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

September 26, 2007



Ready for the worst

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On the cover

A Tongan Marine puts his medical skills to the test as he works on a casualty during the Tactical Combat Casualty Care training course at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Sept. 11. For the full story, turn to page 6.

Photo by Master Sgt. Michele Hammonds

Contact us

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

Discipline essential to daily Army life

Discipline has been central to military units and operations ever since there were military units and operations. Webster's dictionary defines "discipline" as a rule or system of rules governing conduct or activity. Our Army is governed by rules, regulation, and policies which ensure it can fight



Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb
Third Army Commanding General

and win our Nation's battles. For those of us who serve, however, discipline means so much more than merely following a set of rules. I define discipline simply as doing what is right when no one else is around.

Discipline goes deeper than just a set of regulations that tell us what we should or should not do. It is the glue that holds units together in order to accomplish assigned missions under the toughest conditions. And this kind of discipline applies as much to the whole unit as the individual Trooper, for this kind of self-discipline is the bedrock upon which unit discipline is built. Individual discipline is an essential component of unit discipline and allows the individual to see that, despite his own preferences, he must accomplish assigned jobs well to ensure the team succeeds.

General George S. Patton Jr. said: "Discipline is based on pride in the profession of arms, on meticulous attention to details, and on mutual respect and confidence. Discipline must be a habit so ingrained that it is stronger than the excitement of battle or the fear of death."

For each of us, it doesn't matter if the "boss" isn't watching; the task will be done and done properly. It doesn't matter that it's hot and dusty, or cold and wet. It

becomes a matter of pride; our ingrained sense of self-discipline will not let us settle for less than a job done right.

Discipline encompasses the desire to accomplish the task well—not because of fear of punishment, but because of pride in one's unit and oneself.

It means putting the task of the unit,

the team, the mission ahead of personal desires. It means holding yourself to the standards no matter what.

A Soldier's pride in doing things to standard is critical to the performance of an organization. When you walk into a unit as an outsider and you see everyone in the same uniform, vehicle load plans are organized, fundamental drills are performed as routine, you learn much about that unit, the command climate and the unit's level of discipline. You can tell immediately that standards are established, everyone knows the standard, and there is a leader in charge.

We, the Soldiers of Third Army/U.S. Army Central will carry out the task at hand to the best of our ability because we understand the standards and have a tremendous sense of discipline. Our motivation keeps us going until the job is done. That same self-discipline will not let them settle for doing something unless it's done to the prescribed standard and to the best of our ability. This sense of discipline and adherence to standards ensure mission success!

Be the standard; know the standard; enforce the standard.

Patton's own!

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You can help prevent heat injuries

Story by

Chief Warrant Officer James Melby
Third Army/USARCENT Safety Officer

Our egos allow us to believe we can endure the heat without worry and that our Third Army/U.S. Army Central servicemembers are too tough to be taken out of the fight by something so simple.

Unfortunately, this is precisely the mentality that contributes to most heat injuries. Heat injuries are entirely preventable and the responsibility for prevention falls squarely on the shoulders of the leadership.

A little knowledge and a few simple precautions will eliminate the risk of you or your servicemembers becoming a heat casualty.

Some ways to avoid heat injuries are simple and require a little planning ahead before engaging in everyday activities.

One way to prevent heat injuries is to identify the servicemembers in your ranks with prior heat casualties, as they are more susceptible to future heat injury.

Acclimate your servicemembers to new environments by spending 50 minutes exposed to the environment, twice a day for the first seven to 14 days minimum. Remember, acclimatization can be lost after 30 days of working in an air-conditioned trailer.

Following the guidelines on the work/rest chart can prevent heat injuries due to overworking during the hot hours of the day.

Consider that this chart assumes you are acclimated to your environment, if not, you may require more rest and less work.

Another way to avoid heat injuries is to plan any strenuous work periods, physical training and ranges during the cooler times of day.

Consider the negative impact of body armor and heavy loads when determining the level of risk and be prepared to modify the uniform posture.

Also consider that immunizations

can cause low grade fever, adding to the risk of becoming a heat casualty.

“Sports” drinks with electrolytes may be substituted for water, but caffeinated beverages, “energy” drinks and vitamin supplements are harmful to the body as they help dehydrate the body and alter the chemical balance, particularly in a hot environment.

Implementing a hydration monitoring system, such as a length of parachute cord tied to the servicemembers uniform is a good way to keep tabs on water consumption. Have them tie a knot each time they finish a canteen of water.

Over hydration can result in Hyponatremia, a potentially deadly condition resulting from an electrolyte imbalance.

Paying attention to any symptoms of heat injuries will help identify if there is a potential heat injury before it happens.

Some symptoms of heat injuries are headaches, dizziness/lightheadedness, weakness, mood changes (irritable or confused/can’t think straight), feeling sick to your stomach, vomiting/throwing up, decreased and dark-colored urine, fainting/passing out and pale, and clammy skin.

If a servicemember suffers from a heat injury there are ways to treat the condition and to prevent any further damage.

Move the person to a cool, shaded area to rest.

Don’t leave the person alone.

If the person is dizzy or lightheaded, lay them on their back and raise their legs about six to eight inches. If the person is sick to their stomach, lay them on their side.

Loosen and remove any heavy clothing.

Have the person drink a small cup of cool water every 15 minutes if they are not feeling sick to the stomach.

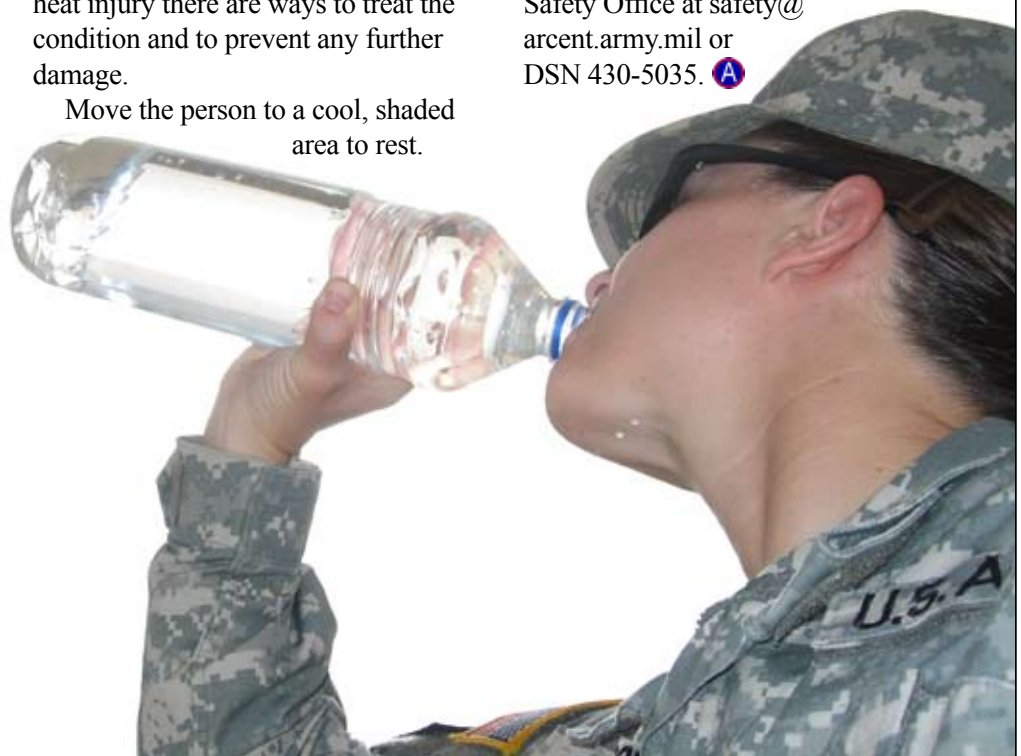
Try to cool the person by fanning them and if possible cool the skin with a cool spray mist of water or wet cloth. If ice is available, place ice packs under the armpits and groin area.

If they do not feel better in a few minutes, call for emergency help. If heat exhaustion is not treated, the illness may advance to heat stroke.

Soldiers experiencing the onset of heat injury may hide the symptoms. Battle buddies and leaders must be alert and engaged in prevention and detection to help protect these servicemembers.

Nobody wants to be a heat casualty, but it is the leader’s responsibility to prevent them.

For additional information on heat injury prevention, contact the Third Army/U.S. Army Central Safety Office at safety@arcent.army.mil or DSN 430-5035. 



Mechanics keep trucks m

Story and photos by
Master Sgt. Michele Hammonds
1st TSC Public Affairs

They turned wrenches, drilled holes and banged on steel as they repaired Heavy Equipment Transporter Systems. These wheeled vehicle mechanic Soldiers could be seen lying on the ground underneath their HETS or crouched either inside or outside of the trucks in the motor pool.

They checked for leaks and malfunctions as they performed maintenance on several of the systems.

They are the Soldiers of the 217th Transportation Company, and they keep the heavy movers on the road.

HETS are large vehicles designed to transport, deploy and evacuate tanks and other heavy equipment up to 70 tons.

The M1070 Heavy Equipment Transporter consists of the M-1070 truck tractor and M-1000 semi-trailer. HETS are designed to accommodate the increased weight of the M1 Abrams tanks. The Army uses HETS for convoy operations because of

their reliability and hauling capacity.

The 217th Transportation Company belongs to the 1st Sustainment Command (Theater), and supports Third Army/U.S. Army Central in its logistical mission to support Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom.

When the 217th HETS become inoperable they are sent to the mechanics where it's more work than just popping up the hood and looking inside. First a crane operator must remove the cab.

"You have to remove the cab off the HET in order to get to the engine and most of the major

transmission and transportation components," said Staff Sgt. Henry M. Carreon, senior mechanic of the 217th Transportation Company. "It has to be done safely."

With only a couple more days on the job in Kuwait, Carreon and Master Sgt. Jose Picon, 217th TC motor pool sergeant, supervised their mechanics and helped new mechanics in the motor pool.

"We are still working to provide assistance in training the new maintenance unit (who will take over) our



(Background) A Soldier talks to the driver of a Heavy Equipment Transporter System, the Army's largest transporter truck. The Soldiers are deployed to Kuwait as part of the Third Army/U.S. Army Central, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Pvt. Eric Santos, a wheeled-vehicle mechanic, checks for leaks in a tight spot.

movin' on

actual section's maintenance," said Carreon as he stopped at several HETS and spoke with mechanics that performed maintenance on the vehicles.

Mechanics with the 217th TC worked alongside Pvt. Keith Nauer, a wheeled-vehicle mechanic assigned to the 546th Transportation Company, based at Fort Bragg, N.C. Nauer and other members of the 546th recently replaced the 217th TC at Camp Arifjan. Nauer, of Towaco, N.J., said he grew up working on cars and trucks.

"I love working on trucks. I used to work on my Jeep before I came in the Army,"



mechanic squeezes himself and malfunctions on a HET.



Pvt. Keith Nauer, 546th Transportation Company, gets down and dirty as he repairs a HET.

said the 21 year old.

Throughout their stay in Kuwait, the 217th TC mechanics provided maintenance for a line platoon which includes four squads of Soldiers which have more than 20 HET Systems assigned.

"My squad provided the combat maintenance support and kinds of main services or support whether here or in Iraq," he said.

Picon added, "My job is to make sure that the mechanics work to get the trucks ready for convoys. I make sure the mechanics get enough rest and that they get all the parts to fix the trucks."

In between making repairs on HETS, mechanics drove the vehicles when tasked to participate in convoys. Their mission was to transport equipment or anything needed into theater.

Prior to the 546th mechanics' arrival, the 217th TC logged millions of miles transporting heavy equipment ranging from M1A1 tanks, engineering equipment, cranes, tractors, steel boxes and all types of heavy armored and up-armored vehicles from Kuwait to Iraq.

Keeping the HETS up and running for convoys is something the mechanics strive to do.

"The HETS are very dependable vehicles," Carreon said. "It's important that we keep the HETS operational at all times."

"The convoys depend on the HETS for their mission due to all the types of equipment for active duty, reserve and guard equipment that needs to be moved down range (north to Iraq)," Carreon said. **A**



Spec. Michael Warns, 546th Transportation Company, operates the controls on a Heavy Equipment Transporter.

Tongan Marines train for the horrors of

Story and photos by
Master Sgt. Michele Hammonds
1st TSC Public Affairs

Fifty Royal Marines from the Kingdom of Tonga did not storm the tropical beach in their native homeland – rather they hit the desert sand when they went through medical training at the medical skills training facility at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Sept. 11.

The Tongan contingent is headed to Baghdad where they will employ the skills they learned during their stay in the Third Army / U.S. Army Central operational area.

The U.S. military and civilian contractors provided medical training to 50 Tongan Marines led by Capt. Toni Fonokalafi, senior national representative contingent commander.

Fonokalafi commented on the hands-on training as he went through the four-hour Tactical Combat Casualty Care, Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures class.

“Recently we had (U.S.) Marines come over to Tonga for a week of training, after that we came through Camp Pendleton for another two weeks of training with the U.S. Marines,” he said. “Then we came to Camp Buehring for another week.

“Now is our final week of training with the Army. Some of the training is repetitious, but overall it is good training for the team to get ready for the task ahead of us.”

The medical training not only provided medical hands-on training, but it also helped the Tonga Marines build confidence, said Fonokalafi.

“All of this training gives us the confidence to do what is expected



Tongan Marines work together on a casualty during the Tactical Combat Casualty Care tactics, Techniques, and Procedures training course at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Sept. 11.

of us in Iraq,” he said. “Like today, this medical training has shown us how to treat people in these situations (scenarios given in class) and this builds our confidence in whatever we should do in the north.”

Fonokalafi said his Marines were eager to go through the practical exercises and hands-on training in Third Army/US Army Central’s area before moving up north to assume their new assignment.

“We are currently in Kuwait doing our final part of the training. Everybody is happy and everybody is excited to move on and conduct the missions outlined for us,” Fonokalafi said.

Tongan society is a very close-knit community of small islands. Many of the deployed Marines are related to one another, said Capt.

Sonne Aholelei, 2nd platoon leader for Tongan Marines.

“It’s a saying back home that everyone knows a bit about each other,” Aholelei said. “Seeing the reality of what may happen – we need this type of skill to save the guy right next to us.”

The Marines went through a battery of hands-on training using mannequins to practice on, working to keep a patient alive until trained medical staff arrive.

Spc. James McClellan, of the 213th Air Support Medical Company, Arkansas National Guard, provided assistance to the Tongan’s they went through the hands-on training.

“I think they are doing real well,” said McClellan, a registered nurse with

f war



s, techniques, and

Brent Cloud, medical simulations training instructor, demonstrates the proper way to apply a tourniquet to a training dummy at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Sept. 11.

the White River Medical Center, Batesville, Ark., where he resided before he deployed with his guard unit. “They are energetic and want to learn how to do the medical tasks, and that goes a long way.”

Brent Cloud, medical simulations training instructor, was the primary trainer for the Tongans. “We do what we can (in) getting the guys in here and we try to provide them with quality training,” said Cloud, who teaches about 300 military personnel a day and 1,500 a week, including coalition forces. “We try to accommodate every one regardless of their skill set,” and apparently regardless of their nationality as well.

Editor’s note: This is the second in a two-part series on Tongan Marines training for Iraq. 



Tonga Marines work on a casualty training dummy during Tactical Combat Casualty Care tactics, techniques, and procedures training course at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Sept. 11.

Glitz, glamour visit service

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

Two of the biggest names in entertainment, one on the football field, the other on the silver screen, took time to visit with Third Army/U.S. Army Central servicemembers at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait last week.

On Sept. 12, members of the world-famous Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders performed and signed autographs for the servicemembers at the desert camp. The performance marked the beginning of the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleader's 63rd Tour with the USO. It was also the first time the troupe had performed in Southwest Asia.

Megan Fox, a four-year member of the team, said to get the chance to perform for servicemembers here is truly a blessing.

"(The show) is our way to say thank you for all the sacrifices you make and for all that you do for our country," Fox said. "We want to say thanks to your families as well because they stay behind and keep life together while you're stationed over here and we just can't thank you enough. Because of what you do, we have the freedom to do what we do."

More than 1,000 people crowded the stage as the cheerleaders performed dance routines to different rock 'n' roll and country songs. The servicemembers were



Celebrity Chuck Norris holds an M-16 rifle while posing for photographs with servicemembers. Norris, visited servicemembers in the Third Army/U.S. Army Central area of responsibility.

serenaded by several cheerleaders and a few had the opportunity to get on stage with the ladies.

Capt. Thomas J. Sears, Area Support Group-Kuwait, said he did not expect the show that was put on. He said the show

was phenomenal.

"(The show) consisted of wonderful dance routines and singing," Sears said. "It far exceeded any expectation we had."

It was a trip to remember, the cheerleaders said. It began on Sept. 11, when they boarded the plane less than 24 hours after performing at the Cowboys' home game against the New York Giants Sept. 10. Twenty-two hours later, they were in Kuwait.

A day later, Chuck Norris, star of numerous films and of the *Walker, Texas Ranger* television series, visited Arifjan to sign pictures and talk with the warriors here. Norris said his objective was to show the fighting men and women stationed in the Middle East that, no matter what is portrayed on the news, there are people supporting them at home.

"That's why I'm here," Norris said. "I just want to let them know that we're thinking of them, we love them and we're



Members of the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders sign autographs for security personnel after a performance at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait Sept. 12.

Members at Camp Arifjan



Photo by Pfc. Christopher T. Grammer

ers at Camp Arifjan, Sept. 13. Norris, an honorary

all praying for them to come home safe.”

Capt. Mike Mehringer, an operations officer with Third Army/USARCENT, from Wilmington, DE, said meeting a person like Chuck Norris is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

“This guy’s one of my heroes and it was great to finally meet him,” he said.

Mehringer was just one of the more than 2,000 people who waited in line, some more than four hours, to meet Norris. He said it’s flattering to know he has so many fans especially in light of the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders performance the night before.

“(The crowd) was incredible especially when they told me I beat out the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders,” Norris said. “That’s a real compliment.”

Overall, the objectives were met by both parties. The appearances raised the morale of the servicemembers on the desert camp. Mehringer said he was cheered



Dallas Cowboys Cheerleader Erica Perry, sings during a performance for Third Army/U.S. Army Central personnel at the Camp Arifjan, Kuwait Sept. 12.

up and he thinks the rest of the camp was cheered up too.

“It definitely brings morale up,” Mehringer said. “It’s great to see celebrities take time out of their busy schedules to come and see us. It’s not everyday you get a celebrity walk by you and takes time to shake your hand, look you in the eye and say to you he’s proud of what you’re doing.”

Norris said he’s just doing his job.

“If I can, in some small way, boost morale a little bit, then it’s an honor to do that. I get emails from the servicemembers’ mothers thanking me for coming over here,” Norris said. “They say their servicemember sent the picture home and, to see the smile on their son’s and daughter’s faces that they haven’t seen in months, how can you not take that to heart?” 



Sgt. Enrique Alvarado, HHC, 1st Cav. Div., re-enlists during a ceremony at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. Also attending the ceremony were Soldiers from his unit. Alvarado said that part of his decision to re-enlist was to take care of his fellow Soldiers.

Camaraderie a factor for re-enlisting Soldiers

Story and photo by
SpC. Giancarlo Casem
Desert Voice editor

A tax-free bonus, peer pressure, family or stability. Whatever the reason Soldiers re-enlist, a factor in their decision is camaraderie.

Soldiers' camaraderie may be heightened while deployed to a combat zone.

"The bonuses are a big motivator in re-enlisting. However I believe a Soldier ultimately reenlists because they like the Army way of life and the security," said Sgt. 1st Class Mark Duffy, a career counselor with the 54th Signal Battalion. "A Soldier has pretty much made up his mind on re-enlisting before they even come to see me."

Currently, there are monetary benefits for Soldiers wishing to re-enlist while they are deployed. Soldiers of Third Army/U.S. Army Central are taking advantage of these bonuses. These bonuses are paid in a one-time payment and are tax free while in theater. They also may get

their station of choice. Duffy said that re-enlistment is up 250 percent in his unit. However the Soldiers who re-enlist have already made up their minds, which makes the money just an added benefit.

For Sgt. Enrique Alvarado, 1st Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, his mind was already made up before he contacted his retention office.

This is the eight-year veteran's third re-enlistment. However, this time he is doing it for six more years. He said since his mind was already made up, the re-enlistment bonus was not really a factor.

"Well besides the \$23,000 that I'm going to get, I just love being a Soldier," Alvarado said. "The Army's done so much for me. I just decided to re-enlist for another six to take care of Soldiers."

Despite the benefits, Duffy said he does not see a significant difference between Soldiers re-enlisting back in the U.S. and while deployed. Another factor for why a Soldier may re-

enlist is his fellow Soldier. There is a correlation between Soldiers who re-enlist and the number of his fellow Soldiers from his unit that re-enlist.

"Definitely, Soldiers see their buddies re-enlisting for bonuses and assignments and usually follow suit," Duffy said.

Although, Soldiers still do come to him with a few questions.

"The most questions are: Can I get a bonus and how much? Where can I go? Can I change my (military occupational specialty)?" Duffy said.

To sort through all the rumors and uncertainty, Soldiers are advised to talk to their career counselor. A career counselor like Duffy can help a Soldier plan out his future, with or without the Army.

"I like to ask the Soldier to show me their plan for life after the Army," Duffy said. "Then I can sit down with them and go over the pros and cons of staying in and to let the Soldier know that the grass may be greener on the other side, but I guarantee you the water bill is higher." 

RAMADAN

12 Sep - 13 Oct 2007

“Most venerated, blessed and spiritually beneficial month of the Islamic year”

From Sunrise to Sunset

Be Considerate when off post.

- Don't Eat
- Don't Drink
- Don't Chew
- Don't Smoke

To include when you are in a vehicle.

Individual can be detained by KU Authorities and incur a 100 KD (\$300 Plus USD) fine for violating this practice.



Why I serve:

**Petty Officer 1st Class Michael Maixner
Supervisor
Navy Mobile Construction Battalion 40**



The Spokane, Wash., native explains why he chose to join the military.

“My dad served in the Air Force for 20 years. My grandfather served in the Taiwanese army for 34 years under Chang Kai Tschek. Being in the military is in my blood. Plus, serving my country gives me a new perspective and an appreciation for my citizenship as an American.”

Just One Question...

“What would influence you to re-enlist?”



“If the quality of the Army returned to its roots. The standards have lowered to keep people in.”

Spc. Courtney Smith
Orlando, Fla.
Light wheel mechanic
2nd Bn., 1st Avn. Bde., 1st Inf. Div.



“If I could make E-4, then I would probably stay in.”

Airman Jeffery Pierson
Waterford, Mich.
Aviation boson mate handler
U.S.S. Kearsarge



“The bonuses.”

Senior Airman Douglas Lembo
Wethersfield, Ct.
Truck driver
70th Medium Truck Detachment



“I plan on staying in already because of the opportunity to travel.”

1st Lt. Diane Jones
Los Angeles
Redeployment logistics OIC
316th Expeditionary Support Command



“The bonuses are the biggest thing.”

Sgt. Nathan Besmer
Rochester, Minn.
Truck driver
546th Transportation Company

What's happening around Kuwait ...



World-class entertainment comes to Kuwait

Photo by Spc. Giancarlo Casem
Members of the Army Ground Forces Band perform for Third Army/U.S. Army Central servicemembers at Camp Arifjan Kuwait, Sept. 18. The band also performed at other camps throughout Kuwait.



Photo by Pfc. Christopher T. Grammer

Country singer Granger Smith performs at a stage in the Life Support Area, Kuwait, Sept. 18.

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