



GUNFIGHTER GAZETTE

1st Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment Family Readiness Group Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2004



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A Message From Gun 6

Excitement is in the air—literally and figuratively!

We're flying more than ever. Our aircraft and vehicle readiness rates are the highest they've been. Our morale continues to climb with R & R leave, letters and packages from home, the Gunfighter luau, and the video concert under the stars. Our teamwork is strengthening as we cover for people gone, surge for important events, and look out for our family members and fellow soldiers. As they say in the surfing world: We're hangin' ten!

However, when all of your toes are off the front of the surfboard and the wave is gently curling over your shoulder behind you, you are also just one more toe away from falling off into the coral reef below. So let's keep our balance, stay disciplined, and not get overconfident. Respecting the risks we face every day—in combat or on the autobahn—will keep us all focused, alert, and safe.

I'd also like to remind everyone just how important each of us is to the entire "Gunfighter Chain of Success." No link is insignificant: soldiers, spouses, children, relatives, friends, aircraft, fuel, parts, repairs, mail, communications, administration, orders, bullets, guns, trucks, supplies, quarters, morale, intelligence, medicine—not a single one! So whether we are the first or last link in the chain, the closest to or farthest from the nose of the Apache flying over Iraq, we all make a difference between mission success or not.

Finally, keep up the outstanding work, stay motivated, fight complacency and fatigue, and anticipate a grand return whenever that time comes. I'll keep everyone posted on any official redeployment timelines. It really is exciting to serve the entire nation like we are right now. And it continues to be my honor to serve in the ranks of the Gunfighters. Duty First! Attack!

LTC David R. Moore
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A Message from Gun 7

Contributed by CSM James Martin, Gun 7

Aloha! It's hard to believe that we only have a few months to go in Iraq. Soon we will be changing responsibility with a new unit, and we will be heading home. Our soldiers are getting anxious, though the time continues to pass quickly.

Although we may be approaching the final chapter of the Gunfighter's deployment, we still take time to relax and have a good time. During August, we had two MWR events, which included a Hawaiian day and a jazz night. A huge thanks goes to Java 6 (**SPC Christian Bevans**), who came up with the great idea of a Gunfighter Café. It's a great place for soldiers to enjoy a cup or two of Java 6's amazing coffee and take a break. Our MWR facility also has made bikes available for soldiers to ride whenever they choose. This helps keep our soldiers in shape and increases morale.

As you can tell, the creature comforts are getting better day by day, but we still have to let our soldiers know that they are doing a good thing and that we support them 110 percent. So please let our soldiers know that they are missed and loved. Encourage them to stay sharp and focused, so that we can finish what we started and come home to the ones we love. NCOs lead the way, but it's the soldier who makes it happen.

Hammer Update

Contributed by CPT Levi Dunton, Hammer 6

It is with a sad countenance that I announce that this month's newsletter will commence with a number of re-tractions from my previous installment. Apparently, I may not be able to please all of the people all of the time, but I sure can aggravate all of the people some of the time.

One such way is to inadvertently insult the entire portion of the human race with a Polynesian heritage by defaming one of their treasured culinary delicacies by describing it as a compressed loaf of gristle packed in grease. Though my intent was to merely to draw a colorful metaphor, I clearly missed the mark and have spent the intervening days looking over my shoulder lest La'Amea and his band of Pacific Island Warriors drag me by the heels to the nearest beach to find a big rock to lay my head upon. I take it back! Spam tastes great! Hungry? Sink your teeth into a hearty Spamburger—it's Spam-tastic! I'd name my second child Leviticus Spamalonius Duntonius the First if I could take back all of the angst my careless remark caused.

Speaking of careless remarks, I've spent the past thirty days trying to reassure young **CPT Pov Strazdas** that I was engaging in some good-natured hyperbole when I stated that he ate fourteen ice-cream bars at one sitting. Yes, I embellished quite heavily, but what's a dozen more or less when you're telling a good story? Now he's convinced that I have slanderously branded him a glutton. Alas, my thoughtless composition! If it's any consolation, I will officially state here that it was **CW2 Jason Callegari** who ate the fourteen ice-cream bars. Apparently my admission wasn't enough for CPT Strazdas. One night shortly after the last letter was published, I found myself sitting in the dining facility surrounded by a mob of cruelly taunting officers. I discovered that the only way to thwart their otherwise malicious designs was to eat my way out of there. A full dinner and sixteen ice-cream sandwiches later, I staggered clear of the mob as the sound of a standing ovation thundered through the cafeteria. Sadly, the fame and adoration I earned for making a total pig of myself was rapidly replaced by animosity and even open disdain during the ensuing month-long ice-cream shortage on FOB Speicher. Every great achievement has its price.

On a much brighter note, I think our battalion's Hawaiian luau exceeded expectations. Our fellow troops in the Delta Company Vikings went all-out with tiki torches; cabana furniture; a slip-and-slide that turned out to be more popular than we could have imagined; wading pools (quickly transformed into dunking pools); grass skirts, leis, and straw hats for all; snow cones; tons of excellent food; gourmet java courtesy of **SPC Christian Bevans** and the Gunfighter Café; live ukulele music; and even a guest appearance by Dave Matthews

"Hammer Update" is continued on page 3.

Taz Devil Update

Contributed by 1LT Aaron Morris, Taz 26

Well, it's another month down the drain and one month closer to going home. The heat has started to subside, and now you can feel a nip in the air at night and in the morning. Running our air conditioners at full blast at night is now starting to freeze us out, so we're starting to give them a breather after three months of continuous operation. I'm sure they appreciate it, and we're still amazed they've held out this long.

The Taz family welcomes a couple of new editions this month. **1LT Kip Chojnacki** and his wife, **Kendra**, joined the family. They are both from North Carolina. Some of you may remember Kip from his days at rear detachment. Kendra just started teaching fifth grade at Rainbow Elementary, so some of you may run into her there. Kip came to the company in mid-August and was welcomed with typical Taz shenanigans courtesy of **CW2 Graham Ward**, **1LT Mike Ferlazzo**, **CW3 Ron Thompson**, **CW2 Eric Whitehead**, **CW3 Dawne Griffith**, **MAJ Charles Bowrey**, and **LTC Dave Moore**. It was a memorable event for all involved, and we hope that Kip will be able to laugh about it after a couple of months. Kip will be taking over for me as a platoon leader when I depart in September to go work with 2nd Brigade at FOB Dagger. Welcome to the family Kip and Kendra.

Our missions continue to focus on ensuring the security of Iraqi infrastructure, routes and convoys, and the occasional raid conducted by ground units. These are pretty much the same types of missions we've been flying the past couple of months, so our mission variety is minimal. Because we've done these missions over and over again, our planning time is greatly reduced, easing the pilots' jobs considerably. Our maintenance personnel continue to perform incredible feats to ensure that we don't miss any missions. Our success definitely is directly attributed to their hard work and dedication through the long hot days. I'm sure the coming of cooler weather will be welcomed by them most of all.

Our free time still mostly consists of movies, coffee, Internet, and movies. Some people have decided to seek their degrees and have started taking college courses. Still most of us occupy ourselves with a movie and coffee. Catching camel spiders is still a fun event every now and then. The fun lies in seeing what other peoples' reactions are as you give them the spider. So far our best responses are from **CW2 Russ Motes** and **CW2 Scott Sweat**, who both have a definite dislike for our multi-legged friends.

On August 11, we celebrated our halfway mark and had the 1-1 AVN mid-tour luau. It was a break from the normal workday, and we even had some authentic

"Taz Update" is continued on page 4.

Taz Devils CW2 Jeremy Griffin, 1LT Aaron Morris, and CW2 Russ Motes strike a pose at 1-1 AVN's mid-tour luau.

Hammer Update

Continued from page 2.

and crew—on video. For an hour, at least, things here really didn't suck—well as much as possible with the overabundance of beach, the absence of oceanfront, and the fact that those we love are continents away. The whole event was such a success that we hosted another outdoor coffeehouse jazz concert last week, with people from all over FOB Speicher coming to see Nora Jones and Harry Connick Jr. do their thing. It seems like we've hit on a good idea; word travels fast.

Now we just have to figure out how to get our crew down in Anaconda back here to Speicher to join in the fun. Of course, to do that, we need a place where they can live, so we have **SFC Mark Zimmerman** and his crew of Iraqi construction experts building condominiums to accommodate our out-of-town contingent. It may take a few weeks, but when they're finished, property values here at Speicher will skyrocket, and we can look at putting the entire battalion at one location. The guys down at Anaconda might miss their movie theater, Olympic-size swimming pool, and Pizza Hut, and they'll be much nearer to the flag pole, but I think they'll still appreciate the change of scenery.

Don't let the stories of parties and frivolity fool you; when it comes to doing the serious soldier thing, we're all business. The clock moves in slow motion sometimes, but looking back it seems like less than a week since I wrote my last monthly letter. That groundhog rears its fuzzy little head here day after day, but we've stayed busy launching helicopters, fueling and fixing the fleet, guarding the perimeter, and improving our assembly area on a daily basis. Even though it seems like the bad guys are pretty scarce around these parts—in large part due to the vigilance of the Apache helicopters—we haven't let that tempt us into dropping our collective guard. The Hammers continue to make the mission happen, and your spouses and loved ones have made looking out for each other second nature. We couldn't do this if we weren't able to keep the faith that things are solid on the home front. Thanks, yet again.



Taz Devil Update

Continued from page 3.

Hawaiian entertainment provided by **SFC Dan Phillips**. The commanders were kind enough to provide us with a nice dance and Lake Speicher provided refreshment from the heat. Some went in by choice; some went in at the hands of others. I have **CW2 Jeremy Griffin** and **CW2 Russ Motes** to thank for my swim. But the event was a good time and gave us a chance to relax and goof off before another day at work.

The R & R slots continue to come in. We sent four Taz Devils home in August and will send four more in September. Those who will be leaving in September have been notified and have started making their plans. We look forward to sending as many as we can home for a much-deserved break in the future. We also look forward to getting those we've sent home back safely and hearing about all the good times they had while with their friends and families.

While several Taz Devils have done great things this past month, we'd like to congratulate **SPC Miguel Hernandez**. SPC Hernandez went before the E-5 board and did a great job. He is now promotable for sergeant, pending points. Congratulations Miguel!

We'd also like to wish a happy birthday to all of our September babies in the Taz family: **Kendra Chojnacki** on September 5, **Kristine Combs** on September 7, **Cindy Knigge** on September 10, **Vincent Karsten** on September 11, **Tamra Karsten** on September 13, **Jennifer Broam** on September 16, **Jennifer Griffin** on September 16, **CW2 Jeremy Griffin** on September 20, **Kylie Griffin** on September 22, and **CW2 Graham Ward** on September 25. Also, happy anniversary wishes go out to **SSG Alberto Estrella** and his wife, **Anna**, on September 4, and **1LT Kyle and Elizabeth Randall** on September 12.

We hope that all of you back home are safe and that all of the kids in our big, extended family start school successfully and safely. Know that you all are in our thoughts and prayers daily, and we are still counting down the days until we can see you again.

As I move out of the company and on to other things, I'd like to thank each and every one of you for allowing me to be part of this family. It's been great to lead and become close to your family members. I look forward to seeing all the Taz Devils reunited with their loved ones back in Germany.

1SG Trefus Lee and SPC Cory Karsten show off their straw hats at 1-1 AVN's Luau on August 11.



Viking Update

An excerpt from the journal of CPT G. S. Thompson

August 11, 2004

0900 hours: Today is Gunfighter day! **SSG Robert McClinton** really did a great job of setting up the pools and the slip-and-slide at the new clamshell hangar. Of course, overshadowing his extraordinary effort is the fact that the luau has been moved to the MWR hangar. I guess I should have told him that. There is still a lot to do. **LTC Dave Moore** keeps going on about the slip-and-slide. Who in the heck is going to be using that anyway? Never mind the warning that clearly states "Not intended for adult use." And we are up to seven different pools. Is there that much demand? Are we setting up a water park or a luau? I hope the water truck shows up. Either that or we will be using a *lot* of bottled water.

1500 hours: Water truck made it; pools are getting filled. And we only went through ten or twelve cases of bottled water. Now I have to convince **CPT John Broam** that we need to dance to kick off this event. Wait a minute: I need to convince LTC Moore that dancing is a bad idea. Let's be real. Do I look like I have any rhythm? And the BC is way easier to talk to anyway.

1520 hours: OK, so we will be dancing after all. CPT Broam will understand. Or not. Regardless, we are dancing.

August 12, 2004

1415 hours: Well, LTC Moore is a bit more visionary than me. Apparently the demand for a water park with a slip-and-slide was much higher than I had imagined. Nearly everyone ended up getting wet, though not all went willingly. And people were actually lined up for a chance to try the slip-and-slide. This story should make an excellent article for the "Gunfighter Gazette." Maybe I should leave out the part about SSG McClinton setting up the pools and all in the wrong location. After all, it wasn't entirely his fault. And he did set up the pump for the smash hit of the slip-and-slide. Note to self: Strike disparaging comments about SSG McClinton.

August 13, 2004

0900: Today I need to start my newsletter article, so Fannie isn't sending me hate mail this month like last month when it was late. She does such a great job, and for free even. I really owe it to her to get it in on time.

1030 hours: The Summer Olympics! I will definitely have to make some time for the events I actually watch, which would be swimming, soccer, and maybe basketball or softball. After all, this only happens ever four years. A few hours of sports won't hurt.

August 15, 2004

1130 hours: Well, I had to add shooting to the list of events to watch. The U.S. looks like it is a medal

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Viking Update

Contributed from page 4.

contender—and I need to support our athletes. Most of the events are showing at strange times on AFN. I may need to adjust my work schedule to catch them all. I really need to check on night shift anyway.

August 16, 2004

1400 hours: Who knew that the U.S. would be a contender for a medal in fencing? I didn't even know it was still an Olympic event. The athletes are so fast, though the judging is a bit lame. What can you expect from a sport traditionally dominated by the French. I won't let that squash my enthusiasm or support for the Americans. Go USA!!!

August 17, 2004

0100 hours: Caught some Judo in between swimming, shooting, and fencing, right before the weightlifting. Lots of pauses in the action, which should allow me to get to work on that article that I need to write for the Gazette.

0400 hours: Artistic gymnastics? What the heck is that all about? Well, I will just leave it on while I work on that article. It should make for some good background noise.

1400 hours: I had to cut my sleep to six hours a night—or day, as the case may be. The U.S. basketball team has not fared so well. They need my support.

August 18, 2004

0000 hours: I can get by on five and a half hours of sleep. I keep dreaming of olive wreaths anyway.

0200 hours: Road cycling finishes today, and I can watch equestrian and fencing after that. Then I will work on that newsletter.

August 19, 2004

I really need to find a way to make sure I don't miss any more key events. Can't let down Team USA! Artistic gymnastics paused for the trampoline; I don't think I could handle the ups and downs of two gymnastic events at once. I have been amazed at the creativity, not to mention flexibility. Such beautiful works of art they portray.

August 20, 2004

2310 hours: Shooting and swimming are both nearing the medals! Relocating another TV into the CP so I can watch both near-simultaneously has prevented any serious schedule conflicts. The QC shop didn't need to watch anymore of the fashion channel anyway. To be truthful, that was starting to creep me out. When I overheard **SSG Michael Flowers** and **SGT Terry Sopha** discussing updating accessories for their outfits—and giving advice to **SPC Karissa Ellis** on the right fall

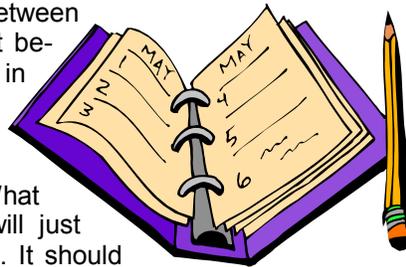
colors to wear to match her complexion—I knew something had to be done.

August 21, 2004

0300 hours: Got the extra TV right on time! Who new that the badminton competition would be so fierce? The U.S. may be out of the medal race, but every Olympian deserves support, right? Besides, badminton is almost over. I really think I need to stick it out. Without my support, there is no way Korea would have made it this far.

0700 hours: Archery, rowing, and the swimming finals. I may need to hook up a VCR to tape a third channel.

0800 hours: **CW4 Marty Calkins** obviously does not support Team USA like a real fan. He kept going on and on about needing me to fly some maintenance something or other. He obviously does not realize the importance of my support to the athletes. Hall would have never gotten the gold if I had not been jumping up and down on our conference table. That much is clear.



August 21, 2004

0200 hours: Too much going on to sleep. Fencing, rowing, sailing, shooting, and track cycling finals are on. I hope **1SG Cornell Williams** doesn't mind that I borrowed his TV and receiver, so I can monitor that third channel.

0900 hours: OH MY GOODNESS!!! Women's beach volleyball! I'll write again later.

1900 hours: Go USA! I will get to that newsletter right after beach volleyball is done. Who could miss the athletes, the crowd, and the uniforms?

August 25, 2004

0115 hours: I just could not pull away from the fine athletes. Who knew beach volleyball could be so...uh...interesting. Nothing but live beach volleyball, beach volleyball highlights, and taped beach volleyball for the past three days, interspersed only occasionally with some track and field (I have to spread my support around some). But my hard work has paid off: Team USA wins gold in the 100 hurdles and beach volleyball, too! I wonder if Misty May has noticed the super-fan Web site I put up about her.

0300 hours: I am going to try and nap for a few hours before synchronized swimming.

August 27, 2004

0900 hours: I have been out for two days. My newsletter was due yesterday. I knew I should have paced myself better. I need to nap for fifteen minutes every two hours—it worked for DaVinci. I just can't afford to miss anymore. Team USA needs me! Oh, and that newsletter...

Wolfpack Update

Contributed by 1LT Mike Snowden, Wolf 26, and SFC Michael Tebaldi, Wolf 27

The midpoint of the tour has come and gone. We celebrated the six-month anniversary with a Gunfighter luau. **CW4 Ted Tomczyk** was gracious enough to lend the battalion his new swimming pool. Since water equals fun, a posse soon formed. Those participating were determined to throw people into the pool. **SFC Jason Bryant**, **SGT Theodore Rodgers**, and **SGT Rudy Laumbach** were successful in soaking **SPC Angel Barreras** and a few other unsuspecting victims. I'm not sure if Wolf 6's boots are dry yet.

In the spirit of the Olympic games in Athens, we have conducted our own sort of Aviation Olympics. The company has flown the most hours ever in the history of the Wolfpack. We won't receive gold, silver, or bronze medals, but we continue to maintain our high state of readiness and aircraft availability. This is all due to an outstanding team effort and the selfless attitudes shared by every member of the Wolfpack.

1SG Doug Greene located about a hundred "like-new" twelve-foot tall concrete barriers for our company area. Force protection notwithstanding, we will now have privacy in our area. Now that 1SG Greene has the wall up, the next plan is to build a mote and drawbridge to make us truly feel at home.

The NCOs have banded together and finally finished their Motel 8 housing complex. Vacancies are now available. Considering the long hours maintenance puts in, it's truly astounding that they have been able to put as much effort into the construction as they have. The builders of this new Wolfpack building have come to two conclusions: A straight wall isn't really straight, and thumbs and hammers often don't mix.

CW2 Angie Nixon continues to go to great lengths to remove us from the conflict outside the wire. Her planning and organization of an outside DVD concert series is a huge success and shows the rest of FOB Speicher that the 1-1 Aviation area is *the* place to be. It's truly a time to relax and enjoy the atmosphere under the stars. That's our MWR officer working for us!

Congrats to **CW2 Troy Moseley**. He is the latest member of the Wolfpack to make the transition successfully into the backseat. His leadership and level of experience in the airframe have proven his need to be a backseat aviator and eventually a pilot in command.

I would also like to recognize our newest NCO, **SGT Steven Renner**. SGT Renner has shown an impressive level of knowledge and proficiency of the aircraft and of what it takes to be a successful noncommissioned officer. Congratulations on your promotion, SGT Renner, and keep up the good work!

On that note, I would also like to express a little

Wolfpack pride in **SPC Thaddeus Ogg**. He conducted himself in a professional military manner, awing the board with his discipline and bearing. We should be promoting SPC Ogg in the near future. Yet another member of the Wolfpack striving to proudly represent himself and the company!

Well, I have given my update, I'd like to hand it over to SFC Tebaldi for news from the maintenance side.



Greetings from the M.O.C. (maintenance operation center). This month has been especially busy for the maintenance folks. We flew more than 400 hours this past reporting period, a rarely achieved statistic. This feat required a lot of hard work, long hours, and a little luck. All this was done during the hottest month of the year. Hopefully the heat will abate next month.

We also started performing 125-hour inspections, an extensive undertaking usually handed off to D Company maintenance. SFC Bryant and his crew were instrumental in spearheading this endeavor.

We've become quite adept at these inspections, and it looks like it will become the norm rather than the exception.

Lastly, we are all concerned that **SGT Kevin Durham** hasn't blown away in Hurricane Charley. **SGT Kenneth Ashline** claims to have seen SGT Durham on the news, clinging to a telephone pole screaming, "Nah . . . this can't be happening on my R & R!" Of course, SGT Ashline realized he was dreaming about SGT Durham again.

Finally, we would like to recognize a few birthdays, anniversaries, and other important dates to members of the Wolfpack and Wolfpack FRG. Birthday wishes are extended to **Jessica Johnson**, **Ina Ashline**, **SGT Kenneth Ashline**, and **1LT Mike Snowden** on September 2; **Bailey Greene** on September 6; **SGT Steven Renner** on September 10; **Kyle Landers** on September 12; **Steven Ashline** and **Samantha Durham** on September 15; **Kristin Laumbach** on September 16; **Rudolph Laumbach** on September 18; **CW2 Michael Maine** on September 23; **2LT John Landers** on September 25; and **Katja Rodgers** on September 27.

Anniversary wishes are in order for **CW2 Mylon and Kerri Gladden** on September 6.

As summer in Katterbach and the U.S. comes to a close, we wish the families well and hope everyone enjoyed their time in the sun. We certainly are enjoying ours. Best wishes, and until next time, we at Bravo Company bid farewell.

Ghostrider Update

Contributed by CPT Lee Fennema, Ghost 6

As summer comes to an end, I hope that you all are transitioning into the rhythm of a new school year and that you are ready for the cooler months. I can tell you that we certainly are looking forward to lower temperatures here.

Rest assured that all your deployed Ghostriders are doing fine and that they continue to astonish me in their ability to endure the many challenges and changes set before us.

We are still at LSA Anaconda and do not have a set date for movement to FOB Speicher yet. I assure you that you'll be informed just as soon as we are.

As there really isn't too much to report on the activities of the company as a whole, I will take the opportunity to give you a quick update on each soldier. This month I'll capture the first portion of the alphabet:

What hasn't **CW4 Doc Carter** done? Without his and Dave Lewandowsky's skills, we would be living under seventeenth-century technology: no operational showers, electricity, and oh yes, airplanes.

When **CW2 Tom "Hog" Brautigan** isn't busy burning holes in the sky, he and Joe Ladd are busy with their new hobby. Be sure to ask him about it.

SPC Alix Cassagnol is always busy testing medical personnel by ensuring they are trained and prepared.

SSG Russ Christianson is the 2nd Platoon father figure you don't want to disappoint.

We can always count on a good, tasteful (of course) joke right before **SPC Jesse Coble** launches his pilots.

No day is ever uneventful with **CW2 Brent Cole** here. His out-of-tune singing and jokes always seem to make our long, hot days go by a little easier.

"Git-r-done, sir," says **CW2 Ryan Collier**. He always gives 110 percent, even when the power goes off for hours on end.

SPC Kelly Downey has put up with all of us men for six long months. I'm not sure how she does it.

CW4 Bob Fullerton continues to heal in Germany from his "robotic" hand surgery.

We finally had to put **CW2 Mike "Lastat" Harmison** on days, so he could work on his suntan.

1LT Adam Hepppe is our newest addition. Adam took over for Shane Scott on August 15 and is enjoying flying, leading, and learning.

Ask **CW2 Joe "Shrek" Ladd** about his new hobby also.

SFC Jeffrey Lawson is our current events and world history information source.

CW2 Dave Lewandowsky is known as "Doc Junior." He, too, does it all.

SPC Robert Levis is a rising star, perhaps a future Sergeant Major of the Army.

Our honorary Ghostrider, **CW4 Dave Lumley**, still remains the "best CW2" in the company. Not many senior CW4s get the opportunity to be battle-rostered in a line unit. We absolutely enjoy his experience and good spirits.

We have several Taz Devil birthdays this month. Happy birthday wishes go out to the following: **SFC Jeffrey Lawson** on September 3, **Leman Christianson** on September 4, **Brandi Ladd** on September 10, **John Fennema** on September 16, **Heather Scott** on September 17, **CW2 Ryan Collier** on September 18, **Heidi Brautigan** on September 22, and **Christina Wright** on September 24.

Again, I truly hope everyone had a fantastic and relaxing summer and that you are all doing okay.

Take care.



Top: CW2 Tom Brautigan and SFC Jeffrey Lawson enjoy fine dining at its best at the DFAC. **Bottom:** The Ghostriders bring a little bit of Bavaria to Iraq with "Ghostdorf."

CPT Schneider's Update

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you. On July 16, I replaced CPT Josh Burton as the Task Force Gunfighter commander.

Task Force Gunfighter exists to serve the soldiers and families of 1-1 AVN in the best way possible throughout the duration of 1-1's deployment. CPT Burton did an outstanding job of achieving that mission, and I would like to assure the soldiers and families of the Gunfighters that I will do everything possible to continue that mission to the highest standard.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or if Task Force Gunfighter can be of assistance to you. I look forward to getting to know more of our outstanding family members in the coming months. Thank you for your continued support!

—CPT Peter Schneider

Gunfighter Happenings on the Home Front

Roam If You Want To

There is a new Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) document that is required for all Germany-based U.S. Forces personnel who carry tourist passports. Local passport offices are issuing a new SOFA certificate to replace the SOFA stamps. The new certificate is a separate laminated document that will be carried in the passport. The deadline for this certificate is January 15, 2005. After that, German officials will no longer recognize the current SOFA stamp in U.S. tourist passports for entry into Germany.

Uniformed members of the U.S. Forces in Germany do not need these certificates, nor do civilians who possess an official passport containing a SOFA stamp issued by the State Department. The official passport, also known as a "no-fee" passport, may be red or blue and is marked "official."

If you require the certificate, please take the following steps:

- ▶ Complete AE Form 600-77A. Forms are available from the 1-1 AVN FRSA, Elizabeth Randall, at battalion headquarters. Only one AE Form 600-77A is required per family. Section two of the form is completed by a family member, and section three needs to be completed by the Task Force Gunfighter commander, CPT Peter Schneider. Elizabeth will be available to assist family members in completing the form and securing CPT Schneider's signature.
- ▶ Take your completed and signed 600-77A, along with your passport and military ID card, to the passport office on Barton Barracks. They will issue the certificate immediately. The passport office hours are Monday-Friday from 0800-1130, 1300-1430.
- ▶ Non-U.S. passport holders require additional information. Foreign-born spouses and other family members must provide the following additional paperwork: copy of official orders to Germany and a current DD 1172 (print out of family members from DEERS office).

If you have questions regarding the SOFA stamp, please call the passport office at 0981-183-898.

A Message from Task Force Gunfighter and the FRG

Please make sure that your family's passports are all up to date and that you are able to easily locate them in the event of an emergency (we recommend keeping them in a fire-safe box). Likewise, if you recently had a new baby, please ensure that he or she has a valid passport. Don't wait until you're in the midst of a family emergency and need to return to the States on short notice. Check the expiration date now, and ensure that every member of your family has a valid passport. Passports are difficult to replace in short notice. Be prepared!



Company FRG Updates

HHC: A very special thank goes to the Rotary Club of Lancaster and 1st Place Awards for donating approximately 150 dog tags for HHC soldiers to send to their children. The dog tags say "With love from Dad (or Mom), U.S. Army, Iraq 2004." The dog tags were sent downrange at the end of August for the soldiers to return to their children with a note. Thank you to HHC spouses **Stephanie Casas** and **Maria Martinez** for coordinating this effort. For more information on the dog tags, please log on to www.theav.com/tags.

The HHC FRG will hold a monthly meeting on Friday, September 17 at 1700 at the Yellow Ribbon Room. All HHC spouses are invited and encouraged to attend!

—Contributed by Frannie Schneider, HHC FRG Leader

A Co.: Our next meeting will be a pot luck dinner on September 24 at 1830. We'll be choosing meeting dates and projects for the upcoming months. Details will be sent out via email in the coming weeks. Please contact Elizabeth Randall at 09825-923-163 with any questions.

—Contributed by Elizabeth Randall, A Co. FRG Leader

Walk to Iraq Update

Walk to Iraq participants can walk the distance to Iraq while their loved one is deployed. And on Monday, September 27, program participants will have an opportunity to check their progress at a fitness assessment at the Katterbach Fitness Center from 1200-1600. (If you can't make that, head to the Bunch Fitness Center on Illesheim on Tuesday, September 28 from 0900-1200.) Bring your copy of your activity journal to receive half-way mark prizes. Assessments are mandatory for those Walk to Iraq participants who received a pedometer.

For more information, contact the 0931-889-6335 or 09802-832-810.

Family News

Congratulations to **SSG Jairo and Francina Lopera** of D Co., 1-1 AVN. They will celebrate their ten-year wedding anniversary on September 21. We wish you many more happy years together!

To include your family news (birthdays, anniversaries, birth announcements, etc.) in an upcoming newsletter, please e-mail Frannie Schneider at frannie.schneider@us.army.mil. Submissions should be limited to three sentences and are due the twentieth of each month.

Around the Community

Are you looking for ways to fill your time now that your spouse is deployed? The good news is that there's a lot going on within the Ansbach community. Besides the activities that will be sponsored by the FRG throughout the deployment, the 235th BSB is increasing the number of programs available for spouses and family members. In each newsletter, we'll highlight just a few of the community activities targeted toward family members. For more information on any of the programs listed here, contact Heidi Lumley or your company FRG leader.



The newly renovated **Katterbach Movie Theater** will reopen on September 3 with a 1500 showing of *Harry Potter and the Prisoner Azkaban*. There will also be a 1900 showing of *Spiderman 2*. For more information on the movie schedule, log on to www.aafes.com/ems/euro/katterbach.htm.

ACS is now accepting applications for the **free and reduced-price school lunch program**. Application packets are available at Army Community Service and Central Enrollment Registry. Completed applications must be turned into ACS for review. Completed applications include the following: AE Form 352-1 (included in the application packet), most current end-of-month LES for all working adults, and military orders or command-sponsorship amendments authorizing family members to reside OCONUS. Please call Frannie Schneider with questions at 09802-832-064/883.



Just because school is starting doesn't mean that Outdoor Recreation is slowing up on their trips. Check out the **Trier city tour** on September 18 and **Munich Oktoberfest** on September 25. Call Outdoor Recreation at 09802-833-225 to reserve your slot and for more information on cost and bus pick-up times.

When the school-age kids head back to class this fall, treat your little ones to a day at **Legoland**. The September 9 event, part of the One Day Wanders program, will provide free transportation to interested participants. You'll be responsible for the cost of admittance. On September 23, One Day Wanders will take you to **Ikea** for a Swedish-inspired shopping spree. Call Outdoor Recreation at 09802-833-225 for more information. You must sign up ahead of time.



Army Community Service (ACS) will be offering **Army Family Team Building Level 2** training during the month of September. This exciting four-night course is geared toward emerging leaders within our community and anyone who would like some helpful tips on surviving a year-long deployment. The classes will be held from 1730-2130 on September 14, 16, 21, and 23 at the Yellow Ribbon Room. Please call ACS at 09802-832-883/846 to register. Child-care costs will be reimbursed, but you must make your own child-care arrangements.

It's open-house season at area schools! The schedule is as follows: **Ansbach Elementary's** open house is scheduled for September 14 from 1800-1900. Contact the school at 09802-832-628 for more information. The **Ansbach/Middle High School** open house is scheduled for September 15 from 1600-1800 at the school. For more information, contact 09802-832-808. And **Rainbow Elementary** will hold its open house September 16 at 1600. For more information, contact 0981-183-808.



The 235th BSB Youth Services office presents a trip to **Six Flags Holland** on September 16. The bus will depart the teen center on September 16 at 2330 and return on September 17. The event is open to both adults and youth. All sixth- through twelfth-grade youth must be enrolled through the Central Registration office. Cost is \$89 for youth and \$109 for adults. Call the Teen/Middle School center at 09802-832-588 to register (deadline is September 14).

Aerobic classes will resume at both the Katterbach and Illesheim Fitness Centers this month. Classes will be held every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 0900 at the Illesheim Fitness Center and every Tuesday and Thursday at 1800 at the Katterbach Fitness Center. Call 09802-832-810 for more information.



The **Summer Shout Out** continues into September with Olympic power-lifter Shane Hammon. The event will be held September 19. The location and times are yet to be determined, but call 0981-183-636 as the event gets closer for the most up-to-date information.

See the next page for more community information!

Ansbach Spouses' and Civilians' Club

The ASCC is an all-ranks club for spouses and civilians in the Ansbach military community. The club offers an opportunity for members to meet, sponsor, and participate in social, welfare, recreational, community, and cultural activities.

Who is Eligible to Join?

All officers, enlisted, and civilian personnel, both active and retired, and their spouses are invited to join. Also, any adult family members, eighteen years of age and older, living with or sponsored by active-duty or retired military or civilian personnel, are eligible for membership.

How to Join

Simply e-mail asccmembership@yahoo.com, and we will get an application out to you. Or you can stop by the Katterbach Thrift Shop and fill out an application. Membership dues are \$15 for the full year. During the month of September, you can take advantage of a reduced membership kick-off rate of only \$10!

Community Involvement

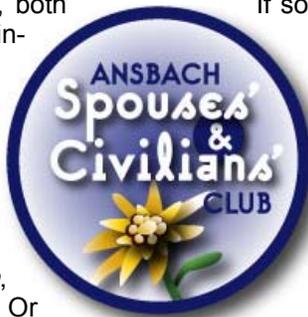
Members of ASCC complete many hours of community service. You could volunteer at the bazaar, Thrift Shop, and other club events. Many organizations in the community benefit from the efforts and contributions pro-

vided by the club. Girl Scouts, Vacation Bible School, scholarships to high-school seniors, Red Cross, ACS, Club Beyond, and Operation Holiday are just a few of the organizations who received funding from ASCC during the 2003-2004 membership year.

A Great Way to Meet People

If socializing is what you are looking for, you have found the right group. Each month the club membership gets together for a fun event. During the 2004-2005 membership year, look for Bunco events, pottery bingo, bowling, a "recharge your battery" party, a progressive meal party, a trip to the Nurnberg Christkindle Markt, an antique auction, and a spring dinner and dance. (All events are subject to change.)

You can also join one of the club's smaller special-interest groups, which include but are not limited to: a lunch bunch, a bunco group, cultural group, crafting group, or any other type of group you would like to start. The possibilities are endless!



Our First Event

Come join us for our 2004 kick-off event of bunco on September 16 at Eddie's Place at 1830. Prizes will be crystal and pottery. Desserts will be provided, and drinks will be available. Cost for the event is \$10, which includes the membership dues for the 2004-2005 year.

Get Involved— Volunteer!

Make a Difference

Make A Difference Day 2004 will be held on Saturday, October 23. This is a national day of volunteering when groups get together and adopt projects to make a difference in the community. To adopt a project for your organization, call the Army Volunteer Corps Coordinator (AVCC) at the number listed below.

To learn more about the Army Volunteer Corps, or if you would like to explore volunteer opportunities in the Ansbach area, stop by ACS and see Christine Duer or call at 09802-833-874.



Local Volunteer Opportunities

Many volunteer opportunities exist in the Ansbach community for volunteers to make a difference year-round. Here are just a few to get you started. For more information on any of these volunteer positions, stop by ACS and ask to speak with Christine Duer.

Child and Youth Services is looking for volunteers in many capacities. If you want to make a difference in a child's life, this is the place for you.

The **Ansbach Spouses' and Civilians' Club (ASCC)** is looking for committee members and chairpersons. (See box above for more information.) Get involved with the largest community event of the year, the **Ansbach bazaar**. There are dozens of ways to help throughout the entire planning process.

Help make the holidays brighter for Ansbach families, and volunteer for **Operation Holiday**.

The **Non-appropriated Funds Civilian Personnel Assistance Center (CPAC)** is looking for a human resources administrative assistant.

The **Ansbach Girl Scouts** are looking for leaders, assistant leaders, a Girl Scout hut manager, and a treasurer.



Six months—nearly seven—have passed since 1-1 AVN deployed. We've all found ways to cope with being apart from our loved ones, but that doesn't mean we're not ready for a much-deserved break. Although we can't control the deployment, we can make the time more bearable and even productive. In this month's newsletter, we bring you tips on surviving part two of the deployment.

How to Entertain Yourself Without Breaking the Bank

By Susanna Hickman Bartee

Waiting on that promotion? Spouse deployed and boredom has set in? New to the area and trying to find ways to stay busy? No matter the reason, money is an issue in most houses I know. If you haven't recently won the lottery, here are some tips to follow when you need some fun in your life but your wallet is a little too thin for a trip to the mall, let alone the amusement park.

1. Host a video swap. Invite friends to bring over their videos or DVDs that are collecting dust. Most of us own several that we don't watch all the time. Trade with each other so that everyone goes home with something new. You might end up with a Barney episode your toddler has never seen, a workout video you've always wanted to try, and/or a chick flick for after the kids go to bed. Just make sure to mark your tapes clearly and agree upon a return date. Cost: about \$10 if you provide some popcorn and lemonade for all who attend.

2. Turn your home into a spa.

Make a quick trip to the discount store to pick up some new bubble bath and nail polish. The rest of the stuff you can make at home. Trust me, even little boys love facial masks and toenail polish. Surf the Internet for beauty indulgences; there are many that can be made from kitchen ingredients. Once you've pampered the kids, tuck them into bed, light the candles, and settle in for a long soak in the tub. Cost: around \$10 depending on which brands you choose.

3. Watch old home movies. This is a guaranteed rainy day pick-me-up. Your kids will beg to watch themselves over and over. And you'll get a chuckle out of watching how you have all changed. Warning: this can lead to severe nostalgia. Cost: free!

4. Grab a cookbook and pick an all-day recipe. Make anything from homemade bread to a five-layer cake. Pass out aprons and let the kids cook too. Planning the treat and shopping for the ingredients can even be a

great learning experience for little ones. You might need a little patience as you watch them crack eggs, but you'll be eating the payoff in the end. Cost: depends upon the recipe, but bread will probably be your cheapest (and best-smelling!) choice.

5. Have a magazine day. Swap babysitting with a good friend. Then head home to do something completely self-indulgent: Turn off the telephone, pour a cup of tea (or Diet Coke or whatever your pleasure), and pull out the latest edition of your favorite magazine. Put your feet up and read it cover to cover uninterrupted. If you don't see this as a pleasure-beyond-words then you are obviously not a mother. Cost: \$3 to \$5 depending on the magazine.

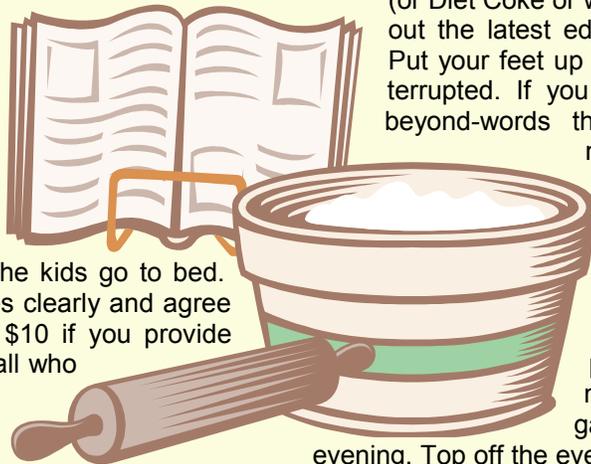
6. Host a pajama party. This is a lot of fun with your own family, but really a blast when you invite another family over to play. Dig out the sleeping bags, make cookies, and play board games or watch old movies all

evening. Top off the event with a donut breakfast in your PJs. Cost: less than \$10 for frozen pizza and a box of donuts.

7. Try a progressive dinner party. Instead of one person doing all the work, plan the crab dip at your house, the baked chicken at a friend's, and the strawberry shortcake at another's. All the fun (and yummy food) without all the time and effort. Cost: ingredients for your recipe.

Whatever you choose to do, remember that it doesn't have to come down to being bored or broke. With a little imagination and just a few dollars, you and your family can collect memories...and that's always better than just another shirt from the Gap.

Susanna Hickman Bartee is a mother of four and an Army wife of 13 years. She recently launched www.militarymama.net to offer a unique and humorous look at the military lifestyle.



15 Ways to Make the Time Fly

Keeping busy is perhaps the best way to make the time fly during a deployment. When you have other things on your mind, you won't have time to dwell on the separation. Here are fifteen healthy ways to get yourself out of the house—and perhaps one or two ways to treat yourself and maintain your sanity.

- 1. Volunteer.** Helping others is good medicine for your mental and spiritual health.
- 2. Set a goal.** Start the program or project you've been putting off. Begin a self-improvement program. Go back to school; learn a new skill or hobby. Do something for yourself.
- 3. Initiate.** Don't wait for the phone to ring. Plan a special dinner, then call several friends to join you.
- 4. Travel.** New scenery and a change of pace—even for a day or two—can do wonders for the spirit. Plan on taking a friend and making a day out of it.
- 5. Go to work.** A full- or part-time job can provide extra income as well as opportunities for interaction.
- 6. Take a break.** Take time away from your children. Single parenting wears you down, so go to dinner or see a movie with friends once a week.
- 7. Laugh.** Don't lose your sense of humor. Take time to smell the roses and to enjoy them.
- 8. Don't feel guilty** about going out with friends and leaving your children with a sitter.
- 9. Keep a journal** of your thoughts and activities while your service member is away to help them catch up when they return. Include snapshots of you and the children while they were away.
- 10. Join a support group.** Whether it is your FRG or a group at your church or work, the support of your friends makes the going easier.
- 11. Know at least two of your neighbors.** You may need their help on an emergency basis, and they can offer day-to-day support.
- 12. Keep the peace.** If you and your spouse have some differences, wait until after he or she is home to resolve the issues. The time will pass quicker—not to mention smoother—if you're getting along.
- 13. Find a friend.** Another spouse who is also alone temporarily will make a great companion. Time passes quicker with a friend.



14. Little things can help a lot. Cook a special dish that you enjoy but that your spouse dislikes. Do some physical labor. It will help you relieve emotional tiredness and stress.

15. Time to adjust. When your service member returns home, give both of yourselves time to adjust. Allow each of you some time alone.

Sleep Tight

Feeling crabby? More irritable? It could be that you aren't getting enough sleep. The average adult needs seven to nine hours of sleep a night, but that number could be hard to come by with work, taking care of kids, managing a household, and a deployment. Here are a few ways to make the sleep you get count:

★ Stick to a schedule. Go to bed and get up at about the same time every day—even on weekends.

★ Don't eat or drink a lot before bedtime. If you get the bedtime munchies, eat something that triggers serotonin, such as bread, cereal, milk, tuna, and turkey.

★ Avoid caffeine and nicotine.

★ Exercise. If you're trying to sleep better, the best time to exercise is in the afternoon.

★ A slightly cool bedroom is ideal for sleeping.

★ Sleep primarily at night. Limit daytime sleep to less than one hour, no later than three p.m.

★ Set limits on how often children and pets sleep with you.

★ Go to bed when you're tired and turn out the lights. If you don't fall asleep within thirty minutes, get up and do something. Go back to bed when you're tired.

★ Soak and sack out. Taking a hot shower or bath before bed helps bring sleep and relax muscles.

Portions of this article are from www.mayoclinic.com.

Kids Count

Even though the deployment is half over, it's important to keep talking to your child(ren) about the separation and watching how he or she is handling it. Here are a few tips to helping your kids cope with the ongoing deployment.

Involve the child in writing letters or e-mails or making things to send to his parent. Also encourage the deployed parent to send individual letters to the child.

Find a way to count down the time until the parent returns. Some families make calendars, while others fill a big jar with candy for each day until the soldier returns. You could make a paper chain and add a link for each day that the parent is gone, then use the chain as a decoration when they return.

Plan special outings or activities. A trip to the movies or even a bike ride together may help a child feel better. You may also want to plan events with children from other families that are coping with deployment.

Limit television watching, especially of military action. If your child is interested in watching coverage of military action, try to do it together so that you can answer questions and offer reassurance.

Make sure your child's teacher is aware of the deployment. If your child's teacher is informed of the situation, he or she may be able to cope with any behavior changes your child might have. This is especially key for stateside families.



Strength at Home

By Ben Stein

This is a letter I wrote to the newsletter of an Army unit called The Strykers, stationed in Iraq out of Ft. Lewis, Washington. The editor asked me what I would say to make the wives feel appreciated while their husbands are in Iraq. This is what I wrote to one soldier's wife.

Dear Karen,

I have a great life. I have a wife I adore, a son who is a lazy teenager but I adore him, too. We live in a house with two dogs and four cats. We live in peace. We can worship as we please. We can say what we want. We can walk the streets in safety. We can vote. We can work wherever we want and buy whatever we want. When we sleep, we sleep in peace. When we wake up, it is to the sounds of birds.

All of this, every bit of it, is thanks to your husband, his brave fellow soldiers, and to the wives who keep the home fires burning while the soldiers are away protecting my family and 140 million other families. They protect Republicans and Democrats, Christians, Jews, Muslims, and atheists. They protect white, black, yellow, brown, and everyone in between. They protect gays and straights, rich and poor.

And none of it could happen without the Army wives, Marine wives, Navy wives, Air Force wives—or husbands—who go to sleep tired and lonely, wake up tired and lonely, and go through the day with a smile on their faces. They feed the kids, put up with the teenagers' surliness, the bills that never stop piling up, the desperate hours when the plumbing breaks and there is no husband to fix it, and the even more desperate hours after the kids have gone to bed, the dishes have been done, the bills have been paid, and the wives realize that they will be sleeping alone—again, for the three hundredth night in a row.

The wives keep up the fight even when they have to move every couple of years, even when their checks are late, even when they have to make a whole new set of friends every time they move.

And they keep up the fight to keep the family whole even when they feel a lump of dread every time they turn on the news, every time they switch on the computer, every time the phone rings and every time—worst of all—the doorbell rings. Every one of those events—which might mean a baseball score or a weather forecast or a FedEx man to me and my wife—might mean the news that the man they love, the man they have married for better or worse, for richer and for poorer, in sickness and in health, is now parted from them forever.

These women will never be on the cover of *People*. They will never be on the tabloid shows on TV about movie stars. But they are the power and the strength that keep America going. Without them, we are nothing at all. With them, we can do everything.

They are the glue that holds the nation together, stronger than politicians, stronger than talking heads, stronger than al Qaeda.

They deserve all the honor and love a nation can give. They have my prayers, and my wife's, every morning and every night.

Love, and I do mean love,
Ben

This article originally appeared in the Wall Street Journal's August 18 edition. Mr. Stein, a television personality and writer, is co-author with Phil DeMuth of Can America Survive, forthcoming from Hay House.

All Stressed Out and Nowhere to Go

Adapted from Taya L. Cline's article for www.LIFELines.navy.mil

Bills, traffic, doctor appointments, the future, the deployment—it's enough to give you a monster headache and raise your blood pressure to the moon. The little stuff gets to everybody and makes your life seem more hectic and chaotic. But if these things cause you more than occasional anxiety, you've got stress.

We are all familiar with stress. We all know that it can affect our lives and our loved ones. But there are some simple ways to reduce your stress levels. By following a few simple guidelines, you will be on your way to a stress-reduced environment.

Relax and Breathe Easier

Everyone needs time each day to relax. If you have trouble doing this, try this simple stress release exercise. For day-to-day stress, try deep breathing exercises, which can help you calm down, feel in control, relax your muscles, and reduce your heart rate. For more on deep breathing and other relaxation techniques, try the Canadian Mental Health Association's Web site at www.cmha.ca/english/coping_with_stress/index.html.

Get Moving

Exercise is also a great way to deal with stress, and it

releases endorphins in your body that make you feel better. Start planning a daily routine that will allow you thirty minutes to run, walk, or participate in group exercises, such as step aerobics or a walking club.

Exercise helps you feel in control, which improves the feeling that you're in control of other aspects of your life. Check out the Army's Hooah for Health Web site at www.hooah4health.com for more information.

What Are You Laughing At?

Simple laughter is another excellent way to relieve stress. It's tough to be bummed out when you're laughing. Watch a Marx Brothers movie. Read a funny book. Get your kids to tell you jokes. Do whatever it is that makes you laugh out loud. The heartier the better, although even giggles can change your outlook.

Don't Give Up

During times of high stress, we often think that the situation we are currently in will not end. But it will, and it will get better. One of the most important things to remember during your time of stress is that it won't last forever. This level of stress will decrease in time, and it will eventually become something in your past.

Frannie Schneider
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MPS



GUNFIGHTER GAZETTE