

MARCH 23, 2005

# DESERT VOICE



## DIGGING IN

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# DESERT VOICE

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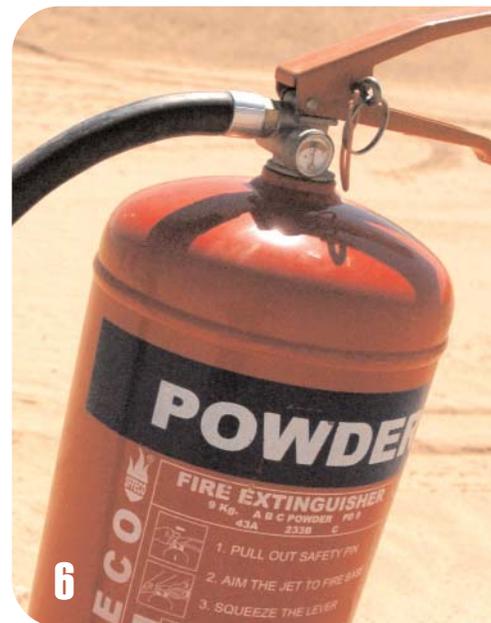
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On the Cover A bucket loader moves dirt at the new Basic Load Ammunition Handling Area at Camp Virginia.

Photo by Sgt. Matt Millham

# Slow down, buckle up and be safe

By Lt. Gen. R. Steven Whitcomb

CFLCC and Third U.S. Army Commanding General

The greatest non-hostile danger our Soldiers face in Kuwait is the same danger all U. S. Soldiers face world-wide – motor vehicle accidents. In fact, 65 percent of all Army fatal accidents thus far in FY05 involved motor vehicles. Anyone who drives the highways or secondary roads in Kuwait knows this is an environment more dangerous than most. With that in mind, every Soldier must exercise extreme care when traveling in tactical or non-tactical vehicles. No one is exempt from these dangers and nearly all accidents are avoidable.

An analysis of several months of accident data here in Kuwait shows an accident profile we can't ignore. The majority of serious motor vehicle accidents, both tactical and non-tactical, are rollovers. The causes of rollovers vary, however, excessive speed is nearly always a factor.

When you are traveling the roads of Kuwait, always remember, in addition to your mission, your ultimate goal is to get home to your loved ones when your tour is over. The best way to accomplish that goal is to slow down. Whether you are the driver, passenger, or convoy commander in a

motor vehicle, it is your responsibility to ensure the vehicle's speed stays within the posted speed limits and driving conditions. If you are the ranking person in the vehicle, it is always your responsibility to ensure the vehicle is operated safely.

Further, we need to remember traffic safety in Kuwait goes beyond driving responsibly. On December 19, 2004 four of our Soldiers were struck while changing a tire on a Kuwait highway. Tragically two Soldiers were killed and the other two were very seriously injured. Changing a tire or otherwise working in or near traffic lanes in Kuwait is very dangerous. Based on the accident investigation board's recommendations, we are changing CFLCC travel and convoy procedures as follows to better protect our Soldiers when a vehicle must stop on a highway:

1. Senior individual present does a risk assessment of the situation (traffic, weather conditions, day / night etc.)
2. Whenever possible, the vehicle should be driven clear of traffic. In the case of a flat tire, the potential damage to a tire or wheel rim is insignificant compared to our Soldiers' safety.
3. If you must work in or near traffic lanes, use another vehicle and traffic marking devices to completely block the lane in

which Soldiers are working.

4. When exiting a vehicle near traffic, EVERY SOLDIER must wear reflective gear.

Following these three basic steps can substantially reduce the chances of similar tragedies in the future.

Lastly, it is essential that you buckle up every time you get in a vehicle. Although nearly 80 percent of all drivers in the United States wear seat belts, the majority of deaths and serious injuries are to those not wearing seat belts. The dangers here in Kuwait are even greater, particularly in tactical vehicles where there are no airbags, little interior padding and a greater likelihood of being ejected from the vehicle. Statistics show our Soldiers are at least 25 times more likely to die if thrown from the vehicle.

When it comes to traffic safety, we must be architects of our circumstances rather than victims. Remember - buckle up, slow down and drive like your life depends on it, because it does.



Lt. Gen. Whitcomb

# Tour length, pay, retirement top concerns

By Master Sgt. HAK HASKINS

377th Theater Support Command Public Affairs

The day will come when a Soldier's identification card is just that – a card that clearly states the bearer is a Soldier, not a Reserve Soldier or a member of the National Guard.

That will hold true for the other service branches as well.

The news was one of many items discussed earlier this month by William Hall, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs during a 90-minute town-hall style meeting at Camp Arifjan.

Hall visited Kuwait March 12-14.

Questions about reserve pay, retirement benefits and the length of active-duty tours dominated the session at Arifjan, and Hall used part of the question and answer session to update the crowd on issues that affect all reserve force members.

A retired rear admiral, the assistant secretary has held his current position in reserve affairs since 2002. He told the crowd of Soldiers and Sailors who packed the Zone 1 Theater that the point of his

short tour was to listen to their concerns.

The concerns he heard ranged from the lack of promotion for Soldiers called to service from the Individual Ready Reserve, to how de-mobilized reservists can utilize Tri-Care as their primary health insurance.

"Questions on pay and retirement are usually the kinds of questions I hear. And questions on Tri-Care are asked," he said after the meeting. "But I always learn something. I always get a question I haven't been asked before."

Aside from the news on the forthcoming identification cards, Hall's questions didn't reveal any major changes in policies affecting reserve forces. He did, however, shed some light on policies he is advocating.

One of those is a bonus for reserve members who have critical skills; another is an increase in the reserve-side Montgomery GI Bill.

"We are your advocates. We are there for you," said Hall, referring to himself and his staff.

Some policies he discussed in response to questions:

- The Department of Defense does not intend to extend combat tours past 12 months of "boots on the ground" except when reservists volunteer or combat commanders spell out a specific need.
- The maximum number of months to serve in this zone will remain at 24; the total will be cumulative, not consecutive. That means a reservist won't be activated for 23 months, and 30 days only to be released for a day to be called back.
- Hall does not endorse an idea to allow reserve servicemembers to retire at 55.
- Servicemembers who have reached 20 years of service shouldn't expect any kind of bonus for re-enlisting; bonuses will remain targeted at those with between 10 and 16 years of service.
- After de-mobilization, servicemembers can opt to take one year of Tri-Care health coverage for every 90 days of activation. That adds up to eight years of coverage for anyone deployed for 24 months.
- Hall doesn't endorse "gap" pay for reservists who take a pay cut while on active duty.

# 3rd ACR gears up for round two

Story and photo by Spc. Brian Trapp

A little more than a year ago, Capt. Nile Cassett was hit by a truck. The encounter left him with a collapsed lung, a broken collar bone and some broken ribs. He went home for a few months to recover, then came back to pick up where he left off.

That was Cassett's first tour in Iraq. He's hoping things go better in his second Iraq tour.

Cassett's unit, the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, took its knocks in Operation Iraqi Freedom 1, but it recovered. Now, after about a year away, it's on its way back to the fight for a free and stable Iraq.

Before heading north, the 3rd ACR is in Kuwait for some additional training. They are going through something all troops deploying to Iraq have to go through, but the 3rd ACR Soldiers are coming back with an added edge: experience.

The unit retained more than 60 percent of the troops from its last deployment. More than 250 Soldiers even reenlisted to stay with the unit, which was slated to deploy again to OIF. The experiences of

combat are still fresh in the minds of 3rd ACR's troops, some of whom were home for less than a year. The effect of the experience on the unit can be clearly seen, said Cassett, who's now an operations officer with the ACR's 3rd Squadron.

The last time the 3rd ACR was in theater, they swiftly moved into the fight in western Iraq. This rotation, the 3rd ACR had more lead time and an opportunity to hold their focus on training for their upcoming mission in southern Baghdad.

"The first time we came, it was a lot quicker," said Staff Sgt. Thomas Ericksen, who is with the Regimental Headquarters and Headquarters Troop. "This time there was a lot more prep time. We were able to focus on new scenarios and things we learned in theater the first time. The new Soldiers being integrated into the platoons and troops were able to come up to speed faster."

When the 3rd ACR started to train up for this deployment, a lot of the lessons learned by the veterans of OIF 1 were still fresh, Ericksen said. That experience came into play during exercises that prepared the regiment for this deployment.

The 3rd ACR Soldiers have been walking patrols down village streets for months,



Above: From left, Pvt. Matthew Taylor, Spc. Abmale Marquez and 1st Sgt. John McNichols go over an inspection checklist for an M113 mortar carrier. Left: Getting tanks ready for Iraq.



making use of a mock village at Fort Carson,

Colo. They've been kicking in doors and dealing with captives, and every Soldier has sat through basic Arabic classes. They also had classes on the Islamic culture to familiarize themselves with local customs.

This training helped hone 3rd ACR's skills to deal with the Iraqis, an experience many retained from their last tour. It just takes a little time to gain the confidence of a village "if you do what's right and respect the people who live there," Cassett said. "It doesn't take long for them to respect the unit as well,"

Even though the unit is familiar with Iraq, as always in the battlefield, things change. One of the new challenges the 3rd ACR has to face is the changing tactics of the insurgency. The technology used in improvised explosive devices used today is leaps ahead of the primitive IEDs of OIF 1.

"I think we'll be able to identify them sooner than say a unit here for the first time," said Ericksen, who identified and called in IEDs during the ACR's first deployment.

Many things may have changed in the year since they left Iraq, but many things will always be the same.

"I think the level of awareness and guard that a soldier has to be on as long as we're here in theater will always be the same,"

Ericksen said. "There's always a threat whether you're here in Kuwait or up in Iraq ... you always have to be checking around and keeping your eyes and ears open."

Dealing with threats isn't new to the 3rd ACR, which was assigned to the Al Anbar Province, one of the largest areas of responsibility assigned a single unit during OIF 1. The province covers about one third of Iraq and includes the Sunni Triangle.

The 3rd ACR was "involved in a good chunk of fire fights," during its first OIF deployment, which ended a year ago.

All of the noncommissioned officers in Ericksen's troop are from line units, like scout and tank platoons, which took the brunt of the battles last time, he said. "We have that knowledge, and we're sharing it with the Soldiers so that they're prepared just as much as we are."

With the eyes of the unit looking north, they prepare for the move to Iraq. Recent memories of Iraq will be rekindled while new Soldiers will rely on the knowledge of those who have been there before.

"We expect our mission to be demanding and involve risk and sacrifice," said Sgt. 1st Class Donald Sparks, public affairs NCO in charge for 3rd ACR. "We will accomplish our mission to train security forces and defeat the insurgency. We are committed to accomplishing our mission ... providing a safe environment for the Iraqi citizens."

# One 1st Cav hero's story

Story by Alex Licea

Injured by the shrapnel of an enemy grenade, a Soldier collects himself as notices his buddies are down. He rushes to protect them, firing round after round at his attackers as bullets punch into the walls around him. If he and his friends are to live, there's nothing he can do but continue to fight alone and wait for reinforcements.

This was the situation Sgt. Benny Alicea – then Spc. Alicea – faced during a battle in Fallujah in November 2004. “It came as a complete surprised to us,” he said. “In a matter of seconds our world changed.”

Alicea's actions that day earned him the Silver Star. It wasn't just another award, but it was just one of the many awards he earned during his year in Iraq. He also received two Purple Hearts and two Army Commendation Medals – one with a V device for his valor in another battle.

In the early hours of Nov. 13, 2004, coalition troops were preparing to hammer the insurgent stronghold of Fallujah. Members of A Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Infantry, 1st Cavalry Division were there to take part in Operation Phantom Fury, which aimed to bring the rogue city under coalition control.

As the sun rose over Fallujah, insurgents operating from a complex of houses fired on the company's 1st platoon. The platoon returned fire from their Bradley Fighting Vehicles and began clearing the complex to secure the area.

“We dismounted, and my heart was pumping as we started firing and catching a whole lot of insurgents,” Alicea said. “At that point, I was feeling pretty good about the situation.”

The company detained 20 suspected insurgents and found a cache of weapons and ammunition. As the Soldiers dealt with the detainees, another group of insurgents attacked the troops from a nearby house.

Alicea's squad got the order to eliminate the new threat. One of his buddies kicked in the door and threw two grenades into the house. After those deto-

ated, the squad moved into the room only to find debris. The squad moved into the room, and a sense of anxiety fell over the Soldiers as they headed toward a door on the opposite side of the room.

“For some strange reason, we all felt like something was about to happen,” said



Photo courtesy of the 1st Cavalry Division

**Soldiers with A Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Infantry, 1st Cavalry Division engage in a firefight in the Iraqi city of Najaf in September, 2004.**

Alicea. “Instead of rushing into the room, we were all cautious.”

In an instant, bullets punctured the calm, justifying their unease.

“The door was not even fully open when a hailstorm of bullets started coming out,” he said. “It was chaotic, and I felt the rounds passing by me.”

“We didn't realize how many people were in there until they started shooting and we heard their voices,” he said.

The squad found itself battling 15 insurgents. Bullets and shrapnel flew everywhere as both sides suffered casualties. Shrapnel from two enemy grenades caught Alicea in the hip and butt.

As the squad backed out of the house, Alicea laid down suppressive fire before falling to the ground in pain. Three of his comrades were also injured, and Alicea positioned himself to protect them.

“I just loaded my weapon and kept on firing as I was staying around my brothers to protect them,” said Alicea. “At this point, in my mind I felt like I was going to die.”

Alicea was running out of ammunition when a Bradley came to rescue him and the other wounded Soldiers.

With the skirmish over, Alicea helped

load the wounded into vehicles, ignoring his own pain.

The three Soldiers Alicea protected all suffered severe wounds. One of those Soldiers, Spc. Jose Velez, didn't survive.

Despite his heroism, Alicea remains humble about his actions. According to his friends and fellow Soldiers, that attitude describes the type of person he is.

“Alicea doesn't like to take credit or boast about the actions he performed,” said Staff Sgt. Carlos Santillana, a squad leader in Alpha Company's third platoon. “He is the definition of selfless.”

1st Lt. Daniel Kilgore, leader of A Company's third platoon, called Alicea a true leader. He goes beyond his role as a team leader to make sure the job gets done, said Kilgore.

While he is proud of what he did to earn the Silver Star, the award also brought back the harsh memories of a fallen friend.

“It is an honor to get it, but the award also reminds me of Velez a lot,” he said, his eyes welling up with tears.

Now in Kuwait, the first stop on his way home, Alicea prepares for his return to Fort Hood, Texas. He looks forward to spending time with his wife, organizing his life and thinking about the future.

“I appreciate life a lot more,” he said. “Some people don't take life seriously until they see someone close to them being picked up off the ground.”



Sgt. Alicea



**A backhoe shapes a berm at Camp Virginia's Basic Load Ammunition Handling Area.**

# Digging in

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

They have a plan. They have the materials. They have the people. The only thing missing from Camp Virginia's multi-million dollar renovation is a reality television crew.

The makeover, which will cost an estimated \$14 million, will change the camp to such a degree that those in charge of carrying out the plans say it will be unrecognizable from its present configuration.

For anyone who has had to navigate the Virginia's convoluted network of dirt lanes, sleep in its wood-floored tents or cram into its dining facility during the surge, this is welcome news.

The original plan for the Camp, which was built in large part during the ramp up to

Operation Iraqi Freedom, was to arrange everything in a rough circle, said Master Sgt. Chris Calvert, the noncommissioned officer in charge of operations at Camp Virginia. Capt. Glenn Peers, officer in charge of service and support for the camp, said he heard rumors that Virginia was arranged so haphazardly to minimize the number of casualties in the case of a missile attack by Saddam Hussein.

Whatever the case, since its initial construction, the camp has only grown, and with growth came even more confusion. The jumbled layout may have been tolerable for a short time, but Virginia has been designated as one of the few Kuwait camps that will remain as an enduring camp – a camp whose life will extend beyond 2007, accord-

ing to a document, dated Dec. 1 2004, that lays out the plan for Virginia's makeover.

"The plan details things the camp is lacking in order to accomplish its [Reception, Staging Onward Movement and Integration] mission," said MAJ John McFassel, the project engineer for Camps New York and Virginia, who is with Facility Engineer Team 24. McFassel is responsible for producing the planning document, titled "Camp Virginia Master Plan," every quarter.

The plan sorts out all the confusion while making major improvements to the camp's living and work areas, shower facilities, road network and ammunition handling area. The plan also allowed for the construction of a new helipad, which was recently completed, and calls for an additional dining facility and a marked increase in capacity to handle rotational surges.

"The improvements will allow the camp to handle more troops with increased comfort and efficiency," said McFassel.

The surge's impact on Virginia will only increase as plans move forward to eliminate Camp New York, which has served as a key rotational camp. "Since Camp New York is

closing, both Virginia and [Camp] Buehring will have to be able to support significantly more troops next year," said McFassel. The new plan calls for the capacity of Camp Virginia to increase from 11,000 to 16,000.

One of the most significant changes will be to the camp's layout. Construction crews are already untangling the seemingly unplanned jumble of roads and random living areas as they tear down the old tent pads and build new ones.

Work under the new plan began in November with the construction of concrete pads to hold fest tents, which can each hold up to 60 people. This part of the project was completed in time to deal with the annual surge, which effectively ended a few weeks ago.

But that was only the beginning. Now, "we're trying to get everything ready for the next surge," said Peers, adding that many of the improvements are designed to make life at the camp more enjoyable for permanent residents as well.

After completing the first tent project, American International Contractors Incorporated, the company contracted to carry out some 90 percent of the reconstruction, graded the camp's perimeter road to make the once pothole-infested circuit easier to navigate. They also completely rebuilt the camp's entry control and fuel points.

Then work began on laying concrete for nine tent pads, each of which will hold 52 temper tents. When complete, the pads' combined capacity will hold in excess of 6,500 transient troops – roughly the size of a new Unit of Action.

The concrete pads virtually eliminate the vibrations that would shake a wood-floored tent and disturb troops trying to get a decent night's sleep. The new pads also have upgraded electrical systems with individual breakers for each tent. If an outage occurs, the new system should isolate the problem to a single tent, said Peers, who is supervising much of the construction project.

Living conditions will be even better for permanent tenants at Virginia. They will move out of tents and into re-locatable buildings, or RLBs, which will be brought in over the next year and a half. A new chapel, which was not part of the improvement plan but was completed in January, will double as a Morale Welfare and Recreation area for big events. Up to four additional community buildings will be added as well, said Peers. As of March 16, construction was underway on one of those buildings, which will most likely be used as a conference center, said Peers.

The camp's common, where all of the AAFES vendors are located, will also be expanded to better the quality of life at the

camp. At the center of the camp, which includes the common, the command cell and most of the other administrative offices, a network of solar-powered street lights will make the area safer to navigate at night.

Work continues on a new Basic Load Ammunition Handling Area, which AICI is upgrading to "peacetime standards," said Peers. The original ammunition handling area was designed to hold a net weight of up to 20,000 pounds of explosives. The new area, which will cost just under \$600,000 to complete, will be able to hold more than 14 times as much within the same amount of space.

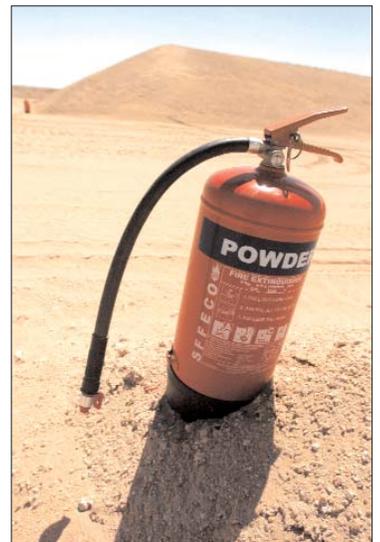
Other improvements will be made to administrative areas. As part of the Doha closure, 26 RLBs will be transferred to Virginia to take the place of tents that house administrative services and medical and dental facilities.

Improvements will also be made to the camp's hygiene facilities, gym and exercise areas, DFAC, loading ramps, container storage area, vehicle maintenance area – the list goes on to include nearly every aspect of the camp.

"The camp will be in operation at least as long as OIF lasts," said McFassel. "The items being built now, such as the community buildings, tent pads and helipad, will last for many years."



From above: A worker smooths concrete for the floor of what will be a new conference center at Camp Virginia. New temper tents sit on new concrete slabs in one of nine new tent pads. A fire extinguisher sits jammed into an earthen berm at Virginia's Basic Load Ammunition Handling Area. The camp's new helipad needs only lights to become fully operational. A worker dismantles a tent at one of the old tent pads.



# Dutch pitch redeployment camp

Story and photo by Spc. Brian Trapp

They arrived at the end of January, took an empty patch of sand, put down their flag and started building.

The Dutch Royal Army's redeployment team built a logistical base from the ground up in less than six weeks in order to redeploy the entire Dutch contingent from Operation Iraqi Freedom as the Netherlands pulls its troops out of the coalition. A once empty corner of Camp Virginia is now a Dutch subdivision that has turned into a small camp of its own.

The Dutch are in the process of moving about 700 vehicles and 1,200 containers out of Iraq along with all of the roughly 1,400 Dutch troops still in theater.

"This is a big operation for a small army," said Dutch army Lt. Stefan Mostert, liaison officer for the Dutch army. "Everything the Dutch army does is a big operation."

The camp has its own post exchange, which only accepts Euros, an internet café, a post office and a number of operations offices, all set up around a courtyard that sits just 15 yards away from the bustle of the country's redeployment operation.

The troop withdrawal comes after 20



**Dutch troops cut loose and enjoy a barbecue March 10 at their compound in a corner of Camp Virginia. The Dutch are pulling out of Iraq after 20 months of military involvement in Iraq.**

months of Dutch military involvement in Operation Iraqi Freedom and is part of an arrangement made with the United Nations.

"The people in the Netherlands think we have to help the Iraqi people, but the politics decided it's time for us to go," said Dutch army 1st Sgt. Chris Van Hee, first sergeant for the redeployment camp at Virginia. The Dutch public's support for the deployment to Iraq is similar to the support for the Americans Iraq, Van Hee said. It's mixed for and against it but, the public thinks the troops did a good job.

The Dutch soldiers worked under Stabilization Force Iraq where they provided security patrols and force protection. They also protected Japanese soldiers, who are involved in a humanitarian mission in southern Iraq, and trained more than 3,000 Iraqi police and a tactical support unit for the Iraqi National Guard.

"The Iraqi police are very friendly and willing," said a captain of a redeploying Dutch unit who declined to give his name. "They always wanted to learn something."

Now, after turning their mission over to British and Australian forces, the Dutch are completely focused on redeploying, said Mostert.

The vehicles, people and containers coming into the Dutch area of Camp Virginia are all received by their redeployment team and readied to be sent back to the Netherlands.

"Two of the biggest issues are vehicles and containers," Mostert said. The vehicles and containers are tracked with a bar code system, so the operations station at the center of the Dutch camp and the main

computer in the Netherlands can track the movements of the materials.

The vehicles come into a small four-corners area where all the extra gear and Kevlar blankets lining parts of the vehicle are stripped and packed up.

How quickly the vehicles move through the four-corners depends on the type and size of vehicles, said Dutch army Sgt. 1st Class Kees Potters, who is with the maintenance platoon. About two-thirds of the Dutch's maintenance team is at Camp Virginia, while the remainder is still in Iraq arranging to move more vehicles to Kuwait.

Vehicles that are able to pass the regulations to drive in Holland are driven from Virginia to the Sea Port of Debarkation. All other vehicles will be moved to the port on a flatbed.

Normally, it takes about two days for the team to strip and inspect vehicles to get them ready and moved to their staging area in preparation for movement to the port.

The pullout of the Netherlands won't be a straight sprint home for the soldiers. The Dutch have a mandatory relaxation program for all troops redeploying from Iraq. The soldiers are required to spend two days at Cyprus, an island in the Mediterranean Sea, to decompress after their time in Iraq.

"They can sleep in a hotel, or talk about what they've done in Iraq," Van Hee said. There are also psychologists there for the troops to talk to, "but it's really informal."

The last Soldiers will head for Cyprus as the Dutch redeployment team packs up and goes home at the end of May. They have yet to decide what to do with the facilities they have erected at Camp Virginia.

## Netherlands facts

The average height of a Dutch man is 6 feet; the average American male is just over 5 feet 9 inches.

Marijuana is not officially legal, but it is sold in registered coffee shops. Even with the abundance, only about 5 percent of the population smoke it.

The Netherlands is Europe's most densely-populated country.

The land is very flat, and bicycle riding is a popular mode of transportation.

The Dutch East India Company sent ships east in search of exotic goods. They also colonized several far away places including New Amsterdam, which is now New York City.

Queen's Day, April 30, is a national day-long street party where many party goers dress in orange and stroll through the city. It also doubles as a national yard sale day because street trade is unregulated that day except for food and alcohol.

The elevation of the Netherlands ranges from 322 meters above sea level to 7 meters below sea level.

The Netherlands is about double the size of New Jersey.

The Netherlands are more commonly known in America as Holland.

# Karate!

By Spc. Curt Cashour



**START HERE!**

## BREATHE IN, BREATHE OUT

Kneel on the ground make a fist with each hand and extend your arms out in front of you. Thrust your arms to your side, breathing out as you do so. Pull your arms back to the original position while breathing in. Do this movement before the workout and between sets to relax your muscles.



## THREE FINGER

The name here is a little misleading, as you technically use the thumbs, index and middle fingers of each hand. This technique isolates these areas and helps you to learn how to control your body weight, Valsarajan said.

## THREE KNUCKLE

Three-knuckle pushups focus on the 3 outermost knuckles of the hand. Doing these pushups will help you develop power used in Jeet Kune Do punches, a style of punch popularized by Bruce Lee, Valsarajan said. Since the goal is to support yourself using the three outermost knuckles, your index-finger knuckle shouldn't touch the ground during this movement, Valsarajan said.

## KNUCKLE PUSHUPS

Supporting your body weight with your knuckles instead of the palms of your hands during pushups is a great way to increase punching power, Valsarajan said. To execute, make a tight fist with each hand, locking your thumb on the outside of each fist. Assume a normal pushup position, supporting your weight with your 2 inner knuckles.

## WRIST

This one could be painful if you're not careful. To minimize the chance of injury, make sure only your wrist is touching the ground instead of the entire back of the hand. If performed correctly, this technique will target your forearms and rear neck muscles. It will also build strength in the wrists, which will

## FULL FINGER

Finger strength is crucial when it comes to executing the many variations of eye pokes, throat thrusts and grabbing maneuvers, Valsarajan said. This variation will help you achieve that strength. Extend your fingers as shown, and push.



Some of the movements might be a bit tough for beginners, so start off with a few repetitions and work your way up. A good guideline is 10 repetitions per variation said Valsarajan, adding that experienced brown and black belt martial artists typically include 25 to 50 repetitions of each variation into their workouts.

Valsarajan has a black belt degree in Sports Karate-Do from the academy of India, which is sanctioned by the Japan-based World Shotokan Karate Federation. The 29 year old is a housing technician at camp Doha.

# I got it at the PX

In case you were wondering

## Aqua Games Pearl Divers Retrieval Game

Pearl Divers, a fun-filled water sport that one must assume can be played in the desert, tests your ability to sink to the bottom of a pool after having gained more than ten pounds of pudg from a daily diet of burgers and fried chicken. This giant plastic clam hides a fortune of giant plastic pearls, which taunt you from the bottom of the pool as you float helplessly above it. Despite this fact, the game will provide hours of entertainment for those outside the pool, who will undoubtedly be amused by your undulating mass of back fat.

**\$11.95**



**\$14.98**

## Recon Wrap

Anyone can conduct reconnaissance in boring brown, black, or camouflage colored head gear, but it takes a true special-operations warrior to evade enemy eyes while wearing this fluorescent wrap. And at \$14.98, this piece of cloth is an incredible bargain. Sure you could make the same thing out of an old t-shirt, but then you'd be stuck lugging around an extra \$14.98 in cardboard AAFES pogs.

## SoBe No Fear Super Energy Supplement

If sugar is a means of eradicating fear, most servicemembers in Kuwait have nothing to worry about considering the thousands of pounds of ice cream consumed here every day. For those who don't eat ice cream, you can quench both your fear and your thirst as you relive the embarrassment of owning a closet full of No Fear T-shirts - for far less than the cost of a new wardrobe.

**\$1.99**



**\$1.75**

## Tush Wipes

Having a nasty reaction to all the one-ply toilet paper in theater? We have the answer: Tush Wipes. These wet wonders have been breathing life into tired tushes for years. Each package contains 12 single-use wipes, a big improvement over the competition, whose packs include six dual-use towels. And don't worry if you're new to the tush-wiping world. Tush Wipes come complete with three-step instructions.

# behooverly



# Community

## happenings for March 23 through 30

### Arifjan

#### Wednesday

R&B Night, 7 p.m., Community Center  
Country Western Night, 7:30 p.m., Zone 6 MWR  
Combat Kick Boxing, 5:30 a.m., Power  
Stretching, 8 a.m., Bench/Step Workout, 10 a.m.,  
Body Pump Workout, 1 p.m., Zone 1 gym tent  
Aerobics, 6 p.m., Zone 6 gym tent  
Aerobics, 7 p.m., Zone 2 gym tent

#### Thursday

Country Music Night, 7 p.m., Community Center  
Spinning Class, 5:30 p.m., Zone 2 gym tent  
Open Mic Night, 7:30 p.m., Zone 6 MWR area  
Karate Class, 7:30 p.m., Zone 6 MWR area  
Basketball signups begin, Zone 1 gym

#### Friday

Salsa Night, 7 p.m., Community Center  
Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool  
Aerobics, 6 p.m., Zone 6 MWR tent  
Aerobics, 7 p.m., Zone 2 gym tent

#### Saturday

Bingo Night, 7 p.m., Community Center  
R&B Night, 7:30 p.m., Zone 6 MWR  
Combat Kick Boxing 5:30 a.m., Power Stretching  
8 a.m., Bench/Step Workout 10 a.m., Body Pump  
Workout 1 p.m., Combat Kick Boxing 3 p.m.,  
Zone 1 gym tent  
Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool

#### Sunday

70s Music Night, 7 p.m., Community Center  
Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool  
Bench/Step Workout 5:30 a.m., Super Abs 8 a.m.,  
Power Stretching 10 a.m., Body Pump Workout 1  
p.m., Bench/Step Workout 3 p.m., Zone 1 gym  
tent

#### Monday

Country Western Night, 7:30 p.m., Zone 2 stage  
Bingo Night, 7 p.m., Community Center  
Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool  
Combat Kick Boxing 5:30 a.m., Power Stretching  
8 a.m., Bench/Step Workout 10 a.m., Body Pump  
Workout 1 p.m., Combat Kick Boxing 3 p.m.,  
Zone 1 gym tent  
Aerobics, 6 p.m., Zone 6 gym tent

#### Tuesday

Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool  
Bench/Step Workout 5:30 a.m., Super Abs 8  
a.m., Power Stretching 10 a.m., Body Pump  
Workout 1 p.m., Bench/Step Workout 3 p.m.,  
Zone 1 gym tent

#### Wednesday

301 Darts, 7 p.m., Community Center  
Combat Kick Boxing 5:30 a.m., Power Stretching  
8 a.m., Bench/Step Workout 10 a.m., Body Pump  
Workout 1 p.m., Zone 1 gym tent

For more information call 430-1202

### Buehring

#### Wednesday

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

#### Thursday

Country Night, 9 p.m., Tent 1  
Tae-Kwon-Do Class, 7 p.m., MWR Tent #1

#### Friday

Dominoes Tournament (Call for info)

#### Saturday

Tae-Kwon-Do Class, 7 p.m., MWR tent

#### Sunday

Easter services  
Billiards Tournament (Call for info)

#### Monday

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

#### Tuesday

Tae-Kwon-Do Class, 7 - 8:30 p.m., MWR tent 1

#### Wednesday

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

For more information call 828-1340

### Doha

#### Wednesday

Casino Night, 7 p.m., Frosty's

#### Friday

Karaoke Night, 7 p.m., Frosty's

#### Saturday

Pool Tournament, 7 p.m., Frosty's

#### Tuesday

Ping Pong Tournament, 7 p.m., Frosty's

#### Wednesday

Foosball tournament, 7 p.m., Frosty's

For more information call 438-5637

### Kuwaiti Naval Base

For more information call 839-1063

### Navistar

#### Wednesday

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

Aerobics Class, 6 p.m., Game tent

Softball Tournament practice, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.,  
Softball field

#### Thursday

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

Softball Tournament practice, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.,  
Softball field

#### Friday

Aerobics Class, 6 p.m., Game tent

Softball Tournament practice, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.,  
Softball field

#### Saturday

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

3 p.m. - 6 p.m., Softball field

#### Monday

Checkers Tournament practice, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.,  
MWR center

Aerobics Class, 6 p.m., Game tent

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

#### Tuesday

Smoking cessation class, 10 a.m., MWR center

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

#### Wednesday

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

Aerobics Class, 6 p.m., Game tent

For more information call 844-1137

### Spearhead/SPOD

For more information call 825-1302

### Victory

#### Wednesday

Skit/Open Mic Night (Call for info)

#### Thursday

Softball Tournament (Call for info)

#### Monday

Movie Night, 5 p.m., MWR

#### Wednesday

Spa Day, 10 a.m. (Call for info)

For more information call 823-1033

### Virginia

#### Wednesday

Country Western Night, 7 p.m., Dusty Room

#### Thursday

Tug-of-War, 3 p.m., by MWR tent

#### Friday

Spa day, 10 a.m., MWR tent

#### Saturday

Bazaar, 10 a.m.- 8 p.m., Dusty Room

#### Sunday

Checkers Tournament, 3 p.m., MWR Tent

#### Monday

Unit Feud, 6 p.m., Dusty Room

#### Tuesday

Billiards Singles Tournament, 5 p.m., MWR tent

#### Wednesday

Billiards 2-on-2 Tournament, 6 p.m. MWR tent

For more information call 832-1045

### Easter Service Schedule

#### Maudy Thursday

Catholic Mass, 7:30 p.m.

Ecumenical Service, 9 p.m.

#### Good Friday

Catholic Mass, 11 a.m.

Ecumenical Service, 7 p.m.

#### Easter Vigil

Catholic Mass, 7:30 p.m.

#### Easter Sunday

Sunrise Ecumenical Service, 5:30 a.m.

Contemporary Protestant, 10 a.m.

Catholic Mass, 12 p.m.

Gospel Service, 2:15 p.m.

Traditional Protestant, 7 p.m.

Contemporary Protestant, 9 p.m.

For more information call 430-6253

### Doha/Ali Al Salem Bus Schedule

	Departs AAS	Arrives Doha	Departs Doha	Arrives AAS
			0615	0745
			0815	0945
0800	0930	0945	1115	
1000	1130	1245	1415	
1130	1300	1415	1545	
1430	1600	1615	1745	
1600	1730	1745	1915	
1800	1930	1945	2115	
1930	2100	2115	2245	
2130	2300	0015	0145	
2300	0030	0145	0315	
0200	0330	0445	0615	
0330	0500			
0630	0800			

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.

# Safety Corner

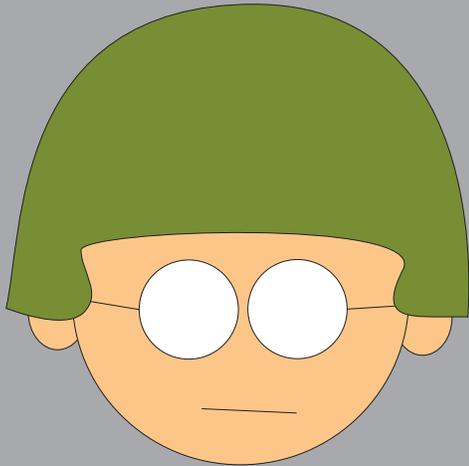
## Rollover prevention

From the 377th Theater Support Command Safety Office

Vehicle rollovers are a common problem in Kuwait. Here are some contributing factors and how to prevent them.

1. **Speeding:** Vehicle speed is the most critical component of a rollover, and it is easy to control. Obey posted speed limits and convoy speed in accordance with standard operating procedures, and drive according to road conditions. Don't speed!
2. **Load Security:** Ensure all loads are secured, properly blocked, braced and cushioned. This will prevent loads from shifting.
3. **Trailer Towing:** Exercise caution when towing trailers. Remember that turning radius and breaking distances are much greater when towing a trailer.
4. **Slow down in curves and on inclined roads.**
5. **Lack of Preventive Maintenance Checks and Service:** Perform PMCS before, during and after your mission to keep your vehicle in good operating condition.
6. **Remember to ALWAYS wear your seatbelt.**

To register for upcoming safety classes or for questions or comments on this segment, please refer to the 377th safety office's Maj. Nathan Phelps or 1st Lt. Rene Surgi.



Send your  
submissions to:  
**DESERT  
VOICE**

Editor  
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# NATURE CALLS

By Capt. Paul Nichols, 377th Theater Support Command



# JESfully Mine

By Maj. Yvette Rose

A thought of you usually starts my day.  
You greet me with an invisible touch.  
You do things for me that make me wild  
and it's really not that much.  
You're like the sun that provides me light  
to get me on my way.  
Then comes your moon to fill my heart  
ending my lovely day.  
In the even of the weekend you're my river  
current smooth and strong.  
You hold on tight to my heart  
ensuring I don't steer wrong.  
When your spirit washes my joy to the shore,  
your valley scoops me up  
The hands of your mountain dry me  
and fill my happy cup  
I had a really good thought of you  
I smiled to realize this much is true  
The very best part of all my days  
is the part where I get to have YOU.

# ARMY LIFE

By Lt. Col. Michael Verrett, CFLCC C4

