

The North Star

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



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54 Soldiers 'Stay Army Strong'

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

Fifty-four Task Force Marne Soldiers recommitted themselves to serving in the Army during a mass re-enlistment ceremony on Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Jan. 27.

Those who re-enlisted were honored by TF Marne's commanding general, Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, who administered the Oath of Re-enlistment, along with TF Marne's senior enlisted advisor, Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Andrews.

"This is the first re-enlistment of this size for Task Force Marne," said Sgt. Maj. Luis Rivera, the Task Force Marne command career counselor, 3rd Infantry Division.

The group of 54 Soldiers were a

mixed representation of Soldiers throughout the task force.

"You all represent a commitment of more than 290 years to the United States Army," said Maj. Gen. Cucolo. "All of you are fighting the good fight with us here at Task Force Marne. We all come from 14 different major Army units, 14 different patches, 14 different unit mottos, and we're all pulling together as one.

"We're in this one together, no matter what unit patch or motto we have. We're in a combat zone, and that's when the Warrior Ethos comes into override, placing missions first, never

"You all represent a commitment of more than 290 years to the United States Army."

-Major General Tony Cucolo, TF Marne commander

quitting, never accepting defeat and never leaving a fallen comrade. The fact that you are re-enlisting in this difficult, complex and dangerous environment just gives me and command sergeant major even greater pride."

The ceremony was brief, but the commander made poignant comments that resonated with his audience. Staff Sergeant Richard Jadick said that he's hoping to make a statement by re-enlisting for indefinite service while at combat.

"When it came to my 14th year mark, I wanted to go indefinite and continue my service to my country and complete my 20 years," said Staff Sgt. Jadick, a military policeman, who has deployed five times, and is a squad leader with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2-3 Brigade Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

Staff Sergeant Jadick, who is stationed at Forward Operating Base Marez, re-enlisted for six more years. He said that his inspiration for re-enlisting came from the support of his wife.

"My wife wanted me to do it when I left Fort Stewart, and here, the opportunity arose with Maj. Gen. Cucolo, and I thought, 'let's do it,'" said Staff



Photo by Sgt Chad Nelson, 135th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

(lower left corner) Major General Tony Cucolo, TF Marne commanding general, administers the Oath of Re-enlistment during a re-enlistment ceremony with Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Andrews, TF Marne command sergeant major, standing by his side, at COB Speicher, Jan. 27.

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Photo by Spc. Cassandra Monroe, 135th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Dyna Shirasaki, lead vocalist for the all-female AC/DC tribute band, Thund 'Her' Struck, sings into her microphone during a performance, Jan. 25. The band, who is on their U.S. Armed Services tour, dedicated the song "Girl's Got Rhythm," to the females in the crowd and asked for a few volunteers to come to the stage.

THUND 'HER' STRUCK ROCKS COB SPEICHER

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

Thund 'Her' Struck, an all female AC/DC tribute band, performed for servicemembers at the COB Speicher gym, Jan. 25. The band, which is named after the AC/DC song "Thunderstruck," performed a selection of songs such as "Hells Bells" and "TNT," as well as older AC/DC hits.

Thund 'Her' Struck is composed of five musically accomplished women who spread their motto "Let There Be Rock." They also have performed at numerous events and venues, have been featured on many radio and television programs and in many magazines.

They have performed at many national and international festivals, fundraisers, trade shows and corporate and military events.

The band plays material from both AC/DC eras, and has been recognized as "Best Tribute Band" by All Access Magazine, and has received a letter of

commendation from Dianne Feinstein, Senator of California.

While at COB Speicher, the band first stopped by the Division Main Headquarters, greeting Soldiers as they enthusiastically approached the band for handshakes and photos in the main foyer.

The "Thund 'Her' Struck" female band also signed band flyers for the Soldiers, cracked a few jokes with a few high spirited fans.

One Soldier even printed a recently taken photo of himself and the band and had them sign it, while another held up a home-made sign and presented it to the foyer full of appreciative fans.

After a brief media conference, and a couple of guitar tune-ups, the women hit the stage with wide smiles on their faces and guitars strapped at the ready.

The first guitar riffs broke the silence and the crowd roared as the band played their first song.

Halfway through the set, the

ladies dedicated the song "Girl's Got Rhythm," to the females in the crowd and asked for a few volunteers to come to the stage, which was met with great response.

Female servicemembers ran up to the stage, not letting their chance to show what they could do slip.

A female Marine imitated the guitarist and garnered cheers from her peers.

"I had a blast," said Army Sgt. Patricia Leal, a vehicle mechanic with the 209th Aviation Support Battalion, who took photos with her digital camera while on stage with the band members. "It was really awesome to see people break out of their shells and to let a little piece of them out," said Sgt. Leal.

The band members would agree that being on stage brings out a different side of them.

"I can go crazy, it's like an alter ego," said Thund 'Her' Struck lead gui-

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Sgt. Jadick.

Coincidentally, Staff Sgt. Jimmy Punzo also wanted to make a point with his re-enlistment.

"For me, it's a way to show Soldiers that the Army has given me a lot, and it's time to give my time back to the Army," said Staff Sgt. Punzo, a brigade schools noncommissioned officer stationed at FOB Warrior with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, Fort Bliss, Texas.

"Because we're actually here in a line of combat, it means just a little bit more.

We're out here making a difference, and it makes this re-enlistment a little more special also," he added.

Career counselors, who escorted Soldiers from their brigade to the ceremony, were proud that they were able to keep in quality Soldiers. Master Sergeant Brenda Windham, the brigade career counselor with HHC, 2BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., attended the

ceremony to support 25 Soldiers from her unit.

"It's nice to see your Soldiers dedicating a few more years of their life to serve their country," said Master Sgt. Windham.

Prior to the ceremony the re-enlisting Soldiers along with Maj. Gen. Cucolo and Command Sgt. Maj. Andrews recorded a retention commercial. The theme for the commercial was "Team", and the 60-second message was summed up with these words from the commanding general, "Some folks go long, and keep playing no matter how tough the opposing team is or how unpre-

dictable the game might be. Today the 3rd Infantry Division honors those key players -- those who chose to stay on the team and go long".



Photo by Sgt Chad Nelson, 135th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Major General Tony Cucolo, TF Marne commander and Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Andrews, TF Marne command sergeant major, and re-enlistees record a "Stay Army Strong" commercial during a mass re-enlistment ceremony at COB Speicher, Jan. 27.

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tarist, Tina Wood. "I can do goofy stuff and everyone thinks it's cool."

The excited male servicemembers in the crowd had their chance of fame too.

During "Back in Black," the servicemembers sang along with the band, rocking their heads, bodies and arms back and forth.

During the rest of the set, the crowd surpassed previous energy levels, with fists and "rock on" hand symbols rocking back and forth in the air to the rhythm.

"People out here are a lot louder and the energy is just amazing," said Andrea Zermeno, the band's bassist. "It's a completely different thing. We get the warmest, enthusiastic response."

As the band started to conclude their performance, they came back onstage for an encore.

Although the women are an AC/DC tribute band, they gave the crowd a sample of

some of their Led Zeppelin tunes.

"I expected to have a good time and rock out, which I did," said Army 1st Lieutenant Jason Odom, a cavalry officer with the 1st Battalion, 98th Cavalry Regiment, a Mississippi National Guard unit. First Lieutenant Odom and a group of male Soldiers went on stage to rock out, and even crowd surfed.

"It's a really good stress reliever

for the crowd and myself," said 1st Lt. Odom.

"The countries that are in conflict are the most special to us, because that's where we feel the entertainment is most needed," said Zermeno.

The band concluded their evening with a meet and greet with those who attended the show, and signed posters, posed for photos with servicemembers and exchanged hugs and smiles.

"These tours are special and unique and the reception is like no other," said Zermeno.

However, one thing is for sure for servicemembers here in Iraq: their autographed posters will not last for a very long time, but their memories of this night will last a lifetime.

Although these servicemembers are here in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, they still know how to have a good time and let their wild side come out.



Photo by Spc. Cassandra Monroe, 135th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Servicemembers stationed at COB Speicher rock hard to Thund 'Her' Struck, the all-female AC/DC tribute band, Jan. 25, at the Main Gym.

Task Force Marne Heroes of the North



Specialist Mary Collins, of San Antonio, is with Support Medical Company, 296th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, as a medic on the personal security detail. She supported more than 40 mounted patrols in direct support of her unit. She was awarded an Army Achievement Medal for her support in TF 296 - North's medical civilian military operations. Specialist Collins participates in everyday section operations such as combat logistics patrols, running the Morale, Welfare and Recreation phone and Internet cafe, range support, 24 hour on-call evacuation teams and routinely assists with sick call in the medical clinic. Specialist Collins also earned the title of battalion's Soldier of the month in December, 2009. She went on to place third in the battalion's Soldier of the quarter board. Her determination to excel and her selfless-service make her a clear choice for today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.



Corporal Joel Sanchez, of Visalia, Calif., is with 2nd Battalion, 25th Aviation Regiment, 25th Combat Aviation Brigade, 25th Infantry Division. He serves as a non-rated crew member flight instructor. His proven ability to train new UH-60 crew chiefs and door gunners has directly impacted the overall success of his unit. His technical confidence, tactical experience and thorough instruction methods have led to the progression of five crew chiefs and door gunners to readiness level one, increasing the combat power for Task Force Marne. He also continues to train and assess crew chiefs to ensure combat readiness is maintained. Corporal Sanchez's dedication and commitment to excellence sets him apart from his peers and makes him an obvious choice as today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.

www.puzzlechoice.com Crossword Puzzle

Across

1. Fruit
3. Retail food seller
6. Italian rice
8. Consume
10. Type of lobster
11. Used to season and preserve food
13. Sampled
15. Pestle and ____
18. Aromatic leaves
19. Thick syrup
22. Cereal grass
23. Pear-shaped tropical fruit
24. Type of cake
25. Very thin pancake

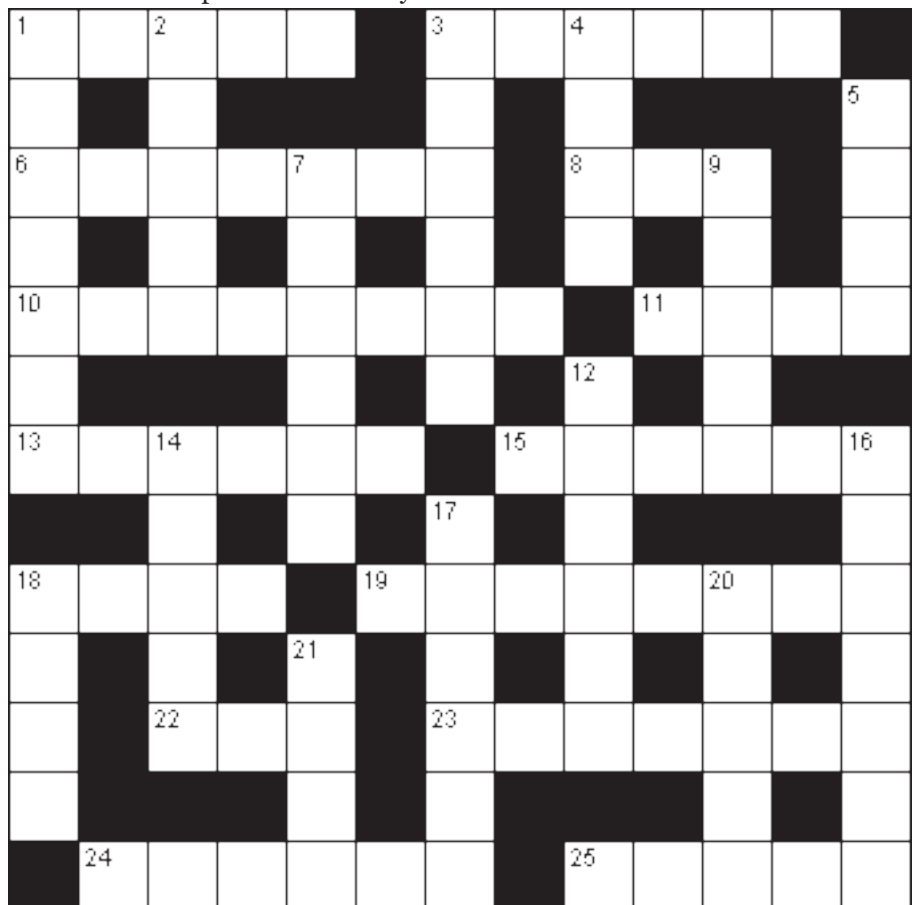
7. Sticky candy
9. Heated bread
12. Edible tuber
14. Sweetener
16. Cooked meat or fish coated in egg and bread-crumbs and fried
17. Thick soup
18. Cook slowly in liquid
20. Large edible ray
21. Vegetable

Down

1. Downy fruit
2. Shaped and dried dough
3. Game bird
4. Kitchen appliance
5. Open pastry with fruit filling



Answers will be posted in Monday's edition of the North Star



REGIONAL HEADLINES

'Pool shark' celebrates 101st birthday in Texas

Associated Press

LONGVIEW, Texas- "Fast Eddie" slowed down just long enough, Jan. 24, for friends to celebrate his 101st birthday in his favorite hangout.

"Make a lot of good friends, that's what keeps you alive," Edward Halliday said at his table in Page Pub where a dozen or so people gathered to shower the New York state native and one-time Las Vegas pool shark with hugs and cake.

"He's just got one of those personalities, and he's such a genuine person," said Morgan Hoyt, who dines with Halliday every Tuesday ever since he moved into Eastman Estates assisted living last summer. "Even at 101, he's still a ladies' man. We've known each other about three years now, and were born in the same town in upstate New York."

Halliday and Steve Crane, who is married to Halliday's niece by marriage, have been regular Sunday night chess partners for years at the watering hole at West Loop 281 and Bill Owens Parkway. The scene was a fitting one to mark Halliday's birthday, Jan. 24.

"We have a standing date," Crane said. "He has a Coke, and I have a beer. One hundred and one — and he still beats me."

Halliday has beaten more than a few challenges in a somewhat storied life.

A real estate agent in Las Vegas during the roaring '70s, he achieved membership in the Million Dollar Club of agents who reached seven figures in sales back when \$1 million was nothing to sneeze at.

Halliday has a son in New York and a daughter in Canada, both in their 80s. He moved to Longview in the early '80s with his wife, Frances Merritt (Berry) Halliday, a Longview native and aunt of Kathy Crane, Steve Crane's wife.

Kathy Crane is Halliday's closest local relative. She remembers going to see her Uncle Ed in Las Vegas in 1974, as a high school graduation present. She learned he was the man to be with in Vegas.

"If we went into any of the night clubs back then, like Caesar's Palace, they all knew him," she said. "He had kind of a reputation of being a really good pool player, and they called him 'Fast Eddie.' He never had a sleaze factor about him. He's always been very professional. He came from an age of being kind of genteel and a real gentleman."

Halliday recalled the comparison to Paul Newman's "Fast Eddie" Felson in the 1961 movie, "The Hustler."

"That's right," he said. "A pool shark — yeah, I was pretty good. I took on all comers. I've played chess for the last — lemme see — 60 years. I'll take on anyone that comes along."

Halliday became a 15-year volunteer with Lifecare Hospice in Longview.

Bigfoot believer recalls encounter

[Thenewstribune.com](http://thenewstribune.com)

NISQUALLY, Wash.- One night 54 years ago, Cliff Crook says, he stared into the face of a Northwest boogeyman. He called it a "woods giant." Today, it's better known as Bigfoot.

"I had a real terrifying encounter," said Crook, now 69. "It's not something that goes away."

He remembers the towering size, the ape-like face, the gurgling sound in the dark. He remembers the dog that charged into the bushes and then was tossed out and crashed onto the ground. He also remembers running away with three younger camping buddies. They arrived home a mile away, their bare feet bleeding. His friends' parents weren't pleased.

"They didn't want them around me anymore," Crook recalled last week.

The encounter fueled a lifelong obsession by Crook with the hairy ape-like creature. He calls himself "America's first Bigfoot investigator." Others call him a hoaxer and an attention grabber.

Crook appeared on the front page of The News Tribune in 1990 when some mushroom hunters found possible Bigfoot footprints near the Nisqually River. Crook found the prints credible.

Crook's son, Cary, in Polson, Mont., carries on the family research and keeps the Bigfoot Central Web site — bigfootcentral1.com — updated.

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

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

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