

THE

Volume 1, Issue 4

Produced for the 416th Theater Engineer Command

Fall 2008

# BRIDGE



OPERATION

# ESSAYONS



# Leader's Notes

## TEC Deployable Command Post – Maj. Gen. Eyre Deploys

by Lt. Col. Donald Gardiner  
416th TEC Provost Marshal

The 416th Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Eyre, has mobilized and deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Eyre was selected by Lt. Gen. Stultz, Chief of the Army Reserve, and Lt. Gen. Van Antwerp, Chief of Engineers, to command the Gulf Region District of the US Army Corps of Engineers.

The Change of Command of GRD will occur with Brig. Gen. Dorko in mid-October. The GRD will eventually transition to the Theater Engineer Command-Iraq at a future date.

With Eyre's deployment, Brigadier General Jimmy Fowler, the former Deputy Commanding General of the TEC, has been appointed the acting commander.

Fowler will continue to lead the TEC until Brig. Gen. Paul Crandall, the current Commander of the 420th Engineer Brigade, returns with the 420th from Afghanistan late in the spring of 2009. Crandall has already been selected to be the next TEC Commander.

This is another historical moment for the 416th TEC, as we continue to lead the way and support Central Command through the deployment of General Officers.

Previous 416th Commanding Generals, Maj. Gen. Mulcahy and Maj. Gen. Heine have deployed to Southwest Asia to lead the 416th. During Operation Desert Shield/Storm in 1990-91, Mulcahy led 416th Soldiers in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait completing theater level engineering support and expertise.

In 2002-03, during the initial stages of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Heine led 416th Soldiers in Kuwait and Iraq providing professional engineering and theater level support. No other major Army Reserve command has deployed three Major Generals in their history.

With the deployment of the DCP, the 416th continues to lead the Army Reserve



**Maj. Gen. Michael Eyre**

and USACE in the number of units and Soldiers supporting the current war efforts in two separate theaters of operation.

The DCP will consist of another seventy Officers and Soldiers from the Headquarters Company, the Facility Engineer Group, and even some of the other down-trace units. Their job will be to continue the success of the GRD by providing command and control of professional engineer forces, and provide full spectrum engineering support to the Multi-National Force Commander in Iraq.

The DCP will most likely continue to utilize Eyre's Four C's – Communication, Coordination, Cooperation and Compassion, as they perform daily work throughout Iraq and Kuwait.

We wish all the DCP Soldiers and Families well during their upcoming deployment.

### THE BRIDGE

Produced for the 416th Theater Engineer Command

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# First Up

## Public Affairs Unit Rolls Out OPERATION ASSIST

*Pilot program will provide unit-specific visual marketing materials and greatly impact unit recruiting efforts*

*by Lt. Col. Edgar Montalvo  
318th Press Camp Headquarters*

FOREST PARK, Ill. – In July 2008, the 318th Press Camp Headquarters dramatically expanded its training program for Army broadcast journalists (46R) by partnering with the 416th Theater Engineer Command's G-1 section to provide selected units assistance with their Army Reserve – Recruiting Assistance Program. This joint program incorporates Lean Six Sigma process enhancement tools and analysis to bring about an increase in total accessions, while providing essential public affairs training.

**Unit Recruiting Plans** – Broadcasters from the 318th PCH will visit various 416th TEC down trace units in an effort to assist them in developing and implementing a comprehensive Unit Recruiting Plan. Each subordinate element of the 416th TEC is already required to develop a recruiting plan that seeks to attract and retain our most important asset, our Soldiers. Units that have not already completed this critical first step will be provided templates and walked through the process of making one. Once a unit has a tailored recruiting plan, site visits can be scheduled.

While it remains the responsibility of the unit to execute their plan, specific assistance is available from the 318th to units with two key components of an effective recruiting plan – enrollment of as many current unit members into the AR-RAP as Recruiting Assistants, and the development of unit specific recruiting material.

**Enrollment of AR-RAP Recruiting Assistants** – The most effective unit recruiting plans incorporate enrollment of current members into the AR-RAP as Recruiting Assistants. Often unit participation levels are low because Soldiers are unaware of how to enroll, or believe that doing so obligates them to become mini-recruiters. Successful command teams understand the many benefits that result when they maximize unit level participation in

this critical program, and best accomplish this through education – all current Soldiers of the unit need to learn how to enroll, as well as the potential financial benefits in participating as a RA.

According to AR-RAP statistics, for every 10 unit Soldiers enrolled as a RA, the unit generates 4 prospects or future Soldiers, which then typically results in 1 new accession. Each unit has been assigned an accession mission based upon assigned unit strength. The best commanders know their mission number and that working toward achieving this mission means increasing RA participation levels.

**Development of Unit-Specific Recruiting Materials** – Many units lack the resources needed to create and prepare unit specific recruiting materials, which has been shown to have a positive impact in helping prospects make decisions about joining a particular reserve unit. This unit recruiting material provides two immediate benefits, first, by becoming the training vehicle by which broadcasters become more proficient at telling the Army's story, and by assisting the unit's overall recruiting effort.

Broadcasters will interview unit command teams and other unit personnel to create unit specific recruiting material, both video and printed brochures, which will then be available to unit members to help tell their unit's story, and ultimately to positively impact unit recruiting efforts. Both the videos and printed material, such as tri-folds, will strive to present the unit in a most favorable manner by capturing unique characteristics about the unit, along with contact information for those wishing more information.

For commanders at the battalion level or higher, interested in more information about this pilot program, contact Capt. Aaron S. Jenkins, PAO for the 318th PCH, at 708-209-2600, ext. 270.

## AKO Keeps Families Connected Too!

*by Glenda Wilson  
416th Theater Engineer Command  
Family Programs Assistant*

The 416th Theater Engineer Command Family Programs staff would like to encourage all Soldiers to sponsor their Family member with an AKO account (no CAC needed)! Whether you are deployed overseas, mobilized homeside, or TPU this is an excellent way for Family members to stay informed (through updates from

the Family Readiness Group), not to mention the free instant messaging, webcam availability, chat rooms and the ability to have their own FRG or Family link. Though no email is totally secure, this is the best way to communicate and it only takes a couple of minutes to sign them up.

# Command Notes



## Sexual Assault Intervention

The Secretary of the Army, the Honorable Pete Geren, and Chief of Staff of the Army, Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., have made the prevention of sexual assault a priority. Consequently, Command Sgt. Maj. Larry E. Reeve and I call on all leaders within the 416th Theater Engineer Command, but especially upon first-line supervisors to give this issue your full attention.

As first-line supervisors, taking care of Soldier should be second nature – this means that it becomes our duty to establish a command climate and the appropriate conditions that leave no doubt that there is no place in the Army for sexual assault and sexual harassment, and to ensure that everyone understands that such behavior will be prosecuted to the fullest in accordance with UCMJ. Additionally, first-line supervisors must explain to all Soldiers their duty, as by-standers to intervene and protect their comrades from harassment and the risk of assault.

According to published reports, the 2007 rate of reported sexual assault cases in the Army was more than double the rate of our sister services. Since 2001, with our Nation at war, over 1800 Soldiers have been punished for sexual assault of their fellow Soldiers, with nearly 500 additional cases pending final disposition.

In an effort to reverse this trend and make the Army a role model for society as a whole – in which sexual assault becomes a thing of the past, the Army has recently developed a comprehensive prevention strategy consisting of four overlapping phases, each with specific goals for reducing sexual assaults while increas-

ing reports by Soldier who are victims of this crime.

The program includes the education and training of our Soldiers to ensure they understand their moral responsibility to intervene to stop sexual harassment and protect their comrades from the risk of sexual assault, along with several tactics to intervene effectively.

The Soldiers who committed these crimes betrayed not only their victims, but all Soldiers who count on them, for they violated a sacred trust and forfeit their claim to the title “Soldier.”

And when a fellow Soldier fails to intervene to protect a comrade from harassment or the risk of assault, he or she has forsaken the duty to never leave a fallen comrade – and therefore, they too become complicit in the crime and have no place in the Army.

Sexual assault and harassment are repugnant to everything a Soldier stands for and we all must recognize and condemn them as the crimes they are, and as destructive of the moral fiber that gives our Army its inner strength.

So I ask each of you to join the senior leadership of the 416th Theater Engineer Command, together with Soldiers across the Army in a commitment to eliminate sexual assault and harassment from our ranks. Our immediate goal is to create a climate of zero tolerance for gender-based misconduct – in attitude, word and deed. As our Army erased the ugly stain of racism and built our Nation’s model organization for color-blind opportunity, so too shall we succeed in this effort.

Essays,

Brig. Gen. Jimmy E. Fowler  
**Commander, 416th TEC**

Command Sgt. Maj. Larry E. Reeve  
**Command Sergeant Major, 416th TEC**

# 420th Engineers Bridge the Gaps in Afghanistan's Busy Highway 1



Australian and American Combat Engineers construct a Mabey Johnson bridge near Mogur along Afghanistan's Highway 1, which stretches from Kandahar to Kabul, to replace one destroyed by insurgent activity this summer. The engineers finished the bridge in two days. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Tomas Rofkahr)

*by 1st Lt. Tomas Rofkahr  
Combined Joint Task Force 101*

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – Capt. James Reid and his fellow Soldiers from the 420th Engineer Brigade, known as Task Force Castle, teamed up with an Australian Reconstruction Task Force to construct bridges on Afghanistan's main highway.

Due to their combined efforts, they recently completed the emplacement of two bridges near Andar and Moqur in eastern Afghanistan. Insurgent attacks during the summer left the bridges in each location impassible to both civilian and military traffic, forcing Afghans and coalition forces to use single-lane bypasses.

Work progressed quickly once the Australian and American combat engineers arrived on site.

In just over two days, the first bridge in Andar was quickly erected and the forces then moved to Moqur, where they emplaced the second bridge.

The stretch of Highway 1, or Kandahar to Kabul road, that the engineers worked on, is a paved route originally built in the 1960's that joins the two major Afghan cit-



The old bridge near Mogur (inset), and its replacement. (U.S. Army photo by 1st. Lt. Tomas Rofkahr)

ies. The 300-mile stretch that the bridges are located on was refurbished in 2002 and 2003 as part of President Bush's Afghanistan Road Initiative. According to USAID, the work was credited with reducing the transit time between Kandahar and Kabul by half.

In recent months, Highway 1 has become a focal point for insurgent activity. Both Taliban fighters and common bandits are targeting supply convoys and merchant traffic up and down the route. The bridge attacks were the latest in the Taliban's efforts to impede Afghanistan's reconstruc-

tion and stability.

"Each section of the bridge is called a bay and is about 10 feet long," said Reid, Task Force Castle's assistant operations officer. "We were able to do a 10 bay bridge in two days."

Reid has seen a great deal in his 20 years of military service, with multiple tours in Iraq and now building bridges in Afghanistan.

"I'm excited to be involved in this," said Reid. "It's helping everybody, it's helping Afghanistan, it's helping the coalition forces and it's just a win-win for everyone."

## Introducing Strong Bonds!

by CH (Col.)

Timothy M. Samorajski

Strong Bonds is for you! Each event is conducted over the course of a weekend at various times and locations at no cost to you. In fact, the Army puts you on orders to attend!

As members of the world's premier fighting force, Soldiers make sacrifices for our country every day, as do their loved ones. We all know that military life places extreme hardship on our relationships, especially within our families.

Because of this, the Army has committed unprecedented resources to help Soldiers build stronger relationships through the Strong Bonds Program.

Strong Bonds empowers Soldiers and their loved ones with critical relationship building skills. It is a nonsectarian, holistic, preventative program committed to the

restoration and preservation of Army families, even those near crisis. The program is initiated and led by Army Chaplains and more than 90% of those attending rate it positively. The specific program consists of three component parts. Strong Bonds for couples, for singles and for families.

**Strong Bonds for couples** Whether you've celebrated one anniversary or 20, as an Army Reserve couple you can expect more excitement and more challenges than the average civilian couple. Long separations and the stress of deployment subject marriages to much more stress. Strong Bonds for couples seeks to teach skills that will fortify marriages while providing a time of relaxation and fun. As a couple, you'll practice communication and relationship building skills critical for the health of the

marriage relationship.

**Strong Bonds for singles** About 50% of Army Reserve Soldiers are single. Strong Bonds for singles reaches out to this group and affirms that growth and wholeness can occur in all stages of life. Additionally, single soldiers learn to examine priorities, manage mate selection patterns and learn to evaluate a relationship's potential for long term success.

**Strong Bonds for families** This is a fairly new addition to the Strong Bonds Program and seeks to assist the entire family. Children are involved and attend along with their parents. The key focus is communication and conflict resolution skills.

To locate an event near you, simply visit the Strong Bonds website at: [www.strongbonds.org](http://www.strongbonds.org).

## Are You Fit For Duty?

by Capt. Tracey Golden

318th Press Camp Headquarters

On the heels of the Democratic and Republican National Conventions as Americans consider which candidate is best suited to hold the position of President of the United States, it seems logical that we might take a moment to think about our own approval ratings.

While you may not be racing to the White House or even the state house, the positions you hold and the roles you fill within your personal, professional and social life are very important. Regardless of your position or title, your contributions either add to or subtract from value of your relationships and/or organizations. So here is the question... "Are you fit for duty?"

As Reserve Soldiers the answer may seem obvious. "Well of course I'm fit for duty, I passed the PT test and I received a pretty good review from my commander," you may respond. But how are things

going in the other areas of your life? You may have maxed the push-ups, but are you maxing your role as a parent or spouse? Are you going the extra mile at work? Are you doing a good job balancing your professional career, reserve career and family?

If you answered "yes" to all of these questions hold your own convention in the spirit of true democracy and tell everyone how great you are! However, if you answered "no" to any of these questions it is time to decide what is important to you and to get to work on a fitness plan to be all that you can be in every role that you play.

Consider what it will take for you to feel good about your performance in the various roles you play. However, you must remember that this is not just about you – it is also about the people you serve. So be sure to consider the expectations of your audience what must you do to satisfy their needs? Do your kids expect you at every

sporting event or will they be pleased with your performance if you are there fifty percent of the time? Is fifty percent enough for you to satisfy your personal objectives and goals or do you need to attend seventy five percent of their activities to feel like a winner?

Once you have a plan, present your platform and open yourself up to debate. Let your audience know what you plan to do in order to be their number one choice and they will let you know whether or not you are on the right track. Remember, they have a vested interest in your success; therefore, your audience will be happy to provide the feedback that will help you fine-tune your plan to best address the issues.

Do whatever it takes to be fit for duty. Every role you play an opportunity to serve; and service is both an honor and a privilege. Earn the right to serve and be brilliant!



The bumper turret is one of several pressurized water pumps that the HEMMT-based Water Tender can muster to assist the Tactical Firefighting Truck in combating flare-ups over most any terrain. The first HEWATT was fielded to the 406th Engineer Detachment of El Dorado, Kan. in June. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Darius R. Kirkwood)

## 406th En. Det. Firefighters First to Receive New HEMMT-Based Water Tender

*by Spc. Darius R. Kirkwood*  
*318th Press Camp Headquarters*

EL DORADO, Kan. – The Army Reserve engineer unit that made headlines as the first to be fielded with the HEMMT-chassised Tactical Fire-Fighting Truck in 2005 has achieved a new milestone, as they now have the honor of being the first operators of a new HEMMT-Based Water Tender from Pierce Manufacturing's Bradenton, Fla. production line.

Six members of the 406th Engineer Detachment (FF) in El Dorado, Kan., undertook 24 hours of intense training on the tanker June 25th – 27th, led by Honeywell Technology Solutions instructor Bobby Bailey.

The eight-wheeled extreme-duty vehicle has the capacity to deliver a 2,500-gallon portable water reservoir to support the TFFT during missions on rough terrain, or in areas that lack a modern water source.

It also has some firefighting abilities, with a bumper turret and several under-truck nozzles that can deliver water or foam to a blaze.

"The only water source is 1000 gallons on the TFFT," said Dave Gardner, program manager for the TFFT and the HEWATT at Pierce Manufacturing. "There are 2,500 gallons of water for those guys to make use of on the HEWATT to support

a mission anywhere the Army goes."

When the 406th deployed to Iraq in 2004, they did not yet have the TFFT or the HEWATT.

According to Staff Sgt. Norman D. Docter, class leader during the training sessions, Soldiers from the 406th had to make do with an M920 tractor-trailer towing a 6,000-gallon water tank. While this makeshift firetruck had no trouble transporting a large volume of water, it lacked a pressurized pump, which provides the directable flow critical to firefighting operations.

The HEWATT, coupled with the TFFT, addresses this and other vehicular inadequacies with ease.

According to Docter, maintenance on their old trucks was often a concern, since the souped-up M920s they employed while mobilized had been upgraded with firefighting equipment that was not common to the Army's fleet of wheeled conveyances.

With its familiar HEMMT chassis and standardized equipment load, however, the HEWATT will easily transition into motorpools Army-wide.

It will also be an easy fit for first responders like the Soldiers of the 406th, who will use them to preserve the lives and safety of their fellow servicemembers wherever the mission dictates.



Honeywell Technology Solutions instructor Bobby Bailey briefs Soldiers from the 406th Engineer Detachment (FF) on their tasks for the day during the hands-on portion of training on the new HEMMT-Based Water Tender, pictured above. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Darius Kirkwood)



Pfc. Jacob T. George of the 406th Engineer Detachment (FF) demonstrates the HEMMT-Based Water Tender's firefighting abilities, while Staff Sgt. Lance A. Koslowsky fills the portable 2,500-gallon water reservoir that is critical to its support role during training on the new tanker on June 26th, 2008. The 406th is the first unit to receive the HEWATT, which provides direct support to the Tactical Fire Fighting Truck, the Army's primary fire extinguishing conveyance. They were also the first unit to receive the TFFT. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Darius Kirkwood)

# Around the Command

Soldiers conduct MOUT (Military Operations in Urban Terrain) training during the Sapper Stakes competition at Operation Essayons 2008. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Mekonya Cheefus)



Spc. Chris Richmond of the 100th Battalion, 422nd Infantry receives a dental examination and filling from Capt. Mike Chiaramonte, a dentist with the 7222nd Medical Support Unit, during Operation Essayons 2008. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Christopher Oposnow)



Soldiers rig an explosive shape charge during a field exercise at Operation Essayons 2008. Working with demolitions during annual training is part of a combat engineer's job. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Mekonya Cheefus)

Enjoy taking pictures? The 416th TEC Public Affairs Office is always looking for Unit Public Affairs Representatives (UPAR) to submit photos for future editions of *Around the Command*. Please forward all submissions to Staff Sgt. Danny McCormick, Assignment Editor, at [danny.e.mccormick@us.army.mil](mailto:danny.e.mccormick@us.army.mil), with "Around the Command" in the subject line.



Cliff rappelling was part of the overall training experience at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. during Operation Essayons 2008. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Mekonya Cheefus)



Soldiers from the 428th Survey Detachment, working in collaboration with the 368th and the 411th Engineering Brigades, work with new state of the art equipment such as the Tremble GPS Survey Device during Operation Essayons 2008 at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Joshua Horneck)



Soldiers from the 674th Asphalt Company operate a street paver during Operation Essayons 2008. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Carolyn Kettelhut)



Sgt. 1st Class Gery Ryan of the 389th Engineer Battalion demonstrates combatives techniques during a training session at Operation Essayons 2008. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Mekonya Cheefus)



Realistic training scenarios is the norm during Sapper Stakes at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. during Operation Essayons 2008. Named for Staff Sgt. Coby Schwab, the Sapper Stakes is a competition in several critical task areas performed by a combat engineer. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Joshua Horneck)

# Newly Formed Brigade Directs Patriot Warrior Engineer Assets



Sgt. BillyJoe Sutton, the 739th Engineer Company Multi Role Bridge fourth squad team leader, applies camouflage before going out on a recon mission to a nearby lake. During this recon mission they will check the water depth, distance across, angle, etc., for use in a bridging operation. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Seth Myers)



Spc. Travis Sharrock, a heavy equipment operator for the 994th Engineer Company in Denver, Colo., gains experience in carpentry while cutting out a window opening with a circular saw. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Timothy Book)

*by Sgt. Seth Myers*  
*310th Expeditionary Sustainment Command*

FORT MCCOY, Wis. – With all the missions, training and role-playing during Patriot Warrior, a unit is brought in to organize and direct the engineer units involved.

This unit is the 372nd Engineer Brigade, and it was just activated in October of 2007.

This is the first time the personnel in this unit are working together on an operation.

The training here provides them with the scenario and the resources to make this better than the usual A.T., said Lt. Col. Patrick E Gallagher, executive officer of the 372nd.

“[Patriot Warrior replicates] what the true work load on our unit would be,” said Gallagher. “The [engineers] in this exercise have a simulated component computer as well as live units on the ground doing actual working projects, and the 372nd’s role is to control the engineer unit as well as one chemical battalion to support the exercise.”

The 372nd will direct units that will be doing everything from expanding roads for better tactical movements to improving

buildings on Fort McCoy.

There will also be a chemical unit qualifying on the Biological Integrated Detection System, firefighters doing controlled burns, bridging exercises, route clearance and other various projects.

Gallagher also stressed the benefit of working with units they haven’t worked with before because that occurs often in today’s Army.

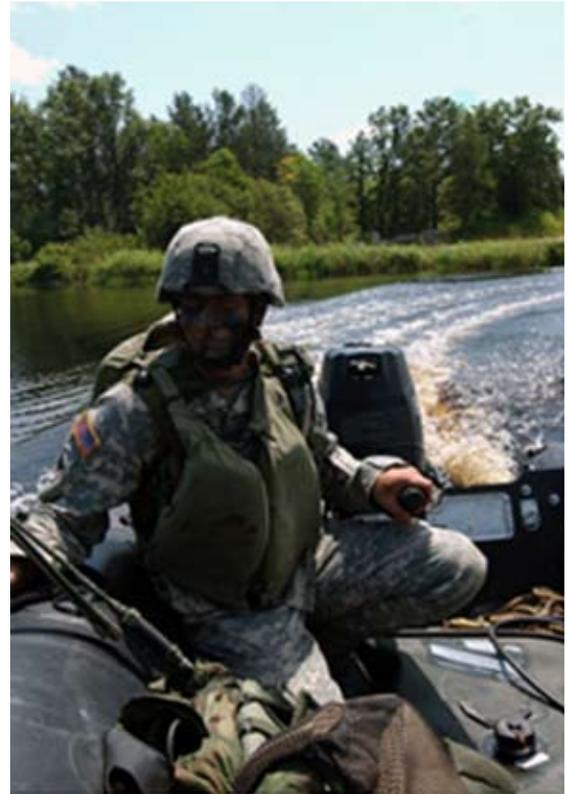
However, becoming adept at working with unfamiliar units and the realistic scenario aren’t the only experiences they intend on getting out of Patriot Warrior.

“The biggest thing is to get our team put together, establish systems, test them, document them in our [Standard Operating Procedures] so we have a format we know works... and get that all documented so when we walk out of here we have some experience under our belt; we know each other as a staff, a cohesive team,” said Gallagher.

“We need to get this brigade ready to go to war right away and whatever it takes to do that we are ready to do.”



Spc. Brian O'Connell finishes the corners of a window opening with a hand saw. O'Connell, a heavy equipment operator, is gaining experience as a carpentry/masonry specialist during Patriot Warrior 2008. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Timothy Book)



Sgt. Nicholas Joellenbeck, the 739th Engineer Company's (Multi Role Bridge) assistant noncommissioned officer in charge, drives a raft while conducting reconnaissance in the area before a bridge is laid down. This raft will also provide security when the bridge is being built. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Seth Myers)



Soldiers of the 994th Engineer Company adjust a newly constructed stud wall to align with a wall already in place, as Pfc. Kendall Guinn uses a level to ensure the wall is plumb and true. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Timothy Book)



Pvt. Brandon R. Walker, a Soldier from the 994th Engineer Company, nails a header to tie in the newly erected stud walls and prepare this 16 by 32 foot-structure for the rafters and roof. The semi-permanent structure is constructed as a SWA hut, characterized by a foundation of concrete blocks sunk no more than six inches. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Timothy Book)



Crater charges, as pictured above, are used to create craters on roads or trails to slow down the enemy during combat. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Mekonya Cheefus)

# Engineers Get Demonstration On Demolition

by Sgt. Mekonya Cheefus  
318th Press Camp Headquarters

FORT HUNTER LIGGETT, Calif. – Range 12 was crawling with spectators July 19 waiting patiently for the show to begin; they all knew the signal to look for.

Once the final group headed for the berm, it was just a couple minutes to show time.

The 411th Engineer Company from Iowa City, Iowa capitalized on a rare opportunity to train their 85 Soldiers on explosive materials. Careful instruction was given on how to identify and assemble basic firing circuits or technically called a Modern Demolition Initiating system.

“This is good training,” said Master Sgt. Wigger Torres from the 411th Engineer Brigade who was the quality control officer that day. “All engineers, not just combat engineers should have basic demolition knowledge.”

Torres said MDIs are used to ignite various charges in a combat environment.

Both the shape charge and cratering charge were detonated on the range. The shape charge creates a blast approximately 6 feet deep by 2 feet wide into the ground. The cratering charge is then placed in the hole created by the shape charge. Once detonated, the explosion creates an obstacle to oppose the enemy.

The first explosion is considered a confidence blast, explained 1st Lt. Melanie Spiegel, OIC for the engineer company.

“Some of our newest Soldiers have never experienced this type of training before. The confidence blast allowed them to become more comfortable handling the materials and less intimidated,” said Spiegel.

Soldiers were excited about an opportunity to get real-world training.

“This was a great overall experience because I got to do some real MOS training. This was the first time that I got to

detonate. In basic training and advanced individual training, we were only allowed to set up the explosives as a safety precaution,” said Pvt. Michael Decarlo, a combat engineer with the 411th Engineer Brigade.

Even with all the excitement of watching things go boom, safety remained an important part of the demolition training, explained Torres. Many precautions were taken to ensure that no one was hurt. Soldiers involved in the set-up quickly walked to the berm, putting a safe distance between them and the detonation. Others watched the explosion further away from the comfort of the bunker. Some of the observers were simply happy to have the time off to be present.

“The Soldiers learned a lot and enjoyed themselves,” said Torres. “Demolition is not always available in the Army Reserve so this is a good retention tool for engineers.”

# 372nd Soldier Commissioned After 18-Year Break in Service

by Maj. Dan Benson  
364th Press Camp Headquarters

FORT IRWIN, Calif. – After serving on active duty for four years, Keith Krzeminski figured it was time to start the next phase of his life.

It was 1989, and Krzeminski, who had advanced to the rank of sergeant, decided to get out of the Army.

Years passed. Krzeminski, who was born and raised in Toledo, Ohio, earned a bachelor's degree in construction engineer technology in 2005 from the University of Toledo. In civilian life he now works full-time in project management and construction.

Something began to pull Krzeminski back to the military.

“Ever since Sept. 11, I just wanted to give a little back,” Krzeminski said. “I got my degree, started my career and family, and I felt that I had taken enough from the system. I wanted to give a little back after Sept. 11.”

Krzeminski and his wife, Deborah, reside in Columbus, Ohio, with a son, Robert, and an infant daughter, Sarah. After discussing what it would mean to be back in the military, Deborah was supportive of his decision to join the Army Reserve, Krzeminski said.

“My wife had her doubts, seriously, but in the end, she would support my decision because that's what made me happy,” Krzeminski said.

With his family's support, Krzeminski joined the Army Reserve three years ago. He is a member of the 304th Engineer Company's detachment in Monclova, Ohio.

The decision to join the Army Reserve, however, has provided Krzeminski more opportunity than he originally expected.

“I have enjoyed being back in,” Krzeminski said. “I came back in with the presumption that I would just try to get my E-5 back, and just try and occupy a slot as a squad leader. Then I was afforded the opportunity to go through the direct commission program and become an officer,



2nd Lt. Keith Krzeminski checks out a project site at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif. Krzeminski was recently commissioned after living as a civilian for 18 years. (U.S. Army photo by Maj. Dan Benson)

which was like a dream.”

Krzeminski, who turned 42 years old on May 6, was commissioned as an officer in December 2007 - 18 years after he completed his stint on active duty.

As a new second lieutenant, he is planning to attend phases two and three of the Basic Officer Leadership Course, beginning in January.

In the meantime, Krzeminski is using his engineering skills as a platoon leader with the 304th. He served as the officer in charge of a concrete masonry unit's building project during annual training at Operation Sandcastle in May and June.

Krzeminski said he finds being in the military a little more challenging physically at age 42, but he also believes that mentally he is more prepared to be in a leadership role than when he was younger.

As a leader and one who has experience

debating the merits of staying in or getting out of the military, Krzeminski said he has mentored younger Soldiers who are faced with similar decisions on their futures.

“I've had a few Soldiers coming up on (the end of their enlistments),” Krzeminski said. “I told them that they are good Soldiers - to not depart the Army Reserve, because the Army right now needs all the qualified and experienced people they can get. There is a lot of opportunity for advancement in the Army Reserve right now. There is a lot of money out there. There is a lot of opportunity for these young Soldiers to stay in. It is a good choice.”

The choice to get back in the Army Reserve is one that Krzeminski is glad he made. He figured it was time to start another phase of his life, as a Soldier and an officer.

# 414th Chemical Company Holds Decontamination Training During Operation Essayons

by Spc. Carolyn M. Kettelhut  
318th Press Camp Headquarters

FORT HUNTER LIGGETT, Calif. – Figures in rubber suits dot the dried and arid California landscape. The figures look more like aliens than like Soldiers. However, these suits, as foreign as they seem, protect the men and women from nuclear and biological threats.

“We are here to support the 389th Engineer Battalion, basically because engineers do a lot of digging,” said Cadet Tyson Furgess, the 414th Chemical Company executive officer. “If they dig up any type of chemical, biological spills or anything, we will react to it. We will come out, set up our site and send those guys through our wash racks.”

To keep their skills fresh, the 414th Chemical Company held their monthly decontamination training exercise Monday at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. Pressure washers and a conveyor belt sat in a large tent nearby. Upwind from the tent, Soldiers put on white suits. While yellow-suited Soldiers waited inside the tent with the pressure washers in their hands – ready.

Spc. Gregory Sinclair was placed on a stretcher and quickly carried up the hill by several yellow-suited Soldiers. They saturated him with water from head to toe and scrubbed him thoroughly.

Carried farther up the hill, Sinclair was hosed down again and sent on a short ride on a conveyor belt.

The yellow-clad crew was on the “contaminated” side of the field. Once decontaminated, Sinclair was then taken to the white-suited crew, where they would dispose of his water-soaked clothing.

This continues several more times until several Soldiers, posing as casualties, stood at the final area soaking wet and dripping.

Luckily for the casualties this was only a training exercise. In the event of an actual emergency, decontamination



Soldiers in white suits haul Spc. Gregory Sinclair, a chemical mechanic from the 414th Chemical Company, to the uncontaminated area where he dries off. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Carolyn M. Kettelhut)

chemicals would have been added to the water and the casualties would have been medically evacuated out of the area.

Despite the heat, the training was successful, said Pfc. Michael Linn, a chemical operations specialist in the 414th Chemical Company. Linn, a runner, carried the stretchers to the tent.

“I think the overall mission went well. It is really hot in these suits. I think the speed and accuracy of everybody doing their job was excellent,” said Linn, while still wearing the remnants of his yellow suit.

Soldiers found the exercise refreshing in more than one way.

“It was hot, then it became cold really fast, but it was pretty fun,” said Sinclair, a chemical mechanic.

Some Soldiers got baths instead of showers.

Sgt. Crystal Barnes, a new supply sergeant at the unit, was one of the lucky candidates to get thrown in the water bladder behind the tent.

“It was fun,” Barnes said then laughed. “I’m new to the command, so that was their welcome.”

However, the seriousness of the training was not lost on the Soldiers.

“We’re here to train for anything that could happen either stateside or anything dealing with Soldiers,” said Furgess.

“If we were to get hit with any kind of chemical or biological agents, we will be on standby. If this nation gets hit with any kind of chemical weapons, we would probably be the ones saving your life.”

# Operation: HYDRA



The 688th Rapid Port Opening Element and the Air Force's 570th Global Mobility Squadron train together during Operation Hydra at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Scott D. Turner)

*by Spc. Christopher Oposnow  
318th Press Camp Headquarters*

FORT HUNTER LIGGETT, Calif. -- With a 12-hour notice they can deploy anywhere in the world. Within 24 hours they can create a fully functional landing strip and deliver cargo to people who have been ravaged by natural disasters.

To achieve this level of proficiency, members of the Army 688th Rapid Port Opening Element and the Air Force 570th Global Mobility Squadron train together during Operation Hydra to build airstrips and rapidly respond to disasters.

"We can provide over 35 tons of supplies," said Col. Steven Jordon, Joint Task Force Commander. "Our main job is to clear an airfield to do that."

The seven-day exercise simulates situations and environments that the Soldiers may one day find themselves in, added Jordon.

"We get together to do rehearsals of different types of scenarios," said Air Force Lt. Col. Luke Calarnc of the 570th Global Mobility Readiness Squadron. "So, when we get into the field this isn't the first time we think about things we may run up against."

Army 1st Lt. Latirice Watson said she is proud of what they are able to accomplish but hopes their services are never needed.

Air Force Staff Sgt. Jose Velasquez said that joint-service training is an interesting experience. The joint service environment has allowed him to be both a teacher and a student.

"It's a great idea for these branches to join together, and it's a wonderful process, I love helping people, and working with the Army," said Velasquez.



Spc. Gregory Sinclair of the 414th Chemical Company gets an initial scrub-down after being removed from the contaminated area during the exercise. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Carolyn M. Kettelhut)



During the process of chemical decontamination, 'casualties' are brought through the decon line for a thorough washing and cleaning. Spc. Gregory Sinclair, a chemical mechanic with 414th Chemical Company, plays one of the casualties during Operation Essayons. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Scott D. Turner)



Sgt. Crystal Barnes, the 414th Chemical Company's supply sergeant, gets the traditional 'dunking' from 414th unit members after their chemical decontamination exercise while at Operation Essayons. All new members get to take the plunge at their first chemical exercise. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt 1st Class Scott D. Turner)



A dripping wet Lt. Col. David Baker says farewell to the Soldiers of the 476th Chemical Battalion during his change of command ceremony June 22. Baker was replaced by Lt. Col. Richard Williams. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Amanda J. Solitario)

# A Soaking Farewell

by Sgt. Amanda J. Solitario  
304th Public Affairs Detachment

A military fire truck idled in the distance, waiting for Lt. Col. David J. Baker to approach the podium. When he did so, the truck sent a powerful stream of water in his direction until not a spot on his uniform was dry.

Soldiers of the 476th Chemical Battalion took a break from training to say goodbye to their old commander, Lt. Col. Baker and welcome Lt. Col. Richard D. Williams, during a spring ceremony at Ft. Lewis, Washington.

With the sun hanging overhead, Williams assumed control of the battalion from Lt. Col. Baker. As the new commander, the Soldiers are reminded of Lt. Col. Williams' veteran status within the battalion. For the last year, Williams has served as the unit's executive officer, which he said has helped to prepare him for this new position.

"As the executive officer of the unit, I had a lot of interactions with the rest of the staff," Williams said. "Taking on the role of commander, I will now see the bigger picture."

Already familiar with the unit and staff, Williams said he is looking forward to the future with the unit.

During the ceremony, Col. Robert Dickson, 301st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade commander, addressed the audience of Soldiers, family and friends assuring them of Williams' high level of expertise.

"Incumbent upon every leader is to take care of Soldiers and to

take care of families," Dickson said. "It is the one most important thing, and it has to happen. I have the utmost confidence in Lt. Col. Williams."

Dickson said Williams was a perfect fit for the position given his extensive chemical and civil affairs background.

Command Sgt. Maj. Sherri LaCroix, noncommissioned officer in charge of the battalion, echoed Dickson's sentiments.

"He grew up in this unit," LaCroix said. "He has a strong chemical and civil affairs background and is a well-rounded individual."

Williams has served in the active duty component, Army Reserves and National Guard. Some of his various positions have included leadership positions in a Military Intelligence Battalion, Air Defense Artillery, Field Artillery, Chemical Battalion and a Psychological Operations Battalion.

Near the conclusion of the ceremony, Williams briefly thanked the Soldiers for the opportunity to serve as their commander.

Following the ceremony, the Soldiers returned to the field to complete their three-day training exercises.

Lt. Col. Baker, uniform still damp from the soaking farewell, laughed as he thanked the unit for the two years he spent serving as commander.

"At least it never rained on me in the field," Baker joked about the prank.

# Brig. Gen. Fowler Visits Troops at Fort Hunter-Liggett

by Sgt. Mekonya Cheefus  
318th Press Camp Headquarters

Brig. Gen. Jimmy Fowler, deputy commander of the 416th Theater Engineer Command, visited the troops supporting Operation Essayons at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. His presence acknowledged hardworking Soldiers within the command.

“The purpose of this visit was to show the flag of the 416th. There are a lot of new Soldiers out there and this is their first year wearing our patch. I think it is very important that Soldiers who are new to our down trace [units] see that there is command emphasis in this program.”

The visit also allowed him to show some recognition to the Soldiers who are out there working hard and deserve it, Fowler said.

Operation Essayons is a U.S. Army Reserve Command sponsored exercise and part of the Army Reserve Training Strategy in support of the Army Force Generation concept. Fort Hunter Liggett is now the USARC’s largest training facility.

“The exercise is focused on training engineers by contributing a great deal in development of one of the Army Reserve’s foremost combat support training centers,” said Maj. Joseph Snel, plans officer from the 411th Engineer Brigade. “Many of the projects taking place during the operation not only provide important skills training but enhance the quality of life for those who live and work on this post which was previously used as private hunting grounds.”

Fowler was provided an overview of the operation by the 411th Engineer Brigade from New Windsor, N.Y., and the task force facilitating Operation Essayons in 2008. He then visited several of the work sites and interacted with Soldiers.

“It is important to visit the troops so they can see that nobody cares about them more than the Army does. At the 416th TEC, we care about what our troops are doing. It’s important that we make sure the training is legitimate and worthwhile,” Fowler said.

Fowler, an engineer officer, has been deputy commander of the 416th from Darien, Ill. since February 2005. As a civilian, he is Dr. Jimmy Fowler, Associate



Spc. Cory Hanson of the 411th Engineer Company receives a coin from 416th Theater Engineer Command deputy commander Brig. Gen. Jimmy Fowler for reciting the Soldier’s Creed after a demolition exercise at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. (Photo by Sgt. Mekonya Cheefus)

Technical Director for military Research and Development Center in Vicksburg, Miss.

At each site, the South Carolina native happily initiated conversation with men and women damp from sweat under the California sun.

“Everybody out here enjoying themselves?” Fowler asked.

The Soldiers responded positively to the one-on-one attention.

“It’s nice that we have higher ranking officials coming out here to observe us

and the work that we do and the type of training they allow us to do and see how we progress and grow as Soldiers,” said Pfc. Derek Bleile from the 411th Engineer Company.

Fowler said he wanted his Soldiers to take advantage of the training provided here at Operation Essayons.

“It might save your life. It will make you a better person or maybe it leads to a different civilian job opportunity. Get the most out of the time you got here and enjoy it and be safe,” Fowler said.

# Parting Shot

