

# The North Star

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



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## Law school opportunity opens for military officers

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

For Soldiers interested in expanding their legal careers both in and out of the military, the Office of the Judge Advocate General is now accepting applications for the Army's Funded Legal Education Program.

Under the FLEP program, the Army can send up to 25 active-duty officers, from second lieutenant to captain, to law school.

The officers must have accumulated between two to six active-duty service years of total federal service by the beginning of the legal training. Interested officers can review Chapter 14, AR 27-1 (The Judge Advocate's General Funded Legal Education Program) to determine their eligibility.

"We have a lot of officers who perhaps had a political science degree or some sort of undergraduate legal training," said Col. Jonathan Guden, the Staff Judge Advocate for the 3rd Infantry Division.

"For those individuals, it's a great opportunity for them to get their law degree, [and] continue to serve in the U.S. Army.

Regardless of their undergraduate degree, it's a great opportunity to switch branches and experience life as a judge advocate, practicing law in the military."

Officers who are eligible and are interested in applying for the program must take the Law School Admission Test, or LSAT, a standardized placement test for law school.

Officers must then submit the re-

"When an officer is selected for the FLEP, he or she will go to law school, typically where they can get in-state tuition, and that will be their job for three years."

-Colonel Jonathan Guden, TF Marne Staff Judge Advocate

sults of the test with their application packet through command channels, along with their undergraduate transcripts.

Officers must also conduct an interview with their servicing SJA.

Upon acceptance, officers will attend law school at either a school in their state of residence, or a school that grants in-state tuition to military personnel.

"It's a highly competitive program," said Col. Guden, a Chippewa Falls, Wis., native. "When an officer is selected for the FLEP, he or she will go to law school, typically where they can get in-state tuition, and that will be their job for three years."

The law school experience doesn't end after school is out for the summer.

Through this program, officers will also have the chance to get real world, on-the-job training by serving in a military legal office during their summer break.

"I think it's a great program, because it really does allow you to practice law and serve in the military at the same time," said Lt. Col. John Frost, the deputy staff judge advocate with 3rd ID.

Lieutenant Colonel Frost, an East Lansing, Mich., native, attended the University of Maine School of Law under the FLEP and said his experiences in military law have been very diverse

as opposed to the career path of a civilian lawyer.

Besides working in stereotypical areas of practice like trying cases for the government or defense at court martials, judge advocate generals also work as legal advisers for commanders at all levels.

"The military area of legal practice is expansive, and that is of great value to lawyers, even just out of law school," he continued.

"A typical lawyer in a law firm might spend 30 to 40 years looking at contracts or at one particular niche area of practice, whereas we have an expansive area of practice. ... We're advising Soldiers in areas of legal assistance; and command in administrative, fiscal, contract, operational, criminal and military justice law matters."

The JAG Corps is looking for people who have a desire to serve in the military and to practice law.

If interested in the program, officers have until Nov. 1 to submit their applications through their chains of command and contact the SJA for an initial interview.

Interested officers in United States Division-North may contact Lt. Col. Frost at SVOIP 708-670-0152, DSN 318-849-0313, or by NIPR e-mail at john.frost@3id.army.mil to arrange for an interview with Col. Guden.

# Speicher clinic relocates, essential services remain

By Spc. Cassandra Monroe  
135th Mobile PA Det.

The 21st Combat Support Hospital observed its relocation with a ribbon cutting ceremony, July 30, at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq.

The ribbon was cut by Task Force Marne Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo; the 21st CSH Commander, Col. Barbara Holcomb; and the youngest Soldier at the CSH, Pfc. Ashley Lane, a medic with the hospital.

The hospital was relocated to provide full care to the Soldiers and civilians who moved as a part of the transition to stability operations.

"The Soldiers we take care of are consolidating ... and it would be inconvenient for them to come down to the old hospital location, which is two miles away," said Col. Holcomb, a San Antonio, Texas, native. "It puts us much closer to the life support area and where the Soldiers are at."

Although the hospital has moved its location, it still offers the same medical capabilities it did before.

"The capabilities that we will have will not change significantly," said Col. Holcomb. "The hospital will still have the operating rooms, emergency medicine, inpatient care, the laboratory and pharmacy, dental, behavioral health, optometry as well as physical therapy.

"We will not have cardiology because it is consolidating down at Joint Base Balad at the Air Force hospital, along with other sub-specialty units. The only thing that is changing is that we are decreasing the

capacity, but the capabilities remain the same."

A piece that makes this relocation different from its last location is the transition to expedient structures. Some medical facilities will be housed in Deployable Medical Systems, which are medical tents.

The efforts required to make the building of the new CSH a success included ground preparation for the medical tents, building helipads, configuring existing buildings for healthcare, as well as installing power capabilities and water sources.

"We had a big mission with this hospital because we set up the power and water," said Sgt. 1st Class Charles Houston, a maintenance noncommissioned officer with the 21st CSH. "Without those two things, the hospital would be non-functional."

Sergeant First Class Houston and his team drew up a plan based on how much power and water was needed to facilitate the hospital, which took about a month.

Another issue the team had to keep in consideration was how to keep the power and water running at the old hospital site while maintaining the new one.

But to Sgt. 1st Class Houston, a Tallahassee, Fl., native, his team's time was well spent in preparing the hospital for its new opening.

"I think my guys did an outstanding job," he said. "I like the location. It's a nice set up and very workable. We were successful and we'll be one hundred percent by the opening date."

Colonel Holcomb agreed that the Soldiers of the 21st CSH put forward a great

effort to succeed in the completion of the hospital so the services can open for the Soldiers on base.

"The Soldiers have worked really hard on getting this together," she said. "It's been a huge effort, and I'm very proud of the work they've done here."

After the ribbon cutting, the distinguished guests, which included Command

Sgt. Maj. Jesse Andrews, TF Marne command sergeant major, received a full tour of the hospital and all of its facilities to include the behavioral health and the combat stress center, inpatient units, operating and physical therapy rooms.

The tour ended with refreshments and drinks at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation center at the site.



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

(From left to right) The 21st CSH Commander, Col. Barbara Holcomb, Pfc. Ashley Lane, a medic with the 21st CSH, and TF Marne Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Tony Cucolo, cut the ribbon during the 21st CSH ribbon cutting and relocation ceremony, July 30, at COB Speicher.



# Lone Wolf Comedy tour stops at Marez

By Spc. Dustin Gautney,  
2nd HBCT, 3rd ID PAO

Laughs were abound as Soldiers from 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, were entertained by comedians from the Lone Wolf comedy tour during the tour's visit

to Contingency Operating Site Marez/Diamondback's Community Activity Center, July 24.

Featured in the evenings' events were comedians: Wayne Federman, Mark Sweeny, and headlining was Comedy Central's Scott Kennedy. This tour marked

Kennedy's 38th tour in Iraq.

"As long as there are Soldiers here in Iraq I'm going to keep coming; don't get me wrong, once the Soldiers are gone I'm not coming back, it's not like I'm buying a time-share," said Kennedy jokingly.

Performing in Iraq since 2003, Kennedy has toured Iraq nearly once every three months.

"I do it for the Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen. To me they are true heroes, the people that volunteer to risk their lives for their country," said Kennedy. "Just the chance to be out here among true heroes is what makes it all worth it."

"They sacrifice for those back home, so the least I can do is come out here and entertain them."

And entertain they did, according to Sgt. Tim

Cooper, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd HBCT.

"This was my third time deploying to Iraq, and by far that was the best show I've seen," said Sgt. Cooper. "Those guys really help boost Soldiers' moral; it is something that every Soldier should take advantage of given the chance."

Sergeant Cooper also said that he was truly impressed with the dedication of Scott Kennedy to travel to Iraq that many times, not for any personal gains, but to support the Soldiers.

"After the show [Kennedy] stayed and talked to the Soldiers one on one and posed for pictures with them. You could tell he loved what he was doing, and maybe even more so loved what being a Soldiers stood for," Sgt. Cooper said.



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

**Comedian Scott Kennedy speaks with Soldiers as part of the Lone Wolf Comedy Tour held at COS Marez/Diamondback, July 24.**

## 3rd ID Soldier gets exactly what he asked for in Iraq

By Pfc. Jennifer Montagna  
CP North PAO

Specialist Demetrius Bolden was counting on his chance to deploy when he joined the U.S. Army in August 2008. After completing his basic combat training and advanced individual training at Ft. Jackson, S.C., he was stationed at Ft. Stewart, Ga., where he got his chance. Assigned to the 3rd Infantry Division, Spc. Bolden began training to deploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in the spring of 2009.

He arrived at Contingency Operating Base Speicher in September as part of the 3rd ID Special Troops Battalion. Specialist Bolden acted as the non-commissioned officer in charge for the temporary badges office at the entry control check point on COB Speicher for nearly nine months before he was re-assigned to Command Post North. While stationed there, Spc. Bolden was assigned to Deputy Commanding

General Support of Task Force Marne, Brig. Gen. Tom Vandal's personal security detail.

"I enjoy the opportunity to provide security for Brig. Gen. Vandal as he builds better relationships between Peshmerga, Iraqi Army and U.S. Forces," said Spc. Bolden.

At CP North Spc. Bolden provides security for missions throughout U.S. Division-North, as well as security

missions on Contingency Operating Site Marez. As part of a seven man team, Spc. Bolden understands the importance of teamwork.

"My team is very dedicated and work great together, there's really nothing bad about my job. It's important and hard work at times but the high morale of our team makes it easier to achieve our mission," said Spc. Bolden.

Specialist Bolden is looking forward to seeing his family and pursuing his civilian degree in criminal justice once he returns to Georgia this fall.

"I joined because I wanted to help out with the ongoing conflict in Iraq, and to better myself as a person. I also knew the Army would give me a chance for higher education," said Spc. Bolden.

Now nearing the end of his deployment, Spc. Bolden has completed his goal of serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and looks forward to the next step in his education.



Photo by Pfc. Jennifer Montagna, CP North PAO

**Specialist Demetrius Bolden is currently serving his tour of duty at COS Marez.**

## Task Force Marne Heroes of the North



Private First Class Condora James, of Sylacauga, Ala., is with Company A, 26th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. She serves in a communications position outside her military occupational specialty. After learning all facets of communications equipment - including how to operate, fill, set up and troubleshoot - she ensured more than 50 missions had functioning, encrypted communications and that all radios were operational. She personally conducts radio checks with higher headquarters to ensure convoys are able to communicate with all other battle space owners. Private First Class James completely replaced an entire up-armored vehicle's radio system minutes before mission execution, ensuring it was fully operational. Working diligently, her single-handed efforts ensured the critical vehicle could participate in the mission. Private First Class James maintains more than 30 tactical radios, ensuring they are configured with current encryption at all times and that they are properly accounted for. Her dedication to the mission and willingness to take on any task she's given makes her a worthy choice for today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.



Specialist Jessica Olive, of Hampton, Ga., is with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. She serves as an aviation flight operations specialist for the Spartan Brigade. Her actions continuously prove an asset to the daily operations of the Brigade Tactical Operations Center and the aviation cell. Specialist Olive is responsible for processing, building and tracking all attack and scout weapons team systems missions for the brigade and deconflicting and coordinating all airspace within Spartans airspace, a job outside of her normal military occupational specialty and well above her pay grade. She competently executes the duties of a three-person team by herself. Her hard work, professionalism, and dependability were all reasons the brigade chief of operations and battle captain each fought to have her assigned to their shift. Specialist Olive's deep sense of personal duty to learn, coupled with her drive and capacity to assume increased responsibility, has ensured she continues to be a valued member of the Spartan team. Her ability to self-learn and assume the duty and responsibility of a flight mission planner in support of the brigade commander and various Government of Iraq officials make her an outstanding choice for today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.

# Muslims celebrate Ramadan holy month

## Cultural Tidbit Special to the North Star

**R**amadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar.

It is the Islamic month of fasting and also considered the most holy month of the year.

Muslims fast from food and drinks from dawn to sunset.

During Ramadan, Muslims ask forgiveness for past sins, pray for guidance and help in refraining from everyday evils.

The most holy night of the year is Laylat al-Qadr "the night of decree or measures," as it is the night in which the Quran was revealed to Muhammad and it is believed it occurred on a night during the last 10 days of the month of Ramadan.

Ramadan ends with Eid al-Fitr (a

celebration of breaking the month of fasting).

Every day during Ramadan, Muslims around the world get up before dawn to eat Shur then they perform the morning prayer. They have to stop eating and drinking before the morning prayer until the fourth prayer of the day, (sunset prayer), when they break their fast, called Iftar.

Ramadan also is a time of reflecting on and worshiping God.

Muslims are expected to put more effort into following the teachings of Islam and to avoid irreligious sights and sounds.

The fast is intended to be an exacting act of deep personal worship in which Muslims seek a raised awareness of and closeness to God. The act of fasting allows Muslims to practice self-discipline, self-control, sacrifice,

and sympathy for those who are less fortunate.

During Ramadan most Muslims pay the Zakat (Tithe) to the poor, so the poor can enjoy the month and the Eid al-Fitr.

In addition to fasting, Muslims are encouraged to read the entire Quran. Some Muslims perform the recitation of the entire Quran by means of special prayers, called Tarwih, which are held every night in the Mosque during Ramadan.

In many Muslim countries markets close down most of the day, and reopen at night after the Iftar, and remains open until the early morning hours.

*Editor's note: The Task Force Marne Human Terrain Analyst Team contributed to this cultural tidbit.*

## REGIONAL HEADLINES

### Texters having difficulty kicking habit while driving

Atlanta Journal Constitution

ATLANTA- One month into Georgia's texting-while-driving ban, many nimble-fingered drivers are facing the possibility they might just have a problem.

Their ears are primed for text message alerts. Their eyes widen when their devices light up.

Their phalanges fiddle with their phone's vibrations.

Kelly Ann Ryder, a 19-year-old driver from Bremen, has tried to quit cold turkey, turning her iPhone to silent, "no vibrating or anything ... because when I hear it, I get this sensation," she says.

But what really breaks Ryder into a sweat this weekend is just thinking about the fines the Georgia State Patrol is prepared to issue which started August 1.

After a one-month grace period, police across the state will begin enforcing the new law banning texting while driving. Ryder, a junior at University of Georgia, vowed before the law went into effect July 1, she'd only text when stopped or if no one else was on the road.

"So if I do anything stupid, I'm only hurting myself," she says.

Jenny Meyers is still coming to terms with her addiction. The 33-year-old attorney knows she is unnaturally attached to her phone.

She commutes from Canton to Cobb and Cherokee Counties with her Blackberry (literally) in hand, she says. To her, instant messaging her office while driving is as natural as braking. And, yes, she often drives with her knees.

Meyers believes the law is appropriate for young drivers, but suggests it only be enforced with adults who have a record of accidents-while-texting. (She, for the record, says she has a clean driving history.)

She's trying her best to be a law-abiding Georgia driver, but knows just what she'll do if stopped for an alleged DWT violation.

"If a cop pulls me over and says 'You've been texting,' how can they prove it?" Meyers asks. "They are not taking my phone without a warrant."

That may not stop a trooper from issuing a \$150 citation (also worth one point on the driver's record) to a motorist suspected of violating the law. It's up to the officer's discretion, says GSP trooper Larry Schnall.

Brittany Haugabook recently hit rock bottom. Specifically, she hit the car in front of her. She was text-driving while navigating through a rainstorm.

"My first thought 'Oh my God. I have this phone, I'm going to jail,'" recalls the 20-year-old from Stone Mountain.

The cars had little damage, but Haugabook says she was scared sober. She hasn't texted, while driving, since.

### Cracks in roof of Alamo are OK, says report

San Antonio Express-News

SAN ANTONIO- A highly anticipated engineer's report on the Alamo's concrete roof says the water-stained cracks visitors see in the ceiling actually help preserve the hallowed state-owned structure.

But the report by Datum Engineers "strongly" recommends the roof's copper, lead-coated exterior, which has leaked for years, be repaired or replaced to protect the famed Alamo Shrine from rainwater seepage — its "single largest threat."

The report's findings were celebrated by leaders of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, the Alamo's custodians, as well as one DRT member who had raised concerns about the nearly 90-year-old roof.

"The report should dispel accusations of neglect on the part of the DRT by critics who claimed that cracks in the church's roof presented a public safety issue for the millions of visitors who pass through the building," the DRT said in a release.

But Sarah Reveley, the member who accused the group of neglecting the Alamo, stands by her grievance filed on Feb. 1 with the Texas attorney general's office, which is investigating the DRT.

"I am glad to finally know the roof is stable, but it does not change my opinion of neglect," Reveley said.

#### THE

### North Star

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