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

September 5, 2007



Patriot teams "on target" training

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On the cover

Soldiers of B Battery, 3rd Battalion, 43rd Air Defense Artillery, take apart the Engagement Control Station during gunnery training at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait Aug. 22. For for the full story turn to page 6.

Photo by Pfc. Christopher T. Grammer

Contact us

Comments, questions, suggestions story ideas? Call the Desert Voice editor at 430-6334 or e-mail at desertvoice@arifjan.arcent.army.mil.

Customs, courtesies carry on traditions

My name is Franklin Ashe, but you can address me as sergeant major. By doing so, you would not only be showing respect to me as an individual, but you would also be displaying military courtesy.

The customs and courtesies we adhere to in the U.S. military

distinguish our organization from all others. These traditions stem from the military's deeply-rooted history.

Military customs are ideas and practices that have been handed down throughout the years. Courtesies are ways servicemembers show respect to each other.

Today's servicemembers should not only take great pride in wearing the uniform and serving our country, but we should also be proud of being able to carry on these customs and courtesies made standard by those who came before us.

The customs and courtesies of the military are important because they make our organization unlike any other.

When you change managers at a civilian business you don't get into a formation, conduct a formal ceremony and pass the guidon over to your new boss to acknowledge a change of leadership. Practices such as these are specific to the military.

Taking part in these military traditions shows pride in the service we represent and respect for what the military has gone through to become what it is today. We wouldn't be where we are if we



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

hadn't been preceded by great Soldiers in the past.

Our customs and courtesies are seen in many aspects of daily military life. We remove our headgear when we enter buildings. We walk to the left of those who

outrank us because the position on the right is that

of honor. We address officers as sir or ma'am and NCOs by their rank to pay homage to their authority. We render the hand salute as a measure of respect. It is equally important for the salute to be returned because that is a show of mutual respect. It's our duty and obligation to follow these customs and give these courtesies.

When servicemembers fail to render proper courtesy to others, it breaks down the solidarity, making our military weaker. There's never a good reason to disrespect a fellow servicemember, our flag or any staple of our military heritage.

One of the reasons some people have so much respect for the military is because we have such a high level of respect for each other. For troops who think it's a nuisance to have to stand up when you're talking to someone who outranks you, remember your military bearing. Render the proper courtesies and greetings to those appointed over you, regardless of what you think of them as individuals. It is your obligation and duty to respect the person's rank, the uniform and all it stands for.

—Third ... Always First.

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Servicemembers carry on proud legacy

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

More than 100 people filed into the Camp Arifjan Zone One Chapel Aug. 27 to honor the 87th anniversary of the passing of the 19th Amendment. The 19th Amendment gave women the right to vote. Entitled "Women's Right to Vote," the program showed servicemembers the struggles women went through to gain the important right of voting.

Colonel Latrice Jones Tollerson, Deployment/Redeployment Operations Chief, 1st Sustainment Command (Theater), was the guest speaker at the event. The 1st TSC supports the Third Army/U.S. Army Central in its logistical support mission.

Tollerson said women would not be in the positions they are today without the struggles that women like Susan B. Anthony and Lucretia Mott suffered in their journey to gain acceptance at the polls.

"The ratification of the 19th Amendment on August 26, 1920, marked a turning point of America as women were guaranteed the right to vote," Tollerson said. "The struggle for women's rights is a story of strong women joining together to break down the barriers to equality."

Tollerson said the Women's Suffrage Movement came from grass roots beginnings as an idea between longtime friends Anthony and Elizabeth Candy Stanton. It then transformed into a storm that gained strength and could no longer be controlled by a predominantly male-centric society. As the movement gained momentum, other activists joined as well.

"Many women played key roles in the success of the Women's Suffrage Movement," she said.

Brigadier General Luis Visot, 1st TSC deputy commanding general, said the program gave Soldiers a chance to connect with the past so that they move on to better things in the future.



Col. Latrice Jones Tollerson, Deployment/Redeployment Operations Chief 1st TSC, speaks during the Women's Equality Day program at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Aug. 27. The program, entitled "Women's Right to Vote," celebrated the 87th anniversary of the passing of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote.

"(Women's Equality Day) gives us an opportunity to not only appreciate the history of women's equality in our nation, but also we can apply that to what's going on in the world," Visot said. "Especially in our responsibility to help provide the nation of Iraq an opportunity to understand and appreciate what freedom is all about."

In Tollerson's speech, she praised women like Harriet Tubman, who was a conductor on the Underground Railroad in the mid 1800's, and Jeanette Rankin, the first woman elected to Congress a full three years before women were granted the right to vote. She also talked about how a woman helped sparked the civil rights movement.

"In the 1950s we had a private woman, who sat down in order that we might stand up," Tollerson told

the crowd. "Rosa Parks was a black seamstress whose refusal to relinquish her seat to a white man on a city bus in Montgomery, Alabama, almost 50 years ago grew into a mythic event that helped touch off the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s."

Tollerson concluded the program by telling the audience that the power of women has been passed down from "our mothers and our grandmothers." She said women need to continue to light the way and make those women who paved the way for them proud as they lead the way for their daughters and granddaughters.

"Continue to grow, develop and prosper, to achieve whatever it is you want to be," Tollerson said. "If I may coin the phrase, 'we've come a long way baby, and yet we have a long way to go.'" 

Feeding 'Patton's Own'

Food inspectors check food quality

Story and photos by
Pfc. Christopher T. Grammer
Desert Voice staff writer

Feeding troops on the front lines and those who support them is an ongoing effort. The food that servicemembers eat must be of the greatest quality to keep up their health and morale.

Food is transported into the country by convoy, boat and aircraft.

The Soldiers of 949th Medical Detachment Veterinary Services then inspects all the food distributed to troops in the Third Army/U.S. Army Central area of operations.

"Our mission is to provide quality food to troops throughout the theater and to ensure the food received is wholesome and serviceable," said Spc. Amanda Pence, a veterinary food inspection specialist with 949th Med. Det.

Due to efforts by the U.S. Army and multiple charities back in the states, servicemembers are provided with as many home comforts as possible, including food items they may have enjoyed back home.

When these items are purchased by the military for dissemination among the dining facilities in Kuwait and Iraq, they are inspected by the 949th's food inspectors to ensure they are of the highest quality.

They are screened for any defects or spoilage that may occur during the long journey to the Third Army/U.S. Army Central area of operations, Pence said.

To check the food, the food inspectors take a small amount

of the entire shipment as a sample. If any defects are detected, another sample is taken to find out if the defect was an isolated incident or if the entire shipment is defective, Pence said.

The decisions made by the 949th directly effect the health of servicemembers because the food goes to every chow hall in areas the area of responsibility, said Staff Sgt. Christopher Mease, noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the 949th.

The inspectors check two different types of supplies, prime vendor, and government furnished material.

Prime vendor supplies are purchased through a company that makes sure the suppliers meet the standards specified by the government and then sold to the military.

Government furnished material is food already purchased by the government and stored in a facility owned by the purchasing company off-post. The purchasing company then ships the supplies ordered by the dining facilities to their respective locations, Mease said.

Having something to eat other than field rations is a way to make servicemembers feel more at home in a deployed environment.

"The food is something the servicemembers can look forward to," Mease said.

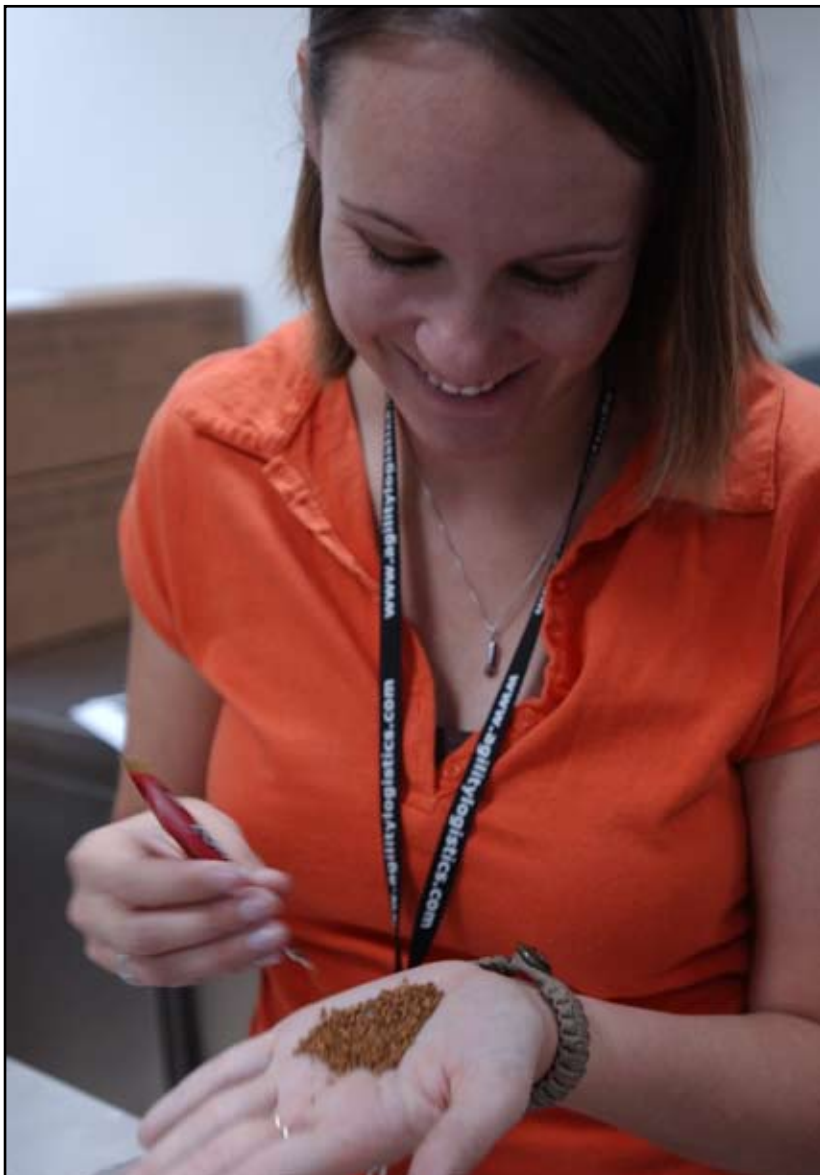
Without personnel to inspect the supplies coming into Kuwait and Iraq before it gets to the troops, they might receive expired, damaged, tainted or low quality food. This would put them in unnecessary danger and would damage the mission readiness of the troops down-range. **A**



The prime vendor for the Third Army/U.S. Army Central Area of Operations stores food in Iraq and Kuwait at a warehouse in Kuwait. Once the food is inspected, it is distributed to the troops.



Central Area of Operations houses all the food going to the chow halls and is ordered by the chow halls, the prime vendor transports



Spc. Amanda Pence, a Veterinary Food Inspection Specialist, inspects a packet of coffee for quality. The 949th Medical Detachment Veterinary Services food inspectors check all food coming into the Third Army/U.S. Army Central Area of Operations that goes to chow halls in Iraq and Kuwait.



A package of pre-cooked bacon is checked for safety and quality by the food inspectors of the 949th Medical Detachment Veterinary Services.

Artilleryme

Story and photos by
Pfc. Christopher T. Grammer
Desert Voice staff writer

“Go! Go! Go!” Someone shouts, spurring Soldiers into action. The Soldiers deftly deconstruct equipment and prepare to move out to another location ready to engage any threat that presents itself.

Soldiers of B Battery, 3rd Battalion, 43rd Air Defense Artillery Regiment, performed gunnery training at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Aug. 22. The purpose of the training was to evaluate the mission readiness of the unit and provide necessary practice with the Patriot missile system.

“(Our) mission is to deter any Tactical Ballistic Missile threats and protect assets here in Kuwait,” said 2nd Lt. Anthony Nicola, an assistant platoon leader with B Battery in support of Third Army/U.S. Army Central.

Gunnery training is a safe and cost effective way to simulate every process of how a Patriot missile system is packed up, moved to another location and prepared for action. After receiving a warning order, Soldiers await the order to prepare a convoy for movement to a specific location. All the equipment is mobile and can be moved in a moments notice, said Sgt. Brian Valentas, a Patriot crewmember with B Battery.

Once every element of the Patriot missile system is ready to move, it is transported to the training area where it is unpacked and set back up.

A Patriot missile launcher system cannot engage a target alone. The entire missile system is made up of many pieces of equipment that can detect, engage and destroy threats to the Third Army/U. S. Army Central area of operations, Nicola said.

Patriot system maintainer/opera-



The Antennae Mass Group is packed up and prepared for movement during gunnery training at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Aug. 22.



Soldiers of B Battery, 3rd Battalion, 43rd Air Defense Artillery prepare the Patriot radar for movement during gunnery training at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Aug. 22.

n keep watchful eye to the sky

tors, also called “Launcher Dogs,” set up the equipment for the Patriot missile system before the Tactical Control Officer and his assistant take over the trigger.

The entire system can be up and ready in a few minutes after arriving at the location specified for redeployment, said Gonzales.

“Once you have it set up there’s nothing to it,” said Spc. Kyiton Johnson, a system maintainer/operator for B Battery.

The Patriot missile system is a complex defensive missile system that can defend a military installation from Tactical Ballistic Missiles and enemy aircraft, Nicola said. It takes a dedicated specialized group of individuals to operate, maintain and mobilize.

“The folks we have in our unit are very intelligent, exciting to work with,” Nicola said. “It’s real impressive to see them in action.” 



Soldiers of B Battery, 3rd Battalion, 43rd Air Defense Artillery deconstruct the Engagement Control Station during gunnery training at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Aug. 22.



A Patriot missile launcher from B Battery, 3rd Battalion, 43rd Air Defense Artillery stands ready during gunnery training at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Aug. 22. As part of the exercise crews set up, took down, moved, and re-set up the launchers.



Petty Officer 3rd Class Jojo Manansala from Honolulu, removes the rough edges of a lens he just ground at the optometrist's clinic at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, July 30. Manansala is an optician for the Expeditionary Medical Command and deployed to Kuwait to support Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Cmdr. Karen Kato of Libertyville, Ill., examines Petty Officer 2nd Class Tuck at the Clinic at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, July 30. Kato and Tuck are assigned to support Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Optometrists keep servicemembers in focus

*Story and photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Paul Tuttle
1st TSC Public Affairs*

What do you do when your glasses break and you're heading out to Iraq tomorrow? Why, go to the optometrist's office at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, of course.

It's a full-service shop crammed into three little rooms at the Troop Medical Clinic annex of the Expeditionary Medical Facility.

"Vision ready is mission ready," said Cmdr. Karen Kato, an optometrist who heads the only military eye care provider in Kuwait, inside Third Army/U.S. Army Central's area of responsibility.

Kato received her doctorate from the Illinois College of Optometry and has several years experience under her belt.

"We provide eye care services to coalition forces. Not only for eye-glasses," she said, "but for complete eye care."

Kato's patients include service members from Great Britain, Australia and South Korea among others, as well as U.S. forces. She sees patients from Camps Virginia and Buehring and every other location where troops are stationed in Kuwait – and even as far away as Qatar and Djibouti.

All receive the benefits of a full range of care.

"We do routine eye exams to check for any visual deficiencies or ocular pathology," said Kato, a native of Libertyville, Ill. "About 25 percent of our services are for urgent-type care – traumatic injuries – that type of thing."

The facility is a cost saver for the Department of Defense. Patients

who need eye care would have to be referred to local civilian doctors otherwise.

"We see a lot of patients here, so if they were to go on the outside, it probably would be very costly," Kato said. Costs add up, "... when you think about transportation, time away from training – so not only just in money, but man-hours away from training and man-hours away from the mission."

Of course, exams for glasses account for a lot of her work. The clinic provides the old standard military eyeglasses – jokingly referred to by some as "BCGs," or "birth control glasses" for their plain, brown, heavy frames – but the inventory now has more popular wire-frame glasses.

If the prescription is in the stock inventory, a patient simply waits while the technician cuts the lenses and he or she can walk away with a new pair



Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael Tuck Jr., at the Optometrist's Clinic at the Troop Medical Center at Camp Arifjan's Expeditionary Medical Center and deployed to Kuwait in support



Petty Officer 3rd Class Jojo Manansala selects a lens blank before grinding a prescription at the Optometrist's Clinic at the Troop Medical Center at Camp Arifjan's Expeditionary Medical Center in Kuwait, July 30. Manansala is assigned to EMC and deployed to Kuwait to support Operation Iraqi Freedom.

of glasses. The wait time is usually 15 minutes or less.

Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael Tuck Jr. thinks this is comparable to anything found in the civilian world and it is first-rate.

Tuck, from Birmingham, Ala., had his glasses in hand before he left the area right after he finished his exam.

"This service is second to none," he said. "When they make glasses, they have a quick turn-around, and that's great service."

Staff Sgt. Rennick Beneby, of Fort Lee, Va., agrees. He's been there three times.

"I've had a few replacements because of the environment, and I've had a couple of mishaps," he said. Pairs of his glasses have been run over by a vehicle, been broken during physical training and a pair even tumbled down the stairs.

"Back at Fort Lee, in order to get glasses, it's a long, drawn-out process," he said. He has an unusual

prescription, so it takes a bit longer to get his glasses, but he's received them here in about a week's time.

"The Navy personnel here are efficient, courteous and very professional," Beneby said.

He works in the next building as the noncommissioned officer-in-charge of Acute Care Plans. "Whenever my glasses are ready, they bring them over to me," he said. "I'm pretty appreciative of all their work and efforts."

Kato pointed out that the clinic also makes inserts for protective eyewear.

"The commands buy (their) Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen ballistic eyewear," Kato said. "What a lot of Soldiers don't know is that we can make their inserts for that eyewear."

Anyone who needs corrective lenses can get inserts in their prescription for all their protective gear, including gas masks.

If you're a pilot or driver who needs sunglasses, they have a tinting

process that makes them too.

One of their newest acquisitions is a computerized machine that grinds multi-focal lenses. If you wear bifocals, it can take as little as 30 to 45 minutes to produce a pair.

The clinic sees around 10 to 12 scheduled patients a day, but walk-ins can sometimes double that number.

Kato estimates they see between 350 to 400 patients a month. That's a lot for a three-person operation.

Kato emphasized protecting eyes.

"The military issues ballistic eyewear. If you go up north (to Iraq) especially, wear it," she said.

"Not only does it offer you ballistic protection, but also ultraviolet protection. UV rays from the sun can cause long-term damage to your eyes. It's like sunscreen for your eyes," she said. "Wear your protective eyewear. I can't say that enough."

Servicemembers should heed her advice. Otherwise, they'll be back to the clinic sooner than they expect. **A**

Meet Your Average Jane:

Former 228th Signal Company commander leaves lasting impression

Story by

Sgt. Jacob A. McDonald

Desert Voice staff writer

The former commander of 228th Signal Company is just one of the many Soldiers supporting the Third Army mission, but she is not just the Average Jane. She left an impression on junior leaders across Kuwait with creative and informative training.

Capt. Natalie Vanatta, recently left Kuwait to pursue her doctorate in applied mathematics at the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, Calif., after serving in the Middle East for two years. During her time here she created a professional development seminar that affected and influenced junior officers throughout Kuwait.

A self described Army brat, Vanatta grew up with both parents in the military. She said she loved it and wanted to be a part of it.

"It was the greatest experience," she said. "I could see just with the interaction of the people my parent's worked with the caliber of person the Army could churn out. I wanted to serve my nation."

She said she went straight from being a dependent to a cadet to an officer. In college she went through the ROTC program. Following her commission she was assigned to Germany. She deployed from there to Iraq. Since then she has spent all her time either in Germany, Iraq or Kuwait.

During her tenure in Kuwait, Vanatta began a professional development program with her junior officers. The monthly training provided her lieutenants an opportunity to learn about a variety of military topics.

For one of her last monthly classes Vanatta wanted to show them some of the opportunities in the Army. She said young officers don't understand



Capt. Natalie Vanatta

all the opportunities, all the money, all the schooling opportunities, and all the training opportunities that the Army will let you do as a captain.

"There are some really cool programs," She said. "Most people don't know what they are so they don't know to ask for them. If you don't talk to your branch manager soon enough, as a lieutenant... your time line is all out of whack and you are not going to be able to do it."

With that purpose in mind, Vanatta began to plan the training. The original plan involved three or four presenters, based on her platoon leaders' strengths, coming in to talk about their programs and how to get involved. She sent out some emails, and it bloomed into something much larger.

In the end, 32 officers from almost every different functional area and program came and spoke about the opportunities available to company grade officers. Speakers from the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait and officers

passing through from Iraq contributed to the knowledge pool. Junior officers from all over the installation attended the conference.

It was mostly lieutenants, but a few captains attended. The officers came away with points of contact and info. It was an opportunity to meet people and talk to them about careers and opportunities, Vanatta said. This was an opportunity to learn about continuing education, the military decision making process. It opens their minds so when it comes time to make some of these decisions, they have already been thinking about it.

"Sometimes they need a reminder that there is more to the Army than what is here," Vanatta said. "Too many people get out after their initial obligation because of their job."

"I didn't know about all the career field designators outside the basic branches," said 2nd Lt. Micah Bushouse, officer in charge, Earth Terminal Complex, who attended the conference. "It was interesting to find out how each path led to a lot of experiences and opportunities."

Bushouse said each presenter opened doors of communication and information that let the attendees compare how to develop in each one.

"It got me off worrying about the next month and picking a career field," said 2nd Lt. Sarah Frederickson, platoon leader, 385th Signal Company. It lets you plan out further. People are not always happy with where they are, but the Army provides opportunities and outlets for people outside of their basic branch, she added. You want the people working for you to be happy, she said.

Despite the fact she has left Kuwait, Vanatta said she hopes someone will continue to develop this program and provide opportunities for junior officers to learn, grow and develop in the Army. **A**

Safety is everyone's responsibility

By Col. Mike Carroll
Third Army/U.S. Army Central
Chief of Staff

As the new Chief of Staff for Third Army/U.S. Army Central, one of the tasks I do is to read the accident reports that come from our units. I'm probably like a lot of you who dreads another lecture on safety. I even would groan and probably expect 30 minutes of banter from Charlie Brown's teacher.

However, after reading these reports, this is a serious matter. I'll just provide the root causes of recent accidents for our professional Soldiers so we all can "see the next one coming" and stop it.

Well here are some recent cases in our area of responsibility:

- A non-tactical vehicle passenger was killed in a roll over, the passenger was not wearing a seatbelt.
- A truck rammed another truck ahead of it because it was following too closely in the dust on a gravel road.
- An NTV rolled over while turning on a gravel road due to excessive speed at night.
- Attempting to clear a weapon with a loaded magazine in the

weapon.

• A truck rammed another truck ahead of it because the lead vehicle's brake lights did not work-and both drivers already knew that.

• A Humvee rolled over with neither the driver nor senior occupant wearing seatbelts.

I always think "this can never happen to me." So could these apply to me? Well, I do ride in NTVs daily. I get in Humvees with others driving. I draw my weapon to travel off-post and I clear it several times each day as we travel. I travel in daytime during dusty conditions and have to move late at night.

So I have to do the pre-combat inspections I learned to do on my armored personnel carrier back when I was a lieutenant. I ask myself: Do I have ID Cards? Weapons? Magazines in ammo pouch? Vehicle dispatch? Off-post memo? Seatbelts? Fuel? Clean windows? Water? Cell phone? Strip maps?

Doing these checks each time has not made me late for a meeting yet, they don't take very long and I am making sure I am as safe as possible. This something we can each do, isn't it? **A**



Courtesy photo

Some accidents are avoidable by implementing safety checks.

Just One Question...

"What have you learned about Ramadan since deployment?"



"I learned that it starts and stops at a different time each year."

Lt. Shivan Sivalingam
Arlington, Virg.
National security training OIC
Combined Security Transition Command



"I know you can't eat or drink off-base during the day."

Airman Nicole Hill
Oneida, N.Y.
Water and ice technician
586th Aerial Expeditionary Group



"I learned that its like Christmas, New Years, and the 4th of July all rolled into one for Muslims."

Sgt. David Lowery
Inman, S.C.
CG's communication support team
228th Signal Battalion

Why I serve:

**Seaman Austin Gailor
Seabee
Navy Mobile Construction
Battalion 40**



The Lockport, N.Y., native explains why he chose to join the military.

"I see people complaining about the things that are going on in the world but they do nothing to change it. I figured if I serve my country, I could say that I did something about it."

What's happening around Kuwait ...



Making friends

Photo by Spc. Paul Norwood

1st Lt. Norman Carson of Sitka, Alaska, holds a trained Saker Falcon in the Kuwait desert. Carson is with C Company, 3rd Battalion, 297th Infantry, Alaska Army National Guard. During a routine patrol in the Kuwait desert, C Co. Soldiers befriended a pair of Kuwaiti falcons.

Chief Warrant Officer Deshawn Bell digs down deep to give it all he has got to reach muscle failure during multiple repetitions on the vertical chest equipment in a gym at Camp Arifjan. Bell is a communication architectural technician for the 335th Theater Signal Command and a native of Colorado Springs, Colo. He has served in the Army for 19 years and does physical training six days a week.



No pain, no gain

Photo by Master Sgt. Michele Hammonds

SAY "HI" FOR THE HOLIDAYS, SEND A SHOUT OUT!



SHOUT OUTS ARE A GREAT WAY TO WISH A HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY IN THE UNITED STATES. LOOK FOR FILM CREWS AT YOUR CAMP ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:

LOCATION	DATE AND TIMES
CAMP BUEHRING	SEP. 17-18 AND OCT. 1-2
CAMP VIRGINIA	SEP. 20-21 AND OCT. 4-5
CAMP PATRIOT	SEP. 24 AND OCT. 8
SPOD	SEP. 25 AND OCT. 9
CAMP ARIFJAN	SEP. 24-28 AND OCT. 8-12

ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST BE IN DUTY UNIFORM (NO PT UNIFORMS) CREWS WILL SHOOT OUTSIDE THE COMMUNITY CENTER WHEN NOT AT UNIT LOCATIONS AND OUTSIDE THE DINING FACILITIES DURING MEALS. UNITS CAN SCHEDULE TIMES FOR CREWS TO COME TO THEIR LOCATION DURING THE DAY BY CALLING 318-430-6364 OR EMAIL SGT. JACOB McDONALD JACOB.A.MCDONALD@KUWAIT.SWA.ARMY.MIL