

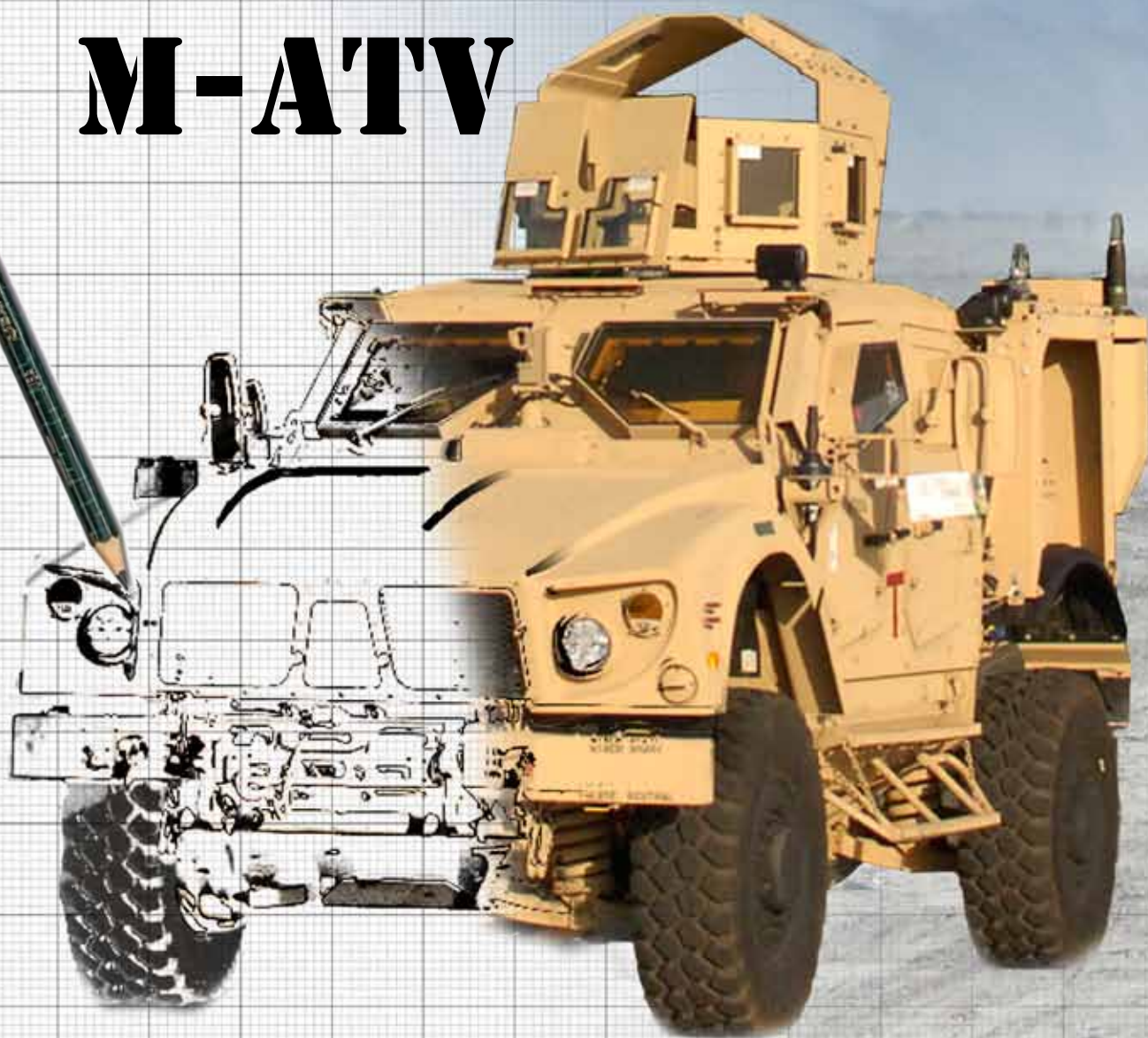


# The Desert Voice

Third Army/United States Army Central  
"Ready Tonight ... Sustain The Fight ... Shape The Future"

October 14, 2009

## M-ATV



**Coming to a theater  
near you!**

# DV

## Table of Contents

**Page 4**

One Million Miles

**Page 5**

Third Army's new plan

**Page 6**

M-ATV lands in  
Afghanistan

**Page 10**

CFC kicks off

**Page 11**

Strykers new look

**Page 12**

Minn. NG MRAPs



## On the cover

See full story on Page 6

Photoillustration of the new MRAP M-ATV  
by Sgt. Daniel Lucas

## 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).



THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
WASHINGTON, THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Dear Service Members and Department of Defense Civilians Serving Overseas:

It is a privilege and an honor to serve again as the chair of the Department of Defense Combined Federal Campaign-Overseas (DoD CFC-O). The CFC-O is your annual opportunity to support the charities that are meaningful to you.

United States service members, DoD civilians and family members have answered our nation's call, serving every day in defense of the freedoms we enjoy as Americans. You have seen firsthand the hardships people endure around the globe. In addition to your committed service, many of you gave generously to the 2008 campaign raising more than \$15.8 million for people in need.

The funds raised through the CFC-O support many national and international participating charities, as well as your own overseas Family Support and Youth Programs (FSYP). Funds given to FSYP totaled nearly \$700,000 in 2008 and support quality of life programs in your local military community.

This year's CFC-O Charity Listing contains more than 2,000 participating organizations that support important causes that are close to our hearts. I know at one time or another, some of these charities may have helped you, your family or a friend. The CFC-O theme, *Make a World of Difference*, underscores that our shared contributions can make the world a better place.

Please join me in donating to the charity or charities of your choice. Giving to the campaign is easy – you can donate via cash, check, payroll deduction or credit card. It is a wonderful feeling to know that you have helped someone in need.

Thank you for your service to our Nation and for your support of the CFC-O.

Sincerely,



Robert M. Gates

# DV

The  
Desert  
Voice

Volume 31, Issue 4

The Desert Voice is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents of the Desert Voice are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government or Department of the Army. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the U.S. Army Central Public Affairs Office. This magazine is published by Al-Qabandi United, a private firm, which is not affiliated with USARCENT. All copy will be edited. The Desert Voice is produced weekly by the 20th Public Affairs Detachment.

Find us online at [www.arcent.army.mil](http://www.arcent.army.mil).

Third Army Commanding General  
Lt. Gen. William G. Webster  
Third Army Command Sgt. Maj.  
Command Sgt. Maj. John D. Fourhman  
Third Army Public Affairs Officer  
Col. Gerald O'Hara  
Third Army Public Affairs Sgt. Maj.  
Sgt. Maj. Brian Thomas  
Third Army Deputy PAO (FWD)  
Lt. Col. Martha Brooks

203rd Public Affairs Detachment Commander  
Capt. Tracey Frink  
20th Public Affairs Detachment Sergeant  
Sgt. 1st Class Jennifer Rothfus  
203rd Public Affairs Detachment  
Print Team  
Sgt. Daniel Lucas  
Sgt. David Nunn  
Spc. Monte Swift  
Spc. Brandon Babbitt

<http://www.youtube.com/user/dvidshub?blend=2&ob=1>





# Make half your grains whole



**Y**ou have probably heard recommendations to eat more whole grains. With many marketing terms like “multigrain”, “natural”, and “heart-healthy”, it is hard to know what is a whole grain and what is not.

A whole grain is the whole kernel of wheat, oats, rice, corn, barley, quinoa, sorghum, rye and spelt. This means that the bran and germ are both still present in the food. Whole grains contain naturally occurring iron, B vitamins, Vitamin E, and magnesium. When a grain is refined to make products like white flour or white rice, these nutrients are lost. Many grains in our food supply are enriched with several vitamins and minerals, but most or all of the fiber is removed. About a quarter of the protein is also lost when the bran and germ are removed. Whole grains, like fruits and vegetables, con-



**Capt. Kate Schrumm R.D.**  
**U.S. Army Central Surgeon's Office**

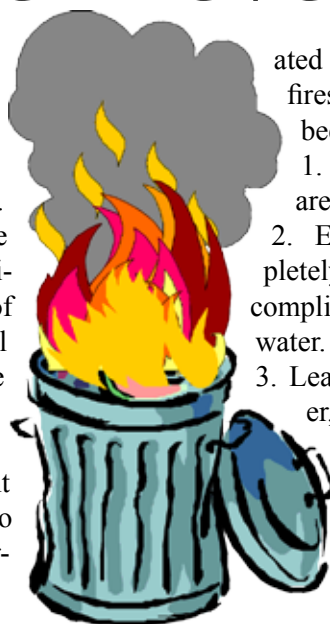
tain antioxidants and phytochemicals which are two nutrients that fight diseases.

Individuals who eat more whole grains have a lower risk of obesity, heart disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes. Some whole grains available to us include breakfast cereals, oatmeal, whole wheat bread, granola bars, and popcorn – just watch the butter and salt. Look for the word “whole” among the first few ingredients on the food label. The current recommendation is to make “half of your grains whole” meaning that if you eat 6 servings of grains per day, at least 3 of those should be whole grains. To learn more and find ways to include more whole grains in your diet, visit [www.wholegraincouncil.org](http://www.wholegraincouncil.org) or visit the grains page of [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov). <sup>A</sup>

## National Fire Prevention Month

**O**ctober 2009 is National Fire Prevention Month. It is interesting to note that during the first nine months of 2009, dumpster fires were the most numerous type of ARCENT fire occurring within Kuwait.

As of 16 September, 50 dumpster fires were reported and extinguished on ARCENT facilities throughout Kuwait. The vast majority of those fires resulted from the improper disposal of smoking materials. Depending upon the contents of the particular dumpster, dumpster fires have the potential to pose a significant danger to personnel, vehicles and government property. Most dumpsters are not designed to withstand the high temperatures that are gener-



ated by dumpster fires. Those numerous dumpster fires were preventable if the following practices had been followed:

1. Smoke only in designated, approved smoking areas.
2. Ensure that your cigarette or cigar butt is completely extinguished before disposal. This can be accomplished by extinguishing with available sand or water.
3. Leave the extinguished butt in an approved container, such as a butt can, provided for that purpose. Keep your own safety and that of your comrades in mind while smoking and your caution may prevent personnel injury or property damage. <sup>A</sup>



**Ready Tonight**  
**Sustain the Fight**  
**Shape the Future**  
**Third Army/U.S. Army Central**

1,000,000  
Miles...  
and counting



**Putting reflective tape on the steps leading into the cargo compartment of a MRAP shows the attention to detail soldiers deployed with Third Army show the mindset that keeps the Soldiers safe while operating around the vehicle.**

**Article and Photos by  
Sgt. Robert D Walden  
115th Fires Brigade**

The Security Force and Convoy Security components of the 115th Fires Brigade from Cheyenne Wyo. reached a major milestone Sept. 18 by traveling over one million miles throughout Kuwait and Iraq during their deployment without any serious injuries.

"One million mission miles in less than 60 days on mission, while maintaining an equipment readiness rate throughout the brigade in excess of 90 percent is a huge success," said Sgt. Maj. William N. Frost, operations Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge, Headquarters, Headquarters Battery, 115th Fires Brigade. "The vast majority of these miles are driven at night while escorting large convoys that [in the past] have experienced accidents, medical emergencies and the occasional Improvised Explosive Device.

The Soldiers attribute their safety record to constant training and avoiding complacency.

"We review battle drills and have safety briefs before every mission," said Staff Sgt. Shawn M. Hauf, a convoy commander, 2-300 FA from the Wyoming National Guard. "There's always something we are training on to better ourselves and stay prepared so that we can come home safe."

After every mission, the Soldiers in the convoy meet to

discuss the scenarios they faced and point out the good and bad. They talk about how they could have done things differently to improve the situation and compile this information into an After Action Report. These reports are used to determine training needs and to establish standard operating procedures.

"You learn from each mission because they are all different," said Hauf. "We escort different trucks, and the terrain and weather change. The training we do on our off time is to better us and will defeat complacency."

The 115th FiB mileage started accumulating the end of July when the individual units completed their Relief in Place training with the unit they replaced from the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Hawaii National Guard.

"Within the first 30 days, we realized we were accumulating mission miles at an unbelievable rate," said Frost. "When we started totaling the mileage early after the RIP, the magnitude of the mileage we would accumulate became evident."

The 1-151 FA from the Minnesota National Guard, the 2-300 FA from Wyoming National Guard, and A Company, 960 Brigade Support Battalion from the Wyoming National Guard are the units conducting convoy security. The 1-147 FA from the South Dakota National Guard and the 151 Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear from the Alabama National Guard conduct Security Force missions.



Only the security force and convoy security mission mileage is counted in the brigade's million miles. This does not count the miles driven from the separate companies conducting other missions. Travel from commanders and staff members for administrative reasons is excluded as well.


The mechanics performing maintenance on the vehicles have also made a significant contribution to the brigade's first million miles.

"They put 200 to 1000 miles on a vehicle and we spend about four hours checking it out and doing repairs," said Sgt. 1st Class Albert R. Marcus, motor sergeant, 1-151 FA. "If its broke, we fix it. If it needs a new engine, we just replace the engine. If it needs springs, we replace the springs."

"As a rule, we have the vehicles ready by the time the crew is ready to go out again for their next mission," said Marcus.

According to Frost, the brigade will exceed four million miles during the deployment at the current rate of missions. However, the number of convoys is expected to increase due to the responsible drawdown in Iraq.

"Safety will have to be the Soldiers highest priority in completing these missions," said Frost. "The next goal will be for each of the individual units to achieve a million miles."

"This is a big deal for the mechanics as well. If they don't keep the vehicles running we wouldn't have achieved this million mile mark, and we won't reach future goals," explained Frost. 



*Above: Pfc. Justin Sirek, a humvee gunner with the 1-151 FA, Minnesota National Guard, prepares the vehicle by washing the windows before departing on a mission at Camp Virginia, Kuwait.*

*Below: Pfc. Aaron C. Thoreson, a mechanic with the 1-151 FA from Madison, Minnesota, repairs the air conditioning on a humvee at Camp Buehring, Kuwait.*



# New kid on the block



Article by Spc. Monte Swift  
203rd Public Affairs Detachment  
Photos by Senior Airman Susan Tracy

The U.S. Army received the first two of 5,244 Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All Terrain Vehicles, the Military's newest addition to the family of Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles, in Afghanistan early October to support combat operations in Afghanistan's difficult, mountainous terrain.

The M-ATV features the same life-saving, v-shaped hull that has proven to be successful defending against Improvised Explosive Devices on the larger MRAPs, but in a smaller, Humvee-sized package. They will eventually be dispersed between Army, Marine Corps, Navy and Air Force troops serving in Operation Enduring Freedom.

The first M-ATVs were delivered to troops in Afghanistan just three months after the first contract was awarded to

the Oshkosh Corporation and one year since the requirement was identified. The need to produce the M-ATV came from a requirement for a smaller, more maneuverable MRAP to travel off-road and navigate the mountainous terrain.

"So we have pulled out all the stops to collapse the schedule and get these vehicles into theater," said Brig. Gen. Michael Brogan, Commander, Marine Corps Systems Command and Joint Program Executive Officer of the MRAP Program. "We are doing everything that's required to ensure that they are safe, that the risk assessments are complete, that they're fully integrated and flown into Afghanistan."

According to Marine Corps Systems Command, the M-ATVs will support small-unit combat operations in highly restricted rural, mountainous and urban environments that





include mounted patrols, reconnaissance, security, convoy protection, communications, command and control, and combat service support. It is designed to replace the up-armored Humvee in Afghanistan carrying up to five personnel – four plus a gunner.

Only one version, comparable to the Cat 1 MRAP but more maneuverable, is planned for Afghanistan. The M-ATV is a separate category within the MRAP family of vehicles due to their off-road capabilities and smaller size which is necessary due to the lack of established roads and bridges in the Afghanistan theater of operations. It will be used to complement other tactical vehicles, including MRAPs, already in country.

The M-ATVs off-road capabilities lie in its lighter weight and independent suspension system that allows for 16 inches of wheel travel. The TAC-4 system developed by the Oshkosh Corporation has already seen over 400,000 miles of government durability testing and is also being used on other MRAPs.

The Military is currently working to ensure that M-ATVs coming off the line are finding their way to combat troops on the ground as soon as possible. Airlift is the fastest way to deliver MRAP and MRAP-type vehicles to the U.S. Central Command area of operations where they are most needed. Air Force cargo aircraft, including the C-5 and C-17 transport planes, and AN-124 commercial aircraft can carry M-ATVs into Afghanistan. Besides using military and commercial airlift, Navy and commercial sealift will also be used to transport M-ATV vehicles.

As with earlier MRAPs, none of the new vehicles will touch down in Kuwait on their way into theater until a significant number is fulfilling the mission in Afghanistan.

As necessary, the intra-theater transportation system will engage to bring M-ATVs to the Servicemembers. <sup>A</sup>



**Left Page:** A close up view of a “baby MRAP being unloaded off a C-17 Globemaster III. **Top Right:** A U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III loadmaster spots the driver of a Mine-Resistant, Ambush-Protected All-Terrain Vehicle as he drives it off the aircraft.



**NOW THROUGH DECEMBER 4**



**2009**

**COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN - OVER**

***Make***



**CONTACT YOUR UNIT REPRESENTATIVE**

**PULL OUT**



A close-up, high-angle shot of a soldier in a blue and grey camouflage uniform. The soldier is looking down at a document or map spread out on a green surface. The soldier's name tag, which reads "MUNDSON", is visible on their chest. The soldier's hand, wearing a ring, is visible at the bottom left, resting on the document. The background is dark and out of focus.

9

RSEAS

*e a world of difference.  
Your choice. Your Opportunity.*

VE OR VISIT

[www.cfcoverseas.org](http://www.cfcoverseas.org)

PULL OUT

# Make a difference, make a donation



Article and photo by  
Spc. Brandon Babbitt  
203rd Public Affairs Detachment

**Third Army Soldier, Spc. Ashley Belfield, Awards Clerk with Third Army's personnel office, looks through the CFC Catalogue with the assistance of her CFC Unit Representative, Staff Sgt. Shane Harman, personnel Replacement Operations NCOIC for Third Army.**

"The Combined Federal Campaign is an effort that has provided phenomenal support to those in need for many years," said Maj. Gen. Peter Vangelj, deputy commanding general, Third Army. "The impact of the contributors to CFC are felt worldwide."

The mission of CFC is to promote and support charitable donations through a program that is employee focused and effective in providing all federal employees an opportunity to improve the quality of life for those organized under a certain charity.

"In the military, we commit ourselves to serving our country. Military members support the United States and their communities in many ways," said Vangelj. "CFC provides another option for us to demonstrate our service to the nation."

CFC is the largest and most successful annual workplace charity campaign in the world. There are more than 300 national and international campaigns under CFC, which raise millions of dollars each year for approved charities. Pledges made by federal civilian, postal and military donors during the campaign season support eligible non-profit organizations that provide health and human service benefits around the globe.

Over 270 million dollars were raised last year through CFC. Some of the more popular charities for service members to give to are Wounded Warrior Project, Make A

Wish Foundation, Habitat For Humanity, and Africa AIDS Watch.


Master Gunnery Sgt. Juan Velasquez, CFC's Program Manager for Third Army, sees this opportunity as a unique way to be part of an initiative that gives back to those in need.

"This is the first time I've been tasked with this responsibility," said Velasquez. It has been a great experience working with other military members in promoting this important campaign."

With all the different charities with the campaign, Velasquez encourages military members to donate to one that they can relate to.

"We don't live in a perfect world," Velasquez said. "Try to donate to a charity that hits close to home. With about 2,000 charities to choose from, look for something that you can relate to. It will make you feel better about giving."

The easiest way for a military member to give is to complete a pledge card and request an allotment be taken out of their pay. That way, a certain amount can be given to whatever charity they select.

Other payment methods are cash, check, or an online donation with a credit card. Civilian contractors are not eligible for the program. Contact your CFC Unit Representative for more information. 



# Strykers get a tan

Article and Photos by  
Dustin Senger

## Area Support Group Qatar Public Affairs Office

Stryker armored combat vehicles will soon receive a cosmetic makeover for better concealment in Iraq and Afghanistan. The current deep green color will be phased out in favor of desert tan. The first to adopt the change was revealed inside the Stryker battle damage repair facility at Camp As Sayliyah, Qatar. It was an infantry carrier vehicle that had been restored after deterioration during enemy engagement in Iraq.


“Safeguarding soldiers is the primary purpose for this color change,” said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Peter Butts, 1st Battalion, 401st Army Field Support Brigade commander. “Strykers will blend into surroundings better. They’re less likely to stand out like silhouettes.” Produced by General Dynamics Land Systems, the eight-wheeled armored combat vehicles have been painted a foliage green color since their combat debut in 2003, supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“Talks about changing the color have been ongoing since 2004,” said Butts. “Painting this first Stryker helped us understand the necessary man hours, material needs and unit coordination to finally make it happen – it’s our proof of principle.” Every Stryker vehicle sent to the Qatar repair site will depart desert tan, once administrative requirements are complete.

Tan 686A is a paint meant for desert camouflage. It’s the same solid color covering most military equipment throughout Southwest Asia, where encountering dust storms and sand dunes are far more common than thick jungles and rolling prairies. To lighten the current tint while in sandy terrain, Central Command war fighters have relied on dust collected in the abrasive texture of the vehicle’s hull and slat armor.

The planned transition to desert tan represents the latest survivability retrofit since Stryker vehicles moved into Afghanistan this summer. Since then, GDLS welders and mechanics have installed mine protection kits, tire fire suppression kits, cameras, engine enhancements and software upgrades.

Stryker combat vehicles provide Central Command military operations with the following ten configurations: infantry carrier; command vehicle; fire support; engineer support; reconnaissance; medical evacuation; anti-tank guided missile; mortar carrier; nuclear, biological and chemical reconnaissance; and mobile gun system. Additional variants and improvement options are constantly explored by GDLS and U.S. government officials.

“This first tan vehicle is for soldiers in Afghanistan,” said Rick Hunt, GDLS site manager at the battle damage repair facility in Qatar. “Soon, everything we receive from Iraq and Afghanistan for retrofit and repairs will leave here tan.” 



*Jagadish Hajam, an auto body repairman and painter from Nepal, applies a coat of Tan 686A, a paint meant for desert camouflage, on the wheels of a Stryker armored combat vehicle inside a booth at Camp As Sayliyah, Qatar. It's the first vehicle to adopt the new desert tan color in Southwest Asia, in preparation for a planned phase out of the Stryker's current deep green color.*

# Minn. Guard relies on MRAPs for convoy escort mission



Article and Photos by  
Master Sgt. Dave Largent  
115<sup>th</sup> Fires Brigade

The Convoy Escort Teams of the 1st Battalion 151st Field Artillery, 115th Fires Brigade, are using Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles and armored Humvees to escort truck convoys from Kuwait to Iraq, ensuring Soldiers have the supplies they need.

The battalion, based in Minnesota, is finishing its second month of running the convoy security missions with safety as a primary concern for unit members when scheduling, planning and conducting their missions concerning the safety of their Soldiers, vehicles and the local population.

Using an MRAP as the lead vehicle has a lot of benefits to the Combat Escort Teams. They have enough MRAPs

to have one in each of their CETs with extra to rotate in if they have maintenance problems. They also have a couple configured as ambulances.

The escort teams use the MRAP to add to their survivability. "We need to keep our Soldiers safe and the MRAP does it," said Lt. Col. Scott Alan St. Sauver

1-151 FA Battalion Commander, Montevideo, Minn.

"My mission is long haul; we go from North to South (Iraq). The missions last anywhere from six to ten days," said St. Sauver. "We put the meanest, toughest vehicles up front. (MRAPs) are a high visibility platform, have night vision capabilities and is the most survivable platform in case of Improvised Explosive Devices," said St. Sauver.

Additional advantages are its height, Explosively Formed Projectiles and Improvised Explosive Devices are less effective against it and it's safer for the occupants with the armor it carries.

"I've got a visual of everything and my guys don't have to relay the situation back to me," said Staff Sgt. James R. Otto, CET leader, A Battery, 1-151 FA from Tracy, Minnesota.

"The MRAP is an asset we have that provides increased security and protection for our Soldiers to increase their survivability. The MRAP is a lead vehicle that can take a hit and survive. It helps our Soldiers come home safe," said Capt. Jeff M. Nelson, commander, A Battery, 1-151 FA from Zimmerman, Minnesota.

But it's not all good.

"It's a bumpy ride but I think the benefits are worth it; you definitely feel a lot safer," said Pfc. Craig A. Dokken, MRAP gunner, C Battery, 1-151 FA. He's on his second tour, both with the National Guard. Ten days is the longest mission he's been on.

The MRAPs have only been used here for the CET missions a while.

"Our predecessors (29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team based in Hawaii) received the MRAPs a couple months before we arrived," said St. Sauver.

While it takes time for the operators to learn the MRAP, it can also throw a wrench into the maintenance operations. Since it's fairly new to the Army inventory it will take some time to get the mechanics trained to repair and maintain the MRAP.

"These are a new vehicle to us; we've only been working on them since we got here," said Sgt. 1st Class Albert R. Marcus, motor sergeant, Headquarters 1-151st FA.





“Our mechanics train each other. Four of our mechanics have deployed before and they train the younger guys.”

The disadvantages are maintenance. “The added stuff is what goes wrong. It’s vehicle specific, if you take care of it and maintain it, it’s better,” said Otto.

“Once you know a vehicle, it’s a huge benefit. You recognize new sounds and know you need to check it,” he explained.

His mechanics work with the drivers who find and report the problems, so the mechanics can get them fixed.

“I’ve had small issues, nothing major. If it was serious it would take longer than a Humvee to get repaired,” said Otto. “It’s hard to get them worked on while at Forward Operating Bases because not all mechanics are familiar with MRAPs,” he added.

“The operators bring them in as good of condition as can be expected,” said Marcus. “Then the mechanics run them through inspections and repair any deficiencies to get them ready for the next mission.”

The repairs can range from changing a light bulb, to replacing the springs in the suspension system, to more major repairs.

The time goes by pretty fast because the mechanics are busy. Being a National Guard unit, the mechanics bring a lot of skills from their civilian jobs that help them with their work at Camp Buehring, according to Marcus.

“We have guys who weld, electricians, fabricators and air conditioning guys in their civilian jobs. They all use those skills from civilian jobs here,” Marcus said.

The mechanics aren’t the only ones getting high speed training.

“Here it’s the staff sergeants who are out there getting it done. The E-6s are out where the rubber meets the road,” said Nelson, it’s some of the best small unit leadership duty and training you can get. These guys are on the road anywhere from four days to ten days, some

up to two-and-a-half to three weeks. It’s a very significant responsibility for an E-5 or E-6. Truly they are the boss when they are out on the road. It’s a fantastic opportunity to develop leadership skills.”

Responsible leadership, dedicated Soldiers and good training is the key to their success.

“The key is hands on training, especially for a National Guard field artillery unit. We don’t have the MRAPs in our unit back home, so we are training everyone we can on the MRAP during our deployment.

“We do rollover training and refresher rollover training. Even after Soldiers return from leave, we do refresher training,” said St. Sauver.

“Before every mission we do Pre-Combat Checks and Pre-Combat Inspections and make sure Soldiers have done Preventative Maintenance, Checks and Services (PMCS) and help with anything we can,” said 1st Lt. Jeffrey J. Halla, platoon leader, A Battery 1-151 FA. They do the PCCs and PCIs to ensure a second set of eyes are checking equipment and personnel before sending them out on the convoys according to Halla.

According to the Soldiers of the 1-151 FA that drive and maintain MRAPs, they’re worth all the time and effort to maintain and keep them running.

“It’s the best platform to keep our crews safe. I want more of them,” said St. Sauver. **A**



Opposite Page: After completion of the Pre Combat Checks and Pre Combat Inspections an Escort Team member guides the MRAP out of the inspection area. Inset: MRAPs are washed and turned into the maintenance section after each mission. Any minor deficiencies are corrected and the vehicle is prepared for the next mission.

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## Top U.S. Troop Request Exceeds 60,000

The request for troops sent to President Barack Obama by the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan includes three different options, with the largest alternative including a request for more than 60,000 troops, according to a U.S. official familiar with the document.

Although the top option is more than the 40,000 soldiers previously understood to be the top troop total sought by Gen. Stanley McChrystal, the top U.S. officer in Kabul, 40,000 remains the primary choice of senior military brass, including Gen. McChrystal, the official said.

The details of the three scenarios were first reported by ABC News and confirmed by the U.S. official. The third option presented to Obama would be only a small increase that would keep U.S. forces largely at their year-end levels of 68,000 troops.

Gen. McChrystal has warned that the U.S. faces possible "mission failure" in Afghanistan unless it quickly sends large numbers of forces there. But the Obama administration faces growing hurdles even if it decides to go with a buildup of tens of thousands of troops.

## Nearly 25% of people worldwide are muslim

The global Muslim population stands at 1.57 billion, meaning that nearly 1 in 4 people in the world practice Islam, according to a report Wednesday billed as the most comprehensive of its kind.

The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life report provides a precise number for a population whose size has long been subject to guesswork, with estimates ranging anywhere from 1 billion to 1.8 billion.

The project, three years in the making, also presents a portrait of the Muslim world that might surprise some. For instance, Germany has more Muslims than Lebanon, China has more Muslims than Syria, Russia has more Muslims than Jordan and Libya combined, and Ethiopia has nearly as many Muslims as Afghanistan.

"This whole idea that Muslims are Arabs and Arabs are Muslims is really just obliterated by this report," said Amaney Jamal, an assistant professor of politics at Princeton University who reviewed an advance copy.

Pew officials call the report the most thorough on the size and distribution of adherents of the world's second largest religion behind Christianity, which has an estimated 2.1 billion to 2.2 billion followers.

## Preston to senior NCOs: Focus on sgts.

The Army's top enlisted soldier told senior NCOs he wants them to spend more time teaching junior sergeants how to take care of soldiers.

Sgt. Major of the Army Kenneth Preston told a roomful of high-ranking non-commissioned officers Tuesday that recent surveys have revealed that young sergeants don't know enough about what it takes to be a good NCO.

"The feedback is we have great warriors; they are combat veterans, they know how to lead a patrol ... they know how to do a four-man stack and take down the bad guys," Preston said at the 2009 Association of the United States Army's Annual Meeting and Exposition. "But back in garrison, they don't know how to take care of soldiers. They don't know to deal with situations that come up in soldiers' and their family's lives."

Eight years of war continues to create stress on the force, Preston said, describing how NCO professional development has suffered from the high operational tempo. In the past, it was commonplace for first sergeants to dedicate an hour each week toward professional development of the unit's NCOs. These short sessions covered everything from how to counsel a soldier, how to inspect a room and how to keep records on training, he said.

"This is the thing that is missing right now among our formations," Preston said. "If you want to talk about taking stress off the force and improving quality of life for all soldiers ... you've got to invest, you've got to spend that time and the best way is to teach — just to carve out a little bit of time, whether it's one hour a week for a professional development forum, that becomes absolutely critical for teaching all of our NCOs what to be, know, and do."

## House passes advance funding bill for VA

They didn't pass the 2010 veterans' budget on time — for the 20th time in 23 years — but House lawmakers took a historic vote Thursday to enact legislation that would prevent disruption from similar budget lapses in the future.

By a 409-1 vote, the House gave final approval to HR 1016, a bill that would provide funding one year in advance for veterans medical programs, starting with fiscal 2011.

Advance funding would apply to medical services and support and facility programs, but not to other portions of the VA budget. Funds for benefits such as disability compensation and the GI Bill are not subject to disruptions because they do not come from annual appropriations.





## Emergency Numbers

**Camp Arifjan**

**DSN 430-3160/ Arifjan Cell 6682-2120**

**Camp Buerhing**

**DSN 438-3224 Buerhing Cell 9720-5396**

**Camp Virginia**

**DSN 832-2559 /Virginia Cell 6705-9470**

**LSA**

**DSN 442-0189/ LSA Cell 6682-2467**

**K-Crossing**

**DSN 823-1327/ K-Crossing Cell 682-0095**

**KCIA/APOD**

**Cell 6706-0165-DSN 825-1314**

**SPOD**

**Cell 9720-5982**

**KNB**

**DSN 839-1334/ KNB Cell 6691-4967**

## NCO Spotlight

**Petty Officer 2nd Class James Campbell**  
**PAO Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group**



"Try your hardest and never give up."

Petty Officer 2nd Class James Campbell enlisted in the U.S Army in October of 2001, and attended basic training at Fort Sill, Okla. A friend convinced him to join the Navy in March of 2007. Since then the Memphis, Tenn., native has gone into the public affairs field and is now the Assistant Public Affairs Officer for the Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group in Kuwait. James has a wife, Susan, and two children; James and Connor.

## Just One Question ...

**WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE COOLEST MILITARY VEHICLE AND WHY?**



"The MRAP. It can take a beating. I have seen those get torn up and keep on moving with Soldiers still safe inside."

Staff Sgt. Jason Schiavo  
70th Medium Truck Detachment  
Seldon, New York



"The HEMMT Wrecker. They are reliable and durable, and they get you in and out of the toughest situations while providing wrecker support."

Sgt. First Class Damion Green  
First Sergeant of the Trailer  
Transfer Point Camp Arifjan  
Pittsburg, Penn.



"Either the Bradley or the 1114, because they are fast and carry the firepower you need."

Daniel Walsh  
Field Training Officer  
Nogales, Ariz.



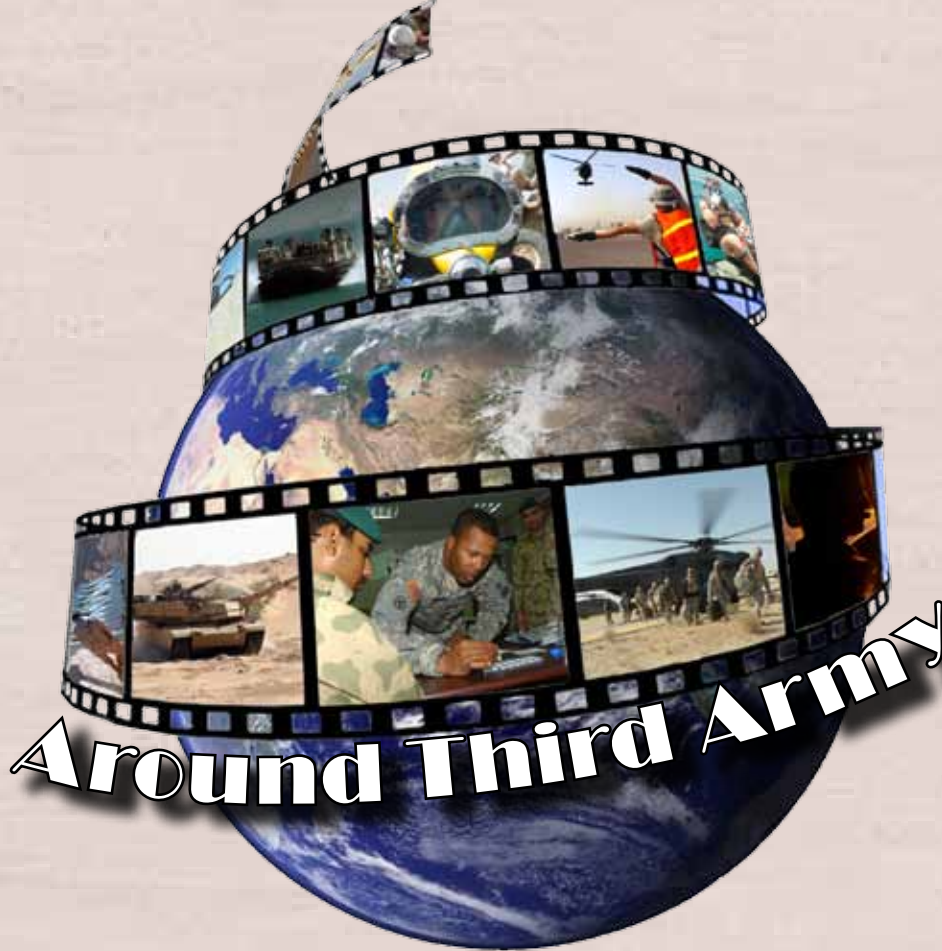
"A gun truck. It is the most tactical purpose vehicle."

Spc. Joshua Charfauos  
594th Transportation Company  
Elizabethtown, Ky.



"The HET (Heavy Equipment Transport). You can haul anything. You call us and we can haul it, and they are safe."

Staff Sgt. Demetria Holmes  
443rd Transportation Company  
Memphis, Tenn.



## ***YOUR PHOTO HERE***

*The Desert Voice plans on expanding and we want to include you and your unit! Call us at 318-430-6334 or email the editor @ [desertvoice@arifjan.arcent.army.mil](mailto:desertvoice@arifjan.arcent.army.mil)*



## ***HAPPY BIRTHDAY NAVY!***

*On October 13, 1775, meeting in Philadelphia, the Continental Congress voted to fit out two sailing vessels, armed with ten carriage guns, as well as swivel guns, and manned by crews of eighty, and sent out on a cruise of three months to intercept transports carrying munitions and stores to the British army in America. This was the original legislation out of which the Continental Navy grew and as such constitutes the birth certificate of the navy.*



## ***Coin and a farewell***

*Major Joseph Daum, Secretary of the General Staff, receives a farewell coin Oct. 6 from Brig. Gen. James Walton, Commanding General 335th Signal Command, for his fine service throughout his recent deployment.*