

The North Star

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U. S. Division- North, Iraq



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Photo by Sgt. Johnathon Jobson, TF Marne PAO

Sergeant Mervin Leonor, a CBRN NCO with Co. C, 209th ASB, 25th CAB, 25th Inf. Div., performs a Spanish love song, during the TF Marne Caribbean-American Heritage Month ceremony, June 18.

TF Marne travels to Caribbean

By Sgt. Johnathon Jobson
TF Marne PAO

Caribbean-American Heritage Month brought reggae music and Salsa dancing to Task Force Marne Soldiers at Contingency Operating Base Speicher during a ceremony, June 18.

In an educational and highly entertaining fashion, the Caribbean

was broken down by its Spanish, French and English populations. Speakers, either from or related to individuals in Puerto Rico, Haiti or Jamaica, gave an overview of the islands by highlighting a popular politician, entertainer and athlete.

The prominent public figures

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National Safety Month informs leaders, Soldiers how to stay in fight

By Spc. Michael Adams
TF Marne PAO

Every leader in Iraq wants to make sure their Soldiers and Civilians redeploy home safely.

To make sure this hap-

pens, Task Force Marne is observing National Safety Month; a chance for leaders at all levels and services to ensure everyone is conducting themselves in a manner that reduces unnecessary

risk both at the workplace and off duty.

The task force is focusing on weapons handling, reducing personal injuries and vehicular operation. Safe weapons handling in-

volves making sure Soldiers properly clear their weapons, maintain muzzle control- do not point weapons at comrades at any time, or

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negligently discharge their weapons.

Personal injuries are essentially accidents such as injuring a body part while playing sports, working, or just moving furniture in the living quarters. The leaders of the Safety Office want Soldiers at work or on their personal time, to know how to maintain awareness and identify hazards around them and take appropriate precautions to reduce risks. A simple safety precaution can be wearing a reflective belt at night, wearing seatbelts, maintaining a safe speed on the contingency or forward operating bases.

Vehicular safety, whether it is in a tactical or non-tactical vehicle, is making sure drivers and passengers conduct themselves in a safe manner. This means that standards are maintained and rules are followed. According to Charles Fitzpatrick, safety director for TF Marne, the majority of vehicular fatalities Armywide could have been avoided had the victims been wearing a restraint device.

"Safety is the very essence of everything we do," said Fitzpatrick, of Morehead City, N.C. Fitzpatrick added that American history has many examples of how people died needlessly in the workplace because simple safety precautions were not met.

"In combat you have to take necessary risks," said John Hornick, deputy safety director, for TF Marne, of Swoyersville, Pa. "What safety does is reduce or eliminate the unnecessary risks so that you can get your mission done. We have to be proper stewards of our people and our equipment to get our mission done."

If Soldiers are not conducting themselves in a safe manner, they may be doing more than just hurting themselves.

"Our enemy's primary mission is to take Soldiers out of the fight," said Fitzpatrick. "We don't want to help them out. We have to protect the Army's most valuable asset and that's the Soldier. And the way we do that is through engaged leaders training Soldiers to standard and maintaining that standard throughout the deployment. This message must reverberate throughout the ranks and each individual must take responsibility to

maintain the standard."

Fitzpatrick added being safe has to be a day-to-day practice.

"Safety is leadership in action," he added. "We recognize this as a group effort involving all unit members but nothing replaces leaders properly supervising and educating their Soldiers. We must continually strive to reduce accidents and injuries in USD-N as well as here at COB Speicher."

Fitzpatrick added that many leaders are using their past experiences on and off deployments to make sure their junior Soldiers are safe and healthy.

To help promote risk reduction on COB Speicher, TF Marne teamed with the Garrison Safety Office to create a traffic checkpoint, June 9, on the base where military policemen checked to ensure all vehicle operators, military and civilian, had their vehicles properly dispatched, were properly licensed, were using seatbelts and other basic measures to ensure vehicle safety.

Sergeant Maxim Kooker, with the 108th Military Police Company, out of Fort Bragg, N.C., was one of the Soldiers who stopped vehicles.

"Driving down the road, you don't want to tell your parents you got hurt while driving on the base," said the Reading, Pa., native. "Seatbelts are important. It doesn't matter if you're going 10 miles or 30 miles an hour."

There will be three total safety checkpoints during the month of June.

To get the word out about the importance of keeping Soldiers alive and unharmed, the Safety Office is sponsoring a number of events. Division Headquarters will be treated to safety videos in the TF Marne headquarters lobby throughout the month of June. The videos are for showing the importance of risk reduction and the consequences if someone chooses not to be safe.

Safety awareness will be interactive



Photo by Spc. Michael Adams, TF Marne PAO

Specialist Jeffrey Ostwald, a medic with the 313th Med. Co., gives his driver's license to Sergeant Maxim Kooker, a military policeman with the 108th MP Co., at a safety checkpoint, June 9, at COB Speicher.

for the headquarters building as well.

The safety office will conduct a fire drill to ensure that Division personnel are able to get out in a timely manner.

Also, those who work within the headquarters will be able show their safety side artistically. All staff sections were invited to create a poster to reinforce safety. Prizes will be awarded for the winners, including the opportunity to have the winning poster as a screensaver on Division computers. Coordination and planning for this contest is ongoing. The winner will be announced the end of June.

The Safety Office is also conducting other events to encourage all TF Marne units to be safe. Brigades within TF Marne nominated outstanding Safety Officers based on their outstanding safety record. All of these events are designed to make everyone in USD – N aware of the hazards they face.

Despite the potential hazards those serving in the task force face, the TF Marne Safety Office felt that during this deployment, everyone involved has done a great job in enforcing the standard.

"Task Force Marne Soldiers have done an excellent job," said Fitzpatrick. "Safety has always been right at the forefront of everything we do and the focus point of the task force. I believe our leaders and noncommissioned officers are doing a great job. I haven't talked to one NCO yet that didn't consider Safety a top priority."

Man with heart for stone crafts for Stryker Brigade

By Pvt. Zachary Zuber
3rd SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div. PAO

It all started with grief in 2004-05 timeframe. Three Soldiers lost their lives, and a U.S. civilian contractor, who had befriended them, was left with a loss. Charles Wagner, a mechanic for General Dynamic Land Systems, was working in Mosul, Iraq, at the time and had to find a way to deal with his pain.

In an effort to relieve the pain felt from the passing of his friends, Wagner began shaping marble stones into crests, crosses and hearts.

"This started out as a way to displace myself from what's going on over here, working during off hours to focus on other things," said Wagner, a native of Rainier, Wash.

Wagner said he lost three Soldiers on one mission, and he created hearts, cru-

cifixes, and lancers for each of the parents as a way to connect to them.

During that first tour, in 2004-05, he carved a full-size lancer for 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division. Then, during the 2006-07 tour with 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID, he created a replica of the Indian-head shield that represents 2nd Infantry Division. When he traveled with the Arrowhead Brigade to Iraq last August, he received the request to make the 3rd Stryker Brigade crest, which includes the 2nd ID shield on top of an arrowhead, with the number three located above the shield.

The piece, carved from nearly fifty pounds of marble, is a chance to leave a permanent personal memento with the brigade, Wagner said.

"I was born at Madigan

Army Hospital [at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.], so I kind of share the pride of the brigade. And for the Soldiers, this is my gift back because of what the military has done for me," said Wagner. "It's a lot of pride for me to be asked to do this, and to offer it to the Soldiers of the brigade."

Marble pieces isn't the only gift he's given to the Arrowhead Brigade. When Soldiers take him vehicles to repair some see the stone carvings he has laying around. If a curious individual asks about them, Wagner gladly shows them how they can create their own escape from a simple block of stone.

"If you give someone a square block, they can take a saw to the corners and round it off with a washer to make a perfect circle,"

said Wagner. "That's what I show to Soldiers I meet, to help them take their mind off of what's going on and let them drift somewhere else."



Photo by Pvt. Zachary Zuber, 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID. PAO

This marble carving of the 3rd SBCT, 2nd ID, crest, was created by Charles Wagner, from Rainier, Wash., a mechanic with GDLS.

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Photo by Sgt. Johnathon Jobson, TF Marne PAO

Suzette Owens, the digital master gunner for TF Marne G-6 and a Jamaican native, interacts with the crowd as the co-host of the Caribbean-American Heritage Month celebration at the TF Marne headquarters, June 18.

who have made strides and contributions to the U.S. and around the world included: actress, Zoe Saldana; retired and former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Colin Powell, and musician Wyclef Jean.

"We have people from many different areas all coming together to do the same job," said Sgt. 1st Class Luis Matias, the Division Main joint network node platoon sergeant from 3rd Signal Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division, and a native of Puerto Rico. "We are trying to pay tribute to where we come from."

After each speaker, various Soldiers performed songs and dances from their native homeland. Sergeant Mervin Leonor, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear noncommissioned officer with Company C, 209th Aviation Support Battalion, 25th Combat Aviation Brigade, and a Newark, N.J., native, performed a Spanish love song; and Soldiers from multiple units on COB Speicher performed Spanish

dances including the Bachata.

"It was great, like being in the Caribbean," said Suzette Owens, a Jamaican native, who hosted the ceremony. "It was rehearsed, but it was not rehearsed, so you felt like you were in the islands. It was like a 30-minute vacation from work."

Command Sergeant Major Jesse Andrews, command sergeant major for TF Marne, went to Montego Bay, Jamaica during his Environmental Morale Leave and he said what he witnessed during the ceremony was very accurate to what he experienced on vacation.

"The Army is a very diverse organization," explained Command Sgt. Maj. Andrews. "We want to make sure our Soldiers are imbued with the different cultures so we know how to relate to each other on a daily basis."

He also added that a trip to the Caribbean would be worth it. "It's an experience," Command Sgt. Maj. Andrews said, "you will never forget."

Task Force Marne Heroes of the North



Specialist Joe Rocha, of Stockton, Calif., is with 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division. He is assigned as a rifleman and was recently identified as the only match to donate bone marrow to his sister. He unselfishly returned home to undergo the painful procedure of donating the bone marrow. After a successful transplant, Spc. Rocha quickly recovered, returned to his company and seamlessly returned to the high operational tempo and regime of being deployed. His sister is on track for a full recovery. Specialist Rocha and his sister were selected by the American Red Cross to be the subject of a national commercial highlighting the crucial services the Red Cross provides to the Armed Forces. His selfless devotion to his Family and brothers in arms are in keeping with all the Army Values. His unwavering dedication to both his natural Family and his deployed Family make him a natural choice for today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.



Specialist Qunisha Pettaway, of Greenville, N.C., is with Company B, 26th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. She serves as the signal support systems specialist assigned to her company. Since joining the Communications and Electronics Shop, Spc. Pettaway has been a vital asset and an instrumental part of the team. As the production control clerk, she successfully and accurately processed more than 400 work orders. She is the primary troubleshooter for all Blue Force Tracker issues and is responsible for troubleshooting more than 50 vehicles throughout the Spartan Brigade. Private First Class Pettaway is also the PCC for two other outlying locations. She takes personal pride in her work and is eager to learn all she can. This motivation has earned her the respect of her customers, who feel reassured knowing that if she doesn't have the answers to a problem, then she will find it. Her dedication to the mission and attention to detail is what makes her an excellent choice for today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.

You are invited

Vertical Horizon

Where: COB Speicher
When: July 4, Main Gym;
July 7, South Speicher,
Where: FOB Marez
When: July 5
Where: FOB Warrior
When: July 6

Tops in Blue

Where: FOB Marez
When: July 8
Where: FOB Warrior
When: July 9
Where: COB Speicher
When: July 10

Ja Rule

Where: FOB Warrior
When: July 19
Where: COB Speicher
When: July 20

Lone Wolf Comedians

Where: FOB Marez
When: July 26
Where: FOB McHenry,
FOB Warrior
When: July 27
Where: COB Speicher
When: Two shows July 28

A poster for the Army Pictorial Service, 1942-1970. It features a large black and white photo of a soldier in the foreground and several smaller photos of soldiers in various settings. The text reads: "THE SIGNAL CORPS' ARMY pictorial SERVICE 1942-1970". Below this, it says: "While photography had long been a part of the Signal Corps' mission, its value and versatility had never been fully appreciated or exploited." and "Improvements in training and organization overcame most of the initial difficulties and the visual record of WWII speaks for itself." At the bottom, it states: "Because of the expanded scope of its work during wartime, the Photographic Division of the Office of the Chief Signal Officer became the Army Pictorial Service on 17 June 1942." There is a circular seal at the bottom right.

Happy 150th Birthday to the
Army Signal Corps

REGIONAL HEADLINES

Show for odd autos comes to Seattle's Fremont Fair

Seattle Times

SEATTLE - Fake eyeballs, rainbows, shoes and plastic soldiers — that's what art cars are made of.

Last weekend, more than 50 wildly decorated cars from all over the nation and Canada cruise into Seattle's annual Art Car Blowout. Now in its 11th year at the Fremont Fair, it rivals Minneapolis as the second-largest show in the U.S., behind the hub of the movement — Houston — where 300-some art cars parade the streets every spring.

"It's a really supportive community here," said Kelly Lyles, the event's coordinator. Unlike in some cities, the Seattle exhibition isn't juried. "So the guy who slaps house paint on his car ... to the professional sculptor are totally welcome."

The term "art car" is very broad — encompassing everything from custom paint jobs to glued-on doodads to oddly-shaped chassis; one car coming to Seattle this week looks like a larger-than-life red wagon. "In a way, it's shaking up the status quo of the automobile," said Blank, who has documented the scene in books and films. "It's what we think the car should be — more fun, more colorful, more expressive."

It's certainly an extension of Lyles' personality. She affectionately nicknamed her art car "Excessories Odd-yssey" and covered it with a

variety of shoes, purses and jewelry. Among other things, the hood sports a magnetic paper doll.

The 53-year-old painter from West Seattle first got into the scene when she was looking for a car 20 years ago. She was going to buy a used Subaru but opted for a Ford Pinto instead, with fewer miles.

"I was mortified to be seen in it, so I decorated it like a horse, glued little horses on it," said Lyles.

"I custom-painted it with brown and white spots like a pinto pony, with horse hood ornaments, a cowboy and Indian diorama in the back. The blinkers played 'Love Me Tender.' "Some art cars can be driven, but others don't even run. Blank, for example, had to tow his car (covered with random objects and called "Oh My God!") behind a minivan.

But for longtime exhibit participant Leith Zeutenhorst, her art car was a welcome diversion. Years ago, after she was diagnosed with ovarian and uterine cancer, she made her mother's 1982 Ford Futura into a rainbow art car named "Joyride."

"I was so happy to come out of the hospital and see my art car," said Zeutenhorst, a 54-year-old artist from Camas, Clark County. "Now I take my friends to their mammogram appointments in my car."

Her 88-year-old mother was at first horrified to see what happened to the car, but saw the effect it had on people. "I guess it's just a happy car," said her mother, Nada Jarvis. "It makes people

smile, and be happy. It offers good transportation, too."

Cathedral of Junk saved for now

Austin American-Statesman

AUSTIN, Texas - The Cathedral of Junk has been saved — at least for now — in the latest twist of the wrangling over Vince Hanneman's yard art.

Hanneman said city officials told him that he will be allowed to keep the 33-foot tower of castoffs that he has constructed over the past 20 years. Hanneman had decided to dismantle it this week after months of back-and-forth with city code enforcement officers over safety concerns.

Now, Hanneman said he has agreed to submit a letter from an engineer confirming the structure's safety. It was the city's intent all along that the Cathedral be preserved, said Leon Barba, an assistant director with planning and development review. Hanneman, Barba said, "probably misunderstood what the engineer said."

Hanneman said he is happy that the structure will remain an Austin landmark but said working through the city bureaucracy was unnecessarily complicated.

There are new rules for the Cathedral following the agreement: Hanneman will have to limit the number of people who visit the tower to 50 at a time, and visitors can no longer climb on the structure.

THE

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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,
25th Infantry Division
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