



The Desert Voice

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

August 4, 2010



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Third Army loads a Humvee aboard Logistical Support Vessel (LSV) 6 as part of a movement validation exercise at Kuwait Naval Base in Third Army's area of operation, July 23.

Contact us

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

Command Corner Duty



*Command Sgt. Maj. John D. Fourhman
Third Army Command Sergeant Major*

As Third Army Soldiers, we must be proficient in our assigned tasks. We must go above and beyond our call to Duty.

Duty involves fulfilling all of your professional, legal, and moral obligations, while accomplishing all tasks to the fullest of your ability. It is accepting responsibility for your actions and those of your subordinates. Duty means being able to accomplish tasks as part of a team.

We here at Third Army are part of an expansive team. The Draw-down of Iraq and Build-up of Afghanistan requires us to work in unison in accomplishing a singular mission. To fulfill this mission; Third Army requires each Servicemember to be proficient in his or her assigned tasks, as well as accomplishing their duties.

Over the past year Third Army Soldiers have moved numerous pieces of military equipment have been transported out of Iraq. Third Army plays a key role in this operation. We must stay focused on our mission and ensure our duties; no matter how great or small, are completed to the best of our abilities.

From the lowest ranks to the highest, we must put the Army Value "Duty" into practice in our every day professional lives. Everyone in the Third Army command plays a key role in our operations. We should remain committed to our Duties and never forget what we do does make a difference in the team's efforts.

For further guidance on Third Army standards, you may refer to the most current edition of the Standards Book on the Third Army's homepage, conveniently located under the "Featured Links" tab. For more information on the Army Value "Duty," you may refer to http://www.goarmy.com/life/living_the_army_values.jsp <http://www.goarmy.com/life/living_the_army_values.jsp> .

Patton's Own!

Lucky 7



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From Sand to Sea:

Logistics operations critical to meeting Iraq drawdown deadline



During ship loading operations a driver pushes a nonoperational High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle from Iraq onto the Motor Vessel Liberty at Shuaiba Port, Kuwait. The Liberty will carry 6,000 tons of military cargo from the port to the United States. Port operations, managed by 595th Transportation Brigade, are essential to 1st TSC's efficient drawdown of equipment from Iraq.

Story and photo by
Natalie A. Cole

1st Sustainment Command (Theater) Public Affairs

For much of the war, the complex logistical process of supplying the warfighters in theater has been behind the scenes. Now, with the push to get people and equipment out of Iraq, the work of Surface Deployment and Distribution Commands at sea ports is in the spotlight. The images of the war have shifted from combat troops doing battle in deserts and urban landscapes to convoys of vehicles.

One such unit that contributes to the heavy lifting of the drawdown is the 1185th Deployment and Distribution Command, a reserve element from Lancaster, Pa. The 1185th is responsible for operations at the Shuaiba Port in Kuwait.

On a continual basis, thousands of vehicles from Iraq arrive to Shuaiba Port to be shipped back to the U.S. Troops of the 1185th are responsible for inventorying the equipment, cleaning it, inspecting it and finally loading it on a ship bound for the U.S. By the time equipment reaches the port, it has been cleaned and inspected multiple times by troops. At the port, armored vehicles are inspected one last time by U.S. Navy customs.

Sgt. 1st Class Michael McMullen,

the noncommissioned officer in charge of cargo management for the 1185th, said the coordination among different logistics troops is essential for preparing equipment to meet the standards of customs.

"The main thing is having everything done right before it gets to the port," McMullen said.

Once they reach the U.S., the armored vehicles will begin a process known as retrograde. Retrograde is another term for repairing (or retiring) damaged equipment and reassigning it for use elsewhere in the Army.

The deadline to have troop levels down to 50,000 by Aug. 31 will influence the operations tempo at Shuaiba Port, said Lt. Col. Walter Chwastyk, commander of the 1185th. He said that the pace of incoming and outgoing equipment has been consistent, but he added "today's work in Iraq is tomorrow's work in Kuwait is next week's work at the port."

Usually, port operations are an unseen effort, taking a backseat to the more typical images of combat. However, working on the port is a demanding job that comes with its own hazards. For example, cranes and forklifts are often oversized, as they need the capability to lift armored vehicles onto flatbed trucks and ships. Further-

more, the large amount of commercial shipping traffic on the port can create dangerous working conditions. "The fact that we're moving large pieces of equipment – in the day, at night, in sandstorms, 24-hours – can make ports lethal," said Maj. Eric Delellis, 1185th operations officer at Shuaiba Port.

Weather is also a challenge, as Kuwait is one of the hottest places on Earth. "High winds and sandstorms are prevalent," said Delellis. The port closes, in such instances, which forces troops to juggle the timing of incoming vessels, cargo that needs to go out, and cargo that is coming in. "It's a real chess match," he added.

In the face of the dangers, safety is paramount, and troops have the training needed to perform their duties safely, said Chwastyk.

Despite all the combined challenges of port operations, the 1185th continues to meet their own goals. For example, Chwastyk said that his troops maintain a 10-day dwell time, which refers to the amount of time vehicles stay at the port before going home.

"This can be thankless work," Chwastyk said, but troops have upheld a high standard of performance "to meet our goals of moving equipment."



Third Army loads a Humvee aboard Logistical Support Vessel (LSV) 6 as part of a movement validation exercise at Kuwait Naval Base in Third Army's area of operation July 23. Soldiers were required to load multiple vehicles that facilitate the setup of the Assault Command Post. If needed, the ACP stands ready to deploy within the Third Army's twenty-country area of responsibility within 96 hours.

Assault Command Post tests the waters

Story and photos by
Cpl. Ryan Hohman
Third Army Public Affairs

Third Army Soldiers tested contingency operations for their Assault Command Post by loading all necessary equipment onto Logistical Support Vessel 6 and a Landing Craft Utility at Kuwait Naval Base in Third Army's area of operation July 23.

The ACP allows Third Army to sustain the fight by acting as a self-sustaining central hub, which can provide command and control to any situation in any environment within the Third Army area of responsibility.

Soldiers used this training as a way to prepare for any problems that might arise and would not allow the movement of the equipment, which is normally deployed by C-17s.

"Because the ACP has to be ready to deploy within 96 hours," said Sgt. 1st Class Renard Chaffin, who serves as the noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the ACP, Third Army, "we would use the watercraft as a contingency plan should air not be an option."

After the Soldiers were given training on the capabilities of the vessels, they quickly began loading their equipment.

"Loading the equipment went really smooth," said Pfc. Adam Kangieser, water craft operator, 411th Transportation Detachment, LSV 6.

"They were able to get everything on board quickly, so that we could strap it down and secure it for the trip."

With this training Soldiers were given the opportunity to not only work with their equipment but learn how to work aboard a watercraft vessel.

"Many Soldiers have never worked on a ship," said Chaffin. "They had to learn how to drive their vehicles aboard a ship, where the equipment would go and how to work aboard a ship."

This learning experience proved to be helpful for the ship's crew as well.

"It was good for the [LSV 6 crew] to see how the equipment for the ACP would fit aboard the ship," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Justin Trenary, chief mate, with the 411th Transportation Detachment, LSV 6. "Only when you train as you fight can you recognize and correct any problems that do or could occur."

Once everything was on board, and before heading out to sea, Soldiers were given a tour of the watercraft where they were able to learn where crew members slept, worked out and



Sgt. 1st Class Renard Chaffin, who serves as the non-commissioned officer-in-charge of the Third Army Assault Command Post, ground guides a Humvee onto a Logistical Support Vessel (LSV) 6 as part of a movement validation exercise at Kuwait Naval Base in Third Army's area of operation July 23.

ate. The ship preformed a quick trip out into the water before returning back to port.

"Training like this is important because it helps us keep our edge by emphasizing the safety factors with the entire evolution of the mission," said Trenary. "It gave us a chance to learn how to work together so we can always get the mission done."

By testing contingency operations for their ACP, Soldiers with Third Army will be prepared to Sustain the Fight in any part of Third Army's 20-country area of operations.

ASG-KU welcomes new commander

Story and photo by
Natalie A. Cole

1st Sustainment Command (Theater) Public Affairs

Area Support Group-Kuwait – the provider of regional and installation security within the Kuwaiti area of operations – welcomed a new commander July 21 at a change-of-command ceremony. Outgoing commander Col. Christopher K. Hoffman passed the reigns to Col. Robert G. Cheatham Jr., a distinguished graduate of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National Defense University.

Hoffman will assume the role of deputy regional director, Installation Management Command, Southeast Region at Fort Bragg, N.C. Hoffman stated that establishing increased force protection measures and improving quality of life for Servicemembers are among his proudest accomplishments as ASG-KU commander. In his parting remarks, he highlighted how troops in ASG-KU serve quietly and professionally as they support warfighters in Iraq. “I applaud each and every one of you for what you do every day,” he said. “I am totally amazed ... we run camps in Kuwait and you make it seem easy.”

Additionally, Hoffman encouraged those in the ASG-KU team to be proud of their collaboration and efforts. “Take pride in what you’ve done and those accomplishments you’ve made. Take your story back – tell your neighbors, tell your families.”

Cheatham brings with him experience and knowledge gained from his role as chief of operations for U.S. Army Europe and Seventh Army from 2007 to 2009. While with USAREUR and Seventh Army, Cheatham was the principle staff-officer-in-charge of managing operational activities and crisis action plans in the European Command area of operations.

In his remarks at the change-of-command ceremony, Cheatham said he remains committed to the team-



Outgoing Area Support Group-Kuwait Commander Col. Christopher K. Hoffman passes the colors to Lt. Gen. William G. Webster at a change of ceremony at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, July 21. Incoming commander Col. Robert G. Cheatham Jr. assumed leadership of ASG-KU, the provider of installation and regional security for troops in Kuwait.

work required to sustain relationships in the ASG-KU area of responsibility.

“[I] look forward to continuing to strengthen the strong bonds between the ASG and our host nation,” he said. “Our two great nations have common interests that will keep us working together to remain strong and free.”

ASG-KU is the critical link between U.S. Army Central/Third Army and the host nation of Kuwait. In addition to security and host nation collaboration, ASG-KU provides theater sustainment operations.

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Govs. meet Servicemembers, tour Third Army

Story and photos by
Sgt. M. Benjamin Gable
Third Army Public Affairs

Governors from five states visited Third Army and Camp Arifjan, July 22, to connect with home-state Servicemembers as well as receive tours of Responsible Drawdown Efforts.

Govs. Mike Rounds, R-S.D., Jay Nixon, D-Mo., Deval Patrick, D-Mass., James Douglas, R-Vt., and Tim Pawlenty, R-Minn., were given tours of convoy sites, maintenance yards and vehicle retrograde sites, and were treated to a dinner at the Hall of Heroes.

“One of our priorities was meeting Servicemembers within Third Army,” said Gov. Pawlenty. “Their hard work and dedication is unparalleled.”

Each governor took time out of their trip to speak directly to those whom they represent. They discussed important issues in their home states, posed for photos and even handed out coins as a token of their appreciation.

According to Staff Sgt. Andrew Mass, a financial technician with the 376th Financial Management Company, Detachment 4, and native of Minneapolis, meeting his governor personally was a great experience.

“We actually talked baseball,” said Mass. “And I’m a supporter of the governor, so I was excited to finally meet him.”

Sports weren’t all the governors discussed with Third Army Servicemembers.

Governors reminded troops that they love and respect them and admire what they are doing. They expressed appreciation for the troops and left with a better understanding of their mission here. They plan to relay it to their constituents in their respective states.

Pawlenty, whose many accomplishments include proposing and signing into law significant new benefits for veterans and Servicemembers; was pleased with the accomplishments of Third Army Soldiers.

“Third Army has such an incredible history, and [they] are living up to



Top: Governors from five states arrive via helicopter at sundown July 22 and visited Third Army Servicemembers at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. The governors from South Dakota, Missouri, Massachusetts, Vermont and Minnesota stopped here during their fact-finding tour of the Middle East. They took the opportunity to connect with their individual constituents as well as receive tours of Third Army’s Responsible Drawdown of Iraq and Build-up of Afghanistan.

Left: Staff Sgt. Andrew Mass, a financial technician with the 376th Financial Management Company, Detachment 4 and native of Minneapolis, meets with Gov. Tim Pawlenty, R-Minn., at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait July 22. During their brief meeting, the two discussed baseball and local issues in Minnesota. Gov. Pawlenty was one of five governors who visited Third Army’s area of operation. According to Gov. Pawlenty, the Third Army’s commitment to the Responsible Drawdown of Iraq and Build-up of Afghanistan is “incredible” and should be praised.

that history in this mission,” said Gov. Pawlenty. “One of the pivot points for the Drawdown of Iraq and Build-up of Afghanistan [and] for all that action is Third Army. They are doing a great job with their usual gusto and commitment.”

Before their trip to Camp Arifjan

and Third Army’s area of operation, the governors were invited to participate in the delegation by the Defense Department. While in the Middle East, they visited leadership in Iraq and Kuwait. They will also tour other areas of operation before returning to their respective states.



Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Fernandez, operations sergeant, Headquarters Headquarters Company, 3-15 Infantry Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, troubleshoots a Counter Remote Control Improvised-Explosive Device Electronic Warfare system to test his newlylearned skills at the CREW Electronic Warfare Officer's Course, at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Fernandez hopes to use his newly-acquired skills, as he prepares to deploy to Iraq, so he can sustain the fight as his unit assists in the Responsible Drawdown of Iraq.

Soldiers master the art of electronic warfare

Story and photo by
Cpl. Ryan Hohman
Third Army Public Affairs

As Soldiers continue to support the Responsible Drawdown of Iraq and the Build-up in Afghanistan, attacks from Improvised Explosive Devices continue to be a threat.

To counter this threat, Soldiers throughout Iraq and Afghanistan have been using Counter Remote Control Improvised-Explosive Device Electronic Warfare systems.

Soldiers traveling through Camp Buehring, Kuwait, on their way to Iraq or Afghanistan attend a five-day course to validate operator proficiency on the CREW system used to protect units from IED attacks.

“With almost every vehicle equipped with a CREW system, It’s important they are properly maintained so they can save lives,” said Anthony Hope, team chief, Electronic Warfare Officer Course at Camp Buehring.

“This is the wave of the future and saves it lives,” said Lt. Col. Nancy Griego, Center for Army Lessons Learned, Theater Observation Detachment, and a student of the course. “We need to get it right.”

While the Soldiers receive initial training at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., and Fort Sill, Okla., this course provides hands on training and acts as a refresher before Soldiers head to a combat zone. They are given classes on basic antenna and

cell phone theory, how to perform pre-combat inspections on the systems and how to fix system faults.

“Units send their top notch Soldiers here. They know the importance of the system,” said Hope. “These Soldiers must take the skills they learn here and use them so they can protect their unit downrange.”

In order to pass the course, Soldiers are given a written exam and practical hands on exercises, requiring them to fix CREW system faults to ensure they understand how everything works.

“It’s important for these Soldiers to be able to fix the system while downrange, so their unit is fully protected from IED attacks,” said

Hope. “Soldiers could pass hundreds of IEDs, and if the system is working properly they would never know it.”

Despite the capabilities of the CREW systems, their usefulness is only as good as the people who operate them.

“EWOs are important because as we start moving equipment in support of the Build-up of Afghanistan and the Responsible Drawdown of Iraq, these systems have to be maintained to ensure the safety of our Soldiers,” said Griego.

As the Army continues to evolve and adapt to the ever-changing face of the battlefield, Soldiers will always be able to sustain the fight by learning new skills, which help them save lives.



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A Mine-Resistant, Ambush-Protected Egress Trainer (MET) spins while eight Servicemembers on board simulate a rollover drill July 21. During the drill, Servicemembers are faced with a realistic, stressful situation were they must exit a flipped MRAP. The MET helps prevent accidents resulting in injury or death due to MRAP rollovers ensuring Servicemembers can continue to Sustain the Fight during the Responsible Drawdown of Iraq and Build-Up of Afghanistan.

Rollover! Rollover!

Soldiers prepare for a MRAP rollover

Story and photos by
Cpl. Ryan Hohman
Third Army Public Affairs

As Servicemembers travel through Kuwait on their way to Sustain the Fight with the Responsible Drawdown of Iraq or the Build-up of Afghanistan, they must first prepare for one of the most deadly situations they could face while deployed.

In the Army alone, there were 144 non-hostile-related Mine-

Resistant Ambush-Protected (MRAP) vehicle incidents in the military between Nov. 1, 2007 and Mar. 31, 2008.

As U.S. Servicemembers continue to increase use of the MRAP in combat due to its ability to better protect themselves from Improvised Explosive Devices, the importance of protecting themselves from rollover incidents has become top priority. The MRAP Egress Trainer



Air Force Staff Sgt. Christopher Whitman egresses a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Egress Trainer, with seven other Servicemembers on board to simulate a rollover drill.

(MET) at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, was designed to provide Servicemembers with a realistic training experience, so they can better prepare themselves in case of a vehicle rollover.

We teach survivability skills for Servicemembers by teaching them how to survive an MRAP rollover, said Gus Edwards, site leader for the MET. There are a lot of factors to consider including the seatbelt, number of personnel inside and the disorientation afterwards.

The MET consists of a simulated MRAP cab, which is able to seat a total of eight personnel; six in the back and two up front. The hull is attached to a giant axel with the ability to spin them 360 degrees so they can feel the full force of a real-life rollover.

“This MET gave us a sense of realism that this is actually happening,” said Sgt. Jermaine Kareg, with the 200th Medical Detachment. “It allowed us to be able to not only trust ourselves, but our battle buddies in case this ever happened in real life.”

Once the Servicemembers are situated in the cab the vehicle is rotated to a point where the occupants are able to feel what it is like when the driver is about to lose control of the vehicle.

Afterwards the machine is rotated 360 degrees to familiarize them with the sensations of confusion and disorientation they would feel in an actual rollover.

The Servicemembers are then faced with two rollover simulations, one where the vehicle is rotated 90 degrees, forcing the crew to egress through the gunner's hatch, and another



Servicemembers prepare to be spun around in a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Egress Trainer, with eight Servicemembers on board to simulate a rollover drill.

er where the vehicle flips over several times. In the final simulation before ending, the vehicle is completely upside down and all the doors are locked but one. The Servicemembers then must work as a team to discover the only egress point and safely make their way out of the vehicle and onto solid ground.

As Servicemembers exit the MET, they begin to simulate standard operating procedures such as securing the area, assessing injuries and counting weapons.

“These are the skills they need to survive, whether assisting in the Build-up of Afghanistan or the Draw-down of Iraq,” said Edwards. “You

never know what is going to happen.”

The MET has become a vital part in the preparation for Servicemembers before they head to Iraq or Afghanistan.

“Since April 2009, we have trained over 100,000 personnel with the MET,” said Edwards. “We want them to be able to walk away confident on how to react during a rollover.”

By putting Servicemembers into realistic stressful situations in, which they must exit a flipped MRAP, the MET helps prevent accidents resulting in injury or death due to MRAP rollovers. This ensures Servicemembers can continue to Sustain the Fight throughout Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Desert Vision

is on the Command Information Channel

Find out what's going on in all branches who serve Third Army by watching the Command Information Channel on your local broadcast station.

Move'em Out:



photo by Capt. Y. Daniel Hosaka

A Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle from Iraq is loaded up at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait to be returned to service in keeping with Third Army's mission to Sustain the Fight. "It's just being good stewards of the tax dollar," Lt. Col. J.P. Silverstein, 1st Sustainment Brigade deputy commanding officer, said of process to reclaim both standard and non-standard, commercial gear for later use.

Keeping the lines open in Iraq, Afghanistan

Story by

Sgt. Benjamin Kibbey

367th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

As U.S. troops continue to make their way out of Iraq, the equipment that has sustained and protected them for the past seven years is being moved out as well.

The responsibility for this task currently falls to the 1st Sustainment Brigade, based at Fort Riley, Kan., and currently deployed to Camp Arifjan.

Since the early days of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the U.S. military has moved from a system in which each unit brought every piece of equipment they would need with them when they deployed to one in which units fall in on gear already in theater. Because of this change, as units leave theater, they take less with them.

When the new status of forces agreement was signed, it set in motion an ongoing operation — the most significant since World War II — that will account for the movement of some two million pieces of equipment out of Iraq.

The 1st SB has addressed this need with the "Durable Express," a regular convoy that goes north empty — sometimes as far as Mosul — and



photo by Capt. Y. Daniel Hosaka

Sgt. Paul Vaughn, a Soldier with the 1st Sustainment Brigade, based at Fort Riley, Kan., and deployed to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, washes a military transport after the first Durable Express convoy, May 15-22. The Durable Express is 1st SB's answer to the challenge of moving some two million pieces out of Iraq as part of the U.S. drawdown of forces.

returns full.

"The Durable Express was an initiative that we came up with that pro-

vides a predictable, tailorable convoy to the various [Retrograde Assistance Team] and [Mobile Retrograde Assistance Team] yards up north, where a majority of this equipment is located," said Col. Donnie Walker, 1st SB commander from Lineville, Ala.

"We felt that, if we could dedicate convoys to go up and do that, and make it part of the planning process with those we're supporting up north, then it would pay us big dividends, and it has," he said.

At the end of June, the brigade was ahead of schedule for what needed to be moved out of theater.

"Last month [June], we did 104 convoys total," Walker said. "The projection was 73, so we're at about 147 percent, based on the projections of cargo that we were going to move."

Walker said around 80 percent of those convoys were the Durable Express.

The Durable Express convoys are kept predictable by communicating with the yards in the north and tailoring the make-up — with specific trucks being required to move specific equipment — so the convoy that goes north is set up to upload the equipment on the ground, Walker said.

“Before, it might have been just a full convoy of flatbeds,” he said. “If it gets up there, and you have 30 [Mine-Resistant Armor-Protected vehicles], and you’ve got 30 flatbeds, you can’t pick it up.”

With the progress the brigade has made, Walker said he feels confident they will continue to run ahead of schedule and will finish this phase of the equipment retrograde — scheduled for completion by November — well-ahead of schedule.

In addition, Walker acknowledged the work of the brigade staff, who set up the convoys and track all the details, and specifically the Soldiers in charge of the convoys.

“It’s due to a lot of creative thinking, a lot of young convoy commanders at the [staff sergeant] level, the junior noncommissioned officers,” Walker said. “Because those are the guys out there running those convoy operations: making good decisions on the road, keeping the vehicles repaired while they’re on the road, dealing with the threat that’s out there.”

Staff Sgt. Rodolfo Rojas, 2nd Heavy Equipment Transportation Company, assigned to 164th Sustainment Battalion, is a convoy commander who, at the end of June, had 22 convoys under his belt.

“I’m the over-all-seer for my convoys,” said the Nogales, Ariz. native. “I’m responsible for the loads -- make sure the loads get loaded up properly;



Photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew Veasley

Soldiers from the 824th Quartermaster Company, deployed to Qatar and assigned to the 1st Sustainment Brigade, secure a cargo delivery system package of Meals Ready to Eat. The 824th recently broke the theater airdrop record with 1,649,278 pounds of cargo dropped Third Army’s area of responsibility.

make sure the convoy makes it from camp-to-camp — basically, anything that has to do with that convoy.”

The convoys can vary as much in distance as they do in size, with the longest round-trip taking 16 days, assuming there are no stops or delays, and the size varying by 30 percent or more. This requires some adaptability on the part of the troops.

“I’ve done everything,” Rojas said. “Whatever they tell us we need to do, we do.”

The convoys, which are carefully planned out, make for long days, but

the troops do what they can with what free time they have.

“We set our routes before we leave Arifjan, and each camp we hit has tents where we stay at,” Rojas said. “We sleep a little and then push back out.”

Orchestrating the joint efforts of everyone assigned to the brigade began with multiple layers of planning, Walker said, with U.S. Forces-Iraq in Baghdad and the 1st Theater Sustainment Command -- 1st SB’s headquarters in Kuwait.

In addition, the 1st SB brought some of the people they would be working with in Iraq down to Camp Arifjan and walked through, step-by-step, all of the processes and challenges to be dealt with over the coming months.

At the heart of fulfilling 1st SB’s mission is the welfare of the troops.

“One of the things that we’re big on is resiliency,” Walker said. “We’ve had very few family-type issues that we’ve had to deal with out here, and I attribute that to the great family readiness group structures that are both back at Fort Riley and back at all of the other home stations.”

“It’s important that you have those strong foundations, because what we’ve seen is that our Soldiers have been able to focus on the mission at hand, and we, as the chain of command, have had to spend very little time dealing with issues back at home.”



Photo by Capt. Y. Daniel Hosaka

A container of full of recently-inspected equipment from Iraq is loaded up at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait to be returned to service. "It's just being good stewards of the tax dollar," Lt. Col. J.P. Silverstein, 1st Sustainment Brigade deputy commanding officer, said of process to reclaim both standard and non-standard, commercial gear for later use.

DoD to resume restructured military spouse career program

*News Release
Office of the Assistant Secretary of
Defense (Public Affairs)*

The Department of Defense announced today the resumption of a restructured military spouse career advancement account program - MyCAA, following a comprehensive review. The program will be available to spouses of Servicemembers in the pay grades of E1-E5, W1-W2 and O1-O2 beginning Oct. 25 at 8 a.m. EDT.

“The changes announced today reflect a return to the original intent of the program, which is to help military spouses with the greatest need successfully enter, navigate and advance in portable careers,” said Clifford Stanley, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness. “We fully support the program and are committed to ensuring the program’s sustainability. To that end, we are making several critical operational changes.”

Amongst these changes, eligible spouses will receive a total of \$4,000 in DoD-funded financial aid, with an annual cap of \$2,000 per fiscal year; funding must be used within a three-year time period from the start date of the first class; and must be used to obtain an associates’ degree, licensure or certification. A waiver may be granted when fees for licensure or certification require an up-front fee

greater than \$2,000 and up to the total maximum assistance of \$4,000.

“The MyCAA program popularity grew beyond our expectations and became too expensive to continue. Therefore, we are returning to the original intent of the program in a way that is attainable and fiscally responsible for the Defense Department,” said Stanley. “As we look to the future, we envision a program that is much broader than DoD’s financial assistance component. Military spouses will be guided along a more holistic approach to career planning.”

Under the long-term program guidelines, career counselors will continue to work with all military spouses to help develop career and education goals and plans, and assist them in identifying and accessing available federal education benefits toward these goals.

“Families play a crucial role in supporting our men and women on the battlefield. When Servicemembers are confident that their Families at home have access to resources and support, they are better able to focus on their mission,” said Stanley. “The Defense Department is committed to investing in military Families. When we invest in the well-being of the Family, we invest in the well-being of the force.”

More information can be found on

Changes to MyCAA

1. Be available to spouses of active-duty Servicemembers in pay grades E1-E5, W1-W2, and O1-O2. including the spouses of activated Guard and Reserve members within those ranks. Spouses of Guard and Reserve members must be able to start and complete their courses while their sponsor is on Title 10 orders.
2. Offer a maximum financial benefit of \$4,000 with a fiscal year cap of \$2,000. Waivers will be available for spouses pursuing licensure or certification up to the total maximum assistance of \$4,000 .
3. Require military spouses to finish their program of study within three years from the start date of the first course.
4. Be limited to associate degrees, certification and licensures.

the MyCAA Web site: <https://www.militaryonesource.com/MOS/FindInformation/Category/MilitarySpouseCareerAdvancementAccounts.aspx>.

Don't be This Guy!

The consequences of disobeying general order number one can put you in hot water and risk your safety, the safety of those around you or end your military career! Why take the risk?

Go home with honor, Obey the no alcohol Standard!



135th ESC Soldiers Teach Afghan Children

Story by

Lt. Col. Daniel Lonowski

Joint Sustainment Command - Afghanistan

The young, impressionable Afghan boys slowly wander to school, each politely greeting their teachers, who anxiously wait for all the students to arrive, the boys are not afforded the opportunity to attend classes in their communities. Girls do not go to school at all.

This day is different. Each week on Saturday, as vendors arrive at Kandahar Airfield to sell their colorful carpets to Soldiers and contractors, their children move to the school.

Each Saturday, different coalition forces are selected to teach at the school.

This particular spring day, the teachers are Soldiers from the 135th Expeditionary Sustainment Command. For many, this is their first experience with teaching students.

“As-salaamu-alaykum. Chutoor haste?”

Sgt. Constance Cobb, an executive administrative assistant with the 135th, greets one of the students along with the other Alabama National Guardsmen with a hearty “good morning” and “how are you?”

The students respond in kind. They experience new teachers each week; they are more comfortable with the routine than the teachers are.

“I was nervous,” said Lt. Col. Terry Travis. “It’s been a while since I have interacted with 10 to 14-year-olds. The fact that we did not speak each other’s language was going to make it tougher.”

It didn’t take long for students and teachers to set up tables and chairs and begin to interact. As they paired up with one another, many colored in books while others read or taught their English teacher how to write names in Pashtu.

“The kids communicated better than I expected,” Cobb, a Birmingham, Ala. native said. “Some of the students speak English very well.”

The students are taught English each week by an Afghan teacher who comes from Kandahar City,



Photo by Sgt. Jason Adolphson

Sgt. Constance Cobb (left), executive administrative assistant with the 135th Expeditionary Sustainment Command, interacts with an Afghan student at the Bazaar school in early May. The school was established to help teach the children of bazaar vendors at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

Afghanistan. After the first hour with Soldiers, the teacher instructs the students in manners, English, Pashtun and math skills during the second hour.

The Soldiers then return for the third hour and participate in an activity with the students — normally soccer.

“I feel very good [about working with Afghan children],” said Sgt. Joi Dawson. “We colored, put together a couple puzzles, I let him take pictures with my camera, and he wrote my name in Pashtu. We also did some flashcards where he told me in English what each picture was.”

Dawson worked with the eight-year-old, Anwarsha. She said she was able to communicate in English with the students.

Travis, who lives in Montgomery, Ala., is the staff judge advocate for the 135th ESC. He considered the experience the opportunity of a lifetime. He also said he was surprised at how physical the boys were.

He said the fist bumps, high-fiving and sneaking up on each other (as

well as the teachers) exhibited more playful behavior than he was expecting.

Dawson, a computer technician with the 135th, said the kids were excited, both during the classroom instruction and the last hour of recess. She added that she enjoyed the experience. Cobb concurred.

“It was a great experience,” Cobb said. “I hope we can do it again.”

The students attended classes at an outdoor patio for more than a year. Recently, they moved into a school built by coalition Soldiers. The students are now able to attend classes in an air-conditioned, one-room schoolhouse.

The students’ three hours of classes take place when their fathers are setting up vending shops, preparing for the weekly bazaar that occurs at Kandahar Airfield.

Usmal, one of the students, said the school was fun.

“You are good teacher,” Usmal told one of the teachers after being told that he was a good student. “I want to come to school on all days.”

Third Army G-6 presents

Technology BYTES

The 4 steps to e-mail compliance

Story by
Staff Sgt. Adonis Cooper
Third Army G6

1. Establish clear rules about email usage

E-mail is the quintessential communications tool with much of an organization's day-to-day life, which depends on it for both internal and external communication. E-mail can contain as much as 80 percent of a company's business records, so setting out the rules for how it should be used is essential.

The starting point is to define a clear and transparent framework for behavior, setting down what's acceptable and what isn't when it comes to using e-mail. An explicit, organization-wide Acceptable Use Policy (AUP), accompanied by the ability to audit its use and enforce its rules, is a simple first step in demonstrating the intention to meet regulations and goes a long way toward avoiding liability. As an example, typical clauses might be:

- Don't forward or send e-mail containing pornographic images
- Do limit attachment sizes to 5MB.

With the AUP in place, you can then focus on ensuring that your practices are compliant with the wide range of local, regional, national and international laws that extend into e-mail communications.

2. Prevent data loss via e-mail

The data that you hold in your systems is valuable business information. It must be guarded carefully from accidental or deliberate disclosure of confidential information to parties outside and on occasion within your organization. Some of the processes will be covered by your AUP, but new employees, leaving employees, distracted employees and disgruntled employees can all inadvertently, or maliciously, threaten the security of your data.

It is essential to put in place an automated, centrally-managed mechanism to prevent data loss regardless of intention or the goodwill of your employees. This solution should be able to:

- Block e-mails by the filetypes of their attachments
- Scan messages for keywords
- Add disclaimers and banners to mail in all directions
- Encrypt messages so that only the intended recipient can read them
- Ensure that your e-mail system is not being abused by unknown and malicious users.

3. Maintain visibility over and access to current and past traffic

You need to make sure that you are aware of and can account for the e-mail coming into, going out of and circulating around your organization. This means you must:

- Retain accessible records of relevant e-mail communications, including log information that can show who sent what to whom and when.
- Copy or archive sensitive messages, both internal and external.
- Be able to intercept and re-route violating messages to those responsible for enforcement so that potentially damaging incidents can be avoided and remedial efforts can take place.

It is important to recognize that not every e-mail contains sensitive data, so not everything needs to be archived and encrypted. Depending on your jurisdiction, there are also limits on how long you must retain copies of e-mail communication.

In fact, the cost of storing and accessing large volumes of e-mail requires you to be deterministic when it comes to what needs archiving or encryption, and how long you should be storing.

4. Eliminate spam, phishing and malware

One of the main ways that virus writers get malware onto your users' computers and into your systems is through e-mail. Spam campaigns that rapidly change in order to attempt evasion use a variety of methods – such as dropping keylogging trojans or linking to malicious websites – to steal confidential business and personal information.

You must ensure, and be able to demonstrate, that your e-mail infrastructure is protected against malware, viruses, spyware and other threats to system and data integrity. For this you need a solution that blocks malware, spam, denial-of-service attacks, and harvesting of e-mail addresses.

By blocking threats at the perimeter right through to your internal mail servers and desktops, you will eliminate most of the external risk associated with data loss. Your AUP will go a long way toward covering the remaining internal risk.

E-mail compliance is absolutely necessary in order to maintain the data integrity and security of our DoD networks. Information warfare is the new frontier of warfighting and should be equally as guarded.



Health



Weight Gain – Understanding the Problem

Story by
Capt. Steven Jackson, Ph.D., R.D.
ARCENT Dietitian



Capt. Steven Jackson
Third Army Dietitian

All too often Servicemembers gain weight while deployed, especially when working long hours in sedentary jobs. In my last article, I introduced the concept of energy balance as the relationship between the number of calories a person consumes, and the number of calories the person burns off. Further, I illustrated how energy balance dictates body weight using the “24-hour ledger sheet” analogy, which says calories consumed are like credits, and calories burned are like debits to the ledger. Weight gain results from a positive ledger; in other words, too much eating or not enough burning of calories.

Many folks don’t understand that weight gain is

generally not the result of obvious over-eating. Rather, people usually gain weight gradually (over many weeks or months), because the ledger is only slightly positive on any given day. Moreover, environmental changes (e.g., deployment, longer working hours, restricted exercise schedule, etc.) may lead to changes in diet or physical activity that are not immediately apparent.

Do the math – because 3,500 calories is the equivalent of one pound, a slightly positive ledger each day for a year will add body weight.

If one’s ledger is over 100 calories each day for the year, 365 days per year, one would consume an extra 36,500 calories for the year.

By dividing that number by the 3,500 calories required to gain a pound – over the year, one would gain 10 pounds!

By the way, that 100 calorie-per-day excess is less than one 12-ounce regular soda. As you can see, even very small caloric excesses can lead to noticeable weight gain over time. The key to avoiding this is to keep a watchful eye on your weight by using the scale. Do this on your own don’t wait for the next unit weigh-in. Be careful, if your weight starts creeping up, reduce your intake or ramp up your exercise. Stay looking sharp and healthy.

Visit from Kuwaiti Maj. Gen. Al-Othman

Kuwaiti Maj. Gen. Abdulrahman M. Al-Othman, assistant chief of operations and plans, with Kuwait Joint Military committee for Defense Cooperation, was briefed by Lt. Col. Dave Reardon, deputy commander of G3 future operations, during a visit with Third Army and Maj. Gen. Randy E. Manner, deputy commanding general for Third Army at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait July 27. During the visit, Al-Othman was given an update on the retrograde process involving Kuwait, given a tour of the Command Operations Information Center and given an orientation of a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle.



Photo by Cpl. Ryan Hohman



Safety



Five Deadly Words

Story by
Brig. Gen. Anthony G. Crutchfield
Joint Center for Operational Analysis

During my two years at the National Training Center as the senior aviation trainer, I saw many units train under extremely harsh conditions. After a brief period, it became obvious that most individuals were making the same mistakes.

During one particular rotation, the same unit incurred three aviation accidents. Why were these accidents occurring? I thought the answer might be in past accident reports. I read numerous reports from the NTC over an extended period. The accidents were both ground and air. Certain words appeared repeatedly in the safety investigators' write-ups. These adjectives described the cause of most accident.

These were several different accidents — air and ground — that different officers investigated. The words were untrained, unsupervised, undisciplined, overconfident and complacent.

Shortly after I finished my tour at the NTC, I was fortunate enough to take command of the 10th Aviation Brigade then we deployed to Afghanistan. I used the five words as my safety philosophy and challenged my leadership to be on the lookout for these five words in their subordinate units. Every unit is in stages where one or more of the five safety words could describe their current safety condition. No matter how good or safe one thinks they are, each unit could be described by these five words. The challenge for leaders is recognizing these potential hazards, mitigating the risks as much as possible and controlling the rest.



Conditions are constantly changing. This month, your unit may be untrained; however, six months from now, overconfidence or complacency might be the biggest problem. This is especially true of our troops deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan. A leader must recognize and take action to deal with these deficiencies before an accident happens. The answer is simple and as old as the Army itself: leaders must take care of their Soldiers. That duty is all encompassing, touching almost every aspect of our personal and professional lives.

A leader's responsibility for safety includes establishing an organizational culture emphasizing the importance of safety. A safety culture is, instead of the former, a continuing educational process that stimulates an attitude

of true safety consciousness in every member of the unit.

A leader must also supervise and take immediate and effective action against deviations from established standards. Inherent with authority is the obligation to issue and enforce policy. Too frequently, accident investigations reveal a fateful deviation from regulations. Be responsible and accountable for Soldiers.

Furthermore, recognizing the five words in ones' unit shouldn't be shameful. Point out those deficiencies to subordinates and superiors. Conversely, to deny the fact that one's unit is untrained, unsupervised, undisciplined, overconfident or complacent is a dereliction of duty. The result can be disastrous if one doesn't fix those problems.

Chaplain's Corner



Ramadan: a quest for self-restraint

Story by
Chaplain Maj. Dawud Agbere
Third Army/USARCENT

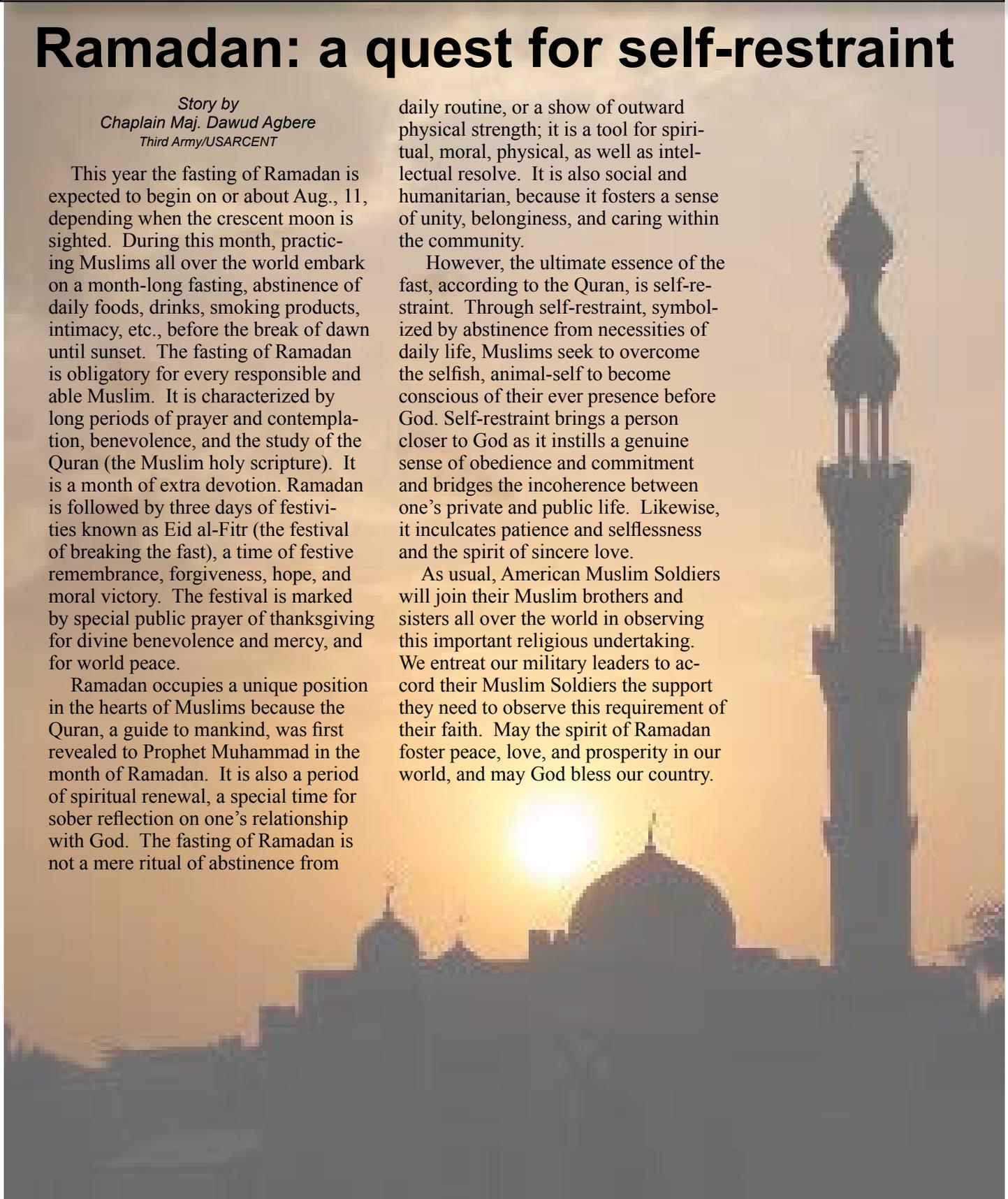
This year the fasting of Ramadan is expected to begin on or about Aug., 11, depending when the crescent moon is sighted. During this month, practicing Muslims all over the world embark on a month-long fasting, abstinence of daily foods, drinks, smoking products, intimacy, etc., before the break of dawn until sunset. The fasting of Ramadan is obligatory for every responsible and able Muslim. It is characterized by long periods of prayer and contemplation, benevolence, and the study of the Quran (the Muslim holy scripture). It is a month of extra devotion. Ramadan is followed by three days of festivities known as Eid al-Fitr (the festival of breaking the fast), a time of festive remembrance, forgiveness, hope, and moral victory. The festival is marked by special public prayer of thanksgiving for divine benevolence and mercy, and for world peace.

Ramadan occupies a unique position in the hearts of Muslims because the Quran, a guide to mankind, was first revealed to Prophet Muhammad in the month of Ramadan. It is also a period of spiritual renewal, a special time for sober reflection on one's relationship with God. The fasting of Ramadan is not a mere ritual of abstinence from

daily routine, or a show of outward physical strength; it is a tool for spiritual, moral, physical, as well as intellectual resolve. It is also social and humanitarian, because it fosters a sense of unity, belongingness, and caring within the community.

However, the ultimate essence of the fast, according to the Quran, is self-restraint. Through self-restraint, symbolized by abstinence from necessities of daily life, Muslims seek to overcome the selfish, animal-self to become conscious of their ever presence before God. Self-restraint brings a person closer to God as it instills a genuine sense of obedience and commitment and bridges the incoherence between one's private and public life. Likewise, it inculcates patience and selflessness and the spirit of sincere love.

As usual, American Muslim Soldiers will join their Muslim brothers and sisters all over the world in observing this important religious undertaking. We entreat our military leaders to accord their Muslim Soldiers the support they need to observe this requirement of their faith. May the spirit of Ramadan foster peace, love, and prosperity in our world, and may God bless our country.





LEFT: Marine Staff Sgt. Amber Cwiklinski, a MARCENT strategic mobility chief from Wapanucka, Okla., and her daughter Sarah Cwiklinski smile for the camera.

BOTTOM: Marine Staff Sgt. Amber Cwiklinski, a MARCENT strategic mobility chief from Wapanucka, Okla., works at her photo-covered work space next to the stuffed animal for which her book is titled at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait July 28.

Marine NCO's child inspires book

Story and photos by
Pfc. Daniel Rangel
Third Army Public Affairs

Family members back home can find deployments difficult, especially when those Family members are two-year-old children who don't know why their parents are gone.

To connect with her two-year-old daughter during a deployment to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Marine Staff Sgt. Amber Cwiklinski, a MARCENT strategic mobility chief, chronicled the life of her stuffed animal then placed her photos and captions on Facebook.

Cwiklinski, a Wapanucka, Okla. native, traded her pink bear for her daughter's pink puppy before her deployment.

She shared how photos and captions of that pink puppy have evolved into

"The Adventures of Pink Puppy."

"I would write little captions for her so her dad could read them," Cwiklinski said about the photos she placed on Facebook.

What started out as a few captions on Facebook, quickly caught the attention of others.

"The Marines started catching onto it and really liked it, so I thought it would make a great story," Cwiklinski said. "So I've talked with a publisher and I've talked with a literary agent."

Although still in development, this wouldn't be the first time Cwiklinski has been published.

"I've written a couple of poems and gotten a couple of publishers' awards and in my spare time I do poetry. I've even found a couple of



'open-mic' nights in Okinawa," Cwiklinski said about her work and performances while stationed in Okinawa, Japan.

For writing inspiration, Cwiklinski reads mystery and romance novels. A hobby she's had since she was a child.

"When I grew up I was a bit of a loner," Cwiklinski said. "My mom was a single parent. She worked a lot, so growing up my escape was reading. I guess over the years I liked reading so much I started writing my own stuff."

Cwiklinski also shared what drives her to publish her book.

"Sometimes being here and being a mom kind of makes you feel guilty," Cwiklinski said. "That's the whole idea behind this story — connecting with my daughter and trying to be there for her. She's so small that [the stuffed animal] is only thing that's grabbing her attention and reminding her that mommy's still there for her."

Now that her book is getting interest from agents and publishers, her daughter will not be the only one who has the staff sergeant's attention. Readers back home may soon be able to pick up her book on the bookshelves as well.

O.N.I.E.



By Staff Sgt. Mark Bennett

Emergency Numbers

911 Emergency DSN – 911/112

From cell phone 2389-9911

Camp Arifjan

DSN 430-3160 / PMO 430-1343

Arifjan Cell 6682-2120

Camp Buerhing

DSN 438-3224 / PMO 438- 3325

Buehring Cell 9720-5396

Camp Virginia Emergency DSN 832-9111

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

SPOD DSN 825-1314

SPOD Cell 9720-5982

KNB DSN 839-1334

Just one Question?

What do you want to read about in the Desert Voice?



“I want to know things like if there’s going to be a new gym by the Zone-2 DFAC.”

Spc. Arthur Davies
Medic, ARCENT HHC



“I would like to see stories on people coming back from Afghanistan.”

Navy Petty Officer 1st Class
Richard Thornton,
Navy Information Operations
Command



“I would like to see pictures of Coasties, A lot of people don’t know where out here doing platform security.”

Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd
Class Antione Springfield
SPOD security specialist



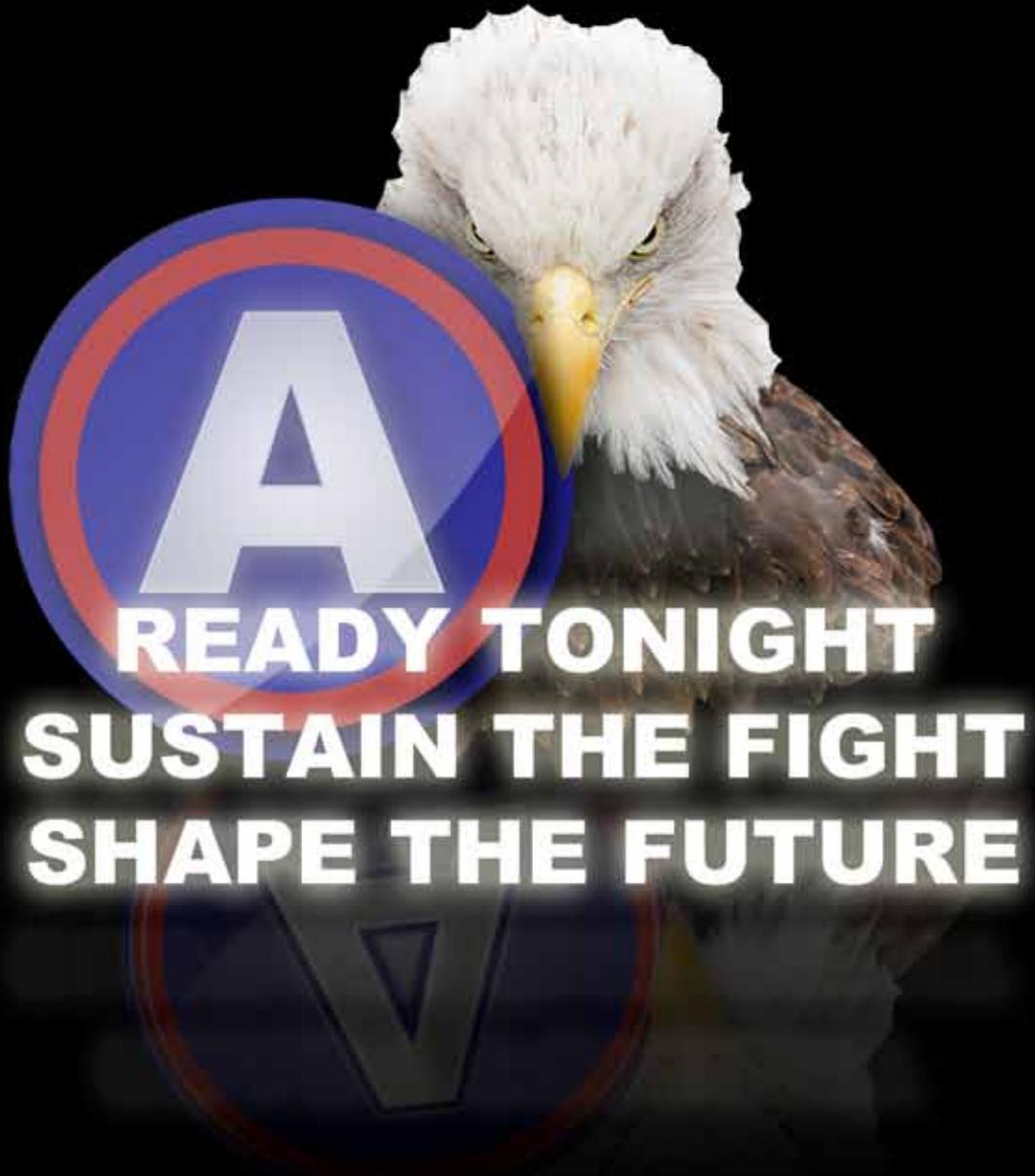
“I would like to see stories about people who go out of their way to help others, Acts of charity and humanitarianism always make a good story.”

Navy Petty Officer 1st Class
Edwina Williams
SPOD security specialist



“I would like to hear about the people who do interesting things outside of the Army. There are people in the reserves that are key leaders within their communities back home.”

Maj. Langston Scott,
STB executive officer



**READY TONIGHT
SUSTAIN THE FIGHT
SHAPE THE FUTURE**