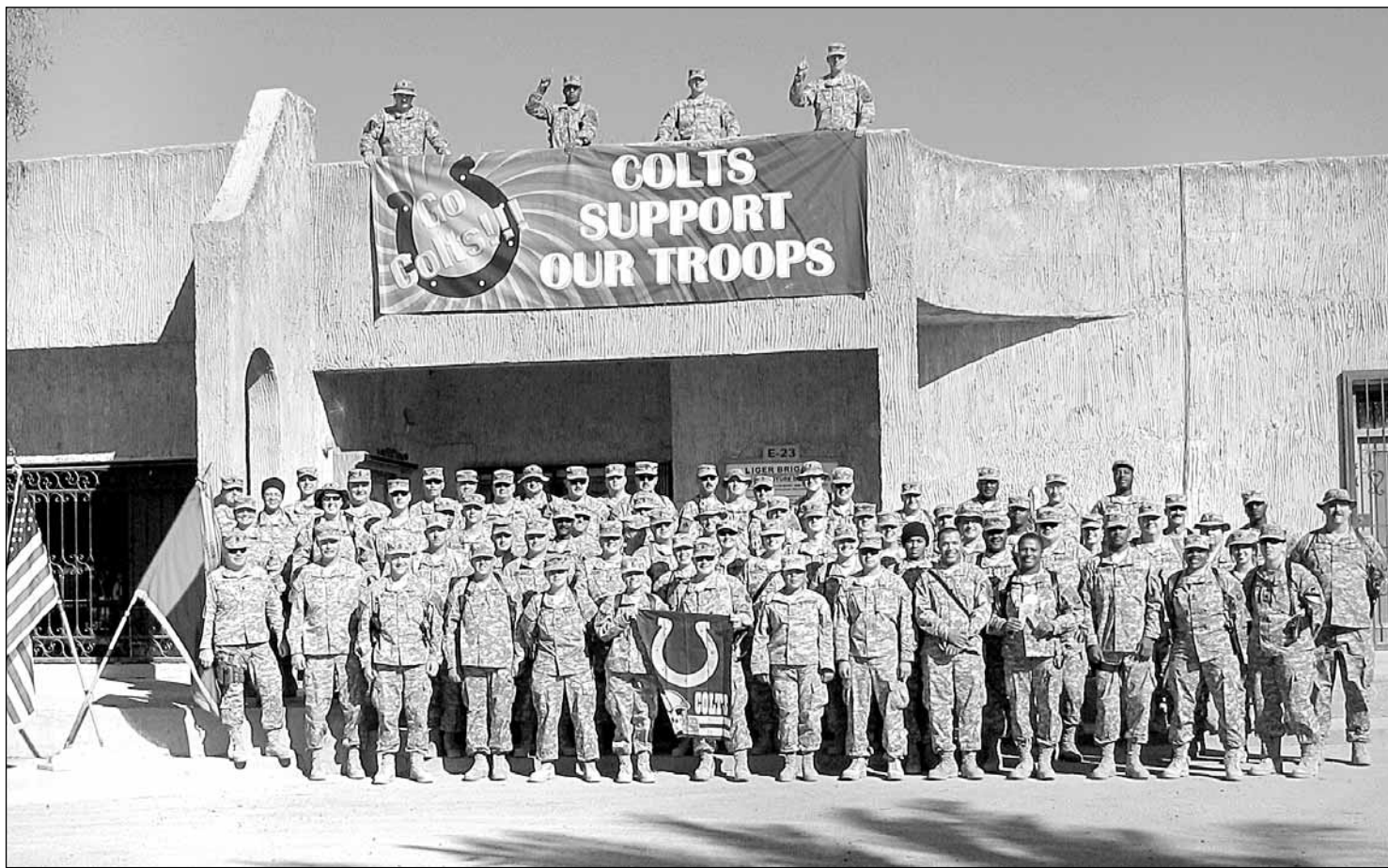




## Super Bowl XLI: Indianapolis Colts vs. Chicago Bears

Time: 6 p.m. Sunday TV: WISH-Channel 8 Radio: WFBO-94.7 FM



Task Force Indy, an Indiana Army National Guard unit from Indianapolis, poses with a banner sent to the troops by an Indianapolis Colts representative in October. The soldiers, who have only been able to watch five Colts games this season, plan to watch the Super Bowl and cheer on the team.

Submitted photo

## Fans keep their fingers crossed

By CANDACE BEATY  
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The Colts won't win unless one Bargersville resident is rubbing the head of his Tony Dungy bobblehead doll.

Another Colts fan wears her horseshoe necklace for several days leading up to a game.

From wearing the same jersey to avoiding restaurants with the opponent's city in the name, superstitions are a way of life for diehard Colts fans.

Following the same patterns on game day might not change what happens on the field, but some fans will do anything to will the Colts into victory.

Take Jeremiah Spurling, for example.

He and his girlfriend, Angie Espes, wear the same jerseys for every game. They have one set for home games and another for road games.

When the Colts play at home, he wears a Peyton Manning home jersey and she wears Brandon Stokly. If the Colts are away, they switch to the away jerseys. Spurling wears a Stokly then and Espes brings out her Manning jersey.

That's how superstitions work: "Nothing gets switched up," Spurling said.

He wears the same blue Colts hat during every game. Spurling wanted one of the AFC Championship hats, but he couldn't buy it. Instead, someone else had to buy it for him. And he's not wearing it until the season is over, he said.

A miniature Tony Dungy leads the team to victory, too.

The bobblehead doll sits on the entertainment center until the game starts. When the game is under way, it moves to the coffee table, he said.

When the team needs a boost, he

pats the doll's head to get it going, Spurling said. If the team really needs a boost, he'll grab the Dungy doll and plead with it, he said.

"Between the hat, the jerseys and the doll, yes, it works," Spurling said.

On Bargersville resident Brandon McDonald's left wrist is a blue, rubber Colts bracelet. On the right wrist, he has a white one.

He's worn the bracelets all season, and they're not coming off. At least not until the season is over, he said.

Game day, he'll wear his Bob Sanders jersey. The two games this season he didn't wear the jersey, the Colts lost, he said.

McDonald watches the game at the same friend's house every week, too, he said.

Even the places where everyone sits during the game can affect how the Colts are doing.

"We had to switch seats when they were losing," he said of the conference championship game against the New England Patriots.

Superstitions for some fans can change a little, especially before the Super Bowl.

No one in Stephanie Travis' department at Stock Building Supply will eat at Chicago's Pizza in the days leading up to the game, she said. The restaurant is off limits, since the Bears are Chicago's team.

She and co-worker Heather Chaney are convinced the Colts are going to win. Their boss, who is the biggest Colts fan at work, got a free trip to the game.

"That means we are going to win," Travis said.

Cindy Poyle of Fishers said she bought a horseshoe necklace before the first playoff game against Kansas City. Since the Colts keep winning, she's going to keep wearing the necklace, she said.

Poyle will make sure it's on before going to a Super Bowl party to watch the game Sunday, she said.

# Cheering from afar

## Colts, troops showing support for each other

By JOSEPH S. PETE  
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Some Hoosiers will set their alarms for 2 a.m. Monday to catch the Super Bowl via satellite in Baghdad, Iraq.

Members of Task Force Indy, the Indiana National Guard's 38th Division command support unit, will watch the Indianapolis Colts in the wee hours, sitting on patio furniture in the dining hall, recreation center and company command post. But the soldiers will wear camouflage instead of Colts blue.

No celebration will follow a Colts title beyond some fist-pumping and high fives. Most soldiers plan to skip out on the post-game show to sneak in more sleep before another duty day.

Deployed to Iraq since July, the company's 130-some soldiers mostly hail from the Indianapolis area. The Colts' Super Bowl appearance has proved a welcome distraction from the stress of a war zone.

In October, a representative from the Indianapolis Colts sent a banner showing the team's backing of the Guard unit. The banner says: "Colts support our troops."

Now, the soldiers hope to return the gesture. "We're supporting the Colts as the 12th man

from the other side of the world," Warrant Officer Matthew Lohsl wrote in an e-mail.

The company is stationed at Victory Base near Baghdad International Airport, where it manages logistics for more than 50,000 multinational soldiers, contractors and Department of Defense civilian employees.

"Try thinking of the everyday process of electricity, sewage disposal, phone service, zoning boards, dining facilities, building contracts, fire departments, police departments and medical facilities," Lohsl wrote. "Now try thinking of all of this in the middle of a war zone."

Soldiers watch games through the Armed Forces Network, which broadcasts the same programming to soldiers deployed around the world. Soldiers in Task Force Indy have caught only five Colts games this year, including the AFC Championship Game, which aired at 2:30 a.m. local time.

Baghdad's time is eight hours ahead of Indiana.

Soldiers reported staying up all night for the game and paying for it during the following day.

Still, few soldiers regret watching the Colts' march to Miami, even when a 21-3 deficit in the AFC title game made the cause seem hopeless and sleep more tempting. Faith in the Colts' potent offense kept the soldiers away from their beds.

"What excitement!" Lohsl wrote. "It's been the talk of the camp."

The soldiers hope the satellite signal doesn't cut out on Monday morning, as it occasionally does.

Warrant Officer Richard Stahl expects the game to come down to a last-second field goal, which he'd hate to miss. Most in the unit predict a Colts blowout.

"We are all pumped and looking forward to this one," he wrote in an e-mail. "We will be rowdy!!!"

Family and friends mailed Colts memorabilia and decorations since the team won the AFC title, and it started arriving this week. Stahl just hung a poster in his office in the company command post.

Some soldiers in the unit plan to watch the Super Bowl in a conference room, rigged with a computer projector and speakers. The unit won't all watch the game together.

In Iraq, soldiers avoid large gatherings for security reasons.

Optimism runs high, and most soldiers hope a Colts win will make their deployment go faster.

"I'm sure it will lift the spirits of all of us," Stahl wrote. "It'll definitely dominate conversations for several days."

## Churches

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

church, Fall Creek Baptist, cancel its party. The church planned to project the game on a large screen and charge a fee to pay for snacks. The event was dubbed a Super Bowl party.

The NFL sent the church a letter saying it could not charge a fee, use the licensed phrase "Super Bowl" or project the game on a screen larger than 55 inches.

At Community Church of Greenwood, Super Bowl viewing parties at the church will be canceled or moved.

Groups within the church, had

planned to meet in various parts of the church to watch the game, eat and provide activities for kids.

Now, only the pre-game activities, which won't include watching any football, will continue, said Joann Cribbs, a church official said.

Community Church of Greenwood hosts Super Bowl parties every year, and the fact that the Colts are in it this year was an added bonus, she said.

Game-watching events planned at the church will be moved to homes or canceled to avoid breaking any laws, she said.

Cribbs said she started calling the event organizers Thursday afternoon to find alternate plans and expected some to be disappointed.

A few gatherings planned at Mount Pleasant Christian Church in the Center Grove area have been moved into people's homes, spokeswoman Joyce Long said. Most people planning parties for church members already planned to have them at home, she said.

The church moved back its Sunday evening service from 6:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. so people who usually attend church can still watch the game, she said.

Fair Haven Christian Church in Franklin hosts a Super Bowl party for junior high and high school students every year. Some years the party is at someone's home, but this year it's at the church, student minister Travis Trueblood said.

The game will be shown in the

church's sanctuary and in the youth room, he said.

The church will have the gym open for kids who would rather shoot basketballs than watch the game, he said.

Usually some of the students lose interest after the first or second quarter, he said. With the Colts playing, he expects more interest in the game, unless it's a blowout, he said.

He expects 30 to 70 students to attend. The event is open to children who attend the church or live in the community, he said.

Pizza and other snacks will be served, he said.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

MILES AHEAD IN HEART CARE

## "WOMEN ARE DIFFERENT. SO ARE THE SIGNS."



Ruth Clarkson is from Westport, Indiana.

Ruth Clarkson didn't realize heart attack symptoms can be different for a woman.

"So when I started having intense back pain, I thought it was something else. Fortunately I got to Columbus Regional Hospital fast and received expert treatment before any damage was done."

The Heart Center at Columbus Regional Hospital delivers the region's most advanced and comprehensive cardiac care, including open-heart surgery. We're the first hospital in southeastern Indiana to receive Chest Pain Center Accreditation and have been recognized for surpassing national standards of clinical excellence in the treatment of heart attacks.

"I'm thankful every day that I made the right choice."

For information on heart attack symptoms, visit [www.crh.org/heart](http://www.crh.org/heart).



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