

FEBRUARY 2010



VETERANS

POST

SERVING VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES IN RETURN FOR THEIR SERVICE TO US

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ORANGE DUSK DEPARTURE



A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter swiftly departs the flight line at dusk on Camp Taji, Iraq, Jan. 11, 2010. The helicopter is assigned to the 1st Cavalry Division's 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, which conducts aviation operations 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to support U.S. and Iraqi forces.

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Travis Zielinski

SABARI SECURITY



U.S. Army Pfc. Briallynn Lanteigne provides security for a traffic control point in the Sabari district, Afghanistan, Jan. 20, 2010. Lanteigne, a Military Police officer is assigned to the 25th Infantry Division's Headquarters Company, 425th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Combat Brigade Team.

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jeffrey Alexander

USNS COMFORT DELIVERS



The 1,000 bed hospital ship USNS Comfort is anchored just off of the coast of Haiti in support of Operation Unified Relief, Port-Au-Prince, Haiti, Jan. 20, 2010. The Navy currently has 11 ships supporting the operation with about 11,000 sailors, Marines, and civilians who are providing humanitarian and medical aid to the battered nation after it was struck by a powerful earthquake Jan 12, 2010

U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Chelsea Kennedy

STACKING SUPPLIES IN HAITI



Now this is a real Pick-Up truck! U.S. Marines unload supplies from a floating causeway offloaded from the Military Sealift Command maritime prepositioning ship USNS 1st Lt. Jack Lummus in the harbor of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Jan. 26, 2010.

U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Class Chris Lussier

AFGHANISTAN NIGHT PATROL



As seen through a night-vision device, Kunar Provincial Reconstruction Team and security forces members move along Camp Wright's perimeter during a night patrol in Asadabad, Afghanistan, Jan. 24, 2010.

U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Brian Boisvert

A VETERAN is someone who, at one point in his or her life, Wrote a blank check made payable to the United States of America for an amount of "up to and including their life"!



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When a Lion Dies

By Kelly Crigger

"How you doing today, Major?" an old guy in civie clothes says to me one afternoon in Afghanistan. I wasn't surprised by the greeting as much as where it happened-in the JOC. (Joint Operation Command) My JOC. I was the JOC chief and some old guy had just invaded it like he was Josey Wales and even greeted me politely. Cheers to that, but my only thought was, "who let this guy in here?" Before I could utter as such, a small crest on his shirt that I immediately recognized as the Medal of Honor stopped me in my tracks.



Holy Sh!#, was about all I could get my mind to think before he shook my hand. "I'm good, Sir. How are you?" I replied, suddenly humbled.

His name was Robert Howard and he was about the studliest son of a bitch you'll ever hear about. I call him a son of a bitch with the full reverence of a fellow soldier in complete awe of his accomplishments and because I know that's what he would have wanted. He was the epitome of a grunt, selfless and patriotic, bereft of ego, and made of

something few people (myself included) will ever know. He was a last vestige from the days of wooden ships and iron men and it wasn't until his death a few weeks ago that I discovered he was the highest decorated soldier since WWII. Besides his MOH, he had two DSC's, eight purple hearts, five tours of Vietnam, and a tossed salad of bravery that would make the real 300 Spartans at Thermopylae bow in deference.

Yet when cancer finally dragged him down like a pack of hyenas swarming an injured lion, he was relegated to the back pages of most newspapers, subjugated to the more important headlines of the day, like

which of Tiger Woods' new mistresses came out of the closet.

Are you fraking kidding me? It's no secret that entertainers are the apple of America's eyes. It's a necessary evil of being a secure, rich, strong country with nary an enemy on the horizon of the two oceans that protect us. We're comfy and lazy and would rather hear about the balloon boy and Simon Cowell's reduced role in the upcoming season of American Idol than pay respects to a man who was killing zips in the

jungle while we were learning the phrase, "mommy...poop!"

As much as I'd like to throw contemptuous bags of shit at the walls of the New York Times, it's really our own fault. Americans want to be entertained and we place those who provide our entertainment on a pedestal to be scrutinized on the same level as our elected leaders (which begs the question, why would you want that life?).

I want to be angry that we worship actors, people who simply pretend to be someone else, instead of our brave warriors. But I can't blame people who don't have a care in the world when men like Colonel Robert Howard created it for them. I can only hope they get a healthy dose of perspective (preferably from their responsible parents) and realize America's most precious asset is not Angelina Jolie in her Beverly Hills mansion, but Sergeant Angel Jiminez in his fighting position in Balad.

Brian Williams of NBC News says Howard leaves behind a grateful nation. Bullstick! Michael Jackson left behind a grateful nation full of weepy fans. Robert Howard left behind a small, yet very appreciative group of people who understood who he was and were proud to meet him, even if it was in a tent in Afghanistan on the eve of his passing. Rest in peace, Sir. Robert Howard Jul 11, 1939-Dec 23, 2009

First published on The Rhino Den at <http://rhinoden.rangerup.com>

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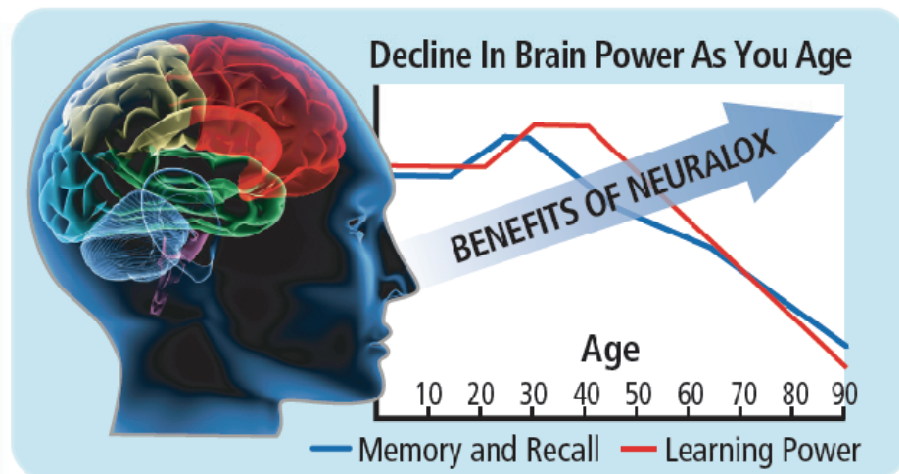
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The Small Print
Truth and Reality - The New Lie

By Phillip Meskin

Paul Shirley, who is a pro basketball player for Phoenix, also writes... Or did write for ESPN. We have read some of his articles and he is clear minded and concise in his words, not your normal jock. So when he wrote an honest article on the Haitian quake for Internet based 'FlipCollective', he was attacked for his words and ESPN dropped him. (Free Speech?)

His words spoke about the Truth and Reality of what has happened in Haiti which was; that no one in Haiti even bothered to prepared for a catastrophic event! That the world's knee-jerk reaction was just to give lots of money.

Mr. Shirley points out this happens often in Haiti, known as the Poorest Country in the Western World.

In 2008 it was hit by hurricanes and we sent them almost One Billion (1,000 Million) Dollars, to help rebuild Haiti. And they rebuilt most of their nation the exact same way with wooden shacks for their homes and the worst methods of construction known to man.

If the Haitians used the same amount of energy and know-how in getting their nation into the 21st Century as they do in looting stores, they would have a strong infrastructure of government and could handle these horrific events.

Haitians live on an Island in the Tropics that is on a major Fault Line of the Earth's Crust. Well actually they live on Half an Island (size of Mass) and they number 10 Million. They use no birth control and cannot feed themselves from their own lands.

Haitians do not work together even is the smallest community, as they will not assist each other EXCEPT in disasters like this when they plead in unison before the cameras of the world to help them.

In an AP report, Ms. Sophia Eltime, mother of 2 said; "We need food, clothes, we need everything. I don't know whose responsibility it is, but they need to give us something soon!"

Sixty-two percent of the population are adults, they are responsible for taking care of their family, their community and their nation.

**The Ways Of The Garden
 In Response To Anything Cair Says;**

Your words are quite moving about the troubles in the Middle East and Gaza and the Palestinians.

I look at the world like it is a garden and all the people are the plants. In the Middle East you have the Israeli's who produce food and fruit from what once was sand. they provide medicine, science, electronic devices, music, literature and make fresh water from the salty oceans.

The Israeli's are like roses, whose very presence gives us beauty and a delightful scent. But if you get too close and try to squeeze them, you will bleed.

Also in this garden are Palestinians, Iranians, Iraqis, Turkeys, Jordanians, Syrians and a number of others who do not believe anyone should exist unless they think like them.

There are many good people within these groups, but the bad ones spring up like weeds in the garden. They infect others near them and you have large patches of weeds that will literally try to take over your garden.

These weeds produce no wonderful scent, nor pretty bloom, they just exist to destroy everything around them. So when you go to eradicate that section of garden, you also take out some nice grass, but you know that in time, with the right gardening techniques, flowers will once again bloom in that area.

I have not seen much good come from the Arabic or Muslim nations. No medical breakthroughs, no scientific thoughts, no agriculture frontiers... They bring nothing to the world table but hate and destruction.

These terrorists hide behind good people. The good people are not trying to protect the bad, they are just in the wrong place. Think of a surgery... Even if you are doing something wonderful like a heart transplant, or a kidney, or liver... The outer skin gets cut in order to make the whole body better. And even after the body gets better, the outer skin still bears the scar of what was once there.

May you find the truth, in the ways of the garden.

Dear Company Clerk,

I noticed by the address label that I am due to renew my subscription to the Veterans Post Newspaper. Well, my wife gave me a 2 year subscription for Christmas, so I am sending it in.

Keep up the good work, I enjoy reading the paper from front to end. Have aGreat 2010!

MSG N. M. Arlt, USA Ret.
 Petersburg, VA

Dear Company Clerk,

By chance I picked up a copy of the Veterans Post News while out at MacDill AFB the other day... And I was pleasantly blown away! Good Stuff!

Please sign me up for a yearly subscription, thanks.
 SFC Arthur Gifford, USA Ret
 Tampa, FL

Dear Company Clerk,

Regarding Marko J. Skof, A 30 year Veteran's letter. (Jan 2010) He signed off with "Have the courage to print this letter" I can't believe HE had the courage to SEND the letter!

P.S. I'm still working on all of the good stuff the prez has done for our country in his first year. I'll have to get back to you on that one.

Mike Demas
 Tampa, FL

Dear Company Clerk,

I have enjoyed your newspaper for the last four years, so here is my check to continue my subscription for another year of excellent articles. Keep up the good work!

Terry R. Vance, USA Ret.
 Nolanville, TX

Dear Company Clerk,

Please renew my subscription for two more years, thank you for all the information. I wait for this newspaper every month, it's nice.

I can count on finding information that is not found anywhere else around here in upstate New York.

James Murch
 Spencerport, NY

Dear Company Clerk,

The commander-in-chief's Dec. 1 lecture at the U.S. Military Academy has to go down in history as one of the strangest presentations ever offered by a wartime president.

The robotically delivered address is defended by administration officials as the culmination of a carefully thought-out "strategy review," in which Mr. Obama proffered the "rationale" for deploying additional troops and explained "The Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan." Unfortunately, it failed to do any of this.

Though he was standing before West Point's Corps of Cadets, the president's remarks were devoid of strategic vision, lacking any definition of victory and empty of the rhetoric elected leaders employ to rally democratic people to a cause requiring the sacrifice of blood and treasure. The speech did, however, provide another Obama "first." Giving the enemy a timetable for withdrawing American troops while committing additional combat forces to a war zone is unprecedented. No commander-in-chief has done such a thing before - because it makes no sense from a political or military perspective.

To his credit, Mr. Obama said, "I have determined that it is in our vital national interest to send an additional 30,000 U.S. troops to Afghanistan." These additional troops, trainers and mobility assets are needed desperately. But he offered no rationale for how he arrived at a number that is 25 percent less than what his hand-picked commander, Gen. Stanley McChrystal, requested. Then he devoted five additional passages to defending his statement that "after 18 months, our troops will begin to come home."

Finally, Mr. Obama's self-centered West Point remarks - he referred to himself no fewer than 57 times - also prove that he and his speech writers don't know history, either. He claimed that Afghanistan will not become "another Vietnam" because "unlike Vietnam, we are not facing a broad-based popular insurgency." Whoever wrote those words is simply wrong. The Republic of Vietnam wasn't lost to a "popular insurgency." By April 1969, the Viet Cong had been eliminated as a military threat. The frail, flawed democratic government in Saigon collapsed in April 1975 - three years after the last American combat troops were withdrawn -because in December 1974, the country was invaded and subsequently conquered by a hostile neighbor - North Vietnam - only after the U.S. Congress rebuffed President Gerald Ford's request for \$522 million in emergency aid.

A head of state who distorts the lessons of history is a peril. A leader who tries to deceive himself and his people is dangerous. We can only pray that this commander-in-chief isn't committing 100,000 young Americans to a mission impossible in the shadows of the Hindu Kush.

Lt. Col. Oliver North, USMC Ret.

**Dear Company Clerk,
 Farewell Of The Marines From Iraq**

SgtsMaj, MGySgts, CMDCMs, Marines and Sailors, Saturday, 23 January at 1100 marked the end of the Marines in Iraq as an organization. II MEF (fwd) will conduct a Transfer of Authority Ceremony with the First Armored Division without a Relief in Place from any incoming unit. USF-W (formally MNF-W) will merge with USD-C (formally MND-Baghdad) and will cease to exist.

After 6 years, over 850 Marines and Sailors killed in combat and another 8800 wounded we have completed our

VETERANS POST NEWSPAPER

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**Increase awareness of Veterans activities
 Educate and inform Veterans and citizens
 Increase membership of Veterans organizations
 Ensure that Veterans are not forgotten**

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mission. At our peak, we had almost 26,000 Marines and Sailors on deck, close to 200 aircraft, over 380,000 pieces of ground equipment, and were averaging close to 2000 significant events a month. We have added a whole new generation of Heros; and names like Al Nasiriyah, Fallujah and Ramadi will be added to our History books.

Words can't begin to explain the magnitude of effort and sacrifice our Marines and Sailors have gone through to help the Iraqi people. Each year since the initial invasion, Marines and Sailors from all over the Corps have been a part of the revolving I MEF (fwd) and II MEF (Fwd) Commands. Each year has been different with its own sets of unique challenges and each successive year, the incoming organization has built upon the successes of the outgoing organization.

This year was no different, we didn't have anywhere near the level of fighting that previous MEFs have done. However, we did conduct many operations, maintained security, continue to professionalize the Iraqi Security Forces, develop good governance and economics, assisted with the continued establishment of the Rule of Law and oversaw the peaceful transition of the provincial government. We also had one unique mission that we can call our own. That was to finally bring the Marine Corps home. Over the past year, we have simultaneously conducted the responsible drawdown of 24,000 Personnel, over 34 COPs and FOBs, including Baharia, Rawah, and TQ and sent six years worth of equipment out of theater.

For those of you, who served with me this year, thank you. It was long and difficult at times, with our own set of challenges, but we did it. It has been an honor to serve with you.

For those of you who have left your boot prints over here at least once during the last six years; thanks to you too. You set the stage for us to finish the job. It has been costly, it has been challenging, it has taken a while with quite a few dark days. But, in the end, it was worth it.

All Marines and Sailors, including those who remained stateside have contributed to the overall success of the Marines and Sailors in Iraq and; all of us have known someone who didn't make it back alive or has permanent injuries. It is up to us to ensure that those who follow never forgot their sacrifice or what we did here.

Collectively, we have added another illustrious chapter to the successful story of our Marine Corps. One that all of us can be proud of.

Semper Fidelis,

K. Carpenter, Sergeant Major

United States Force - West, Iraq

(Previously Multi National Force - West) II Marine Expeditionary Force (Fwd)

21 January 2010 UNCLASSIFIED

WHO OWNS AMERICA?

CITGO Owned by the government of Venezuela. Which is a communist anti-American Country.

Nestlé, a Swiss company, is the owner of the Toll House brand of chocolate morsels, baking supplies and cookie dough.

Good Humor Unilever, the British-Dutch conglomerate, had bought Lipton in 1937. Unilever is now the world's biggest ice cream maker. It also owns Ben & Jerry's and Breyers.

French's Mustard was never French. During the anti-France fury at the start of the Iraq War, French's made a point of telling the world: "For the record, French's would like to say there is nothing more American than French's Mustard." Except that it's owned by Reckitt Benckiser, a British conglomerate.

Frigidaire Sweden's AB Electrolux
Tretorn, Puma & Adidas Is now German and owns Reebok. Puma bought Tretorn, the classic preppy shoe, which was originally Swedish.

The Flatiron Building Located in Manhattan, Daniel Burnham's 1902 Flatiron Building has been a National Historic Landmark since 1989. Italian real estate investor Valter Mainetti, who likes to collect trophy properties, bought a share of the Flatiron in 2006, then recently brought his share up to 53%.

The Chrysler Building Now the Abu Dhabi Investment Council controls 75%.

Caribou Coffee & Church's Chicken Bahrain-based First Islamic Investment Bank. Arcapita, which conforms to Sharia Law.

Trader Joe's German billionaires Karl and Theo Albrecht, who owned ALDI.

7-Eleven Japan's Ito-Yokado, got equity and now its parent.

Holiday Inn named after the Bing Crosby movie - in 1952. Brits from Bass (as in the beer), a company that later morphed into InterContinental Hotels Group.

Dial Soap conglomerate Henkel KGaA, based in Dusseldorf, Germany.

Campton Place Hotel Taj Hotels Reports and

Palaces, a luxury lodging arm of India's Tata Group. Tata also owns another California favorite, Good Earth Tea.

Shell a Dutch company called Koninklijke Nederlandsche Petroleum Maatschappij.

T-Mobile Deutsche Telekom, the publicly traded remnant of the former state-owned German telephone company.

Firestone owned by Japan's Bridgestone
Sunglass Hut Italian eyewear seller Luxottica Group

The Indiana Toll Road Indiana calls itself the "Crossroads of America." The Indiana Toll Road -- otherwise known as part of the cross-continental Route 80 -- links the Midwest to the East Coast. The state of Indiana built the road in 1965, then leased it to a joint venture of Spain's Cintra and Australia's Macquarie for \$3.8 billion in 2006 for 75 years. Truckers boycotted for a while and now drivers are complaining about long toll lines. In 2009 the cash toll was raised from \$6.75 for cars and almost three times that amount for trucks to ride the whole 157 miles.

If you keep driving on the Indiana Toll Road towards Chicago, you'll hit the Chicago Skyway, which was leased by the same Australian-Spanish consortium for \$1.83 billion for a 99-year lease starting in 2005. The Chicago Tribune reports that when residents feel underserved, they continue to ask

what the city did with all the money.

Anheuser-Busch? Beer drinkers were shocked when Belgian beer juggernaut InBev put the moves on Anheuser-Busch.

Clerk's Note: So no matter how much the prez and the congress bring up stimulus funds, remember that the profits of these corporations go to the corporations home country... Not Ours! And yet... Americans have very little choice but to continue to work for these foreign companies, especially with the job market being in its current state.

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American Legion	26	2207 West Baker Street	Plant City 0208	2nd & 4th Tue. - 7:30 PM	813-752-8608	Alvin McGary	
American Legion	111	6918 Florida Avenue	Tampa	1st Wed. - 7:00 PM	813-236-2281	Dennis Scruggs	
American Legion	119	130 1st Avenue Southwest	Largo 0607	2nd Tue. - 8:00 PM	727-584-2038	Mark Bloomer	www.Veteranspostnews.com/AmLeg119.htm
American Legion	125	6440 5th Avenue South	Saint Petersburg	3rd Mon. - 7:00 PM	727-347-6085	Don Phipps	Legion125@verizon.net
American Legion	147	17413 Gunn Highway	Odessa	1st Thur. - 7:30 PM	813-920-4512	Sal Poliandro	
American Legion	252	11433 Park Boulevard	Seminole	2nd & 4th Tue. - 7:00 PM	727-398-2463	Larry Burmaster	post252@tampabay.rr.com
American Legion	273	600 American Legion Drive	Madeira Beach	1st Tue. - 7:00 PM	727-391-3670	Bob Cissell	
American Legion	347	699 W Lady Lake Boulevard	Lady Lake	2nd Weds. - 7:30 PM	352-750-2099	Bob Johnson	
American Legion Auxiliary	5	3810 West Kennedy Boulevard	Tampa	1st Thur. - 6:00 PM	813-870-0505	Mary Hoover	
American Legion Auxiliary	111	6918 Florida Avenue	Tampa	1st Thur. - 7:00 PM	813-236-2281	Louise Wilt	
American Legion Auxiliary	119	130 1st Avenue Southwest	Largo 0607	1st Tue. - 7:30 PM	727-584-2038	Sue Heisler	www.Veteranspostnews.com/AmLeg119a.ht
American Legion Auxiliary	125	6440 5th Avenue South	Saint Petersburg	2nd Tues. - 7:30 PM	727-347-6085	Fran Worthington	
American Legion Auxiliary	147	17413 Gunn Highway	Odessa	1st Thur. - 7:30 PM	813-920-4512	Dawn Poscich	
Sons of the American Legion	119	130 1st Avenue Southwest	Largo 0607	4th Tue. - 7:00 PM	727-584-2038	Mike 'Doc' Bowen	www.Veteranspostnews.com/AmLeg119s.ht
AmVets	98	4629 Bartelt Road	Holiday	2nd Sun. - 10:00 AM	727-943-5863	Rudy Drouin	www.Veteranspostnews.com/AmVets98.ht
AmVets Auxiliary	98	4629 Bartelt Road	Holiday	2nd Sun. - 10:00 AM	727-271-1902	Joyce Chadwell	
AmVets	698	5864 Park Boulevard	Pinellas Park 1108	2nd Sun. - 12:00 PM	727-548-0698	Dennis Watkins	www.Veteranspostnews.com/AmVets698.ht
Army Navy Union	3697	11904 Seminole Boulevard	Seminole	1st Sun. - 10:30 AM	727-585-1592	Troy Lowe	
Army Navy Union Auxiliary	3697	11904 Seminole Boulevard	Seminole	2nd Sun. - 10:30 AM	727-585-1592	Patty Daviduc	
Disabled American Veterans	004	2612 North Tampa Street	Tampa	2nd Tue. - 1:00 PM	813-223-4059	Angel Rivera	
Disabled American Veterans	067	16314 Cortez Boulevard	Brooksville	1st Wed. - 7:00 PM	352-796-1679	John Demas	
Disabled American Veterans	078	6711 Jefferson Street	New Port Richey	1st Thur. - 7:00 PM	727-845-3886	Al Bedor	
Disabled American Veterans	083	115 West Clay	Brandon	1st Mon-Din 3rd Mon 6:30	813-571-1490	Reuben Perez	
Disabled American Veterans	103	360 Douglas Avenue	Dunedin	2nd Mon. - 7:00 PM	727-733-5108	Carl Kingsley	
Disabled American Veterans Aux	067	16314 Cortez Boulevard	Brooksville	1st Wed. - 7:00 PM	352-796-1679	Gail Pannell	
Disabled American Veterans Aux	078	6711 Jefferson Street	New Port Richey	1st Thur. - 7:00 PM	727-845-3886	Cheryl Gilliland	
Jewish War Veterans	373	James A Haley VA Hospital	Tampa	3rd Sun. - 9:30 AM	813-767-2605	Leon Blumberg	fourhorns1@msn.com
Jewish War Veterans	409	Mier/Kent Jewish Ctr 1955 Virginia St	Clearwater	1st Sun. - 10:00 AM	727-712-3717	Jess Krug	
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Jewish War Veterans Auxiliary	409	Mier/Kent Jewish Ctr 1955 Virginia St	Clearwater	1st Sun. - 10:00 AM	727-796-0950	Charlotte Michaels	
Korean War Veterans Assoc.	014	VFW 4364@ 5773 62nd Street North	Saint Petersburg	3rd Thur. - 7:00 PM	727-522-6496	Clarence Dadswell	
Korean War Veterans Assoc.	169	1211 Penn Street	Leesburg	4th Wed. - 2:00 PM	352-323-1896	John Yohn	
Korean War Veterans Assoc.	188	Womans Club Bldg. 450 So Lake Ave	Groveland	3rd Wed. - 1:00 PM	863-424-5212	Carl Hogue	
Korean War Veterans Assoc.	174	15166 Spring Hill Drive	Spring Hill	1st Thur. - 7:30 PM	352-688-7196	Rich Mellinger	
Korean War Veterans Assoc.	199	@AmLeg 24 - 2000 75th Street West	Bradenton	4th Thur. - 7:00 PM	941-746-4440	Gene Gillette	
Marine Corp League	1002	@VFW 9236 - 3435 Shoal Line Blvd	Hernando Beach	1st Mon. - 7:00 PM	352-686-2186	Les Homan	www.Veteranspostnews.com/MCL1002a.htm
Military Order of the Purple Heart	1980	@DAV Hall, Ohio & Jefferson Street	New Port Richey	2nd Wed. - 1:00 PM	727-845-5877	George Shred	
Military Order Purple Heart Aux	1980	@DAV Hall, Ohio & Jefferson Street	New Port Richey	2nd Wed. - 1:00 PM	727-845-5877	Susan Collade	
National Order of Trench Rats	446	4801 37th Street North	Saint Petersburg	4th Mon. - 7:00 PM	727-526-9870	John Golden	www.VeteransPostNews.com/NOTR446.htm
Paralyzed Veterans of America	GCC	15435 North Florida Avenue	Tampa	3rd Thur. - 10:30 AM	813-264-1111	Wayne Webber	www.floridagulfcoastpva.org
The Retired Enlisted Association	58	Surf's Edge Enlisted Club	MacDill AFB	3rd Tue. - 1:00 PM	813-684-5414	Louis Arana	www.VeteransPostNews.com/TREA58.htm
Veterans Memorial Park & Museum		3602 US Hwy. 301 North	Tampa	9:30 AM - 5:30 PM	813-744-5502	David Braun	
Veterans of Foreign Wars	2550	360 Douglas Avenue	Dunedin	3rd Tue. - 7:30 PM	727-733-6107	Dutch Grubbs	www.VFW2550.org
Veterans of Foreign Wars	10209	14736 Edward R. Noll Drive	Spring Hill	4th Wed. - 7:30 PM	352-796-0398	Jose A Heredia	www.freewebs.com/vfwpost10209/index.htm
Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary	10209	14736 Edward R. Noll Drive	Spring Hill	2nd Mon. - 7:00 PM	352-686-8657	Kathleen Alonzo	www.freewebs.com/vfwpost10209/index.htm
Vietnam Veterans of America	787	1511 West Clay Street	Brandon	4th Thur. - 7:00 PM	813-758-4547	Jim 'Rambo' LaGarde	www.Veteranspostnews.com/VVA78701.htm
WAC Army Corp Veteran's Assoc	97	@AmLeg 186 - 12091 Cortez Blvd	Brooksville 0208	2nd Sat. - 10:30 AM	352-684-1968	Debra Gould-Avery	www.Veteranspostnews.com/WAC9701.htm

New American Vodka Donates 100% Of Profits To Veterans, And Its No 'Joka'

A new American vodka is donating all of its profits to American Veterans through the Blue Star Mothers.

Founded in Colorado in January of this year, Joka Vodka has already generated thousands of dollars in support for the Blue Star Mothers. Joka provides not only profits to American Veterans - it also works to make active duty soldiers aware that there are many who care about them, as well.

Hopefully soon, every Veteran-friendly bar and American military base will carry Joka Vodka instead of brands that send their profits overseas to other countries. So far, two bars in America have gotten rid of all other brands in favor of carrying Joka exclusively - the VFW in Grand Junction, Colo., and the Riverwalk Hilton, in San Antonio, Texas. "We hope this is just the beginning of a national trend of not only keeping monies stateside, but putting the monies where they are most needed, to help Veterans in need," founder and Vietnam Veteran Joe Nedlin told *News of the Force* today.

Nedlin hopes to expand the brand nationally & eventually generate enough sales to create an annuity that will make available an eternal source of financial support for Veterans in need, all generated from the sales of a fine, smooth American made vodka. Currently, Joka is available for online sale nationwide and in Veteran-friendly stores & bars in Colorado, California & Texas.

To buy Joka online, see a list of Joka account locations or buy Joka merchandise, please visit www.jokaspirits.com.

Honor Flight's Goal Is To Fly 25,000 Veterans To D.C.

Honor Flight has established the goal of flying 25,000 World War II Veterans by the end of 2009 to visit the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Ohio pilot Earl Morse formed Honor Flight several years ago, and private pilots donate their time and aircraft for the cause. Honor Flight also charters commercial airliners for large groups of Veterans.

Pilot Who Endured Torture At 'Hanoi Hilton' Dies

Retired U.S. Air Force Col. Jack Pitchford, a fighter pilot from Mississippi who survived seven years in the notorious Vietnamese prison camp known as the "Hanoi Hilton," has died. He was 82.

The Natchez, Miss., native died December 2nd, after battling a brain tumor, said his brother, 64-year-old Jim Pitchford, of Baton Rouge, La., yesterday.

Col. Pitchford was shot down over North Vietnam in 1965 and taken to the Hoa Lo prison, a hellish place where many Americans, including U.S. Sen. John McCain and Medal of Honor recipient George "Bud" Day, endured brutal torture.

Pitchford was released in 1973, the same year as McCain, who was imprisoned there in 1967 after his own plane was shot down.

The pilot never fully recovered from his injuries, but never regretted his service to his country, his brother said. "His achievement in life was really sustaining himself through the ordeal in prison camp, and he considered himself a very fierce resister," Jim Pitchford said, recalling a story another prisoner told him about his brother. "One day [in the prison], when it was his time to offer the blessing at a group meal, he said, 'Lord, we thank you for this dog s--- we're about to consume and we ask that you come down and smite these heathen bastards.'"

Pitchford attended Louisiana State University on the GI bill after World War II, then entered the Air Force's officer training program. He missed combat in both World War II and Korea because of training assignments, his brother said.

Pitchford volunteered for a perilous assignment in Vietnam with the "Wild Weasels," a group of pilots who flew low-altitude missions hunting down and destroying surface-to-air missiles. He became the first "Wild Weasel" pilot taken prisoner after bailing out of his F-100 Super Sabre on Dec. 20, 1965, according to his brother and Air Force records.

Pitchford was shot in the arm three times and the man flying with him, Bob Trier, was killed in a gun battle on the ground, Jim Pitchford said.

The pilot recalled his time at war and the torture some of the Americans endured, including being

hung from the ceiling by their feet, in a 2005 interview with the *Natchez Democrat* newspaper. "War is hell," he said at the time. "It truly is hell. There are no winners and no losers."

John A. Dramesi, who wrote the book *Code of Honor* in the 1970s about his experiences in the camp, said Pitchford gave him what little food he had as Dramesi prepared for what would be an unsuccessful escape attempt. "He was a great guy and a great military man," Dramesi told *The Associated Press*.

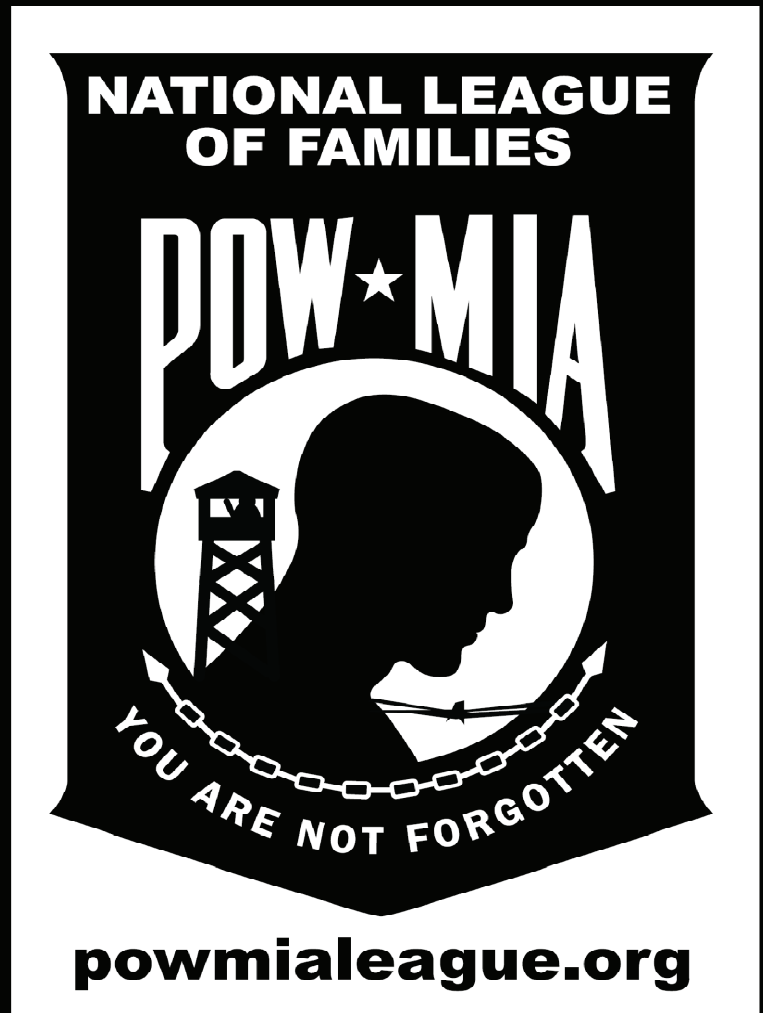
After retiring from the military, Pitchford returned to Natchez, the picturesque town he loved on the bluffs of the Mississippi River. He enjoyed horse racing and frequented events like the Kentucky Derby, his brother said.

Pitchford was the second of 12 children. All seven boys who survived beyond childhood joined the military after high school.

Pitchford had no children, but he was deeply proud of six nephews in the Marines and another in the Army, his brother said.

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Ashes Of World War II Veteran And Wife Get Proper Military Burial



The remains of Delbert E. Hahn, dead 26 years, and his wife, who died six years ago, were placed in a niche at the Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell with a full military send-off.

Last month, Mike Colt and his girlfriend, Carol Stargell, found the urns in a trash heap in Tampa, Fla., while they were looking for fishing tackle.

And What Did You Get For All That? U.S. Companies Shut Out As Iraq Auctions Its Oil Fields

Anti-war protestors insisted that the U.S. invaded Iraq for its oil, but nobody seems to have told the Iraqis: they've awarded most oil contracts to countries that opposed the war.

Clerk's Note: It seems we lose even when we win their hearts and minds.

Military To Scrap Pregnancy Punishment

The U.S. military in Iraq will scrap a policy this spring that has led to the punishment of some soldiers serving in Iraq for becoming pregnant, the commander of U.S. forces in Iraq said.

Taliban Releases Video Of Captured U.S. Soldier

The Taliban released a video Christmas day of an American soldier captured in Afghanistan, showing him apparently healthy but spouting criticism about the U.S. military operation.

In Idaho, U.S. Army PFC Bowe Bergdahl's family pleaded on Christmas Day for his release and urged him to "stay strong."

Bergdahl disappeared June 30 while based in eastern Afghanistan and is the only known American

serviceman in captivity. The Taliban claimed his capture in a video released in mid-July that showed the young Idaho soldier appearing downcast and frightened. He hadn't been heard from until this video, in which he looks well and speaks clearly.

Although the video was released, it was unclear when it was made, and NATO spokesman Col. Wayne Shanks said it was not evidence that Bergdahl is still alive. He suggested the video may be a pastiche of clips from earlier this year. "We are not using this as a proof-of-life video," Shanks said. "It's still to be determined when it was made, but it could have been made even several months ago. It has a lot of editing pieces."

In the video, Bergdahl is shown seated, facing the camera, wearing sunglasses and what appears to be a U.S. military helmet and uniform. On one side of the image, it says: "An American soldier imprisoned by the Mujahideen of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan." It also shows him eating while wearing garb characteristic of Afghanistan's Kandahar Province, an area where the Taliban emerged in the 1990s. He identifies himself as Bergdahl, born in Sun Valley, Idaho, and gives his rank, birth date, blood type, his unit and mother's maiden name before beginning a lengthy verbal attack on the U.S. conduct of the war in Afghanistan and its relations with Muslims.

U.S. military officials have searched for Bergdahl, but it is not publicly known whether he is being held in Afghanistan or neighboring Pakistan.

Tricare Officials Expanded Benefits And Customer Service In 2009



The past year has been a busy one for Tricare officials with the introduction of a new Web-based counseling program and major enhancements to several other Tricare benefits.

Introduced Aug. 1, the

Tricare Assistance Program uses today's constantly evolving Web-based technologies to bring short-term professional counseling assistance closer to the people who often need it most: service members and veterans recently returned from overseas and their families who have persevered through the deployment.

The assistance program is available in the United States to active duty service members, those eligible for the Transition Assistance Management Program and for members enrolled in Tricare Reserve Select. It also is available to their spouses, no matter their age, and other eligible family members 18 years of age or older.

From the comfort of their homes, or anywhere else, beneficiaries with a computer, Web cam and the associated software can speak "face-to-face" with a licensed counselor over the Internet at any time of the day or night.

Eligible beneficiaries can get more information about TRIAP and other behavioral health resources at www.tricare.mil/mentalhealth.

After a busy year in 2009, Tricare officials are looking forward to an equally productive 2010.

For news throughout the year and get benefit information direct from the Tricare news service via e-mail by signing up at www.tricare.mil/subscriptions

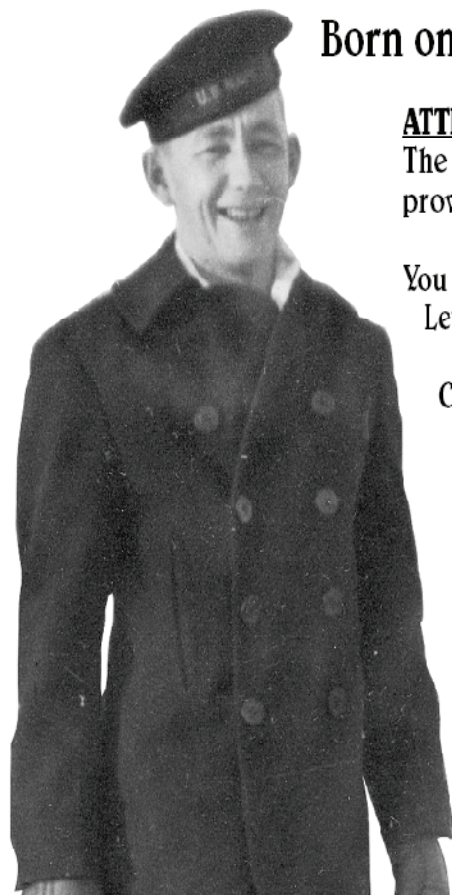
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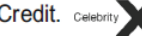
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BONUS: Includes round trip Tampa air and \$100 Per Cabin Shipboard Credit.



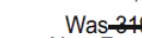
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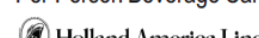
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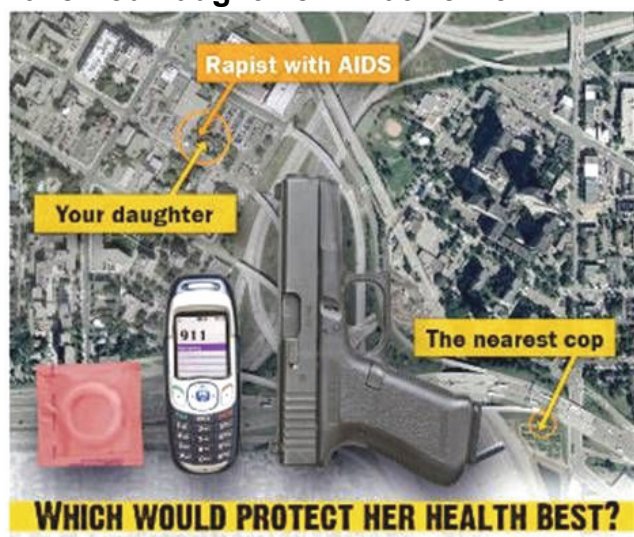
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It Only Took Four Weeks! No Kidding?

The San Diego County, Calif., district attorney has ruled that three police officers were justified in the fatal shooting of a Metropolitan Transit System mechanic who had just shot two of his co-workers.

I Want Death Row In California!

In Orange County, Calif., Billy Joe Johnson, who had just been convicted of murder as a hit man for a white supremacist gang, begged the judge and jury, in all sincerity, to sentence him to death. Johnson knew that those on California's death row get individual cells and better telephone access, nicer contact-visit arrangements and more personal-property privileges than ordinary inmates. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that the state's spending per-death-row-inmate is almost three times that for other inmates. The current death-row census totals 685, but because of legal issues, only 13 have been executed since 1977 (compared to 71 death-row fatalities from other causes). In fact, Johnson was so eager to be put on

death row that he tried to confess to two murders that no one yet knew about.

Gunmen Kill Family Of Mexican Drug War Hero

Gunmen have killed the family of a Mexican Marine who died during a raid that took down powerful drug kingpin Arturo Beltran Leyva.

Clerk's Note: How can we common folk even fathom this atrocity. These so called drug cartels do not need to be brought to justice, they need to be wiped out.

A Year Later, Piracy Is Up

A helicopter fired warning shots toward a suspected pirate skiff where six Somali men sat among assault rifles, grappling hooks and an aluminum ladder. But before it could be boarded by sailors from a nearby warship, the men threw all the gear overboard. With little evidence to convict them, the would-be pirates were let go, along with their boat and enough fuel to get to Somalia. Nothing was done to prevent the men from rearming and trying again.

Pirate attacks nearly doubled in 2009 over a year earlier, despite the deployment in December 2008 of the European Union Naval Force - the first international force specifically to counter Somali pirates.

Somali pirates currently hold at least 10 vessels and more than 200 crewmembers for ransom. Still, proponents of the force note the pirates' success rate has been cut roughly in half since the patrols began.

Clerk's Note: What if the next time they find a small boat a hundred plus miles from shore, who are not requesting assistance, they just take the engine and leave the crew a bottle of wine?

Lieberman: Yemen Is 'Tomorrow's War'

Senator Joe Lieberman called for preemptive strikes against Yemen during an interview yesterday, warning that the country could become "tomorrow's war" if

action isn't taken against the growing presence of al-Qaida.

Mother Fights To Be Buried With Son



Denise Anderson lost her only son in the Iraq war. She's determined not to lose her fight to be buried with him in a national veterans cemetery.

U.S. Army Spc. Corey Shea died Nov. 12, 2008, in Mosul, with one about a month left on his tour of duty in Iraq. He was buried at the Massachusetts National Cemetery in Bourne, about 50 miles from his hometown of Mansfield, Mass.

A grieving Anderson, 42, soon hit an obstacle in her quest to be buried in the same plot with her son. That chance is offered only to the spouses or children of dead veterans; Corey Shea was 21, single and childless.

The Veterans Affairs Department grants waivers and has approved four similar requests from dead soldiers' parents since 2005. Anderson also sought a waiver. But under the VA's policy, she has to die first to get one, a limbo that Anderson finds tough to live with.

VA spokeswoman Laurie Tranter said Anderson's waiver request was not granted because it was made "in advance of her time of need, which is VA's policy for all such waiver requests." Tranter noted, however, that just in case, Corey Shea's remains "were placed at a sufficient depth to accommodate her future burial."

The two lawmakers are pushing the Corey Shea Act, a bill that would allow burial privileges for biological or adoptive parents of dead veterans who are buried in any of the 130 cemeteries run by the VA's National Cemetery Administration. The legislation does not apply to burials at Arlington National Cemetery, which is maintained by the Army. Under the bill, parents would be allowed burial space if their deceased veteran sons and daughters had no living spouses or minor children, and if there is available space at the grave site. The veteran in question also must have been killed in battle or in preparation for battle.

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Marine Who Enlisted To Follow In His Deceased Brother's Footsteps Is Killed

A U.S. Marine who enlisted after his big brother was killed in an accident at Camp Pendleton, Calif., four years ago has himself been killed in a training accident at the same base.

Cpl. Ryan L. Pape, of Grand Forks, Minn., was involved in a low-level, static line parachute training exercise when he died, Camp Pendleton officials said.

The Marine Corps has not released any specific details about the incident, but all parachuting exercises for the unit Pape was with, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, have been suspended pending the results of an investigation.

Pape, the son of a farmer, enlisted in the Marine Corps after his older brother, Cpl. Riley Pape, was killed in a motorcycle crash near Camp Pendleton on May 18, 2005.

"It's just crushing - that's the only word that fits - just crushing that they've lost two sons," Mike McNamara, a family friend who had served with Riley Pape in Iraq, said.

Both brothers were Iraq Veterans and had seen combat operations in Anbar Province. A third Pape brother has completed his military career and is farming near East Grand Forks, N.D.

Ryan Pape joined the Marine Corps in October 2005. His personal service awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, the Combat Action Ribbon, the National Defense Service Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal and the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon.

Marine Corps Vietnam Veteran Now Serving In Iraq

By Lance Cpl. Melissa A. Laty, USMC, Combat Logistics Regiment 27 (Forward)

From the battle at Belleau Wood, where Marines earned the name "Devil Dogs," to the iconic image of the flag-raising at Iwo Jima, Marine Corps history is embedded in every Marine from their initial training at boot camp and continues to provide inspiration to those who continue to serve.

Some Veterans of past wars, like Vietnam, are not

only holding on to the memories of that time, but are also making new ones while they serve in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The company first sergeant for the Transportation Support Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 46, 1st Sgt. Viriato B. Sena, is one of the few Vietnam Veterans still left among the ranks of currently serving Marines. Sena, who joined the Marine Corps in 1973, participated in the evacuation of Vietnam and is now deployed to Iraq during the responsible draw-down of U.S. forces and equipment in Iraq. The military draw-down from Iraq has been noted to be the largest operation of its kind since Vietnam.

Court Rejects Making Sailors Report DUIs

The U.S. Navy's rule forcing sailors to "promptly" tell their commanding officers if they have been arrested for an off-base drunken-driving violation is unconstitutional, the Navy and Marine Corps's highest military judges have ruled.

The requirement, which dates back to 1999, forces sailors to incriminate themselves, a violation of the Fifth Amendment "for which no exemption exists," according to the Nov. 25 ruling from the Navy-Marine Corps Court of Criminal Appeals.

The case could force the Navy to change its policy and also prompt officials to reconsider some past punishments for drunken driving or failure to report a civilian driving-while-intoxicated arrest.

Vietnam POW Dies

Retired Lt. Col. Robert B. Purcell, an F-105 pilot and the 17th American taken prisoner during the Vietnam War, died on Dec. 6 at his home in Fort Worth, Tex., at the age of 78.

He had been in declining health since a 2005 fall left him paralyzed, according to news reports.

Purcell was on his 25th mission over Vietnam when his F-105 was shot down in July 1965. He spent 17 months in solitary confinement and then was in the "Hanoi Hilton" until his release in February 1973.

Other POWs credited the "stubborn, tough as nails" Purcell with helping them survive the ordeal. He was the one who raised spirits as some 50 POWs faced the infamous Hanoi March through angry, rock-throwing crowds by quipping, "Oh, I love a parade."

Soldier Seeks To Re-Claim Boxing Title

Spc. Michael J. MacLeod, USA, Multinational Force-West



U.S. Army Spc. Wenderson Jangada mans a machine gun in a guard tower at Forward Operating Base Ubaydi, Iraq, Dec. 5. A former Brazilian heavyweight champion boxer who became a U.S. citizen just prior to deploying with the 82nd Airborne Division.

For the woman he loved, he became a paratrooper in the vaunted 82nd Airborne Division and eventually a U.S. citizen.

With his enlistment nearly up, 6-foot, 5-inch, 230-pound U.S. Army Spc. Wenderson Jangada is ready to return to his home country of Brazil to reclaim the title of heavyweight boxing champion.

Jangada deployed to Iraq's Anbar Province in August as an infantryman with the 82nd Airborne Division's 1st Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, a unit whose battle campaign streamers from World War II read like a Stephen Spielberg movie script: Sicily, Anzio, Normandy, and the Ardennes.

At 34 in the sport of boxing, Jangada is a mature practitioner, though he has friends who have boxed professionally into their 40s. Jangada began his career as a muay thai fighter in the same Brazilian gym that spawned mixed martial-arts greats Wanderlei and Anderson Silva. But that's not for him, Jangada said. "Boxing is a noble art. It's a classic. Rocky Marciano and Muhammad Ali are classics. Besides, I have heavy hands," he said, referring to his 38 knockouts.

In his time off, Jangada coaches his battle buddies in the art of boxing. "They have heart here in the Army, much more than civilians," he said.

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Blind Officer Completes Course

By Kristin Molinaro, The Bayonet (the post newspaper at Fort Benning, Ga.)



U.S. Army Lt. Col. Fredrick Dummar, commander of the Special Operations Recruiting Battalion at Fort Bragg, N.C., congratulates U.S. Army Capt. Ivan Castro on graduating from the Maneuver Captain's Career Course at Fort Benning, Ga., Dec. 15. Castro, who will be assigned to the recruiting battalion, is the first blind student to attend the course. (U.S. Army photo by Kristin Molinaro)

The 20-week course prepares captains for company commands and serving as staff officers at battalion and brigade level.

USMC Has Stake In Army M-4 Re-Design

The U.S. Marine Corps may have a new service rifle to consider in the future, as the Army pursues a redesign of the M4 carbine.

The Army effort is aimed at making the 5.56-mm weapon shoot cleaner and straighter, and with higher rates of fire.

- Adding a heavier barrel for better performance during high rates of fire.
- Replacing the direct-impingement gas system with a piston gas system.
- Improving the trigger pull.
- Incorporating an improved rail system for increased strength.

- Adding ambidextrous controls.
- Adding a round counter to track the total number of bullets fired over the weapon's lifetime.

The Marine Corps, which uses both the M16A4 and M4 in combat, is watching closely as the Army proceeds, said Patrick Cantwell, a former Marine captain who heads the Corps' fires and maneuver integration division at the Marine Corps Combat Development Command, based at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va. But Marine officials aren't committing to any changes, and say they are largely happy with the M4s and M16A4s they have.

Troops Get Holiday Homecoming

By Donna Miles, American Forces Press Service

Two days before Christmas, the longest line at the airport in Baltimore, Md., wasn't at a ticket counter, or at security checkpoints. It was at the international terminal, where hundreds of well-wishers lined up to welcome about 150 troops home from combat deployments.

Families, Veterans, beauty queens, students enjoying the first day of their holiday vacations - and even Santa Claus - began descending on the Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport in the early afternoon to greet the arriving Air Mobility Command charter flight. As they waited for the troops to clear customs, the group revved itself up, turning toward a flag just beyond a giant Christmas tree full of blue-and-white ornaments to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and sing the *National Anthem*.

Then, as the first soldier who had cleared customs stepped into the terminal, the crowd burst into hoots and hollers. They hoisted "Welcome Home" and "Merry Christmas" banners and American flags high. Hands extended to every soldier, sailor, airman and Marine, along with expressions of welcome and thanks for their service.

Troops beamed as they pushed their luggage carts through the gauntlet of well-wishers. Boy Scouts and Veterans helped to carry their duffle bags as the troops worked their way through the maze of outstretched hands - some simply to shake hands, others to offer boxes of Girl Scout cookies, balloons or other goodies.

"It's overwhelming," said U.S. Army Sgt. Larry

Downs, a 372nd Transportation Company soldier who was part of a 101st Airborne Division contingent that deployed to Kuwait to ship equipment to Afghanistan for an upcoming deployment. "It's nice to be appreciated for what we do," he said. "A lot of us do it because we love it. But it's also nice to get the appreciation and know that people support what we do."

U.S. Army PFC Alma Aguillar, from the 101st Sustainment Brigade, at Fort Campbell, Ky., grew up in a military family and remembers how it felt to welcome her father when he returned home from duty overseas. Now, as she returned from her first deployment to Kuwait to prepare for a year-long deployment next month to Afghanistan, she said it felt great to be on the receiving end of the thanks. "It's heartwarming," she said. "I'm just glad that after all this time, people are still out there expressing appreciation and showing they care. That means a lot."

U.S. Navy Chief Petty Officer Richard Fernandez, returning home after nine months training Iraqi security forces in Baghdad, said he bent down and kissed the ground when he took his first step onto U.S. soil. Nothing, he said, had prepared him for the patriotic outpouring of support he and his fellow service members received at BWI airport. "It gives me a whole new sense of what it means being in the military, and being appreciated for what we do," he said. "It makes you feel like a real U.S. citizen, doing something for your country."

U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Edwin McBride, returning from an eight-month deployment to the Victory Base Complex in Baghdad, said he, too, was taken off-guard by the size of the crowd that amassed to welcome his flight. "I expected to see maybe a couple of [Veterans of Foreign Wars] guys, but I certainly didn't expect anything like this," he said.

McBride had several hours before his connecting flight to Norfolk, Va., where he looked forward to seeing his wife and 7-year-old daughter, Emily. The homecoming was going to be especially exciting, he said, because Emily didn't yet know that her daddy would be home for Christmas. "It's going to be a very, very Merry Christmas," McBride said, an ear-to-ear smile anticipating the reunion.

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Flag Burner Pilloried By Veterans

Back in Sept. in Valley Falls, NY... This is a red, white and blue village that is still seeing red after a flag that flew over Iraq was burned by a 21-year-old.

The payback? He was publicly humiliated by being duct-taped to the flagpole of Veterans of Foreign War 1938 say he desecrated Sept. 18.

Nick Normile, post commander and Vietnam War Veteran, said he's been flooded with calls from media outlets since the events of Sept. received attention from local TV stations and newspapers. He's been asked to go live on a Veterans radio show program from Tennessee, another radio show from Chicago and even received a call from NBC studios in NYC.

But Normile said he's not planning to let the story get any more attention and has declined appearances. "I'm not trying to be some martyr or hero," Normile said. "I just did what I thought was right."

The 21-year-old appeared intoxicated when he entered the VFW post on the day of the alleged act, Normile said. When the man was refused service for not having a proper ID, he ran out in a fit of anger. He cut the rope of the flag, which had once flown over troops in Iraq, and ignited it with a cigarette lighter.

Two days later, Normile said the man was forced to sit in the sun pilloried for six hours as townspeople gathered across the street for a youth soccer picnic. A sign was hung around his neck detailing what he had done. It recalled the Middle Ages punishment, subjecting him to public humiliation and scorn.

"He'll never disrespect the flag again, I can tell you that," Normile said on Friday.

A week later villagers were hush-hush about the event, but patrons of the post bar gave a nod of agreement to the punishment, pointing proudly to a newspaper clipping of the event on a bulletin board.

Patriotism is on open display in this village of about 500, the walls of a defunct railroad bridge near it's entrance now brightly colored red, white and blue. Most of the historical homes have American flags of their own hanging from porches, some also adorned with the Don't Tread on Me flag, popular with Tea Party activists.

Normile said once he found out what the man had done, he knew he had to be taught a lesson. Normile said he went out hunting for him, but when he

couldn't find him at his apartment, he sought the help of the man's uncle to bring him out.

"He manned up, he knew he had punishment coming," said Normile, who described the young man he refused to identify as guilty and ashamed.

"I told him to think about those kids in the foxhole, and how they had no one to set them free," Normile said. "It got to him, so I was satisfied. He showed a lot of remorse, no attitude."

Normile said the flag, had significant meaning. The villages auxiliary had been sending toiletries and other goods to Soldiers in Iraq, who then sent back the flag that had flown over their bunker. It was received with great attention and a ceremony.

State troopers and Rensselaer County sheriffs deputies said no charges had been filed by either the VFW post or the man.

Greedy Story That Never Came To Light

In late August 2009 there was a breaking story about VA Officials high up the chain that were giving themselves and their friends bonuses to the tune of \$24 Million Dollars and all during the time when VA Veteran claims were backing up.

The irony to this story is that the financial abuses were done by the very people who were supposed to be fixing the problem... 1,000s of 'Technology Office Employees' at the VA were awarding each other cash bonuses for a job well done all the while the claims were approaching a 'One-Million Claim Back-Up!'

At the low end of the scale, workers got \$2,500 each, some got the bonus for a job well done even though they did not yet worked for the VA! At the top of the food chain, the boss, Jennifer Duncan gave herself a \$60,000 bonus plus gave her family and friends a \$140,000 in VA college tuition, they were not eligible for! Other admin got \$73,000, \$59,000 & \$58,000, for their great work which caused a system to crash, laptops lost with millions of Veteran's info and a greater backlog then ever in the VA history.

In addition, the VA budget was shortchanged another \$37,000 for the transportation of a female from Florida to DC 22 times. About \$1,682 per round trip. That alone is well above First Class Seating.

There were two separate IG reports about the misuse of funds, improprieties, inappropriate conduct

and nepotism... Of course Your congress promised swift action and to deal with all the ones responsible for this travesty to the VA and the Veterans they were responsible for...

Well, the truth is. Nothing happened. It went into another committee somewhere until they felt the coast was clear and then disbanded the committee with a recommendation that it be looked into at a future date to be established by some other committee to be designated in the near future.

The closing quote of the committee was: "VA must appoint honorable individuals to these critical positions." Now don't you feel better?

Hillsborough County FL Vets Build Anew

By Bob Silsmer

With new land and great planning by the County Veterans Council, Tampa Bay is going to get some monuments of world caliber.

The first one kicking off is the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, which will have a UH-1Huey, an AH-1F Cobra mounted on pedestals. A 12 foot wide by 7 foot tall and 8" thick Black Granite Monument with the names of all the Veterans from Hillsborough County who died in Vietnam.

They goal is to have this Memorial completed by Veterans Day 2011 and we need your help to do that.

If you are a Veteran of the Vietnam War, or a family member who has lost a loved one in Vietnam and you would like to have his or her name engraved on a brick or a Black Granite Tile to be placed in the new 5,900 square foot Hillsborough County Vietnam Veterans Memorial go to www.HCMemorials.com and purchase your Brick or Tile online. You can also make a monetary donation to this Memorial online.

They are available to give a free presentation to your club or organization just contact one of these members; Bob Silmsmer 813-220-7246, Tom Hall 813-655-7129, Dave Braun, 813-310-8513, Walt Raysick 813-653-4924, Jim Basta 813-503-9299.

<http://www.VeteransPostNews.com/HCV01.htm>

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There was a man who worked for the Post Office whose job was to process all the mail that had illegible addresses. One day, a letter came addressed in a shaky handwriting to God with no actual address. He thought he should open it to see what it was about. The letter read:

Dear God,

I am an 83 year old widow, living on a very small pension. Yesterday someone stole my purse. It had \$100 in it, which was all the money I had until my next pension payment. Next Sunday is Christmas, and I had invited two of my friends over for dinner. Without that money, I have nothing to buy food with, have no family to turn to, and you are my only hope. Can you please help me?

Sincerely, Edna

The postal worker was touched He showed the letter to all the other workers. Each one dug into his or her wallet and came up with a few dollars. By the time he made the rounds, he had collected \$96, which they put into an envelope and sent to the woman. The rest of the day, all the workers felt a warm glow thinking of Edna and the dinner she would be able to share with her friends. Christmas came and went. A few days later, another letter came from the same old lady to God. All the workers gathered around while the letter was opened. It read:

Dear God,

How can I ever thank you enough for what you did for me? Because of your gift of love, I was able to fix a glorious dinner for my friends. We had a very nice day and I told my friends of your wonderful gift. By the way, there was \$4 missing. I think it might have been those bastards at the post office.

Sincerely, Edna

A six year old goes to the hospital with her grandmother to visit her Grandpa. When they get to the hospital, she runs ahead of her Grandma and bursts into her Grandpa's room... "Grandpa, Grandpa," she says excitedly, "As soon as Grandma comes into the room, make a noise like a frog!" "What?" said her Grandpa. "Make a noise like a frog - because Grandma said that as soon as you croak, we're all going to Disneyland!" Can you feel the love?

Four old retired guys are walking down a street in The Villages, Florida They turned a corner and see a sign that says, 'Old Timers Bar - all drinks 10 cents. They look at each other, and then go in, thinking this is too good to be true. The old bartender says in a voice that carries across the room, 'Come on in and let me pour one for you! What'll it be, Gentlemen?' There seemed to be a fully-stocked bar, so each of the men ask for a martini. In short order, the bartender serves up four iced martinis... Shaken, not stirred, and says, 'That'll be 10 cents each, please.' The four men stare at the bartender for a moment. Then look at each other...they can't believe their good luck. They pay the 40 cents, finish their martinis, and order another round. Again, four excellent martinis are produced with the bartender again saying, 'That's 40 cents, please.' They pay the 40 cents, but their curiosity is more than they can stand. They have each had two martinis and so far they've spent less than a dollar. Finally one of the men says, 'How can you afford to serve martinis as good as these for a dime a piece?' 'I'm a retired tailor from Boston,' the bartender said, 'and I always wanted to own a bar. Last year I hit the Lottery for \$25 million and decided to open this place. Every drink costs a dime - wine, liquor, beer, it's all the same.' Wow!!! That's quite a story,' says one of the men. The four of them sipped at their martinis and couldn't help but notice seven other people at the end of the bar who didn't have drinks in front of them, and hadn't ordered anything the whole time they were there. One man gestures at the seven at the end of the bar without drinks and asks the bartender, 'What's with them?' The bartender says, 'Oh, they're all old retired congressmen waiting for happy hour when drinks are half price.'

Roy, an undertaker, recently came home with a black eye. "What happened to you?" asked his wife. "I had a terrible day." replied Roy. "I had to go to a hotel and pick up a man who had died in his sleep. When I got there, the manager said they couldn't get him into a body bag because he had a huge erection. Anyway, I went up and sure enough there was this big naked guy lying on the bed with this huge erection. So I grabbed it with both hands and tried to snap it in half." "I see" said his wife, "but how did you get the black eye?" Roy replied: "Wrong room."

Conservative vs. Liberal

If a conservative doesn't like guns, they don't buy one. If a liberal doesn't like guns, then no one should have one.

If a conservative is a vegetarian, they don't eat meat. If a liberal is, they want to ban all meat products for everyone.

If a conservative sees a foreign threat, he thinks about how to defeat his enemy. A liberal wonders how to surrender gracefully and still look good.

If a conservative is homosexual, they quietly enjoy their life. If a liberal is homosexual, they loudly demand legislated respect.

If a person of color is conservative, they see themselves as independently successful. Their liberal counterparts see themselves as victims in need of government protection.

If a conservative is down-and-out, he thinks about how to better his situation. A liberal wonders who is going to take care of him.

If a conservative doesn't like a talk show host, he switches channels. Liberals demand that those they don't like be shut down.

If a conservative is a non-believer, he doesn't go to church. A liberal wants any mention of God or religion silenced.

If a conservative decides he needs health care, he goes about shopping for it, or may choose a job that provides it. A liberal demands that his neighbors pay for his.

A Nun and a Priest were crossing the Sahara desert on a camel. On the third day out the camel suddenly dropped dead without warning. After dusting themselves off, the Nun and the Priest surveyed their situation. After a long period of silence, the Priest spoke. 'Well, Sister, this looks pretty grim.' 'I know, Father. In fact, I don't think it likely that we can survive more than a day or two.' 'I agree,' says the Father. 'Sister, since we are unlikely to make it out of here alive, would you do something for me?' 'Anything Father.' 'I have never seen a woman's breasts and I was wondering if I might see yours.' 'Well under the circumstances I don't see that it would do any harm.' The Nun opened her habit and the Priest enjoyed the sight of her shapely breasts, commenting frequently on their beauty. 'Sister, would you mind if I touched them?' She consented and he fondled them for several minutes. 'Father, could I ask something of you?' 'Yes Sister?' 'I have never seen a man's penis. Could I see yours?' 'I suppose that would be OK,' the Priest replied lifting his robe. 'Oh Father, may I touch it?' The priest consented and after a few moments of fondling he was sporting a huge erection. 'Sister, you know that if I insert my penis in the right place, it can give life.' 'Is that true Father?' 'Yes, it is Sister.' 'Oh Father, that's wonderful... stick it in the camel and let's get the hell out of here!'

Peace at Last

The Pentagon announced the formation of a new 500-man elite fighting unit called the: United States Redneck Special Forces (USRSF) These mostly Southern boys will be dropped off into Afghanistan and will be given only the following facts about the Taliban and terrorists:

1. The season opened today.
2. There is no limit.
3. They taste just like chicken.
4. They don't like beer, pickups, country music, or Jesus.
5. They are responsible for the death of Dale Earnhardt.

The Pentagon expects the problem in Afghanistan to be over in a few weeks. Applications are available at your local Wal-Mart sporting goods counter.

Dear Mrs. Ms. or Sir:

I'm in the process of renewing my passport and still cannot believe this. How is it that Radio Shack has my address and telephone number and knows that I bought a TV from them in 1987 (23 years ago), and yet, the Federal Government is still asking me where I was born and on what date. For Heaven sakes, do you guys do this by hand? Ever heard of computers?

My birth date you have in my social security file. It's on EVERY income tax form I've filed for the past 30 years. It's on my Medicare health insurance card and my driver's license, It's on the last eight damn passports I've had, It's on every stupid customs declaration form I've had to fill out before being allowed off the plane for the last 30 years. And it's on all those census forms that we have to do at election times. Would somebody please take note, once and for all, that my mother's name is Maryanne, my father's name is Robert and I'm reasonably confident that neither name is likely to change between now and when I die!

Between you an' me, I've had enough of this bureaucratic bull! You send the application to my house and then you ask me for my damn address. What is going on? You must have a gang of bureaucratic Neanderthal morons working there! Look at my damn picture. Do I look like Bin Laden? And "No," I don't want to dig up Yasser Arafat, for pity sakes. I just want to go and park my ass on a sandy beach. And would someone please tell me, why would you give a damn whether I plan on visiting a farm in the next 15 days? If I ever got the urge to do something weird to a chicken or a goat, believe you me, I'd sure as hell not want to tell anyone!

Well, I have to go now because I have to go to the other end of the city and get another damn copy of my birth certificate - to the tune of \$100. Would it be so difficult to have all the services in the same area so I could get a new passport the same day? Nooooo that would require planning and organization. And it would be too logical for the damn government.

You'd rather have us running all over the place like chickens with our heads cut off. Then, we have to find some lame duck to confirm that it's really me on the damn picture - you know, the one where we're not allowed to smile. Hey, you know why we can't smile? We're totally pissed off! Signed - An Irate Citizen.

P.S. Remember what I wrote about getting someone to confirm that the picture is me? Well, my family has been in the United States of America since 1776. I have served in

the military for something over 35 years and have had security clearances up the Ying Yang. However, I have to get someone important to verify who I am - you know, someone like my doctor Who Was Born And Raised In India! And you Jerks want to run our health care system? Yeah... Right!

So let me get this straight...

....We're going to have a health care plan *written* by a committee whose chairman says he doesn't understand it, *passed* by a Congress that hasn't read it but exempts themselves from it, *to be signed* by a president that also hasn't read it and who smokes, with *funding* administered by a treasury chief who didn't pay his taxes, all to be *overseen* by a surgeon general who is obese, and *financed* by a country that's nearly broke. So what could *possibly* go wrong?

A Farmers Words of Wisdom for 2010

Fences need to be horse-high, pig-tight and bull-strong.

Keep skunks and bankers at a distance.

Forgive your enemies; it messes up their heads.

Life is simpler when you plow around the stump.

It don't take a very big person to carry a grudge.

When you wallow with pigs, expect to get dirty.

Don't judge folks by their relatives.

If you find yourself in a hole, the first thing is stop diggin'.

Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.

Timing has a lot to do with the outcome of a Rain dance.

Sometimes you get, and sometimes you get got.

Always drink upstream from the herd.

The biggest troublemaker you'll probably ever have to deal with, watches you from the mirror every mornin'.

Good judgment comes from experience, and a lotta that comes from bad judgment.

Live a good, honorable life. Then when you get older and think back, you'll enjoy it a second time.

A lady in Tiffany's sees a beautiful diamond bracelet and walks over to inspect it. As she bends over to look more closely, she farts. Very embarrassed, she looks around nervously to see if anyone noticed her little 'whoops'. As she turns around, her worst nightmare materializes in the form of a salesman standing right behind her and he's good looking as well. Cool as a cucumber, he displays all of the qualities one would expect of a professional in a store like Tiffany's. He politely greets the lady with, 'Good day, how may we help you today?' Blushing and uncomfortable, but still hoping that the salesman somehow missed her little 'incident' she asks, 'Sir what is the price of this lovely bracelet?' He answers, "Madam, if you farted just looking at it - you're going to shit when I tell you the price."

The only way to pull off a Sunday afternoon quickie with their 8 year-old son in the apartment was to send him out on the balcony with a lollipop and tell him to report on all the neighborhood activities. He began his commentary as his parents put their plan into operation: 'There's a car being towed from the parking lot', he shouted. 'An Ambulance just drove by.' 'Looks like the Anderson 's have company', he called out. 'Matt's riding a new bike...' 'Looks like the Sanders are moving' 'Jason is on his skate board...' After a few moments he announced, 'The Coopers are having sex! Startled, his Mother and Dad shot up in bed! Dad cautiously called out, 'How do you know they are having sex?' 'Jimmy Cooper is standing on his balcony with a lollipop.'

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BINGO

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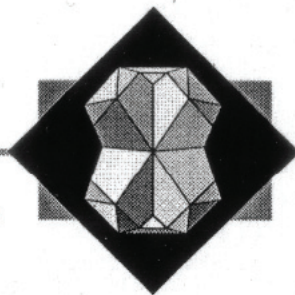
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From A Recon Marine In Afghanistan

From the Sand Pit: It's freezing here. I'm sitting on hard, cold dirt between rocks and shrubs at the base of the Hindu Kush Mountains, along the Dar 'yoi Pomir River, watching a hole that leads to a tunnel that leads to a cave. Stake out my friend, and no pizza delivery for a thousand miles.

I also glance at the area around my ass every ten to fifteen seconds to avoid another scorpion sting. I've actually given up battling the chiggers and sand fleas, but those scorpions give a jolt like a cattle prod; hurts like a bastard. The antidote tastes like transmission fluid, but God bless the Marine Corps for the five vials of it in my pack.

The one truth the Taliban cannot escape is, believe it or not, they are human beings, which means they have to eat food and drink water. That requires couriers and that's where an old bounty hunter like me comes in handy. I track the couriers, locate the tunnel entrances and storage facilities, type the info into the handheld, shoot the coordinates up to the satellite link that tells the air commanders where to drop the hardware. We bash some heads for a while, then I track and record the new movement.

It's all about intelligence. We haven't even brought in the snipers yet. These scurrying rats have no idea what they're in for. We are but days away from cutting off supply lines and allowing the eradication to begin.

I dream of Bin Laden waking up to find me standing over him with my boot on his throat as I spit into his face and plunge my nickel-plated Bowie knife through his frontal lobe. But you know me, I'm a romantic. I've said it before and I'll say it again: This country blows, man. It's not even a country. There are no roads, there's no infrastructure, there's no government. This is an inhospitable, rock pit sh-- hole ruled by eleventh century warring tribes. There are no jobs here like we know jobs.

Afghanistan offers two ways for a man to support his family: join the opium trade or join the army. That's it; those are your options. Hell, no wonder they have a death wish to see Allah and the virgins. Oh, I forgot, you can also live in a refugee camp and eat plum-sweetened, crushed beetle paste and squirt mud like a goose with the stomach flu. But the smell alone of those "tent cities of the walking dead" is enough to hurl you into the poppy fields to cheerfully scrape bulbs for 18 hours a day.

I've been living with these Tajiks and Uzbeks, and Turkmen and even a couple of Pushtuns, for over a month and a half now, and this much I can say for sure: These guys, all of 'em, are Huns, actual, living Huns. They LIVE to fight; it's what they do; it's ALL they do. They have no respect for anything, not for their families, nor for each other, nor for themselves. They claw at one another as a way of life. They play polo with dead calves and force their five year old sons into human cockfights to defend the family honor. Huns, roaming packs of savage, heartless beasts who feed on each other's barbarism. Cavemen with AK-47's. Then again, maybe I'm just cranky.

I'm freezing my ass off on this stupid hill because my lap warmer ran out of juice, and I can't recharge it until the sun comes up. Oh yeah! You like to write letters, right? Do me a favor, write a letter to CNN and tell Wolf and Anderson and that awful, sneering, pompous Aaron Brown to stop calling the Taliban "smart." They are not smart. I suggest CNN invest in a dictionary because the word they are looking for is "cunning." The Taliban are cunning, like jackals and hyenas and wolverines. They are sneaky and ruthless, and when confronted, cowardly. They are hateful, malevolent parasites who create nothing and destroy everything else. Smart? Pfft. Yeah, they're real smart.

They've spent their entire lives reading only one book (and not a very good one, as books go) and consider hygiene and indoor plumbing to be products of the devil. They're still figuring out how to work a Bic lighter. Talking to a Taliban warrior about improving his quality of life is like trying to teach an ape how to hold a pen; eventually he just gets frustrated and sticks you in the eye with it.

OK, enough. Snuffle will be up soon, so I have to get back to my hole. Covering my tracks in the snow takes a lot of practice, but I'm good at it.

Please, I tell you and my fellow Americans to turn off the TV sets and move on with your lives. The story line you are getting from CNN and other news agencies is utter bullsh-- and designed not to deliver truth but rather to keep you glued to the screen through the commercials. We've got this one under

control. The worst thing you guys can do right now is sit around analyzing what we're doing over here, because you have no idea what we're doing, and really, you don't want to know. We are your military, and we are doing what you sent us here to do.

You wanna help? Tell our Pansy-A-president to grow a pair and to hurry and send us more grunts.

Saucy Jack, Semper Fi

Recon Marine in Afghanistan

"Freedom is not free, but the U.S. Marine Corps will pay most of your share.

Clerk's Note: We are not sure of the validity of this letter, but we like it anyway and printed it.

Pilot Does His Job Above and Beyond

My lead flight attendant came to me and said, "We have an HR on this flight." (HR stands for human remains.) "Are they military?" I asked. 'Yes', she said. 'Is there an escort?' 'Yes, I already assigned him a seat'. 'Would you please tell him to come to the flight deck. You can board him early,' I said.

In a moment, a young Army Sergeant entered the flight deck. He was the image of the perfectly dressed soldier. He introduced himself and I asked him about his soldier. The escorts of these fallen soldiers talk about them as if they are still alive and still with us.

'My soldier is on his way back to Virginia ', he said. He proceeded to answer my questions, but offered no words on his own.

I asked him if there was anything I could do for him and he said no. I told him that he had the toughest job in the military and I appreciated the work that he does for the families of our fallen soldiers. The first officer and I got up out of our seats to shake his hand. He left the flight deck to find his seat.

We completed our preflight checks, pushed back and performed an uneventful departure. About 30 minutes into our flight I received a call from the lead flight attendant in the cabin. 'I just found out the family of the soldier we are carrying, is on board', he said. He then proceeded to tell me that the father, mother, wife and 2-year old daughter were escorting their son, husband, and father home. The family was upset because they were unable to see the container that the soldier was in before we left. We were on our way to a hub where the family was going to wait four hours for the connecting flight home to Virginia.

The father of the soldier told the flight attendant that knowing his son was below him in the cargo compartment and being unable to see him was too much for him and the family to bear. He had asked the flight attendant if there was anything that could be done to allow them to see him upon our arrival. The family wanted to be outside by the cargo door to see their son being taken off the airplane. I could hear the desperation in the flight attendants voice when he asked me if there was anything I could do. 'I'm on it', I said. I told him that I would get back to him.

Airborne communication with my company normally occurs in the form of e-mail like messages. I decided to bypass this system and contact my flight dispatcher directly on a secondary radio. There is a radio operator in the operations control center who connects you to the telephone of the dispatcher. I was in direct contact with the dispatcher. I explained the situation I had on board with the family and what it was the family wanted. He said he understood and that he would get back to me.

Two hours went by and I had not heard from the dispatcher. We were going to get busy soon and I needed to know what to tell the family. I sent a message asking for an update. I saved the return text from the dispatcher and this what I read:

'Captain, sorry it has taken so long to get back to you. There is policy on this now and I had to check on a few things. Upon your arrival a dedicated escort team will meet the aircraft, the team will escort the family to the ramp and plane side. A van will be used to load the remains with a secondary van for the

family. The family will be taken to their departure area and escorted into the terminal where the remains can be seen on the ramp. It is a private area for the family only. When the connecting aircraft arrives, the family will be escorted onto the ramp and plane side to watch the remains being loaded for the final leg home. Captain, most of us here in flight control are Veterans. Please pass our condolences on to the family. Thanks.'

I sent a message back telling flight control thanks for a good job. I printed out the message and gave it to the lead flight attendant to pass on to the father. The lead flight attendant was very thankful and told me, 'You have no idea how much this will mean to them.'

Things started getting busy for the approach and landing. After landing, we cleared the runway and taxied to the ramp area. The ramp is huge with 15 gates on either side of the alleyway. It is always a busy area with aircraft maneuvering every which way to enter and exit. When we entered the ramp and checked in with the ramp controller, we were told that all traffic was being held for us.

'There is a team in place to meet the aircraft', we were told. It looked like it was all coming together, then I realized that once we turned the seat belt sign off, everyone would stand up at once and delay the family from getting off the airplane. As we neared our gate, I asked the copilot to tell the ramp controller we were going to stop short of the gate to make an announcement to the passengers. He did that and the ramp controller said, 'Take your time.'

I stopped the aircraft and set the parking brake. I pushed the public address button and said, 'Ladies and gentleman, this is your Captain speaking I have stopped short of our gate to make a special announcement. We have a passenger on board who deserves our honor and respect. His Name is Private XXXXXX, a soldier who recently lost his life. Private XXXXXX is under your feet in the cargo hold. Escorting him today is Army Sergeant XXXXXX. Also, on board are his father, mother, wife, and daughter. Your entire flight crew is asking for all passengers to remain in their seats to allow the family to exit the aircraft first. Thank you.'

We continued the turn to the gate, came to a stop and started our shutdown procedures. A couple of minutes later I opened the cockpit door. I found the two forward flight attendants crying, something you just do not see. I was told that after we came to a stop, every passenger on the aircraft stayed in their seats, waiting for the family to exit the aircraft.

When the family got up and gathered their things, a passenger slowly started to clap his hands. Moments later more passengers joined in and soon the entire aircraft was clapping. Words of 'God Bless You', I'm sorry, thank you, be proud, and other kind words were uttered to the family as they made their way down the aisle and out of the airplane. They were escorted down to the ramp to finally be with their loved one.

Many of the passengers disembarking thanked me for the announcement I had made. They were just words, I told them, I could say them over and over again, but nothing I say will bring back that brave soldier. I respectfully ask that all of you reflect on this event and the sacrifices that millions of our men and women have made to ensure our freedom and safety in these United States of America.

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Remote Control Warfare Prompts Protests

This year the Air Force will train more pilots of unmanned aerial systems than pilots of fighter or bomber aircraft, and the Syracuse-based New York Air National Guard has become the first in the nation to announce it was remotely operating Reaper UAVs in combat around the clock.

From their Syracuse base - where they used to operate F-16s - the Guard is now flying Reapers, hauling two 500-pound bombs, in missions over Afghanistan nearly 24 hours a day and then going home to sleep in their own beds before starting again the next day. That makes the base - and those homes - a target of the enemy, according to groups that followed up on the news by coming to the base to protest war.

It also completely changes the psychological dynamic of deploying for combat. The pilots at the unit who are currently flying Reapers all have a commercial pilot's certificate, but the Air Force is looking into using "pilots" who have never flown an aircraft from an actual moving cockpit.

Afghan Women Among Worst-Off In The World, HRW Says

Afghan women are among the worst off in the world, violence against them is "endemic" and Afghanistan's government fails to protect them from crimes such as rape and murder, Human Rights Watch (HRW) says in a new report.

The report cites cases where rapists have been pardoned by the government, girls and women have been imprisoned for running away from home, rape victims have been charged with adultery and where women in public life have been murdered.

It comes a week after the United Nations said violence and rape against women in Afghanistan was a problem of "profound proportions."

Meanwhile, President Obama's Afghanistan strategy gives military timelines but experts say it is too vague when it comes to sustainable development work or commitments on areas like women's rights and the rule of law.

Clerk's Note: So where is Barbara Walters Now? And what about Not fond-a jane? Or Pelosi, Hillary, Diane Sawyer, Cindy Sheehan, Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton and the other who play it safe in front of the TV cameras and not in the line of fire? But they feel it is there 'Right' to criticize those who do get involved. Well, this is US calling them to task on their so-called human rights issues.

Report: Brazil's Police Killed More Than 11,000

Police in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo have killed more than 11,000 people in the past six years, many execution-style, according to a report released today by *NOTF's* friends at Human Rights Watch (HRW).

Maybe Hillary Is A Really Good Friend?

Two companies run by Mark Penn, Hillary Clinton's pollster for her 2008 presidential bid, received \$6 million from the U.S. government for a public relations campaign on the national shift to digital-only television.

Conference Explores Trauma's Impact On Families

By Elaine Wilson, American Forces Press Service

U.S. Army Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Loree K. Sutton, director of the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury, spoke at the Trauma Spectrum Disorders Conference in Bethesda, Md., Dec. 10.

The nation must move beyond the "suck it up and drive on" military culture of the past and look to a future that puts psychological and spiritual injuries on par with physical ones, the Army's highest-ranking psychiatrist said.

"We must pay attention to the whole person, the whole family, the whole community, the whole nation. It's about building resilience. It's about fostering recovery, and supporting reintegration into communities across this country."

Gen. Sutton spoke at the Trauma Spectrum Disorders Conference at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Md. The two-day conference - sponsored by the departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs and the NIH - focused on the impact of trauma spectrum disorders on military and Veteran families and caregivers throughout the deployment lifecycle. Trauma spectrum disorders, or TSD, comprise a broad range of psychological health and traumatic brain injury issues.

According To Russia Another U.S. Civil War Looming?

According to an obscure report in the *European Union Times* (EUTimes.net), "Russian military analysts are reporting to Prime Minister Putin that U.S. President Barack Obama has issued an order to his Northern Command (USNORTHCOM)'s top leader, U.S. Air Force General Gene Renuart, to 'begin immediately' increasing his military forces to 1 million troops by January 30, 2010, in what these reports warn is an expected outbreak of civil war within the United States before the end of winter. According to these reports, Obama has had over these past weeks 'numerous' meetings with his war council about how best to manage the expected implosion of his nation's banking system while at the same time attempting to keep the United States' military hegemony over the world in what Russian military analysts state is a 'last ditch gambit' whose success is 'far from certain.'"

The *EU Times* article continues by saying, "To the fears of Obama over the United States erupting into civil war once the full extent of the rape and pillaging of these peoples by their banks and government becomes known to them, grim evidence now shows the likelihood of this occurring much sooner than later."

The *Times* story goes on to say that there are "over 220 million American people armed to the teeth and ready to explode."

The *Times* article concludes by saying, "Though the coming civil war in the United States is being virtually ignored by their propaganda media, the same cannot be said of Russia, where leading Russian political analyst, Professor Igor Panarin, has long warned that the economic turmoil in the United States has confirmed his long-held view that the U.S. is heading for collapse."

U.S.A.F. Will Be Staying Longer In Iraq

Airmen at a town hall session with Defense Secretary Robert Gates at FOB Warrior in Iraq learned first-hand that the U.S. Air Force could remain in Iraq after the main U.S. troop pull-out.

Asked about USAF assistance to the Iraqi Air Force, he said, "I wouldn't be a bit surprised to see agreements between ourselves and the Iraqis that continues a 'train, equip, and advise' role beyond the end of 2011."

In fact, he said, the same applies to Afghanistan. Both countries, he said, recognize that "kind of role is very likely to continue beyond the end of our combat operations."

Gates acknowledged there are no current long-term agreements, but he said in recent discussion with the Iraqi Prime Minister they talked "about their equipment purchases, training, and so on as they look at 2012 and beyond, and they clearly have some concerns."

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