



THE QUEBEC INQUIRY



U.S. NAVY CUSTOMS BATTALION QUEBEC

- HQ COMPANY - ALPHA COMPANY - BRAVO COMPANY - CHARLIE COMPANY -

Special Issue: A Day on the Job —Working to earn our bread (pgs. 3 - 9)



Customs Battalion QUEBEC send well wishes to Freeport Flag Lady

By JO1 Doug Mappin

Kuwait—A random act of kindness can go a long way to making someone feel less cut off from their world of support.

For military personnel on outgoing flights from the continental United States a layover in Bangor, Me., is a common occurrence. Ensuring that the troops know they are loved and appreciated is the mission of the Freeport Flag Ladies—and their presence is far from being a random occurrence—and far from an easy proposition for these three women from Freeport.

The Freeport Flag Ladies travel to Bangor International Airport as often as possible. The trip from Freeport, Me., to Bangor is a two to three hour drive—all so that they can pay their respects to the troops fighting in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom / Operation Enduring Freedom.

Navy Customs QUEBEC and its members were the lucky recipients of a send off from these fine ladies.

Recently, Freeport Flag Lady Elaine Greene had taken ill and was hospitalized. She has since been released. But one act of kindness once recognized calls upon us to return in kind.

“Elaine had been getting increasingly ill for several months,” said Freeport Flag Lady JoAnn Miller. “Her hospital course was very rocky with several cri-



Photos by JO1 Doug Mappin

The Chiefs’ Mess gather to send well wishes from Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC’s Chief’s community. SKC Demetria Supiping, Command Master Chief Susan Frazier and SKC Patricia Tibaudou display a signed battalion t-shirt that has been sent to Freeport Flag Lady Elaine Greene. Anyone wishing to send Ms. Greene a card may find her address on page 13.

ses. She was distraught that she would miss holding the flag for the first time since September 11, 2001.

“We assured her that her troops and their families would understand,” Miller said.

During her recuperation friends brought Greene her scarf, bears and flag. Greene began receiving cards, flowers and well-wishes—and many prayers from friends and from strang-

ers from all over the country. Greene and the other two have resolved to continue her mission to honor our troops.

“She recently insisted on attending the funeral of a fallen Maine National Guardsman who was killed in Iraq,” Miller said. “This was against her doctor’s advice, but she said she was going to do all she could

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Letter from the CO



By the time you read this we will be more than a third of our way through our time in theater. While it seems in some ways that we just arrived, we have been very busy accomplishing our mission and improving the work environment for our Sailors. Bravo

Zulu to all of you for making the Customs mission go so well to date. We continue to meet or exceed all of our mission requirements without any serious injuries. The Army is impressed by the major enhancements QUEBEC has made to our work sites and the 20% reduction you have made in redeployer process flows.

I appreciated your Command feedback from the Captain's Calls conducted earlier this month and I hope that you recognize some of your suggestions have already been implemented. We are continuing to look for solutions that will allow us to do our jobs better. The smoother and more efficient our processes are the easier

we make it on the troops leaving the theater. I ask that you keep the lines of communications open in your chain and the ideas flowing and we will do our best to find the resources to make it happen.

We recently completed our first round of personnel rotations in an attempt to allow for cross training, new environments or experiences or additional leadership opportunities. We obviously could not meet everyone's desires but we did follow through on the commitment to give you this opportunity. I anticipate another round will take place later in our tour as we frock our 34 new 1st Class Petty Officers and 20 2nd Class Petty Officers. Congratulations to all these Sailors on their advancement.

As the days get longer and the temperature rises, I ask that you be safe and watch out for your shipmates so we continue to meet our first goal of bringing everyone home safely. I encourage you to take time to stay in touch with your friends, families, and employers back home. Keeping those lines of communication open, will make your time here go

more quickly and the reintegration back into your normal life easier on your return. I am also excited that Navy Chaplain Lt. Andrew Smith has agreed to embrace the QUEBEC Sailors with spiritual and emotional guidance and support for the remainder of our stay. He will be traveling around to the companies with senior leadership on a regular basis and can be contacted for individual guidance as may be needed.

Finally, Memorial Day traditionally marks the beginning of summer. I hope that each of you will take time to reflect on the accomplishments and deeds of those who have gone before us in uniform. The fight that we are involved in today is no less important to our Nation's future than wars gone by. In years to come each of you will have a different appreciation for this special holiday and be able to hold your head high as a grateful nation thanks and honors you for your selfless service.

Let's keep up the good work and stay safe this summer.

Cmdr. Mark Failor

Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC's coins

Command Excellence Coin
Sponsored by CO and CMC



Chief's Coin
Sponsored by CPO Assoc



Command Coin
Sponsored by Officer Wardroom



A Day on the Job: Among this team, PAX is tops!



Photos by PH3 Michael Oday

BM2 Missy Parker assigned to the Alpha Company PAX team of U.S. Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC, double checks the paperwork needed to ship inspected cargo at a remote area assembly warehouse before it's shipped back to the United States.

By PH2 Michael Oday

Kuwait—When you walk into the passenger terminal (commonly known as the “sunshade”), you sense there is something different about this mission. It is not because of the cold drinks and snacks or because of the TV playing the latest movie releases. It is because walking through this door means you are going home.

The sign on the building could easily read “Enter here for family, friends, green grass, apple-pie, and all points west.”

U.S. Navy Customs Battalion Quebec’s PAX Team from Alpha Company has five primary watch locations. The team works PAX or passenger inspections and remote area assembly missions focusing on every type of cargo from ammunition to sea bags to vehicles. The team is responsible for getting anything shipped home quickly, safely, and in full compliance with civilian laws and military regulations regarding entrance into the United States.

Mineman 2nd Class Bonnie Dykes, the PAX team supervisor, credits the team for being able to accomplish such a



Photos by PH3 Michael Oday

JO2 Donald Randall and Boatswains Mate 2nd Class Missy Parker assigned to Alpha Company’s PAX team of U.S. Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC, inspect boxes of cargo at a remote area assembly warehouse before shipping back to the United States. Our Sailors are charged with enforcing rules, regulations, and laws of US Border Control, Customs, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms.

diverse mission set with the highest level of professionalism.

“I think we have the hardest working team here,” MN2 Dykes said.

PAX missions require a wide range of skills, knowledge of the operating procedures and dedication. The team can start as early as 0530 and it’s not uncommon for them to still be working after 2000. The PAX team is also called upon several times a week to inspect distinguished visitors at remote locations. While these missions can run as late as 2130, most of the PAX members consider it an honor to be picked for this duty.

The Team’s favorite duty is by far the passenger missions.

“I enjoy it because you work with the people coming in from Iraq. I enjoy talking to them and hearing what they have to say, what it’s been like for them and what their plans are,” Boatswain Mate 2nd Class Judith Lopuszynski said. “There was a two-star general who just came in from the field. He had been in Iraq for a year. It was his second or third tour and it was just such an honor to be part of the



Photos by PH3 Michael Oday

SK3 Pedro Abascal assigned to Alpha Company’s PAX team of U.S. Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC, “wands” a passenger during an inspection mission aboard the Sunshade (passenger terminal). This type of inspection insures passengers carry no harmful items on to their flights back home.

process to get him home.”

PAX Team members find a great deal of satisfaction in their jobs. Ask any team member what they enjoy most and a common theme emerges.

“It’s the passenger inspections because you are probably doing the hardest work you do for PAX,” Boatswain’s Mate 2nd Class Missy Parker said. “You go as quick as you can, you’re covering two tables but you meet all these people from a Corporal to a Colonel and all the different stories they tell. Some were just here for a week and some are going home after three years.”

This sentiment is repeated again and again by the members of the PAX team.

“The best part of working PAX is the customer service. You actually get to see the troops going home and you get to help them,” Journalist 2nd Class Donald Randall said. “Hopefully with less hassle, they get their things pre-cleared here so when they get back to the United States they can walk out the airport door and right into the arms of

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A Day on the Job: Iraq crew in transition; new rotations begin



Photo by QMC Troy Cox

The old Amnesty Box provided an area for service-members to anonymously dispose of contraband.



By Chief Quartermaster Troy Cox

Iraq – There is nothing like working in the blistering heat and then, all of a sudden, battling a rain storm that pops up and dissipates with equal rapidity. Of course, it gets even more interesting when you have to stop working to run to the bunkers when the mortars start to fly!

But work is what they do in Iraq and changes abound. Personnel in Iraq now fall under the jurisdiction of Bravo Company. The rotation of personnel has just taken place and everyone involved has learned new duties and are taking on new challenges. The new team jumped right in and took on some new and old projects. The X-ray machine that had been broken since QUEBEC's arrival in March immediately gained the attention of Fire Controlman 2nd Class Tony Barnes.

On the day of his arrival FC2 Barnes had heard all the tales of the infamous X-ray machine and the problems associated with its repair. He just smiled a little at the machine as he looked it over for the first time. With a knowing and confident look he went immediately to work fixing the machine that the Rapiscan technicians had said was unfixable.

Two hours later Barnes crawled from under the machine with his now even more noticeable smile and turned the machine on its first action in several months. SUCCESS!!! Barnes



Photo by QMC Troy Cox

(l-r) EN2 Jason Colvin, SK2 Cesar Acosta, BM3 Vincent Tuono and MN2 David Bulerski stand at the entrance of the new Amnesty Area (which they constructed) next to the Customs Processing Center.

had done what the company technicians could not, and he saved several thousand dollars by applying his Navy learned repair skills. In addition to equipment being rejuvenated, there are changes underway to the facility as well.

Presently there are several ongoing projects at Life Support Area (LSA). The first project was the construction of a new amnesty area outside the customs main entrance. Once completed, it will allow for a faster and more fluid passenger (PAX) flow. The old single unit amnesty box was dismantled and a new design was given to the project team consisting of Storekeeper 2nd Class Cesar Acosta, Mineman 2nd Class David Bulerski, Engineman 2nd Class Jason Colvin and Aviation Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class Vincent Tuono.

The team commenced construction using old lumber from the dismantled unit until approval could be gained from the base Self Help and Lumber Yard for additional materials. Within days the unit was standing tall as the new "Taj Majal" of Navy Customs compound. The new configuration, along with process improvements, will alleviate the problem of Soldiers "skirting" the system. The new process will be safer and more efficient.



Photo by QMC Troy Cox

(top) EN2 Colvin and MN2 Bulerski stand in the new Amnesty area under construction.



Photo by QMC Troy Cox

(above) EN2 Colvin stands in the breezeway connecting the Amnesty area to the Customs Processing Center. (far left) The new Amnesty area will allow for faster processing and more privacy for those wishing to dispose of any contraband items.

At the end of the first week two new container boxes (CONEX) stood in place. One box will be used for storage. The other to maintain sterility of the outgoing bags which had previously been left sitting on a pallet until loaded for transport. This sterility fix alone is one of the easiest but most important improvements made to date. It ensures that the Soldiers, Sailors, and Airman remain safe and confident that no new contraband will be allowed to find its way into their bags or onto their plane home.

Still in progress is the 500 ft. of AM2 walkway matting presently being placed along the old pallet walkway. It will provide a safer walking area for passengers carrying baggage when finished. Still in the design phase is the new office space reutilization plan. Two new offices will be built into the present CBCA common area allowing the LCPO and Admin Lead Petty Officer (LPO) to move to the Custom's compound.

This rotation, as did their predecessor, is leaving their mark on the Navy Customs mission in Iraq. It is exactly what be would expected from a motivated group of sailors with a "Can do" attitude and a little elbow grease.

A Day on the Job: Bravo's mission is first line defense

By OS2 Nathan Keith

Kuwait—The typical day for the Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC is anything but typical for the average U.S. Navy personnel. While the rest of the fleet may be at sea, the hard working sailors of Bravo Company are maintaining border security for Kuwait by inspecting all trucks leaving Iraq.

This elite team of Customs Border Clearing Agents (CBCA) risk their lives as they leave the relative safety of the base and cross the wire to perform their duties less than a mile from the Kuwait/Iraq border.

While the overall mission of the Navy Customs QUEBEC inspection battalion is to ensure returning service members and equipment carries no unwanted plants, pests or diseases to American shores, those attached to Bravo Company are here to insure that no contraband material makes its way into Kuwait.

The items on the banned list which will earn the owner some prison time (or worse) are: pornography, alcohol, drugs, weapons, illegal aliens, cigarettes, and Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) or IED making equipment. The search for these substances requires each CBCAs to climb in and out of hundreds of vehicles. Most of those vehicles are semi trucks. To date, this squad has confiscated over 6,100 cartons of cigarettes (2,500 cartons in one bust alone), fifteen bottles of alcohol, and twenty miscellaneous objects.

It could appear to an outside observer that cigarettes are our biggest bust article and the question possibly will arise "what's the big deal?" The answer is that the street value of each carton is up to \$30 U.S. dollars.



Photos by Camp Navistar personnel

Vehicles line up, seemingly for miles as they await an inspection from Bravo Company personnel. The Sailors' mission at this station is to insure that no contraband or weapons enters Kuwait from the northern border.



Photos by Camp Navistar personnel

Personnel from Bravo Company inspect the luggage storage compartment of a passenger bus (top).

Two Bravo Company Sailors (right) inspect the storage compartment inside a semi-truck cab.

AO2 Ariel Carrion-Martinez hands out water to two truck drivers while waiting for their vehicle inspection.



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A Day on the Job: A Unique Perspective

By YN2 DeeAnna Brown

Kuwait—May 1, 2006. I am one vehicle in a convoy of many. I may have come from any place in the Middle East or some other part of Afghanistan. I am on a trek back to my birthplace. I have a long journey before I get home.

The troops accompanying me take me through the wash racks to free me of any dirt or plant life before my trip home. I don't want to get anyone sick or dirty when I return. Plus my driver might have left something valuable or restricted inside of me. After I get my 2855 (that is my stamp of approval), then I am off to a sea station to await being shipped. I stay with my customs agents to maintain sterility.

When I arrive at the seaport, I am greeted by my gatekeeper. The Mike Two watch station is the gatekeeper of the sterile lot. No one gets in the sterile lot without being checked here first. I'm counted with all of the other vehicles in my convoy, my 2855 is checked, and then I'm sent to the lot. I'm not sure how long I will be waiting for my ship, hopefully not too long.

May 2, 2006. Mike One, the leader of the Mike watch stations, came by for a 10 percent check. We get one every twenty-four hours. Now I will just wait until my ship is ready.

May 3, 2006. It is official. The ship is just about ready for me. Now I have to check out with Mike 3, where my 2855 will be verified again, and sent to the rinse rack to get a quick rinse off before I leave. Romeo Watch Station will check my 2855 and put a dated letter on me. Then, I'm off to the loading lot. At the loading lot, Sierra Two or Three watch station checks my 2855, counts the number of vehicles in my convoy, and sends me to the Loading Sterile lot. I will be here until the ship is ready to be loaded. I know which pier I will be loaded on based on which watch station they send me to.

May 4, 2006. Sierra One, the leader of the Sierra stations, completes another 10 percent check on the vehicles in my convoy. I'm so glad that I have so many customs agents ensuring that I am clean before I go home.

May 5, 2005. I am going to the pier today! I meet up with the Papa One or Papa Two, depending on which pier I am going on. My 2855 is checked one final time. Then I am loaded onto the



Photos courtesy of Charlie Company

MM3(SW) Rodney Jessamy (left) and IT2 Sae Kim (right) show off a HUMVEE that was inspected by Sailors from U.S. Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC before it is shipped out of the AOR. All equipment leaving Kuwait, Iraq or Afghanistan must meet sterility requirements before entering the United States and other U.S. military installations.



Photos courtesy of Charlie Company

The ship American awaits pier-side for cargo to be loaded before departing for its home port. Sailors from U.S. Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC insure that no cargo is loaded without being inspected beforehand.

ship named the AMERICAN. I am placed in her belly, and then off to sea.

For a watch stander the view is one aspect of the trip, but for a military vehicle or other types of equipment, this is a typical trip through the camp systems. Soon I will be home, and hopefully so will be the troops for who maintained me this past year. During my trip before leaving Kuwait I overheard a number of conversations.

"There are other watches, such as the helo watch, which are just as important," Operations Specialist 1st Class Barbara Hager said. "However, they are not manned on a regular basis."

"We took four to six personnel, inspected the helos and then rode along with the helos to maintain sterility," Boatswain's Mate Senior Chief (SW) Mark Turner said. "When we arrived at the seaport, the helos were rinsed and shrink wrapped before being loaded onto the ship. The helo watch is one of the most interesting missions we have."

"I will never forget the two-foot lizard that was just lying on the side of the road," says Aviation Boatswain's Mate Chief (NAC) Michael Salazar. Encounters with giant lizards, snakes, scorpions, and spiders are an everyday hazard of the watches here.

"The Middle East has several animals that are extremely venomous, such as the Desert Black Snake, the Desert Horned Viper, and the Persian Sand

Viper, the infamous Camel spider, the black scorpion, and the Domino Beetle," Hospital Corpsmen 2nd Class Jill Partin said. "The reality is that some of our medical facilities are limited and antivenom is only available at our main camp."

"I prefer the Mike 2 station because all of the action starts with this watch," Machinist Mate 3rd Class (SW) Rodney Jessamy said.

"I prefer to be at the Sierra Three station due to the close proximity to the water," Information Systems Technician 2nd Class Sae Kim said.

"The Papa watch is a tough watch to stand because we are out in the sun with all of the fumes from the ships, vehicles and chemical plants that surround the encampment." Ship's Serviceman 3rd Class Todd Hanes said.

"The fact that the dining facility (DFAC) is small, they are able to put the personal touch on the food that is served," Hull Technician 1st Class (SW) Harold Neales said.

"The mission is unique in the fact that it is not a military facility, but a seaport," Lt. Cmdr. Juan Guerin said. "All of our watch stations at the seaport are vital to the receipt of war fighting materials for troops that are fighting the war."

A Day on the Job: Viper Teams send them home



Photos by Bravo Company

Photos by Bravo Company

OS2 Daniel Larkin and EM2 Stephen McKee look over the schedule board for the day's scheduled VIPER missions.

U.S. Army personnel (above, below) are led in line of seven tents for a Customs pre-briefing before their personal belongings are inspected by the Sailors of Bravo Company at the LSA.



Photos by Bravo Company

OS2 Daniel Larkin and EM2 Stephen McKee provide instruction to a U.S. Army soldier preparing to board the bus for departure from Kuwait.



By MA2 Mark Kozee

Kuwait—It is 1740 and the chalk commander still has not come forward with the manifest. For a chalk that is supposed to “push” or go to the airport at 1745 this has the potential for disaster.

Such unpredictable events are the nature of Viper missions, and according to Electrician’s Mate 2nd class (SS) Stephen McKee, a member of Viper Team Three, this is all in a day’s work.

“We see all kinds of potential delays to getting these Soldiers and Airmen home on time,” said McKee. “Some delays, like the weather, we obviously don’t have any control over.”

The chalk commander, an Army major, finally arrives with the manifest. The delay was actually over part of his checked baggage. McKee and Viper Team Three partner Operations Specialist 2nd Class (SS) Daniel Larkin debrief the major and moments later, the convoy is off.

It is a lot of hard work processing chalks through Customs. But those chalks still have to get to the airport from the Life Support Area (LSA) where they were checked, and they have to still be sterile, from a U.S. Customs point of view.

“If passengers are not sterile when they get to the airport, then all of the hard work of customs inspectors is wasted,” said OS2 John Dawkins, a member of Viper Team One.

That is where the Viper teams come in.

The Viper teams accompany the secure convoy carrying the chalk to the airport from LSA. The convoy consists of the Viper’s non-tactical vehicle (NTV), two military police HUMVEEs, and buses of passengers. The Viper teams insure that sterility is maintained by escorting the convoy and monitoring the disembarkation of the passengers. This insures that no contraband or prohibited items find their way out of theater and into the U.S. after the servicemember has been cleared by the

Bravo Customs team. Vipers also support Remote Area Assembly (RAA) missions and escort VIPs.

This requires the Viper teams to escort the convoy to the airport. Once they arrive they must stand watch over the passengers as they enter the holding area before they get to the flight line. Then the Viper teams must go out on the flight line and monitor the loading of the baggage and passengers. The Viper teams don’t get to go home until they see the plane takeoff.

One of the Vipers’ most difficult challenges is the logistics of coordinating their efforts with those of Tactical Operations Center (TOC), the Army, Air Force, the MCT or Movement Control Team, the contract bus drivers, and the Kuwaiti National Police. “If one piece is missing, the whole ‘push’ can come to a standstill,” OS2 Josh Perkins said.

According to leading petty officer (LPO), OS2 Lawrence Ripa, it’s not unlike

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A Day on the Job: PAX is tops!

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of their loved ones and to me that is the most satisfying part of customs.”

When the team is not inspecting passengers or in the middle of canyons of container boxes surrounded by nothing but sun and sand, they are back at the sunshade cleaning, maintaining, and improving the building for the next mission.

“We put a lot of work into the building because the people coming here are heroes going home and we want their last day or night in country to be a good one,” PAX Assistant Supervisor, Storekeeper 2nd Class Scott Johnson said. “We want the process to be as quick and smooth as possible.”

Mineman 2nd Class Dykes smiles

when she speaks about how hard everyone has worked to improve the conditions at the sunshade to make the military per clearance process as pleasant as possible for the passengers. She explained that the entire process is constantly improving.

“QUEBEC is only the third battalion to have customs here for the Navy and we’re learning,” Dykes said. “The company command has created a customer service survey because it’s important to know what the passengers think, if they have a suggestion we need to look and implement it if we can.”

But with all the improvements Mineman 2nd Class Dykes is most proud of “the people and the Sailors that make up the PAX Team.”



Photos by JO1 Doug Mappin

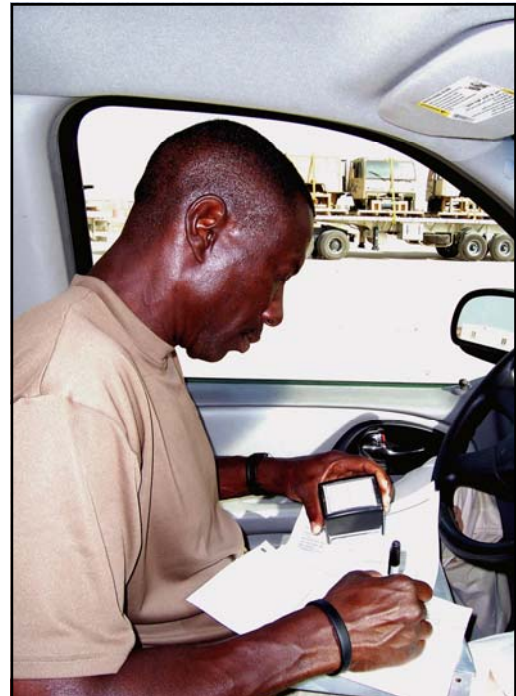
(above) JO2 Donald Randall inspects the personal belongings of a soldier returning back to the United States. SK2 Scott Johnson stands by to perform a quality check once Randall’s has completed his inspection.

U.S. Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC conducts rotator missions at the Sunshade (passenger terminal). The sunshade facility is used to inspect departing personnel’s personal belongings insuring that nothing leaving Kuwait is on the prohibited list of items that could endanger anyone on the return trip home.



Photos by PH3 Michael Oday

PH3 Ernesto Bonilla (above) assigned to Alpha Company’s PAX team of U.S. Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC inspects 50 caliber machine guns for sterility (cleanliness) at a remote area assembly container yard before they can be shipped back to the United States.



Photos by PH3 Michael Oday

IC2 Jamaal Edwards (right), assigned to U.S. Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC, completes the necessary paperwork for the truck cab inspection before they can be shipped back to the United States.

A Day on the Job: Viper Teams send them home



Photos by Bravo Company

Members of Bravo Company's VIPER team converse with members from the U.S. Army. The teams work together to assure safe transit to the airport.



Photos by Bravo Company

Members of Bravo Company's VIPER team converse with members from the U.S. Army while awaiting a departure time to deliver troops to the airport.



Photos by Bravo Company

EM2 Stephen McKee calls out boarding instructions to Army personnel awaiting to board the transport bus from the LSA to the airport and their final destination.



Photos by Bravo Company

(above) OS2 Stephen McKee (Center) and OS2 Daniel Larkin (right) provide last minute instructions to Army personnel who soon will be departing the AOR for their home destinations.

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operations specialists work aboard a ship.

"It's kind of a coincidence that so many Vipers are OS's, but the work is similar. It's a balancing act," he said. Ripa added that as an LPO, he is still a Viper.

"Morale among the Viper teams has remained consistently very high, and I think it has to do with the tangible nature of the job. We get to see Soldiers and Airmen get on a plane and go home. It's cool.

"It's also rewarding to see how the other branches work, and to get to know service members of the other branches," Ripa said.

The 24-hour availability of Vipers adds to the uniqueness of their jobs. "Most Sailors in Customs are either on days but not us Vipers," said Aviation Ordnanceman 3rd Class Joana Jonas, also of Viper Team Two. "If there is a push at 12 in the afternoon or 12 at night and it's assigned to my team, then I'm there. Sleeping and eating sometimes have to wait.

"But those are small sacrifices that we make to help these war heroes get home," said Jonas.

Finally, at 2245, over five hours after the mission began, McKee and Larkin are ready to leave the airport.

"Mission accomplished," said a relieved Larkin.

"Morale among the Viper teams has remained consistently very high, and I think it has to do with the tangible nature of the job. We get to see Soldiers and Airmen get on a plane and go home. It's cool."

**—OS2 Lawrence Ripa,
Bravo Company, U.S. Navy
Customs Battalion QUEBEC**

QUEBEC Ombudsmen provide our link between us and home



Battalion Ombudsman: Thank you for the opportunity to serve as Ombudsman. My name is Janet Weyer, my husband is SK3 David Weyer. We have been married for 14 years, and although we have no children we do have one very precious dog who is spoiled rotten. I have spent most of the last 15 years working in the not-for-profit world with various agencies doing fund raising and management. David has been a Pre-School Teacher for the past eight years. We reside in Indiana; however, we love to travel, and thanks to David's wonderful voice and his participation in our local Philharmonic Chorus we have been able to take trips to Italy and England. We also enjoy short weekend trips, especially to St. Louis, Mo., for Cardinals baseball. I am very excited to serve as your Battalion Ombudsman for Navy Customs Quebec, I consider it an honor to assist the families of the men and women who serve in this unit.

Contact: jweyer2@netzero.com



Alpha Company: Hello, my name is Rebecca Nelan. I am the Alpha Company Ombudsman. My husband is OS1 Roger Nelan. We have been married for 16 years. This is our son Bradley. We live in Camp Verde, Ariz. I have a full time job, I am helping with our son's swim team and I help with his Boy Scout Troop. I look forward in working with you all.

Contact: rnelan@commspeed.net



Bravo Company: Good day. My name is Bridgit St. Onge. My husband is Glenn and has been a Reservist for three years. This is my first deployment, but Glenn was active duty several years ago. We have a son who just turned three. I still work full time, and attend school. We live in New Mexico, and I am an active member with the Blue Star Mothers, and the Hearts Apart Support group on Kirtland Air Force Base.

Contact: bridgit75@hotmail.com



Bravo Company: My name is Sara Johnson I am the wife of MM1 Johnson with the Bravo Company. We reside in Sturtevant Wisconsin we have two children a son Brandon who is 13 and a daughter Kylie who is 10. I work part time for the school district as a Food Service Manager. I enjoy golf, sports, and doing Stampin' Up (making cards).

Contact: saralynn@wi.rr.com



Charlie Company: Our names are Patty Hager and daughter Casi Rice. My husband has been in the service for 18 years and I have been with him throughout his Naval career. We have been married for 35 years. We have two sons that have also served in the armed forces. I have never been an ombudsman before, but I feel I am up for the challenge. I will be accompanied in this position with my daughter Casi. Her husband was in the Navy for eight years. She was on the Command Board at all of his duty stations. She has also been an Asst. Ombudsman. I want to thank you all for giving me the opportunity in helping everyone in the Charlie Company. Please feel free to call us any time night or day. I will do my best in helping you and keeping you well informed. Thank you,

Contact: hagersla@bellsouth.net



Bravo Company: My name is Tammy Harvey, wife of 6 years to Chris. I am the assistant ombudsman for Bravo Company. We have a 4 year old daughter and another one on the way, due in September. I am honored to be chosen to serve as family ombudsman and have already made several friends that I will carry with me long after my duties are over. I look forward to supporting our troops and families left back home in the coming months.

Let me know if you need any further information.

Contact: tammy.harvey@PHNS.com

QUEBEC Corpsmen on Watch as Temperatures Rise

by HM1 Jonathan Greene
Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC, Medical
Department LPO

“That which doesn’t kill you makes you stronger,” is a statement meant to give comfort during difficult times. While in many cases adversity can make one stronger, exposure to extreme heat and sustaining heat related injuries does not improve one’s health or strengthen the character. The medical staff of Customs Battalion QUEBEC knows that all too well. Because the effects of heat related injuries can be permanent, the staff of Navy Corpsmen keep it high on the radar at all times.

“The only effective way to avoid permanent damage from heat related injuries is to avoid them in the first place,” said Hospital Corpsmen 1st Class Jaime Watson, Medical Department Lead Petty Officer with Alpha Company.

Watson, along with her staff of corpsmen, makes evaluating work conditions and stressing hydration part of their every day work routine.

“You have got to replace the fluid lost through sweating,” Watson said. “Out here you can dehydrate quickly. We keep on these guys to drink their water and Gatorade.”

On a recent day, HM3 Kristin Nixon was making her way out to a remote work site with ice for coolers of drinking water. She makes the run on most days. Today she is taking extra time and care checking Sailors for signs of heat injury.

“Today is our first “Black Flag” day,” Nixon said. “We want to make sure the guys are handling the heat OK.”

The flag warning system is based on the color codes (green, yellow, red, and black) of the WBGT index. The WBGT Index is a system for combining shade, air temperature, radiation, humidity, and wind into a single value. This value is obtained by reading three simple instruments and multiplying each reading by a known factor. The results are then totaled to obtain the index. The index is used as a guide for controlling the degree of outdoor physical activity engaged in by military personnel. Colored signal flags are hoisted on Camps in the AOR to indicate the heat stress potential. Using the color code and a chart posted in work areas, supervisors and sailors can determine the appropriate work / rest cycle for the day.

There are several factors which increase the risk of suffering a heat related injury. People with positive sickle cell trait are 40 times more likely than those without to have heat related illness. Personnel new to the AOR or who

normally work in air conditioned spaces can be more likely to have adverse effects of the heat when working outside. People in poor physical condition and those who are overweight tend to suffer more, the extra layer of fat acts as a blanket keeping the climbing body heat in. Even those in good physical condition can fall victim to heat related illness or injury. Use of over the counter medications like Sudafed can increase the risk, as can the use of nutritional supplements like Creatine. An overly motivated Sailor can be at risk too. Continuing to work through break periods and ignoring the signs of dehydration can send a well meaning Sailor to the hospital or the SIQ list.

“We’re in the workspaces making sure people hydrate and use their sunscreen sometimes in spite of themselves,” Watson said. “Your corpsmen are like an insurance policy for the battalion. They focus on our people so they can focus on the mission. In the end, it is all about ensuring our primary objective to return all our Sailors healthy when the mission is complete.”



Heat Can KILL!

Prevention Works

Drink:

- Drink enough water to replace your sweat losses.
- Don’t wait to feel thirsty, your body may need water before you feel thirsty.
- Remind your buddy to drink. Refill your canteens at every opportunity.
- Look at your urine. If it is dark or if you have not urinated, you need to drink more.

Eat:

- Eat meals to replace salts. Drinking too much water and not eating enough salt may be fatal.
- Do not follow low calorie diets while training in a hot environment.
- Do NOT take any dietary supplements containing ephedra (ma-huang) ANY time.

Customs Battalion QUEBEC Family news



Photo courtesy of the Allen family

Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC HQ's Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class Marcus Allen is a new father.

He and his wife Angeleta Allen, have welcomed a baby girl to their family. Ashley, 6 lb., 12oz., was born on May 18; BM3 Allen learned he had advanced to second class a few days later. Congrats to the Allen household!



Two other families have celebrated the arrival of a newborn.

Gunner's Mate 2nd Class Mark Craig and Construction Mechanic 2nd Class Michael Corsetti both are new fathers. Details will follow in the July issue.

This Month in U.S. Navy History

- June 1, 1914 - General Order 99 prohibits alcohol on board naval vessels, naval yards or Naval Stations.
- June 3, 1949 - Wesley A. Brown becomes the first African American to graduate from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md.
- June 3, 1966 - Launch of Gemini 9, piloted by Lt. Cmdr. Eugene Cernan, USN. The mission included 45 orbits over three days.
- June 4-7, 1942 - Battle of Midway. It is here the four Japanese aircraft carriers responsible for the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor are sunk. USS Yorktown is sunk during this battle.
- June 6, 1944 - D-Day! Operation Overlord; Allied Invasion storms the Normandy Beach of France; the largest amphibious operation in history (over 2700 ships and crafts were involved).
- June 8, 1990 - Cmdr. Rosemary Mariner becomes the first woman to command a jet fleet aircraft squadron.
- June 11, 1953 - Navy ships evacuate 20,000 Koreans from West Coast Islands to safety.
- June 12, 1970 - USS Guam begins 11 days of disaster relief after major earthquake strikes the country of Peru.
- June 24, 1833 - USS Constitution enters drydock for refit. The ship, the U.S. Navy's oldest "ironside," was saved from being scrapped as a result of public support. She remains in service to this day.
- June 30, 1815 - USS Peacock takes HMS Nautilus. This is the last action of the War of 1812.

Next Issue

- Sailor Spotlight
- Down Time: Sports and other local R&R activities
- QUEBEC Corpsmen provide watchful eye to health
- Ratings merger! No more JOs or PHs (LIs and DMs too)
- Bowling in the Sand?
- Bravo Company improves the process!

This and more...

See you next month!

June Birthdays

OS2 Bryan Miller	June 1	HQ	MNSN Ramon Rodriguez-Maldonado	June 17	Bravo Co.
YN3 Maria Forestier	June 2	HQ	OS2 John Sanchez	June 18	Alpha Co.
AT2 Justin Perry	June 4	Bravo Co.	BM3 Alberto Vasquez	June 19	Alpha Co.
OS2 Refugia Trujillo	June 4	Alpha Co.	YN2 Steven Mundy	June 19	Alpha Co.
Command Master Chief Susan Frazier	June 6	HQ	FC2 Tony Barnes	June 20	Bravo Co.
Cmdr. Mark Failor	June 9	HQ	CS3 Aaron Valleroy	June 23	Charlie Co.
HT2 James Miller	June 10	Bravo Co.	BM3 Missy Parker	June 25	Alpha Co.
AE2 Clessie Simmons	June 15	Delta Co.	EM2 Ben Adkins	June 26	Bravo Co.
HM2 Pascale Mialy	June 16	Bravo Co.	YN2 Deborah James	June 28	HQ
SK2 Carlos Cabrera	June 17	Delta Co.	UT2 James Hager	June 29	Charlie Co.
			EO3 Shawn Sullivan	June 29	Charlie Co.
			OS3 David Craig	June 29	Charlie Co.

Sailors return-in-kind: well wishes for a Freeport Flag Lady



Photo by PH3 Michael Oday

Sailors from Alpha Company's night shift display a signed battalion t-shirt being sent to Freeport Flag Lady Elaine Greene. Green, along with other Maine citizens work tirelessly to see that American troops know they are appreciated in their fight against terror. The Flag Ladies met with our Sailors from U.S. Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC on their layover in Bangor, Me., in March.



Photo by JO1 Doug Mappin

QUEBEC's Senior Enlisted send the Chiefs' coin in appreciation for Greene's work. Everyone from U.S. Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC wish her well.

(continued from page 1)

to be there to say a final goodbye."

"I talked to all three of the ladies," Storekeeper Chief Patricia Tibaud said. "I had read about them in my local newspaper about the wonderful things they are doing for our servicemen. I never thought that I'd get to meet them on our way over. It was a nice surprise."

The Freeport Ladies' history is an interesting read. Forming to show their support for the troops after the events of September 11, 2001,

the three ladies are Elaine Greene, Carmen Footer and JoAnn Miller.

They have since met thousands of troops on their way in and out of the United States. They provide hugs, well-wishes, small gifts such as phone cards and other useful items that the troops might find need in the field.

"It was wonderful meeting these ladies," said Storekeeper 3rd Class Brandon Bridges. "They met us early in the morning and let us use their phones to call our families before we left the country. It was

great seeing people that early in the morning supporting us."

"I think it is very moving what these ladies do. It was very emotional to see them there," Yeoman 3rd Class Maria Forestier said. "They were very concerned that we were feeling okay. They were reassuring to us—worried that we were comfortable. After meeting them I felt closer to my home. It was like touching a piece of home before leaving. They made me feel proud that they cared so much."

The personnel of U.S. Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC send well-wishes for Greene's health. The battalion recently sent Greene a get-well gift and everyone hopes to see the ladies on our return trip home.

Get well soon, Elaine!

To learn more information about the Flag Ladies go to:

www.freeportflagladies.com

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—YN2 Maria Forestier, HQ Company, U.S. Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC



Photo courtesy of the Freeport Flag Ladies

The Freeport Flag Ladies are (l-r) Carmen Footer, Elaine Greene and JoAnn Miller. If any personnel would like to send Elaine a get well card or to write the three Flag Ladies, their address is: Freeport Flag Ladies, 17 School Street, Freeport, ME 04032



Long may she wave!

Humor in Uniform: Army's donkey goes AWOL; turns up with Charlie Co.



By JO1 Doug Mappin

Kuwait—Raheem, the coveted Three-legged Donkey, mysteriously disappeared from the office of Colonel James Robertson, 115th Area Support Group (ASG), in mid April. Word quickly spread that Raheem had disappeared. Rumors ran rampant. Had the donkey been absconded by infidels? Had he gone for a drive in the desert and gotten lost? Had he been abducted by space aliens? Had he been kidnapped (oops) donkey-napped by animal rights activists? No one knew for sure. No ransom demands had been made. Everyone was worried sick.

A few days later scuttlebutt revealed that Raheem had reappeared at the camp as mysteriously as he had vanished. When asked where he had been, Raheem is said to have mumbled it was all too vague to recall.

“I don’t know what happened,” Raheem said. “I was just minding my own business standing around in Col. Robertson’s office when all of a sudden the lights went out and I knew I was in deep trouble!”

When Raheem reappeared he was found wandering the streets at Senior Chief Mark Turner’s camp. Turner is a member of U.S. Navy Customs Battalion QUEBEC’s Charlie Company.

“I had heard Raheem was missing,” Turner said. “But I had no idea he would show up here. When I found him, he looked dazed and disoriented. I immediately offered my assistance and took him back to our office. I treated him to an ice cream sundae and lots of water. He was obviously suffering from dehydration.”

Raheem quickly acclimated to Navy life. Raheem made friends fast with the crew who treated him as one of their own. He soon was taught to break dance and to swim at the pool. Life was good. All the while, everyone knew that Raheem would eventually have to return to his rightful home.

A farewell party was given in his honor, leaving the Sailors in tears as he rode away in Lt. Cmdr. Guerin’s SUV. Raheem returned to Col. Robertson who was visibly beside himself to see Raheem safe and sound.

Raheem, the Three-Legged Donkey Award is a weekly ritual at Camp Arifjan. He is passed from command to command for the most embarrassing story of the week, as voted by military personnel present at the weekly ceremony, which is held at the Zone I Pavilion.

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Question of the Month: How did your team do in the NFL draft?

HEADQUARTERS

ALPHA COMPANY

BRAVO COMPANY Team 1



CTT1 Jon Owen

Seeing the draft go down I was not impressed. The Bears need to protect the QB with a strong line and they need some one to pass to. Their first pick was a Defensive Back. Why? They arguably had and have the best "D" in the league with plenty of depth already. Second pick was a KR/WR from Miami (FL). They do need some help there. The rest were mostly defensive players. Let's hope we can pick up some free agents. Overall I am disappointed. There were a lot of NCAA receivers we could have used and would have fit our system. That is why Jerry Angelo gets the big bucks and I am in the dessert. We'll see. [DA BEARS!](#)



BM3 Deborah Dilmore

I think the Saints got a great draft in Bush, but they are never going to win because they can't protect him. He might end up being better than Brooks, but Brooks never had more than two seconds to throw the ball. We need a line.



GM2 Billy Kraus

I think the Packers got one of the best picks in AJ Hawk. I think he will be a Brian Urlacher type LB and help solidify an already great defense. I hope that their Offensive Lineman picks will help the line, so that Brett Favre can have a great season and the offense can put some points on the board. All in all I think they did a good job, but we will see what they can do on the field where it counts.

BRAVO COMPANY Team 2

BRAVO COMPANY Team 3

CHARLIE COMPANY



OS2 Scott Sneden

The Indianapolis Colts are looking to add some spice to their offensive line by drafting star running back Joseph Addai out of LSU. The Colts have also drafted a number of players that promise great things. The team has added Tim Jennings, a talented corner back from SDSU; from TCU Michael Toudouze; from Oklahoma State OT Charlie Johnson and Safety Antoine Bethea from Howard Univ.; lastly, the Colts drafted Return Specialist T.J. Rushing. This well-rounded draft promises to add electricity to their lineup and help the Colts reach their ultimate goal—winning the Super Bowl. Go Colts!



BM2 Michael Hudson

My team is the Pittsburgh Steelers and they did fair in the draft. They always have good players. Hey! They are the Super Bowl Champs.



BM2 Terry Davis

My favorite teams were the Carolina Panthers and Kansas City Chiefs. They both did fairly well, but I believe that New Orleans got better picks.