renamed in honor of Lt. Col. Gary Derby and four members of his personal security detail who were lost to a suicide vehicle-borne improvised explosive device in February.

# This Week In TROPIC LIGHTNING History

## TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS

**APRIL 15, 1966 – VIETNAM** – Flying artillery observance in a virtually defenseless OH23G helicopter is hardly the easiest job in the world.

Unlike the heavily armed UH1B ("Huey") choppers the bubble-headed observation helicopters are relatively helpless.

Nevertheless, they bravely fly solo deep into enemy territory, report hostile positions and call in artillery to destroy them.

I went up recently with Captain John W. Kearns, of Salem, W. Va., the pilot of Angel, an observation helicopter that has seen more than 250 hours of flight time and 400 combat sorties in little more than two months in support of 1st Battalion, 8th Artillery.

Leaving 8th Arty, and the dust of Cu Chi, the helicopter headed north toward Ho Bo Woods, an area controlled by the Viet Cong for more than 15 years.

We skimmed over shining, green, rubber plantations, patches of rice paddies and farm land. The earth below was beautiful except for craters, the end result of American firepower.

"We have heavy machinegun fire at coordinates 645, 242," the radio voice from fire direction center said.

And that's where we were heading.

"He just notified me to see if we can spot the machineguns, the captain said. The bad part about today is that the ceiling is so low. If you can't get above 1,500 feet, the

small arm's fire may get you." Capt. Kearns pointed out a spot near a rubber plantation where he had evacuated casualties when 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry, ran into trouble.

Below we saw what appeared to be a burning tree in the middle of a field, but we moved on.

We could see two Hueys in the distance.

"There's two or three V.C. down there now," Capt. Kearns said suddenly. "They're probably messengers. See, they jumped into that group of trees."

Capt. Kearns radioed the coordinates of the location to the fire direction center. The white phosphorous marked the explosion of the first 105mm shell, and the captain was correct. He called back, "Left 150, drop 200."

"Those people haven't moved yet," he stated. "There's no trenches. They can't get out."

After two adjustments, a volley of six 105mm shells thundered on target.

"If there was anybody in there," Capt. Kearns said, "they're gone. Now we'll try to take a look at the machinegun emplacement and see if anyone's there."

We would not go down to the road for a body count. It would be too dangerous.

"You can see the trench down there," he said a few minutes later. I looked down but could see nothing. He was expecting me to see positions he had trained years to

recognize.

"If you see a flash, let me know," he said, as he swung the helicopter in an arc, staying a safe distance from the suspected emplacement.

"I don't see any movement," he said, "but I'm going to fire at it just in case."

"We're receiving small arms fire," Capt. Kearns announced, more to the fire direction center than to me.

Why couldn't they hit us? We seemed to offer a big, slow target, yet at 1,500 to 2,000 feet we were a minimum of 800 meters laterally from the emplacements, and it would take an expert to score.

The white phosphorous shell hit. The captain made one correction and sent two volleys in. Twelve shells exploded. They looked like they hit on target. Capt. Kearns moved closer and dropped the helicopter a few hundred feet.

"I'm just waiting for more fire," he said, matter of factly. "You're just like a guinea pig out here, but that's the only way to find out if they're still there."

We moved even closer, but no life stirred from the machine gun emplacement. The area around it was now scarred with craters.

"If they don't shoot at us now," Capt. Kearns said, "I don't know what they're waiting on."

They didn't shoot; maybe they were dead or maybe they were waiting for tomorrow.

## TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS

**APRIL 14, 1969 – LAI THIEU, VIETNAM** – As Tropic Lightning troops of the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry find and engage the enemy in the scorching paddies and hedgerows of the Trang Bang area five miles northwest of Cu Chi, they repeatedly find themselves in temporary possession of bunker and tunnel complexes which the enemy has hastily abandoned.

To assure that he will never return to his lair, the demolition engineers with the Warrior Battalion must work swiftly and with skill to destroy Charlie's underground handiwork.

On an operation eight miles north of Cu Chi, Alpha Company Warriors routed an estimated reinforced enemy platoon from a dense maze of bamboo. Driving into the enemy camp behind a fierce barrage of small arms the Tropic Lightning troopers killed 18 of the VC and NVA soldiers and took complete control of their entrenched fighting positions and bunkers.

Swiftly locating the six major fortifications in the camp, the demolition men put in a call for heavy explosives. Within minutes a Huey slick was enroute with a load of 15 pound shape charges.

With just a short half-hour left before an eagle flight was to lift the weary company out of the area, the engineers had to accomplish the monumental task of destroying the six huge bunkers and a number of smaller fortifications. A demo team set to work.

Directing the distribution of the heavy charges to strategic locations, the 65th Engineer Battalion experts started at the far end of the complex. Working leap-frog fashion, meeting only to exchange tools and cut carefully measured lengths of fuse from a roll of orange cord, the team set quickly to work.

Expertly crimping delicate, high explosive blasting caps to the time fuse and inserting them into a small hole in the end of the cone-shaped charges, the team used hand signals to indicate when a charge was ready to be ignited.

After he ignited the first fuse, one of the team members rose and raced to the location of the second charge, where his comrade was already preparing to light the fuse.

"Three minutes," he called as he passed enroute to number three where 30 pounds of explosives were waiting. He dropped to his knees and worked quickly.

Behind him now were two lighted fuses. His comrade passed him heading for number four. Just as the third fuse was ignited, the first thundering explosion shook the countryside.

"All charges had to be blown before the choppers landed," said 65th Engineer Battalion First Lieutenant Lovell Nester of St. Joseph, Mo. "Working this 'leap-frog' method is not standard procedure but the men on the scene were competent, well-trained soldiers and they made the decisions based on time available and the job to be done."

Just before the eagle flight roared in over a distant tree line, the two engineers turned and looked back.

Two meters away the ground erupted. A plume of smoke and debris burst silently a hundred feet into the air. A second later the sound came.

Turning back toward the landing zone the team signaled, "Last charge. All clear" to Alpha Company commander First Lieutenant Richard N. Wiggins of St. Petersburg, Fla.

The choppers were on their way.





Maj. Gen. Robert L. Caslen, Jr.

## LIGHTNING 6 WEEKLY EDITORIAL

### DIYALA PROVINCE, BAGHDAD'S STRATEGIC FLANK

Second only to Ninewa Province where the city of Mosul is located, Iraq's Diyala Province remains the most volatile and restive area in Multi-National Division – North's area of responsibility. Although security is greatly improved relative to pre surge statistics and attack trends, the province still sees daily attacks against Iraqi and Coalition security forces. Extremists and terrorist organizations still use remote, isolated areas of Diyala for refuge and as waypoints along routes used plan and prepare insurgent operations and to smuggle weapons and personnel.

Located at the southern end of the province to the south of Balad Ruz is a chain of smaller communities that were largely abandoned as families fled seeking safety from the agents of Al Qaeda in Iraq. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi sought to establish the capital of his future terrorist caliphate in this province. Those that remained were coerced and intimidated into supporting, even if passively, the presence of extremists. Coalition and Iraqi Army operations during the surge served to push insurgents out of the region, but were quickly moved to other locations allowing the insurgents that escaped to return and reestablish themselves.

In March of this year, as part of an operation named Wolf Pursuit, the 1<sup>st</sup> Stryker Brigade Combat Team of the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division assisted and supported the Iraqi Army's 5<sup>th</sup> Division to clear the area again of extremists. This time the Iraqi Army is staying to ensure the enemy cannot return. Wolf Pursuit is a part of a renewed effort by the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division to support and assist the Iraqi Army as they conduct true counter insurgency operations in regions that were previously isolated and for which the Iraqis simply did not have the manpower to deal with before.

The combined Iraqi Army and Coalition operation has yielded significant results. Once the residents of the communities south of Balad Ruz realized that the Iraqi Army had come to stay, families displaced from their homes began to return. Humanitarian supplies distributed by Iraqi Soldiers are rewarded by the trust of residents confident enough to resist the extremist and who provide information that helps locate caches and hideouts. These locations are quickly exploited by the combined Iraqi and Coalition team and generally lead to more information about extremist networks and their operations in Diyala and other provinces. Their ability to smuggle weapons and people and to facilitate attacks has been diminished.

The success of the operations so far has provided the Iraqi Army's 5<sup>th</sup> Division with new confidence in counter insurgency tactics and momentum to continue to pressure and pursue agile extremist networks. Likewise U.S. Army leaders and Soldiers have gained new insight and experience in transitioning to supporting and advising the Iraqi Army to plan and execute operations as the lead headquarters, a role that U.S. personnel will have to become increasingly more comfortable with in the months ahead. The bottom line is that Diyala Province is more secure now than before, the Iraqi people have more confidence in their Army, and the Iraqi Army is more capable of maintaining security for the people. There is still much work to be done before Iraqi Security Forces will be fully capable of completely independent security operations but the momentum is in the right direction.



**TROPIC LIGHTNING!**

**Robert L. Caslen, Jr.**  
**Major General, USA**  
**Commanding**

***Tropic Lightning!***

# NEWS FROM THE HOME FRONT

## HAWAII

**WAHIAWA, Hawaii** — When Dr. John Magauran began his medical career he never thought he'd chart a course as a country doctor.

Today he makes house calls. He listens patiently to a laundry list of ailments. And he never shows frustration.

That's why Magauran was nominated by Susanna Cheung, chief executive officer of Opportunities for the Retarded Inc. Magauran is one of the three men and two women to receive this year's Jefferson Awards for Public Service. The five will be recognized on Thursday at a luncheon at the Pacific Club.

"He is a mild-mannered man," Cheung said. "He has patience and will sit there for a long time and speak softly, smile and nod his head. He has an extremely good bedside manner."

When Magauran came to Hawai'i in 1996 it was to be a general internist. But life has a way of taking us along different paths, he said.

At the time he was running a 24-hour clinic in Waikiki and Cheung asked him to help with developmentally disabled clients in Wahiawa. Magauran started visiting them once a month and the next thing he knew he was there full time. Now he practices medicine solely in Wahiawa.

"I believe we need to advocate for the elderly and the developmentally disabled," Magauran said. "It is often the case that it is easier to get access to medicine if it's in an area they're comfortable in."

The 47-year-old Magauran also is the medical director of the newly built ORI Anuenue Hale Wellness Center next to Helemano Plantation.

"I can't believe that you can get an award for doing something you like," Magauran said. "There are people out there in the community who are involved with things and I didn't think I was doing anything special. I like to do this."

## ALASKA

**FAIRBANKS** — The popping of staple guns echoed through the new Tanana Valley Sportsmen's Association building on Saturday as Mike Tinker, Grant Lewis and Gary Brazo fastened a sheet of plastic vapor barrier to a wall of freshly-laid fiberglass insulation.

Nearby, Tom Plowman, Chris Plowman and Art Delaune prepared another wall for vapor barrier by measuring and cutting insulation and packing the slabs between studs in the wall.

The men joked as they worked. Brazo kidded Lewis about whether he had a license to operate the electric lift he was trying to maneuver, while Tinker chastised just about

anyone he could.

"This is starting to look like an Alyeska job," he said at one point. "We've got five guys standing around."

This wasn't the first Saturday afternoon the men had given up to work on the new TVSA building, and it wouldn't be the last, but they were having fun.

"Sometimes you wonder if it's all worth it, but it will be when we get the kids in here shooting," Tom Plowman said before climbing a ladder into the mezzanine to lay more insulation.

Piece by piece — and with lots of volunteer help — the new Tanana Valley Sportsmen's Association clubhouse and shooting range is rising from the ashes of the old log building that burned down two years ago.

"An architect told us if we hired it out, it would be

\$3 1/2 million," Lewis, the club president, said of the new building. "We're going to do as much of it as we can except the electrical because the state won't let us do that."

"Right now we've spent about \$1 million," he said. "Hopefully by the time we get the interior finished and the ventilation system in, we'll still be under \$2 1/2 million."

The old TVSA lodge, a log building that was more than 50 years old, burned to the ground on March 31, 2007.

The new TVSA building will be located in almost the same spot as the old one, just off Boat Street across Airport Way from Fred Meyer West.

The new building, which measures 72 feet by 168 feet, will feature two eight-lane shooting bays, two classrooms, a spacious gun vault, bathrooms, an office, a lobby and a state-of-the-art ventilation system.

"It's going to look nice when we get it done," Lewis said.

The club, which has about 150 members, has been hosting volunteer work parties each weekend. The same faces seem to show up each weekend, Lewis said, adding that more hands would be appreciated.

On Saturday, there were packages and piles of insulation strewn across the concrete floors. After the insulation and vapor barrier is up, volunteers will begin putting up sheetrock, Lewis said.

Before they could start laying insulation and putting up vapor barrier, club members had to chip a 3-inch layer of ice off the floor. A water line broke in November and flooded the building, Lewis said. The water froze, and it wasn't until this spring that the club hooked up a boiler and began pumping warm water into the heating coils in the floor to thaw the ice, which they then chipped out with shovels and pry bars.

"We hauled tons of ice out of here in wheelbarrows," Lewis said.

The TVSA, which has taught firearms safety to hundreds of youths through its 4-H, middle school and high school shooting programs, still needs to raise about \$1 million to complete the new building, Lewis estimated. The ventilation system alone likely will cost about \$250,000, he said.

"We've gotta sell some more land and get some more donations," Lewis said.

The club has sold five of seven riverfront lots it owned to help fund construction of the new building and donations have "just kind of been trickling in," Lewis said.

Even without the ventilation system, the club is hoping to have the range open for air rifle shooting this fall.

"Hopefully we'll get the kids in here shooting soon," Tom Plowman said.

## TEXAS

**CANTON, N.Y.** — There are signs the former Glass Onion restaurant may be reopening.

Alfred Cassara, who has the liquor license for the Tick Tock Inn on Hodskin Street, informed the village Feb. 12 that he planned to apply for a license for 25 Court St.

Mr. Cassara's brother, Richard N., told the village the same thing last fall, but the state Liquor Authority never received an application in his name.

On March 27, Alfred Cassara changed his information with the village, telling it the license applicant would be listed under Custmo Inc. He didn't return a phone call Friday asking for comment on his plans.

Both he and Richard Cassara have been active in Canton businesses as landlords and with Morgan's ice cream stand, Phoebe's restaurant and the Tick Tock Inn, which is for sale.

The Court Street building previously housed the Glass Onion, Cuca's, the Elegant Frog and the Canton Club.

St. Lawrence University, which became the owner of the building when it lent money and later leased 25 Court St. to Marlene M. Connolly, one of the founders of the Glass Onion, sold the property May 1 for \$243,375 to James Wolf, Holden, Mass.

Mr. Wolf deeded the property July 7 to Custmo for no money.

An application under the name of either Alfred Cassara or Custmo hasn't yet been filed with the state, Liquor Authority spokesman William S. Crowley said. Applications typically take several months to approve.

However, a classified advertisement in North Country Now seeks applicants for all positions for a restaurant and bar opening soon to apply in person between 4 and 6 p.m. at 25 Court St.

# LIGHTNING HERO OF THE WEEK

**SSG Jason McMullen**

**A Troop, 4-9 CAV, 2 HBCT, 1 CD  
Portsmouth, OH**

SSG McMullen has played a critical role in the successful operations of Apache Troop. On February 18<sup>th</sup>, after a vehicle in his patrol was struck by an IED, he dismounted into an unknown enemy situation and extracted all four crew members from the stricken vehicle. On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, while on a joint mission with the Iraqi Army, his platoon discovered a large weapons cache which SSG McMullen exploited, recovering critical forensic evidence. SSG McMullen's constant and unwavering dedication to duty and tireless efforts are absolutely critical to the overall success of Apache Troop, 4-9 CAV and Task Force Lightning.

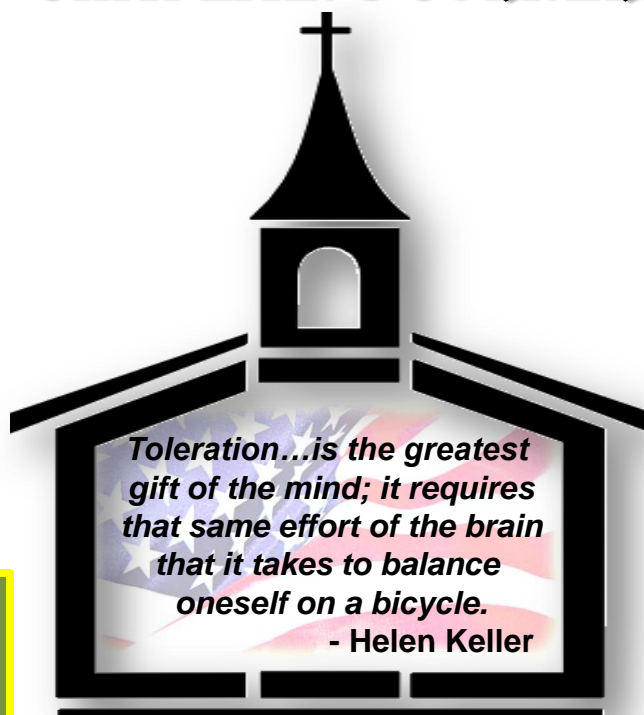


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## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER



*Toleration...is the greatest gift of the mind; it requires that same effort of the brain that it takes to balance oneself on a bicycle.*

**- Helen Keller**





### Pakistan Militants Attack NATO Supply Trailers

**ISLAMABAD, Pakistan** – More than 80 militants attacked a supply terminal in northwest Pakistan that serves U.S. and NATO-led troops in Afghanistan, police said.

The militants used rocket launchers and petrol bombs to torch 10 trailers at the terminal early Sunday in Peshawar, said Warid Khan of the city's police.

An ensuing gun battle with the militants wounded three security guards, said Hassan Muhammad, also of Peshawar police.

Peshawar is the capital of the North-West Frontier Province, which intelligence officials say is rife with Islamic extremists and has been the site of recent clashes between Pakistani security forces and militants.

Because Afghanistan is landlocked, many supplies for NATO-led troops fighting Islamic militants in the area have to be trucked in from Pakistan.

Convoys carrying food and military supplies have regularly come under attack in the area.

### Poland Hostel Fire Kills at Least 21

**WARSAW, Poland** – Polish authorities declared Tuesday a day of mourning after a massive hostel fire killed 21 people.

The fire broke out early Monday at a three-story building in the town of Kamien Pomorski, said Marcin Rodak of the National Center for Coordination of Rescue Operations.

At the time, about 77 people were inside the building, said Jan Mikruta of the Polsat television station.

Forty-one people were rescued from inside the building, with 20 of them hospitalized, Rodak said.

Officials do not know what caused the blaze at the hostel which housed underprivileged residents. On Monday afternoon, firefighters were still looking for victims.

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk was at the scene of the damaged building, with the president expected to arrive later Monday.

## SPORTING NEWS

### Armstrong Says French May Ban Him From the Tour

**AUSTIN** – Lance Armstrong believes French doping officials may ban him from riding in this summer's Tour de France over a report that he violated protocols during a recent drug test.

"There's a very high likelihood that they prohibit me from riding in the Tour," a somber Armstrong said Friday in a video statement posted on his website. "It's too bad. The tour is something I love dearly."

France's anti-doping agency, known as AFLD, has said the American did not fully cooperate with a drug tester when he showed up at Armstrong's home in France to collect blood, urine and hair samples from the cyclist on March 17.

Although no banned substances were found, the dispute revolves around a 20-minute delay when Armstrong went inside the house and took a shower while his assistants checked the tester's credentials.

The seven-time Tour winner said he asked the tester for permission to go inside and it was granted. The AFLD says Armstrong "did not respect the obligation to remain under the direct and permanent observation" of the tester.

According to Armstrong, the tester wrote "no" on the section of the official paperwork that asks if there was anything irregular about the test.

Armstrong has had tense relations with France's anti-doping authorities for years, but had been hoping to coexist with them while he tries for an eighth Tour title in July after coming out of a 3½-year retirement.

"I know we have a lot of history there," Armstrong said. "I know that certainly my comeback wasn't welcomed by a lot of people in France. It's unfortunate."

Armstrong recorded the statement from Aspen, Colo., where he has spent a few days training as he tries to return from a fractured collarbone suffered last month during a race in Spain.

He predicted the dispute will continue to escalate and "we'll see even more antics out of the AFLD in the near future."

Armstrong said the disputed test was his 24th out-of-competition test since his comeback began last September.

A ban from the Tour, a race he dominated with consecutive wins from 1999-2005, would be a major blow to Armstrong's cycling plans.

Although he has scheduled another top race, the Giro d'Italia in May, the Tour de

France remains cycling's crown jewel.

Armstrong has said the main focus of his return is to continue spreading his anti-cancer message to a global audience. Armstrong was diagnosed in 1996 with testicular cancer that had spread to his lungs and brain.

"The comeback has been important to me for two main reasons: I have a passion for cycling still, but more importantly I have a passion for the global fight against cancer," Armstrong said.

"Certainly we wanted to tell that story in France," he said. "If we can't do, we can't do that. That's really their call. It's their event, their country and their rules."

The video was posted on the same day that the head of world cycling defended Armstrong, accusing the French agency of unprofessional and "disturbing" behavior. The French tests were not under the jurisdiction of the International Cycling Union.

"The fact (is) the test was done and was a matter of fact reported by Lance Armstrong himself on Twitter," UCI president Pat McQuaid told the BBC. "Then the French authorities decided to make up a report on the testing procedure, forward it to the UCI – knowing that the UCI have no jurisdiction in this case – and at the same time that report has leaked to the press."

"So I would have to question why is that the case? I would have to say that the French are not acting very professionally in this case."

McQuaid said proceedings between anti-doping agencies and the UCI are supposed to be kept confidential until "a decision to open up the case has been taken."

"But this case, it has leaked to the press and I do find that disturbing," he said.





# TASK FORCE LIGHTNING - THROUGH THE LENS



Spc. William Roberts, 22, of Sacramento, California, recites the oath-of-office with company commander, Capt. Kevin Arnett, 29, of Redding, California, during Roberts' re-enlistment ceremony. Roberts, an engineer with the 643rd Engineer Company, 84th Engineer Battalion (CE), re-enlisted for six more years of service to the Army April 4.



Maj. Jonathan Harvey, Operations Officer for CP-North, Task Force Lightning, prepares to practice his shooting technique prior to going "hot" during a recent small arms range at FOB Marez, Mosul, Iraq.



Col. (Retired) Robert L. Howard, Medal of Honor Recipient, recounts his story for members of the CP-North Team at the CP-North Shore Lanai on Easter night.



Brig. Gen. Robert Brown, deputy commanding general (support), Multi-National Division-North, takes communion from chaplains, Capt. John Hubbs and Capt. William Alley, at the St. Elijah Monastery on Forward Operating Base Marez, Mosul, Iraq, during the Easter sunrise service, April 12.

# HEROES OF THE 25<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY DIVISION



- Staff Sgt. Raymond H. Cooley
- Co. B, 27th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division
- Born: 14 May 1914, Dunlap, TN
- Died: 12 March 1947, Jasper, TN
- Entered Service: Richard City, TN, 1942
- Place of Action: Near Lumboy, Luzon, Philippine Islands
- Date of Action: 24 February 1945



Raymond H. Cooley

## Medal of Honor Citation:

*He was a platoon guide in an assault on a camouflaged entrenchment defended by machineguns, rifles, and mortars. When his men were pinned down by 2 enemy machineguns, he voluntarily advanced under heavy fire to within 20 yards of 1 of the guns and attacked it with a hand grenade. The enemy, however, threw the grenade back at him before it could explode. Arming a second grenade, he held it for several seconds of the safe period and then hurled it into the enemy position, where it exploded instantaneously, destroying the gun and crew. He then moved toward the remaining gun, throwing grenades into enemy foxholes as he advanced. Inspired by his actions, 1 squad of his platoon joined him. After he had armed another grenade and was preparing to throw it into the second machinegun position, 6 enemy soldiers rushed at him. Knowing he could not dispose of the armed grenade without injuring his comrades, because of the intermingling in close combat of the men of his platoon and the enemy in the melee which ensued, he deliberately covered the grenade with his body and was severely wounded as it exploded. By his heroic actions, S/Sgt. Cooley not only silenced a machinegun and so inspired his fellow soldiers that they pressed the attack and destroyed the remaining enemy emplacements, but also, in complete disregard of his own safety, accepted certain injury and possible loss of life to avoid wounding his comrades.*

***Tropic Lightning!***