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U.S. AIR FORCE
CROSS INTO THE BLUE

Homecoming

Fort Hood soldiers return amid celebrat

By T.A. Badger
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FORT HOOD, Texas — After a year in which they captured Saddam Hussein and lost 79 soldiers while doing whatever they could to stabilize Iraq, the troops of the 4th Infantry Division are finally back home.

This Central Texas Army post gave its 20,000 returning troops a hero's welcome with a daylong party Thursday, a day after the last of them flew in from their yearlong tour in the Middle East.

Gov. Rick Perry and Secretary of the Army Les Brownlee, who praised the troops for catching Saddam hiding in a spider hole, were among the crowd expected to ultimately reach 50,000 by midnight.

"When the 4th (Infantry Division) nabbed the ace of spades, the people of Iraq knew that he would never terrorize them again," Brownlee said, referring to Saddam's rank in the card deck of high-level Iraqis sought by U.S.-led forces.

A patriotic concert started around noon with a performer list that included Jessica Simpson, Randy Travis, Tracy Byrd, Ludacris, Moby and John Michael Montgomery, as well as the Carey, Lynyrd Skynyrd and the Dallas Cowboys and New England Patriots cheerleaders.

Texas cattle raisers donated about 30,000 beef barbecue sandwiches for the bash.

Soldiers surrounded by children, wives, friends and relatives milled about the grounds. Troops in desert camouflage rode a carousel and Ferris wheel with their toddlers at a small carnival set up for the party.

Monica Sanchez clung to her husband, Steven Sanchez, of Palmdale, Calif., while her 3-year-old son cradled their sleeping 3-month-old son, Matthew, born while he was deployed.

"I don't know what I would have done if I lost him," she said of her husband, who was killed in a helicopter crash in Iraq. "I cried days before he shipped out. I kept looking at my calendar and wondering when he would come home. I'm nine. I have the two most important things in my life right now."

Columbia

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members determined the most definitive results regarding the size and the velocity of the foam since they only had one chance at the test, Widnall said.

"I think by the time we finished, especially with the foam test, we really were sure that

this was in fact the cause," Widnall said.

Senior chemical engineering major Chris Coxon and junior mechanical engineering major Jonathon Colletti attended the lecture that was put on by the Dwight Look College of Engineering.

"I wanted to learn the truth about the disaster from someone that was working on the investigation board and their beliefs

and thoughts as to why it happened," Coxon said.

Students were able to gain this experience and better understand the ramifications of such situations in the workplace.

"If I am working on something and I saw there was a chance of risk I would be trouble moving on if I saw there was a serious risk of something like that happen," Colletti said.

Auction

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the castle designs.

Each team will be graded on quality of design, management of budget, overall appearance and peer review. Five judges will be on hand Saturday morning to critique the structures, and a silent auction will take place throughout the day, said Peterson.

"It's a good experience for us to get to actually go out and build something," said Tyler Bruce, a sophomore construction science major.

"Many of the students in this class have had a building project until now."

For Peterson, the knowledge his students gained from building the project is something that cannot be taught in the classroom.

"Putting the students in real world situations and money crunches are what this program is designed to accomplish," Peterson said. "I've been very pleased with the creativity and resourcefulness of some of these students."

Playhouses not sold during the auction will be donated to local children's organizations such as CASA, which should receive at least four of the structures, Peterson said.

Congratulations
to the following outstanding
Texas A & M University seniors
accepted into Teach For
America. They've shown
they have the leadership
and commitment needed to
tackle one of our nation's
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