



The IGUANA



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U.S. forces back off Korea DMZ

By Gerry J. Gilmore
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – U.S. and Republic of Korea officials have agreed to a plan to realign American forces stationed in “The Land of the Morning Calm.”

In June 4-5 meetings held in the South Korean capital city of Seoul, according to a joint U.S.-South Korean statement, it was decided the operation would consist of two phases:

Phase 1 – U.S. forces at installations north of the Han River would consolidate in the Camp Casey (Tongduchon) and Camp Red Cloud (Uijongbu) areas. Both bases are north of Seoul and the Han, but well south of the demilitarized zone that separates North and South Korea. The 14,000-strong U.S. Army 2nd Infantry Division, which provides troops to bases near the DMZ, is headquartered at Camp Red Cloud.

Phase 2 – U.S. forces north of the Han River would move to key hubs south of the Han River.

U.S. and Korean officials agreed to continue rotational U.S. military training north of the Han even after Phase 2 is completed, according to the statement.

The realignment operation would take several years to complete, according to the joint statement.

Realignment of American troops in South Korea is part of an ongoing U.S. force assessment involving overseas and stateside troops. About 37,000 U.S. troops are currently serving in South Korea.

U.S. Deputy Defense Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz noted at a June 2 press conference in Seoul that “a substantial amount of money” would be invested – about \$11 billion over the next four years.

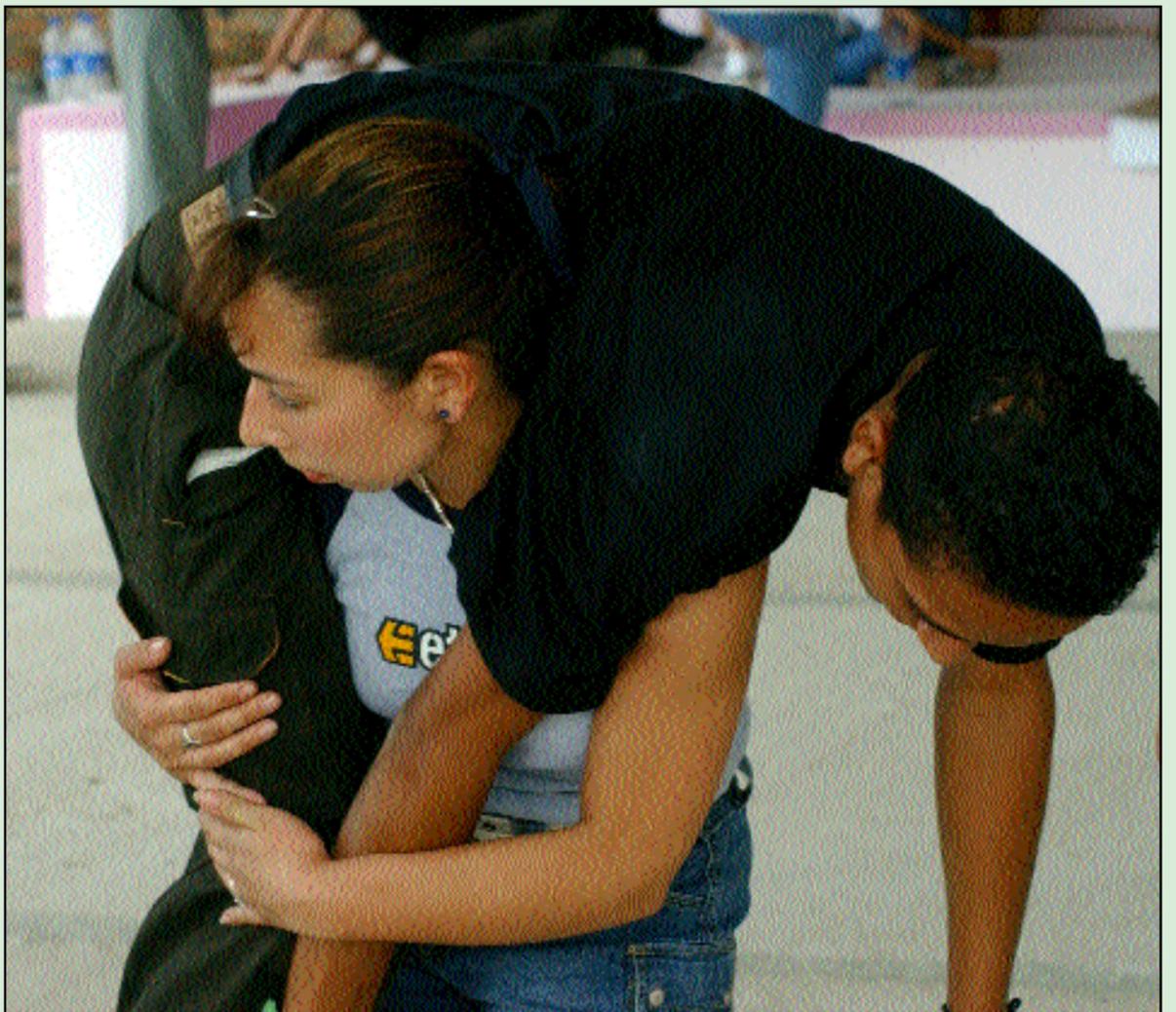


Photo by Spc. Chuck Wagner

Ranger carry

MEDEL Sgt. Vanessa Helnore snaps up a student during first aid lessons for a Christian youth group in Comayagua June 7. Soto Cano personnel spent the entire day instructing about 60 Ranger group members. See photos and story on page 4.

West Point cadets visit, learn in Honduras

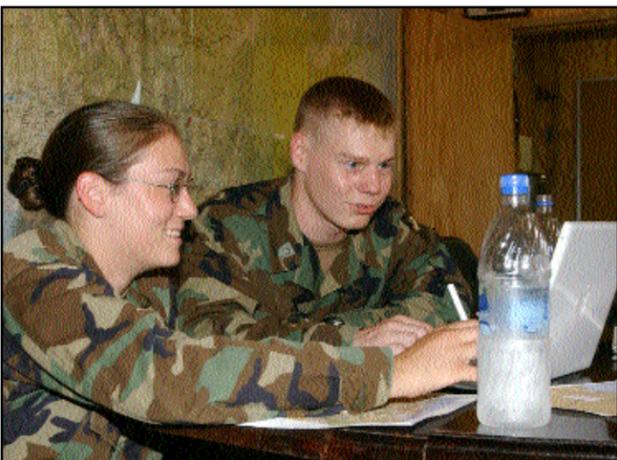


Photo by Spc. Chuck Wagner

Cadets Mindi Updegraff and John Madden go over plans in the J-7 office.

By Spc. Chuck Wagner
Editor

Five cadets from West Point U.S. Military Academy visited Soto Cano Air Base recently to learn about systems engineering in a real-world setting.

The cadets arrived May 25 and worked with the base J-7 office as part of a summer learning program called Advanced Individual Academic Development. They will leave tomorrow to finish up with a three-day visit to U.S. Southern Command in Miami.

J-7's Capt. Frank Townsend accompanied the team while touring Soto Cano, and visiting Hon-

duras' port cities of Trujillo and Cortez, as well as La Ceiba, San Pedro Sula, the island of Roatan, the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa, the Honduran Ministry of Defense and Copan.

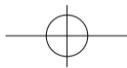
The team is comprised of several different academic majors, which helped give it an “interdisciplinary” approach in tackling the assigned project – initial planning for New Horizons '04, and Joint Logistics Over the Shore, according to Maj. Gregory Lamm, West Point systems engineering instructor. Joint Logistics Over the Shore describes how the Navy will move equipment from ships to on-shore sites.

At the end of the project, the cadets will submit their plans to Soto Cano officials, who will compare it to their own initial plans and focus on “anything we didn't see or consider in our own plans,” said Townsend.

The cadets are supposed to gain out-of-classroom experience in solving real-world problems, learn about the role and mission of a joint task force and a major command, learn about a foreign culture and improve their problem-solving and leadership skills, said Lamm.

See Cadets page 2





'Great Physician' heals emotional scars

By Chaplain (Capt.) Tommy Vaughn
Joint Task Force-Bravo command chaplain

When I was nine, I made the mistake of putting my hand somewhere it shouldn't be and nearly lost the top of my middle finger. At first glance (or handshake), you wouldn't know I ever had a problem. And yet, a scar is there, visible to anyone who looks close enough.

A thin white line running around my finger surrounded by stitch marks. The skin on the side of this finger is still slightly numb after all these years, the damage done. All because I wasn't paying attention. I made a mistake. I was careless.

Many people have scars in their lives that aren't visible to others at first glance. But if you take the time and look close enough, you can see them. Hearts and lives that have been injured, emotions still slightly numb, though years may have passed since the damage was done. All because someone

wasn't paying attention. Someone made a mistake. Someone was careless.

With time and proper treatment, most physical damage can be repaired. Medical technology continues to improve by leaps and bounds. Doctors and surgeons are able to use their expertise to not only patch us up today, but cover up their work in the process.

Emotional damage can also be repaired, but often is more difficult to deal with. Broken relationships, bruised egos, and fractured families require much more in the way of time, effort and treatment to heal. The scars, though, may remain.

Fortunately, God is the Great Physician and can

heal all of our hurts, pains, and mistakes. No matter how much damage has been done, He can repair it if you'll allow Him to. Under His loving and guiding Hand, even old scars can be made to fade away. "But what if they don't fade?" Then allow them to serve as a reminder. As I look at my finger and rub it from time to time, I don't remember the pain anymore. Instead, it reminds me to be more careful in the future. Recognize the scars in your life. Learn from them and be more careful in the future. Remember that carelessness can scar you and those you love.

If you need someone to talk to, contact Chaplain (Capt.) Tommy Vaughn, JTF-B Command Chaplain, at 6844 or 6845.

The Chaplain's Corner

Honduras' history found in museums

By Robin Gonzalez
MWR manager

Museums. The name conjures up images of ancient relics, vibrant paintings, statues, dusty artifacts, pin-spot lighting, glass display cases, in a hushed environment. While that is a museum, it is also much more.

Museums are teachers. They teach us the history of the country we are in and often how we fit into history's "bigger picture."

Throughout the country, Honduran museums preserve and teach us about its rich and varied culture and history. From the museums in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula to the archeological museums at the Copan Ruins and Comayagua, there is a wealth of knowledge and information about Honduras available for everyone.

The Comayagua museum, located by the main plaza, is dedicated to the Lenca civilization, which flourished in central Honduras, primarily on the Humaya River and at Lake Yojoa. Ceramics, grinding stones, flints and other objects excavated from sites in the valley form the core of the museum's collection and show what life was like as long ago as 8,000 years. Also in Comayagua is the Colonial Museum of Religious Art located in the Episcopal Palace (built in 1735) across from the main cathedral.

The museum has a very complete collection of 16th and 17th century colonial religious art including chalices, sculptures and jewels used to adorn saints and paintings. Valuable historical documents, such as Francisco Morazan's marriage certificate, can also be seen. And for those that have eaten at Villa Real Restaurant (behind the cathedral), did you know you were sitting in the courtyard of a hacienda that was built in 1750 and is still

owned by the same family?

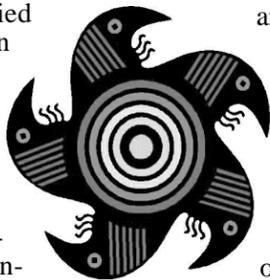
San Pedro Sula has a museum specializing in the history of that area from about 1500 BC through the arrival of the Spaniards in the mid-1500s up to the early 20th century. Highlights of the collection are the display of polychrome pottery and a remarkable alabaster vessel depicting a Spanish captive bound with rope around his body. The museum also features a variety of Spanish artifacts related to the conquest and introduction of African slaves to Honduras dating from the 16th century.

Naturally the most frequently visited museums are in Copan and deservedly so. Located in the ruin's park is the Sculpture Museum featuring a dramatic entrance through the mouth of a Mayan serpent. Visitors walk down a dimly lit tunnel and emerge in front of a full-scale replica of the Rosalita Temple in addition to sculptures and facades of private houses.

The Copan Archaeology Museum, located on the town's central plaza, features smaller Mayan artifacts such as jade necklaces, pottery, household sculptures, burial items and more.

Tegucigalpa is home to a variety of museums such as the Villa Roy History Museum, Casa Presidencial Exhibition Hall, National Art Gallery and the Casa Ramon Rosa. Collections in these various museums range from the jewel-encrusted sword of Francisco Morazan, Honduras's mining history and special rotating-theme exhibits to gold and silver articles, paintings, and other aspects of Honduran culture.

So the next time you are in Comayagua, San Pedro Sula, Copan or Tegucigalpa, remember these museums. To learn more about this country's complex, varied and colorful history and for the pleasure of viewing some of the world's most beautiful ceramics, sculptures and paintings, do not miss these Honduran museums.



Cadets

From front page

"I got a good idea about what engineering units do in the 'real' Army," said Cadet John Madden, curling his fingers into quote marks. "I also got a good idea of what a lot of the different staff jobs are. This is the first time I've been

able to see a joint task force at work."

Madden said he had no idea there were U.S. forces in Honduras before selecting the program, but he's happy with his choice now that he's seen the country. All the cadets seemed to agree.

"It's a very interesting country.

It's very beautiful and there are a lot of great scenic sights," said Cadet Mindi Updegraff. "It's also very different to see how the people live here."

The poor infrastructure and civil services in many locations was a "real eye-opener," she said. "I appreciate home a lot more."

SUBMISSIONS

The Iguana is always looking for submissions. Any articles, photos or letters to be submitted to *The Iguana* should be sent to the PAO at charles.wagner@jtfb.southcom.mil or delivered to the Public Affairs Office, Bldg. D-06. If you have questions about possible submissions call ext. 4150 or 4676 to talk to the editor.

The IGUANA

EDITORIAL STAFF

JTF-Bravo Commander

Col. Raymond A. Thomas III

Public Affairs Director

1st Lt. Carla Pampe

Superintendent

Tech. Sgt. Tom Mullican

Editor

Spc. Chuck Wagner

Photo Technician

Martin Chahin

E-mail:

PUBLICAFFAIRSOFFICE@jtfb.southcom.mil

Website: <http://www.southcom.mil/home/jtfbravo>

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Robertson takes over ARFOR command

By Spc. Chuck Wagner
Editor

Lt. Col. Douglas C. Robertson took command of ARFOR in a ceremony held under the pavilion at the Soto Cano Air Base fire department June 4.

Lt. Col. William J. Sternhagen symbolically handed over the battalion guidon as he relinquished command.

Sternhagen told the assembled crowd there are many people he'd like to thank for the successes he's had at Soto Cano, but most of all ARFOR soldiers, who stood in formation at the ceremony. Robertson nodded in understanding.

Joint Task Force-Bravo Commander Col. Raymond Thomas listed Sternhagen's many achievements while at ARFOR's helm, and promised Robertson has the qualifications to "take the battalion to the next level."

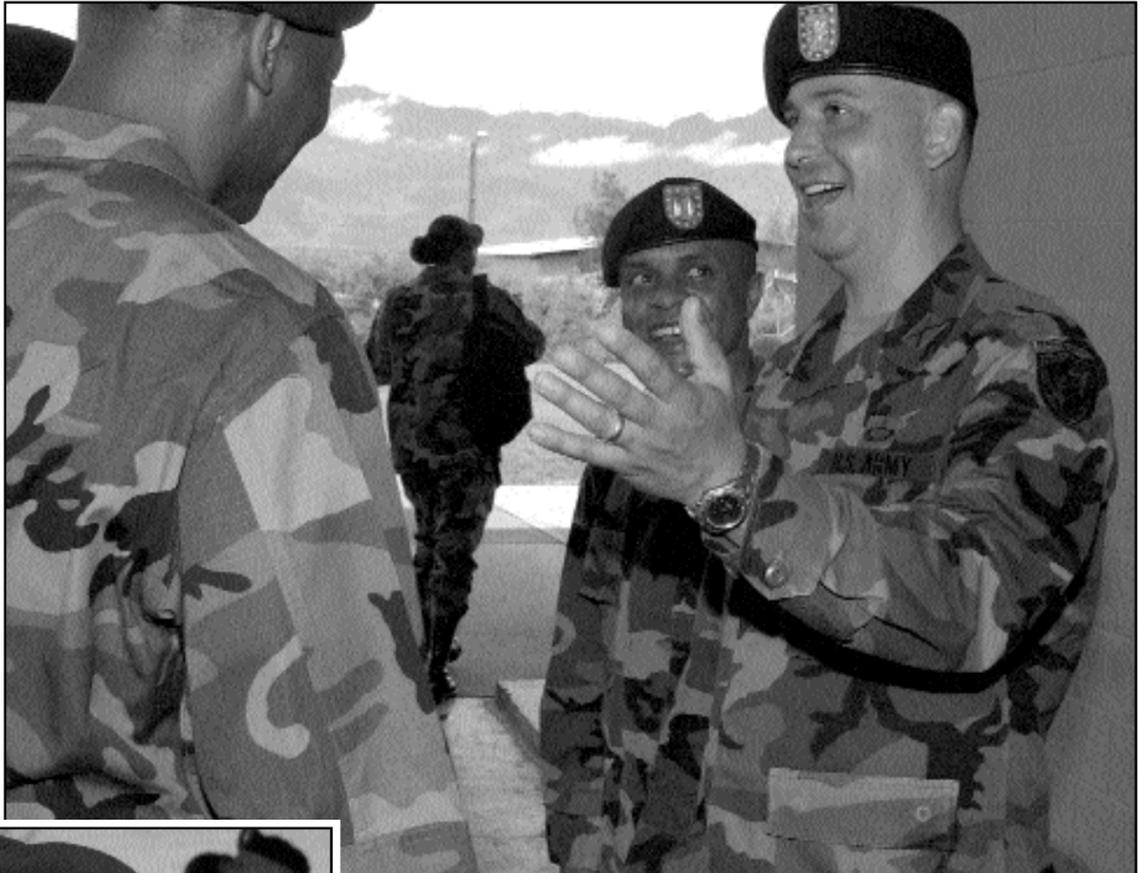
Robertson arrives from advanced civil schooling after a tour in Germany, where he served as the Chief, J-9, Civil-Military Cooperation for Joint Headquarters Center, a NATO sub-regional command.

Previously, he has served as J-3, Operations Officer for Headquarters Kosovo Forces, and was assigned to the NATO Land Component Command Headquarters in Heidelberg, Germany.

"I would like to thank the soldiers of ARFOR for their participation in one of the best change of command ceremonies that I have ever seen," Robertson said. "I would especially like to thank the Color Guard and the dining facility for their tremendous work."

"I am looking forward to a rewarding and busy year here at Soto Cano."

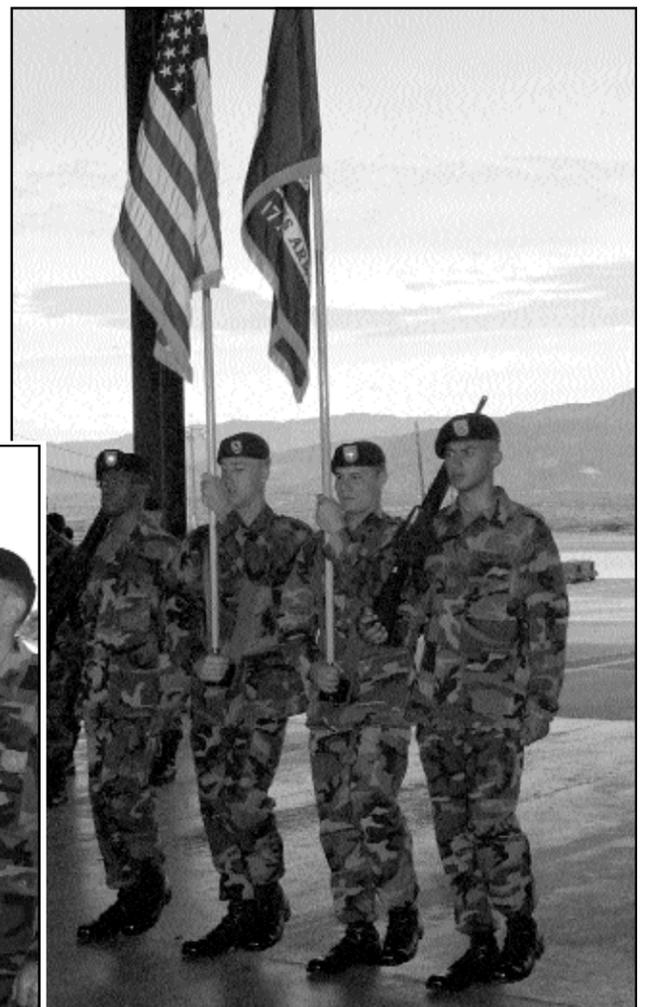
Sternhagen will serve in a joint operation in Norfolk, Va.



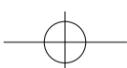
Lt. Col. Douglas C. Robertson greets ARFOR soldiers after the ceremony at the Soto Cano Air Base fire department.

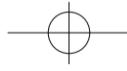


Above, Lt. Col. William J. Sternhagen talks to well-wishers after the ceremony. Right, Robertson receives the ARFOR guidon from Col. Raymond Thomas.

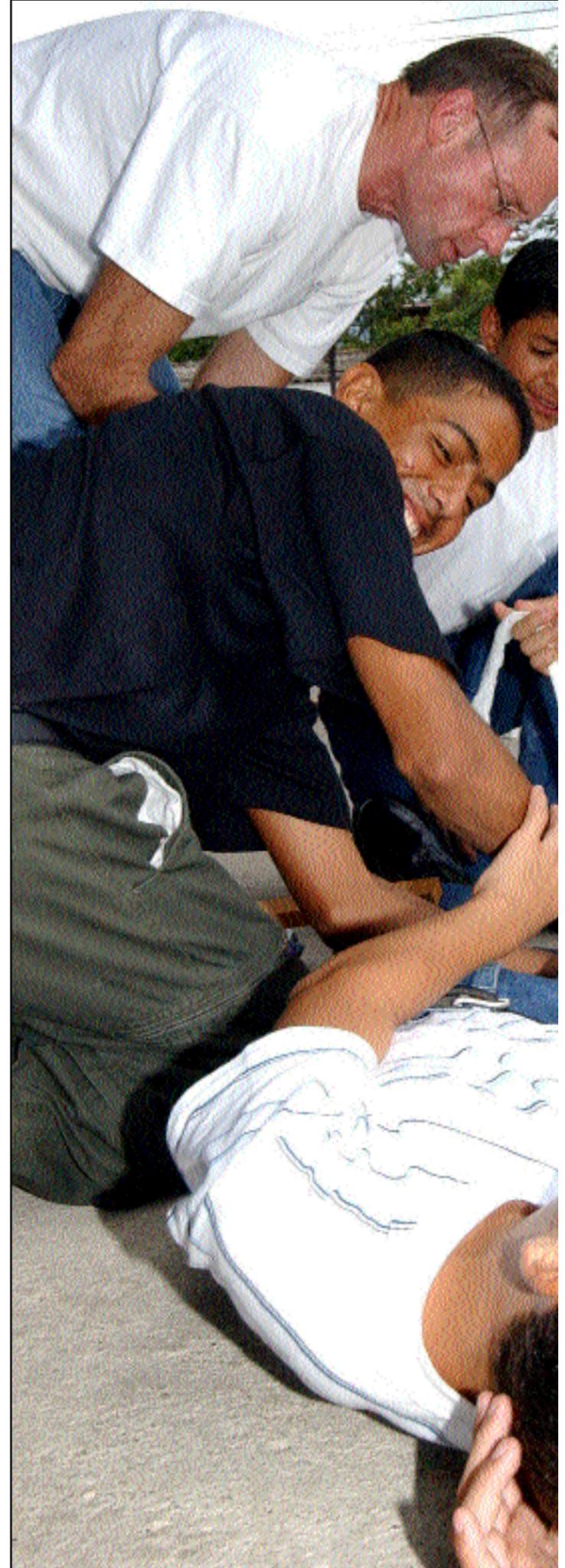


The ceremony Color Guard keeps in step.





Members of the Rangers, a church youth group, watch MEDEL Sgt. Vanessa Helnore demonstrate how to move a casualty. Below, the students practice binding a splint.



While Rangers bind his leg, a mock victim struggles and v MEDEL Commander Lt. Col. Richard Hilburn observes their





Photos by Spc. Chuck Wagner
in pain, which evokes laughter from the group. ss and would later act as a mock victim.



1-228th Sgt. Shontal Thompson, left, and MEDEL Staff Sgt. Curnes Williams bind a Ranger's fracture.

First lessons in first aid

Soldiers teach skills to church youth group

By Spc. Chuck Wagner
Editor

These Rangers typically learn more about Samuel than splints, but some basic infantry skills are useful even for Christian soldiers.

Soto Cano personnel spent the day teaching first aid skills to about 60 members of a Comayagua church youth group June 7.

Seventeen volunteers, mostly from MEDEL and the 1-228th Aviation Regiment, rotated the children through four classes covering topics like fracture splinting, stopping severe bleeding, transporting patients, dental health, and caring for simple

problems like blisters, scrapes and insect bites, according to MEDEL commander Lt. Col. Richard Hilburn, who participated in the lessons held at Ministerio Internacional La Cosecha, a non-denominational church.

Group members, called Rangers, are mostly between the ages 11 and 18. Several volunteers acted as translators.

Church leaders heard about Soto Cano personnel teaching Honduran Boy Scouts at the U.S. embassy in Tegucigalpa last month, and worked several channels to see if they could arrange similar training for their youth group members.

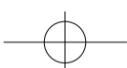
"They are a church group along the same lines as a scout troop," said the non-commissioned officer in charge, Staff Sgt. Gregory Adams. "What the church is doing is trying to show the government that they can make an impact on the youth. They can fill their time with valuable activities and give them positive role models to keep them out of gangs or other trouble."

The church group hopes their civil projects will garner more support from federal leaders, Adams said.

The soldiers are planning another series of lessons in the future, involving more complex first aid skills, Hilburn said.



All eyes are on MEDEL Lt. Col. John Balas during lessons.





Air Force, Army snipers engage Afghan guerillas

By Tech. Sgt. Eric M. Grill
455th Expeditionary Operations Group

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM – Two Air Force security forces airmen deployed to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, got what they called, “the chance of a lifetime,” June 1 when they embarked on a combat patrol in eastern Afghanistan with the Army’s 82nd Airborne Division.

Senior Airmen Luke Allen and Rusty Youngblood, both 820th Security Forces Squadron countersnipers at Moody Air Force Base, Ga., are deployed to the 455th Expeditionary Operations Group to defend Air Force Village in the event of an attack on Bagram. They said they believe this is the first time Air Force countersnipers and the Army have paired up in a combat mission.

The two countersnipers got their chance for the offensive mission when an 82nd Airborne’s patrol needed a couple of extra marksmen. The airmen had already worked with the Army on scout missions around the outskirts of the base, but not in an actual combat mission.

Their mission was to provide long-

range reconnaissance, target acquisition and neutralization of any al-Qaida or anti-coalition forces target of opportunity.

“We were a little apprehensive at first,” said Youngblood, who attended the Air Force Countersniper School at Camp Joseph T. Robinson in Arkansas in December. “Training is training, but when you’re going into combat, you’re always a little apprehensive. But, at the same time, I was excited and wanted to go kick some (butt).”

Both airmen said that there was some of the usual banter between the two rival services, like everyone referring to the duo as “those Air Force snipers.” But, when it came time to perform the mission, it was all business.

The first contact with enemy forces came June 2, when six 107mm rockets were fired toward the patrol in the area of Takurghal, the same area where Operation Anaconda took place. In that March 2002 battle, two airmen, Tech. Sgt. John Chapman and Senior Airman Jason Cunningham, and six other Americans were killed.

“At first we saw a flash off in the distance, and we were trying to figure out what the flash was,” Youngblood said.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Eric M. Grill

Senior Airmen Luke Allen (left) and Rusty Youngblood, Air Force countersnipers deployed to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, embarked on an offensive combat mission with the Army’s 82nd Airborne Division. Allen and Youngblood are deployed from the 820th Security Forces Squadron at Moody Air Force Base, Ga., supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

“Then we heard the incoming artillery and took cover.”

One of those rockets hit the ground about 300 meters from the patrol’s location.

The patrol was on a mountain peak about 11,000 feet above sea level. Allen said after the rocket attack, he ran to the end of the peak and positioned himself where he had full view of the entire area. Using night-vision goggles, he found the enemy forces about 3,000 meters away – too far for his M-24, single-shot rifle. Close-air support was called in and provided by Danish F-16s, Air Force AC-130 gunships and Army Apache helicopters.

The patrol spotted three different

groups of enemy forces, totaling about 15 people, Allen said, and chased them for a little while.

They got as close as 1,000 meters, Youngblood said, but no contact was actually made.

There was another rocket attack on the pair’s patrol the next morning, where a second rocket landed within a few hundred meters of the pair’s position.

“I was just hoping that those rockets wouldn’t land on us,” Allen said.

Describing the experience as more surreal than a life-and-death experience, Allen said the combat mission “felt more like a game or a training exercise,” but also said he took what he was doing very seriously.

Army birthday to be celebrated worldwide

By Spc. Bill Putnam
Army News Service

WASHINGTON – Even while conducting a war on terrorism and the rebuilding of Iraq, the Army is celebrating its 228th birthday this year.

The actual birthday is June 14, but celebrations will be held throughout the month of June from ballparks to ball rooms, the Pentagon to Camp Zama, Japan.

This year’s theme “U.S. Army – At War and Transforming” will be celebrated at posts around the world and several sporting events around the country.

In the Military District of Washington, soldiers of Headquarters, Department of the Army will run through Arlington National Cemetery June 10. Members of the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment will deliver cakes to members of Congress.

Senior Army leaders will lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns June 13. Later that morning, a cake-cutting ceremony will be held in the Pentagon courtyard.

The 228th Army Birthday Ball, the area’s big bash, will be held at the Washington Hilton and Towers June 21. This year’s Army Ball will include featured

performances from the U.S. Army Soldiers Show, performing groups from the U.S. Army Field Band including “The Jazz Ambassadors,” “The Soldier’s Chorus” and “The Volunteers.”

At Camp Zama, Japan, the most senior and junior soldiers will cut an Army birthday cake June 14. Maj. Gen. Robert M. Shea, deputy commander of United Forces Command Japan will also give a speech that day.

The Hawaii-based 25th Infantry Division will host an Army Birthday Ball with 400 members of the local military and civilian communities attending the evening of June 12.

Fort Sill, Okla., will commemorate the day with the post’s 77th Army Band participating in pre-game activities at a Texas Rangers baseball game, and a ceremony on post.

Soldiers from the U.S. Army Accessions Command will also hand out thousands of U.S. flags and “Support Your Soldiers” postcards before several sporting events around the country the weekend of June 14 to 15 and June 28. The Army memorabilia will be passed out to sign and send to sol-



diers deployed overseas.

The flags and postcards will be passed out at baseball games in Camden Yards in Baltimore; Fenway Park in Boston; Jacobs Field in Cleveland; Comerica Park in Detroit; Kauffman Stadium in Kansas City; The Metrodome in Minneapolis; Ballpark in Arlington, Texas; The Great American Ballpark in Cincinnati; Edison Field in Anaheim, Calif.; Oakland Coliseum in Oakland; Yankee Stadium in New York; Safeco Field in Seattle; and the baseball minor league Florida State League’s Single A All-Star game.

They’ll also be passed out at the Arena Football games in Richmond, Va., Quad City, Iowa, on June 14, and Albany, N.Y., on June 28.

Racing fans won’t be left out in the cold during the month. Soldiers will pass out flags and postcards at the 39th Annual Pontiac Excitement National Hot Rod Association Nationals in Columbus, Ohio, June 12-15 and the Sirius Satellite Radio 400 NASCAR race in Brooklyn, Mich., June 14.

To check out what other posts are doing go to the Army’s birthday Web site.





Constructive help Volunteers rebuild community police post

By Spc. Chuck Wagner
Editor

The small Honduran community of El Coquito has a new police guard post thanks to the U.S. military and PAE contracted employees on Soto Cano Air Base.

They repaired or rebuilt the run-down remains of a previous post over two weeks in March using materials provided by the military and labor volunteered by PAE.

"It was a shell – a piece of shell really – and we completely rebuilt it. We did a great job if you look at it now," said Joe Adams, PAE facility engineer branch manager.

The project was a combined effort of several organizations, he said. PAE program manager Howard Butcher agreed to provide labor for construction.

The Base Civil Engineers played a role, especially Senior Master Sgt. Thomas Lawyer, said Adams. Many of the supplies donated by the military were leftovers from

recovery efforts after Hurricane Mitch.

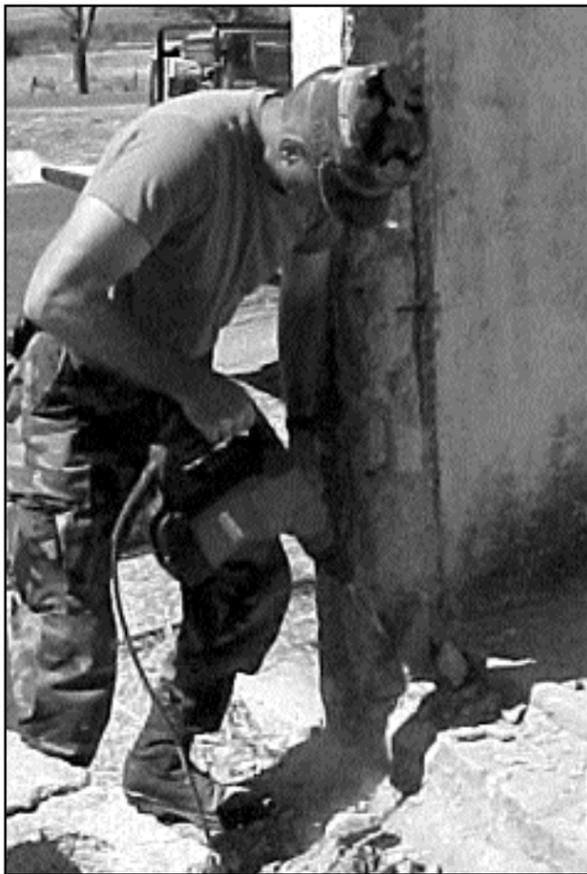
"The main idea was to provide the community with a guard post, and to enhance our security. The guard post is on the corner of a road leading right up to the gate (on the south end of base). With the guard post rebuilt, they can help with security."

Before volunteers showed up, the structure had no roof, tumbled walls and crumbling sidewalks.

Volunteers constructed a new roof, walls, sidewalks and installed electrical wiring, he said.

Eleven volunteers from PAE worked on the project, usually in crews of two at a time. The volunteers were Eliseo Romero, Medardo Maradiaga, Marco T. Ardon, Antonio Vasquez, Edy H. Ramirez, Hector Ortega, Oscar O. Paz, Benancio Rivera, Miguel Montoya, Encarnacion Raudales, and Francisco Flores.

The military donated supplies worth about \$2,000, Adams said. The volunteer work amounted to about \$1,500 in labor costs.



Military personnel and PAE employees volunteered for the project, which took two weeks to complete. Courtesy photos





Photo by Spc. Chuck Wagner

First Lt. Thomas Swint, foreground, and Capt. Michael Rutherford feed "Poncho," Soto Cano's iguana.

Army green suits Iguana

By Spc. Chuck Wagner
Editor

Since moving on base, this gangly paratrooper has shed her grungy uniform and proudly wears crisp military green.

"Poncho" is in fact getting greener by the day. "She's very happy. She's growing. She's looking a lot greener these days. That means she's healthier," said Capt. Michael Rutherford, who along with First Lt. Thomas Swint built Poncho's new home in Soto Cano Air Base's command compound.

The two-foot iguana leisurely nibbles on spinach and tomatoes in her mesh and wood cage constructed next to the base headquarters building. Her older, brownish skin still sheds from her feet. Her newly-exposed back is bright and shimmering.

Honduran Army Col. Carlos Paz Sevilla of the 2nd Paracadista Regiment gave the lizard to Joint Task Force-Bravo Commander Col. Raymond Thomas during the "Iguana Voladora," or flying iguana, a multi-national

airborne jump April 9.

Poncho wore a parachute on her back and was kept in a portable wire cage when the Honduran officer gave her to the Americans. Somewhat unsure about caring for the exotic pet, Swint and Rutherford started by constructing a larger, sturdier cage.

They had to learn quickly about the critter. The discovered on the Internet that iguanas are vegetarians.

"They do not eat insects or meat, just vegetation. But most people think vegetation is anything that grows from the ground, but she does not eat fruits," said Swint. Poncho's favorites are spinach, lettuce and tomatoes.

Poncho's lunch can sit untouched in the cage the entire afternoon, worrying some passersby.

"She eats in the early morning or in the evening," said Swint.

For Poncho, the new surroundings include several potted plants on which she enjoys noshing, a large water dish, limbs to climb about on, and a flat rock that releases a comfortable ambient heat through the night.

Swint said iguanas cannot be taken out of Honduras, and Poncho is now a permanent resident of Soto Cano. The Hondurans purchased the reptile from a pet store. Lightning-quick cousins of this domesticated iguana make homes across the base, but rarely allow personnel to get up close and personal like Poncho.

"She's chilled out. She was jumpier when people used to walk up to the cage," said Swint.

"Yes, she's much more tranquilla," added Rutherford.

