

ARNORTH Monthly

June 2009



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Exchange Soldiers

ARNORTH hosts first MPEP conference

Wildland Fire Fighting

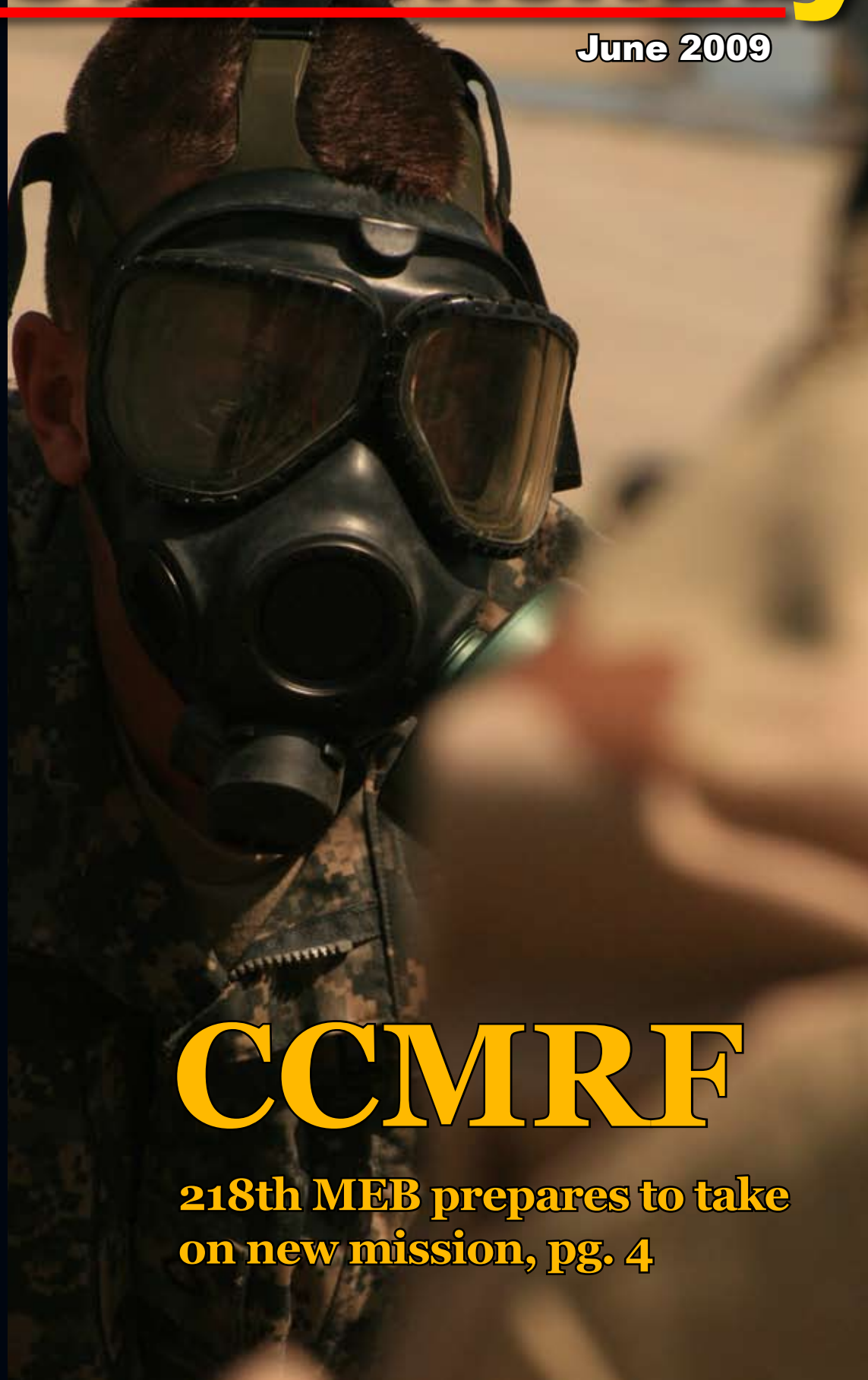
Servicemembers train for 2009's wildland fire season

Year of the NCO

ARNORTH NCOs go to T Bar M for annual retreat

Joint Effort

JTF-CS trains to save lives in chemical environment



CCMRF

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Cover Photo

by Spc. Joshua Edwards

A South Carolina Army National Guard Soldier wears his protective mask as he trains for the 218th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade's new national consequence management response mission. The 218th MEB assumes the mission October 1, 2009.



ARNORTH CG:

Lt. Gen. Thomas R. Turner

ARNORTH CSM:

Command Sgt. Maj. George Nieves

ARNORTH conducts Homeland Defense and Civil Support operations, and Theater Security Cooperation activities, as the NORTHCOM Joint Force Land Component Command and the Army Service Component Command in order to protect the American people and their way of life.

Consequence Management

218th MEB trains for rescue mission

The South Carolina National Guard's 218th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade will assume a national consequence management response mission beginning October 1, 2009.

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Exchange

Conference brings MPEP Soldiers together

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Certification

MAFFS training certifies, prepares troops for upcoming wildfire season

Working to re-certify personnel for qualification in the Wildfire fighting business, 108 Airmen from the 145th Airlift Wing at the Modular Aerial Fire Fighting System conducted training exercises at the Arizona National Guard Base on the Tucson International Airport in Tucson, Arizona May 3 through May 10.

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U.S. Army North Public Affairs Office

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A Look Ahead

June 1 HURRICANE SEASON STARTS

JUNE 2009

Safety Month

1943 5th Army reactivated in Chicago

1971 5th Army relocated to Fort Sam Houston

**Fifth Army
Inter-American
Relations
Program**

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June 21 FATHER'S DAY

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Makini Pahili 09 Region IX
June 2-5

Empire 09 Region II
June 2-9

D-Day Anniversary

DSCA Course
June 8-12, Charleston, S.C.

**CG Sensing Session
with Principals**

Texas Folklife Festival

**Space Transportation
System 127 Launch**

Red Dragon
June 15-27, Fort McCoy, Wisc.

Newcomer's Brief

Ardent Sentry
June 18-24

**Texas Emancipation
Day**

ARNORTH Retirement Ceremony
9 a.m. in the Quadrangle

**Space Transportation
System 127 Landing**

Consequence Management

218th MEB trains for rescue mission

The South Carolina National Guard's 218th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade (MEB) will assume a national consequence management response mission beginning October 1, 2009.

The Department of Defense has created a new force called the Chemical, Biological, Nuclear, Radiological and High Explosive (CBRNE) Consequence Management Response Force, or CCMRF for short.

Being part of the new force requires a shift in thinking for Soldiers who are used to taking charge. Federal military Soldiers must remember that they work in support of a civilian agency while operating within the United States.

The Pentagon has chosen the 218th MEB, based in Charleston, S.C., to control more than a dozen Reserve and National Guard units throughout the country and Puerto Rico to help local authorities during the next several years.

"This is a great opportunity for the South Carolina National Guard. It is an honor to be chosen for such an elite mission," said Maj.

"The 218th MEB and TF-51 truly solidified our working relationship for future operations"

Gen. Stanhope Spears, S.C. National Guard Adjutant General.

In preparation for the upcoming CCMRF mission, members of the 218th MEB held a training exercise May 18-21, 2009 at Clarks Hill Training Center and in the surrounding cities of McCormick, Plum Branch and Parksville, S.C.

Supporting units of the 218th MEB involved in the training included the 4th Battalion, 118th Infantry; 218th Brigade Support Battalion; 151st Signal Battalion and 111th



Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Jorge Intriago

During a training exercise in McCormick County, S.C., from May 18-21, 2009, Soldiers were faced with several different scenarios ranging from reacting to nuclear bomb detonation, simulated burglaries, escaped convicts, medical evacuations, car accidents and bus accidents involving elementary school children.

Signal Company.

These units sent almost 500 Soldiers with equipment to work alongside local and TF-51 officials to deal with a theoretical disaster.

"The 218th MEB and TF-51 truly solidified our working relationship for future operations," said Major Gary Mills, TF-51 operations officer.

Named "Operation Palmetto Guardian," the training was an opportunity to find new ways for the South Carolina National Guard to help local authorities in the event of an emergency – specifically a manmade disaster.

During the training exercise, Soldiers performed as if they had been 'federalized' under presidential authority.

This is in keeping with the military's domestic rules of engagement and the Posse Comitatus Act, which prevents federal troops from enforcing law on U.S. citizens.

The training consisted of several different scenarios practiced by the 218th MEB and evaluated by the U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) and ARNORTH.

"Immense progress was made in regards to standard operating procedures, battle drills, reporting procedures, common operating picture, and other staff functions that will certainly

improve our cohesiveness working together during any upcoming training events and real-world operations," Major Mills said.

The main scenario involved a nuclear bomb detonation in nearby Greenwood, S.C. Soldiers successfully set up checkpoints where civilians could check on the status of family and friends from the nuclear fallout area. Medical aid stations were set up where civilian victims could receive care.

Simultaneously, there were opportunities for the Soldiers to react to simulated burglaries, escaped convicts and car accidents.

Because of the facilities at the Clarks Hill Training Center and the cooperation of the surrounding communities, the SCNG was able to put on a training exercise of this magnitude.

Overall, Lt. Col. Ken Rosado, commander of the 4th Battalion, 118th Infantry, said he was very pleased with both the training and response by the community.

"For our first time training on this mission, I thought our Soldiers did a great job," he said. "We think the community was very supportive in our efforts. It truly was neighbors helping neighbors."

(by Capt. Tim W. Irvin, 218th MEB PAO)

Exchange

Conference brings MPEP Soldiers together



Photo by Sgt. Joshua R. Ford

Military personnel exchange Soldiers discuss benefits of the Military Personnel Exchange Program during a meeting at U.S. Army North. The conference was a week long and gave the Soldiers an opportunity to give feedback to ARNORTH and the Army about what needed to be done to improve the program.

U.S. Army North (ARNORTH) held its first Military Personnel Exchange Program (MPEP) conference May 4-8 at Fort Sam Houston to better assess how MPEP Soldiers are working with their Canadian or Mexican counterparts.

“The big reason for the conference is so Department of the Army Headquarters can get our assessment and feedback, determine which positions are still relevant, and ask the question, ‘Do U.S. Army Soldiers need to fill these positions or can other armies use these positions to better develop?’,” said Staff Sgt. John E. Stoner, signals intelligence analyst stationed at Canadian Forces Station Leirtrim in Ottawa, Canada. “These are strategic as-

pects that the Army learns as we give them feedback.”

The conference also gave the Soldiers the opportunity to use in-station support, such as medical, dental and personnel support, which is harder to get in Canada or Mexico.

Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Dorsey was the first Soldier to go through the system at ARNORTH when it took over the Army’s MPEP and is enjoying the transition that comes from working in the U.S. to working in Canada.

“We (MPEP Soldiers) work and function as members of the Canadian (or Mexican) military although administrative control is here at ARNORTH. We are playing the role of a Canadian (or Mexican) soldier,” Dorsey said.

Since Sgt. 1st Class Dorsey has been stationed in Canada he has been developing curricula for the Canadian Department of National Defense’s Mapping and Charting

Establishment in Ottawa. He also instructs new Canadian army soldiers and civilians about geospatial engineering.

The one-for-one individual swaps mean the same numbers of Mexican and Canadian troops are serving with U.S. units at home and overseas.

Through MPEP, the Army builds, sustains, and strengthens its relationships with Canada and Mexico.

The goals of the program include promoting mutual understanding and trust; enhancing interoperability through mutual understanding of doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures; and developing long-term, professional and personal relationships.

ARNORTH took full administrative control of the Army’s personnel exchange program between the U.S. and Canada and the U.S. and Mexico, June 1, 2008.

(by Sgt. Joshua R. Ford/ARNORTH PAO)

CBRNE Training

Joint Forces train to save lives in chemical environment

Every time U.S. Navy Capt. Michael Collins attends a CBRNE Consequence Management Response Force or CCMRF (pronounced “seasmurf”) exercise, he hopes he will never have to “do this for real.”

By “this” he means recovering corpses, decontaminating people exposed to radiation or chemical agents, or aiding third-degree burn victims, to name some of the few gruesome things exercise participants must learn to deal with.

But as chief of staff for Joint Task Force-Civil Support, or JTF-CS, he constantly takes part in such exercises.

The task force is the only U.S. military organization dedicated solely to saving lives, preventing injury and providing temporary critical life support during a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear or high-yield explosives, or CBRNE event, in the United States or its territories. It deploys to an incident site, establishes command and control of Department of Defense forces and provides support to civil authorities.

One of the captain’s main roles is to assure

the staff runs effectively so it can perform its mission and they are prepared and trained to deal with a catastrophic event.

“When we deploy for an exercise, I mostly work in the joint operation center, which is the headquarters of JTF-CS and the CCMRFs, and make sure we are providing the proper command and control to those forces supporting the community.

“Unfortunately, if it’s something like an improvised nuclear explosive device [we are dealing with] there are going to be — probably — tens of thousands of dead people, maybe hundreds of thousands of injured and hundreds of thousands of other people who require decontamination from radioactive fallout,” he said.

The task force’s mission is to work with the Primary Federal Agency to support the affected community. Its members, who come from all the military services, put their extensive training and expertise into practice by initially providing medical evacuation via ambulances or helicopters to staging areas where victims receive more definitive care.

“We’ll do such things as triage — figuring out who needs medical care the quickest or is most critically injured — pull people out of the rubble, search for people or move people out of a chemically or radiological contaminated area,” the captain said.

(by Agora Magazine staff)

“Unfortunately, if it’s something like an improvised nuclear explosive device [we are dealing with] there are going to be — probably — tens of thousands of dead people, maybe hundreds of thousands of injured and hundreds of thousands of other people who require decontamination from radioactive fallout”



Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Chris Hale

Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear or High-Yield Explosive Consequence Management Response Force members use an aerial map to help plan their actions during a drill simulating a nuclear explosion in Atlantic City, N.J.

ARMY NORTH**Brig. Gen. Wiggins welcomed to ARNORTH**

Lt. Gen. Thomas R. Turner, ARNORTH commanding general, welcomed Brig. Gen. Perry L. Wiggins to be deputy commanding general of ARNORTH during a ceremony May 28 in the Quadrangle.

Brig. Gen. Wiggins thanked all who attended the ceremony.

“It is a distinct privilege to join an organization with such a distinguished history and a mission focused on protecting the American people and their way of life,” Brig. Gen. Wiggins said.

ARNORTH represented at Asian Pacific American Heritage Month celebration

Sgt. Maj. Gilbert L. Canuela, inspector general office, ARNORTH, was honored to be a guest speaker at a celebration of Asia Pacific American Heritage Month at Fort Sill, Okla., May 18.

“I was born in the Asian country of the Republic of the Philippines. We understand a thing or two about the importance of America,” Sgt. Maj. Canuela said. “Let us not forget the part of what makes us special as a nation: love of freedom, respect for human dignity, and the embrace for democracy.”

“Make no mistake, I am an American first and foremost. My heart and soul is

red, white, and blue,” Sgt. Maj. Canuela told the crowd.

ARNORTH commander addresses border security conference

The U. S. Army North Commanding General represented the U. S. Northern Command Commander at the 4th Annual Border Security Expo in Phoenix, recently.

Lt. Gen. Thomas Turner was one of the dignitaries who spoke at the conference that brought more than 1100 government and industry leaders and others to the Phoenix Convention Center on May 13 and 14 for exhibit hall displays of cutting-edge technology, workshops and speaker presentations on critical issues, and free certified training for law enforcement professionals.

In his remarks Lt. Gen. Turner explained how ARNORTH and Joint Task Force – North work with interagency partners on a daily basis to sustain good working relationships.

“These relationships foster timely and responsive military support to law enforcement and provide greater interagency synchronization to deter and prevent drug traffickers and associated transnational threats,” Lt. Gen. Turner said.

ARNORTH participates with first responders in annual exercise

U.S. Army North units will participate in the 2009 Defense Interoperability Communications Exercise June 1 – 5 at Camp Mabry, Texas.

DICE is an annual U.S. Northern Command exercise designed to bring local, state and federal agencies together to test and exercise communications capabilities, or interoperability, during a simulated emergency response to a catastrophic incident.

It is also the largest communications exercise incorporating both Department of Defense and non-DOD agencies and their

communications systems and processes—designed to achieve the most effective connectivity among local, state and federal emergency management agencies.

New command surgeon welcomed to ARNORTH

Col. David E. Fulbright is one of the latest additions to the ARNORTH team taking the job as ARNORTH’s command surgeon.

His colonel-level command came at Fort Benning, Georgia as the commander of the 14th Combat Support Hospital.

He has been married to the former Beverly Thompson for over 28 years. They have three children: sons Colin, 24 (currently serving as a Medical Service Corps second lieutenant in Vicenza, Italy) and Cameron, 21, and a daughter, Devon, 19.

ARMY-WIDE**Screenings help redeploying Soldiers with stress**

Many health issues may arise after a Soldier redeploys from a combat zone.

Some wounds are physical and spotted easily. Others, such as traumatic brain injury and post traumatic stress disorder, are not as obvious, and may take some time to develop.

To help identify these problems, the Army has developed the Post Deployment Health Reassessment, or PDHRA, to evaluate Soldiers returning from a combat zone.

As part of Mental Health Awareness Month, the Army National Guard is calling attention to this program as it proactively screens redeploying Guard members for potential health issues.

“We want to look out after and safeguard every Soldier in the Army National Guard,” said Maj. Anthony McGinthy, the PDHRA program manager for the Army National Guard’s Surgeon’s office.

The program gives Soldiers a chance to identify problems three to six months after deployment. This window gives them a chance to settle into life and work, and evaluate their health over that period of time. If combat-connected health problems arise, Soldiers can report it during their PDHRA to become eligible for care.

Army makes progress in achieving balance, chief says



The Army is making progress toward getting current operational needs and long-term requirements back in balance, but there is still a long way to go, the service’s top officer said.

The Army is so weighed down by current demands that it can’t do “the things we know we need to do to sustain the all-volunteer force for the long haul and restore our strategic flexibility to do other things,” Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey Jr. told Pentagon reporters during a media roundtable.

The service is following plans put in place in 2004 and 2007 to address the balance question by 2011. “That sounds like a long time, but in an organization of 1.1 million people that’s growing and transforming itself, it’s not at all,” Gen. Casey said.

The general said the next 12 to 18 months are the crunch time for the Army, “because we will actually increase the number of troops we have deployed by about 10,000 as we shift [forces] from Iraq to Afghanistan.”

World-Wide Public Affairs Symposium

About 40 military and civilian public affairs officers from throughout the United States learned about U.S. Army North’s role in disaster response during the 2009 Army Worldwide Public Affairs Symposium May 4-6 in Arlington, Va.

The break-out session at the Army’s annual conference for communicators was facilitated by the ARNORTH PAO, Col. Barry Johnson and included Col. Pete Brooks from the South Carolina National Guard and Bob Jensen from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The session served as an opportunity to educate PAOs whose first experience with disaster response may be when their unit is employed for route clearance or their installation is designated as a National Logistics Staging Area, Col. Johnson said.

“The active-duty military is not the pointy end of the spear when it comes to disaster response in the homeland,” Col. Johnson said. “We and the rest of the federal response play a supporting role to the state.”

The panel members stressed the importance of continuing to improve coordination, synchronization and integration of communication among agencies.

“We’ve come a long way in a short time,” Mr. Jensen said. “But we’ve still got a way to go. So that’s why we’re here.”

Warrior Transition Command stands up at Pentagon

A new command to provide sole guidance and policy for the Army’s 36 Warrior Transition Units and the nine Community Based Warrior Transition Units was activated May 11, in the Pentagon courtyard.

The new Warrior Transition Command will oversee the care of more than 9,500

wounded, ill and injured Soldiers while providing centralized family support under the command of Brig. Gen. Gary H. Cheek, who also serves as assistant surgeon general for warrior care and transition.

REGIONS

Region I DCO visits maritime academy

Col. Gary Stanley, the Federal Emergency Management Agency Region I Defense Coordinating Officer, visited and briefed the students at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy (MMA) located in Buzzard’s Bay, Mass.

Col. Stanley presented an overview of the federal emergency response structure, responsibilities, and new initiatives. Additionally, he provided an in-depth review of the defense coordinating element, its functions and capabilities, engagements with other New England agencies and states, and deployment information.

In addition to the colonel’s presentation, students were able to take part in a demonstration of the DCE’s Emergency Response Vehicle. Sgt. First Class Eddie Brinkley, Region I communications noncommissioned officer, showed the students the ERV’s capabilities while also facilitating some hands-on training.

The MMA was founded over 100 years ago and is the oldest coed maritime college in the United States. In their curriculum, MMA offers a Bachelor of Science and Masters in Emergency Management. This is the second presentation to their cadets since the DCE became a full-time presence in the region.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Upcoming Joint Wargame Examines Future Force Capabilities

Security experts from inside and outside the Pentagon soon will test out predictions on what the U.S. military will look like and how it will operate in coming years, a senior U.S. military officer said.

The seminar-type, joint wargame experiments will be held in McLean, Va., from May 31 through June 5, and feature input from national security experts, multinational partners and interagency organizations, said Navy Rear Adm. Dan W. Davenport, chief of U.S. Joint Forces Command joint concept development and experimentation directorate.

“The idea is to bring the right kind of leaders and thinkers together,” Rear Adm. Davenport said, “to analyze and deal with the future threat.”

The wargame looks ahead to 2020, he said, and will feature scenarios that pit U.S. joint forces against three types of enemies: a globally networked terrorist threat, a peer competitor, and a failed or failing state.

PACOM Senior Enlisted Leader Selected for Top Air Force Post

Air Force officials announced May 8 that Chief Master Sergeant James A. Roy, currently the Senior Enlisted Leader and advisor to U.S. Pacific Command will be the next Chief Master Sergeant of the United States Air Force following a ceremony June 30.

“I’m honored and blessed to be chosen as the next Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force and look forward to working with Gen. Schwartz and Secretary Donley to represent the best interests of our Air Force family to our nation’s leaders as we support today’s joint fighter,” said Chief James Roy. “Paula and I are excited for the opportunities that lie ahead and will continue to dedicate ourselves to serving our Air Force.”

New PCS program puts customers in driver’s seat

With nearly 200,000 Permanent Change of Station (PCS) moves expected in the approaching season, it is important for Department of Defense personnel to note

several broad changes to the personal property shipment process.

The uniformed services began using the Defense Personal Property System (DPS) to move DOD personal property Nov. 19, 2008. DPS is the system that drives the new Defense Personal Property Program (DP3), formerly known as ‘Families First.’

“The more a servicemember or DOD civilian knows about the new program, the better their move will be. DP3 and DPS really put them in the driver’s seat,” said Lt. Col. Daniel Bradley, deputy chief of staff for Personal Property at Surface Deployment and Distribution Command. “It allows them to manage, hands-on, their personal property move with improved information and access.”

DPS provides the capability to self-counsel on-line from any computer with internet access around the clock, seven days a week. Once PCS orders are in hand, members can estimate their household goods weight, enter relevant information, request pick-up and delivery dates, and let their prospective mover know of unique items that require special attention, all without going to a transportation office. Once their move is complete, they can file claims for damaged or missing items on-line as well.

HOMELAND SECURITY

NOAA: Mild Solar Storm Season Predicted

Although its peak is still four years away, a new active period of Earth-threatening solar storms will be the weakest since 1928, predicts an international panel of experts led by NOAA’s Space Weather Prediction Center and funded by NASA. Despite the prediction, Earth is still vulnerable to a severe solar storm.

Solar storms are eruptions of energy and matter that escape from the sun and may head toward Earth, where even a weak storm can damage satellites and power grids, disrupting communications, the electric power supply and GPS. A single strong blast of “solar wind” can threaten national security, transportation, financial services and other essential functions.

The panel predicts the upcoming Solar

Cycle 24 will peak in May 2013 with 90 sunspots per day on average. If the prediction proves true, Solar Cycle 24 will be the weakest cycle since number 16, which peaked at 78 daily sunspots in 1928, and ninth weakest since the 1750s, when numbered cycles began.

Joint Statement by Secretary Napolitano and Canadian Public Safety Minister Peter Van Loan on the U.S.-Canada Border

The Honorable Janet Napolitano, U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security, and the Honorable Peter Van Loan, Canadian Minister of Public Safety, recognize the unique nature of the U.S.-Canada border and share a determination to tackle common threats that we face, including terrorism and organized crime.

“We are working in partnership to ensure we manage the border in a way that contributes to the well-being of our two countries and recognize that we can enhance our security without compromising trade.

“Together, the United States and Canada create and trade over a billion dollars worth of goods and services each day. We are committed to a collaborative approach to our border—one that enhances our security and public safety while facilitating the trade and travel that connects our two countries.”

FEMA

The Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator Confirmed

Congress has approved the appointment of new FEMA Administrator W. Craig Fugate.

At FEMA, Fugate leads more than 4,000

employees in a mission to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters of all kinds. He is charged with implementing a risk-based, comprehensive emergency management system while advancing Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano's ongoing reform goals of efficiency, transparency and fiscal responsibility.

Prior to joining FEMA, Fugate served as Director of Florida's Division of Emergency Management, where he led the state's disaster response efforts since 2001. He was formerly Chief of Florida's Bureau of Preparedness and Response from 1997-2001, where he helped build the state's nationally recognized emergency management program, and previously spent 15 years in local government, serving as the Emergency Manager for Alachua County, Fla., a paramedic and volunteer firefighter.

As Hurricane Season Nears, States And Local Governments Ramp Up Preparedness Efforts

With the beginning of the 2009 Atlantic Hurricane Season upon us, hurricane-prone states across the country are doing their part to help prepare their citizens and communities. From sales tax holidays on hurricane and emergency preparedness equipment in Virginia and Louisiana, to a major hurricane exercise in Florida, states are taking actions to ensure that citizens and the emergency response community are prepared for the 2009 hurricane season.

"Across the country, we are working and communicating with our state and local partners to prepare for the upcoming hurricane season," said FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate. "States are also taking it upon themselves to make sure their citizens and responders are prepared. These efforts will go a long way in determining the outcome of the next hurricane or disaster, and I applaud them."

Below please find examples of just some

of the activities taking place in hurricane-prone states.

Delaware:

Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) is holding an evening of preparedness with the counties of New Castle and Wilmington at a minor league baseball game on Thursday, May 28. Throughout the game, preparedness slogans will be scrolled across the scoreboard with contact information for DEMA (dema.delaware.gov). A group of Citizen Corps volunteers will distribute bags with a collection of preparedness materials to attendees before the game.

Florida:

On May 28 and 29 and June 1-3, the State of Florida Division of Emergency Management and county programs will conduct a week-long annual exercise to prepare for Hurricane Season. The exercise will be based on a catastrophic incident-it will follow the track of the Great Miami Hurricane of 1926. The hazards will be category 4 hurricane, possible tornados, flooding, and wind damage. This exercise will allow Florida Division of Emergency Management, FEMA and all Emergency Support Function (ESF) partners an opportunity to test new approaches and methodologies acquired from the 2008 Hurricane Season. For more information, please visit www.floridadisaster.org/index.asp.

Georgia:

The Georgia Emergency Management Agency is using its web site (www.gema.ga.gov) to highlight important information about hurricane preparedness activities. In addition, GEMA's preparedness program, Ready Georgia (www.ready.ga.gov), is highlighting a different hurricane-related topic (storm surge, high winds and tornados, inland flooding, hurricane forecasting, and general preparedness) each day this week. GEMA will also participate in the 1st Annual Family Safety Day on May 30. Georgia Aquarium, in partnership with the World of Coca-Cola, and along with a number of law enforcement and public safety agencies, is hosting the 1st Annual Family Safety Day on May 30. GEMA's Ready Georgia program has been invited to participate and will promote Saturday's theme, Take Action.

Louisiana:

The 2009 Louisiana Hurricane Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday will take place on Saturday, May 30, and Sunday, May 31. On these two days, shoppers can purchase specified emergency supplies free of the four-percent state sales tax in preparation for the 2009 Atlantic hurricane season, which begins on June 1. For more information, please visit revenue.louisiana.gov/.

Maine:

The State of Maine is conducting the new FEMA course "Hurricane Readiness for Coastal Communities" in Acadia National Park, May 27 and 28. See the link below for details.

www.maine.gov/mema/mema_news_display.shtml?id=71569.

Massachusetts:

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Association continues to release important information on hurricane season including preparedness tips for families, home owners, those with unique needs, pet owners, and information on sheltering-in place and evacuation through www.mass.gov/mema.

Mississippi:

On Wednesday, May 27 through Friday, May 29 Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) staff will provide public tours of MEMA's Mobile Operations Command Center and distribute hurricane tracking charts and preparedness guides to counties across the state. The Red Cross and local emergency managers will also participate. More details can be found by visiting: www.msema.org/.

New York:

New York Governor David A. Paterson has issued a proclamation, proclaiming May 24-30 as Hurricane Preparedness Week in the Empire State. New York State Emergency Management Office and the emergency management offices of New York City and Nassau and Suffolk counties are conducting the annual all hazards emergency management conference May 27-28 in Melville, Suffolk County. This event traditionally draws professionals from the first responder, health-care and emergency management fields. For more information on activities in New York, please visit: www.semo.state.ny.us.

Puerto Rico:

The Puerto Rico Emergency Management Agency (PREMA) is reaching out to citizens to talk about the importance of the family Preparedness Plan, and other ideas and important information for the hurricane season. More information can be found on www.gobierno.pr/AEMEAD/Inicio.

South Carolina:

South Carolina is publishing and delivering an official South Carolina Hurricane Guide, which will be available in both English and Spanish to more than 700,000 residences and businesses beginning Sunday, May 31. The Guide also will be posted on the Division web site, www.scemd.org.

Texas:

Texas will host a Hurricane Summit May 27-28, to discuss the challenges of sheltering citizens and the demands it places on hosting jurisdictions. Jack Colley, the Chief of the Governor's Division of Emergency Management will be the master of ceremonies. Bill Read, Director of the National Hurricane Center and Mark Cooper chief of Louisiana Emergency Management will attend and discuss the evacuation of New Orleans. They'll discuss re-entry task forces, volunteer assistance centers, agriculture strike teams, and enhanced public works teams, evacuations, and food bank operations, among other issues. For more information on what Texas is doing to prepare this hurricane season, please visit www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/pages/index.htm.

Virginia:

Virginia is holding a sales tax holiday on hurricane and emergency preparedness equipment from Monday, May 25 through Sunday, May 31. During this seven-day period, purchases of certain supplies and equipment needed for hurricane preparedness will be exempt from sales tax. For more details, please visit www.vdem.state.va.us/.

FEMA leads and supports the nation in a risk-based, comprehensive emergency management system of preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and

mitigation, to reduce the loss of life and property and protect the nation from all hazards including natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other manmade disasters.

NATIONAL GUARD

Florida trains communications experts for upcoming hurricane season

The torrential rains in Florida gave a realistic backdrop to National Guard training this week, as Soldiers and Airmen prepared their emergency response efforts for the upcoming hurricane season.

More than 100 members of the Florida National Guard completed three week-long courses in northeast Florida May 5-22, learning how to operate mobile Regional Emergency Response Network (RERN) systems.

The systems are capable of providing high-speed Internet connectivity to computers and laptops, and signal strength for hand-held radios.

The RERNS use a variety of frequencies to provide defense support to civilian authorities in times of state-wide emergency, helping them assist in disaster recovery.

This is the fourth year the RERN classes have been held here at Camp Blanding, Fla. Despite the soggy weather, the trainees studied all aspects of the systems, including troubleshooting, basic repair, and responding to the communications needs of their "customers" in the field.

The course even included a "night operation" where the Soldiers and Airmen set up and operated the systems in the dark.

The Florida National Guard currently has 17 RERN systems available for emergency response missions. They have been used by Florida National Guard members in disaster recovery operations in Florida, Texas, Louisiana and Kentucky, and even during the Presidential Inauguration ceremony in Washington, D.C., earlier this year.

"It's a mission they enjoy, and we're very happy to help Florida and other states," Lt. Col. Loretta Lombard, 290th Joint Communications Support Squadron commander said. "We're hoping for a quiet

(hurricane) season, but we're very prepared for whatever it might bring."

Hurricane season 2009 began June 1.

VETERANS

VA Accepting Applications for Post-9/11 GI Bill Benefits

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced today that Veterans can begin submitting applications on-line for the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

"There is no better investment than education," said Tammy Duckworth, VA's assistant secretary for public and intergovernmental affairs. "The Post-9/11 GI Bill will provide new opportunities that are essential to our Veterans, our workforce and our economy."

Veterans, service members, reservists and National Guard members with active duty since Sept. 10, 2001, may be eligible for this benefit. Veterans will remain eligible for benefits for 15 years from the date of last discharge or release from a period of active duty of at least 90 continuous days. Eligible applicants must have served for an aggregate period of at least 90 days since Sept. 10, 2001, or served at least 30 continuous days on active duty since Sept. 10, 2001, and received a discharge for disability.

Benefit payment rates range from 40 percent of the maximum benefit for a person with at least 90 days, but less than 6 months of aggregate service and up to 100 percent of the benefit for people with at least 36 months of aggregate service or 30 continuous days and a discharge due to a service connected disability. Prospective beneficiaries may apply on-line through the GI Bill Web site at www.GIBILL.VA.gov.

Qualified Veterans will receive a "Certification of Eligibility" as well as additional information regarding benefits they may qualify for under the Post-9/11 GI Bill, which will become effective on Aug. 1, 2009.

Information about the new program and VA's other educational benefits can be obtained through www.GIBILL.VA.gov or by calling 1-888-GIBILL1 (1-888-442-4551).

Certification

MAFFS training certifies, prepares troops for upcoming wildfire season



Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Dan Beaudreau

A C-130 aircraft flown by the 145th Airlift Wing, an Air National Guard unit from Charlotte, N.C. maneuvers close while contour flying to drop a load of simulated retardant during Modular Aerial Fire Fighting training May 3-9 in the Coronado National Forest of southeastern Arizona. The 145th AW is a contingent of the 302nd Air Expeditionary Group, part of a unified military support effort of U.S. Northern Command to provide assistance to the U.S. Forest Service, state and local agencies, and the National Interagency Fire Center in battling large, uncontrolled wildfires throughout the nation. The 145th AW is performing upgrade and initial training of aircrews, maintenance crews, and aviation resource management staff as they and three other Airlift Wings from Colorado, California and Wyoming qualify for MAFFS operations in annual training exercises this week.

Working to re-certify personnel for qualification in the Wildfire-fighting business, 108 Airmen from the 145th Airlift Wing at the Modular Aerial Fire Fighting System conducted training exercises at the Arizona National Guard Base on the Tucson International Airport in Tucson, Arizona May 3 through May 10.

The week-long exercise ensures veteran and novice C-130 pilots, lead plane pilots, ground crewmembers, U.S. Forest Service officials, with state and local liaison officers performing a variety of functions, are brought up to speed on standards and procedures, and

apprised of newer equipment and operational modifications implemented since last season, through initial and recurrent training sorties.

Overall, the Wing flew eight sorties in six hours of flying, dropping 72,000 gallons of water (used in training to preserve the expensive phostek retardant utilized for real-world scenarios) through 24 drops in the Coronado National Forest of southeastern Arizona.

Airmen from the 145th AW are also introducing the MAFFS operation to representatives from the Botswana Defense Force Air Arm. Lt. Col. H.T. Rakgantswana (rak-enswana) of the Botswana Defense Force Air Arm and other members of the Botswana Defense Force Air Arm, North Carolina's partner in the State Partnership Program have joined members of the 145th AW as they and three other Airlift Wings from Colorado, California and Wyoming participate in annual MAFFS training exercises this week. The Botswana

government intends to adopt a similar fire fighting program of their own soon, and are using the opportunity to gain experience and knowledge about the aerial procedure.

In recent years the National Interagency Fire Center operation, headquartered in Boise, Idaho, has combined military units with the USFS and state forestry and fire protection services to supplement commercial efforts in the annual struggle to contain fires.

The MAFFS mission has been part of the 145th AW commitment as a National Guard unit to state and federal needs including emergency response and federal defense since 1985.

Troops from the 145th AW as well as other units in the North Carolina National Guard are currently deployed in the Global War on Terror and continue to stand ready to meet future catastrophes within North Carolina.

(by Arizona National Guard)

Year of the NCO

ARNORTH Strong: NCOs break from work to strengthen corps

Every now and then it is good to relocate your workplace for a day and change up the routine.

Twenty three Army North noncommissioned officers and four NCOs from Fort Sam Houston's garrison Headquarters and Headquarters Company did just that May 27, 2009, when they moved their place of duty from Fort Sam Houston to T Bar M in New Braunfels, Texas for ARNORTH's second annual NCO retreat.

"We tried to accomplish a couple of things here," said Sgt. Maj. Karen Bolden, chaplain's office sergeant major, ARNORTH. "First we want to support (Lt. Gen. Thomas R. Turner's, ARNORTH commanding general) strategic objectives by further educating our NCOs and help better our quality of life. Then we are here to have fun and build a stronger NCO corps within ARNORTH."

The NCOs started the morning with breakfast and a seminar on military ethics and leadership. The seminar included required reading on the subject and gave the NCOs a chance to discuss different issues and scenarios within the subject.

"This is definitely improving the skills and knowledge management of the NCO corps. It

exercises critical thinking which is something we need to practice as leaders," said Sgt. Maj. Gilbert Canuela, inspector general sergeant major, ARNORTH.

"Twenty years ago NCOs did not get such in-depth training in matters such as military ethics," Sgt. Maj. Canuela added. "This critical thinking is something that will need to be used by these leaders when they leave here and go down range."

After an in-depth discussion on military ethics the NCOs took a break for lunch and then spent time using everything T Bar M had to offer including putt-putt golf, a swimming pool, a spa, and various nature trails to hike on.

"This is wonderful. We need to do this more often. I got out there and got my 'Tiger Woods' on playing putt-putt. It was fun," said Sgt. Amos Stimage, executive administrative assistant, ARNORTH.

"It was a great atmosphere to learn and discuss with fellow NCOs. This is an idea I will definitely take back to my unit," said Sgt. Francisco Ruiz, finance technician, garrison HHC.

This is the second year the ARNORTH chaplain's office has hosted a retreat exclusively for NCOs, but officials hope they will continue.

"We hope to keep this going. Everyone

"This is definitely improving the skills and knowledge management of the NCO corps. It exercises critical thinking which is something we need to practice as leaders"

seems to have a great time and learns a lot. Hopefully we can start having two a year instead of just one," Sgt. Maj. Bolden said.

"Since it is the year of the NCO we need to pull together as a group, we need more events like this," Sgt. Stimage said. "Everybody is in their own section, and we don't get to communicate with each other consistently. I think it is great to bring the NCO corps together like this and hope we do more of this in the future."

(by Sgt. Joshua R. Ford/ARNORTH PAO)



Photo by Sgt. Joshua R. Ford

ARNORTH NCOs play cards and dominoes at T Bar M in New Braunfels, Texas, May 27 during ARNORTH's annual NCO retreat. The NCOs gathered in the morning for a seminar on military ethics and in the afternoon played cards, dominoes and putt-putt golf.

Joint Summer Safety Campaign Aims to Reduce Off-duty Deaths

As Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates pushes to get deployed troops whatever they need to succeed and return home safely, the services are gearing up campaigns to reduce deaths at home during the summer vacation season.

The period between Memorial Day weekend and Labor Day typically sees a big spike in vehicle and recreational accidents, Defense Department safety officials note. People tend to spend more time outside enjoying off-duty activities, and they travel more. The unfortunate result is that accident rates increase, too.

Last year, 115 service members died in off-duty accidents during the so-called “101 Critical Days of Summer.”

Motor vehicles remained the No. 1 cause of off-duty military deaths, despite broad safety awareness efforts, officials reported. Motor vehicle accidents claimed 88 service members’ lives last summer.

Motorcycles were the biggest culprits, claiming 50 lives. Another 38 service members died last summer in cars, trucks, sport utility vehicles and vans.

To reduce those statistics this year, the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard launched the 2009 Safe Summer campaign earlier this month. Safety chiefs are emphasizing the importance of everyone – service members, civilians and fam-

ily members alike – to make the campaign a success.

Just one loss is one too many, particularly for a military at war, said Brig. Gen. William T. Wolf, commander of the Army Combat Readiness and Safety Center at Fort Rucker, Ala.

“In combat, a Soldier’s battle buddy is frequently the first line of defense when it comes to affecting a soldier’s decision-making process or reaction to a particular situation,” he said. “I am encouraging leaders, Soldiers and family members to be a battle buddy this weekend to help ensure a great start to a fun, safe summer season.”

Rear Adm. Arthur J. Johnson, commander of the Navy Safety Center, urged the Navy and Marine Corps communities to arm themselves with the information they need to avoid becoming statistics.

“Make a plan to stay safe while enjoying recreational and off-duty events,” he said. “We’re counting on you to know the statistics so you don’t become one.”

“The enemy ‘risk’ can be defeated, but it takes teamwork,” said Army Command Sgt. Maj. Tod Glidewell, top non-commissioned officer at the USACR Safety Center. The team requires leaders, troops, civilians and family members alike, “both on and off duty, protecting our most precious resource to ensure ‘no one stands alone,’” he said.

(story by Donna Miles)

Awards



Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Jacobs, Operational Command Post 2 commanding general, presents Capt. John Pixley, Maj. Gen. Jacobs’ aide-de-camp, the Army Achievement Medal.

The following Soldiers are receiving awards for their hardwork and dedication to ARNORTH.

Lt. Col. Franklin Jackson
Meritorious Service Medal
PCS



Lt. Col. Kevin Keipp
Meritorious Service Medal
Retirement



Lt. Col. Larry Ritter
Meritorious Service Medal
Retirement



Maj. John Morales
Meritorious Service Medal
PCS



Sgt. Maj. Gilbert Canuela
Legion of Merit
Retirement



Sgt. Lauren Pena
Army Commendation Medal
ETS



Father's day: A Personal Reflection on Fatherhood

Father's Day. A time most dads think of as a day to sleep in, get breakfast in bed and be pampered the remainder of the day.

Some will go fishing or golfing without fear of rebuke from "mom." Many wives and kids will also take dad out for dinner.

But for a few of us, it is a time of remembrance to give thanks for what God has blessed us with. Not only our own fathers, but our children as well.

Don't get me wrong! I enjoy sleeping in and having a nice meal as much as the next man, but I also place the meaning of the day in its proper context – giving thanks for what I was blessed with: a loving father and children of my own.

I didn't really appreciate my father as much as I should have until I was in my early 20's and had joined the military. It was then that I began to understand the reason he had driven his values, ethical beliefs and sense of morals into the very fiber of my being.

He had spent 20-plus years in the Air Force and had never once suggested that I join, but supported me when I did. It wasn't until I had graduated from basic training and the Security Police Academy that I remember him telling me how proud he was of me. I'm sure he had said it before, but it had never been as emotional and heartfelt as that day.

Soon, I met my wife, and, eventually, we had two boys of our own. During each birth I almost lost her and each son due to complications.

The oldest one remained in the hospital for eight days before coming home; the youngest one eight weeks. I thanked God for blessing me with a beautiful, healthy child each time. Yes, they were born with complications, but each had 10 toes, 10 fingers and didn't require surgery – to me that is healthy.

Through the years, I have found myself instilling my father's values, ethical beliefs and morals upon my sons. I now understand the reasons my father did the same to my brother and myself.

I also find myself becoming more and more like my father each year. When I was younger, I would've considered this traitorous to my generation and virtually impossible to do. Now, I find it comforting and the "right thing to do." And, like myself, I'm sure my own children won't truly value those "nuggets of wisdom" until later in life.

I still remember a sermon at the chapel on Beale Air Force Base, Calif., back in 1997. The chaplain said, "A good parent is not judged on how well their children turn out, but on how well their grandchildren turn out."

Unfortunately, my father has passed away. He was able to visit with my oldest son many times and reinforce those values and ideals he had taught me. My father only saw my youngest son once, when he was less than a year old, a month before he died.

He never got to see the boys grow older, the accomplishments they've enjoyed through the years: participating in school plays, making high school sports teams, playing in all-star games, running at state track meets, being an usher at church or joining the military. All things I know would've swelled my father with pride.

My father never got to see my wife and I become foster parents to continue to spread those values to new generations. He never saw the pride in his grandson's eyes as he stood over his gravesite at the Fort Sam Houston cemetery recently.

Now, I find myself each Father's Day reflecting on how much I appreciate what my father did for me. And, I'm glad I was able to tell him that before he passed away.

My children may be too young to judge how well he did as a parent. But, I believe he did an outstanding job, and I hope one day I will be able to look at my grandchildren and know I did as well as him.

Thanks dad and Happy Father's Day.
(by Randy Mitchell/ARNORTH PAO)



ARNORTH golfers volunteer for PGA Texas Open

ARNORTH members Paul Lucci, Mike Pukansky and Bill Barnello relax after volunteering at the Professional Golf Association Valero Texas Open May 14-17. Volunteering at the 17th hole the ARNORTH crew witnessed firsthand Zach Johnson take first at La Cantera Golf Course in San Antonio.

ARNORTH NCOs leading Health and Fitness Month

The NCOs of ARNORTH are inviting all of the ARNORTH team to participate in ARNORTH's first fitness month in June.

The purpose behind fitness month is to motivate and emphasize the importance of physical fitness.

The intent is for all participants to have a

great time getting together with others and working to stay fit.

Intensity levels will be up to the individual. To ensure that individuals are not placed at undue risk of injury or accident, a safety briefing will be conducted before every exercise session.

A nutritionist from BAMC has volunteered to assist ARNORTH with nutritional concerns.

No sign up is necessary.

For more information contact Sgt. Maj. Timmy Stampley at 221-1479 or Sgt. Maj. Karen Bolden at 221-0211.

ARNORTH Chaplain NCOs help retired Paratroopers display their heritage



Photo by Sgt. Joshua R. Ford

Master Sgt. Angela Bray, operations noncommissioned officer, chaplain's office, U.S. Army North, hands a parachute and a reserve parachute to retired Sgt. 1st Class Marty Martinez. Mr. Martinez is the president of the Alamo Silver Wings Airborne Association. The parachute was donated from the ARNORTH chaplain's office to replace one that was stolen from the Silver Wings.

U.S. Army North noncommissioned officers gathered with retired Paratroopers at the Drop Zone Café and Bar, San Antonio, May 20 to present a parachute and parachute reserve to the Alamo Silver Wings Airborne Association to replace one that was stolen from the restaurant earlier this year.

Retired Sgt. 1st Class and Paratrooper

Marty Martinez accepted the gift from the ARNORTH chaplain's office.

"We appreciate your kindness and all you're doing for our country," Mr. Martinez said to the ARNORTH NCOs. "The Silver Wing Airborne Association is grateful to ARNORTH for this gift."

"We got the call about the display's disappearance and set out to find them a new

one," said Sgt. Maj. Karen Bolden, chaplain's office sergeant major, ARNORTH. "We are glad to be here and glad to be able to give you a new parachute for the display."

The parachute was shipped from Fort Bragg, North Carolina and is currently on display at the Drop Zone Café and Bar outside of Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

U.S. Army Safety Center calls drivers to ‘share the roads’

The U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center has joined the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and other state and national organizations to remind motorists and motorcyclists to be extra alert during Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month.

Across the nation, motorcycle fatalities have steadily increased over the past decade. In fiscal 2008, the Army lost more Soldiers in motorcycle accidents than any other previous year going back to 1986.

Since the beginning of fiscal 2009, there have been 13 motorcycle-related Soldier fatalities, and peak riding season is still a few weeks away.

“This is really the beginning of the traditional riding season because, with the weather improving, more and more motorcyclists are

hitting the roads,” said Walter Beckman, Safety Center driving task force program manager. “With that in mind, drivers of all vehicles need to be extra attentive and make sure they are sharing the road.”

Mr. Beckman said motorists and motorcyclists alike have many responsibilities out on the road like making sure they follow the rules, remaining visible to all drivers and never driving while impaired. Motorcyclists’ responsibilities also include always wearing a DOT-compliant helmet and other protective gear.

“Motorcyclists are much more vulnerable than passenger vehicle occupants in the event of a crash,” Mr. Beckman said. “Research shows that motorcyclists are about 37 times more likely than a passenger car occupant to die in

a traffic crash, so remember to slow down and ride within your capability.”

As the Army heads into summer, last year’s deadliest month for Soldier motorcycle riders, NHTSA recommends several tips for drivers to help keep motorcyclists safe out on the roads:

- Remember the motorcycle is a vehicle with all of the rights and privileges of any other motor vehicle on the roadway. Always allow a motorcyclist the full lane width—never try to share a lane;
- Always make a visual check for motorcycles by checking mirrors and blind spots before entering or leaving a lane of traffic and at intersections;
- Always signal your intentions before changing lanes or merging with traffic.

ARNORTH motorcyclists ride together during motorcycle safety month



(Left) Lt. Col. Eric Roberts, civil support division chief, plans, U.S. Army North, poses on Navy Lt. Kimberly Filos’, Joint Task Force - North liaison officer to ARNORTH, pink motorcycle before a ride to Fredricksburg, Texas. (Right) ARNORTH motorcyclists gather in the Quadrangle for a safety inspection before a weekend ride. There are more than 30 motorcyclists in ARNORTH. For more information on motorcycle safety or when the next ARNORTH motorcycle trip is contact Joseph Osborne, ARNORTH safety officer, at 210-221-9744 or at joseph.r.osborne@conus.army.mil.

CST

Eight states participate in CST regional exercise

Sirens wail as a fire truck speeds to a local school in response to a reported incident. Dozens of students are sent to area hospitals. The radiation alarm on one of the firemen begins to scream.

It is every parent's nightmare and every citizen's biggest fear, but for the 14th Civil Support Team (CST) of the Connecticut National Guard this is just another day on the job.

The scenario was presented to the 14th CST here on May 4, the opening day of CONN-EX 09, an exercise involving CST teams from across New England, New York and New Jersey.

The Connecticut National Guard is the host of the exercise, which is being held at various sites throughout southeast Connecticut and is headquartered at Camp Rell in Niantic, Conn.

The regional, multi-state, multi-agency exercise is conducted by U.S. Army North and is designed to test agency responses and strengthen our ability to collectively address future complex incidents by subjecting participants to simulated Weapons of Mass Destruction scenarios over a protracted period of time. It consists of a full 24-hour deployment cycle for each CST and is tailored to the various training needs of the other participating agencies.

Participants include nine CSTs from eight states, including Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York and New Jersey. Other agencies involved are Connecticut's Military Department, State Police Emergency Services Unit, Department of Public Health, Department of Environmental Protection and Department of Emergency Management as well as federal agencies to include the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Bureau of Investigations, Department of Energy, U.S. Naval Submarine Base in



Photo by Pfc. Brian Holloran

Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Van Damme, a decontamination noncommissioned officer for the 14th Civil Support Team of the Connecticut National Guard, checks Sgt. John Barton, a survey team member, for contaminants after Barton returned from surveying the inside of a local school in Groton, Conn., on May 5, 2009.

New London, Conn., and the U.S. Coast Guard - Sector Long Island Sound and Explosive Ordnance Disposal Teams from various states.

"The exercise is designed to test and evaluate the teams on the unit's effectiveness preparedness," said Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Van Damme, the 14th CST's decontamination noncommissioned officer.

At 9 a.m., the fire department called the 14th CST for help after it found radiation at the school. The 14th CST is made up of 22 full-time Soldiers and Airmen.

"After we get the call our main first task is to get a reconnaissance team on site as soon as possible," said Staff Sgt. Karl Rhynhart, survey team member for the 14th CST.

The recon team is tasked with gathering as much information as possible and determining if the area is safe or if evacuation is necessary.

"Once the recon team assesses the situation the rest of the team arrives and starts setting up," said Rhynhart.

"Once the team arrives on site our first priority is to get each area operational," said Van Damme. "Once that is accomplished the survey team gets geared up and begins a sweep of the area."

During the sweep the survey team checks every window, door and any other opening that leads outside, for any signs of a contaminate leak.

"We use devices which check for radiation, the amount of oxygen in the air and other contaminants," said Sgt. John Barton.

"We look for anything that indicates the toxin has escaped the building."

"Training like this is meant to keep us on our toes and make sure we have all of our ducks in a row and that's exactly what this exercise has been doing all day long, making us stay on our toes," said Van Damme. "This is what we train for, it's why we look forward to this event."

(by Pfc. Brian J. Holloran/Connecticut National Guard)

No One Gets Dirty Alone

Whether you're on the street, track or in the dirt, the right gear will help protect you and your buddy.

- Helmet
- Eye protection
- Sturdy over-the-ankle boots
- Shin guards
- Gloves (padded full-finger)



Have fun and look out for each other this summer. Do your part to protect our Band of Brothers and Sisters.

SAFE SUMMER



ARMY SAFE IS ARMY STRONG

