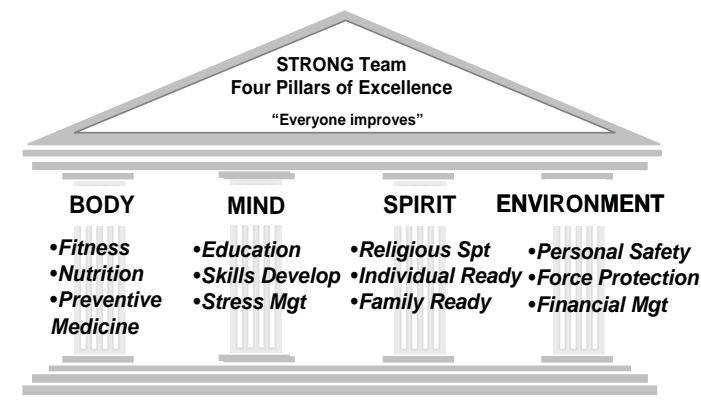




STRONG Well Being Program Builds a Foundation for Accomplishing the Mission

By Col. Joel Mjolsness
311th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)
Chief of Staff

Gen. William D. Frink to form a team to come up with a framework to develop, promote, and manage a holistic readiness program in order to ensure the health and well-being of all personnel.



Dear Log Warriors and Family members,

As we were preparing to deploy in March 2008, you could hear Soldiers talking about what they were going to do to make improvements in their lives while they were away from home for a year.

Here are some of the paraphrased comments:

"I'm going to work on my A.A... my college degree... my Masters..."

"I'm going to learn about Arab culture and religion..."

"I'm going to read a bunch of books..."

"I'm going to work out everyday..."

"I'm going to lose 20 pounds..."

"I'm going to gain 10 pounds..."

"I'm going to reduce my bodyfat by 5%..."

"I'm going to learn how to swim..."

"I'm going to learn how to defend myself..."

"I'm going to church or synagogue more than I do at home..."

"I'm going to figure out how to invest my money..."

"I'm going to quit smoking... quit chewing..."

The buzz amongst the Soldiers prompted Brig.

As the Well Being team developed the concept, the word STRONG was chosen because it represented what we were striving to accomplish – make each person stronger in body, mind, spirit, and within their environment. An acronym was created to provide additional meaning to the program:

S elf Improvement
T rain for the Future
R eadiness
O n-going Pursuit of Excellence
N ever Quit
G row as an Individual

The deployment is almost over and there are some great testimonials to the accomplishments of Soldiers throughout the command. Several are included in another article in this newsletter.

Holistic Readiness = Balanced Well-Being

What is "holistic readiness"? It is the idea that balanced well being is important and valuable to perform the mission, to be ready to fight, to be ready to support

See STRONG on page 8

C O M M A N D E R ' S C O R N E R

We Did It!

By Brig. Gen. William D. Frink, Jr.
311th Sustainment Command
(Expeditionary)

WE DID IT!! and what a great job you all have done!

As we redeploy and make our first stop at Ft Bragg before reaching home, please ensure your redeployment process is complete. Many will be in a hurry to get home, but make sure all your paperwork is accurate and your medical screenings are complete.

Some will be joined by their families at Ft Bragg, while the rest of us will see our families as we arrive in Los Angeles. No matter where you link up with your family, take time to get reacquainted.

Remember, we have been away for one year and things can change drastically in that time. Everyone will want to spend time with you immediately; take time to reintegrate with your family and friends.

We all have met new people from all across the United States; we've made new and lasting friendships

and some friendships have become stronger. I hope and encourage you to keep in touch with your fellow 311th ESC members.

During this past year and the training leading up to the deployment, you have learned new skills, gained knowledge, and experienced things that others may never get the opportunity to do. Share all this knowledge and mentor other Soldiers and units so that they may also learn and grow.

I challenge you to look into future opportunities that capitalize



SPO celebrates leaving Ft. Bragg. Hats will fly again as we all head back home.

on personal development and increased leadership skills. It's been a great year and I thank you for all your support and hard work.



For those who will be leaving the 311th ESC, remember, you are always family and I know our paths will cross again. I am proud to serve with each and every one of you and wish you much happiness and success.

"Sustain the Fight - Log Warrior"



**311th Sustainment
Command (Expeditionary)**

**Commander
Brig. Gen. William D. Frink, Jr.**

**Command Sergeant Major
Command Sgt. Maj. Jerry L. Ayala**

**Public Affairs Officer
Capt. Kenneth C. Morrison**

**Log Warriors Editor
Staff Sgt. W. Watson Martin**

**Assistant Editor
Sgt. Tracy Ellingsen**

Click below to see archives ...

www.dvidshub.net/unit/311ESC

Log Warriors is the monthly command information newsletter of the 311th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense, according to the provisions afforded by Army Regulation 360-1. The opinions and views expressed in *Log Warriors* are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, or the Department of the Army. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the 311th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) public affairs officer. Point of contact for questions and submissions is Staff Sgt. W. Watson Martin.

Continue to lead from the front

By Command Sgt. Maj. Jerry L. Ayala
311th Sustainment Command (Exp.)

311th ESC Soldiers, we are almost at the end of our mission, with just a dozen or so days left to be completed and a few more tasks to be accomplished. We will soon be back home with our families.

We will start working on adjusting to a different battle rhythm; it will take some time to be familiar with the changes that have take place at home or in the community. But never the less, it will be a great and

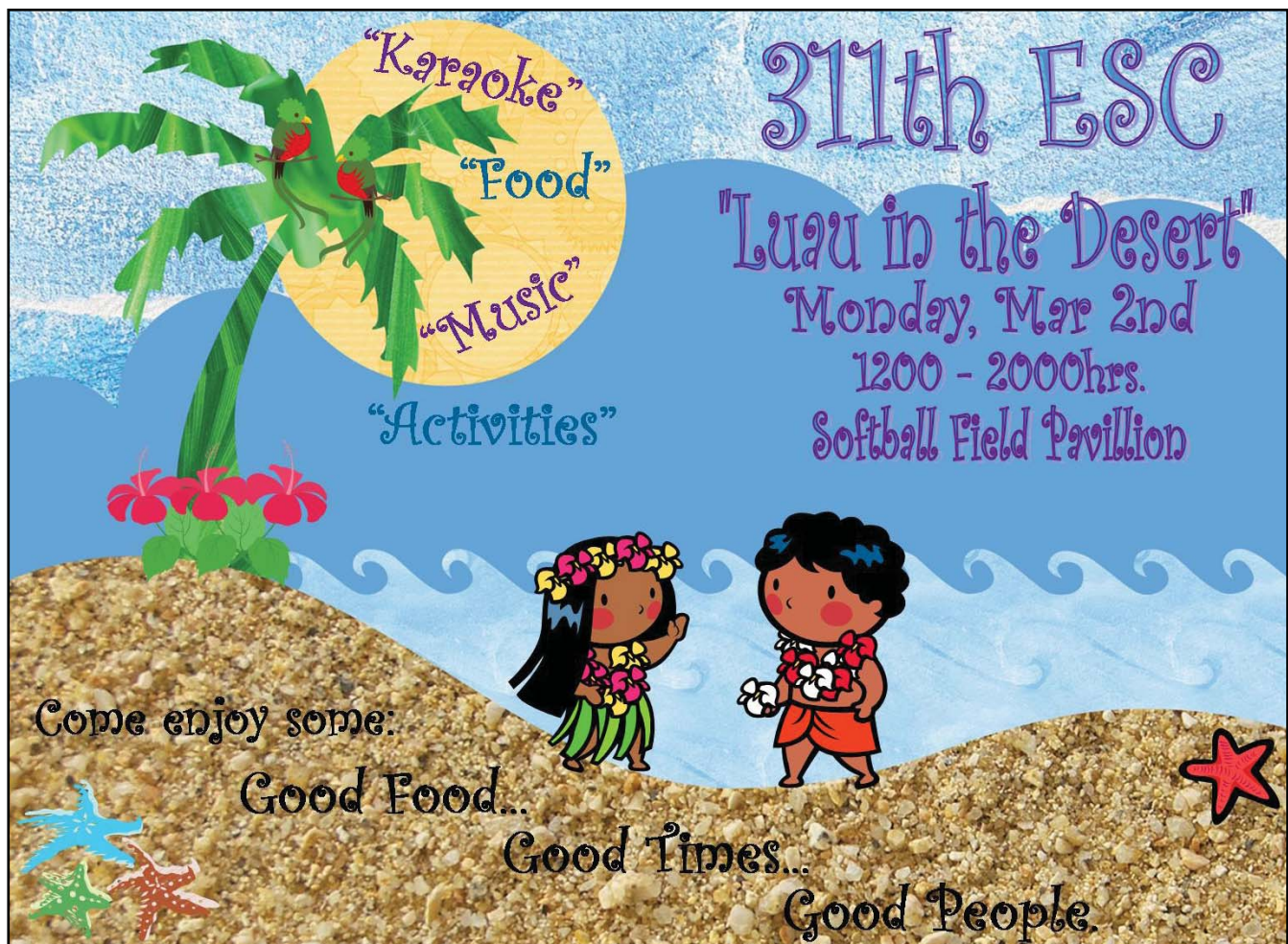
wonderful day when we are reunited with our so very much missed families and friends.

I ask two things of you, that all of you continue to be safe and keep focused on the last remaining days of our mission. Be alert of your surroundings; adhere to every safety policy and guidance given by the Command. Don't get complacent and forget that you are Soldier still on duty, serving with honor, pride and serving until the mission is over.

I have said it once and I will say it again; our mission

doesn't end until we arrive in our own living room at home.

Battle buddies continue to take care of each other, lets all board the freedom bird together, let's all be safe and let's all go HOME. Lead from the front and continue to Soldier 24/7. Thank you for your support and thank you for making the 311th ESC the best Sustainment Command in the United States Army. God Bless you and take care, Hooah!





Los Bad Apples free-styles rap and latin music



Originally a classical pianist, Anita Benner started singing in college with the University of Texas at Austin's Brazilian Ensemble. She has since proven her songwriting skills, fusing her classical training and latin jazz roots with electronica and hip hop. Her voice has an "unwavering golden tone, remarkable agility, and utterly unpretentious honesty."



Warrant Officer 1 Jose Ahumada, 311th ESC G1, watches Zeale, a freestyle battle emcee, make his presence felt at Camp Arifjan Feb. 15.



(Left) Eight Majors - as well as two Sgt. 1st Classes - face their sponsors before receiving their promotions Feb. 7. The gold to silver ceremony was held at the post theater. The newly promoted Soldiers are Lt. Col. Donald Blue, Chaplain (Lt. Col.) James Bray, Lt. Col. Vamin Cha, Lt. Col. Paul Cuyler, Lt. Col. Daniel Ellis, Lt. Col. Eric Evans, Lt. Col. Eric Hoggard, Lt. Col. Kevin West, Master Sgt. Robert Bodeman and Master Sgt. Sharen Calvin.

Log Warriors Deliver on Successful Logistics Mission

By Maj. Belinda May
311th Sustainment Command
SPO - DIB

Readiness

Back in June 2007, when the 311th was still reorganizing into an ESC, it was called upon to deploy to support Operation Iraqi Freedom. The command quickly began planning, studying its deployed mission, and preparing unit personnel and equipment for the mission ahead. The 311th had to grow and fill its ranks, and train over a hundred new Soldiers along with existing members to function as a cohesive unit.

Throughout the fall and winter of 2007-2008, the primary scope of work for the six months leading up to the unit's deployment was to train and build a team of logistic "log" warriors. After months of hard work and training, the 311th was finally ready to deploy and departed for Southwest Asia on April 20, 2008.

Soldiers were immediately engaged in taking over logistic operations the day after hitting ground at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, on April 23, 2008, when they reported to their new work stations. During the deployment, the command's Soldiers rapidly learned new skills and adapted to their diverse wartime mission.

Mission

The 311th's mission was complex, requiring mastery of many different logistic skills. The command was responsible for coordinating concurrent, multiple, large-scale supply transport operations and tracking convoy movements between Kuwait and the combat environment of Iraq. The 311th commanded Navy, as well as Army logistics units and forces in Kuwait. Its Soldiers managed many contracts to support the re-supply of combat operations in Iraq and part of Afghanistan. The command also supported deploying and redeploying U.S. and international (Coalition) forces, including the movement of person-

nel and equipment into and out of Kuwait. Finally, the command provided support services to U.S. military units based in Kuwait, as well as received, housed, fed, trained and transported transient U.S. military and Coalition forces.

The successful accomplishment of the command's enormous logistics mission relied heavily on the diligent and dedicated efforts of its Soldiers, often working long hours, seven days a week and subordinate logistic units, to sustain the war fighters. The 311th's multi-functional Support Operations (SPO) section performed a large portion of the unit's mission, including land, sea and air movement operations, heavy equipment and vehicle tracking and maintenance operations, and the critical coordination and transport of food, fuel, equipment, supplies and ammunition.

Accomplishments

Sustainment (Transport of Supplies and Equipment) Operations

- Managed and distributed over 35,000 tons of ammunition, ensuring a steady supply to the war fighters in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Distributed over 250 million gallons of aircraft and diesel fuel, and 20 million gallons of gasoline to the fuel supply sites throughout Kuwait and Iraq; fuel convoys destined for Iraq amounted to over 32,500 tanker truck loads.
- Delivered over 17,500 refrigerated container truck (Reefer) loads with perishable food to camps in Iraq and Kuwait, as well as other rations that provided over 22 million meals per month.
- Transported over 4,100 Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles from Kuwait to camps in Iraq.

- Ensured proper management of nearly 150 logistic and maintenance contracts for goods and services amounting to over 3.2 billion dollars, to support the war fighters.

- Tracked the movement of over 229,500 tons (set on 117, 500 large standard-sized pallets) of assorted air cargo to support U.S. military forces within theater.

- Directed over 4,500 convoys, averaging 30-32 trucks per convoy, using over 120,000 flat bed, heavy equipment transport system (HETS) and tanker trucks that traveled over 64 million miles roundtrip to sustain U.S. and Coalition forces in Kuwait and Iraq.

- Tracked over 100 types of high visibility items, including over 3000 vehicles and pieces of equipment, moving within theater from U.S. military units to departure points en route to repair site locations.

- Delivered 5,800 empty "semi" trailer-sized containers, off-loaded over 17,000 containers and transferred 6,500 containers to support supply and equipment movements in Kuwait and Iraq.

- Tracked and coordinated the movements of 64 military and commercial cargo vessels, including Army watercraft, that conducted over 90 missions, transporting 1,400 vehicles and pieces of equipment to ports within theater.

Deployment and Redeployment Operations

- Deployed or redeployed over 25 brigade combat teams (averaging 2,500 Soldiers), six combat aviation brigades, seven division headquarters, and seven Coalition forces brigades through the Kuwait-based main theater gateway and Coalition task force operations.

See Mission on page 7



SUPER BOWL FUN



Servicemembers listen to President Barack Obama at the Camp Arifjan, Kuwait post theater give thanks to the fighting men and women in our Armed Services for their efforts all over the world, and to let them know that he and the American men and women back home are thinking of them during this year's Super Bowl. Sodas and coffee kept many awake during the early morning hours along with several revelers jumping up and yelling for their team. In the foreground, Steeler fans wear homemade helmets labeled with their favorite player's numbers.



At halftime Morale, Welfare and Recreation gave away prizes from a free raffle with gifts donated by the post exchange. Somehow the only winners from the 311th ESC were Chaplains (Maj. and Lt. Col.) James Bray and Milton Herring. Maybe good guys always do win.



Free food and drink from local AAFES vendors sits hot and ready for consumption throughout the early morning hours.

Mission, from page 5

- Supported over 3,800 Inter-Theater air flights that moved over 311,000 personnel and about 9,000 Intra-Theater flights that moved nearly 1.1 million personnel, of which approximately 250,000 were on Rest and Recuperation, via the theater's largest gateway operation.

- Task Force Gator, the Coalition partner processing operation in Kuwait managed by 311th and subordinate unit staff, deployed and redeployed



22,200 Coalition partner personnel; shipped nearly 2000 pieces of Coalition equipment; trained 7,500 Coalition personnel from 13 of the 27 represented countries; supplied uniforms and equipment to 15,000 Coalition personnel from U.S. military supply points in Kuwait; and hosted 40 distinguished visitors, consisting of senior military and political leaders from 17 Coalition countries.

Command Staff Support Services

- G4 completed twelve major construction projects valued at \$5.9 million, including Tactical Operation Centers, Large Area Maintenance Shelters, Unit Motor Pools and Unit Arms Rooms; inventoried over 2,200 subordinate unit wheeled vehicles, as well as \$2 million in unit



property assets; audited over \$29 million in U.S. military purchases, enabling the command to defer \$45,000 in expenditures; and managed the \$35 million food service contract for Kuwait that fed U.S. military, Coalition and civilian contractor personnel.

- G5 led the planning team for the inaugural "Friendship One" exercise--the first exercise since Desert Storm, in which U.S. and Saudi Arabian military forces conducted maneuvers together; this combined joint exercise, was designed to promote regional security and improve international military cooperation.

- G6 completed over 20 communication system projects that totaled over \$1.3 million; managed the maintenance of 11 network servers and associated tactical communication equipment; created a 600 gigabyte SharePoint backup System Recovery Plan; set up three video conference systems; implemented the network architecture of the Army Battle Command Systems (ABCS); and installed the first Command Post of the Future (CPOF) repository in Kuwait.

- G8 managed \$300 million in contracts including critical Support Operations (SPO) projects, activities and contracted items; audited government purchase card accounts with expenditures totaling over \$2 million; and coordinated Self-Service Supply Center (SSSC) accounts that supported all deployed units under Army Central Command (ARCENT).

- G9 coordinated humanitarian supply convoy missions that moved over 14 containers of much needed aid from the Kuwait Humanitarian Operations Center (HOC) to Iraq for distribu-



tion to Iraqi people; arranged for the donation and distribution of 1200 wheelchairs to hospitals and clinics in Iraq through the California-based "Free Wheelchair Program"; coordinated the movement of medical supplies from Kuwait into Iraq, through the Defense Re-utilization Marketing Service (DRMS); and promoted the participation of local corporate, international, governmental and non-governmental aid organizations and individual donors.

- The Safety Team operated a combined office supporting both 311th and its higher headquarters personnel, as well as all members of the five U.S. military camp communities in Kuwait; implemented risk management strategies for convoy operations; mandated safety training

to reduce accidents in the joint service environment; and included civilian contractors and third country nationals (TCNs) employed by the many camp life support activities, in the preparation of safety plans, information and guidance.

- The Unit Ministry Team provided guidance and spiritual support to over 1,560 service members, who sought religious counsel during the deployment; organized and administered various religious services to personnel at all five Kuwait camps; conducted convoy prayers; taught awareness of Strong Bonds; assisted the Theater Mortuary Evacuation Point (TMEP),



which conducted multiple 24-hour duty days and ramp ceremonies for fallen service members; and trained and mentored ten religious support teams among the 311th's subordinate units.

- Staff Judge Advocate (SJA) assisted 311th and supported unit Soldiers in applying for citizenship through the first Army Reserve Naturalization Program implemented in Kuwait.

- The Command hosted the inaugural Kuwaiti Appreciation Day — an event that promoted positive host nation relations — on Nov. 22, 2008, featuring an exciting Kuwait versus



See Deployment on page 10

STRONG, from page 1

the 'warfighters'. In addition to being mission ready, it brings value to the individual and to their family. It is not just about exercising and getting into shape. It is about eating right, getting the right amount of sleep, managing stress, stimulating the mind, extending yourself, thinking about getting healthy – physically, mentally, spiritually ...

Call to Action!

Everyone improves! That has been and is the call to action for deployed Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Civilians, Contractors, and Family Members. After 11 months of exercising the concept of "balanced well-being" – strengthening oneself in Body, Mind, Spirit, and Environment – the team determined that the program can be shared with family members and applied

to one's time before or after a deployment.

The benefits that can accrue from the STRONG program include a sense of accomplishment, Quality of Life, improved health, more educated, more marketable, better trained, less stressed, happier outlook on life.

This has been a program to help deployed personnel cope with the stresses of the deployed environment.

Keeping it Going!

Just like our motto - Sustain the Fight! – our individual personal challenge upon redeployment will be to maintain and sustain the positive improvements each Soldier and civilian has made while deployed. The potential exists for the returning deployed personnel to share these ideas with their family members.



"I've transformed my health and fitness level with CrossFit (www.crossfit.com) and had the pleasure to do the same for others. 1LT Shults was my main partner-in-crime. I'll never forget the day we put on the body armor & kevlar to do 20 minutes of pull-ups, push-ups, and squats in 110 degree heat. It was a whole new level of suck. Staff Sgt. Soto of G2 turned into quite the athlete ... maxing his two mile run at 13:12 and blowing away his previous lifts."

~ Maj. John Maloney



"I volunteered to deploy with the 311th ESC. Though my wife didn't want me to go, she stayed strong and stuck by me. She knows I did it for the family's benefit and love of country. After 12 years of duty and nine years in the civilian sector I can honestly say the Army and the 311th ESC have shown more concern for the welfare of families than any other organization. Now that I plan on getting out of the military, my wife, two small boys and daughter will be my main focus as I move ahead."

~ Staff Sgt. W. Watson Martin



"When we started getting ready for this deployment with Mobilization Training at Ft. Hunter-Liggett in Feb. 2008, I weighed 245 lbs. I have been working out and watching my diet since. Before our deployment from Fort Bragg, I had lost a total of 19 pounds. I arrived in Kuwait weighing 226 pounds. At weigh-in after my last APFT in Nov., I weighed 188 pounds. APFT is much easier to do now, especially when you are not carrying around an extra 50-plus pounds."

~ Master Sgt. James Horn

Video greetings go around the world

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait -- Families and friends of deployed servicemembers all over the world now have a reason to celebrate; they can see their loved ones on television wishing them greetings.

The 311th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Public Affairs Office partnered with the broadcasters of the 4th Sustainment Brigade's Public Affairs team, from Fort Hood, Texas, to provide a venue for troops to broadcast their love and wishes to their moms, wives, and significant others from Kuwait.

Sgt. 1st Class Erick Ritterby, a native of Phoenix, Ariz., and the chief of Public Affairs for the "Wrangler" Brigade, spearheaded the effort.

"I feel I'm providing a great service to the Soldiers of the [311th ESC] by helping them deliver greetings back home to their loved ones," he said. "It might be a small part, but it's a part. At the end of the day, if one of those greetings play on TV back home and a mother, wife or significant other sees it, it has all been worth it."

Recording greetings and sending them back home isn't a new idea. The armed services have given service members overseas a chance to send greetings home for the past 24 years.

Yet the 4th Sus Bde is doing something new and improved.

"The idea to do shout-outs is something the last public affairs group did. The idea was passed on to us while conducting the transition to take over the PA mission in Kuwait," said Ritterby.

"The last group had success, especially during major holidays, but the 4th Sus Bde PA is taking it one step further by focusing on smaller holidays and exposing the units' Soldiers and Airmen to more local TV stations," said Ritterby.

"Saying a greeting brings me closer to my mom and gives her peace of mind," said Sgt. Sheila Rivera, an administrative sergeant under the 4th Sus Bde. "It allows my mom to see me and see that I'm doing ok," said Rivera, a member with Joint Logistics Task Force 28 from Manheim, Germany.

"I think it's great," said Lt. Col. Christopher Benoit, the commander of JLTF 28. "It's important for Soldiers to communicate with their families; it gives them something to talk about when their loved ones tell them they saw their servicemember on TV."

"It feels good to be able to send a shout-out to my mom," said Spc. Keith Mravlja, a native of Plythe, Ga., and a signal support systems specialist with the 4th Sus Bde, "I didn't expect to be able to do a greeting while deployed; I'm glad I did it, because it's a surprise gift for my mom and really, it's



Sgt. 1st Class Erick Ritterby, NCOIC of the 4th SB PA team, shoots holiday greetings on the outdoor stage at Camp Virginia, Kuwait.

just another way for them to see me and for me to communicate with my parents."

The 311th ESC's unique mission of supplying the war fight in the Central Command area of operations, allows all services to participate in this unique way of reaching back home to their family.

"I've never done this before," said Airmen 1st Class Jose Sanchez, a native of Freemont, Calif., with the 60th Security Squadron from Travis Air Force Base, "I was nervous but I wanted my mother to see my face, to show her that I'm doing ok."

"This is a first for us. The 4th Sustainment Brigade has never had a PA section quite like it has right now, and it has never had the capability to reach the amount of Americans back home that we can reach now through shout-outs and through Dept. of Defense marketing efforts," said Ritterby.

"The public affairs capability used to end at the internal audience, but now PA units have the capability to reach any audience worldwide, especially back home in America," he said.

"When a family sees the servicemember on TV, it's a huge morale boost for the family and especially the servicemember because he knows now that he can do more than just call, it's good for the American populace to see the servicemember in a positive light," said Ritterby.

"It helps PA promote and support the armed services," he said. "When the American public sees our Soldiers and Airmen doing greetings, it's nothing but good things for the [311th ESC] and the Army."

www.dvidshub.net/units/311ESC

Deployment, from page 7

311th ESC "Blue Devils" soccer match; during the deployment to Kuwait, the Command also received 67 distinguished visitors.

The year-long deployment to Kuwait in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom was an exciting and challenging time for the 311th. In addition to overcoming the challenges of a new work and living environment, and a mission that expanded with more operational demands, 311th Soldiers still managed to find ways to improve logistic support processes, making them more efficient, responsive and cost-effective. The result was millions of dol-

lars in cost-savings for Support Operations and command purchases, and streamlined staff required to conduct operations.

In the summer of 2008, despite encountering several severe dust storms, called shamals, that caused movement delays from roads and air travel being shut down, as a result of the blinding windblown dust, the command was able to complete vital transport missions. Timely adjustments implemented around the dust storms--but always with safety factored into the planned missions--enabled the resumption of movement of critical supplies to the war fighters. Throughout the deployment, the 311th's log warriors continued to "sustain the fight"-- words that had

become the unit's motto.

By the end of the deployment, Soldiers of the 311th had become highly productive and successful log warriors, meeting or exceeding the expectations of the command's higher headquarters. The command had grown--in terms of knowledge and experience--and learned many valuable lessons in the process. The command's performance as the first ESC to manage theater logistics in the Kuwait area of responsibility laid the groundwork for sustainment and deployment/redeployment operations for future ESCs to follow. The 311th, which had deployed as an ESC for the first time, had become one of the most well-trained ESCs in the Army Reserve.

Yellow Ribbon Program Benefits Soldiers and Families

By Col. Marlene Summers
311th Sustainment Command
Assistant Chief of Staff, G1

A new program is here to help Army Reserve members released from active duty to return to normal civilian pursuits with their families, their jobs and other pursuits of happiness.

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program is designed to help Soldiers refocus on their loved ones following deployment.

The 2008 National Defense Authorization Act authorized establishment of the YRRP to begin this year. This combat veteran reintegration initiative provides military members and their families information, services, referrals and outreach opportunities.

The program is designed to facilitate access to services that support the health and well-being of Army Reserve members and their families.

The events provide a forum for members and their families to address negative behavior related to combat stress and transition. Soldiers who attend will be paid commensurate with their rank to attend the activity.

Games and other special youth

attractions will be available to the children of Soldiers attending each Yellow Ribbon event.

A large number of state and federal agencies will take part in each session. Representatives from different agencies will be present to discuss employment opportunities. Financial planners, transitional advisors and licensed clinical social workers will also be available.

Family members have been invited to attend a one day activity, Event 4, in Los Angeles on March 7 whose registration cut off date was Feb. 25.

Those who live outside of 50 miles will travel on March 6 and 8. Invitational orders for two family members per Soldier will be funded by the hosting RRC. The point of contact for the 311th ESC is Ms. Theresa Olson at (310) 235-4223 or email at theresa.olson@usar.army.mil for more information. She is working with the 63rd RRC on our behalf.

For events 5 through 7 registrations need to be done BOTH on line at the website provided AND with Ms. Olson. If you have given your information to Capt. White, he will relay the information to Ms. Olson.

Ms. Olson does not have visibility of the on line registrations. Without our input to her, she cannot plan appropriately for the proper numbers. This is crucial for the child

care portion.

Capt. White will be available until released from active duty and then will try to come back on temporary orders to continue to assist.

If you plan to attend a session sponsored by another RRC instead of the 63rd, you need to coordinate with the POC found on the website next to the event.

Soldiers should try to attend the event closest to their home of record.

Phases need to be taken in sequence -- Phase 5, Phase 6, then Phase 7. If a Soldier takes longer than 90 days to complete these three phases, that is understandable due to conflicts created with Battle Assemblies and phase dates.

Phase 5 and 6 are for Soldiers and/or two family members. Phase 7 is for Soldiers only. If you have problems with the website contact Capt. White or Ms. Olson.

All Soldiers are required to complete Phases 5 - 7.

Schedules of events can be found by clicking below:

<https://www.arfp.org/yellowribbon>
(Then click on Post-Deployment Events)

Leave those trophies behind

Provided by 311th ESC Safety Office

So you're about to leave the combat zone for home. Your tour is over and you want a souvenir of your time in the desert. But maybe you're not sure what constitutes an "appropriate" memento from Operation Enduring or Iraqi Freedom.

While shopping for souvenirs, think about what your wife or husband will say (or scream). That life-sized brass camel statue that looked so attractive in the bazaar will get through customs but most likely won't pass home inspection. If you can imagine your spouse exclaiming, "There's no way you're bringing that thing into my house," you might want to reconsider your selection.

All kidding aside, there are some trophies you simply cannot bring back to the United States. These banned items might seem obvious to anyone blessed with common sense, but as we all know, common sense really isn't that common. Here's a partial list of contraband that CANNOT be brought back from overseas.

■ Sand. Southwest Asia currently is experiencing a critical shortage of sand - not even one grain can be spared! Besides, there's a real threat that the spirit of an ancient warrior king lives in the sand and will hurt you bad. The king's spirit isn't the only thing living in the sand that can

hurt you either. Just imagine all those microorganisms.

■ Weapons. An assault rifle is an excellent and even necessary item to have in the combat zone, but not so much back home. Your neighbors might be impressed with your new AK-47, but local law enforcement authorities likely will be even more impressed.

■ Ammunition, explosives, and unexploded ordnance. The term "dud" is commonly used to identify UXO, but it also applies to anyone challenged enough to play around with it. But don't worry, bomb-sniffing dogs at customs will find it if you "forget" to leave it.

■ Cuban cigars. Anything that tastes this good has to be either illegal or bad for you. Cuban cigars are both.

■ Pets. Prohibited pets includes grasshoppers, lizards, camel spiders, scorpions, snakes and anything else that can make you say "ouch!" Whether they're dead or alive, squished, stuffed or encased in plastic, there's no earthly reason why you need a sand viper. And admit it—the whole time you were deployed, all you thought about was home. The desert is their home.

Hopefully these hints will help you find a safe and tasteful souvenir that'll pass a customs search with flying colors. Selecting the right memento will lead to years of pleasant memories, something you'll cherish long after the sand flea bites heal.

311th ESC Blue Devils play Kuwaiti Ministry of Interior on Feb. 14 at Camp Arifjan



Final score was 4-2. MOI won.



Both teams gather for a group portrait along with their sponsors and senior leadership before the game began. The Blue Devils were scheduled to play MOI Feb. 28 but a dust storm interrupted.

Patience makes it easier for us

By Capt. Peter J. Amara, HHC
Commander, 311th ESC

As the HHC, 311th ESC (forward) prepares to redeploy home, amongst many things the topic of reintegration takes center stage. The country has changed since we left in the spring of 2008. How will we adjust to life with your families? How about life in your communities? The Army prepares us with a lot of pieces to reintegrating someone back to their family and their community. We can make sure the Soldier is back up to speed with everything before they go back in the workplace as well as all the other typical Army requirements.

The real bonus is that family, friends and care-givers can take care of their loved ones and let them know they are appreciated and to identify individual things that they can fix and assist with. Our Log Warriors are owed a great deal for being deployed and carrying our nation's heaviest burdens during this long war.

It is difficult on the entire family when a loved one is deployed, but the time after that

father, mother, husband, or wife returns home is often the most challenging of all. During the redeployment seminars here at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, the Chaplain Team talked about taking advantage of what Strong Bonds has to offer; where families will have opportunities to strengthen and renew their relationships, and participate in fun, family-focused activities.

To the friends and families of these Log Warriors, reintegrating in the first few days is not going to be easy. When your friend, family, or spouse is gone, it is easy to romanticize everything. You may be the greatest couple that ever existed and you never fought and life was always flowers and sausages. And then he or she comes home, and you realize you had forgotten the little things that have bugged you for several years. It may be little habits like falling asleep in the middle of your conversations, or going to sleep during the most random times of the day and you will think it was something you were doing wrong, or it is a lack of interest in talking to you. I guarantee you that it is more than that. For our married couples, decisions such as taking leave, where to go, what to do,

would become stressful because it is the first thing you would have to do as a couple again. You will get frustrated with each other because you are not agreeing on everything. When this happens, smaller things will rob you the wrong way.

Reintegration is a tricky thing, even for solid couples. You may like the same movies, the same music, the same foods, the same TV shows, get along great and rarely bicker. But reintegration is hard for everyone. There are so many different stressors – learning to share the house again, dealing with extended family who wants to be included in the homecoming, catching up on a year of your life, and then, maybe, you have to add children to the mix too. Needless to say that having too much on your plate those first few days will not be easy. For my Log Warrior heroes returning home and their family and friends, I ask that everyone take it one day at a time, and I hope that we all start experiencing some sort of normalcy as each day goes by.



Army Achievement Medal and Army Commendation Medal recipients receive awards at 8 am followed by Bronze Star Medal and Meritorious Service Medal recipients at 10 am.

1st Sgt. Stacy White - energizer man - receives his MSM from 311th ESC commander, Brig. Gen. William D. Frink.



Awards ceremony on Feb. 24



**Sgt. Maj. William Cushard of G3 operations receives his MSM from Brig. Gen. William D. Frink. "Lead me, follow me, or get out of my way."
-- GEN George S. Patton**