

DV

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

May 23, 2007



Down and Dirty

Humvee drivers training course readies Soldiers for the road

DV Contents

Page 3

Chaplain ministers to hundreds at Camp Buehring

Page 4

New U.S. Central Command commander tours U.S. Army Central facilities in Kuwait, visits servicemembers

Page 6

New humvee driver training prepares servicemembers for Iraq roads

Page 8

Saturday night at Camp Buehring racetrack helps reduce stress for deployed servicemembers

Page 10

Airman receives college diploma while deployed

Page 11

Memorial Day events in Kuwait

Page 12

Stay Army Strong

On the cover

Soldiers train for off-road driving in Camp Buehring's Uparmored Humvee Driver's Training Course.

Photo by Sgt. Thomas L. Day

Reminder to Army Contractors

► Online applications for Common Access Cards

- The Contractor Verification System (CVS) is an on-line process that allows Department of Defense (DoD) contractors to apply for a Common Access Card (CAC). It replaces the manual Department of Defense Form 1172-2.
- CVS allows a background vetting process to verify CACs to DoD contract personnel. This system requires a contracting officer to create new contractor accounts into CVS and validate the need for a CAC.
- Eligible personnel include DoD civilian employees and eligible DoD contractor personnel deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom or other military contingency operations.
- The ASG-Kuwait personnel office is the point of contact for establishing accounts for personnel on Camp Arifjan who have contractors that need a CAC issued in order to use government computers.
- Requirements for attaining a CAC through CVS
 1. Copy of current contract (contract must state that contracted personnel are authorized issuance of CAC)
 2. Signed DD Form 577 for verifying official
 3. Copy of U.S. identification (passport, driver's license, etc.)
 4. Letter of Authorization/Letter of Instruction

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Chaplain offers hope, understanding to hundreds

Sgt. Sarah Scully
Desert Voice staff writer

Using the shade between two tanks to cool down from the 140-degree desert heat, a chaplain carries a dusty Bible in his hands and holds impromptu spiritual services for his infantry troops in Iraq.

That's one of the scenarios Chaplain (1st Lt.) Darren Turner foresees happening in the weeks to come after his unit finishes training at Camp Buehring, Kuwait and heads up north to combat.

"I feel like I was made to do this – being with Soldiers in combat," said Turner. "As a minister, that thrills me. This is as real as life gets."

Dealing with marriage problems, combat trauma, professional relationships and separation hardships, many Soldiers find comfort in talking to a chaplain about their troubles.

With more than 800 Soldiers needing spiritual guidance, Turner is ready for a busy deployment. As the only chaplain for the 130th Infantry Battalion, out of Fort Stewart, Ga., he's ready to tackle the job he's planned for since he became a Christian in 1996.

The 34-year-old father of three children said he immediately wanted to be in the ministry so he could serve people and share the message that helped him.

"I wanted to be with Soldiers when they're going through the crisis of their life," said Turner. "I'm very excited to be here, oddly enough. I'm with Soldiers going to war."

Several of his Soldiers sat in the



1st Lt. Darren Turner, a chaplain with 130th Infantry Battalion, talks with one of the Soldiers in his unit, Capt. Ricardo Swenness, a battalion physicians assistant from Falls Church, Va., outside the Camp Buehring chapel days before they headed up north.



Photos by Sgt. Sarah Scully

chapel at Camp Buehring May 13 for Sunday contemporary services.

While most of them might not know their chaplain – Turner's only been with the unit for a few months – they are grateful to have a place to worship and a chaplain who will listen to their problems.

"It means a lot that I'll be able to bring my Soldiers to him and have the spiritual support we will need to get through this," said Spc. Timothy Klibbe, 130th Inf. Bn.

During a Family Day picnic held at Fort Stewart before the battalion deployed, Turner had the opportunity to befriend his fellow troops.

Quick to say he doesn't believe in thumping Soldiers over the head with a Bible, Turner prefers to play a game of basketball to reach his future congregation.

"You don't have to say a word, and that's an immediate bond," said the Georgia Bulldogs fan who loves both basketball and football.

By getting to know him, the Soldiers should feel more comfortable coming to their chaplain for help.

And Turner understands many of the problems they're facing. His wife, Heather, is also at home raising their children: Elie, 6, Sam, 4, and Meribeth, 10 months.

"She's got the tougher job," said Turner, with a smile. "She's on 24/7, and I'm only on 23/7."

Being separated from family for at least a year – suddenly thrust into a strange environment, deadly combat and foreign culture – can have a tremendous impact on Soldiers.

But Turner said he's ready for the challenges ahead.

"They just want to be heard," said Turner. "This is what I'm here for."

New U.S. Central Command commander tours U.S. Army Central facilities in Kuwait

Sgt. Thomas L. Day
Desert Voice staff writer

Adm. William Fallon, in his first visit to U.S. compounds in Kuwait as the new U.S. Central Command commander, toured the Camp Buehring Training Village Sunday and met with Third Army/U.S. Army Central commanders whom oversee training of most U.S. forces prior to entering Iraq.

Fallon was met at Camp Buehring by Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb, the Third Army/USARCENT commanding general – Fallon’s top Army officer. Whitcomb and his assistant commander, Maj. Gen. Dennis Hardy, escorted the 42-year Navy officer through a simulated urban combat

course, first aid training with a deploying unit, and the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer (HEAT) before flying to Third Army/USARCENT headquarters at Camp Arifjan.

The CENTCOM commander was direct when speaking with Soldiers deploying to Iraq. “You are the last of the big plus ups,” he told the troops. Fallon told the Soldiers that he would be relying on their work to “stabilize” some of the hottest regions of Iraq.

Troops train at Camp Buehring for 10 to 15 days before crossing into Iraq. The training is geared toward building upon training already completed at their duty station. The urban

combat training facilities, which also include a video-screen simulator where Soldiers are tested on targeting in a virtual environment, prepare troops for the “complexities” of the Iraq theater, Hardy explained.

Fallon also got to see a demonstration of new counter-Improvised Explosive Device technology at the Camp Buehring Training Village. His tour of the village spanned about an hour before flying to Camp Arifjan. There Third Army/USARCENT had a display of new uparmored vehicles, which Fallon toured before joining Hardy and his wife, Mary Fallon, for religious services with troops.



Photo by Sgt. Chris Jones

At the Medical Simulation Training Center on Camp Buehring, Kuwait, May 13, Admiral William J. Fallon, commander of U.S. Central Command, gives a motivating speech to Soldiers before they move forward into Iraq.



Photo by USMC Staff Sgt. Houston F. White, Jr.

Staff Sgt. Demetrius Rucker (left), gives Admiral William J. Fallon, commander, U. S. Central Command, an up-close and personal look at an armored heavy equipment truck and transport vehicle, May 13, at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. Rucker, a squad leader with 96th Transportation Company, used his expertise to answer any questions the new CENTCOM commander posed during his visit.



Photo by Sgt. Chris Jones



Photo by Sgt. Chris Jones

Admiral William J. Fallon (left), commander of U.S. Central Command, follows Soldier around an uparmored humvee while touring Third Army/U.S. Army Central facilities and visiting servicemembers at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, May 13.

Admiral William J. Fallon (right), commander of U.S. Central Command, observes a Soldier as he scans his sector of fire after successfully exiting a humvee on the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, May 13.



Photo by Sgt. Chris Jones

Admiral William J. Fallon, commander of U.S. Central Command, observes Soldiers on the Engagement Skills Trainer 2000 at the Training Village in Camp Buehring, Kuwait, May 13. During his visit, Fallon toured the facilities of Third Army/U.S. Army Central, and met with deployed servicemembers, some of whom were preparing to move into Iraq.

Making

New humvee driver training course ser

Sgt. Thomas L. Day
Desert Voice Staff Writer

David Boykin's previous career was as a motorcycle driving instructor. His new line of work involves a much larger vehicle.

His job at Camp Buehring is to train Soldiers deploying north to Iraq how to drive an uparmored humvee. Boykin, an Orlando, Fla., native, is the supervising instructor for the Uparmored Humvee Drivers' Training Course, which was launched on Feb. 25.

Ten such courses exist in the continental United States, but this is the only humvee driving course that puts students in the same desert environment they will face in Iraq.

The course, he insists, is very necessary for troops moving across the Kuwaiti border and into Iraq.

Classes begin with a safety briefing at a tent inside Camp Buehring, then Boykin takes everyone to an eight-kilometer range for the class. The class takes about four hours to complete.

The course is the spawn of the U.S. Army Advanced Skills Driver Course, which trains military personnel on how to safely drive civilian vehicles. Boykin says the Advanced Skills Driver Course has trained more than 4,000 students in two years.

That course includes exercises in basic steering, off road driving, and skid control. The uparmored humvee driving course includes all of those instructions – which they call the “crawl” phases – then adds more instruction in the “walk” and “run” phases.

The walk phase includes climbing hills, moguls, blind turns, and hill descents. The run phase teaches the students to complete two exercises at the same time.

“Our course is a familiarization course,” said Travis Henry, an Atlanta native and course instructor. “We usually train the master driver. It's up to the master driver to train the Soldiers.

“We don't certify anybody, we don't license anybody,” Henry added.



A Splash

ending troops to Iraq ready for the road



David Boykin, an uparmored humvee training instructor, shows what happens when a vehicle takes a steeper incline than the vehicle allows.



The M1151/1152 humvee improves the former model, the M1114, by adding removable armor. One door, in the M1114, weighs “about 250 pounds,” according to Boykin. The new M1151, he said, is about three times that weight.

Boykin and his instructors can teach maneuvers in both vehicles. “Basically we’re just trying to

give you a feel for what the [M1114] and the [M1151] can and cannot do,” Boykin said. “We’re trying to show them the difference between the two vehicles.”

The staff has been loaned 14 tactical vehicles for the class. If a student has his own vehicle, they can train with that vehicle as well.

Troops! start your engines

► **Radio-controlled race car competitions at Camp Buehring reduce stress: “the weeks just seem to fly right by.”**

Staff Sgt. Vernon Metcalfe
3rd Battalion, 297th Inf. Regt. PAO

Staff Sgt. Gary Smith isn't used to such passion involving radio-controlled race car competition. He says that in his home state of Alaska, it isn't very popular. “But in the lower 48, it's huge like NASCAR. There are multiple leagues you can get into. People get in fist fights over this thing,” Smith said.

It took a deployment for Smith to learn how and why RC racing is such a big deal. At Camp Buehring, Kuwait, the sport has taken over Saturday nights.

According to Smith, RC racing has been a sport on Camp Buehring for at least

three years.

With hills, bumps and hairpin turns, the Camp Buehring track is a rural dirt road with a row of sand bags on each side to delineate boundaries. Like lifeguards, Soldiers stand at each turn, waiting for a car to jump the track and put it back on the road.

The track is continuously being sprayed with water to make the dirt sticky. “You don't want mud but you do want it wet. Damp enough so the cars stick to it. You don't want them slipping on loose dirt,” said Smith.

The participants stand on a platform that enables them to see the whole track.

They hold their radio transmitters with a steering wheel, throttle and break levers. At the start line, each car is attended by one or two Soldiers holding the car off the ground. A high



Photos by Staff Sgt. Vernon Metcalfe

Five radio-controlled cars head down the straightaway doing about 35 miles per hour. The servicemembers in the viewing stand on the right use radio transmitters to control the cars.



(Left) Maj. Charles Nesloney controls his race car during radio-controlled race car competition at Camp Buehring. Nesloney is a native of New Braunfels, Texas, and a member of the 3rd Battalion, 297th Infantry Regiment.

(Above) Staff Sergeant Gary Smith (right) and other “drivers” control their radio-controlled cars during a race at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Smith is from Eagle River, Ak., and is a member of the 297th Infantry Regiment.

pitched whine is heard as the drivers rev-up their engines with wheels spinning. As the green flag falls, the cars are dropped to the ground and leap down the



Staff Sgt. John Ruthe, a native of Anchorage, Ak., gives his radio-controlled car some maintenance during a race at Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

track at speeds of up to 35 miles per hour.

“These cars have a faster start than some sport cars and will out run a Porsche for a short distance. So they are hard to steer, especially when driving backwards,” said Sgt. Sherman Stebbins of Delta Junction, Alaska.

“When the car is moving away from the driver, left is left and right is right. But when it is coming back at you it is just the opposite,” said Smith.

The sport can sometimes be expensive. Smith has about \$3,500 tied up in the cars he has in Kuwait, not including the cost of the new monster truck. “It is relatively inexpensive if you want to just get into it but if you get serious, it can be expensive,” said Smith.

But you don’t need to be rich to play, said Sgt. Paul Grimsley of Kenai, Ak. Grimsley spent \$600 on his three cars. “You can compete at that level. It’s not about how expensive your car is. It’s about how good a driver you are,” Grimsley said.

For many servicemembers deployed to Camp Buehring, RC racing is a fun way to spend a Saturday night, a great stress-reliever, and it’s something to look forward to all week long.

“It is difficult to express the passion that all of us feel when we are out there... the weeks just seem to fly right by,” said Warrant Officer Paul Thompson.

“What makes this racing so much fun is that there is no rank out there,” said Thompson. “Everyone is on a level playing field as a racer.”

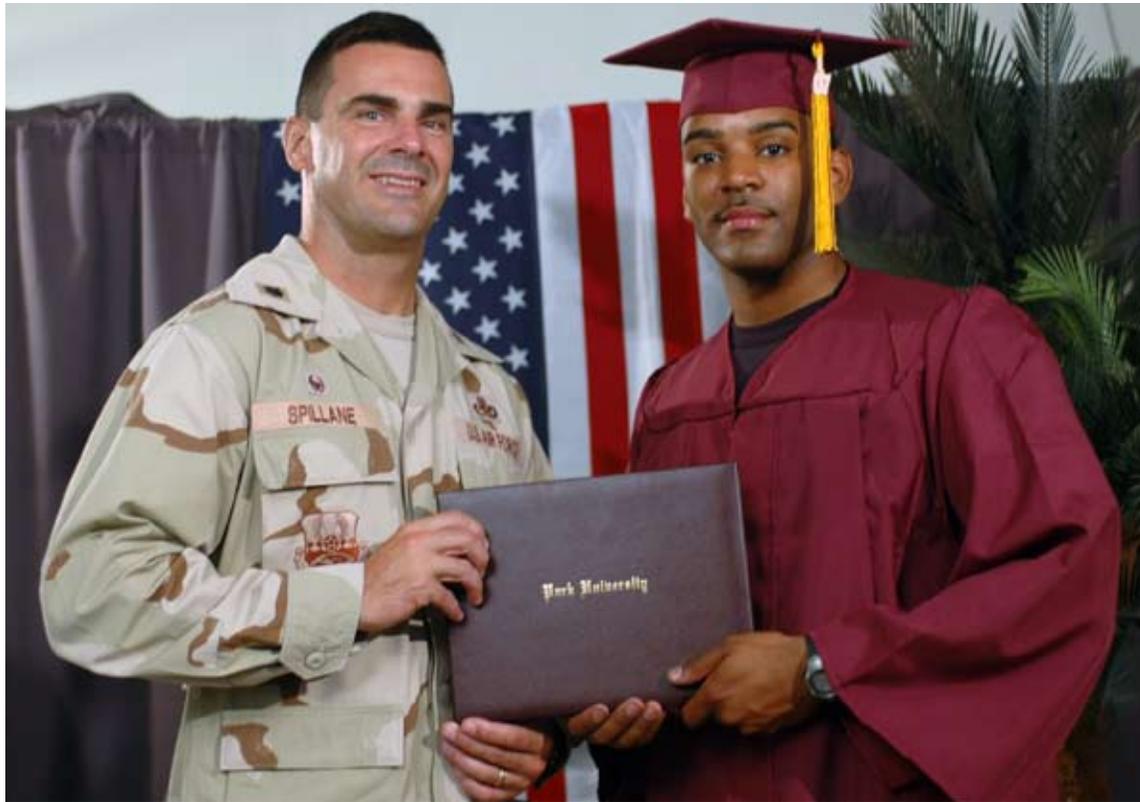


Photo by Maj. April N. Olsen

At the Third Army/U.S. Army Central broadcast studio on Camp Arifjan, May 12, Staff Sgt. Steven Poole, an aerospace maintenance craftsman in the 386th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron accepts his bachelor's degree in human resources management from 386th EAMXS commander, Lt. Col. Richard Spillane. The degree was from Park University in Independence, Mo., and a live video feed brought Poole and his family together for the ceremony.

Airman receives college degree in Kuwait

► Live video feed to Park University lets his parents share the moment

Maj. April N. Olsen
40th PAD Commander

All but one of the 481 candidates in the 2007 graduating class of Park University sat in an auditorium in Independence, Mo., May 12, ready to receive their diplomas while surrounded by family and friends.

More than seven thousand miles away, one graduate sat in the Third Army/U.S. Army Central broadcast studio wearing desert combat boots and a graduation cap and gown, surrounded by his chain of command and fellow airmen.

Staff Sgt. Steven Poole, an aerospace maintenance craftsman in the 386th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, accepted his diploma for a bachelor's degree in human resources management from his squadron commander, Lt. Col. Richard Spillane, at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, as his parents and the audience in Independence watched and cheered via Web cast.

The degree completed a three-and-a-half-year journey the airman met

with hard work and commitment while working on his education through on-line courses and multiple deployments.

"It takes a lot of motivation," Poole said of serving on active duty and completing college work. "It takes a lot of drive to read and complete your assignments, a lot of motivation to stick with something and follow through with it."

"I try to show it can be done," he said.

Spillane said Poole's example is encouraging to fellow airmen in the squadron.

"People who are willing to go the extra mile to complete a degree add a level of maturity [to the unit]," Spillane said. "Being able to follow through and finish up on something is the same mindset that transfers to the work ethic on the flight line."

That work ethic is what helped Poole reach his goal.

Rather than get discouraged, trying to keep up with classes while deployed, his determination only

increased.

After returning to the U.S. following a tour in Balad, Iraq, in 2004, Poole was reassigned to Yokota Air Base in Japan.

"I decided that once I returned to the U.S. [from Iraq] and got orders to Japan, I would complete my degree on time," Poole said.

"It was very difficult, some all night study sessions... all of my college was on my own time," Poole said. "I spent weekends at the library... anywhere I could find a computer, and I had my books," he said.

Poole did complete his graduation requirements on time, but his second deployment came last December with orders to Kuwait, weeks before his graduation ceremony.

Poole said being able to participate in the commencement ceremony over a satellite meant a lot to him. Rather than take a break while waiting five months for the May ceremony, Poole instead enrolled in the graduate school and began his next journey – a master's in business administration.

Memorial Day Events

Camp Virginia — Memorial Day 5K Run, Library, 6 a.m., May 28; Memorial Day Splash Bash, Volleyball Courts, 1 p.m., May 27

Camp Buehring — Memorial Day 5K Run, Green Beans, 6 a.m., May 28; Memorial Day Barbeque and Talent Show, MWR Stage, 12 p.m.-7 p.m.

Camp Arifjan — Memorial Day Awards Show Celebration, Zone 6 Training Activities Center, 7 p.m., May 27; Memorial Day Talent Show, Zone 1 Community Center, 7 p.m., May 28

The Rock — Memorial Day “Deal or No Deal,” Scorpion’s Den, 7:30 p.m., May 28; Memorial Day 5K Run, Location TBD, 6 a.m., May 26

Camp Patriot — Special Memorial Day Movie Marathon, MWR Movie Tent, 10 a.m., May 28

Just One Question...

“In the upcoming movie ‘The Forbidden Kingdom,’ who will win -- Jackie Chan or Jet Li?”



“I’m going to have to say Jackie Chan...a lot of his old movies, he does some spectacular stunts.”

Spc. April Riddle
Flint, Mich.
Food Inspector
HHC ASG-Kuwait



“Jet Li -- He’s just more animated. Jackie Chan is a little old.”

Sgt. 1st Class Ronnie Williams
Millen, Ga.
Dining Facility manager
314th Chemical Battalion



“That’s pretty tough. Jackie Chan.”

Spc. Christy Wizda
Scranton, Pa.
Training specialist
67th Signal Battalion



“Definitely Jet Li.”

1st Lt. Flora Wildman
Topeka, Kan.
Leaders Recon OIC
377th Theater Support Command



“Kung Fu is totally stupid.”

1st Lt. Brad Hamlett
Greenville, S.C.
Supply and Services
336th Transportation Group

Hometown Hero



Sgt. Reshema Horton
659th Maintenance Company

Horton is the liaison officer for the 659th Maintenance Company in Kuwait.

Horton talks about why she misses her home, the Virgin Islands.

“I miss the weather, the beach, and the people.”



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