

The North Star

Serving Task Force Marne
U. S. Division- North, Iraq



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Handler credits trust to partnership

By Pfc. Jessica Luhrs,
1BCT, 1st AD PAO

Sergeant 1st Class Canto, a Patrol/
Explosive Detection Dog, sits at his

handlers feet, Staff Sgt. Larry Chartier,
a Saranac, N.Y., native, with 230th
Military Police Company, from Kaiser-
slautern, Germany, and waits for his
command.

1st Class Canto is just working so he
can play with his toy, his keen sense of
smell and level of training makes him
priceless to his fellow Soldiers.

“Sometimes I wish these military
working dogs knew how important
they were to our mission,” said Staff
Sgt. Chartier.

Sergeant 1st Class Canto is the key
to keeping Soldiers safe during a pa-
trol, according to Staff Sgt. Chartier.

This MWD is able to pickup on ex-
plosives during a patrol before the Sol-
diers go into a life-threatening zone.

When Sgt. 1st Class Canto does
locate anything dangerous Staff Sgt.
Chartier knows immediately.

“It shows the relationship we
have. I can tell when he has found
something and he can tell if I need his
protection in some way,” said Staff Sgt.
Chartier.

To get to this point it takes a lot of
trust and respect for one another and
even though the partners cannot hold
a conversation with one another the
trust and respect they have for each
other is clear.

The relationship the two have can
be credited a lot to their deployment,
while deployed they train, sleep, eat
and play together.

This relationship will continue to
grow throughout the rest of their de-
ployment to Forward Operating Base
Warrior, while they assist the Soldiers
of 1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team,
1st Armored Division, along with their
Iraqi Security Force partners, in the
search for explosive devices and the
capturing of insurgents.

Staff Sergeant Chartier just says, “watch
him” and immedi-
ately the dogs’ attention
snaps to the volunteer
“criminal,” wearing a
bite sleeve, who is mov-
ing aggressively toward
the pair.

A moment later Staff
Sgt. Chartier says “get
him” and Sgt. 1st Class
Canto is chasing the
alleged criminal and
defending his partner.

Soon after Sgt. 1st
Class Canto grabs onto
the bite sleeve, the
“criminal” gives up and
Staff Sgt. Chartier tells
his partner to “release”
and then throws Sgt.
1st Class Canto what
he was working for – a
bright yellow tennis
ball.

It is so easy to make
Sgt. 1st Class Canto a
happy dog, said Staff
Sgt. Chartier. He is still
a puppy, very playful
and smart, my part-
ner already knows he
receives a reward for
working.

Even though Sgt.

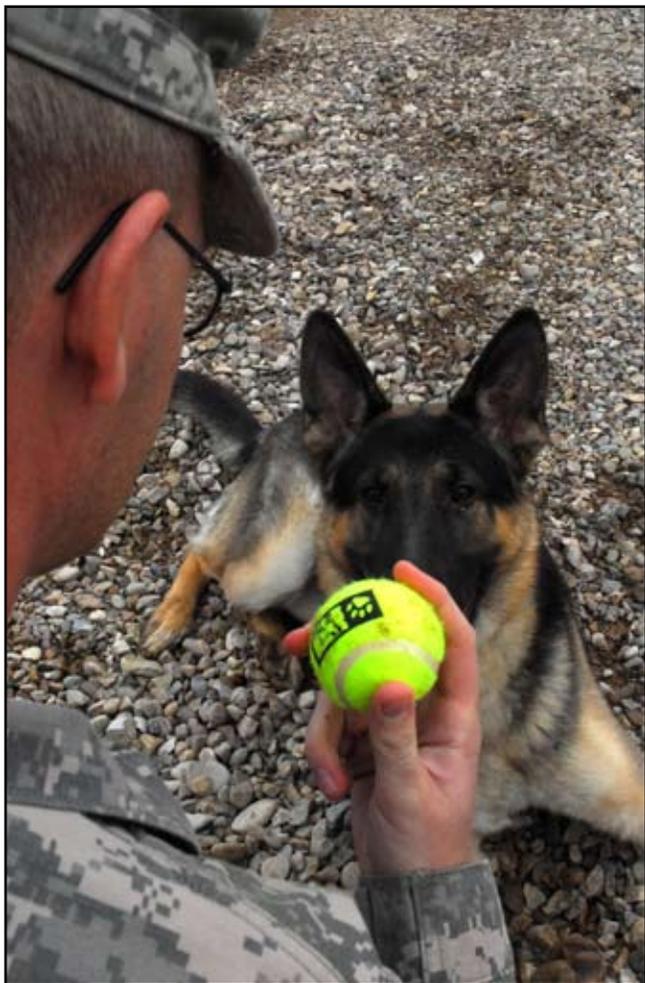


Photo by Pfc. Jessica Luhrs, 1BCT, 1st AD PAO

**Staff Sergeant Larry Chartier, a Saranac, N.Y., native and a Pa-
trol/Explosive Detection Dog handler with 230th MP Co., from
Kaiserslautern, Germany, plays fetch with his partner, Sgt. 1st
Class Canto, a PEDD.**

TF Marne connects thru social media

By Spc. Cassandra Monroe
135th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

If a person walks into any wireless, Internet-friendly cafe, he or she will generally find customers on social networking sites responding to messages and comments.

One of the most recognizable Internet sites by people of all ages is Facebook, a site which lets users post and view status updates, photos, videos, and also lets users post comments to their friends' pages. According to the site's statistics page, Facebook has more than 350 million users.

This summer the Army directed for stateside Directors of Information Management (DOIM) to give Soldiers access to Facebook, Flickr and Twitter sites on their government computers. The written directive stated that the intent of using social networks is to leverage social media as a medium to allow Soldiers to tell the Army story.

All 10 Army divisions have Facebook pages. Overall, there are 352 Facebook, Flickr, Twitter and YouTube accounts associated with U.S. Army units. Task Force Marne has almost 1,000 fans on its Facebook page and people continue to join to get daily updates sent directly to them.

Social network sites are not just another media for spreading information

to varying audiences, but an inexpensive communicative outlet for family and friends separated by distance.

Facebook user Karen Pipkin uses the site to connect with her husband, Sergeant 1st Class Chad Pipkin, who is with, Company E, 1st Bn., 64th Armor, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

"It gives me peace of mind to see his status telling me he made it back to the COB (contingency operating base) okay after a mission," she said.

Users can also stay connected by posting photos during their deployment while Family Members and friends post photos of events going on at home. By posting photos to the sites, it gives those at home a peek into the life of a servicemember and helps them understand the unique experiences of deployed troops.

"It's been a fantastic resource for us and we're still amazed at how technology has helped us communicate," said Pipkin.

Creating a site that represents a whole unit is another great way to keep in touch with those at home. For example, when creating a fan page for a unit on Facebook, this allows users to see what the whole unit's mission is overseas, see photos others have posted, write messages on the discussion board and see what servicemembers

are up to by status updates regarding the unit as a whole.

"The brigade I work for has embraced Facebook and does a wonderful job of updating pictures and posting messages from the command group," said Melissa Cryer, a Facebook user and the Family Readiness Support Assistant for 2-3 Brigade Troop Battalion, 2HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div. "I know it means a lot to distant Family, especially to see the updates and be able to feel connected." Cryer's husband, Sergeant 1st. Class Eric Cryer, is in the 3rd Infantry Division Band.

Keep in mind that there are also other great alternatives to these sites, such as live messenger systems, where users can talk in real time and share files as well as chatting by using a webcam.

"We use Facebook chat to 'talk' in real time and use it to share photos with each other, said Pipkin. "It's also a quick way for me to see when he's online so we can switch over to Skype and talk."

However, when logged in to these sites, users must remember to practice good operational security and not speak of important timelines, time hacks or troop movement. By practicing good OPSEC, users can prevent any information from getting into the wrong hands.

Social networking sites for Task Force Marne

Task Force Marne

FACEBOOK: <http://www.facebook.com/business/dashboard/#/pages/Tikrit-Iraq/Task-Force-Marne/156320704002>

Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/TFMarnePAO>

Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/TaskForceMarne>

CNN IReport: <http://www.ireport.com/people/TFMarne>

Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/tfmarne/>

2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/business/dashboard/#/pages/>

Fort-Stewart-GA/2nd-Heavy-Brigade-Combat-Team-3rd-Infantry-Division/160689006596?ref=search&sid=728785987.3831873760..1

4th Infantry brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division

Official Website: <http://www.riley.army.mil/UnitPage.aspx?unit=4ibct>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/4ibctDragonBrigade>

CNN iReport: <http://www.ireport.com/people/4IBCTDragons>

Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/dragonbrigade/>

Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/DragonBde>

Trooptube: [tv \(Search "4IBCT"\)](http://www.trooptube.</p>
</div>
<div data-bbox=)

Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/DragonBrigade>

1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/#/pages/El-Paso-TX/1st-Brigade-1st-Armored-Division/118726966865>

130th Engineer Brigade

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/business/dashboard/#/group.php?gid=21896290418&ref=search&sid=728785987.891188014..1>

Iraqis dream too



Photo by Specialist Shantelle Campbell, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division Public Affairs Office

Servicemembers and civilians walked in honor of the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Jan. 15 at Contingency Operating Base Speicher. Dr. King was born in Atlanta in 1929. In August of 1963, he led the March on Washington to fight for equal rights for African-Americans and all Americans. When Dr. King spoke at the event, he declared "I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of it's creed. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

"We look at this country Iraq and the justice that is being done along with the works [of individuals] who are [standing] for justice and equality to unite their country. If [the walk] is a small symbol of what they are going to do, then today is a successful day," said Sgt. 1st Class Sherry L. Williams, the brigade's equal opportunity advisor with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division.

Base closure assistance teams assist USD-N units

By Maj. Brian Smith
Base Closure Alignment Team

As USD-N draws down to support the Presidential Mandate of 50,000 troops by the end of August 2010, the need for subject matter experts in base closure and transfer procedures increases.

The USD-N G4 is answering that need by providing three base closure assistance teams or BCATs. The BCATs are logistics subject matter experts working for the Transition Working Group. In addition to logistics issues, the BCATs work with USD-N staff sections to provide a "one-stop shop" for answering units' questions regarding the base closure and transfer process.

The BCAT teams travel to the unit's location providing on-site assistance. The motto of the BCATs is to "help units do their staff work".

After the initial BCAT visit to Q-West, MAJ Scott Wadyko, assistant S-3 for the 15th Sustainment Brigade said, "These guys are a clearinghouse for information. Having a single point of contact for a unit required to close a base is a huge advantage."

After the BCATs visited three locations in his area of operations, 1st Lieutenant Ryan Martz said, "They said up front they weren't here to inspect, but to help and they lived up to their word. They were competent and user-friendly."

Initial customer-service visits are 24-72 hours in length depending on



Courtesy Photo

Members of the USD-N BCAT stand together. They will assist units and commanders significantly in a number of issues for the upcoming drawdown.

the size of the installation. Units desiring BCAT services are encouraged to contact their brigade S4 to coordinate a site visit. For more information on BCATs, contact Maj. Brian L. Smith at SVOIP 670-2358.

Task Force Marne Heroes of the North



Specialist Joseph Fearon, of Philadelphia, is an OH-58 helicopter repairman and petroleum, oil and lubricants product manager. Soon after assuming responsibilities as the POL manager, he established control measures for ordering, issuing and storing necessary POL, chemicals and other hazardous materials used to conduct aviation maintenance. While establishing control measures, he identified more than two tons of expired or unusable hazardous material and POL products. He quickly developed a plan of action, briefed his supervisors and disposed of all unnecessary products. He conducted the necessary coordination with Hazardous Waste Disposal and turned in the products through the proper channels. Specialist Fearon's professionalism and attention to detail not only saved several thousand dollars, it also prevented aircraft damage. His dedication to his unit's mission is unmatched and it has earned him the title of today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.



Private First Class Nicholas Ptaszek, of Edgewater, Fla., is a forward observer with Company C, 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division. He is a vital part of each scout mission, ensuring day and night observation is available for the scout platoon and the Tactical Operations Center. Private First Class Ptaszek coordinates and executes all phases of mission coverage for unmanned aerial vehicle operations. He expertly coordinates restricted operating zones required for Raven UAV flight operations and diligently maintains the unit's Raven fleet. His commitment and dedication to mission success reflect a maturity and focus normally found only in Soldiers of significantly higher ranks. Private First Class Ptaszek's complete dedication and focus on mission accomplishment make him both 'Combat' Company's and today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North

OPSEC Reminder

Operational security violations can be found in the most unlikely of places, like your dirty laundry. Check your pockets before dropping off your laundry and ensure that you haven't left any OPSEC for the enemy to exploit. Items such as ID Cards, badges, thumb drives, personal mail, CD-ROMs and notepads may contain information that could hurt or kill your battle buddies. Do your part to protect friendly information. Remember OPSEC!

Answers to Friday's Sudoku

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



REGIONAL HEADLINES

Humane society puppies reach out to community.

www.gainesvilletimes.com

GAINESVILLE, Ga.- There is now a waiting list for the Humane Society of Northeast Georgia's popular pet therapy program.

All the attention the humane society has gathered this year with a name change and a new mission has put the pet therapy program in the spotlight as well.

Kelly Uber, director of education and volunteer development for the humane society, said she has gotten many more requests for pet therapy, which pairs volunteers and shelter animals with nursing homes and other facilities. Uber said there are now six organizations hoping to work with the nonprofit, but there are not enough volunteers.

Volunteers take puppies to visit with people in facilities who may be lonely or have special needs.

"Everyone seems to need some kind of pet therapy," Uber said. "It's been proven to help in the healing process, help kind of reduce that stress they have in the facility."

Humane Society President Rick Aiken said pets and volunteers may be the only visitors some elderly people see some days.

"We don't mean to, but sometimes when a person gets into a home like that, the family has their life and kids, and they just don't get to come out and see them as much as they would like,"

Aiken said. "It's really good when you have (volunteers) come in and spend some time with them."

Aiken said the experience is often just as rewarding for the volunteers, who have the opportunity to meet some very interesting and accomplished people.

Calm puppies are typically chosen from the shelter's adoptable animals to go out for visits, but sometimes other animals, like rabbits, work in pet therapy, too.

Chicken deaths blamed on 'El Chupacabras'

United Press International

HORIZON CITY, Texas- Two Texas men said they have a prime suspect in the slayings of 30 chickens on their property, El Chupacabras.

Cesar Garcia of Horizon City, Texas, said he found 20 chickens dead and drained of their blood Jan. 10 and his brother-in-law, Juan Miranda, found 10 chickens killed the same way in a different coop Sunday morning, the El Paso (Texas) Times reported Wednesday.

"I saw the chickens were dead, but there was no blood around the sheet metal," Garcia said. "All of them were just dead in one big pile. But, really, I don't know what it was because there was no blood."

Garcia and Miranda said they researched the twin puncture wounds on each of the chickens and tracks found near the coop and linked them

to the mythical creature.

However, Tony Zavaleta, a professor of anthropology at the University of Texas-Brownsville, said El Chupacabras, which translates to "the goat sucker," is strictly legend.

"The Chupacabra is a mythical creature," Zavaleta said. "I reserve the right to say that until someone produces one."

Man tussles with toothless burglar

Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. - A Spokane homeowner who returned to his house to find a burglar inside was uninjured after a brief struggle with the toothless man.

Around noon on Jan. 15, the man arrived at his house, in the 2300 block of N. Nettleton, to find a stolen car parked in his driveway. The man entered his house to find a skinny, toothless man inside.

The man confronted the burglar and a struggle ensued during which the burglar threatened the homeowner with a taser. After the scuffle, the burglar ran from the home but not before the homeowner hit him on the head with a stick.

The burglar was able to get away with few pieces of the homeowner's heirloom jewelry, all of which were recovered by police while they were searching for the suspect. Unfortunately police were not able to find the burglar.

THE North Star

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4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team,
1st Infantry Division
2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team,
3rd Infantry Division

3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team,
2nd Infantry Division
1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team,
1st Armored Division

25th Combat Aviation Brigade,
25th Infantry Division
130th Engineer Brigade
135th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

TASK FORCE MARNE

Commanding General - Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo
Command Sergeant Major - Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse L. Andrews Jr.

Task Force Marne Public Affairs Staff

TF Marne PAO - Maj. Jeff Allen
TF Marne PA NCOIC - Master Sgt. Marcia Triggs
TF Marne Writer- Sgt. Johnathon Jobson

Editorial Staff

Managing Editor - Master Sgt. Marcia Triggs
Editor- Spc. Michael Adams