

NOVEMBER 17, 2004

DESERT VOICE

**INSURGENTS BEWARE
WE'RE COMING BACK FOR YOU**

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DESERT VOICE

Volume 26, Issue 14

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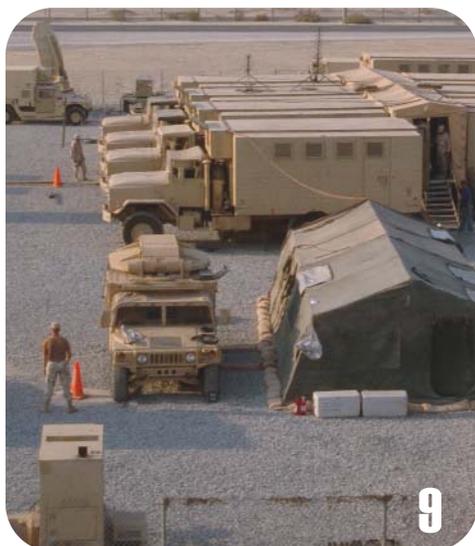
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Spc. Curt Cashour

Spc. Brian Trapp

Spc. Aimee Felix

Broadcasters

Sgt. Scott White

Spc. Chase Spears



On the Cover An Army gun truck ready to rumble on the Iraqi road.

Photo courtesy of the 518th Gun Truck Company (Provisional)

Honoring those who came before us

story and photos by Spc. Brian Trapp

The day before America raised the flag to honor all of those veterans who served their nation honorably, while troops in Iraq continued to mount attacks on insurgents in Fallujah, troops and civilians gathered outside the Third Army Headquarters building on Camp Arifjan to recognize Veterans' Day with a solemn ceremony.

Organizers held the ceremony a day early to make sure civilians had the opportunity to attend the event.

"The important thing about today is it's our holiday, you're all vets," said Col. Brick T. Miller, ASG Kuwait commander. "Remember all the folks that came before us and all those that will come after us. This is a humbling event when you sit down and think of what you're a part of."

Miller then marked the occasion by reading a prayer prepared for the event by a chaplain for the event and laid a wreath at the foot of the flag pole before retreat.

The 11th marked the 26th Veterans' Day that Command Sgt. Maj. Ray Middleton celebrated in the military, and he considered it "the most special because of the location and the one team one fight mentality," he said. "It's no longer just Soldiers, Marines, Airmen and Sailors. Now, it's DA civilians too and even AAFES; you know their motto, 'We go where you go.'"

The following day, schools and communities across America had their own ceremonies honoring veterans, including the Washington D.C. wreath laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery attended by President George W. Bush.

In his annual Veterans' Day proclamation, Bush highlighted America's strong heritage of veterans and their sacrifices through history to defend freedom.

"Across America, there are more than 25 million veterans. Their ranks include generations of citizens who have risked their lives while serving in military conflicts, including World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, and the war on terror," Bush said. "They have fought for the security of our country and the peace of the world. They have defended our founding ideals, protected the innocent and liberated the oppressed from tyranny and terror. They have known the hardships and the fears and the tragic losses of war. Our veterans know that in the harshest hours of conflict they serve just and honorable purposes."

During his speech the president reiterated the messages in his proclamation and cited the troops' concurrent efforts in the Middle East.



Soldiers ceremoniously fold the flag after retreat at the Veterans' Day ceremony Nov. 10 outside the Third Army Area Support Group Kuwait headquarters. The ceremony was held a day early to ensure the participation of the civilians that contribute to America's efforts.

"Some of tomorrow's veterans are in combat in Iraq at this hour," Bush said. "They have a clear mission: to defeat the terrorists and aid the rise of a free government that can defend itself. They are performing that mission with skill and with honor. They are making us proud. They are winning."

America's support for its troops was evident from the day set aside to give recognition to its veterans, and those troops who will be coming home as veterans. The national holiday has a history dating back more than 80 years to a beginning that was actually an end. Veterans' Day didn't actually start as Veterans' Day, but as Armistice Day, a day that marked the end of World War I, Nov. 11, 1918. The day was originally set aside to honor veterans of that war.

Then in 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen in the nation's history; after American forces had fought aggression in Korea, the word "armistice" was replaced with "veterans" to recognize all of the members of the armed services who served in all wars and during peacetime.

"On that day let us solemnly remember the sacrifices of all those who fought so valiantly, on the seas, in the air and on foreign shores, to preserve our heritage of freedom, and let us reconsecrate ourselves to the task of promoting an enduring peace so that their efforts shall not have been in vain," said Dwight D. Eisenhower in his 1954 presidential proclamation.

Veteran's Day is a day that will be steeped in American tradition well into the future to honor the members of the armed services, but the spirit of the day was captured pretty well by President Gerald R. Ford in the 1970s who cited the day as, "a celebration to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good."



Command Sgt. Maj. Ray Middleton, left, and Col. Brick T. Miller render a salute after laying the wreath.

Aftermath of a storm

One thing life in the desert offers is a reasonable assurance that you won't be pummeled by a freak thunder and hail storm. This is what happens if we take this for granted.



photos by Maj. Jim Blair

This is one of the 51 tents that was ruined by a storm in Camp Virginia Nov. 2.

story by Spc. Aimee Felix

Soldiers bravely held on to tent poles, trying to salvage their tents as lightning struck around them. Other Soldiers tried getting rid of the water that was keeping their roof down by pushing off from underneath the canvas, but the wind and hail worked against them. Nearby, gusts of wind tossed portable toilets and knocked a shower trailer off its stand. Whenever the lightning struck it lit up everything, letting the drenched Soldiers witness the destruction around them.

"It was one of the wickedest lightning storms I'd ever seen," said Maj. Jim Blair, a coalition forces liaison officer at Camp Virginia. The Camp Virginia storm began Nov. 2 at 10 p.m. with a heavy downpour that quickly turned into hail. Within 15 minutes, the rain, wind and marble-sized hail destroyed 51 tents, flipped over about 40 portable toilets and knocked over a shower trailer.

That the storm struck on the same day



About 40 Port-a-Potties were knocked over by the strong winds that came with the rain storm.

the former Camp Virginia command group handed authority over to the 687th Quarter Master Battalion, a Reserve unit out of Decatur, Ill., was an unwelcome initiation into camp life in Kuwait. "It was like 'Welcome to Camp Virginia,' and boom the storm hit," Blair said.

Staff Sgt. Linda Leetucker, a chipper Quad Cities, Ill., native said she "was having a blast." First things first, Leetucker took out her camcorder to record the lightning storm. She recorded a minute and a half of what turned out to be an awesome, blue light show. Leetucker having such a good time was due in part to the fact that she followed the advice of her husband, a prior servicemember, by putting all her clothes in Ziploc bags, and so nothing of hers was damaged. "While everyone was scared, I was excited," she said.

Scared is probably not the right word to describe the general condition of the residents of Camp Virginia, though. "Well, you just take it as it comes," said Spc. Sean Bulow from Columbus, Ohio, telling how he reacted to the storm. Bulow was in the MWR tent when everything happened, and he kept seeing people come in drenched and muddy. Still unfazed, Bulow is just waiting for satellite TV to be available again.

Leetucker's battle buddy compared the destruction of her tent to the parting of the Red Sea. "The whole top of the tent divided just like that," said Command Sgt. Maj. Cathie Cunliffe, the 687th battalion sergeant major. Another Springfield native, Spc. Tina Bergschneider, who, along with the other residents in her tent, was forced to stand outside to be instantly drenched by the rain, described her experience during the storm. "Water started coming in from the side of the tent and then one side of the tent collapsed, and then all the tent poles went down." Like most of the Virginia residents affected by the storm, Bergschneider, who works in the command cell, kept a high-spirited attitude. "We're in the Army," she said as if because of that, the storm was no big deal.

Troops in the command group walked out with chemical lights to witness the flooded destruction. With about 100 displaced Soldiers, everyone immediately got to work. The command group went around getting head counts to ensure that everyone was accounted for, and Soldiers from the 482nd Transportation Company out of Cherokee, Iowa, brought out flatbeds and started loading up as much of the displaced Soldiers'



Soldiers dig through a pile of rubble, remains of a destroyed tent, to reclaim their belongings the day after the storm.

belongings and gear as they could.

Within 45 minutes, all the displaced troops were assigned to other tents. Typical of the seemingly unfazed optimism of the troops in Virginia, Blair highlighted how fortunate they were to not have experienced the storm during a surge, when Virginia populations can rise up to 12,000.

"This is one of those things that can either bring you together or bring you apart. It brought us together," said Blair. The chow hall opened to serve hot cocoa and coffee to keep everyone warm, and the MWR tent became a safe haven for the frozen troops.

The gym tent was also taken out by the storm. It was a festive tent - the large, white kind - as was every other tent taken out by the storm. The festive tents lack the reinforced frame the temper (smaller) tents have, none of which were destroyed. The laundry tent was also damaged, and laundry was flying everywhere, Bergschneider said.

AAFES Team Leader Chelle Denton echoed the sentiments of Bulow and Bergschneider when asked how she reacted to the storm "You just pick up and keep going." With this attitude, it's no wonder all the tents have already been rebuilt, the Port-a-Potties are all right side up and everything else is on its way there.

The day after the storm, there was a

string of electrical fires because of the horizontal rain, which increased the chances of water getting into electrical systems, said Camp Virginia Fire Chief Sgt. 1st Class Brian Francis with the 468th Engineers Detachment Firefighting Headquarters. Francis predicted the electrical fires based on how the rain was falling, and in an attempt to salvage as much as he could, he deployed his teams throughout all of Camp Virginia, turning off generators the day of the storm.

One of the fires happened in an AAFES stock trailer where they keep most of their electronics, "the expensive stuff," said Denton. The trailer is inches away from the trailer the AAFES managers live in. Because of how quickly the fire department responded, the fire never spread to the trailer they live in, said Blair.

The camp may still experience some electrical glitches for a few months because some other small components may have been fried by the power surges the lightning caused, said Capt. Daniel Hicks, company-commander of C Company, 319th Signal Battalion. Lightning struck Camp Virginia's communication tower at least twice that Hicks knows of, as many as four, he said. He has a network cable that is completely fried because of a power surge that resulted



The rain and hail storm also caused severe flooding.

from one of those lightning strikes. Since the storm, the troops in the signal company have been working 12-hour shifts trying to get communications in Virginia back up and reliable. While phones and the Internet are up, they randomly go down. Hicks and his troops are trying to keep communications consistently up. One bright side for the communications troops is that because of the many backup hard drives they have, the 319th lost no data from the outages, Hicks said. They've been swarmed with requests and complaints about the communication problems, especially from the command cell, Blair joked, but they've handled it greatly, he added.

Blair credits how well everyone handled the storm to how well everyone pulled together to help each other out. "You learn a lot about people in situations like these," said Blair, who said this will likely be the highlight of his trip.

For information on personal claims for damage resulting from the storm, call ASG-Kuwait's Staff Judge Advocate Office at DSN 430-2111.



photos courtesy of the 518th Gun Truck Company (Provisional)

If a convoy can get on the road before dawn, there's a better chance it won't have to deal with traffic or the insurgents who hide in it.

Riding with the regulators



story by Sgt. Matt Millham

The Soldiers of the 518th Gun Truck Company wouldn't be able to tell you about a time when the roads in Iraq were peaceful. When the unit began escorting convoys into Iraq eight months ago, the growing insurgency already made daily headlines.

These Soldiers also wouldn't be able to tell you what it's like to run from a fight, because they don't do that. Their unit insignia – a star in the fashion of an Old West marshal badge – reads “518 Combat Guntruck, U.S. Regulators.” By the look of their heavily-armored, heavily-armed trucks, they're ready for a showdown.

Already known for their take no prisoners approach to guarding convoys, Iraqi insurgents

tend to leave the 518th alone.

Despite this success, the existence of the 518th is more an accident of history than anything else.

Before spring of this year, the 125th Military Police Battalion escorted convoys on Main Supply Route Tampa into Iraq. In March, though, the MPs were taken off of their convoy escorting mission and tasked with covering customs operations, leaving the Iraq-bound convoys without armed escorts.

“There was an immediate void that was left over to escort convoys,” said Capt. Thelonious McLean-Burrell, who recently took command of the 518th, a provisional unit made up of National Guardsmen from North and South Carolina, Ohio, Virginia and Louisiana.

Capt. Rob Landry, a reservist commanding a transportation company at Navistar, came up with the idea of standing up a temporary company of gun trucks, armored trucks that carry more firepower per vehicle than an entire infantry squad, to fill the void left by the departing MPs. But he and others realized they had to do more than simply replace the MPs; the growing insurgency necessitated a profound transformation in the tactics used to protect the convoys.

“These transportation units were getting their asses handed to them on the MSR,” said Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Litchard, platoon leader of the company's 1st Platoon. The growing hostility demanded a fierce response, and those who joined the new unit came ready to deliver it. “What you've got here is a bunch of people who were tired of riding in the convoys and getting shot up.”

When word began to spread about the cobbling together of a provisional gun truck company at Navistar, Soldiers started to line up to join. “I told my platoon sergeant I wanted to volunteer,” said Spc. Brandon Whisenant, who came to the 518th from the 1450th Transportation Company, a National Guard unit from Lenoir, North

“What you've got here is a bunch of people who were tired of riding in the convoys and getting shot up.”

– Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Litchard

Carolina. "They said they didn't want to lose me, but I wanted to go."

After gathering together enough people and equipment to take on the convoy mission, the unit underwent extended training at Udari Range under the tutelage of Military Professional Resources Incorporated, a company the Army contracted to train American troops. But while the MP convoy guards trained to escape a kill zone as fast as they could and not look back, MPRI taught a completely different method, which Litchard calls "turn, fix and fire." It is an aggressive approach that has insurgents turning on their heels.

If the insurgents aren't dealt with in a decisive way, said Litchard, "next time you go through that area, you'll have those same guys shooting at you."

So the plan of the 518th is not to run from, but

staying alert through those tedious hours. "You just gotta stay awake and keep from being bored," said Whisenant. "You don't usually see anything."

But while the insurgents don't pester the 518th as much as they used to, the gun truckers still have Iraq's reckless drivers to help keep them on their toes. "They'll push you as far as you can go," said Sgt. Robert Smith, who also came to the 518th from the 1450th.

The Soldiers' enthusiasm hasn't been dulled by the fact that the average day on the road is more mind-numbing than exciting. Whisenant is quick to say he would rather be here than with his Guard unit, where he was also a gun trucker. But there, he said, he wasn't learning everything he has learned with the 518th.

Most of the Soldiers in the 518th are Operation Iraqi Freedom 2 Soldiers who are on



Left: Traffic on the roads in Iraq includes everything from passenger cars to school buses to trucks, but even in this seemingly suburban environment, troops have to be on their toes. Right: A .50 Caliber machine gunner scopes out the road through night-vision goggles.

rather to kill every insurgent they come across. "We either stop in the kill zone or go back into the kill zone, lay down a base of fire and flanking fire and kill the enemy," said Litchard, matter-of-factly.

The results of this bulldog approach tell their own story. "We'll only get hit once in an area," said Litchard. "Is that because we kill them all? Nah, there's probably a few that get away." Last month the unit killed eight insurgents and wounded an unknown number of others who attacked their convoy on the outskirts of Baghdad. "That's what [these Soldiers] want to do. They want to go back there and they want to fight," he said.

The Soldiers in the 518th swear they aren't doing it for the glory, which is, despite the unit's successes, in short supply. The gun truckers work on a six-day schedule that puts them on the road for four days – two days to LSA Anaconda and two days back – followed by a day of maintenance and, if they're lucky, a day of rest.

The roundtrip to Anaconda is roughly 800 miles, and most of the time the hardest part is

their way home. OIF 3 Soldiers under the 7th Transportation Group are rotating in to take their place, and some OIF 2 Soldiers are volunteering to stay behind to help out their replacements.

"I'm trying to stay another six months to stay with the 518th to help train up the new guys, help them learn from our mistakes, maybe keep them alive," said Smith.

Smith and some of his colleagues are concerned that the history of the 518th will be lost when Operation Iraqi Freedom is over. It's a shame "to put all that sweat, to put all this into it, and then it'll be nothing,"

said Spc. Michael Tate, who is in the company's 1st Platoon. The 518th is, to anyone's knowledge, the only unit ever stood up for the sole purpose of guarding supplies. Litchard, for one, isn't anxious about the company's legacy. As far as making history, said Litchard, "We already have."

"We'll only get hit once in an area. Is that because we kill them all? Nah, there's probably a few that get away."

– Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Litchard

Georgia deploys its own OIF 3

With some help from America, the former Soviet republic nearly doubles its troop contribution.

story and photo by Spc. Aimee Felix

On April 29, 2002, the Department of Defense announced the beginning of the Georgia Train and Equip program, a twenty-month program through which the United States provided the Georgian military with tactical and command staff training. According to the U.S. Department of State, the program served its purpose; it enhanced Georgia's military capability and stimulated military reform in the Georgian armed forces.

More than two years later, the U.S. military is reaping what it sowed with the support of hundreds of Georgian troops, serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The first deployment of Georgian troops, which began in August 2003, was a small force of 71 troops. The Georgian government has steadily increased its support, and now, with the third rotation of Georgian troops, the country has increased its contribution to 300 soldiers.

The Georgian soldiers arrived at Camp Virginia Nov. 8 for a two- to four-day stop before flying to Balad between Nov. 10 and 12. As they got off the buses in Virginia, several of them lit up their cigarettes, while others walked into a few tents to rest.

Some of the troops who stuck around outside, some to smoke and some to take photos, explained that they've seen war in their country, a nation that has experienced internal ethnic conflict in the last decade and a half. It seemed this was the driving force for their wanting to play a role in defending freedom and fighting terrorism. "We are getting rid of terrorism, the global enemy, where it was born," said Jr. Sgt. Alex Kipshidze, a Georgian soldier with the Commando Battalion 11th Mechanized Brigade of the Georgian Armed Forces.

One of Kipshidze's English-speaking peers was one of the soldiers who conducted military operations during the Georgian internal conflicts, which involved the separatist areas of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, areas supported by Russia at the time. Despite the conflicts Georgia has seen, the troops have not lost all hope in fighting for a cause.

The main mission of the Georgian troops in Iraq will be peacekeeping and stability, said Capt. Malkhaz Jamureli, Georgian liaison officer for coalition operations in theater. The Georgians will man checkpoints and conduct raids and patrols. They will also provide force protection. When they arrive up north, they will replace the 159 Georgian



Georgian soldiers don their headgear after stepping off the bus at Camp Virginia Nov. 8. Unlike the trip for U.S. Soldiers, the flight from Georgia to Kuwait takes just about four hours.

troops there from the country's second troop rotation.

The third rotation's six-month deployment will be a drastic difference in environment for these soldiers who are used to mountains as high as 17,064 feet. "It's almost awesome," said Sgt. Kozhoridze Paata sarcastically when asked about how he liked Kuwait. The Georgian's time in Kuwait was mostly down time, though. All the soldiers really got out of their time here was acclimation, which they needed coming from a warm, pleasant Mediterranean-like country.

The troops all miss their families, said Jamureli. "First family, then friends, then nature," he said, listing what he misses most from home. He has been deployed for seven months as a liaison officer and can't wait to see his wife.

Georgia's citizens support the troops in their efforts. Based on the letters Jamureli has read from home, everyone definitely misses the troops, but they understand the cause. Besides, the Georgians supporting the United States is a benefit to the Georgians because of the experience and continued military training and support they receive, said Jamureli.

When asked how they felt about their deployment, the Georgian troops all answered at the same time in their native tongue, which one of them translated, "They're glad to be part of the team."

Get to know your coalition partners

- After centuries of struggle, Georgia gained independence in 1991. It has been a democratic republic since a constitutional referendum Oct. 17, 1995. The president is elected by popular election for a five-year term, limited to two terms.
- The Georgian language is one of the oldest living languages in the world, and it has its own distinctive alphabet. While surrounding countries use Cyrillic script when writing, Georgians go it alone with their own.
- Its capital, Tbilisi, is more than 1,500 years old.
- The natural hazard in Georgia is earthquakes
- The terrain is rugged and mountainous, with a peak elevation of 17,064 feet, and 38% of the land is forest land. The weather is mild and Mediterranean-like.
- The country religions breakdown to: Georgian Orthodox 65%, Muslim 11%, Russian Orthodox 10%, Armenian Apostolic 8% and other 6%.
- The Georgian culture is a diverse, modern one because it is at the junction of Europe and Asia. According to several tourism websites, Georgians toast to just about everything over a meal and food is one of the biggest attractions in Georgia.

Pushing the command forward

First battle tested in the early days of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Early Entry Command Post is a collection of high-tech gadgetry that gets commanders closer to the front lines without actually having to be there.

story and photos by Spc. Curt Cashour

Though the temperature outside easily tops 100, a humming air conditioner keeps the square room cool and comfortable. Nearly all of its approximately 40 square feet of space is occupied, jammed with computer workstations, video cameras and an arsenal of monitors. A phone with the president's number on speed dial rests in the corner. In the middle of it all sits a folding chair, an unassuming throne that could ultimately hold some of the most powerful men in the United States.

It's not a top secret presidential bunker in an undisclosed location, or a secure room for Pentagon officials to flock to in the event of another terrorist attack, but its purpose is also vitally important.

It's the command cell for the Coalition Forces Land Component Command Early Entry Command Post. Officials have brought it, along with the rest of the EECP, to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, for a 10-day communications exercise involving approximately 70 Soldiers from three units: Third Army/CFLCC, the 385th Signal Company and the 513th Military Intelligence Brigade.

The training will consist of various tests of EECP communication equipment and include a series of three battle rhythm briefings—a top secret intelligence brief, a battle update assessment and a staff update—from the EECP, Lord said.

Normally conducted in Arifjan's Coalition Operations and Intelligence Center, the briefings are secure video teleconference transmissions between CFLCC commanders in the field and the CFLCC commanding general.

"[The exercise] is designed to validate the communication links and portals within the EECP," said Maj. Bradford Lord, a battle captain for Third Army's operations section who helped plan the exercise.

Basically a tactical operations center on wheels from which military commanders can control all aspects of burgeoning operations, the EECP serves as a temporary home to military commanders and their staff when the United States military enters a new



From left: Spc. Jason Engel and Sgt. Michael O'Bryon, both attached to the 385th Signal Company, prepare a satellite for its role in the Coalition Forces Land Component Command Early Entry Command Post communications exercise. The exercise began Nov. 11 and ends Nov. 20.

country, Lord said.

The heart of the EECP is a collection of six modified five-ton trucks EECP officials refer to as expando vans. The back of each van contains a room equipped with built-in cameras, computers and individual work stations. The vans are arranged in two rows and backed up to one another end to end, forming a corridor that allows easy access to each of the rooms.

In these rooms, commanders and staff members can send and receive updates on operations in real time via phone, Internet and video teleconferences.

The staff manning the vans consists of a cross section of all the elements needed in any forward command post, including intelligence, civil-military affairs, combat service support, communications and fire support, Lord said.

The six vans form a nucleus around which a collection of generators, vehicles, tents and satellite-equipped Humvees sit. The satellites provide the communications connectivity central to the EECP's operation, giving staff Internet, phone and video teleconference access anywhere in the world, said Sgt. Mark Hendricks, a Soldier attached to the 385th Signal Company.

Completed in 2002, the EECP made its combat debut in April 2003 when it served as the command post for Combined Joint Task Force Seven, near Camp Victory, Iraq, said Master Sgt. John Modrich, Third Army

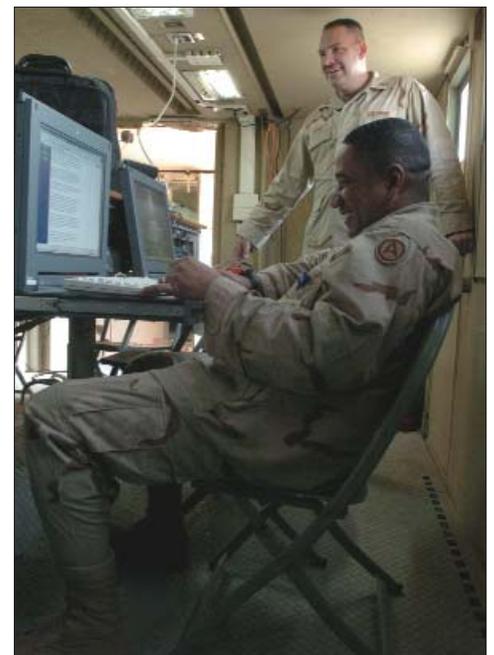
network noncommissioned officer in charge.

With its video teleconferencing and computer capabilities, the EECP facilitates an increase in situational awareness on both operational and tactical levels and is a vast improvement over previous command post systems, which relied heavily on analog radios and map boards, said Lt. Col. Stan Holman, Third Army EECP officer in charge.

In Iraq, EECP communication systems provided support to numerous task force personnel housed in a nearby palace. Well aware that they won't always have a hard structure nearby for support personnel, EECP officials are currently working on plans to

integrate temporary structures into the EECP set up, Lord said.

The event, which will conclude Nov. 20, is part of a series of upcoming EECP training exercises at various locations leading up to the system's participation in September 2005 in Bright Star, a multi-national military exercise held every other year in Egypt, Lord said.



Sgt. 1st Class Lamont York types while chatting with Maj. Timothy Bennett

Shooting for number one

story and photo by Spc. Curt Cashour

It was a hard-fought battle in the heart of the desert. Over the course of two days, more than 100 combatants expended thousands of rounds of hot lead. Although the targets were left full of holes, everyone survived.

Servicemembers from the Air Force, Army, Marines and Navy descended upon Mubarak Range at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Nov. 10 and 11 to test their marksmanship skills in the Elementary Excellence in Competition Pistol Match.

Hosted by the 891st Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, an Air Force unit that provides Military Police support for Arifjan, the event brought together troops from Camps Doha, Victory and Arifjan as well as Ali Al Saleem Air Base.

While contestants had their sights set on the 10-ring targets placed 25 meters down range, event officials said they were aiming for something more important.

The event was a lesson in friendship among the services and morale building, which some servicemembers describe with the French term “esprit de corps,” meaning spirit of the corps, said Air Force Tech Sgt. Robert Sabarese, who served as combat arms instructor for the event. In garrison environments, Air Force units try to hold events like the EIC at least once a year, he said.

891st Commander Capt. Scott Selchert said that shooting competitions like the EIC are effective in building morale and camaraderie because they provide a level playing field for both men and women and promote



Air Force Master Sgt. John Sobel checks Air Force Capt. Brian Payne's shot group.

the sort of good-natured ribbing among contestants that drives self improvement. That the competition is a form of target practice doesn't hurt either.

“You've got to keep your sword sharp,” he said. “Some people came from the suburbs and never learned how to shoot. Some came from inner cities and never learned how to shoot properly.”

Rotating in hourly shifts spread out over the course of two days, the waiting around commonly associated with range visits was brought to a minimum. Participants showed up at their assigned time at Arifjan's community center, attended a short briefing on weapon and range safety, then headed for the range.

Over the course of three timed sessions, marksmen scored points depending on where their shots landed on the targets. Contestants were required to shoot a total of 30 rounds from both one and two-handed firing positions.

Gunning for the top score of 300 points, shooters competed for an EIC badge for wear on the Army and Air Force service-dress uniforms. For the Army, medals were to be awarded to the top ten shooters.

Guidelines for the Air Force were stricter, with only one medal available to the contestant with the highest score over 270.

Competition was in the air, as a group of about 40 people hit the range on the morning of Nov. 10. Air Force Capt. Brian Payne joked that he hoped to simply hit the target, but said his real goal was to top the score of the commander of his unit, the 887th ESFS, which is deployed to Arifjan.

Sgt. Brian Thompson and Spc. Sean Gow, both Army National Guardsmen deployed to Doha and serving with the Washington-based 303rd Cavalry's E-Troop, traded light-hearted verbal jabs after their respective turns.

“Overall, I shot better than him,” Thompson said as he pointed toward Gow.

Preparations for the EIC match started in mid September, with event planner Air Force Tech Sgt. Peter Rainbolt coordinating the event with EIC officials in the United States. The event was the first EIC match that's been held in a combat zone, said Rainbolt, who also served as the EIC's chief range official.

“There may be others, and they'll probably be better, but we got first,” he said.

Excellence in Competition Pistol Match: top 45 finishers

| Name | Service | Score | Name | Service | Score | Name | Service | Score |
|----------------------|---------|-------|-----------------------|---------|-------|----------------------|---------|-------|
| Julia E. Jefferson | USAF | 278 | Carolyn P. Pascua | USA | 242 | Allan C. Sacdalan, | USAF | 201 |
| Joel A. Jacobs | USA | 277 | James D. Amos | USAF | 236 | Frank Salcedo | USA | 201 |
| John M. Badey | USAF | 268 | Anthony R. Castro | USAF | 233 | Gerald J. Perkins Jr | USA | 200 |
| Brian J. Thompson | USA | 267 | Sean P. Gow | USA | 233 | Geneo L. Graves | USA | 199 |
| John J. Sobel | USAF | 266 | James M. Telesky | USA | 232 | Brian S. Payne, | USAF | 196 |
| David S. Krebs | USAF | 258 | Geraldo Andujar | USA | 231 | John Miller III | USA | 190 |
| Steve M. Swisher | USA | 256 | Michael A. Cunningham | CPT | 229 | Kevin B. Davis | USN | 183 |
| Scott C. Selchert, | USAF | 253 | Michael M. Wombles | USAF | 229 | Jordan M. Gaddis | USAF | 183 |
| Jeremy W. Hartwell, | USA | 251 | John Pochinski | USA | 217 | Minelli Torres | USA | 182 |
| Michael D. McKnight | USAF | 251 | Todd C. Parry | USA | 212 | William W. Nase | USA | 175 |
| Bryan K. Vibert | USAF | 251 | Jeffrey A. Vish | USAF | 211 | Herman Barreto | USA | 172 |
| Bradly M. Baganowski | USA | 247 | Frank J. Brown | USAF | 211 | Michael T. Hallman, | USAF | 171 |
| Stephen L. Castora | USMC | 247 | Joel Hernandez | USA | 211 | Keith P. Heithoff | USA | 171 |
| John Booker | USA | 246 | Robert L. Gamble | USA | 210 | Daniel L. Edwards | USAF | 170 |
| Timothy L. Stokes | USAF | 244 | Thomas F. Walker | USA | 208 | James W. Frazier | USAF | 170 |

In & Around Our Community

Special and weekly events around Kuwait's U.S. military community for Nov. 17 – Nov. 24, 2004

Special Events: Arifjan

Wednesday

8 Ball Tournament, 7 p.m. at the Community Center

Saturday

R&B Night, 7 p.m. at the Community Center

Sunday

Bid Whist Tournament, 7 p.m. at the Community Center

Wednesday

Thanksgiving Dinner and Dance, 7 p.m. at the Community Center

Weekly Events: Arifjan

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. at the Zone 1 gym tent

High Impact Aerobics, 7 p.m. at the Zone 2 gym tent

Thursday

Caribbean Music, 7:30 p.m. at the MWR stage
Country Music Night, 7:30 p.m. at the Community Center

Martial Arts, 7 p.m. Spinning Class, 5:30 p.m. at the Zone 2 gym tent

Friday

Open Mic Night, 5:30 p.m. at the MWR stage
Step Aerobics, 7 p.m. at the Zone 1 gym tent
High Impact Aerobics, 7 p.m. at the Zone 2 gym tent

Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m. at the pool

Salsa Night, 7 p.m. at the Community Center

Saturday

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. at the Zone 1 gym tent

Martial Arts, 7 p.m. at the Zone 2 gym tent

Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m. at the pool

Sunday

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. at the Zone 1 gym tent

Cardio Pump Kick Boxing 3 p.m. at the MWR stage

Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m. at the pool

Monday

Country Western Night, 7:30 p.m. at the MWR

stage

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. at Zone 1 gym tent

High Impact Aerobics, 7 p.m. at Zone 2 gym tent
Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m. at the pool

Tuesday

Spa Day, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Zone 2 gym tent
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. at Zone 1 gym tent

Martial Arts, 7 p.m. Spinning Class, 5:30 p.m. at Zone 2 gym tent

Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m. at the pool

Special Events: Doha

Wednesday

R&B Dance Night, 7 p.m. at Frosty's
Softball Season 2 signup cutoff and coaches meeting, 7 p.m. at the Fitness Center

Friday

Softball Season 1 ends
Sopranos Hand Shake Tour, time TBA at the DFAC

Saturday

Chess Tournament, 7 p.m. at Frosty's
Turkey Bowl Flag Football Cutoff and Coaches meeting, 7 p.m. at the Fitness Center
Softball Season 2 starts

Monday

Boxing signup cutoff and weigh-ins at the TMC

Tuesday

Backgammon Tournament, 7 p.m. at Frosty's
Flag Football
Boxing weigh-ins at the TMC

Wednesday

Holiday Boxing, 7 p.m. at the Fitness Center

Weekly Events: Doha

Sunday

Spa Day, 11 a.m. at Marble Palace

Events: Victory

Thursday

Majority Rules Movie Night, 7 p.m. at MWR tent

Friday

Salsa Night, 7 p.m. at MWR tent

Sunday

Open Mic Night, 7 p.m. MWR tent

Wednesday

Dominoes Tournament, 7 p.m. at MWR tent

Events: Virginia

Wednesday

Ping Pong Singles Tournament, 7 p.m. at the Dusty Room

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

Thursday

Karaoke and Game Night with cash prizes, 7 p.m. at the Dusty Room

Friday

Salsa Night

Saturday

Hip Hop and R&B Night, 7 p.m. at the Dusty Room

Sunday

Old School Slow Jams Night, 7 p.m. at the Dusty Room

Bazaar, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Dusty Room

AMC Jazz Quintet, 7 p.m. at DFAC

Events: Buehring

Thursday

Spades Tournament, 7 p.m. at the MWR bunker

Tuesday

Bingo, 7 p.m. at the MWR bunker

Religious Services: Arifjan

Catholic Mass

Sunday, noon, Zone 1 Chapel

Saturday, 5:30 p.m., Zone 1 Chapel

Contemporary Christian Services

Sunday, 10 a.m. and 9 p.m., Zone 1 Chapel

Traditional Christian Services

Sunday, 10:30 a.m., building 506 conference room and 7 p.m., Zone 1 Chapel

General Protestant Services

Sunday, 10 a.m., Zone 6 Chapel

Gospel Worship

Sunday, 2:15 p.m., Zone 1 Theater

Saturday, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Chapel

Friday, 7 p.m., Zone 6 Chapel

Episcopal/Lutheran

Saturday, 3 p.m., Zone 1 Chapel

Seventh Day Adventist

Saturday, 10 a.m., Zone 1 Chapel

Spanish Protestant Worship and Studies

Sunday, 11:30 a.m., Zone 6 Chapel

Latter Day Saints

Sunday, 5:30 p.m., Zone 2 Chapel

POC Master Sgt. Randall Palmer, 430-6127

Islam Jumu'ah

Friday, noon, Zone 1 Chapel

Shuttle bus schedule

| Departs Doha Stop 1 (Blvd. 6 PAX tent) | Arrives Doha Stop 2 (Bldg. 2&8&31) | Departs Doha Stop 2 | Arrives Arifjan | Departs Arifjan | Arrives Doha Stop 1 |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| | | 0545 | 0700 | 0715 | 0830 |
| 0845 | 0900 | 0715 | 0830 | 0845 | 1000 |
| 1015 | 1025 | 0915 | 1030 | 1045 | 1200 |
| 1300 | 1310 | 1040 | 1200 | 1300 | 1430 |
| 1445 | 1450 | 1325 | 1430 | 1445 | 1600 |
| 1615 | 1625 | 1505 | 1615 | 1630 | 1745 |
| 1900 | 1910 | 1640 | 1800 | 1900 | 2015 |
| 2030 | 2040 | 1925 | 2045 | 2100 | 2215 |
| 2230 | 2240 | 2055 | 2215 | 2230 | 2345 |
| | | 2300 | 0030 | | |

Doha movie schedule

| Day | Time | Movie |
|--------------|------|------------------------------------------|
| WED, Nov. 17 | 1730 | ANACONDAS, THE HUNT FOR THE BLOOD ORCHID |
| | 2000 | TAXI |
| THU, Nov. 18 | 1730 | TAXI |
| | 2000 | EXORCIST, THE BEGINNING |
| FRI, Nov. 19 | 1730 | SUSPECT ZERO |
| | 2000 | TAXI |
| SAT, Nov. 20 | 1400 | PAPARAZZI |
| | 1730 | CELLULAR |
| | 2000 | TAXI |
| SUN, Nov. 21 | 1400 | THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE |
| | 1730 | TAXI |
| | 2000 | PAPARAZZI |
| MON, Nov. 22 | 1730 | CELLULAR |
| | 2000 | NAPOLEAN DYNAMITE |
| TUE, Nov. 23 | 1730 | PAPARAZZI |
| | 2000 | FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS |
| WED, Nov. 24 | 1730 | NAPOLEAN DYNAMITE |
| | 2000 | CELLULAR |

For more information, call 965.974.6174

Don't let the "Zee" monster get you down

by Dale Evans

It was late in the night
We were into the tenth round
Of an eighteen round fight

My eyes felt heavy
And my feet were weary
"Zee" was getting the best of me

He had me up against the ropes
My head was bobbin' and weavin'
My eyes were red as my body he pounded

BLING!!!! The bell sounded

In despair I shuffled to my corner
And sat on my stool
And then gulped down a cold Red Bull

When the eleventh round started
I came out swinging

The fog had been lifted from my brain!
And I could see clearly now the way to fame!

I hit him with a combination
To the head and shoulders
And he was clearly shook

Then I took him down
With a mighty left hook

StrongSoldier Competition

Nov. 27 at Camp Arifjan

It's an eight-event competition among five-man teams of servicemembers from any branch of service and any country. Each team must have one female.

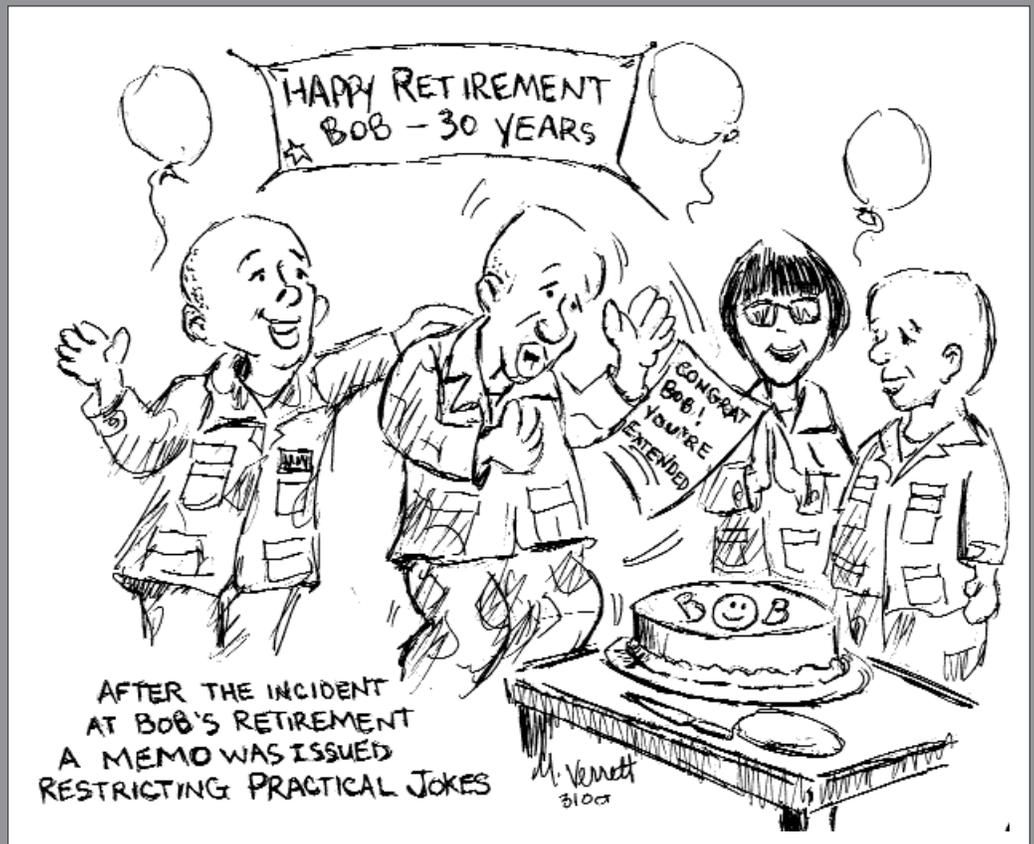
The preliminaries will be on Nov. 20 at 9 a.m. at the Camp Arifjan Zone 1 Sports Field. This will be a process of elimination competition to find the top teams to compete Nov. 27 at 10 a.m. at the Camp Arifjan Zone 1 Sports Field. **Entries are due Nov. 18.**

The competition is open to all camps. You can pick up entry forms at fitness centers at the following places: Camp Arifjan, Camp Buehring, Camp Doha, Camp Victory and Ali Al Saleem Air Base.

e-mail questions to Chief Warrant Officer John Robinson at john.robinson@kuwait.army.mil.

**DESERT
VOICE**

Editor
CFLCC PAO/Desert Voice
Camp Arifjan
APO, AE 09306
matthew.millham@arifjan.arcent.army.mil



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