



Best Brands. Best Prices.

AAFES commander responds to issues

Pg 3

Shoplifting ends careers

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What's hot

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AAFES goes where you go!

Lightweight Convenience

Pog money -- who'd thought! AAFES brings innovative ideas to OEF/OIF exchanges

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Amanda Glenn

AAFES public affairs office

First off, you *can* spend them like real money, even if they look like board game currency.

Second, if you don't get rid of them before heading back home, you can redeem them at any Army and Air Force Exchange Service store worldwide.

Third, if you don't want them, give them to someone else, keep them as souvenirs or start a collection. Whatever you do, don't throw them away!

Fourth, when in doubt, refer back to the first sentence.

Pogs – the small, round, coated-paper gift certificates issued by Army and Air Force Exchange Service facilities supporting operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom in place of metal coins – have been given to Soldiers in lieu of metal currency since 2001.

Normally, AAFES uses metal currency – quarters, nickels and dimes – provided by finance and accounting offices, explained Maj. David Accetta, AAFES Europe public affairs officer.

During wartime operations, the priority for shipping is for mission-essential items –

food, but this doesn't extend to coins. Paper money weighs less than metal coins and printing currency is against the law, so, at the request of the Department of Defense, AAFES thought 'outside the box' and developed the Pogs to satisfy the requirement for change, explained Accetta.

Now, a couple years and designs later, more than a million dollars-worth of Pogs have been printed and distributed. The first Pog designs were basic with only the monetary amount printed on them. New designs include powerful

images featuring OEF/OIF

action. A series of 36 designs that are both captivating and relevant to operations in the Middle East are in currently in circulation.

Although people who don't like or understand them throw away the Pogs, lots of people do use them as change, Accetta said. Some even take them home as souvenirs. Recently AAFES discovered that the Pogs were being sold on E-Bay as collector's items.

Since World War II, when servicemembers deployed to a combat situation, AAFES wasn't too far behind them, bringing a touch of home. From hygiene items and clothes to snacks and electronics, AAFES moves out front to improve the quality of life of our servicemen and women.

Today, AAFES has nine stores in Kuwait and 30 in Iraq, with about 450 associates employed at any given time. Those associates live and work right alongside the deployed troops. AAFES supports approximately 90 unit-run Imprest Fund activities that serve forward operating bases where it is too remote or the population isn't large enough to support a store.

An Imprest Fund is basically a troop-operated store where the unit establishes an account and buys merchandise in bulk from AAFES and then sells that merchandise to troops at the same AAFES' prices.

AAFES also conducts 'Rodeos' to bring merchandise to remote locations periodically to allow troops to get 'a touch of home'. Essentially, when the Soldiers can't get to the PX/BX, AAFES brings the PX/BX to them.

Additionally, AAFES runs 37 call centers throughout Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom where deployed troops can go to make a call home to their loved ones.

AAFES truly goes where service members go to provide quality service at the best price to the best customers in the world.

The history of pogs

In the 1930s, 40s and 50s, kids in Hawaii collected milk caps from all the different dairies.

Eventually cardboard containers replaced the old, glass milk and juice bottles. The milk cap craze seemed to fade.

In 1991 Blossom Galbiso, a counselor at Waiialua Elementary School in Hawaii, brought the milk caps back to life. The milk cap game is played by two-or-more players on any flat surface. Each player places an equal number of milk caps on the stack, art side up.

One player goes first and throws another milk cap or a hitter, often called the slammer, at the stack trying to flip over as many caps as possible.

From 'Straight Talk,' page 3

for the first store. Before Baghdad had fallen, AAFES had stores operating. I guess we really took a risk, but we could do it because the AAFES associates knew how important that support was to the troops. These were associates who have spent their careers devoted to soldiers and airmen and they simply weren't going to let the troops down after a long hard fight. Without all of these and other things like mess halls, and showers, having PX support wasn't just nice to have, it was essential. That's a level of devotion that's impossible to buy—it's built one year at a time in PXs and BXs around the

world

DV: *As the Army transforms to meet new challenges how do you see AAFES evolving in the future?*

We've been supporting the Army for 108 years. Our first stores were on the frontier. We've operated in all our nations wars, have stores in over 30 countries, 5 U.S. territories and all 50 states. As our Army has changed, AAFES has too. We are working closely with the Army to ensure we plan for changes, are responsive to evolving requirements and are positioned to continue great support. Regardless of changes in our Army, it's stationing or it's mission, I want to make sure soldiers recognize one constant: AAFES will

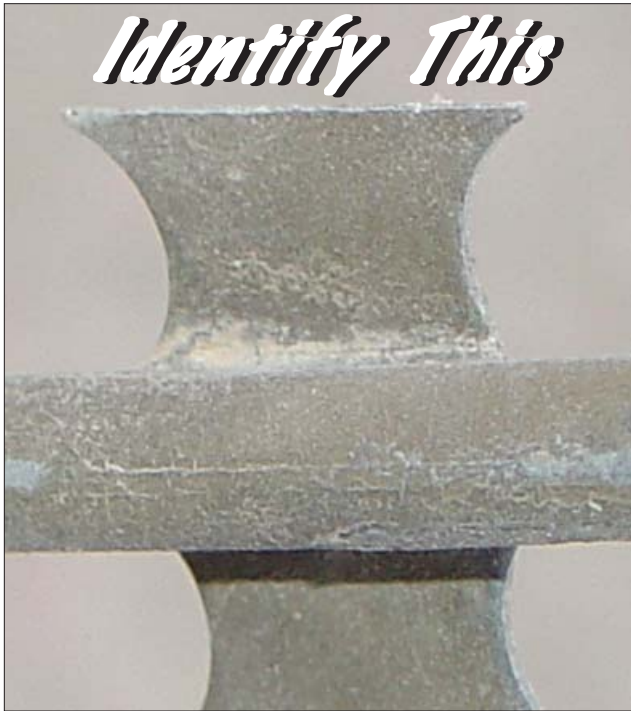
be there for them. We will be structured appropriately and operate efficiently so we can deliver value, service and support wherever the troops are and continue to provide the huge dividends to the Army and Air Force MWR programs.

DV: *Your clientele, the American Soldier, was recently selected as Time's 'Person of the Year' how does such an honor make AAFES feel?*

It just reinforces what we've known for 108 years. AAFES truly is **servicing the best customers in the world**, and it reminds us of our responsibility to do everything in our power to provide the level of support the American soldier deserves.



Identify This



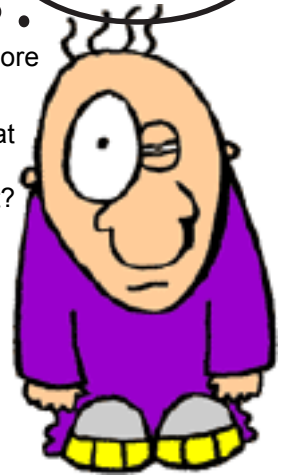
KNOW WHAT THIS IS? Each week, the "Tallil Times" staff will take a photo from around Tallil AB. If you can identify the object or item, shoot us an e-mail at: tallil.times@tlab.aorcentaf.af.mil with "identify this" in the subject block. The winner will receive a prize and have their name printed in the Tallil Times. Congratulations to last week's winner, Tech. Sgt. Keith Cross, 407th ESFS, who correctly identified the photo of a magazine well of a 9mm pistol.

RIDDLES

Who doesn't enjoy a good riddle? See if you can figure these out.

Stumped? Look for answers in next week's issue

1. What gets wetter and wetter the more it dries?
2. You throw away the outside and eat the inside. Then you eat the outside and throw away the inside. What is it?
3. What goes up and down the stairs without moving?
4. What can you catch but not throw?
5. I can run but not walk. Wherever I go, thought follows close behind. What am I?
6. What goes around the world but stays in a corner?
7. Give me food and I will live. Give me water and I will die. What am I?
8. The man who invented it doesn't want it. The man who bought it doesn't need it. The man who needs it doesn't know it. What is it?
9. Throw it off the highest building and I'll not break. But put me in the ocean and I will. What am I?



Pogs surface as latest collectible craze

by Capt. Susan A. Romano

407th AEG Public Affairs

Since the inception of online Internet auction sites, collectors around the world have been able to find exactly what they're looking for from the comfort of their own home.

Historically, Americans have been collectors of countless types of things – from stamps and coins to military memorabilia and baseball cards.

One can find virtually anything at an online auction site: false teeth, used socks, even shrunken heads! Now military members have joined the craze with an item that's as common to deployed personnel as bottled water — the AAFES pogs.

What is a pog, you ask? The word pog goes back to the early 20th Century to the Hawaiian island of Maui. A local fruit drink company bottled its product in glass bottles similar to old-fashioned milk bottles. The bottles were sealed with wax-covered paper disks. The company, whose most popular fruit

drink was a combination of passion fruit, orange and guava juice, put different pictures on the disks, and children began calling the paper/wax disks POGs.

From there, adults and children alike all over the world began to play games with pogs. The game's popularity spread and U.S. toy companies realized this could be a toy that was easily and inexpensively manufactured. Pogs again became a national craze in the mid 1990s.

AAFES' use of pogs in Middle Eastern operations came about out of necessity. Because of weight, the U.S. Treasury Department does not ship coins to those areas. So AAFES chose to make its own version of the pog, in denominations of 5, 10 and 25 cents. AAFES pogs are about an inch in diameter and feature various military-themed graphics.

Currently, there are three series of AAFES

pogs dating back to 2001. The first year of issue simply has the specific denomination as the design. In 2002, AAFES began issuing pogs with illustrations on them, such as aircraft, rockets, military personnel in action and other armed forces-related images. Pogs issued in 2003 have the year stamped on them, while those made in 2002 do not. Each denomination has 13 different designs



Although AAFES never intended the pogs to become a collectible item, that is exactly what has happened. Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines are saving the cardboard circles as souvenirs of

their tours of duty or as additions to their personal collections of military memorabilia.

Pogs, like other collectible fads, show that sometimes people in their spare time can find the most interesting use for the most ordinary objects.