

# DV

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

December 26, 2007



## Passing the Colors

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## On the cover

*Third Army/U.S. Army Central subordinate units render their salute during the playing of the National Anthem during the rehearsal of the Third Army/USARCENT change of command ceremony Dec. 18 on Camp Arifjan. The ceremony, held later that evening, resulted in Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb relinquishing his command to Lt. Gen. James J. Lovelace. Lovelace arrives from Washington, D.C., where he was the chief of staff for G3/5/7. Whitcomb will serve as the Army inspector general in Washington, D.C.*

*Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Reeba Critser*

# Opening salvo from the CG

My name is LTG Jim Lovelace. First, let me say that it is a privilege to be a Soldier in the United States Army and, as importantly, an honor to serve as the Commanding General of Third Army / U.S. Army Central and especially to be your commander.

I have been absolutely impressed by what I have seen of this organization...we all know, however, that we can never simply rest on our laurels.

The command's focus will be: **Do the mission...protect the force.**

We will:

□ **Take care of Families**-The strength of Third Army / U.S.

ARCENT relies significantly on the strength of our Families. We formalized this long-recognized fact recently in signing the Army Family Covenant. We will sustain our Third Army Soldiers, Families, and civilians.

□ **Succeed in the current conflict**-We support the forces deploying into Afghanistan and Iraq...while also preparing our own formations for the conflict.

□ **Reset our units and rebuild readiness**-Continue execution of Title X support and services in theater...as well as uninterrupted support to the Combined, Joint, Operating Area.

□ **Continue to transform**-This command is at the forefront of Army Transformation. We'll grow the operational capacity of Third Army / U.S. ARCENT headquarters while capitalizing on the capabilities of the assigned transformed units.

The success of Third Army / U.S. ARCENT will result from teamwork. None of us can do it by ourselves. I will depend heavily on the leaders of this great organization. I'll provide strategic direction for the command and expect leaders to execute in accordance with the mission, intent, and concept of operations.

I am passionate about the importance of leaders and leader development...and the impact they can make on an organization. Foremost, **everyone in this organization is a leader**, regardless of rank. Leaders make the

right things happen each day; leaders make the organization and themselves better. Whatever you do, from wherever you are, make a difference...and be proud of what you do. **Be**

**a Soldier...act like a Soldier... look like a Soldier. Remain ever mentally, physically, and morally ready.**

**NCOs are the backbone of this organization.** The NCO Creed is such a powerful document and its message is potent:

No one is more professional than I...

Competence is my watchword.

Uppermost in my mind...is the accomplishment of my mission

and the welfare of my Soldiers.

To be the "Backbone of the Army" and Third Army / U.S. ARCENT, NCOs must live this creed on a daily basis.

The Army has a set of values ... values we cultivate in our ranks ... values we share as an organization ... values which are important to our very existence: **Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage.** The other military services have their own sets of formal values, as do our coalition partners. To be part of the best military in the world-and each and every one of us inherently requires embracing our respective service values.

We are all part of a great team...all professionals doing the right thing. We will accomplish the mission and protect the force...it's about being a part of the finest military in the world...whether you are a Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine, Coast Guardsman, military civilian, or contractor. Our country is asking a lot of us and our Families...and I know we will deliver.

Again, it's my privilege to be a part of this outstanding team. I look forward to meeting you in the days ahead.

Patton's Own!

*LTG Jim Lovelace*

—Third, Always First



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# 7th Chem. trains for turmoil

Story and photo by  
Staff Sgt. Anishka Calder  
1st TSC Public Affairs

Soldiers from the 7th Chemical Company, who are deployed at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, took time out of their regular schedule to hone their urban warfare tactics during Military Operations on Urban Terrain training at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Dec. 4.

“This training entails close quarters marksmanship qualification and four-man stacks on clearing multiple rooms,” said Capt. Christopher Wei, the platoon leader for 3rd Platoon, 7th Chemical Company, and the officer in charge of the training. “It is basically preparing us (in) the event that we were to encounter such built up areas in Iraq while conducting our missions.”

During the training, the Soldiers were taught how to clear rooms in a swift, safe manner while at the same time maintaining muzzle-awareness and keeping in mind the safety of their buddy to the left and right. They went through dry runs before ultimately going through the highlight of the course which was clearing a room in four-man stacks with live ammunition.

The training is geared towards mak-

ing the Soldiers aware of every possible scenario they may face in close quarters combat and how to make the best of each situation.

“The Soldiers are learning a lot about techniques, tactics and procedures for clearing rooms,” said Wei. “This training is very realistic. We use live rounds, so safety is key while going through this training.

The training serves as a refresher for the Soldiers and is also a means to build camaraderie and teamwork, which are essential in the success of their daily missions.

“This training keeps us battle-focused,” said Wei. “We hope to gain a more technical understanding of room clearing and close quarters battle. It just enhances what we learned from the States. It is a confidence builder for us and helps us with team building ... it definitely boosts our morale.”


Sgt. 1st Class Harold Flory, the platoon sergeant for 3rd platoon, 7th Chemical Company, agreed on the importance of this training for Soldier development.

“This training enforces the Warrior tasks and drills that the Soldiers need to have, to the point where they can do it on a daily basis, and continue to build on that foundation of skills and training that they already have,” Flory said.

The Soldiers of the 7th Chem. Co., who are out of Fort Polk, La., have been deployed for over six months and already have over 220 combat missions, or combat logistics patrols, and have driven around 1.8 million miles since their deployment. The more than 10 hours of training that they receive at the MOUT site prepares them for the unexpected as they drive back and forth on the dangerous roads of Iraq.

The training also builds the leadership of the younger Soldiers who are preparing to lead other Soldiers on similar missions. It helps them to think quickly and to stick with the decisions that they make for their team, and to build each member of the team’s confidence, said Sgt. Jay Jordan, a chemical operations supervisor for 7th Chem. Co.

Wei stressed the importance of Soldiers, especially those who travel on the Iraqi roads, getting this training, regardless of their mission in support of the war on terrorism.

“Everybody should be able to come out here and do this type of training,” said Wei. “We as a chemical company do this type of training even though it’s usually reserved for the infantry-type or combat arms units. All Soldiers should have a basic knowledge of this kind of training, it makes the Soldier more well-rounded.” 



Soldiers from the 7th Chem. Co., out of Fort Polk, La., train in Military Operations on Urban Terrain training at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Dec. 4. The Soldiers are stationed at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait and are deployed in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.



*Soldiers simulate rescuing a Marine from a burning HMMWV during the Warrior Task Challenge competition at Camp Virginia, Kuwait, Dec. 15.*

## Going back to the basics

*Story and photos by  
Staff Sgt. Anishka Calder  
1st TSC Public Affairs*

Servicemembers deployed to Kuwait in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom were tested on their knowledge of basic soldiering skills during the Area Support Group “Warrior Task Challenge” competition at Camp Virginia, Kuwait, Dec. 15.

The competition was the mas-  
termind of Soldiers assigned to the 485th Chemical Battalion, a Reserve unit out of Wilmington, Del., who are deployed to Camp Virginia. The intent of the challenge was to build esprit de corps among service members in Kuwait and to maintain common task skills.

“We did it [the challenge] as a unit internally before we deployed, but it was very small and thrown together,” said 2nd Lt. Robert C. Heffron, an assistant contracting of-

ficer representative from the 485th Chemical Battalion, and the officer in charge of the event. “It sparked our interest before we left that we wanted to do it here...It’s something to get the Soldiers’ minds off being here, especially during the holiday season.”

The challenge saw 10 three-man teams competing at nine stations, which were designed after subject areas in the Soldier’s Manual of Common Tasks, skill level one. The participants were tested physically



*Soldiers plot points on a map during the land navigation portion of the Warrior Task Challenge at Camp Virginia, Dec. 15.*

and mentally on each task at the stations. A last station, consisting of a board of senior noncommissioned officers, was geared towards professional development, and tested the participants on current affairs and common military knowledge.

Each team comprised of service members who were sergeant and below in rank, with no more than two sergeants per team. The participants were required to move swiftly and safely from each station in the shortest time possible, without injuring themselves or damaging their equipment.

“If anything, this competition helped me to go over basic infantryman skills that you need to retain in order to be a good infantryman,” said Spc. Luke Weston, an infantryman assigned to the 1st Battalion, 160th Infantry Regiment, of the California National Guard. “It helped me remember some of the stuff that I haven’t done in a long time. When I was in my active duty time, I got my Expert Infantryman’s Badge, so it kind of reminded me a little bit of the EIB competition. It’s good to just go through all that stuff and get a feel for it again.”

The 6.2-kilometer course was a refresher for some of the participants, but for others, the experience was more than just going over basic skills, it was a challenge that they rose up to.

“The competition was pretty realistic and a bit challenging,” said Petty Officer 3rd Class Carolina Forero, an engineering aide from the Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 40 out of Port Hueneme, Calif. and a native of Miami, Fla. “Carrying all the gear and going from



**Soldiers take cover behind a small berm after receiving indirect fire during the Warrior Task Challenge competition. Each team consisted of three participants who were tested on their knowledge of basic soldiering skills.**

one station to the next was the most challenging part of the competition for me, it was definitely a workout. This competition was very organized. It was great that they brought personnel from different bases to come together for this competition and hopefully they keep doing these competitions.”

Moving casualties to cover while giving suppressing fire and finding objects to care for the casualties was another challenge throughout the competition.

“It was a great challenge that brought the teams together, moving and communicating to get the mission accomplished,” said Spc. Jesus Espinoza, an indirect infantryman assigned to 1st Bn., 160th Inf. Regt.

The tasks that the participants were tested on included first aid, land navigation, react to indirect fire, communication, written tests including U.S. military and coalition rank structures commonly found in Area Support Group - Kuwait, and disassembling and assembling the M-249 machine gun, the M-16 series rifle and the M-9 pistol.

The intent is to have the competition at Camp Virginia every


three or four months, changing up the events and the number of the events. Future participants are advised to study the Soldier’s Manual of Common Tasks, skill level one, and be prepared for more intense competitions, said Heffron, a native of Herndon, Va.

After the nine-hour long competition, each participant was awarded a certificate of achievement for their efforts, and first, second and third place teams were given plaques for their achievement.

“I enjoyed the event,” said Sgt. Zachery Bailey, a combat medic assigned to the 1st Bn., 160th Inf. Regt., and a native of Urbana, Ill. “It’s nice to be in an environment where we can get together with other branches of the military. We’re all in this fight together, and even though we are competing, we’re still on the same wave length in terms of what our goals are.”

Each participant left the event with not only sore muscles and aching feet, but with the reminder that basic soldiering skills are an integral part of survival on the battlefield.

“This competition exceeded my

expectations. It was an excellent thing for everyone to do,” said Heffron. “The positive feedback was enormous from teams coming in and finishing the event. At the end, we made sure that the teams gave us a good after action review with both positive and negative comments so that we will be able to adjust fire for the next event.” 



**Soldiers don their mask on the command of “gas, gas, gas” during the Warrior Task Challenge competition at Camp Virginia, Dec. 15. This is one of nine scenarios in the nine-hour competition that the participants were tested on.**



**Lt. Gen. James J. Lovelace passes the Third Army flag to Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb at the Third Army/U.S. Army Central change of command ceremony.**

**The Third Army/U.S. Army Central color guard renders honors during the Third Army/USARCENT change of command ceremony.**

## *Patton's own' welcomes new commander*

*Photo by GunnerySgt. Christopher Cox*

**By Staff Sgt. Jacob A. McDonald  
Desert Voice NCOIC**

Patton's Own said farewell to Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb today in a change of command ceremony on Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, when he relinquished command of Third



*Petty Officer 1st Class Matthew Magee*

**Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb speaks at the Third Army/U.S. Army Central change of command ceremony Dec. 18.**

Army/U.S. Army Central to Lt. Gen. James J. Lovelace.

After the passing of the colors Adm. William J. Fallon, commander, U.S. Central Command, spoke to the audience at Camp Arifjan and to the Family members and staff assembled in Fort McPherson, Ga., watching via a live satellite feed.

"I wanted the opportunity to be here in person to let you know how important this command is to me personally, but most importantly to our country and the effort that we have underway," Fallon said. "This is really about two things, one to let all those present and observing know there has been a change of leadership, but just as importantly to let them know the mission will continue to carry on in the capable hands of Jim Lovelace."

Fallon then thanked Whitcomb for his service, support, vision, direction and leadership in accomplishing the Third Army mission in the Central Command area of operations. Fallon also welcomed Lovelace and expressed his confidence in the

incoming commander's abilities and experience.

Upon the conclusion of Fallon's remarks, Gen. George W. Casey Jr., Army chief of staff, commented on the capabilities of the outgoing and incoming commanders. He said both commanders are superb leaders who have done, and continue to do great things. He then spoke to the Soldiers of Third Army, thanking them for their service.

"You continue to reflect the best of our nation," Casey said. "Your performance has been tremendous as you and your fellow Soldiers continue to make a difference in our fight against terror."

In his remarks, Whitcomb expressed thanks to his staff, the Third Army Soldiers, civilians and local dignitaries he worked with during his tenure as the Third Army commander. Whitcomb also spoke some words in Arabic to the Kuwaiti leadership in attendance at the ceremony.

"I am not going to recount troops, trucks and trips, because for most people it really is inconceivable what



Photo by Sgt. Edward Siguenza  
**Command Sgt. Maj. Frank**  
**and ceremony.**

ors to the commanding



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Reeba Critser  
**Lt. Gen. James J. Lovelace, commanding general of Third Army/U.S. Army Central, gives his remarks to the audience after the command of Third Army was passed to him from Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb.**

this nation can do, the United States of America, this military and certainly what Third Army and ARCENT has done,” Whitcomb said.

Speaking to the troops he expressed his appreciation of their service while under his command.

“I did not want combat commanders in Iraq or Afghanistan to divert their attention to our business,” Whitcomb said. “Day in and day out you met that objective and more. Today we ask a great deal from our men and women. They are our nation’s boots on the ground making sure our national policies, and our coalition and regional interests and policies can be executed. You have delivered.

“You serve simply because your nation asked,” he continued. “You serve in hot wars, in cold wars, in places people cannot even spell or find on a map. And while you serve, your Family sacrifices; they mend the broken bones, broken cars and broken promises while you stand guard.”

Lovelace then spoke about his

feelings on joining Third Army as its commander.

“There is no greater honor than the privilege to command America’s sons and daughters,” Lovelace said adding that this command would continue to remain, “Third, Always First.”

Lovelace is a native of Richmond, Va. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in field artillery upon graduation from the United States Military Academy in 1970. He holds advanced degrees from Indiana University, Salve Regina College and the U.S. Naval War College.

Lovelace has commanded field artillery units at all levels from battery through division and also served as commanding general, Joint Task Force 6, Fort Bliss, Texas, and commanding general, U.S. Army Alaska. His most recent assignments include director of the Army staff and deputy chief of staff of Army G-3/5/7, Washington, D.C.

Lovelace and his wife Gail have three sons: Michael, Robert and Jeffrey; three daughters-in-law: Caro-

lyn, Amber and Shanann; and two grandsons, Drew and Judd.

Whitcomb will be the inspector general for the Army in Washington D.C. **A**



Photo by GunnerySgt. Christopher Cox  
**Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb passes the Third Army colors to the Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey Jr. during the Third Army/U.S. Army Central change of command at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Dec. 18.**

Background photo by Sgt. Edward Siguenza

# Army announces stationing decisions

Story by Maj. Tom McCuin  
Office of the Chief of Public  
Affairs

The U.S. Army announced Dec. 19 unit stationing decisions to support the president's plan to grow the Army by 74,200 Soldiers across all three Army components.

This growth includes the stationing of six new infantry brigade combat teams, eight support brigades in the active component, and associated growth in smaller combat support and combat service support units required to complement the U.S. Army's overall force-structure growth.

The foundation for this stationing plan is implementation of Base Realignment and Closure-directed realignments.

This plan relocates the 1st Armored Division from Germany to Fort Bliss Texas, and the 1st Infantry Division from Germany to Fort Riley, Kan., and Fort Knox, Ky., by September 2011.

The plan extends brigade combat team capabilities in the European command for an additional two years through the activation of two brigade combat teams in Germany in 2008 and 2010.

This supports near-term theater security needs, and reduces stress and turbulence on Soldiers and Families by allowing needed time for construction to support transformation, BRAC realignments and grow the Army stationing.

The Army currently has 42 active component brigade combat teams. Complying with the Record of Decision for the Army's Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, the Army will grow six infantry brigade combat teams for a total of 48.

The Army will retain one infantry brigade combat team at Fort Carson, Colo., as the 43rd Brigade Combat Team (fiscal year 2008); activating



Courtesy photo

**Various units across the Army will be relocated to support the President's plan to grow the Army by 74,200 Soldiers.**

the 44th Brigade Combat Team at Fort Bliss, Texas (fiscal year 2009); converting one heavy brigade combat team to an infantry brigade combat team at Fort Stewart, Ga. (fiscal year 2010); and growing three infantry brigade combat teams (fiscal year 2011), one each at Fort Stewart (46th BCT), Fort Carson (47th BCT), and Fort Bliss, Texas (48th BCT).

The two brigade combat teams stationed in Germany for two years will relocate in fiscal year 2012 and 2013 respectively.

These units tentatively are to go to Fort Bliss and White Sands Missile Range, N.M.

The Army will also activate eight active component support brigades and restation two others as part of rebalancing the force at the following locations:

In fiscal year 08, an air defense artillery brigade headquarters activates at Fort Hood, Texas, and an engineer brigade headquarters activates at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.


In fiscal year 2009, a maneuver enhancement brigade activates at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo

In fiscal year 2010 a fires brigade activates at Fort Bliss and a maneuver enhancement brigade will be restationed to Fort Richardson, Alaska, pending completion of supplemental environmental analysis in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act

In fiscal year 2011, an expeditionary sustainment command headquarters activates at Fort Lewis, Wash., and a sustainment brigade activates at Fort Hood

In fiscal year 2013, a military police brigade will be retained at Schofield Barracks; a battlefield surveillance brigade activates at Fort Polk, La.; and a maneuver enhancement brigade will be restationed to Fort Drum, N.Y.

To support these six infantry brigade combat teams and eight support brigades, the Army simultaneously is announcing the stationing of approximately 30,000 Soldiers in combat support and combat service support units throughout the United States as well as various overseas locations

The details are contained in a report directed by the Fiscal Year 2007 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations' Act requiring the secretary of Defense to submit a stationing plan to support Army growth. 



Photos by Pfc. Christopher T. Grammer

**Kid Rock plays an acoustic guitar in front of an audience of more than 6,000 servicemembers during the CJCS USO Holiday Troop Visit at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Dec. 17. The show brought entertainment to troops who are deployed for the holidays.**

# Holiday Troop Visit entertains all

Story by Maj. Michele R. Satak  
Third Army Public Affairs Office

The United Service Organizations began their Holiday Troop Visit Tour Dec. 17 by visiting various camps in Kuwait.

Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb, Then Third Army/U.S. Army Central command-

ing general, introduced Adm. Michael G. Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who opened the show on Arifjan to an enthusiastic crowd of more than 6,000 servicemembers.

Mullen introduced actor Robin Williams, seven-time Tour-de-France winner Lance Armstrong, musician Kid Rock, comedian Lewis Black and Miss USA Rachel Smith.

"You are all terrific, terrific people ... thanks for what you are doing," Mullen said. "Enjoy the show, it will be a great one. God bless you and your Families."

In addition to the variety show, troops dined with the performers. The performers shared their heartfelt gratitude and thanks for the servicemembers' selfless service and sacrifices to the nation.

"It was great," Sgt. Sophia Murphy, a liaison officer with Task Force 1146, said about the show. "It broke up the monotony and made sure everybody had something special to do for the holidays."

Williams, an Academy Award-winning actor and comedian, is on his fourth USO tour. While thanking the troops Retreat sounded and the crowd responded by coming to attention and rendering honors to the American flag. Williams and the audience fell silent. Williams, having never witnessed the lowering of the flag on a military installation later stated "at that moment it was so

surreal."


Miss USA Rachael Smith, the daughter of former Soldiers, is no stranger to the military. She was born on a U.S. Army base in Panama. As troops cheered and applauded she said, "thank you ... and I love all of you!"

Stealing the show, Kid Rock displayed passion and charisma in each song he performed. He enthralled the audience with his songs of classic and modern rock and roll. Later he commented that the best part of the tour was "just to see the guys and girls faces."

Armstrong praised the troops by comparing them to heroes. "Interesting thing about the word hero, nobody can claim to be a hero, you have to be called a hero or told you are a hero," he said.

"I can speak for everybody here on this trip that we truly look around and we are humbled by your bravery and honored to be in your presence," Armstrong said. "We are just athletes and entertainers ... please accept our gratitude and know that y'all are heroes - not us - y'all."

Grammy Award-winning comedian, actor and author Lewis Black had servicemembers rolling with laughter. Black closed his performance by praising the audience.

"It's been a privilege, pleasure, honor to perform for you," Black said. "You are the best. Thank you for what you do." 



**Miss USA Rachael Smith waves to the crowd of servicemembers during the USO Holiday Troop Visit.**

# Lending Soldiers a helping hand

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

There is an old saying that you never get a second chance to make a first impression. However, don't tell that to Staff Sgt. Michael Noer, because he'll prove you wrong.

Noer, a chaplain's assistant with the 243rd Quartermaster Battalion, has seen the upside and downside of life. A foster child, along with his biological younger sister, Noer was shuffled from foster home to foster home. The moving, Noer said, helped him develop an attitude about life at an early age. That attitude was to not quit in anything. That's not the only thing he had to develop.

"We got uprooted seven or eight different times so you learn to take care of yourself. You learn to go get whatever you want," Noer said. "I had a biological little sister in tow so I became a parent in my mind as well."

Noer said not knowing how long they would be in one place was the toughest. As a child, he recalled, if you were moved, the thinking was "they don't want me."

"In foster care you're living with Joe's family and all of a sudden you come home from school one day and they pick you up and move you to Matt's Family," Noer said. "It is never explained to you why you're moving. You go through your whole life being told you're not wanted. And you fight for acceptance."

When he was 13, Noer and his sister were adopted by a minister. Being adopted, however, did not change his attitude toward life, it just altered it.

"I still thought the same – if you want it, go get it," he said. "Now it was use God – pray to him, keep him on your side, and the goal will be easier to attain."

Noer joined the U.S. Army at the age of 18 and was sent to Germany as his first duty station. As a young man filled with chaos and confusion, Germany was the worst place for him to go at that point in his life, Noer said.

"I was fighting the biological family demons," the sergeant said. "My mother was an alcoholic. The legal drinking age was 18 in Germany."

Noer recalled that the big thing was to drown your problems in alcohol. If it had not been for several individuals, Noer



**Staff Sgt. Michael Noer (right), seen here with Chaplain (Maj. Gen.) Douglas Carver, Army chief of chaplains, uses experiences from his past to help the Soldiers of Camp Arifjan overcome their problems while deployed.**

said, there's no telling where his life might have ended up.

"Sergeant Phillip Stark and Sergerant First Class Leticia Wright were both instrumental in helping me," Noer said. "They told me I was a good Soldier and could go far, but I could not do what everyone else was doing. It will come back to bite you. They knew what to say, 'Don't go to the club with the boys. Stay here and let's play basketball. You love basketball.' They gave a little bit of their extra time."

After finishing his initial enlistment, Noer left the Army. Noer said there were a number of reasons for leaving but he points to one event that ultimately foreshadowed his return to the military.

"In 1994, I lost a buddy to suicide," Noer said. "There was no education. There was no chaplain. If there was one, we did not know who he was. Chaplain's assistants were non-existent. When we really needed them in 1994, we did not have them. That's the reason I came back. There's a war going on. The suicide rate is outrageous and people need someone to talk to."

Noer promised himself that if he could come back into the military, he would help people.

"I came back to Christ in 2000 and said if I can be a help to anybody, I'm going to do it," he said. "I told them I would only come back in if I could be a chaplain's assistant to help Soldiers."

Col. Darletta Stowers, commander for the 243rd Quartermaster Battalion, said

Noer, an individual augmentee, has been a positive influence to the younger Soldiers in the unit.

"With the fact that we are away from our Families and the different things that can go on in the States, also with the holidays coming up, it has an impact on the Soldiers," she said. "We have to be there for one another, not as formal as a counseling but just someone to listen."


Stowers said it takes a while for an augmentee to fully integrate within a unit. However, she said, Noer has fit right in with her unit.

"Staff Sergeant Noer has come in and gelled with our unit," she said. "The Soldiers accepted him and respect him. They go to him."

Stowers said she has grown to be reliant on Noer. She said his hard-work ethic has put her at ease.

"There's nothing that I'll ask him for that I don't get," Stowers said. "He keeps me informed of everything that's going on. I could not have asked for a better chaplain's assistant than what I have now."

Noer said that as a chaplain's assistant, people are afraid to talk to him but he said his job is just like that of a squad leader.

"Our role is an education piece. I can educate the squad leaders about the things that keep their Soldiers plugged in," he said. "Soldiers come in needing someone to talk to. You sit down and listen to them. But no matter what their problem is, you took time to listen to them. They leave thinking you just performed brain surgery and you didn't do a darn thing." 

# Army safety program changes

Story by Chief Warrant Officer Will Chance  
Third Army/U.S. Army Central Safety Office

Many changes have taken place in the U.S. Army's safety program over the past several months. Most notably is the latest revision of Army Regulation 385-10, "The Army Safety Program," dated Aug. 23.

This change became known as the "Super Regulation" because it revised and merged so many of the regulations in the safety series. In concert with the Army's transformation, the safety program had to transform to keep pace with the requirements of our modern Army. Since we all have a vested interest in safety, each Soldier and leader must embrace this transformation.

There are many new requirements which must be complied with and many of the proven existing standards now reside under another title which can be confusing and overwhelming when one tries to make sense of it all.

Many of the technical requirements for developing management and control processes for operations of the superseded regulations are now prescribed in DA Pamphlets such as DA PAM 385-90, The Army Aviation Accident Prevention Program; DA PAM 385-24, The Army Radiation Safety Program; DA PAM 385-30, Mishap Risk Management. DA PAM 385-10 prescribes many safety functions required by AR 385-10 and makes it easier to understand how to implement and manage a safety program.

Leaders at all levels should be familiar with these processes. Along with organizational standing operating procedures to prescribe and integrate unique safety control measures into operational procedures, these processes will improve the organization's ability to accomplish its mission without incurring unnecessary risk of accidents resulting in injury to personnel or damage to equipment.

The ultimate goal of a the Army safety program is to preserve the fighting force. The re-structured AR 385-10 and associated publications are the foundation for that program.

## Why I serve: Sgt. Justino Torres III Marine Central Command Armorer



The San Juan, Texas native explains why he chose to join the military.

**"I felt a sense to belong to a special and elite fighting force and to travel to different places and see things that I could not see as a civilian."**

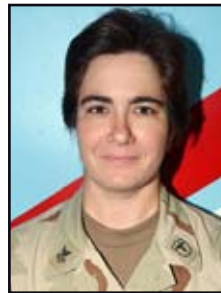
## Just One Question...

**"What is your favorite memory of 2007?"**



**"My son being born on May 11."**

Capt. William Delucchi  
Army Corps of Engineers  
Engineer  
San Jose, Calif.



**"My daughter's first birthday."**

Petty Officer 1st Class Sarah Ferguson  
Navy Environmental Preventive Medicine Unit  
Food and water inspector  
Cleveland, Ohio



**"Deploying over here."**

Maj. Peter Hjellming  
1st Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division,  
Brigade EWO  
Talil, Iraq



**"Knowing I only have four months left to go."**

Petty Officer 2nd Class LaTonya Kelly  
Theater Field Confinement Facility  
Prisoner Service Branch  
Columbia, S.C.



**"Mobilizing through Fort Bragg (N.C.)."**

Sgt. 1st Class Clarence Renfro  
640th Sustainment Brigade  
Facility management office  
Akins, Okla.

# Christmas around Kuwait...



Photo by Master Sgt. Michele R. Hammonds

**Soldiers presented Knowlton Award and Medallion for excellence in military intelligence to Warrant Officer Lamesha Craft (left), analysis and production chief for military intelligence, (G-2) and Master Sgt. Quintina M. Donald, security manager and physical security noncommissioned officer for G-2, received the recognition during an awards presentation Dec. 22, in Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.**



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jacob A. McDonald

**Sgt. Janaya Prokupek and Spc. Sandra Lugo-Bobe, with Third Army/U.S. Army Central G-6 decorate a gingerbread Christmas tree in preparation for the U.S. Army Central Special Troops Battalion's Holiday Party at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Dec. 20.**



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jacob A. McDonald

**Soldiers from Army Reserve and National Guard Affairs sing their part of the song "12 Days of Christmas" during the Special Troops Battalion's Holiday Party at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Dec. 20. Each section at U.S. Army Central had to fill in their own rendition to the song.**