

# BRIDGING THE

# GAP

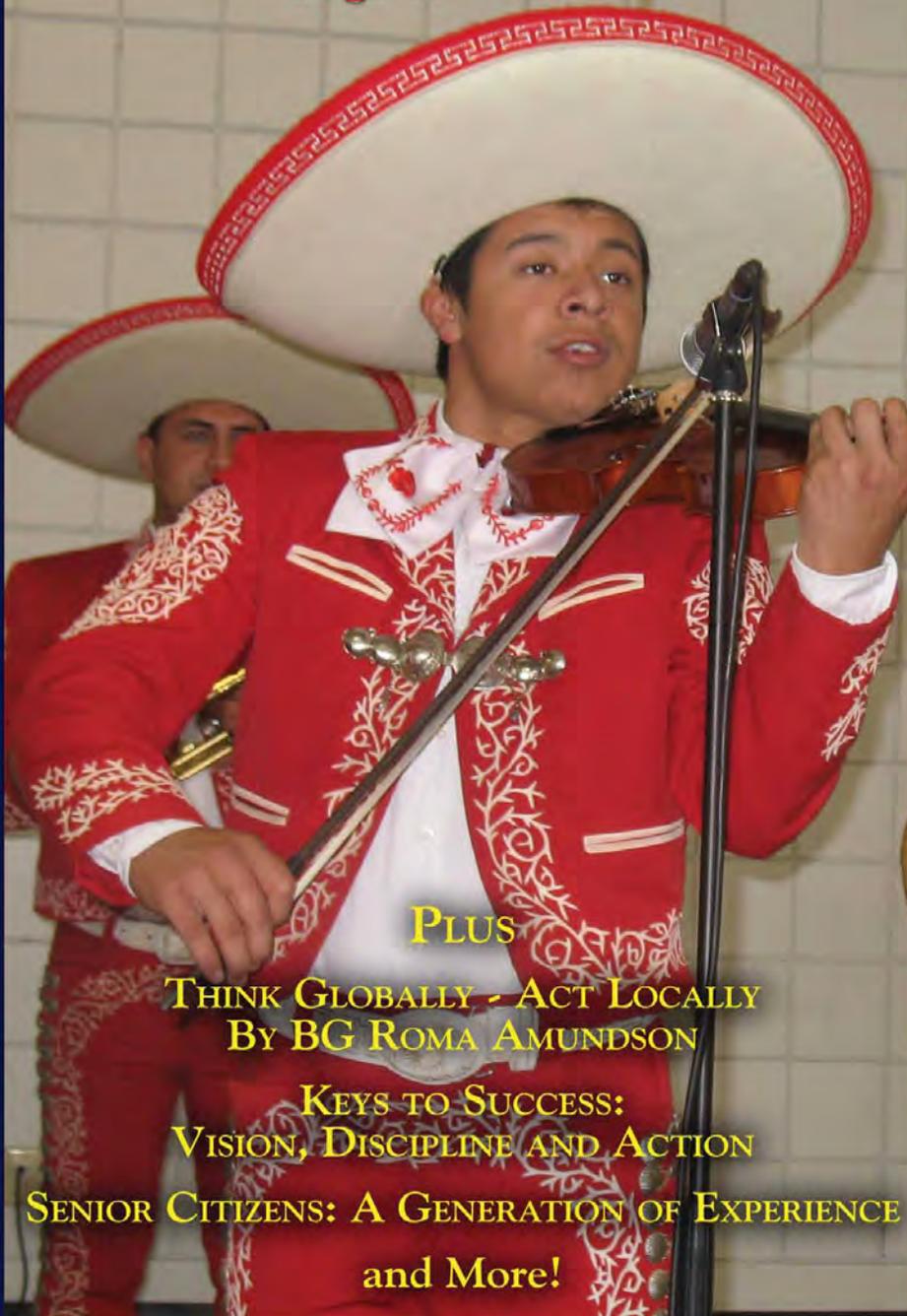
Through Knowledge, Education, Understanding & Insight

December 2009 / January 2010, Issue 19



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**PUBLISHER**

Special Emphasis Program (SEP) Group

**CREATIVE DIRECTOR**

Mary Schmidt-Rodriguez

**EDITORS**

MSgt Paul Dion

SSgt Kevin Krausnick

Pam Makovicka

LaVonne Rosenthal

Mary Schmidt-Rodriguez

**ASSISTANT EDITORS**

Karen Jordan-Anderson

Sharon Rezac

**THE NEBRASKA MILITARY DEPARTMENT  
VALUES DIVERSITY**

*The purpose of the SEP Group is to work with leadership and management in carrying out their joint responsibility to identify barriers to the recruitment and advancement of special emphasis groups, devise solutions, and draft plans to implement the solutions.*

*In addition, the SEP Group provides opportunities for positive exchange among diverse groups through community outreach, education and cultural diversity awareness.*

**NOTE FROM THE SEP GROUP**

Welcome to Bridging the Gap (BTG) Issue 19!

As we are finishing up the year 2009, it is as fun and exciting to look back over the year and our accomplishments as it is to look forward to where we want to go in 2010. We began 2009 with celebration luncheons featuring Dr. Naser Alsharif (Greater Middle East Heritage Luncheon), Fire Chief Niles Ford (African American Luncheon), and Cheryl Zwart (Women's Luncheon). We then moved on to celebrating different ethnic groups through entertainment provided by the Lincoln Irish Dancers, Kokyo Taiko Drummers, The Ostry Family Singers, Mariachi Luna y Sol and ended the year with storytelling by Matthew "Sitting Bear" Jones.

All luncheons provided valuable insights into the diverse cultures represented in this great land we call the United States of America. With each presentation, the bar raises for future event highlights and the level of information and entertainment we can provide to educate attendees of our rich cultural differences and similarities.

One of the highlights of each event is the food provided by different caterers throughout Lincoln including Sinbads, Hy-Vee, The Blend

and Famous Dave's. This is always a large part of the success of each event and we thank the caterers for working with us on the menus and all that goes into making a successful luncheon.

As we go into the year 2010, we know we have our work cut out for us to bring you great heritage events throughout the year. We also want to continue to bring you informative and interesting articles in BTG. In order to do this we welcome comments and suggestions on the articles and luncheons and the publication in general, as well as ideas for future articles (see below).

Our focus continues to be to help members of the Military Department and BTG readers to understand that diversity is not something to fear, but rather something to promote by embracing peoples' differences. Our intention is to celebrate the power of cultural diversity: the richness of ideas, traditions and understandings between people.

We wish you a very Happy New Year and that your 2010 is prosperous and filled with many wonderful and diverse experiences in the coming year. 

Bridging the Gap welcomes your submissions of article ideas and written articles.

To have your upcoming event published in Bridging the Gap, please notify us by December 29, 2009 for Issue 20: February-March 2010.

All submissions, due December 11, 2009 for the above issue, will be considered for publication. We reserve the right to edit submitted material.

Please send your submission to Mary Schmidt-Rodriguez at [m.schmidtrodriquez@us.army.mil](mailto:m.schmidtrodriquez@us.army.mil)

**SPECIAL EMPHASIS PROGRAM (SEP) GROUP MEMBERSHIP**

MSgt Paul Dion ..... <a href="mailto:paul.dion@us.af.mil">paul.dion@us.af.mil</a>	Mary Schmidt-Rodriguez .. <a href="mailto:m.schmidtrodriquez@us.army.mil">m.schmidtrodriquez@us.army.mil</a>	
Pam Makovicka..... <a href="mailto:pam.makovicka@us.army.mil">pam.makovicka@us.army.mil</a>	LaVonne Rosenthal ..... <a href="mailto:lavonne.rosenthal@us.army.mil">lavonne.rosenthal@us.army.mil</a>	
BG Roma Amundson	Kari Foote	SrA Winston Sanniola
Denise Anderson	Capt Amy Johnson	Susan Stevens
Jessie Bockelman	MSG Colin Jones	SSgt Casey Svitak
CPT Dale Burrage	CPT Richard Jones	CPT Carlos Van Nurden
MSG Reynold Castaneda	Karen Jordan-Anderson	SGT Adrian Velez
MSgt Kim Davila	SFC Kim Moore	CPT Juan Vidal
	WO1 Robrenna Redl	

*Interested in becoming a member of the SEP Group? Please contact one of the members with an email address listed above.*

## THINK GLOBALLY – ACT LOCALLY!

By *BG Roma Amundson*

***“The Salvation of the State is in the Watchfulness of the Citizen.”***

***Hartley Burr Alexander, Professor and Dean of Philosophy, UNL, circa 1920.***

When you visit the Nebraska State Capitol, you will see this statement over the main entrance. It sums up what we as citizens, and especially as Citizen-Soldiers, need to keep in mind.

What happens in foreign countries affects us here in the Midwest, even though we might feel that we are insulated by distance. The potential exists for horrific acts of terrorism caused by either domestic or foreign terrorists, foreign animal disease, pandemic diseases, civil unrest or natural disasters to occur within our state. Therefore, we as citizens have the imperative duty to be watchful, ever vigilant and prepared to act should any of those events named above occur or appear to have the potential to occur.

It has happened elsewhere, it could happen here in the Midlands. It occurs as easily as someone throwing a towel covered with snot from a cow infected by anthrax into a feedlot, and suddenly, Nebraskans are fighting a bovine disease which affects not only an important food source, but the economy of our state. Another example is that fires can be set in a coordinated pattern across the state, and suddenly we have a massive prairie fire that threatens homes, businesses, people, crops and animals. I thought about that as I flew above the fires we experienced in western Nebraska a few summers ago; how easy it would be for terrorists to take advantage of our desperate situation at that time and set even more fires when the state's resources were already engaged.

As I traveled with Lieutenant (Lt.) Governor Sheehy to the fires in western Nebraska and to New Mexico to visit our troops involved in Operation Jumpstart, I had the opportunity to visit with him about his assignment as

Nebraska Homeland Security Director. He shared with me some of his thoughts surrounding this program to which he was assigned as director shortly after the events of 9/11 in the U.S. The fires in western Nebraska and the protection of the border are excellent examples of the intent of Homeland Security: to protect the citizens of our nation and state against natural disasters and the entrance of both undocumented persons and illegal drugs. Let me share with you some of his thoughts.

The title *Think Globally — Act Locally* squarely hits the philosophy of the Nebraska State Homeland Security program on the head as those involved in emergency management strive to enhance Nebraska's security against threats of terrorism, disasters and major emergencies. The Nebraska Homeland Security Strategy addresses the preparation of the state in such areas as terrorism awareness, effective response to radiation emanating from a nuclear attack, skills in preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation of natural disasters, and knowledge of the overall Nebraska Emergency Operations Plan in order to facilitate a rapid response.

Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy oversees the growth and development of Nebraska's capability to detect, prevent and protect against, respond to, and recover from threats or incidents of terrorism, disasters and major emergencies. For this mission to succeed, regional coordination, cooperation and focused effort is required from all Nebraskans, all levels of government and from private and non-profit sectors.

When one talks about regional coordination and all levels of government being involved in the overarching mission of Homeland Security, a great deal of organization and leadership is required in order to make it function. The Nebraska Homeland Security Planning Team was created to do that very thing. It is a multidisciplinary committee that helps guide strategy development for grant allocation among emergency responders.

These emergency responders include personnel from law enforcement, emergency management, fire service, hazardous materials, public works, government administration, public safety, communications, health care, agriculture, education and public health. In addition, the Nebraska National Guard (NENG) as the State Militia under the command of the governor, plays a significant part in the planning as it serves as the military first responder providing a Quick Reaction Force, a Chemical, Biological, Radiological/Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) - Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP), and a Civil Support

Team (CST). The Guard is also part of a regional CBRNE Consequence Management Reaction Force (CCMRF). Its skills in chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive scenarios are invaluable, as are its capabilities in dealing with search and extraction, fire fighting, security and law enforcement.

In addition to the NENG being part of the resources available to the Lt. Governor as Homeland Security Director, the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), also within the



***Lt. Governor Rick Sheehy observing Operation Jump Start, at the Mexican border which is supported by Nebraska Army National Guard***

## A NEBRASKA SOLDIER'S VIEW ON THE AFGHANISTAN PEOPLE

By MSG Rey Castaneda

In Issue 17 of Bridging the Gap, I wrote an article about Afghanistan where I touched on many different aspects of my experiences in the country. In this article I will focus on a specific topic, namely the people I encountered during my deployment, including those on my forward operating base (FOB), the Afghan Army and the people I encountered when on missions.

Being a foreigner in a country, let alone a war zone, caused an uneasy feeling in me. Would the people be nice or would I have to constantly watch my back? My first encounter with the locals was at the dining facility (DFAC) at Camp Phoenix in Kabul. There were quite a few Afghanis working in DFAC and every day they would smile at us. It wasn't until I reached my FOB that I gained a better understanding of the Afghan people. We had six interpreters (called 'terps') assigned to our team, and I developed a good relationship with four of them: Jahaney, Shafiq, Wahaab and Sharif. We called them Patriot, GQ, Gladiator and Speedy respectively. Each name fit them because Jahaney is very loyal, Shafiq thinks he is God's gift to women, Wahaab is the spitting image of Russell Crowe and Sharif is always quick to respond when called upon.

They are young and no different than Americans their age. They all like to surf the internet and the single men are in love with Indian actresses on local television. The only difference amongst the terps was the maturity which was displayed by the married ones. While the single men couldn't wait to leave and go



MSG Castaneda and CSM Barat

prayed their daily prayers. Even when out on missions they take time to pray. I tip my hat to them for having such strong religious beliefs.

One thing I was really impressed with is the number of languages they know. All of our terps are fluent in Pashtu, Dari and English. It's amazing especially considering the low literacy rate in Afghanistan.

Strong family values are another trait they share. I never asked who they lived with, but I got the impression they still lived with their parents or lived close to them. One thing they all do is give money to their father. It seems the norm in Afghanistan is for the sons to help their family out financially when they are of age. Try that in America and you would have a riot!

We did have local Afghanis on our bases who were not interpreters. They worked in the DFAC and on numerous construction projects. It's pretty amazing watching them build a brick building with nothing but primitive tools. Most of them would work extremely hard on their project, but every now and then

have a good time in Kabul, the men who were married were focused on going home to their wife and kids. All of the interpreters I encountered share a strong religious background. Every day they washed up and then

there was a lazy one who would barely do anything. For the most part they are nice. They always wanted cold water, pop or Gatorade. Like our terps, praying was a daily ritual for them.

Working with the Afghan Army was an experience in itself. My observations led me to believe that the primary reason men join the army is for the money. On average, a Soldier makes \$150 a month, which, although it doesn't sound like much money, it is when you compare it to the average farmer's wage of \$30 per month.

I worked with the 5th Kandak's Command Sergeant Major (CSM) on a daily basis when I wasn't on missions. CSM Barat was a good guy and cared about his troops and the good of Afghanistan. One thing that stuck with me was when he told his first sergeants "to put aside their ethnic differences and work as one." Working with the CSM also gave me an opportunity to see how leadership worked within the Kandak Battalion. The S1 (administration), S3

(training and operations), and

Headquarters Officers were the leaders

I respected the most. The S1 had a good system of keeping track of the Soldiers, and

he did a great job of

providing a daily manning report to the Commanding Officer.

The Headquarters Officer, Captain Hakim, did a great job of commanding the Kandak when we went out on the first joint mission. He was also in charge of more missions than other leaders in the Kandak. I got to wondering why he was chosen for so many missions. The FOB was the most secure place to be, and the more missions you went out on, the greater your chance of being blown up or killed. There are two possibilities as to why he was chosen more often than

*Every time I saw this Soldier he would put his hand over his heart and bend his head which is a sign of friendship and respect.*

*A Soldier's View Continued from Page 4*

others: one was that he was in the dog house (trouble) with someone higher up; or two, was that he was chosen because if something did go wrong on a mission he was the best qualified to lead his troops and get them out of a bad situation. I happen to think the latter.

Probably the best officer was the S3. This was the person who did all of the

*Shura*

mission planning and coordination. The way he made sure that there were enough people and equipment available for each mission was impressive even though the Brigade was scattered in many locations.

An Afghani's daily routine was pretty much like a Soldier in the U.S. Army: wake up, prayer, physical training, breakfast, section training, lunch and then more section training. The main difference was that part of the afternoon training was dedicated to reading and writing. Within my Kandak, the Soldiers trained on driving, communication, and first aid, since they were a Combat Service Support (CSS) Battalion. The Soldiers within my Kandak knew who I was and showed me the proper courtesy. By going on missions with some of these Soldiers, you earned their respect even more. One Afghan Soldier from my Kandak had to leave his weapons at the front gate at Gardez to get on the FOB, and he was very leery of this (like any good Soldier would be). I reassured him that his weapons would be safe, and when he left the FOB and got his

weapons back he had a look of relief on his face. Every time I saw this Soldier he would put his hand over his heart and bend his head which is a sign of friendship and respect. Other Soldiers offered tea as a sign of friendship. The Afghan Soldiers trained hard for the missions and did them well, but there were times I felt like these guys thought they were on a picnic. I would see Soldiers in their pajamas and flip-flops during the middle of a mission. Personally, I feel they need to understand that there is an enemy presence in their country and they need to start taking the fight to them.

One good thing about my deployment was that I was able to see some of the countryside and the people. The major cities I saw were Kabul, Gardez and Khost. These cities were more westernized than the other parts of the country in that there were cars, markets and women without burqas, especially in Kabul. I personally did not interact with any of the local people, but was able to get a feel for their customs.

One of the things I noticed was that this is a male-dominated country, especially in the outlying villages. After every mission, a Shura (meeting of local area elders) was held and the only people who attended were men. It was quite an experience observing all these "old" guys with their flowing beards. I had quite a bit of respect for the elders but at the same time there was a sadness at not seeing any women. It was pretty much the same when we did humanitarian missions where only the men and boys were evident. Every now and then a girl would



be in attendance, but it was rare.

For the most part, the people I encountered were nice. When we drove down the roads many of the people would wave, but every now and then kids would pick up rocks and throw them at us. There were also times where adult males would look at us as if they wanted to slit our throat. These were usually in areas where improvised explosive devices (IEDs) were found, so it's not too hard to see the Taliban's influence in those areas.

I rarely encountered any women. Most of the time when I saw them, they were usually working the fields or tending the livestock. When there was a woman on the road they would completely turn their back to us. It was better to be snubbed by the women than have them look at me and get beaten by their husband.

As for the children of Afghanistan, I felt very sorry for them. They usually are out in the fields working with their parents. In the outlying areas, their schools are makeshift tents, if that, and their school supplies are minimal. It was sad seeing the poverty these people live in while still maintaining their pride.



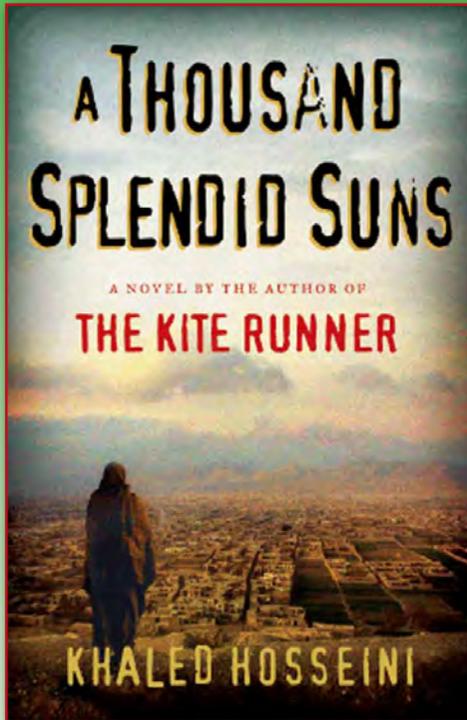
If you are about to deploy to Afghanistan as you are reading this article, my advice (besides learning about the dangers of the country) is to learn the culture. It's a very male-dominated society, religion plays a great part in their life, and these are proud people who will do anything for you if you become their friend. 🌍

## BOOK REVIEW: A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS

Written by Khaled Hosseini; Publisher: Penguin Group (USA); May 2007

Book Review by MSG Rey Castaneda

I first got a taste of the author Khaled Hosseini from seeing the movie *The Kite Runner* with my wife for our annual New Year's date in January 2008. Since I didn't know what this movie was about, my wife (who read the book) told me that it was about Afghanistan. Getting ready to deploy to that country, I figured the more I learned about it the better off I was. I enjoyed the movie so much that I read the book, which was the first book I had read in over five years. As soon as I got done reading this book I picked up *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by the same author. Whereas *The Kite Runner* is about the culture of Afghanistan from a man's point of view, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is about the culture of Afghanistan through a woman's eyes.



The two main characters are Mariam and

Laila. Mariam is the illegitimate daughter of a wealthy man who is raised by her mother. Her father loves her but is ashamed to be seen with her. She wants nothing more than to be treated like a true daughter by her father. Mariam is married off to a ruthless man named Rasheed, who treats her very badly. He makes her wear a burqa, and walk behind him like

other Afghanistan women. The treatment of Mariam gets worse as the years pass when it becomes evident that Mariam is unable to bear Rasheed's child.

On the other hand, Laila is a young girl who is raised by caring parents. Her mother and father love her greatly. The

two women's paths cross when Laila's house is destroyed by an errant rocket during the Mujahedeen years, killing her parents. Rasheed takes Laila in as his second wife and starts favoring Laila over Mariam. At first, Mariam despises Laila, but as their friendship develops, they both realize that Rasheed is their true enemy.

This book is nothing but sadness. I kept hoping that something good would happen for these two women. Coming from someone who doesn't read often, I truly recommend reading this book especially because it will grab your heart.

There were many things I read in this book which I personally experienced during deployment. I saw women in burqas and gatherings at local villages where women were excluded. I saw women work the fields, and I even saw a woman carrying a bed up a hill while her husband sat on his rear drinking tea. The part of my deployment that stands out though, was of a proud father walking hand-in-hand with his little daughter. This was such a beautiful picture that it made me realize there is still hope for this war-ravaged country. 

## WEBSITE REVIEW:

[www.more4kids.info/589/teaching-kids-cultural-diversity/](http://www.more4kids.info/589/teaching-kids-cultural-diversity/)

Review By Capt Amy Johnson

Over the past few weeks my son Quinlan realized that his eyes are brown and mine are green. He is now infatuated about different eye colors. As a parent raising a child who is biracial, I decided to look for websites for children that discuss cultural diversity.



I did a Yahoo search on "cultural diversity websites for kids." Much to my amazement, the topic had over one million hits. I chose one of the pages

on the [more4kids.info](http://www.more4kids.info) website because it had an article titled *Teaching Our Kids about Cultural Diversity*. The article was written by Jennifer Shakeel, a writer and nurse. She discusses what we as parents need to know and do to help raise children to be open to new people and new experiences. In addition, she discusses that the best way to teach our children about cultural

diversity is to let them see that we as adults are accepting and tolerant.

I initially thought the whole website would be geared toward children, but soon realized it is geared more toward parents. There is an abundance of categories and information, which range from parenting, pregnancy and crafts, to green living, product reviews and cooking. Although the website is not geared for children, there is an abundance of timely information for a parent to help educate themselves and their children. 

## A CIVIL WAR MUSEUM...IN NEBRASKA?

910 First Corso; Nebraska City, Nebraska

By BG Roma Amundson

Did you know that Nebraska City has a Civil War museum? I sure didn't! It is well known that Nebraska City is the home to Arbor Lodge, John Brown's Cave and the Lewis and Clark Memorial, which combine to make Nebraska City one of the most historically significant cities in our state. Yet I didn't have any knowledge about a Civil War museum. So, of course, when Civil War re-enactors gave my husband and me this "you didn't know that!" look and said, "We'll take you there!" we, of course, went.



attacks by the Plains Indians. However, in August of 1861, the regiment was sent east to fight the Confederacy and was soon followed by three other full regiments of cavalry and a battalion composed of Nebraska Soldiers.

The First Regiment Nebraska Volunteer Infantry, under the overall command of General Ulysses S. Grant, fought in the battles of Fort Donelson and Shiloh in Tennessee in 1862 and participated in several minor

died as a result of disease, accidents and complications from surgery. Only 35 (14.6%) Nebraska Soldiers died from hostile action during the Civil War, while 209 Soldiers died from disease and accidents. The last Nebraska Civil War veteran, Michael Bondell, died in 1948 in Beatrice.

Even the building where the museum is located is a historical treasure. The building is called the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) Hall and housed the William Baumer Post 24 for forty years. Colonel William Baumer, a Nebraska native and a Civil War veteran, also served as a commander of the First Nebraska Infantry which, by the way, had over 200 volunteers from the Nebraska City area.

The building was constructed in 1894 with a grand opening and dedication in 1895. This building served as a place for the G.A.R. veterans and members to meet, and eventually it became a place for other community activities, such as youth groups, temperance meetings and other political and social events. The post closed in 1935, and then the building fell into disrepair.

An interesting statistic: on a per capita basis, Nebraska provided the highest percentage of Soldiers to the Union Army of any state or territory fighting in the Civil War. During the four years of the war, more than 3,157 Nebraskans served in the Union Army, which represented slightly more than 33% of the men of military age living in the Nebraska Territory. That number doesn't include those who fought for the Confederacy, or the percentage would be even higher.

Let's review some facts. The nucleus of the first military unit, which was formed primarily of Nebraska volunteers, came from active Army personnel pulled from Fort Kearny and Fort Randall. These active Army personnel were joined by Nebraska volunteers. Together they served in the First Regiment Nebraska Volunteer Infantry, which was formed during early summer of 1861 under the initial command of Colonel John Milton Thayer. The original intent for the regiment was to serve as a local defense force to protect incoming settlers from



engagements in Missouri and Arkansas. These were really the only battles in which the First Nebraska Infantry was involved, because in 1863 it was sent back to the Nebraska Territory. At this time it was changed to a cavalry unit, and ordered to provide protection to the settlers on the plains. In 1866 it was officially deactivated from federal service and became the State Militia, the forerunner of our Nebraska National Guard.

All accounts of the medical problems during the Civil War indicated that being killed by hostile fire caused the fewest deaths. The majority of Soldiers



In 1991 G.A.R., Inc. Hall, Inc. initiated a restoration project, and now it appears much like it did when it was originally built. This historical

building now houses exhibits from the Civil War. You'll find flags, uniforms, buttons, pictures, swords, revolvers and rifles from both the Union as well as the Confederate Armies. I really encourage you to go, as I think you'll be pleased with the variety and quality of the exhibits. 

## KEYS TO SUCCESS: VISION, DISCIPLINE AND ACTION

*By Shawn Fitzgerald*

*This is the third in a series of articles that will give us insight into the personal accomplishments of a variety of individuals, and the keys that allowed them to rise to their current positions in the organization. The authors will provide a glimpse into the barriers they may have faced and tell us about those mentors who had a positive impact on their career.*

When initially approached to be a contributing author to *Bridging the Gap*, I was a bit taken back, particularly when told the subject was *Keys to Success*. Further explanation revealed that the subject matter was to provide a glimpse into the barriers faced and mentors encountered along the way in building my personal career.



I can honestly say that being the Nebraska Military Department's Controller was certainly not in my most early responses when answering the question "What do you want to be when you grow up?" Stepping outside of my day-to-day activities and taking an objective look back on a long and somewhat convoluted career path has been a daunting task. My childhood aspirations of growing up to be a doctor or chief executive officer of a Fortune 500 company may not have come to fruition...yet; but there is still a long and winding road ahead – and the possibilities are endless! All I knew from those very early and limited childhood aspirations was the fact that I wanted to be the boss and I knew I had to make a difference. Colleagues, coworkers, friends and family may certainly attest to the fact that I've got the bossy part mastered. Making a difference is a more personal and ever-changing affirmation.

Growing up in the late 1960s and 1970s, societal norms often included traditional roles and career paths that were women's

work. Couple that with a conservative all-female educational path, and it's a wonder that I've been intrigued by and gravitated toward typically male-dominated working environments. The 1960s and 1970s were also a time of change and restlessness – no longer were people satisfied with societal norms or limits to their individual abilities within the workforce,

particularly women.

I had great role models in my most early mentors. My parents built an unshakable foundation based on belief in oneself, the benefits of education, a strong work ethic, pride in a job well done and service to others. As much as I tried to rebel against what I considered their old-fashioned ideals, that foundation is what I continue to build on each and every day, particularly when facing seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

Perhaps my father had uncanny wisdom or perhaps it was just dumb luck that I was given a name that was stereotypically male. Having a boy's name pretty much guaranteed that in any classroom, team sport, or social situation, there was never another person sharing the same name that was a female. Early on that set me apart, allowed me to stand out a bit and sometimes to get my foot in the door before anyone found out I was a girl. Then, once in, I was too stubborn to have anyone tell me that I didn't belong. That tenacity has at times limited me,

but primarily has been the driving force in a journey that can be defined by a few simple, yet complex steps.

The personal stepping stones that have led me to where I am today are:

- Know what it is you want to do – set short and long term goals.
- Equip yourself to carry out the plan – DO YOUR HOMEWORK.
- Endure while improving.
- Stick to the plan.
- Know when you have control and when you don't.

### ***Know What It Is You Want To Do***

Have a plan as to what it is you want to do with your career or professional life, and be prepared to be flexible. Your hopes, dreams and ideas may evolve over time, but the core plan is generally pretty consistent. For example, if you aspire to be in a leadership position, make sure you train for the job. And by that, I mean make sure your work history contains enough of the responsibilities that provide the experience you really need. You have to be proactive and take the initiative in your own professional development. In doing so don't lose sight of your current position or current goals; you may miss out on some of the basics needed to take the next step. There have been times when I have spent way too much time and energy campaigning for the position I thought I wanted or deserved, when I should have been knocking the ball out of the park with a current responsibility or position.

### ***Equip Yourself to Carry Out the Plan – Do Your Homework***

Read and learn something new every day. In order to get to the top of my game,

*Keys to Success Continued from Page 8*

I have learned to find out what other people are saying and doing. Find out what you can about what you are working on. Plan ahead and try to develop a network of coworkers and colleagues you can gain insight from – you'd be surprised what can be gained from an informal meeting or conversation. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Everyone could use an older, wiser adviser, at least some of the time, on his or her career journey. We all need someone to show us the ropes, someone to explain (preferably behind closed doors) what's really happening. You also have to learn how to help yourself develop along the way. Sometimes you have to depend on gut instincts to get where you want to go. It takes vision, discipline and action: be willing to put in the work.

### ***Endure While Improving***

I have spent years attempting to understand what produces greatness, what common thread might run through the lives of all the outstanding people that I most admire. Surprisingly, the most outstanding fact was that virtually all of them had to overcome very difficult obstacles in order to become who they were. Obstacles can be totally positive experiences for certain individuals.

For years, struggling to make ends meet while single-handedly raising my son was certainly an obstacle. I couldn't focus on anything more than paying the bills, and ensuring that I did my best to provide for his every need. Frustration, separation guilt and constantly asking "Why me?" when working two and sometimes three jobs at a time did not seem to be career building in the least. Yet each and every one of my part-time gigs served to afford me so much more than a paycheck. Had it not been for the struggle and obstacles in my path, I would never have encountered the people I've met, the places I've seen or the experiences I've had. If you want a place in the sun, you've got to expect some blisters.

### ***Stick to the Plan***

Sticking to the plan is difficult at best; it takes vision, discipline and action.

It also takes patience, something I personally am not very good at. Moving up sometimes includes the possibility of having to give up something and that something differs with every goal. Self-discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishments.

Oftentimes women are told, "Don't be too proud. Don't stand out by making waves," or something similar. But I've learned that it's okay to have power, it's okay to have pride, and it's okay to have a big ego, but you need to manage it and drive it in the right direction. There are many occasions where I am the only woman present in a meeting. It's tough, but sometimes I actually enjoy the pressure of standing out, because I know that I am very hard to forget. I know that I must always focus on ensuring that my performance matches my claims and my ego.

### ***Know When You Have Control and When You Don't***

Being in a leadership role, especially when it comes to having difficult discussions or making difficult decisions is not always easy or popular. These truths, once recognized, can proactively adjust performance and processes to give better insight into a leadership role.

Your life is the sum of all the choices you make, both consciously and unconsciously. If you can control the process of choosing, you can take control of all aspects of your life. You can find the freedom that comes from being in charge of yourself. Each day brings a fresh start; the ability to build a positive pattern of success, by following the three R's: Respect for self; Respect for others; and Responsibility for all your actions.

For me the overall keys to success require the confidence, consistency, tenacity and discipline to build upon the foundation of your dreams.

Whatever your focus, and each person's is distinct, your goals and dreams will keep pulling you upward, away from the mediocre toward the exceptional. It's your goals that keep you reaching. 

*Think Globally - Act Locally by BG Roma Amundson Continued from Page 3*

Nebraska Military Department, plays a significant role in homeland security. The Assistant Director of NEMA maintains daily oversight and establishes policy direction and compliance with Federal and State statutes for agency activities. NEMA has been appointed as the State Administrative Agency for the Department of Homeland Security/ Office for Domestic Preparedness Grants, and oversees the State Homeland Security Program in support of the Lt. Governor as the Nebraska Homeland Security Director.

Nebraska's vision for the Homeland Security Strategy is to reduce the vulnerability of people and communities of the state to damage, injury and loss of life and property resulting from terrorism, natural disasters and major emergencies. Its purpose is to ensure preparedness of the people and responding organizations, prepare for response, assist in recovery and provide mitigation for events. In order to accomplish this purpose, it strives to raise awareness of terrorism, develop plans for state emergencies and practice response. Homeland Security extends across all levels of government and jurisdictions and is dependent upon clear communications, coordination and understanding.

While the government and the military have worked to develop adequate response plans, it is nevertheless imperative that the citizens of the state be watchful, vigilant and prepared against domestic or foreign terrorist activities, natural disasters and civil unrest. We must stay informed of global events and be willing to take action locally when the need arises. We must remember that "the salvation of the state" depends upon us as citizens. Lt. Governor Sheehy has a huge job, and we need to be engaged with our state's well-being in support of him and his mission.

Sources: <http://www.nemaweb.org/home.aspx> and [http://www.nema.ne.gov/index\\_html?page=content/home\\_news/homelandsecurity\\_home.htm](http://www.nema.ne.gov/index_html?page=content/home_news/homelandsecurity_home.htm) 

**TRIVIA: THE 1980s***Compiled by Capt Amy Johnson*

1. Which dancing screen great was born in 1899 in Omaha, Nebraska and died in 1987?
  - a. Gene Kelly
  - b. Fred Astaire
  - c. Sammy Davis, Jr.
  - d. Bob Fosse
2. In the 1980s, Afghanistan was occupied by troops from which country?
  - a. Egypt
  - b. India
  - c. USSR
  - d. United States
3. At whose 70th birthday concert did Whitney Houston sing in London in 1988?
  - a. Nelson Mandela
  - b. Margaret Thatcher
  - c. Gordon Brown
  - d. Queen Elizabeth
4. Which Martina dominated tennis in the 1980s?
  - a. McBride
  - b. Hings
  - c. Seles
  - d. Navratilova
5. Which basketball team did Magic Johnson play for throughout the 1980s?
  - a. Los Angeles Lakers
  - b. Philadelphia 76ers
  - c. Boston Celtics
  - d. Seattle Supersonics
6. In which 1980s comedy did Dustin Hoffman play an actor who pretends to be a woman to get a part in a soap opera?
  - a. Arthur
  - b. Tootsie
  - c. Rain Man
  - d. Family Business
7. Which Princess and former film star died in a car crash near Monte Carlo in 1982?
  - a. Princess Margaret
  - b. Princess Ann
  - c. Princess Grace
  - d. Princess Katherine
8. Where were the 1980 Winter Olympics held?
  - a. Sapporo, Japan
  - b. Oslo, Norway
  - c. Innsbruck, Austria
  - d. Lake Placid, New York
9. In 1980, what was the attempt to rescue the U.S. Embassy hostages held in Tehran called?
  - a. Operation Lightning Strike
  - b. Operation Hercules
  - c. Operation Talon
  - d. Operation Eagle Claw
10. What were Nina Blackwood, Alan Hunter, J.J. Jackson, Mark Goodman and Martha Quinn famous for?
  - a. Each gave a eulogy at the 1982 funeral of John Belushi
  - b. The original "VJs" on MTV in 1981
  - c. Members of The Buggles who sang "Video Killed the Radio Star," the first video shown on MTV
  - d. The first news anchors of CNN when it was launched in 1980
11. At what number could you reach Jenny?
  - a. 687-5309
  - b. 786-4302
  - c. 867-5309
  - d. 877-3504
12. In which year did the Berlin Wall come down?
  - a. 1989
  - b. 1987
  - c. 1984
  - d. 1988

*Trivia Answers on Page 17***SCHOLARSHIPS OFFERED BY****NEBRASKA FEDERAL WOMEN'S COUNCIL AND HEARTLAND FEW CHAPTER**

*Information will remain confidential. The scholarship(s) will be awarded to a woman (or women) currently employed by the U. S. Government in the State of Nebraska, in a permanent position, who:*

1. Is attending an accredited college or university;
2. Is enrolled in a course/courses directly related to current job, career advancement, or is seeking a degree.
3. Has a grade point average of 3.0 or above in course work.

**Scholarship Award Information:**

1. Amount: May vary up to \$500 (Minimum - \$150.00).
2. Purpose: To assist one or more female Federal employees who are presently pursuing an education and need assistance.
3. Opening Date: NOVEMBER 1, 2009.
4. Closing Date: DECEMBER 15, 2009.
5. Application Form: Available from your agency's Federal Woman's Program Manager.
6. Mailing address and contact for additional information: Pam Makovicka; Chair, Scholarship Committee; Nebraska Military Department; 1234 Military Road; Lincoln, NE 68508; 402-309-7511
7. Notification Date: JANUARY 2, 2010.

## SENIOR CITIZENS: A GENERATION OF EXPERIENCE

By Pam Makovicka

The United States is on the brink of a longevity revolution. By 2030, the proportion of U.S. population aged 65 and older will double to about 71 million older adults, or one in every five Americans. Aging is a normal part of life, and we're living longer and longer. With today's medical advances, many adults are celebrating good health along with longevity. It's important to be aware of the many components of senior health, including physical health, mental health, and emotional well-being. With healthy lifestyle habits, plenty of exercise, activities and strong social support, healthy seniors can look forward to personal fulfillment and a long life.

It is often said that we are what we eat. In reality, we are what we think and feel, too. Add that to the fact that many people are holding stereotypical views of elderly persons being incompetent, helpless, or even burdens, and we have a situation whereby the vast majority of people probably dread the thought of growing old. It is clear that optimism is crucial for healthy living and healthy aging, and being able to deal with the changes that come with aging is a key element to maintaining control over one's own life. With populations rapidly graying, this is a potentially serious issue, not just socially, but also health-wise. It is thus paramount that society as a whole begins to alter our attitudes about aging and the elderly.

Even in the "oldest old," a little physical activity goes a long way, extending life by at least a few years for people in their mid- to late- 80s. The three-year survival rate was about three times higher for active 85-year-olds compared with those who were inactive. Getting less than four hours of exercise weekly was considered inactive; more than that was active. The elderly didn't have to be super-athletes to live longer; walking at least four hours weekly counted, even if it was just in 15-minute strolls a few times daily.



Rather than retiring and relaxing into a life of leisure, increasing numbers of older Americans are remaining on the job or returning to the workforce after retirement. They're prodded in part by the harsh economy and their shrinking nest eggs, but holding down a job has benefits beyond pulling a paycheck. Older adults who work, whether part time or full time, are healthier as a whole, particularly if they like their jobs. Continuing to work gives people a sense of meaning and purpose which can translate into lasting mental and physical

vigor. Continuing to work can also help older people eat better, move better and feel better.

### *Care for aging family members*

There are many elderly care options for families to consider when a loved one is no longer able to live independently. Many avenues are available to assist you in selecting what's right for your aging parent's needs. Whether you need in-home services like homecare, adult daycare or companion care, or you're considering housing options like assisted living, group homes, residential care facilities or nursing homes, the following are some links to answer your questions on aging and local agencies to assist you with planning care.

*Aging Partners: A Pioneering Area Agency on Aging* (formerly The Lincoln Area on Aging Agency) is the principal agency which plans, coordinates and advocates for older people in eight Nebraska county

*Continued on Page 19*

### *When are you a Senior Citizen?*

There is no set age when a person becomes a senior citizen. The age requirements for federal and state programs and entitlements are established by legislative action.

At 60 you are eligible for:

- Social Security benefits to surviving spouse
- Railroad Retirement Benefits
- Local programs funded under the Older Americans Act
- Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)

62 year olds are eligible for:

- Reduced Fare Program (transportation)
- Senior citizen federally subsidized housing and congregate housing
- 80% Social Security/Railroad Retirement benefits for retirees

At 65 you are eligible for:

- Full Social Security benefits (if income is less than \$14,500)
- Medicare/Medicaid coverage
- Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled (PAAD)
- Lifelong Credit Program
- Hunting and Fishing Licenses at a reduced fee
- Tuition-free or reduced fee courses at New Jersey public institutions of higher learning and some private institutions
- Senior citizen property tax deduction if eligible

70 year olds are eligible for:

- Full Social Security benefits regardless of the amount of earned income

## RESTAURANT REVIEW: PERU, MUCHO GUSTO - PERUVIAN RESTAURANT

7755 L Street; Ralston, Nebraska 68127; 402-932-0049

By BG Roma Amundson

A culturally unique dining experience is provided at Peru, Mucho Gusto, where "Authentic Peruvian Cuisine" is prepared by Chef Raul Atencio, a gentleman from the Amazon area of Peru. His culinary creations are served by his wife Mimi, a wonderfully friendly woman from Los Angeles. Talking with Mimi, a gregarious hostess eager to inform diners about the cuisine, was a real revelation to me. I didn't know that indigenous Peruvian foods are influenced not only by European cooking styles, most notably the Spanish, but also by Asian styles brought into the country by workers, merchants and immigrants from China and Japan. The influences of these cultural styles become evident when you find out how the entrees are prepared and served.

Raul Atencio hails from Iquitos, Peru. He and his wife Mimi focus on preparing "made to order entrées using the freshest Peruvian ingredients, imaginative sauces, all with a masterful touch!" Their intent is to introduce the food and culture of Peru to you. They invite you to try the many flavors and aromas of the foods featured on their menu. They are not only happy to discuss the foods with you, but they take pride in talking about Peru's cuisine. I really enjoyed visiting with both of them, as the pride they have in their restaurant and food is very obvious and well-deserved!

I had a difficult time deciding what to order, as all of the entradas (appetizers), the platos principales (main dishes) of beef, fish and seafood, chicken and porciones (side dishes) seemed to just call my name! I finally settled on Causa Limeña, as the entrada, Chupe de Camarones, as the plato principal, and Yucca Frita as the porción. So what did I choose in English? I had potato pie as my appetizer, shrimp soup for my main dish and fried yucca as my side dish. As my drink, I chose Inca Cola, which comes from the Amazon area. You can, of course, get the usual fountain drinks, tea, coffee and juices.

The Causa Limeña was composed of mashed potatoes with ingredients of chicken, yellow chili, a mayonnaise sauce and served with red onion salsa. My Chupe de Camarones, a shrimp soup, had a milk base with eggs, rice, cheese, tomatoes, red chili, unique Peruvian spices and croutons. Finally, my Yucca Frita was fried yucca prepared similarly to french fries. All was delicious, served with style and grace and in more than a sufficient amount!

While waiting for the food, I had time to look around the restaurant. The main attraction was the picture of Machu Pichu, the fantastic Inca ruins found high in the Andes Mountains. Mystery surrounds those ruins, because they reveal a very advanced civilized people who lived there, constructed the buildings and then left, for no reason that can be determined through historical study.

The décor of the restaurant was further carried out with chili peppers, paintings, flowers and crosses hung on the walls. The television was carrying news from CNN-en español. The restaurant was light, clean and airy, a very relaxing place to experience a well-prepared and culturally unique meal. This restaurant is one to which I will return, and I urge you all to put this one on your Must-Go-To list when you are in Omaha! 



*Jalea (jelly) is a fried, lightly breaded fish, or seafood dish. There are mainly three types of jalea: jalea de mariscos (jelly seafood), jalea de pescado (jelly fish) and jalea de pota (jelly pota).*



*Yucca Frita*



*Papa rellena, served with salsa criolla, is twice cooked mashed potatoes, stuffed with seasoned beef, eggs, raisins and Peruvian spices.*



*Ceviche de pescado is fresh sliced fish with freshly squeezed lime juice, sliced onions, salt and chile (aji limo or rocoto) and is usually served Ceviche with boiled sweet potatoes or corn.*



*Lomo saltado, served with plain white rice, is a dish of marinated beef steak, fried potatoes and vegetables.*

## 2009 HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH LUNCHEON RECAP

By Capt Juan Vidal



were high expectations with a Mariachi band as the main entertainment for this event. A few of the SEP members had already seen them perform around the Omaha and Lincoln area, so we had a good idea what to expect. There was a

lot of anxiety shared by SEP members, at the back of the Penterman drill floor waiting for the arrival of the Mariachi members. A big sigh of relief was felt when it was made known that they had indeed arrived.

As soon as Mariachi Luna y Sol (Moon and Sun) was introduced by MSgt Kimberly Davila, the drill floor was overcome with the brilliant sound of the trumpet against the sweet sound of violins and the happy medium sound of the guitar. The deep sound of the guitarron quickly caught the attention of attendees as the eight members of the Mariachi band made their entrance to the center of the Penterman Armory drill floor wearing their wide white sombreros and their red decorative toreador (bull fighter) like costumes.

Marcos Mora, vice president of the South Omaha Arts Institute and director of Mariachi Luna y Sol, introduced each member of the Mariachi band. The average age of the entire band is 26, the youngest being only fourteen years old; five of whom are currently in high school (Omaha). The band had five violins, one trumpet, one guitar (five strings) and one guitarron (large guitar, a six strings acoustic bass instrument). Mariachi has

been a part of Mexican musical culture since the 19th century, and it has been played around the world. Mariachi musicians frequently play at weddings, Quincianeras (15th birthday party for girls, the equivalent of the American "Sweet 16") and any special occasion.

The rhythm was very contagious. Marcos taught us how to say "el grito" (the cry), which had audience members laughing as they tried their best to imitate this sound. Each Mariachi member stepped forward to showcase their talent, but one of them took our breath away. His proficiency with the violin was fantastic to the point that the hair of his stick started to break, while he continued to play the song to the end.

The luncheon quickly transitioned to a fiesta (party) for about sixty minutes with familiar songs like "la Bamba," "la Cucaracha" and others. The audience was enthusiastically involved in the fiesta, as the young musicians shared their talent to the point we could not resist tapping our fingers against the tables or tapping our boots or shoes against the concrete or singing along. A SEP member sitting in the front row, got most of the attention of the Mariachis, as their songs were directed toward her. The lyrics of the songs speak about machismo, love, betrayal, death, politics, revolutionary heroes, country life, plants and animals. Imagery of the courtship of farm animals is often used to describe the relations of men and women. La fiesta was complimented by a delicious cuisine typical of the region catered by La Paz in Lincoln.

A certificate was presented to Mariachi Luna y Sol by Colonel Bob Athan as a token of appreciation for their authentic performance of traditional music while proudly representing their unique culture. The audience had a wonderful time, which was indicated by very positive feedback on the survey cards. 

Hispanic Heritage Month is the time of the year to recognize the contributions of Hispanic Americans to the United States and to celebrate Hispanic heritage and culture. The observation started in 1968 when Hispanic Heritage Week was approved by President Lyndon Johnson and was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a thirty-day period starting on September 15th and ending on October 15th. It was enacted into law on August 17, 1988, upon the approval of Public Law 100-402.

September 15 was chosen as the starting point for the celebration because it is the anniversary of independence of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. These Central American countries all declared independence in 1821. In addition, Mexico (North America), Chile (South America) and Belize (Central America, English official language) celebrate their independence days on September 16, September 18 and September 21, respectively.

The date for the Hispanic Heritage Month luncheon came quickly as there

## EID AL-ADHA – FEAST OF THE SACRIFICE

By Denise Anderson

Eid al-Adha, Feast of the Sacrifice, is a Muslim festival originating in the Quran.

God asked Ibrahim (Abraham) to sacrifice his son to show his willingness to follow God's (Allah's) commands. Right before Ibrahim sacrificed his own son, God (Allah) revealed to him that he did not have to go through with the sacrifice, and instead offered Ibrahim an alternative animal (which was caught in the thickets) to be used as a sacrifice in place of his son.

Eid al-Adha annually falls on the 10th day of the month of Dhul Hijja (ذو حجة) of the lunar Islamic calendar. The festivities last for three days or more depending on the country. Eid al-Adha occurs the day after the pilgrims conducting Hajj (the

annual pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia by Muslims worldwide) descend from Mount Arafat. It happens to be approximately seventy days after the end of the month of Ramadan.

On this day, Muslims dress in their best clothes and go to a communal morning prayer. Prayers are followed

by visits with family and friends, and the exchange of greetings and gifts. All Muslims who are financially able must make a sacrifice (Qurban) just like Ibrahim. The sacrificed animals, called uḍḍiyah have to meet certain age and quality standards or the animal is considered an unacceptable sacrifice. Families who are unable to financially

afford this may pool their money and buy an animal to be slaughtered. The meat is equally shared; one-third is eaten by immediate family and relatives, one-third is given away to friends, and one-third is donated to the poor.

On Eid Al-Adha Muslims greet one another by saying: "Eid Mubarak" (Blessed Festival).

The response is "Taqabbal Allah minha wa minkum," which means "May Allah accept [good deeds] from us and from you."

The calculated date for the 2009 holiday is 27 November and for 2010 is 16 November.

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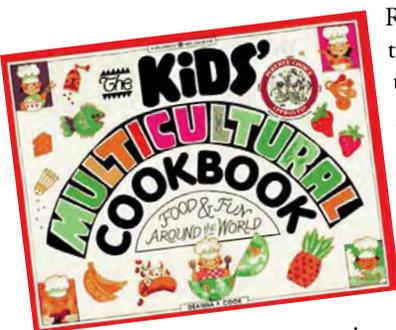


*Distribution of meat of a traditionally sacrificed animal to the poor in Pakistan*

## CHILDREN'S BOOK REVIEW: THE KIDS' MULTICULTURAL COOKBOOK

Written by Deanna F. Cook; 1995; Williamson Publishing Co.

Book Review by Denise Anderson



Recently we took our girls to the public library so they could pick up new books to read. While I was

perusing the stacks, I came across this wonderful cookbook. It is a well organized book dividing the recipes into different regions (Asia, Europe, Africa and The Middle East, The Americas and South Pacific). Since this is a cookbook aimed at children, it includes a section on the basics of cooking and baking which includes tools and preparation work needed to get ready for cooking.

In addition to recipes, the different sections include games, fun facts, pictures of children cooking or playing and jokes. Each recipe includes a short introduction with a reason as to why this food is eaten in that particular country or region, and a bit of a fun food history lesson as well. It was wonderful to see children

from different countries happily playing. The recipes are fairly simple (because it is geared towards kids) and most of the ingredients you can find at your local grocery store. As Deanna says in the introduction, "Cooking is a fun way to learn about cultures around the world."

One of the recipes from Thailand caught my eye. It truly illustrates the diversity of recipes available for your tasting pleasure found in this fun cookbook.

### Tom Kar Gai (page 21)

Mix one 13-3/4 ounce (390 ml) can chicken broth with 1 cup (250 ml) water, 2 tablespoons (25 ml) lime juice, 1 teaspoon (5 ml) fresh chopped ginger, 1/4 teaspoon (1 ml) salt, and 2 teaspoons (10 ml) sugar. Cook for 5 minutes.

Add a 14-ounce (400 ml) can coconut milk and one uncooked chicken breast,

cut into thin slices. Cook for 8 more minutes.

Pour into bowls, top with fresh cilantro leaves, and a pinch of crushed red pepper (if you like spicy food).

Spoon this quick, coconut chicken soup over rice.

Serves 4. 

## SEP MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

### *CPT Juan Vidal - Commander for the HHD 126th Chemical Battalion; Full-Time Officer Strength Manager*

I was born and raised in the Pomabamba Province of the Ancash Region in Peru. After high school I migrated to Lima (capital of Peru) to further my education. I studied at Callao University for about three years. In 1995, I moved to the United States of America to start a new life in East Hartford, Connecticut. I lived there for three years while I attended Manchester Community College.

In March 1998, I signed up with the U.S. Army as a 63T Bradley fighting vehicle system (BFVS) mechanic, reporting for duty the same year on May 18. After completing basic combat training, advanced individual training and recovery specialist training, I was assigned to the National Training Center (NTC) located at Fort Irwin, California, with the 2/11 Armed Cavalry Regiment as an opposing force Soldier. I left Active Duty on May 17, 2001.

After a few months of financial instability, I decided to search for new horizons in Nebraska. I moved to Omaha in September of 2002 where I worked for a local company for three years. On October 22, 2002, I joined the Nebraska Army National Guard under the Try-One enlistment option, which was extended two times. I attended Traditional

State Officer Candidate School (OCS) at Camp Ashland, Nebraska, the following year and I graduated from OCS in August 2004, but delayed my commission for one year.

I began my quest for U.S. citizenship early in the year of 2000. Finally, after more than two years of a very slow process, I became a U.S. Citizen on December 2, 2002.

While stationed at NTC, I married my wife Miriam in Lima, Peru on June 29, 2000. Moving my wife to the States was impossible at that time. Our first daughter, named Fiorella, arrived in late February 2002. After a painful and slow process, in January 2005, my wife and my daughter Fiorella were granted a visa to come to the States.

In August 2005, I received a Bachelor of Science in Management Information Systems from Bellevue University,



and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. Our second daughter, Francesca, was born at the beginning of June 2006. Two months after her arrival, I reported to Fort Sill, Oklahoma to start my Basic Officer Leadership

Course (BOLC) II and completed my Chemical Basic Officer Leadership Course (CMBOLC) III at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

My military assignments have included Platoon Leader for the 754th Chemical (CM) Company and 189th Transportation Company; Operations Officer for the 754th CM Company; and 09L Language and Cultural Specialist Program Officer in Charge (OIC). Currently I am the Commander for Headquarter and Headquarters Detachment (HHD) 126th Chemical Battalion, and am working full-time as an Officer Strength Manager in Omaha. 

## AGUADITO DE POLLO (PERUVIAN CHICKEN SOUP)

<http://allrecipes.com/Recipe/Peruvian-Chicken-Soup-Aguadito-de-Pollo/Detail.aspx>

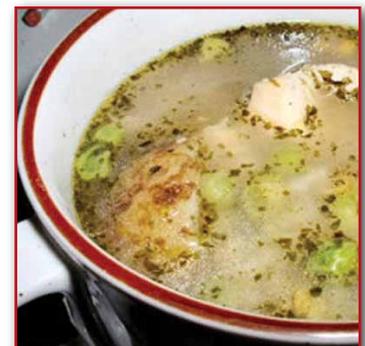
### Ingredients

4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves - cut in half	1 tablespoon seeded, minced serrano chile	10 cups chicken broth
salt and pepper to taste	1/2 cup chopped cilantro	4 Yukon Gold potatoes, cut in half
1/2 cup olive oil	1 cup green peas	1 cup uncooked white rice
1 medium onion, chopped	1 cup corn	
1 teaspoon minced garlic	1/2 red bell pepper, chopped	

### Directions

Season the chicken with salt and pepper. Heat the olive oil in a large, heavy pot over medium-high heat. Stir in the onion, garlic, and serrano chili; cook until the onion has softened, about 1 minute. Add the chicken, and continue to cook for 5 minutes.

Stir in the cilantro, peas, corn, and red pepper; cook for 1 minute. Pour in the chicken broth, potatoes, and rice. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer until the chicken is opaque and the potatoes are tender, about 40 minutes. 



## SEP MEMBER HIGHLIGHT

### CPT Carlos Van Nurden - Visual Information Manager, G6 Office



One of the first things I hear when I meet someone is "your first name and last name don't match." It's true, Carlos Alberto and Van Nurden

do not match. That's because my first and middle names represent my mother's Spanish ancestry and my surname reflects my father's Dutch ancestry.

Growing up, I spoke Spanish at home and English at school. It seemed natural to switch between the two and I could do so automatically. Although today I find it much harder to accomplish the switch, primarily because I tend to think in English, translate to Spanish in my head, and then speak in Spanish. What's interesting is that the last time I vacationed in Peru, I was thinking and speaking in Spanish in the span of two

to three days. The change was almost imperceptible to me – I just realized a few days later that I was totally fluent both in thought and speech.

Growing up, my father was in the Air Force so we moved frequently. I have memories of friends in the different grades, but they are only memories. After Vietnam, my father was stationed at Offutt Air Force Base (AFB) and he immediately became enamored with the area. I went to Logan Fontenelle Junior High and graduated from Bellevue East High School. I joined the Marine Corps and served four years of active duty. Those were crazy wild days! As a friend of mine once said of our adventures, we were bulletproof. I served as a Marine in Camp Pendleton, Camp LeJeune, TwentyNine Palms and Camp Hansen, Okinawa.

After returning home from the Corps, I attended the University of Nebraska in Lincoln (UNL). At the same time, I joined the Nebraska Army National Guard (24th Med) and drilled at the Army Aviation Support Facility (AASF) #1. I attended Officer Candidate School (OCS) in Camp Ashland and graduated

with my class (OC 30). After graduating from UNL with a Bachelor of Science in Finance, I became a financial software installer with Information Technology, Inc. and as a result I traveled to almost every state in the Union. After that, I became the System Administrator for the Arbor Day Foundation which subsequently led me to be an Adjunct Professor at Southeast Community College.

Always missing the military life, I plotted my return to the Nebraska Army National Guard (NEARNG) in 2005 and after some paperwork, an Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT), more paperwork, a physical and a little more paperwork, I was allowed the privilege of returning to the ranks. Seeing old friends, making new friends and a deployment has been extremely enjoyable for me. I honestly like what I do, the people I work with, and the satisfaction of contributing to a cause. My only regret is not coming back into the military sooner.

For the future, along with my wife Dee, I plan to raise my three girls and continue to contribute to society in a positive way and to enjoy the little things in life. 

## OLIEBOLLEN (DUTCH DOUGHNUTS)

<http://allrecipes.com/Recipe/Oliebollen-Dutch-Doughnuts/Detail.aspx>

*Ollie-bollen, or (Oliebollen) is a dutch pastry similar to a doughnut. It typically is a deep fried pastry filled with raisins and dusted with powdered sugar. Some modern variations serve them topped with berry filling, but this is a traditional recipe. Oliebollen are a traditional treat on New Year's.*

### Ingredients

1 (0.6 ounce) cake compressed fresh yeast  
1 cup lukewarm milk  
2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour  
2 teaspoons salt

1 egg  
3/4 cup dried currants  
3/4 cup raisins

1 Granny Smith apple - peeled, cored and finely chopped  
1 quart vegetable oil for deep-frying  
1 cup confectioners' sugar for dusting

### Directions

Break up the compressed yeast, and stir into the warm milk. Let stand for a few minutes to dissolve. Sift the flour and salt into a large bowl. Stir the yeast mixture and egg into the flour and mix into a smooth batter. Stir in the currants, raisins and apple. Cover the bowl, and leave the batter in a warm place to rise until double in size. This will take about 1 hour.

Heat the oil in a deep-fryer, or heavy deep pan to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). Use 2 metal spoons



to shape scoops of dough into balls, and drop them carefully into the hot oil.

Fry the balls until golden brown, about 8 minutes. The doughnuts should be soft and not greasy. If the oil is not hot enough, the outside will be tough and the insides greasy. Drain finished doughnuts on paper towels and dust with confectioners' sugar. Serve them piled on a dish with more confectioners' sugar dusted over them. Eat them hot if possible. 

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## 1980s TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. b. Fred Astaire, born Frederick Austerlitz, was an American film and Broadway stage dancer, choreographer, singer and actor. His stage and subsequent film career spanned a total of 76 years, during which he made 31 musical films (ten of those with his



dance partner Ginger Rogers). Astaire was born on May 10, 1899 in Omaha, Nebraska, the son of Johanna and Frederic Austerlitz. His father came to the United States in 1882 from Austria and settled in Omaha where he worked for the Storz Brewing Company. Astaire's mother dreamed of leaving Omaha by virtue of her children's talents. His older sister Adele Astaire, and his dance partner in his early vaudeville stage days, showed an instinctive talent for dancing and singing. Although Fred Astaire refused dance lessons at first, he easily mimicked his sister's steps. He took up piano, accordion and clarinet as well. Fred Astaire died on June 22, 1987 in Los Angeles, California at the age of 88.

2. c. USSR. The Soviet War in Afghanistan was also known as the Soviet-Afghan War. This nine-year conflict involved the Soviet Union supporting the Marxist government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan at their own request against the Islamist Mujahideen Resistance. The Afghan government was also supported by India, while the Mujahideen found support from a variety of sources including the United States, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and other Muslim nations.

3. a. Nelson Mandela. The Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday Tribute was a popular music concert staged on June 11, 1988 at Wembley Stadium in London and broadcast to 67 countries. It was also referred to as Freedomfest, Free Nelson Mandela Concert and Mandela Day. Also performing at the event were Stevie Wonder, Sting, Dire Straits, Tracy Chapman and George Michael to name a few.



4. d. Martina Navratilova won eighteen Grand Slam singles titles, 31 Grand Slam women's doubles titles (an all-time record) and ten Grand Slam mixed doubles titles. She reached the Wimbledon singles final twelve times, including nine consecutive years from 1982 through 1990, and won the women's singles title at Wimbledon a record nine times.



5. a. Los Angeles Lakers. Earvin "Magic" Johnson, Jr. (born August 14, 1959) played point guard for the Los Angeles Lakers. He was selected first overall in the 1979

NBA draft by the Lakers. He won a championship and an NBA Finals Most Valuable Player Award in his rookie season, and won four more championships with the Lakers during the 1980s.



6. b. Tootsie is a 1982 comedy film that tells the story of a talented but volatile actor whose reputation for being difficult forces him to go to extreme lengths to land a job. The movie stars Dustin Hoffman and Jessica Lange. Supporting cast includes Teri Garr, Dabney Coleman, Charles Durning, Bill Murray, Sydney Pollack, Marge Helgenberger and Geena Davis. Tootsie was directed by Sydney Pollack.



7. c. Princess Grace. Grace Patricia Kelly (November 12, 1929 – September 14, 1982) was an American film and stage actress and fashion icon who later became Princess Grace of Monaco. Kelly became an actress in the 1950s, starring in such films as *Rear Window*, *To Catch a Thief*, *High Society* and *The Country Girl*. She retired from acting in 1956, at age 26, when she became "Her Serene Highness The Princess of Monaco" upon marrying Rainier III, Prince of Monaco. The couple later had three children: Caroline, Albert and Stephanie. Kelly maintained dual American and Monegasque citizenship after her marriage. Grace Kelly died after being critically injured in a car accident with her daughter Stephanie in September 1982.



8. d. The 1980 Winter Olympics, officially known as the XIII Olympic Winter Games, were held in Lake Placid, New York February 13-24, 1980. This was the second time the upstate New York village hosted the Games after 1932. The only other candidate city to bid for the Games was Vancouver-Garibaldi, British Columbia, Canada; they withdrew before the final vote.



9. d. Operation Eagle Claw (or Operation Evening Light) was a United States military operation that attempted to rescue 52 American hostages from the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, Iran on April 24, 1980. The Eagle Claw mission was first aborted after mechanical problems disabled two of eight Navy and Marine Corps RH-53D helicopters and a third turned back

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BTG  
DIVER-CIPE  
CORNERSubmitted by  
Pam Makovicka  
Recipe by  
Grandma MatousSOUR CREAM SUGAR  
COOKIES 

*I started making these cookies with my grandmother many years ago. We always had a great time cutting, baking and especially decorating them. I am continuing the tradition by sharing these great memories and making new ones with my own grandchildren. They enjoy the fun just like I did and these are their favorite cookies.*

Makes about 36 cookies.

### Ingredients

3 cups all-purpose flour	1/2 cup butter or margarine (at room temperature)
1 1/4 teaspoons baking powder	1 cup reduced fat sour cream
1/2 teaspoon baking soda	1 large egg
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon	2 teaspoons vanilla
1/8 teaspoon salt	
1 1/2 cups granulated sugar	

### For the Glaze

2 cups sifted confectioners sugar	1/2 teaspoon vanilla
3 tablespoons lowfat (1% milk fat) milk	paste or liquid food coloring (optional)

**STEP 1:** In a medium-size bowl combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon and salt. In a large bowl, with an electric mixer on medium, cream the granulated sugar and butter, beating until fluffy, scraping sides of bowl often.

**STEP 2:** Add the sour cream, egg, and the 2 teaspoons vanilla, beating well. Using a wooden spoon, stir in the flour mixture just until flour disappears. Divide the dough into three equal pieces. Wrap each piece of dough in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for one hour or until thoroughly chilled and easy to handle.

**STEP 3:** Preheat the oven to 375°F. On a lightly floured surface, roll out one piece of dough to 1/4-inch thickness and cut into shapes with cookie cutters. With a spatula, transfer the cookies to ungreased cookie sheets, placing them two inches apart. Bake for 8 to 10 minutes or until the edges are firm and bottoms are lightly browned. Remove cookies and cool on wire racks. Repeat with remaining dough.

**STEP 4:** To prepare the glaze, in a medium-size bowl, stir together confectioners sugar, half of the milk, the 1/2 teaspoon vanilla, and a little food coloring (if using). Gradually stir in enough of the remaining milk to make the mixture of glazing consistency. Spread the top of each cooled cookie with some of the glaze. Allow glaze to dry completely. Store cookies in an airtight container (do not freeze glazed cookies). 

Senior Citizens Continued from Page 11



areas. Their mission is to enhance daily living, expand

personal choices and educate the community in an effort to ensure the independence and full life of the people they serve.

Families provide nearly 80% of the care required by older adults. Many people, at some time in their life, will become a caregiver. Caregiving can be a rewarding yet difficult responsibility, and there is help available. Aging Partners has a website ([answers4families.org](http://answers4families.org)) which provides valuable information and suggestions to help those in a caregiver role.

### Contact Information:

Aging Partners: A Pioneering Area Agency on Aging  
June Pederson, Director  
1005 O Street  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68508-3628  
(800) 247-0938 (toll free)  
(402) 441-7070  
<http://www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/mayor/aging/index.htm>  
Counties Served: Butler, Fillmore, Lancaster, Polk, Saline, Saunders, Seward, and York

### Aging with Dignity:

The aging with dignity website (<http://www.agingwithdignity.org>) also has valuable information such as the Five Wishes which lets your family and doctors know:

1. Who do you want to make health care decisions for you when you can't make them?
2. The kind of medical treatment you want or don't want.
3. How comfortable you want to be.
4. How you want people to treat you.
5. What you want your loved ones to know. 