

2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat  
Team Forward  
Camp Buehring, Kuwait



# Striker Torch

## 24TH

EDITION 02 JUL 06

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**Quote of the Week**  
*“They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety  
 deserve neither liberty nor safety.”*  
 - Benjamin Franklin

**Front Page**

**Top:** Spc. Darren Craddock of Company C, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 35<sup>th</sup> Armored Regiment, helps distribute water to Iraqis in the village of Imam Ways, Iraq. Photo by 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Dustin Gray

**Bottom Left:** Pfc. Joseph Rashke, covers the rear as Pfc. Michael Lindolph, Spc. Tomecia Bradley, and Pfc. Bryan Roberts, all of Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 47<sup>th</sup> Forward Support Battalion, prepare to clear a room during the unit’s MOUT training at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Photo by Capt. Mark Bednarczyk

**Bottom Right:** Spc. John Jensen of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 27<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment mans his M249 SAW during a recent Tactical Movement and Convoy Training exercise. Photo by 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Paul Radion

**Back Page**

**Top Left:** A C-17 Globe master III transport aircraft makes final preparations just before departing Kuwait for Iraq, carrying members of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division. Photo by Spc. Joshua Ramey

**Top Right:** Battery C of 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 27<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment looks at its future as it converts to a dual-purpose role as a Motorized Rifle Company and Artillery Firing Battery at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Photo by Capt. Brian Gerber

**Bottom Left:** Sgt. Davis Endries (center) and Spc. Nicholas MacDonald from the maintenance section of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 40<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion prepare an M88 engine at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Photo by Capt. Kris Haley

**Bottom Right:** Staff Sgt. Marvin McKay of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 27<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment bench presses 465 lbs at the weight-lifting competition at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Photo provided by Staff Sgt. Marshall Carter



**Left:** (From top to bottom) Pvt. Peter Pantel, Cpl. James Austin, and Cpl. John Anderson, all of Company B, 40<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion, practice clearing buildings at a range near Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Picture by 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Michael Jakubson

**Top Right:** Sgt. Alexis Johns of Battery C, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 27<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment scans his sector of fire during Gun Truck training held outside of Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Photo by 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Charles Dayton

**Bottom Right:** Pfc. Leonard Thompson provides security as Iraqi citizens and members of Company C, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 35<sup>th</sup> Armored Regiment, unload water in the Zangora region of Iraq. Photo provided by Task Force Conqueror

**Correction:** In the 23<sup>rd</sup> Edition of the Striker Torch, we incorrectly spelled the authors name in Camp Buehring’s STREND Competition, the story was written by Sgt. Justine Gilligan.



## Bears Take on New Missions in Southern Baghdad

Story and Photos by Pfc. Jason Dangel



Sgt. Roberto Rodriguez from Battery B, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 27<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment and an Iraqi National Police officer search for weapon caches in Southern Iraq.

As the sun begins to set, beckoning another Baghdad night, the rumbling sounds of armored vehicles resonate from a small patrol base south of the Iraqi capital.

The mission is underway for Soldiers from 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, Battery B, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 27<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment, currently attached to the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division's 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team, deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Recently reassigned to a new area of operations, "Bear" Battery, accustomed to patrolling densely populated areas in southern Baghdad, finds its Soldiers patrolling through rural, open fields and searching through farmlands for hidden weapon caches.

The Soldiers who man the guard towers and patrol the area daily live in austere conditions, yet some refer to the patrol base as their second home.

"Up until about three weeks ago, we were primarily doing patrols all throughout Baghdad," said Staff Sgt. Richard Butler, squad leader, Btry. B, 4<sup>th</sup> Bn., 27<sup>th</sup> FA.

According to Butler, a native of Beaumont, Texas, the platoon conducted mounted and dismounted patrols, route clearance security and responded to hostile activity while patrolling the streets of downtown Baghdad.

"Everybody in this unit has seen enemy contact," Butler explained. "It's something that happens all the time. You can't expect to go out and not get attacked; you have to be ready all the time."

Butler and his troops have many stories about their time on the streets of the Iraqi capital.

Spc. Steven Schaefer, gunner, Btry. B, 4<sup>th</sup> Bn., 27<sup>th</sup> FA, said he and his fellow Soldiers have

seen improvised-explosive devices and have been attacked with small-arms fire while working in their new area of operations.

Even though the mission for Battery B has changed, Schaefer, a native of Youngstown, Ohio, said he remains ready, and that he and the Soldiers from his unit will not be complacent.

The day started like most days for the Soldiers of "Bear" Battery. The field artillery unit, working as a motorized infantry platoon, awakened early for mission briefings.

Capt. Kirill Tsekanovskiy, platoon leader, 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon, briefed his Soldiers with detailed diagrams on the mission at hand.

His platoon sergeant, Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Deoraj Baldeo, sent the Soldiers to get some rest and to prepare their equipment for the mission.

"The mission we will be conducting today is called operation Bear Hunt," Tsekanovskiy a native of Ukraine, said to his Soldiers.

"It's going to be a hot one out there," echoed Baldeo after his platoon leader, ordering his Soldiers to drink water.

The Soldiers from 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon searched for weapon caches in southern Baghdad. The enemy hides the weap-

ons in many small places, and the search area is vast.

According to Tsekanovskiy, often Soldiers cannot get information about these hiding spots from the people in the area because the terrorists intimidate the people.

"This mission won't be easy," he said.

The platoon met with a small team of Iraqi National Police, and as the last hours of daylight began to subside over the Baghdad horizon, the troops and their Iraqi counterparts were already on the objective, searching through the farmlands for anything out of the ordinary.

The Soldiers identified numerous possible hiding spots for weapons, but by the end of the day, they had found no caches.

The mission is still important to the Soldiers of Bear Battery; their attitudes toward the task at hand were a reflection upon their commitment to its success.

"Everybody in this unit works hard and loves what they're doing," said Sgt. Chris Myers, team leader, 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon, Btry. B, a native of Littleton, Colo. "Regardless of whether or not we actually find something, we are still making a difference, because we are out there doing our jobs."

Walking back to his M1114 Up-Armored High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicle, sweat dripping from his brow, Butler expressed frustration, but remained optimistic about the days to come.

This is only the first day of the mission, he explained. Tomorrow is another day, he said.

The 26-year-old squad leader, who has not spent a birthday with his wife since 2001, is commonly asked why he does what he does and why he risks his life everyday.

His response is simple, "I love what I do," he said.



Soldiers from Battery B, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 27<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1<sup>st</sup> Armored Division, and Iraqi National Police pull guard during a mission south of Baghdad.

# The Truth About Camel Spiders

Story by Sgt. Raul Montano



This particular picture circulated around the internet spreading false rumors about Camel Spiders actual size. This picture shows a false perspective. Camel spiders rarely, if ever, grow larger than six inches (15 CM). Photo from foxies.nl

Most Soldiers who have been deployed to the desert have heard of them. They become the topic of discussion when Soldiers go out to the field, or just to the motor pool. Several names have been given to them. The science community calls them "Solifugids," translated from Latin as "those that flee from the sun." Soldiers in the desert know them as Camel Spiders, but they aren't spiders at all, they maintain their own class of arachnids such as scorpions. Although many rumors exist about Camel Spiders, most of them are untrue. Like all nature encountered in the desert, they should be left alone.

Those that serve in the military know that rumors spread worse in the field than in sewing circles. Urban legends about the camel spider's abilities have spread throughout the ranks since Soldiers deployed during Operation Desert Storm, with advent of the Inter-

ger than themselves unless they are being threatened, and they contain no venom whatsoever. Camel Spiders do not eat flesh and feed mostly on small insects or occasionally small lizards. Camel spiders are unable to jump. If they appear to be aggressively chasing somebody, they are most likely just trying to find relief from the desert sun in their shadow. In addition, Camel Spiders do not move incredibly fast at all. They travel at speeds no faster than 10 MPH, so they are not likely to get speeding tickets, even on Camp Buehring.

"I've heard that they can numb you and you'll wake up the next

net further embellishing stories of the camel spider deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom. Some of these rumors claim that Camel Spiders attack and eat camels' flesh (hence the name "Camel Spider"), they travel at speeds up to 25 MPH, and their venom numbs the victim leaving it unaware it is being eaten alive.

Although Camel Spiders are carnivorous, they do not attack anything that is larger than themselves

morning with out an arm," said Spc. Nicholas Figueroga of Company B, 47<sup>th</sup> Forward Support Battalion, "but I think they're just rumors." Since camel spiders do not have any venom, they instead crush their prey to kill it, and then liquefy it with their relatively powerful jaws before finally ingesting it. Their jaws are capable of creating wounds that are too large to close immediately after a bite. This makes it possible for the wound to later become infected, but there are certainly no chemical hazards from a Camel Spider's bite.

"Stay away from areas where they may be prevalent," recommends Spc. Paxton Stewart, a combat medic from Battery C, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 27<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment, "Also, [a Soldier] should make sure their living area is clean." Although encounters with a Camel Spider can sometimes be unavoidable, Soldiers can take measures to minimize the risk to themselves. Camel Spiders are no real threat to a Soldier, and most of the rumors about them are unfounded. Soldiers have been repeatedly briefed by their chain of command to leave the wildlife in the desert alone, and if Camel Spiders are left alone, they have no reason to attack (or certainly try to eat) Soldiers.



A Solifugid, also known as Camel Spider, looks more intimidating than it actually is. Photo taken from [www.defense.gov.au](http://www.defense.gov.au)

## Extreme Makeover: Service Battery to Motorized Rifle Platoon

Story by 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Christian Fierro

Soldiers from Service Battery, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 27<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment turned in their fuel trucks, cookware, tools, and ammunition transportation vehicles to prepare for their transformation into a Motorized Rifle Platoon (MRP). The platoon is comprised of five different military occupation specialties. A battery that once focused on providing combat service support for any mission, is now called upon to execute those missions. The platoon is extremely motivated about their new role in Kuwait. “This is very exciting, I have been waiting for a chance to get out there and do some infantry training,” stated Spc. Toran Savant.

The Soldiers of the ‘Stallion’ MRP are enjoying the opportunities that being in a motorized platoon brings, such as demanding training, additional weapons training, and developing tightly knit teams. “In the end, this platoon is going to be a pretty close family. We already know each other pretty well, but with us being close during all this training, I think we are going to come together



Spc. Marcos Gonzalez of Service Battery, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 27<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment fires a M249 Squad Automatic Weapon during a range outside Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Photo by Capt. George Cowles

much more,” said Sgt. Matthew Wearly of Service Battery. For some of the Soldiers the training is completely new, but the challenge is building them to be a team. “I think the training is ‘hooah’ and high speed. It is training that is important and will keep us alive in dangerous situations and it is much more exciting than my dining facility duties. I

get dirty, which equals fun,” declared Pfc. Robert Joiner, a dismount in the platoon.

The past two weeks have been a wake up call for the platoon, as they have been emerged in the rigorous life of a mo-

torized rifle Soldier. “I have great respect for every infantry Soldier. This is exhausting, but rewarding at the same time,” said Staff Sgt. Kelly Sullivan. The Soldiers were recently exposed to Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT) training, where they learned proper techniques for clearing buildings and shooting while moving. The platoon also trained on a route reconnaissance and clearance lane, where they learned first-hand the role Engineers play on the battlefield in the fight against Improvised Explosive Devices (IED). Overall, the training has been physically demanding and very educational as to the role of the MRP.

The Stallions have a long road ahead of them, but the platoon is ready for any challenge. Using five different occupational specialties to perform one mission is a difficult task, and each Soldier knows the difficulties that lie ahead. Sgt. Matthew Wearly concluded, “This team is a family; any problem can be overcome with our teamwork and dedication.”



(From left to right) Sgt. Wayne Santos, Sgt. Ruben Cervantes, Staff Sgt. Shyler Dieuvielle, and Sgt. Gil Sanchez, all of Service Battery, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 27<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment, stack to enter a room during their urban warfare training outside Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Photo by Capt. George W. Cowles

# Iron Soldiers Host Kuwaiti War Heroes

Story by Chaplain (Maj.) Anthony Horton

The Third of June, 2006, marked a unique and special day for the officers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team. Major General (Ret.) Salem Masoud visited Camp Buehring to speak about his experiences during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Maj. Gen. Salem Masoud is the former commander of Kuwait's 35<sup>th</sup> Tank Brigade, the partnership unit of the 2<sup>nd</sup> BCT. Accompanying Maj. Gen. Salem Masoud was Colonel Ali Abdul Kareem Abdullah, who was a company commander of one of the few tank companies deployed into service on the day of the invasion.

Both men told how they organized and deployed to engage the invading forces as well as how they survived. Included in their presenta-

tion was the strong belief that God had protected and aided them in their efforts to save their homeland. When asked how they managed to prepare for such a battle in such a short time, both guests said that it was by the grace and will of



God that they were able to both prepare and engage the enemy that day.

One story that was told was how the young Captain Ali Abdul Kareem Abdullah's unit was out of food and water, and had been fighting hard all day long. Heat, fatigue, and dehydra-

tion were beginning to take their effect when the Captain raised his voice in prayer to God and asked for water and food for his men. The men managed to avert their deaths from exposure when they were able to locate food and water to sustain the fighting force.

To the Kuwaiti people, and even marked upon their money, is the motto, "We seek God's assistance."

Which is akin to our own motto, marked upon our money, "In God we trust!"

Closing their presentation, the Kuwaiti war heroes added this for thought and a lesson learned, "Always pray for God to help, and then work hard and fight with all your might believing He will provide."



(From left to right) Lt. Col. Jeanne Hooper, Commander of 47<sup>th</sup> FSB, Col. Abdulhakeem, Col. Robert Scurlock, Commander of 2<sup>nd</sup> BDE, 1AD, Gen. (Ret.) Masoud, Lt. Col. William Graham, Commander of 40<sup>th</sup> Eng. Bn., and Lt. Col. Robert Cheatham, Commander of 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 27<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Regiment following the awards ceremony.

## Upcoming MWR Events

### Saturday, 1 July 2006

1700: Squat Competition @ Gym  
 1700: 3 on 3 Basket Ball Tournament @ Basket Ball Courts  
 1900: Country Music @ MWR Stage

### Sunday, 2 July 2006

1200: Spades Tournament @ Oasis  
 1700: 3 on 3 Basket Ball Tournament @ Basket Ball Courts

### Tuesday, 4 July 2006

Camp Buehring's 4th of July Festivities  
 0500: 5k Fun Run @ Green Beans  
 1000: Volleyball and Softball Tournaments  
 @ Volleyball Courts and Softball Field

### Wednesday, 5 July 2006

1830: 7.5k Fun Run @ Green Beans

### Thursday, 6 July 2006

1900: Washington Redskins Cheerleaders @ MWR Stage  
 1930: Ping Pong Tournament @ Rec. Center

### Friday, 7 July 2006

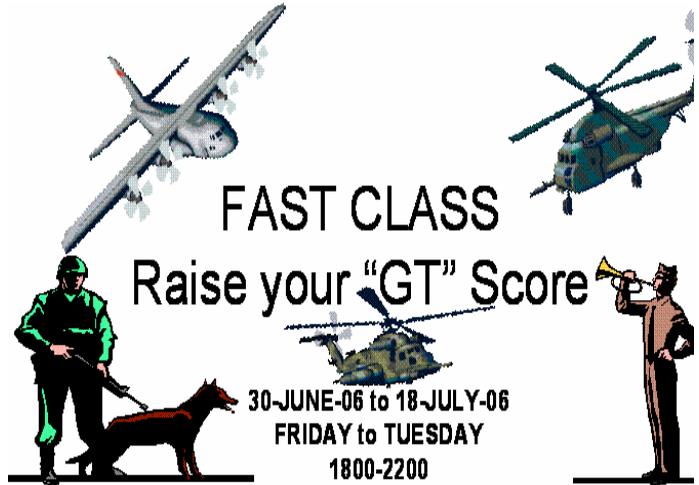
1930: Bingo @ Events Tent

### Saturday, 8 July 2006

1600: Darts Tourney @ Rec. Center  
 1700: 3 on 3 Basket Ball Tournament @ Basket Ball Courts

### Sunday, 9 July 2006

1200: Grappling Tournament @ Oasis  
 1300: Texas Hold Em Tournament @ Oasis  
 1700: 3 on 3 Basket Ball Tournament @ Basket Ball Courts



Stop by the Education Center to reserve your seat in class; also pick up your registration form to be signed by your Commander. Seating is limited...  
**P.O.C. Thomas Sasko**

## What Do YOU Think?

# “To What Recurring Event Do You Look Forward?”

Questions and Photos By Sgt. Raul Montano and Spc. Joshua Ramey



2LT Paul Radion  
 HHB, 4-27 FA

Crab Salad on  
 Wednesdays at the  
 DFAC



PFC Eric Butler  
 Troop G, 1<sup>st</sup> CAV

The weekly fun  
 runs



SSG Yvonne Nelson  
 B, 47<sup>th</sup> FSB

Spa Day



SFC Anthony Gloriani  
 HHC, 40<sup>th</sup> EN

Bingo Nights



1LT Terry Moody  
 B, 47<sup>th</sup> FSB

Church  
 Services

Next Week: “What Would You Do To Improve Morale At Camp Buehring?”



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This Edition can also be found online at  
<http://www.1ad.army.mil/2BCTNewsletters.htm>



**We are looking for any type of submissions to include:  
letters, articles, comic strips or artwork, and photographs.**

If you would like a copy of this issue please contact your Battalion UPAR  
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47<sup>th</sup> FSB: Capt. Maurice Miles      4-27 FA: Maj. Frederick Bower

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