

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



June 14, 2010



Photo by Sgt. Johnathon Jobson, TF Marne PAO

(left to right) Major General Tony Cucolo, commanding general of TF Marne; Chief Warrant Officer 5 Ray Noble, the oldest Soldier in the division and the senior maintenance officer for the TF Marne G-4; Pfc. Deonne Dore, the division's youngest Soldier and an intelligence Soldier with the TF Marne G-2; and Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Andrews, the TF Marne command sergeant major, cut the ceremonial cake during the celebration of the Army's 235th birthday at COB Speicher, June 13.

**By Sgt. Johnathon Jobson
TF Marne PAO**

Birthdays are a guarantee in life; however, it is how they are celebrated that makes them memorable. More than 200 Soldiers from Task Force Marne celebrated the Army's 235th birthday

at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, June 13, with a trip through the Army's history.

While the Army's official birthday is June 14, the decision was made to hold the celebration a day early due to significant events happening in Iraq.

"Now you might be sitting there thinking, 'But sir, you're a day early, tomorrow is the Army's Birthday,'" and you'd be right," said Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, commanding general of TF Marne

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Barking NCO raises morale, reduces stress

By Sgt. Johnathon Jobson
TF Marne PAO

Whether personal or work related, everyone deals with stress during deployments. The 85th Combat Stress Clinic's mission is to help Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines deal with this stress and keep their "mental edge."

While the 85th CSC provides standard counseling services, they also have some more nonconventional therapy approaches, namely Sgt. 1st Class Albert.

Sergeant First Class Albert is not a normal noncommissioned officer; he walks on four legs and has a wet nose. Sergeant First Class Albert is a 3 year-old golden Labrador retriever, and is the 85th CSC's therapy dog.

Together with his handlers, primarily Pfc. Carolina Ruiz and Spc. Andre Mailhot, both behavioral health specialists with the 85th CSC, Sgt. 1st Class Albert helps alleviate stress felt by servicemembers within U.S. Division – North.

"He is here for stress therapy," said Pfc. Ruiz, a Victoria, Texas, native. "He has had a great turnout that I can see. People will come in just to see him, not even making an appointment to see a specialist."

While Spc. Mailhot, who is a native of Running Springs, Calif., and Pfc. Ruiz are the main people who work with Sgt. 1st Class Albert, they are not the only ones. He goes out on missions with many different members of the 85th Combat Stress Clinic.

As Sgt. 1st Class Albert is in the middle of the second of his back-to-back tours in Iraq, he spends most of his time at the clinic, either roaming around the building soaking up all of the attention he can get or sitting in on therapy sessions with Pfc. Ruiz.

"He often just lies down in the office next to a patient I am working with," Pfc. Ruiz explained. "The patients will just sit and pet him while they are talking to me."

Sergeant First Class Albert also goes out on missions around Contingency Operating Base Speicher and to other bases within USD-N. He even has his own ear and eye protection

and boots for travel by helicopter.

"We take him with us when we go out to assess units," said Spc. Mailhot. "Sometimes a unit will request that we bring him to their location, other times we just take him with us anyway. We also regularly take him to the combat support hospital to visit with patients there."

"While we are visiting units, we will tell Sgt. 1st Class Albert to 'make friends.' At this command he will roam around the room and visit with everyone. With many people you can visibly see them become more at ease and less stressed."

Even though Sgt. 1st Class Albert's primary mission is to help allevi-

ate stress, he is also part of a larger mission. He is part of a study being conducted by Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

"The study is being headed by the Occupational Therapy branch at Walter Reed and it focuses on the effectiveness of animal assisted therapy," explained Staff Sgt. Darius Cox, the noncommissioned officer in charge for the 85th CSC and a Nyack, N.Y., native. "When I was here two years ago they had the first two therapy dogs here, and since then they have continued the research to decide whether or not to continue the program and possibly increase the number of therapy dogs in theater."



Photo by Sgt. Johnathon Jobson, TF Marne PAO

Specialist Christopher Clemmens, an operations assistant with the TF Marne G-3, and Sgt. Candice Kerns, an operations NCO with G-3, play with Sgt. 1st Class Albert, the 85th CSC's therapy dog, during one of his visits to the Task Force Marne headquarters.

Celebrating 'Hooah'



Photo by Spc. Dustin Gautney, 2nd HBCT, 3rd Inf. Div. PAO

Spartan Brigade celebrates the Army's birthday by conducting a brigade run through Contingency Operating Site Marez, June 14. Colonel Charles E. A. Sexton, the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division commander, gave a motivating speech before the run. He told his Soldiers that the Army is a powerful Ally for the Iraqis, and they're making a difference in Iraq.

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and 3rd Infantry Division. "I scheduled it today because tomorrow is a special day for Iraq, a day in which you all can take personal, quiet pride. Tomorrow is the first seating of the newly elected council of representatives."

As Iraq makes history, TF Marne recognized its service to the world.

To commemorate the rich past of the United States' oldest fighting force, Soldiers from the Task Force Marne G-6, or communications section, and the Division Special Troops Battalion color guard attached 178 campaign streamers to the Army flag, while a brief history of each conflict was given.

The streamers, earned for participation in the campaigns, were broken down into 20 groups based on the major conflict they were part of; from the Revolutionary and Civil Wars to the World Wars and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

To emphasize the history behind the streamers,

four Soldiers were dressed in World War I, World War II, Korean War and modern combat uniforms. These Soldiers placed the main sets of streamers from the time period they represented.

"Those streamers hung today and those uniforms represented here from World War I forward show how after a hundred-plus years of being the most free nation on Earth, as the 20th century dawned, we could not stand by and let others be slaves to tyranny or oppression," expressed Maj. Gen. Cucolo.

"Each streamer represents hundreds if not thousands of lives lost, more Americans, just like you, who left their homes and the United States saying, 'I will not stand by and let this happen. I am one more American since those who came forward in 1775 who will fight to make things right.'"

Following the streamer presentation, the youngest and oldest Soldiers from TF

Marne cut the Army's birthday cake. Alongside Maj. Gen. Cucolo and Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Andrews, the TF Marne command sergeant major were Chief Warrant Officer 5 Ray Noble, senior maintenance officer for the task force, from Savannah, Ga., and Pfc. Deonne Dore, an intelligence Soldier from G-2, a native of Miami.

The cake cutting portion of the ceremony is an important part of the ceremony because it represents experienced Soldiers passing on history to younger troops.

"We are celebrating our traditions, what makes us special and different," Maj. Gen. Cucolo said. "We are celebrating the self-sacrifice of others over the last 235 years. All 178 battle streamers on the Army colors represent the lives lost and the willingness again to go above and beyond for others. We must pass this tradition on."

With the formal birthday ceremony complete, all attendees were invited to at-

tend festivities outside that included a barbecue and live music from, Sasquatch, the TF Marne rock band.

"I would say everything has gone very well," stated Capt. Charles Gaines-Hager, the TF Marne G-6 network operations battle captain, from Gainesville, Fla. "Throughout the event I have counted over 200 attendees. This is a great turnout."

Soldiers showed their support and dedication to their service and were able to enjoy some of the comforts of home. The celebration also coincided with the division's 235th day in Iraq for this deployment.

"This felt a lot like being at home," said Spc. Paul Vendt, an intelligence analyst with the TF Marne G-2 and a native of St. Louis, Mo. "Obviously, at home everyone is not wearing the same thing or carrying a weapon, but you can still close your eyes taste the barbecue, listen to the music and it's almost like home. It's great for morale."

Task Force Marne Heroes of the North



Specialist Cory Courson, of Massena, N.Y., is with 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division. He has distinguished himself while serving as the lead gunner for the Personal Security Detachment Battery. His adaptability, knowledge, and commitment to excellence has allowed the task force commander and the members of his PSD to accomplish all missions successfully despite a grueling patrol schedule. In addition, Spc. Courson's military occupational specialty proficiency as a petroleum supply specialist has been an immense asset. He has participated in numerous joint training exercises with our Iraqi Army counterparts to ensure safe petroleum, oil and lubricants handling and sacrificed his own time to single-handedly conduct remedial training as well. Through challenging times and conditions where we demand more out of our Soldiers than ever before, his "no mission too difficult, no sacrifice too great" attitude has made him a Soldier to emulate. Specialist Courson is truly deserving of being recognized as today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.



Roy Foots, of Kaiserslautern, Germany, expertly performed the duties of the Army Sustainment Command logistics assistance representative in support of United States Division - North. He ably supported the warfighter, ensuring all supply-related issues concerning ASC stocks were promptly resolved and always ensured outstanding results. Foots was a key contributor to the task force's daily Materiel Condition Status Report 026 and acted on contract procurement when no stocks were available under a central contract. His proactive efforts ensured units' requirements were made known to ASC. Foots' actions are in keeping with the finest traditions of Civilian Service and make him most worthy of being recognized as this week's Task Force Marne Service Provider of the Week.



Two hundred and thirty-five years ago, the United States Army was established to defend our nation. From the Revolutionary war to the current operations taking place around the world, our Soldiers remain Army Strong with a deep commitment to our core values and beliefs. This 235th birthday commemorates America's Army - Soldiers, Families and civilians - who are achieving a level of excellence that is truly Army Strong. Being Army Strong goes beyond physical endurance and mental preparedness. It encompasses an indomitable spirit, and high ethical moral values. These are not only desirable traits in a person, but in a nation that wishes to live up to the ideals and vision of its founders. We are "America's Army: The Strength of the Nation."

Check out the Task Force Marne Facebook page

REGIONAL HEADLINES

\$50,000 offered for teen fugitive's surrender

Everett Herald

EVERETT — An anonymous donor is willing to give fugitive Colton Harris-Moore \$50,000 to turn himself in within the next five days, an Edmonds attorney said.

The same lawyer, Jim Johanson, said he's willing to represent the Camano Island serial burglary suspect free of charge.

"It's just time for him to quit running," Johanson said.

Johanson said the donor wants to remain anonymous. His motivation is to make sure that no one — police, Harris-Moore or the general public — gets hurt, he said.

Harris-Moore escaped from a halfway home in 2008, skipping out nearly two years before he completed his sentence.

Now 19, he is suspected of dozens of burglaries and thefts. Police also believe he has piloted stolen planes and boats and stolen luxury cars.

He also could face federal charges for allegedly breaking into an automated teller machine and crossing international boundaries and state lines in stolen vehicles.

Despite the long list of accusations, Johanson said Harris-Moore is young and his legal issues are not insurmountable.

"He is 19 years old," Johanson said. "He can still have a decent life."

With TV news crews shooting

footage at an Everett bail bond office, Johanson looked into the cameras and appealed directly to Harris-Moore several times, saying, "Colton, I know you are tired" and "You need to trust someone."

Michael Rocha, an Everett bounty hunter, said he has spoken to people who have had contact with Harris-Moore and they have indicated that "he is very tired and he's tired of running."

Rocha also said a reward fund now is up to \$9,000 for information leading to Harris-Moore's arrest.

Johanson acknowledged that it is unusual to offer a fugitive money to turn himself in.

"I have never heard of that in my career of 25-plus years" as a lawyer, Johanson said.

Rocha said he believes several factors have contributed to Harris-Moore's elusiveness.

"He is good. I think he's lucky, and I think he is getting help," he said. "It's a combination of things."

Fitness gym accused of defrauding Texas customers

[Click2Houston.com](#)

HOUSTON — A Houston-area fitness club has been accused of trying to mislead former customers, officials told KPRC Local 2.

Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott charged Bally Total Fitness Corp. with unlawfully attempting to mislead its former customers into

paying past due membership fees they do not owe.

Bally, based in California, operates 24 fitness centers in the Houston, Dallas and San Antonio areas.

The attorney general said that between the summer of 2009 and March 2010, Bally mailed more than 11,000 misleading "past due" notices to former members in an attempt to encourage them to rejoin their former gym.

Abbott said the notices created the false impression that former members had outstanding dues that needed to be paid.

More than 1,000 Texans made payments to Bally after receiving the past due notices.

However, company representatives acknowledged that the notices were not a collection effort, but rather an attempt to get former members to renew their memberships, officials said.

According to court documents filed by the state, Bally's notices claimed that recipients owed at least one month's overdue fees -- fees for which the notice demanded immediate payment. Some of Bally's past due notices even claimed that failure to remit a payment could result in a negative entry on their credit reports.

Bally is accused of attempting to confuse its former members with deceptive bills so they would make payments that were not actually owed, thus effectively reinstating a previous membership.

THE North Star

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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,
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