Proudly serving the United States servicemembers of Joint Task Force-Bravo

The Iguana

Vol. 13, No. 15 Aug. 24, 2001

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Photos by Spc. Sarah Maxwell

Members of the Soto Cano Search and Rescue team wait for their turn to perform the Jacob's Ladder insertion/extraction exercise with the Sgt. Maj. of the Army, Jack Tilley, Aug. 13.

Army's top enlisted leader visits base

By Spc. Sarah Maxwell
Iguana Editor

Joint Task Force-Bravo troops were treated with a visit to Soto Cano from the Army's senior ranking enlisted leader Aug. 13 and 14. Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack Tilley showed troops here that just because they were in a remote location, their voices are still being heard.

Tilley performs Jacob's Ladder by climbing into the hovering CH-47.

After eating his first meal with soldiers, airmen and the JTF-Bravo senior enlisted leadership, Tilley visited the 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment soldiers.

He then went out for some Search and Rescue Team training by practicing the Jacob's Ladder, climbing up and down a ladder in and out of a hovering CH-47 Chinook, with the team members. It was something he had never done in his more than three decades as a soldier.

After the training, Tilley didn't miss a beat and went to the theater where he hosted an open discussion bringing controversial Army issues to the forefront for about 100 soldiers and airmen in the audience.

Troops and the sergeant major of the Army exchanged points of views about issues such as pay and the transformation of the Army, including the new "Army of One" ad campaign and the donning of the black beret.

Addressing concerns and getting on the soldiers' level about the issues that are important to them is what brought Tilley's visit.

"I came down here because I always like to see what goes on around the Army and what the issues are," he said to his captivated audience.

He went on to explain the different ideas that are being kicked around in Washington about the pay table, such as adding a new rank of E-10. But, he focused on one key issue about pay: "Fix my base pay."

He said that he was advocating for an increase in the base pay table for soldiers, focusing on noncommissioned officers.

Explaining that the "Army of One" campaign is designed as an enlistment tool and that "it's working," he went on to give the history of the black beret and how it has been used by different organizations in the Army over the last century. It's now being used as a symbol of the Army's transformation to a lighter more mobile force, he said.

The sergeant major of the Army finished his time on base by spending it with soldiers and having dinner and breakfast with large groups of NCOs and junior enlisted troops.

"I'm proud of everything the soldiers are doing down here. You have great soldiers here and a great noncommissioned officer's corps," he said about his visit to the base. "... It's all about being a soldier. It's all about believing in what you do."

Commanders Corner

Education benefits save dependents thousands

By Mo Eckols
Education Center

Command emphasis to maximize quality of life for families of military personnel stationed here brings to mind the fact that the military does take care of its own. One way the military is doing this is by providing many educational benefits for family members.

However, those benefits do not come automatically to families unless their sponsors initiate research and inform their dependents of education benefits and options to make it happen.

The importance of education as a family affair is reflected in comments like, "Mo, my family has been farming for generations. I am the first one to get a degree thanks to CCAF ... My wife and son want a degree, but we don't have the money." From another, "... With me overseas, my wife has no time for college ... at home watching our babies."

Well, good news, folks! Sponsors can help their dependents save thousands of dollars and a lot of time getting a degree through the education center benefits.

How do family members receive those benefits? Dependents can visit their nearest on-post education center, even while sponsors are overseas.

Active-duty personnel and dependents receive services and programs totally free. However, while military personnel get free college-credit exams, dependents pay a very low cost.

It doesn't matter whether an airman or soldier e-mails or scans information sheets directly from the Soto Cano Air Base Education Center to his spouse's e-mail, or mails information sheets to the Family Support Groups (FSG). There are support groups for 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment and others at Fort Wainwright, Fort Carson, Army Finance Center, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base.

Military dependents can take advantage of on-post services as follows:

Totally free counseling; computer literacy training; multimedia research; televideo CD-ROM study of math, English, science, etc; English as a second language; on-line distance learning; credit evaluation; SOCAD agreements; and more.

Save money and time: Dependents pay only $27 for a Dante's Standardized Subject Test exam and only $45 for a CLEP exam.

There are more than 100 exams for associate's and bachelor's degrees.

A typical associate's degree from University of Maryland costs $420 (per 3 credit hour, 1 course) times 20 courses equaling $8,400 for 60 credits.

Add $60 times 20 textbooks and that equals $1,200. Then add school fees and supplies of approximately $400 and the dependent's associate's degree costs $10,000.

By taking exams family members can pay as low as $305 for 60 credits instead of $10,000 for 60 credits.

A student must ask colleges about policy that affects various tests for different degrees.

The command perspective on quality of life is an encouragement and challenge for personnel to ensure dependents use education benefits, which expand long-range family and career options. Moreover, imagine how that perpetuation of higher education for generations, like the Community College of the Air Force graduate, will expand the quality of community life wherever those military families settle and work.

Chaplain's Corner

Stay fit, but don't forget about spirituality

By Chaplain (CPT) Earl Vanderhoff
JTF-Bravo Chaplain

Our military leaders are vigilant about making sure the force is ready to go to war and perform its mission. We are tested regularly to make sure we are physically fit. Many of us have set goals to buff up and get in top shape while we are here at Joint Task Force-Bravo. We have mandatory training to make sure we are mentally and emotionally fit. However, in order to be totally fit we must give attention to spiritual fitness.

A timeworn adage that makes a lot of sense in the world of business and industry is, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it!" However, that definitely does not apply when it comes to people's health. In fact, health experts report that preventive care can not only lead to better health and reduced risk from disease, but vastly reduce medical costs. People are unwise to neglect their physical condition.

This truth has its parallel in the spiritual realm, as the writer to the Hebrews shows. Twice the book warns its readers to pay attention to their spiritual condition *(Heb. 6:1-20; 12:14-29)* ... let us strip off and throw aside every encumbrance, and let us run with patient endurance and steady and active persistence the appointed course of the race that is set before us, pursue that consecration and holiness without which no one will [ever] see the Lord, be on the watch, to see that no one falls back from and fails to secure God's grace (his unmerited favor and spiritual blessing). Notice the strong language used in *Heb. 12* to describe what can happen to us if we neglect our walk with Christ:

•We can fall short of the grace of God *(12:15)*.

•Bitterness can take root and sprout up, causing trouble *(12:15)*.

•Many people can become defiled *(12:15)*.

•We may make a foolish or even catastrophic mistake like Esau did *(12:16-17; Gen. 25:27-34; 27:1-45)*.

•We may refuse to listen when God speaks to us *(Heb. 12:25)*.

•God's judgement may consume us *(12:29)*.

Those are dire consequences! Fortunately, the writer offers some ways to check our spirituality and make corrections where we detect trouble:

•Are we pursuing peace with others? How do we respond to conflicts at home, work or school?

•Are we pursuing holiness *(12:14)*? Is our thought life focused on that which purifies *(Phil. 2:1-13; 4:8-9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8)*?

•Are we listening carefully to God *(Heb. 12:25)*? Do we regularly wrestle with scripture, allowing it to challenge us and keep us accountable?

•Do we live in grace, serving God in an acceptable way with reverence and respect *(12:28)*? Are we growing in our appreciation for God and his salvation and for other believers? Do we express that clearly and regularly? Would others describe us as thankful *(1 Tim. 4:4; Col. 3:17.)*?

How is your spiritual condition? Are there any symptoms to be concerned about? Any functions that seem weak or absent? What changes do you need to make to build yourself up into spiritual health and strength?

Please come join us at the chapel. Gospel service is at 1 p.m. Sunday; Roman Catholic at noon Wednesday, 4:30 p.m. Saturday and 8:15 a.m. Sunday; Protestant worship is 11 a.m. Sundays; and Bible study at 9:30 a.m. Sundays. Sunday at 4 p.m. we offer a Bible study for men to learn how to be a complete husband. Mondays at 7 p.m. we offer a study for women to learn how to be an excellent wife. For more information, call the chapel at ext. 4351.

The Iguana

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Content is edited, prepared and provided by the Joint Task Force-Bravo Public Affairs Office, in Building D-06. Telephone numbers are 011-504-234-4634, ext. 4150 or 4676. Fax is ext. 4550. or DSN 449-4150/4676. Readers with story ideas should call the Public Affairs office. All photographs are property of JTF-Bravo unless otherwise noted.

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Red Cross helps families stay linked in bad times

By Master Sgt. Jeff Bohn
Public Affairs

When the unthinkable happens and an immediate family member back home finds themselves in a life or death situation, do your relatives or loved ones know how to get in touch with you?

Most folks at Soto Cano keep in touch with their friends and family using e-mail, instant messaging, the defense switchboard network phone system and snail mail. However, in the event of a crisis situation where hours are important and a trip home is required, these methods are not the first choice to use.

The American Red Cross has a process established that will serve as the bridge from families to servicemembers by getting a soldier or airman notified and authorized for emergency leave.

Chief Master Sgt. Allen Niksich, the AFFOR Command Chief, outlined the Red Cross notification process for servicemembers here at Soto Cano.

"Once the member's family contacts the local Red Cross, that Red Cross will call the area agency, such as the hospital or other emergency facility and compile a message for us to take action. The local Red Cross sends a message to one of two places — Southern Command in Miami or Fort Sill, Okla., who relays the information to our joint operations center. The JOC (Joint Operations Center), in turn, notifies the first sergeant for the attached unit. The first sergeant takes action to notify the member and beginning processing orders and assistance to the member with phone calls, financial assistance and transportation needs," Niksich said.

Of course there is one limiting factor; the families must know how to get in touch with their local Red Cross office and know the pertinent information about the servicemember — unit, duty location, and even personal identification information such as social security numbers. Many family members may know personal mailing addresses but may not know the unit in which their servicemember is assigned.

Niksich said, "Everybody here needs to let their family members know that they need to put the local Red Cross number in their city and state on their refrigerator door. The local Red Cross office needs to do their notification to us before I can do my thing and get the servicemember moving toward airline tickets or making other plans."

Supervisors and members up the chain of command can be involved and take steps to increase awareness and assist their troops when they arrive for duty.

"I give my business card to every person when they process in to AFFOR and explain to them about having their family place the local Red Cross number on their refrigerator. It is a very simple process; it can be nerve wracking if you haven't been informed on what to do," Niksich added.

Servicemembers should prepare a little for a potential emergency also. While soldiers and airmen don't have to be on 24/7 alert, they should be able to locate some important documents quickly in the event a call comes through. For AFFOR, they have an average of one airman each week receive a Red Cross notification.

"When you travel, don't forget your passport and take a copy of not only your emergency leave order form, but also a copy of your PCS or TDY orders that brought you here for duty. Keep a folder and your own personal checklist of things you would need to do should you have to go on emergency leave. Your mind is going 10 different ways, and you'll forget important things to do. But a pre-planned to-do list will help keep you organized and tracking," Niksich concluded.

For members needing assistance, contact your supervisor or unit first sergeant for more information.

SGLI benefits extend to families spouses, children now covered

By Staff Sgt. A.J. Bosker
AFPN

WASHINGTON — The Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance will be extended to provide coverage to family members beginning Nov. 1.

The government has always had an excellent estate program to protect family members in case of a servicemember's death, said Maj. Jeffrey T. Keef, chief of Air Force military estate and special pays policy at the Pentagon. However, little has been available to provide the military member financial protection in the event of a family member's death.

Under the new provisions, spouses and children will be automatically covered if the military member is an SGLI participant, Keef said.

The member will have the option to decline spouse coverage if submitted in writing.

The maximum automatic coverage is $100,000 for a member's spouse, and any lesser amount must be evenly divisible by $10,000, Keef said. However, the amount of coverage of a member's spouse cannot exceed the amount of coverage of the insuring member. Premiums for spouse coverage will be charged based upon spouse's age and will range from 9 cents to 55 cents per $1,000 of coverage. For example, $100,000 of coverage could be obtained on a spouse younger than 35 for $9 per month.

There is also a policy conversion option for the insured spouse after loss of eligibility for SGLI, he said.

Children will be covered automatically for $10,000, and no premiums will be charged the member, Keef said. In cases where both parents are eligible SGLI participants, the child may not be insured by more than one member.

In the event of a family member's death, any insurance in effect will be paid to the insuring member.

If the member passes away before payment can be made, then the amount will go to the people named as the member's beneficiaries.

"The Air Force sees this as a good deal for its members," Keef said.

"By allowing members who have elected coverage only under SGLI to opt for family member coverage, we are putting them on equal ground with civilians who might obtain family coverage as a rider to their master civilian life insurance policies," he explained.

"This relieves our members from having to seek out more than one provider in order to acquire coverage for the entire family. "

Military personnel flights can expect to receive detailed implementing instructions in September.

Re-up bonuses grow in 121 Army jobs

By Staff Sgt. Marcia Triggs
ARNEWS

WASHINGTON — Re-enlistment bonuses increased this quarter in 121 military occupational specialties for soldiers with critical job skills.

The re-enlistment goal for this fiscal year to date is 14,991 for initial-term soldiers with 15,643 re-enlisted, and for mid-career soldiers it's 17,832 with 18,998 signed up.

The retention program is managed in three major categories: - initial-term for soldiers with 17 months to six years of service; mid-career for soldiers with six to 10-years of service; and career soldiers with 10 or more years of service.

At the same time, bonuses were reduced in 54 other specialties. Soldiers in a total of 240 MOSs are being offered bonuses to re-enlist, stay or move to one of the target SRB installations.

Currently, installations on the target Selective Re-enlistment Bonus list are all locations in Korea, Fort Bliss, Texas; Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Stewart, Ga.; Fort Leavenworth, Kan.; Fort Riley, Kan.; Fort Drum, N.Y.; Fort Bragg, N.C.; Fort Campbell, Ky.; Fort Carson, Colo.; Fort Polk, La., and Fort Sill, Okla.

Bonuses for target SRBs are offered to fill critical skills at locations where those skills are short, said Sgt. Maj. Tony Rose, senior career counselor in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel.

The TSRBs are paid to soldiers at a higher level than the conventional SRBs, Rose added.

Additionally, soldiers who re-enlist for TSRBs are also stabilized longer, Rose said.

A tour in Korea would increase to 18 months instead of the normal 12-month tour, he said.

"Conventional SRBs are applied to MOSs that are 10 percent below their required operating strength. Then depending on the Army's need, they may be increased, decreased or deleted on a quarterly basis," Rose said.

The maximum bonus offered by the Army is $20,000. However, as an exception a satellite communication systems operator-maintainer (31C) can now receive up to $30,000 and a Korean linguist (98G) can receive up to $40,000, Rose said.

SRBs are calculated by multiplying base pay times the number of years the soldier is re-enlisting for times the SRB multiplier. Soldiers can re-enlist for a minimum of three years to a maximum of six. The higher the SRB multiplier and the more years the soldier re-enlists for gives the highest payment, Rose said.

"Changes to the SRBs and TSRBs will go into affect July 27. The data is tracked to see if our goals are being met," Rose said. "If our goals aren't being met then we may increase the bonus in increments of .5 until it produces the number of soldiers we're looking for."

The Army budgeted $60.9 million for new re-enlistment contracts and $49 million for anniversary payments during the fiscal year that ends Sept. 30, said Ron Canada, chief of the Enlisted Retention Management Division, Total Army Personnel Command.

So far, Rose said the SRB program has been a success story.

"SRBs play a major role in the Army accomplishing or exceeding its retention mission. It is a behavior modifier that influences soldiers to re-enlist when they may not have if the SRB had not been available," he said.

Col. Mike Conners, a dentist from the 128th Medical Squadron, Milwaukee, took time at the beginning of the day to entertain children who were waiting for medical care. During the Aug. 8 visit to Valle de Angeles dentists treated more than 50 patients.

General MEDRETE help thousands

Joint Task Force-Bravo, MEDEL, the Honduran Ministry of Health, the Honduran Armed Forces and Air National Guard units joined forces to help more than 5,780 patients during a general medical readiness training exercise in the local Comayagua area Aug. 7 to Aug. 16.

For eight working days, the team of about 60 medical professionals and volunteers set up their equipment and supplies in a different rural town every morning.

Working in makeshift clinics, usually rural school buildings, they treated the patients while battling dehydration from the heat, bugs, and unclean environments. They saw hundreds of patients a day, some who walked for hours to get a chance to see a doctor. That didn't stop the servicemembers from being enthusiastic about their jobs. They went out of their way to educate and treat as many people as they could every day.

"Our goal is to improve the overall general health of the people here and make a difference," said Maj. David Barton, the executive officer of the Missouri Air National Guard's 131st Medical Squadron from St. Louis.

Improving the overall health of the area is just what they did along with the ministry of health, which gave out immunizations. Hundreds waited in line everyday seeking medical care that they couldn't afford without the MEDRETE. Some didn't even have the transportation to get to a doctor.

The unit made up the bulk of the medical care including the preven-

Col. Mike Conners, assisted by Master Sgt. Jackie Reinhardt and Capt. Brian King of the 128th Medical Squadron pull several teeth from a patient during the visit to Valle de Angeles.

Maj. David Siegel, MEDEL flight surgeon and Tech Sgt. Margie Dickerson of the 131st Medical Squadron examine a sick toddler during the medical visit to Valle

tive medicine program; physicians' assistants and nurses for the diagnostic areas; physicians for treating those who needed it; an optometrist and technicians; and pharmaceutical technicians. In all, more than 30 medical professionals from the unit.

There was also a dental element with dentists and technicians from the Air Guard unit in Wisconsin.

MEDRETEs are exercises that not are not only designed to help servicemembers become more proficient at their job, but the training they receive directly benefits the Honduran people.

"From the unit's point of view, it gives them training in an austere environment, which is what they'll have to do during war. From the diplomatic point of view, it (enhances) international relations between the two nations. And, from the Honduran point of view, it provides humanitarian assistance to a country that really needs it," said Dr. Carlos Duron, a general practitioner and MEDEL liaison officer.

Joint Task Force-Bravo and MEDEL host about 25 MEDRETEs in Central America a year. Usually about seven a year are general. The rest are specialties such as plastic surgery or one-day dental .

They work with the Honduran Ministry of Health to establish where they are most needed.

By participating in the exercise for their annual training, the guard units left not only with knowing they really made a difference in the communities, but also with new outlook on their profession.

1st Lt. Vieann Bruemmer, a nurse with the 131st, had never experienced anything like the exercise before. The experience has motivated her to get more involved in situations like the medical exercise.

"The only thing that's really upsetting is that we can't see everybody," she said. "This is something I will reflect on for a long time. It will hopefully change my perspective in my own life." *(Story by Spc. Sarah Maxwell)*

Maj. David Barton, 131st MDS, gives a child medicine to treat pinworms as part of the preventive medicine clinic.

Photos by 1st Lt. Richard Komurek

geles Aug. 8. Although the medical team provided care to people of all most of the patients were young children who needed basic medications.

People in Valle de Angeles line up for medical care and medications during the Medical Readiness and Training Exercise Aug.8. In the first four hours of the day nearly 600 patients were seen in the preventive medicine clinic alone. By the end of the eight-day exercise more than 5,700 people were treated.

Local boys strum Strait toward top with pure country

By Master Sgt. Jeff Bohn
Public Affairs

Call it fate, luck or circumstance, but Soto Cano could be witnessing music history in the making. Consider Beaumont, a relatively small town in Central Texas that has been the hometown for some nationally renown country music singers; George Jones, Mark Chestnut, Tracy Byrd and Clay Walker are a few examples.

Now mix into the picture a couple of supply troops from 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment. Spc. Danny Avery and Sgt. Randy Schafer, who after a couple of months here have teamed up as a country music duo and became solid friends and co-workers.

The oddity grows because they didn't know each other before this assignment yet grew up 20 minutes apart near Beaumont — there has got to be something in the water in that part of Texas.

Avery came from Fort Bragg, N.C., and attributes his love for country music mostly from his mother's strong influence over his 20-year life.

"When I would go to see my mom, she'd listen to country music, I'd hear it on the radio, she'd play these tapes, and we'd sing it together. I liked it a lot. Ever since I was a kid I would just start singing. I guess over the years it built my voice up, and I had become pretty good," Avery said with a light Texan drawl.

After joining the Army two and a half years ago, his love for music, writing and eventually playing the guitar just got stronger. After arriving at Soto Cano, it finally came together.

"I came here, met Randy (Schafer), started playing together, found out where we were from, getting acquainted and stuff — we just connected. I just can't believe it because it feels so strong. If we were together and we went to try and make it, we'd hit it big like Montgomery Gentry or Brooks and Dunn," Avery said.

Schafer's love-for-country-music story shares some common threads with his newfound friend.

"It's just like George Strait said, 'It all started in third grade,'" Schafer said about his earliest recollections of enjoying country music.

Schafer remembers when his dad came home off of the graveyard shift. He would run up to the pickup truck, climb in with his father, and listen to the sounds of 1970s country music twanging from the radio.

Playing and singing in a church trio, he traveled around the southern United States performing at church rallies and camps when he was 14. His migration to country singing was expedited in 1993 when he had a revelation.

"(It) was in the early 90s when Garth Brooks, Alan Jackson and all the other guys were going strong with new songs. I'll never forget, I thought this voice that God's blessed me with, if I can take the time to learn and pick up the talent, maybe I can learn the guitar and be somebody," Shafer said.

The tie that binds them to country music is very strong with these two artists and also gives insight to their character and future.

"What draws me to country music is the talent and the cleanliness of it; the beauty and the difference that sets it apart from other music. I didn't have a country background, and that countriness I didn't always see. It's like being on a ranch or having a relationship with a woman, it draws me to it. Someday I will have a ranch, and one day I will have a beautiful, loving wife and a great family," Avery said.

Schafer has similar thoughts of his love for country music, but being seven years older and married with four children, he has already achieved some of his dreams and has a different perspective.

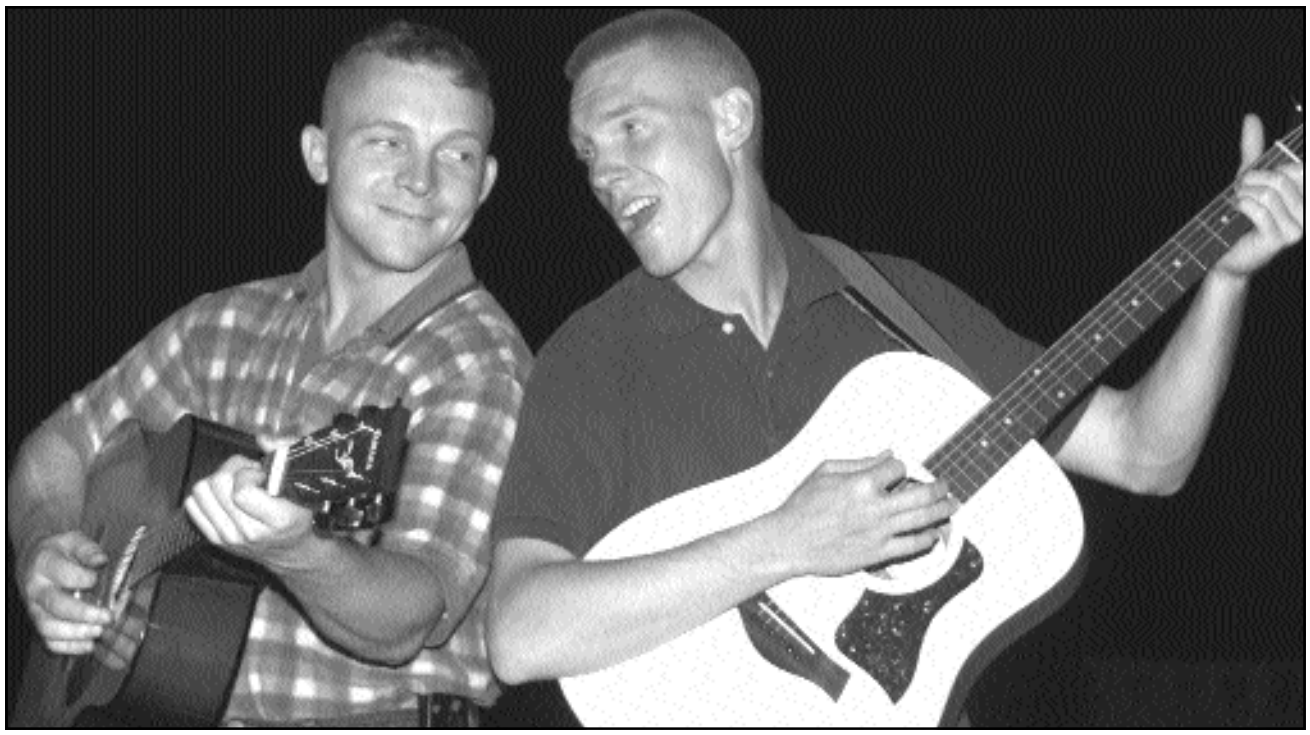


Photo by Master Sgt. Jeff Bohn

Idolizing George Strait with country lyrics that come straight from the heart and family life, the Soto Cano duo of Sgt. Randy Schafer and Spc. Danny Avery aim to entertain at every opportunity.

"It hits home. It's the way I grew up, it's the way I live every day, the way I still live every day," Schafer said. "I know folks say if you play it backward you get your dog back and your house back and everything else. But, you know what? Country music is all about real life. It's not just for country people; it talks about everybody. Country music comes from the heart. It also talks about things that I can relate to."

To emphasize this point and define the importance of his philosophy, he explained the story of his marriage. Schafer met his wife when he was 19 and she was 25.

They were married three weeks later — they just knew they were made for each other. From the company commander on down, they wished him luck but didn't give the marriage six months.

His first country song he wrote is the nearest and dearest to his heart because it had to do something that happened in real life. It's called "The Painting."

It was drafted in a moment of marital growing pains, and he was thinking about the first birthday present he got for his wife — a painting of his wife's portrait. Looking at that painting provided the inspiration to write a song from the heart that made him feel blessed to have this special woman. After hearing what her husband had written, the feeling was mutual and the marriage got back on track.

Avery provided some insight to his favorite song, an artistic number by Tim McGraw called "One Of These Days."

"That song hit me so hard because it reminded me so much about myself. Every time I hear that song I just want to cry," Avery said.

Avery's sensitive side lends itself well to writing country songs. He first started writing when he was involved in Job Corps learning a trade as a carpenter when he was 16.

"I was at that age when I was always wanting a girlfriend," Avery recalled. "I've got about 20 songs written so far, don't know if they are number ones, but I know I do have some good ones."

Avery's favorite song that he has written is called "Family Love." He was on leave when he wrote that song before coming to Honduras. He picked up his guitar and wrote the song about how much fun it will be to get back home to his family.

"It talks about how growing up with your family. Even after you leave your family, ... you can see the love in your family by getting together. It talks about how you can look around for other love, but nothing is as strong as your family's love," Avery said.

Country music can be described as a music to celebrate love, ease a hurting heart, or having fun and getting a little rowdy. Avery said he is partial to the love songs. He likes to play love songs best because he's waiting for that special woman to come along.

"A big factor in my song writing is writing from emotion. Like 'I Love You Cowgirl.' I wrote that song when I was in North Carolina, and I went out to eat at the Texas Roadhouse with my friend. We went in there, and here are all these beautiful waitresses walking around, all these couples in there eating together — young couples, old couples — and I just started thinking. Sometimes you feel lonely for a relationship, and I started thinking 'when is it going to happen, when am I going to meet me the right one.' I went back to the barracks, started thinking about it and wrote me a song right there. I've had people who don't even listen to country say that is a great song. It really shows emotion," he said.

"When you are down and you are looking for that woman and you can't find her, but she is there and she's going to show up, and when she does your going to pay all of your attention to her, give her all your love and treat her the best you can."

Avery has several roads along his career path, and while the Army plays a role in each of them, eventually the roads all end in Nashville.

"One of these days I'm gonna be somebody. It is an awesome feeling; it makes you feel real good about yourself and gives you the motivation to keep on going," Avery said.

Schafer shared similar interests, but just enjoys getting up and playing for folks for now.

The un-named duo has plans to add to their group and continue to perform around Soto Cano.

For country music enthusiasts and others that are open minded to the diversity of music, keep an ear out at the local club or in the papa area near their hooch. The next Brooks and Dunn may be performing in an area near you.

Photo by Spc. Sarah Maxwell

A Fyne Performance

Members of the group Fyne entertained about 50 servicemembers at the Oasis Club Aug. 15 as part of a United Service Organizations tour. Offering USO performances is an element of Soto Cano's Morale, Welfare and Recreation program.

MORALE, WELFARE AND RECREATION TRIVIA CONTEST

ENTRY RULES:

- Only active duty military are eligible to participate.
- Only one entry per person per contest.
- Completed entries may be given to the MWR Manager, H- 401, Mon-Fri, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. or e-mailed to Robin Gonzalez
- Entries must be received by Aug. 30
- Completed entries will be verified for accuracy by an independent judging panel (PAO, MWR and one volunteer).
- If none of the entries are completed, then entries with the most correct answers will be judged.
- Decisions of the judges are final.
- Completed and correct entries will be maintained in the MWR safe until the Commander's Radio Talk Show
- The impartial individual will draw two correct entries and announce the winners.
- Prizes will be awarded the two winners and may be picked up at the MWR Manager's office.

TRIVIA QUESTIONS (answers may be found in the library, taking MWR trips or talking with long time contract employees):

What country/countries border Honduras: _____

What year did the Spanish colonize Honduras: _____

What is Soto Cano's former name: _____

Who/What is Honduran currency named after: _____

Name two JTFB colonels who made general: _____

What is the capitol of Honduras: _____

Where do MWR trips currently go horseback riding: _____

Where was the first capitol of Honduras: _____

How old is the clock in the Comayagua church tower: _____

What are three main exports of Honduras: _____

NAME: _____ UNIT: _____ DUTY PHONE: _____

VERIFIED BY: _____

Do you know what MWR has to offer?

By Robin Gonzalez
MWR

What is the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Division, better known as MWR? It is sports tournaments, library, travel and tours, fitness center, wood, wicker and hammock crafts, marina, club, recreation center, equipment rentals, movies, swimming pool, special events and appearances by United Service Organizations celebrities and Department of Defense bands. That is what MWR is.

The MWR program at Soto Cano is one of the best in the military and offers a wide variety of events for everyone regardless of how long they stay in Honduras. Best of all, 99 percent of the activities are free!

What is free? Well, how about bike and sports equipment rentals at the recreation center; CDs, books and videos at the library; and wicker, wood and hammock supplies for craft projects. Tours to areas such as Lake Yojoa and the waterfalls, Valley of Angels and historic Comayagua are at no cost. There is no charge for visits to Danli to see how Honduran cigars are made, hikes in the rain forests, or golf trips to Tegucigalpa. MWR even provides the drivers and transportation at no expense to the customer. MWR also provides free transportation to the Mayan ruins at Copan, to La Ceiba for Carnival, to San Pedro Sula to watch world-class soccer, and to and from the airports or ferries for those trips to the Bay Islands.

Need engraving done or your tennis racquet restrung? MWR offers this service for free. There is no cover charge to see celebrity shows such as the Redskin cheerleaders, Armed Forces Entertainment sponsored bands, or local bands performing for special base-wide events. Nightly entertainment, plus 10 TVs at the Oasis showing 10 different sporting events simultaneously, is — you got it — free! Additionally, there are cost-free wood and boating safety classes, weightlifting and personal fitness instruction, swimming lessons, and karate classes.

For those programs where there are costs, MWR continually strives to offer the highest quality at the least cost to the military. MWR even pays a portion of the initial scuba, advanced or rescue diving certification costs. Horseback riding trips, boating at Lake Yojoa and hotels throughout the country are all at the most affordable rates possible.

Now you know what MWR stands for — lots of terrific programs at hard to beat prices and lots more that are free!

BRIEFS

Post Office

The post office will be closed in observance of Labor Day from Aug. 31 to Sept. 3 and will reopen for normal business on Sept. 4.

New Weekend Curfew

The curfew on Friday and Saturday nights has been extended to 2 a.m. The curfew on all other nights remains at midnight. The Comayagua bus schedule has been adjusted to the following for the new weekend curfew hours:

•1:30 a.m. the bus will depart Comayagua from the last bus stop near the Maranatha Bilingual School

•1:50 a.m. the bus will arrive at the gate to make the 2 a.m. curfew.

90-Minute Morale Calls

Effective immediately, military/DoD personnel are authorized a total of 90 minutes for DSN morale calls per person per week. A week is defined as beginning on Sunday and ending on Saturday. Each person is limited to 30 minutes of DSN time per day. DSN call time is non-transferable from one week to the next and is non-transferable from one person to another. Use of computers on the DSN system and calls made into Soto Cano using a DSN line are counted against the 90 minutes of weekly allocated time. See the complete policy directive for more details.

Hooch Watch

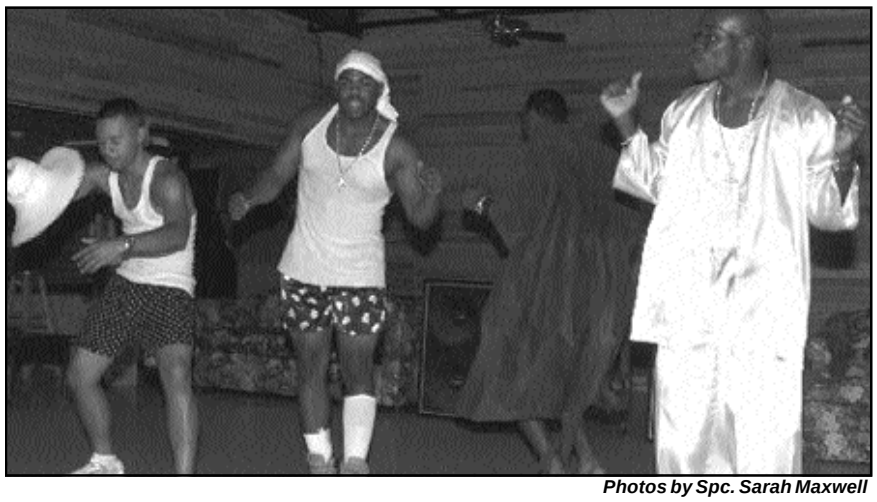
Going away for a few days or a few weeks? Sign up for the hooch watch program and have JSF check on your hooch while you're gone to ensure things are safe and secure. To sign up, call JSF at ext. 4170.

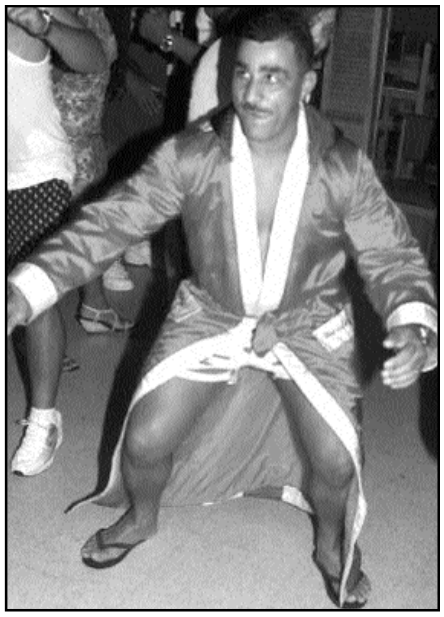
Army Hat Policy

Effective immediately, soldiers will no longer purchase or wear the green service cap/hat; this includes officers, warrant officers, and enlisted personnel. Soldiers who have not been issued the black beret will wear the garrison cap with the Class A and B service uniforms, until they receive their beret. For questions call Capt. Gus Perez at ext 4380.

Misplaced Carts

AAFES shopping carts are being left at bus stops and hooch areas instead of being returned to the base exchange. There are only a small number of carts available, so please be courteous to other shoppers and return them after use.





Photos by Spc. Sarah Maxwell

Pajama Party ...
Servicemembers get down in their jammies during the Jammie Jam party at the Oasis Club Aug. 17.

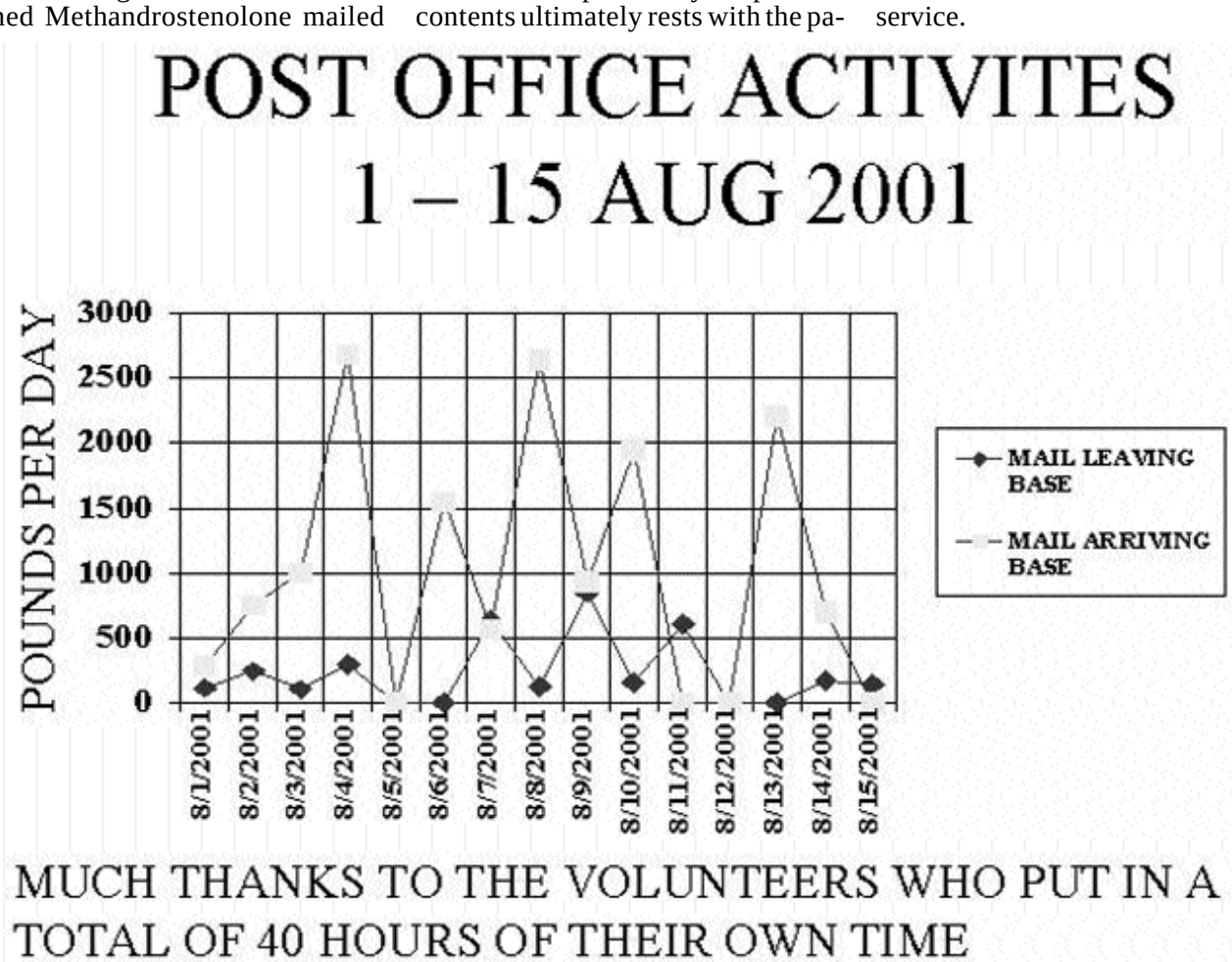
Post office users are responsible for contents

By Staff Sgt. Scott Evans
Post Office

July 31 the U.S. Customs at Chicago reported a parcel mailed from an APO in Europe was intercepted by the Department of Agriculture containing meat products. An interception notice has been issued and the mailer fined $250 for the infraction. Additionally, customs has intercepted a parcel from an APO, Armed Forces Europe (AE), containing 12 military padlocks (presumed stolen government property) and a parcel from another APO in Europe containing 993 tablets of a steroid named Methandrostenolone mailed under a custom form "3 CD-ROM's". Soto Cano's APO has recently received in-bound mail containing alcohol; the individual mailed the package via MPS, (at government expense). Since this is a recent event, actions are pending.

U.S. Customs is very aggressive and may fine the mailer if it's determined that they were not truthful when listing items on a customs form. We can question (not open the parcel) obvious discrepancies such as listed contents and weights not matching.

If we suspect something's not accurate, we will ask if all contents are declared. The responsibility of a parcel's contents ultimately rests with the patron. Bottom line: Be truthful when filling out your customs form!

As the old saying goes: "The more we find the more we look." It starting to happen especially since there has been two large shipments of illegal drugs (993 tablets of Methandrostenolone and 1,800 tablets of Ecstasy) found mailed from APOs in less than 30 days.

Eyebrows are being raised concerning the military mail. The mindset that military mail is clean, contraband, illegal drug and danger free is changing. The more items custom's officials find and report, the more it will be scrutinized, which causes delays in service.