
VOTE IN HONOR OF A VET

Sergeant Sam Wenzel, Jr U.S. Army

Name Samuel Wenzel, Jr
Hometown Port Charlotte, FL
Currently..... Port Charlotte, FL
Unit..... 810th Reserve
Military Police

Sgt. Sam Wenzel Jr. arrived home from Iraq the day after Hurricane Charley devastated much of Charlotte County, Fla. After 16 months of desert fighting in the Middle East the 20-year-old local soldier came home to a town that looked like it was part of a war zone, too.

Sam and Kathryn Wenzel, his mom and dad, survived the hurricane without injuries. Their Port Charlotte home sustained roof damage from the storm's ravages. The young soldier and his parents were lucky.

A member of the 810th Reserve Military

Police Company headquartered in Tampa, Wenzel and the soldiers in his unit have been providing convoy protection for 18-wheelers loaded with military equipment going back and forth up and down MSR-Tampa (Main Supply Route-Tampa) since May 2003. It connects the Kuwait border with An Nasiriya, Baghdad and Fullujah.

"In addition to convoy duty we did tons of other missions," Wenzel said. "We might do downed aircraft rescue when a helicopter crashed. We could be sent to protect it and its crew. We might also do customs work, provide security service or law and order."

Mostly, however, the men of the 810th MP Company protected convoys of trucks running supplies back and forth along Highway MSR-Tampa. From Camp Navistar, their home base, just over the Iraqi border in Kuwait, to Baghdad was a two-day trip one way if there were no incidences.

"MSR-Tampa was much like I-75 around here. It's a multiple-laned, blacktop highway in both directions. It's three lanes going up to Baghdad much of the way and then it will drop to two lanes and then back to three. In and around Baghdad they have good roads and many freeways."



Top: Sgt. Sam Wenzel, Jr.'s Humvee is in the foreground. Only the Port Charlotte soldier's ring-mounted machine gun can be seen. His gun truck and a half dozen other Humvees are riding shotgun on a convoy of 30 flatbed trucks headed for Navistar along the Kuwaiti border to the Iraq capital. Bottom: Wenzel sits atop his Humvee at Victory Base in



To read all of Sam Wenzel's military history, search his name on DonMoore'sWarTales.com for the complete article.

Information provided by Don Moore, Author of WarTales
and writer for Sun Herald Newspapers
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