



The Iguana



MEDRETE team provides care to remote village

By 1st Lt. Richard Komurek
Public Affairs Director

At the break of dawn a convoy of JTF-Bravo vans and SUV's drove out from So-to Cano carrying a team of 15 active-duty Army, Air Force and Navy pediatricians, medical students, dieticians and military health specialists from San Antonio. Their mission would last until dusk and take them along dirt roads through a remote mountain region where lush hillsides are covered with coffee and banana plants and the people live off the land like generations that have gone before them.

Their final destination was the village of Santa Ana, located in the mountains of the La Paz department near the border of El Salvador. Their goal for their Nov. 14 pediatric medical readiness training exercise was to provide medical care to as many children as possible and to conduct research to determine the health conditions of people in the region. In all they provided care to 125 children and conducted anemia checks while a JTF-Bravo dentist also provided fluoride treatments.

Like the other 25 or so medical training exercises that are conducted each year, the MEDRETE to Santa Ana was organized and supported by members of JTF-Bravo's Medical Element. Together with the visiting medical team from Texas, the men and women of JTF-Bravo set out to help Hondurans in need of basic health care. However, this MEDRETE was different than most because in addition to providing medical care the medical team also conducted three days of nutritional research in the homes of Santa Ana residents and ended their visit with a visit to malnutri-



Photos by 1st Lt. Richard Komurek

Capt. Deena Sutter, an Air Force pediatric medical student at the San Antonio Military Pediatric Center in Texas, examines the ears of a sick girl in the village of Santa Ana during a MEDRETE Nov. 14. The medical team treated 125 children who were in need of health exams and medications. JTF-Bravo personnel are key to the planning and execution of nearly 25 medical exercises each year that provide care to thousands of people throughout Honduras.



Drawing blood samples was one job during the MEDRETE. The blood was tested for anemia to help survey the iron levels of the children.

tion ward of a hospital in Tegucigalpa.

The challenges for the team began on Nov. 11 as the group started research work in Santa Ana to study the local sugar supply for vitamin A fortification and to look for evidence of malnutrition in children. Outfitted with backpacks full of sugar and survey materials the team broke up into several small groups and walked for miles around the town and surrounding hillsides to visit random houses and gather information and local sugar samples. In exchange for answering some questions about their diet and providing a small cup of household sugar, the survey participants received one pound of sugar. The survey, conducted at the request of the Honduran Ministry of Health, provided a

wealth of information and proved to be a valuable training experience for the team members.

"We gathered information about the households such as food resources, education levels and evaluated children for anemia using a field hemoglobin analyzer," said MEDRETE Commander Lt. Col. Julia Lynch, an Army pediatrician from the San Antonio Military Pediatric Center. "This is a region where the Honduran government felt there was significant malnutrition and we've seen substantial cases of both acute and chronic malnutrition."

Hands-on training in austere conditions is important for military medical personnel that can expect to participate in humanitarian missions around the world, said Lynch. For example, malnutrition is a leading cause of death in war-torn areas and refugee camps, and U.S. pediatricians see very little malnutrition and are generally unprepared about how to treat it. Visits to locations such as rural Honduras provide conditions sim-

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Commanders Corner

MEDEL prepared for worst case

By 1st Lt. Noelle Flynn
MEDEL

"Chopper down, chopper down," was the initial radio call received at the Medical Element Nov. 6. As the call came through, MEDEL's ambulance siren sounded and the page went out. Within minutes MEDEL became a cohesive team as the medical readiness exercise was underway.

Emergency medical treatment staff immediately formed EMT teams consisting of a medical provider, a nurse and a medic. The teams set up the immediate triage area to begin receiving critical patients while medics formed medical evacuation teams to off load patients. The delayed, minimal and expectant triage area teams moved rapidly to set up litters along with medical equipment and medical supplies they might need, while the operating room team prepared to perform emergency, life-sustaining surgeries. The OR team, consisted of a surgeon, anesthesiologist, OR nurse and OR techs. Finally, the trauma team would not be complete without medical support group. This group contained patient administration section, lab, X-ray, pharmacy, and operations. The PAD prepared trauma packets, retrieved patient information and tracked the patient's

disposition. An immediate assessment of blood supply on hand is crucial prior to receiving patients. The trauma team needs to know how many units of blood and what type is readily available. The laboratory staff played an important role by reporting the number of units of blood that was available and what types of blood. Once patients arrived, they would perform "stat" lab tests and prepare units of blood to be administered. The pharmacy quickly assessed stock levels and prepared to mix any required intravenous medications. MEDEL was ready!

MEDEL operations section gave the trauma teams the report, "three immediate patients so far, one with chest trauma, one with abdominal wound and one complaining of back pain." Quickly the medic teams rushed to the helipad to receive patients. As seconds count in reviving traumatically injured patients, the medics must know in what order to off load patients to insure the most critically wounded arrives in the EMT first. Once inside the EMT, patients are evaluated and re-triaged as necessary.

Continuous monitoring and re-assessment of patients is required as a patient's condition can rapidly change from "delayed" to "immediate." The EMT teams engulfed the patients placing monitoring equipment on each one, checking vital

signs and evaluating the patient's level of consciousness. It was quickly decided all three immediate patients would need to be MEDEVACED to a local trauma center. MEDEL operations section went into action coordinating the MEDEVAC as the MEDEL LNO called Hospital Escuela in Tegucigalpa to insure a trauma team would be standing by to receive the casualties.

Meanwhile, the flight surgeon, after re-evaluating a "delayed" patient initially identified as a psychiatric patient, determined that the patient's behavior could be indicative of head trauma and so moved the patient into the immediate area. The action intensified as one EMT team was "packaging" two patients to be MEDEVACED to Tegucigalpa.

The training is critical so we can sustain our trauma skills for real-world critical incidents. MEDEL recently had a chance to perform as a trauma team again when we received three traumatically injured patients from a hit and run car accident. MEDEL trauma teams rapidly responded to the ambulance sirens call then quickly assessed, treated, and prepared the patients to be MEDEVACED to a local trauma center. This real world mission validated what the MAREX had demonstrated; that MEDEL is "Here to Serve and Fit to Fight."



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Chaplain's Corner

Everyday should be lived like thanksgiving

By Chaplain (Capt.) Earl Vanderhoff
JTF-Bravo Chaplain

Every day - not only on Thanksgiving Day - we need the kind of (living thanksgiving) Noah displayed, after having been confined for an entire year to the ark with his family: In GEN 8:20 we read, Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. 21 And the Lord smelled a soothing aroma.

BUILDS ALTARS

The first thing Noah did when released from the ark was to worship God by building an altar of thanksgiving. That indicates what was living in Noah's heart: his deepest desire was to serve the Lord, together with his family. Are we like Noah? Are our hands also stretched out to the heavens to give God's gifts back to himself? Do we yearn to worship and serve God, with a broken heart, full of thanksgiving?

As I CHRON 16:34 instructs us, "Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for he is good! For his mercy endures forever."

God blessed Noah and his family. By grace, he made a difference in Noah's family. God gave Noah's contemporaries 120 years to repent and turn from their wicked ways, but they refused. Heaven opened its windows and earth her mouth; nearly everything was destroyed on the earth by the powerful waters of God's wrath. Only the little ark, the little home on the waters, was saved. Only one family was kept by the grace of God. GEN 6:8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

I think Noah confessed often while in the ark, "Lord, what a wonder that my family and I are inside the ark!" It is only grace that my entire family was not destroyed with the wicked world. From day to day it is only God's grace that gives us breath and life. We need to develop a lifestyle of living Thanksgiving. This is a picture or a type of Jesus Christ. Only in Jesus Christ can anyone escape the wrath of God be-

cause of sin.

When Noah saw the blue sky and a dry earth, and was given permission to walk upon the earth, he did not gaze upon the earth with selfish eyes, but first gazed to ward the Lord. He built an altar even before he built a house. True thanksgiving was his immediate task.

The Lord has abundantly blessed our country and us. We enjoy freedom and personal rights. We have religious freedom. We benefit from our free market system and democratic representative form of government. America has the best military force in the world. We have food and houses and great health care. Our families benefit from education. What is our reaction to his gifts and blessings? Let us truly give thanks and worship.

RECONCILIATION

This passage in Genesis also speaks of reconciliation. Noah didn't own any of the animals in the ark.

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Soto Cano captains visit Copan for seminar

Story and photos by 1st Lt. Richard Komurek
Public Affairs Director

JTF-Bravo leadership issues were mixed with Mayan history and culture as a group of 33 Army and Air Force captains visited the ancient ruins of Copan Nov. 16-17 for a two-day officer professional development seminar hosted by Col. Michael Okita, the JTF-Bravo commander.

The seminar gave the officers a unique opportunity to discuss issues with the task force commander, meet their fellow captains from across Soto Cano, learn about the Mayan's civilization; and to hear from a guest speaker from the U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa about the various U.S. government agencies that work within Honduras. The off-site OPD, the first of its kind in recent years, was supported by the 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment who flew the group to Copan in one UH-60 Black Hawk and one CH-47 Chinook helicopter.

After landing the aircraft in a field near the modern-day town of Copan, the captains seemed to travel back through time as they made their way among the Mayan ruins for a day-long guided tour. Through tour guide tales and the remains of stone temples and other artifacts, the officers learned about the ancient city of Copan which flourished from the years A.D. 250 to 900 and was regarded as a cultural center of Mayan civilization. Discovered in 1839 by American and British travelers, the Copan Ruins is one of the most well-known tourist attractions in Honduras. It is estimated that only a small fraction of the ruins have been uncovered since its initial discovery, and the site continues to provide archeologist with important information about the ancient Mayan people. Some of the main sites at Copan included the ruins of temples, a ceremonial court, a ball court, a hieroglyphic stairway, sculptures of Mayan rulers and sacrificial altars.

Later in the afternoon the captains returned to their hotel and attended the seminar portion of the OPD which featured a presentation by the guest speaker and a round-table discussion with Okita.

"I had three objectives for the OPD," said Okita. "I wanted to provide historical exposure to the history and culture of Honduras, expose the captains to aspects of the (U.S.) federal government that operate with us in Honduras and to provide a team building event where captains from across the JTF could come together in a professional environment and get to know each other better."

The round-table discussion gave the captains a rare opportunity to ask the commander questions of their concern and to gain greater insight into the commander's vision and priorities for the task force.



A tour guide points out facts about an ancient statue to the captains who attended the officer professional development seminar in Copan Nov. 16 - 17. The seminar gave the captains the opportunity to have a round-table meeting with Col. Michael Okita about issues important to them and JTF-Bravo.

For many captains who are new to JTF-Bravo, the OPD provided a wealth of information and a chance to see another side of Honduras.

"I thought the OPD was awesome," said Capt. Lee Brinker, Army Forces operations officer. "I enjoyed going to the ruins ... it was something I've never seen before and I thought they were really beautiful. I also went horseback riding and bought some souvenirs."

For Brinker, who has been at Soto Cano for one month, the OPD trip allowed him to gain additional knowledge about the people and issues of the task force.

"It allowed us to spend time with our Army and Air Force peers and meet people we didn't know before," said Brinker. "I got a lot out of the OPD and it was good to hear the questions from the people who have been here awhile. It also put a few things in perspective and laid the foundation for the upcoming synchronization (planning) conference."

For the Air Force captains on the trip, the OPD provided an opportunity to meet and interact with their Army counterparts who they may see infrequently during day-to-day AFFOR operations at Soto Cano.

"The OPD gave us an opportunity to talk with the commander and gave us insight into Army operations here," said Capt. Gretchen DePauw, Air Force Forces mission support flight commander. "It was a great way to meet the other captains at Soto Cano and made us feel like one post and one big family."

For those new to JTF-Bravo and a joint environment, it also helped orient them to the Army point of view and Soto Cano operations.

For DePauw, who arrived to Soto Cano in October, the flight to Copan on an Army helicopter was a highlight that marked her first time flying on military aircraft. "After four and a half years in the Air Force I had never been on an Air Force aircraft," she said. Now I've been here at Soto Cano for two months and I've been on a helicopter twice ... that was really interesting."

In all, the trip proved to be more than just another leadership seminar, it was a life enhancing experience.



At the end of the two-day seminar, the captains loaded back into the helicopters and headed home.



Statues watch over the Mayan ruins of Copan. The city, one of the most popular tourist attractions in Honduras, is believed to have been cultural center of the Mayan civilization from A.D. 250 to 900.



Photos by Martin Chahin

V-I-C-T-O-R-Y victory was their battle cry

Air Force intercepts Army's last minute attempt to claim trophy

By Spc. Jon Christoffersen
Iguana Editor

The annual Turkey Bowl, held Nov. 21, pitted rival flag football teams from the Army and Air Force.

Leading up to the 8:30 a.m. kick off, a lot of words had been spoken about the projected outcome of the game. "Trash talk" could be heard all over Soto Cano about the game, and talk is what the game was all about. Bragging rights was the main reward for the team who triumphed over the opponent on the Grid Iron.

As the clock ticked down to 0:00, the Army knew they would be hearing about outcome for the next 364 days, until the next Turkey Bowl. For the victors; the spoils of war. A joyous mid-field celebration, first to partake of the Thanksgiving feast in the dining facility and sweetest of all, the right to rub the Army's proverbial noses in the hard-fought, richly earned victory.

The first few minutes of the game spelled out the eventual outcome, close.

The Army received the opening kickoff and proceeded to march down the field to an eventual TD. With the extra point attempt good, the Army offense strolled

off the field after their first possession leading the game 7-0. The Air Force offense took the field looking to match the offensive success of their opponent. It took only a few minutes for the Air Force to strike against the Army. With the precision of laser guided munitions, the Air Force flew down the field and scored their first touchdown of the day. Holding back their extra point attempt, Army dodged a bullet and continued to lead the game 7-6 after Air Force's first offensive possession. The bullet would prove to be the last to be dodged by the Army.

Soon after taking the field, Army offense threw the first of three picks. The Air Force took advantage of the turn over and quickly scored to finish the first quarter leading 12-7. The Army offense never got going in the second quarter, unlike their counterparts across the field. The Air Force offense continued to be effective in the second, and helped cushion their lead before halftime. The teams went into

halftime with the Air Force leading 18-7.

The second half started with hopes for the Army when their defense started strong and continued strong for the duration. Their offense was also effective scoring another touchdown in the third to wittle the Air Force lead to four at the end of the quarter.

The Air Force nailed the Army's coffin shut when, with less than six minutes left in the game, intercepted a pass ending Army's hopes of scoring again. The Air Force held on and won the game 18-14.





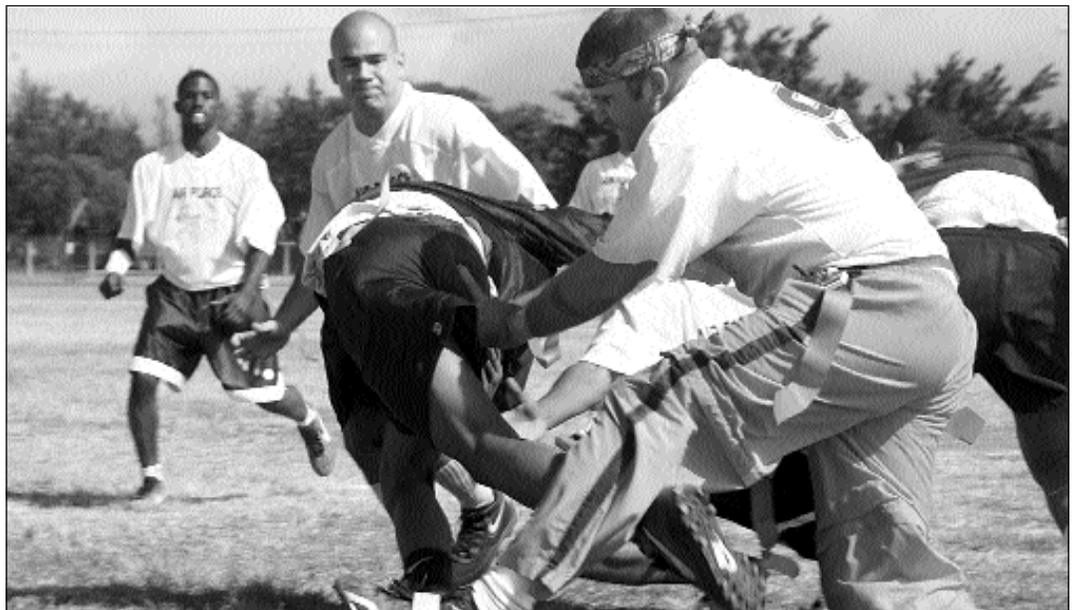
Adrian Gaymon tries to avoid the Air Force defenders while running the ball during the Turkey Bowl Nov. 21. The Air Force rolled to a 18-14 victory over the Army.



Head referee Kevin Carter signals first down before the Air Force team snaps the ball into play. Air Force didn't score any points after the second quarter, but the play of their defense kept the Army from reclaiming their early-game lead, holding them off and winning 18-14.



The tough, physical play by both teams made spectators wonder if it was flag football. Above and below, players work hard to grab the flag off the opponent's waist.



Army - Navy game set for Dec. 1

Black Knights look for 49th win over Midshipmen

One of the most revered rivalries in all of sports will be revisited tomorrow when Army and Navy battle for the 102nd time. Rich with tradition, drama and excitement, the series has featured seven of its most riveting editions in the last nine years.

The outcome of each of those skirmishes was decided in the final minute with the Black Knights prevailing six times. Those six Army victories were decided by a total of 14 points. Navy snapped a series-record five-game Army winning streak in 1997 with a 39-7 victory. That, along with Navy's 19-9 win in 1999, mark the only series matchups in the last nine years that have been decided by more than four points.

Just five years removed from a season that saw both Army and Navy invited to postseason play, the teams have struggled this fall. In fact, Army and Navy will carry the teams' second worst combined record into this hallowed matchup. Despite the team records, the pairing remains one of the treasured traditions in all of sports.

All-Time Record

The Black Knights are in the midst of their 112th season and fourth as members of Conference USA. Army boasts an impressive all-time record of 620-382-51 (.613) and ranked tied for 19th on the nation's all-time victories list entering the 2001 campaign. The Black Knights ended 108 years of Division I-A independence in 1998 and headed into the 2001 season ranked 21st among all Division I-A programs in winning percentage (.626).

Army Last Year

Army struggled to a deceiving 1-10 record a year ago, dropping four straight verdicts to end the season. The Black Knights suffered three of their losses by a total of nine points, and dropped a total of five games by 14 points or less.

Army finished the year ninth in the final Conference USA standings, posting a 1-6 record. The

Cadets' lone victory came during a dramatic, last-minute 21-17 comeback win over Tulane at Michie Stadium.

Army began last season with six consecutive setbacks before notching its first victory opposite Tulane during late-October. The Black Knights closed the year with four consecutive setbacks, dropping a 30-28 verdict to Navy in the season finale.

For the second consecutive season, Navy enters its season finale without a victory in tow. The Midshipmen have dropped all nine of their games to date and have dropped 19 of their last 20 contests. Their lone win during that span came against Army in last year's season-ending encounter. Senior QB Brian Madden heads the Mids' spread offense, having rushed for 830 yards and passed for 860 markers. Madden, who missed last season due to injury, gashed Army for 177 rushing yards on 41 carries to lead Navy past the Black Knights two years ago. Besides Madden, no other Navy player has rushed for more than 190 yards this fall. Senior Jeff Gaddy, a converted defensive back, tops the Mids' receiving corps, leading the club with 23 receptions.

The Army-Navy Series

Army has captured 10 of the last 15 meetings (and 6 of 9) with its arch rival to grab a 48-46-7 advantage in the revered series, which dates back to 1890. Hard-fought Army victories were commonplace during the decade of the 1990s, with the Black Knights prevailing in seven of those 10 matchups.

Those seven Army victories came by a total of just 24 points, with amazing six-game stretch of Cadet wins decided by a total of only 14 points. The point differential over the course of the 101-game series stands at a rather microscopic 101 points. The history of the series is detailed in the notes section on pages three through of this release.

(Editor's note: Information gathered from Army Sports Web sites.)

Soldier scores big on TV game show

By Spc. Kenneth Rockett
7th Transportation Group

FORTEUSTIS, Va. — Several service members competed Nov. 11-12 in a two-part special edition of the national television show "Who Wants to be a Millionaire," but it was a Fort Eustis captain that took home top earnings with winnings totaling \$125,000.

Capt. Travis Sumner, movements officer for the 7th Transportation Group, won the most money for the two-part program, which honored members of the Armed Forces in recognition of Veterans Day.

"I'm pretty excited and happy about it," Sumner said of his experience at the New York studio.

Other notable winners included Sgt. Maj. Steven D. Malnar of Fort Monroe, Va., and Air Force Staff Sgt. Jim Laverty, who each won \$64,000. Navy Lt. j.g. Shannon Martin and Coast Guard Chief Scott Hastings pocketed \$32,000 and Marine Capt. William Hennessy walked away with \$16,000.

Sumner said just being on the show was a great experience and that's what he focused on more than the money. "I always said to myself when I went into this that I was just going to try to enjoy everything regardless of what else happened. Winning the money is just a bonus."

Sumner said that at first he was a little nervous, but as the game progressed and he kept answering more and more questions, he became more relaxed and focused. He said the show's host Regis Philbin does a good job of keeping contestants calm during the show.

"Regis really wants people to win," Sumner said. "He's a genuinely nice person."

Sumner said another thing that helped was the show's lighting. He said that when a contestant is seated across from Philbin they can't really see the audience and therefore are able to focus just on the questions.

Sumner said he plans on using the money to pay off his car and student loans and then put the rest in the bank. He also said he might treat himself to a trip somewhere, but is still undecided.

Fellow soldier and money-winner Sgt. Maj. Steven D. Malnar, the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command public affairs sergeant major at Fort Monroe, Va., talked to Sumner after the show and gave him some advice.

"Capt. Sumner is a really great guy," Malnar said. "I told him that after winning \$125,000, he'd better start wearing those glasses with the big fake nose and funny mustache. He's a single guy, but not for long."

Malnar said his winning \$64,000 isn't cause for big changes in his life.

"It was great to have had this experience, but it hasn't changed much," Malnar said. "I'm not going on any lavish spending sprees or exotic trips. This [win] just means we are going to be debt free. I'm going to pay some bills, not that we have a lot. For the most part we'll apply this money to doing things for my kids."

"My only real purchase," Malnar added, "will be a riding mower; I've got an acre of land and I'm tired of pushing a mower."

In late October, thousands of service members competed for the right to be on the show but only 14 were selected to attend the tapings.

Former POW lives for airmen

By Senior Airman Jodi Swartzback
1st Fighter Wing

LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va. — "The turning point in my life happened in Vietnam," said retired Lt. Col. William Russell.

"I was out checking my aircraft at 2 o'clock in the morning — just pitch black outside," he said. Russell was a C-130 Hercules pilot during the Vietnam War. "It was really dark and I had a powerful flashlight checking my aircraft. I heard a Coke can (fall) over and a single shot. I doused the flashlight and dropped to the ground and rolled."

Right beside him lay a Viet Cong who had infiltrated the base. Security policemen had been following him and lost him in the darkness. When the Viet Cong stumbled over the Coke can, a security policeman whirled around and saw him silhouetted where Russell's flashlight was against the aircraft.

"He dropped him in one shot," Russell said. "I asked him, 'How did you know the difference between me and the Viet Cong?'" and the airman said,

"That was easy, you were the one with the flashlight."

The airman refused to give Russell his name. He simply said, "I just did my job. Your job is to fly your missions and my job is to protect you on the ground."

Russell told the airman that just saying thank you was not enough for saving his life.

The airman finally broke down and asked this of Russell: "Whenever you can, help an Air Force airman."

When Russell returned to the United States and the 1st Tactical Fighter Wing here, he knew that a lot of airmen were not able to go home for Christmas, and he remembered the airmen's request.

Russell recruited people on the base to bake cookies and cakes during the holidays. The Christmas of 1971 was the first year cookies, cakes and other baked goods were distributed to the dormitories and workstations here.

The project proved to be bigger than expected, Russell said.

See POW, Page 7

BRIEFS

University of Maryland

Many have requested early registration and book ordering do to holiday travels. Come to the education center, building H-56 to sign up for 75percent government paid tuition assistance using your GI Bill for 25percent remaining cost. The following 3-semester-hour classes will start on January 14, Monday, 6-9 p.m.

BMGT 330: Small Business Management. Monday and Wednesday. For associate and bachelor degree upper level.

Math 009: Basic Algebra. Tuesday and Thursday, previously "Math 101." Required before Math 105.

English 294: Creative Writing. Tuesday and Thursday, used for English Composition II or Humanities.

Spanish 112: Elementary Spanish 2. Monday and Wednesday. Next level from last class 111, ready to take free Spanish CLEP later for 12 semester hours.

NOTE: If you have at least six semester hours from UMUC, request an official degree plan evaluation be initiated by Luis Ortiz for HQ UMUC Germany to consider you a degree-seeking student, awarding you college credits converted free from your military experience, training and AARTS. Call Sandra, education tech/secretary at ext. 4495 for info.

POVs on base

Beginning Monday, 26 Nov 01, privately owned vehicles will be authorized to operate within Soto Cano Air Base. However, before operating any POV within the cantonment area, owners will be required to register their vehicle with the Joint Security Forces Liaison Office located in E-56, Joint Security Forces building and receive a "colored" interim JTF-Bravo vehicle pass. For the complete policy and procedure letter, visit the JTF-Bravo Intranet site and click on Command Issues and read the JTF-B Vehicle Pass and Registration Policy.

Tree lighting ceremony

Please join the JTF-Bravo community for the traditional lighting of the Base Christmas Tree, Dec. 14, 7 p.m. in the Bravo area adjacent to the basket ball court. This will be a great time to come together and sing familiar Christmas carols and enjoy friends. This informal evening will usher in our hopes and dreams for the holidays and bring us together as a JTF-B family.

Holiday mail schedule

For U.S. mail to reach Soto Cano and Soto Cano mail to reach the United States in time for Christmas the following mailing schedule is recommended.

First Class Letters/Cards/Priority Mail: Dec. 11. Space Available Mail: Nov. 27.

Chaplain

(Continued from Page 2)

But God gave him liberty to offer these sacrifices. The Lord provided as it were- a Lamb for the burnt offering.

Noah took one of clean animals and slew them for the sacrifice. As he and his family stood alive before the altar, these animals were slain as their substitute. Those animals pointed to the clean, pure, sinless substitute, Jesus Christ. For Noah and his family true thanksgiving was inseparable from God's way of reconciliation. It was inseparable from blood - shedding, inseparable from the gospel. Living thanksgiving is inseparable from Jesus Christ, God's sacrifice.

Noah had a true Thanksgiving Day. He laid his sins and all the sins of his family on the altar and surrendered to the Lord-on the strong shoulders of the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ, who would be both the altar and God's bloody sacrifice. We have the same need as Noah. We stand between the past and the future. If we number our sins, in our thoughts, words and deeds, how shall we stand before God? Without God's altar of reconciliation, Golgotha, the cross, the entire burden of our sins must fall on our families and us.

We can neither bear the past nor face the future without coming just as we are by gracious faith to this better altar, casting all our sins upon the strong shoulders of Jesus Christ.

Praise be to God! The blood of reconciliation is still available this holiday season for the greatest of sinners! Still today the gospel's joyful sound declares that the

blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin.

PLEASES GOD

This living Thanksgiving not only builds altars and points to reconciliation, but it also pleases God. (Gen 8:21) And the Lord smelled a soothing aroma.

The aroma that was soothing to the Spirit of God was the spirit and heart of the giver-Noah, viewed in Jesus Christ.

In Christ the Lord had regard for Noah. He received Noah's broken heart and contrite spirit for the Messiah's sake. In Christ's blood, typified by Noah's sacrificial animals, clouds of sweet odor pierced the heavens. The Apostle Paul wrote, EPH 5:1 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ also

has loved us and given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

What aroma does the Lord smell on us? Does he smell only the stench of self and our works? Or does he smell the soothing aroma of his son upon us?

Is it evident in our life that we agree with God, in that both he and we are well-pleased only

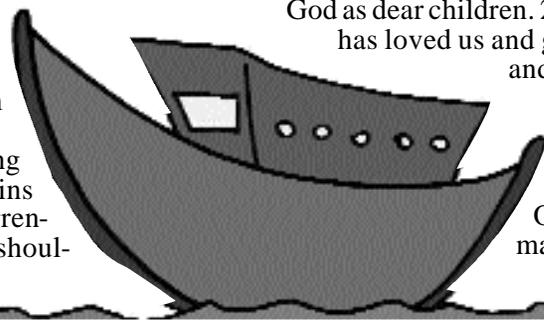
with Christ? Is Christ our soothing aroma?

HEB 11:7 By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

Only in Jesus Christ can we truly enjoy this living Thanksgiving. Turn to Him in faith today.

1 THESS 5: 18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

HEB 13:14 Therefore by him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name.



POW

(Continued from Page 6)

"It was so much that I went to the officer's wives club and asked them to take it over," he said. "And they still do it to this day."

But, Russell was not finished.

"When I retired, I went to work at the bank on base," he said. "I managed that for 10 years. I wanted to learn everything about banking that I could so I could use that knowledge to help the airmen."

Russell also studied and passed the test to become an insurance salesman.

"I never did sell one policy," he said. "But I wanted to know everything about insurance in case someone had a question."

Russell then began to do research in the legal arena. He used the legal office on base and the law library at the College of William and Mary, Va., to obtain enough knowledge to begin lecturing.

"I lectured at the first term airman's center and at airman leadership school to give my knowledge to them, hoping to save them before they got into trouble," he said.

Russell shares not only his book knowledge but also his 36 years of ex-

periences in the Air Force that he said made him the person he is today.

He was shot down during World War II and ended up as a prisoner of war in Germany. He tried to escape and was caught.

"They caught me and brought me back and broke the insteps of both my feet to deter me from trying to escape again," he said.

Except they relaxed security after crippling him. So, Russell tied his boots on tight and crawled to safety. Belgians found him and they got him back to American lines.

Now, he finds humor in the experiences that could have cost him his life, Russell said.

While stationed in Germany after the war, Russell took a trip into East Berlin. The Russian guards had a habit of snapping the radio antenna when they leaned over to see who was in the vehicle, he said.

"When we went through the checkpoint, as the guard leaned in, he let out a bloodcurdling scream," he said. "They yanked us out, threw us on the ground, spread eagled us and had guns to our heads. And this young lieutenant was laughing his head off."

The lieutenant had hot-wired the antenna to the battery, so when the guard grabbed the antenna, he got an electrical shock.

"I didn't see the humor in it then," he said. "We were on the pavement for six hours. But when we got back and got released, then I saw the humor in it. But that lieutenant never stopped laughing."

Russell said he believes that knowledge is wasted unless it is shared. He set out on a mission to learn all he could to help airmen if they got into a situation.

He began to help airmen purchase cars.

"There was a Korean lady, the wife of a master sergeant, who asked me to go (car shopping) with her," he said. "Her husband told me she refused to go without me."

Russell worked his magic and had her car ordered from the warehouse at the wholesale price, saving the couple a lot of money and hassle.

"She has brought me homemade kimchi about once a month," he said. "These things make it all worthwhile. I walk a little taller and a little swifter."

Russell also gives scholarships to Community College of the Air Force students.

"It's been a rewarding life," he said. "You can retire from the Air Force, but you never separate from the Air Force family. I'll continue as long as airmen give me a call or knock on my front door."

Unit coin: U.S. military history, heritage live on

By Master Sgt. Jeff Bohn
Public Affairs Superintendent

Military customs are long on tradition, and many date back several-hundred years — born in foreign nations by militias that no longer exist. One tradition that has rapidly grown in popularity in the past decade is the unit coin and coin challenge.

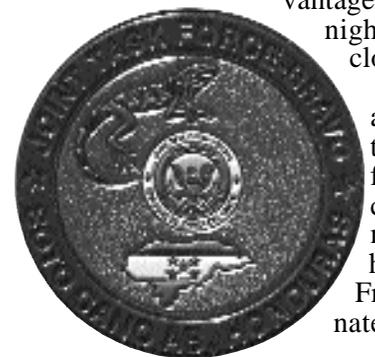
Arguably, all military members have seen unit coins, and most have one — by either being presented one or purchasing one as a keepsake. But how many service-members know the folk lore behind the history of the unit coin?



today's military service.

According to the most prevalent saga of coin origin, during World War I, American volunteers joined up with newly formed flying squadrons in Europe. In one squadron, a wealthy lieutenant pilot ordered medallions struck in solid bronze, which carried the squadron emblem, for every member of his squadron. He himself carried his medallion in a small leather pouch that hung from his neck.

This lieutenant's aircraft was severely damaged by German ground fire and he was forced to land behind enemy lines. He was immediately captured, and in order to discourage his escape, the Germans took all of his personal identification — except for the small leather pouch around his neck. In the meantime, he was taken to a small French town near the front lines. Taking advantage of a bombardment that night, he donned civilian clothes and escaped.



He succeeded in avoiding German patrols and reached the front lines and he crossed through no-man's land. Eventually, he stumbled into a French outpost. Unfortunately, the French in this

sector of the front had been plagued by saboteurs. Not recognizing the young pilot as an American, the French thought him to be a saboteur and made ready to execute him. Just in time, he remembered his leather pouch containing the medallion. As he showed the medallion to his would-be executioners, his French captors recognized the squadron insignia on the medallion and delayed the execution long enough for his identity to be confirmed. Instead of shooting him, they gave him a bottle of wine.

Back with his squadron, a tradition was born to ensure all members carried their medallion or coin at all times. This was accomplished through a coin challenge. A challenger would ask to see the coin. If the challenger could not produce his coin, he was required to purchase a drink of choice for the member who had challenged him. If the challenged member produced his coin, then the challenging member was required to pay for the drink. This tradition continued throughout the war and for many years after while surviving members of the squadron were still alive.



cohesion.

During the war, pilots carried handguns on them for self-protection. Often, these flyers and their crewmen each had a bullet specially engraved or marked with the unit insignia or abbreviation.

These bullets were carried as a good luck charm, and inevitably the charm found itself as a conversation piece in the English pubs. The habit of showing off one's bullet evolved into slamming the bullet down on the bar, primer end down, in a challenge to a fellow squadron-mate to see who had to buy the next round. Commanders felt the wisdom of slamming live ammunition down on a hard wooden surface was somehow lacking, so they issued a formal proclamation to force airmen to use dud ammo instead. Well this still led to problems, as one could not always readily determine if

the bullet was live or if it had had its charge fully removed.

Commanders knew the futility of trying to do away with one of the flyers' favorite off-duty pastime, so instead they brought the campaign coin into being.

The unit coin became a new device of the challenge custom.

Vietnam had a similar situation with weaponry, only these warriors each carried a personalized bullet from the weapon they carried in combat. Alas, these clubs also turned to coins as the size of the bullets eventually increased to howitzer-sized shells and the mass amount of firepower in local clubs also made commanders worried for personnel safety.

Another practical example of unit coin use is reported from guerrilla forces in the Philippines. The guerrillas used the coin to identify comrades that had never met before. The story goes, if two people met in a public place, either might reach into their own pocket and remove a handful of change. In the change would be a coin that had one side smoothed with their unit emblem stamped on it. During the course of conversation if both members nonchalantly displayed their unit coins they knew the other person was a friendly. They then might discuss where they would later meet at a secretive place with their newly confirmed ally.

There of course are many other stories that add further color to the history and heritage of the unit coin. For now, military members identify with the unit coin as a symbol of pride. If presented a coin as a memento from a superior, it is known as an accolade for a job-well-done.

So the next time servicemembers gather to let off some steam, and a sharp slap of metal on wood snaps through the air, dig deep into your pocket and produce your unit coin. You my friend, are being challenged with a long standing tradition of the United States military.

(Editor's note: Information gathered from Internet Coin Web sites and multiple public affairs sources)

www.afrc.af.mil/Units/10af/heritage_3.htm
www.geocities.com/joe_lubin/vetpride/coins.html
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Doctors

(Continued from Page 1)

ilar to the field and also provide a service to the local population, she said. After the three days of surveys, the team dedicated one full day for providing health care to the children of Santa Ana by setting up a clinic in a local school. At the temporary clinic the Honduran government provided a class in general health care and sanitation and the MEDRETE personnel provided health exam, vitamins and medications to families. The doctors encountered children with some common ailments such as diarrhea, upper respiratory infections, colds, fever and asthma. But there were also cases of malnutrition, parasites, pneumonia, juvenile arthritis and a case of a kidney disease called nephrotic syndrome that were found that day. In addition six children were found to be anemic during on-site blood testing and received iron supplements for their condition. The unique combination of conducting door-to-door research and giving medical care at a clinic provided team members with an unforgettable experience

and a new appreciation for life in the United States.

"We had a rare opportunity to get into people's homes and see how they really live," said Capt. Bonnie Hartstein, a SAMPC staff pediatrician on her first MEDRETE. "It (the day of the clinic) was a lot of people and a lot of work but it was a really terrific day ... it was rewarding to see some children and make them better just like I've been training to do for the past seven years."

The Santa Ana exercise was a unique experience not only for those new to MEDRETEs but even for those who have had previous experiences providing care in remote overseas environments.

"Being out in the field and going on foot from house to house was a great experience. I loved it," said Air Force Tech. Sgt. Rodney Pierce, an international health specialist and 19-year veteran with a background as an ophthalmology technician. Even though this was his fourth visit to Honduras and he has participated in about 10 other MEDRETEs in Central and South America over the years, he is still deeply affected by the conditions and the people that he meets during training exercises. "It's changed my life forever ... it made me realize that I'm blessed to be an American and it changed my life for the better."