

# ARNORTH Monthly

March 2010



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**Command Sergeant Major:** Command Sgt. Maj. David Wood  
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## Air Defense

# 263rd ADA trains for National Capitol Region mission

By U.S. Army North PAO

FORT BLISS, Texas — As U.S. Army North's commanding general watched on, Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 263rd Air Defense Artillery Brigade, a South Carolina National Guard unit based out of Anderson, S.C., showcased their formidability during a live-fire exercise Feb. 26 at the White Sands Missile Range in New Mexico.

Lt. Gen. Guy Swan III, ARNORTH's commanding general, visited the air defense Soldiers and observed the Soldiers as they shot down remotely piloted aerial targets with Stinger missiles.

The live fire was the culminating event for the Soldiers, who deployed Feb. 8-27 to Fort Bliss to prepare for their upcoming mission in providing air defense capabilities for the National Capitol Region.

"The Soldiers are prepared to step into this arena, and we have all the tools to accomplish the mission," said Command Sgt. Maj. Jamie Wilbanks, the senior enlisted leader for 2nd Bn.

"We are motivated," declared Wilbanks. "We understand the mission set and understand that this is one of the most important missions in the world."

The Soldiers are scheduled to replace the Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 265th Air Defense Artillery Regiment, a Florida National Guard unit, in conducting the vital mission of monitoring and defending



Photo by Sgt. Joshua Ford, U.S. Army North PAO

Lt. Gen. Guy Swan III (left center), U.S. Army North commanding general, is briefed by Soldiers with the 2nd Battalion, 263rd Air Defense Artillery Brigade, South Carolina National Guard, during an exercise at White Sands Missile Range, N.M., Feb. 26. The exercise was designed to prepare 2-263rd ADA Bde. for their upcoming mission to provide air cover for the National Capitol Region.

the region's airspace.

During their yearlong deployment, which begins in March, the unit will be based out of Bolling Air Force Base, Washington. "I'm excited to go – It's a cool thing to do," said Pfc. Trevor Gaston, an Avenger crewmember with 2nd Bn. "Taking all our equipment up there for a year and having this real-world mission is an honor."

The Soldiers began preparing for the deployment more than 18 months ago, said Wilbanks, adding that they participated in numerous national-level exercises and culminating training events.

"The training has been great. The Soldiers have done an excellent job and are prepared for this mission," concluded Lt. Col. Bill Brown, 2nd Bn.'s commander.



Photo by Sgt. Joshua Ford, U.S. Army North PAO

Lt. Gen. Guy Swan III, U.S. Army North's commanding general, meets with the Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 263rd Air Defense Artillery Brigade, a South Carolina National Guard unit, during a live-fire training exercise Feb. 26 at White Sands Missile Range, N.M. The live fire was the culminating event for the Soldiers, who deployed Feb. 8-27 to Fort Bliss to prepare for their upcoming mission in providing air defense capabilities for the National Capitol Region.

## Civil Support

# ARNORTH puts homeland defense unit to CST test in Nevada

By Sgt. Joshua Ford

U.S. Army North PAO

LAS VEGAS — U.S. Army North's Team B, West Division, Civil Support Training Activity, evaluated the Soldiers and Airmen of the Nevada National Guard's 92nd Civil Support Team during a certification exercise Feb. 10 at the National Guard Readiness Center in Las Vegas.

CSTs, such as the 92nd CST, are designed to assess hazards, advise civil authorities, and facilitate military support during emergencies and incidents involving weapons of mass destruction.

During the exercise, the 92nd CST was tasked with responding to a training scenario in which two men created a harmful biological agent and attempted to use it to contaminate food and water sources.

"We try to make the exercise as real as possible," said Phillip Barnes, an operations analyst with Team B.

During this exercise, the team used aerosol cans to simulate devices used to spray biological agents.

The evaluation exercise tested the Soldiers and Airmen on 12 collective tasks that include more than 450 sub-tasks. Tasks included setting up a worksite to evaluate any harmful biological or chemical threats found in a mobile laboratory.

"Making sure that we don't grow complacent is the driving force behind this," said Maj. David Sellen, 92nd CST commander. "We can't afford to be complacent — especially when it comes to homeland



Photo by Sgt. Joshua Ford, U.S. Army North PAO

Sgt. Anthony Rigano (left) and Sgt. Ryan Campbell (right), both survey team members, 92nd Civil Support Team, Nevada National Guard, prepare to enter the simulated contaminated zone while Phillip Barnes (orange vest), operations analyst Team B, West Division, Civil Support Training Activity, U.S. Army North, evaluates the team during the 92nd CST's evaluation exercise Feb. 10 at the National Guard Readiness Center in Las Vegas.

defense."

Rich Murphy, a contracted role player and assistant fire chief in Florida, played the situation commander, representing a unified command under local, state and federal authorities, to provide more realism to the training.

"This allows law enforcement agencies and civil support teams to manage their own assets while key decisions are made collectively by local, state and federal officials,"

said Murphy.

Additionally, a representative from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Las Vegas office played his role as the FBI's representative.

"Every time we go out to one of these exercises, we learn something," said Brett Handy, FBI weapons of mass destruction coordinator. "It's a great opportunity to increase our understanding of the different agencies."

Evaluation exercises not

only certify the CSTs, they also provide the CSTs, local, state and federal responders a good understanding of what each agency does in the event of a disaster or attack.

"Once you get in and do the networking, you prove that you are competent in your ability and, more importantly, you show you aren't a threat to another agency's environment," said Sellen. "You show

— see CST, Pg. 5



Photo by Sgt. Joshua Ford, U.S. Army North PAO

Left: Sgt. Ryan Campbell, a survey team member with the 92nd Civil Support Team, Nevada National Guard, tests a puddle of water for biological or chemical contamination during the 92nd CST's evaluation exercise Feb. 10 at the National Guard Readiness Center in Las Vegas. Right: Staff Sgt. Roberto Caceres, decontamination noncommissioned officer, 92nd Civil Support Team, Nevada National Guard, prepares a decontamination site during the 92nd CST's evaluation exercise Feb. 10 at the National Guard Readiness Center in Las Vegas.

from **CST**, Pg. 4

that you're actually there to support and, with that, you take away that 'Hollywood' stereotype that the military is coming to take over when it's the exact opposite."

The training and evaluation process proved essential for the 92nd CST when it had to react to a real world situation.

In 2008, Nevada first responders requested the 92nd CST's assistance when the highly toxic chemical Ricin was discovered in a Las Vegas motel. The team also assisted in Hurricane Katrina

recovery efforts.

"This is an experienced group," said David Brown, Team B operations analyst and observer/controller. "During the exercise, (the 92nd CST) concisely made the effort. That's what we look for. They met all the tasks to standard. They're a good team and did an outstanding job."

"ARNORTH has a vested interest in making sure we are trained; but at the same time, it is a reality check," said Sellen. "They aren't going to tell us things that are good and pat us on the back. They are going to tell us where we stand, good or bad."

## Tax Assistance Center

Main Post Location: Building 158, located at New Braunfels and Wilson Road.  
 Hours: Tuesdays through Fridays 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
 Closed: Sunday and Monday  
 For appointments call (210) 295-1040  
 Brooke Army Medical Center Location: BAMC basement, Room L31-9V (BAMC Library)  
 Hours: Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
 Closed: Saturday and Sunday  
 For appointments call (210) 916-1040

# ARNORTH trains for the unthinkable

By Michelle Tan

Army Times

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas — Lt. Gen. Guy Swan III, U.S. Army North commanding general, and his Soldiers at U.S. Army North are training for a mission they hope they'll never have to execute.



Swan, who took command Dec. 15, said his new assignment is "sobering."

Army North, the component command to U.S. Northern Command, conducts homeland defense and supports civil and local authorities.

"I can't think of anything more noble to do than protecting the people of the United States," Swan said during a meeting Jan. 6 with Army Times. "With all due respect to the people of Iraq and Afghanistan, protecting the American people is job (number) one."

Most recently, Swan was chief of staff

and director of operations for Multi-National Force — Iraq and is aware that the Army is stretched by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, he said, the Army plays a key role in protecting the homeland.

"I think 9/11 and (Hurricane) Katrina were two events that showed there is a role for the Army and the other services in the homeland, but we need to stay in our lane," he said, adding that in these cases the active-duty military plays a supporting role to local and state authorities.

"We can assist law enforcement agencies with capabilities they may not have," he said.

For example, Army North's Joint Task Force — North in El Paso, Texas, supports America's counter-drug operations by providing assets such as unmanned aerial vehicles and intelligence analysts, Swan said.

Swan likened the defense of the U.S. to a series of concentric rings, with the troops fighting overseas forming the outer ring.

The innermost ring what Swan calls the "no-penetration line," is made up of local law enforcement, local first responders, the National Guard and Army North.

"If we can't stop al-Qaida in Afghanistan and they work their way to the United States, and they should be challenged every step of the way, we're part of that last line of defense," he said.

However, in this innermost ring, the Army takes a step back and works in support of the local authorities, Swan said.

"I would say a good 90 percent of emergency events are handled by local law enforcement, local first responders, the local National Guard," he said. "Army North ... is the insurance against the big one."

That leads to potential events that keep Swan awake at night.

"The one that scares me to death is a Chernobyl-type event," he said, referring to the April 1986 incident at a nuclear reactor at the Chernobyl power plant in Ukraine.

"We've made a lot of mistakes in Iraq and Afghanistan ... and we've fixed them," Swan said. "In a catastrophic event, you don't get a second chance."

That is why one of Swan's priorities is training, he said.

"We plan for the worst-case scenario and hope that what you have is less catastrophic," he said.

## ARNORTH DCG inducts new recruits during S.A. Stock Show and Rodeo



Photos by Becky Garcia, San Antonio Recruiting Battalion PAO

Left: Maj. Gen. Perry Wiggins (left), the deputy commanding general of U.S. Army North, rides out on horseback Feb. 12 to induct 40 new recruits into the U.S. Army during San Antonio's annual Stock Show and Rodeo at the AT&T Center. Right: Maj. Gen. Perry Wiggins, the deputy commanding general of U.S. Army North, shakes hands with a new U.S. Army recruit prior to a mass enlistment ceremony Feb. 12 during San Antonio's annual Stock Show and Rodeo at the AT&T Center. Wiggins, along with his wife, Annette (right, cowboy hat), met with the 40 recruits and their parents during a "Future Soldier" function prior to the event.

# JTF-CS members earn 'Employee of the Year'

## Capt. Bruce Hill

JTF-CS PAO

FORT MONROE, VA. – Seven Joint Task Force – Civil Support employees at Fort Monroe learned in February that they won JTF-CS Employee of the Year 2009 in their respective categories.

Names of the awardees were released to all JTF-CS employees via email on Feb. 8.

As a result of their selections, their names were forwarded to compete for employee of the year at the U.S. Northern Command level the first week of March.

“At first I was surprised,” said Paul Marcinko, deputy surgeon for JTF-CS and

winner of the Civilian Category II award. “It’s a good feeling to think your boss feels you are worthy of such recognition and that the things you do are appreciated by the command.”

You compete at the NORTHCOM level if you won at the JTF-CS level for the year, said Sharita Burns, Navy chief information specialist, JTF-CS.

“Categories and how to submit a package are listed in the instruction,” (North American Aerospace Defense Command and NORTHCOM Quarterly and Annual Awards Program Instruction 36-137), Burns said.

The program is designed to recognize personnel for outstanding accomplish-



Photo by MC1 Steven Weber, JTF-CS PAO

Marine Col. Ben Hancock (left), deputy commander of Joint Task Force — Civil Support, presents Col. Pat Stevens The Defense Meritorious Service Medal Feb. 19.



Photo by MC1 Steven Weber, JTF-CS PAO

Navy Command Master Chief Glen Hopkins is presented the Bronze Star for his actions and Mission Support while deployed to Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom. The medal was presented by Maj. Gen. Daniel E. Long, commander Joint Task Force — Civil Support Jan. 8.

ment during a specific period and applies to U.S. and Canadian Forces personnel.

The JTF-CS Employee of the Year award winners in their respective categories are:

Lt. Elizabeth Smith, U.S. Navy – Company Grade Officer of the Year category.

Maj. Sueann Ramsey, U.S. Army – Field Grade Officer of the Year category.

Petty Officer 3rd Class Aaron Shanahan, U.S. Navy – Category I.

Staff Sgt. Christopher Hale, U.S. Marines – Category II.

Master Sgt. Lucas Hansrote, U.S. Air Force – Category III.

Paul Marcinko – Civilian Category II.

Patty West – Civilian Category III.

According to the instruction, each category submission is measured by achievements in the following three performance areas: leadership and job performance, significant self improvement, and installation and

community involvement.

Nominees must be permanently assigned to Headquarters, NORAD and NORTHCOM at least 180 days to be eligible.

Reserve and National Guard component members who have trained or worked in the commands for at least 180 days, either consecutively or incrementally, are eligible to compete as well.

“Deadlines for NORTHCOM submissions are put out by NORTHCOM before the year’s end, but is normally the end of January,” Burns said.

Winners are normally announced shortly after the Annual Awards Board, which is held the first week of March.

Nominations, publications and forms for 2010 are available on the Headquarters NORAD and USNORTHCOM e-publishing Web site for downloading and ordering at <https://operations.norad-northcom.mil/sites/CommandGroup/ChiefOfStaff/pubsandforms/default.aspx>.

# Senior medical NCO retires after 20-year 'adventure'



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Manuel Torres, U.S. Army North PAO

Retired Master Sgt. Miguel Contreras congratulates Sgt. 1st Class Isaac Lester on his retirement. Contreras served as Lester's first noncommissioned officer in charge. He had the rare opportunity to mold and direct Lester for his first years in the military. Now 20 years later, Contreras sees how Lester's career was everything he knew it'd be. "He was always willing to learn and grow," said Contreras.

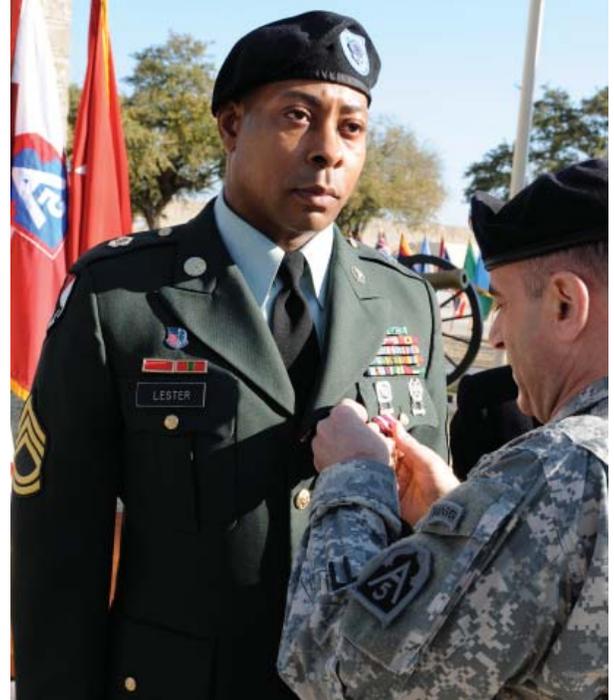


Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Manuel Torres, U.S. Army North PAO

Maj. Gen. Jefferey Jacobs, Contingency Command Post 2 commander, pins the Meritorious Service Medal on Sgt. 1st Class Isaac Lester Feb. 26 at the Quadrangle for his significant contributions to U.S. Army North and the U.S. Army.

## ARNORTH welcomes new EEO manager

### ARNORTH EEO

Gerard Francis serves as a member of the Special Staff for the Army North and as the chief of the Equal Employment Opportunity section.



Gerard Francis

He began his assignment in February. He is responsible for Army North's Equal Employment Opportunity program and its execution.

Francis has more than 25 years of experience in various assignments, such as an EEO officer and manager, complaints manager, federal employed women's program manager, black employment program manager, hispanic program manager, asian pacific islander program manager, me-

diation director, EEO manager and senior EEO specialist. He has served in five different countries: Germany, Japan, Panama, The Netherlands and Belgium. Other duty assignments include New York, Massachusetts, Oklahoma and Arkansas.

Francis holds a Bachelor of Science in Business with double majors in Management and Marketing from Indiana University.

He is a certified mediator and EEO counselor for the Department of the Army, is registered in the states of Massachusetts and New York, and is a certified trainer for prevention of sexual harassment.

In 2004, he received a Meritorious Civilian Service Award as the Complaints Manager for the Defense Contract Management Agency. He has also received Commander

Awards, an Army Certificate of Achievement and two Achievement Medals for Civilian Service.



# When it comes to standards, there is the wrong way and the “Wright Way”

**By Sgt. Maj. Tyrone Wright Sr.**

*ARNORTH Chaplain Sgt. Maj.*

Let me say that I am proud to be a Soldier and a noncommissioned officer – a leader of Soldiers. NCO leadership, like the Army culture, has transformed over the years and will continue to do so as we serve during this critical time in the history of our nation.

Being a member of the U.S. Army North team of highly competent and confident noncommissioned officers who support the enduring DSCA mission, I have established a genuine respect and appreciation for this team and the core values we represent. Indeed, our mission is unique and NCOs and Soldiers are charged with shaping the environment for success.

As I look back over nearly a decade of supporting persistent conflict and contingency operations overseas, NCOs have truly stood at the tip of the spear in the realm of leadership. We are relevant and our roles, functions, skill sets and capabilities continue to enhance as we lead our nation’s sons and daughters in combat zones.

It has been, and continues to be, our responsibility to set and maintain standards, order and discipline, take the moral high ground, shape junior leaders for the future, care for Soldiers and their well being and remain the professionals personified by our NCO Creed. We are the driving force behind our commander and command sergeant major.



As Gen. Casey so eloquently put it at the kickoff of 2009 as the Year of the NCO, he stated: “NCOs are the drivers of the Army and the keepers of standards.”

We must tell our story and lead by our actions. The ARNORTH leadership team expects us to lead, and authority has been given to us by regulatory guidelines. As I look at the imperatives listed by the Chief of Staff of the Army, as well as Lt. Gen. Swan’s commander’s vision and philosophy, one of the overarching themes is the well-being of our Soldiers and Civilians – People really matter!

NCOs must be the solid force to ensure this philosophy remains a compelling need in order to build a cohesive and dynamic team, both in our command and across the Army. I have lived by this quote as a “Wright Way” rule of thumb, which states: “Soldiers don’t care about how much you know until they know how much you care.” This applies at all levels and to all leaders.

As our command continues to evolve, I am confident the state of our organization will continue to grow strong under practical and relevant leadership. Our role is to remain flexible, adaptable and available to those whom we serve: seniors, peers and subordinates alike.

NCO leaders, I applaud your dedication and commitment to excellence. Let’s continue to keep our Corps relevant, strong and ready by making the necessary impact in our Army, this command, the lives of Soldiers and our Civilians. We are the finest Corps on the face of the planet, and we are Army Strong – Hooah!

For God and country!

## Technology can pose security risk in workplace

**By James Parker**

*ARNORTH Security Manager*

Our nation’s security can be damaged by new technology that is being introduced into our work place.

This is especially true if we don’t understand the capabilities as well as the vulnerabilities of our technological wonders.

We learned how to deal with phones and computers in a secure environment and we must do the same with ever evolving new communications equipment.

For example, video teleconferencing systems contain both a microphone and a camera.

These systems are designed to help save time by offering the advantages of a face-to-face meeting without the travel.

They have been introduced into both secure and unclassified areas in an effort to save time, money and resources.

The problem is that these systems were not designed with security in mind, and specific security procedures were developed to accommodate them.

Other time saving and work-enhancing electronic devices

can intentionally or unintentionally be used as surveillance equipment if the devices are not properly used or controlled.

Cellular phones pose a serious security risk to safeguarding information.

Very simple and low level tech-



nology is available to intercept and capture conversations. Cellular phones send radio signals to low-power transmitters

located within “cells,” which broadcast in a radius of varying distance.

As your automobile travels from cell to cell, the signal carrying your voice is transferred to the nearest transmitter. Radio scanners can intercept these signals.

Newer models of cell phones can be turned on remotely and can be used to intercept and monitor all conversations occurring within a room; they can record and many have camera capability.

There is no privacy or security in using cellular phones. This is why cellular phones must be turned off in secure work areas.

# LT. GEN. GUY SWAN III EXPLAINS THE MISSION, VISION AND PHILOSOPHY FOR HIS COMMAND

1. Purpose: Outline my vision and command philosophy for the future of U.S. Army North as the Joint Force Land Component Command and Army Service Component Command for U.S. Northern Command.

2. Mission: U.S. Army North, the Joint Force Land Component Command and the Army Service Component Command to U.S. Northern Command, conducts homeland defense, civil support operations, and theater security cooperation activities in order to protect the American people and our way of life.

3. Vision: The Army's Center of Excellence for Civil Support and Domestic Operations and NORTHCOM's "go to" command to lead, coordinate, and support land domain operations in NORTHCOM's area of responsibility.

4. People — our most vital resource. This command has come a long way since reaching full operational capability on 16 October 2006, and I applaud the efforts of all the men and women of Army North who have gotten us to this point. I will continue to focus on building a highly competent, disciplined workforce operating in a World Class environment. We will actively hire the best Civilian and military professionals available and build career progression paths that place you at the top of our profession. I count on your professionalism, expertise, and initiative to get the job done and you have my total trust and confidence. My job is to provide top cover and to underwrite well-considered risks. And, don't forget to take time with Family and friends to recharge and enjoy the unique benefits that San Antonio offers. That being said, we are an operational command with an operational mission and may be called upon on very short notice.

5. Five areas where we must be the best:

a. **Training** — U.S. Army North is the recognized training center of excellence for civil support operations and defense support of civil authorities — in order to provide the DoD response to any emergency in the NORTHCOM area of responsibility — includes exercise design, observer-trainers, SMEs, skilled senior mentors, and non-DoD players.

b. **Theater Security Cooperation** — The security of our Nation is inextricably tied to the security of Mexico and Canada. Our role includes traditional mil-to-mil partnerships as well as military support to U.S. law enforcement agencies that are assisting Canadian and Mexican law enforcement in countering transnational threats.

c. **Planning** — Our military training has provided us skills that are equally important to our many partners. We will share that expertise in ways that make others successful, in a respectful manner, and helps build planning capacity in other agencies, departments, and jurisdictions. Planning also helps us anticipate and get ahead of the inevitable confusion that goes with catastrophic events.

d. **Command and Control** — C2 of DoD response forces in large scale operations is our strength. We will be able to build teams, staffs, organizations on short notice in what will be "come as you are" chaotic operational environments. Must be practiced constantly.

e. **Synchronization and integration** — We will assist our interagency, international, and State partners in synchronizing and integrating a response or operation. For example, our DCOs play this role when integrating requested DoD response forces into a USG response within a State. Our military training has made us experts in this crucial area.

6. Measuring Success. We operate in a complex environment and must aid others — international, interagency, intergovernmental partners, our subordinate Joint Task Forces (JTF), and the Defense Coordinating Officers/Elements (DCO/E) to accomplish their missions. I will measure our success by how successful we make others in our theater of operations.

7. JFLCC. This is why Army North was conceived to be the NORTHCOM Commander's single point of contact for all land-based operations. Our authority comes from being the Land Component Command; therefore, we will emphasize our JFLCC roles and responsibilities.

8. Value. In a resource-constrained environment, we must demonstrate our value every day to our partners, the States, NORTHCOM, and HQDA. We will strive harder to ensure we prove our relevance to homeland defense and civil support by being the best in the five areas above.

9. To do all of the above, we must see ourselves as true Theater Army headquarters. Staff training and synchronization must step up a level. As we move U.S. Army North forward with the DA-approved Concept Plan, adding much-needed personnel, capacity, and capability, we can only be successful and of value to our higher headquarters and our subordinates if we operate as a true 3-star headquarters at the operational/strategic level in our theater of operations.

10. A Final Thought. We will not be afforded much time to respond to an emergency or catastrophe. So, we must do all we can ahead of time to prepare ourselves as completely as possible for all missions. In today's homeland and national security environment, you and I will at some point be asked to execute our mission on short notice. When that call comes, our fellow Americans will count on us — we will not let them down!



  
GUY C. SWAN III  
Lieutenant General, USA  
Commanding

## News

## Army-Wide

## U.S. engineers train Haitians to assess building damage

By Sgt. Richard Andrade  
16th MPAD

TOURGEAU, Haiti – The Naval Facilities Engineering Command partnered with Army engineers, Navy Seebees, engineers from the Air Force, Feb. 26, to train Haitian engineers on building assessment, to ensure Haitian citizens are living in structurally-sound buildings.

“The work we are doing today is to systematically walk through neighborhoods assessing damage,” said Vince Sobach, a NAVFAC Joint Task Force Engineer. “The primary goal is to get people back in their homes. The second part of the mission is training the local Haitian engineers. Basically we are doing a technology transfer. We are trying to both things at the same time, since time is of the essence.”

Sobach explained that many of the residents of Tourgeau are in one of the local internally displaced persons’ camp that is very much overcrowded. He said it is essential that the camp is decompressed.

“The goal today is to evaluate all the houses and structures in the neighborhood of Tourgeau for earthquake damage and get people back to safe houses or tell them if they are living in a dangerous one,” said Bryan Haelsig, a NAVFAC engineer.

The group of engineers walked from house to house knocking on doors, looking in and around buildings and talking to residents. All of the Haitian citizens opened their doors with no protests and confidently showed the cracks on the walls of their homes.

“We are here to do the assessments for two reasons,” said U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Scott Shaulis. “According to a United Nations poll, it is estimated that the people living in the large displaced persons’ camp near the palace, about 85 percent of them are from Tourgeau. If we find that their homes have little to no damage from the earthquake,” Shaulis said, “it is hoped that they will come home and alleviate the strain on that camp.”

## Army launches ‘Apps for the Army’ challenge

By Ashley McCall  
Army News Service

WASHINGTON – The Army announced its first internal applications development challenge March 1, dubbed Apps for the Army or A4A.

Open to all Soldiers and Department of the Army Civilians, A4A offers Army personnel the opportunity to demonstrate their software development skills and creativity.

In return, the Army hopes to improve its current capabilities or to add new ones - all through the ingenuity of its people. The Army will recognize the top submissions at the LandWarNet Conference in August 2010. Winners will receive monetary awards. The total cash pool is \$30,000.

“We’re building a culture of collaboration among our Army community to encourage smarter, better and faster technical solutions to meet operational needs,” said Lt. Gen. Jeff Sorenson, the Army’s chief information officer.

### Department of Defense

## Military OneSource offers free tax filing

By Elaine Wilson  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Defense officials encourage military families to once again take advantage of the free electronic tax filing services offered through Military OneSource.

People can access the H&R Block at Home program by going to Military OneSource at <http://www.militaryonesource.com/> and clicking on “Tax Filing Services.”

More than 200,000 servicemembers filed their tax returns through this resource last year, officials said.

“We have such a mobile force, and you have folks dispersed all over the world. It’s a quick link for the Family to link up with the (servicemember),” said Tommy Thomas, deputy undersecretary of defense for military community and Family policy. “It’s a convenience for you to be able to go on that site and file that tax form.”

The program is open to active-duty, Guard

and Reserve servicemembers, regardless of activation status, as well as spouses, dependent children and Family members standing in for a deployed servicemember.

Participants can e-file up to three state resident returns for each federal return, Thomas said. However, he added, they should ensure they’re filing through Military OneSource. People who file through H&R Block directly may be charged for services, he cautioned.

The program is set up for basic returns. People who wish to upgrade to the premium program also may incur charges.

For tax assistance, filers can call a Military OneSource tax consultant from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. EST, seven days a week, at 1-800-730-3802.

## Gates issues terms for ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ review

By Lisa Daniel  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Defense Secretary Robert Gates released the guidelines and parameters of a Defense Department review of the so-called “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” law March 2 in preparation for its potential repeal.

The 10-month review should include input from service chiefs and all levels of the force and their families, Gates said in a memo to Army Gen. Carter Ham, commander of U.S. Army Europe, who was chosen to head the effort along with Jeh Johnson, the Pentagon’s top lawyer.

Gates established the review Feb. 2, saying it would be critical to ensuring a smooth transition if the law that bans gays from serving openly in the military is repealed, as President Barack Obama has proposed.

The review also should engage Congress members, Gates said, as well as “key influencers of potential servicemembers and other stakeholder groups.” It should also take into account the experiences of foreign militaries, he added.

“To be successful,” Gates said in the memo, “we must understand all issues and potential impacts associated with repeal of the law and how to manage implementation in a way that minimizes disruption to a force engaged in combat operations and other demanding military activities around the globe.”

## News

## Regenerative medicine shows promise for wounded warriors

By Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

FORT DETRICK, Md. – Movie-goers have seen the concept play out time and time again on the big screen. Sinister Borg drones reconstitute missing digits and limbs before their eyes in the “Star Trek” series. Alien Jack Jeebs in “Men in Black” regrows his head after it’s damaged or blown off.

The military is working to bring some of that science-fiction capability to wounded warriors so they can harness their own body’s power to regenerate itself and repair disabling and disfiguring battlefield injuries.

The Armed Forces Institute of Regenerative Medicine is leading the charge with an ambitious program that aims to help Soldiers with burn and blast injuries regrow muscle, skin, tendons, nerves and even bone, said Army Col. Robert Vandredre, the project director, based at this western Maryland Army post

“Ultimately, we will be able to grow limbs,” Vandredre said. “But in the next decade, we should be able to reduce the number of limbs that have to be amputated, just because we will have new ways to fix things that can’t be fixed now.”

## New policy authorizes social media access with caveats

By Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Attention all Facebookers, Twitter tweeters and YouTubers: a new Defense Department policy authorizes you to access these and other Web 2.0 platforms from nonclassified government computers, as long as it doesn’t compromise operational security or involve prohibited activities or Web sites.

Defense Department officials issued the

long-awaited policy today, establishing consistent rules for all military members and employers.

Deputy Defense Secretary William Lynn III, who signed the policy, said it strikes a critical balance between the benefits and potential vulnerabilities of these applications. “This directive recognizes the importance of balancing appropriate security measures while maximizing the capabilities afforded by 21st-century Internet tools,” he said.

While authorizing access to these tools, the new policy also recognizes the importance of protecting military networks and operations, explained David Wennergren, deputy assistant secretary of defense for information management and technology.

For example, the new policy allows commanders to temporarily limit that access as required to maintain operations security or address bandwidth constraints. It also prohibits malicious activity on military information networks and denies access to sites promoting prohibited activity such as gambling, pornography and hate crimes.

While information sharing may seem the polar opposite of security to some people, Wennergren said the Defense Department can no longer afford to consider just one or the other.

“If you look at either one individually, you will fail,” he said. “You will have great security, but no ability to access information sharing. (Or), if you think only about sharing, you will run into issues of operational security and letting bad things into your system. So you can no longer think of them as two separate subjects.”

## Wars force U.S. military to review ban on women in combat

By AFP

WASHINGTON — U.S. commanders are taking a second look at policies that bar women from ground combat, as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have thrust female Soldiers into the thick of the fight.

The Army chief of staff, Gen. George Casey, told lawmakers last week that it was time to review the rules in light of how women have served in the two wars.

His comments came as the military unveiled plans to lift the ban on women serving in submarines, an all-male bastion that Navy

officers once insisted could never change.

Despite a policy designed to keep women away from units engaged in ground combat, the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan have placed women in battle with insurgents who do not operate along defined front lines.

As a result, women have earned medals for valor and praise for their mettle.

“My best combat interrogator was a woman Soldier, my best tank mechanic was a woman Soldier,” John Nagl, a retired lieutenant colonel who served in Iraq, told AFP.

Getting the two women in the unit required “a little paperwork sleight of hand,” as the rules formally barred them from that role, said Nagl, president of the Center for New American Security, a think tank.

Nagl and others say the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have been a watershed for women in the US military, and that policies written in the 1990s will have to be rewritten to catch up with the realities on the ground.

“I believe it’s time we take a look at what women are actually doing in Iraq and Afghanistan and to look at our policy,” Casey told senators.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates has yet to weigh changing the policy but his press secretary, Geoff Morrell, acknowledged that despite the rules, “effectively many women in uniform are in combat missions every day, be they helicopter pilots, be they medics, be they logistical support personnel ...”

Even as the military signaled a willingness to break with tradition when it comes to women’s roles, Casey and other top commanders have voiced apprehension and even outright opposition to allowing gays to serve openly.

The performance of female Soldiers in the 1990-91 Gulf war helped prompt an earlier wave of reform, opening the way for women to serve in combat aircraft and naval warships.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are likely to have the same effect, said Nancy Duff Campbell, co-president of the National Women’s Law Center.

Commanders want the most talented people for their units, “and they’re asking why do we have these old rules,” she said.

Future policies should set “gender-neutral standards,” focusing on the skills or physical strength required for a military job instead of assuming no woman could meet the criteria, she said.

Sending women to battle remains a sensitive issue, however, and some lawmakers have tried unsuccessfully in recent years to reassert limits.

## News

## Veteran Affairs

## VA announces \$41 million in construction contracts for San Antonio

By Veteran Affairs PAO

WASHINGTON – The Department of Veterans Affairs announced the award of two contracts totaling \$41.5 million to create a “polytrauma center” that cares for the most severely injured Veterans and to improve the existing wards at the Audie L. Murphy VA Medical Center.

“A top priority for VA is providing greater access to VA’s health care system and higher quality of care for the nation’s Veterans,” Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki said. “America’s Veterans have earned the very best that this nation as to offer.”

One contract announced by Secretary Shinseki provides \$37.2 million to Robins and Morton of Birmingham, Ala.

The contract calls for construction of a three-story, 84,000-square foot “polytrauma center.”

It would include physical medicine, rehabilitation services, prosthetics service and research.

“Polytrauma” refers to health care for Veterans who have more than one severe, life-threatening medical problem.

Many of VA’s polytrauma patients are recent combat Veterans injured by roadside bombs and other explosives in Iraq and Afghanistan.

A second contract, valued at \$4.3 million, went to Strategic Perspectives Development of San Antonio.

It provides for upgrades and expansion to ward 4-A, including electrical work, utilities, fire alarm and fire protection systems, telephone and data systems, and asbestos abatement.

Last year, VA spent more than \$7.8 billion in Texas on behalf of the state’s 1.7 million Veterans. VA operates 11 major medical centers in the state, more than 40 outpatient clinics, 14 Vet Centers and six national cemeteries.

## National Guard

## Youth ChalleNGe program nears 100,000 graduates

By Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill  
National Guard Bureau

WASHINGTON – With increasing government and private support, a National Guard program that helps high school dropouts transform their lives is closing in on its 100,000th graduate.

“The National Guard is proud of the success of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program,” said Air Force Gen. Craig McKinley, the chief of the National Guard Bureau. “It is essential that we reduce the number of high school dropouts, and Youth ChalleNGe is part of the solution.”

McKinley was hosted by retired Air Force Lt. Gen. John Conaway, chairman of the National Guard Youth Foundation, along with several other corporate and military leaders, politicians and celebrities at the 2010 Challenge Champions Gala held Tuesday evening.

“Gen. McKinley and the National Guard are not only fighting our nation’s wars overseas and helping here inside the United States ... but they have another mission – helping to save America’s youth, so they can be productive citizens,” Conaway said.

## Former Utah Guardsman wins Olympic gold

By Tim Hippias  
Family MWR Command

WHISTLER, B.C., – Former Utah National Guard bobsledder Steven Holcomb ended Team USA’s 62-year gold medal drought in Olympic bobsleigh competition by driving Justin Olsen, Steve Mesler and Curtis Tomasevicz to victory in the four-man event at Whistler Sliding Centre Feb. 27.

Holcomb, 29, of Park City, Utah, piloted “The Night Train” sled designed by former NASCAR driver Geoff Bodine down the fastest bobsled track in the world to a four-heat combined time of 3 minutes, 24.46 seconds. They lowered the track record in each of their first two

runs Friday, leaving it at 50.86 seconds.

“It’s incredible,” Holcomb said. “We’ve been working so hard the last four years and it’s finally paid off. It’s kind of overwhelming. It’s been stressful but awesome, kind of all over the place.”

Five-time Olympic medalists Andre Lange and Kevin Kuske teamed with Alexander Roediger and Martin Putze aboard Germany I to win the silver medal with a time of 3:24.84. The Canada I quartet of Lyndon Rush, Chris Le Bihan, David Bissett and Lascelles Brown claimed the bronze in 3:24.85, marking the first time in 46 years Canadian bobsledders have medaled at the Olympics.

Team USA’s .38 margin of victory is considered a landslide in the sport of bobsleigh.

## Guard’s first weapons school graduate tops the class

By Master Sgt. Carlos Claudio  
Virginia National Guard

LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va. -- Maj. Michael “BOK” Schaner, a weapons officer and F-22 Raptor pilot with the 149th Fighter Squadron of the Virginia Air National Guard was recently selected as the F-22 Outstanding Graduate for the elite United States Air Force Weapons School.

Not only did Schaner win the top honor, he was also the first Air National Guard pilot selected to attend the F-22 program.

Lt. Col. David Nardi, Virginia ANG, 149th FS commander, said there was an excellent reason why the major was the best selection for attending weapons school.

“He was unanimously selected by the Air Force as the first choice for the Weapons Instructor Course across the community, because he is one of the most highly experienced Raptor pilots with great depth of experience in both the operations and the test communities,” Nardi said. “He is one of the very best pilots and instructors in the F-22 and in the Air Force total force”.

Class 09 Bravo Instructor Course, which ran from July 9 through Dec. 13, 2009 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., was designed by Maj. Micah “Zeus” Fesler to take top instructor pilots to new zeniths using the latest technology and instructor guidance available.

# DoD Social Media Policies:

twitter



**Q. CAN MY UNIT HAVE THEIR OWN WEBSITE AND OR FACEBOOK PAGE?**

*A. Yes, however certain steps must be taken in order for the page to adhere to DoD guidelines on Social Media.*

- *Clearly indicate the role and scope of the external official presence.*
- *Provide links to the organization's official public Web site.*
- *Be actively monitored and evaluated by DoD Components for compliance with security requirements and for fraudulent or objectionable use*



You Tube

**Q. CAN I UPDATE OUR UNIT PAGE ON A GOVERNMENT COMPUTER?**

*A. Yes, Commanders at all levels and Heads of DoD Components shall continue to defend against malicious activity affecting DoD networks (e.g., distributed denial of service attacks, intrusions) and take immediate and commensurate actions, as required, to safeguard missions (e.g., temporarily limiting access to the Internet to preserve operations security or to address bandwidth constraints).*



**Q. I WANT TO UPDATE MY BLOG/PAGE OR STATUS CAN I DO THAT ALL DAY LONG?**

*A. No. LIMITED AUTHORIZED PERSONAL USE. You are permitted limited personal use of Federal Government resources when authorized by the agency designee on a non-interference basis. When accessing Internet-based capabilities using Federal Government resources in an authorized personal or unofficial capacity, individuals shall employ sound operations security (OPSEC) measures in accordance with Reference (g) and shall not represent the policies or official position of the Department of Defense.*



These are parts of the policies taken from original memo to disseminate DoD's recently policy for Responsible and Effective Use of Internet Based Capabilities. For full article and memorandum explanation, full memo details are available at the following website.

<http://www.defense.gov/NEWS/DTM%2009-026.pdf>

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# Looking for Spring? FOLLOW THE *Bluebonnet Trail*



By Laurri Garcia,  
USARNORTH PAO

The only sure sign of Spring a true Texan will accept is the site of beautiful blue blossoms lining Texas highways and fields as far as the eye can see. Those lovely blue blossoms are Texas' beloved Bluebonnets.

According to folklore, it is the Indians we owe our thanks to for our cherished state flower. Legend has it one summer

the land was very dry and the buffalo had no food to eat and soon the Indians faced starvation.

The Great Spirit spoke to the chief in a vision and said that the rains would come if the tribe sacrificed its most precious possession to the Great Spirit. Fine horses and beautiful blankets were offered, but the rain never came. One evening, a small Indian girl sacrificed her favorite corn-husk doll.

Tearfully, she laid it on the coals of the sacrifice fire. In the morning, a miracle happened, the life-saving rains came, the dry fields were covered with grass for the starving buffalo and everywhere the ash from the fire had blown was a carpet of beautiful blue flowers – the bluebonnet.

The bluebonnet is to Texas what the shamrock is to Ireland, the cherry blossom is to Japan or the tulip is to Holland. It was named the official state flower of Texas, March 7, 1901 and since has become intangibly woven into the state's social conscience.

Tour buses, hiking trails, country roads and state parks are full of people hoping to take in the floral extravaganza and capture that perfect photo.

Thanks to Lady Bird Johnson and the Texas Highway Department's Highway Beautification Program, roadways throughout the state are bordered by acres and acres of gorgeous wild flowers — many of which are bluebonnets.

Bluebonnet season begins in late March and runs through the end of May but peaks in mid-April.

Wildflower experts say the upcoming bloom should be exceptional throughout much of the state, thanks to heavy rains the past several months. So expect fields of blue painted on the ground with splatterings of red, yellow and pink wild flower abound this time of year.

I encourage each of you to get out and explore this uniquely Texas treasure.

Below are a few of the bluebonnet festivals happening around the state, so mark your calendar you have no excuse. "Get out and see Texas"!



**2010 Texas Bluebonnet Festival**  
Chappell Hill, Texas  
April 10 & 11  
Hours & Fees  
Saturday,  
10 a.m. - 6 p.m.  
Sunday, noon - 5 p.m.

**Ennis Bluebonnet Trails Festival,**  
April 17-18  
9 a.m. - 6 p.m. in downtown Ennis, Texas.

**Burnet 27th Annual Bluebonnet Festival**  
April 9  
11 a.m.  
Burnet is the Bluebonnet Capital of Texas.

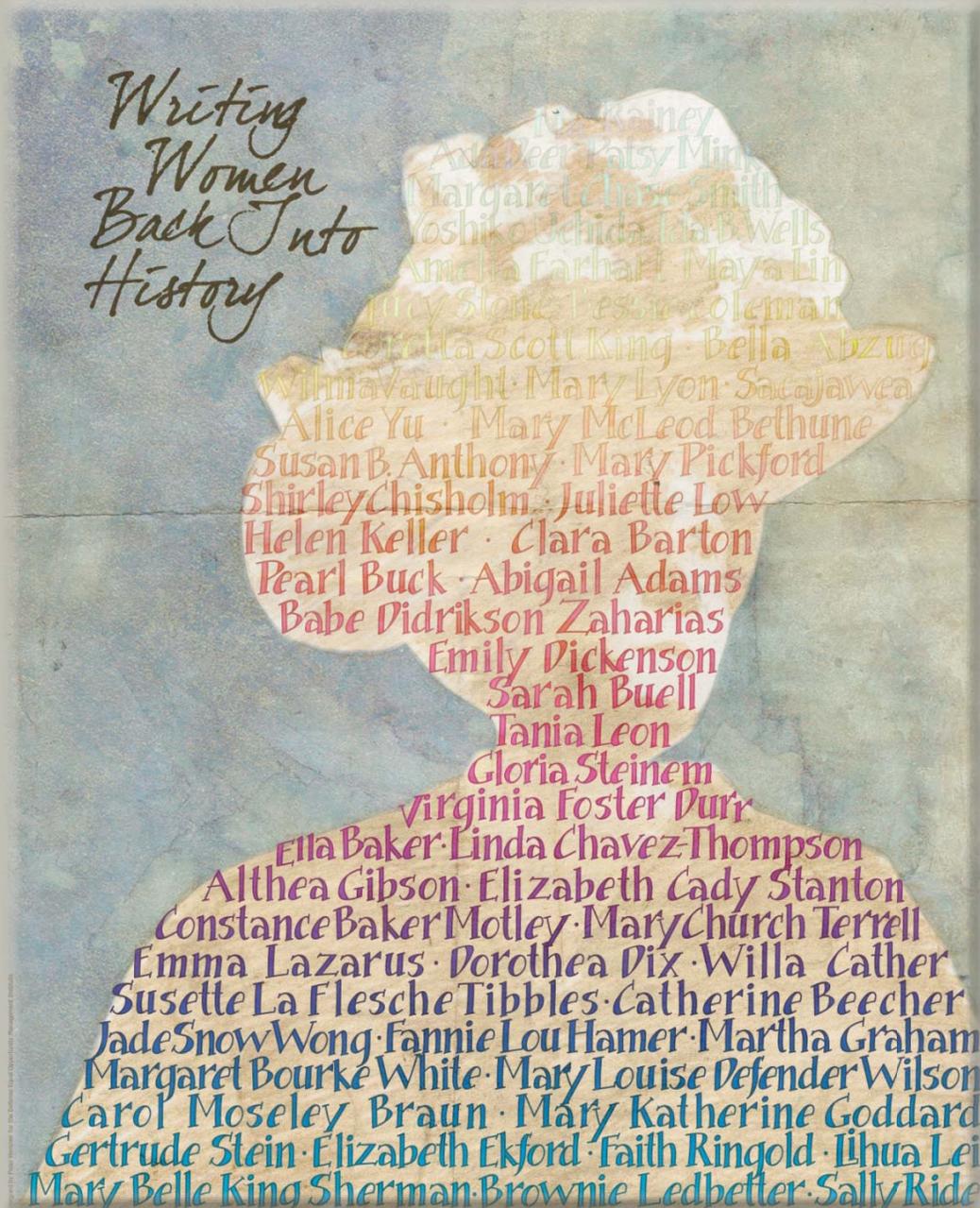
**Kingsland Bluebonnet Festival**  
First weekend in April.  
Kingsland and Lake LBJ Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 465, Kingsland, TX 78639,  
915-388-6211  
Admission: Free

**Llano Highland Lakes Bluebonnet Trail**  
Second and Third weekends in April.  
Llano Chamber of Commerce, 700 Bessemer, Llano, TX 78643,  
915-247-5354.

**Lampasas Bluebonnet Fair**  
First Saturday in April.  
Lampasas County Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 627, Lampasas, TX 76550,  
512-556-5172.  
Admission: Free



# Women's History Month Commemoration



**March 30, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

Army Community Service (Bldg. 2797) Stanley Rd.

Fort Sam Houston, TX 78234

Sponsored by Fort Sam Houston Installation EO  
POC for this event is Master Sgt. Peters at 295-0561.

To request reasonable accommodation for a disability, please contact  
295-0561.