

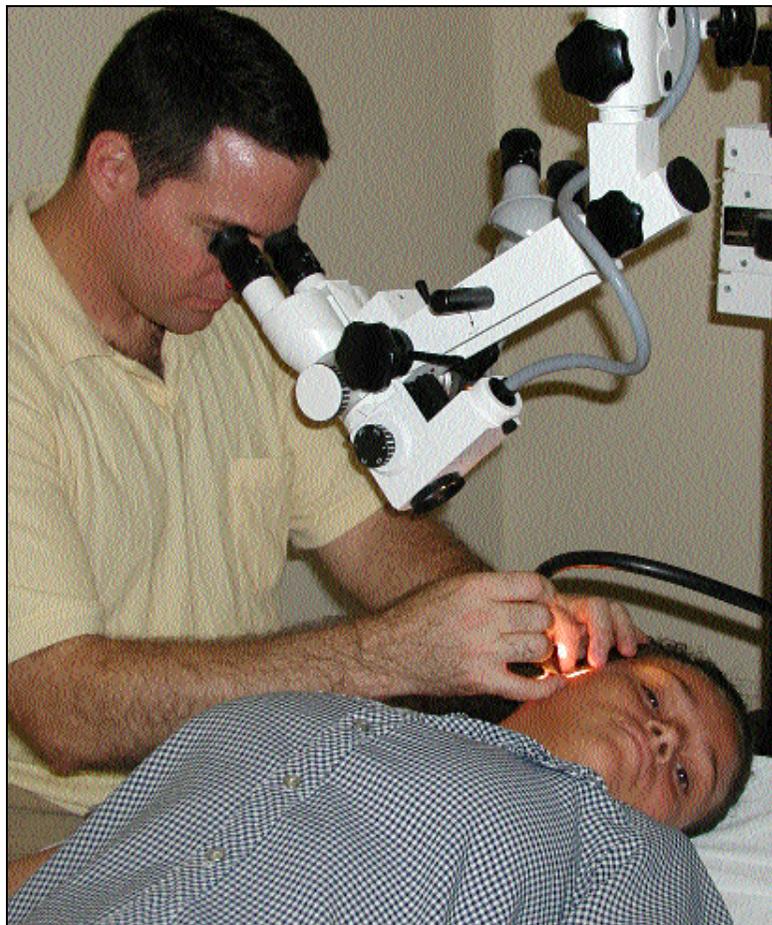


The IGUANA



August 9, 2002 Volume 14, No. 15

Docs tend to San Pedro Sula youth



Maj. (Dr.) Brien Tonkinson, an ear, nose and throat resident at Wilford Hall Medical Center, screens a patient to see if ear surgery is necessary during the San Pedro Sula MEDRETE.

Story and Photo by 2nd Lt. Carla Pampe
Public Affairs Director

More than 130 Honduran children received free medical care in San Pedro Sula July 13-25 when an 11-person medical team from Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, came to the city on a medical readiness training exercise, or MEDRETE.

A team from Joint Task Force Bravo's Medical element, consisting of Sgt. Larry Madison, Sgt. Osualdo Maldonado and Spc. Maria Morales, met the team in San Pedro Sula and assisted them throughout the mission.

This particular MEDRETE focused on problems of the ear.

"We did ear surgery mainly on kids with chronic ear disease," said Dr. (Capt.) Kenneth R. Bergman, a U.S. Army surgical intern at Brook Army Medical Center at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, doing a rotation at Wilford Hall. "We operated on 33 children, and saw an additional 100 in clinic.

"The children and their parents were very grateful and very appreciative – much more so even than our patients in the U.S.," Bergman said. "They have an ear, nose and throat doctor in San Pedro Sula, but they don't have microscopes and equipment to do the surgeries."

Bergman said the medical mission served two purposes for the team.

"From the military readiness aspect, we get up to speed on packing up our stuff and preparing to deploy," he said. "But more importantly

for the surgeons, who are medical residents, we get to do actual surgeries. You can practice a lot in the lab, but you'll only get better by actually operating."

Maria Leudora Pineda, ER Head Nurse at Leonardo Martinez Valenzuela hospital in San Pedro Sula, said word of the team's visit spread like wildfire among members of the community.

"The poorest people in any country are usually the sickest, and they are the ones who cannot afford the medical care," she said. "When the word starts spreading that a team is coming, it travels quickly.

"Each time, we get more and more patients coming in. The people remember the previous MEDRETES, and we get people coming to San Pedro Sula from all over the country," Pineda added. "They sometimes come days before the team arrives to get on the surgery list, because medical care usually costs a lot of money and this care is free."

Pineda said the medical missions not only benefit the community, but also help the clinic's medical staff, which is often overworked.

"About once a month Americans come here offering different specialties," she said. "The teams bring the doctors and the specialties needed to help our patients."

The teams also bring their own equipment and supplies, which is beneficial to the hospitals they visit.

"Our team was completely self-contained," said Senior Airman Maria Mathis, an ear, nose

See MEDRETE, Page 5

New contractors prepare for changeover

By Spc. M. William Petersen
Editor

Starting in September, the contractor responsible for many of the vital functions of Soto Cano Air Base will change.

DynCorp will turn over the base operations contract to Pacific Architects and Engineers Government Services, Inc. on the first of the month.

The contractors are no strangers to Honduras. PAE formerly held the Soto Cano Air Base contract from 1991-97, and currently are partners in four international airports in Honduras where they provide fire, crash and rescue, security and maintenance services. PAE was in Honduras as early as 1984, operating a small base on the north coast of the country.

Currently the Government Services

division of PAE has contracts with the Department of Defense and the State Department in more than 17 nations, including Afghanistan, East Timor, Congo and Sierra Leone, according to Barry C. Wright, executive vice president of PAE Government Services.

"We're one of the oldest companies contracting with the U.S. military," said Wright. "This new contract is with a new subsidiary of PAE that is dedicated to DoD and State Department contracts only.

During the Vietnam War, PAE had more than 33,000 people in Vietnam operating 104 bases. The company, founded in 1955, has been supporting the U.S. military since the Korean War era.

"PAE goes to high-risk areas to survey and give ideas to the government," said Edwin W. Sandison, director of contract administration and compliance for PAE Government Services. "We

were in Kabul early on to solicit a proposal for housing units. We obtained a sole-source contract ... the people at Bagram Air Base saw our work and asked for a contract. It's a satisfying job not only for the State Department, but also to us for serving on the front lines for our government."

Aside from providing base operation services on military installations around the world, PAE Government Services has contracts with American embassies in cities including Tokto and Moscow. They are currently contracted for the American embassy compound in Afghanistan.

Sandison is part of a team of experts that have come to Soto Cano to help prepare for the Sept. 1 transition from DynCorp to PAE.

The object of the phase team is to ensure that the transition between contractors goes as smoothly as possible,

according to Bill Conklin, DoD and third-party contracts manager for PAE Government Services.

"We know, having been replaced and replacing others [in contracts], what are the best ways to do a phase-in with minimal impact on our customers," said Conklin. "A seamless transition is our objective."

For the DynCorp workers facing this transition, PAE has offered the right of first refusal for positions available under the new contract. Many of the employees from the DynCorp contract will remain at Soto Cano working with PAE. Some were even prior PAE employees from the previous contract, according to Wright.

The phase team is currently headquartered at building G-02. DynCorp employees wanting more information about the transition can drop by or call ext. 5008.

Commanders Corner

The Santa Clauses of JTF-Bravo

By Lt. Col. Frank Matheson

J-5 Director

Of all the experiences that make you feel really good about life, seeing a happy child is one of the best. Think how excited, smiling kids make events like Christmas and birthdays memorable and satisfying. While Christmas only comes once a year, the opportunity to help kids in the communities surrounding JTF-B comes year round.

The daily Santa Clauses of JTF-B are those who have participated with MEDRETES and the unit-adopted orphanages and schools and feel the contagious delight of those they help with, food, clothes, school supplies, and volunteer support. These generous service members are positively influencing the lives of Hondurans who live in the vicinity of the Task Force and their views of the U.S. presence and mission in Central America. They are

building a circle of friendship around Soto Cano.

While most members of JTF-B are aware of the command-sponsored volunteer projects, many may not know that these types of humanitarian aid activities are an important Civil Affairs mission and are bread and butter tasks conducted by the J5 office. For those new to JTFB, here is what we do and a few of the recent missions conducted by the J5.

Doctrinally, Civil Affairs missions are the activities that establish maintain, influence, or exploit relations between military forces, governmental and non governmental organizations, civil authorities, and the civilian populace in a friendly, neutral, or hostile environment. The goal of these activities is to facilitate military operations and consolidate and achieve U.S. objectives. Activities include foreign nation support, populace and resource control, humanitarian assistance, military civic action, emergency services, as well as various levels of support to civil administrations. It is a mission that allows civil affairs soldiers to interface directly with host

nation citizens, and demands both cultural and linguistic expertise.

What do we do? We support the command by building and maintaining strong relationships "outside the wire." The J5 shop currently maintains close relations with all levels of the local community. The shop spends on average about 50 percent of its time out in the community, building relationships and prioritizing and surveying requests for support, and providing that support. Much of our time is also used to help coordinate activities between the U.S. forces and our Honduran Military hosts here at Soto Cano, such as the recent Honduran open base day. Recent and ongoing J5 projects include rebuilding wells in local villages, as well as various levels of support to local schools, retirement homes, orphanages, and various local governmental agencies.

If you are interested in helping in the local community we invite you to call the "Help Your Neighbor Hotline" at ext. 4124/4151 to volunteer to work with the J5 on do-good projects.

The Chaplain's Corner

What's in the well comes up in the bucket

By Chaplain (Capt.) Patrick R. Basal

JTF-Bravo Chaplain

"People can tame all kinds of animals and birds and reptiles and fish, but no one can tame the tongue. It is an uncontrollable evil, full of deadly poison. Sometimes it praises our Lord and Father, and sometimes it breaks out into curses against those who have been made in the image of God. And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right! Does a spring of water bubble out with both fresh water and bitter water? Can you pick olives from a fig tree or figs from a grapevine? No, and you can't draw fresh water from a salty pool." — James 3:7-12

Here we go again. Our friend James is revisiting the problems we have controlling our tongues. He recognizes how powerful an impact our speech has on how we live our lives. His warnings of the dangers we face and the damage we cause with our speech is well worth paying attention.

James' word pictures in the first 12 verses of chapter three are great. His comparing our tongue to the reins of a horse and a rudder on a ship show us the impact that our speech has on our lives.

Then to see him compare our words to a great forest fire or poison has to impress us on the need to watch what we say. It's so easy for us to slip and to criticize or say something cutting about our brother. It's so tempting to gossip. The person who has his or her tongue under control has definitely matured in the life of faith.

James' warning to us from today's Scripture

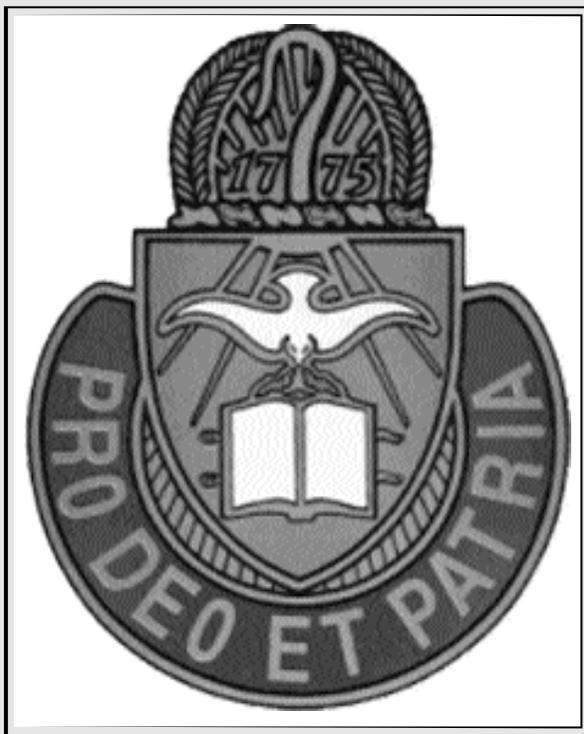
verses must not be ignored. Just as fruit on a tree identifies the tree and the quality of the water characterizes the water source, our speech is a good indicator of our spiritual condition.

Can we have Jesus in our hearts and spew out gossip and slander? Can we profess to be a child of God and have no regard of the foul language and lies that fall effortlessly from our lips? Can we bless God with our lips on Sunday and use His name in vain the rest of the week?

The product from our mouth is a good indicator of the state of our heart. If people only hear our words, would they consider us to be one of

God's folks?

If our words are our only fruit, what kind of tree would we be called? What makes this really hard to face is that our lives may be the only Bible some people may read. So, if we have problems controlling our tongues, maybe we need to check our heart. Our speech may be a symptom of heart disease.



SUBMISSIONS

The Iguana is always looking for submissions. Any articles, photos or letters to be submitted to The Iguana can be sent to the editor at michael.petersen@jtfb.southcom.mil or delivered to the Public Affairs Office, bldg. D-06. If you have any questions regarding possible submissions call ext. 4660 or 4676.

The

IGUANA

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Shop's skills keep Soto Cano flying

By Spc. M. William Petersen

Editor

Set back among the many wooden buildings near the Oasis, a key element of Joint Task Force-Bravo exists almost unnoticeable among identical buildings. It's the airmen inside that make Air Traffic Control and Landing Systems Maintenance stand out.

Unless a person knew what happened inside the wooden hooch, the large orange and white ATCALs Maintenance sign would only hint at the vital functions of the technical experts within. They keep Soto Cano Air Base communicating, flying and functioning.

ATCALs Maintenance is internally divided into four sections; each is specialized in certain aspects of radio and radar. Master Sgt. Jeffrey Brochu serves as chief of maintenance, working his way around the sections and overseeing the operations and personnel.



Staff Sgt. Mike Vilcinkas, ground radio technician, makes a quick maintenance check on the airfield's radio equipment.

At the core of the shop's operations is Maintenance Support. Aside from constantly tracking hundreds of pieces of equipment and ensuring it's all maintained, the two-man team of Staff Sgt. Larry Six and Senior Airman James Moad also has to provide quality assurance for their shop from within by performing inspections, personnel evaluations and technical manual evaluations.

"The job itself is incredibly tough. There's a lot to do," said Six. "The best thing about it is learning the different jobs and responsibilities. It teaches you how the job should be done."

The Ground Radio section maintains more than 70 pieces of equipment, including ground-to-air and ground-to-ground radios. With military police, firefighters and aviators depending on these radios, ground radio is constantly on-call in case something goes wrong.

"Once Maintenance Support gets the call, they pass it on to us," said Staff Sgt. Mike Vilcinkas, ground radio technician and Chicago native. "We've got to run out there, verify the problem and either fix it on-the-spot or get a replacement immediately."

For the Meteorological and Navigational Equipment Repair section, respon-

sible for vital weather and navigation equipment, the challenge is constant training.

"I knew a master sergeant who once told me, the minute you quit learning is the minute you give it up," said Senior Airman Jason Goodman, METNAV technician.

The training needed to maintain both weather monitoring equipment and a navigational radar tower that acts as a 'lighthouse' for both rotary and fixed-wing aircraft begins with nine months of training, but never ends. On-the-job training is a constant, said Senior Airman Adam Prestage.

"It's all about preventative maintenance," said Prestage. "We've got to know we'll be able to do what's needed when the time comes."

In the meantime, METNAV studies and trains, and occasionally performs the odd secondary duty. Prestage once was tasked with setting up cable television in Bosnia.

The Ground Radar section maintains the functions of the only precision approach radar in Central America. The section's technicians perform daily maintenance inspections to ensure their equipment is fully functional and that air traffic controllers can rely on it.

"The level of technical knowledge you need to have, as far as what component does what and the general scope of electronics, requires constant on-the-job and upgrade training," said Senior Airman Rico Thompson, radar technician.

While the members of the shop may not always be visible around Soto Cano, their impact is omnipresent.

"If ATCALs Maintenance isn't here to fix the equipment," said Vilcinkas, "nobody flies, nobody lands."



Senior Airman Rico Thompson, ground radar technician, swings the massive radar array around during a maintenance check.

Stored Value Card coming to Soto Cano in Sept.

By 1st Lt. Blake Young

Joint Task Force-Bravo Finance Officer

You may have heard the rumor: the Stored Value Card is coming to JTF-Bravo in September and after that there will be no more U.S. currency on post. Is this true? Yes and no.

Yes, the Stored Value Card is coming to JTF-Bravo, but no, U.S. currency is not going away, it will still be around.

The Stored Value Card is nothing more than a plastic card with a computer chip imbedded into it. The electronic value is loaded onto this chip. The primary difference between a SVC and a debit or credit card is where the information is stored.

While a debit or credit must access your account information over a network, all information for a user's Stored Value Card is maintained within the chip. Currently, the Department of Defense is using the SVC in the Balkans and at Army and Air Force basic training sites. The program is also being deployed

in Kuwait and Qatar this fall.

The purpose of the Stored Value Card is three-fold: to reduce the volume of U.S. currency and coins used by service members and civilians at JTF-Bravo, to simplify and expedite financial transactions and to allow more efficient cash management procedures for vendors. The Stored Value Card is not a 100 percent replacement for U.S. dollars, and vendors will continue to accept U.S. currency as a form of payment.

The process for using the card is quite simple. Each individual will be issued a card at the Finance Office. The card is loaded with the user's name and social security number, and the user's name is printed on the back for security reasons. Value can be loaded onto the card at the same locations dollars can be obtained: the Finance Office, AAFES or through the ATM machine. The cards may be used for purchases at all U.S.-operated sites on post, including any AAFES location, the Post Office, Finance, the DFAC, Oasis, Lizard Lounge and more.

To make a purchase, the SVC is inserted into a Point-of-Sale terminal. The current card balance is displayed,

and the cashier enters the amount of the charge. The card user verifies the amount, and the updated balance is displayed after the transaction.

The Stored Value Card provides many benefits to JTF-Bravo. For users, it provides a simpler and more efficient way to pay for transactions. With most transactions on post being a small amount, the SVC can certainly simplify daily life. It also eliminates the need to maintain U.S. currency for use on post and Lempiras for use off post.

For vendors, it provides a more secure and efficient method to manage and deposit cash. For JTF-Bravo, a reduction in U.S. coins leakage saves thousands of dollars in TDY missions to re-supply the coins.

Over \$500,000 is withdrawn from the ATM machines every month. Around half of this cash ends up back in the Finance Office or at AAFES. During this journey, the money was counted numerous times, secured by the owner, exchanged for goods, received as changed, etc. With the Stored Value Card, the end result remains the same, but the process becomes much simpler.



ONE -on- ONE

-with-
Chaplain (Capt.) Patrick Basal
JOINT TASK FORCE-BRAVO CHAPLAIN



(One-on-One is a forum designed to provide members of the Soto Cano Air Base community with insight into military and civilian leaders affecting their way of life. This week's interview is with the new JTF-Bravo chaplain. At 6'6", 230 pounds, Chaplain (Capt.) Patrick Basal has a certain presence when he walks into a room. Had his nickname not been determined years ago as "Spice," based on his family name, it might have been "Big Country" or the ever popular "Tiny;" either way, his good-humored nature puts people meeting him for the first time at ease. The 42-year-old Minnesota native, who could easily pass for 32, arrived at Soto Cano on June 24. The interview was conducted by Tech. Sgt. G. A. Volb, while photos were shot by Spc. M. William Petersen, both of the Joint Task Force-Bravo Public Affairs Office.)

The Iguana: You currently sport an undergraduate degree in English from Oxford College in Minnesota; a Masters Degree in Divinity from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Massachusetts, and a PhD in Church History (Reformation) from Harvard University. Seeing as how you're an Army chaplain, one might get the impression you're not familiar with the phrase "over qualified."

Chaplain Basal: Well, when you're raising a family and trying to support going to school at the same time you have to make sacrifices. My education was the culmination of many years of work, prior to and during my service in the military. So it may seem a little out of the ordinary to most at first glance, but it was a gradual thing.

TI: One of your favorite hobbies is fencing. I have to tell you that lead to some pretty scary images: someone your size gliding "gracefully" over the floor, in tights, with a sword in hand. What turned you on to fencing?

CB: My grandfather was the U.S. national team fencing coach way back when. He was the first American to take a European or Canadian medal in fencing. This was back in the 30s, 40s and 50s. He was still fencing when I was born in the 60s.

My strong point is the foil, which relies on your form through the mid-arm. His was the saber, which was a slashing and cutting style using the wrist. I don't have the wrists for that.

TI: You've been preaching for a fair number of years now; what's been the funniest thing you saw people doing from the pulpit? Anyone start snoring?

CB: From the pulpit in church it's usually just people falling asleep. But the most embarrassing moment for me was way back when I was an alter boy. I was about 14 years old, it was a really hot day, and as I was helping with the communion behind the alter the heat finally overcame me and I threw up. But the pastor didn't miss a beat. He very calmly wiped his sleeve off and wiped the chalice down. Then the ushers opened up the alter and I bee-lined it out of there -- nobody saw a thing, just a normal communion service. Other than that, you normally see heads bobbing on occasion as they nod off. Sometimes if I think people are bored to death, I'll get them out of their chairs to wake them up.

TI: Where is the satisfaction as an Army chaplain?

CB: For me it's getting out of the office and interacting with the troops. It's not just doing the pastoral thing with the church. My gift is not preaching; my gift is teaching. But it's also being out where the soldiers are — in the mud, repelling off the tower and at the firing range.

TI: Much of the base population sees you on Sundays, but you're a pretty busy man during the week too. Tell me about a normal week.

CB: There's "PT" every day, numerous command and staff meetings — I'm currently trying to integrate

myself into the Air Force meetings to learn that side of the house. We also have Bible studies, a fellowship group, interact with the church in Comayaqua, gospel choir practices, prayer team on Saturdays and then service on Sundays.

We also have what we consider a "soul outing" once a month where we go do something off post. We've gone horse-back riding at Marcala, we've done a retreat to Roatan, and next month we're planning on going to Lake Yojoa — all in the name of spiritual fitness training.

TI: Where you nervous the first time you stood in front of a congregation to speak?

CB: I sweat profusely, even today. I've never gotten used to talking to people, because, again, my gift isn't as a preacher. I'm a teacher, and if we were sitting here in a Bible study or class environment, then that's where I shine.

TI: What's the toughest part of your job, keeping the service interesting maybe?

CB: I'd say the toughest part of the job is getting more people into the service. I think many people tend to expect the same old, routine service they've experienced in the past. If you come to one of my services you'll discover it's not traditional in nature, that even though I'm Lutheran it's not a traditional service. I didn't bring my robes down here. I didn't bring my clericals. I try to keep it very contemporary, playing Creed on our CD player and things like that to get people involved. What I envision, to enlarge the service, is maybe to move the service to the Oasis, where we could have coffee and doughnuts. We have to do the things that will bring in the younger generations who weren't raised in church. If we're using modern songs and doing things they can relate to, then they'll attend service. How many churches have a coffee and doughnut service?

TI: You know the Twins are kicking some butt right now; do you see them taking the World Series?

CB: Growing up in Minnesota the Twins were always the team to follow, the problem was nobody would admit to ever going to see a game — they were that bad back then. We'd have senior skip day just to see a game, and still nobody would admit to having been there.

BIOGRAPHY

Education: Bachelor's Degree in English from Oxford College, Minn.; Master's Degree in Divinity from Gordon-Conwell Seminary, Mass.; and PhD. in Church History Reformation from Harvard.

Hobbies: Reading, fencing and hunting.

Experience: 16 year veteran, including reserve time.

Favorite authors: Alexander Kent and Patrick O'brien.

Favorite movie quote: "The deadliest weapon in the world is a Marine and his rifle." -- Full Metal Jacket.

AFN-Honduras: U.S. radio at Soto Cano



Sgt. John Cortez, broadcaster, plays a song on his daily morning radio show in the AFN-Honduras studio.

Story and Photo by Spc. M. William Petersen
Editor

Across the globe, the Armed Forces Network is the voice of America for the U.S. military overseas.

Whether in Korea with 2nd Infantry Division, in Italy at Aviano Air Base or in Japan, there is always an American radio station and American television for soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines to tune in.

Despite the relatively small size of Joint Task Force-Bravo, AFN is here as well. A crew of three soldiers and one airman run the Power Lizard radio station and provide five AFN television stations.

Each individual in the shop has their own set of responsibilities that keep the airwaves flowing with music, T.V. programming and movies.

Army Staff Sgt. Mike Parson has been station manager for AFN-Honduras for nearly a year. In that time, he has managed the overall operations of the station as well as performing disc jockey duties for one of the station's three live on-the-air shows.

Parson currently hosts the afternoon radio show, while Army Sgt. John Cortez pulls morning show duties. The shows are broadcast from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. for the morning show, and from 2 p.m. to 5

p.m. for the afternoon show.

With his departure from Soto Cano Air Base closing in, Parson has begun training Cortez to take over as station manager. This benefits the station since the rotation of soldiers and airmen in and out is constant.

"There's a constant turnover here," said Parson. "We had one soldier, Pfc. Brooks Taylor, who was here for three months. Once we had him fully trained-up, he left. There's really no continuity."

For Cortez, his assignment to Soto Cano is the opportunity to do what he's always wanted to do. He extended his tour here to keep doing the job and eventually take over as station manager.

"When I was a kid, I used to sit in front of the TV and broadcast Braves games to myself. I always wanted to be a broadcaster," said Cortez. "I'm doing something that I always wanted to do and serving my country at the same time."

Currently AFN is looking at their options to expand. A second radio frequency may be in AFN-Honduras' near future, said Parson. The station is currently slated to be focused more on news and talk radio than the current music station.

The Power Lizard is always accepting volunteer DJs to host radio shows. Experience isn't required, but can be provided.

"Even if they don't know how to do it, we'll show them," said Parson.



ONE ON ONE

Continued from Page 4

TI: One of your favorite quotes is: "The deadliest weapon in the world is a Marine and his rifle," from Full Metal Jacket. Some might say it's a "chaplain and his sword." Care to comment?

CB: [Laughing] I do have several sabers hanging on my wall in my office back home. And I get that common look of people walking in expecting to see crosses hanging all over the place, and then looking around seeing the swords. The look on their face seems to say, "Hey, this guy has more going on than just being a preacher. He's a normal kind of guy." So I guess I'm trying to change the historical perception of us being the frail, withdrawn minister type and include a little ruggedness, more manly traits.

Growing up, I hated the way ministers were portrayed on television or in movies, like Father Mulcahy on M.A.S.H. -- meek and mild. You know Christ was a carpenter, so I'm thinking he probably had a pretty good build on him. You can't be a wimp as a carpenter. Plus, he had 12 disciples and many followers that I could see him wrestling with -- they probably did the same macho type things guys do today.

TI: In fact, you enjoy going to the range with troops to fire, yet you, as a chaplain don't carry a weapon in time of war. Kind of ironic?

CB: I've qualified expert in both 9mm and M-16 in the Army, Navy and Marine Corps. Yes, I'd say it's ironic, but then again, my assistant is my body guard. If he doesn't know how

to shoot, then I'm going to make sure he learns. [Smiling] I want to make sure he's qualified, so he can protect me.

TI: In your short time here, is there anything you would like to provide the community that hasn't been offered in the past?

CB: I think what I bring to the community is a little more contemporary ideas. Previously, it was an old, traditional Methodist service. So I try to do something totally different to keep things interesting. Again, I'm trying to bring in the younger generation, so I have to be talking their language.

TI: What is your goal for the chaplaincy here? Where do you want it to be when you're moving on to your next assignment?

CB: I'd like to see a greater following. People willing to admit they need the lord on their side. This post is so open to other areas of entertainment, like drinking and such, that I want to offer an equalizer of sorts -- something to balance it all out and offer an alternative. I don't judge people; I just want them to know there are alternatives on and off base.

TI: If you weren't a chaplain in the Army, what would you be doing?

CB: That's hard to say. But more than likely I'd probably be getting dirty; maybe knee deep in an archeological dig having to do with church history.

MEDRETE

Continued from Page 1

and throat operating room technician at Wilford Hall. "We brought everything with us -- equipment, supplies, sutures, water, instruments -- everything. The hospital in San Pedro Sula doesn't have much of the surgical equipment, so they wouldn't be able to do the operations unless we brought the equipment with us."

Mathis, who had never visited Honduras before, said the members of the team gained a sense of satisfaction knowing they helped people who couldn't otherwise afford medical care.

"Without this care, some of these kids would eventually die, because an ear infection can go into their brain," she said.

1st Lt. Jennifer Tay, an audiologist at Wilford Hall, said in addition to helping the patients, the medical team gained an appreciation for the quality of medical care people have in the United States.

"There were a lot of children we saw who had something wrong with them that would be so easy to fix in the states, but it goes untreated here because they don't have the money or resources to get it treated," Tay said. "As an audiologist, I did a number of hearing tests, and found many children who could be helped by a simple hearing aid. I'd like to come back with some hearing aids donated from the states. I hope to make sure we can do this again."

On average, medical teams from Wilford Hall do between 10 and 12 MEDRETEs each year in countries whose health care is often lacking.

Bergman said missions such as these benefit everyone involved.

"It's a win-win situation all around, because we get education, and the people get free medical care," he said. "We take every opportunity to do these missions whenever we can."

Rescue team saves Coast Guardsman at sea

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. — A 920th Rescue Group aircrew came to aid of an ailing Coast Guardsman July 23 after diverting from aerial patrols in conjunction with safeguarding Vice President Dick Cheney.

While patrolling about 40 miles off the coast of Cape Canaveral, Fla., the five-member HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter crew received a radio message from a nearby Coast Guard cutter asking for assistance. A Coast Guardsman was apparently having a heart attack and needed to be airlifted from the ship to a medical facility.

Ironically, the “coastie” was on the same mission at sea as the Air Force Reserve Command helicopter crew.

“When we got the call, we didn’t hesitate to act,” said Maj. Chris Hannon, aircraft commander. “There were other air assets in the area, so we could afford to divert to another critical mission.”

The helicopter hovered near the cutter and two crewmen, 2nd Lt. Rusty Bradshaw and Master Sgt. Lance Supernaw, jumped into the ocean with a patient litter and swam to the cutter. They climbed on board and treated the stricken Coast Guardsman. After he was stabilized, they placed him on the litter and he was hoisted up to the helicopter.

“He was having severe chest pains, and had a fast heart rate and rapid respirations,” said Bradshaw, a combat rescue officer. “He was also sweating very hard. We put him on oxygen and stabilized him.”

After a 12-minute flight to Melbourne, Fla., the helicopter landed on a field near a medical center and transferred to paramedics.

The HH-60 crew headed back over the Atlantic Ocean to rejoin the vice presidential security detail. The mission continued without incident for another three hours. After it was over, the rescuers returned to Patrick, where they learned the Air Rescue Coordination Center had credited them with another save.

Other crewmembers on the mission were Maj. Bruce Shuman, copilot, and Master Sgt. Steve Johnson, flight engineer. (Courtesy of AFRC News Service)



Courtesy Photo

Master Sgt. Lance Supernaw (left) and 2nd Lt. Rusty Bradshaw remove their gear from an HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla. The airmen are assigned to the 920th Rescue Group. They were recently credited with saving the life of a Coast Guardsman.

82nd jumps into Transformation exercise at NTC

Story and Photo by

Pvt. Sara Wood and Sgt. Kim Dooley

13th Public Affairs Detachment

FORT IRWIN, Calif. — In one of the first troop maneuvers of the Army Transformation Experiment and Millennium Challenge 2002, 750 paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division jumped into the National Training Center’s Bike Lake Army Airfield in the early morning hours of July 30.

Two NTC observers/controllers participating in the jump and 21 of the 82nd paratroopers were injured in the drop. None of the injuries were life- or limb-threatening, though, and consisted mainly of broken bones, back strains and a few concussions, said Maj. Richard Patterson, 82nd Abn. Div. public affairs officer. As of July 31, 10 of the soldiers were being treated for their injuries at a local hospital and 13 had returned to duty.

The mission began at 2 a.m. with a heavy drop of two High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicles and two 105-mm howitzers.

Air Force C-130 aircraft transported the paratroopers and equipment to the drop zone, and officials said this demonstrated the Army’s interoperability with other military services.

The paratroopers’ mission was to seize and secure the airfield for the landing of several Stryker Infantry Carrier vehicles aboard other C-130 aircraft.

This part of ATEX02 tested the interoperability between the “legacy force” and the “interim force,” said Maj. Gen. John R. Vines, commanding general, 82nd Abn. Div.

Vines stressed the importance of the paratroopers, saying they are still the only force that can make a strate-



A jumpmaster from the 82nd Airborne Division conducts pre-inspection of another paratrooper prior to the July 30 jump at the National Training Center

gic, forcible entry into a landlocked area.

“The bread and butter of the 82nd Airborne is airfield seizures,” said Capt. Rob Boone, commander, Company D, 1st Bn., 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment. “This mission is dangerous because we are the first ones in, and it’s important because we have to secure the area and open up the airfield for follow-on forces.”

The paratroopers received ongoing training at their home station in preparation for the exercise, including live-fire ranges, a brief integration with new communications equipment, and job specialty training, said Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Lynch, platoon sergeant, Co. D, 1st Bn., 325th AIR.

Although the 82nd conducts heavy drops and airfield

seizures regularly at Fort Bragg, Monday night’s mission introduced the unit to some unique challenges, including the large size of the exercise, new battlefield technology and unfamiliar terrain, Lynch said.

In light of these different challenges, the unit placed more emphasis on ensuring safety through a thorough jumpmaster pre-inspection.

“The JMPI is the final quality control check that a jumpmaster does of an individual jumper prior to getting the jumper onto the aircraft,” said 1st Lt. David Powell, battalion air officer, 1st Bn., 325th AIR. The air officer’s primary role in the exercise was to ensure the safety and accountability of all personnel and equipment on the aircraft and on the airfield. “Depending on what deficiencies are found, these checks can literally be the difference between life and death for the paratroopers.”

During JMPI, jumpmasters check for the serviceability of the jumpers’ parachutes, correct rigging of all equipment and double check to make sure the parachute and combat equipment is donned properly, Powell said.

With only about 70-80 jumpmasters and safeties to conduct the JMPI of all 750 paratroopers, the responsibility of safety also rests heavily with the jumpers themselves, he said.

“Finding a deficiency is also often up to the experience and training of the jumper himself and of the jump buddy that helps him don his equipment,” Powell said. “The number of deficiencies we detect and correct is dependent on those two factors, as well as our own expertise.”

(Editor’s note: ARNEWS senior correspondent Joe Burlas also contributed to the article.)

BRIEFS

E-mail abuse

Lately, there have been some abuses of the e-mail system regarding the ALL e-mail policy. Sending non-critical e-mail out to everyone on base without it coming through the PAO office is against command policy. Trying to get around this policy by sending e-mails to everyone using their individual groups, such as AFFOR, ARFOR, MEDEL, JSF, etc., constitutes a violation of this policy as well.

If you have information that needs to be disseminated to the entire base populace, it must come through the PAO office for review.

If the e-mail is deemed appropriate and/or mission essential, PAO will send it out to ALL. If not, your information can be posted on the e-news, which is updated several times a week, broadcast it on the Power Lizard, or posted on the Commander's Channel.

Please review the policy on the JTF-B webserver and keep it in mind when sending out mass e-mails.

View Travel Payments on H-Drive

The Finance Office is now posting all travel voucher settlements to the "JTF-B data" folder on the network. Travel settlements filed after 8 July 2002 will be logged. Monitor the status of your travel payments by going to H:\ARFOR\FINANCE\Travel Payments Log.xls.

New Legal Office hours

Due to a shortage in personnel, the Office of the Command Judge Advocate (Legal Office) is reducing hours that legal assistance will be available. Until further notice, all powers of attorney and notarizations will be processed Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. People unable to make those times or seeking other legal services must make an appointment. Notification will be distributed when this policy is no longer necessary.

Ten Miler team tryouts

A 10 kilometer run will be held Aug. 29 at 6 a.m. to select the members of the JTF-B team that will go to Washington D.C. to race in the Army Ten Miler on Oct. 20.

The run will start and finish in the vicinity of the track. Eight personnel will comprise the team.

Sign-up forms will be available soon so T-shirts can be ordered.

All are invited to run and encouraged to participate.

Fort Bragg officials react to four spousal homicides in six weeks

By Spc. Kyle J. Cosner

U.S. Army Special Operations Command Public Affairs

FORT BRAGG, N.C. — Fort Bragg and the U.S. Army Special Operations Command officials have responded to reporters' questions about the killing of four military wives by their active-duty husbands in a span of less than six weeks during a press conference July 26.

Three of the four accused soldiers had returned from deployments to Afghanistan within the last six months.

Despite suggestions from the media that the killings may have been related to those deployments, Col. Tad Davis, Fort Bragg's garrison commander, told a roomful of reporters that the incidents probably related more to the soldiers' preexisting marital problems than to their deployments in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"That's one of the factors that we'll look at during our investigation into each one of these cases, but also what was the relationship, what was going on in that family, what was going on in that household — and then look at all those issues together to see what we can put together as a total picture of what was going on in that family," Davis said.

Davis discounted Afghanistan as a direct factor in the killings, pointing out that duty there was no more stressful than deployments to other theaters.

"We've got several thousand soldiers deployed right now in 30 or more countries around the world," he said. "In many cases, those soldiers are in an as stressful, if not more stressful environment, than these soldiers might have been in Afghanistan."

Davis also cautioned against drawing too many connections between the four incidents.

"We've got to judge each and every one of these cases on its own merit and then see what we come up with in the end," he said.

Across post at the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, Maj. Gary Kolb, the command's public affairs officer, echoed Davis' comments. Three of the accused soldiers belonged to USASOC units.

"I think each case has to be taken differently," Kolb said. "To pinpoint one thing like the war in Afghanistan and say that's the cause is pretty hard to do. Each (case) needs to be looked at individually."

Davis said that although military families are subject to the same problems as civilian families, these incidents were a surprise, as there hadn't been a domestic-related homicide at Fort Bragg in two years.

"In many respects, what we've found is that some (military) families do have problems," Davis said. "But...we are shocked and extremely surprised with the recent occur-

rences, and our hearts go out to each and every one of the families, to include the children in particular.

"In whatever way we can, we try to have programs available for (families experiencing problems) — everything from marriage counseling to marriage enrichment programs" Davis continued. "At the same time, we stress to each and every one of our leaders at every level to make sure that they're aware of the circumstances among the soldiers, especially those that are married."

However, such resources can't do much good if soldiers don't take advantage of them, according to Henry Berry, Fort Bragg's family advocacy program manager.

"Its one thing to know that an individual is experiencing a problem — it affords you the opportunity to render assistance," Berry said. "If you don't know, you're hands are tied. Then, when a serious incident does take place, you go on a guilt trip. Should we have known? What could we have done? To be absolutely honest...(these incidents) are mind-boggling...I was completely caught off guard.

"We're going to look at these cases," Berry continued. "We have to identify what took place to prevent them. It could mean deleting programs, but it will probably mean adding on to our programs."

Whether the accused soldiers came forward for counseling is under investigation, Davis said.

He also said that despite his post's attempts to prevent domestic disputes within military families, sometimes problems could slip through the cracks — with tragic results.

"We want to make sure that the families back here at Fort Bragg are taken care of," Davis said.

"Stress is something we face on a daily basis...when you add on top of that military life, it increases the stress tremendously, and when you add on top of that the fact that loved ones might be moving into harm's way and danger, that also increases the amount of stress on our families," Davis said. "We have worked very hard since (Operation Desert Storm) in particular to stabilize the programs we have to reach out for family members and be able to look after their needs, especially when their loved ones are half a world away serving in defense of this nation."

Two of the accused soldiers, Sgt. Cedric Griffin and Master Sgt. William Wright, are in police custody and charged with the first-degree murders of their wives on June 29 and July 9, respectively.

The two other suspects, Sgt. 1st Class Rigoberto Nieves and Sgt. 1st Class Brandon Floyd, both allegedly killed their wives shortly before committing suicide June 11 and July 19, respectively.

All four cases occurred off-post and are still under investigation.

Pentagon blast site open for business

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Less than a year after a hijacked airliner crashed into the Pentagon, the first tenants of the destroyed area will move back in, Defense officials said.

As befitting their tradition, a Marine Corps office will move back into the E-ring office it occupied before Sept. 11, said Rachel Decker, a communications specialist with the Pentagon Renovation Plan.

"It's the office they recovered the

Marine flag from," she said.

The project is well ahead of schedule, Decker said. Other offices will move back in, although the schedule is not yet set, she said.

In rebuilding the area, Pentagon engineers incorporated many changes recommended by those who were in the area when American Airlines Flight 77 struck the building. One important change was placing lighting along the floor, so people crawling in thick smoke can find the exits. Another is placing walls around stairwells to contain fires and explosions.

Already in the plan was work to install sprinkler systems in the building. The plane struck at the junction of Wedge 1, which had sprinklers in place, and Wedge 2, which didn't. The sprinklers helped firefighters suppress the fire in Wedge 1, whereas fires in Wedge 2 took almost three days to put out.

Decker said work continues on other Pentagon renovation projects. The program has established a Universal Space Lab in a section of Wedge 2 to test new furniture, new ways of placing utilities and new safety measures.

Give 'em the Bird

Wilbur: MEDEL's talkative mascot

Story and Photos by 2nd Lt. Carla Pampe
Public Affairs Director

On any given day, people walking by the medical element dormitories might hear a high, shrill voice calling out – “hola!” “adios,” or “what’s up?”

No, it’s not a friendly hootch maid trying to get your attention, it’s just Wilbur the parrot making his presence known.

Wilbur, the MEDEL mascot, has lived at Soto Cano for about three years, said 1st Lt. Tuesday Blome, his primary caretaker.

“He was a gift to MEDEL from someone who was stationed here back then,” she said. “He belongs to all of us, and we love him.”

Although he didn’t talk much at first, Blome said in recent months, Wilbur’s vocabulary has been rapidly expanding.

“He says hola, hello, adios, pretty bird, hey buddy, Wilbur, what’s up and I love you,” Blome said. “He can also meow like a cat and cluck like a chicken, too.”

However, some of the things Wilbur has been

taught can’t be put in print.

“People think it’s funny to teach him bad things,” Blome said. “His newest thing to say is ‘booty call.’”

When he’s not talking to people passing by, Wilbur loves to snack on his favorite foods, like pistachios, bananas, apples, pears and raw spaghetti.

“He loves pasta,” Blome said. “He gets really violent when people feed him sugary foods, though. He needs a lot of protein and carbs.”

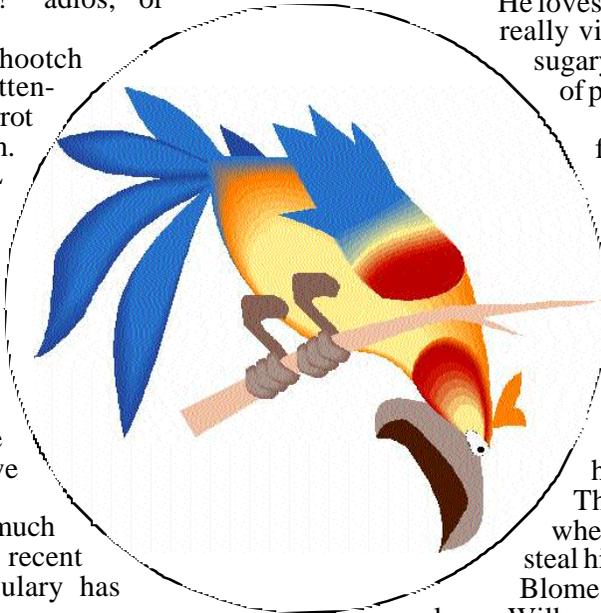
Wilbur also likes warm baths from a spray bottle and dancing around on the beams of his cage.

Although his cage is fairly large, Blome said MEDEL is trying to get plans for a new one approved.

“This cage is in pretty bad condition,” she said. “It’s deteriorating from termites, and he really needs a new one. There are a lot of holes in it where other birds can come in and steal his food.”

Blome said it will be hard for her to leave Wilbur when she heads back to the states this month.

“I know I’m going to cry and cry, but the new dentist, Capt. [Ammon] Baus, has volunteered to take care of him after I leave,” she said. “Everybody helps out with Wilbur, and I know he will be in good hands.”



1st Lt. Tuesday Blome, preventive medicine, visits with her friend, Wilbur, on Monday. Blome has been Wilbur’s primary caretaker, but will pass on those duties when she leaves Soto Cano at the end of this month.

