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

November 7, 2007



Heavy
'METL'

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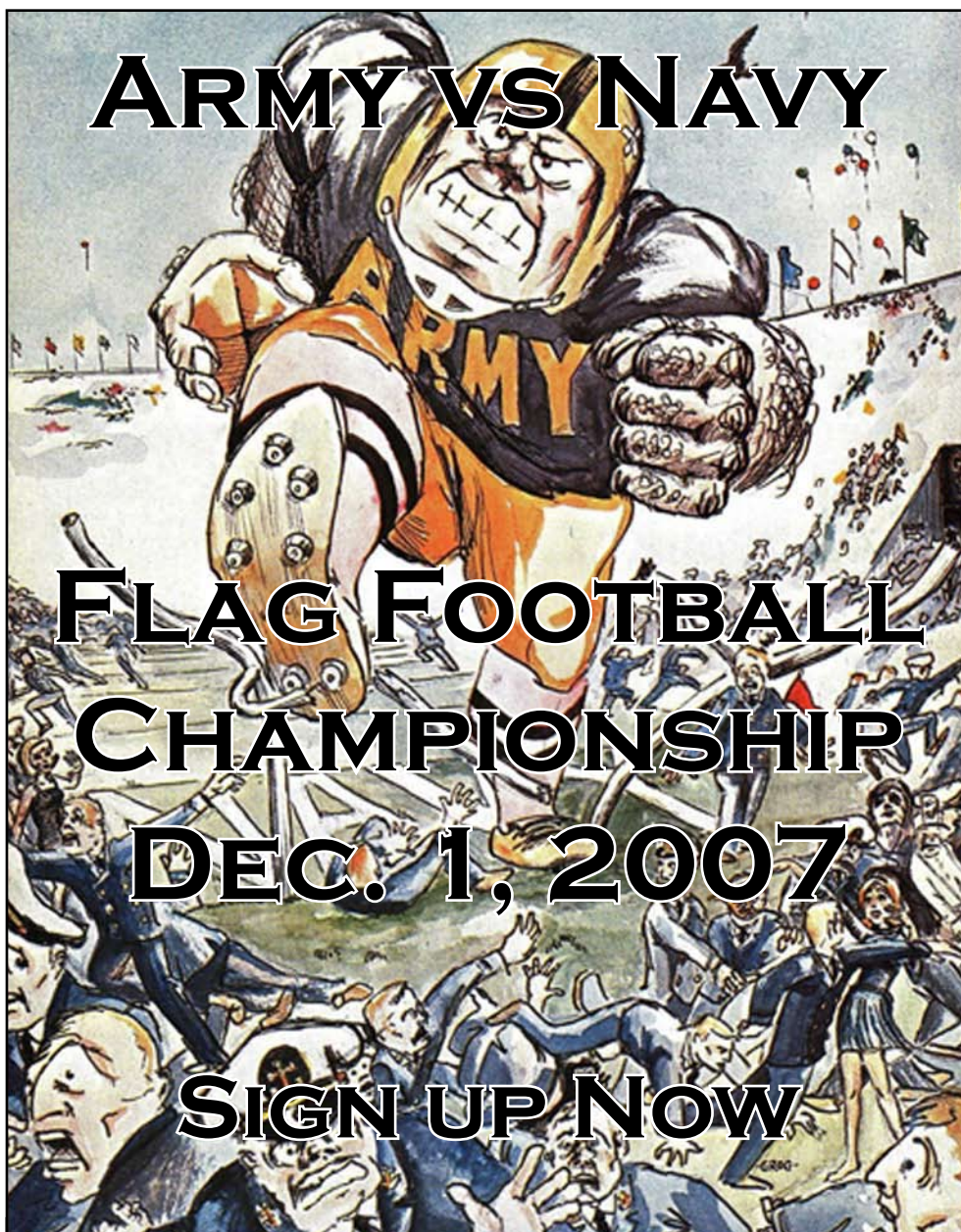
On the cover

An M1 Abrams crew from 4th Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, await their turn on the firing line, at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Oct. 31. For the full story, turn to page 6.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Jacob McDonald

Contact us

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



The first Camp Arifjan Army-Navy game will kick off Dec. 1 at noon. Officers will face officers, enlisted against enlisted. The winner gets all of the bragging rights and the loser gets the "trophy." Only one team from both officer and enlisted is needed, so find the biggest, fastest and best. Team rosters need to be in by Nov. 15. For those who don't want to play, come out and root for your individual teams. For more information, contact SGT Stroh, e-mail: james.r.stroh@arifjan.arcent.army.mil

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DV
Desert Voice
Magazine

Drive to arrive – Defensive driving saves lives

Story by
John R. Hutchison
ASG-KU safety manager

More than 41,000 people lose their lives in motor vehicle crashes each year and over two million more suffer disabling injuries, according to government records. Last year, the U.S. Army suffered 212 fatalities.

The triple threat of high speeds, impaired or careless driving and not using occupant restraints threatens every driver – regardless of how careful or how skilled.

Driving defensively means not only taking responsibility for yourself and your actions but also keeping an eye on “the other guy.” Army Safety suggests the following guidelines to help reduce your risks on the road.

- Don’t start the engine without securing each passenger in the car. Safety belts save thousands of lives each year.
- Remember driving too fast or too slow can increase the likelihood of collisions.
- Don’t kid yourself. If you plan to drink, designate a driver who won’t drink. Alcohol is a factor in almost half



Courtesy photo

Excessive speeding can be fatal. In this accident, both the driver and passenger of the red car was killed, as well as the motor bike rider. The bike was traveling with speeds over 100 mph, the driver of the car was not speeding.

of all fatal motor vehicle crashes.

- Follow the rules of the road. Don’t contest the “right of way” or try to race another car during a merge. Be respectful of other motorists.
- Don’t follow too closely. Always use a “three-second following distance” or a “three-second plus following distance.”
- While driving, be cautious, aware and responsible.

ASG-KU has an excellent driving skills training program called “Army Safe Driver Training.” The hands-on education equips drivers with skills to make split-second decisions

as they face the unexpected on Kuwaiti or Iraqi roads and it works back home too. The collision avoidance skills and techniques are applicable to all types of vehicles, as long as one understands the dynamics of their vehicle.

The course helps drivers:

- Handle emergency maneuvers
- Hone and enhance driving skills
- Orient toward safe operation of vehicle
- Skills are transferable to other types of vehicles

For more information call the ASG–Kuwait safety office at 430-2155. 



Cultural awareness program in Jordan now taking names

Story by
Spc. Giancarlo Casem
Desert Voice editor

Servicemembers in the Third Army/U.S. Army Central area of operation looking to expand their horizons can literally go over the horizon to Jordan.

Third Army/USARCENT will conduct their annual cultural awareness training for more than 600 troops at the Peace Operation Training Center in Zarqa, Jordan, Feb. 17 through March 27, 2008. The event is in support of the Central Command Theater Support Cooperation Program.

"The overall objective is to train Soldiers on the cultural consideration, not tactics," said Maj. Keith Thompson, Third Army/USARCENT, training operations officer. "In doing so, Third Army/USARCENT hopes to aid in the process of restoring diplomacy and order in the Middle East, promote multinational involvement, international cooperation and strengthen the relationships between countries in the Middle East."

The course consists of six rotations, one three-day senior leader seminar intended for brigade/battalion commanders, sergeants major and field-grade officers. There are five rotations of junior leader training. Cultural awareness training relating to customs within the Arabic culture: hierarchy of tribes and structure of Iraqi society, social structure for a family, women in the Arabic society, Iraqi Dos & Don'ts, Arabic language and cultural awareness.

"This training is unique in that it is a 'train the trainer' and we teach cultural considerations, not tactics, that U.S. servicemembers can incorporate into their homestation training," Thompson said. "The students are immersed into the Arab culture in which they undergo classroom training and stressful situational training exercise lanes on situations they may face in Iraq or Afghanistan. Also, the



Courtesy photo

Soldiers react to a simulated situation as it unfolds near their vehicle in Jordan last year.

training is conducted in an Arabic country with actual Arabs, not Arab-Americans. Furthermore, students will conduct cultural tours of historic sites to further their understanding of the Arabic culture."

In past iterations, the junior leader rotations included three situational training exercises on checkpoints, building searches and mounted patrols.

"This training challenges them into making the right decision when facing a difficult situation, as well as not offending the Arabic culture," Thompson said.

The STX lanes focus on many aspects of Arabic culture and are taught by Jordanian officers. Each STX lane is supported by an American observer controller/trainer and numerous role players.

"Troops had to interact with them in a way that balanced the mission while respecting the culture and religious beliefs of the Arabs," Thompson said. "Those missions involved searches, clearing or speaking with the media about a family's home or mosque that was being used to store

money and weapon caches to support insurgency. This training can be implemented into home station training at the squad and team level."

The Jordanian Armed Forces hosts the courses to train U.S. servicemembers on cultural awareness in preparation for their mission in Iraq and in support of the Global War on Terror.

"Cultural awareness training is held in Jordan because the Jordanians are familiar with their Iraqi brothers," Thompson said. "The common factors are language, history and customs."

Third Army/USARCENT's cultural awareness training provides tremendous value to American servicemembers preparing for future deployment, and is available to all U.S. servicemembers.

For more information contact, Maj. Alfredo Ferrer at 404-464-1897 or alfredo.ferrer@arcent.army.mil and Maj. Keith Thompson at 404-464-4973 or keith.a.thompson1@arcent.army.mil. Additional information may be obtained from the Third Army/USARCENT website at www.arcent.army.mil, visit "Cultural Awareness Training" under useful links. 

Swing Out class dances onto Arifjan

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Anishka Calder
1st TSC public affairs

Deployed Soldiers spend their off time doing a variety of activities. Some stay in their living quarters and play games or watch movies while others go to pools to take a swim, or go to the gym to work out. Some choose to take part in the various activities that the Directorate of Morale, Welfare and Recreation has to offer.

Some servicemembers and contractors in the Third Army/U.S. Army Central area of responsibility on Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, decided to spend their off time learning how to swing dance, and became the first Swing Out graduating class on a military base in Kuwait, Oct. 21.

“Swing out originates from dances that were done in the early 1900s. It was really popular back then but it kind of faded out, and now it’s in isolated pockets,” said Maj. Fredrick Barber, a plans officer for support operations for the 1st Sustainment Command (Theater). “There are different types of swing out dances and different steps. The turns are pretty much the same, but the basic steps change and the rhythm at which people move is different based on where in the country you dance the swing out. The version that our instructor taught us is from the Dallas/Fort Worth area.”

“Swing out originated from jazz and the Lindy Hop,” added 1st Lt. Kiana Jones, the chief of personnel actions and awards for the 1st TSC. “The Lindy Hop is an older dance that has developed over the years into a different type of dancing. Some people in Chicago call it stepping, in Philadelphia they call it bopping, and in Dallas they call it swing out.”

Although members of the graduating class had various reasons for attending the dance class, most of the dancers had one thing in common – they wanted something more than sitting in their rooms after work.



Lt. Col. Michael Barkett, the comptroller for 1st TSC, guides his partner, Warrant Officer Selvina Wasson, 640th CSSAMO, during the Swing Out dance class graduation ceremony at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Oct. 21.

“When I first saw the flyer, it said something about stepping. From my perception, I thought that it was going to be fraternity type stuff. One day I went to the class and the music drew me in. The music was a kind of smooth, old-school type music, something mellow,” said Warrant Officer Shawn Hickey, a 37-year-old human resources technician from 1st TSC. “I’m kind of at the age where the rapping is good, but I like the mellowness. When they said that anybody could do it, even if they had two left feet, I was drawn in.”

Equipped with new moves under

their belt, most of the graduating class intend to keep practicing the moves they were taught. Some even have the intention of teaching their spouses what they learned during the class when they go home.

“My wife, Patrice, is taking dance classes now so that we can dance together when I get back home. I’m going to teach her what I learned here when I redeploy.” Barber added. “The class taught me the difference between dancing with someone and dancing in front of someone. I now know how to dance with someone, and that’s real.” 



An M1 Abrams comes off the firing line after zeroing at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Oct. 31. The 4th Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, is heading north to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Staff Sgt. Christopher Fitzpatrick, master gunner for D Company, 4th Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, oversees the tanks on the firing line during zeroing at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Oct. 31.

4-64 brings the HEAT

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

At eight feet tall and 30 feet long the more than 60-ton M1 Abrams casts a deadly shadow.

The Soldiers of 4th Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, are trained to ride these gigantesque war-machines into combat. Before they head up to Iraq however, the 4-64 trained on Third Army/U.S. Army Central ranges at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Oct. 31.

"We are ensuring that our weapon systems are accurate, functional and ready to head north," said Staff Sgt. Christopher Fitzpatrick, master gunner of D Company, 4th Bn., 64th Armor

Regt.

Aside from ensuring that their weapons systems were good to go, the 4-64 used this chance to get in a little firing practice to make sure their gunners were up to snuff, Fitzpatrick said.

Most of the Soldiers of the 4-64 have been deployed more than once. For some this is their third or fourth tour. Despite that fact, their spirits are high and they seem to enjoy what they do.

"I'm just glad to be back over here to make a difference," said Sgt. Stephen Stage, a gunner with 4th Bn., 64th Armor Regt.

Fitzpatrick had his tanks set up in two lines, a firing line and a bore-sight line. Before heading to the firing line the tank crew must align the sight with the barrel, this is called boresighting.

To learn how to operate this vehicle the tankers attended 14 weeks of one-station unit training at Fort Knox, Ky. The basic crew of an M1 Abrams is four tankers each with a specific function. Each tank has a driver, loader, gunner, and a tank commander.

There are three different versions of the Abrams

in use by the Army and Marine Corps today. The M1A1 and M1A2 have certain armor and armament improvements upon the original design, while the M1A2 SEP has upgraded optical capabilities.

The 120 mm M256 smoothbore gun is an improvement on the original 105 mm M68 rifle. Shooting various types of ammunition such as High Explosive Anti-Tank rounds, Sabot armor piercing rounds or Multi Purpose Anti-Tank rounds the M1 Abrams is very versatile in combat.

With new improvements in technology, the armor of the Abrams has increased in effectiveness against anti-tank weaponry. The fuel and ammo are kept in armored compartments to protect the crew in case of ammo cooking off.

The role of the M1 Abrams is an important part of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Stage said.

"It's very important," Stage said. "We bring the heaviest armor that the Army has to the battlefield."

Being trusted with one of the U.S. Army's heaviest pieces of equipment, the Soldiers of 4-64 don't disappoint when it comes to bringing heavy armor and big firepower to the battlefield. **A**



An M1 Abrams is silhouetted by the sun at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Oct. 31. Each one of these heavily armored tanks weighs more than 60 tons.

Third Army orders more life-savi

Story and photos by
Chuck Sprague
401st AFSB public affairs

In the on-going effort to save Soldier's lives, the Tank (Automotive) Armament Command's Forward Repair Activity at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, supporting the 401st Army Field Support Brigade, is filling another Third Army/U.S. Army Central order to fabricate an additional five Humvee Egress Assistance Trainers.

The HEAT's design and fabrication originated at the Kuwait FRA more than two years ago to help alleviate serious injury to warfighters involved in Humvee rollover accidents.

Mechanics and welders deployed

to the FRA from Anniston Army Depot, Anniston, Ala., and the Red River Army Depot, Texarkana, Texas, cut humvee cabs from battle damaged units and mounted them onto a rotating platform. They have built more than 30 Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer units for the Southwest Asia Theater, according to Randy Hughes, FRA foreman, deployed from the Anniston Army Depot.

All newly deployed troops arriving in Iraq and Afghanistan receive required training on the HEAT. Soldiers enter the cab with "full battle rattle," lock into their safety restraints, and take a wild ride as the cab is rotated 360 degrees.

They experience first hand many

of the sensations and pressure points associated with a vehicle roll-over as they hang upside down in life-saving restraints.

Soldiers learn how to safely unlock the safety restraints, exit the vehicle and assist others as they egress the humvee.

"The realistic training that the HEAT offers is absolutely saving lives. Experiencing what a vehicle roll-over feels like, combined with learning exactly what to do afterwards is very useful and beneficial training," said Lt. Col. Joe Caire, the brigade support operations officer managing the new project. "The FRA Team knows this. Their focus is always Soldier support." 



Wesley Wright, from Heflin, Ala., and Richard Kirkland, from Sylacauga, Ala., FRA mechanics, both deployed from the Anniston Army Depot, prepare to cut the cab off of a damaged Humvee at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. The Humvee will be part of a roll-over training device, teaching Soldiers how to safely exit the vehicle. Third Army/U.S. Army Central has ordered five more units from the FRA.

ing HEAT from FRA, 401st AFSB



HEATs fabricated earlier in the year for warfighter training await transit to forward operating bases throughout the Third Army/ U.S. Army Central area of responsibility.



Photo by Spc. Wes Landrum

A Soldier goes through the HEAT at the training site on Camp Buehring, Kuwait. The goal of the simulator is to teach service-members how to escape the Humvee should an accident occur. More HEATs are being delivered throughout Kuwait.

Going above and beyond call of duty...and Earth



Army sergeant first to receive Air Force Space Badge

*Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Carlos M. Burger II
Third Army/USARCENT public affairs*

FORT MCPHERSON, Ga. – When a person thinks of space operations, the first organizations that usually come to mind are the Air Force or NASA. Enlisted Soldiers are usually associated with forces on the ground and not the “final frontier.” One Third Army/U.S. Army Central sergeant, however, has blazed a trail right through the normal perceptions of Soldiers and into the history books.

Sgt. Daniel L. Holscher, a satellite systems operator and maintainer, became the first enlisted Soldier in the Army to receive the U.S. Air Force “Basic” Space Badge Oct. 19, at Fort McPherson, Ga.

“I didn’t even know (I got the badge) at first,” the Elizabethtown, Ky., native said. “I was supposed to get out the Army last August. If I had, obviously I wouldn’t have got it.”

Holscher currently works as a Satellite Control Operations noncommissioned officer for the Third Army space support element. Established last October, the SSE is the first element of its kind in the Army. He has been working space operations, which mostly consists of analyzing imagery, monitoring theater ballistic missile warning systems and coordinating space support requests with units in theater.

Holscher, however, had a little help in his history-making achievement. Col. Tom Quintero, chief of Third Army space



Sgt. Daniel L. Holscher

operations, was instrumental in assisting Holscher in obtaining the education he required to conduct space operations.

“Our shop sent Sergeant Holscher to the Space 200 and Space Operations Officer Qualification Course in Colorado Springs,” he said. “Both courses are requirements for the badge, but are normally reserved for Air Force personnel and Army officers.”

After Holscher received the training and worked in the designated position for 12 consecutive months, Quintero recommended that he be awarded the badge. U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command approved the request and they verified that he is the first enlisted Soldier in the Army to receive it.

Although Holscher is the most junior Soldier in his section, he will soon deploy to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, to serve as the USARCENT forward space

operations officer. Having already served two deployments to Iraq, Holscher said he looks forward to accomplishing the mission. His supervisors also said that he is best for the job.

“Holscher was hand picked to come to our section. He speaks smartly on what our section can and can’t do,” Quintero said.

“Holscher is as smart on space operations as any of the officers that work here and he has less experience,” added Maj. Darin Eades, Third Army space operations officer and Holscher’s supervisor. “His knowledge is respected and he is very approachable to the other Soldiers.”

After receiving the badge, Holscher hopes that other noncommissioned officers will follow in his footsteps and seek out the positions that will help them obtain the coveted badge.

“Getting the right job is critical,” Holscher said. “There are other NCOs who have been to the schools, but don’t work in the right slot. If I wasn’t working at Third Army, I wouldn’t have gotten it either.”

Since Third Army’s SSE is the prototype, other Army-level space support sections are sure to stand up, giving other noncommissioned officers a chance to step up and fill the required positions, Quintero said.

“Currently, there’s no doctrine or policy that mandates what we do. It’s up to the officers to do the right thing for their NCOs. Hopefully, we will go and make good decisions,” he added. 

Just One Question...

**"As a veteran, what does
Veteran's Day mean to you?"**



"It gives us all time to reflect upon all the Soldiers that have made the same sacrifices that we have."

Maj. Chris McIntyre
Springfield, Ill.
Maintenance officer
Task Force AVCRAD



"It's an opportunity to honor those who served our country."

Petty Officer 1st Class Edward A. Lombard
Salt Lake City
Command legalman
Customs Battalion Tango



"It means a lot to me. It is a chance to recognize the past and present veterans. It is good to feel appreciated."

Staff Sgt. Fred Payton
Chesapeake, Va.
Movement NCO
640th Sustainment Brigade



"It recognizes all the people who have served. There are a lot of American heroes who have served in the military."

Sgt. 1st Class Jerry Ross
Augusta, Ga.
CSSAMO NCOIC
1st Sustainment Command (Theater)



"It is an opportunity for all in the military to remember those that came before us. It is a reminder that our country supports us, no matter what."

Capt. LeeAnn Browning
Atlanta
Real estate property manager
Third Army/U.S. Army Central

Have the
COURAGE
to seek
HELP

"One suicide is one too many."

Kenneth O. Preston
Sergeant Major of the Army

Talk to your Chaplain or a
Behavioral Health Professional
or call Military OneSource
1-800-342-9647
www.militaryonesource.com

USA CHPR

Why I Staff Sgt. Mark Townley
G2 NCOIC
serve: 335th Signal Command



The Roanoke, Va., native explains why he chose to join the military.

"Ever since the 8th grade, I've always wanted to be in the military. I did it because of patriotism. I remember having an American flag on my wall when I was a kid."

What's haunting around Kuwait...



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jacob McDonald

Petty Officer 2nd Class Jennifer Marquette, Emergency Medical Facility–Kuwait, a native of Newport, Calif., dressed as Judy Jetson, poses outside the haunted house at the Halloween Party on Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Oct. 31.



Photo by Spc. Giancarlo Casem

Participants in the Run for Your Life Halloween 5K Fun Run/Walk line up at the starting line at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Oct. 30.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jacob McDonald

Chief Warrant Officer Yrume Fernandez, 54th Signal Battalion, a native of Hialeah, Fla., dressed as Perseus, and Capt. Rosana Montanez, 228th Signal Company, a native of San Juan, Puerto Rico, dressed as Medusa, play a ring toss game at the Halloween Party and haunted house on Camp Arifjan, Oct. 31.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jacob McDonald

Capt. Joe Smith Jr., Third Army/U.S. Army Central, a native of Tampa, Fla., dressed as a dead pirate, screams at the crowd during a costume contest at the Halloween party and haunted house on Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Oct. 31.