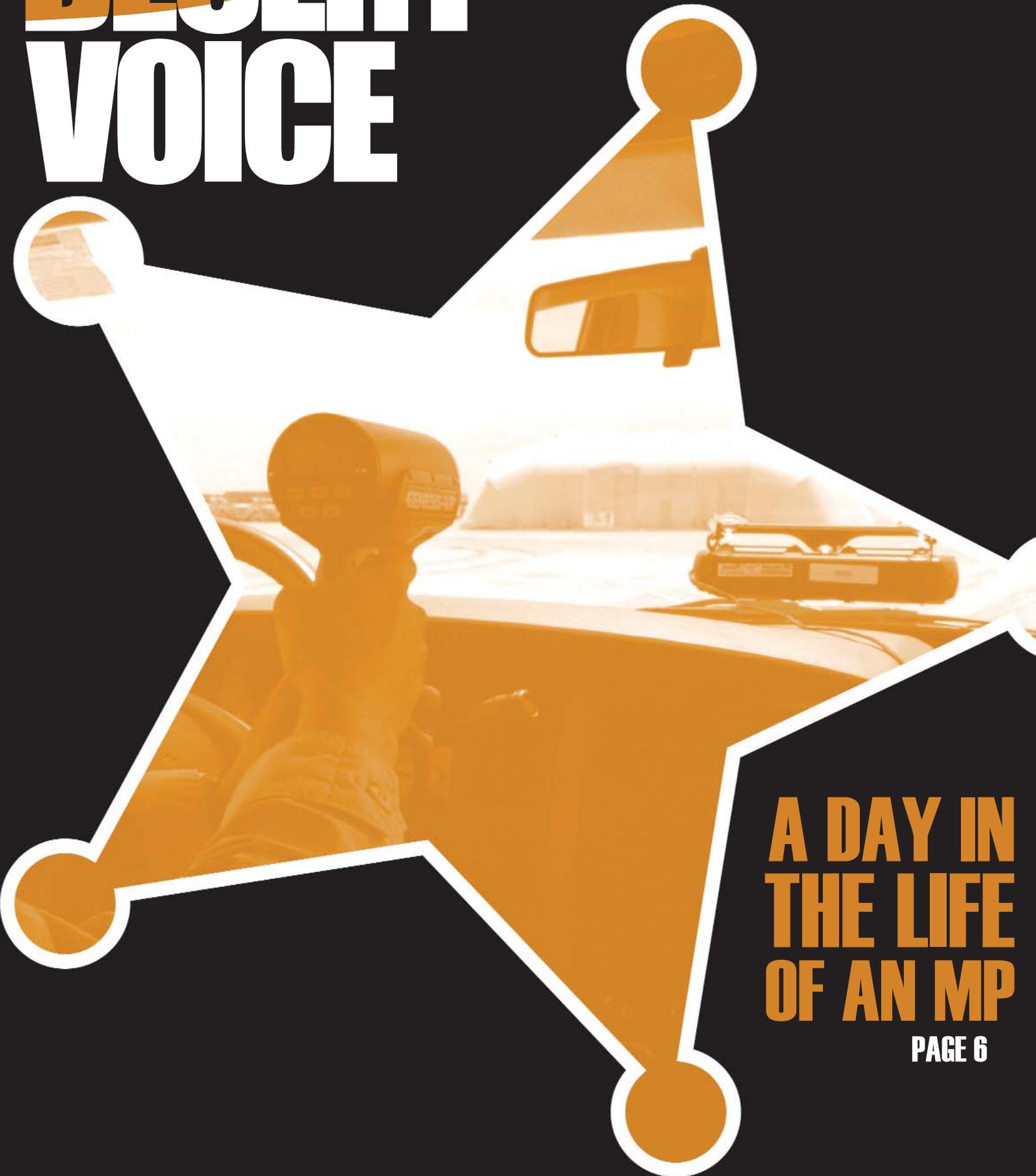


MAY 4, 2005

# DESERT VOICE



**A DAY IN  
THE LIFE  
OF AN MP**

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# DESERT VOICE

Volume 26, Issue 38

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More than two years into Operation Iraqi Freedom, President George W. Bush said he is pleased with the progress in Iraq, but added he won't give a timetable for the pull-out of U.S. troops there.

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American troops won't be able to pull out of Iraq until the country has its own security force. Hundreds of U.S. servicemembers are training Iraqis toward that end.

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### On the Cover

A Camp Arifjan military police officer scans the roads for speeding drivers.

Graphic illustration by Sgt. Matt Millham

# Bush pleased with progress in Iraq

Story by Jim Garamone  
American Forces Press Service

President Bush said the Iraqi people are making good progress in creating a democracy in the nation and said that as the democracy takes root, more people will see the benefits.

He spoke during a White House press conference April 28. The president also spoke about North Korea.

"There are still some in Iraq who aren't happy with democracy," Bush said. "They want to go back to the old days of tyranny and darkness, torture chambers and mass graves. I believe we're making really good progress in Iraq, because the Iraqi people are beginning to see the benefits of a free society."

The president said he was pleased with Iraqi officials' announcing their cabinet. He also praised the training effort coalition forces have undertaken to form the Iraqi army and Iraqi police.

"The Iraqi military is being trained by our military, and they're performing much better than the past," Bush said. "The more secure

Iraq becomes, as a result of the hard work of Iraqi security forces, the more confidence the people will have in the process, and the more isolated the terrorists will become."

But Iraq still has problems and still has terrorists willing to kill vast numbers of people to intimidate the population and bring back the excesses of the former regime. "We will work with the Iraqis to secure their future," the president said.

"A free Iraq in the midst of the Middle East is an important part of spreading peace. It's a region of the world where a lot of folks in the past never thought democracy could take hold. Democracy is taking hold. And as democracy takes hold, peace will more likely be the norm."

Bush said he would not lay out a timetable for pulling troops from Iraq. "All that will do is cause an enemy to adjust," he said. "So my answer is, As soon as possible. And as soon as possible depends upon the Iraqis being able to fight and do the job."

The president said the number of U.S. troops in Iraq – now under 140,000 – is not limiting his options elsewhere in the world. In Korea, for example, the U.S. troop levels

have dropped. But the U.S. has made up for that by increasing other capabilities in the nation.

"(North Korean leader) Kim Jong-il is a dangerous person," Bush said. "He's a man who starves his people. He's got huge concentration camps. And ... there is concern about his capacity to deliver a nuclear weapon. We don't know if he can or not, but I think it's best when you're dealing with a tyrant like Kim Jong-il to assume he can."

The president said the best way to deal with North Korea is via diplomacy. He said the United States tried a bilateral approach, and it didn't work.

"I felt a better approach would be to include people in the neighborhood, into a consortium to deal with him," Bush said. "It's particularly important to have China involved. China has got a lot of influence in North Korea."

Still the president isn't relying solely on diplomacy. He said the missile defense system could offer at least limited protection from a North Korean strike. "We've got a comprehensive strategy in dealing with him," Bush said, referring to Kim Jong-il.

## Kuwait National Guard checks out Level 1 armor



Photo by Spc. Aimee Felix

**Two members of the Kuwait National Guard check out a U.S. Army Level-1 up-armored Humvee during a visit May 1.**

**They were among ten Kuwait National Guard officers and soldiers to pay a visit to the Army Materiel Command's Field Support Battalion-Kuwait lot located at Camp Arifjan.**

**The purpose of the visit was for the Kuwaiti officers and soldiers to assess the capabilities of the Level-1 up-armored vehicles as the Kuwait National Guard is interested in purchasing several to support their convoy security mission, which supports U.S. operations here in Kuwait**

**FSB-Kuwait commander Lt. Col. Scott Fletcher gave the Kuwaitis an overview of the vehicles' features and capabilities, including a desert test drive.**

# Security, Iraqi style

Story and photo by Spc. Curt Cashour

While a number of countries have contributed to the success of Operation Iraqi Freedom, completing the overall mission hinges on the achievements of one nation: Iraq. In order for the country to stabilize, Iraq must develop a robust network of security forces to include military and police contingents.

According to an April 23 radio address by President George W. Bush, the number of trained and equipped Iraqi security forces now exceeds 150,000.

To keep these forces growing, the Iraqi Assistance Group, a military team co-located in Kuwait and Iraq operating under the command and control of the Multi National Security Transition Command-Iraq, is helping to partner teams of American military advisers with Iraq's burgeoning security forces.

For the past two months IAG-Kuwait has been helping these advisory teams navigate through Kuwait on their way to Iraq, said Lt. Col. Tony Morales of the 98th Division, an institutional training Reserve unit headquartered in Rochester, N.Y.

As chief of operations for IAG-Kuwait, Morales, 43, oversees 12 Soldiers who support the reception, staging and onward integration of the teams, which hail from all branches of the military.

So far, 220 advisers have passed through Kuwait. Next month, nearly 400 are scheduled to shuffle through. According to Morales, the trend is going to continue.

"This is the priority mission for the theater. Last year we were focusing on fighting the insurgency. Now we're concentrating on training the Iraqis to do it," he said.

Once they leave Kuwait, the teams travel to the Phoenix Academy in Iraq, where they'll spend about three weeks working through mission-related problem solving exercises and case studies.

After the training, the teams will be ready to partner with an Iraqi unit. Advisory team deployments typically last for a year, Morales said.

The teams often consist of 10-man groups composed of both commissioned and noncommissioned officers who have proven themselves adept at problem solving and adapting to different types of situations, Morales said.

Specializing in all types of security functions, the teams will advise and help train Iraqi forces in the art of operations at battal-



Photo by Lt. Col. Tony Morales

**Soldiers with the 98th Division conduct foreign weapons training with AK-47s at Udairi Range Nov. 18. The training is a requirement for all U.S. military advisory teams partnering with Iraqi Security Forces.**

ion, brigade and division levels. They will not, however, be in charge of the Iraqis.

"It's a balance between doing it for [the Iraqis] and making suggestions," Morales said.

Once paired with a unit, the advisers immerse themselves in Iraqi culture by eating, living and training with Iraqi service-members, Morales said.

To help them better relate to their Iraqi counterparts, the advisers receive training in cultural awareness and extensive instruction in Arabic before leaving the United States.

"It was a college year of Arabic shoved down our throats in 30 hours," said Capt. Jack Rebolledo, 33, part of an advisory team made up of Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 163rd Field Artillery, a National Guard unit from Evansville, Ind.

The language and cultural training has put the advisers leaps ahead of American Soldiers who have previously deployed to the Middle East, said Maj. John Osborne, part of an advisory team composed of Soldiers from the 100th Division, a Reserve institutional training unit from Louisville, Ky.

The 39-year-old Osborne served in Operation Desert Storm. During the conflict, then 2nd Lt. Osborne was shocked when a local contractor tried to hold his hand. With the help of the cultural-awareness training,

Soldiers will now know that such an act is merely a friendly gesture, he said.

A member of an advisory team from the 29th Infantry Division, a National Guard unit headquartered in Fort Belvoir, Va., 1st Lt. Paul Chenevert will soon be working with members of a newly-formed Iraqi infantry battalion.

Once Chenevert, 33, and his team members are satisfied with the progress of the Iraqi unit, the group will begin conducting missions. Advisory members will be there to monitor the group's progress and serve as liaisons between the Iraqi unit and coalition forces.

Rebolledo and his team will also pair up with an Iraqi infantry battalion. In previous assignments, Rebolledo has served as a liaison to the Kuwaiti and German armies and said he welcomes the opportunity to work with Iraqi forces.

"You get the opportunity to teach them what you do and you learn a lot from them too," he said.

For Rebolledo, the most important part of his impending mission is teaching the Iraqi security forces to work as a team and take ownership of their country.

"Their success and their ability to stand up as a military force means that U.S. forces can go home," he said.

# AFN radio hits Kuwait

Story and photo by Spc. Brian Trapp

Troops will have a few new radio choices to add to Voice of America's English lessons and European top 40. Now, Soldiers in Kuwait can tune into two new AFN radio stations, which were brought up to full power this week.

Camp Buehring and Camp Arifjan each installed new transmitters, and Camp Doha's transmitter was repaired two weeks ago. The three should give all of Kuwait's camps AFN radio service.

Buehring's transmitter will operate at 300 watts on 107.9 FM and Arifjan's and Doha's transmitters will operate at 500 watts on 104.3 FM.

"The Kuwaiti station plays all the same songs. I've heard Candy Shop by 50 Cent about 3 times tonight," said Timothy Hayne, a CSA security contractor who frequently listens to the radio during his 12-hour guard shift. Once he found out he could pick up the AFN radio broadcast at his guard post, he switched from Kuwait's English speaking station. "They don't play rock music on the Kuwaiti stations," he said.

"The intent is country-wide coverage, north to south," said Capt. Graham Fox, 228th Signal Company commander. The process to bring AFN to all of Kuwait took about eight months.

"The frequency will never change, but the programming will change," said Staff Sgt. Gerald Barber, cable tech monitor with the 228th Signal Company. There is a rotation plan for the radio programming to accommodate all listeners' tastes. Changing the type of music played on the transmitter is as easy as changing the channel on the receiver. All they need to do is hit a few buttons, Barber said.

For the next four months, Camp Arifjan will broadcast AFN radio's Z-Rock, one of 10 channels of programming that come from the AFN Defense Media Center in California. There are seven around-the-clock music channels, from country and hard rock to oldies and adult contemporary and three news and sports channels. The music stations broadcast syndicated American radio shows like Rick Dees top 40, and there are several news and sports formats like ESPN sports and National Public Radio.

The AFN radio service may be new to many U.S. military camps here, but it isn't new to Kuwait.

Camp Doha has had AFN radio for years, but for the last two years, the antenna has been operating at about 40 percent of its original power.



**Staff. Sgt. Gerald Barber, cable tech monitor with the 228th Signal Company, switches wires after running a test on the satellite picking up Camp Arifjan's Armed Forces Network Radio feed. The new country-wide radio service will give troops another choice on their radios.**

The radio service didn't come sooner because of the war, Fox said. The strategic communication network for Kuwait's camps had top priority.

Now that the strategic network is in place, the mission is growing to include services like AFN radio service. The outlying camps in Kuwait are relatively new compared to Camp Doha, which has been in use since the early '90s.

The push for Kuwait's AFN radio service came from Barber, Fox said. While Barber was installing AFN cable television service, he was approached by the people from Armed Forces News, who installed Camp Doha's transmitters, and they offered to send the equipment to expand Kuwait radio service. He took them up on their offer.

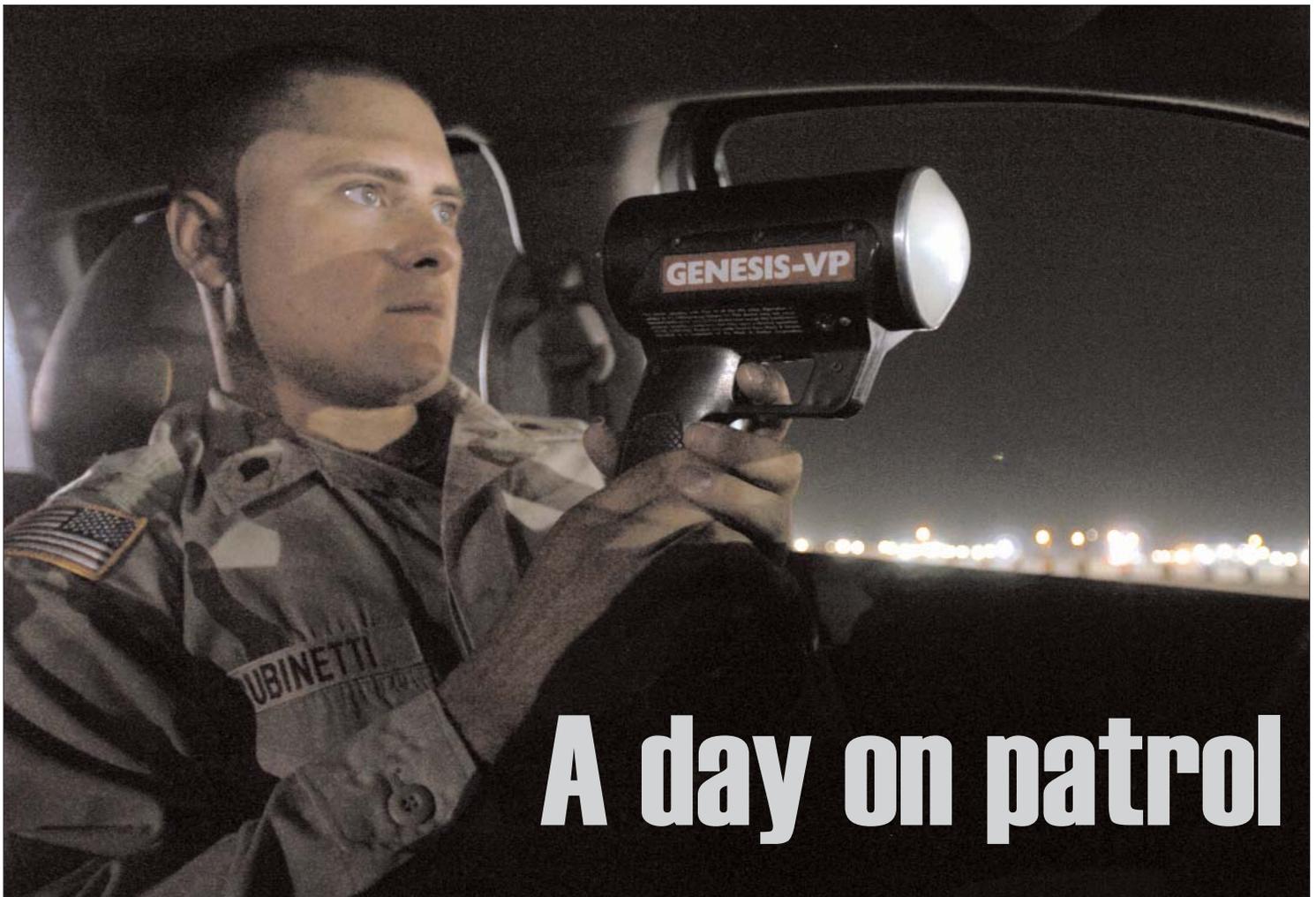
After getting the correct equipment to Kuwait, AFN sent a team for the country-

wide project to assist in setting up the transmitters and repairing Camp Doha's aging systems.

Bringing the radio stations online took some leg work, Barber said. Once the transmitters were in place at Camp Arifjan, the 63rd Signal Battalion, C Company's antenna team had to pull more than 200 feet of antenna wire up one of Camp Arifjan's radio towers. It took from the morning until after dark to get it fully installed, Barber said.

Once the satellite dish was set up at the base of the tower and aligned with the AFN radio satellite, radio service came on line for the southern camp.

As far as what will be going out on the air from the new radio stations, scheduling is up to the discretion of the Directorate of Information Management commander, said Fox.



# A day on patrol

**Spc. Vincent Rubineti, a military policeman with the Army Reserve's 430th Military Police Detachment, a unit from Red Bank, N.J., checks the speed of a vehicle driving into Camp Arifjan's Zone 6 April 29.**

**Speed is one of the biggest reasons for accidents in Kuwait, according to Master Sgt. Robert Cornlea, operations noncommissioned officer for the 430th.**

**Story and photos by Sgt. Matt Millham**

Drivers who don't pay any attention to road rules, a constant threat of terrorist activity and Soldiers who are often overly eager to get to Iraq or back home can make a military police officer's day difficult. They can also take some of the tedium out of a job that relies on people breaking the rules to make things interesting.

Spc. Vincent Rubineti, an MP with the 430th MP Detachment from Red Bank, N.J., begins his day on patrol at 9 a.m. That's after a 4:30 a.m. wakeup for physical training, a 7:45 a.m. work call, 8 a.m. weapons draw, 30 minutes of something called guard mount, during which the MPs find out what patrol they'll be on and anything they should look for while on the road, and checking over his vehicle.

After all that begins a 12-hour shift that could be the most boring 12 hours of a patrol officer's life, or the time could be filled with bomb threats, fatal traffic accidents, speeding tickets, public nudity or fistfights. It just depends on the day.

**"For the amount of trouble they get into, they just steal the dumbest stuff."**

**— Master Sgt. Robert Cornlea**

On April 29th, Rubineti, who hails from East Hanover, N.J., had a busy morning. Before he got to look over his Dodge Durango, he got called to Arifjan's Entry Control Point-1 – the gate used by trucks and third country nationals. The reason: a truck coming onto camp tested positive twice for an explosive, leading to an hours-long investigation effort that brought out every inspection tool at the MPs' disposal. Despite the hubbub, no threat was found.

Immediately after that, Rubineti had to see to a money escort from the Zone 1 PX. He hardly got a moment of peace all morning, and just after noon had to take a sworn statement from a sergeant who had lost his military identification card.

"People lose their ID cards all the time," said Master Sgt. Robert Cornlea, operations noncommissioned officer for the 430th.

Rubineti's day slowed almost to a halt after the sworn statement. He drove around Arifjan for about an hour, then spent another 30 pointing his radar gun at vehicles driving through Zone 6 before being called back to the station to follow up on the morning's explosives alert.

After dealing with a minor paperwork issue, Rubineti headed back out to patrol Arifjan. He got no calls. He caught no speeders. His brand new Durango overheated on a day that wasn't even hot by

Kuwait standards, forcing him to pull over three times to let the engine cool as the vehicle limped a mere mile back to the station.

Rubinetti traded vehicles and headed back on patrol for about an hour before he had to report for flag detail.

Later that night there was another scare. Someone left a bag unattended in one of Arifjan's barracks. The handles of the bag had black wire wrapped around them, which led someone to call the bag in as suspicious. Rubinetti and the MPs from Sierra 1, the patrol that covers Kuwaiti Naval Base and the Seaport of Debarkation, responded to the call along with the fire department, explosive ordnance disposal personnel and a K-9 unit. It was a lot of effort for what turned out to be nothing.

"It's just a bag of files," said the private first class who Rubinetti was forced to charge with leaving the suspicious bag.

"People don't know that," said Rubinetti, "especially when it's wrapped with wire."

What happened wasn't necessarily a crime, but it's something that happens all the time and can create problems for a servicemember, including action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

"Lately, for some reason, there's been a lot of lar-

The amount of crime on U.S. military camps here is far less than you'd find in a comparable population in the states according to Lt. Col. Neal Flatt, who is the operations officer for the 430th. In his civilian job as a patrolman in Chesterfield County, Va., Flatt sees a lot more crime than he sees here, he said.

Corneia said the station handles about 20 cases a day on average with about three of those being major cases – usually cases that involve theft or accidents with injuries. Some days are busier though. Rubinetti himself has given up to 20 traffic tickets in a single day. He doesn't like to do it, but sometimes, he has to.

"I try to give people something to work with," he said. "But some people won't work with you ... Some of these guys have a bad attitude."

He recalled a Marine who wised off to him after being pulled over for speeding. Rubinetti asked the Marine if he knew why he had been pulled over, and the Marine responded, "Because I'm driving on your base," said Rubinetti. "I was like, no no no no."

**Rubinetti asked the Marine if he knew why he had been pulled over, and the Marine responded, "Because I'm driving on your base."**



**From Left: Staff Sgt. Muriel Perales, Spc. Phillip George and Rubinetti, all members of the 430th, prepare to lower the flag at Camp Arifjan April 29. Spc. Rubinetti writes up paperwork related to a suspicious bag that was called in the evening of April 29. Rubinetti helps control people trying to cross the street toward Building 507 where the suspicious bag was found.**

deny at the PX," said Rubinetti. Recently, a Soldier who had just been promoted from private first class tried to steal specialist rank from the PX, said Rubinetti. The cost of what the Soldier was trying to steal was less than \$3, and what made it worse was the fact he had the money to pay for it. At a minimum, shoplifting at the PX brings a \$200 fine. Chances are the Soldier didn't spend long as a specialist either.

"For the amount of trouble they get into, they just steal the dumbest stuff," said Corneia. "Some people just get a thrill out of it ... A lot of these people have money. They steal just to steal."

Driving this point home, Rubinetti passed on a story about a troop who stole a bottle of Gatorade from a PX on Camp Arifjan. Less than a minute's walk from the PX is a dining facility that gives away the same thing for free.

Rubinetti prefers giving warnings to tickets, but in cases where people show no remorse or blatantly break the rules, he doesn't mind ticketing them. Still, his favorite part of the job is being able to help people.

Shortly before the end of his shift, Rubinetti clocked a vehicle heading out of Zone 6 at about twice the posted speed limit of 10 kilometers per hour. He pulled the vehicle over, took the driver's license and returned to his Durango. After a few minutes, he went back to the stopped car, handed the license back and let him off with just a warning. "I'm not here to screw anybody," he said. "I try to take the easy way out – scare the crap out of them, tell them I should be arresting them for this or telling their commander, then send them on their way." He rarely pulls over the same person twice, he said.

# South Koreans teach, build and heal

Story by Spc. Brian Trapp

Many of the reconstruction missions in Iraq help communities by building schools and roads. South Korea's troops are taking it further by teaching job skills to Iraqis at a vocational school at their camp in northern Iraq.

This week, a company of about 110 engineers with the South Korean army's Zaytun unit will move from Camp Virginia to Irbil, Iraq, to join the engineering side of the unit's reconstruction and peace mission.

The 3rd Engineer Company, making its first deployment to Iraq, has plans to improve infrastructure, build roads and homes, and teach classes on heavy equipment operation and homebuilding.

South Korean Capt. Hyun Jun Mun, 3rd Engineer Company commander, plans on teaching the homebuilding class himself to help give the Iraqis the skills they need for a stronger future, he said.

"Through the trade school, we can boost improvements for the villages," Mun said. "The people that graduate from the vocational school have a good reputation and the [local Kurdish] government guarantees they will hire graduates from the vocational school."

The school teaches an assortment of vocations, ranging from computer skills to heavy machinery operation to truck driving and even baking.

"The truck driving class is actually pretty difficult," said Sgt. 1st Class Kurt Hoehn, noncommissioned officer in charge of coalition forces with the 678th Quartermaster Battalion, who toured the South Korean camp in Iraq where the engineers will spend the next six months. The obstacle course where the Iraqis test their skills on backing up trucks with trailers looked pretty tough to Hoehn, who has a commercial driver's license and has driven tractor trailers as a

## South Korean facts

South Korea is slightly larger than Indiana, but has nearly eight times the population with 48.4 million people.

The average income in South Korea is 14 times more than North Korea's.

The top five companies in South Korea are Hyundai, Samsung, Daewoo, Lucky Goldstar and Sunkyong. They account for 50 percent of the country's exports.

South Korea's Department of Defense has a conscript obligation of 24 to 28 months, and it has to be done between the ages of 20 and 30, but voluntary service can be entered at 18 years old.



Photo courtesy of Sgt. 1st Class Kurt Hoehn

**Capt. Kyung Tak Kim, an officer with the Zaytun Vocational School, goes over the layout of the Zaytun unit's vocational training center in Irbil, Iraq, where the soldiers teach job skills like computer skills, heavy machinery operation and even baking to the local Iraqi community.**

civilian.

The Korean's teaching goes beyond the basic skills of a modern job market. Besides the engineer's mission, the Zaytun unit also has a program that teaches advanced skills to Kurdish doctors and nurses at the Korean's base hospital. The hospital has treated more than 7,500 Iraqis.

Some of the afflictions affecting the Iraqis result from Saddam-era neglect. Late last year, the Korean engineers in Iraq closed a contaminated well that was causing skin afflictions. They also started building a new sewer system for the village.

The 3rd Engineer soldiers are planning to continue building a strong relationship with the Irbil community as they assist the Iraqis in rebuilding from the destruction suffered under Saddam Hussein's regime. One of the ways the South Koreans are progressing in their relationship with the Iraqis is through a program known as Green Angle. The regular daylong event is held every few weeks, and it gives the Iraqis the chance to have their cars fixed for free by the Koreans and go to the hospital for physical check-ups. The soldiers have also staged martial arts demonstrations during the event.

The 3rd Engineer Company soldiers are getting ready to take on their six-month deployment and to continue to strengthen the relations with the Iraqis during their mission in Iraq.

"The battalion has a long and honored

history, and the battalion commander feels very proud to have the battalion selected for [the Iraq mission]," said South Korean Capt. Hyun Jun Mun, 3rd Engineer Company commander.

The battalion is used to high profile missions though, Mun said. They were involved in the construction of a railroad that ran from Seoul, South Korea, across the demilitarized zone to North Korea. Now the engineers are prepared to begin their new mission and work together with their coalition partners.

"The U.S. Army is joined to us by blood because of the Korean War, and they sacrificed a lot," Mun said. "I have a sense of belonging and want to contribute to Operation Iraqi Freedom as a representative of the Korean army soldier."

The soldiers seemed to echo the same sense of honor about the deployment, but did admit to a little apprehension about working in Iraq. Still, they have positive expectations for the mission.

"I'm happy and excited," said Lt. Gynic Jang, 3rd Platoon leader for the 3rd Engineer Company. "I'm a little concerned because of the land, but it is a test for me; and I want more practical experience."

"It's an honor to be selected for deployment," said Lt. Young Gun Shin, platoon leader with the engineers. "I know the area of operation is dangerous, but it is worth the risk to go on this deployment."

# Final surge trucks roll south

Story by Spc. Tammy Bennett  
7th Transportation Group

You can anticipate the surge, and you can dread the surge, but you can't prepare for the surge.

Basically a large build-up of military and civilian forces coming into country at the same time, this year's surge saw 13 brigade combat teams move through Kuwait en route to Iraq. That's more than 300,000 Soldiers and countless tons of equipment.

The transient Soldiers all had one thing in common. They couldn't have gotten to their destination without the services of the 7th Transportation Group.

"The surge was a busy time for us," said Chief Warrant Officer Marcus Griffin, 7th Transportation Group's mobility officer. "I was getting up at 3:45 in the morning to do a little Physical Fitness and catch some breakfast before going to the office. I didn't leave the office until 11 or 12 o'clock that same night. I am doing this seven days a week."

The hard work of Griffin and other 7th Transportation Group Soldiers translated into impressive results. 7th Group drivers spent around 164 million hours on the road. That's not including the activity behind the scenes, where Soldiers worked around the



Photos by Sgt. Missy Turla

**A formation of 7th Transportation Group and 143rd Transportation Command Soldiers salute a convoy April 21 during a welcoming ceremony at Camp Arifjan celebrating the fact that the convoy would be the last convoy of the surge.**

clock to make sure that troops got where they needed to go in a timely fashion. During the height of the surge, 2,000 supply-laden trucks departed for Iraq each day.

"It is a bench mark in Operation Iraqi Freedom," said 7th Group Command Sgt. Maj. Dwayne Perry. "The drivers that drove during the surge have driven as many miles as someone driving from Austin, Texas, to Boston, Massachusetts, every day."

Perry even went as far as saying the 7th Group's efforts during the surge surpassed those of the Red Ball Express, a massive convoy effort to supply the allied armies moving through Europe during World War II.

As with any large-scale mission, however, 7th Group Soldiers encountered their fair share of problems throughout the surge. One of the biggest challenges Griffin had was staying on top of what equipment was actually on the ground.

"What I might think is on the ground and ready to go might not be actually ready at all due to priority or up-armor issues," he said. "It's not something that you can really prepare for. You just got to be ready."

Not only were 7th Group Soldiers getting transient troops and their equipment to their destinations, unit members transported Korean, Ukrainian and Hungarian forces and equipment as well as soldiers in slacks.

Perry helped put together the April 21 ceremony welcoming back the group's last convoy. It was returning from a ten-day trip

that began at Camp Anaconda, Iraq, and ended at Camp Arifjan. As the convoy rolled by, a formation of 7th Group and 143rd Transportation Command Soldiers saluted until the last truck passed. The formation then marched into a nearby clam shell that had been stocked with refreshments and a cake in the shape of a Heavy Equipment Transporter.

7th Group Commander Col. Jeff Miser then turned the formation over to Brig. Gen. William Johnson, who told the troops that they will forever be a part of history.

"This signals the end of a very successful mission. The miles we have driven in this mission alone are the equivalent of 7,542 trips around the equator and 125 trips to the moon round trip.

You have effectively and efficiently finished a very symbolic mission. Good job and well done," he said.



**Servicemembers at the ceremony were treated to this Heavy Equipment Transporter-shaped cake.**

## Safety Corner

### Following distance

Try to maintain a safety cushion by using a good following distance while driving. Do this by using the two-second rule. When the vehicle in front of you passes a fixed object, such as a light pole, begin counting down the seconds until your vehicle reaches the same object. If you counted at least two full seconds, your distance is good enough to react to hazards. Add two seconds for every hindering factor, such as a wet road or sandstorm. In the case of a breakdown, pull off the road as far as you safely can. Exit from the side of the vehicle that is away from traffic (usually the passenger side), and stay away from the road. Call the number on your memo, and give your location. DO NOT attempt to fix the vehicle while on the road.

For more information contact the 377th TSC Safety Cell's Maj. Nathan Phelps at 430-6113 or 1st Lt. Renee Surgi at 430-5414.

# DDKS brands its name in Kuwait

Story by Sgt. Alex Licea

Ever curious how basic necessities such as hammers, nails and brooms get to servicemembers across the Middle East? According to Col. Gloria Blake, commander of the Defense Distribution Depot Kuwait, Southwest Asia, the acronym DDKS is the answer to that question.

DDKS serves as the distribution facility for the entire United States Central Command area, said Blake. Its mission is to provide logistical support to servicemembers across the Middle East.

"We are on the ground providing support for the warfighter across the entire CENTCOM region."

The Defense Distribution Center activated the DDKS on August 30, 2004.

It packs and ships hundreds of supplies on a daily basis to military units across the Middle East.

Commodities distributed by DDKS include repair parts, barrier and construction materials, clothing, textiles and tent equipment, said Blake. It is one of more than 20 distribution sites around the world.

"When any request hits the DDKS system, we pack and ship within 24 hours," she said.

DDKS replaced a distribution site that was operating in Bahrain. Defense Distribution Center officials felt that a distribution site in Kuwait served as a more permanent location for the Defense Distribution Center's mission across Southwest Asia.

"By positioning these items in Kuwait, we will observe more than \$160 million in air transportation cost avoidance and significantly reduce customer wait time," said Brig. Gen. Mike Lally – then Col. Lally – Defense Distribution Center commander, during DDKS' activation ceremony last summer.

Unlike a typical military company, DDKS employs civilian workers to get the job done. "We currently have a total of 11 civilian workers," Blake said. "Each of them is a specialist in their field of work."

DDKS processed more than 63,000 orders in the month of March, which set a new high for the distribution system.

"We have the capability to accommodate these large amounts of requests because we have plenty of items in stock to provide service to the warfighter," said Blake.

DDKS stocks about 20,000 items with the potential to add more in the future.

Since Sept. 22, 2004, when the first order was shipped, more than 216,000 items, valued at more than \$124 million, have been shipped by air and sea to units across the region.

"Our goal is to ensure our customers' readiness, so we are committed to providing the right item at the right time every time."

## Four day pass spells relief

Story by Master Sgt. Hak Haskins

377th Theater Support Command Public Affairs

Not all the airplanes that lift off from the runways of Kuwait are headed toward Iraq or Afghanistan to deliver supplies and Soldiers.

Some follow a flight path to peace of mind and a few days off. The destination is Qatar and four days of R&R.

It's a pass program available to all servicemembers and Department of Defense employees serving in this theater and one that shouldn't be confused with Rest and Recuperation leave, its distant cousin.

Getting there – Qatar that is – is almost as easy as asking to go. Major commands throughout the theater are given R&R pass allocations, which amount to seats on one of the flights. In turn, those commands distribute the allocations among their subordinate commands and units.

Each unit should have an individual or section that runs the program locally and the first sergeant or the personnel shop are good places to start the search for who does what.

According to Lt. Col. Frazier Pope, theater chief of league programs, the information is usually turned in to the same people who take care of the R&R leave program.

Requests should be accompanied by a leave form tailored for the servicemembers' service branch.

There are a few ground rules on eligibility. Those who took R&R leave in the past few months, for example, may not qualify; details are available through a servicemember's local command.

The pass request should be made a month before the desired R&R date to give planners sufficient time to build the manifest rosters for each flight.

Maj. Ben Dennis, the operations officer for the 377th Theater Support Command and one of the Soldiers instrumental in mapping the R&R pass program, said the system was designed with morale in mind. It was designed for servicemembers who are ineligible to participate in the R&R leave program because of mission constraints or because they are not on 365-day orders.

"We have many Soldiers based in Kuwait, [who] are primarily serving on convoy missions in Iraq, who were previously ineligible as participants in the pass program. Now, regardless of location in this theater, commanders select participants based on mission requirements and specific command policies and priorities," said Dennis.

"The program provides respite from the stresses associated with the combat mission and allows participants to enjoy recreational venues. This is seen as an investment in the well being of our forces that will improve mission performance," Dennis said.

A trip to Qatar may not be a panacea for

all the stresses of combat or combat service, but it offers diversions simply not available anywhere else.

The program is home-based out of U.S. Central Command's Headquarters (Forward) at Camp As-Sayliyah. The small base, located a few minutes from Doha, the capital of Qatar, boasts a day spa, two gyms, an Olympic-size pool, a community center, restaurants and a pair of all-ranks clubs where music and conversation are the dominant themes. Alcohol is served – three drinks per evening – in the form of beer, wine or mixed drinks.

The base also has a pair of restaurants where patrons take a seat and are served.

Depending on the threat assessment, venues outside the gate are available.

As of April 25, trips to Doha's malls and a desert safari were being offered; fishing trips, cruises and other programs are dependent upon the threat level.

Petty Officer 1st Class Christine Ellis, the lead petty officer at Camp Arifjan's troop medical clinic, requested a four-day pass partly because she will not apply for the R&R leave program, and partly because she needed a break.

She enjoys meeting people and Ellis got the chance to meet many. But, meeting new people wasn't the only part of the trip she remembers; what she didn't pack for the trip back to Arifjan made the visit worthwhile. "I left the stress behind," she said.

# Community

## happenings for May 4 through May 11

### Arifjan

#### Wednesday

Ping Pong Tournament, 7 p.m., Zone 1  
Community Center  
CESAR, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage  
Legs, butts and guts, 5:30 a.m., Stretch and flex 8 a.m., Step Aerobics, 1 p.m., Circuit weight training, 3 p.m., Zone 1 gym

#### Thursday

Cinco de Mayo, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center  
Cardio kickboxing, 5:30 a.m., Stretch and Flex, 8 a.m. Circuit Weight Training, Zone 2 gym

#### Friday

Arifjan Boxing Team, 7:30 p.m., Zone 6 gym  
Salsa Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center  
Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool  
Interval training, 5:30 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Zone 1 gym

#### Saturday

Audie Murphy Club study sessions, 3 p.m., Building 508 Room 25B  
Country Western Night, 7:30 p.m., Zone 6 MWR stage  
Karaoke Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center  
Circuit weight training, 5:30 a.m., 8 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m., Zone 1 gym  
Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool

#### Sunday

Mother's Day Bingo Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center  
Salsa Night, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage  
Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool  
Cardio kickboxing, 5:30 a.m., Stretch and Flex, 8 a.m., Circuit Weight Training, 1 p.m., Step Aerobics, 3 p.m., Zone 1 gym

#### Monday

Arifjan Boxing Team, 7:30 p.m., Zone 6 gym  
Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool  
Legs, butts and guts, 5:30 a.m., Stretch and flex 8 a.m., Step Aerobics, 1 p.m., Circuit weight training, 3 p.m., Zone 1 gym

#### Tuesday

Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool  
Cardio kickboxing, 5:30 a.m., Stretch and Flex, 8 a.m., Circuit Weight Training, 1 p.m., Step Aerobics, 3 p.m., Zone 1 gym

#### Wednesday

Country Western Night, 7:30 p.m., Zone 6 stage  
Reggae Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center  
Legs, butts and guts, 5:30 a.m., Stretch and flex 8 a.m., Step Aerobics, 1 p.m., Circuit weight training, 3 p.m., Zone 1 gym

For more information call 430-1202

### Buehring

#### Wednesday

Softball league game, 4 p.m., (Call for info)  
Walking Club (5 miles), 5:30 a.m., command cell flagpole  
Massage Therapy, 9:30 a.m., MWR Tent 4  
Aerobics, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m., MWR Tent 4

#### Thursday

CESAR, 7 p.m., (Call for info)  
Soccer league game, 4 p.m., (Call for info)  
Volleyball league game, 4 p.m., (Call for info)  
Walking Club (5 miles), 5:30 a.m., command cell flagpole

Tae-Kwon-Do Class, 7 p.m., MWR Tent 1

#### Friday

Walking Club (5 miles), 5:30 a.m., command cell flagpole

#### Saturday

Spa Day, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., MWR Tent 1  
Tae-Kwon-Do Class, 7 p.m., MWR Tent 1

#### Sunday

Spa Day, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., MWR Tent 1  
Walking Club (10 miles), 5:30 a.m., command cell flagpole

#### Monday

Softball league game, 4 p.m., (Call for info)  
Walking Club (5 miles), 5:30 a.m., command cell flagpole

Aerobics, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m., MWR Tent 4

#### Tuesday

Soccer league game, 4 p.m., (Call for info)  
Volleyball league game, 4 p.m., (Call for info)  
Walking Club (5 miles), 5:30 a.m., command cell flagpole

Tae-Kwon-Do Class, 7 p.m., MWR Tent 1

#### Wednesday

Softball league game, 4 p.m., (Call for info)  
Walking Club (5 miles), 5:30 a.m., command cell flagpole  
Massage Therapy, 9:30 a.m., MWR Tent 4  
Aerobics, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m., MWR Tent 4

For more information call 828-1340

### Kuwaiti Naval Base

#### Wednesday

Ping Pong Tournament, 7 p.m., MWR gym

#### Thursday

Foosball Tournament, 7 p.m., MWR gym

#### Friday

Billiard Tournament, 7 p.m., MWR gym

#### Saturday

Barbecue, DFAC, (Call for info)

#### Monday

Strong man competition, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., bus parking lot/beach

For more information call 839-1063

### Navistar

#### Wednesday

Chess and Backgammon practice, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m., MWR game tent  
Pool Tournament practice, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m., MWR game tent  
Self Defense class, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., basketball court

Aerobics Class, 6 p.m., Game tent

#### Thursday

Chess and Backgammon practice, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m., MWR game tent

Pool Tournament practice, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m., MWR game tent

Karate Class, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., basketball court  
Softball Tournament practice, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m., Softball field

#### Friday

Pool Tournament practice, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m., MWR game tent

Aerobics Class, 6 p.m., MWR game tent

#### Saturday

Chess and Backgammon tournament, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m., MWR game tent  
Pool Tournament, 8 a.m. - 10 a.m. & 6 p.m. - 10 p.m., MWR game tent

#### Sunday

Chess and Backgammon tournament, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m., MWR game tent

Pool Tournament, 8 a.m. - 10 a.m. &

6 p.m. - 10 p.m., MWR game tent

#### Monday

Poker Tournament Practice, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Aerobics Class, 6 p.m., MWR game tent

Self Defense class, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., basketball court

#### Tuesday

Karate Class, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., basketball court  
Smoking cessation classes, 10 a.m., Rec. tent

Education/Awareness/Prevention, 1 p.m., Rec. tent

Karate Class, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., basketball court

#### Wednesday

Self Defense class, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., basketball court

Aerobics Class, 6 p.m., MWR game tent

For more information call 844-1137

### Spearhead/SPOD

#### Thursday

Hip Hop Dance Night, 9 p.m., South DFAC  
Bingo Night, 7 p.m., Tent T-32 and 8 p.m., South DFAC

#### Friday

Movie Night, 8 p.m., Outdoor Movie Theater

#### Saturday

Movie Night, 8 p.m., Outdoor Movie Theater

#### Tuesday

Volleyball, 6 p.m., MWR area

For more information call 825-1302

### Victory

#### Friday

CESAR, 7 p.m. (Call for info)

#### Tuesday

Movie Night, 8 p.m. (Call for info)

For more information call 823-1033

### Virginia

For more information call 832-1045

## Doha/Arifjan Shuttle Schedule

Departs Doha Stop 1*	Arrives Doha Stop 2*	Departs Doha Stop 2*	Arrives Arifjan	Departs Arifjan	Arrives Doha
	0700	0715	0830	0545	1000
1015	1025	1040	1200	1300	1430
1445	1450	1505	1615	1630	1745
1900	1910	1925	2045		

\* Stop 1 is behind the Building 6 PAX Tent  
Stop 2 is between Buildings 28 and 31

Are you holding an event you'd like to see listed in the Desert Voice?

Send your event listings to the Desert Voice editor at the e-mail address listed on the back page of this issue.

# ARMY LIFE

By Lt. Col. Michael Verrett, CFLCC C4

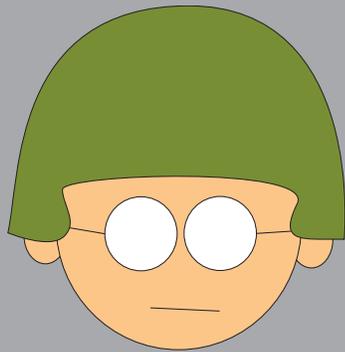


**Peachtree  
Road Race  
10K run  
July 4th in  
Kuwait**

Free giveaways.  
Stay tuned to the Desert  
Voice for more information.

## NATURE CALLS

By Capt. Paul Nichols, 377th Theater Support Command



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