

“THE GAZETTE”
AUGUST 2006

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AMRAC Costa Rica Adventure



AMRAC Mid-Atlantic Regional Chairmen Carl Garner zips thru the jungle on a recent AMRAC tour.

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BY JEROME L. PIONK

For the past twenty years, give or take, I have been a party to a tradition of going on an annual “guys only” event with a few of my friends. These annual outings have taken us to many locations around the world. Our tradition is relatively simple; one of us picks a location and the others tell who is in or out of the trip and we agree on a date and go. This year it was my turn to pick the location and we decided on Costa Rica. Why Costa Rica? Well, in truth it was somewhere we’d never been, so that was a plus, I’d heard about great deals on land, so we wanted to check that out, and we’d been told about the incredible scenery and night life, so always up for a party we set out for Costa Rica. I was accompanied by two of our stalwart members, Mike Meyers and Carl T. Garner.

Well, we had a blast- the country is a tropical paradise, jungle, volcanoes, white water rapids, the ocean, sport fishing and night life that is unequaled. As long as our hearts held together (literally) we had five days of unparalleled fun. One interesting activity was canopy gliding above the jungle. We were outfitted with equipment and hooked to zip lines and through 14 different stations, zipped over the most beautiful forest canopy imaginable- monkeys, parrots, birds of all varieties below us and a volcano spewing ashes above us. Of course each night, we would go to the hotel for our one hour of free cocktails and then experience the lively night life of San Jose, the



Continued page 2



AMRAC Costa Rica Adventure Cont'd

capital and largest city. It was about a three hour drive through dense jungle, winding, unpaved, rutted, bone rattling roads and little one laned villages, so we were ready for beer in the evenings.

Carl Garner wants to go to Brazil for next year's trip, so since it has even more jungle, the Amazon, and nightlife that we're told is truly crazy, I'm on board, of course so is Mike Meyers. We are preparing our lives and taking our medications in preparation.

Package Costa Rica
www.packagecostarica.com

This site is the entry to vacations to beautiful and enchanting Costa Rica. Scott Bowers, president of the company will personally help you plan a vacation, find Costa Rican real estate, and provide other general travel information in Central America.

He has agreed to provide discount packages to all AMRAC members.

Mention that you know Carl, Jerry and Mike from AMRAC when booking to receive any discounts in advance.

Association Realtors offer Discounts to Members

Following is a partial list of realtors who have initially agreed to participate in our Association's discount realty network. These realtors have all agreed to provide counseling and relocation or home sales assistance to any of our members who request it. In most cases, they have agreed to offer a discounted commission on home sales. This will result in substantial savings to our members. Our goal is to have at least one affiliated realtor in each state. Participating realtors (to date) are:

John O. Anderson (Wisconsin and Minnesota) 952-808-1110
M.Janders@earthlink.net

Greg "Jake" Spencer (Virginia/Maryland) 703-599-0077
grspencer@drhorton.com

Dennis Ramirez (Columbia SC) 803-309-2500
dramirez1@sc.rr.com

Mike Meyers (Illinois)
MMeyers67@aol.com

Russ Madden (Arizona)
russmadden@msn.com

Kelly Bennett (Florida) 941-232-5900
kjs1079@aol.com

Kevin J. Herman (Wisconsin) (608)487-HOME (4663) kevin.herman@charter.net



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Army Plate Approved for Virginia

ALEXANDRIA—Thousands of Army Soldiers and Army veterans in Virginia now have a means to show their Army Pride on their cars.

The Commonwealth of Virginia, the first state authorized to use the registered Army trademark on a license plate, recently approved the development and design of the Army specialty plate.

The prototype of the plate can be seen on the Virginia DMV site, www.dmvnow.com, however, the plate is not available through the DMV until the sponsor collects 350 prepaid applications.

The official sponsor, Roy Steed, is an Army Lt. Col. who works in the Pentagon. Steed believes he will have enough applications by the end of this summer and that the plate will be in production shortly afterwards.

All active, retired and honorably discharged Soldiers from the Active Army, Army Reserve or the Army National Guard are eligible. Steed states that he has gone back to the state legislature to ask that Department of the Army (DA) civilians qualify for the plate,



An example of the Virginia Army plate pictured above. For more info visit www.dmvnow.com. The plate is available to all active, retired and honorably discharged Soldiers from the Active Army, Reserve or Army National Guard.

but at this time they do not.

To apply for the license plate, Soldiers and veterans should send the completed a Virginia State Form 10, a copy of their military ID or DD 214 with social security number blocked out, and a \$10 check (\$20 if you desire a personalized plate) made out to Roy Steed at 4254 Moot Dr., Dumfries, VA 22026.

For more information and the application form go to site <http://www.dmv.virginia.gov/exec/vehicle/splates/infoindex.asp?id=367> or email Roy.Steed@us.army.mil

Note from Gazette staff: The Army is still about 75-100 applications short of attaining this goal to have a personalized Army plate in Virginia. If you are from Virginia and are the least bit interested, please support this worthy cause.



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AMRAC to redesign website

Be on the lookout for the website redesign of Association of Military Recruiters and Counselors (AMRAC). Scheduled to be completed by the end of August, the redesign of NGOB.NET will create a public face for the association on the Internet that reflects its position as a leader in nonprofit veteran's organizations and will support the association's growth plans for the future.

The redesign not only undergirds the association's strategic objectives, it also showcases AMRAC communications tools and follows web best practices. The redesign positions our association web presence ahead of other like veteran's associations. The research and analysis we've done will help ensure the web site's success.

This research and analysis resulted in a new visual design that: is clean, professional and flexible, and easily accommodates AMRAC's current and future strategic initiatives, such as donating money to college students and benevolent awards. Aligns the look and feel of the public site with communications publications, such as the Gazette and future Strategic Recruiting and Retention White Papers. Will allow and encourage online membership registration to facilitate the automation initiatives of the membership committee. Provides a link with the "new" AMRAC store for members to purchase all of their association gear.

Check back often throughout the month of August for the redesign of NGOB.NET!

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AMRAC Announcements

**From the desk of George Taylor,
Director of Awards and Recognition:**

Retention Hall of Fame Committee Selections

The Military Recruiting and Retention Hall of Fame Committee will make its annual selections for inclusion in the Military Recruiting and Retention Hall of Fame. The committee will meet in late September 2006 and announce its selections in October 2006. To be considered by the Hall of Fame committee, the individual must be retired from the military for at least two years. Nominations can be submitted by any AMRAC member knowing of a worthy candidate. Voting is conducted by the 10 member Hall of Fame advisory board, comprised of current Hall of Fame members and chaired by the AMRAC Director of Awards and Recognition. Full selection criteria can be found on the Hall of Fame portion of the Association's web site at www.ngob.net.

Some changes to the Hall of Fame have recently been approved by the awards oversight committee. They include:

- Change the name to "**Military Recruiting** and Retention Hall

of Fame" This change reflects our inclusive nature and the fact that we represent recruiters, counselors and veterans who are supportive of those causes.

- Eligibility is open to all retired former recruiters, counselors from all military services, active or reserve.
- Current Hall of Fame members will comprise the voting committee.
- Awards will be procured and presented by AMRAC.

2006 School Year Essay Contest

The Association will again conduct its annual youth essay contest. This year's theme is: "**What price should we be willing to pay for freedom**".

Rules and Eligibility:

- The essay contest is open to high school or college students between the ages of 14 (as of September 1st 2005) and 21 years of age (as of January 1st 2007).
- Essays must be typed, double spaced and at least 500 words in length.
- Total prize money will depend on the number of entries. Winning entries will receive up to \$500.00. Other separate essay endowments are also available in addition to our Association's essay contest. To offer a grant or scholarship in the name of a loved one, contact the editor at ngobl@aol.com.
- Entries must be post marked no later than November 18th, 2006.



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Training and Retaining the New Iraqi Army

BY DR. LYLE HOGUE
AMRAC COLUMNIST

We know from our history the story of Valley Forge, PA. Faced with the decision of defending a supply depot at Reading or the city of Philadelphia, General George Washington chose Reading, giving the British Army a clear shot at Philadelphia. In September of 1777, the Brits marched into the city and took possession. With Valley Forge now free, Washington

moved to set up camp there for the winter of 1777-78. Of the many historic locations associated with the Revolutionary War, none conveys more suffering, sacrifice, and ultimate triumph of the new American Army than Valley Forge. From December 19, 1777 to June 19, 1778 approximately 3,000 Citizen Soldiers died, 1,134 deserted, and 268 were court martialed—a startling attrition rate of 40%

These were the days of the

early American Army. There was desertion, attrition, and bewilderment. We can assume that some early American Soldiers thought we were crazy for declaring our independence from England—that the new, young, fragile colonies would never make it on their own. The naysayers cried the farmer in the south would not be represented and the industry in the north would rule. This came to fruition when just 70 years later when our young nation was embroiled in yet another war – a civil war. A war that pitted brother against brother and friend against friend. Yet, we persevered and now take on a noble calling of helping another nation become free.

The New Iraqi Army (NIA) is in its Valley Forge days. In some units, the equipment is poor and shoddy. Some NIA Soldiers struggle to find meaning to all that has happened in their country. In June 2005, Anthony Shadid and Steve Fainaru wrote a piece titled *"Building Iraq's Army: Mission Impossible: Project in North Reveals Deep Divide Between U.S. and Iraqi Forces"* in the Washington Post. The authors pointed out the obvious differences in culture and competence between the American Army and NIA. They wrote about the NIA Soldiers wanting respect but not getting it by the Americans. In their defense, American Soldiers feel that the NIA Soldiers have not earned their respect because of high attrition and desertion while fighting insurgents for their own country. I could not help but draw a comparison between the two young armies.



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