

# DV

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

January 9, 2008



Training for **Gas! Gas! Gas!**

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Baseball hero swings through international barriers with children in Kuwait.

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## On the cover

*A security force member assists Petty Officer 2nd Class Juan J. Sanchez with the proper decontamination of his protective mask during decontamination training at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Dec. 27. 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](mailto:desertvoice@arifjan.arcent.army.mil).

# Safety during winter months

Even though the holiday season is over, we send our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to the men and women who are serving around the world and to their Families. Each of you is making the sacrifice to defend our Nation and our way of life,

especially those brave Soldiers and civilians currently deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. Thank you.

Historically, during the holidays, the Army loses approximately 15 to 20 Soldiers to preventable and devastating accidents.

With the exception of combat fatalities, POV accidents continue to be the number one area in which we lose Soldiers. Alcohol is a major contributor to vehicle accidents.

Across America, alcohol related accidents kill 71 people and injure 2,000 every day. That's over 25,000 deaths per year.

We ask each of you take time to carefully plan your activities and remain mindful of the hazards that routinely accompany holiday



**Gen. George W. Casey Jr.**  
**U.S. Army Chief of Staff**

daily missions.

Recognize the special hazards associated with the changing weather and take the precautions necessary to protect yourself and your Family. We want each and every member of our Army team to return safely to their

formations after this holiday break.

Deployed members of the Army team may face different hazards, and they also must remain vigilant and safe.

We encourage leaders at every level to employ tested and proven accident preventive measures to protect our servicemembers, civilians, and Family members. Leaders and supervisors must address each member of their command to increase awareness as individuals prepare their travel plans.

The Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center stands ready to provide additional accident prevention information and tools to assist you in this effort at <https://crc.army.mil>.

Army safe is Army Strong.

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# Sailor breaks borders with baseball

Story and photos by  
Staff Sgt. Jacob A. McDonald  
Desert Voice staff writer

A deployed Navy Reservist and baseball pitcher shared his knowledge and love of the game with the Kuwait Little League during a visit to their ball field in the South Surra area of Kuwait City, Dec. 7.

With a name like Clemente Sosa baseball is almost an assumption. Sosa is currently deployed as an investigator at the Camp Arifjan Provost Marshal's Office. The opportunity to teach the little leaguers presented itself through a contractor who works with the league. Sosa said he did not know they had baseball in Kuwait but jumped at the opportunity to work with the children by providing a one-day pitching clinic.

"It's a great thing that we have this kind of tie with the Kuwaitis, that we can know each other," Sosa said. "They can know us and we can know them. They have a lot of talent. It is good to teach. It takes me way back."

Growing up in New York City, Sosa said baseball was a part of his life. America's pastime took him out of Manhattan and to the Dominican Republic where the left-handed hurler played for the New York Mets farm team. After an injury took him off the team, he moved on and moved back to New York. He still plays today in work and local leagues, but the father of five now works as a detective for the New York City Police Department in homicide when not deployed with his Navy Reserve unit.

"Growing up in Manhattan and



Baseball player Clemente Sosa watches a Kuwait Little League player pitch during his visit to their ball field in the South Surra area of Kuwait City, Dec. 7.

Harlem we had a bunch of games in Central Park, with tons of kids. In the United States and especially New York, baseball is big. Being out here with these kids is awesome."

While not having the same number of participants as the New York youth teams the Kuwait Little League now boasts more than 120 players between 9 and 11 years old, since its birth in 1980.

As he began his training with the little league pitchers Sosa gathered the young men around him on the mound and said the number one thing they need to do is finish school and get an education. He then ran them through an abbreviated version of a spring training camp. As the training continued, Sosa taught the players about balance and how to throw a good pitch.

"Every country is the same, the kids are the same," Sosa said. "They have a passion for the game just like in the Dominican Republic and the United

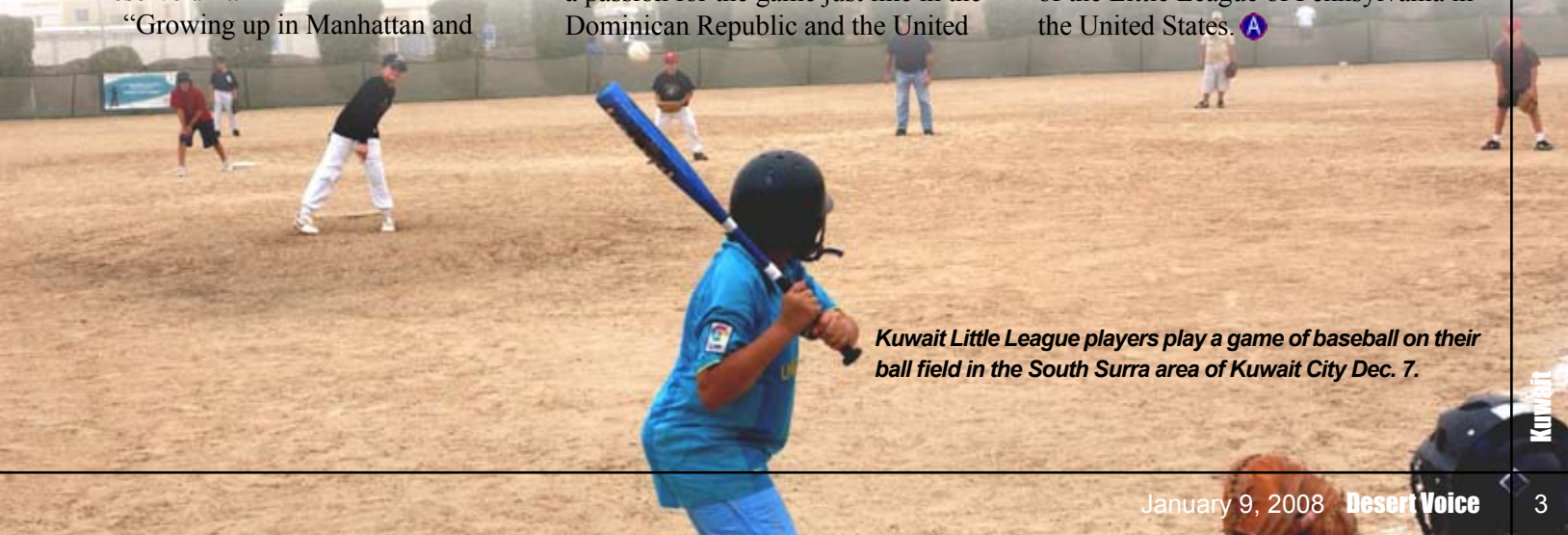
States."

According to Sulaiman Almugh-rabi, one of the founders of the Little League in Kuwait, former president of the Kuwait Little League and currently an umpire and coach, this was a great opportunity for the young players.

"It's really a pleasure to have a player here in Kuwait," he said. "It is really great for the kids to meet a player from the (United) States in Kuwait. They have a really great time. They are taking pictures. A lot of them were really surprised to have someone from the States watching them playing and getting involved with them.

"This is building a stronger relationship. We are working hard for the children of our community. We teach them not only the sport of baseball, but also teamwork and to be a good citizen."

Almughrabi said the Kuwait Little League is organized under the auspices of the Little League of Pennsylvania in the United States. **A**



Kuwait Little League players play a game of baseball on their ball field in the South Surra area of Kuwait City Dec. 7.

# Food inspectors ensure quality

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

The forks on the forklift drop and a pallet full of boxes hits the ground with a loud thump. The pallet is pushed into a side room and the doors leading from the 18,000 square foot warehouse close. Then Soldiers from the 422nd Medical Detachment–Veterinary Services, ripped into the boxes of Unitized Group Rations.

The 422nd Medical Detachment–Veterinary Services is a Reserve unit out of Rockville, Md. Their job is to ensure that food served to the servicemembers and civilians assigned to the U.S. Central Command and Third Army/U.S. Army Central areas of responsibility conforms to Department of Defense safety standards.

The Soldiers go through a rigorous process of checking these food items which not only come from the United States, but also from the local economy and surrounding countries.

These foods are placed into three categories: government furnished materials, such as energy bars and drinks; operational rations, which include UGRs, Meals Ready-to-Eat, Halal and Kosher meals; and prime vendor or local market-ready items such as fresh fruits and vegetables, said Staff Sgt. Linwood D. Pender, the noncommissioned officer-in-charge of food inspections.

“Basically all these fruits and vegetables come from different regions depending on the growing season,” Pender said. “The Army has purchase specifications for the contracts of those fruits and vegetables, as well as the meats and operational rations. It’s part of our job to ensure that the companies or vendors that are providing these materials, are providing (what) the contracts state. From time to time we also go out and do audits at the vendors who we purchase from, to



**Soldiers assigned to the 422nd Medical Detachment–Veterinary Services, a reserve unit out of Rockville, Md., are sending them out to be consumed by servicemembers. The Soldiers are part of a team whose job is to ensure that the food served to servicemembers is of optimum quality and conforms to Department of Defense safety standards.**

ensure that those who are producing products conform to military regulations, and that those who are storing products do so properly.”

Each time the warehouse receives an item in its stock, the civilian workers there have to annotate what the item is and its expiration date.

“As those items become closer to their expiration date, especially if they are 36 days or less, we take a look at these products to possibly extend these products for another three or six months,” said Pender, a native of Laurel, Md.

The reason for the extension is to make sure the items have ample time to make it to their destination and be stored at the dining facility, and serving them to the Soldiers, Pender

said.

The six-man team examines between \$500,000 to over a \$1 million worth of food products on a weekly basis, Pender said. While an important aspect of the food inspectors’ job is to ensure that the Soldiers are given quality meals, one of the most important reasons for inspecting the food supply is ensuring the safety of those who consume it.

“I feel like I pull security within the transport of the food to make sure that from the time it leaves the factory or the storage area and goes out to the troops, that it’s not tampered with,” Pender said. “We have to make sure that the safety of the Soldiers or their mission is not jeopardized. Tampering or poisoning a truck load of food does

# Quality food goes to quality troops



*Spc. Victor Rivera, a native of Rockville, Md., inspects boxes of food before they are sealed and sent back to the warehouse to be re-issued. Both Soldiers are veterinary food inspection specialists assigned to the 422nd Medical Detachment-Veterinary Services, a Reserve unit out of Rockville, Md.*



*Spc. Sohini Mukherjee, a native of Gaithersburg, Md., stamps the seal of approval on a box of rations, while Spc. Victor Rivera, a native of Chesapeake, Md., tapes up a box of food he finished inspecting. Both Soldiers are veterinary food inspection specialists assigned to the 422nd Medical Detachment-Veterinary Services, a Reserve unit out of Rockville, Md.*

not affect just one Soldier, it could affect an entire battalion of Soldiers and pose a problem to the unit's mission."

The same sentiments were echoed by Spc. Victor Rivera, a veterinary food inspection specialist. "It's not just about looking at food and making sure that it is wholesome, we are also trained in food security and we check to make sure that the food hasn't been tampered with," said Rivera, a native of Chesapeake, Va. "If someone's tampering with our food before it gets out to those Soldiers, it will affect the overall mission."

He said that they check the storage and packaging conditions of the food, and check the food to make sure they haven't been tampered with.

After inspectors sample a product and find nothing wrong with it, the contents are placed back into the box, sealed and sent back to the warehouse to be re-issued. If it's perishable, such as frozen products, it's destroyed because once the product is thawed out, it starts degrading, said Spc. Marcus Bailey, a veterinary food inspection specialist.


If a defect is found, a special inspection is conducted to find out the nature of the problem. Samples are pulled and tested, and a decision is made whether to destroy the product, use it as first issue or to keep the product as is and see what happens, Bailey said. Usually, they go with the worst case scenario and the product is destroyed.

Aside from checking the food to ensure the safety of the servicemembers who consume it, the food inspectors also do food recalls and ensure the government gets what they are paying for in terms of quality and quantity, Bailey said.

"If we are forced to purchase less than perfect quality items, we

make sure the government gets the appropriate discount," said Bailey, a native of Salisbury, Md. "We also make sure that what the Soldiers buy in the Army and Air Force Exchange Services while deployed, is equivalent to their money's worth. For example, if you are paying \$1.50 for popcorn, we make sure you are getting \$1.50 worth of popcorn."

The work of the food inspectors is an on-going one. As long as there is a threat to servicemembers at home or in deployed areas, whether it be food-borne illnesses or acts of terrorism through food, food inspectors will be there working behind the scenes to safeguard the lives of servicemembers.

"It's a good feeling knowing that we are doing this for our country," said Rivera. "But not only that ... it's about helping those on the frontlines in Iraq and Afghanistan doing the big jobs, doing the convoys, getting in fire fights and going out there conducting raids. What we do here may make their day a little better when they get this food. When it comes down to it, it's all about them." 



A security force member assists Petty Officer 2nd Class Juan J. Sanchez with the proper decontamination of his protective mask during decontamination training at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Dec. 27.

# PMO gets down and dirty

## Grab your MOPP!

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

Gas, gas, gas. Every service-member has heard this call at one point in time during their training, but how many are ready to react when they really need to?

This is why the Provost Marshal's Office held mandatory annual decontamination training at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Dec. 27.

"The DECON training is intended to test and improve the troops survivability in a contaminated environment so they can continue the mission at hand," said Capt. Kevin Re, deputy provost marshal.

The training held just outside the PMO consisted of eight stations geared toward decontaminating and resupplying a company-sized element in the occurrence of a chemical, biological or radiological



Petty Officer 2nd Class Juan J. Sanchez simulates decontaminating his MOPP gear.

attack, Re said.

The participants included mainly Navy personnel, however the

training was open to anyone who wished to attend.

The DECON operation guided servicemembers through the entire process of removing contaminated mission oriented protective posture gear.

When there is a Chemical, Biological, Radiological Nuclear attack, a DECON station is set up at least 500 meters away and downwind from the site of attack. For this specific exercise, 13 personnel were divided up to man the stations.

At the first station, servicemembers decontaminated their gear with a brush and soapy water prior. Next, they began removing each individual contaminated article of protective gear at various stations.

After the servicemembers were finished removing all their gear they proceeded to station eight. Station eight is when the service-




**Senior Chief Kevin Williams, the project manager technical monitor with the Area Support Group Provost Marshal's Office, gives the servicemembers attending the training a quick rundown of the training ahead.**

member was reissued gear and weapons.

The DECON operation can facilitate the of about 250 or more personnel in two hours. The participants were broken down into groups of three or four per station, said Senior Chief Kevin Williams, the project manager technical monitor for Area Support Group PMO.

The main substances looked for during the DECON are nerve, blister and blood agents, however any type of CBRNE attack is extremely deadly.

“Mustard Gas will boil the moisture right out of the lungs,” said Williams stressing the danger of certain chemical agents used in biological warfare.

DECON training keeps servicemembers familiarized with chemical equipment and more prepared in case of a potential CBRNE attack. 



**A security force member simulates the decontamination of a protective mask during decontamination training. The Provost Marshal's Office held annual DECON training outside the PMO to be better prepared in case of a CBRNE attack.**



*Lt. Col. Orest M. Logusz, the staff section officer in charge of civil military affairs in the 1st Sustainment Command (Theater), shares a laugh with Sgt. Maj. Mohammad Al-Qallaf of the Kuwaiti Border Police at the Kuwaiti border, Kuwait, Jan. 1.*



*Sustainment members enjoy lunch with members of the Kuwaiti Border Police, Kuwait, Jan. 1. McLaughlin and Brooks' relationship exists between Kuwaitis and U.S. Army.*

# 1st TSC Civil Affairs works to

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

Foreign military presence in a country is sometimes a hard reality for citizens of a host country to deal with.

Issues may arise that will cause conflict between the two entities, but the 1st Sustainment Command (Theater) Civil Affairs Office's mission is to ensure that a smooth relationship exists between local nationals and U.S. military personnel deployed in the Third Army/U.S. Army Central area of responsibility.

The Civil Affairs Office is responsible for acting as liaisons and building relationships with any civilian agency, governmental or non-governmental, that has an

impact on the unit's mission, said Maj. Jack McLaughlin, the deputy staff section officer responsible for civil military affairs in the 1st TSC.

"We spend a lot of time going downtown, building relationships with the Kuwaitis and trying to maintain those relationships and then using those relationships to help the 1st TSC accomplish its mission," said McLaughlin, whose family is from Bryan, Texas.

"For instance, if we went to the border crossing to build relationships with the Kuwaiti customs or the border police, and then we have a problem later with something coming through the border, we go up there and talk to these individuals," McLaughlin said. "A lot of times, based on the personal relationships we have with these guys, they will go above and beyond for

us and try to help us out."

Army civil affairs units have four functional teams responsible for 16 different functional specialties. The teams are government, public facilities, economics and commerce, and special function. Since the 1st TSC CAO is a staff section, its activities are focused mainly on the special functions of cultural relations and civil information, said Sgt. 1st Class Chadwick A. Brooks, a civil affairs specialist with the 1st TSC, and a native of New Orleans.

"We are a combat multiplier for commanders," said Lt. Col. Orest M. Logusz, the staff section officer in charge of civil military affairs in the 1st TSC, and a native of Fort Lauderdale, Fla. "Right now we are coordinating with our surgeon general to establish a base



**Maj. Jack McLaughlin and Sgt. 1st Class Chadwick A. Brooks of the 1st Command (Theater) Civil Affairs Office, of the Kuwaiti Customs at the Kuwaiti bor-**  
**oks are responsible for ensuring a smooth military personnel deployed to Kuwait.**



**Maj. Jack McLaughlin, the deputy staff section officer responsible for civil military affairs in the 1st Sustainment Command (Theater), discusses current is-**  
**sues with 1st Lt. Jasem Al-Haidari (center) and Sgt. Maj. Mohammad Al-Qallaf, of the Kuwaiti Border Police at the Kuwaiti border.**

## to maintain good relations

with local hospitals so that in the future when more Americans and their Families live in this part of the world, they will be able to use these facilities. So we go out and speak to local doctors to find out the best facilities and how they will meet our needs.”

The five-man team consisting of four military personnel and a civilian interpreter faces many challenges when interacting with host nation civilian or government agencies. Extra caution is taken to ensure that the military doesn’t leave a negative impact on the U.S. or the host nation.

“The biggest obstacle that we meet in dealing with the Arab culture is that we have a different perspective on institutions,” McLaughlin said. “Americans believe in institutions such as

armies, bureaucracies and offices, whereas with the Kuwaitis, it’s not the relations between the institutions.


“If you know the individual and you can tap into him, it is much more effective than just working on an agency-to-agency basis,” he said. “That’s just Arab culture in general, but it can be frustrating to us because we tend to take more of an organizational, institutional approach to things, versus the personal type.”

Despite the challenges that the Soldiers face when interacting with the locals and trying to resolve issues, they still claim they have the best job in the military and enjoy what they do.

“I love the culture,” McLaughlin said. “I find it fascinating and it’s kind of a challenge trying to

navigate the different obstacles the intercultural piece puts into play. I like the language and I have a lot of fun speaking Arabic. It’s really rewarding when I actually say something and they understand me.”

McLaughlin summed up the importance of civil affairs in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom, and in maintaining good relations with U.S. allies.

“The bottom line is we’re trying to accomplish a mission,” McLaughlin said. “We’re trying to set the conditions on the battlefield that allows the 1st TSC to do its operations. If we lose the support of the Kuwaiti people and government, then we will not be able to conduct operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.” 

# Navy Customs Battalion remembers fallen Sailor

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

Sailors assigned to the Naval Customs Battalion Tango of the Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group Kuwait, and other servicemembers, gathered to pay their final respects to a fallen comrade at a chapel on Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Jan. 5.

Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Victor W. Jeffries, a native of Brooklyn, N.Y., died Dec. 31, 2007, at the Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany, from injuries sustained in a motor vehicle accident outside Kuwait City Dec. 24.

"Petty Officer Jeffries was a professional Sailor dedicated to the Navy," said Cmdr. Mark Schwartzel, the commanding officer for Navy Customs Battalion Tango, and a native of San Diego. "I know he served his Navy and the United States of America with honor, integrity and pride ... I know that by his actions he contributed to a safer world here and at home."

"We had a father-daughter type of relationship ... he's a little bit older and he's always trying to help me figure out what's right," said Petty Officer 2nd Class Jaclyn King, 23, an administrative assistant assigned to NavELSG. "I miss him teasing me. He used to always put spiders on my desk ... but on Christmas Eve before this (the accident) happened, this time he left me my Christmas gift ... and he's not going to be able to come back and I can't tell him thank you ... and I just miss him."

Jeffries deployed to Kuwait in October 2007 in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, and worked for the Navy Customs Battalion Tango under NavELSG as a mass communications specialist for Navy public affairs.

"He was fully engaged in the public affairs mission and loved the interaction with both Sailors and Soldiers alike," Schwartzel said. "He knew the risks he was heading into here in Kuwait. He



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Paul Tuttle

**Petty Officer 2nd Class Jaclyn King, of Kailua, Hawaii, places a coin on a "fallen comrade" display for Petty Officer 1st Class Victor Jeffries during a memorial service held in a chapel at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Jan. 5.**

had trained and was prepared for this mission."

"Petty Officer Jeffries was a Christian and had faith in the Lord," said Master Chief Petty Officer Reed Van Wagoner, a native of Provo, Utah. "He demonstrated his faith by living the example the Lord set for us. He genuinely loved and worried about his fellow shipmates and those he served with."

Jeffries entered the military in 1984 and served in the Coast Guard, the Army and eventually the Navy. During his last assignment in the Navy Reserve with SEAL Delivery Vehicle Team 1 in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, he maintained and operated small boats and equipment used by the SEALs. In his civilian life, he was a high school physical education teacher with the Department of Education in Honolulu.

"He believed in the saying 'Everyone has to start somewhere,'" said 1st Lt. Greg Suguitan, a native of Lanai, Hawaii. "You have to make your mark, make strides, and prove yourself. That's why he loved to teach."

Suguitan, who has been a friend of the Jeffries family for 10 years, referred to Jeffries as a fountain of youth who loved to be the father of the bunch, the older brother, or the uncle that everyone

wants.


"We'll all remember Victor Jeffries as a devoted husband, father, Sailor, teacher, mentor and friend," Suguitan added. "Like Vic, I'm a believer in the saying 'Everything happens for a reason' ... It's all a part of the Lord's master plan. All we can do is look out for one another, be good to one another and love each other. Just like the way Vic did."

King expressed her gratitude for having known Jeffries and for the impact that he made in her life.

"I am very thankful to have been able to serve in the Navy with him," King said. "His spirit has blessed me and made me a stronger person, and I'm thankful for it."

Van Wagoner assured the servicemembers celebrating Jeffries' life that he would always be a part of them and encouraged them to follow his example of love and kindness.

"Remember, we came to this earth to experience life and this is what Petty Officer Jeffries did," Van Wagoner said. "It was time for him to return to our creator where he is in His presence. He will now be our advocate in the world to come."

He is survived by his wife Elizabeth Jeffries and his two daughters, Keshia and Chantel. 

Z1 Community Center presents

# KARAOKE CONTEST

## Arijjan Idol

### RETURNS ROUND 3

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1900 HRS ZONE 1 COM CTR

*This is our 3rd year go around for this popular contest!  
Contest starts on 16 Jan and runs on Wednesdays to 19 Mar.*

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## Just One Question...

### "How are you going to keep your New Years Resolution?"



"I've got my mind set to do it."

Petty Officer 2nd Class Luis Wilson-Leon  
Navy Mobile Construction Battalion 14  
Utilities man  
Ponce, Puerto Rico



"My new year's resolution was to stay diligent to my faith in God, so I intend to go to church every Sunday."

Sgt. Taniki R. Jones  
Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 29  
Electronics countermeasure technician  
Jacksonville, S.C.



"Make resolutions that are easy to keep."

Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Benoit  
335th Theater Signal Command  
Signal University operations manager  
Atlanta



"Pretty simple, I didn't make one."

Chief Petty Officer Shawn Frye  
1190th Deployment Support Brigade  
Section NCO  
Columbus, Ohio



"Just be a little more determined than last year."

Staff Sgt. Rick Fechtmann  
429th Brigade Support Battalion  
Squad leader  
Winchester, Va.

## Why I serve:

Sgt. Wade Satchel  
3rd Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment  
Maintenance supervisor



The Rogers, Ark., native explains why he chose to join the military.

"I joined when I turned 24. I was working and going to school at the same time. After I lost my job, which was my main source of income for school, I needed a steady job."

# What's happening around Kuwait ...



**Happy  
New  
Year**

*Photo by Maj. Michele Sutak*

**Party-goers dance the night away as they welcome the new year at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Dec. 31, 2007.**



*Photo by Maj. Michele Sutak*

**While some danced, other party-goers merely enjoyed the moment and sit as they await the countdown to usher in 2008.**



**Sweat it off**

*Photo by Pfc. Christopher T. Grammer*

**Servicemembers and civilians ride stationary bicycles as part of a "spinning" class at the Zone 1 gym on Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Jan. 4.**



**The end**

*Photo by Pfc. Christopher T. Grammer*

**A joint flag detail lowers and folds the U.S. flag during Retreat at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Jan. 4. The flag detail is one of the Camp Arifjan military police's additional duties.**