



# Tallil Times

Vol. 1, Issue 24

332nd Air Expeditionary Wing, Tallil Air Base, Iraq

Friday Oct. 24, 2003

## NEWS BRIEFS

**Burger King, Pizza Hut open**  
Tallil Air Base's Pizza Hut and Burger King restaurants will open with a ribbon cutting ceremony today at 10 a.m. Members of all services are invited to enjoy the base's newest addition serving American culinary fare.

### Flu Shots Delayed

The shipment of vaccine for the members of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing has been delayed. Members will begin receiving their yearly flu immunizations as soon as the vaccine arrives. Please contact your unit's first sergeant or the 332nd EMDG's immunization flight for more details.

### Hometown News Release

You can let your family and friends know how you are supporting the Tallil Air Base mission in your hometown newspaper. Fill out a Hometown News Release from the 332nd Intranet page by clicking on the 'Public Affairs' link and then the link entitled 'Hometown News Release.' Complete the form and drop it by the Public Affairs office in the WOC and then contact Visual Information (459-0368) for an accompanying photo.

### American Forces Network

The American Forces Network provides first-run American television and sports programming to overseas military units. Programming schedules are available online at: <http://www.myafn.net>. Users can customize the page to reflect local time zones or to find specific program air dates.

## Tent City changes underway

### *Clothing policy updated, Cadillac shower installation begins*

**by Master Sgt. Don Perrien**

*332nd AEW Public Affairs*

Some significant changes affecting the deployed members assigned to the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing are taking place in Tallil Air Base's Tent City compound this week.

The most visible change is the addition of some important new buildings in the middle of Tent City. The 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron began installing Cadillac shower and latrine facilities for the area's residents.

"The first Cadillac shower unit is being installed in tent city this week," Tech. Sgt. Daniel Hammon, 332nd ECES Utilities Special Projects manager said. "Our goal is to install one to two trailers per week. Once the sewage pumping station is complete, we will then begin installing the latrine trailers."

Another change for the wing's de-

ployed residents is the most recent update of the Tent City rules.

After meeting with the Tent City Council, Col. Marke F. Gibson, 332nd AEW commander approved three major changes regarding clothing wear in Tent City.

First, the current policy regarding line badge wear while in civilian clothes has been amended. While the 100 percent ID check will still be accomplished as members enter Tent City, off-duty personnel are no longer required to display their line badges while inside the area.

The rules regarding wear of civilian clothes in Tent City were also changed.

Effective immediately, shirts are required to be worn at all times while outside the individual's living area. This includes playing sports in the athletic areas and when walking to and from the showers. All civilian

clothing must be conservative and in good taste.

In addition, with the exception of the Fitness Center, sandals (even without socks) are authorized in all Services facilities including the Tallil Tavern. However, flip-flops or shower shoes will not be worn in the Tallil Tavern or Fitness Center.

According to Tent City Mayor, Capt. Debbie Horne, these changes emphasize the importance of the Tent City Council.

"We provide every member an opportunity to address concerns and make suggestions to improve the quality of life at Tent City," she said. "These changes are a perfect example. Through the suggestions from individuals, the concurrence of the Council, and the approval of the commander, these rules have been changed, effectively removing another irritant of living in Iraq."



### ◀ TROOP TALK:

Lt. Gen. Walter E. Buchanan III, commander 9th Air Force and U.S. Central Command Air Forces speaks to deployed troops here at Tallil Air Base during his visit Oct. 17. General Buchanan visited bases in the AOR last week to assess the state of the Air Force mission in Iraq.

Photo by Senior Airman Karolina Gmyrek



### Commander's Corner

Over the next few weeks, Tallil Air Base will be in a state of transition as AEF Blue leaves and AEF Silver comes in. Many of you will be heading home to family, friends and loved ones shortly.

I just want to say "Thank You" to the men and women of AEF Blue for a job well done. You will all be sorely missed.

The current members of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing have set a high bar for future members to reach. In the last four months, this base has made tremendous strides -- both in mission capability and in quality-of-life.

I hope the 332nd AEW is as lucky with AEF Silver rotation, but AEF Blue will be a tough act to follow. Thanks again!

# Army Civil Affairs assists Iraqis

by 1st Lt. Daniel DuBois

332nd AEW Public Affairs

They were among the first American troops at Tallil as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Their mission: to minimize civilian interference with troops and logistics. The goal: a free Iraq, where the Iraqi people are responsible for their own affairs.

The Army's 486th Civil Affairs Battalion began executing their mission in April and their mission continues today. Of course back in April, they had to start from scratch.

The unit immediately moved into the local community, meeting the local village leaders, Army Lt. Col. Don Wadley, 486th Civil Affairs Battalion commander said. The soldiers needed an assessment of the humanitarian assistance needs and a plan for creatively providing for those needs.

"When we arrived at Tallil, there were no basic services available to the local civilian population -- estimated to be approximately 1.3 million in the Dhi Qar Province," Colonel Wadley said. "There was no electricity, water, emergency services or local security."

The village's last food distribution from the government was prior to the war and many people were on the verge of starving, he said. The Civil Affairs teams quickly assisted the local population with emergency humanitarian assistance rations and bottled water.

Through the efforts of the Civil Affairs team, the Tallil area villages had improved electrical services and more potable water. By early May, the situation had improved even beyond what had existed be-



U.S. Army Photo

▲ **WHAT'S UP?:** Sgt. 1st Class Dan Gilliss, 486th Civil Affairs Battalion, talks with a child from the Abu Shuwaich school near An Nasiriya.

fore the conflict, Wadley said.

During the past seven months, the Army unit's projects have ranged from emergency food and water distribution to coordinating road and school reconstruction, Wadley said.

Wadley says the men and women at Tallil, especially the engineering units, have been invaluable for accomplishing their mission. He feels the Civil Affairs team has been extremely fortunate to work with several highly competent engineer units from the Air Force, Army and coalition forces.

The 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron, for example, is assisting the 486th by building cabinets for a local orphanage.

According to Capt. William Pringle, 332 ECES flight commander, many members of the unit were eager to assist in the project.

"Many people in CE wanted to make a difference, not only on Tallil, but in the local Iraqi commu-

nity," said Captain Pringle. "This was one opportunity to help some needy children and to give the local Iraqis have a positive opinion about Americans."

The 486th has been doing many such projects throughout the local area. Of course, the civil affairs mission in Iraq has not been without challenges.

"Our unit came to Iraq with a lot of experience but little organic language abilities in Arabic," Wadley said. "Fortunately, a few Kuwaiti volunteers helped us with interpretation in the early months. Since that time, the Titan Corporation contractor has provided us with locally hired interpreters."

Through accomplishing their mission and overcoming such challenges, the 486th is contributing to OIF, he said. Civil affairs interactions provide a vehicle for information operations that illustrate the positive intent of coalition forces to assist the Iraqi people develop a safe, democratic government.

## ACTION LINE

332AEW.actionline@tlab.aorcentaf.af.mil

The Commander's Action Line is the direct link to the 332nd AEW Commander, Col. Marke F. Gibson. It's your opportunity to make Tallil Air Base a better place to live, work and play.

First give your chain of command and the appropriate base agencies a chance to solve the problem, but if you don't get a satisfactory answer, send an e-mail to 332AEW.actionline@tlab.aorcentaf.af.mil.

Items of basewide interest may be published in the Tallil Times.

**Q:** Tent City Rules say you can't wear sandals in the dining facility without socks. That's a different policy than other bases in the AOR -- can we get the policy changed?

**A:** Thanks for the suggestion. This was brought up before the Tent City Council, who submitted the idea for the commander's approval. Effective immediately, members are now authorized to wear sandals (not flip-flops) without socks in the dining facility and rec tents.

### EDITORIAL STAFF

The Tallil Times

Vol. 1, No. 24 Oct. 24, 2003



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332nd AEW Commander

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The content is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs Office of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing. All photographs are U.S. Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

The TALLIL TIMES accepts stories, photographs and commentaries, which maybe submitted to the PA

staff located in the Wing Operations Center (WOC) or can be sent directly to the newspaper at tallil.times@tlab.aorcentaf.af.mil

Deadline for publication is 2 p.m. Thursday before the week of publication. All submissions are edited for content and Air Force journalistic style. Submission of articles and photos does not guarantee publication. The editor reserves the right to publish, reject and edit all news stories in accordance with the TALLIL TIMES editorial policy. For more information, visit the PA office located in the WOC, call 459-0014, or e-mail the staff at tallil.times@tlab.aorcentaf.af.mil



## IN BRIEF

All times are local.

### AF Worship Services

Worship is at 332nd AEW Chapel, unless otherwise noted.

#### Catholic

*Daily Mass:* Monday through Friday, 6 p.m.  
*Vigil Mass:* Saturday, 6 p.m.  
*Confessions:* 5 to 5:40 p.m. in the Blessed Sacrament Room  
*Sunday Mass:* 8 a.m.  
**POC: Ch. Eugene Theisen at 459-0038**

#### Protestant

**Noon Prayer/Praise**  
**Monday through Friday, 11 to 11:15 a.m.**  
*Lutheran/Episcopal Communion:* Saturday, 7:30 p.m.  
*Traditional*  
Sunday, 9:30 a.m.  
*Liturgical Communion*  
Sunday, 10:35 to 11:15 a.m.  
*Gospel Service*  
Sunday, 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.  
*Contemporary, "nondenominational"*  
Sun, 7 p.m.  
**POC: Ch. Rodger Ericson, 459-0038**

#### Latter Day Saints

*Lay-Led Service*  
Sunday, 2 p.m.  
**POC: Staff Sgt. Hager, 573-1107**

#### Jewish

**Lay-Led Service**  
**Friday, 8 p.m.**  
**POC: Ch. Ericson, 459-0038**

#### Muslim

**(LSA Adder Chapel)**  
**Prayer**  
*12:30 p.m. and sunset daily*

#### Bible Studies

*Women's*  
Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. (chapel)  
*Men's*  
Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. (Chapel annex)  
*Catholic (RCLA)*  
Thurs, 6:30 p.m. (chapel annex)  
*Catholic*  
Sunday, 6:30 and 7:30 p.m. (Chapel annex)  
*Men and Women*  
Thursday 7:30 p.m. (chapel annex)  
*LDS Study*  
Thursday, 7:30 p.m. (chapel annex)  
*Chaplain Led*  
Saturday, 6 p.m. (chapel annex)

### AF and Army Notices

#### Morale Calls

Do not use workplace phones for morale call purposes.

#### Driving on Base

Speed limits on base are 20 mph. Helmets are required in all tactical All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV's) and "Gators."

#### Run Routes

Running in groups of two or larger is authorized in two locations: from the BX/PX parking lot and off the main gate road toward the burn pit. The required uniform is T-shirt and shorts or pants. Running is not authorized on any other road.

#### Ammunition Storage

The 38th Ordnance Group provides ammunition storage for units on Tallil Air Base. Contact Mr. Matheson at 573-1258 for more information.

#### Ziggurat of Ur

Visits to the Ziggurat require a pass. For information, U.S. Army personnel may call 573-1107.

### 332nd ESVS News

#### "The Hot Spot" Rec. Center

Bingo is scheduled for 7 p.m. tonight at the outdoor theater.

#### What's playing?

**Tonight:**  
*The Adams Family* (indoor at 8 p.m.)  
Bruce Almighty (outdoor at 8:30 p.m.)  
**Saturday:**  
*Anger Management* (indoor at 6 p.m.)  
NCAA Football (outdoor at 8 p.m.)  
**Sunday:**  
*Gladiator* (indoor at 6 p.m.)  
NFL Football (outdoor at 8 p.m.)

#### "Muscle Beach" Fitness Center

An Iron Man contest is scheduled for tonight at 7 p.m.

A 3-point shoot out is scheduled for Saturday at 7:30.

A Tallil Bench press competition is scheduled for Saturday at 6 p.m. at the outdoor stage. Weigh-in is at 5:30 p.m.

## 332nd AEW Warrior of the Week

### Airman 1st Class Jarrod Gibson

#### Unit and duty title:

332nd Air Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron PHASE inspector

**Home unit:** 23rd Maintenance Squadron, Pope Air Force Base, N.C.

#### Why other warriors say he's a warrior:

"Airman Gibson has made endless contribution as PHASE inspector to include quality assurance pass ratings -- 17 assessments with no discrepancies," said Master Sgt. Norman Evans, 332nd EAMXS first sergeant. "Because of his attention to detail, Airman Gibson was able to identify a small crack on an A-10 gun -- the detection saved untold system damage."

**Most memorable Air Force experience:** My first day of work as a part of PHASE at Pope Air Force Base.

**Hobbies:** Drawing, basketball and football



Air Force Services has expanded its tour schedule to include two afternoon visits to the Ziggurat. For more information, call the Air Force Rec. Center at 459-0121. The schedule is as follows:

*Saturdays, Tuesdays, Thursdays:* 10 a.m. (show time of 9:30 a.m. at the Rec. Center).

*Sundays and Wednesdays:* 2 p.m. (show time of 1:30 p.m. at the Rec. Center).

If you read this, call 459-0014. The first person to call will receive a can of soda or cup of coffee from EPA.

#### AF Volunteers needed

Volunteers are needed for 5K Fun Runs. For more information, call AIC Bret Lockerbie at 459-0118.

Volunteer drivers are needed for Ziggurat Tours. For more information, call Bernard Ashlock at 459-0117.

## Congratulations



# 332nd ECES

**AEF Blue Rotation Commander's Sports Challenge Champions!**



**UXOs and other munitions have littered the ground of Tallil for years and now EOD is sending them home ...**

# UP IN SMOKE



**by Airman 1st Class Kara Philp**

*332nd AEW Public Affairs*

Some might call a bomb squad living in a bunker ironic; the 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron Explosive Ordnance Disposal Flight calls it practical.

The EOD Flight is on alert 24 hours a day, seven days a week and responds to an average of 25 to 30 calls each week.

“By living and working here, we’re always ready,” said Tech. Sgt. Tom Cowern, 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron EOD Flight craftsman.

Life in the bunker has other advantages for these 12 activated reservists.

“We don’t have enough manning to split into shifts and this way we’re always ready,” Sergeant Cowern said. “If the phone rings at 2 a.m., we all hear it.”

Although responding to calls is an important of the job, it isn’t the only part.

“We’re actively clearing areas of the base, taking munitions to the range and getting rid of them,” Cowern said. “Basically anytime someone puts a shovel in the ground, we have to clear the area.”

The EOD Flight also conducts two training sessions each week.

“We use what we’ve found, and what we think we’ll find, as a basis for our training,” Cowern said. “There’s no such thing as too much training, we are always learning something new and there’s a lot to remember — we’re just trying to keep ahead of the game.”

The EOD shop has given ordnance identification classes to over 500 people during their stay at Tallil.

“It is another part of our job to help train people that have to work and live in an environment that has real world unexploded ordnance laying about,” said Chief Master Sgt. Russell Ehmke, 332nd ECES EOD Flight chief. “We are here to help save lives and protect assets so the mission can be completed.”

According to EOD members, the flight works

differently than most others.

“Our team chief solicits the opinions of each member before making a call,” said Senior Airman Jon Mejia, 332nd ECES EOD apprentice. “Because everyone brings a wealth of knowledge and past experience to the table.”

The 332nd ECES EOD Flight works closely with the Army, in addition to the Italian and Korean Air Force EOD members.

Most EOD deployments since the gulf war have involved more training than clearing of munitions due to the locations.

Tallil is in a class by itself.

“As EOD technicians, we could have not chosen a better place to go to practice our trade,” Chief Ehmke said. “We have a team of true professionals that have risked their lives and will continue to risk their lives while assigned here.”

New territory has meant new equipment and experiences for the EOD Flight.

“We’re testing new explosive tools, and finding munitions there



*Photos by Senior Airman Karolina Gmyrek*

**▲ LINE ‘EM UP:** Tech. Sgt. David Featherstun, 332nd ECES EOD craftsman, lines up Soviet, O-832 DU, 82 millimeter, high explosive filled, mortars for a demolition shot.

isn’t a lot of information on,” Cowern said. “I’ve never had a deployment in my career that comes close to this one.”

Flight members agree that their adventures at Tallil will not be soon forgotten.

“I have been very lucky to have been a part of this EOD team,” Ehmke said. “This group comes from four different parts of the country and has blended into the best, hardest working team of technicians I have ever had the pleasure of working with. I would trust my life with any one of them.”



**▲ TAKIN’ NOTES:** Tech. Sgt. Tom Cowern, 332nd ECES EOD Flight craftsman, documents an Iraqi M73, a 60 millimeter, high explosive filled, mortar, with an Italian PDB 335 Fuze prior to detonation.



# DESERT HAWK DEFENDERS



▲ **READY FOR TAKEOFF:** Staff Sgt. Joseph Vialpando (left) and Staff Sgt. Michael Roth prepare the 'Desert Hawk' aircraft for flight. The lightweight aircraft is part of the Force Protection Airborne Surveillance System used at Tallil Air Base to see over the horizon looking for terrorist activities.

## Security Forces protect base with FPASS

**Story and photos by Master Sgt. Don Perrien**  
*332nd AEW Public Affairs*

Not every unmanned aerial vehicle over the skies of Tallil Air Base is a Predator.

The 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron is using their 'Desert Hawk' UAV here at Tallil, providing an extra set of eyes in the sky for looking for potential terrorists and criminals.

"Desert Hawk allows us to interdict our adversaries before they are able to threaten USAF personnel and resources," said Maj. Glen Christensen, 332nd ESFS commander. "With this equipment, we can achieve the desired Integrated Base Defense effects of, 'See First,

Understand First and Act First.'"

The Desert Hawk UAV system's official name is the Force Protection Airborne Surveillance System — or FPASS, a small, seven-pound remote control aircraft used by Air Force Security Forces Personnel. The battery-powered aircraft has a wingspan of approximately four feet and flies for about an hour using its on-board rechargeable batteries.

For all the fancy adjectives and acronyms, the Desert Hawk is a remarkably simple, yet durable aircraft.

"The manual describes the plane as a state-of-the-art composite material, but it's actually got a lot more in common with a Styrofoam cup

than anything else," said Staff Sgt. Michael Roth, 332nd ESFS Desert Hawk program manager. "It's pretty tough, but we can glue it back together if it breaks."

The little plane already has scars from its missions here at Tallil. Brown scuffs along the underside mark the plane's many landings on the desert plains, and small gray lines show the places where glue connects the pieces replaced following its missions.

"This plane has gone through a lot, but she's still flying," said Staff Sgt. Joseph Vialpando, Desert Hawk NCOIC. "The environment here makes it tough to fly, especially the winds. Getting the plane airborne, keeping it on track and

catching it when it's done is probably the hardest part of the FPASS mission here."

The FPASS is launched by a bungee cord and controlled with a portable computer system by the operators on the ground. One of the strengths of the FPASS system is in its flexibility. The Desert Hawk aircraft can change its route while airborne by changing the waypoints in the computer's software program. The plane can also lift interchangeable payloads of color cameras and thermal imagers for day and night operations into the sky enhancing the vision of security forces on the ground.



# Safety First

## 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 ... We Have Liftoff!

The majority of us here are counting down. No, it's not a shuttle launch. It's more exciting than that; it's our return home.

Most of us will be leaving Tallil within the next few weeks, and like a shuttle launch, we need to prepare well in advance for what will probably be the most exciting event in our life.

Ask any pilot and they will tell you the key to a successful mission starts long before takeoff and isn't over until the bird is safely on the ground and parked.

Your mission here isn't over until you are safely parked back at your home. We have spent the last several months trying to stay out of harm's way and for the most part, the injuries people have suffered have been minor.

As we approach the end of our journey here at Tallil, remember to plan ahead so that your homecoming is a memorable one.

Continue to follow all of the safety practices you've learned and don't let your thoughts of finally coming home distract you to the point that you hurt yourself or a co-worker. One individual from the last rotation broke his arm just days before he was due to return home.

Once you land back home, remember you have probably been awake for at least a day. Try to have a family member or friend pick you up at the airport or take a taxi so that you don't fall asleep at the wheel.

If you plan on stopping at your favorite watering or your homecoming celebration plans include alcohol, I can't stress enough the importance of having a designated driver.

After four months without alcohol, your body's tolerance to it will be much lower. A designated driver, or a taxi home is your best way of assuring a successful mission.

Remember, a little bit of common sense and planning in your "Mission Control" can be the difference between hearing "Houston, we have a problem" and "Welcome Home."

# FPASS

From Page 5

Sergeant Vialpando is probably one of the Air Force's most experienced FPASS operators, and the lessons learned elsewhere have helped him in his mission here.

"I operated the FPASS up in Afghanistan during my last deployment, and learned a lot," he said. "In three months we found weapons caches, 107mm anti-aircraft guns and other weapons with the plane.

"So far we haven't found anything near that volatile, but we have found people trying to loot materials and scrap metal outside the wire near our base perimeter," Vialpando said. "That's a big concern for us because not only could those people present a threat to us, but also to themselves - there's a lot of unexploded ordnance in that area just waiting to go off."

The base's security forces use the FPASS at Tallil as part of a comprehensive anti-terrorism program. Together with remote sensors and standard foot patrols, the Predator's little brother helps keep the base and its people safe.

"Most of our UAV flights are supporting the squadron's random anti-terrorism program," said Sergeant Roth. "We'll vary our flight times and days of the week looking for signs of possible terrorist activity. We can be ready to fly almost anytime and see any part of the base and its surroundings quickly."

As the security forces scan the skies of southern Iraq, the Desert Hawk is also returning images of the people living in Southern Iraq returning to a normal way of life.



▲ **VIEW FROM ABOVE:** The Ziggurat of Ur as seen from the FPASS viewscreen. The system also carries infrared cameras for evening flights.

"It's kind of nice to see life outside the gates - the caravans, vendors, sheep herders and such," Roth said. "We don't normally have a chance to go outside the perimeter here, so the FPASS is one way we get to 'go off base' and see the Iraqi people we're helping protect."

For the security forces operating the FPASS, their rotation at Tallil has been both a challenge and an opportunity. Protecting the base while operating a piece of cutting edge technology has been an experience these airmen won't soon forget.

"I feel like we're making a difference for our security forces on patrol at Tallil," Roth said. "Working with the Desert Hawk and supporting the mission here is something I'll remember for the rest of my career."



▲ **UP AND AWAY:** Staff Sgt. Joseph Vialpando recoils back after releasing the Desert Hawk aircraft. The four-foot long plane relies upon a bungee cord catapult system to provide acceleration for takeoff.



# Army returns control of site to Iraqis

**Transfer of power called “significant stride” in returning control of Iraq back to its citizens**

by **John Randt**

MTMC Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq – A significant event marking the return to normalcy for the Iraqi people occurred Oct. 7. Authority of a site was transferred back to the people of Iraq.

Coalition forces transferred authority of the former Al Thawath Nuclear Research facility to the Iraqi Ministerial Guard. The Ministerial Guard will oversee the security and integrity of the facility.

To kick off the ceremony, two separate formations, one comprised of the Iraqi Ministerial Guard and the other of soldiers from B Company, 1st Battalion, 37th Armored Regiment, 1st Armored Division, marched from opposite ends of the ceremony area toward each other and came to a stop five feet before they would have met. The two formations showed the union upon which coalition forces and Iraqis are building. As a special guest speaker, Dr. Rashad Omar, the Iraqi minister of science and technology, said the day was monumental.

“Today marks the first change-

of-command ceremony between Iraqis and the coalition,” he said. “This place (the nuclear facility) was a place of much concern and controversy. We will use it for new and better circumstances.”

The prior regime utilized the Al Thawath Nuclear Research Facility as a weapons research and development site, mainly concentrating on nuclear energy. Omar said the site will be used for science and technology research.

Lt. Col T.C. Williams, commander, 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 1st Armored Division, also spoke at the ceremony. He spoke of his fondness for the Iraqi people and said that their cooperation with the coalition made the event possible.

“I am proud of the spirit of cooperation between the coalition and the Ministerial Guard,” he said.

The ceremony concluded with the playing of the Iraqi national anthem and a ceremonial exchange of an AK-47 assault rifle between a U.S. soldier and a member of the Ministerial Guard to symbolize the transfer of authority.

“The Americans did well to give back this facility to the Iraqi people,” said Hady Bouhy, one of the 412 guards assigned to the 23,000-acre complex. “It shows great progress.”



U.S. Army photo

**▲ CHANGING OF THE GUARD:** Capt. David Zelkowitz, B Company commander, 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment, 1st Armored Division, performs a ceremonial passing of an AK-47 rifle to a Ministerial Guard, symbolizing the transfer of authority, at the former Al Thawath Nuclear Research Facility in Baghdad, Oct. 7.

Capt. David Zelkowitz, B Company commander, 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment, 1st Armored Division, said the change of authority is more than just another step toward normalcy for the Iraqi people. “It offers more jobs and this will definitely be a centerpiece for

this area,” Zelkowitz said.

Bouhy and the rest of the guards were thrilled by the ceremony and the chance to be a part of history. “Now we can celebrate something for ourselves,” Bouhy said. “We did not have the opportunity to celebrate with the old regime.”



Photo by Staff Sgt. John Barton

**◀ SHOW ME THE MONEY!:** Fiji Army members Private Joeli Rarawa and Private Epli Rakai unload sacks of cash from an aircraft flown into Tallil Air Base Tuesday. The coalition partners oversee the safe delivery of the currency used to fund operations in Iraq.

## Words for Warriors

*“Old rules no longer apply. It is not business as usual. This State of War requires us to challenge old paradigms, to be flexible and adaptable to face a cunning and devious enemy.”*

– Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker  
Chief of Staff, U.S. Army



# AF plans to fill first sergeant slots

by Staff Sgt. C. Todd Lopez

Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — Before the end of the year, Air Force officials will have taken the first step toward eliminating a 10-percent manning shortfall in first sergeant billets.

In November, as part of the new First Sergeant Selection Process, Air Force officials expect to release a list of master sergeants selected as candidates for first sergeant special duty, said Senior Master Sgt. Chris Anthony. He is the first sergeant special-duty manager at the Pentagon.

Those selected under the new process will account for nearly 33 percent of graduates from the First Sergeant Academy at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., Anthony said. They will begin attending the school in May.

That one-third is not an arbitrary number," Anthony said. "It is based on volunteer rates. Over the last year or so, the volunteers only filled about two-thirds of our requirements."

The Air Force requirement for new first sergeants is reflected in the number of slots allocated in the First Sergeant Academy each year — a little more than 300. Anthony said declining numbers of first sergeant volunteers left more than 100 empty desks at the school last year.

Empty desks at the school translate to empty first sergeant billets around the force. About 130, or 10 percent, of the nearly 1,300 units needing first sergeants are currently doing without. That is an unacceptable statistic, said the Air Force's highest-ranking enlisted member.

"First sergeant manning and decreasing class enrollments at the First Sergeant Academy have become a concern," said Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Gerald Murray. "Since the beginning of 2000, first sergeant manning has steadily decreased from 96 to 89 percent, while the rank structure has become significantly imbalanced. I believe anything less than 100-percent manning is unacceptable to properly lead and care for our enlisted force."

The prevalence of those empty enlisted leadership positions is one reason the Air Force moved toward selecting some first sergeants, Anthony said.

"First sergeant is a special duty," Anthony said. "But it is also a leadership position. We don't have vacant squadron commander positions in the Air Force. If somebody doesn't volunteer to go be a commander then the Air Force selects somebody. We do the same thing with command chiefs. Now we will do it with first sergeants."

One reason for the declining number of volunteers for first sergeant duty is a fear that it will affect a person's promotion ability. Anthony said that fear is unfounded.

"There is a perception of reduced promotions," Anthony said. "But we promote at the same level as other Air Force (specialties). The reality is that you have the same opportunity to get promoted as a first sergeant as you do

anywhere else."

The difference, Anthony said, is in the quality of people a person must compete with for that promotion.

"The competition is a little different," Anthony said. "As a first sergeant, you are in a special duty where you are competing against other first sergeants, all with stellar records. We don't bring in anything less than outstanding non-

commissioned officers in this job. That tends to make the competition a little tougher."

Simply having completed a tour as a first sergeant increases your chances of promotion when returning to your primary career field, he said.

"For those (who) depart first sergeant duty after three years, it is a big career enhancer for them," Anthony said.

"Our numbers show that 87 percent of master sergeants who return to their primary (specialty) after having performed first sergeant duty get promoted to senior master sergeant the first time testing. Promotion boards look favorably on first sergeant experience."

Anthony said the list released in November will contain about 400 names. Of those 400, about 120 will eventually become first sergeants. Continuing at that rate, he said, the Air Force can expect to be 100-percent manned for first sergeants by about 2006.



## This Week In History



October 24, 1944  
McCampbell downs nine fighters

Navy Commander David McCampbell hops into a partially fueled aircraft to intercept a Japanese bomber force at sea. Everyone else goes for the bombers, but McCampbell and his wingman go for the 40+ fighters, which have already turned back. Facing 20:1 odds and with no help coming, the two pilots choose to engage the enemy alone. McCampbell makes an astounding nine kills and receives the Medal of Honor.

Only you can prevent  
Tent City fires!



Don't let this happen  
at Tallil Air Base...





◀ **TWO BY TWO:** A pair of camels make their way through the southern Iraqi desert as the mid-October sun sets.

Photo by Special Agent Jessie Garcia



Photo by Flight Lt. Allen

▲ **READY, AIM, FIRE:** Flight Lt. Simon 'Gizmo' Gilmore, No.1 Air Control Centre A Watch Surveillance Director, takes aim with a U.S. Air Force M4 Rifle on the local range during a recent 'Coalition' range day.

# BEST — Give Us Your — SHOT

### Here's How:

We want to see Tallil Air Base and the surrounding areas from the inside and out and we need your help. If you've got a digital camera, then we want to talk to you!

Send us your best digital photo for the week and we'll chose the top shots to be published in the next issue of the *Tallil Times*.

When submitting photos, make sure they are of reasonable quality and in any PC compatible format. Next, make sure you provide us with an accurate description of the event and **COMPLETE** names of all persons pictured.

Photos without complete information cannot be considered. Photos must be in good taste and not compromise safety or security in any manner.

If you have questions, contact the Public Affairs Office at DSN 459-0014 or send your questions directly to [tallil.times@tlab.aorcentaf.af.mil](mailto:tallil.times@tlab.aorcentaf.af.mil).



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Elven Gilliam

▲ **AFTER THE STORM:** After a frenzy of lightening and rain late Saturday night, the sun breaks through the clouds over tent city Sunday morning.



# Cops trade handcuffs for intramural basketball crown

## ESFS defeats EMXS, 44-37 in championship

by Staff Sgt. Terry Jones

332nd Expeditionary Services Squadron

The motto for the 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron intramural basketball team was simple: win one game for the base championship.

Their prediction ranked right up there in basketball folklore like Boston Celtics legend Larry Bird's predictions of winning numerous NBA three point contests.

The Cops handcuffed the 332nd Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron in the early going and held off several of their rallies to win Monday's intramural championship 44-37 before a large, vocal crowd.

Had Maintenance won, a second contest would have to be played, but the Cops coach, Purnell Smith, had no plans to play two.

"One game" was echoed by several ESFS players throughout warmups, and they carried that attitude onto the court from the opening tip off until the final buzzer sounded.

Meanwhile, EMXS traveled a long and weary road to make it to the finals. After losing their playoff opener, the Maintainers won four straight games, including two on October 17, to reach the finals. If their championship dream was to remain alive, they would have to defeat the powerful Cops, better known as five-0, twice in the same night.

The Cops, with a huge front line advantage, patiently tried to get the ball inside in the early going, but 332 EMXS packed their 3-2 zone defense in the paint to offset the bigger Cops team.

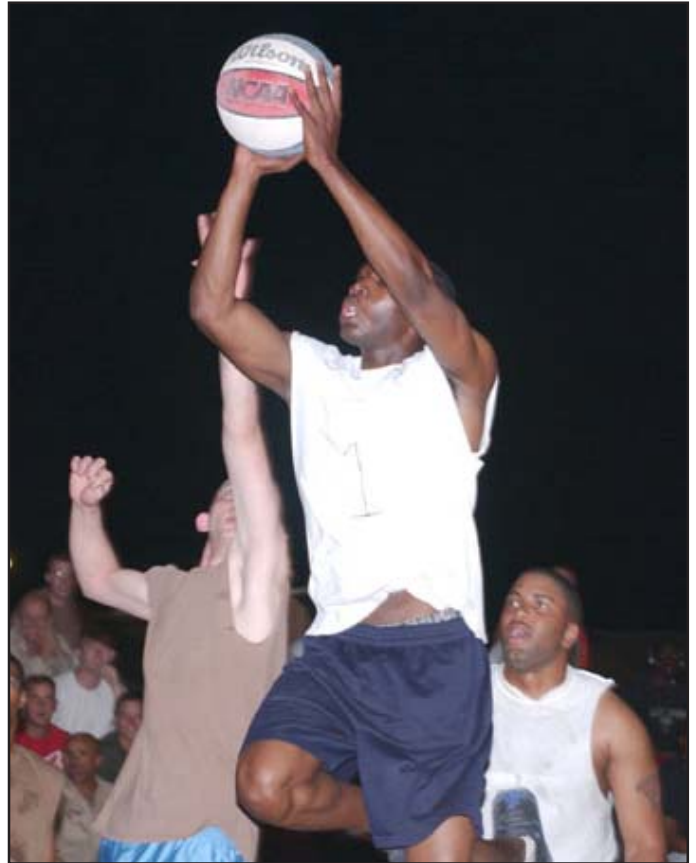
ESFS shooting guard Javon Barnett took advantage of the situation, hitting a three pointer to start the contest. On the next possession, Barnett hit another three pointer, and when 332 EMXS continued to play a tight zone defense, Barnett later canned another three from the same spot on the court.

Finally, Maintenance loosened the zone, and the Cops were able to find some passing lanes in their defense.

Meanwhile, Maintenance, down nine after Barnett's barrage of three pointers, began to creep slowly back into the contest behind a balanced scoring attack. The Cops led 23-16 at halftime.

The 332 EMXS guard tandem of Garnett Bradley and Jose Kobbs began to slice through and around the Cops' defense for layups or short jumpers, dropping the Cops' lead to four midway through the second half.

The Cops went back to their strength, their low post game, as Darius Peoples began to assert himself around the basket, either scoring or drawing fouls. However, a 3 for 8 showing at the free throw line by the Cops kept the maintainers in the battle.



▲ ONE FOR THE TEAM: Reginald Jones, ESFS, takes a jumpshot during the intramural basketball championship game Monday. Photos by Master Sgt. Kenneth Velez

Maintenance fared worst at the free throw line in the second half, sealing their fate. They shot just 3 for 11 from the charity stripe in the second half, allowing the Cops to cling to their lead. The Cops went to their spread offense for the last two minutes of the game, forcing the maintainers to foul. As the final seconds wound down, the jubilant Cops fans began to celebrate the hard fought victory.

Smith assessed his team's performance.

"Our strategy was to move the ball around, not commit too many turnovers, and basically score a bucket every time we controlled the ball," he said. "We were concerned with their two guards. They control the tempo of their game."

Smith also wanted to take advantage of his team's size.

"We wanted to keep the ball going inside to our big men and make sure we kept our presence in the paint," he said. "When they got back in the game, we wanted to control the ball, have no turnovers, and get the ball inside to our big men."

Barnett led the Cops with 15 points, and Peoples added 13. Bradley and Kobbs paced 332 EMXS with 11 points each.



▲ ONE GAME: Fans and members of the 332nd ESFS team chanted "one game" during warm ups for the Championship game between the cops and 332nd EMXS. Had the maintainers won, the two teams would have faced another game to determine the intramural champion.