Servicemembers explore R&R options

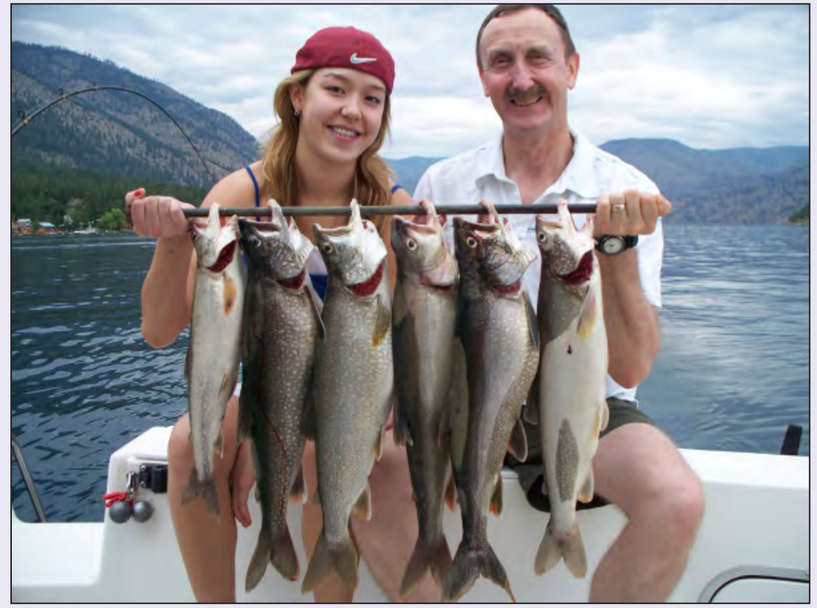
Many Servicemembers take advantage of the Rest and Recuperation Program during their deployments to get a break from work.

The program offers 15 chargeable leave days to those deployed for 12 months and 18 days of chargeable leave for those deployed for 15 months. In addition Servicemembers chain of command can issue a four-day pass.

The program was initiated by the United States Central Command on Sept. 25, 2003, for Servicemembers supporting Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Many Servicemembers, like Lt. Col. Donald Meseck, Civil Military Operations, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, use the time to relax at home with family.

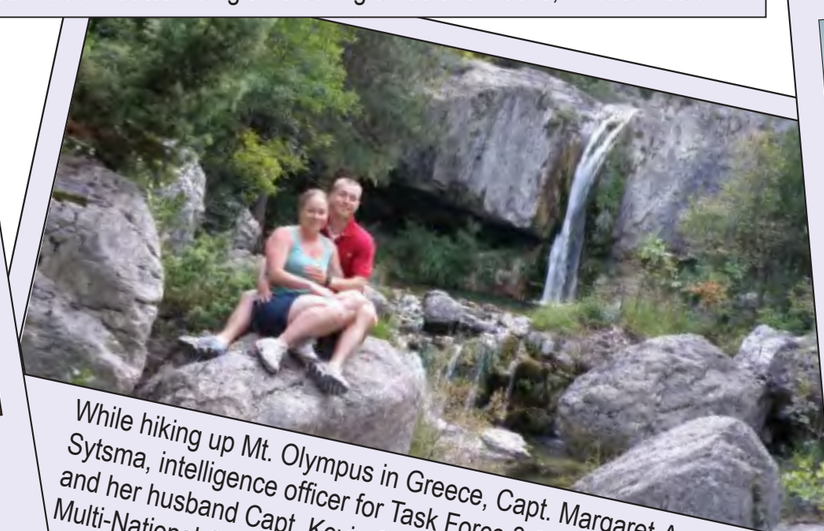
"I had an excellent time during my leave," said Meseck. "Besides fishing, we hiked to and swam in Snow Lake in the cascades. Much of what I did was standard stuff, not too exciting, but I had an outstanding R&R."



Lt. Col. Donald Meseck and his daughter Elizabeth hold six trout they caught while fishing on Lake Chelan, Wash., July 24. By the end of the day the pair caught a total of seven fish. "Most of what I did during leave was standard stuff, but I had an outstanding time during those two weeks," Meseck said.

Spc. Kevin Cruz, honor guard, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, and his wife Spc. Brittany Cruz, 593rd Sustainment Brigade, smile for the camera for their son's first birthday while he digs into his first birthday cake.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 James Andersen, signal intelligence collection manager for Multi-National Corps-Iraq and Multi-National Force-Iraq, and his wife, Pam, pose in front of the Temple of Antoninus and Faustina in the Forum Romanum, Oct. 4, in Rome.



While hiking up Mt. Olympus in Greece, Capt. Margaret-Anne Sytsma, intelligence officer for Task Force 3-3 Air Defence Artillery, and her husband Capt. Kevin Sytsma, C-RAM Liaison Officer for Multi-National Corps-Iraq, stopped for a picture in October.

1st Lt. Ryan Filis exercises on a trail above Kalastraki, Greece, Oct. 9.