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

August 15, 2007



To boom or not to boom

U.S., Danish EOD dispose of ordnance

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On the cover

An Air Force Explosive Ordnance Disposal Airman helps Danish Soldiers unload munitions to dispose of Aug. 4 at Udairi Range, Kuwait.

Photo by Pfc. Christopher T. Grammer

Contact us

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

Energy conservation is important to us

*Story by
Maj. Antoinette R. Gant
Director of Public Works*

We are consuming resources faster than they can be regenerated and there is little time to plan for alternative fuel resources. Water tables are falling and aquifers are being pumped dry. Therefore, energy conservation is critical to our ability to successfully accomplish the mission. Practicing energy conservation saves money and more importantly it protects the limited resources required for a successful mission. For those of us stationed in Kuwait, energy conservation is extremely important.

In Kuwait, there are no U.S. bases. We have camps and other facilities that are provided for our use in accordance with Kuwaiti policies. Area Support Group-Kuwait is responsible for the power supplied to all of the camps and manages over 89 Megawatts of electricity a day. Although most of this power is produced by ASG-KU generators, Kuwait provides about 15 percent of our power through its commercial grid. Each year during the summer months, Kuwait has difficulty with the generation and transmission of electricity. The city is currently approaching the need to impose daily black outs. As guests in Kuwait, we must be mindful of this and understand that we have a responsibility to conserve electricity.


Area Support Group-Kuwait has created an energy conservation program that focuses on reducing consumption. The goal of this program is to ensure the availability and supply of energy to the Army by encouraging conservation without degrading readiness, the environment or quality of life.

We at Third Army are taking the necessary steps to ensure the mission is accomplished as efficiently as possible while conserving energy as it's done.

Here are some helpful tips when it comes to conserving energy:

1. Turn off the air conditioning when leaving an office, tent or room for the day. It is wasteful to cool a room that no one is occupying.
2. Turn off separate water heaters during the summer months. The water coming out of the pipes is normally hot this time of year anyway.
3. Turn off lights when leaving an office, tent or room. This action alone could save an enormous amount of energy.
4. Wash laundry in cold water and only wash full loads. Dry towels and heavier cottons separately. Lighter weight clothes dry faster and require less time. Clean the lint filter in the dryer after every load. Use the "Free Laundry Service" provided on each camp when possible. These cleaners use large industrial grade facilities which are more efficient than the camp's small washers and dryers.
5. Conserve water and energy by not allowing water to flow continuously when washing your hands or showering. Always report leaking faucets or toilets that flush repeatedly to your facilities maintenance officer. Conserving water saves energy.

The Kuwaiti government is asking all of its residents to be conscious and careful of energy usage during the peak hours of 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. During this time, the demand for air conditioning is at its highest.

Remember and practice these energy conservation tips and share them with your coworkers and friends. These simple steps help us to be good stewards of Kuwaiti resources. 

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Desert Voice
Magazine



Third Army welcomes Ethiopian general

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Carlos M. Burger II
Third Army Public Affairs Office

FORT MCPHERSON, Ga. – Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb, Third Army/U.S. Army Central commanding general, hosted a top Ethiopian general during an officer professional development seminar held at Third Army/USARCENT Headquarters at Fort McPherson, Ga. Aug. 3.

Maj. Gen. Bacha Debele Buta, head of defense combat engineering of the Ethiopian National Defense Force and former commander of Eastern Corps, talked with the USARCENT staff on lessons learned during Ethiopia's recent military campaign to support the Transitional Federal Government, the recognized government of Somalia.

"It's always good to hear from a military that has been as successful in the War on Terrorism as Ethiopia," Whitcomb said.

Buta was invited to speak by Whitcomb and is the latest speaker in the Third Army Command Professional Development program, an initiative which brings in speakers from across USARCENT's area of responsibility. The speakers usually hold seminars on subjects of interest to the Third Army command, said Col. Dave Huggins, Third



Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb, Third Army/U.S. Army Central commanding general hosted guests Maj. Gen. Bacha Debele Buta, head of defense combat engineering of the Ethiopian National Defense Force and Gen. (R) Crosbie "Butch" Saint, during the professional development seminar held at Third Army/U.S. Army Central Headquarters at Fort McPherson, Ga., August 3.

Army director of Civil Military Affairs.

"It is important that the Ethiopian and U.S. governments continue to work together to combat the War on Terror," Buta said before the seminar.

After Buta's opening remarks, the USARCENT staff was given a detailed presentation of the campaign. Ethiopia supported the TFG after it was forced out of Mogadishu by warlords of the Islamic Courts Union, later known as the Conservative Council of Islamic Courts, between June and December

2006. The Ethiopian government sent in its military to help reclaim the capitol and, after a series of battles, succeeded in reestablishing the TFG's control as government of Somalia last January. Buta was commander of ENDF operations in Somalia until early April, when he was chosen to become the Ethiopian National Defense Force chief of education and training. The Ethiopian government is currently supporting the TFG.

The seminar was the second of Buta's two-part visit with Third Army. Prior to the visit to the headquarters, Third Army sponsored his visit to the U.S. Engineering School at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

In the past, USARCENT has provided the ENDF with personnel to share information on subjects such as the roles of the lawyer's and inspectors general in the U.S. Army, said Maj. Kent W. Hall, Third Army Ethiopian desk officer.

Hall said Buta's visit was extremely beneficial to Third Army, not just from the viewpoint of operational information, but to the two nations' continued efforts in the War on Terrorism.

"The real importance of this visit is the formation of a basis of true partnership between Ethiopia and the United States. They can learn from us and we will learn from them," he said. **A**



Maj. Gen. Bacha Debele Buta, head of defense combat engineering of the Ethiopian National Defense Force gives his opening remarks during the professional development seminar held at Third Army/U.S. Army Central Headquarters at Fort McPherson, Ga., Aug. 3.

Saving and training

Ambulances give quick medical care

*Story and photos by
Spc. Giancarlo Casem
Desert Voice editor*



Sgt. James Lewis, 557th Medical Company Ground Ambulance, conducts a functions check on an automated external defibrillator at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

When lights start flashing and sirens are wailing, it probably means there is an emergency. Those involved can take heart knowing help is on the way.

That help is fast and reliable. That help comes from the 557th Medical Company Ground Ambulance.

"The 557th Medical Company Ground Ambulance, Medical Task Force Kuwait has the mission of providing ground transportation and evacuation to the sick and wounded in the theater of Kuwait," said Capt. Thomas Sherbert, 557th Medical Company commander.

The 557th are the first responders to medical emergencies on Camp Arifjan. They also have teams in other camps around the Third Army/U.S. Army Central Kuwaiti area of responsibility. The company works together along with the fire department to provide vital medical care for service-members stationed on Camp Arifjan.



Sgt. David Schwartz, 557th Medical Company Ground Ambulance, coaches Spc. Kenneth Ordaz, 1113th Transportation Company, during a Combat Life-Savers refresher course conducted by the 55th's Joint Mobile Training Team at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.



Pfc. Shawn Armstrong, foreground, and Sgt. James Lewis, both of 557th Medical Company Ground Ambulance, prepare to pull out a stretcher in their ambulance at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. The company provides quick medical aid in the Kuwaiti area of responsibility.

However, medical care is not their only mission.

“Here in Kuwait, we do split operations,” said Sgt. 1st Class Timothy DeWitte. “We are the emergency first responders along with the fire department, we conduct patient transportation missions. We also provide combat life-saver training throughout the theater.”

The 557th employs its own fleet of ambulances, both civilian and military. They respond to calls on-post as well off-post if it involves a U.S. contractor or Department of Defense contractor.

DeWitte said he believes the 557th’s mission is an important one.

“It’s an important mission, I remind my guys how important it is,” he said. “Our job as Soldiers is inherently dangerous, even here in Kuwait. We don’t have mortars being fired at us, but we do have a lot of heavy equipment being moved around and we have ranges.”

The ground ambulance’s mission directly affects Camp Arifjan’s logis-

tical mission, DeWitte said.

“If some one breaks an ankle, it could hamper that unit’s mission and slow everything down,” DeWitte said. “We stress safety, but if something goes wrong we’re here to take care of them.”

Another mission that the 557th has undertaken is the implementation of the Joint Mobile Training Team. The JMTT has trained almost 1,200 servicemembers, civilians and foreign servicemembers. They have also trained Kuwaiti emergency medical personnel.

The formation of the team provided its own challenge, Sherbert said.

“At first we didn’t know how the Kuwaitis would receive training from our female instructors,” Sherbert said. “We had hoped that they would be treated the same way as our male instructors and given the same respect, but when we first arrived in Kuwait we just didn’t know.”

Sherbert said that after the first class the Kuwaitis were very recep-

tive of their training.

“That experience opened the door for a continued strong partnership with our coalition brothers in arms,” he said.

The ground ambulance company keeps servicemembers safe by providing quick and reliable medical care. They help keep unit down-time to a minimum by ensuring victims get aid and transported to a medical facility quickly.

Their presence alone on Camp Arifjan gives servicemembers a little bit of security, DeWitte said.

“We’re a vital link to everything that is going on here with units making the transition north and the logistics mission,” DeWitte said. “We are a very visual unit, servicemembers can see our ambulances outside. They know if something goes wrong, somebody is going to show up and take care of them. It’s one less thing they have to worry about.”

Editor’s note: This is the last in a three-part series about emergency services in Kuwait. **A**



Sergeant Nicholas W. Cox, 221st EOD, are to pull out of

Captain Morten Maerkedahl, commander of the Danish Engineering Company helps unload a crate of smoke grenades to be disposed of Aug 4. at Udairi Range, Kuwait, with other munitions the Danish Army can't take with them or leave behind.

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

Danish troops under British command have worked alongside U.S. and coalition forces in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom since autumn 2003. Their time in Iraq and Kuwait however, is drawing to a close.

Contrary to the original withdrawal date of Aug. 10, announced by Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Danish troops have begun to withdraw from Iraq and Kuwait early.

"We have found a way of packing our bags more quickly than expected and the Soldiers have worked hard for that," said Danish military spokesman Lt. Col. Jes Rasmussen to Danish TV channel TV2.

More than 250 Danish troops have already passed through Kuwait en route to Denmark and another 150 are slated to leave Basra soon.

Though they are leaving, the Danish troops feel they have had a positive effect on the war in Iraq.

"I feel good about what we have

done here," said Capt. Morten Maerkedahl, commander of the Danish Engineer Company. "I think our people have done a good job."

Some of the munitions the Danish troops have in Iraq and Kuwait however cannot return with them. To take care of these munitions the Danish Explosive Ordnance Disposal along with the 221st EOD took it to Udairi Range, Kuwait, Aug. 4 to dispose of it.

The Danish were disposing of various munitions including 84mm rockets, 40mm grenade rounds and 5.56mm NATO rounds. Using this chance to dispose of some unserviceable munitions, the 221st EOD brought along some 155mm High Explosive Rocket Assist rounds that had been exposed to more heat than recommended. Including the munitions brought by the Danish, the total amount to dispose of was estimated at approximately 14,000 pounds of explosives.


After a quick safety brief the Danish troops unloaded their munitions along with the 221st EOD's 155mm HERA rounds. The munitions were lined up and stacked in two separate

piles. Working, together the Danish troops and the 221st EOD made quick work of setting up the ordnance for disposal.

"Working with the Danish is really good for building international relations," said Sgt. Nicholas W. Cox, 221st EOD.

Both piles of munitions were set to detonate simultaneously by means of an electric blasting cap once the 221st EOD and Danish personnel had moved to a safe distance. The 221st EOD gave a Danish Soldier the privilege of detonating the munitions.

The explosions went off within less than a second of each other, lighting up the horizon of Udairi range and sending flaming fragments in all directions. After the flames from the explosion died down, the blast area was inspected to make sure that all the ordnance was destroyed.

Once everything was packed up the Danish EOD returned to Camp Virginia, Kuwait, to prepare for their departure. Though the Danish are leaving Iraq and Kuwait they remain a valuable ally of the United States. 

ve a blast with 221st EOD



W. Cox talks to Danish Soldiers Aug. 4 at Udairi Range, Kuwait. The Danish Army
Iraq and Kuwait early and must dispose of munitions before returning to Denmark.



A pile of various munitions is lined up by the Danish Army and 221st
Explosive Ordnance Disposal Aug. 4 at Udairi Range, Kuwait.



Crime and punishment in Kuwait

Story and photos by
Sgt. Jacob A. McDonald
Desert Voice NCOIC

When crimes are committed and regulations broken, the Navy personnel at the Theater Field Confinement Facility on Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, stand guard so field units don't have to.

The confinement facility serves as a temporary prison for servicemembers accused and convicted of crimes throughout the Middle East who are awaiting trial, serving their sentence or preparing to serve time in permanent facilities in the United States.

"The Theater Field Confinement Facility's mission is to be a safe incarceration facility for U.S. Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen or Marines," said Navy Commander David Wegman, commander of the facility.

Wegman said the facility provides a resource for commanders to

maintain discipline and order in their units without sacrificing manpower to secure prisoners.

"People make mistakes," Wegman said. "The system is designed to take care of those people legally. Our job is to take care of them and make sure they are properly housed, fed, clothed and ready to go back to their units (or be escorted back to the United States)."

Inside the chain-link fences surrounding and dividing the compound, the servicemembers incarcerated there live, eat and sleep in tents. The facility has the capacity to house nearly 130 prisoners in tents or eight individual segregation cells. While incarcerated, inmates maintain their uniforms but wear no rank.

"It's a pretty sobering thing to go inside the wire and see all these friendly service uniforms," Wegman said.

Wegman said his responsibility is

one of the unique aspects of this war.

"I do know when you send more than 150,000 over to a war zone, give them guns and tell them to kill people, crimes are going to happen," Wegman said. "When they do, we are here to get them where they need to be on the punishment side of the house."

"Being sent here is their punishment, we are not here to punish them," said Petty Officer 1st Class Matthew McGillis, a native of Bayonne, N.J. "We have to take care of them, they are still our Soldiers and sailors while they are here."

Soldiers receive full care and can make requests for military services while in custody at the facility. Inmates receive medical care, lawyer visits and are able to make phone calls during their 90 minute recreation time each day. They can also have their religious needs met, take care of finance problems or make inspector general complaints. Prisoners who follow the rules can have their sentences reduced through good behavior.

"The biggest thing they want when they come here is to call home, and we (let them) do that," said Petty Officer 1st Class David Eldridge, guard commander, day shift, and a native of Iron Mountain, Mich.

While their job is to take care of the prisoners, the guards must also maintain discipline and control.

"We control pretty much everything they do. Anything they want to do goes through us," Eldridge said.

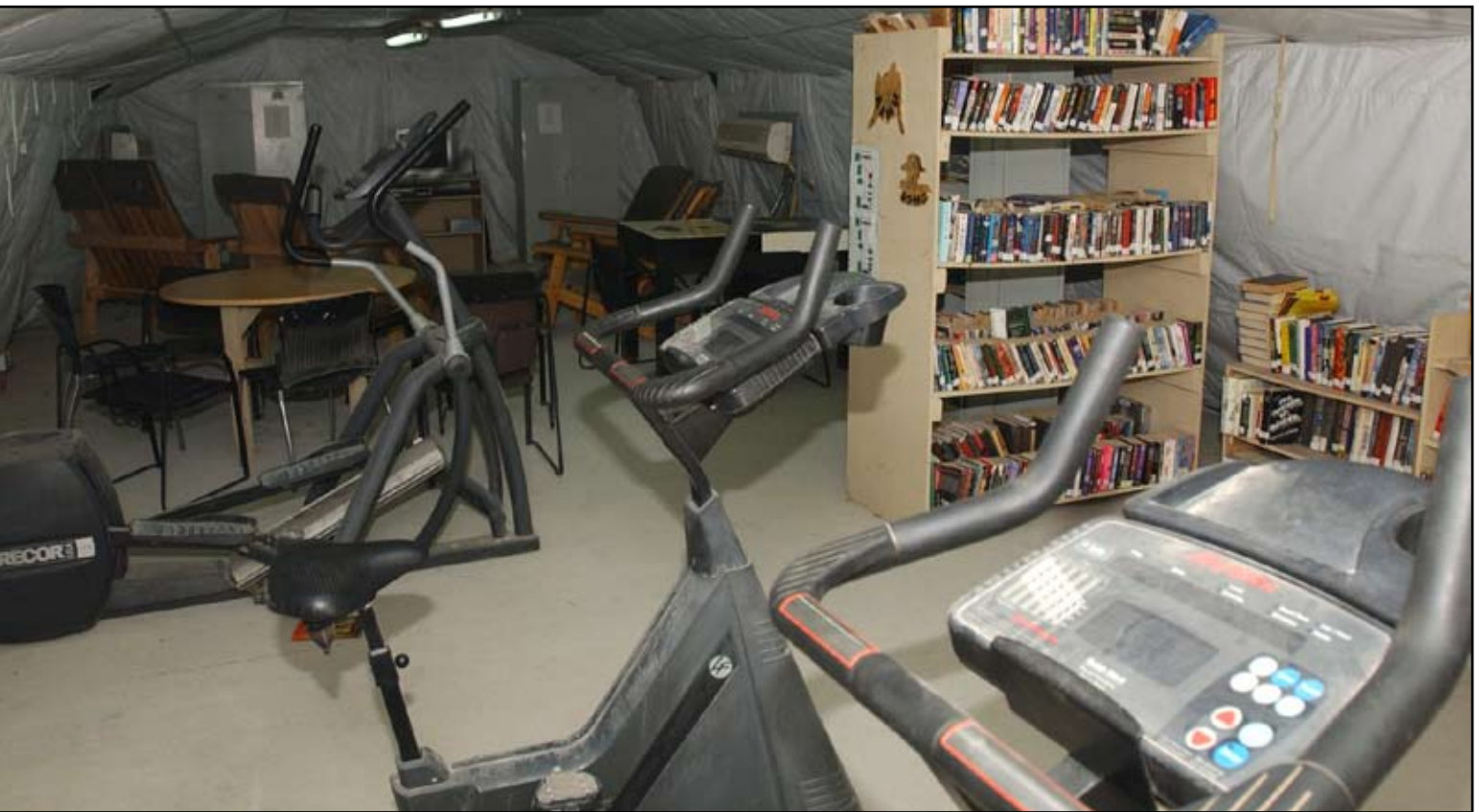
Daily routines such as physical training, personal hygiene and physical labor are enforced. Inmates are required to march everywhere and are told when to bathe, eat and sleep. As part of their required labor, the inmates provide all of the sandbags for Camp Arifjan.

"As long as they act like a Soldier while they are here we will treat them as such," McGillis said. But when Soldiers lose control they are



Segregation cells at the Theater Field Confinement Facility on Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, serve as a home for inmates not living in general population. The cells have the minimum accommodations, but little else.

The n
tion ti



morale, welfare and recreation tent in the camp provides prisoners an area to exercise and relax. They are allowed 90 minutes of recreation a day.

subject to lose privileges such as recreation time, phone time or good conduct time. Servicemembers accused or convicted of certain crimes, or who are unsuitable for general population may end up in segregation cells. Until discharged from the military, prisoners are also subject to additional action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Prisoners charged with everything from minor infractions to murder and aiding the enemy have passed through the gates of the facility. Despite the nature of the prisoners they deal with, Wegman maintains poor decision making as the primary reason most people end up at his doorstep.

“Poor decision making is not a rank issue, it’s a human issue,” Wegman said. “When people’s morals and values guide them to do a variety of different things you get a variety of different outcomes, some of which are not good. When they are not good and it gets found out, justice has to be served.”

And in the facility, justice is served. **A**



A nights worth of sandbags fill palletes outside the Theater Field Confinement Facility in Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. As part of their sentence prisoners fill sandbags to meet orders around Kuwait.

Deployment extension means extending EagleCash too

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

As units are winding down their time towards redeployment, something else is winding down.

For many servicemembers affected by February's notice of extended tours in the Third Army/U.S. Army Central area of operations, their EagleCash Cards, issued through the finance office, will expire at the one-year date. But there is something servicemembers can do to make sure they're not stuck without a way to pay.

"When Soldiers got their EagleCash Cards, it was set up to expire two months after they redeploy," said Capt. Heather Doran, 13th Finance Group. "If some Soldiers got extended for an additional three months, those Soldiers who have cards could have them expire."

The EagleCash Card program was set up in June 2006 for use by servicemembers supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Servicemembers, after filling out the proper paperwork, are given a card that is linked to a checking or savings account back in the United States. In essence, the EagleCash Card is used like a debit card. Doran said the number of cards issued increase every month.

Doran said those Soldiers affected by longer tours need to rectify their EagleCash situation before the card expires.

"The Soldiers will need to go to their local finance office, let them know that they have been extended, and the finance office will be able to extend the date on their card," Doran said.

For those who redeploy without taking care of their EagleCash Card situation, Doran said not to worry. There is a process in place for servicemembers to get their money back.

"If you redeploy back to a (mobi-



Soldiers who have been extended may extend their EagleCash Card's expiration date.

lization) station that has the EagleCash Card kiosks, you can transfer the funds from the card back to the account," she said. "If not, there is a number on the back of the card for the Federal Bank of Boston. Call them and they will be able to do it. If a card expires and there's money on it, the bank will automatically send that amount back to the link account after so many days."

If there is no account for the money to go to, Doran said there is a plan in place to get the person their money.

"If there is no link account on that expired card, they will pull a copy of the servicemembers' DD 2887 (EagleCash Card Enrollment Form) that they filled out when they first got the card and send (the money), by check, to the address that's on the form," Doran said.

In a July 9 press release, Juan De Jesus, Program Manager for E-Commerce at the Army's Finance Command, said the benefits of EagleCash "are clear, impressive and continue to increase daily as more and more Soldiers prefer to use the card."

Command Sgt. Maj. Barbara Petit, the senior non-commissioned officer in charge of the 15th Finance Battal-

ion at Camp Liberty, Iraq, said with up to three months possibly added onto an already yearlong deployment, many troops should consider the benefits of the no-transaction-fee card during the remainder of their deployment.

"Three months is a long time for any Soldier," she said. "The card can be used until the end of the deployment."

The press release went on to say there are EagleCash kiosks located in several countries in the Third Army/USARCENT area of operations. EagleCash is issued and is accepted in Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan and Qatar. Since June 2007, more than 67,000 cards were issued and loaded with more than \$205 million in electronic currency. The kiosks have become popular as well. Soldiers have performed more than 301,000 transactions in the last 12 months.

"Soldiers can upload \$350 per day to the card, so they actually have more money available for use with the card than if they got cash from finance," Petit said. "Also, if the card is lost or destroyed, the amount on the card is still available to the Soldier. With cash, it is lost." **A**

General Casey visits Camp Arifjan



Photo by Spc. Wes Landrum

General George W. Casey Jr., Army Chief of Staff, is greeted by Capt. Charles Cameron, U.S. Army Central Joint Visitors Bureau, during his visit to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait Aug. 10. The general stopped in Kuwait while on a troop visit in the Third Army/U.S. Army Central area of operations. This was Casey's first visit to U.S. Army Central as Army Chief of Staff.



Hometown Hero

Sgt. David Schwartz
557th Medical Company

The El Paso, Texas, native explains why he chose to join the military.

"I serve to support our country in a time of war."

Just One Ques-

"What technique do you use to motivate your peers, seniors and subordinates?"



"I like personal interaction, the more I get to know the individual, the better I can adjust to meet their needs."

Master Sgt. Brian Cerney
Fayetteville, NC
First sergeant
737th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron



"I set a common goal."

Sgt. Daniel Totten
Castro Valley, Calif.
74C chemical operations
557th Medical Company Ground Ambulance



"Set clear direction focused on the mission with a twist of humor."

Col. Dave Wilcox
Ashland, Ky.
G-3
13th Sustainment Command Expeditionary



"Go over and above, and motivate by personal example."

Petty Officer 1st Class Adam D. Puckett
King, NC
Pax inspector
Navy Customs Battalion Sierra, Alpha Company



"Try to be upbeat and positive, catch people doing things right and encourage them."

Lt. Col. William Camargo
Franklin, Tenn.
Deputy commander
640th Sustainment

I'm free as a bird now...



Photo by Spc. Giancarlo Casem
Pfc. Jake Marlin, 50th PAD, out of Fort Bragg, N.C., plays "Free Bird" with the USCENTAF Expeditionary Band, Thunder Roll, at the Zone 6 stage, Aug. 5.

**What's happening
around Kuwait ...**

...And this bird you cannot change



Photo by Spc. Giancarlo Casem

The U.S. Central Air Force Expeditionary Band, Thunder Roll, performs for servicemembers at the Zone 6 stage, Aug. 5.

A job well done



Photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Christopher Krieg

Sailors from U.S. Navy Customs Battalion Sierra hold coins of excellence received from Zone 6 Commander Col. Kenneth Beard for a job well done while working at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait Aug. 7. These sailors inspect containers, engines, triwalls, wooden boxes, pallets, weapons, and personal gear prior to shipment.

Strykers roll in



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Paul Tuttle

A Soldier from Joint Logistics Task Force 10 drives a Stryker fighting vehicle down the ramp of a U.S. Navy transport ship at a port in Kuwait, July 8.