

DESERT VOICE

December 14, 2005

Serving the U.S. and Coalition Forces in Kuwait



IED ... Beware

Page 6&7

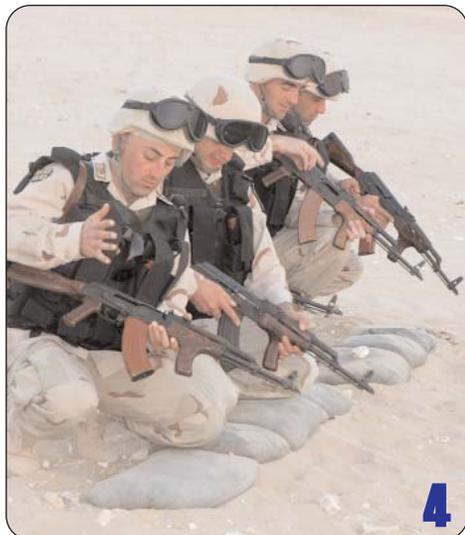
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On the cover

Courtesy photo

A training device used at the counter-improvised explosive device training exercise lanes to prepare troops for their deployment to Iraq.

Maintaining motivation during holidays

Command Sgt. Maj. Franklin G. Ashe

CFLCC Command Sergeant Major

Since our youth, for most of us, the holidays have meant gathering with family and friends to share gifts, good food and good times.

We all grow up with holiday joy and holiday spirit pumped into us, but the truth is it can be a very stressful time of year. In addition to normal holiday stressors, being deployed overseas away from loved ones can really take a toll on troops.

I've been recently deployed to Afghanistan for a year prior to my tour here. I can say from personal experience, aside from coping with the loss of the lives of our fellow servicemembers, one of the hardest parts of all of this has been the family separation.

Although the thought of being without your loved ones may weigh heavily on your shoulders, you can't take the opportunity you've been given to serve here for granted. Some of you will look back on the times you had here and miss them because you'll realize it was here you had some of the best times in your life.

Try to keep that in mind now while you're going through it.

Being away from the people you care about is hard.

One way I think about it is that I'd rather my family be proud of me and what I've done for them and my country than for them to have never missed me and take me for granted.

For some people, the holidays can be a depressing time regardless of whether they're home or abroad for a variety of reasons.

One reason is they place high expectations on themselves as well as on family and friends. We all need to be realistic about what we can and can't accomplish and try not to become overwhelmed by the pressures of the season.

Though these are trying times, we still have a mission to do. We've still got weeks or months before it's time to go back home again. It's important not to dwell on the things that stress you, but to maintain your routine.

Being in shape is not just about getting a high score on the Army Physical Fitness Test. Continue to do physical training, whether it's with your unit or on your own. It's good for your mind as well as your body. When you

have a chance to rest, take advantage of that opportunity and make sure you get enough sleep. Eat right.

All these things have an indirect effect on your attitude. If you take care of yourself, you'll feel better for it.

Don't isolate yourself and dwell on negative things. I deal with the guilt or the sadness I sometimes feel about being away from my family by going to places where there are Soldiers and just talking to them. If I'm helping others by focusing on their issues, whether they're positive or negative, it makes me forget about my issues. It also keeps me from feeling down or feeling sorry for myself.

I think most of us are driven to serve our country because of family and friends. Talking to the people you care about when you get the chance helps you remember why you're serving here and how important it is.

Remember that regardless of your location, your loved ones care about you and everybody around you cares about you. It's very important to stay in touch with loved ones back home if you're feeling separation anxiety.

With the various means of communication we have available, there's no reason why Soldiers here in Kuwait and virtually anywhere in the Central Command area of responsibility should have to be out of touch with their families. Soldiers have access to phones so they can call, computers from which they can e-mail and regular mail to send packages and letters.

All of us have to be aware of our battle buddies.

We need to pay close attention to each other, especially the people we're close to. If there's anything that makes you feel like something's not quite right with someone, don't just ignore it.

Encourage troubled Soldiers to either talk to you or to see the chaplain, the chain of command or a counselor. If you can't get them to do that, bring it to the chain of command's attention.

Do not assume everything's fine. There are a whole bunch of people that are living with regret because they felt like something wasn't quite right, but they ignored it. The person they could have helped either hurt himself or is gone forever. Looking back, they regret not being proactive when they could have helped someone.

Think about what people say if you feel like something's bothering them. Monitor

your buddies for behavior that's not normal. Help each other out.

There's nothing wrong with asking for help if you're feeling down.

Everybody feels down at times and it's nothing to be ashamed of or embarrassed about.

The purpose of your chain of command and your noncommissioned officer support channel here is to support you. If you know of someone who needs help, don't hesitate to talk to either of these outlets.

I guarantee someone there cares enough about you to help, because that's what we're here for. We'll do what we can to help you in any way we can, professionally and personally.

All of us have different feelings about being deployed, but we're all in this together. You're not by yourself; there are lots of people here to help. Don't ever forget that, and don't let your battle buddies forget it.

Whether we realize it or not, everybody here is a positive role model to all of their families back home. Quietly and professionally, you're showing everyone that you understand you're a part of something that's bigger than yourself. You're proving your willingness to sacrifice a great deal so the people you care about can continue to live the lives they've chosen to live in freedom and peace.

It's said so often it might sound like a cliché, but freedom isn't free. We're paying for the freedom of our country with our time, our work and unfortunately in some cases, our lives.

You have to look at your time here during the holidays in a positive way. Remember that your service here is, in a sense, a gift to your friends, family and fellow Americans. That gift is the preservation of our rights, our freedoms and our way of life. Be happy about that, be proud of that and don't forget it. I'm proud of you. Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and may God bless all of you - PATTON'S OWN.



Command Sgt. Maj. Franklin G. Ashe

Soldier brings Eskimo culture to Iraq

Spc. Michael R. Noggle
CLCC PAO/11th PAD

When the Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 297th Infantry, describe the personality of Sgt. Paul Bavilla, it can be summed up in one phrase.

"He is a shining star, a hero amongst his people," said Sgt. 1st Class Todd Patnode, 1st Bn., 297th Inf.

Bavilla is a Yupik Eskimo from Togiak, Alaska. At the age of 35 and with 15 years of National Guard service, he deployed to Iraq with the unit from Nome, Alaska.

Continuing the tradition of his ancestors, Bavilla is referred to as an Eskimo scout.

They are experts of surviving and living through harsh weather conditions and using their surrounding environment for resources.

The title Eskimo scout was given during World War II, when an invasion by Japanese forces caused America to call on Alaskan natives to help defend the land and allow time for the United States Armed Forces to

arrive, Bavilla said.

The natives from Nome and other areas of the country patrolled more than 5,000 miles of Aleutian coastline and 200,000

miles of tundra, rescuing service-members and

fighting the enemy. "Villages were organized into an Alaskan territorial National Guard," said Lt. Col. Chip Andrews, 1st Bn., 297th Inf. commander. "They served as the 'eyes and ears of the Northwest' to protect the coast line."

While battalions were formed after the war to guard Alaska against invasion or intrusion by Russia, scouts have decreased in drastic numbers since the fall of the Soviet Union.

"When I first got in 15 years ago, there were around 300 Eskimo scouts still serving in the Alaskan National Guard," Bavilla said. "Now there couldn't be more than 30 scouts serving in the military."

Bavilla said the people of his

"This guy is as hardcore as they come... He goes out in 30 degrees below zero temperature and lives in the wilderness for months at a time."

Yupik culture, among Eskimo cultures, have a difficult time entering the military because of their inability to read, write or finding time to attend unit drills.

"It is hard to find recruits these days," Bavilla said. "It is slowly fading away."

Today's scouts continue to train in the conditions and environments once done by their ancestors, such as hunting wild animals, hiking through knee-high snow and living in huts during harsh winter conditions.

"This guy is as hardcore as they come," Patnode said of Bavilla.

"He goes out in 30 degrees below zero temperature and lives in the wilderness for months at a time," he said.

Bavilla recalled one incident with his uncle when they were lost coming back from their 50-mile hike to collect wood in the winter season. However, during the return trip home, his uncle

lost the trail at which they first traveled.

"My uncle has taught me a lot and has been a great mentor, but during this occasion, I was the one who had to save him," he said.

"It has helped me a lot being a scout and serving in the National Guard," Bavilla said. "My training has enabled me to become a great Soldier."

"He has a good reputation with everyone in the unit and leads by example," Patnode said. "There aren't too many words that can describe how much this man has done for those around him."

During their upcoming deployment, many in the unit including Patnode are interested in learning more about Bavilla's language and culture.

"These are some excellent guys to be around," he said. "They respect me for my work ethic and want to learn to speak my native language."

Patnode said, "He carries a lot of pride as an American but has just as much for himself and his people."



ARMY LIFE

by
Michael Verrett





Spc. Janine Coogler

(Left) A Georgian soldier aims at a target during entry control point training.

Sgt. Kara Greene

(Below) Bosnian troops line up to practice firing at targets in preparation of their deployment to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Coalition Forces build confidence in themselves, weapons, peers

Spc. Janine Coogler
CFLCC PAO/11th PAD

“Fighter stance ... Ready ... Up.”

Following the commands of the Military Professional Resources Incorporated instructor, troops positioned their bodies, found the targets and fired their weapons.

Two Coalition Forces with two different missions in Iraq had the same type of training at Udairi Range and Camp Virginia Dec. 2-11.

More than 100 Georgian troops from the 23rd Battalion and approximately 30 Bosnian troops from the 2nd Explosive Ordnance Device Armed Forces Bosnia Platoon became familiarized with their weapons during close-quarters marksmanship and entry control point training and conducted a three-day counter improvised explosive device and tactical movement training at Udairi, as well as humvee and reaction drill classes at Virginia.

In Iraq, the Bosnian unit’s mission is to help the Coalition Forces and Iraqi security to identify explosive ordnances, said

Bosnian Capt. Draze Guto, 2nd EOD platoon leader.

The 23rd Battalion’s mission in Iraq is to assist U.S. military in securing two forward operation bases, said Georgian Maj. Mikheil Quljanishvili, assistant liaison officer.

Although they have different missions, the concept of their training is essential for soldiering, just as it is important for U.S. military to conduct the proper training before going into combat, said Capt. Christian Werthmuller, Task Force Gator support group officer.

“The importance of this training is to instill confidence in the soldiers, their peers and their weapons,” said Larry Morgan, MPRI instructor.

During CQM, troops learn to identify, acquire and engage enemy targets 25 meters or closer.

The safety standards help to instill confidence among troops. Keeping their weapons on safe, maintaining proper muzzle awareness, keeping two hands on the weapon and maintaining focus are required especially because troops are in close inter-

val with loaded weapons, Morgan said.

“As the soldiers become comfortable with their weapons, they learn to become confident with each other and build trust,” he explained.

The 2nd EOD platoon and 23rd Battalion also completed entry control point, night-fire, counter-IED and tactical movement training.

To prepare for their three-day training, Bosnia and Georgia were given reaction drills and humvee instructions prior to their fielding.

“The reaction drills provide the troops with scenarios on how to react to broken-down vehicles in a convoy, and what to do when attacked,” Werthmuller said.

Since they were not used to driving big vehicles, TF Gator took the time to provide the Coalition troops a block of instruction and give them the opportunity to drive.

The classes are effective because they give the troops an opportunity to gain experience with the humvees and how to react to unique situations, Werthmuller said. As a result,

they performed really well.

In order to conduct training, the instructors had to overcome language barriers.

With a minimum number of translators, the instructor had to use basic military language to communicate orders.

“It’s amazing how NCOs speak the same language,” said Roger Headrick, MPRI instructor.

“Although they don’t fully understand me word-for-word they get the concept of where I want the troops to go, and then relay the message in their language,” he said.

Besides gaining experience with their weapons, the training gives the Coalition troops an opportunity to interact with U.S. military forces.

In Iraq, the Coalition Forces will be working directly with U.S. military so the training is a chance for the troops to get acquainted with U.S. troops and get comfortable around Americans, Werthmuller said.

Guto added, “The training will make it an easier transition when we get into Iraq to do our mission.”

Counter-

Spc. Robert Adams

Assistant Editor

As the convoy starts rolling down Route Los Angeles North, it will receive a taste of what Iraq will be like.

This mission, though challenging, will give the unit the knowledge and preparation it needs to enter the combat zone with confidence.

Before crossing the border, units must first complete a number of hands-on classes. The classes go over walkthroughs, convoy and combat operation missions down to new tactical movement with counter-improvised explosive device training exercise lanes built over the past five months at the Udairi Range.

Back in July, Coalition Forces Land Component Command's training division started planning and integrating the project to make the training at Udairi more realistic and beneficial to troops. Then in late September, Gen. John Abizaid, Central Command commanding general, directed CFLCC to have C-IED lanes for units during reception, staging, onward movement and integration.

What was once known as the convoy live-fire lane exercise, now has been replaced with a new TMCT which now includes a situational training exercise lane, several C-IED dismounted and mounted lanes for combat arms units, a route reconnaissance and recurrence lane for engineers and explosive ordnance disposal units, a C-IED fundamentals lane and multiple practice maneuver lanes.

Part of the planning process involved updating the tactics, techniques and procedures and programs of instruction to emulate current enemy IEDs and tactics used in Iraq.

The training division started working



Photos by Spc. Robert Adams

Tony Colon, U.S. contractor, engulfs in a cloud of smoke as he tests out a simulated suicide bomber vest at Foward Operating Base Dagger on Udairi Range Wednesday.



Courtesy photo

An aerial shot of Al Busayab, the southern most village in the Al Bussayab Province. This is one of the many villages that convoys will pass through as they head down the various lanes.

IED *New lanes training prepares troops for combat operations*

hand-in-hand with the Joint-IED Defeat Task Force, which has teams in Iraq and Afghanistan studying enemy activities and advising Coalition Forces, said Lt. Col. Christopher Ballard, chief of training.

They send their field teams to the Udairi Range to help proof and validate the training to make sure it is as good and realistic as it can be, he added.

All of the new training TTPs and POIs being emplaced at Udairi are also being sent out to home stations, mobilization sites and combat training centers to further educate and prepare units before they board the plane.

Another part of the planning process involved gathering available resources to build towns and scenarios to train troops moving down each lane.

"We have used 16,000 square feet of plywood, 1,200 spare tires, 70 telephone poles, and 50 connexes to build houses and gathered vehicles from the Camp Arifjan retrograde yard to use along the lanes," said Maj. Larry Smedley, C-IED material resource officer.

The training also involved civilians on the battlefield, mostly comprised of third-country nationals, who play various roles in the contemporary operational environment. They will drive vehicles that interact with convoys and play roles that force troops to make decisions.

Troops are being taught to not only look at the explosion but to look at the whole IED

system, to include the trigger man, video man, financier, supplier and placer, Ballard said. Role-player interaction is important because troops will be dealing with Iraqis.

The next phase of the planning process is the introduction of simulator rounds that replicate IEDs such as booby traps, mines, vehicle-borne IEDs and suicide bombers.

Troops will be able to see the smoke and hear the explosion of the IED to give them a more realistic scenario.

Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., Multi-National Forces-Iraq commanding general, visited Udairi Dec. 2 to view the new training and observe several convoys rolling through engagements.

"I'm pleased with the comprehensive approach to counter-IED training," Casey said. "They learn how to integrate the full spectrum of counter-IED tools into their mission profile."

The lanes training will be a continuous building project as the enemy is a master at pattern analysis and adaptation and changes their TTPs on a regular basis, Ballard said.

He added, "We will continue to build and modify the overall operational environment to make sure the training stays current with situations in Iraq."



A demonstration shows the grouping of IED simulators exploding. The visual and audio effects will give troops a more realistic training environment.



(Above) Soldiers draw out a plan in the sand before their convoys rolls out on a lane training exercise at the Udairi Range Wednesday.



(Left) An example of an IED placed behind a guard rail is one of many types of IEDs the enemy uses against U.S. and Coalition Forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. Soldiers receive walkthrough classes to identify IEDs at Forward Operating Base Dagger at the Udairi Range.

Courtesy photo

Sibling rivalry not on this deployment

Army, Navy brothers enjoy deployment together

Spc. Debralee P. Crankshaw
CFLCC PAO/11th PAD

Service and sibling rivalry ran strong during the Army vs. Navy game for two servicemembers deployed to Camp Arifjan. But after the game, the bonds of brotherhood stayed strong.

The brothers, Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Cruz, 501st Special Troops Battalion, 101st Airborne Division joint network node hub-node noncommissioned officer in charge, and Petty Officer 1st Class Kelly Cruz, Law and Order Detachment patrol supervisor, were thrilled to be in a deployed environment together.

Kevin arrived in August while his brother was volunteering for his current assignment.

"It was a planned evolution – not so much for him, but for me," Kelly said. "I saw the opportunity to serve with my brother before his retirement. I thought it'd be fun for both of us."

Kelly arrived in October and immediately tried to find his brother.

"The morning I arrived I

noticed a 101st Airborne Division sign in Zone 6," Kelly said. "I thought it was his unit, but it was finance."

Kelly asked about his brother and finance helped him get a hold of him.

The two decided to meet for breakfast that morning at the dining facility but while Kelly was waiting at the Zone 6 DFAC, Kevin was at Zone 1. Kelly asked a passerby if there was another DFAC and found out about the other two. He decided to try Zone 1. He took the bus to Zone 1 but his brother wasn't there either.

Kevin had left to check Zone 6 for his brother. Kelly wasn't sure about catching the bus back so he started walking and ran into Kevin walking back to Zone 1.

"He cried," Kevin joked.

The brothers said they have a good time with each other.

"We spend a majority of our off time together – watching and playing sports, hanging out and playing cards," Kelly said. "We even get together and call our mother."

The brothers are only 18

months apart in age and said they think that helped form a bond early on along with their leisure activities.

"We share a lot of interests and our ages helped make us close," Kelly said. "We spent a majority of our time growing up together – more so than our other brothers."

Over the years, the brothers say their bond has only grown.

"We used to fight with each other," Kevin said. "Now we fight together."

The two also contribute their bonds of brotherhood while growing up in south Bronx, N.Y., with their mother.

"It was tough love growing up in New York City," Kelly said.

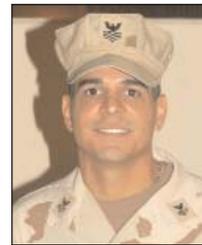
"We were learning our lessons on the street," Kevin added.

But the brothers' normal hang out – the Salvation Army – was why they said they think everything turned out well.

"It was a place to go," Kevin



Kevin Cruz



Kelly Cruz

said. "It gave the opportunity to have an area of safety and mom didn't have to worry about us."

Today, their mother's worries aren't over because both her sons are deployed.

"Her concern was fear immediately... but we've assured her that altogether we're in good hands," Kelly said. "I think she's equally as glad to say her sons are supporting the Global War on Terrorism and the military mission."

While the brothers are in separate services, they value each other and the other service.

"There is no real rivalry," Kelly said. "I have respect for the Army, he has respect for the Navy."

"I've worked with the Navy before and it builds a respect," Kevin added. "When I went to work with them I found them more technical in their jobs while the Army is focused on pushing out leaders."

Cheers not enough

Spc. Debralee P. Crankshaw

Maj. Gen. James A. Kelly, Third U.S. Army/Army Central Command/Coalition Forces Land Component Command deputy commander, cheers on his aide-de-camp Capt. Sean Cook's shoulders during the pre-game activities before the Army/Navy football game Dec. 3 while Maj. Mark Olin performs his master of ceremonies commentary. The Navy beat the Army, 42-23. The last time the Army team beat the Navy was 2001.



Sailors train for first time with Soldiers on convoy tactics

Staff Sgt. LaTorry Sidney

CFLCC PAO

It appeared to be the typical logistics convoy: a band of vehicles snaking through hazards concealed by desert roads on its mission to carry supplies to reinforce the combat element in Iraq.

At a glance, one could see Soldiers scanning their sectors, keeping watchful eyes out for anything that posed a threat. If you looked closer, you could see that some of these Soldiers weren't Soldiers at all; they were Sailors and they had attracted an audience.

Ten Sailors, who will be working with various units in Iraq, sharpened their land warfare skills by taking part in training at the Udairi Range with Soldiers from the 40th Combat Support Group Dec. 1. The Multi-National Forces-Iraq Navy deputy commander of strategic effects came out to observe and take part in this unprecedented event. It marked the first time Sailors going forward have been able to conduct this type of training alongside Soldiers.

The Sailors said the tactical movement with counter-IED training exercise was more elaborate than training they'd had in the past. "I feel about 10 times more prepared now," said Operations Specialist Petty Officer 2nd Class Chad W. Eschenroeder, Joint Special Operations Task Force Headquarters common relevant operational picture system operator.

"This is excellent hands-on training that gets you into the field," Eschenroeder said. "It gives you a taste of what it's probably like (on the battlefield). If we find ourselves in a position like this, we'll know what to do to get out safely. It's all about keeping your situational awareness and not zoning out."

During the course of the training, the Soldiers and Sailors were exposed to simulations of some of the dangers they could face in Iraq, such as IEDs and vehicle-borne IEDs.

"The overall focus is to train units on tactics in logistics convoys," said Maj. Michael A. Konczey, Coalition Forces Land Component Command training and operations combined arms maneuvers trainer.

"The training centers on rehearsals, crew duties and escalation of force," Konczey said.

"In the escalation of force, the first response isn't to pull triggers. This training gets people used to firing discriminately," he said.

Backed by civilian-contracted training facilitators, and third-country nationals as role players, Konczey said he aims to provide



Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Gregory D. Devereaux

A Soldier blocks a vehicle at an intersection during the live fire convoy training at Camp Udairi.

true-to-life training for troops moving into Iraq.

"We strive to stress the realism," Konczey noted. "The training we give comes from guidance we get from Multi-National Corps-Iraq, Coalition Joint Task Force 76, Combat Training Center Division, and Multi-National Forces-Iraq as well as other sources," said Konczey. "We take experience gained by units going back to the states for current trends and enemy tactics."

"The threat is so adaptive," Konczey said. "The enemy is watching us, studying us and reacting, so tactics, techniques and procedures change. This will probably be one of the most realistic training experiences these units will have."

According to Konczey, this training at the Udairi Range has been done more primarily by Army, Air Force and Marine units; that is, until Command Master Chief William Cronin, command master chief of a detachment of the U.S. Navy Forces Central Command in Kuwait, saw an opportunity.

Once he took part in the training, Cronin suggested to Navy leadership that Sailors participate. "There were positive reviews from the training and the Navy was excited about it and felt like it should be done more often," Konczey said.

Cronin said the counter-IED training he got prior to being deployed was approximately four hours of instruction and simulation.

"I think training like this is vital," Cronin said. "It's saving lives."

"Each person should be able to execute every position in the vehicle. If you lose a vehicle due to an IED or VBIED, it's going to be up to every one to be able to execute

and carry on the mission."

The training event was so well-received, the Navy deputy commander of strategic effects, MNF-I Rear Admiral Scott R. Van Buskirk, decided to come out and witness it first-hand.

"It's been an honor to be out here," said Van Buskirk. "This is pretty incredible training. The beauty of it is it gradually reinforces the fundamentals of awareness and communication—things it takes to conduct convoy operations."

Van Buskirk applauded the opportunity for Navy and Army forces to work together.

"The element of teamwork is key in all training," Van Buskirk said.

"We're working next to our Army counterparts, and we don't often get to do that. The troops think it's tremendous. They agree it's difficult, but also that it's invaluable to their mission. It gives them more of a sense of purpose and it makes sense for what they will be a part of," he said.

Since the importance of this training has been recognized, an initiative is underway to give every Sailor going into Iraq an opportunity to get it.

"The resounding issue is all incoming personnel should be exposed to this type of training," Van Buskirk said.

"One thing we're trying to do here with the Navy is to try to relieve some of the stress on other branches in the War on Terror," he explained.

Van Buskirk added, "Training like this makes us more of an asset ... and it will only get better. We're adapting and rising to the challenge, and we'll be better for it. Everybody wins."

Celebrating Native American's impact on history

Command Sgt. Maj. Kevin B. Stuart
1st Medical Brigade

Every year during the month of November, we celebrate Native American Heritage Month.

The 2005 National theme for Native American Heritage Month was "Honoring Heritage ... Strengthening Our Nation's Spirit." Native American Month affords us the opportunity to celebrate and share their heritage as well as revisit the lessons our well-intentioned founding fathers and mothers attempted to learn.

All people, regardless of their heritage, can gain from studying and embracing the ways of our Native American Indians ancestors.

Native American Indian Heritage Month offers information useful in their process of self-discovery. It celebrates the diversity of the National American Indian peoples throughout history, and points to their successes as a model for modern day America to follow, as we reshape our world into one that is supportive of all our people and our environment.

Who are Native Americans? They are descendants of the people who discovered and settled America more than 20,000 years ago. Native Americans are a people of diverse cultures and customs with ancestral ties to the peoples of Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe.

In our society today, it is commonly accepted that perceptions form our views of reality. Our perceptions shape our worldview.

What happens when people who perceive things differently meet? Their realities collide and conflict often results, unless the gap which exists between their worlds is bridged. Our history is full of examples in which perceptions based upon facts tainted by fear, prejudice, and misunderstanding, resulted in tragic consequences. This has never been truer than in the case of the Native Americans, commonly called American Indians.

Now of all the cultures and civilizations that exist today, perhaps the most misunderstood is that of the Native American. Much of what is "known" about their culture has been acquired from television westerns, which are more concerned with action, than historical content.

How many of you out there know much or

anything about Native Americans? What images come to mind, when you hear the word Native American or Indian?

Many people don't even realize why Native Americans were called Indians. The term is based upon another misconception. Christopher Columbus coined the phrase because he thought he landed in the East Indies of Asia in October of 1492. Columbus did not realize he had reached the Bahamas Islands. While sailing along the coasts of present-day Cuba and Haiti, he encountered "Eden-like villages of naked Arawakan-speaking people." Columbus called the island natives Los Indies, or Indians, "thus fastening that name on the population of all indigenous nations of Western Hemisphere."

Surprisingly, it is interesting to note; none of the European explorers ever asked these 'Indians' who they were or what they called themselves in the generic sense. Had they done this simple act, it would have provided them a glimpse of how the Native American Indians viewed themselves and perhaps been the first step in bridging the gap.

For years, American history books talked about the ancestors of modern day-Native American Indians as if they were all of one race and as if they were all of one nation.

In reality, however, the 1999 U.S. Bureau of Census statistics show they comprise only about one percent of our population, Native Americans represent 50 percent of the diversity, speak 252 languages and currently have more than 560 federally recognized tribes and 365 state-recognized tribes.

Native Americans have made rich and valuable contributions in the areas of religion, literature, economic systems, arts, crafts, politics, sports and the military to name a few. The Native Americans have many significant contributions in the United States military.

In 1822, David Moncock of the Creek tribe became the first Native American to graduate from the US Military Academy. During the Civil War, the 3rd Indian Regiment gained distinction with their courage and wisdom and was the last group to quit fighting during the war. In 1866, Chief Red Cloud won a war with the United States, becoming the only chief in history to accomplish that feat.

During World War I, approximately 8,000



Commentary

Native Americans were in the military, despite not being eligible for the draft. Their valor and demonstrated patriotism moved congress to pass the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924, which granted Native Americans the rights of U.S. citizenship.

During World War II, more than 250,000 Native American men and women joined the armed services

and were honored with 71 Air Medals, 51 Silver Stars, 47 Bronze Stars, 34 Distinguished Flying Crosses and two Congressional Medals of Honor. During this same time, the department of Navy used approximately 420 Navajo Marines as "code talkers." Trained as battlefield radiomen, they converted military radio traffic into a special classified version of their own language. Their codes were never deciphered by the enemy.

During the Vietnam War, 41,500 Native Americans served in the Armed Forces. The most decorated Native American Soldier of Vietnam was Billy Walkabout, a Cherokee, who won the Distinguished Service Cross, five Silver Stars, five Bronze Stars and was wounded on six different occasions.

During Operation Desert Storm, approximately 3,000 Native Americans military personnel served in the Persian Gulf theater of operations and a total of 24,000 Native American men and women were in the military in 1990, just prior to operation Desert Storm. Today during the operation in Iraq, Native Americans are still serving our country proud.

We must understand that it is crucially important to honor and respect our environment and show respect and mercy for all people, the way our National American Indian ancestors did.

I encourage everyone to take a few moments and learn some history and appreciate the numerous achievements Native American Indians have made to our society and see how their contributions has strengthened the spirit of our country and world.

Let me also remind everyone that we all play a part in building a diverse and cosmopolitan society with concern for human values and principles.

Let us learn to see one another simply as people and remember that the more we learn about each other, the more knowledge we gain about ourselves.

Community

happenings for Dec. 14 through Dec. 21

Ali Al Salem

For information call 442-2005

Arifjan

Wednesday

Christmas concert, 7 p.m., Zone 1 chapel

Pingpong tournament, 7 p.m., Zone 1

Community Center

Flag football league, through Dec. 24, Zone 1 soccer field

Country Music Night, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage

Thursday

SMA Hope and Freedom Tour show, 6 p.m., Zone 6 stage

Ballroom dancing, 8 p.m., Zone 1

Community Center

Country Music Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1

Community Center

Friday

Christmas movie marathon, 7 p.m., Zone 6

Community Center

Salsa Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community

Center

Saturday

Pool tournament, 8-ball, 7 p.m., Zone 1

Community Center

Salsa Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 food court

Country Music Night, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage

Sunday

Christmas parade, 5 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center

Dodgeball tournament, through Dec. 26

Softball tournament, through Dec. 28

NFL Games, 8 p.m., Zone 1 and 6

Community Centers

Salsa Night, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage

Monday

Karaoke Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center

Tuesday

Bingo Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center

Center

Karaoke Night, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage

Basketball tournament, through Dec. 28

Ballroom dancing, 8 p.m., Zone 1

Community Center

Wednesday

Win, Lose or Draw, 7 p.m., Zone 6

Community Center

Beatle Mania, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center

Country Music Night, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage

For more information call

430-1205/1302

Army LSA at Ali Al Salem

For information call 859-1060

Buehring

Wednesday

Fun run, 7.5k, 5:30 p.m., Hole in One Donut

Thursday

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

Friday

Hip-hop dance, 9 p.m., MWR Tent 1

Saturday

Bazaar, 10 a.m., Tent 1

Tae-Kwon-Do Class, 7 p.m., gym

MWR launch night, 5 p.m., MWR Oasis

Sunday

Christmas bingo, 7 p.m., MWR Oasis

Bazaar, 10a.m., Tent 1

Salsa Night, 9 p.m., Tent 1

Tuesday

Christmas tree lighting, 7 p.m., MWR stage

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

Wednesday

Fun run, 2.5k, 5:30 p.m., Hole in One Donut

Wreath decorations, all day, MWR Oasis

For more information call

828-1340

Kuwait Naval Base

Wednesday

Chess, 7 p.m.

Friday

Bingo, 7 p.m., Fitness Center bench area

Saturday

Horseshoes, 1 p.m.

Wednesday

Checkers, 7 p.m.

For more information call

839-1063

Navistar

Wednesday

Pool tournament, 8 a.m., MWR tent

Power Lifting competition, 8 a.m., Gym

Thursday

Pool tournament, 8 a.m., MWR tent

Power Lifting competition, 8 a.m., Gym

Friday

Pool tournament, 8 a.m., MWR tent

Power Lifting competition, 8 a.m., Gym

Monday

Hearts tournament, 8 a.m., MWR tent

Tuesday

Hearts tournament, 8 a.m., MWR tent

Wednesday

Hearts tournament, 8 a.m., MWR tent

For more information call

844-1137

Spearhead/SPOD

For information call 825-1302

Victory

Wednesday

Spa Day, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

Free-throw contest, 3 p.m., MWR courts

Thursday

Aerobics, 5 a.m., MWR

Bill of Rights trivia contest, 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

Friday

Slam Jam pingpong tournament, 3 p.m.,

MWR dayroom

Movie night, 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

Saturday

Aerobics, 5 a.m., MWR

Monday

Spa Day, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

Fat Pockets 8-ball tournament, 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

Tuesday

Aerobics, 5 a.m., MWR

Spa Day, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

Desert Bingo Night, 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

Wednesday

Spa Day, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

OIF Christmas art contest begins

Movie Night, 6 p.m., MWR dayroom

For more information call

823-1033

Virginia

Wednesday

Flag football, 6 p.m., softball field

Checkers, 7 p.m.

Country Night, 8 p.m., Dusty Room

Thursday

Softball, 10 vs. 10, 5 p.m., softball field

Pool tournament, 7 p.m., Sports Lounge

Friday

Chess, 7 p.m., Community Center

Flag football, 6 p.m., softball field

Saturday

Softball, 10 vs. 10, 5 p.m., softball field

Hip-hop Night, 8 p.m., Dusty Room

Sunday

Volleyball, 6 vs. 6, 6 p.m., volleyball courts

Old School Jams, 8 p.m., Dusty Room

Monday

Spades, 10 a.m., Community Center

Tuesday

Bingo, 7 p.m., Dusty Room

Pool tournament, 7 p.m., Sports Lounge

Wednesday

Flag football, playoffs, softball field

Pool, 9-ball, 7 p.m., Community Center

Country Night, 8 p.m., Dusty Room

For more information call

832-1045



ARMY COMBAT UNIFORM



- The trousers have a four-button front fly and an adjustable waist drawstring.
- The ACU coat is a single-breasted design with long sleeves and a stand-up collar.
- Do not dry clean, starch or commercially hot press.
- Before washing, remove all patches from the coat, and all items from the pockets. Close all hook-and-loop fasteners to prevent snagging.
- Machine wash in cold water, using permanent press cycle, or hand wash using mild detergent. Do not wring or twist. Hang dry or machine dry on low to medium setting.

