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Desert Voice Magazine
Serving U.S. and Coalition Forces in Kuwait

July 11, 2007



Soldiers train...

...for HMMWV rollovers

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On the cover

Spc. Travis J. Turner sits in the turret seat of the HEAT simulator during a 25 degree angle simulation at Camp Buehring, Kuwait July 5.

Photo by Wes Landrum

Correction

In Volume 29, issue 4, page 11; Servicemember Spc. Michael Martin was listed as Spc. Michael Mentins.

Fit or fat:



I'm nothing short of puzzled when I go to the gym and see fit people pumping iron, running on the treadmill or going head-to-head in an intense game of racquetball; then I see people who are teetering on the edge of being



**Command Sgt. Maj. Franklin G. Ashe
Third Army Command Sergeant Major**

overweight raiding the dessert bar

in the dining facility, loafing around the community center or taking unfair advantage of the fast food stands.

As I've traveled around the area of responsibility, I've noticed an increasing amount of servicemembers and civilians who are overweight. I've watched several people steadily gain weight while deployed because they haven't taken advantage of the situation around them.

For every opportunity we get to let ourselves become out of shape, we have twice as many opportunities to get in shape. For every excuse we make to forgo working out, there are twice as many reasons why we should.

We all have a choice to make when it comes to our health and fitness, especially here in a deployed environment. With so many obstacles that can be found in the path to fitness, from the large helpings we're offered

at the dining facility to the unpredictable hours of our work schedule, we're forced to make a conscious effort to stay in shape.

Servicemembers are required to stay physically fit. Physical fitness is one of the few things in the Army

you can achieve on your own, almost

anytime you want to, whether it's knocking out some extra pushups, going for a run or going over to the gym to lift some weights.

Whether you're in uniform or civilian clothes, remember, you're representing the United States of America. The way you look forms an impression for the citizens of our host nations. What they think about you becomes synonymous with what they think about Americans in general.

If you wear a U.S. military uniform, you're required to look like a professional. A fit appearance is a professional appearance.

If you're a person who's not physically fit, whether you're overweight or not, it is important that you use this time during deployment to set long-term fitness goals.

Being overweight can open the door to numerous health problems. It

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The choice is yours

increases your chances of developing certain diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. High blood pressure, clogged arteries and a higher risk of stroke all stem from being overweight.

Having excess body weight also puts you at a disadvantage in this environment because the heat makes it even more difficult for your body to cope.

Being overweight can also have adverse affects on your joints and your mobility as well. Imagine doing maneuvers in full body armor with this added interference.

I realize, for some people, staying in shape is harder than it is for others. That just means you have to apply more determination. Some people are overweight because it's passed down to them genetically. Overcoming this type setback is challenging but there are things you can do that will help.

As I've gotten older, I've had to come to terms with the fact that I gain weight more easily. I have to be more careful about what I eat and I have to try to keep a steady fitness routine going. I've also found that I feel better when I don't overeat and when I exercise regularly. I sleep

better.

I have more energy throughout the day and I feel better about myself as well.

I've also seen people who have set and accomplished their fitness goals. I talked to one person who lost nearly 80 pounds while he was deployed. An accomplishment of that magnitude takes a high level of motivation and it's something to be proud of.

Several people have come over here, taken advantage of this environment and lost a lot of weight. They've gotten themselves back into shape and are feeling good about themselves.

They go home feeling like they accomplished more than just their mission and challenged themselves while deployed.

As a Soldier, Sailor, Airman or Marine and as an American serving overseas you're viewed by the public as more than an individual.

No matter where you are in the world, you're representing much more than yourself. You represent the entire military. Servicemembers should carry themselves with distinction and a sense of purpose because your



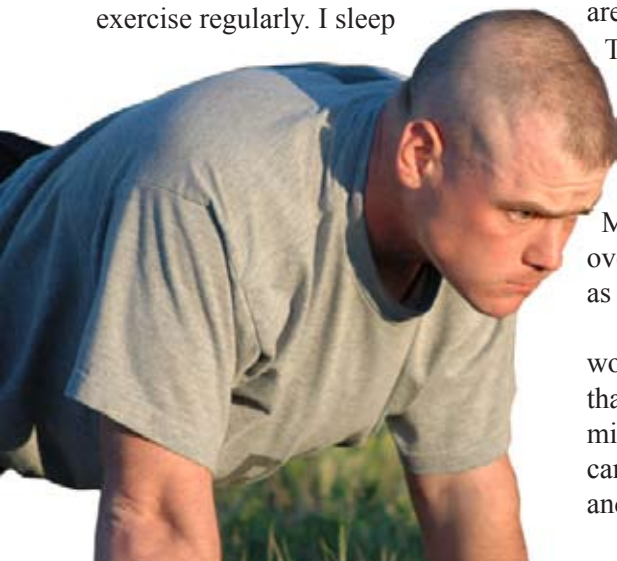
Courtesy photo

actions and appearance are reflections on your unit, your leadership and your branch of service. Every time someone fails to do the right thing, it makes us look weaker in the eyes of our supporters as well as those of our enemies.

Remember, you're obligated to stay fit because you're part of a team that expects you to be there when they need you. Staying fit is one way to win the confidence of that team.

Every day we have the ability to choose. Do you want to be fit or fat? I hope, for your sake and for the image of the military and our country, you'll do the right thing.

— Third ...Always First. 



Military chaplain ...Serving God, country



Air Force Chaplain (Maj.) Carl Wright, base camp chapel manager at Camp Patriot, Kuwait, prepares candidates for baptism in the Persian Gulf.

Story by
Pvt. Christopher Grammer
Desert Voice staff writer

“The duty of any chaplain is to take care of the spiritual needs of warriors and to insure that everyone has access to their religious preference,” said Air Force Chaplain (Maj.) Carl Wright.

Wright, base camp chapel manager at Camp Patriot, has been a chaplain for 18 years. Wright was commissioned into the professional corps after earning his masters degree in divinity in 1989.

For a chaplain, Wright has what can be considered an odd assignment.

“I am an Air Force chaplain working for the Army, taking care of sailors,” Wright said.

Though he is an Air Force

chaplain, Wright helps many Soldiers, Sailors and Marines as well as Airmen.

“The services a chaplain provides are needed no matter what uniform he wears,” said Wright.

During deployment some Servicemembers have difficulty being apart from their families and homes. As a chaplain he has helped many Servicemembers in the Third Army area of operations with their every day problems as well as given emotional and spiritual advice and support

A chaplain acts almost like a father to Servicemembers and is readily accessible for any help they may need, for whatever reason they may need it.

For Servicemembers here in Kuwait,

Iraq and Afghanistan a chaplain’s help becomes more tangible, they want to have the chaplain by their side, Wright said.

“The best way to be a chaplain is to walk alongside the servicemembers,” said Wright. “The chaplain then becomes the conduit to help.”

In a garrison environment, chaplains and their assistants act as a team doing administrative work. They conduct programs such as career breakfasts, counseling and suicide prevention.

However in a combat environment, the chaplain’s assistant basically works as a bodyguard for the chaplain, said Sgt. Benjamin Decker, a chaplain’s

IS...

y and Third Army/USARCENT



Courtesy photos

Wright conducts a baptism at the Camp Patriot chapel.

assistant with 4th Stryker Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division.

“We make sure the chaplain’s are safe so they can do what they need to do,” Decker said.

Wright was inspired to become a chaplain as a young enlisted soldier by the chaplains who took him in and guided him, said Wright. His first assignment was as an organ player at Incirlik Air Base, Turkey. There he met his first chaplain Capt. Jack Williamson, who baptized him in the River Jordan in Israel. Williamson later retired at the rank of Colonel.

During his assignment he played the organ for every service regardless of denomination and presently, continues

to attend every service he can, Wright said.

“I’ve learned that spirituality is not compartmentalized, spirituality pervades all things,” said Wright. “When one grows spiritually they grow in every way.”

While stationed in Iraq in 2006, Wright was the Air Force Theatre Hospital chaplain at Life Support Area Anaconda, where his every day ministry was to injured and dying Soldiers. To Wright holding those dying Soldiers in his arms was a privilege. The names of every Soldier who died on his watch are kept in his Bible, Wright said.

Religious-support teams are

dedicated, because they know how important their mission is to the troops despite the dangers of deployments, said Chaplain (Maj.) Scott Reidel, brigade chaplain, 4th Bde., 2nd Inf. Div.

“If Soldiers know God is with them, they’re going to function,” Reidel said. “If they think they are alone, they’re not.”

The duties of a chaplain are blind to service, race or religious preference. Many Servicemembers need help and in those cases the uniform worn by the chaplain matters very little.

“A chaplain is a chaplain is a chaplain,” said Wright. 

Third Army/USARCE

...for HMMWV rollovers



Spc. Joshua Coke, Headquarters and Headquarters Company 12th Combat Aviation Brigade, sits in the turret seat as the humvee simulator simulates a 25 degree angle to the right. The training is designed to teach servicemembers how to react to a humvee rollover accident.

*Story and photos by
Spc. Wes Landrum
Desert Voice staff writer*

The Soldiers were in the vehicle when it pitched over. They grabbed hold of the turret gunner, who had slid inside the vehicle and they braced themselves. However, this was not a real accident, but a training tool to teach servicemembers with Third Army/USARCENT how to escape an overturned Humvee.

The trainers at Camp Buehring are teaching servicemembers how to save lives. At the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer, the warriors learn how to escape an overturned humvee.

The HEAT trainer sets combat personnel up for success,

said Staff Sgt. David Singleton, 1st Theater Support Command.

"In the event of a rollover, they will know the proper techniques necessary to get out alive," he said.

There are two portions of the training Singleton said. The first part is a one hour class on the trainer. Personnel go over learning techniques via a powerpoint presentation on the two standard humvees, the M998 and the M1114. They learn the characteristics of the two vehicles such as the different types and the different weights.

They also learn how susceptible the vehicles are to rollover accidents. They learn things like proper load placement and how to properly tie things down on the humvee.

"You've got to make sure your load plan is accurate," said Sgt. 1st Class Lewis Dedner, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade, "You just can't go by word of mouth, you've got to check and recheck."

ENT Soldiers train... and accidents



Front-seat passengers hold on to the turret gunner as the humvee completes a 360 degree rollover during their HEAT training.

After the classroom, it's time to learn about the combat locks that hold the door in place.

"We teach them how to disengage the locks, both upright and inverted," Singleton said. "Then we go to the simulator."

Singleton said, at the simulator, the servicemembers are put through a series of twists and turns.

First, the humvee rolls into two 25 degree angles. Next, the Soldiers are put through a 360 degree rollover. Then the simulator is turned into a 180 degree rollover during a daytime simulation and must escape from the vehicle.

"After getting out, they do a sitrep (situational report) – all personnel accounted for, all weapons accounted for and they call in a recovery vehicle," Singleton said.

Lastly, the Soldiers must once again egress from a 180 degree rollover. This time, however, they must escape the humvee in the dark. Singleton said the reason the Soldiers must be able to do it in the dark is because most convoys are operated in limited visibility such as night.

"This training is critical because most Soldiers are on the MSRs (Main Supply Routes) day in and day out. They can be susceptible to a rollover at any time," he said. "If you have a rollover, it's just like a battle drill. You know how to react in the event of a rollover."

Spc. Jay Mellison, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 12 Combat Aviation Brigade, said the training surprised him and



Sgt. Eduardo Altoran, 1st Theater Support Command, gives commands to the turret gunner during HEAT Training at Camp Buehring, Kuwait July 5. After receiving the command, the turret gunner relays it to the crew members sitting inside the humvee.

many of his teammates, especially being turned upside down.

"If you were going to be in a vehicle rollover, you would not expect it," Mellison said. "Here, you're expecting it and it's still surprising. It's like 'I just undid my seatbelt and did not brace myself and I fell on my head.'"

Mellison said the training is important to prepare everyone who may go through something like this, no matter if the Soldier is overseas or back on the homefront.

"It's really important for everyone who has a vehicle," Mellison said. "And that's everybody in the Army." 

Running Hard for indep

Servicemembers participate in the Pea



Photo by Spc. Jennifer McFadden

Chief Warrant Officer Sean O'Donnell, USARCENT Logistics, runs past the starting line to start his first lap during the Third Army/U.S. Army Central 2007 Peachtree in Kuwait Run at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, July 4, 2007.

**Story by
Spc. Wes Landrum
Desert Voice staff writer**

As the sun shone its rays above the desert installation, lines of people were busy with their pre-run rituals. They stretched their muscles, loosening them from slumber. They tied their running shoes tightly and prepared for the Peachtree in Kuwait run.

The third annual Peachtree in Kuwait run and Third Army/U.S. Army Central Area of Operation mirrored its sister race being held for the 38th time in Atlanta. While the participants were not running through the skyscraper-lined streets in Atlanta, more than 1,000 runners joined more than 3,000 participants running the Peachtree Road Race in Kuwait, Iraq, and Afghanistan

on July 4th.

At the sound of the pistol, the crowd began running. The runners may not be traveling from Lennox Square to Charles Allen Drive, but that does not mean their run is not important, said Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb, commander Third Army/U. S. Army Central. Running the Peachtree here brings a bit of home to the desert.

"We have a fun run about once a month," Whitcomb said. "But not one of those has the ties to home like the Peachtree. This race connects us with the home folks.

"This race (Peachtree in Kuwait), in a combat zone, ensures that future Peachtree Races (in Atlanta) will take place in the future," he said.

Col. Dallas F. Wurst, 360th Civil Affairs Brigade, running in Kuwait this year, has been participating in the race since 1981. Back then, the race wasn't as big as it is today.

"There weren't near as many people and you actually had a little space between people back in those days," Wurst said.

The Peachtree race began in 1970. The idea for the race was born a year earlier as members of the Atlanta Tack Club traveled to Fort Benning, Ga. for their annual Independence Day run. While on the way home, a suggestion was made that Atlanta should have their own race. Approximately 110 people ran that first race on July 4, 1970, and it has gotten bigger each year.

"Getting through the first 10 years was key," said Wurst.

"By '81, the folks who had run it years prior, that I talked to, thought it was destined for bigger and better things. The numbers that were running were not that many early on. By '81, they were having tens of thousands; the most people I'd ever seen in one place," added Wurst.



Photo by Pvt. Christopher Grammer

Laura Wells crosses the finish line of the Third Army/U.S. Army Central 2007 Peachtree in Kuwait Run at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait July 4, 2007.

The Peachtree Road Race in Atlanta is a special time for Wurst and his family. In 2001, he ran the race with one of his oldest sons, both finishing the race in under 55 minutes. In 2003, Wurst said he got his wife and two other children to run. They have run in the race every year since. They may not finish the race together but, at least, they start it together, he said.

"I am still able to beat my children – even my E-4 (specialist) son," Wurst joked. "As long as I'm still beating my kids, I'm alright."

In the 2007 Peachtree in Kuwait Fun Run, Chief Warrant Officer Sean O'Donnell from the U. S. Army Central C-4 Maintenance Battalion, Ft. Rucker Ala., led the way for the men. He finished the fun run in a time of 33 minutes and 53 seconds.

2nd Lt. Micah Bushouse, 228th

endence

chtree in Kuwait



Photo by Spc. Giancarlo Casem

Runners take off from the starting line of the Third Army/U.S. Army Central 2007 Peachtree 10K Run/Walk at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, July 4, 2007.

Signal Co., a native of Fremont, Mich., finished in second place completing the course in 41 minutes and 10 seconds.

In third place was Austin, Texas native Sgt. 1st Class Richard Tinney, 36th Combat Aviation Brigade, checked in with a time of 41 minutes and 15 seconds.

Boston, Mass. native Major Laura Wells, Third Army/U. S. Army Central Army Staff Judge Advocate, led the women in the fun run. She came in with a time of 44 minutes and one second.

Behind Wells, Staff Sgt. Sonia Lewis a Houston, Texas native, and automation/ log operations non-commissioned officer, came in second crossing the finish line in 45 minutes and 10 seconds.

Stonesville, Ohio native, 1st Lt. Yvette Richard, 2nd Transportation Co. HET, ended her Peachtree fun run in third place with a time of 47 minutes. 

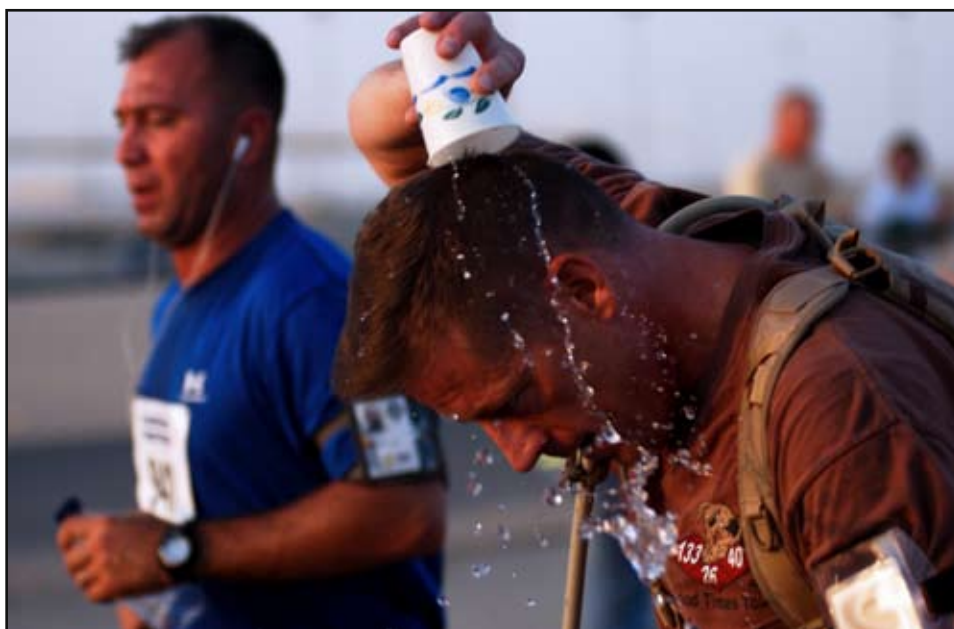


Photo by Pvt. Christopher Grammer

Scott Wilkins cools off after finishing the first lap of the Peachtree in Kuwait Run at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait July 4, 2007.

Servicemembers shed pounds to

Story and photo by
Spc. Wes Landrum
Desert Voice staff writer

The contestants stepped onto the scale one by one. The judges looked at the number being displayed, conferred and marked the weight onto the training sheet. This weigh-in was just another step in determining the Biggest Loser on Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

Outside factors like the television show and discussions with his peers convinced Lt. Cdr. Paul Allen, Expeditionary Medical Facility- Kuwait, to initiate the contest. Allen, a registered dietician, said he would put the contest on, but with a few conditions.

"The biggest drive for doing it was I wanted people to lose weight safely," Allen said. "The goal is not to win the competition. The goal is to develop those habits and develop an awareness to lose weight, lose it properly and for life."



Spc. Heather Harvey, Task Force AVCRAD, steps off the scale as her weight is recorded. Harvey met her goal of losing 15 pounds.

Allen said there were three rules for the competition. Number one, no fad diets. Diets such as the Predican and the Atkins diet were banned. Rule number two was participants were not allowed to use the sauna to lose weight. Allen said the sauna draws too much water out of the body and can cause problems, especially here in the desert. The third rule banned the use of supplements.

"Supplements are probably one of the biggest problems people face here with weight loss," Allen said. "We have too many people taking HydroxyCut, Ripped Fuel, Xenadrine and they have no idea what they are putting into their bodies. They are harming themselves for long-term weight loss."

Although only 130 people competed due to scheduling conflicts, the competition was started in the hopes of at least 200 people participating.

"Some people worked the night shift," Allen said. "Some people had to drop out because of mission requirements."

Heather Harvey, Task Force Aviation Classification Repair Activity Depot, came into the competition with a weight loss goal of 15 pounds. She said she had tried everything to lose weight prior to the Biggest Loser.

"I did the fad diets. I did Atkins," she said. "Nothing was working."

Harvey said diabetes runs in her family and was determined not have the disease run her life as well. She began the process of shedding the weight. By walking on treadmills in the physical fitness center and strengthening her abdominal muscles, Harvey said her weight began to decrease.

"The first month, I lost seven pounds," Harvey said. "I was very proud of myself."

Throughout the contest, the participants were required to weigh in. The contestants would normally meet at the Community Center in Zone 1.

Allen said one would think there

would be some competitiveness between the teams. However, this was not the case.

"The camaraderie is fun," Allen said. "You would think you would create some competitiveness by having teams competing for weight loss but they are helping each other."

Allen said the teams were using the personal trainer to help with weight loss. They were even using each other.

"They're running. They're exercising on the elliptical machines together," Allen said. "That bond you see, that friendship you see between the teams is pretty cool."

Between the weigh-ins, the teams took classes on how to get in better shape. Allen recommended that the participants exercise at least five times a week for at least 40 minutes.

He said people should exercise because it gets the body moving and it burns calories.

He also said the other biggest thing that people need to be aware of is what is going in their mouths.

Electrolyte-filled drinks are a major culprit because they also pack calories, Allen told the crowd.

"Just because we're in the middle of the desert, everyone feels they need Gatorade. We need our electrolytes back. We really don't," Allen said "We get electrolytes from food and we want to make sure that when we are choosing calories, we choose them wisely. We don't need Gatorade, we don't need juice, we don't need any other liquid that contains calories aside from milk. Milk has everything we need – protein, carbohydrates and vitamins."

The next way to reduce weight is to reduce fat intake. Allen said there are three factors that the weight conscious should avoid.

"The biggest fat intakes we have here are omelets. Get rid of the eggs and get rid of the cheese. Cheese is one those food items that adds up really fast and, of course, it tastes pretty good,"

be Biggest Loser

Allen said. "Get rid of the things that are fried. Don't go to the 'Brown Line' – hamburgers, hot dogs, onion rings, etc All of these things need to be reduced or eliminated."

Another thing that people love and should avoid is salad dressing.

"The biggest fallacy I hear is people saying 'I'm going to go to Subway' or 'I'm going to the deli bar and get a tuna fish sandwich,'" Allen said. "What is in tuna fish? Tuna fish and mayonnaise. We need to cut out the mayo."

Another way to shrink the waist line is to stop overeating. Allen said it's important to know how much food people are putting on their plates.

"It's important to know what a half a cup is or how much one cup is," Allen said. "You can tell (the DFAC workers) to not pile it on, but you have to take the plate you have and divide it into the sections it was designed for. The small sections of the plate are about a half a cup. The big section will be one cup."

"It's not the DFAC's job to

decide how many calories they give us, it's how many calories we choose to eat," Allen said. "You can choose meatless meals. No one says you have to eat meat at every meal."

As Harvey stepped up to the scale, a smile emerged. She had made her goal.

"I'm so happy," she said. "I made my goal of 15 pounds but I'm not going to stop. There's a lot of work to be done."

At the end, 34 four-man teams combined to lose almost 750 pounds, an average of just under six pounds a person.

Allen said another Biggest Loser competition is set to begin in September or October. The competition will run through Thanksgiving and end before Christmas.

"Programs like this are fun and they help reduce the prevalence of overweight and obese servicemembers," Allen said. "That, in turn, keeps our forces healthy and fit to fight. It also helps reduce the incidence of related diseases, like diabetes, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure." **A**

Hometown Hero

Staff Sgt. Dianne Watson
Special Troops Battalion
Third Army/ U.S. Army Central
Watson, a native of Kingston, Jamaica, serves as a human resources NCO.

Watson explains why she decided to join the military.

"I was convinced that following in the footsteps of my older brother by joining the Army was a good decision. I was motivated to prove to myself and my family that a woman could do well and go far in the armed forces."



Just One Question...

"What are your thoughts on the recent terrorist attacks in the U.K.?"



"There's going to be terrorism anywhere you go, you just have to pay attention."

Sgt. Clarissa Pol
Newark, New Jersey
Motor transport operator
594th Transportation Company



"You keep seeing it even after 9/11 and it's still shocking."

Petty Officer 2nd Class Roberto Miguel
Washington, D.C.
Navy corpsman
Camp Patriot Troop Medical Clinic



"They're feeling some of the same pain that we feel."

Ensign Pettis Sims
Port Arthur, Texas
Administrative officer
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion



"I think that complacency is starting to set in everyone is paying attention to Iraq and forgetting the rest of the world is at risk."

Spc. Darnell Sanders
Norfolk, Virginia
FA tactical data systems specialist
217th FA



"I haven't been able to really pay attention to it. No one that I know of was involved in it."

Owen Woolston
Cardiff, Wales, U.K.
Sales associate
Exchange New Car Sales

Kuwait

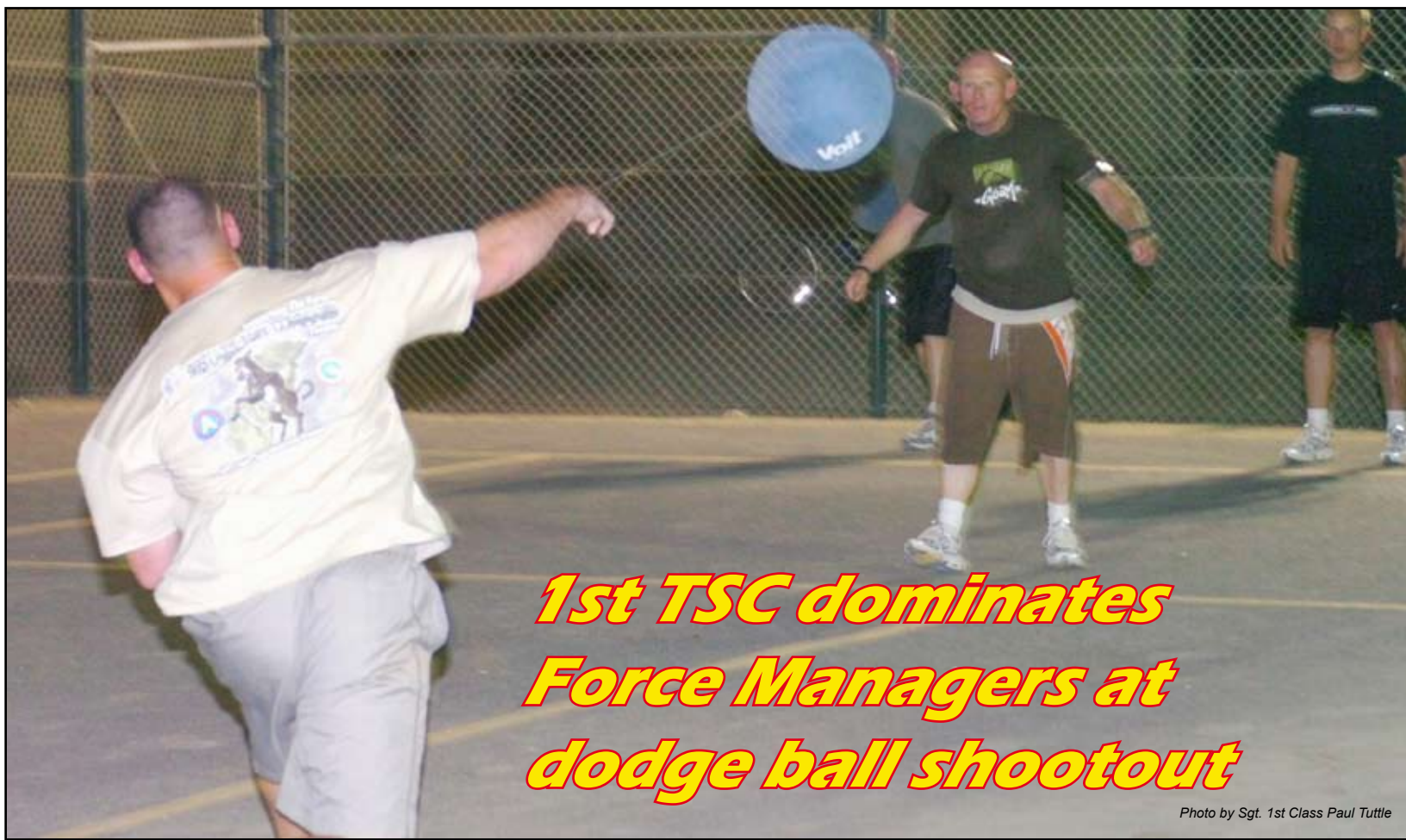
What's happening around Kuwait ...



New NCOs take the oath

Courtesy photo

(Above) Soldiers from the 3rd Bn., 43rd ADA, are inducted as NCOs, June 27. The 12 Soldiers took the Oath of Induction conducted by Command Sgt. Maj. Jimmy Rutherford, the STB, 1st TSC, command sergeant major, at the Zone 1 Chapel at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. (Below) Spc. Justin Taylor of Inverness, Fla., a member of the 1st TSC team, hurls a ball at Maj. Jeff Wellman from Joplin, Mo., of the Force Managers in the dodge ball championships played in Zone 6 at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, June 30. The 1st TSC later won the tournament.



1st TSC dominates Force Managers at dodge ball shootout

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Paul Tuttle