

The North Star

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



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Historic flag waves over TF Marne

By Sgt. 1st Class
Kelly McCargo
TF Marne PAO

The Air Force officer said the friendship started during Operation Iraqi Freedom, when a random care package, addressed specifically to him, arrived in the mail.

The package was from a Jennifer Anne Lawson and her students from the Hillside Middle school, Northville, Mich.

"She sent a package to me addressed from the school when I arrived to Forward Operating Base Kalsu in December 2007," said Air Force Lt. Col. Bruce Munger, who was the 72nd Expeditionary Air Support Operations Squadron commander at the time.

The relationship between the school and Airmen developed. The students organized collection drives and sent care packages to military personnel more than 6,000 miles away.

Three years later, Lt. Col. Munger was back in Iraq serving as the Task Force Marne Air Liaisons Officer at Contingency Operating Base Speicher in Tikrit, Iraq. He and his 40 Airmen linked the U.S. Army with

all of the Air Force's attack aircraft — that operate in airspace north of Baghdad.

Albeit different students, his friendship with the middle school, 6th grade class, continued.

"I told her I was coming up on another deployment, and she said they were looking to sponsor more Soldiers and Airmen," Lt. Col. Munger said.

As Lt. Col. Munger's tour was coming to a close, Lawson, the Hillside Middle School, Mathematics Department head, came up with one final "patriotic" project.

"I do have one last favor to ask," Lawson wrote in an e-mail. "I have an American flag that my dad was given when he left the Navy in 1966. He was in charge of raising, lowering and changing the flag when they were at sea or in port. The flag was last flown on Memorial Day weekend in 1993 when my dad became Commodore of a boat club. Before that it was flown on the Naval ship he served on in Vietnam — USS Inflict. I was wondering if I could send the flag to you to fly in Iraq and then send back."

Lieutenant Colonel Munger said he was more

than happy to assist.

Lawson's father, Ken Smith, also wrote a brief letter about the particular flag his daughter possessed.

From 1962 to 1966, dur-

ing the Vietnam War, one of Seaman Smith's daily responsibilities was to care, raise and lower the ensign.

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Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Kelly McCargo, TF Marne PAO

(left) Specialist Eric Hamrick, the flag detail NCOIC, Sgt. Shelby Mishner, and (right) Spc. Jesse Harper, raised and lowered Seaman Ken Smith's ensign, at the TF Marne on COB Speicher, April 25.

Soldiers find time for education during deployment

By Spc. Michael Adams
TF Marne PAO

One thing Soldiers don't have a lot of during their deployment is time. But for Spc. Shanna Antoine, of Houston, she hasn't let that stop her from pursuing an education while she is stationed on Contingency Operating Base Speicher.

As a cable systems installer/maintainer in the G-6 section for 3rd Infantry Division, she is one of the many who are responsible for keeping the intricate communications network for northern Iraq up and running. But Spc. Antoine's duties while deployed have

not stopped her from obtaining her degree.

"I took time to think about what I wanted to become in the future," she said. "So I decided I wanted to become a mortician."

The COB Speicher education center helped her with the goal and she eventually majored in Mortuary Science.

"I study for 30 minutes to an hour every day," she said, explaining how she gets herself to study. "I do find the balance to make sure I get my work done and my degree."

While sometimes it is hard to find the time, she has nothing but support

from those she works with.

"They've been very supportive," said Spc. Antoine. "My platoon sergeant and section sergeant have been very supportive."

To them education is the key. They want us to become more educated as time goes by. They support me 100 percent."

Specialist Antoine has also been very happy with the support she has received from the Army. The G.I. Bills covers all of her expenses except for books.

Junior Soldiers are not the only ones who are taking advantage of the educational opportunities available while deployed.

Sergeant Major Andrew McCaughey, of Cranston, R.I., works as the food service sergeant major for Task Force Marne and is also a member of the 3rd ID, G-4 section. He is about to obtain his Master's Degree in Business Administration.

"I wanted to make myself more marketable outside," he said. "It's great, it's all writing, there are no tests or proctored exams."

Sergeant Major McCaughey added there are a number of other schools out there that cater to Soldiers' needs as they deploy and

continue to work.

He added the transition is relatively seamless between his daily duties of making sure the Soldiers of TF Marne get their meals and his classwork.

"The primary reason I chose to get my degree here is there aren't a lot of distracters," he said. "I work a lot of hours, but I don't have to cut the grass, I don't have to maintain a house, change the oil in my car. Everything's done in your work day. When I'm done with work I'm able to study."

Sergeant Major McCaughey has no plans to retire any time soon, but when he does he will know how important it is to have an education.

"I recommend every Soldier here visit the education center and at least see what they have to offer," he said. "They can't take that away from you, it's not like going to Air Assault School or Ranger School. When you get out of the Army that isn't going to matter to civilian employers, but that degree will matter the rest of your life."

Information on educational and testing opportunities are available at www.goarmyed.com.



Photo by Spc. Michael Adams, TF Marne PAO

Specialist Shanna Antoine, a cable systems installer/maintainer with TF Marne, studies for an online class in her room, May 4 at COB Speicher.

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An ensign is a mariners' term for a standard, or a flag, that indicates the ships' nationality—in this case the American flag.

Seaman Smith was assigned to the United States Ship Inflict, an ocean mine sweeper which patrolled the southern coast of Vietnam for supply ships trying to equip and reinforce enemy combatants.

"The flag that you have was flying from the mast of the USS Inflict on patrol in the waters of the then South Vietnam.

So we have a retired Sailor, a current Airman who received a lot help from the students, and the students who are learning about the military, Lt. Col. Munger said.

On April 25, the personal security detachment for the Task Force Marne and 3rd Infantry Division, command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Andrews, raised Seaman Smith's ensign one more time during OIF.

"Conducting this event was of a great honor for my Soldiers and myself," said Sgt. Shelby Misher, the

noncommissioned officer in charge of the detail that raised the flag.

"For us to take a little time out our schedules for the benefit of the people we serve is a great feeling."

"I hope that (knowing the flag was raised yet again) gives them the same feeling that it gave us, and that they know that this flag has been on many journeys and has reached us here in Iraq to be flown" he said. "Thank you for giving myself and the soldiers from Task Force Marne the opportunity to be a part of history."

TF Marne celebrates Cinco de Mayo



Photos by Sgt Jessica Rohr, 135th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Above: (left) Sergeant First Class Sean Fullard and Sgt. Martina Jones, chemical specialists for Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear/Force Protection, prepare and serve fresh popcorn during a Task Force Marne Cinco De Mayo celebration at COB Speicher, Iraq, May 5.

Left: Staff Sergeant Chad Graham, with the Staff Judge Advocate, Task Force Marne, prepares a taco of his own creation during the TF Marne Cinco De Mayo Fiesta at COB Speicher, Iraq, May 5.

Customs cracks down on Soldier's contraband

By Spc. Jessica Zullig
135th Mobile PA Det.

When on deployment, Soldiers have the opportunity to purchase novelty items and clothing from local bazaars. But there are only certain items that can be taken to the states.

Sergeant 1st Class Jose Gomez, United States Division – North customs program manager, Headquarters and Headquarters Operations Company, 3rd Infantry Division out of Fort Stewart, Ga., stationed at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, knows what items are allowed.

“Just because you purchase an item doesn’t mean that you can take it back with you,” he said.

For Soldiers leaving Iraq, they are allowed one purse, movie and watch that violate copyright laws in the U.S.

“We’ve regulated with all the companies and they’re

giving us a certain amount of things we can take back,” said Sgt. 1st Class Gomez.

DVDs and purses are restricted items, meaning that they are only allowed to be taken into the U.S. with proper authorization.

Items such as pornography, alcohol and dirt are prohibited and will not be allowed into the U.S., even if it was sent here from home.

Sergeant 1st Class Gomez said that it’s important to control these things because, agriculturally, some insects, plants and bacteria in this country could destroy U.S. agricultural stability if introduced to the U.S.

Items being hand carried are inspected in Kuwait, whereas CONNEX inspections are conducted at the unit’s deployed station. In order for units to be prepared for the inspection, all CONNEXes need to be emptied and cleaned.

The unit movement offi-

cer must have all paperwork that accompanies that CONNEX prepared, such as an inventory of what all will be contained in the CONNEX.

Sergeant 1st Class Jonathan Hennes, a provost marshal operations noncommissioned officer, Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, recently inspected a CONNEX at COB Speicher and wants to make sure all units are ready for inspections.

“Units need to prepare for the inspection prior to the inspection team’s arrival,” he said. “Have all containers emptied and items laid out, ready for the inspection.”

Briefing Soldiers is important prior to inspection.

“It’s important so Soldiers know what is expected of them and can correct deficiencies during the amnesty period,” said Sgt. 1st

Class Hennes.

Contraband found during inspections is confiscated and destroyed if properly, but more severe violations, such as illegal drugs, will cause a Soldier more problems.

“It’s going to fall under Uniform Code of Military Justice,” said Sgt. 1st Class Gomez, “small things, like too many DVDs, we confiscate and then it’s up to the chain of command at that point.

Now, major things like drugs, law enforcement would get involved.”

It is important that Soldiers receive guidance about what is authorized to be taken to the U.S.

“They need to pay close attention to the policies about prohibited and restricted items so they don’t waste their money purchasing things that they end up having to leave behind,” he said.

Task Force Marne Heroes of the North



Sergeant Lisa Moore, of San Antonio, is with 1st Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division. She consistently displays initiative and sets the standard for combat medics. She actively seeks out the most difficult tasks and assignments. Recently, she volunteered to assist with a Woman's Day event sponsored by the Sons of Iraq and 1/37th Armor. During Woman's Day she screened and assisted more than 150 local national women and children. In all regards, she was significant to the operation's success. Sergeant Moore also won the 1/37th Armor Noncommissioned Officer of the Quarter for the third quarter, April 5. Sergeant Moore will go on to represent her battalion at the brigade NCO of the Quarter Board later this month. Her commitment and history of outstanding performance make her a worthy choice for today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.



Sergeant Gustavo Delavictoria, of Miami, is with 296th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division. He serves as a squad leader and is responsible for key control in his platoon. He is always making sure his fellow noncommissioned officers and Soldiers are well informed and are always at the right place at the right time. He is assigned as the vehicle commander for a Mine Resisted Ambush Protected Vehicle Cougar gun truck. He always makes sure his crew and himself are in operational status and ready for any mission. Sergeant Delavictoria has completed more than 120 accident free missions and more than 25 emergency recovery missions. His unselfishness and desire to serve allow him ably to lead his Soldiers from the front. He is always willing to help his subordinates study for company Soldier/NCO of the month boards. In addition, he often makes time to show different ways to complete any task as directed from his superiors. He is an outstanding NCO, a great leader and an excellent choice for today's Task Force Marne Hero of the North.

You are invited

Asian Pacific Heritage Month

Where: D-Main, COB Speicher

When: May 21, 11:30 a.m.

TF Marne Volleyball Competition

Where: Freedom Rest,
COB Speicher

When: May 27-28

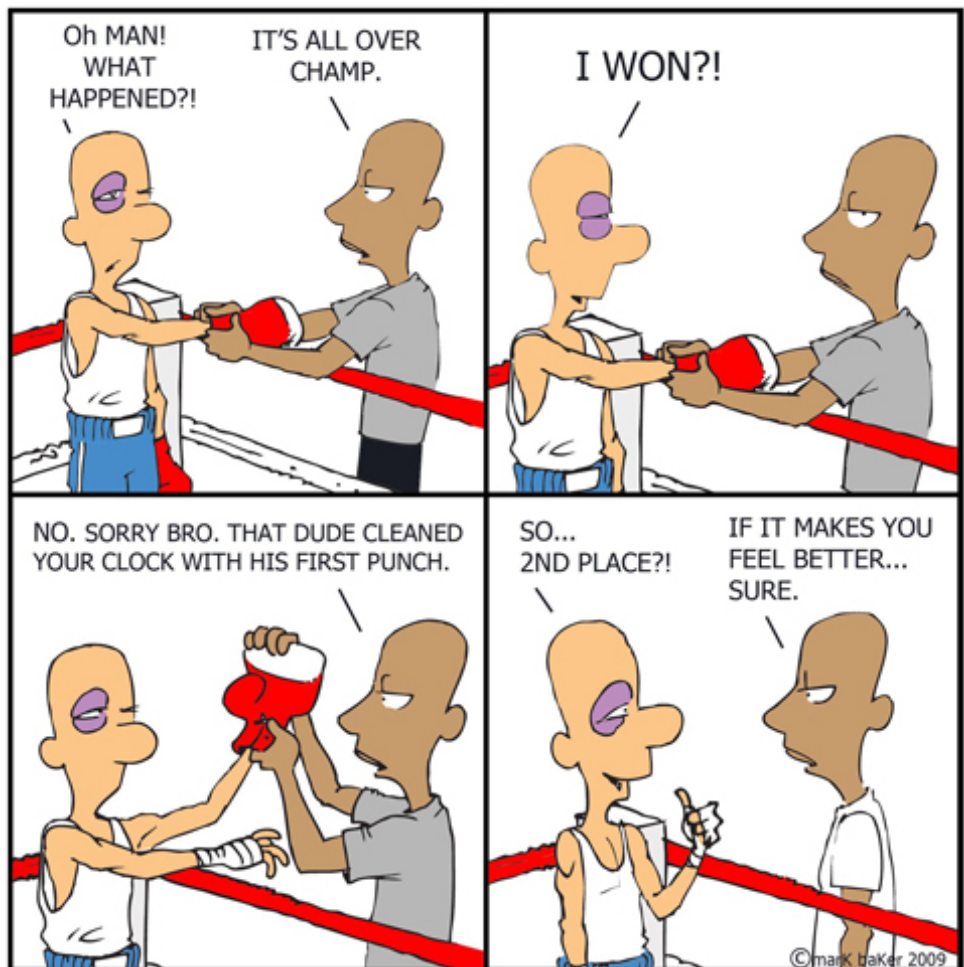
Iron Dragon Fitness Competition

Where: 4IBCT, 1st ID
Headquarters, Bldg. 1001

When: May 27.

The deadline for registration is May 10 at 1 p.m. Participants must register at Dragon Brigade Headquarters.

In order to participate, Soldiers must have a minimum score of 270 on the APFT and present a copy of DA - Form 705.



REGIONAL HEADLINES

Man wins at casino, loses it in blaze

Associated Press

SOLVAY, N.Y. - A Syracuse-area man's lucky day at an upstate casino has gone up in smoke — along with his winnings. Kenneth Lamoree said he returned to his home in Solvay around 3:30 a.m. May 4 after winning \$3,200 at the Turning Stone casino in Verona.

A little more than an hour later, a fire broke out in the two-family home he shares with his fiancée and their three children.

They and the family living downstairs escaped unharmed. Police evacuated residents of two neighboring houses as a precaution.

The house suffered extensive damage and its contents — including Lamoree's wallet with his casino winnings — are believed to have been destroyed.

Lamoree said he had planned to use the money to pay bills.

The fire's cause was under investigation.

Wis. woman braves traffic, saves 14 ducklings

Associated Press

WEST ALLIS, Wis. - A mother duck didn't survive her walk across a busy Wisconsin roadway, but a motorist made sure the 14 ducklings stayed safe — even one that wiggled under her dashboard.

Angela Speed of the Wisconsin

Humane Society says the good Samaritan was driving in West Allis, a Milwaukee suburb, when she saw the newly hatched mallards trying to cross a busy road.

The woman told Speed that a vehicle in front of her appeared to intentionally hit the mother duck, leaving her ducklings confused in the middle of the road.

The woman gathered each into her car and took them to the Humane Society.

But an hour later, she heard a peep. A mechanic took apart her dashboard and found the 14th duckling. Speed says the brood is healthy and expected to survive.

'Seinfeld' actress tickled by Walk of Fame typo

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES - They misspelled Julia Louis-Dreyfus' name on her Hollywood Walk of Fame star, but the Emmy-winning star of "Seinfeld" and "The New Adventures of Old Christine" seemed tickled by the typo. The mistake? The star read "Luis" instead of "Louis," and there was no hyphen between Louis and Dreyfus.

"The misspelling was so perfectly apt, a great metaphor for show business," Louis-Dreyfus said after the ceremony. "Right when you think you've made it, you get knocked down," she continues. "It's an ideal metaphor for how this business works."

Following the ceremony, it was announced that the last Walk of Fame honoree whose name was misspelled was actor Dick Van Dyke in 1993.

Attendees at the Louis-Dreyfus ceremony included cast and crew members of "Christine," as well "Seinfeld" director Andy Ackerman, co-star Jason Alexander and co-creator Larry David, who joked, "I am prepared to give up my nights and weekends to guard this (star) with my life from the filth and pollutants to which it's prone."

Anyone who so much as sneezes near this area, while I'm on duty ... well, I'll say, 'God bless you,' but I won't be happy about it."

Louis-Dreyfus, 49, is the first "Seinfeld" principal to get the Walk of Fame honor, as well as the first to enjoy a successful follow-up series, "Christine," for which she won an Emmy in 2006. CBS has yet to announce whether it will renew the sitcom for 2010-11. "Oh, I certainly hope we'll be back," Louis-Dreyfus noted. "We love doing it. And I think it's very likely that we'll be back next season. Yes."

A spokeswoman for the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, which administers the Walk of Fame ceremonies, said it would install a new, correctly spelled star.

Anti-Kidnapping tip:

Maintain a calm, subdued, professional profile. Avoid attracting unnecessary attention.

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,
25th Infantry Division
130th Engineer Brigade
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