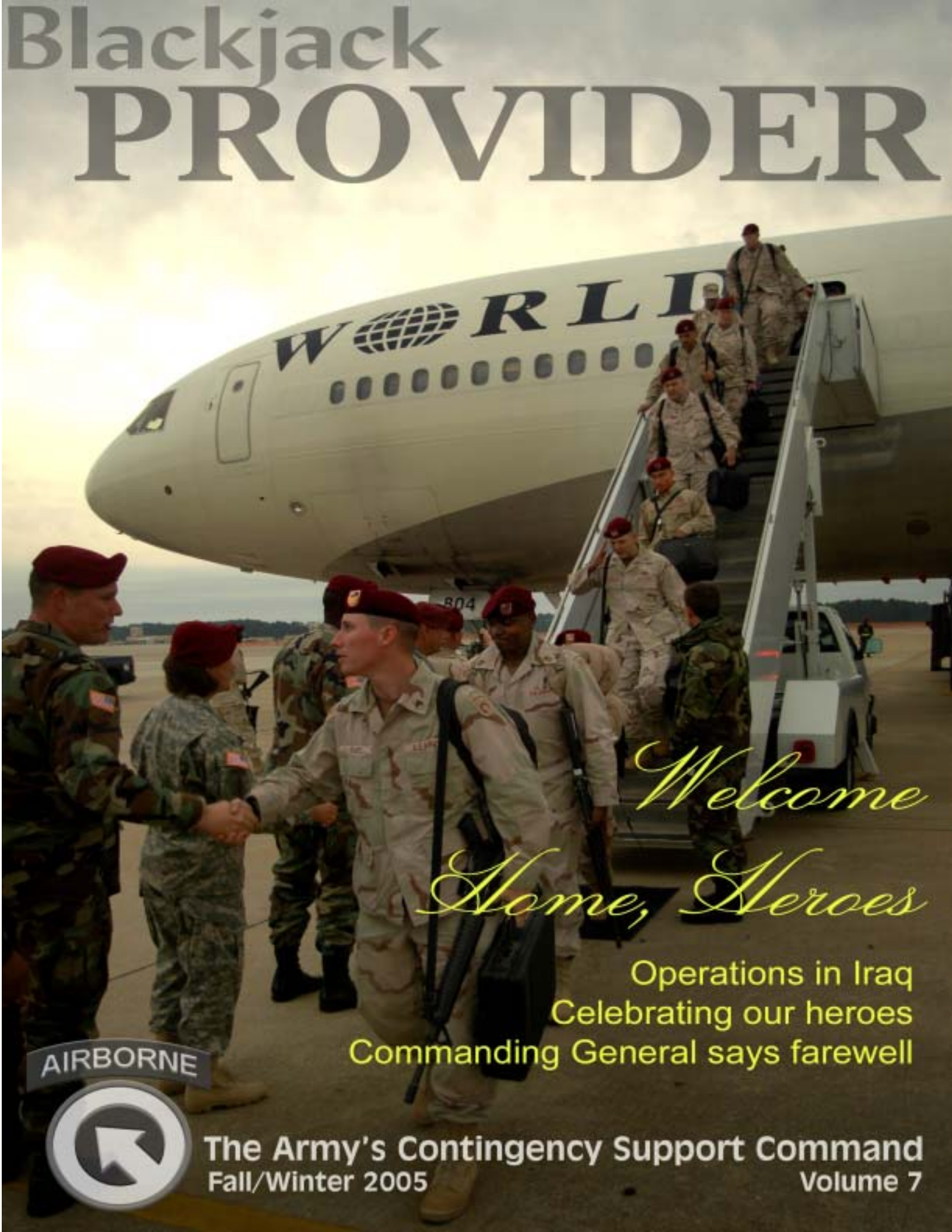
Blackjack PROVIDER



Welcome Home, Heroes

Operations in Iraq
Celebrating our heroes
Commanding General says farewell

AIRBORNE

The Army's Contingency Support Command
Fall/Winter 2005
Volume 7

Blackjack PROVIDER

Commanding General
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Content

FEATURES

Transportation Corps Birthday 5
COSCOM celebrates 63 years of the Transportation Corps' birthday in Iraq.

State-of-the-art training 13
Soldiers pratice their marksmanship on a variety of equipment using a state-of-the-art simulator.

Fort Bragg East gets face lift 17
Construction on new headquarters, barracks, gym and dining facility begins to replace World War II Era building in the COSCOM area at Fort Bragg East.

Aviation Transformation 20
Task Force Sinai exchanges Vietnam Era helicopter for modern day utility helicopters in Egypt.

1st COSCOM troops redeploy 22
After spending a year deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freed, thousands of 1st COSCOM troop redeploy to Fort Bragg in time to spend the holidays with their familes.

COSCOM chefs earn honors 34
Two COSCOM Soldiers are honored for excellence in food services following months of hard work.

Wounded Soldier tells her story 36
A Soldier wounded while deployed to Iraq shares her story with a chaplain and BlackJack Provider readers

ON THE COVER...

Soldiers committed to fighting the war on terrorism. Cover photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop. Layout by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca, 1st COSCOM PAO.

Farewell Letter from the Commander

Troopers, Leaders and First Family Members of the First Team, as I depart Fort Bragg and the 1st COSCOM, I have taken some time to reflect on our significant accomplishments over the past 30 months. It has reconfirmed my belief about how lucky we are- as a country, as an Army, and as a unit - to have a group of professionals like you as part of this command which have made such incredible success as an organization whether in combat, at Ft. Bragg or permanently deployed as part of Task Force Sinai.

You, the 1st COSCOM troopers and leaders, are absolutely a magnificent team. You constantly demonstrate professionalism, knowledge in the profession of arms, innovation in resolving complex issues, persistence in conquering challenges, flexibility in dealing successfully with a myriad of headquarters, joint and coalition forces, but most importantly, you have embraced the Warrior Spirit to win!

Thirty months ago, as we assembled the team, we knew we were going to deploy in support of the Global War on Terror. We trained hard for six months, organized the COSCOM Team to be able to command and control large logistics formations in a massive wartime footprint, established and maintained visibility and situation awareness at all times – all in order to maintain and sustain the XVIII Airborne Corps momentum. The results were awesome and our deployment will forever be remembered in the history books.

At the strategic level, we supported the birth of a New Democratic Nation in the election of a governing council in March, the voting in the referendum on Iraq's first constitution in October, and the preparation for the election of a constitutional government that is occurring today—all remarkable and historic achievements.

At the tactical level, you drove 29 million miles, stored and issued a billion gallons of fuel, a billion gallons of bulk water, 68 million bottles of water, 60 million meals, and eight million short tons of supply—this effort required over 4,600 Soldiers on the road every day to provide both the sustainment commodities and the force protection platforms.

Brig. Gen. Yves J. Fontaine
Commanding General

Behind all of this were the countless warehouses, dining facilities, orderly rooms, supply points, motor pools, guard posts, and other support functions that kept the logistics force sustaining the coalition; all truly amazing. I will tell you that from my foxhole, you made it look easy and like an art—truly a masterpiece when all was said and done.

In addition to your contributions to the Corps, you constructed 24 water filtration systems that provided clean water to over 20,000 Iraqi people; distributed humanitarian aid packages comprised of items such as clothing, school supplies, hygiene items, and toys to over 18,000 Iraqis; funded the construction of three new health clinics, 16 new and renovated schools, and 65 kilometers of road projects.

And while many of us were deployed, we cannot forget our rear detachments Herculean effort in supporting our Soldiers at Fort Bragg, preparing them as well as Corps Soldiers for deployment overseas; our family readiness groups and our spouses maintaining focus with our families and single Soldiers; and Task Force Sinai troopers locating at the "Tip of the Spear" ensuring peace in another volatile area of our world. You all should be proud of your contributions to the history of not only our great country, but to the country of Iraq and to the world.

So, to all First Team Soldiers, noncommissioned officers, officers and family members – I say thank you. I thank you for your professionalism, dedication, patriotism, support and camaraderie. We are and will always remain brothers in arms. I thoroughly enjoyed our time together and am immensely proud to have had the honor to be associated with all of you for the past 30 months.

God bless you and your families and to all have a Happy Holiday and enjoy your well-deserved time off this season.

Blackjack 6 out!

Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen
1st COSCOM CSM

Let me start off by wishing you, my COSCOM Family, the very best for this holiday season. Hope that you all had time to get reacquainted with your families, took time to relax and refocus. Our mission in Iraq was a success. Not just in doing our jobs, but in staying safe and staying alive. Now that we're back from our tour in Iraq, we can't lose focus of our mission here.

We may be out of danger from enemy fire or improvised explosive devices, but new dangers are around every corner. With the upcoming Holidays, statistics show that there is an increase in vehicular accidents due to drinking and driving. Additionally, black ice on the roads during the winter months, is a contributing factor.

That being said, now we have to focus on the 1st COSCOM's future. Some are retiring, others are nearing the end of their contracts, and others are moving to other places throughout the Army. For those who aren't staying here – don't let yourselves become complacent; your mission isn't over until the day you leave.

For those of us remaining, we must prepare for our transformation into the 1st Theater Sustainment Command. Just because we will no longer be called 1st COSCOM, doesn't mean that you will have to go away. Every effort is being made to keep the "First Team" together.

We have built a strong bond during our year in Iraq, and it would be a shame to break it just because of a name change.

Stay on top of your Soldier skills and stay sharp at your job; you will be called upon to help in the reorganization.

To say that I am proud to be part of your success overseas and here is an understatement, but I expect to see the same quality of work here as I did in Iraq. Knowing what you are capable of doing as Soldiers, I have faith that you will all succeed when you work your hardest.

Airborne, All the way!
First Team!

Content continued...

COMMAND & STAFF TOPIC

Commanding General Farewell 3
1st COSCOM CG reflects on his time in command, to include time spent with his troops in Iraq.

Command Sergeant Major 4
1st COSCOM CSM discusses the the command's focus.

Chaplain's Corner 43
As a member of one of many of COSCOM's Unit Ministry Teams, a chaplain discusses "coming home."

Inspector General 44
The 1st COSCOM IG give tips for proper complaint procedures.

LOG OPS

Movement Control Team 6
As a team of eight Soldiers, members of the 635th MCT, deployed in support of Operation Iraq Freedom to Trebil, Iraq, ensures that fuel from the country of Jordan passes safely through the borders of Iraq.

Motor pool takes on more during deployment 8
Headquarters Company, 1st COSCOM steps up its game on motor pool operation after arriving to Iraq.

EXTRAS

NCO Induction Ceremony 10
Newly promoted noncommissioned officers are inducted in Iraq.

Sharp Shooter
Family Readiness Group

And More...!

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

With the help of Brig. Gen. Yves J. Fontaine (center), 1st COSCOM commanding general, the Transportation Corps' 63rd birthday cake is cut by the audiences youngest and oldest Soldier.

Transportation Corps celebrates 63rd birthday

By Spc. Jerome Bishop, 1st COSCOM PAO

July 31 is known to many transporters and logisticians as the birthday of the Transportation Corps, which was celebrated by Soldiers throughout the 1st Corps Support Command in a ceremony at the west post Morale, Welfare and Recreation center at Logistics Support Area Anaconda, Balad, Iraq.

The nearly 500 Soldiers from units throughout 1st COSCOM in attendance were given a brief history of the progress of the Transportation Corps.

The Transportation Corps, which is one of the youngest service branches, was founded in 1942 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt established it following the mobilization for U.S. forces at the start of World War II.

Sixty-three years later in Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Transportation Corps, with 2,400 officers and over 20,900 enlisted Soldiers serving worldwide, is still the sustaining force for the Army and will continue to be for a long time.

"I hope [the Soldiers] realize their jobs and their branch plays an important part of the Army," said 1st Lt. Al Kwon, the organizer of the birthday celebration ceremony from the 41st Transportation Company. "Everyone is important in fighting the Global War on Terror."

The ceremony itself went through extensive planning, but from those who put it together, the time was worth it.

"It's been over a span of five weeks to plan," Kwon said. "I'm very happy about the turnout. They all went above and beyond to put this thing together and I'm very pleased with the outcome."

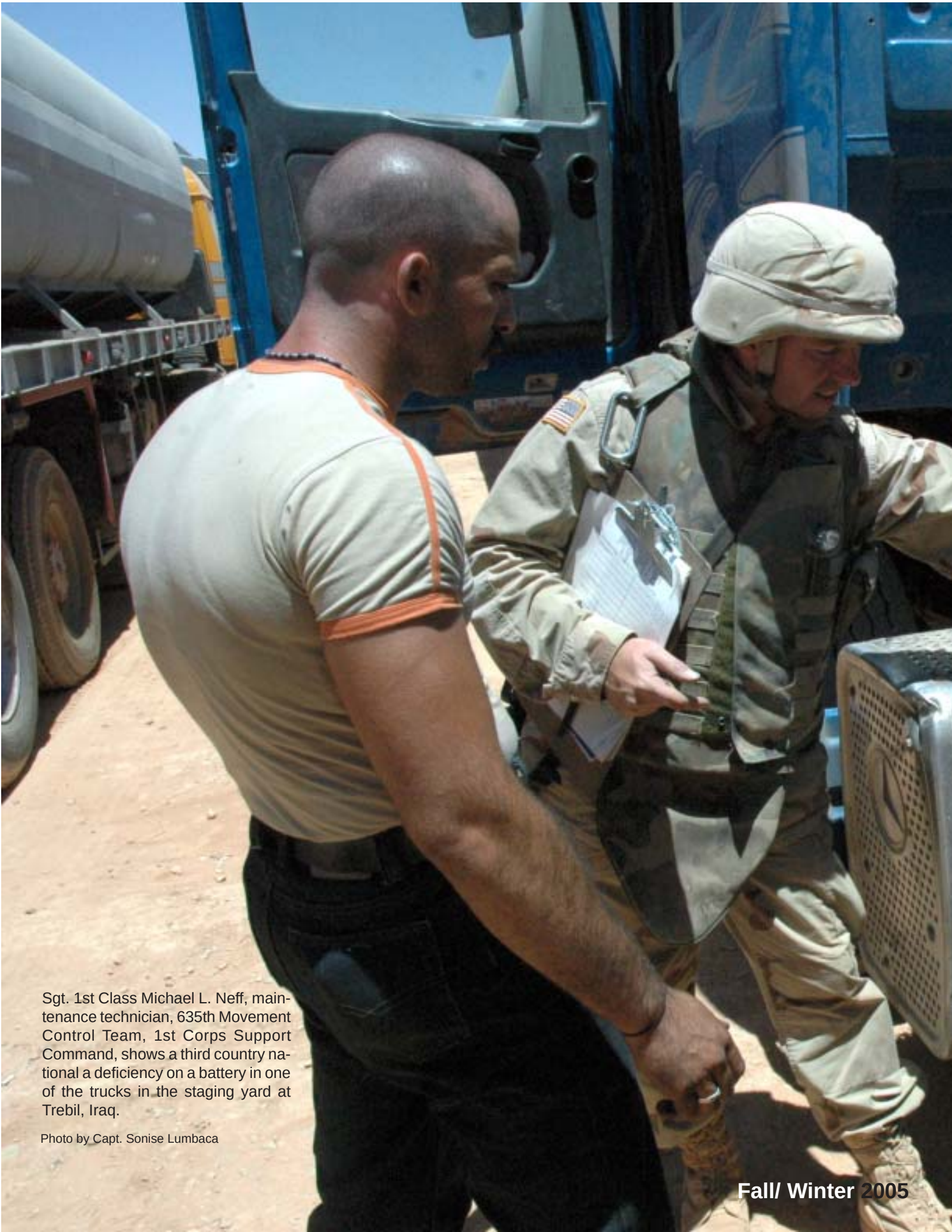
Brigadier General Yves J. Fontaine, 1st COSCOM commanding general, attended the ceremony among with many of 1st COSCOM's various battalion and brigade commanders under COSCOM. Following the ceremony, they took time to talk one on one with Soldiers.

"I Think the Soldiers should remember the history and the Soldiers before them," Fontaine said. "They need to remember the Soldiers who set the way before them and that they're setting the way for the future."

"I didn't really learn until after the process how important this is to the Soldiers," Kwon said, "not so much the younger Soldiers, but for more of the older and more seasoned transporters."

Of course, no birthday celebration is complete without the cake, which was cut by the youngest and oldest Soldiers in the audience with a little help from the commanding general.

The ceremony was concluded after the cutting of the cake, but the Soldiers of the Transportation Corps were left with an important message for all transporters and logisticians – "Nothing moves until we move".



Sgt. 1st Class Michael L. Neff, maintenance technician, 635th Movement Control Team, 1st Corps Support Command, shows a third country national a deficiency on a battery in one of the trucks in the staging yard at Trebil, Iraq.

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Movement control team: "Gate keepers" for fuel

By Capt. Sonise Lumbaca
1st COSCOM PAO

A team of eight Soldiers from the 1st Corps Support Command are responsible for operating a large mission; controlling the movement of thousands of gallons of fuel between the Jordanian and Iraqi border.

These 'gate keepers' are the first and last control point for the fuel brought in by civilian contractors and vendors distributed throughout western and southwestern Iraq each day.

Members of the 635th Movement Control Team, a unit from Weisbaden, Germany, have taken on the large mission, ensuring that fuel gets to the warfighters.

"It's our job to ensure what's been ordered is received, staged and moved forward," said Capt. Gary D. Whittacre, 635th MCT detachment commander. "We coordinate movement of military combat logistics patrols within Iraq, but mainly provide direct support for civilian movement in Iraq and across the border."

The 635th MCT is responsible for expediting, coordinating and monitoring traffic moving through the transportation system. In this case their main commodity is fuel, which is brought in from Jordan.

Movement control teams are essential to the Army's logistical system. These teams decentralize the execution of movement responsibilities regionally or at key transportation nodes.

The 635th MCT is able to run their operations by splitting up into two cells: Operations and Staging Yard.

The Operations cell is responsible for coordination, monitoring and dispersion of fuel from Jordan to meet Corps Support Group requirements.

"We make a point of knowing when it is coming in, where it is going and that the [military] escorts are here to guide them to their final destination," Whittacre said.

Additionally, their mission includes support to Iraqi and Jordanian customs officials at the border to ensure that civilians across the border safely.

"We have a good working relationship with the different customs organizations. We learn from each other and work on ways to improve the system," Whittacre said.

The Staging Yard cell is responsible for receiving the trucks of supplies in a designated area and staging them in lanes, set up specifically for inspecting and meeting up with their security escorts.

"When trucks come through my yard, we inspect every truck to ensure that they meet the maintenance and security requirements," said Sgt. 1st Class Michael L. Neff, maintenance technician, 635th MCT.

Neff created a 24-point inspection for the civilian trucks that enter and exit across the border. This system was developed based on his past experience as a motor sergeant. To date, Neff has conducted more than 4,000 inspections since the MCT arrived in April.

"We have a great system here in place so that the trucks don't break down on the way," Neff said. "The trucks come in from Jordan and they are inspected for maintenance and contraband. Once the

See JORDAN, page 48

Motor pool takes on more during deployment

By Spc. Jerome Bishop
1st COSCOM PAO

Spc. Garrett Doehling, a light-wheel mechanic with HHC 1st COSCOM reaches down into the engine of a High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle or Humvee to ensure certain parts are in place.

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

Spc. Cody Bittick, a light-wheel mechanic with HHC, 1st COSCOM, checks the suspention of a Humvee to finish up on routine services.

The motor pool of any unit is essential to its functionality. For the Soldiers of the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Corps Support Command motor pool, their task has expanded from their company to the support of several others since their arrival to Logistics Support Area Anaconda, Balad, Iraq.

"We support all the units who are assigned to HHC, 1st COSCOM and right now that's about four different units."

-Sgt. 1st Class Richard McLellan
HHC motor sergeant

The missions on hand for this small collection of mechanics are more than they expected, but not more than can be done.

"We support all the units who are assigned to HHC, 1st COSCOM and right now that's about four different units," said Sgt. 1st Class Richard McLellan, the HHC motor sergeant.

"In the rear we only had one company to support, but since we got out here, our mission has increased about 70 percent," McLellan said. "With all the companies together it's about 160 vehicles."

With such an increased volume in maintenance, some vehicles are needed for missions of a higher priority than others.

"The most important missions we have is to support the 623rd Quartermaster Company who run our convoy support," McLellan said, "and the [civil affairs'] vehicles who go outside the wire to the all the local villages."

Deployment has taken the Soldiers of the HHC motor pool from their ordinary job they conducted while back at Fort Bragg to a mission of a greater importance.

"In the rear, our mission was to support the company," said Sgt. Ulric Sanders, the motor pool's shop foreman. "Out here it really means something."

The extra effort put in by the Soldiers of the motor pool doesn't hold them back from feeling good about what they do.

"I feel great and do a good job," he said. "Our mission really means something out here."

Every week the motor pool hosts the unit's vehicles for weekly preventive maintenance checks and services. Although the operators of the vehicles do most of the checks, the motor pool is responsible for the inspection and dispatch of the vehicles.

"Sometimes we have operator support, sometimes not," Sanders said. "If we do it helps, but if not then we just work harder. The work will still get done."

Even with a larger work load than most company motor pools, the Soldiers aren't stopped by having too much to do.

"The work load is better out here," Sanders said. "It keeps you busy and helps the time fly by."

The true blood, sweat and tears poured into the mission at the motor pool isn't just that of the leaders, but of all the Soldiers in the garage or on the lot, and the noncommissioned officers know that without the Soldiers, nothing would get done.

"It's an excellent crew," McLellan said. "They're very experienced and hard working."

"They're great guys and great Soldiers," Sanders said. "I have three Soldiers who are about to get out of the Army when we get back and they're still working hard."

Mechanics are one of many Soldiers who work behind the scenes to make sure the mission is a success, and like these Soldiers and mechanics of the HHC, 1st COSCOM motor pool, a lot of other Soldiers in the unit can rest assured their vehicles will run smooth and drive harder.

NCO Induction Cere

COSCOM welcomes newe

The Troop Support Battalion, 1st Corps Support Command welcomed 17 new sergeants into the Corps of noncommissioned officers July 23 during an NCO Induction ceremony at the Sustainer Theater.

The ceremony began with a reflection on the life and service of Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith, the first and only recipient of the Medal of Honor during Operation Iraqi Freedom, as an example of what NCOs should strive to be.

The ceremony was lead by Command Sgt. Maj. June Seay, Troops Support Battalion command sergeant major, who also introduced the guess speaker, Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen, 1st COSCOM command sergeant major, who gave the new NCOs some words of encouragement.

"NCOs should always remember what it's like to be a Soldier," said Allen during his address. "It's not about you anymore; it's about your Soldiers."

Most of the new sergeants have been fulfilling the role of their rank prior to their actual promotion.

"Several of these newly inducted NCOs have already been out there leading Soldiers," Seay said. "Some that have been promoted less than 30 days ago are out there taking care of Soldiers on guard mount and others have been taking the role of an NCO even before they got promoted."

Although they've been officially inducted into the NCO Corps, the NCOs still have a lot to learn in and about the Army.

"They're still going to be coached and groomed," Seay said, "but they're already shining examples for junior enlisted Soldiers to emulate. They're down there enforcing standards and that's what they're supposed to do."

emony
st NCOs

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen, 1st Corps Support Command command sergeant major, speaks to the new NCOs and the audience on his expierences while serving as an NCO during the NCO Induction ceremony July 23.

The new inductees realize just as much how important their role is to their Soldiers as their leadership does.

"I now have more responsibility," said Sgt. Charlotte Kendrick, an administration clerk from 1st COSCOM civil affairs office and one of the 17 inductees.

"I feel honored because it's a time-honored corps," Kendrick said. "I'm working to always be there for my Soldiers and to be the best leader I can be."

After each of the Soldiers were recognized at the ceremony, Seay presented each of them with a few gifts to help them after they passed though the arch on the stage which signified the crossing into the NCO Corps.

"I gave the Soldiers three things, the (Field Manaul) 7-22.7 – the NCO Guide, I gave them the NCO Creed, which is the creed that all NCOs should be striving to emulate," Seay said. "Then we gave them the NCO Charge. The NCO Charge is an oath to accept responsibility of their Soldiers."

Becoming an NCO is ranked high on the honors that an enlisted Soldier can receive. The day of a Soldiers induction into the Corps of NCOs is one memory that should not be forgotten.

Command Sgt. Maj. June Seay (left), Troop Support Battalion command sergeant major, and Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen, 1st Corps Support Command command sergeant major, present the inductees of the July 23rd NCO Induction ceremony with certificates of acheivement and a copy of the NCO guide known as the "Blue Book" during the NCO Induction ceremony July 23.

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

ROWPU team keeps clean water flowing

By Sgt. Ty Stafford
Contributor

Photo by Sgt. Ty Stafford

Sgt. Edward Beatty, 186th Quartermaster Detachment's ROWPU team, releases the valves on a 3K pump and begins filling water into a tanker truck at Camp Habbayniah, Iraq.

The air Soldiers breathe and the water Soldiers drink are as vital to survival as any armor plating or piece of equipment they use in Iraq.

The 186th Quartermaster Detachment, 507th Corps Support Group, is making the water supply for the service members at Al Taqaddum, Iraq and its surrounding forward operating bases better everyday.

Using a Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Unit, the detachment is funneling 3,000 gallons of water an hour from a canal of the Euphrates River and a nearby lake and storing them in 50,000 gallon raw water storage bags or transporting it directly to Camp Outpost, Ramadi and Habbinyiah, Iraq.

The detachment, which has been in Iraq for only a month, has three teams of six Soldiers at the three FOBs and the headquarters team at Al Taqaddum.

"We operate for 20 hours and spend four hours on maintenance," said detachment 1st Sgt. Monalisa McCullough.

The detachment can produce up to 360,000 gallons of potable and nonpotable water a day using the ROWPU system.

Using semi-trailer mounted fabric tanks, the detachment ships water to two of the FOBs for use.

To prepare for their mission in Iraq, the 186th QM Det. spent a month honing their Soldier skills and used wash racks at Fort Bragg to conduct a two-week validation process to test their equipment.

"We ran a lot of crew drills and attended a lot of (field training exercises) prior to mobilization to keep the Soldiers trained up," McCullough said.

The training was beneficial, McCullough added, because the unit has several new Soldiers from Advanced Individual Training at Fort Lee, Va., added to the unit prior to the deployment.

"We are in high demand and don't have the people to do it," said Staff Sgt. David Kauffman, noncommissioned officer in charge of the Camp Habbayinah site.

Although new to Al Taqaddum, the 186th QM Det. was stationed in Talil, Iraq in 2003.

"Living conditions have improved tenfold since our last deployment," said Sgt. Edward Beatty. The unit replaced the 704th Qm. Det., and has begun making modifications to the current living quarters and equipment.

"We've had one of their ROWPUs go down since we've been here, but everything else has gone pretty smoothly," Kauffman said.

The 186th QM Det., like so many ROWPU units across Iraq, are doing their part to keep the Soldiers clean, hydrated and focused on accomplishing the mission.

State-of-the-art training improves marksmanship

By Spc. Jerome Bishop, 1st COSCOM PAO

Since the early days of the Army, Soldiers have used primitive methods to practice marksmanship. In the Army of today, Soldiers like those from the 364th Supply Company, 46th Corps Support Group, 1st Corps Support Command, are beginning to use a more state-of-the-art method – the Engagement Skills Trainer.

The Fort Bragg EST, located off of Longstreet Rd., beside the 82nd Airborne Division Band headquarters, is made up of several indoor ranges where Soldiers can practice basic marksmanship, perform yearly rifle qualifications, and take on the enemy in engagement scenarios.

Staff Sgt. Eric Holland, a petroleum operations noncommissioned officer from the 364th Sup. Co., regularly takes advantage of the EST facilities with his platoon for sergeants time training.

"We came here around February last year," Holland said. "That was the first time we've ever been here."

"Last week we worked on the M-16 and this week we practiced using the [M-2 50 Cal. machine gun]," he added. "While we were downrange in Iraq, a lot of people didn't have a lot of experience on the 50 Cal. and I want to get them trained up on it."

The EST has a vast arsenal of simulation weapons systems to include the M-9 Beretta, M-16, with or without the M-203, the M-4 carbine rifle, and the AT-4 rocket launcher, as well as crew served weapons such as the M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon, MK-19 automatic grenade launcher, and the M-2 50 Cal.

The variety of weapons isn't the only reason Holland prefers this method of training.

"The training is as close to reality as possible and we had a bunch of new people that didn't get to go the last time," said Holland. "I hope they get the feel of the 50 Cal. and to remember to walk the rounds into their target instead of shooting at center mass."

Vital skills needed to improve a Soldier's effectiveness, such as the weapons themselves used at the EST provide a realistic feel similar to a weapon loaded with live ammunition.

"Our weapons have air compressors in the barrels which simulate the pneumatic recoil of the weapon," said Mike Gaziano, an EST facilitator. "We also have speakers down by the screen which provide realistic sounds which we usually have to turn down so we don't hurt the Soldier's [hearing]."

"The only difference between our training weapons and real weapons are the data cables used for the simulator," he added.

Holland's platoon started their day of training by zeroing their weapons on the qualification range simulation to confirm the firer's shots.

"At first we [practiced] qualification," Holland said. "Their scores were pretty rough, but once we got going, and the firing coaches got better, it went really well."

"You can see how well you shoot," Gaziano said. "You can play a replay of the training scenario to see who shot which target with green dots showing misses, and red showing hits."

See SIMULATOR, page 48

In the dim illumination of the screen, two Soldiers from the 364th Supply Company engage simulated enemies with a modified M-2 50 caliber machine gun at the Engagement Skills Trainer.

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

3rd platoon supports the warfighters

By Capt. Sonise Lumbaca
1st COSCOM PAO

Thousands of pounds of supplies are flown in via fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft or driven in by combat logistics patrols to staging areas each day. The various supplies, which include bottled water, equipment parts and ammunition, are brought in from various locations and countries to aid U.S. troops in Iraq.

Once all of these supplies arrive, who determines what goes where, and when?

Members of 3rd Platoon, 403rd Cargo Transfer Company, an active-duty unit from Fort Bragg, N.C., that fell under the 620th Corps Support Battalion, 561st Corps Support Group, , has taken on the mission of receiving inbound supplies and dispersing them to various units of all services.

The platoon of about 40 Soldiers, which arrived in mid January 2005, is responsible for three areas of this operation which operates 24 hours a day in Taqaddum, Iraq: the Joint Air Control Operations Team, Central Receiving Shipping Point and the Logistics Support Area Operations.

Once called the Air Departure Airfield Control Group, the JACOT mission has evolved into a joint mission involving the Army, Marines, Navy and Air Force. The JACOT is responsible for moving cargo by air.

"The operation is simple, we upload and download Air Force and Marine aircraft. Mainly C-17s and C-130s," said Sgt. 1st Class Lupe G. Galvan, 3rd Platoon, 403rd CTC.

"The Marines download the rotary-winged aircraft and we download Air force pallets and transport them to a cargo yard where the cargo is tracked and facilitated to the correct units," he said.

"All four branches of service work together to facilitate the movement of this cargo," Galvan said.

The JACOT was formed in order to mitigate combat logistics patrols.

"It is the first of its kind in the Iraqi theater," Galvan said.

About 12 members of 3rd Platoon operate the ground portion of the JACOT mission which entails operating various equipment including the Air Force 25K and 40K loader and the Army, Marine and Air Force 10K rough-terrain forklift.

K-Loaders are cargo-loading systems used to load pallets onto an aircraft.

"Our Soldiers have been cross-trained on this equipment by the other branches. The joint training helps to accomplish the mission without flaws," Galvan said.

Pfc. Anastasia Tolley, a cargo specialist for the 403rd CTC, loads cargo during the dayshift.

"I like this job because it is eventful and develops good skills as far as the technical trade goes,"

Continued next page

Pfc. Anastasia Tolley, a cargo specialist for the 403rd Cargo Transfer Company, drives a 10K forklift at the staging yard in Taqaddum, Iraq. Soldiers like Tolley in the 403rd CTC were crossed trained on various equipment to include those handled by the Marines, Sailors and Airmen at Taqaddum.

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

The Central Receiving Shipping Point is where members of the 403rd CTC receive in-coming supplies and equipment from combat logistics patrols. The yard is also used to store and stage equipment to be moved.

Tolley said. "The job is challenging and keeps me on my toes."

The Central Receiving Shipping Point mission, an operation run by about 11 Soldiers, receives supplies and equipment in a staging yard and distributes the Army cargo from incoming combat logistics patrols to units here and other forward operating bases.

The CRSP yard is also a staging area for combat logistics patrols traveling to various other locations in Iraq and Kuwait, Galvan said.

The Soldiers that operate the CRSP yard not only are responsible for cargo documentation, but also operating Material Handling Equipment which includes container handlers to load and unload 20 and 40 feet containers, and the 10K variable reach forklift that loads 463L Air Force pallets.

The container handler is machinery that can be driven through rough terrain with the capability to load and unload large containers on to flatbed trucks, rail cars and on the ground.

"We write down the unit, tracking number, weight and the day the equipment was picked up in order to keep track of what comes in and out of the yard," said Spc. Dianna Deiss, forklift operator, 403rd CTC. "There's a lot of different units and sometimes we'll get cargo that is not supposed to be here. So, we have to track it down and make sure it gets to the right location."

Members of the LSA Operations cell are responsible for providing support throughout the entire camp here. They load up combat logistics patrols and travel throughout Iraq providing support. Additionally, they provide MHE support, which includes the operation of a 40-ton crane to move heavy equipment for units that do not have this type of support.

"We have moved over 6,000 pieces of equipment and freights over the past seven months," Galvan said.

There are some challenges.

"The biggest challenge we have in Iraq is the weather and keeping our equipment mission capable," Galvan said. "The sand storms we have to deal with damage our Kalmars, and 10Ks in our every day usage."

However, the unit is able to meet this challenge with experienced Soldiers within the platoon.

"We have a great maintenance team on hand that keep our equipment from falling apart and they are always looking for replacement parts ahead of time. So far we haven't dropped a mission for non mission-capable equipment because of the fine job they have been doing," Galvan said.

Members of 3rd Platoon enjoy their jobs because they are doing what they were trained to do, Galvan said, but this is just one of many reasons.

"I enjoy this job and its versatility," Deiss said. "It's not monotonous or repetitive."

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Spc. Dianna Deiss, forklift operator, 403rd Cargo Transfer Company, directs a forklift operator to adjust a pallet on the back of a flatbed truck at Taqaddum, Iraq.

Fort Bragg East gets face lift

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Members of the 1st Corps Support Command, Army Corps of Engineers, Directorate of Public Works and Caddell Construction Company break ground at the 1st COSCOM headquarters building Oct. 26.

By Capt. Sonise Lumbaca, 1st COSCOM PAO

The 1st Corps Support Command hosted a groundbreaking ceremony Oct. 26 at the 1st COSCOM headquarters at Fort Bragg to start construction on an $80 million dollar project that will include the construction of a new headquarters building and various other facilities.

The new construction, which includes the creation of more than 10 buildings, is part of phases 1 and 2 construction for Fort Bragg East; also known as the "COSCOM Area."

Currently, many 1st COSCOM subordinate commands and staff members operate out of two-story white buildings built during the World War II era. This will all change when the new buildings are constructed.

Caddell Construction Co., a company based in Montgomery, Ala, will manage the construction.

"We will now be able to have our staff members operate out of one location," said Col. Albert Ballard, deputy commander for the 1st COSCOM. "Right now, our staff members are spread out away from the headquarters. The new two-story headquarters will allow operations and staffing to run smoother for [the command]."

Ballard, who started out as a lieutenant working for the 1st COSCOM in the World War II era buildings some 20 years ago looks forward to the new construction.

"[The new buildings are] a very welcomed improvement," he said.

Additional to work facilities, quality of life will improve. The current Soldiers' quarters, which were built some 20 years ago, will be replaced with more than 500 new living quarters; and a new fitness facility will be built.

"Our Soldiers are deploying and redeploying like a revolving door due the (operation tempo)," said Col. Robin Akin, Chief of Staff for the 1st COSCOM. "With the amount of time and sacrifices that our Soldiers give, it is only fitting that they should come home to new and improved facilities."

The new headquarters will eventually become the command center for the 1st Theater Sustainment Command; a new command that the 1st COSCOM will eventually transform into as a part of the U.S. Army-wide transformation.

"This construction project could not have happened at a better time," Akin said. "The COSCOM will be transitioning into an entirely new command, and with the new command we will have new facilities for our hard working heroes."

With construction of the new facilities will come slight traffic delays and detours. Lane and BlackJack streets off of Honeycutt Rd. will be closed. Parts of Medic, Goldberg and Ordnance Streets will also have closures; and Quartermaster Street starting from the COSCOM headquarters past Lane St. will also be closed.

Other units and buildings involved in the construction project include five COSCOM battalion headquarters, a headquarters and barracks for the 44th Medical Brigade and the 82nd Sustainment Brigade.

"With the new construction, the landscape east of Bragg Boulevard will never be the same again," Ballard said. "And, that is a good thing."

Thanksgiving culi

COSCOM Soldiers g

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

(Above) Brig. Gen. Yves J. Fontaine, 1st Corps Support Command commander serves a family member dinner. (Below) Pfc. Celso Santiago-Mejias carves on of many Thanksgiving turkeys at the BlackJack Cafe dining facility.

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

By Spc. Jerome Bishop
1st COSCOM PAO

Thanksgiving is known to complicate travel, lower sales prices, and for the Soldiers of the 1st Corps Support Command, produce a potentially awarding Thanksgiving meal served at the 1st COSCOM BlackJack Café dining facility Nov. 23.

For the past four weeks, the cooks and chefs at the BlackJack Café have been working hard to prepare and serve a Thanksgiving feast capable of giving Soldiers the feeling of being home – and winning a few awards while they're at it.

"By nature, Thanksgiving is the most celebrated meal in the Army, but what makes it different is the amount of culinary skills we put into it," said Sgt. 1st Class Steven Chow, dining facility manager of the BlackJack Café. "Everything you do for Thanksgiving is going to be evaluated for the 'Thanksgiving Competition' between all the dining facilities on Fort Bragg."

In previous years, the BlackJack Café took the top prize in 2003, and the runner-up in 2004. The cooks expect another hard earned victory, and their customers agree.

"I don't know about the other dining facilities, but this one is really good," said Spc. Byron Jay, an avionics, navigational and electronics systems repair specialist from Company I, 4th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, 507th Corps Support Group. "I think they have a good chance of winning. They got my vote."

Spc. Jennifer Hille, a mechanic from the 259th Field Services Company, 364th Corps Support Battalion, 46th CSG, didn't even have to finish her meal, or start it, to express how she felt about the BlackJack Café's chances at the top trophy.

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

Food service specialists set up various elaborate displays Nov. 23.

inary competition

et early 'Turkey Day'

"I haven't gotten to eat yet but it looks pleasing," Hille said. "If they keep cooking like this, they shouldn't have a problem [at winning]."

Others, like Capt. Jack Chaffin, company commander of the 364th Supply Company, 264th CSB, 46th CSG and his wife Amy, think its more than just the food which will bring the prize to the 1st COSCOM.

"I'd say the presentation and the assortment was the best, and having stuff for the kids," Amy said, with her husband in full agreement.

"That's what stuck out in my mind," Chaffin said as their daughter Leslie, 8, and their son Jack Jr., 5, played in the inflatable jumping pit with a clown.

Children of Soldiers were also treated to cotton candy and face painting provided by the staff of the BlackJack Café as well as being entertained by a mascot-like Thanksgiving turkey.

"The kids loved all the characters inside," Jack Jr. said, as the Soldier in a turkey costume came running outside bringing smiles to the children.

This may seem like a lot for just one meal, but to win the Thanksgiving Competition, it's all closely reviewed.

"We had different categories, we had food preparation, sanitation, culinary originality and the decorations," said Sgt. Maj. Rodney Price, sergeant major of the Directorate of Logistics and one of three of the competitions evaluators. "For Fort Bragg, the 'Thanksgiving Competition' has been going on for over 20 years. Historically, these Soldiers have been putting out a lot of artistic ability."

See COMPETITION, page 49

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Fort Bragg Soldiers enjoy Thanksgiving dinner a day early at the 1st COSCOM BlackJack dining facility.

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

(Above) Sgt. Celina Gonzales, food service specialist, Company C, Troop Support Battalion, carvesmeat to prepare to serve to Soldiers and their families at the BlackJack dining facility. (Below) Trays of desserts are put on display. The Dining facilty took 1st Place overall.

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter is loaded into the cargo hold of the Russian Antonov AN-124 Condor at Pope Air Force Base's Yellow Ramp Dec. 1.

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

Aviation Transfo

takes place in S

By Spc. Jerome Bishop
1st COSCOM PAO

After years of planning, the first five UH-60 Black Hawks for Soldiers of the 1st Support Battalion, or Task Force Sinai, 1st Corps Support Command in Egypt in support of Multi-national Force Observer departed Pope Air Force Base, N.C. Dec. 2.

The plan to replace obsolete aircraft in the Sinai for U.S. peacekeepers assisting in the enforcement of the Egyptian-Israeli 1979 Camp David Peace Accords has been underway for several years.

However, this mission involved more than just getting the helicopters from point A to point B.

"This shows us three things," said Maj. Gen. Virgil L. Packett II, acting commander of the XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg who was on hand to review the loading progress. "First that we're moving forward in providing our Soldiers with the best equipment. Second that we're moving forward in our aviation transformation, and third, the level of international cooperation in a peacekeeping mission by moving American helicopters on a Russian aircraft."

"Today is the first of the final steps in getting that completed in that we're getting the first five Black Hawks to the Sinai and that's a big step," said Chief Warrant Officer John Leake, the aviation readiness officer from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Corps

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

U.S. Army contractors remove the tail rotor off of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter at Pope Air Force Base.

Distribution Command, 1st COSCOM. “In 2002, a force modernization plan was put forward to change the MFO Sinai’s UH-1H Hueys to the Black Hawk.”

Currently, TF Sinai are conducting missions with the UH-1H Huey helicopter, which the Army intends on replacing as part of the transformation of the Army’s Aviation Corps.

“As part of the Army’s Transformation Plan, Army Aviation is divesting itself of the ‘legacy aircraft’ such as the AH-1 Cobra and the UH-1H Huey among others,” said Maj. Joseph Martini, aviation readiness officer for HHC, CDC. Martini spearheaded the coordination for most of the mission through bi-weekly teleconferences between the 1st COSCOM, XVIII Abn. Corps, Air Mobility Command, the 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade and other key players.

Although the Huey and the Black Hawk can both conduct the same variety of missions which includes transporting troops and supplies, search and rescue missions and medical evacuations, the Black Hawk is an essential part of the plan the Army has for it’s revamped aviation fleet.

“The Army decided it wants four aircraft – the UH-60 Black Hawk, the OH-58 Kiowa, the AH-64 Apache, and the CH-47 Chinook,” Leake said.

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inai

Getting the helicopters to Egypt presented it’s own challenge since only a limited number of cargo aircraft are capable of simultaneously transporting five helicopters a third of the world away.

“Because of the priorities set by the Air Mobility Command, our options for transporting the helicopters were limited,” Leake said. “In support of this national mission, they saw fit to charter an aircraft big enough to get them over there rather than resources being used in Iraq and Afghanistan.”

The aircraft utilized by the 1st COSCOM to transport the Black Hawks to the MFO – the Russian Antonov AN-124 Condor.

The crew and aircraft was contracted from a Ukrainian-based charter company called Volga-Dnepr Airlines whom specialize in the transportation of over-sized cargo, Martini said.

The Air Force C-5 Galaxy cargo transportation aircraft is slightly larger than the Condor used by Volga-Dnepr, however, the Condor

See TRANSFORM, page 51

Three Russian Antonov AN-124 Condor crewmembers remove the wench cable used to tow the UH-60 Black Hawks inside the aircraft Dec. 1 at Pope Air Force Base.

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

Welcome Home COSCOM !!!

Sgt. 1st Class Vache Brooks, intelligence analyst, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Corps Support Command spends a little quality time with her son 3-year-old son, Robert Jr., during a redeployment ceremony Oct. 31 at Pope Air Force Base's Green Ramp.

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Holiday cheers for returning troops

By Capt. Sonise Lumbaca
1st COSCOM PAO

Family and friends of deployed 1st Corps Support Command Soldiers have received the best gift anyone can receive for the upcoming holidays; a chance to spend it with their Soldiers.

More than 200 Soldiers assigned to the 1st COSCOM were welcomed home during a redeployment ceremony at Pope Air Force Base's Green Ramp Oct. 31 at 7:30 a.m.

"It's a great day and opportunity to welcome this element that represented the largest command in Iraq," said Maj. Gen. Virgil L. Packett II, the acting commander for the XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg. "It is a great treat to have you all back here with your families."

Among the redeploying members was the commander of the 1st Corps Support Command, Brig. Gen. Yves J. Fontaine.

Members of the 1st COSCOM were deployed for a year to Iraq and Kuwait in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Having spent a year away from their families, many of the Soldiers are in agreement that they are glad to be home.

"It's great [to be home]. I really missed [my children]," said Capt. Jamie Brunson, a members of the Corps Distribution Command. "You see that they are really young, so I was eager to get back and see them and see how they have grown."

"I missed them so much," said Sgt. 1st Class Vache Brooks, referring to her husband Robert and 3-year-old son Robert Jr. "It's great to be home."

Brooks is an intelligence analyst with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st COSCOM.

While in Iraq, the 1st COSCOM, which was based at five major logistical hubs spread

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Brig. Gen. Yves J. Fontaine (left), commander of the 1st Corps Support Command and Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen, lead redeploying 1st COSCOM troopsoff the Pope Air Force Base flight line after returning from Iraq, Oct. 31.

1st COSCOM Operations in Iraq

- Supported over 180 units
- Drove and transported over 3,000 vehicles
- Moved over 1,000 containers totaling over 785 tons of supplies
- Transported over 134 million gallons of fuel, at an average of 1.1 million gallons per day; enough to fuel 57,000 vehicles daily
- Driven or flown over 20,000 Soldiers.
- Installed over 4,000 up-armor kits
- Completed more than 13,000 combat logistics patrols
- Drove an average of 12,000 miles per month (equal to what the average American drives per year) and covered more than 29 million miles during combat logistics patrols
- Maintained a 95% readiness rate for its fleet of more than 6,000 up armored HMMWV
- Conducted over 5,000 security escort missions each month
- Trained over 2,000 Iraqi National Guard truck drivers
- Produced and issued over three million gallons of water
- Transported 190,000 cases of bottled water and over 200,000 meals to forward operating bases throughout Iraq daily.
- Repaired over 30,000 pieces of equipment and processed over 170,000 requests for repair parts

throughout the country, was comprised of five corps support groups, one area support group, one brigade-sized corps distribution command and two brigade combat teams; totaling approximately 20,000 Soldiers.

The 1st COSCOM's mission was to provide logistical support to the Multinational Corps-Iraq, which included combat logistics patrols pushing the mail, water, fuel and food needed to sustain the momentum of U.S. and Coalition Forces across Iraq and Kuwait.

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Excited family members cheer on redeploying 1st Corps Support Command troops Oct. 31 at a welcome home ceremony held at Pope Air Force Base's Green Ramp.

"COSCOM Soldiers completed about 150 combat logistics patrols a day," said Fontaine.

All of the vehicles conducting combat logistic patrols were up-armored, and 80 percent of the fleet had armor, which was the goal, he said.

Many of the up-armoring of vehicles was conducted by units within the 1st COSCOM.

Additional to their mission, the 1st COSCOM partnered with Iraqi forces to facilitate the development of the Iraqi army logistics system. This partnership involved three COSCOM corps support groups establishing and training Iraqi motor transport regiments to conduct their own independent logistical operations. These motor regiments are now conducting independent operations and have helped support Iraqi security forces in the recent constitutional referendum.

"It just feels really good to spend a year [in support of OIF] and accomplish so much and be able to come back to our families," said Lt. Col. Mitchell Johnson, a member of the Corps Distribution Command.

The 1st COSCOM continues to have Soldiers deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Over the course of the remainder of the year, more Soldiers are scheduled to redeploy home to their families.

Fort Bragg families welcome home COSCOM troops

By Capt. Sonise Lumbaca
1st COSCOM PAO

Red, white, blue and star spangled balloons along with a large "Welcome Home 1st COSCOM Heroes" banner decorated the walls of the Dahl Gym's basketball courts here where the family and friends of redeploying 1st Corps Support Command Soldiers waited for their return.

Family Readiness Group booths lined the gymnasium's foyer with welcoming smiles, family reintegration pamphlets, American Flags, and 1st COSCOM novelty bandanas. Inside the basketball court, patriotic tunes blared from the PA system and the thick smell of anticipation was in the air.

More than 60 Soldiers from the Corps Distribution Command, 507th Corps Support Group and Headquarters Company, 1st COSCOM would be welcomed home in a ceremony fit for heroes Oct. 10 at 11 a.m.

"I am going to tell my daddy how much I missed him," said Joshua Stegall, the six-year-old son of Sgt. Ted Stegall, a computer technician for the CDC.

Joshua also anticipates playing video games and trading Pokeman Cards with his father.

"It is going to be nice to just sit and talk as a family," said Susan Stegall, who has experienced a deploying spouse for the first time. "[Talking] is something we have all missed."

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Spc. Kerry-Ann Simpson, an aviation items manager, 507th Corps Support Group, is welcomed home with with flowers and a sign by her father Trevor and a family friend at a welcome home ceremony at Dahl Gym, Oct. 10.

The Stegalls, who have been married for 10 years, five of which have been served in the Army, together have three children with Joshua being the oldest, Emma, 3 and Rachel, 11 months.

"When Ted left to deploy to Iraq, Rachel was only three weeks [old]," Susan said. "I think that he will be surprised to see how much she has grown."

The most difficult part of the deployment was raising three children alone, Susan said. However, with the help of her husband's unit Family Readiness Group, she was able to make it through difficult moments.

"I now have a better idea of what to expect in the future and I have a new found respect for the military wife and what they go through."

The background of patriotic tunes stops and the chatter between anticipating family members die down as an announcement comes over the PA says, "May I have your attention please? Our Soldiers are 10 minutes out."

Cheers and applause from the excited family members roared throughout the gymnasium.

"Daddy is coming home," Lena McCollum says to her six-year-old daughters, Lemaya, and 11-month-old, MyJena as she hugs them.

Lena is the wife of Spc. James McCollum, a logistics specialist for CDC. This is the second deployment for the McCollums who have been married for two years. The first deployment took place while they were dating nearly four years ago when McCollum deployed to Bosnia

while serving with the Pennsylvania National Guard.

Like Susan, Lena agrees that the most difficult part of the deployment was raising her children.

"You have to find a good support group structure, be it family or your husband's unit; especially if you have kids," Lena said. "You also have to be a great supporter of your husband and what he believes in, otherwise you might not make it as a family."

Trevor Simpson, the father of Spc. Kerry-Ann Simpson, an aviation items manager with the 1st COSCOM, agrees.

Trevor, whose family originated from the Caribbean island of Jamaica, arrived Sunday from Windsor, Conn. to see his daughter's return home.

"At first I was sad, especially when I saw her leave. But she assured me that everything would be okay," Trevor said. "Kerry-Ann has a way of showing you that everything will be okay and I want to support her."

While in Iraq, Simpson kept in contact with her father through e-mail and telephone calls.

"You also have to be a great supporter of your husband and what he believes in, otherwise you might not make it as a family."

-Lena McCollum, spouse

"We e-mailed each other on a regular basis, so I always knew that she was okay and what she was doing," Trevor said.

It was through this communication he learned that his daughter became a U.S. citizen in a July ceremony held in Iraq.

"She was so excited and the family was all excited for her. [Her citizenship] was long awaited and we are very proud of her," Trevor said.

For his daughter's welcome home, Trevor has many hugs and a Jamaican meal planned for her.

"It has been such a long time since she has had Jamaican food and I know that she misses it," he said.

"Ladies and Gentlemen," a voice blares over the PA system. "The buses are here!"

Family members who once sat calmly in the bleachers arose and rushed the side doors of the gymnasium in excitement as they watched their Soldiers one-by-one exit the buses.

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Sgt. Ted Stegall, computer technician, Corps Distribution Command, holds his 3-year-old daughter, Emma, at a welcome home ceremony at Dahl Gym, Oct. 10.

"I see my baby," Trevor announced aloud in a cracking voice fighting to hold back sobs.

American flags waved frantically, homemade posters displaying "We love you," were held up high and cheers rang out from the audience of anticipating family members.

After formalities, which included a welcome home speech from Col. Robin Akin, the acting 1st COSCOM commander for the rear detachment at that time, the Soldiers were released to their families.

"I missed you so much," Stegall said as he hugged his wife and children. "And look how big you all are," he said as he held his three-year-old while his son Joshua hugged around his leg.

"My emotions are all over the place," Simpson said as she embraced her father with a large bundle of roses held in one hand. "I am so happy to see you."

"I missed my girls. Did you miss daddy?" McCollum asks as he held both daughters in his arms, MyJena for the first time.

Like these three families, the welcome home for many of these Soldiers on this day was an anticipated and heart-felt moment.

"This is one of the happiest days of my life," Trevor said. "My daughter has returned home safely to me."

The 1st COSCOM was deployed for a year in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. While deployed, the command conducted large-scale logistical operations that included setting up four logistical hubs, training three Iraqi Motor Transport Regiments and force sustainment operations.

Aviation sustainers return home

By Spc. Jerome Bishop
1st COSCOM PAO

The 1st Corps Support Command celebrated another safe redeployment with family and friends of Company I, 4th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, 507th Corps Support Group during two welcome home ceremonies Oct 19 and 20.

The Soldiers of the 4th Bn., 159th Avn. Regt., after hours of waiting, were finally reunited with the loved ones whom they were required to leave behind and others picked up where they had left off a year ago.

A little less than a hundred Soldiers of Company I arrived at Pope Air Force Base in the evening of Oct. 19 to the shock and surprise of those waiting, which didn't expect them for another hour.

Sgt. Eddie G. Bilbraut, an aircraft mechanic, on the other hand, was one in a group of Soldiers who didn't have anyone waiting to welcome them.

"I knew I was going to be here, I knew there were going to be families here and I knew I'd be alone, so I prepared my emotions for that," Bilbraut said.

Knowing he'd be alone didn't make it easy on him or his plan to get home unaffected, as he was still on edge with the emotions of others surrounding him.

"I'm just trying to be strong. I don't want to let all the emotion in the air to make me start crying," he said.

Even though Bilbraut made it back to the states with no one to greet him at Green Ramp, that didn't mean there wasn't a family waiting for him.

"I got extended to deploy, so I'm going to (End Term of Service) and go back home to Puerto Rico to be with my family," said Bilbraut.

Regardless of the emotions of everyone else around him, Bilbraut wasn't afraid to let one emotion show.

"It feels great to be home. There's no dust here," he said.

Nearly 18 hours later in a separate ceremony Oct. 20, another group of Co. I's fellow Soldiers returned to the states along with members of the 82nd Airborne Division's Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Battalion, 17th Cavalry Regiment.

Following the landing of the plane and shaking hands with the leadership, the Soldiers stood in formation anxiously awaiting the command that would allow them their first moment in months with loved ones.

See AVIATION, page 46

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

Soldiers of Company I, 4th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, 507th Corps Support Group walk down stairs as they step foot on American soil at Green Ramp Oct. 19 after serving a year in Iraq.

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Army Brats welcome parents home

By Capt. Sonise Lumbaca
1st COSCOM PAO

Hundreds of family members patiently waited in anticipation to welcome home more than 100 Soldiers of the 46th Corps Support Group, 1st Corps Support Command during a 'Welcome Home' ceremony Oct. 21 at Pope Air Force Base's Green Ramp.

Among the family members waiting were many children anticipating seeing the safe return of the parent they hadn't seen in six months to a year; depending on when rest and recuperation leave was taken.

"I felt lonely when my dad left," said 8-year-old Da'Mon Johnson, the son of Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey L. Johnson, a logistics specialist. "I was upset when he was deployed."

"This time the boys reacted differently to their father being away," said Pam Johnson, Da'Mon's mother.

Pam Johnson attributes her children's reaction to the fact that they are a little older and understand the difference between their father being around and not being there. She has two other boys, Tyrese, 3, and Jaylyn, 2.

"After a certain age, [children] know the difference," Pam said.

Da'Mon said that the biggest thing that he missed during the deployment was working on his homework with his father.

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Stephen Fogarty Jr. (rear), along with his mother, younger brother, and other anticipating families wait outside the pax shed on the Pope Air Force Base flight line as their redeploying service members exits an aircraft that flew in from Iraq.

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Pam Johnson, wife of Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey L. Johnson, patiently waits for the arrival of her spouse along with her three sons (l-r) Jaylan, 2, Da'Mon, 8, and Tyrese, 3 at the pax shed at Pope Air Force Base's Green Ramp Oct. 21.

"My daddy helps me with my math and reading. I like when we do my homework," Da'Mon said.

Besides looking forward to doing homework with his father, Da'Mon looks forward to celebrating his ninth birthday next week.

"I am really happy that my dad is here for my birthday," Da'Mon said.

Additionally, Da'Mon anticipates getting his life back to normal. One responsibility he looks forward to giving up is being "the man of the house".

"I cleaned up the house and watched my brothers," he said.

The oldest son becoming the "man of the house" is something shared by many military sons.

See BRATS, page 47

More COSCOM troops redeploy

By Spc. Jerome Bishop
1st COSCOM PAO

In a series of redeployments, 1st Corps Support Command Soldiers completed their tours in Iraq when they returned home Nov. 4, 7 and 8 during welcome home ceremonies at Pope Air Force Base's Green Ramp.

The 261st Movement Control Team, 330th Movement Control Battalion was the first to arrive home Nov. 4.

"It feels great getting back to freedom," said Sgt. Luis R. Corona, a transportation management noncommissioned officer from the 261st MCT. "It gets old when you're stuck on (Logistics Support Area) Anaconda for a whole year."

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

Spc. Thurman W. Lewis II holds his son, Tyler William for the first time after returning to the U.S. at the welcome home ceremony Nov. 7 at Pope Air Force Base's Green Ramp.

Corona was one of many Soldiers who returned to the States without any friends or family to greet him, but he's proud of what he accomplished and looked forward to seeing his family in the future.

"I feel sad that my family couldn't be here, but I'm happy for those Soldiers who had their family here," said Corona. "But I plan to enjoy my time left on Fort Bragg, and visit my family in California."

"Thanks to this second deployment, I was able to get my citizenship in Baghdad on July 5," Corona added.

Following the weekend, Soldiers of the 4th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment arrived home.

Waiting for Spc. Thurman W. Lewis II, an automated logistics specialist from Company I, 4th Bn., 159th Avn. Regt. to get off of the plane, were his wife Juanita Lewis, his mother and father Joyce and Thurman W. Lewis Jr., and his two sons, Trevor Wade, 8, and Tyler William, 1.

They weren't the only ones waiting. Lewis couldn't wait to spend time with his family again. "[Being with family again] is the best feeling in the world," Lewis said. "My family needed me more throughout this year than my unit."

Unlike many families, the Lewis family faced a complication at the wrong time.

"My youngest son was born on Sept. 19, 2004, but he was a premature birth and was put in an intensive care unit for seven weeks," said Lewis. "By the time he was able to come home, I was heading to Iraq. I really did not get time to bond with him."

Although Lewis was gone, his family pulled together and made the best of their situation for his eventual return.

"I am a family oriented person," Lewis said. "My parents are just a part of my extended family. They will always be there for us."

See REDEPLOY, page 48

COSCOM retires one unit:
Welcomes the return of another

By Spc. Jerome Bishop, 1st COSCOM PAO

The 7th Transportation Battalion, 507th Corps Support Group, inactivated one company and activated another the morning of Oct. 14 at the 1st Corps Support Command Memorial site.

The Guidon of the 58th Maintenance Company (General Support) was furled in an inactivation ceremony, officially retiring the company that has served the 1st COSCOM and Fort Bragg since 1980.

The order to alter the company structure is part of the Army's transformation.

"This was an Army and Force Command level decision to transfer the 58th Maint. Co. to the reserve component and the activation of the 127th Trans. Co.," Lt. Col. Allen W. Kiefer, 7th Trans. Bn. commander, said.

The 58th Maint. Co.'s mission, however, is not over. Elements of the 58th Maint. Co. will continue to support the Army, but in another way.

"Under transformation, [the 58th Maint. Co.'s] general mission will be shifted to the reserve component," Kiefer said. "The missions left over by the 58th will be absorbed into other units in the Army or on Fort Bragg."

Soldiers of the 58th Maint. Co. have since found other places to exercise their skills.

"The Soldiers were either transferred to other maintenance units on Fort Bragg or got orders to other posts," Kiefer said. "They were redistributed to fill slots within the Corps or were given permanent-change-of-station orders."

"A majority of the Soldiers went to the 659th Maint. Co. (Direct Support)," said Capt. Mike Hearn, the outgoing company commander.

"It's sad to see the unit leave and they have a good mission on a GS level," Hearn added. "But it's the direction that the Army is going in."

See RETIRE, page 49

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

Capt. Travis L. Sept, incoming commander of the 127th Transportation Company, 7th Transportation Battalion, 507th Corps Support Group, unfurls the 127th Trans. Co. guidon during the Reactivation Ceremony at the 1st COSCOM memorial site Oct. 14.

COSCOM spouses recognized for volunteerism

By Capt. Sonise Lumbaca
1st COSCOM PAO

Every quarter during the fiscal year those who volunteer their times to the Army community and local organizations are recognized for their selfless service.

This quarter, three members of the 1st Corps Support Command's family were recognized with Fort Bragg Iron Mike Awards during an awards ceremony held at the Community Town Hall Center at Fort Bragg Oct. 28.

Kathy Fontaine, Amy Pike and Debra Whittle each received an Iron Mike Award for donating many hours of their time to various causes.

Maj. Gen. Virgil L. Packett II was present to honor the women during the ceremony.

"If Soldiers are our national treasure, volunteers are the jewels of our national treasure," Packett said during a speech.

"Iron Mike Awards were created four years ago to recognize volunteers that go above and beyond," said Sheena Mitchell, one of two Family Readiness Assistants for the 1st COSCOM at that time.

Army Community Service representatives, such as 1st COSCOM FRA's Mitchell, and members of the command, nominate the volunteers.

There are four types of awards presented to volunteers depending on the amount of hours contributed.

The Iron Mike pin is given to volunteers who have given 300 hours of their time; while the Iron Mike Bronze Star is given for 500 hours; the Silver Star for 750 hours and the Gold Star for 1000 hours of volunteer services, Mitchell said.

Debra Whittle, the wife of Chief Warrant Officer Keith Whittle, an automotive technician for the 659th Maintenance Company, 46th Corps Support Group, was awarded the Iron Mike Bronze Star.

"I have been volunteering for a long time," Debra Whittle said. "I like doing my part and knowing you can help others out is satisfying."

Besides serving as PTA President for the Murray Elementary School at Fort Bragg, Debra Whittle's volunteerism included serving as the treasurer and key caller for the 659th Maint. Co. Family Readiness Group and serving as a soccer coach.

Additionally, she had donated her time in helping to paint classrooms for a Fort Bragg school.

Kathy Fontaine, the wife of Brig. Gen. Yves J. Fontaine, commander of the 1st COSCOM, and Amy Pike, the wife of Capt. Jason Pike, commander of the 659th Maint. Co. received Iron Mike pins for donating over 300 hours of their time to various events.

"Kathy (Fontaine) selflessly volunteered her time for the Armed Services YMCAs Operation Kim Comfort Program," Mitchell said.

Besides donating her time to Operation Kim Comfort, a program where volunteers make quilts for the children of deployed Soldiers, Kathy Fontaine spent her time handing out Baby Bundles to new arrivals at Womack Army Medical Center and is currently a key organizer in the annual Fort Bragg Yule Mart; an event that brings in thousands of dollars that are put towards scholarships and community welfare projects.

Amy Pike served as the Family Readiness Group Leader for the 659th Maint. Co.

"I really appreciate receiving this award and didn't expect it," Amy Pike said. "When [my husband and I] first arrived here I became a part of (Army Community Services). They took care of me during the first deployment. So now I volunteer to give back and help those who are new to the military."

Amy Pike also says that volunteering helps occupy her time especially during deployments.

"You don't have to be alone. Fort Bragg has so many opportunities," she said.

Volunteers are like rare "jewels" because it not often you can find someone to sacrifice a large amount of time to help other.

With volunteerism comes the reward of new friendships and the satisfaction of knowing someone's life was made easier, Amy Pike said.

"I met so many wonderful people and I would have never met them if I didn't volunteer," Amy Pike said. "I am very thankful."

Courtesy Photo

Sgt. 1st Class Steven Chow and Spc. Lisa Diamond of the BlackJack Cafe, the 1st Corps Support Command dining facility, pose for a photo with awards won for excellence in the food service field.

COSCOM chefs earn honors

By Spc. Jerome Bishop
1st COSCOM PAO

Spc. Lisa Diamond, left, prepares a meal at the BlackJack Cafe, the 1st Corps Support Command's dining facility while Sgt. 1st Class Steven Chow supervises. Both Soldiers recieved awards for excellence in the food services.

Courtesy Photo

Two Soldiers of the 1st Corps Support Command's "BlackJack Café" dining facility were honored in a ceremony Oct. 5 for excellence in food services following months of hard work and intense dedication.

Sgt. 1st Class Steven Chow, dining facility manager, and Spc. Lisa Diamond, food services specialist, both of the "BlackJack Café", were presented various awards by Col. Robin Akin, 1st COSCOM rear commander at that time, for their contributions to the excellence in their craft.

"Spc. Lisa Diamond was presented an Army Achievement Medal, a plaque, and a trophy for winning the COSCOM's Specialist Cook of the Quarter for 4th quarter of Fiscal Year 2005 and being selected the runner-up winner for the Installation Cook of the Quarter for the same quarter," Chow said. "I was presented with two Certificates of Achievement and a plaque after the dining facility was selected the Superior Dining Facility of the Quarter, 3rd quarter of fiscal year 2005."

Along with the awards for the dining facility, Chow was also presented with the Honorable Order of Saint Martin, a prestigious award presented to the Soldiers of the Quartermaster Branch, in a special ceremony.

Competing with other dining facilities on post to prove who is the best can take a lot out of the staff, which serves to eliminate those who don't care enough.

"These competitions require a lot of dedication and passion for the job," Chow said. "The competition gets harder each day, as more and more dining facilities compete against each other in the various levels of competitions we enter every year."

While working with the bulk of the dining facility personnel to help push the team to the next level of the facility competition, some Soldiers are also competing with others in the food services for the distinction of Cook of the Year.

"The cooks are selected here to go to the COSCOM Cook of the Quarter board and out of them, two are selected to go to the Installation Cook of the Quarter board," Diamond said. "If you win that, you go on the Corps Cook of the Year board, and then the Cook of the Year on the Department of the Army level."

"It's an honor because you know that the work you're doing is good and you feel good that someone is recognizing it,"

-Spc. Lisa Diamond
Food Service Specialist

During the competition, the dining facility staff runs the risk of encounter complications, which might occur hindering the chance at winning.

"Several challenges come up," Chow said. "Among the most common ones are; shortage of personnel due to deployments, illnesses, and or emergencies, long hours of training and preparation prior to the competitions, which often creates low morale and lack of motivation, and setting high standards and keeping them, year after year."

However through all the hardship of competing as a team, Soldiers such as Diamond who opt to compete on an individual level are faced with many hardships experienced by Soldiers preparing for a board, but with a little extra on the study plan.

"During the board you answer both Army-related questions as well as cook-related questions," Diamond said.

"When you get to the Installation Cook of the Quarter board, you have a written test, a cook-off, and the board," she added. "The board is what makes or breaks you because you can pass the test, win the cook-off and then fail the board, and you lost the competition." In the end, winning a competition doesn't just leave another plaque in a case or another certificate on the wall, but much more which can be carried on for the rest of a Soldier's career.

"Winning the awards and the recognition just keep the Soldiers motivated and lets them know that all the positive things they do on a daily basis is for sure appreciated and compensated," said Chow. "Soldiers built that sense of teamwork and esprit de corps"

"It's an honor because you know that the work you're doing is good and you feel good that someone is recognizing it," Diamond said.

The 1st COSCOM's recent deployment to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom has presented more difficult challenges not normally faced by the staff of the dining facility.

"The 1st COSCOM deployments kind of complicated things around the operations of the dining facility by taking more than 60 percent of our work force away from me. With that, the need for restructuring the team, a new change-of-command and constant

See CHEF, page 48

Wounded COSCOM Soldier tells her story

By Spc. Jerome Bishop, 1st COSCOM PAO

Wars aren't fought and won without sacrifice, and the 1st Corps Support Command is no exception.

Most of these Soldiers find themselves at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Silver Spring, Md. where Chap. (Capt.) Grady Gentry, the 330th Movement Control Battalion and 264th Corps Support Battalion chaplain, also found himself, and a Soldier in the 264th CSG.

"The general purpose was to visit the Soldiers who served under Lt. Col. Steven Cherry (264th Corps Support Battalion commander) while in Iraq," said Gentry. "Lt. Col. Cherry sent me to support these Soldiers who were injured in improvised explosive device attacks."

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

Spc. Natasha McKinnon, an automated logistics specialist with the 249th Quartermaster Company, shows Chap. (Capt.) Grady Gentry, the the 330th Movement Control Battalion and 264th Corps Support Battalion chaplain, her injury and talks with him about life after combat.

"I wanted to tell him about what happened and it seemed like he really wanted to know. Any survivor deserves to have their story told."

Spc. Natasha McKinnon
Automated Logistics Specialist

The Soldier, whom Gentry met with, was more than willing to tell her story and share her experiences and feelings about the attack that took place Oct. 4.

Spc. Natasha McKinnon, an automated logistics specialist from the 249th Quartermaster Company, was injured during a routine mission.

McKinnon, who had been in Iraq only for a few months, had gone on multiple combat logistics patrols before. Unfortunately, it only takes one mission to change a life forever.

"We [were on a combat logistics patrol] to get fuel, and coming back is when we had trouble," said McKinnon. "We were in the last vehicle of the convoy."

"I felt a vibration and I felt it through the floor panel. I started handing my weapon and a field dressing to the gunner," she said.

What McKinnon felt was the blast from an improvised explosive device, the end result being the loss of her left leg below the knee.

"They said that the blast was so powerful that it vaporized the metal," McKinnon said. "That's why they had to amputate."

Amidst the violence and confusion, McKinnon was able to utilize valuable training, which could easily credited to saving her life.

"I was combat lifesaver certified," said McKinnon, "so I took the tourniquet out of my CLS bag and used it on [my leg]. I was amazed, and I was scared."

After stopping the bleeding, McKinnon passed out. It wasn't long before she was on a (medical evacuation) and on her way to safety.

"This all happened Oct. 4," said McKinnon. "By Oct. 5, I was already in Germany. I got here (to Walter Reed) Oct. 12."

See MCKINNON, page 49

COSCOM reaches out to Soldiers through local clergies

By Capt. Sonise Lumbaca
1st COSCOM PAO

The Army has taken many steps to ensure that when Soldiers redeploy from combat there are resources in place for them and their families to turn to for reintegration. One of these vital resources is the Army Chaplain, whom throughout the Army covers a variety of denominations.

Prior to redeploying, many units are briefed by their chaplains on issues that Soldiers are facing when returning home and how to deal with them; but, sometimes this isn't enough. One unit recognizes this and has taken this process a step further. They recognize that some Soldiers confide in their local clergymen for problems such as stress and readjusting to normal life, and that these clergymen may not have the tools to help and refer them to where they can get help.

In aiding Soldiers and improving awareness of the many resources that the Army offers for Soldiers and their families, the 1st Corps Support Command hosted a Spiritual Outreach Forum for local clergymen Oct. 17 at the Fort Bragg Watters Center.

Thirty-seven clergymen of various denominations from the surrounding Fort Bragg communities attended the forum. Included in attendance were clergymen representing Baptist, Greek Orthodox, Islamic and Presbyterian congregations. Additionally, members of the Fort Bragg Chaplain Corps attended to not only brief, but also interact with the clergymen.

"We are recognizing that some Soldiers aren't always coming to our Army chaplains for help, but rather to their local clergymen," said Col. Robin Akin, the 1st COSCOM chief of staff.

Akin, approached her rear detachment Chaplain, Lt. Col. Timothy Lance, about the forum a couple of months ago believing that there was a need for it.

"Colonel Akin came to me and said it would be good for us to get some of the local civilian clergymen together to share with them some of the things they need to know about the various Army agencies in place and what to look for as our Soldiers return (from deployment)," Lance said.

Many Soldiers confide in their local clergymen because a high percentage attend religious services off post and develop close relationships with their congregation, Akin said.

The need for the forum was validated when a deployed member of the 1st COSCOM sent a distressed letter to his pastor stateside outlining personal problems he was dealing with. The pastor immediately contacted members of his unit for help.

"The pastor did the right thing in contacting us. Instead of the situation getting worse we were able to get that Soldier the help he was afraid to ask for," Akin said.

"The most important thing that I took from this (forum) is that there are places that we can refer Soldiers to while understanding that in doing so their careers have not been jeopardized as a result," said Pastor Louise Hilbert of the St. James Lutheran Church.

Like many of the clergymen who attended the forum, Hilbert has had to deal with Soldiers who were afraid to seek help from military agencies for fear that it would negatively impact their career.

"I think it is great because we need to support our Soldiers as they go through what can be a difficult time in their lives," Hilbert said. "Understanding the Army resources and what they can do will benefit us all."

The importance of the forum was emphasized by the attendance of Maj. Gen. Virgil L. Packett II, acting commander for the XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg.

"I am here to really thank you for coming forward and taking part in this initiative," Packett said in addressing the clergymen. "It is so good to see all of you here and I would ask you and your congregations to solicit [Soldiers'] thoughts as you embrace them and welcome them back into your communities. We look forward to your participation and engagement."

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Family Readiness Group and PREP (Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program) were some of the Army resources discussed with the clergymen.

A lot of questions were answered and all of the clergymen received a variety of pamphlets and contact information to aid them in dealing with issues that may arise when confronted by a Soldier in need.

"We are all on the same team in taking care of Soldiers and their families especially since [clergymen] are the ones left behind to take care of the families in some cases," Hilbert said.

With the enlightening of the Army resources and problem that Soldiers and their families are dealing with, local clergymen are now armed with tools to help combat issues.

"I will become more intentional about talking to Soldiers and their families about what they are going through and invite them to share their experiences," Hilbert said.

Paratroopers
refresh their airborne skills

By Spc. Jerome Bishop, 1st COSCOM PAO

A harsh reality of service in Iraq is that airborne operations are few and far between, but paratroopers of the 1st Corps Support Command aren't making their first jump in a year unprepared.

For this situation where Soldiers haven't been able to keep up with their airborne status, the Basic Airborne Refresher course allows them the opportunity to regain their familiarization with airborne operations.

"The purpose of the BAR is so Soldiers who were away from the airborne community can refresh what they learn during airborne school," said Staff Sgt. David P. Hattan, aerial delivery platoon sergeant from the 647th Quartermaster Company, 264th Corps Support Battalion, 46th Corps Support Group.

The course started with a review of actions to be taken before and during the jump. The Soldiers then moved on to practice parachute-landing falls to strengthen their abilities, and their confidence.

"The BAR gives a little tune up and builds confidence," said Sgt. Rodolfo Villafranco, a member of the Secretary General Staff from Headquarters and Headquarters Command, 1st COSCOM. "It's good training for paratroopers and it's a good refresher class."

Since a majority of 1st COSCOM spent a year serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom, their time spent out of the airborne community can present problems when preparing for their first jump after returning to Fort Bragg.

"This is important because if you've been out for a while, the training can get you up to speed for future airborne operations," Hattan said.

Just because the Soldiers didn't have opportunity to jump while deployed, doesn't mean that the knowledge of airborne school was lost. Soldiers taking the BAR noticed how quickly it all came back.

"Down range we didn't jump," Villafranco said. "Once you start to hear it though, it all comes back to your mind."

"We got Soldiers down range who haven't been jumping for a year," Hattan said, "but once they get their hands on it they remember pretty quick."

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

As a jumpmaster at the Basic Airborne Refresher course Nov. 22 instructs the class on the proper wear of a parachute, two students model the donning procedure.

Since the Soldiers have already attended and passed airborne school, the BAR offers an environment where Soldiers can complete their mission as paratroopers instead of students.

"A lot of this stuff is really important because it's a good chance to get them to practice and relax without all the stress of an upcoming jump," Hattan said. "The pressure is not as bad as trying to learn it during pre-jump."

After securing their ruck sacks with a harness and a classroom instruction on donning the parachute, the 1st COSCOM paratroopers can only hope for a good and safe jump.

"It's going to be great to jump," Villafranco said. "I can't wait to get out of the door."

A 1st COSCOM paratrooper practices aircraft exiting procedures in a mock up of a C-17 Globemaster III cargo jet during the Basic Airborne Refresher course Nov. 22.

(Right) Sgt. Rodolfo Villafranco, a secretary general staff team member secures the end of a tie-down strap while rigging his ruck sack for an upcoming jump at the Basic Airborne Refresher course Nov. 22. Photos by Spc. Jerome Bishop

SHARP SHOOTER

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

A Soldier from the 56th Brigade Combat Team hands an Iraqi child a Meal Ready to Eat during an Apr. 30 patrol to a village outside of Tallil Air Base, Iraq. The patrol teams practice "good neighboring" by giving food and water to Iraqi villages they visit during patrols.

A Soldier from the 1st Corps Support Command hugs his wife after returning from Iraq during a welcome home ceremony at Pope Air Force Base's Green Ramp Sept. 10.

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

Photo by Pfc. Mark B. Matthew/ 27th PAD

Soldiers from the 1st Corps Support Command sing the Army Song after receiving end of tour awards during an awards ceremony Sept. 5 at Logistics Support Area Anaconda, Balad, Iraq.

A Soldier from the 1st Corps Support Command load and board a C-130 Hercules Sep. 9 at Logistics Support Area Anaconda on the first leg of their trip home from Iraq. The 1st COSCOM spend a year in Iraq conducting large scale logistical operations in Iraq.

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Pfc. Jason Garner, automation specialist, G6, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Corps Support Command tastes and rates a new Meal Ready to Eat dish during a taste test Nov. 3 held by the Army Times newspaper. Garner, along with four other COSCOM Soldiers tried a variety of new meals and accessories to include an egg omlette, steak sauce, and power drink juice mix.

Soldiers under the 1st Corps Support Command take part in Hawaiian cultural dancing Aug. 23 during a commander's conference hosted by members of the 29th Brigade Combat Team, a unit in the Hawaiian National Guard, at Logistics Support Area Anaconda, Balad, Iraq .

Photo by Maj. Sean Wilson/ 27th PAD

COSCOM celebrates with Heroes' Ball

By Capt. Sonise Lumbaca, 1st COSCOM PAO

High spirits and joy was in the air as the 1st Corps Support Command celebrated a successful deployment to Iraq by commemorating its Soldiers in a Heroes' Ball held at the Fort Bragg Officer's Club Dec. 1.

Nearly 600 Soldiers and their guest attended the ball decked out in their military's finest.

Throughout the ballroom were decorations highlighting the theme of the ball. Large black and white photos of 1st COSCOM Soldiers frozen in time demonstrated how serious the mission in Iraq was and continued to be.

Buzzing through the crowd were tales of one's own experience while deployed, and playing catch up with colleagues, because "sometimes there just isn't enough time to do so in the duty day."

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

This being the final ball with the 1st Corps Support Command for Brig. Gen. Yves J. Fonatine, Col. Kenneth McMillin, 46th Corps Support Group commander and masters of ceremony, roasts the commanding general Dec. 1.

Among those in attendance and honored were Soldiers recovering from wounds received in Iraq.

"It is great to be here and see members of my company again," said Spc. Natasha McKinnon, automated logistics specialist, 249th Quartermaster Company. "I am glad to be here to see everyone."

McKinnon, along with two other COSCOM Soldiers, Sgt. Carla Best and Spc. Ramon Guitard were wounded while deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"The highlight of the ball was having our wounded comrades and their families present for the ball," said Sgt. Maj. Theressa Fillmore, human resource noncommissioned officer. "Recognizing our wounded comrades in person at the ball added a special and personal touch."

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Soldiers from the 1st Corps Support Command and their guest enjoy themselves at the 1st COSCOM Heroes' Ball held at the Fort Bragg Officer's Club Dec. 1.

After a motivating speech from the 1st COSCOM commanding general Brig. Gen. Yves J. Fontaine, a heartfelt video montage starring 1st COSCOM troops in Iraq was played.

"The video was awesome," said Maj. Miles Townsend, support operations officer, 46th Corps Support Group. "It nearly brought tears to my wife's eyes."

It was evident that members of the 1st COSCOM enjoyed the well-deserved heroes' celebration.

Upon completion of the formal portion of the ball, members of the 1st COSCOM "put on their dancing shoes" and "danced the night away."

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

After concluding formalities, Soldiers of the 1st Corps Support Command and their guest top off their dancing by particpating in an old favorite; 'the electric slide."

Chaplain's Corner

Home for the holidays

Chap (Capt.) Grady L. Gentry

Home is a powerful word. It brings up images in your mind's search engine of houses and favorite rooms like the living room, den or dining room or kitchen tables, the front porch or being out in the yard with the dog or with family and friends. It is the place where you had your start, where you learned to navigate life in your understanding of all things considered.

When you got older you decided to join the army you moved away from your comfort zones. Why?

Because you had a dream, an idea, a destiny, a calling to make life better for yourself and others and you chose to serve in the greatest Army in the history of the world.

In the Bible a story is told about a boy who wanted his inheritance so he could leave home and fulfill his selfish desires. He inasmuch said by that action he wished his father dead. He took the wealth and blew it all on fast living, parties for his friends but when the money ran out and the fun was over he was left at a low point with nothing to show for it. The Bible says that he came to himself. He made a decision after seeing the rotten spoils of his spoiled attitude; he decided to go home back to his father who he had left for dead. His father ran to meet him with open arms hugged him and kissed him and had a party for him.

God is like that father ready to bring you back to your faith, to safety and security, to your starting place where you figured out what life was about. It is my prayer that during these Holy days that you would find peace and there would be no better place to find it than at home with God.

Chaplain Contact

Chap. (Col.) Charles Reese	910-396-7303
Chap. (Lt. Col.) Timothy Lance	910-396-7303
Chap. (Lt. Col) Edwin Ahl	910-396-8951
Chap. (Capt.) Grady Gentry	910-907-2014

From the Mule's Mouth

How are you going to spend your holidays?

"I'm going to spend my time here with family and friends. Who wants to travel?"

Maj. Jay Land
Class V Division Chief
Corps Distribution Command

"I'm going to be spending Christmas with my fiancee and his family here in North Carolina."

-Sgt. Lindsey Greenberg
Ammunition Supply Sergeant
Corps Distribution Command

"I'm going to give my daughter a good Christmas since I missed her last one due to the deployment to Iraq."

Pfc. Christopher Phobst
Logistics Specialist
46th Corps Support Group

Inspector General

The Inspector General serves as the eyes, ears, voice and conscience of the commanding general. Our mission is to access and report to the commander on the discipline, efficiency, economy, morale training and readiness of the 1st Corps Support Command.

Before You Tell it to Your Inspector General

-Be sure you have a problem, not just a peeve
(Are the cooks turning out lousy chow or was it just one bad meal)
-Give your chain of command a chance to solve the problem
(Many problems must be addressed to the chain of command for resolution anyway)
-If IG assistance is needed, contact your local IG first
(IGs at higher commands will normally refer the case to the local IG for action)
-Be honest and don't provide misleading information
(IGs will discover the truth quickly in most cases and there are penalties for knowingly providing false information)
-Keep in mind that IGs are not policy makers
(If a policy is flawed you can submit proposed changes on a DA form 2028)
-Keep in mind that IGs can only recommend, not order a resolution
(Only commanders can order; the role of the IG is to advise the commander)
-Remember IGs can only resolve a case on the basis of fact
(Your claim that a supervisor has violated the rules doesn't make it a fact. A claim must be supported with evidence)
-Don't expect instant action on your request...Be patient
(Investigations take time, and IGs tend to have heavy workloads)
-Be prepared to take "No" for the answer
(In any case "Yes" or "No", the IG will explain why)

To complain without fear of reprisal is the right of any Soldier, civilian or family member seeking IG help. After all, problem solving is one of the IG's primary missions.

Inspector General: Lt. Col. James McQuilkin
Deputy IG: Ms. Lynda Avriett
Assistant: Master Sgt. Scott Stein
Assistant: Sgt. 1st Class Lisa Thomas

Hours of Operation
Mon, Tue, Thur, Fri: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Wed: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Phone: 396-8907/ 2788
Bldg#: MT2651
2nd Floor

The Family Readiness Group

From the 1st COSCOM FRG Booklet

What is the Family Readiness Group

An organization of family members, volunteers and Soldiers belonging to a unit that together provide an avenue of mutual support, assistance and a network of communication among the family members, the chain of command and community resources. The primary purpose of any FRG is to encourage self-sufficiency among its members by providing information, referral assistance and mutual support.

Family Readiness Group and what they do

-Give moral support
-Empower families to become more knowledgeable and self-reliant
-Promote more efficient use of community resources
-Increase the Soldier's ability to devote full attention to the mission by offering reassurance that the family members have close, reliable and friendly support
-Provide a helping hand when needed
-Access information and resources to help solve problems
-Provide an effective way of gaining information, support and control during deployment and other times
-Unite other family programs design to improve the quality of life

Family Readiness Group Assistance Program

Leaders
-Assist in putting in place systems to build and strengthen the FRG
-Collect family member information through in-processing, maintain FRG rosters and prepare for FRG IG inspections
-Support plans for predeployment and reunion briefings
-Be part of the rear detachment team in monitoring ad sustaining families through deployments

FRG Leaders and Volunteers
-Track volunteer registration and documentation of hours
-Aid in the publishing of FRG newsletters and information dissemination
-Assist in coordination of FRG meetings by providing tips, guest speakers and resources
-Keep FRG leaders up to date on community resources and set up volunteer training

Soldiers and Family Members
-Provide information and referral to help resolve issues
-Give newcomer orientation
-Be a point of contact for loved ones of single Soldiers

Family Readiness Assistant

Cindy Fitzgerald
396-6345/ 907-2376
cindy.fitzgerald@us.army.mil

Phone Numbers

ACS	396-8682
AER	396-2507
ARC	396-1231
FA	396-5521
Legal	396-4113/ 6113
TriCare	800-931-9501

GLOSSARY

ARC American Red Cross
FA Family Advocacy
FRG Family Readiness Group
RDC Rear Detachment Commander
UMT Unit Ministry Team
IG Inspector General

AVIATION, from page 27

"Dismissed!" said Maj. Gen. Virgil L. Packett, acting commander for the XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg as he released the troops to be with their families.

Corina Maxwell ran into the crowd with her two daughters Kristy, 7, and Haley, 5, to reunite them with their father.

Moments later, Spc. Ryan Maxwell, Co. I, 4th Bn. 159th Avn. Regt., got to see the family he left behind to deploy to Iraq.

"I got my family and friends and all the comforts of home," said Maxwell after spending time with his family.

Soldiers were given the opportunity to spend 15 minutes with family members prior to conducting administrative requirements.

Being together for the first time in a while wasn't without the hardships that were present all the way up to the arrival of Maxwell's flight.

"It seemed like it took forever," said Corina. "The anticipation was really hard. As a civilian I can fly to Timbuktu and back and tell you when I'll be back, but in the military, you never know."

Dealing with the anticipation was only the latest of challenges Corina had to face, which was one of many that she's been working at since her husband's deployment.

"I just tried to get on with my life while he was gone and to do the best I can," she said.

Maxwell's daughters had little to say about the return of their father. "Good" was the only word to come to Kristy's mind.

Haley, however, gave a little more insight to her older sister's feelings.

"She's happy because we love him," Haley said before kissing her father as he went to turn in his M-16, which was the last thing he needed to do before being released for the day.

The 4th Bn., 159th Avn. Regt. deployed in 2004 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Photo by Spc. Jerome Bishop

Spc. Ryan Maxwell of Co. I, 4th Bn. 159th Avn. Regt., leans down to hug his daughter Kristy, 7, while his wife Corina Maxwell watches during Co. I's welcome home ceremony Oct. 20 at Green Ramp.

BRATS, from page 30

Sixteen-year-old Stephen A. Fogarty Jr. assumed this responsibility when his father, Staff Sgt. Stephen A. Fogarty, platoon sergeant and battle noncommissioned officer for the 46th CSG, deployed to Iraq.

"I did a lot of yard work, fixing things around the house, and putting up fence posts," Stephen said.

Unlike Da'Mon, who was upset when his father deployed, Stephen didn't cite any difficulties when his father left. He did miss his father; however, this deployment was easier for he and his younger brother Logan to deal with, he admits.

"[My dad] has been to Korea, Thailand and now Iraq. I'm used to him deploying so, I wasn't too upset," Stephen said.

Stephen looks forward to going home to relax with his family when his father returns.

"We did a lot when my father came home on (rest and recuperation), which wasn't too long ago," Stephen said. "We went out to eat a lot because the food is a little different [in Iraq], so I look forward to just relaxing with my dad."

Courtney Landfried, the twelve-year-old daughter of Maj. Chris Landfried, an operations officer for the 46th CSG, doesn't intend on relaxing when her father comes home.

"We are going to go to a haunted house and have a huge barbeque," she said. "Lot's of our relatives are flying in for it."

The biggest thing that Courtney looks forward to is having a good laugh.

"I haven't had a good laugh in a long time. In our neighborhood they call my dad 'Mr. Da Boom' because he is really funny and always makes everyone laugh," Courtney said.

Courtney said that she didn't get to see much of her father before he left, so it was more difficult for her to deal with. She was especially upset because he was going to be gone longer than before.

"When I see him I am going to run up to him and hug him," Courtney said.

As the aircraft carrying the fathers of Da'Mon, Stephen, Courtney and the rest of the members of the 46th CSG lands, the children along with many other families rushed the door of the pax shed to observe their Soldiers exiting the plane they arrived on.

As the Soldiers marched off to the airfield towards the doors of the Green Ramp pax shed, family members cheered them on. Among the cheers were those from children, including Courtney who leaped up and down frantically waving her American flag.

Photo by Capt. Sonise Lumbaca

Courtney Landfried (right), and her stepmother hugs her father, Maj. Chris Landfried, during a welcome home ceremony at Pope Air Force Base's Green Ramp Oct. 21.

Once the Soldiers were released to their families, Courtney, as earlier predicted, gave her father a hug.

"It is awesome to be home," Landfried said. "[Courtney] has grown so much. Coming home and seeing my family is a big difference than talking to them on the phone."

"I am glad that it is over and am just happy that I am home with my four 'Boos' (a pet name Johnson calls his wife and three children)," Johnson said as he held his 2-year-old in one arm and hugged his wife with the other. Damon stood next to him, looking up at his father with a large smile on his face.

"I feel a lot better now that he is home," Da'Mon said.

Unlike Johnson, who left his personal homecoming open to whatever his family wanted to do, Fogarty anticipate the relaxing time his son Stephen anticipated.

"We have plans to go to the zoo and the beach," Fogarty said; "plenty of family time to be well spent."

"It's good to be home," was a shared comment stated by each father as they hugged their family.

Members of the 46th CSG deployed in support of OIF III to conduct logistical operations that included combat logistics patrols, vehicle up-armoring and force protection operations.

While in Iraq, the 46th CSG was also responsible for the training of the Iraqi army's 1st Motorized Transportation Regiment, Iraq's first transportation unit under the new government.

JORDAN, from page 7

deficiencies, if any, are fixed, everyone is manifested and (civilian) convoy serials are staged."

The MCT runs a tight schedule to ensure that these trucks are staged so that when they're military escorts arrive the trucks are ready to leave.

"The only thing the escorts have to do is conduct a convoy brief and then their ready to hit the road," Neff said.

As far as the challenges they face, they have made great strides to get them to where they are today.

"We've come a long way living out here, there's no situation or operation we can't handle," Whittacre said. "We are always ready to serve."

CHEF, from page 35

training of new personnel was inevitable," Chow said.

"It is a little bit tougher on the new Soldiers that just come from basic training to end up on a fast-paced environment such as Fort Bragg," he added. "However, this environment makes them stronger, smarter, and combat ready for any mission they might face in the future."

Although the "BlackJack Café" didn't make it to the top this year, Chow's expectations of the dining facility and its staff intend to take them all to greatness in the years to come, whether in competition or not.

"My goal is to keep striving to achieve food service excellence and to keep building team players, professionals, and winners," said Chow. "I want my Soldiers to be the best they can and to be proud of their accomplishments. I want to be a role model for all my Soldiers."

With the awards won during the Oct. 5 ceremony as well as others in the past, Chow has acquired skills and knowledge that he plans to use for a long time.

"The amount of lessons learned during my last two years with the 1st COSCOM has given plenty of tools that I will add to my box," Chow said. "I will use those training tools to keep bettering my Soldiers and me."

In the past, the dining facility has won the national nutrition month installation competition two years in a row; placed runner-up at Department of the Army level Philip A. Connelly Competition 2005, installation Best Thanksgiving Day decorated dining facility competition winner and runner-up 2004 and 2005.

The "BlackJack Café" staff has pulled together through the hard times and emerged as one of Fort Bragg's finest dining institutions, and the awards stand to prove that not only are the food and services extraordinary, but the Soldiers who work the kitchen are of equal quality.

REDEPLOY, from page 31

With his time in Iraq behind him, Lewis reflected on how the deployment affected him.

"I am very happy to be back in the states," Lewis said. "Even though we make extra money during deployments, time missed away from your kids is priceless."

"I would have been happier staying here in the states and flip burgers at McDonalds part-time along with serving active duty," he added.

Lewis isn't the only one that is happy to be back in the states again, his parents are excited to have him back as well.

"I'm just blessed that he's back," said Joyce. "I hope he won't be going back any time soon. I'm just praying that this war is going to end."

"I feel wonderfully blessed," said Lewis's father, Thurman Jr. "What did I think [when he got off the plane]? 'Thank God!'"

His wife, however, had more than his homecoming to celebrate.

"Our anniversary is Saturday (Nov. 12) so we're going to go out for dinner. I'm excited," said Juanita. "I'm happy to have him back, very happy."

The 4th Bn., 159th Avn. Regt. welcomed back the last of its Soldiers, including battalion commander Lt. Col. Terence Reeves, during a welcome home ceremony the following day at Green Ramp.

The 1st COSCOM still has about 500 Soldiers serving in Iraq who are expected to return by the end of January 2006.

SIMULATOR, from page 13

Once the Soldiers were comfortable firing the 50 Cal., they put their skills to the test.

"We have 'collective' training where you have one of hundreds of scenarios taking place in several environments including desert, jungle, woodland, and urban where little cartoon characters come out and shoot at you," Gaziano said. "Then we have the 'Shoot, Don't Shoot' scenarios where you go in with a partner into several scenarios such as a bank robbery and you interact and make decisions with your partner."

With training as realistic and convenient as that of the EST, Holland plans to return in the future with good sentiment.

"I definitely would recommend this training, and I will," said Holland. "It seems to give us the ability as close to reality without all the expense and headache of coordinating to get a range."

A lot of commanders and Soldiers on post don't realize that the EST exists here. Most of the troops coming in are from the 82nd Abn. Div. and small groups from other units, Gaziano said. The facility is open to all Soldiers on post.

COMPETITION, from page 19

Although the hope of taking first place in the competition has been in the mind of every cook at the BlackJack Café, the true purpose of the meal was never forgotten.

"The main purpose of Thanksgiving is to make sure the Soldiers get their traditional Thanksgiving meal that they would have back home. Winning the competition is just icing on the cake," Chow said. "If my Soldiers are happy and well fed, then I've done my job."

With the meal done and over with, the hard-working chefs, most of whom have been working late into the evenings leading up to the meal, took the time to rest and enjoy their own work.

"There were nights we wouldn't get out to three or four in the morning," said Pfc. Amber Novak, a food service specialist at the BlackJack Café. "We're not just preparing for Thanksgiving, we're also doing our daily job."

"It feels good to sit down to a job well done. I can relax tonight," said Spc. Wayne Vandever, a food service specialist at the BlackJack Café. "Tomorrow begins the quest for the Phillip A. Connelly competition."

With the exception of the Phillip A. Connelly competition, which is the food service community's top honor, Thanksgiving gives them a chance to let their fellow Soldiers know and taste, what they can do.

"For cooks, this is our time to shine for the command," Vandever said.

RETIRE, from page 32

The time spent by the Soldiers of the 58th Maint. Co. was in a general support environment where their missions support any unit on Fort Bragg, where as their new unit, will focus on the direct maintenance support of 1st COSCOM, said Hearn.

Although the 58th Maint. Co. has closed the latest chapter in its history of existence, the 127th Trans. Co. will be able to start a new chapter in their history as their Guidon was unfurled in a similar ceremony which took place minutes following the inactivation ceremony of their predecessors.

The 127th Trans. Co., which is returning to active status since it's last inactivation in 1967, will act as the 1st COSCOM's newest edition by providing direct service support water purification, storage, and distribution of water.

"I can only speculate that the 127th Trans. Co. activation was to increase the capability of water purification and distribution in the Army," Kiefer said.

While the 1st COSCOM still has elements deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the 127th Trans. Co. is unlikely to see any involvement in the Middle East; at least for a little while.

"The 127th Trans Co. doesn't see deployment in the near future," said Kiefer. "They're still filling equipment and personnel slots.

"It will provide additional water capabilities for the 507th CSG and the 1st COSCOM," Kiefer added. "Six months from today, they will be able to deploy if necessary."

The changes of the 7th Trans. Bn. will hopefully increase the 1st COSCOM's and the XVIII Airborne Corps' ability to fight the Global War on Terror with greater proficiency and productivity.

MCKINNON, from page 36

McKinnon's mother, Janet McKinnon, who has been staying with McKinnon since she arrived at Walter Reed, said she was proud of the progress her daughter has made.

"A lot of people don't believe the amount of progress she made since this happened in October, and it's already November," said Janet. "She's already getting her prosthetic leg. You hear stories about some who don't get theirs for two or three months."

Along with praises on the amount of progress and perseverance McKinnon has made, Gentry hoped that there was one more feeling that they would experience.

"What I hope occurred was that they understood that God cared for them and maybe they experienced the presence of God during my visit," Gentry said. "That was my goal."

Along with McKinnon, Gentry spent some time talking to other Soldiers staying at Walter Reed.

"I think they were very happy to see us," Gentry said. "They seemed to be encouraged that Lt. Col. Cherry remembered them and I think the Ministry of presence was encouraging and thought provoking."

Some Soldiers choose to keep their experiences to themselves. McKinnon was more than happy to chare her story with the chaplain.

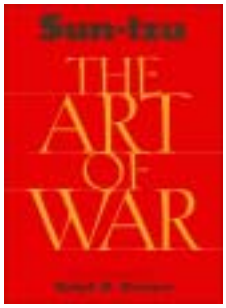
"I wanted to tell him about what happened and it seemed like he really wanted to know," said McKinnon. "Any survivor deserves to have their story told."

After leaving Walter Reed, Gentry took time to reflect on his experiences there with wounded troops, and what he heard of McKinnon's experience.

"It's the first time I visited Soldiers injured to that extent," Gentry said. "It humbled me because of the extent of their sacrifice for their nation and the Army and it was also inspiring."

Although McKinnon and the other Soldiers staying at Walter Reed aren't with their fellow Soldiers or units at Fort Bragg, they haven't been forgotten.

Military Professional Reading



Sun-Tzu: The Art of War

Author: Ralph D. Sawyer

The Art of War is the work of a fifth-century B.C. heir to the knowledge combined by a clan of experts on arms and fighting, and is widely recognized as one of the most useful books ever written on leading with wisdom. Sun Tzu's short but probing aphorisms come to us as a practical guide to achieving success by coming to a deeper understanding of the nature of conflict. *The Art of War* is an essential tool for modern corporate warriors battling to gain the advantage in the boardroom and for anyone looking for advice on how to win the upper hand in confrontations and competitions.

Centuries of Service: The U.S. Army 1775–2004

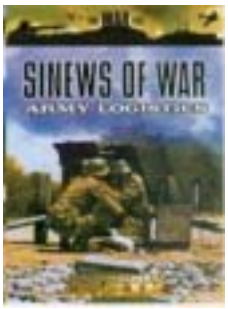
Author: David W. Hogan Jr.

An easy-to-read and informative pamphlet that describes the many missions the U.S. Army has conducted over the course history. The booklet covers America's wars as well as the Army's many operations outside of combat, including occupation, peacekeeping, nation building, exploration, civil administration, scientific research, and disaster relief. This pamphlet is a valuable introduction to American military history for the Soldier and junior leader.

The New Face of War: How War Will Be Fought in the 21st Century

Author: Bruce Berkowitz

This book offers a framework for understanding the new face of combat. As Western forces wage war against terrorism and its supporters, The *New Face of War* explains how Americans fight and the threats we face. The author clearly lays out four key dynamics to the new method of warfare: asymmetric threats, information-technology competition, the race of decision cycles, and network organization. *The New Face of War* is an important book for all new leaders.



Sinews of War: Logistics of the U.S. Army 1775-1953 U.S. Military history series

Author: James A. Houston

This book is a general historical survey of U.S. Army logistics, which includes supply, transportation, evacuation & hospitalization, and service. The book contributes to a better understanding of the significance of logistics in the American military experience, and to an appreciation of some of the logistical problems in its conduct of war from the Revolutionary War through the Korean War. Content that lends itself to completing the book: emergence of modern warfare; warfare overseas; logistics of global warfare; the shadow of conflict; and the uses of logistical experience. Additionally, glossary, maps, charts, tables and drawings rounds out the book.

Helpful Web Sites

U.S. Army Human Resources Command
The HRC mission is to ensure the full spectrum of human resources programs, services and systems are executed to support the readiness and well-being of Army personnel worldwide.

https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/active/index2.asp

ARNEWS
For the latest news happening in and around the Army direct from the office of the Chief of Public Affairs.

http://www4.army.mil/ocpa/news/index.html

Defense link
The official news site of the U.S. Department of Defense providing news for service members, by service members.

http://www.defenselink.mil/

My Pay
A site for Soldiers financial needs covering everything from receiving LES's to setting up allotments and more.

https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx

ArmyAwards.com
An unofficial site produced to aid Soldiers in subjects from organizing the ribbons rack for class A and B uniforms to the latest in DA pay charts along with other news.

http://armyawards.com/index.html

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If you have a story idea, please contact the 1st COSCOM PAO at 910-396-6523/ 568.

TRANSFORM, from page 21

has a wider storage area and can carry more weight than the C-5.

"Pretty much, the Condor is the equivalent of our C-5," Martini said.

Working with the Russian team adds a unique level of international cooperation between two nations towards the advancement of peace in the world.

"The Russian aircrew of the AN-124 was friendly and very cooperative in making sure all of the equipment pallets and aircraft were able to be loaded on the AN-124," said Martini. "Once the AN-124 was loaded, we had about 12 inches or so of room to spare, so they were instrumental in making sure everything that had to go to the Sinai got on the airplane."

Without the help of the Russian crewmembers, the loading of the aircraft that took place Dec. 1, would not have been as fast and effective, said Leake.

"I thought they did a fantastic job," said Leake. "They started loading the Condor at 11 a.m. and they were done by 3 p.m. and it was a tight fit."

The 1st COSCOM is planning to ship three more Black Hawks to MFO peacekeepers sometime in January, however future use of the Condor is still undetermined, Martini said.

"It has been a team effort with outstanding cooperation between all agencies to make the mission happen," Martini said. "I look forward to the same level of cooperation in January 06 when we send the final load of three UH-60s to the Sinai."

AIRBORNE