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Ready In Need Gazette

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TF Twister Soldiers at Camp Steeler keep VBC rolling

By Staff Sgt. Karl Johnson

Camp Trash Can, F-2, The Industrial Zone and The "IZ". Camp Steeler is known by many names and its many missions are often unknown or misunderstood. The small team of Task Force Twister Soldiers who run the camp, however, know all too well the important role Camp Steeler plays in the daily operations of Victory Base Complex.

"The missions being done here are not only critical to operations on VBC, but also to the entire theater in some cases," said Lt. Col. Gregory Guidry, Camp Steeler Mayor.

Most of the industrial needs of VBC get their start on Camp Steeler. From the centralized laundry point that cleans uniforms to the t-walls that protect VBC, it all originates from Camp Steeler. An endless number of services that most never even think about, because they work so well, are completed.

The one mission that most people are aware of is the landfill operations that earned the surrounding area the name, "Camp Trash Can".

"One of the most important functions of this camp is the waste management role," explained Guidry. "That includes both solid and liquid waste."

An endless stream of trucks flow into Camp Steeler carrying liquid waste to the waste water treatment facility, which removes 95 percent of all contaminants.



photo by Staff Sgt. Karl Johnson

The Camp Steeler Mayor's Cell gathers in the Retrograde Property Assistance Team yard for a photo. From left to right: Capt. Jeffery Campbell, Lt. Col. Gregory Guidry and Staff Sgt. Lionel Hunter.

Items that would be considered traditional trash items are sorted into three distinct classes. First, any bulk items that might be reused are removed. Next, eight incinerators running twenty-four hours a day destroy whatever trash can be burned. Anything that doesn't fall into those categories ends up in the landfill.

If it wasn't for the waste management done here, the trash and the smell that is here would be everywhere else on VBC, said Guidry.

Camp Steeler also completes several other critical tasks. All trucks coming into VBC with supplies are first processed through the camp, including all the food that is served at dining facilities. A plant makes all the ice for VBC. Any fuel needed here at one time was on Camp Steeler.

To get all of these tasks completed, a small group of Soldiers and a large group of contractors call Camp Steeler home.

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Spotlight On: CSM Kenneth Howard

When Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Howard joined the Army in 1970, the Vietnam War was still five years from over. "I joined because the war was going on and it just seemed like the thing to do," explained Howard. He never did deploy to

Vietnam, but 40 years later, with two deployments behind him and a third underway, he said he stayed in because he "loved being a Soldier and a teacher."

Howard spent six years on active duty before getting out for 10 years, then returning to the Army



Reserve as a drill sergeant. "At 35 years old I went through drill sergeant school," explained Howard. "It was an experience I'll never forget." The hours were long and time with family was limited, but

Howard says what made it all worth it was watching a person that he was teaching make the transition from civilian to Soldier. "I spent eight years turning couch potatoes into Soldiers," he said. The satisfaction gained from

- See Howard Pg. 3

The Ministry Message

Between Already And Not Yet

By CH (Lt. Col.) Leonard Higgins,
Garrison Command Chaplain

If you have ever been a traveler to New Orleans, then you probably are aware of the two ribbons of concrete that span the largest inland body of water in Louisiana – Lake Pontchartrain. The Pontchartrain Causeway is the longest bridge in the world and seems to go on forever. I am told that the bridge is actually 23.88 miles long. But that is not what has impressed me the most. What is impressive to me is a phenomenon that occurs as you are driving across the water leaving Metairie on your way to Mandeville. When you get about 12 miles out – you realize that you are driving and totally surrounded by water, unable to see either shoreline. For a few moments it feels like you are driving on the water and heading into oblivion.

That's how it can be with mid-points. Putting it another way – it's like being stuck in between already and not yet. For some that means that everything is so familiar it is now hum-drum. Hard to get too excited about "not yet." However, that is where I would position us on this rotation in Baghdad. Been there, done that, and got the T-shirt that now has holes. Yet, we're not close enough to start seeing home on the horizon. It's at this point that many start to feel



Courtesy Photo

exhaustion and maybe even a spirit of discouragement.

I ran a marathon "once" back in 1999. I actually ran the Olympic course in Atlanta on Thanksgiving Day. The first few miles were pure adrenalin. There were cheerleaders, clowns, singers and well wishers that made me feel like a king as I trotted down Peachtree Blvd. I sang songs with the singers, threw oranges at the clowns and even cheered other runners on as we made our way together across the downtown. Along about midway something happened to me. No, I didn't hit the wall – I hit something else. I hit the thought of, "why the heck am I doing this?" Suddenly none of it made much sense to me. Everyone else in Atlanta was at home getting ready to eat

turkey, but I was running through the streets like an idiot. My muscles ached, my stomach cramped, and I became obnoxiously grumpy. I flipped one guy off because he told me to keep up the pace before the pylon pullers caught up with me.

My shirt rubbed sores on my chest, I had dried snot on my face and I actually lost one of my gloves in the porta Johnny. I regretted having even started the training. I was too far away from beginning the race and not close enough from finishing and my attitude really stunk! To make a long story short, I did finish the race. I was so proud of my moment. Unfortunately a 60-something year-old couple from Japan beat me. That didn't bother me as much as the fact that my wife videotaped 15 minutes of cheering on the cute little couple and captured shots of me throwing up and yelling, "hey, I'm over here!"

Being at the midway point of anything can be a most difficult place to be – especially if you lose sight of what's on the other side, just hiding out of sight. Our goals and dreams are not behind us now – they are in front of us – even if we can't see them. This is a good place to start trusting that God will bring us through the fog. Even if we can't see land out there – we have to trust that it is. As the old song proclaims, "'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far. ... and grace will lead me home."

Celebrate the man with a dream for us all

By Master Sgt. Natalie Sokolik
Equal Opportunity Advisor

Every year on the third Monday of January, the United States celebrates the birth of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. It is one of only four federal holidays celebrating an individual person.

With that in mind, let's take a look at who the man was behind the holiday.

He was a man with a dream, a visionary with a zest to fulfill that dream. King was a civil rights leader who believed in a non-violent approach to bringing his message to the people.

Before King's message gained

widespread acceptance, violent crimes against minorities were not uncommon. Much of the country participated in strict segregation policies which, when ignored, were often the motivation for violent reprisals. King's leadership within the civil rights movement was key to reversing many of these policies. He led the Montgomery Bus Boycott after Rosa Parks was jailed for not getting up for a white man on a public bus. He protested the use of literacy tests and other obstacles to voting as many were instituted solely to keep minorities from voting. His efforts were also

critical in the desegregation of schools and other facilities.

King helped to change the way we looked at our neighbors and our friends. He made us look beyond ourselves and see the wonders others can bring to the nation. Since King's death, the value of equality and diversity has become more widely accepted. He was a strong leader whose dream of a free and equal nation brought together people from all backgrounds and made other nations take notice.

Task Force Twister is currently here in Iraq to continue a new dream. To help the Iraqi

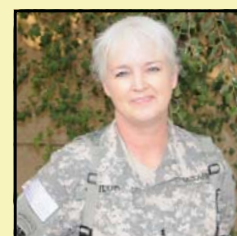
people have some of the same opportunities that King desired for all people. Sometimes it may be difficult to see what impact you're making but, without us, the mission could fail. We stand together as a unit from all over the United States. We have many backgrounds, races, ethnicities and genders. Each person is making a difference in their own way. I challenge all TF Twister Soldiers to take King's message of equality and combine it with your deployment experiences to help all of us grow together and be more successful.



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DEBLIECK'S PICKS

Championship Edition PICKS

Ohio St. vs. Oregon	Oregon
Boise St. vs. TCU	TCU
Iowa vs. GA Tech	GA Tech
Florida vs. Cincinnati	Florida
Texas vs. Alabama	Alabama

DeBlieck's Picks YTD: 31-25

Howard:

teaching never left him and is still something that motivates him today.

The only detour he took during his time as a drill sergeant was to volunteer for deployment in support of Operation Desert Storm in December, 1990. That decision and the experience he gained during that deployment would end up changing his life forever.

Howard described one night that, to him, stood out above the rest.

"It was the night of Feb. 25, 1991, in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. At 8:15 p.m. a SCUD missile hit our barracks killing 28 Soldiers including my commander. Dozens of us were wounded. We spent the night caring for the wounded and the dead."

For his actions that night, Howard was awarded the Bronze Star with Valor Device and the Purple Heart.

After completing his tour of duty, Howard returned home

to serve as a drill sergeant school instructor, sharing his knowledge and experience with future drill sergeants. He continued in that role until 2000, but that would not be the end of his military teaching career.

In 2006 Howard returned to the Middle East for his second deployment. During his year in Baghdad, Iraq, he stood up an Iraqi non-commissioned officer school and taught counter-intelligence techniques to Iraqi Soldiers.

"I just enjoy assisting Soldiers to grow," explained Howard. "If at the end of the day I've helped someone, then I've done my job."

Outside of teaching Soldiers how to be Soldiers, you might find Howard on a golf course in his hometown of Eugene, Ore., improving on his 30 years of cabinet-making or spending time with his wife Lindy.

Whatever you find him doing, you can be sure he's ready for the next opportunity to pass on what he's already gained.

Steeler:

That's where Lt. Col. Guidry, Capt. Jeffery Campbell and Staff Sgt. Lionel Hunter come in.

"We deal with most of the same issues that all the camps do," said Campbell. "Our tenants are just different. We have mostly civilians instead of Soldiers."

Campbell also explained that since their section is so small, each Soldier needs to understand how to do a little

bit of everything.

"We're definitely multitaskers," he said.

One drawback mentioned by all three Soldiers was the separation from the Task Force. They added however, that the opportunity to see a different side of the base's operations and to meet so many interesting people from all over the world outweighed any of the negatives associated with working at the Camp Steeler Mayor's Cell.



Sgt. Whisenhunt does his best thinking in the latrine, even when that latrine was once a "throne" for Saddam Hussein. What's on his mind in this picture? Submit your best guess to the RING staff at karl.johnson@iraq.centcom.mil by Jan. 20, 2010. The Soldier with the best caption will be recognized in the next issue of the RING.



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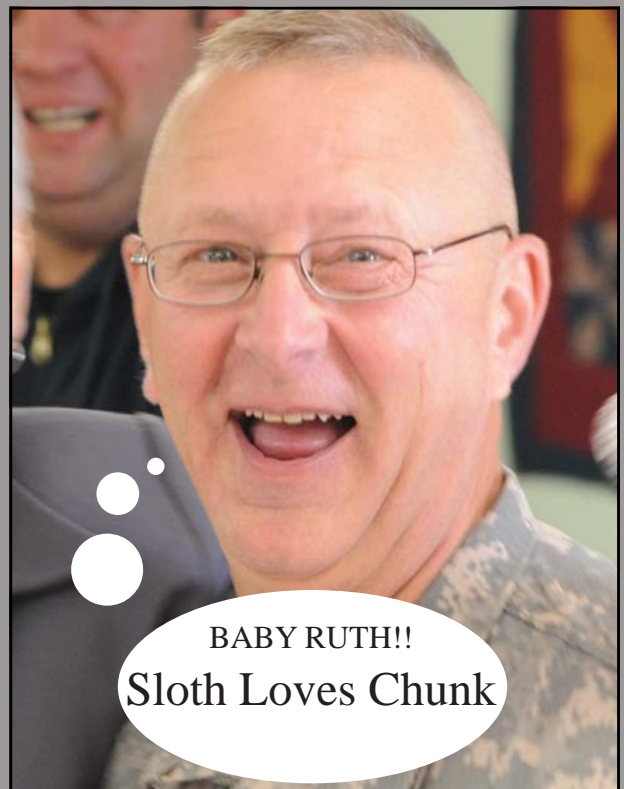
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Top Left: SSG Grant delivering happiness and joy in her own very special way. "You'll take these gifts and like it." **Top Right:** Task Force Twister's finest represent all of us during the Tostitos Salute the Troops Bowl at the East Liberty Fieldhouse. They also made the half time show of the Fiesta Bowl. **Bottom Right:** We'll save CSM Ploeger the trip to the PA office. It was Capt. Gruenewald. **Bottom Left:** Congratulations to the newly promoted MSG Pell. However, that extra rocker doesn't give you permission to gaze into the commander's eyes like that. **Middle Left:** You'd think with this kind of effort, our team would have fared better. Regardless of the fact that the team stunk worse than the Camp Steeler landfill, Camp Striker hosted a great football tournament.



Twister Pics



BABY RUTH!!
Sloth Loves Chunk

The Fridge

A Task Force Community Bulletin



have something for the fridge? send it to karl.johnson@iraq.centcom.mil