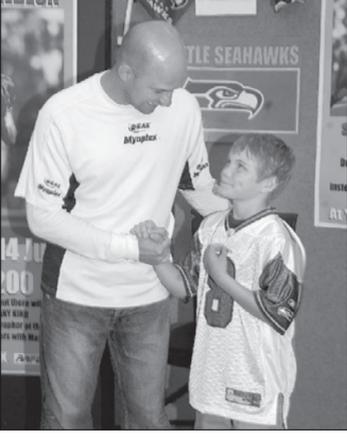


Popular Seahawks quarterback visits post



Spc. Michael J. Nyeste

Matt Hasselbeck poses with Anthony Harlan, whose father is currently deployed to Afghanistan.

By Spc. Michael J. Nyeste
19th Public Affairs Detachment

About a month and a half ago, the NFL's Seattle Seahawks visited Fort Lewis to show their support for their nation's Soldiers.

"I feel so indebted to these troops," said Matt Hasselbeck, quarterback for the Seahawks. "That's why I'm so excited to be here."

Apparently, he was so excited he couldn't wait to come back because on July 14, Hasselbeck returned to the post to visit Soldiers and their families.

Hasselbeck's day began with him signing autographs for sick and injured Soldiers and family members at Madigan Army Medical Center.

He told a story of a Soldier who was going to have a limb amputated the next day, and was amazed by his and other Soldiers' character and morale.

"I was surprised by how good their

spirits were," Hasselbeck said. "It was inspirational. It really was."

That feeling of inspiration has led Hasselbeck's foundation, together with the supplement company, Energy-Athletics-Strength, that sponsors him, to make a \$10,000 donation to the Fisher House organization. Fisher House provides free or low-cost lodging to veterans and military families while they, or their loved ones, are receiving treatment at military medical centers.

Hasselbeck said the other players who visited in May were affected by their last visit, as well.

"Each player was touched in a different way," he said.

After his hospital visit, Hasselbeck visited Fort Lewis's Main Post Exchange, where the Seahawks' photographer took photographs of the quarterback with fans.

"It's got to be so hard on the kids and the parents who are doing this by them-

selves," Hasselbeck said. "If I can lift their spirits for a while, that would be great."

There were more than 200 people waiting in line at the store to have their spirits lifted when Hasselbeck arrived. Many were decked out in Seahawks jerseys and other memorabilia. Some of those in line were Soldiers wearing their duty uniforms, lucky enough to have their chain of command give them a little time to meet a sports icon.

When asked what it was like to have such a large turnout to meet him, Hasselbeck responded with modesty.

"It's a humbling experience," he said.

Once the pictures were ready to be taken, excited fans flashed smiles brighter than the team photographer's camera flash while posing for their pictures. AAFES produced prints for the fans within minutes.

"It was cool, because he's a pro," said Anthony Harlan, whose father is currently deployed to Afghanistan. "He was nice,

he seems helpful and he's a good guy.

"He told me to tell dad he said 'hi,'" Harlan said.

"It was a great honor to meet one of my heroes," said long-time fan, Spc. Joe Russell, a warrant officer candidate with A Company, 5th Battalion, 159th Regiment.

"Matt's such a natural leader. He led his team to the Super Bowl," Russell said. "I hope he does it again."

Perhaps the most appreciative fan was a woman whose husband served two tours in Iraq and recently lost his battle with cancer. Hasselbeck had spent time with them in the hospital. He recognized her, and didn't hesitate to give the teary-eyed woman a big hug.

Acts like visiting sick Soldiers, posing for pictures with them and embracing a Soldier's grieving widow showed that Hasselbeck truly cared about the troops.

"We're absolutely behind you guys, one-hundred percent," Hasselbeck said.

Child care program always needs more providers, director says

By Barbara L. Sellers
Northwest Guardian

When Natalia Wade graduated from college, she started working as an accountant, but it was very difficult for her to find child care for her son Nicolas, who has special needs.

"I figured the best care I could get for him would be my own," she said.

That's why she became a family child care provider and opened her home to other parents with special needs children.

"I know how difficult it is for them to find good child care," said Wade, who has been an FCC provider now for eight years.

In addition to her two children, Nicolas, 13, and Narissa, 11, she has three special needs FCC children.

Wade is an example of a certified and licensed FCC provider who opted to stay here and care for children in her home on Fort Lewis while her husband is deployed to Iraq.

"We always need more people to become family child care providers, but I think you have to be a special kind of person to do this job,"

said Grace Schricker, FCC director, Child and Youth Services. "Providers make a commitment to other military families and to the children in general. Not everybody can do that, and some people do not qualify for this program."

The first step to becoming an FCC provider is to fill out an application.

To find a provider

To find a family child care in-home provider, go to the Central Enrollment Registry office, Building 2166, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., or Tuesday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. The office is closed on weekends.

To become a provider

To become a certified in-home FCC provider, go to Building 2013B, Room 127, and fill out an application. For more information, call 967-7364.

"The applicant, and everyone in the applicant's family, age 12 and older, must pass a background check," Schricker said. "We have to ensure that the children will be in a safe environment, so that includes everyone in the home."

Even if a Soldier has deployed to Iraq, the paperwork must still be done for the Soldier to pass the background check, as well, she said.

If the report contains any derogatory information on the applicant or the applicant's family members, it will be presented to a board of representatives from the Alcohol and Substance Abuse Program, Social Work Services, Family Advocacy, Criminal Investigation Division and the military police.

If it's something like a speeding



Barbara L. Sellers

Family child care provider Stephanie Henke interacts with Thai Pituk, 13 months, one of her FCC children.

week because I have dual military parents and another military parent who does a lot of training," said Stephanie Henke, a former corrections officer at a men's prison in Miami. She now has five FCC children, in addition to her three, ages 5, 8, and 13.

"Some months, I do as much as 299 hours of child care, but it helps pass the time while my husband is deployed," she said.

According to Henke, one of the most challenging things about being a provider is dealing with multiple age differences and making sure everyone's needs are met, but she enjoys going on field trips and seeing the children learn.

"When one or both parents deploy, some children act out in negative ways, and our providers have been seeing a lot of this lately," Carroll said. "They have to find solutions, so we (FCC trainers) go out and help them with that."

Michelle Brown, an FCC provider off and on since 2001, said she went home when her husband, Sgt. Marcus Brown, 5th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, deployed to Iraq (for a year) and to Korea (for another year).

"I always knew I wanted to work with children, and I love being an FCC provider because it allows me to stay home with my own children, while I earn money at the same time," she said. "It gives me a good feeling to provide good child care for other military families."

ticket that someone got a couple years ago, she said the applicant might still qualify, but about three to five percent of the applicants are denied.

Once the FCC applicants pass the background check, they are invited to attend an orientation, and those who decide to continue must complete a series of FCC provisional certification training classes, taught over a period of six consecutive days.

Some of the classes cover business practices, safety, fire prevention, First Aid, child growth and development, diapering, communicable disease, parent relations, health and sanitation, the

individual development plan and multi-age guidance.

"We offer this training about once every two months, and free child care is available to all applicants who attend," said Ardith Carroll, FCC training and curriculum specialist, CYS.

Additionally, all providers must pass a scheduled home inspection.

So far, Fort Lewis has about 70 certified FCC providers. They are a nice child care option for Soldiers who work irregular hours because FCC providers are usually more flexible and often work evenings and/or weekends.

"I provide child care seven days a