

Back in good ole KM



PRIVATE WEARS COMBAT PATCH-Pvt. Pamela Clark, who joined the Army seven months ago to travel and see the world, has completed her first duty assignment in Saudi Arabia where she served in Desert Storm four months. Kristen Anderson, fourth grader at West School, models one of the Saudi outfits for her cousin.

Soldier appreciated KM support

William Ralph Carson, 25, says local people may consider him a hero but to him Kings Mountain supporters of local fighting men and women in the Gulf War are the heroes.



CARSON

Carson, son of Hobart and Nadine Carson, is home on furlough after 6 1/2 months duty in Saudi Arabia. His job was to supply combat troops with ammunition for the ground war.

"The customs and cultures in Saudi Arabia are much different from the U. S. A., and of course, the living conditions don't compare with home," said Carson, who joined the Army 4 1/2 years ago. If the living conditions were improved I wouldn't mind going back.

"The Army trained us for a job there and we did it proudly," said Carson, who said he had never cared too much for fanfare and publicity but was glad to see the overwhelming support of the American people for the Gulf service people. Specialist Carson said he had cards and letters from many school children, neighbors and church groups which kept him going.

"The Gulf War really didn't change me--I'm still just Ralph," he said.

A 1984 graduate of Temple Christian School in Gastonia, he worked at Cracker Barrel Restaurant for two years before joining the military. He completed basic training at Fort McClellan, Ala. and was stationed a year in Korea before reporting to Fort Riley, Kansas in 1988. He returns to Fort Riley after his furlough is up.

Carson is a member of Liberty Baptist Church of Gastonia. He has a sister, Beth Stroupe of Cherryville.

Mayor Kyle Smith took the occasion to present Carson a city pin and to recognize him as one of Kings Mountain's heroes of the Gulf War during a special presentation prior to the public hearing at city hall Tuesday night.



WELCOME HOME-Jerry and Diane Barrett, back row, welcome her brother, E8 Tommy Brothers, home from the War in the Gulf. Tommy and Kathy Brothers stand in front of the Barrett home on Piedmont Avenue.

Soldier thanks God for U.S.

"Thank God for America," says E8 Thomas Brothers, who came home to Kings Mountain Tuesday after four months duty with the Army Infantry in Saudi Arabia.

The 18 1/2 year veteran of the Army has traveled in 20 countries but nothing beats Kings Mountain, he says, where he plans to retire in September 1992 and return to his old painting and wallpapering job with Charlie Powell.

Brothers and his wife, Kathy, visited his sister and brother-in-law, Diane and Jerry Barrett, and talked about his duty near the front lines of the Gulf War and the vast differences in the U. S. A. and countries abroad. A native of Bessemer City, he was reared in Kings Mountain by his grandfather, the late Wade Fowler.

Brothers is counting the days until he completes his 20 year career with Uncle Sam, which included a tour of duty in Vietnam. After a furlough he and his wife return to Aschaffenburg, Germany. They also plan to visit Mrs. Brother's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Jonas Wright on

Church Street, and their son, Bryant Wade Brothers, 21, who is attending Cleveland Community College and recently joined Cleveland Country Club as an assistant golf pro. They also plan to visit their daughter and family in Killeen, Texas and see their first grandchild, Chelsea, 16 months old and visit his brother, Douglas Brothers, in Gastonia.

Attached to a casualty collection point 500 meters from the front lines of the war in the Gulf, Brothers witnessed what he called "an awesome display of military armament which boggled my mind because I thought I had seen it all in over 18 years in the Army. Don't mess with the U. S. A. is what we told the enemy," he said.

Sand, wind, hot weather, poverty, and death were some of the horrors of war he tries to forget now. "Kings Mountain is such a good place to be. We just don't appreciate what we have," said Brothers who was drafted in 1968 and reenlisted in October 1974.

Kuwait's pretty, but she wouldn't want to live there

For an hour Tuesday in West School Library, Pvt. Pamela Clark, just back from four months in Saudi Arabia, answered questions from excited fourth graders wanting to know what it was like over there.

Did you ride a camel? Yes, she did.
Did you see Saddam? No, she did not.
Did you fire a gun? No, but she wanted to.
Was it hot? Yes, the heat was unbearable during the day and the sand was worse.

Do you have any medals? No, but this Private wears a combat patch.

Did you ever have any fun? Yes, she swam in the ocean after the war was over and played in the sand with Saudi children.

Pvt. Clark patiently listed to the children's concerns about the war and for her welfare as a female soldier who joined the Army to travel and see the world and found her first assignment in the middle of a war in the desert.

"I was supposed to be in shipping and receiving and using a computer. I learned, instead, how to drive a 5-ton truck and deliver supplies when I had never even driven a straight drive automobile," said Clark, 20, who plans to go back to college when her service duty is up.

Her first experience as a truck driver was among her scariest moments, she told the boys and girls. "There are no landmarks in the desert and I got lost and found myself 15 hours inside of Iraq looking for supplies. A German troop came along and threw smoke bombs at me and pulled out M-60's and all I

had was a M-16 stuck in the sand," she said. She never encountered an enemy troop.

Clark rode in a tank, lived in a tent, and one of her best experiences was feeding POW's MRE rations. She said she feared scorpions and snakes which were everywhere in the desert and lived off beanie wieners sent her by her family. Before the war she dined on camel steaks which were quite delicious.

"We were limited to seven bottles of water a day and there were no showers in Iraq," she said, telling the children how lucky they were to have running water, showers, and toilets. She made a commode from a box by cutting a hole in the middle. "Flushing a toilet is absolutely the best thing in the world," she declared.

Clark described Prisoners of War as sad, thin, and some not yet 15 years old. "The younger kids were problems but the older group seemed appreciative and didn't seem to want to be in war," she said.

Displaying a Saudi prayer rug she brought home to her grandmother, Dorcas Clark of Grover, Clark talked about some of the customs and dressed her cousin, Kristen Anderson, in a black dress and veil which the Saudi women wear and completely covers them from head to toe.

"Women can't drive and they can't talk back to their husbands," she told the class. She also displayed a colorful dress she bought in Turkey.

Clark said she would like to return to Kuwait under different circumstances. "It's absolutely beautiful."



CELEBRITY NIGHT FOR GIRL SCOUTS-Ashley Leigh, right, of Brownie Troop 1, gets a personal explanation of the camp brochure by Julie Stockton at Pioneer Girl Scout Council's Celebrity Night recently. Leigh sold 650 boxes of Girl Scout cookies and won the award from the Mountain Grove (Kings Mountain and Grover) service units.

No Memorial service in KM

A city-wide Memorial Day service will not be held but will be combined with a July 4 celebration honoring the heroes of Desert Storm at 10:30 a.m. July 4 at Kings Mountain Community Center.

Mayor Kyle Smith said President Bush has asked all cities to hold a patriotic service and he is scheduling the memorial service at the same time as the July 4th celebration.

Woman missing

Kings Mountain Police Department is asking the public's help in locating 40-year-old Mary Priscilla Watson, who has been missing since December 15, 1990.

She was reported missing by relatives March 16, 1991.

The woman stands five feet six inches tall and weighs 195 pounds, has brown eyes and black hair. She was last seen at Pine Manor Apartments on December 15, 1990.

Det. Lt. Richard Reynolds says people with information about the woman should contact his office at the Police Department.



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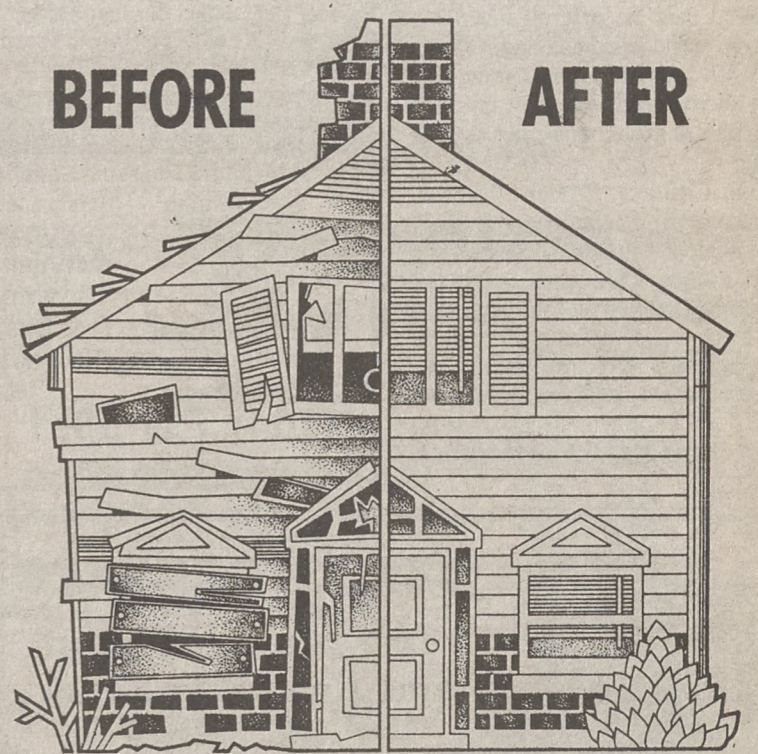
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