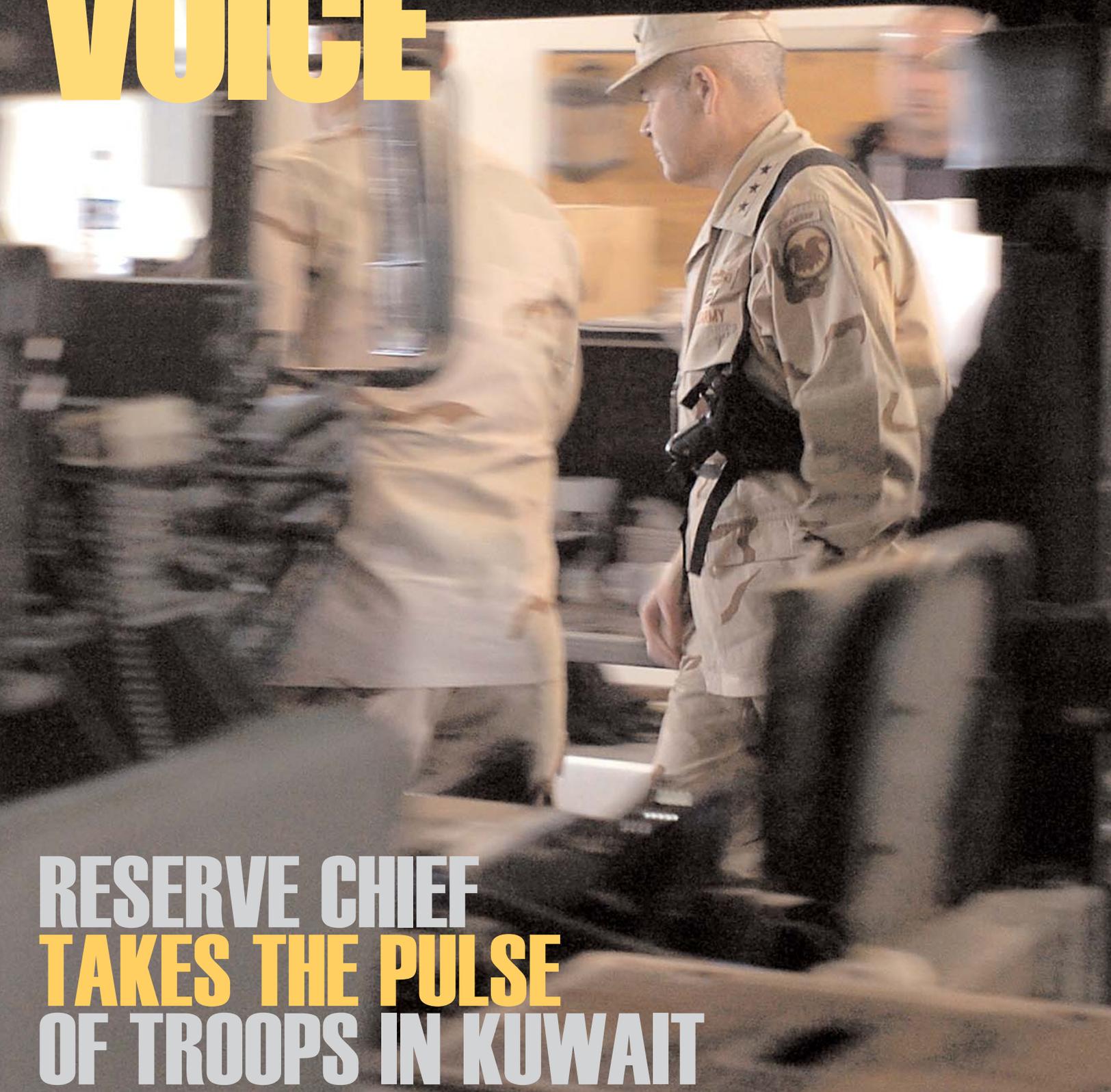


JANUARY 26, 2005

DESERT VOICE



RESERVE CHIEF
TAKES THE PULSE
OF TROOPS IN KUWAIT

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DESERT VOICE

Volume 26, Issue 24

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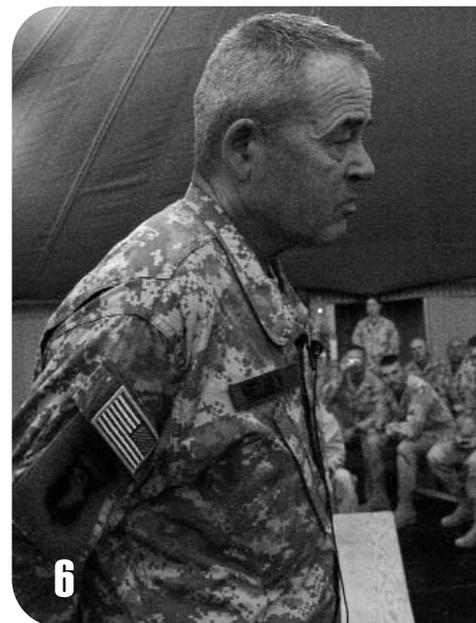
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On the Cover Lt. Gen. James Helmly, chief of the Army Reserve, tours the Level-2 up-armor shop at Camp Arifjan Jan. 17.

Photo by Sgt. Matt Millham

Kuwaitis react to terror

American troops are now subject to stops at Kuwaiti checkpoints

story and photos by Spc. Aimee Felix

Two incidents of extremist activity in Kuwait earlier this month compelled the Kuwait Ministry of the Interior to increase its security checks throughout the country, according to a Coalition Forces Land Component Command report.

The incidents both resulted in gun battles between Kuwaiti security forces and extremists. While Kuwait State Security officers caught some of the extremists involved in the incidents, several others remain fugitives.

For this reason, KMOI is increasing its Kuwait police patrols and its Kuwait police checkpoints along major highways in Kuwait and in various locations in Kuwait City. KMOI has requested the cooperation of servicemembers, coalition personnel and contract civilians in these increased security measures.

Contract and military personnel approaching Kuwaiti police checkpoints are directed by CFLCC to slow down when approaching the checkpoints and proceed with caution unless given another directive by the Kuwait police, said Maj. Leslie Buford, the orders manager for the 377th plans and operations section.

These additional directives could include stopping if directed to do so and/or showing identification. Follow any other instructions as directed, said Buford. Non-tactical vehicles are subject to being stopped and checked at the KMOI checkpoints, but KMOI stated that military vehicles will normally not be required to stop at the checkpoints, and they will be waved through.

Kuwait State Security is authorized the use of lethal force, so no one should disregard any of these checkpoints, said Maj. Steven Misczenski, battle captain for the CFLCC plans and operations section.

Servicemembers and contract personnel

should assist KMOI officers by automatically showing their identification card while slowly driving by, according to the CFLCC report.

Servicemembers and contract personnel should be aware of what the officers manning the checkpoints will look like, to avoid imposters. The checkpoints will be manned by KMOI officers and undercover Kuwait State Security officers.

The KMOI officers will have black and white, blue and white or gray vehicles all marked with the KMOI emblem, and they will be wearing khaki-colored uniforms with black berets.

To further assist contract and military personnel in properly identifying the KMOI officers, the 377th Theater Support Command civil affairs office is working with KMOI to provide badges in English for all Kuwaiti officers working the checkpoints or escorting convoys.

The CFLCC report advises servicemembers to report the checkpoint locations to their chain of command. "Reporting checkpoints is just good practice, especially in these times," said Misczenski.

The extra checkpoints will be temporary but planned. However, if KMOI is looking for someone or if there has been an extremist incident, KMOI will set up an unscheduled checkpoint. KMOI is presently on the tracks of fugitive extremists, so unscheduled checkpoints will probably be in order, said Misczenski.

KMOI will only provide the checkpoint times and locations to the 436th Movement Control Battalion, which is the battalion in charge of scheduling convoys in Kuwait, said Lt. Col. Tracy Thompson, commander of the 436th MCB.

In a coordination meeting between KMOI and CFLCC liaisons, KMOI requested the cooperation of the U.S. military in adhering



Kuwait Ministry of the Interior uniforms, as shown here, are khaki-colored, and include black berets. Personnel wear nameplates over the right pocket and KMOI insignia on the right shoulder.

to the times KMOI has indicated U.S. convoys can operate. KMOI also asked the 436th MCB to ensure that all convoys are escorted by KMOI, Kuwait Ministry of Defense or Kuwait National Guard personnel. The 436th MCB will ensure all convoys follow the convoy handbook specifications for each arming stance.

To aid in maintaining personal safety, all military personnel traveling off post, whether in a convoy or in a non-tactical vehicle, should ensure they are in the correct arming stance, and they should only go off post if it is absolutely mission essential, said Misczenski. Military personnel can find the arming stance through CFLCC's secure webpage or their chain of command.

"These measures are for everyone's safety, [servicemembers], contractors and our allies, the Kuwaitis," said Misczenski, who added that servicemembers could help themselves by following the basics of accountability.



These are the three types of KMOI vehicles military and contract personnel will see at the extra checkpoints KMOI will set up due to increased

security in Kuwait. The black and white vehicle and the gray vehicle are patrol cars and the blue and white vehicle is a traffic control car.

Don't mess with Texas

story by Spc. Brian Trapp

Texas has its share of desert, but it's not hostile like the deserts of Iraq. Still, thousands of Texas National Guardsmen staging in Kuwait before heading north to start their yearlong deployment of protecting convoys, distinguished visitors and each other are convinced that they have what it takes to survive life across the berm.

The mobilization of approximately 3,000 Soldiers with the Texas Army National Guard's 56th Brigade Combat Team, 36th Infantry Division (T-Patchers), for Operation Iraqi Freedom 04-06 is the largest deployment of Texas National Guard forces since World War II.

The 56th BCT will take on their primary mission in the coming weeks as one of two theater security brigades. The 56th BCT is designated to provide convoy escorts and fixed site security as well as provide security and accommodations for distinguished visitors.

Like so many other Soldiers, many of the brigade's troops will be working outside of their military occupational specialties.

"Like everyone is an infantryman, everyone fights; everyone can do convoy escort, everyone can do fixed site security," said Maj. Paul Cerniauskas, the brigade's assistant operations officer for plans. "We are well trained and prepared, capable of doing any mission assigned to us."

After mobilizing in July in July, the 56th BCT Soldiers trained rigorously for about six months between Fort Hood, Texas and the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, La. They arrived in Kuwait about three weeks ago, ready to continue their training.

Cerniauskas said he was impressed with the logistics effort going on in the camps in Kuwait and with the camps built up in the middle of nowhere that move troops and

supplies in and out of theater. The 56th BCT is one of the units that the troops in Kuwait will push forward. The brigade's time in Kuwait is quickly coming to an end as it prepares to start its mission. The T-Patchers seem eager to go.

"It's going to be dangerous, but that's what they've trained for," said Master Sgt. Lek Mateo, noncommissioned officer in charge of the brigade's public affairs office. "This is deadly serious, and we're ready to get the mission going."

During the brigade's time in southeastern Iraq they expect to have a firsthand perspective on two historic elections. Sunday's election, which will elect a 275-seat legislature that will run the country, draft a permanent constitution and choose a president and prime minister, precedes a fresh round of elections at the end of the year, when the Iraqis will elect their own national government under the new constitution.

"We expect to see a lot of changes. The theater is constantly in flux," Cerniauskas said. As a security brigade, they expect to have an integral part in that change. "From my level, day-to-day, we are extremely busy. When you back up and take account of your role and the history that's going on, you'll have a first hand account. You were there, which is exciting when you have time to think about it."

The T-patchers of World War II helped liberate Anzio, Italy, and their contemporaries look forward to carrying on the proud legacy established by their predecessors, Mateo said.

These Soldiers will have been there and come home with something to tell their grandchildren about, said Capt. Kenneth Keller, commander of the Headquarters and Headquarters Company for the 2nd Battalion of the 142nd Infantry Regiment, which is part of the 56th BCT. He was concerned that his Soldiers could get caught in the middle of the violence surrounding the election, "so they've got to be extra vigilant in their duties."

Some of the troops' thoughts jump back and forth between going on with the mission and the life they've left behind. Like all of the troops in theater, these guardsmen have left jobs, lives and families behind for their yearlong deployment.

Spc. Kyral Hayward, a food service specialist with HHC, 2nd Battalion, was put in a situation that not many Soldiers have to go through. He was mobilized as his



photo by Spc. Brian Trapp

Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 142nd Infantry Regiment, 56th Brigade Combat Team, a Texas National Guard unit that is part of the 36th Infantry Division, surround a sand table as they are briefed on their convoy route into Iraq, where they begin a yearlong tour this week.

wife was preparing to do an overseas tour in Korea. They were forced to leave the children, 5-and 2 years-old, with his mother-in-law. The brigade's family readiness group has worked with Hayward, and kept in touch with his wife, to feed all of the information from the parent-Soldiers to his mother-in-law, Hayward said.

"I miss them, but when I raised my right hand, I agreed to this," Hayward said. "After 9/11 the world changed a lot. I was called up, and I'm looking forward to getting this mission done and over with."

Hayward and other food service staff in his unit expect to be split between the food service mission and convoy escort duties, he said.

"I've been with the platoon since August and trained at Fort Polk," Hayward said. "I think I'll do alright with it, even if it's not in our MOS."

"These guys trained up a long time, and the sooner they get started the sooner we go home," Keller said.

That seemed to be a mantra across the 56th BCT; get started, so we can get done. As it makes its final preparations, the brigade is digging at the sand like a Texas longhorn getting ready to charge forward.



photos by Master Sgt. Lek Mateo, 56th Brigade Public Affairs Office

A 56th Brigade Combat Team Soldier test fires his .50 caliber sniper rifle at Udairi Range in Kuwait prior to deploying to Iraq.

3rd ID's 1st BCT ready for more

story and photos by Spc. Jimmy D. Lane Jr.
1st BCT Public Affairs Office

The 3rd Infantry Division's 1st Brigade Combat Team is the first group in Army history to deploy to a combat zone as an entirely self-sufficient unit of action.

While some Soldiers are uncertain of what's to come during their deployment, the brigade's leaders are confident about what their mission is here and how they are going to accomplish that mission.

"Our mission will focus on partnering with the Iraq security forces," said Col. Mark McKnight, 1st BCT commander. "We will be conducting counter-insurgency operations in order to allow the democratic process to continue in Iraq."

Members of the brigade's planning element said their job in Iraq will be made easier by the way the brigade is organized. They will not have to depend on any outside elements to put their plans into action.

"I think we have a lot more enablers within the unit now," said Maj. Rob Rooker, 1st Brigade fire support officer. "For example, we have our own military intelligence and a greatly enhanced signal capability. Whereas before we only had a reconnaissance troop, we now have a reconnaissance battalion. We can do so much more now without having to rely on the division's assets. We have all the elements we need within the staff to help us with planning. This allows us to plan earlier and better."

There are Soldiers, however, who don't yet see much of a difference between the previous task force and the new unit of action.

"It's hard to see any differences right now, because we haven't really started clicking yet," said Sgt. Maj. Johnny Felton, 1st BCT operations sergeant major. "It's kind of early in the game. One of the rea-



Staff Sgt. Joe Wertz, a Bradley commander with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, demonstrates walking techniques during reflexive fire training at Udairi Range Jan. 20.

sons that the command kept flip-flopping between calling it a BCT and a UA is because there really isn't much of a difference. Before you had battalions like the 11th Engineers attached to 1st Brigade, and now they are assigned to us instead. It would be better to ask that question halfway through the deployment."

While some Soldiers are skeptical, most of the staff officers find their jobs are easier with the new organization.

"The main advantage is all our units are now organic," said Capt. Mariano Wecer, brigade assistant planning officer. "We don't have to look to outside elements for support. We now have direct tasking authority."

Brigade members had most of 2004 to train and become accustomed to the unit's new role. Often called the Marne Express, the 3rd Infantry Division was constantly in the field and on the range preparing for this deployment. Home training plus a trip to the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif.,

helped the 1st Brigade bond as a working unit of action.

"This latest NTC rotation helped tremendously," said Staff Sgt. William Gilliam, 1st Brigade tactical operations center noncommissioned officer. "We had never really been in an environment like that, and we had a chance to see how all the parts worked together. I think it really helped with

cohesion. We had a chance to see what mistakes were being made and have a chance to fix them before the actual deployment."

The organization of the brigade in the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom did not give Soldiers the same feeling of security they have with the new brigade.

"With the way planning was before, many times we did not know where our elements were coming from," Gilliam said. "There wasn't nearly as much organization. There were many times as a planning NCO that I didn't know what to do. I ended up standing there scratching my head trying to figure out where our support was going to come from. Now, I know where to go for what I need, and I have a much more specific idea of how to do my job."

"The first time, we didn't know when we were going to cross the berm, what we were going to be facing or when we were going home," Rooker said. "Now we have a much better idea of what we are facing and how to deal with it."



Soldiers from 1/3 BTB practice loading and removing magazines as part of their reflexive fire training at Camp New York Jan. 14.

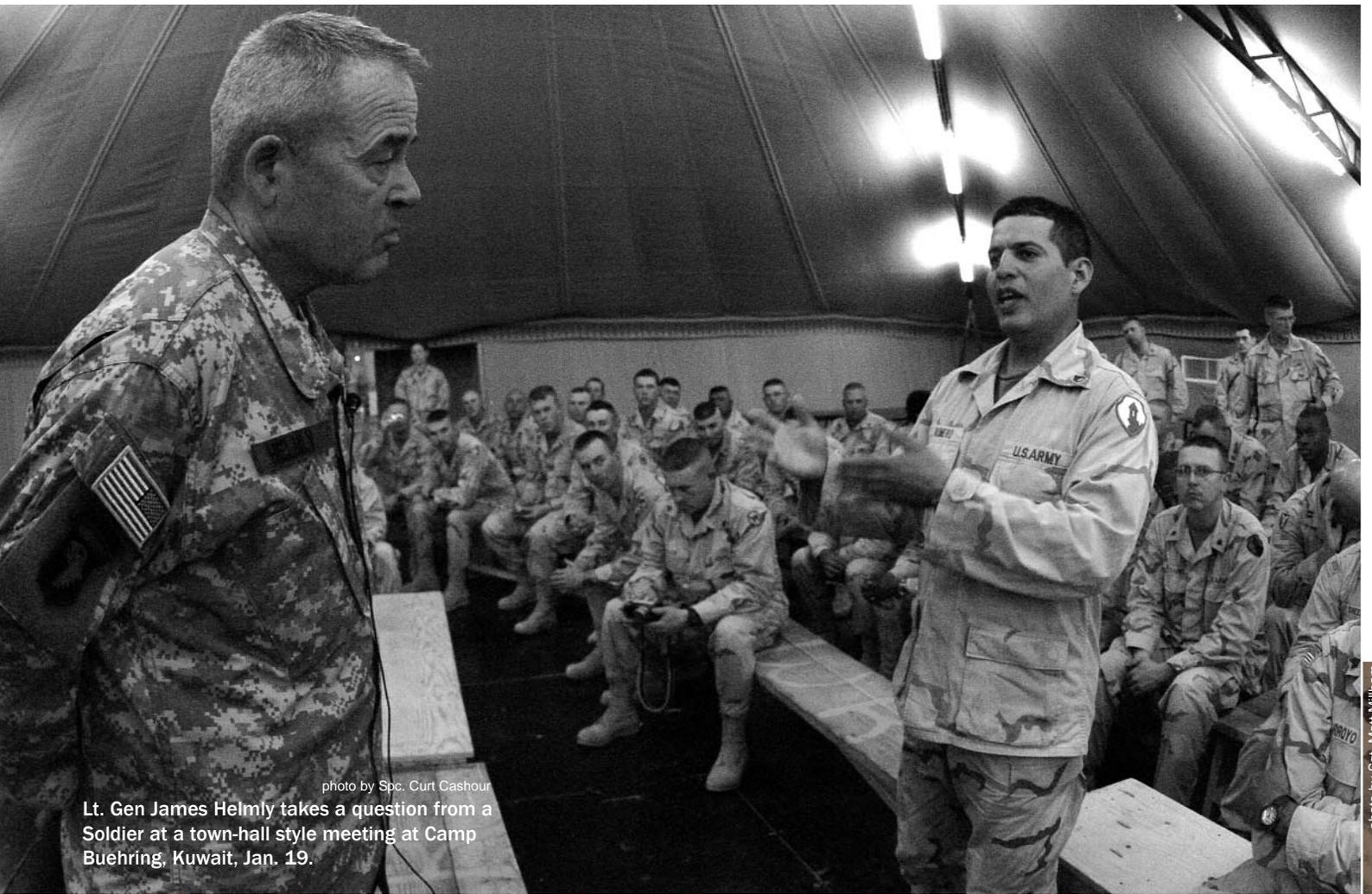


photo by Spc. Curt Cashour

Lt. Gen James Helmly takes a question from a Soldier at a town-hall style meeting at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Jan. 19.

photo by Sgt. Matt Williams

Pulse of the Soldiers

story by Spc. Curt Cashour

Army Reserve Chief Lt. Gen. James Helmly is quick to admit he's no politician.

Although the man in charge of nearly 200,000 Reserve Soldiers routinely testifies before Congress and rubs elbows with some of our nation's most powerful figures, his habit of speaking from the heart on complex issues sometimes gets him into trouble with the Washington elite, he said.

Helmly's Dec. 20 memo to Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker, with its frank discussion of Army Reserve policies and potential problems, sparked his impromptu testimony before Senate members two weeks ago on the state of the Reserve, while further endearing Helmly to his Soldiers.

"He put his head on the chopping block for the Reserves," said Staff Sgt. Christopher Statsmann, who's staying at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, before heading to Iraq with his unit, the 983rd Engineer Battalion headquartered in Monclova, Ohio.

"He put his head on the chopping block for the Reserves." – Staff Sgt. Christopher Statsmann

The contents of the now-infamous memo, along with other Army issues, will be debated in congressional hearings on Army posture this spring, Helmly said. In the meantime, the 37-year Army veteran visited several U.S. military camps in Kuwait and Iraq last week to meet with troops and hold town-hall style meetings on Army-Reserve-related concerns.

"I work for you," Helmly said Jan. 17, as he addressed more than 300 Soldiers from various Reserve units at Camp Doha, Kuwait, and another group of 150-or-so Reserve troops at Camp Buehring two days later. He then thanked Soldiers for their service, urged them to apply the "Warrior Ethos" to their everyday activities and acknowledged some of the challenges facing the Army Reserve.

In his plainspoken, straightforward style, Helmly acknowledged that reservists have endured multiple problems to include payment glitches as well as equipment and manpower issues. Some of these issues resulted from the fact that military planners did not expect to sustain Operation Iraqi Freedom for an extended period,

while others were simply the product of outdated policies and leadership styles, he said.

Helmly assured the troops that he and other Army officials are working as hard as they can to remedy these problems, although it will not be easy. The Army is in the midst of a restructuring effort designed to address current concerns and lessen the frequency of deployments, but continuing military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have made the process more difficult.

"We did not come into this war prepared to stay, so we're playing catch up," Helmly said.

The quickest way to bring about a change for the better, Helmly said, is for Soldiers to "fight the fight" at their respective levels. This means adhering to Soldier fundamentals such as taking care of your buddy, staying sharp mentally and physically and correcting subordinates if they are in the wrong – regardless of their chain of command.

"Leaders, you look around, and if there's an American Soldier that you outrank,

say, however, that the plan is to create a system where reservists can expect to deploy once every five years, although he emphasized it was a goal and not a concrete policy.

When it comes to cash incentives, Reserve reenlistment bonuses of up to \$15,000 and reclassification bonuses of up to \$10,000 will be available this year, depending on the military occupational specialty, Helmly said.

When asked about possible downsizing of the force by Capt. Mike Walker of the 146th Quartermaster Company from Fort Totten, N.Y., Helmly admitted that as many as 35,000 Reserve slots will be eliminated in the future, but Reserve end strength, which hovers around 200,000, will not be affected.

Eliminating slots in certain areas will enable Reserve officials to bring under-

there are a number of improvements in the works that will, in Helmly's words, "do better by our Soldiers." The Reserve pay system, which was designed to support annual training exercises and weekend drill activities, is undergoing a more than \$250 million over-

"If a Soldier has performed their duties and met standards and decides that they don't want to stay a part of the Army, I think we ought to recognize them for that service." – Lt. Gen. James Helmly

haul that includes integration into the active-duty pay system. The change will better accommodate deployment-related pay rates many Reserve Soldiers now qualify for and set the stage for the creation of a single, military-wide pay system for all components a few years down the road.

Plans are also underway to do more to recognize reservists for their efforts, including providing retiring Soldiers with farewell ceremonies and distributing commemorative "warrior recognition" sets to every reservist who has served in operations supporting the War on Terror, Helmly said.



From left to right: While touring the Level-2 up-armor facility at Camp Arifjan, Lt. Gen. James Helmly inspects glass from a Level-2 up-armor kit that is exhibited to show its effectiveness against impact. Helmly

leads Lt. Col. Bettina R. Moncus in the Oath of the Commissioned Officer. Sgt. Jonathan Diddle shows Helmly how to make stencils at Arifjan's ammunition supply point.

you're responsible for them," Helmly said.

Helmly also addressed the Dec. 20 memo, which made headlines after several media organizations got a hold of it in early January. "Whatever you read in that memo, I wrote," Helmly said, adding that despite the problems created for him by the memo's publicity, he stands behind the document.

"You don't hide from your problems, and I don't think you want me to start hiding from mine," Helmly said.

Helmly was just as honest with the troops when fielding their questions. On the subject of the type of operational tempo reservists can expect in the future, Helmly said he could make no guarantees. He did

staffed units to at least 90 percent of their capacity. Helmly also said he's made it clear to commanders that there will always be spaces available in the Reserve for willing Soldiers, as long as they meet Army standards.

In an interview with the Desert Voice after the Jan. 17 Doha meeting, Helmly said he tries to conduct similar visits with Reserve troops in the Central Command theater about every six months. Although his answers to troop questions may seem blunt to some, Helmly said his no-nonsense demeanor is rooted in his desire to provide the truth rather than what people might like to hear.

While Reserve leadership didn't do as good a job as it should have in the past,

In the past, Soldiers who chose to separate from the service were sometimes passed over for awards and other forms of recognition. Now this is not the case, Helmly said.

"If a Soldier has performed their duties and met standards and decides that they don't want to stay a part of the Army, I think we ought to recognize them for that service," he said.

Coupled with an intensive campaign to strengthen the competency and people skills of Reserve leadership, the new efforts are meant to provide rewards that pad more than Soldiers' pocketbooks. In time, reservists will understand the hardships associated with mobilization are worth it, given everything else the Reserve has to offer, Helmly said.

"We're really working all fronts to tell people we care," he said.

"Leaders, you look around, and if there's an American Soldier that you outrank, you're responsible for them."

– Lt. Gen. James Helmly

It only takes a dozen

story and photo by Spc. Aimee Felix

Much like the U.S. military, Britain, the second largest partner in the coalition supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom, has a support headquarters in Kuwait. Unlike the U.S. military, though, which has one support troop for every five troops up north, Britain has just one support troop for every 750 British troops in Iraq.

In total, a dozen British troops make up the British support element in Kuwait. These soldiers, who support the 9,000 British troops in Iraq, work at Camp Doha's British Operational Stand Down.

From buying supplies in Kuwait City for troops in Iraq to giving troops a break, these troops have everything under control within a circle of housing trailers and office space.

Operational Stand Down, which can be pointed out from almost anywhere at Camp Doha because of its proudly-waving Union Jack, is made up of a meager 18 housing trailers and a concrete office building. A local resources team, contract engineers, vehicle engineers, and rest and recuperation and general staff personnel all work within the small complex.

Among the 12, Royal Air Force Cpl. Donna Alderson has what is probably the most rewarding job of the team, handling in-theater R&R operations for the British. "It's good for them. You can tell they need the break when they come down here," she said.

The in-theater R&R program is a two- to four-day break the British troops in Iraq get in Kuwait, midway through their six-month deployment. Alderson briefs the R&R troops, who will have living quarters in the Operational Stand Down area, to inform them of off-limits areas in Kuwait City. The



Cpl. Mark Wilkerson, Staff Sgt. Jay Driver and Cpl. Donna Alderson watch a cricket match between Britain and South Africa Jan. 17 in Camp Doha's British Operational Stand Down.

troops are then released to roam Kuwait.

On the logistical end of things, Cpl. Gary Size and Pvt. Alex Blanks, two local resources team members, are permanently on call to purchase urgently-needed supplies and drop them off at the Iraq border for British troops. The local resources team makes all of their purchases in Kuwait City, and they deal with local contractors. Traveling to the city is never a problem for them as British troops in Doha are allowed to come and go as they please unarmed.

Cpl. Mark Wilkerson, who has been in the British Army for 17 years, had to deliver 400 concrete barriers to the Iraq border this month. The barriers are for British troops to have during the Iraqi elections scheduled for Jan. 30. Wilkerson handles all construction supply support needed by the British troops in Iraq, including getting timber and metal to them and negotiating with the contractors

who supply the construction materials.

Wilkerson, who was deployed during Desert Storm and is on his second OIF deployment, said this has been his easiest deployment.

Staff Sgt. Jay Driver agreed, saying he'd rather be in Iraq where he imagines it is less boring. Driver handles the vehicle supply support needed by British troops in Iraq, and he recently delivered new up-armor for several British vehicles up north.

While they may have dull moments and they are only a dozen strong, these troops and the rest of the British support team offer a significant contribution. And, they try to make the best of the slow times, often participating in sports activities in Doha and with their Doha neighbors, the Australians.

Aside from Alderson, the team will be returning to Britain in May. In the meantime, thoughts of home, family and beer keep them going.

The DFAC, raw eggs and a quick trip to the bog

adapted from CDC recommendations by the Forward Deployed Preventive Medicine Unit East

Just because you can do it doesn't mean that you should - especially if doing so can mean days on the toilet.

In the case of eggs, it's in a Soldier's best interest not to eat them undercooked even though many chow halls across Kuwait will serve them this way if asked.

The reason is salmonella. People infected usually have fever, abdominal cramps and diarrhea beginning 12 to 72 hours after consuming a contaminated food or beverage, and the illness usually lasts four to seven days. Most people recover without antibiotic treatment, but the diarrhea can be

severe, and people can get sick enough to require antibiotics and hospitalization.

If eggs are thoroughly cooked, the salmonella will be destroyed and will not make anyone sick. However, many dishes made in restaurants or institutional kitchens, including many military dining facilities, are made from pooled eggs. Statistically speaking, if 500 eggs are pooled, one batch in 20 will be contaminated, and everyone who eats eggs from that batch is at risk of contracting salmonella if the eggs are not fully cooked.

An egg with a runny yolk still poses a greater risk than a completely cooked egg. Undercooked egg whites and yolks have been associated with outbreaks of salmonella infections.

To reduce your risk of becoming sick:

- Order only thoroughly cooked eggs
- Keep eggs refrigerated
- Discard cracked or dirty eggs
- Wash hands and cooking utensils with soap and water after contact with raw eggs
- Eat eggs promptly after cooking. Do not keep eggs warm for more than 2 hours
- Refrigerate unused or leftover egg-containing foods
- Avoid eating raw eggs (as in homemade ice cream or eggnog). Commercially manufactured ice cream and eggnog are made with pasteurized eggs and have not been linked with salmonella infections

Part-time Soldier, full-time fighter

story and photo by Spc. Curt Cashour

For most troops serving in a combat zone, the battles stop once they get back to the United States. But when Staff Sgt. Dennis McKinney gets home, he'll still have to fight for his check.

The 32-year-old reservist makes his living as a professional boxer when he's not deployed. He's fought in bouts around the world and even held the World Boxing Federation championship belt for 10 fights in 2000.

Growing up primarily in Berlin and Columbus, Ga., McKinney had no ambitions of stardom in the boxing ring, despite the fact that his cousin, Kennedy McKinney, won a gold medal for boxing in the 1988 Olympics.

McKinney, who is deployed to Camp Arifjan with the 175th Maintenance Company from Fort Jackson, S.C., didn't take up the sport until 1993, when he was on active duty at Fort Riley, Kan. He had hoped to become a member of the All-Army Wrestling Team, but an assignment earlier that year to the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., caused him to miss the try-out.

A victory in a Riley boxing tournament in 1993 and another one in 1994 at the All-Army boxing competition at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., landed McKinney a spot on the All-Army Boxing Team. He served with the team until 1997, when he separated from the Army to take up boxing in the civilian world.

Something was missing, though, McKinney said. His father and mother had both made careers of the Army, his father in the Special Forces and his mother as a civilian finance and accounting worker. After his five-year stint on active duty, McKinney just couldn't get used to life as a civilian, he said. "Soldiering was my life. I missed the uniform," he said.

Instead of serving out the remainder of his initial eight-year contract with the Army on the Individual Ready Reserve, McKinney chose to fulfill his obligation by assuming reserve duty with the 175th. He even reenlisted with the unit for six more years in 2000.

Despite his dedication to the Army, McKinney said that he was a little upset when he first found out his unit would be

deploying to Kuwait for a year. After all, the tour in Kuwait would put on hold his matches in front of up to 30,000 people and purses as much as \$100,000. But after thinking about the sacrifices of other Soldiers before him, it didn't take McKinney long to put things in perspective.

"I started thinking about Pat Tillman. This man was already a millionaire. [He] turned down a million-dollar contract to come over here, came over here and then lost his life. I started thinking, 'I'm still here. I still have the opportunity.' Pat didn't have that opportunity," he said.

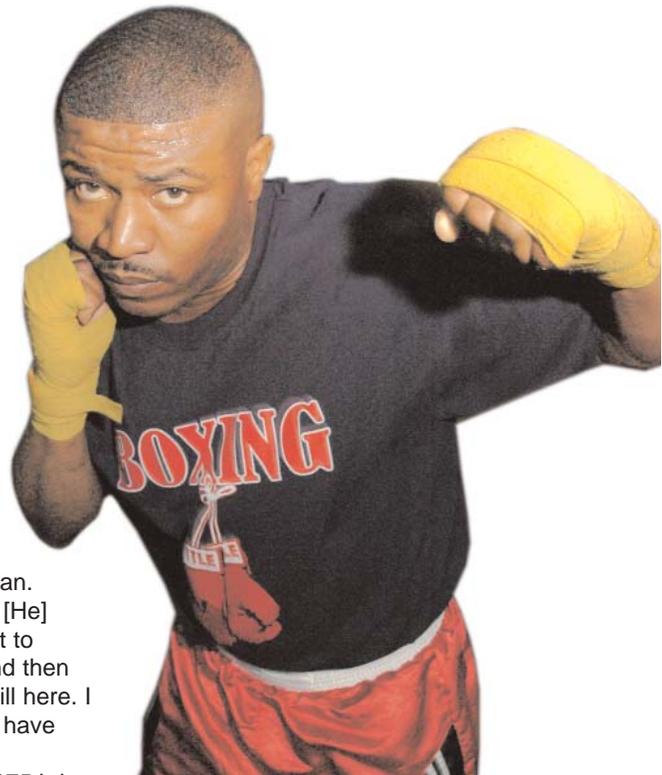
Though his welding job with the 175th is a world away from the bright lights and big paydays of professional boxing, McKinney said it does have its benefits. The 175th helps up-armor many of the vehicles traveling from Kuwait into Iraq. The 12-hour days McKinney spends cutting and mounting heavy ballistic steel armor plates pay off in the form of stories from servicemembers who report back with tales of how the armor saved lives. And while his Army salary is less than what he earns in the ring, McKinney's deployment has actually made it easier for him to save money.

"In the states, I make big money, but I spend big money. Here, I make enough money, and it goes straight to the bank, and I don't spend it, so I'm able to save money," he said.

McKinney has even managed to work in a fight during his deployment, which started last February. In September, he took leave to travel to Charleston, S.C., to face Mark Miller for the Carolina Boxing Association and Carolina Boxing Organization titles. McKinney trained as hard as he could for the bout, but a sudden increase in his unit's workload kept him from training for a two-week period prior to the Sept. 30 match, which he lost in a split decision.

"It wasn't nothing he was doing. It's what I wasn't doing," said McKinney, who also faced the difficulties of preparing for the fight without a sparring partner or coach.

McKinney, whose professional record stands at 28 wins, 29 losses and one draw, came back from the fight disappointed, but determined to get to the gym every night regardless of his daily workload, he said. He found a coach when he ran into Staff Sgt.



Staff Sgt. Dennis McKinney put his boxing career on hold to deploy to Kuwait with his unit, the 175th Maintenance Company.

Leonard Bolanos, of the Area Support Group-Kuwait contracting office, at one of Arifjan's gyms in November.

Bolanos, 48, who won a gold medal in the 1976 Pan-American Games and has three New York Gold Glove titles under his belt, said he was immediately impressed by McKinney's skills.

"This is championship material," Bolanos remembered thinking to himself the first time he saw McKinney.

In Bolanos, McKinney said he's found a much-needed training partner and source of motivation for his nightly three-hour workouts. Besides keeping him in shape, McKinney's dedication to training has made an impression on his fellow Soldiers, who affectionately refer to him as Champ.

"There's no quitter in him. He's a warrior to the end," said 175th 1st Sgt. Ronnie Bush Sr.

The 6-foot, 180-pound McKinney is now preparing for his next fight, a rematch with Miller in Charleston, S.C., scheduled for Jan. 27. Because the 175th isn't due to redeploy until February, a waiver, which might not be approved, is needed to allow his early return. Nevertheless, McKinney said he's looking forward to returning home in February so he can catch back up with his boxing peers.

"All these guys I've been in the ring with, they're champions now. They're making millions," he said, adding that he plans on becoming the world cruiserweight or light-heavyweight champion by 2006.

It's your future, so save for it

from the 377th Theater Support Command
finance section

While restricting troop's ability to get out on the town, being locked down to a camp in Kuwait does have one huge benefit; it's the perfect opportunity to save some cash.

One program that's available to deployed troops offers the possibility of a generous return with absolutely no risk: the Savings Deposit Program.

Military members deployed to Kuwait may deposit all or part of their un-allotted pay into an SDP account, which is a Department of Defense savings account. Interest accrues on the account at an annual rate of 10 percent, and is compounded quarterly. Although federal income earned in hazardous duty zones is tax-free, interest accrued on earnings deposited into the SDP is taxable.

Servicemembers must be receiving Hostile Fire and Imminent Danger Pay and be serving in a designated combat zone or in direct support of a combat zone to be eligible for SDP. Orders must state duty for more than 30 consecutive days or for at least one day for each of three consecutive months.

Servicemembers use the program by making deposits with their finance battalion. Servicemembers may begin making deposits on their 31st consecutive day in a qualifying area. Eligibility to make deposits terminates on the date of departure from theater.

Active duty and Reserve troops may make deposits by cash, personal check, cashier's check, traveler's check or money order. Active troops can also contribute by allotment.

Deposit amounts cannot exceed a servicemember's monthly un-allotted pay and allowances, which is the monthly net pay after all deductions and allotments and includes special pays and reenlistment bonuses. Allotments cannot be made for more than the amount of a troop's base pay (rather than net pay) minus deductions per month, though the allotment can be supplemented by any of the other methods of deposit. All deposits must be made in \$5 increments and can be discontinued at any time.

Interest only accrues on amounts up to \$10,000, principal and accrued interest combined. Deposits made on a cash collection voucher on or before the 10th of the month accrue interest from the first of that month. Deposits made after the tenth of the month accrue interest from the first day of the following month.

Eligibility for SDP stops on the day of departure; however, interest will continue to accrue up to 90 days after redeployment. If the servicemember requests withdrawal of funds prior to the 90th day, interest stops on the date of request. If the 90th day falls on any day other than the last day of a month, interest will accrue through the last day of the preceding month.

To receive funds, mail or fax a written request to the address at the end of this article. Include the following information: name, social security number, branch of service, component, start and stop date of tour in eligible area, and amount requested. After making the request for funds, active duty members will automatically receive their payment via elec-

tronic funds transfer to the same account as their normal monthly pay. Reservists and separated members requesting electronic transfers must include the bank account number, type of account (checking or savings), and the bank's routing transit number or a voided check or deposit slip in their request. Reservists and separated members requesting payment via check must also provide a current address.

If a servicemember's account contains more than \$10,000, the servicemember may make quarterly requests to withdraw the balance that exceeds \$10,000. The \$10,000 remains in the account until the servicemember's eligibility terminates and the servicemember withdraws the remaining funds in their entirety. Servicemembers may make emergency withdrawal requests for the full amount in the SDP account or for partial amounts before eligibility termination. Emergency requests must be for the health and welfare of the member or his dependents and must be substantiated by a written request from the member's unit commander. For questions regarding SDP withdrawal requests call the 374th Finance Battalion Military Pay Section at DSN 430-1340.

DFAS- Cleveland Center (DFAS-CL)
ATTN: Code FMAA
1240 East 9th Street
Cleveland, OH 44199-2055
1-800-624-7368 toll free (stateside)
Commercial (216) 522-6545
DSN 580-6545
Fax (216) 522-6924 DSN 580-6924

Reserve or AGR enlisted and ready for promotion?

by Spc. Aimee Felix

Reservists and active guard reserve Soldiers in Kuwait who are eligible for promotion but have no access to a promotion board have a solution to their problem.

The solution is the U.S. Army Reserve Command's Southwest Asia Enlisted Promotions Division, which serves as a board for specialists and sergeants whose units don't have boards of their own, said Sgt. 1st Class Omar Lugo, the noncommissioned officer in charge of 3rd Personnel Command's EPD.

The program is available to reservists eligible for promotion to sergeant and staff sergeant and AGR Soldiers eligible for promotion to staff sergeant, said Lugo.

Interested Soldiers should first talk to their NCOIC, and if their NCOIC approves their promotion, and the Soldier meets height and

weight standards and makes points, the Soldier can submit their paperwork to their unit's personnel section, said Lugo.

The personnel section will put a promotion packet together, get the required signatures, and if the Soldier's commander signs off on it, the department will pass the packet off to the EPD, said Lugo.

Packets need to be submitted to the EPD no later than 7 p.m. on the 25th of the month preceding the board. The EPD will e-mail the unit about any problems with the packet so they can be fixed before the board meets, which is on the 10th of each month.

Eligible reservists do not have to physically appear before a board, but AGR Soldiers do, said Lugo. Reservists looking to get promoted to sergeant need at least 300 points and two out of three OKs from the board, said Lugo. For promotion to staff sergeant, reservists need at least 350 points and two out of three

OKs from the board, which will also review the Soldier's NCO evaluation reports. To get promoted to staff sergeant, AGR Soldiers need at least 450 points and have to physically appear before a board and get two out of three OKs.

The opportunity to go to the board through the EPD is also available to individual Reserve Soldiers attached to active duty units. According to Army Regulation 140-158, active duty commanders cannot review a reservist's packet, and they cannot make a reservist physically appear before a board. However, the active duty's personnel section can put packets together for Reserve Soldiers and submit the packets to the EPD.

The EPD is located in Room 14A of Building 508 at Camp Arifjan. Personnel sections not in the area can conduct business with the EPD via e-mail by scanning the packets, said Lugo.

For more information call DSN 430-7033, or e-mail theaterepd@arifjan.arcent.army.mil.

Community

happenings for Jan. 26 through Feb. 2

Arifjan

Wednesday

Ballroom Dancing Lesson, 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., High/Low Aerobics, 7 p.m., Zone 1 gym tent
 Aerobics, 6 p.m., Zone 6 gym tent
 Aerobics, 7 p.m., Zone 2 gym tent

Thursday

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

Friday

Open Mic Night, 7:30 p.m., MWR stage
 Outdoor theater night, 7:30 p.m., Zone 6
 Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool
 Aerobics, 6 p.m., Zone 6 MWR tent
 Salsa Night, 7 p.m., Community Center
 Step Aerobics, 7 p.m., Zone 1 gym tent
 Aerobics, 7 p.m., Zone 2 gym tent

Saturday

Oldies but goodies night, 7 p.m., Community Center
 R&B night, 7:30 p.m., Zone 6 MWR tent
 Country Western Night, 7:30 p.m., Zone 6 MWR tent
 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

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

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

Combat Kick Boxing 5:30 a.m., Power Stretching 8 a.m., Bench/Step Workout 10 a.m., Body Pump Workout 1 p.m., High/Low Aerobics, 7 p.m., Zone 1 gym tent

For more information call 430-1202

Buehring

Wednesday

Spades Tournament, 7 p.m., Bunker

Saturday

Duathalon, time TBD, location TBD

For more information call 828-1340

Doha

Wednesday

Rock 'n Roll Music Night, 7 p.m. Frosty's

Saturday

Ping Pong Tournament, 7 p.m. Frosty's
 For more information call 438-5637

Kuwaiti Naval Base

Wednesday

Self Defense 1, 6 p.m., aerobics room
 Foosball Tournament, 7 p.m., new gym

Thursday

Texas Hold'em Poker, 7 p.m., new gym
 Techno Dance, 7:30 p.m., old temp. gym tent

Friday

Bowling, 4 p.m., bowling alley
 Latin Dance, 7 p.m., old temp. gym tent
 Basketball Tournament, 8 p.m., Kuwaiti gym

Saturday

Tennis Tournament, 4 p.m., side of Kuwaiti gym
 Ping Pong Tournament, 6 p.m., new gym
 Softball, 6 p.m., next to soccer field
 R&B Dance, 7 p.m., old temp. gym tent

Sunday

Ultimate Football, noon, Kuwaiti soccer field
 Flag Football, 2 p.m., Kuwaiti soccer field
 Self Defense 2, 7:30 p.m., aerobics room
 NFL, 9 p.m., 12 a.m., gym/MWR tent

Monday

Marine Corp Martial Arts, 1 p.m., TMC
 Darts Tournament, 6 p.m., gym
 Chess/Spades/Checkers/Dominoes, 6 p.m., gym
 Bowling, 7 p.m., bowling alley

Tuesday

Bench Press Competition, gym, 1 p.m.
 PS2 Tournament, 5 p.m., new gym
 Self Defense 1, 6 p.m., aerobics room
 Chess/Spades/Checkers/Dominoes, 6 p.m., new gym
 Self Defense 2, 7:30 p.m., aerobics room
 Country Western Dance, 8 p.m., old temp. gym tent

Wednesday

Self Defense 1, 6 p.m., aerobics room
 Foosball Tournament, 7 p.m., new gym
 For more information call 839-1009

Navistar

Wednesday

Female Self-Defense Class, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., MWR tents
 Dominoes lessons and practice, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m., MWR tents
 Chess lessons and practice, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m., MWR tents

Thursday

Karate Class, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., MWR tents
 Dominoes lessons, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m., MWR tents
 Chess lessons and practice, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m., MWR tents

Friday

Dominoes lessons and practice, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m., MWR tents
 Chess lessons and practice, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m., MWR tents

Saturday

Dominoes Tournament, time TBD, MWR tents

Sunday

Overflow Dominoes Tournament, time TBD, MWR tents

Monday

Female Self-Defense Class, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., MWR tents

Tuesday

Karate Class, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., MWR tents
 Chess Tournament, time TBD, MWR tents

Wednesday

Bazaar, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., MWR area
 For more information call 844-1138

Spearhead/SPOD

Friday

SPOD social dance, 9 p.m. to midnight, DFAC
 For more information call 825-1302

Victory

Friday

Softball Game, location TBD, 3:30 p.m.
 For more information call 823-1033

Virginia

Wednesday

Chess Tournament, 3 p.m., MWR tent

Thursday

Uno Tournament, 6 p.m., Dusty Room

Friday

Ping Pong Tournament Night, 6 p.m., Dusty Room

Saturday

5K Fitness Fun Run, 3 p.m., Dusty room

Sunday

2 on 2 Basketball Tournament, 5 p.m., Gym tent

Monday

2 on 2 Basketball Tournament, 6 p.m., MWR tent
 For more information call 832-1045

Arifjan boxing team

Anyone interested in joining the Camp Arifjan boxing team should come down to the Zone1 gym tent from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Monday through Friday to work out. Nobody needs to even take a punch if they don't want to. Contact Staff Sgt. Darrell Govan at 974-3482

Doha/Arifjan Shuttle Schedule

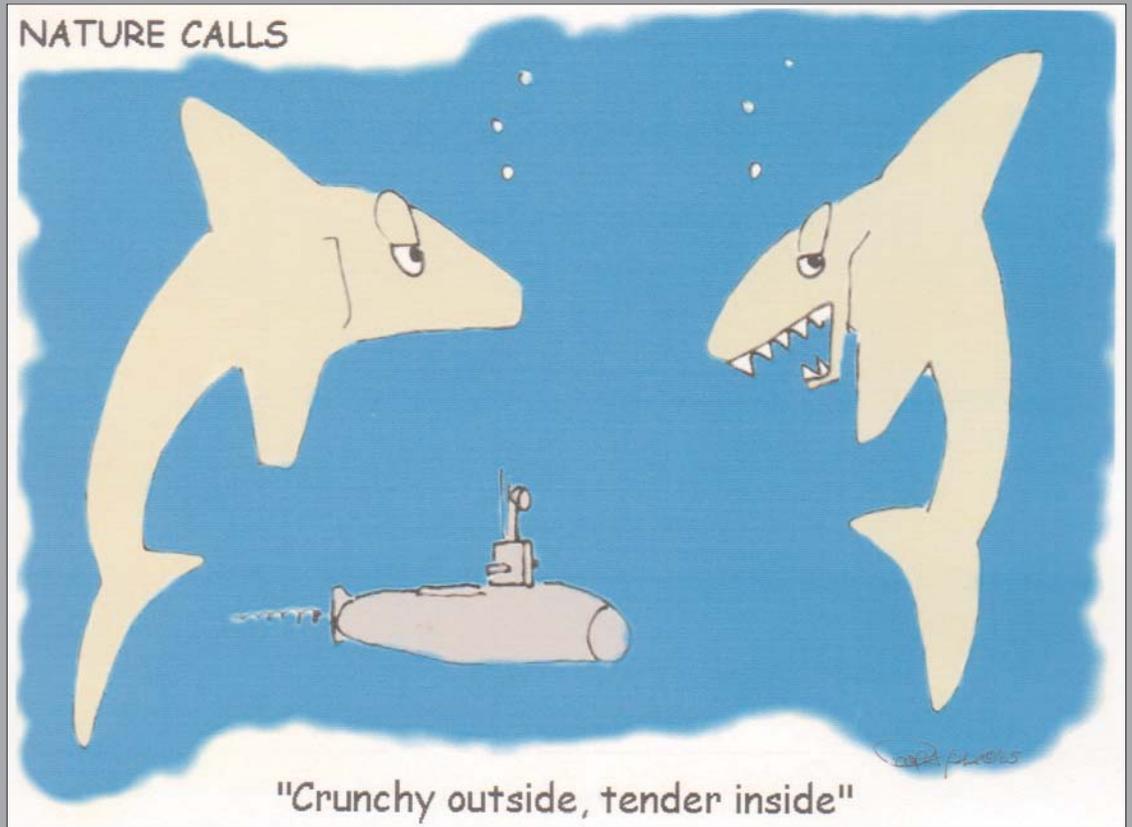
Departs Doha Stop 1*	Arrives Doha Stop 2*	Departs Doha Stop 2*	Arrives Arifjan	Departs Arifjan	Arrives Doha
	0700	0715	0830	0545	1000
1015	1025	1040	1200	0845	1430
1445	1450	1505	1615	1630	1745
1900	1910	1925	2045		

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

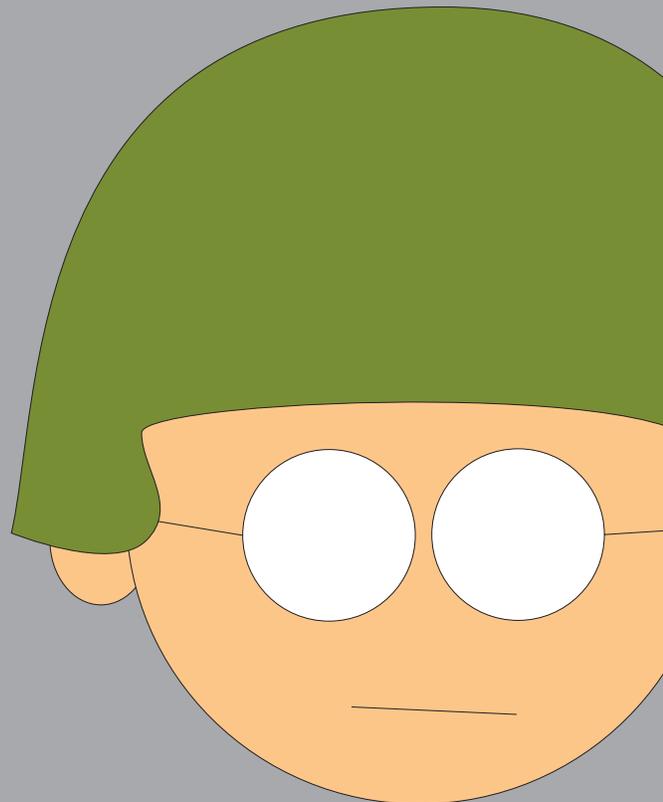
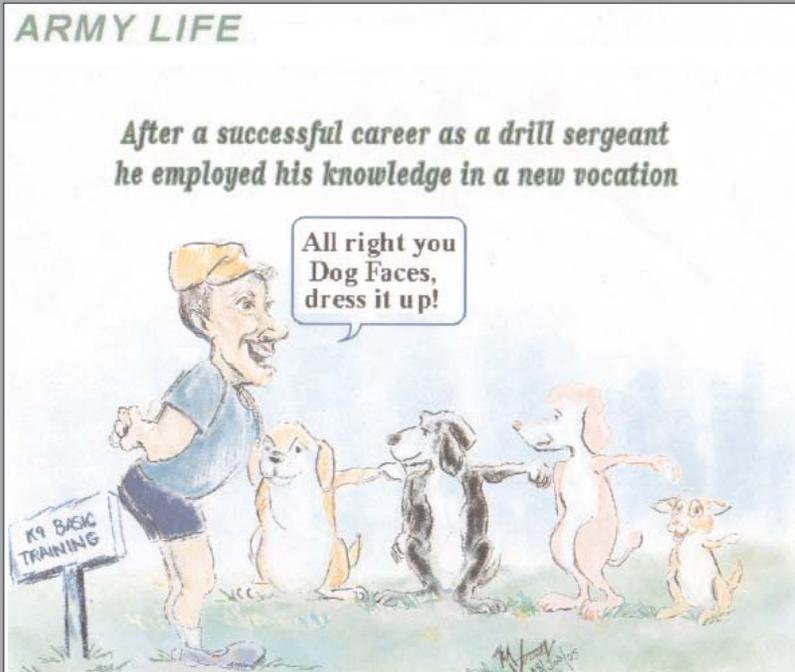
Doha/Ali Al Salem Bus Schedule

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		

by Capt. Paul Nichols, 377th Theater Support Command training officer



by Lt. Col. Michael Verrett, CFLCC container manager, CFLCC C4



**DESERT
VOICE**

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