



STRIKER TORCH NEWS TEAM

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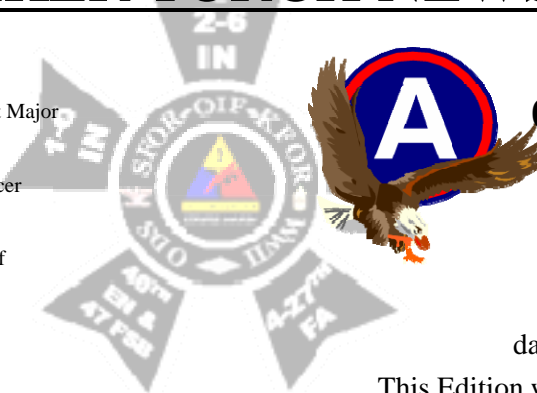
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This Edition will be on our website soon.

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

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2nd Brigade Combat
Team Forward
Camp Buehring, Kuwait

Striker Torch

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(Top) Spec. Daniel Bruno from B Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment, observes the route from the Tank Commander's hatch while road marching to a range.

Photo by
PFC Bryan Haven



A Word from the Striker Command Team



COL Robert E. Scurlock Jr.

CSM Jose A. Santos



Iron Brigade Soldiers, I am proud of your continued perseverance through the beginning of our deployment. Our time here in Kuwait is the perfect opportunity to sharpen our warrior skills to a razor edge. The on-going training, whether it be CQM, mortar live fire, or convoy operations, is some of the best training you can expect to receive. It is essential to our role in The Global War on Terrorism, and essential to your development as a Soldier.

Continue to guard against complacency. Avoid safety violations, maintain muzzle awareness, sensitive items accountability, and always look out for your buddy. Remember that iron sharpens iron and one Iron Soldier sharpens and protects another. We must not let ru-

mors or speculation erode the necessary focus on this critical mission. We are still a lethal force prepared to move forward into Iraq whenever and wherever the need arises—as a life-guard must remain close to the water, we remain close to our theater of operations.

The Brigade R&R leave program is going to begin in the next few weeks. I encourage each and every one of you to take the time to see your family. The Task Forces will operate their own programs and I expect there to be a chance for each Iron Soldier to get a well-deserved break.

Have a Happy and Safe New Year!

Front Cover Photos

Left: Spec. Roger Southard of HHC, 1st Bn., 35th Armd. Regt. stands proud at the entrance of "Rolling Sands" to greet Soldiers as they enter to enjoy all of the decorations and massive meal prepared for Christmas Day. Photo by PFC Joshua Ramey

Center: Spec. Alonzo E. Epps (right) and Spec. Jason L. Dickerson (left) of 2nd Bn., 6th Infantry Regiment display camaraderie & Christmas spirit in their home away from home. Photo by Cpt. Matthew Greb

Right: Santa Claus (PFC Leah Roush of HHC, 40th En. Bn.) greets Soldiers on Christmas Day at "Rolling Sands" dining facility. Photo by PFC Joshua Ramey

Back Cover Photos

Top: Santa Claus waves and smiles to the deployed Soldiers of Camp Buehring. Photo by PFC Evan Richardson

Left: 2nd Platoon, B Company, 40th Engineer Battalion mount a berm in Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Photo by 1st Lt. Patrick McGraugh

Right: 2nd Platoon, 501st MP Co. was recognized at CFLCC Headquarters for their recent assistance in personal security details during the closing of Camp Doha. Photo by PFC Evan Richardson



That Time of the Year

Story by 1st Lt. Bledy Taka

The Holiday season rapidly approached as the Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, continued to train and maintain their combat readiness. Spending time away from home is tough, considering the distance from families and loved ones and for many Soldiers, this will be their first Christmas and New Year's away from home. 1st Bn., 6th Inf. Regt.'s Chaplain worked hard to remind all those who are away from home that there are plenty of reasons to enjoy the season.

When Soldiers woke up on Christmas day, they were able to attend religious services, spend the day relaxing, and call home to their loved ones. The 1st Bn.,

6th Inf. Regt. Chaplain, Capt. Ricky Brunson, dedicated himself to lighting up the holiday spirit in everyone. He found several trees to place inside the otherwise drab tents, while handing out stockings and greeting cards to every Soldier. Chaplain Brunson participated in a program that connected Soldiers with American civilians who support the mission in Iraq. The holiday cards and messages of support let every Soldier know that their sacrifice this season did not go unnoticed. The messages from the public were simple, and very meaningful. *"Just wanted you to know that we are so proud of you and grateful for your service. Come home safe and come home soon. Merry Christmas."*



Spec. Clint Ferguson of HHC, 1st Bn., 6th Inf. Regt. displays the holiday spirit while at the low ready. Photo by 1st Lt. Bledy Taka

Equal Opportunity

The Equal Opportunity (EO) program formulates, directs, and sustains a comprehensive effort to maximize human potential and to ensure fair treatment for all persons based solely on merit, fitness, and capability in support of readiness.

This Month's Special Event: 16 January 2006 is Dr. Martin Luther King's Birthday

The 2BCT Equal Opportunity Office is looking for volunteers to assist in the preparation/conduct of Black History Month. Interested Soldiers and civilians can contact SFC Randy Owens, 2BCT EO Advocate, at the number below.

DSN: 828-1621
Bldg 6-9 Room 6

Court Appearance?

Are You Serious?

Information Provided by 2 BCT JAG Office

Imagine you just received mail, and among the boxes and other gifts from family and friends, you discover a letter from a courthouse demanding your presence because of a divorce, child custody, or other civil action lawsuit. Knowing that you're deployed, you wonder how you are supposed to appear in a court in the United States or what is going to happen to you if you fail to appear.

2BCT Soldiers should be aware they have certain rights afforded to them under the Service Members Civil Relief Act to protect them from instances just like this one. The Service Members Civil Relief Act allows Soldiers the opportunity to stay civil court actions until the Soldier is able to return and appear in court. A stay of a court action means the action will not go forward, and the court cannot come to any conclusions or findings without the Soldier being given the opportunity to appear and plead his case.

To take advantage of these rights, Soldiers need to bring all documentation they received in the mail to 2BCT Legal Assistance, currently located in the 2BCT TOC. The Soldier also needs to inform their chain of command that their appearance is being requested by a court. The 2BCT Legal Assistance attorney will mail letters on the Soldier's behalf to the court explaining the Soldier's situation. A separate letter from the Soldier's Company Commander is also required explaining how mission requirements prevent the Soldier from appearing in the court at this time. Upon receipt of the letters, the court must stay the action until the Soldier returns to a garrison environment and is granted leave to handle the issue.

Soldiers should bring the documents to 2BCT Legal Assistance as soon as they receive them. By taking a few easy steps now, the Soldier can be assured their rights will remain protected.

Delivering the Holiday Spirit

Story and Photos by 1st Lt. Zachary Hadfield

Thousands of miles of oceans and the constant potential of orders for Iraq proved no match for the holiday spirit. In the absence of their loved ones, the families of Task Force 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment Soldiers have been exhausting the U.S. Postal Service and Military Postal Service in an effort to bring holiday cheer to their deployed relatives. Hundreds of packages, coupled with countless letters, have been arriving daily. This generates a daunting task for any battalion S1 shop. Among their other duties, it's up to the S1 (personnel) shop to pick up mail, sort it, and deliver it to the owner. The S1 NCO in charge, SSgt Freddy Lugo, who leads the daily operation, claims that the amount of mail coming in is nearly unmanageable. It has reached the point where he is recruiting Soldiers from other sections to help his crew. "It's a very tedious, yet rewarding job. Everyone likes to see us around, and it keeps motivation high among the Soldiers."

Just how much mail are we talking about? It is estimated that Task Force 1st Bn., 35th Armd. Regt., alone receives and distributes roughly 400 boxes and 800 letters a day. "People don't understand how big of a job it is," says Spec. Robert Vaughn of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Bn., 35th Armd. Regt., "Someone has got to do it; it's a big morale booster for all the Soldiers. There are no days off, it's an everyday job."

The mail distribution schedule seems to be working. PFC Phaengsak Sitthiphaen from C Company, 40th Engineer Battalion, explains, "The mail has been great. I have a package coming from my sister and I hope it gets here before Christmas." SSgt. Lugo remarked that people will eagerly wait around all day for a much anticipated package or letter. "It's nice to see the smile on their face when someone gets a package they've been looking forward to," says SSgt. Lugo. Being separated during the holidays is difficult, but between thoughtful loved ones back home and the ceaseless efforts of the S1 shop, the distance between relatives and Soldiers grows shorter every day.



Camp Buehring mail center is filled to the brim with packages, letters, and gifts for Soldiers during the Holiday season.



Spec. John Parker, C Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment, transfers a package to a waiting bus used to transport mail to expectant Soldiers.



Pvt. 2 Martin Riley, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment, carries out a load of mail while SSgt. Freddy Lugo and PFC Iraq Blackledge sort through packages.

Charlie Med Aids Iron Soldiers

Story by Maj. John Keunzli

For C Company, 47th Forward Support Battalion, the mission is alive and well in Camp Buehring, Kuwait. The company must balance the mission of providing medical care to the Brigade Combat Team (BCT), and conducting necessary tactical and technical training to ensure wherever the BCT goes, trained and qualified medics are by their side.

The Combat Medic (91W) MOS has rapidly taken on a huge range of professional clinical and emergency medical certifications. Medics in today's Army earn the same qualifications as Emergency Medical Technicians in the civilian sector. They also find themselves trailed by a flock of acronym certifications, such as EMT, TC3, CPR, CLS, etc. To remain current, C Company has benefited from the training of the Brigade Nurse, Capt. Damien Kelly, and the company's Physician Assistants and Doctors. These are either permanently assigned to the Company or provided during the deployment through the Army's Professional Filler System (PROFIS).

Some specialized skills the Company does not normally see in garrison are afforded by having a Physical Therapist, Capt. Brandon Sullivan, and two PROFIS doctors. Maj. Shawna Scully, a neurologist and Capt. John Sheppard, a General Medical Officer with plans to pursue a career in radiology, are two filler doctors that act as permanent members of the team.

The C Co. medics keep their skills sharp through tactical training, led by the qualified officers and NCOs in their ranks, which will take them through Combat Live Fire training in the next month.

Although still in the early stages of deployment, the C Company, 47th FSB has already taken on the mission of caring for the 2nd BCT Soldiers. The company has to handle everything from routine sick call to



C Company Physician's Assistant (PA), 1st Lt. Tatiana Nita, demonstrates an abdominal exam on Medic Spec. Michael Pourrier at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Spec. Joel Fitch (rear center) and Spec. Brandon Barnes (right) observe.

Photo by Sgt. Tal Wick

serious physical injuries, while still tending to the necessary requirements of training. This training will keep the company alive on the battlefield, and will enable them to support their combat arms brethren throughout the Brigade Combat Team.

Capt. Brendan Sullivan, C Company, 47th Forward Support Battalion, Physical Therapist, teaches how to do a proper knee exam on Sgt. Kristen Halsey while PFC Michelle Catlin (left) and Pvt. 1 Carina Crawford (right) look on.

Photo by Sgt. Tal Wick



Capt. John Sheppard, Professional Filler System Doctor, teaches steps taken in evaluating lower back pain injuries as he demonstrates on Pvt. 1 Brian Hayden with PFC Karen Sanders observing.

Photo by Sgt. Tal Wick

"There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure."

- General Collin Powell

Christmas in...

Story by PFC Evan Richardson

Family Video Teleconferencing



Sgt. Kevin Tugman of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, waves to his wife and daughter using Video Teleconference equipment. -Photo by PFC Jeremy Neece

Soldiers were thousands of miles away from home this holiday season, but that did not mean that they had to miss out on all of the cheer. Leadership at all levels, along with the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) center, planned a series of events to bring the spirit of the holidays to Kuwait for Soldiers deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Planned activities included Operation Christmas Basket, a candlelight ceremony, Christmas Movie Marathon, and a Jingle Bell Jog. The 2nd BCT leadership helped bring the holidays to Soldiers with Video Teleconferences (VTCs) scheduled to Baumholder.

Holiday festivities at Camp Buehring began on December 20th with Operation Christmas Basket. Volun-

teers composed of citizens and residents of Kuwait raised funds and organized gifts to present to junior enlisted Soldiers as a surprise. Santa Claus passed out the holiday gift bags filled with playing cards, hats, calendars, squeeze balls, and watches. Each Soldier received a \$10 calling card to get in touch with loved ones back home. All of these gifts were much appreciated by the Soldiers. Santa brought members of the Coalition Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC) Chain of Command and Christmas Basket organizers to Camp Buehring to shake hands with Soldiers thanking them for their service.

All throughout the week, the leadership of the 2nd BCT gave many Iron Soldiers an early Christmas gift. Each

A Traditional Christmas Dinner



From left to right: PFC Chad Spears, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, Spec. George Sabillon, Spec. Joseph Toole, SFC Gerald Donaldson, PFC Welton Wilson, and Spec. Roger Southard, all from HHC, 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment, proudly display the Christmas Scene. They worked hard to serve their fellow Soldiers on Christmas Day, 2005, at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. -Photo by PFC Evan Richardson

Operation Christmas Basket



PFC Bruce Scherrer, HHC 1st Bn. 6th Inf. Regt., was thrilled to open his Christmas gifts and find a stress relief ball. "This is really going to come in handy" he said. "It's really good to see people care about us when we're so far away from home." -Photo by SFC David Dockett



Members of B Co., 141st Signal Bn., show off their Improvised Christmas Tree (ICT), fabricated from an antenna, camouflage netting, lights, and other various reflective material. The "tree" is lit every night and has become an attraction all around Pad 1.

Photo by PFC Evan Richardson

night, Soldiers were able to participate in a Video Teleconference with family members in Baumholder and Wiesbaden. Soldiers, face to face with their families, were able to wish them a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. "It's nice that I got to talk to my family. It really hyped me up, even though it was only for a few minutes," said Sgt. Peter Tomas, of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment. When asked how he felt about the Brigade setting up the VTC for Soldiers, Sgt. Kevon Tugman, also of HHC, 1st Bn., 6th Inf. Regt., replied "It's a good thing. A lot of us were [feeling] depressed, but this really brought up our morale."

Christmas morning was filled with precipitation and cold winds; however, unlike Germany there was no snow. The rain dampened the desert sand, but not the holiday mood. Soldiers were treated with a variety of Christmas and holiday movies at the Camp's movie

tent. Films included "A Christmas Story," "It's a Wonderful Life," "Miracle of 34th Street," and "National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation." Soldiers were able to laugh and be entertained all day, sharing the holidays with new friends. Crowds packed the theater throughout the evening with spectators leaving late at night.

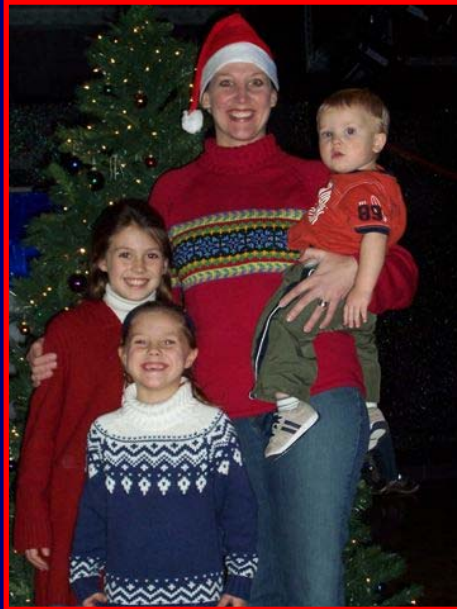
Around the Brigade, different units held a variety of Christmas events. On Christmas Eve, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment had a lunch for the NCOs, a dinner for the senior leadership, and the enlisted men held their qualifying games to gain entry to the semi-final flag football tournament. Many other units handed out Christmas bags with candy and cookies provided by the Family Readiness Groups back in Baumholder for their Soldiers. During the day, Soldiers used the phones or internet to contact their families, while others took the opportunity to rest and relax from training.

MWR also hosted the Jingle Bell Jog on the 28th of December. Soldiers ran a five kilometer route while wearing Jingle Bells, which brought the sound of Christmas to the whole camp. A portion of the route took runners down Eisenhower road, where Soldiers and civilians alike cheered as the athletes approached the finish line. MWR presented the first 650 finishers a t-shirt as a finishing prize.

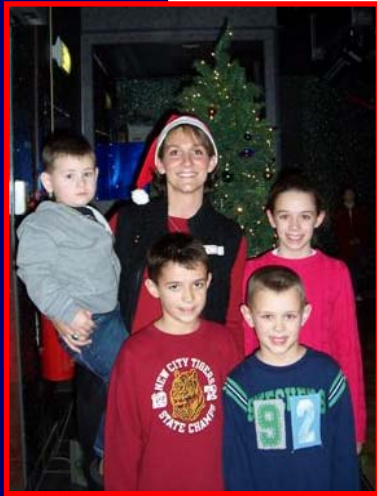
The holiday season in Kuwait turned out to be a surprisingly festive time for Soldiers stationed on Camp Buehring. With a multitude of activities and events, Soldiers had plenty of ways to spend their holiday time. Although Soldiers may have been thousands of miles away from home, they were among friends and their Army family. They were all able to share in a unique experience and establish some new Christmas traditions.



...Kuwait



Images from the Homefront



Photos by Capt. Heather Jangraw



From left to right: Sgt. Tameka Stewart, SSgt. Tommie Bell, and SFC Rebecca Booker from 47th Forward Support Battalion, play a game of musical chairs set to Christmas music.



Sgt. Jeffery Blakenship (top) & SSgt. Adam Addley (bottom) from 47th Forward Support Battalion wake up early Christmas morning to open the presents that Santa brought them all the way from the North Pole. Santa travels to different Army bases around the world and hands out presents this time of year.

Oh yeah, It's Christmas

Story by 1st Lt. Drew Gregory

For most Americans, Christmas is a time of year spent in the comfort of home and the company of the ones they love. It is characterized by presents from Santa Claus and feasts fit for a king. However, for deployed Soldiers, Christmas can become just another day lost in the monotony of mundane operations. As the days string together like scenes from "Ground Hog Day," many Soldiers failed to realize that the special day was fast approaching. 1st Lt. Christopher Poponak from Head-

quarters and Headquarters Detachment, 47th Forward Support Battalion, didn't realize that it was December until he literally tripped over the Holiday decorations in the Dining Facility. At the same time, there are other Soldiers who looked forward to this Christmas as if it were any other. Such as those who decorated miniature Christmas trees in their sleeping tents weeks ago. With mutual kindness and these symbolic reminders of the season, most individuals realized that Holi-

days in a combat zone are an experience that is worth reflecting upon. Though the 2nd Brigade Combat Team cannot spend this time of year with the ones they love, Iron Soldiers can spend it with their extended family: the men and women who are serving our country. However an individual chooses to look at the holidays, they should take a moment and enjoy the Christmas spirit with their new family. This will undoubtedly be one Christmas Soldiers will never forget.

The Torch Comix
Comic by SPC Devin Hall

"Do you think anyone saw that?"

Can you draw? Do you have an idea for a comic strip? Do you have too much time on your hands? We are looking for talented cartoonist from within the Brigade. If you're interested, contact us and we can get YOU published!



The Soldiers of Camp Buehring gather on Christmas Eve for a candlelight vigil.
Photo by PFC Evan Richardson

Upcoming MWR Events

Sunday, 01 January 06

0900 : New Year's Field Day @ Fitness Ctr.

Monday, 02 January 06

1900 : Spoon Tournament @ Oasis

Tuesday, 03 January 06

1500 : Chess & Checkers Tournament @ Oasis

Wednesday, 04 January 06

1500 : Texas Hold'em Poker Tournament @ Oasis

1730 : 7.5k Weekly Fun Run @ Hole-N-One

Thursday, 05 January 06

1400 : Phase 10 Tournament @ Oasis

1900 : 8 Ball Tournament @ Rec. Ctr.

Friday, 06 January 06

1400 : Darts Tournament @ Rec. Ctr.

2000 : Karaoke Nights @ MWR Stage

2100 : Rendezvous Club @ Events Tent

Saturday, 07 January 06

0630 : 10k New Year's Run @ Hole-N-One

1000 : Spa Day @ Events Tent



A Company, 47th Forward Support Battalion's 1st Lt. Patrick Warren (left) takes a break from rigorous training and listens to Spec. Jason Cain play his guitar. Photo by Spec. Eric Laubenstein

From left to right: Cpl. Russel Slaven, Spec. James Mchale, and Spec. Johnathan Salinas of B Company, 40th Engineer Battalion, with their Operation Christmas Basket gifts and \$10 dollar phone cards. "It makes me feel like I'm part of the country. It shows me that the world is participating and cares about the Global War on Terrorism," said Spec. Salinas. Photo by PFC Joshua Ramey



Left to right: SSgt. James Messer, SSgt. Shawn Re' and Spec. Brandon Barnhouse, from B Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, are administered the oath of re-enlistment by 1st Lt. Scott Love. Photo by Capt. Matthew Greb

Interested in Commissioning?

377th TSC and CFLCC are conducting a Commissioning Sources Information briefing for all interested Enlisted Personnel on 05 January 2005 at 1300 on Camp Buehring. The briefing will cover how to obtain an Officer Commission through the West Point Military Academy, Federal Officer Candidate School, State Officer Candidate School, Reserve Officer Training Corps, or Direct Commission. Obtaining a Warrant Officer Commission through Warrant Officer Candidate School will also be discussed.

All Enlisted Personnel interested in attending need to make their reservation by calling Maj. Anderson at 430-5073, or emailing her at tina.anderson@arifjan.arcent.army.mil by 03 January 2005.

The Life of a Bus Driver

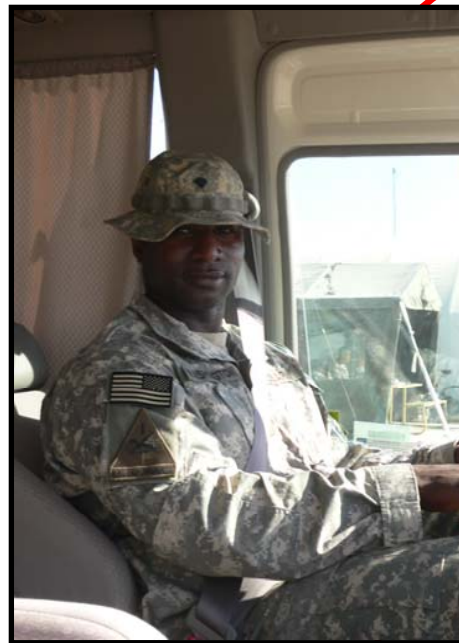
Story by Capt. Dan Napolitano

For Soldiers who routinely walk across the entire camp, the sight of a bus going their way raises the hope of a quicker trip and a welcome break from walking. Too often the bus just drives right past the weary Soldier, raising only more dust to replace their crushed hopes; however, there are other considerations. For many Soldiers, seeing Specialist Luftee Washington driving his blue and white minibus back and forth across the camp is a common sight. Though many might take his work for granted, the life of the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 40th Engineer Battalion bus driver is a grueling, but adventurous one.

Spec. Washington has been helping Soldiers on their way since arriving in Kuwait and makes an average of 40 runs per day. Everyday he begins his route hours before many people have eaten breakfast, and he does not finish until late in the evening. On a few occasions he has returned at 0230, well after the majority of the Brigade is asleep. Not only must he pilot his Mitsubishi Coaster, he also ensures its constant operability by doing Preventive Maintenance Checks and Services (PMCS) three times a week. To those in command, Spec. Washington has continually proven instru-

mental to Battalion operations. Recently, he alone drove over 800 personnel to and from 40th Engineer Battalion's test fire and qualification ranges.

When asked about the best part of his job, Spec. Washington states it is "getting off [camp] and seeing the sights around." He has seen a number of local Bedouins on mules and donkeys, herding camels, and living in tented communities. The worst part of the job is "the hours, because everyone needs to go somewhere," he added. In fact, during the process of the interview, three different Soldiers walked up and asked him if they could hitch a ride. So dear reader, if that lone bus happens to stop and give you a ride; be sure to thank your bus driver.



Spec. Luftee Washington from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 40th Engineer Battalion, offers weary Soldiers a ride.

Photo by Capt. Dan Napolitano



In the sun or a sandstorm, Spec. Luftee Washington from HHC, 40th Engineer Battalion drives on. Photo by PFC Joshua Ramey

What Do YOU Think?

"What is your New Year's resolution this year?"

Questions and Photos by PFC Jeremy Neece



Sgt. David Link
SVC, 4-27 FA

Get promoted and get back to my family.



Pvt. 2 Kathryn Virney
HHC, 2BCT

Write a book and stay true to my beliefs.



Spec. Latoia Andrews
B, 501st MI

Get back to rear soon and get stop loss [there].



PFC Daniel Sestina
B, 40th Eng.

Learn how to play bluegrass music.



Spec. Wesley Belcher
C, 47th FSB

Make my E-6 and finish my nursing degree.

Next Week: What training in Kuwait has been the most rewarding?

