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Back from Iraq, USF student recounts war

By Kristie A. Martinez
Senior Staff Writer

The blackness was broken only by the firefly-like glow of bullets screaming through the night. Artillery, missiles and mortars ripped through air thick with gunpowder and smoke. Helicopters and jets roared overhead. It was midnight in Nasiriya, Iraq. Lance Cpl. Jerry Partney sat inside his amphibious assault vehicle, his heart racing faster than it ever had in his life.

March 25: We were taking fire and laying down an overwhelming amount of firepower... We did not know what to expect (Partney's diary).

Partney, a 21-year-old USF sophomore in the Marine Corps reserve, spent over four months fighting in Iraq earlier this year. He remembers his first night in combat in late March, how he could taste the gunpowder in the air. He remembers the first dead body he saw, how the man's eyes stared right into his. In a camouflage notebook, Partney scribbled notes about his days in the desert from February to June. His experiences on the battlefield changed the way he looks at life in America.

Partney wanted the United States to go to war with Iraq, even though there was a chance he would be involved in the fighting.

"When you sign a contract, that pretty much says that there's definitely a possibility that you're going to have to do what you train for," he said. "It's not like a fraternity." Partney had a feeling the 1st Marine Division would be called to fight because the same division was involved in Desert Storm. Months before the war started, he told his mom and his girlfriend he might not be around much longer, but they didn't believe him.

Partney's unit was activated in January. He was ready to go.

"It was not emotional for me because for months... I got myself ready for this," Partney said. "I knew it was coming."

"I didn't see my parents cry," he said. "They dropped me off and I took off."

Feb. 12: Woke up early in the morning and headed down to the ramp with a lot of gear.

Niran Malaolu lives his dream

USF St. Petersburg graduate student returns to Nigeria to serve his government.

By Tom Harlan
Staff Writer

Niran "Patrick" Malaolu, a veteran journalist and USF St. Petersburg journalism graduate student, dreamed of serving the people and nation of Nigeria, his home country.

On June 16, 2003, he awoke to an opportunity to fulfill his dream as the Honourable Commissioner for Information and Strategy for the Ogun State of Nigeria.

"I was sleeping when the phone rang," Malaolu said. "The caller said, 'Please, Mr. Malaolu, hold on for Governor Daniel.' "

"I did. We spoke (about the nomination), I asked that he give me time to confer with the university. He agreed. My professors were quite supportive and the rest is now history."

Otunba Gbenga Daniel, the governor of the Ogun State, had successfully offered Malaolu, 43, a native of Abeokuta, a cabinet position as the head of the Ministry of Information and Strategy. The ministry, which has a staff of 2,000 Nigerians, oversees three large government-owned agencies: the Ogun State Broadcasting Corporation, Ogun State Television and Ogun State Printing Corporation.

Malaolu said he was surprised Daniel nominated him for one of 13 cabinet-level positions.

"I left the country before the election when the battle was the fiercest," he said. "The fact that he picked me, for me, means he's dead serious about effecting a change in the Nigerian political firmament.

"Writing the truth"

Malaolu started his career in journalism in 1983 as a reporter for the Punch, a radical newspaper published in Abeokuta.

SoBig virus hits campus
It could have been worse

Story page 3

Pell grant budget cuts
80,000 may lose eligibility

Story page 3

Wilcox finds new job
Former CEO promoted in Tampa

Story page 7
U.S. needs United Nations now

The Bush administration still covets Iraq as their baby.

Recently, vice president Dick Chaney said for the United States to go back to the United Nations for help would be embarrassing. Luckily, Bush stood clear of this statement and reiterated the U.N.'s need to be in Iraq. How ever little that may be. Bush's request of additional $79-billion to aid rebuilding Iraq seems a bit high. Especially since Iraq has a large resources at their disposal. While Iraq is reaping American taxpayers' dollars, Iraqi oil fields dominate the landscape. Iraq has money available to restructure the nation. Honduras and Mozambique, the poorest nations on earth, have not received close to that kind of money in their impoverished histories.

In April, Bush asked congress for $79-billion for the war on Hussein and his "regime." But Bush's new proposal has no plan. He is just asking for more money. U.S. representatives and senators are asking tough questions of the Bush administration.

Howard Dean, a 2004 presidential hopeful, said Bush is deceiving the American people. Rep. Dick Gephardt agrees and said the Bush administration is going down the wrong path. The U.S. needs to share the burden of rebuilding Iraq, he said. Bush is asking for money but not being very honest with the American people. It is taxpayers' money, so a visible plan is needed. Just throwing money at a situation never works.

Technically, it is said the war is over. Not hardly. Saddam Hussein might be out of power, but there are plenty of benchemen left to cause havoc to American soldiers. The U.S. failed to capture Osama bin Laden so Bush went after the next big target, Hussein. Bush is committed to not screwing this one up and unfortunately will bust out the big credit card to pay for it. You don't expect Republicans to raise taxes do you?

Weapons of Mass Destruction ... where?

Earlier this year, Bush and company insisted Iraq was hiding dangerous chemical and biological weapons. Removing Hussein from power was good but it was done on false pretenses. Bush pleaded to the world and insisted Iraq had terrible weapons in their arsenal. Yet, with the exception of a few barrels of lethal substances, the military has yet to discover any solid evidence.

Letter to the Editor

I thought of these while walking past the 25 empty Gold spaces in front of MSL. At least I got to make sure the end of the peninsula is still there.

Top Ten List of Proposed New Slogans for Parking Services

1. By tomorrow, you'll like what you see.
2. Sometimes math just gets in the way.
3. Screwed up thinking for a screwed up world.
4. Insufficient intelligence managing insufficient resources.
5. If you can't fix it, break it more.
6. Walking farther this year? The PS Fitness Plan is still cheaper than most gyms.
7. The worse it gets, the better it was.
8. We aren't afraid of Michael Moore and his film crew. Bring it on!
9. We may be parasitic, but look at all the jobs we've created!
10. Shut up, WE know what we're doing.

Sometimes math just gets in the way.

1. By tomorrow, you'll like what you see today.

-Bill Flanery
Sensor Development Engineer
Center for Ocean Technology
University of South Florida
Not Sobig of a threat for campus computing

By David Donald

On August 19, the SobigF virus became one of the largest viruses to attack computer networks in history. The virus infiltrated businesses, universities and institutions slowing down network connections and resources all over the world in its pursuit to proliferate spam mail.

USF St. Petersburg was prepared and felt minimal effects from the SobigF virus attacks.

However, some of the campus faculty did receive dozens of virus-ridden e-mails.

The e-mails contain attachments, that when opened release a malicious replicating virus.

Leta Ramsay, program assistant for Student Disability Services in Student Affairs, clicked on one of these attachments.

"You see the advisors name and you click on it," Ramsay said. "I thought it was from administration."

The unleashed virus searches through computer e-mail directories and then sends copies of itself to those addresses.

The virus's activity slowed down Ramsay's e-mail operations for the day.

E-mail has become one of the most essential areas of communication on campus. The SobigF virus is forcing many of the faculty and staff to take time out of their day to look through junk-mail for legitimate messages.

Michael Killenberg, director of the journalism studies program, has his computer configured to filter suspicious e-mail and send it to a junk pile file.

"I had to go through each one," Killenberg said. "I almost deleted a graduate application."

Most of the e-mails contained the subject lines: "RE: Wicked Screename," "Thank You," and "RE: That Movie."

The SobigF virus is not the only virus to hit computers this month. The Blaster virus made its debut a week before SobigF, exploiting a hole in the Microsoft Windows operating system.

Blaster caused computers to shut down without warning.

On July 16, Microsoft announced the discovery of the hole and offered patch downloads to repair it.

Blaster did not affect those who downloaded the patch.

"We started downloading the patch immediately," said Jeff Reisberg, director of campus computing. "Then we scanned the machines to verify that the patch was working."

The computers' anti-virus program detects most of the virus calamities and the SobigF virus did not cause serious trouble for the campus, said Reisberg.

The SobigF virus, the sixth generation of its kind, terminated on September 10, and many experts believe the next Sobig virus will be worse than previous generations. The first Sobig virus emerged in January.

It is currently impossible to tell how many viruses are out there and who the creators are.

There are virus alerts issued every day, and many remain undiscovered, said Reisberg.

The best way to guard against intrusions from the Internet is to install an anti-virus software program.

USF students without adequate virus protection for their home and laptop computers can download a free version of McAfee Virus Scan from the Security @ USF website. The link can be found on the MyUSF server. Since it is currently impossible to tell how many viruses are out there and who the creators are.

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Take a hike

A camping or hiking excursion might salvage the weekend.

By Melissa Cusack
Staff Writer

Are you searching for something to do this weekend that doesn’t drain your income, but gets you out of the house for a while? Then break out the camping gear and get on the road. Various parks in Pinellas and neighboring counties accommodate campers with reasonable prices. So take a look at those listed below and see which one you like.

Fort Desoto and Shell Key

One area park that provides entertainment for the camper, as well as the day hiker, is Fort Desoto Park, which is located in the Southwest Pinellas County. The park offers miles of trails for the exercise buff, bunkers and cannons for the historical fan, and of course camping for the rest of us. The campsites provide plenty of activities center and head across the channel to Shell Key.

Shell Key is a small island about 100 yards north of Fort Desoto. Campers are restricted to the beach, but the fishing is excellent and the price is right: $5 a day for each kayak. Keep in mind, if you plan on taking a trip across the channel you must inform the park ranger on duty of your plans and make sure you park your vehicle at the Fort Desoto boat ramp.

Myakka River

Myakka River State Park is another great place to visit. It is located in Sarasota County about nine miles east of I-75. There is a $4 entrance fee per carload and once there you will find several activities to keep everyone busy for hours. The family campsites are situated close to Upper Myakka Lake, but if you prefer to get away from the crowd then you can acquire a permit for one of the primitive campsites. Primitive camping requires the individual camper to leave all comforts behind and travel anywhere from two to 10 miles into the park. There is no electricity, no running water (other than well water requiring water tanks) and no other campers for miles! The price is a reasonable $3 a day per adult. Of course, you may not be ready for this yet, but keep in mind that Myakka is over 3,000 acres of park with miles of hiking, biking and running trails. The American alligator is one of the most visible aspects of this park. With over 14 miles of the river, it is nearly impossible to miss one of these reptiles. If you wish to see the alligators up close, rental kayaks and canoes are available for $15 to $20.

Hillsborough River

Finally, for those of you who live in North Pinellas or Tampa, Hillsborough River State Park is a great place to stop. The entrance fee of $5.75 per carload is affordable and you can enjoy over seven miles of trails. Camping is $15 a night. Primitive sites are $3. This park is equipped for the day trips with plenty of picnic areas and a half-a-mile man-made pool ($2 per adult/$1 per children ages 5-17). Canoeing and kayaking are also available with plenty of wildlife to observe.

Several parks in St. Petersburg offer a variety of outdoor activities, without a long distance drive. If you prefer day trips without the camping you may want to check out Boyd Hill Nature Preserve or Sawgrass Lake Park. More information on these, and other local parks, can be found online. Available at www.pinellascounty.org are updated entrance fees, hours of operation and directions. Now that you are a little more informed, get out there and explore what our state has to offer. Oh...don’t leave home without the bug spray. Happy camping!

Sailing starts off strong

By Chris Wagenhelm
The Oracle (University of South Florida)

(U-WIRE) - After just one regatta, the University of South Florida sailing team is already setting its sights on district finals.

USF walked away from the South Atlantic Intercollegiate Sailing Association South Points One Regatta with a first-place finish over district rivals Eckerd College and the University of Florida last week. The varsity team's victory counts toward a berth in the district regatta later in the fall, which in turn gives them an opportunity to qualify for the Atlantic Coast Championship.

"The race this weekend is part of a five-race circuit that would qualify us for the district regatta," USF sailing coach Stephanie Doyle said. "This win already puts us in a good position to get to the regatta."

The regatta, hosted by Eckerd College, was run on Boca Ciega Bay under rite conditions for sailing with an eight- to 12-knot wind coming out of the northwestern. "In the beginning [the wind] was really light, and we were handling the conditions well and then the wind started to pick up," USF sailor Ashley Reynolds said. "It was beautiful weather, we couldn't have asked for a better day."

The varsity "A" team, comprising sophomores Reynolds and Kristen Herman, outdist the competition, claiming four of six first-place finishes. Things did not look so well for the duo at the beginning of the day when, in the first race, the team's boat broke down due to a faulty mast shroud pin. The pair was given the average of the rest of their races once it was determined nothing could have been done about the breakdown. "It was totally out of our hands," Reynolds said. "[The broken piece] was in such a position that we could not check it beforehand, and we had to put behind us and keep sailing."

After the Herman and Reynolds breakdown, the wind began shifting to the right side of the course, which the two were able to capitalize on by making tighter turns on the right side of the course and decreasing their total time. After the breakdown, the pair wound up finishing 1-2-1-1-1.

Andrew Blom and Amber Cockburn, both seniors, made up the varsity 'A' team and finished 3-1-3-1-2, to bring the final team score up to 22, tying first place with Eckerd. With tied teams split on the number of first-place finishes, the Bulls' six first-place finishes earned them the overall victory. "[Blom and Cockburn] did something very well, and there are some things they need to working on," Doyle said. "It is just because they have never sailed together."

The Florida varsity team could only finish in the front of the Florida junior varsity team. USF's junior varsity team finished fourth overall.

Classifieds

Wanted: Enthusiastic students interested in making it happen on campus! The Hibiscus Activities Board is seeking new members. Please call 727-553-4180 or visit the CAC if you are interested.

Intramurals are now being organized for team and individual sports. Students interested in pick up and/or organized play should attend one of the organizing meetings being held in the CAC. Inquire at the Campus Activities Center for basketball, swimming, sailing, and water volleyball, flag football, tennis, ping pong, billiards and darts.

Wanted Students to attend the Student Leadership Conference on Oct. 3 & 4 at Chiefland High Center. Transportation and lodging provided. Spaces are limited. For more information, visit the CAC or call 553-4149.

Professional Tutor

My home or yours. Financial and Managerial Accounting, College Algebra, Statistics, CLAST, SAT. Call Stacey at 727-204-6857.

UPCOMING VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

BEACH CLEANUP Sat., Sept. 20 9 a.m. Tierra Verde Bridge
RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE DINNER Tues., Sept. 23 5:30 p.m.
OASIS TUTORING (middle school students) On-going
PAWS ON PARADE Sat., Oct. 25

For more information on these or other projects, contact Barry at 553-4990 or Medowell@stpt.usf.edu.
Unreal reality shows proliferate in new TV season

Media Watchdog
Joe Wisinski

Judging by the new television season, reality shows won't be losing their grip on TV schedules anytime soon. More than a dozen reality shows either make their debut or continue in the 2003-2004 season.

As in past years, the contestants are mostly predictable. Young. Beautiful. Not over-burdened with brains.

But the variety of concocted situations is astonishing. Want to build a house? Find a spouse? Eat a mouse? Not a problem—as long as you're willing to leave your inhibitions home you, too, can achieve your lifelong dream of making a dummy of yourself in front of millions of strangers.

Among this year's reality shows, some of which are new and some of which are old standbys, are:

Fear Factor
NBC, Monday, 8 p.m.

"Fear Factor" challenges contestants to compete for cash as they participate in dangerous or disgusting activities. How disgusting? A "Fear Factor" interviewer asked a contestant whose challenge was to eat slugs why she waited until last to eat the largest one. (If you have a weak stomach, skip to the next paragraph.) The response: "If I would have done the big one first, I don't think I would have been able to (complete the challenge) because of how much juice came out of him and how much stuff was left in my mouth afterwards."

In the "most intelligent show on TV" category, "Fear Factor" doesn't rank up there with "Nova" or "60 Minutes." And, in fairness, "Fear Factor" isn't meant to compete with intellectual programs. Just don't watch it expecting to increase your IQ.

The Bachelor
ABC, Wednesday, 9 p.m.

ABC says, "One man. Twenty-five women. Who will be chosen?" A young, good-looking, successful man chooses his true love from a bevy of young, good-looking, successful women.

Left unanswered is this question: if he's young, good-looking and successful why must be take such extreme measures to find a girlfriend? And ditto for the women—judging by looks, at least, they should have no problem attracting a member of the opposite sex. So why compete against 24 other women for the affection of a stranger? Maybe they all have personality disorders, manifested by their willingness to embarrass themselves on national TV.

Survivor 7: Pearl Islands
CBS, Thursday, 8 p.m.

Beginning Sept. 18, this installment of the popular series includes a new rule—the castaways may only bring the clothes they are wearing. On previous shows contestants had been allowed to bring, among other items, a bathing suit. Speculation exists that producers hope the lack of a bathing suit will not keep contestants out of the water.

One of the contestants is 63 years old, so if you long to watch a middle-age scout leader skinny-dipping, this may be the show for you.

My Life is a Sitcom
ABC Family, Monday, 8 p.m.

In a twist on the traditional concept of sitcom families pretending they're real, "My Life is a Sitcom" features real families who might be entertaining enough to have their own sitcom. Camera crews come to their homes and follow their daily activities. The winning family has a shot at starring in their own sitcom. The second season of "My Life is a Sitcom" begins this month.

What puzzles me is why no USF St. Petersburg students made it onto this show. Our lives are a laugh riot—we get up in the morning, go to class, go to work, come home and study. And then we do it all again the next day. What could be funnier?

Accreditation, from page 1

It is necessary for the campus to update their application so it more accurately reflects how the university has changed, said Gary Olson, interim vice president of academic affairs.

SACS is the regional accrediting agency that oversees universities to see if the services and courses a school is providing is up to par. After an institution is accredited, they will periodically go through reaffirmation of their accreditation. USF, as a whole, is currently going through reaffirmation of its overall accreditation.

USF St. Petersburg is seeking separate accreditation with Tampa as part of that process.

At the same time, USF St. Petersburg is under legislative mandate to join the accreditation for the USF system. The campus still answers legally to USF president, Judy Genshaft. However, all decisions are made at USF St. Petersburg. If the campus was fully autonomous, USF St. Petersburg would answer to vice president Karen White.

The meeting raised hopes of USF's accreditation and SACS encouraged USF St. Petersburg to revise it's application. The campus plans on completing the application by January. Provided all the information appeals to SACS officials, they will schedule an onsite visit to the campus to review its documents. USF St. Petersburg must prove it makes its own decisions about finances, curricula and promotions. Also, the campus must satisfy earlier concerns that SACS had with the original application.

"I am absolutely convinced that the data will show that USF St. Petersburg offers a high level of course delivery by its students, that we have a first class faculty and that the programs we have are of the highest quality," Olson said.

SACS also looks at the university to see if the administrative infrastructure is working professionally. One area SACS may not be satisfied with is White's title of vice president, Micklo said. Some titles are more demonstrative of autonomy than others.

"I think by the end of January we'll have a completely revised application and I'm sure it will show that USF St. Petersburg is providing a first class education to everybody," Olson said.

Dream House USA
USA, Monday, 10 p.m.

Described by the network as "the ultimate reality show," in "Dream House USA" four families will be given just the shell of a house. Their challenge is to design, with the assistance of a professional designer, the perfect home in 24 days. The winner gets the dream house they designed and built.

This show should be thrilling. I'm not sure I can stand the excitement of watching someone design a house.

And so it goes. The irony of so-called reality TV is that producers take carefully selected people, place them in contrived situations and heavily edit video footage of their interactions—and then call it reality. If that's reality, then "The Brady Bunch" was a documentary of life in the 1960s.

Yet reality shows thrive and endure for a simple reason—money. In a recent week, three reality shows, "Who Wants To Marry My Dad?", "Brother 4" and "The Love of My Life" 2" finished in the top ten in the ratings. Last season, "Survivor: Amazon," finished eighth among network shows, averaging 20 million viewers per episode. And that translates into big advertising dollars for the networks.

When the granddaddy of the current crop of reality TV, "Who Wants to Marry a Multi-Millionaire," aired during the 1999-2000 season, mass media observers wondered if television could sink any lower. We needn't have worried. It has.

Reality? If you're looking for reality situations, here's one for you. You've got a test on Tuesday.
in Lagos, Nigeria.

"It was in The Punch that I got socialised, through newsroom routines, to be critical of the official position," he said. "I learned the importance of the conflict and crisis; the abnormal and the extraordinary." Malalu said he developed a reputation as a hard worker.

"I tried my hands at whatever my bosses wanted done," he said. "When I wanted to leave for Vanguard, a rival newspaper in 1986, my editor spent time to persuade me to stay to no avail." He was very precious to them. I had nothing else to do than work. I had no girlfriend. I don't go night-clubbing. It's work, work, work even.

When the workaholic Malalu took time out of his work schedule to date, he met and fell in love with Oluwabukola, or Bukky, who he married in December 1993. They had their first child, "Olu-bi-Ohun-kojii," which means "No King as God," on July 8, 1994.

After a six-year stint at Vanguard, which included an assistant editor position, Malalu left to become the founding editor of THISDAY newspaper. From there, he joined The Diet as the editor in chief, a role he held until his imprisonment.

Finding the man within

Although Malalu's reputation as a government critic grew, he never feared he would be arrested or imprisoned - his life seemed to be going so well. He was the editor of a large newspaper and, in October 1997, Bukky gave birth to the couple's second son, Ore-Ofie-Olawunmi-lightebami, which means "the grace of God is sufficient for me."

However, on Dec. 28, 1997, he received a strange call from The Diet's publisher, asking if he was going to work that day. Confused why he was being called on his day off, he left his house and headed to work, without taking time to change out of the shorts he was wearing.

A short time after he arrived, soldiers under General Abacha, a military dictator who ran Nigeria, stormed The Diet's office. They asked Malalu, who looked unimportant dressed in shorts, where they could find the editor.

However, after the soldiers lined up the staff and harassed a nicely dressed intern, Malalu confessed. He was arrested with three of his co-workers, chained and placed in solitary confinement. It was difficult for him to be away from his family. However, instead of letting his capturers or the environment at Katsina prison defeat him, he used Graham Greene's novel "The Man Within" as inspiration to become closer to the man inside himself.

"I engaged the man within me in endless debate about so many things," he said. "One of the conclusions was to seek knowledge to broaden my perspective; take up the challenge of political leadership; offer the benefits of these to my community and nation in selfless service."

"My incarceration provided me the opportunity to reflect about my life, my country and my spirituality." In March 1999, a new government replaced Abacha's regime and Malalu was later released from prison.

Malalu said his 14 months in prison taught him a crucial lesson in sonorous activity.

Michael Killenberg, director of the department of journalism and media studies at USF St. Petersburg, said Malalu was imprisoned for being critical of the government.

"He's a soft spoken gentleman and hard to imagine as a perceived enemy of the state," Killenberg said. "But he was targeted because he wrote truthfully and candidly about the tyranny of Nigeria's government."

"Niran provided living testimony to courage in journalism. But hearing Niran speak first hand about the torture and despair of his imprisonment mesmerized our students." Lisa Rosenthal, a USF St. Petersburg journalism graduate student, had several classes with Niran and last semester wrote an article about him for the Crow's Nest.

"The details of what he told me haunted me for weeks," Rosenthal said. "I couldn't get rid of the images of what had been done to this gentle, intelligent man."

Malalu said it was difficult for him to be away from his family. However, instead of letting his capturers or the environment at Katsina prison defeat him, he used Graham Greene's novel "The Man Within" as inspiration to become closer to the man inside himself.

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"My incarceration provided me the opportunity to reflect about my life, my country and my spirituality."

"When good people refrain from going into government, bad people do," he said. "And they'then make bad laws, which good people will be forced to obey."

Embarking on a quest for knowledge

After his release, Malalu reconnected with his family, and found work as the executive director of The Anchor. In June 2002, he and his wife had their third child, a girl, named "Oluwatarise," which means "God has done it."

His life, once again, seemed to be going well. Yet, Malalu said his "quest for knowledge at one of the best universities in the world, where one can drink from the fountain of unimaginable reservoir of knowledge and experience available" lured him to leave his family in Nigeria and enroll at USF St. Petersburg for fall 2002.

"After being imprisoned, away from his wife and children, he had to leave them again to come here to study," Rosenthal said. "You could see how hard it was for him, but it was part of his bigger plan to learn what he could to bring truth and freedom to Nigeria."

"He seemed to have forgiven his torturers. Instead of becoming bitter, he moved right back to what had gotten him arrested - writing the truth." Ed Ericsson, another journalism graduate student, took two classes with Malalu last spring.

"I would describe Niran as a wonder," he said. "After his trials, to be able to laugh so high and dear with a beaming grin is a miracle."

Malalu said through his "unforgettable" experiences at USF he gained immense exposure to the best of journalism and politics.

"My professors were extraordinary brilliant fellows," he said. "They match teaching with experience and this not only sharpens my critical thinking skills; it also exposes me to new ideas about journalism and government."

Malalu said he is working with the journalism and media studies graduate program to complete his degree during his spare time. In addition, he will help USF St. Petersburg develop academic exchange programs and other international contacts.

Dreamcatcher

On July 3, 2003, Malalu was sworn in as the Commissioner of Information and Strategy, a four-year cabinet position. He will be responsible for disseminating information to different segments of the public that make up the citizenry of Ogun State. He will also monitor the execution of public policy programs, and plan economic and political strategies that promote the social well-being of the people, he said.

Although a rookie politician, he said he's always been a student of Nigerian politics.

"From the vantage position as a journalist and editor, I've always followed public policy very critically," he said. "Again, my huge media experience and knowledge gained at USF come in handy. These qualities make me abundantly qualified for the job."

"I believe it's possible to re-invent, re-invigorate and re-position Nigeria," he said. "I'm ready to contribute my own quota towards this goal."

"My desire has always been to contribute my ideas. It's a dream come true."
Former interim VP finds new job

No worries for Ralph Wilcox flipping hamburgers anytime soon.

By Matt Nelson
Editor in Chief

Ralph Wilcox, former interim vice president and CEO of USF St. Petersburg, handed over the reigns to Karen White last month, but he was not out of a job for long. Last week Wilcox accepted a new position as vice provost at USF Tampa.

After a year stint with USF St. Petersburg, Wilcox is promoted to vice provost for campus relations and academic initiatives in Tampa.

Wilcox took temporary control of the campus when Bill Heller, the former chief of USF St. Petersburg, was asked to resign in August 2002.

Wilcox helped implement many changes at the university. Such as creating three distinct colleges: the College of Education, Arts and Sciences and Business. For the first time, deans were hired to run the colleges.

Separate colleges mean local control of course schedules and tenure offerings. Before, Tampa had almost complete control of tenure decisions and course catalogs.

In addition, under Wilcox, the university continued to progress fiscal autonomy and separate accreditation from USF Tampa. USF St. Petersburg is now autonomous with almost full academic, financial and administrative control. The Sarasota and Lakeland campuses are further behind in autonomy from Tampa.

Under Heller and Wilcox, USF St. Petersburg continued to be the largest, most significant regional campus in Florida.

Wilcox replaces Catherine Batsche, who took a one-year professional leave in July.

Win a night stay and dinner

Enjoy a one night stay and dinner for two at the charming St. Petersburg Hilton.

All registered USF St. Petersburg students may enter!

SEND YOUR FULL NAME, SOCIAL SECURITY # & PHONE NUMBER via email to USFCROWSNEST@AOL.COM Title the subject: HILTON

Disclaimer: Crow's Nest staff is not eligible. Students must be registered in at least one class at USF St. Petersburg. All entries must be in by Friday, Sept. 26 at 5 p.m. A winner will be randomly selected Saturday, Sept. 27.

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Marine, from page 1

We got on some buses and headed for March Air Force Base for our long flight to the Middle East.

The 16-hour flight to Kuwait seemed to take Partney back in time. Camels, sheep and shepherds dotted the sand. Both desert and sky were an eerie, grayish-brown. He and his division were assigned to go 300 miles inland. Also known as "shock troops," the Marines took care of heavy fighting before being relieved by the Army.

Partney was responsible for driving an amphibious assault vehicle, or Amtrak, used for transporting and protecting Marine infantrymen.

The Amtraks arrived in Kuwait March 11. Partney said he was surprised about how excited his unit was.

"I thought, 'Wow, it's almost like we're not even over here.' We're back in California training," Partney said. "But we all knew that there were definitely enemies out there."

March 20: We received word that the war has started and Iraq is getting pounded. There were four raids fired towards Kuwait, and we had to button up the hatches. We put on gas masks and waited to see where they hit.

Partney spent most of the war inside his Amtrak, confined to a space the size of a cockpit.

March 30: Can't. We put up with a lot of sh**. I bump my head every day and cut my hands all up. I live on an Amtrak full of gear. We all smell funky and I'm getting used to it.

His first taste of combat was the night of March 25 when he and his division rolled into Nasiriyah. Missiles and artillery were fired into the city until morning. At dawn, Partney was perched on top of his Amtrak, weapon in hand, about 800 meters from the city. Members of the Fedayeen Saddam, a mobile Iraqi militia group, were thought to be scattered throughout the city.

Partney was responsible for driving a tank during a common sandstorm outside Nasiriyah.

March 26: I saw people getting shot with big weapons. They would fall off a roof or fall out from behind a door. I took some shots but they were too far off to hit them.

Partney said had no problems firing at someone. "It was almost like target practice."

Marine infantrymen behind an Abrams battle tank during a common sand storm outside Nasiriyah.

March 29: It was like something you see on a movie. Iraqis walked around wearing rags. He doesn't like shooting at a regular old piece of war hasn't dramatically changed the way he sees life.

"It wasn't really like a life-altering experience," he said. "It was definitely an experience of a lifetime, but not a life-changing experience. If something would have happened to me, if I got shot I'd have a leg blown off ... then it would have been a serious thing, but I came back safe."

He believes the United States was right to go to war with Iraq.

"I don't think anyone should have to live like this, with one guy running the country," Partney said. "You can't vote, you can't do this, you can't do that. If you try to speak out, you're going to get killed."

April 7: The outskirts of Baghdad looked like hell on earth.

Army 9: Most of the people are very happy for us to be here. Once they knew we were not here to hurt them, and the military that oppressed them was gone, they were in the streets cheering.

Partney's division patrolled the city until the end of April.

Partney said. "It wasn't like, 'Oh my God, I'm shooting at somebody.' Pretty much this guy was a target to me, just like shooting at a regular old piece of paper. For all I know he could have been one of the guys that killed the Marines that went in there the day before."

"He wasn't afraid of being killed, either. For the most part, I didn't feel like my life was really threatened," he said. "We had ... so much fire support, tank support and infantry. We just had so many levels of security, it wasn't even funny."

April 21: We are finally out of Baghdad. We are set in at an abandoned Iraqi recruit depot. We got word that we are leaving the Middle East June 1-7. We will see.

Partney said it felt good to know he'd be going home.

"When you didn't have shrapnel for 30 days, and every morning you wake up and (bullets) are flying overhead, you don't want to be there," he said.

"(You're) thinking about your family. You know they're worrying about you, and you're over there not even worried about yourself."

Partney and his unit left the Middle East on June 22. When they arrived in California, Partney said he felt grateful for everything. Having survived in Iraq without running water or a comfortable bed, he realized how much Americans have.

"I was almost ready to go sleep outside," he said. "We've got all this stuff now and ... I'm so used to living out there. In the back of your mind, you're like, 'Wow, I don't really need all this.'"

Partney said his involvement in the war hasn't dramatically changed the way he sees life.

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"I don't think anyone should have to live like this, with one guy running the country," Partney said. "You can't vote, you can't do this, you can't do that. If you try to speak out, you're going to get killed."

He doesn't feel guilty about being part of the fighting, either.

"I don't think what I did was wrong," he said. "I didn't kill anybody. I was just there to witness it."

Partney said military experience increases a person's appreciation for the United States.

"It'll give you a little more respect for where you live," he said. "You live here in the country your whole life and if you don't have to defend it and do anything good for it, you don't really care about it. You let somebody else do it. I didn't want to put that on somebody else. I wanted to do it myself."

Around Campus

Left: Bill Heller, right, is greeted by Nancy Coscia, director of student life, at Thursday's observance of the 9/11 tragedy.
Right: Dressed in chainmail, students Brian Wood and Nancy Lewis prepare for a friendly battle at campus showcase.