

Ancient art helps to calm modern warriors

Story & photo by Susan Huseman
 USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs Office

Millions of Americans have turned to yoga as a form of exercise, but here in Stuttgart, U.S. service members are using it to improve their resiliency.

The 5,000 year-old practice of yoga can help stressed-out service members restore their inner sense of peace and calm.

“People who have been down range are frequently in a state of hypervigilance — they have to be in order to do their jobs,” said Gabriele Evans, a local yoga instructor who

volunteered to teach three early morning classes as part of U.S. Army Garrison Stuttgart’s Suicide Prevention Month activities this month.

When service members return from deployments, “they have lost the ability to relax,” she added.

Yoga teaches that controlling one’s breathing helps control the body and quiet the mind.

“By focusing on the breath — slowing it down — Soldiers learn to claim the nervous system and reconnect to their bodies. It helps them to relax,” said Evans, who teaches Vinyasa yoga

See Yoga on page 4



Yoga instructor Gabriele Evans takes Soldiers from HHC, USAG Stuttgart, through a triangle pose during a Sept. 10 yoga class held in conjunction with the garrison’s Suicide Prevention Month activities. Evans will teach another free class on Sept. 24 at 6:30 a.m. in the Patch Fitness Center. All community members are invited to attend.



Personal stories, photos capture impact of 9/11

The morning of Sept. 11, 2001, will be forever embedded in American memory. Nine years later, a Stuttgart native and a Stuttgart community member remember the terrorist attacks on New York City and the Pentagon with stories, photos, and insights as to the attacks’ ongoing affects on the American nation.

See pages 10-11 for the story.

Tom Bloch

Page 6

Spouses open up about reintegration

After a deployment, military marriages need some TLC, especially when it comes to finances, support and patience with new changes.



Page 7

Send holiday greetings on TV, radio

Joint Hometown News Service will be in USAG Stuttgart Oct. 8 to record holiday greetings from community members to loved ones at home and overseas.



INSIDE
 THIS
 EDITION

Remembering 9/11

Stuttgart colonel recalls terrorist attack on Pentagon

By Carola Meusel

USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs Office

For military families waiting for household goods to arrive during a move, delays usually add more stress.

But sometimes, a delay can save your life.

That was the case for Col. Franklin Childress back in September of 2001, when he arrived in Arlington, Va., to start his first assignment at the Pentagon as the public affairs officer for the Army G-1 personnel office.



Col. Childress

His household goods were supposed to arrive at his temporary apartment on Sept. 5. However, after he had called the company on Sept. 4, he found out that something went wrong with the paperwork. The company offered him two new dates to finally deliver the household goods: Sept. 10 or 11. He told the company to deliver the boxes on Sept. 11 — a decision that saved his life.

On Tuesday, Sept. 11, 2001, four coordinated terrorist attacks hit the United States of America. Nineteen hijackers took control of four airplanes. At 8:46 a.m., American Airlines Flight 11 crashed into the north tower of the World Trade Center in New York City, followed by United Airlines Flight 175, which hit the south tower at 9:03 a.m. At 9:37 a.m., American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon. United Airlines Flight 93 crashed near Pittsburgh at 10:03 a.m., missing its original target, later determined to be the Capitol, the White House or Camp David. At 9:59 a.m. the south tower of the World Trade Center collapsed, followed by the north tower at 10:28 a.m.

Almost 3,000 people died that day from



Jens Schmidt

A helicopter circles the Pentagon, as smoke billows, two hours after the American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the building (and into Col. Franklin Childress' office) Sept. 11, 2001.

these attacks.

"I was sitting on the balcony of my apartment in Crystal City on Sept. 11 at 9:37, waiting for the movers to deliver my household goods. I was really anxious to get back to work because I was new, and I wanted to make a good first impression," said Childress, now the U.S. Africa Command Headquarters director of public affairs, located in Stuttgart. "The movers weren't there yet. I was journaling, and I remember I heard something that sounded to me like a sonic boom. Well, it turned out later that this was the plane hitting the Pentagon."

At that time, he was not aware of what had happened only 51 minutes ago in New York City.

"About 35 minutes later, my pastor from Hawaii [his previous duty station] called me and asked 'Are you alright?' and I said 'What

do you mean?' He asked me if I had watched TV. I said 'no' and he told me to turn on the TV," Childress said.

He saw the replay of the two airplanes hitting the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York and the airplane flying into the Pentagon. Then he saw the twin towers collapse.

"But still it was unbeknownst to me that the plane had actually hit my office at the Pentagon," Childress added.

The plane crashed into the first floor of the Pentagon's west side.

"My office was [on] the second floor at that time. The plane hit, exploded and killed everybody in that area," Childress said.

Altogether, 26 people from Childress' organization were killed, including his boss, all his co-workers in the front office and his sponsor. Childress had recently met all of these people during his in-processing.

In sum, 125 people lost their lives at the Pentagon that day and 59 were killed on the American Airlines Flight 77: a total of 184 people outside of the twin tower attacks.

Childress' initial thought was to put on his uniform, walk to the Pentagon and help. The area was already sealed off, and he was told that he could not do anything at that point. He walked back to his apartment. He still could not identify the area hit by the plane.

"I only saw the Pentagon burn. I was totally at [my] wit's end," Childress said.

Some of Childress' office mates, who were out of town that day, thought he was in the building, so he was counted missing.

"There was confusion on where everybody

was, and it was hard to make phone calls. It was a very busy time," he added.

One day later, more people were killed on the destroyed office building.

"God's hand spared me," Childress said.

There were many other people who survived the fact that Childress was not in the building on Sept. 11. The Childress family, including his wife and daughter, had been in the D.C. area. They had stayed in South Carolina until they found a place to stay in Arlington.

"[In] any other scenario, I would have been there, accepting my fate. I would have been at the Pentagon."

Even nine years later, Childress still carries the survivor's guilt.

"You feel guilty because you should have been killed there; not the others. So I called to a meeting in Stuttgart and I died. It's a weird destiny. I was there for a reason," Childress said.

The following month, Childress attended funerals and memorial services. Besides that, America was in a tragic event and Childress had to coordinate personnel and troops for Afghanistan.

"For me, it was not easy to get into a daily routine as a soldier. They had worked with me before. I died for a long time. I was very close," Childress said.

Childress heard news about Sept. 11. It became a daily take people to the national flag to share their memories of the event, not only with his family but with the world.

"There are so many stories of people who were spared; it's amazing to think about all this. So many emotions from one event," Childress said. It was a hard time. It was difficult, but on the other hand, it was incredibly inspiring. The United States came together and we saw us more united.

"The world community came together. The United States. Hearts of Americans," he added.

On Sept. 13, 2010, Childress celebrated his 50th birthday.

"Every day is a gift. I am alive another year. I am still here. It's a beautiful day," he said.

*Life is eternal; and love is immortal;
And death is only a horizon;
And a horizon is nothing
Save the limit of our sight.*

*Rossiter Worthington Raymond
19th century American poet*

'11 Pentagon

to call people or receive
very confusing and upset-

the detailed information
es was out.
l me from being there,"

incidents that led to the
not at the Pentagon on
s family, including his
l not yet found a house
efore, Childress' wife
na while he traveled to
temporary apartment
e to live.

enario, with my wife
the household goods, I
e Pentagon," he said.
er, Childress still feels

n a way — that you
ed. I should have been
Some people were just
the area that day and
y dynamic. People were
Childress said.

months were filled with
d memorial services.
was at war right after the
ress, along with others,
onnel and prepare the

ot as hard to get back
for other co-workers.
some of the people who
was new; I was not that

many personal stories
ame part of his job to
tional media and help
memories of the tragic
other Americans, but

y stories of heroism, so
le being miraculously
when you think about
ions are wrapped up in
aid. "Personally, it was
pressing. On the other
uplifting to see how the
gether — I have never

unity rallied around the
f people went out to the
two days after the ninth
t. 11 attacks, Childress
thday.

t. I am celebrating that
ar. It's a miracle that I
autiful day to be alive,"



Tom Bloch

Tom Bloch's photos of the New York City skyline, taken before and after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on the twin towers, capture the physical and emotional impact the loss of the towers has on the city today, nine years later. The photos are now on display at the DAZ.

Local photographer captures before/after images of ground zero

By Carola Meusel

USAG Stuttgart Public Affairs Office

The Deutsch-Amerikanisches Zentrum (German-American Center) in downtown Stuttgart currently features a photo exhibition called "Twin Towers Photo Twins" by Tom Bloch. The free exhibition is open from now to Oct. 7, Tuesday through Thursday, from 2-6 p.m.

Bloch, a local Stuttgart photographer, traveled to New York City between 1988 and 2000 and took several photos of the World Trade Center and the surrounding area. In March 2002, six months after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, he returned to New York to take more photos from the same angles, to visualize what

was missing.

"Tom Bloch's photos are a reinterpretation of the terrorist attacks of 9/11. These photos offer a new way of dealing with these traumatic events and our own remembrance," said Michael Weissenborn, director of the DAZ.

All images visualize — in a symbolic and dramatic way — the effects the events of 9/11 had on New York City. In looking at the "photo twins," viewers have the opportunity to reflect on the absence of the twin towers, formerly major landmarks in New York.

"I was in Spain when I heard about the terrorist attacks," Bloch said. "I was driving back to Germany from a trade fair and somewhere between Madrid and Stuttgart, I had that thought and felt the urgent need to return to New York to take more photos."

With the photo twins, Bloch developed a different way for visitors to reflect on Sept. 11, without using the shocking imagery that some other photos display.

"The exhibition is very moving. What true dedication to continuously go back to the exact same areas to take photos. Tom Bloch found the right angle and the right lighting to capture remembrance. No American will ever forget this tragedy — it's still burning," said James Palik, a photographer from California who visited the exhibit.

Bloch's photo twins are also part of the Na-



Tom Bloch

Bloch's symbolic pairing of a photo of the twin towers and today's ground zero is now on display at the DAZ in downtown Stuttgart.

Photographer Tom Bloch discusses his "photo twins" with Ulrike Weissenborn during the exhibition at the DAZ in Stuttgart Sept. 11.



Carola Meusel

tional September 11 Memorial and Museum's collection at ground zero in New York City.

"This feels right to me; the photos found their home now. The images are reflecting my personal way of dealing with 9/11 and they are for the people in New York," Bloch said.

Bloch lives in Stuttgart and is a freelance journalist, photographer and author.

For more information, visit www.twintowersphototwins.com or www.daz.org.