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Army North, Fort Sam Houston grow, mature with Military City USA

By Lt. Gen. Guy Swan III
Commanding General, U.S. Army North and Fort Sam Houston

Fort Sam Houston and Camp Bullis have a special place in the heart of San Antonio and the Department of Defense. Our place in history is as relevant and secure as the other fortress of strength with which we share this south Texas home – the Alamo.

I have the pleasure to command from one of the military's oldest continuously operating structures at the historic quadrangle. I am reminded daily of what this great place has meant for our country.

Every Soldier, Sailor, Airman or Marine that receives medical treatment from a Soldier-medic owes his or her health to Fort Sam Houston – so long the home of the Army Medical Department Center and School. Likewise, we express our gratitude to those patients and our Wounded Warriors who continue their treatment at BAMC, itself the model of military healthcare for the world.

As I travel across this installation down Artillery Post, Staff Post and Infantry Post Roads, I am reminded of the generations of servicemen and women that trained here and called this Fort their home on their way to and from victory. And did you know that even the military planes that crisscross our sky owe their flight to a runway that began right here on Fort Sam? We are still serving, leading with cutting-edge ideas and technology.

Today, joint basing represents a new and exciting venture for our military. It is the manifestation of a process that will make us efficient and vibrant for the coming centuries and is deserving of our collective embrace. Our neighbors here in San Antonio will appreciate and support us the same as ever, remaining true to its nickname: "Military City USA." This much I have been assured.

I am reminded also that there are many shareholders here and this military community will grow from over 60 to 100 and more tenants. Unlike other Joint Basing ventures related to BRAC, Fort Sam Houston does not have a single hierarchy or chain of command to aid in streamlining progress. Multiple individual stakeholder wishes are sure to bring new and unknown challenges. Nonetheless, each will come to love this Fort as we do now, and they will find it to be an exceptional place to serve and grow.

You see, as I talk to other commanders on Fort Sam, I am assured that excellence is the common and uncompromising goal of every command. Every person who serves here should expect no less and is welcome to participate in the collective vision for Fort Sam Houston and Camp Bullis.

Tradition will remain a part of our culture, and foremost is the role that noncommissioned officers play in maintaining standards. There is such a thing as NCO business, and it is what other nations envy most in our arsenal. Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines, as well as our Department of Defense civilian workforce, will see NCOs of all uniforms out front, leading, examples to us all of how joint services work for the common good. The final chapter for Fort Sam Houston and Camp Bullis is not written. At every turn, there is a sign of the value that DoD and this city and state places in Fort Sam Houston and Camp Bullis. New construction and renovation are happening simultaneously.

We, the current tenants of this land, owe it to our successors to provide a place that is better than what we inherited. To that end, I call on everyone here to be great stewards of our treasures, natural and manmade, new and old. Let those who follow look back to our generation with as much reverence as we have for the first military tenants of San Antonio.

In my three decades of service, I have probably never served at a post that has meant so much to our nation's military. I will reach out to you in this and other venues in the months and years ahead. I am honored to be here with you today, commanding forces that today, as before, are the strength of our nation.

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U.S. Army North hosts 3rd annual force protection conference

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Keith Anderson,
Army North PAO

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas — U.S. Army North leaders led a force protection conference May 4-7 in San Antonio to foster greater cooperation among force protection communities and to discuss challenges and the future of force protection in the United States.

The third-annual conference, led by U.S. Army North's provost marshal's office, covered a range of subjects for force protection leaders in North America.

"This was a working conference where attendees from U.S. Northern Command, Continental U.S. Army commands, the Army National Guard and Department of the Army staff both vetted and provided comments on force protection way-ahead strategies for this theater," said Col. David Draeger, provost marshal, Army North.

Force protection, by military definition, is actions taken to prevent or lessen the effect of hostile actions against Department of Defense personnel, their Families, and against government resources, facilities and critical information.

Service members from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps, along with their DoD Civilian partners, participated in break-out sessions ranging from criticality assessments, intelligence and law enforcement information sharing and threat reporting to "train the trainer" sessions on the Core Vulnerability Assessment Management Program. The participants were also provided an opportunity to witness demonstrations from industry leaders on real-time information-sharing systems under consideration. They also heard updates on the Fort Hood Task Force findings and offered input into Army North's force protection plans.

For some attendees from other services, the conference served as an opportunity to glean the latest information for their organizations.

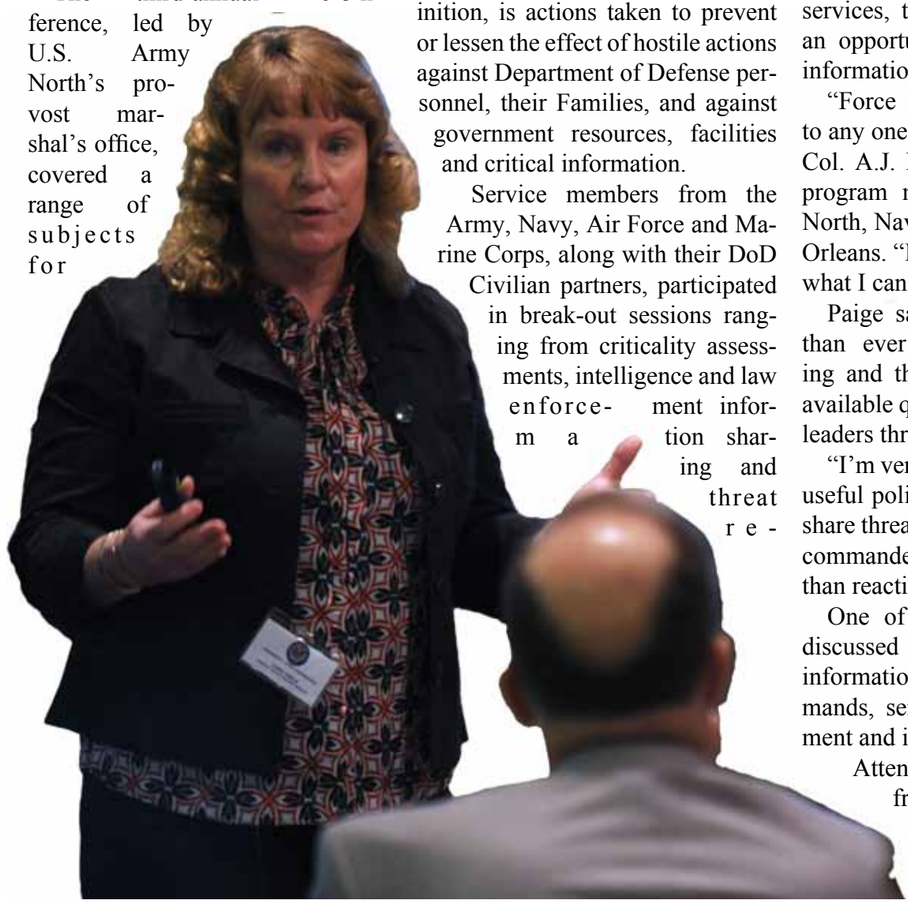
"Force protection is not unique to any one service," said Marine Lt. Col. A.J. Paige, mission assurance program manager, Marine Forces North, Naval Support Activity New Orleans. "I'm here to learn and take what I can back to my command."

Paige said it is more important than ever that information sharing and threat reporting are made available quickly to force protection leaders throughout North America.

"I'm very supportive of putting in useful policies that will allow us to share threat information real time so commanders can be more proactive than reactive."

One of the greatest challenges discussed at the conference was information sharing between commands, services, and law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

Attendees heard a quote from Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner, the congressman who introduced the USA Patriot Act in Oct. 2001:



Chris Frels, deputy provost marshal, U.S. Army North, provides a brief on the Fort Hood Task Force findings to attendees at the Army North Force Protection Conference at the Marriot Plaza in San Antonio May 4.

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Army North Soldiers get 'cultured'

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Keith Anderson,
Army North PAO

Sgt. 1st Class Peter Villa, operations sergeant, U.S. Army North, gives a presentation on Count Casimir Pulaski, a Polish Soldier who emigrated to the United States, during an EO leader course April 30 at the Rudder Army Reserve Center.

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas — Three U.S. Army North Soldiers, along with 27 of their peers from units around Fort Sam Houston and the region, spent a week learning to be leaders in Equal Opportunity from April 26 – May 1 at the Rudder Army Reserve Center.

The six-day, 60-hour course taught noncommissioned officers how to support their command's EO advisor by helping to take informal complaints, set up and assist with ethnic observances and assess the 'command climate,' the morale and perceptions of Soldiers in a command.

Sgt. 1st Class Peter Villa, a student in the course, and operations sergeant, Army North, said the course is very important.

"It helps to educate the Army in Equal Opportunity, and assists in erasing discrimination in the force," said Villa, a native of Brooklyn, N.Y.

According to the Army, the Equal Opportunity program formulates, directs, and sustains a comprehensive effort to maximize human potential to ensure fair treatment for military personnel, family members, and Department of the Army civilians without regard to race, color, gender, religion, or national origin, and provides an environment free of unlawful discrimination and offensive behavior.

The training for EO leaders, more limited than that for EO advisors, covered 24 classes on a wide variety of topics, including individual and group behavior, cultural awareness, aspects of discrimination and EO skills and information. Students conducted presentations on multicultural topics, participated in small group exercises and completed daily quizzes and a final exam.

Villa, a veteran who has deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq, said the training made him a better leader in the Army.

"Noncommissioned officers have many different missions," Villa said.

"One of those missions is to train and instill discipline. Completing the EOL course enables me to further expand my mind and fully accomplish that mission. It also allows me to be a rock for Soldiers in need throughout the Army."

Sgt. Sharra Scott, automations noncommissioned officer, Defense Coordinating Element Region VIII, Army North, who traveled all the way from Denver to attend the course, said the course reemphasized the importance of EO to the Army.

"EO must be a constant on-duty, off-duty obligation for all military personnel and their families," said Scott, a native of San Antonio. "Keeping this in mind will allow for a more diverse and adaptable military force."

Equal Opportunity leaders are essential, said Master Sgt. Mary Peters, equal opportunity advisor, Army Medical Department Center and School, and Fort Sam Houston.

"Equal Opportunity leaders are the eyes and ears of the commander, and the backbone of the EO program," said Peters, a native of Louisville, Ark.

But the job isn't for everyone, she said.

"For me, it's a personal choice," Peters said.

"If you're one of those people who's willing to do the right thing all the time, then yes."

Army North leaders engage community, discuss importance of mission

Photo by Staff Sgt. Keith Anderson, Army North PAO

Lt. Gen. Guy Swan III, commanding general, U.S. Army North and Fort Sam Houston, presents a certificate of appreciation to Gloria Stewart, a Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps cadet at Louis W. Fox Academic and Technical High School, on behalf of the Military Officers Association of America Alamo Chapter during a MOAA luncheon at the Gateway Club May 21 at Lackland Air Force Base. Swan spoke to MOAA members and guests about the role of Army North in homeland defense, theater security cooperation and defense support of civil authorities, and discussed construction and restructuring at Fort Sam Houston.

Photo by Stafff Sgt. Keith Anderson, U.S. Army North PAO

Maj. Gen. Perry Wiggins, deputy commanding general, U.S. Army North, demonstrates an emergency response vehicle to members of the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce – Military Affairs committee during a committee visit to Army North May 12. Committee members were briefed by Charlie Canedy, chief of the commander's initiatives group, on the unique mission of Army North, and then saw demonstrations of the ERV and the Sentinel.

ARNORTH welcomes

Esther Downs, G6

Ronald Robinson, IG

Daniel Shine, G6

Maj. Robert Hall, G2

Capt. Steven Foster, Surg.

Master Sgt. William Griffin, IG

Staff Sgt. Jeremy Heiserman, Rgn VII

ARNORTH says goodbye

Marcus Wynne, PMO

Charles Griffin, G3

Brad Arnett, G3

Maj. Edward Anhalt, G8

Maj. Elizabeth Gum, Surg.

Maj. Robert Mason, G3

Chief Warrant 2 Ike Alumanah, G1

Sgt. 1st Class James Brandon, Rgn. VI

Staff Sgt. Christina Corbett, G2

FATHER'S DAY IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

Sunday, June 20

Father's Day is a day honoring fathers and celebrating fatherhood, paternal bonds, and the influence of fathers in society. It is celebrated on the third Sunday of June in 52 of the world's countries and on other days elsewhere. It complements Mother's Day, the celebration honoring mothers. Father's Day is a celebration inaugurated in the early twentieth century to complement Mother's Day in celebrating fatherhood and male parenting. It is also celebrated to honor and commemorate our fathers and forefathers. Father's Day is celebrated on a variety of dates worldwide and typically involves gift-giving, special dinners to fathers, and family-oriented activities. The first observance of Father's Day is believed to have been held on June 19, 1910 through the efforts of Sonora Smart Dodd of Spokane, Washington.

65-years of military service, experience retires

Photo by Staff Sgt. Keith Anderson, U.S. Army North PAO

Lt. Col. Roger Casillas II, deputy assistant chief of staff G8, Army North; Sgt. 1st Class Brian Johnson, administrative noncommissioned officer in charge and driver for the commanding general, ARNORTH; and Sgt. 1st Class Luis Rosado-Ayala, supply section noncommissioned officer in charge, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, ARNORTH, stand before a crowd of Family, friends and well wishers for a final time during a retirement ceremony in the Quadrangle May 21.

Lt. Col. Roger Casillas joined the Army in 1989 as a field artillery officer. He served as a fire support officer in the Fulda Gap and is a Desert Storm veteran. Casillas changed job duties and became a comptroller after graduating the selected Comptrollership Progam at Syracuse University. "It seems like just yesterday I was just starting out," said Casillas. "I have a fond appreciation for our country and our Army. If you lived in a war-torn country and you give them a chance for peace, it is an unexpected gift."

Sgt. 1st Class Brian Johnson joined the Army in 1986 as a motor transport operator. He served in numerous deployments, such as Operation Desert Storm, Operation Restore Hope, Implementation Force, and most recently, Operation Iraqi Freedom, where he trained Iraqis while serving on a Military Transistion Team He is the youngest of six children who, all but one entered miltiary service."It's hard to sum up 24 years of service in just a few minutes," said Johnson."Its difficult leaving the military service — it's all I've known."

Sgt. 1st Class Luis Rosado-Ayala joined the Army in 1990 as a unit supply specialist. He served in numerous deployments, such as Operations Joint Endeavor, Operation Joint Forge, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. He was responsible for a $72 million property book and has trained numerous Soldiers to work as logistics support clerks during his tenure. "I have to say goodbye to something I still love," said Rosado-Ayala. "Thank you for letting me serve."

City celebrates opening of 'Gateway to Fort Sam Houston'

Left: Computer generated rendition of Walters Street Bridge as a completed project. **Right:** Walters Bridge before construction. *(Courtesy photos from Texas Department of Transportation.)*

Maj. Gen. Perry Wiggins, deputy commanding general, U.S. Army North and Fort Sam Houston, thanks city and state government representatives for their support on the construction of the bridge over Interstate Highway 35 during the Texas Department of Transportation's Walters Street Bridge Ribbon Cutting Ceremony May 25 to officially open the "New Gateway to Fort Sam Houston."

Story and photo by
Sgt. 1st Class Manuel Torres
U.S. Army North PAO

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas — Commuters traveling to and from Fort Sam Houston have the opportunity to witness one of the many improvements made for the community — the new Walters Street Bridge.

As sounds of horns and vehicle engines zipped underneath, U.S. Army North and Fort Sam Houston military and Civilian personnel, along with city and state government representatives, gathered over Interstate Highway 35 to officially open the "New Gateway to Fort Sam Houston" May 25, during the Texas Department of Transportation's Walters Street Bridge Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.

"Today's event highlights the incredible support that Texas and San Antonio provide our military," said Maj. Gen. Perry Wiggins, deputy commanding general, Army North and Fort Sam Houston. "This bridge has another feature; it symbolizes a connection between this community and its military members that is unmatched anywhere in the world. Located close to where the general and 34th President (Dwight D. Eisenhower) once served."

Since Spring 2008, residents and commuters have witnessed the TxDOT's $23 million construction transform the bridge, originally built in 1962, into a representation of the historic Fort Sam Houston Quadrangle clock tower, said Fred Underwood, commissioner, Texas Highway Commission.

It also pays tribute to Dwight D. Eisenhower for authorizing the Interstate Highway System in 1956.

"This turned out to be fantastic," said Gina Gallegos, area engineer, Texas Department of Transportation. "We have received many calls from people about this bridge and construction to compliment on the structure and the progress, and we thank everyone for their patience during the construction."

The project included widening the bridge 37 feet to include turnarounds for both directions of travel as well as a pedestrian and bicycle lanes and sidewalks.

It also widened the IH35 frontage road lanes to allow for better traffic flow to and from the Fort Sam Houston area.

"With its modern traffic design and professional architecture, Fort Sam Houston and the city of San Antonio will be able to look with pride," said Sen. Jeff Wentworth, Texas State Senate, 25th District. "This is no miracle that this is possible. It is because of the hard work and dedication of the workers of the Department of Transportation to continue to enhance the city of San Antonio and the state of Texas."

Plans are also in the works by the City of San Antonio and Fort Sam Houston to build a six-lane throughway from the Walter's Street bridge to the Post's main gate.

The $13 million construction project is aimed at enhancing the surrounding area and providing economic benefits and quality of life improvements for the residents, said Rep. Ruth McClendon, state representative, District 120.

"Interstate 35 is one of the busiest roads in America," said Tommy Adkisson, Bexar County Precinct 4 commissioner. "This bridge is a tribute to all our brave military servicemen and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice to our nation."

With the hard work by the TxDOT and cooperation of city and state officials, the new bridge has become another symbol of the relationship between the military and community members.

"On behalf of the service members and military Families past, present and future that have called or will call this city Home, thank you to the city of San Antonio and the Department of Transportation for a project that truly is worthy of the history and legacy of Fort Sam Houston and your U.S. Military," said Wiggins.

Strong Families = strong ARNORTH command

Story and photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Manuel Torres,
Army North PAO

U.S. Army North hosted its inaugural Family Readiness Group May 18 as the command's leaders and Family members gathered around the main conference room in the historic Quadrangle.

The FRG meeting provided the attendees an opportunity to introduce themselves and share information as they combined their efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the unit by ensuring an essential element of the Army North team – its Families – are kept informed and are provided an avenue to provide feedback to its command team.

"This is more than mandatory meetings," said Col. Richard Francey Jr., chief of staff, Army North. "This is essential in the success of this unit. Successful units have strong FRGs, and it completes the total Army team."

FRGs provide more than just information to Civilians, Family members, spouses and children; they are vital in that they provide commanders avenues to assess the state of their commands by receiving feedback directly from the Soldiers, spouses and Family members on how the unit and the post can provide the valuable resources available.

"We need total support and effort from each and every Family member from this command," said Ginger Chun, Army North FRG leader. "It encourages unit and Family cohesion – not just for deployments but for any occasion."

Chun said assistance is paramount to the success of the group and that there are a variety of opportunities for Family members to get involved in FRG positions.

"Without more volunteers, we can't support those Families whose members has to go away to support any type of natural disaster," she explained.

U.S. Army North Family Readiness Group members get to know each other and discuss upcoming events during ARNORTH's inaugural FRG meeting May 18 in the command's main conference room.

Francey said that although the command is not designated to deploy as a unit to either Iraq or Afghanistan, it can, on a moment's notice, be deployed anywhere in its area of operations to support any type of catastrophic event that occurs.

And it is when events such as this occur, he added, the FRGs are invaluable to both the command and its Families in the support they provide.

"When I was a former rear detachment commander, I couldn't have survived my command without the help and support of my unit's Family Readiness Group," said Francey.

Various resources are available on post that Family members may not even realize, said Chun, who said meetings such as this are vital for sharing some of that valuable information.

"This is a great way to meet new people and build great friendships," said Esther Pizano, during her first experience with a unit Family Readiness Group.

Those desiring to get involved in the unit FRG or to volunteer for a position are invited to visit the U.S. Army North Virtual Family Readiness Group Web site at www.armyfrg.org/arnorth to register.

For additional information, contact Ginger Chun, Army North FRG leader, at: gmainchun@gmail.com.

Ginger Chun, ARNORTH Family Readiness Group leader, discusses upcoming events and opportunities for Families during the command's inaugural FRG meeting May 18 at the headquarters' main conference room.

June marks National Flag Day

Courtesy of the National Flag Day Foundation

Bernard J. Cigrand was born on Yankee Hill in Waubeka, Wis., on Oct. 1, 1866. He was the youngest of six children of Nicholas and Susan Cigrand who had settled and married there a decade earlier after immigrating to this country from Luxembourg in northwestern Europe.

A look at Cigrand's Family gives us insight into the background that prepared the son for a lifetime of achievement. As a youth, young Cigrand sold scrap iron and rags to buy books. At 12, he worked as a sales agent for the U.S. Book and Bible Club earning 25 cents for each book he sold.

He was a conductor on a steam barge on the Milwaukee River in the Waubeka area. Inspired by his father, young Cigrand displayed an early interest in American history.

Courtesy Poster provided by National Flag Day Foundation

He was a devout patriot with a great love of the flag of our nation. Cigrand earned $40 a month teaching school at Stony Hill. With income from selling books, he was able to pay his way through dental school. In 1888, he graduated first in his class from Lake Forest College of Dentistry. He was one of the contributing editors of the Encyclopedia Americana. One of his items was "The Recognition and Meaning of Flag Day." He wrote a widely distributed pamphlet on "Laws and Customs Regulating the use of the Flag of the United States."

The Father of Flag Day, from the 1880s through the 1930s, he preached respect and honor for the nation and its flag. In 1885, however, Cigrand was still a teenager and only at the beginning of his journey. He entered dental college later that year, mixing his professional studies with the promotion of the flag.

In June 1886, he made his first public proposal for the annual observance of the birth of the flag when he wrote an article titled "The Fourteenth of June" in the old *Chicago Argus* newspaper.

In June of 1888, at the same time he was graduating first in his class from dental college, Cigrand addressed a Chicago organization known as the "Sons of America". In his speech he emphasized the good that would come from a flag holiday.

In response, the organization undertook to publish a magazine called the *American Standard* to inculcate reverence for American emblems and appointed Cigrand its editor-in-chief. Cigrand's articles in this magazine helped direct public attention to the Flag and the date of its birth.

In the years that followed, Cigrand authored hundreds of other magazine and newspaper articles advocating recognition of the June 14th adoption of the Stars and Stripes.

In the third Saturday in June, 1894, the first general public school children's celebration of Flag Day in Chicago was held in Douglas, Garfield, Humboldt, Lincoln and Washington Parks, with more than 300,000 children participating.

These observances were held in the five parks again the next year, also on the third Saturday of June. In the years that followed, 36 Governors, scores of mayors and five Presidents of the United States sent delegates and credentials agreeing that Flag Day should be observed in all states of the Union on the actual June 14 anniversary of the adoption of the flag.

By 1916, flag ceremonies on June 14 had become so prevalent that President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation establishing Flag Day as an annual national event. Cigrand died of a sudden heart attack on May 16,1932. President Harry S. Truman signed the legislation in 1949, and June 14th was properly designated Flag Day.

This is where Flag Day stands today, 50 years after Truman, as we enter the twenty-first century.

35th Beach to Bay relay marathon proves 'no sweat' for runners

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

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas — Soldiers from U.S. Army North and Fort Sam Houston ran a 26.2-mile marathon in a torrential downpour May 15 at Corpus Christi in honor of the men and women who have served in the Armed Forces.

With 2,356 six-member teams involved in this year's 35th Annual Beach to Bay relay marathon, finishing it in the top 15 percent of competitors was a feat in itself; the five runners from U.S. Army North, along with a teammate from Brooke Army Medical Center, finished in 372nd place overall.

"The event was a very positive and inviting experience," said Maj. Armando Valdez, plans officer, international military affairs, Army North. "The rain was off and on during the second leg of the run. But by the end, it was pouring down so I knew that I had to finish strong because my teammate was waiting for me."

The marathon relay consisted of a total distance of 26.2 miles, beginning on North Padre Island, winding through Corpus Christi Naval Air Station and ending at Cole Park along Corpus Christi's scenic downtown area.

With each member running a distance between 4-4.7 miles, the Fort Sam Houston team finished with a time of 3 hours, 58 minutes, beating last year's time by 27 minutes despite the weather.

"The weather was horrible," said 1st Sgt. Ramon Gomez, first sergeant, Headquarter and Headquarters Company, Army North. "We still have fun though."

According to the National Weather Service's Precipitation Analysis website, Corpus Christi received between 4 to 6 inches of rain during the marathon.

In 1976, U.S. Naval Commander John Butterfield organized the event to honor men and women in the military during Armed Forces Day.

Quickly, it became a yearly event honoring military and law enforcement members and begun to raise thousands of dollars for charities to include Special Olympics and the Navy Relief Society, according to the marathon's website.

This particular marathon has been organized by military units deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The units ran the race in Tikrit and Marez, Iraq, in 2009.

All proceeds from Relay go to assist local charities in the Coastal Bend Area! For more information visit on the Beach to Bay Relay Marathon, visit: www.beachtobayrelay.com

Courtesy Photo

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas — (Clockwise from bottom left) Capt. Christopher Sheldon, logistics officer, U.S. Army North; Maj. Elizabeth Gum, medical operations planning officer, ARNORTH; Sgt. 1st Class Michael Knott, communications noncommissioned officer, ARNORTH; 1st Sgt. Ramon Gomez, Headquarter and Headquarters Company, ARNORTH, and Maj. Armando Valdez, international military affairs plans officer, ARNORTH. Not shown is 1st Lt. Katherine Ireland, medical officer, Brooke Army Medical Center.

Courtesy photo Beach to Bay Relay Marathon

JTF-N trains law enforcement agents, Soldiers

Story by Armando Carrasco
JTF-N PAO

FORT BLISS, Texas — In its continuous effort to enhance the life-saving and force protection skills of the nation's law enforcement agencies, Joint Task Force – North introduced 22 members of the nation's civilian agencies, along with 20 Soldiers from 1st Armored Division's 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, to a new three-week training initiative. The new JTF – N civilian law enforcement pilot program, code named 'Border Hunter,' was conducted in April at the task force's headquarters and on Fort Bliss ranges and training areas.

Photo by Lt. Col. Phillip Sanchez, JTF-N
A replica of a Middle Eastern village, recently constructed at a Fort Bliss training area, was used during Border Hunter training.

The new JTF – N program is based on the Marine Corps' highly successful 'Combat Hunter' training, currently being used to train Marines pending deployment to Afghanistan. The Marine Corps' program, which evolved from the lessons learned in the two on-going conflicts, trains Marines to sense danger when encountering situations and pitfalls that have proven fatal in combat.

As a U.S. Northern Command subordinate task force, JTF – N conducted Border Hunter in response to a U.S. Border Patrol request for assistance. At the request of Northern Command, and on behalf of JTF – N, the training was supported by U.S. Joint Forces Command, based at Norfolk, Va.

The overall course objective is to train the students to sense for dangers and react appropriately, while safeguarding innocent persons, their law enforcement partners and themselves.

"Border Hunter training was designed to enable skill development in cognitive decision making through tracking, enhanced observation and human behavior pattern recognition," said Marine Corps Col. John Mayer, JTF – N's deputy commander and Border Hunter program coordinator. "The training will help protect and better prepare our nation's law enforcement personnel for future encounters with criminals or terrorists. It will also benefit our military forces that participate in the training."

Highly skilled military and civilian instructors – with extensive personal experience in the U.S. Border Patrol, other law enforcement agencies and the military – provided the students with more than 200 hours of classroom instruction.

The students received instruction in a variety of "tracking" subjects, including the dynamics of a footprint, action indicators and track identification and interpretation.

Tracking is a unique skill that enhances situational awareness and bolsters the effectiveness of law enforcement in a variety of circumstances.

"These subjects are all designed to teach a student to become 'track aware' and subsequently conduct a successful follow-up or tracking operation," said Cornelius Nash, operations director for the Scott Donelan Tracking School. "Additionally, students were taught the fundamentals of urban tracking.

This block of instruction culminated with each team successfully following one set of prints through the urban sprawl and foot print 'contamination' of the housing and built up areas."

Instructors stressed that tracking is employed in a direct operational capacity, intelligence collection, force protection, sensitive site exploitation or investigations; tracking skills enhance, if not direct, nearly all operations.

"The tracking course showed students that it is not enough to say 'someone passed through here' or 'someone walked that way.' Border Hunter students were taught to analyze what they see and develop a true understanding of what transpired," said Nash.

Border Hunter also provided the students with enhanced observation technique training on the use of law enforcement and military issued optics.

"It's been my experience that most military personnel are loaded down with binoculars, night vision and thermal devices, but they have never been taught the best way to use the equipment," said Mayer. "Border Hunter taught the students the optimal way to use their optics to find a threat at the maximum standoff distance, day or night."

The third skill set taught of the Border Hunter triad was Human Behavior Pattern Recognition or Combat Profiling. Mayer stated that HBPR is a scientific discipline that offers the possibility of predicting human actions based on the comparison of behavioral anomalies against established patterns or norms. Greg Williams, a former Detroit policeman and HBPR discipline pioneer, developed the course of instruction taught in Border Hunter.

During the course, Williams taught the students that all people, events and objects give off certain signals when they are measured against context, relevance and a societal baseline. These "signals" are read against the baseline and variations to the norm are "anomalies."

Three or more anomalies above the baseline require action that is initiated during rapid decision-making based on three primary options. Establishing a baseline, detecting anomalies and then acting on these anomalies is the essence of HBPR. The skills learned can be applied to any culture and on any person, event or object.

Combat tracking, enhanced observation and Human Behavior Pattern Recognition are the three key components of the Border Hunter program. When used together, the combination of the three skill sets enables the user to have greater situational awareness and stay a step ahead of the enemy or criminal organization.

The students also received hands-on training during a series of day and night field training exercises conducted at a recently constructed replica of a Middle Eastern village. A group of human behavioral and cognitive scientists from Joint Forces Command were invited by JTF – N to monitor the entire program in order to determine future civilian law enforcement and military training benefits, particularly for irregular warfare and counter insurgency environments.

"The Border Hunter study provided our research team a truly unique opportunity to observe, record and analyze every aspect of the training to measure if, how and why, it works," said Dr. David Fautua, Joint Forces Command research coordinator.

Photo by Armando Carrasco, JTF-N PAO
Department of Homeland Security agents conduct an operations briefing during their Border Hunter field training exercise. The program included both day and night operations.

"Every student raved about the Border Hunter training, about how effective it was in building new skill sets to systematically recognize human patterns and signals, spot anomalies, anticipate threats and make decisions."

Students' feedback included: "How can we get more of this training" and "When will this be institutionalized at the military and law enforcement academies?"

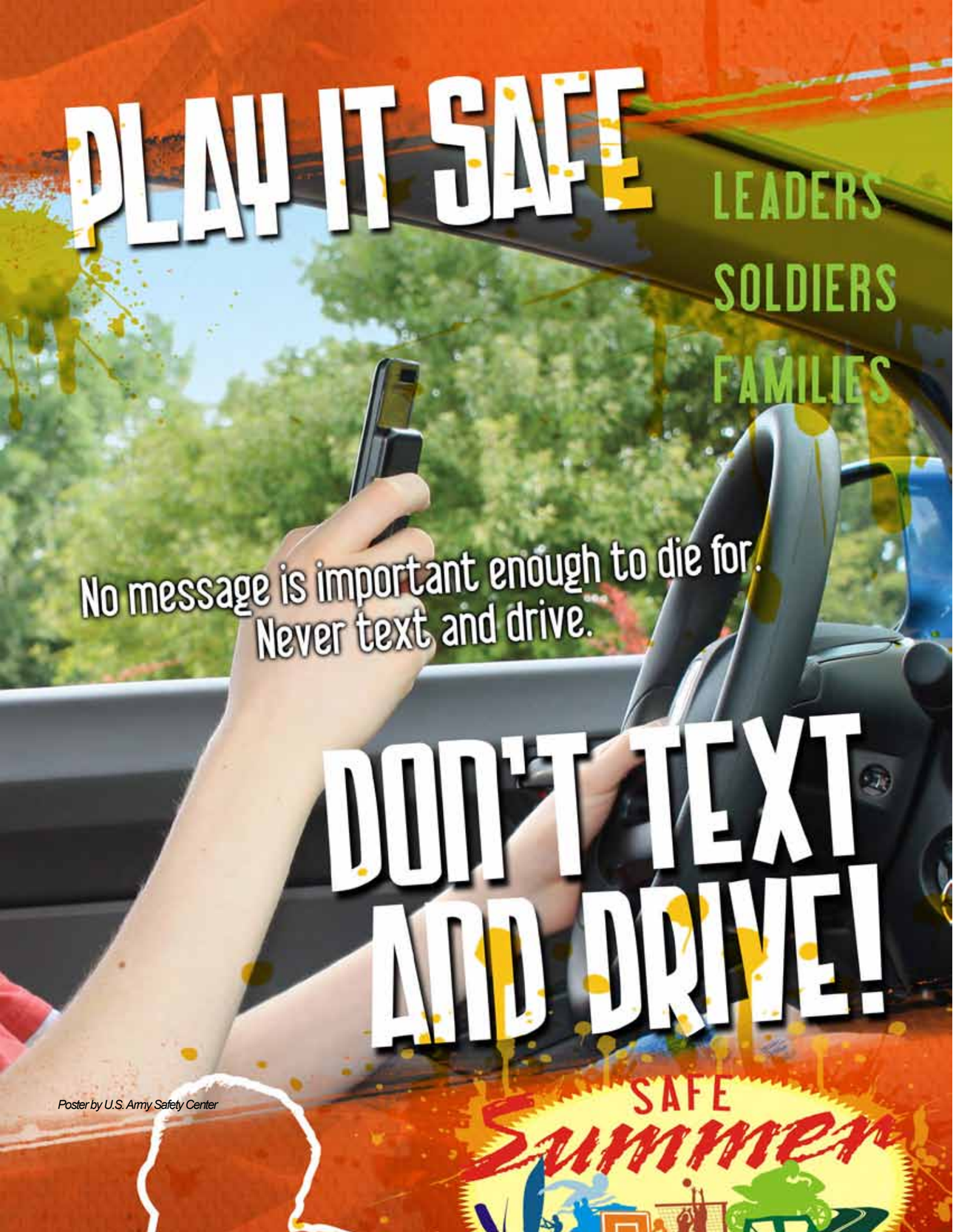
"From our preliminary observations, the course was quite effective in building both individual skill sets and team competencies in sense making," said Fautua.

"What we were also finding is that it is not simply the tracking/profiling skill sets (to sense danger) that are key but also the development of enabling attributes that develop in parallel as a result of the cognitive decision making competence, like confidence, accountability and intuitive reasoning (high order problem solving)," explained Fautua.

JTF – N's Border Hunter pilot program served as an introduction to the Marine Corps' highly effective training.

"It is our goal that our law enforcement partners and other military services incorporate Border Hunter skill sets into their training programs," said Mayer. "The program has been proven by the Marines in combat to save lives by increasing their situational awareness before contact is made with an enemy.

These same skills can save lives of our civilian law enforcement partners and help stop criminals and terrorists from operating in the United States."



Poster by U.S. Army Safety Center

'Play It Safe' this summer

U.S. Army Combat
Readiness and Safety Center

FORT RUCKER, Ala. – The summer season is fast approaching, and the Army is continuing its commitment to safeguarding Soldiers, Army Civilians and their Families with the launch of the 2010 Safe Summer campaign.

"Historically, our off-duty fatality rates inevitably increase from April to September," said Brig. Gen. William Wolf, U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center commanding general and director of Army Safety. "In fiscal 2009, almost 40 percent of our accidents occurred during this time frame, with POV and motorcycle accidents leading the way every month."

Once again this year, the 2010 Safe Summer campaign will stress the importance of proactive, prevention focused risk mitigation during summer months. The campaign, which runs through September 30, will encourage members of the Army Family to have fun this summer but keep a watchful eye on the risk associated with every activity.

"Our Soldiers are working hard and playing harder than ever and we are not telling them to stop what they're doing," said Wolf. "Instead, we're asking them to 'Play It Safe' in all their off-duty activities, because safety is the key to ensuring a good time for all."

Campaign materials including articles, posters and videos will once again be hosted on the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center Web site and will emphasize teamwork and the need for extra precautions during the high-risk summer months ahead. Products are available for downloading, allowing leaders at installations around the globe the opportunity to tailor their summer safety campaigns to meet the needs of their individual populations.

New in this year's campaign is a branding toolkit that provides official logos and templates to those looking to replicate the Safe Summer products with minimal effort.

"Soldiers talk about what they're doing in their off-duty time, even if a leader isn't always within earshot," said Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Eyer, senior noncommissioned officer for the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center. "This is why it's so important for our Families and battle buddies to educate themselves about summer risks, take an active interest in their Soldier's safety and intervene when the risks become too great."

More information about the 2010 Safe Summer campaign can be found by visiting https://safety.army.mil.

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www.arnorth.army.mil

Safety Tips and Tricks

GRAT

Ground Risk Assessment Tool was developed to augment the Composite Risk Management planning and decision-making process. It assists in the identification, assessment and control of hazards associated with specified missions or tasks.

Consisting of five integral parts, it provides the user with an automated CRM worksheet (DA Form 7566) that can be updated, saved and emailed.

TRiPS

Travel Risk Planning System is an automated trip planning tool that incorporates the principals of Composite Risk Management and facilitates a dialogue between supervisor and subordinate prior to POV travel.

Toolbox

The U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center has developed this toolbox to assist commanders, examiners and instructors in the management of driver training.

The toolbox provides a central location for the materials necessary to establish and maintain an effective driver training program.

Please direct your questions, comments or suggestions to the Ground Task Force at safe.amv2@conus.army.mil or Commercial (334)255-3562.

Fort Sam Houston donates $200,000 to Army Emergency Relief campaign

Story by
Sgt. 1st Class Manuel Torres
Army North PAO

Soldiers and community members from Army North and Fort Sam Houston banded together to contribute more than $217,000 in donations to the Army Emergency Relief program through the 2010 Fort Sam Houston AER campaign.

To celebrate their achievements, the campaign workers hosted a Hawaiian-style luau for AER representatives and contributing units May 17.

"It's all about the Soldiers. These AER contributions help them and their Families," said Lt. Col. Kim Chaney, deputy G1, Army North. "Soldiers are the ones accomplishing the mission on the ground, and those are the ones we need to help."

Chaney provided information to Army North members on how they could support the AER campaign as well as the Military American Saves program, which encourages the military community to meet their immediate needs and to build long-term wealth through saving and debt reductions, according to a Military Saves organization pamphlet.

"It was a great turnout this year," declared Staff Sgt. Lashawn Williamson, administrative assistant, ARNORTH AER representative, adding that Army North donations double its contributions from last year.

AER representatives were seen throughout the various commands throughout the installation as they distributed, collected and submitted the AER contribution forms.

The tasks are rewarding, said an Army North representative, but can be challenging as well.

"You need to be very patient and very persistent," said Sgt. 1st Class Alberto Cadiz, command group noncommissioned officer, Army North. "Continue to ask people who haven't had time to donate yet due to their busy work schedules and offer advice to those who are unfamiliar with the program. The campaign gives us an opportunity to share real-life stories of those who have been helped and saved through AER contributions."

Photo by Staff Sgt. Keith Anderson, U.S. Army North PAO

Staff Sgt. Lashawn Williamson, an Army Emergency Relief representative for U.S. Army North, is presented a lei and a certificate of appreciation from Erin Jacobs, AER campaign coordinator, May 17, during the 2010 AER Campaign closing Luau. Williamson helped raise more than $8,700 from ARNORTH.

Sgt. 1st Class Gary Visher, who serves as a senior platoon sergeant with Company C, 232nd Medical Battalion, was recognized during the luau with a certificate of appreciation and a tropical pineapp after he had amassed more than $19,000 in donations.

Ann Mancillas, the AER manager, congratulated the assembled representatives and noted that the campaign, regardless of the dollar amount, was a success due to countless volunteers who worked diligently in getting all the events in motion.

Mancillas, who leads the Fort Sam Houston AER campaign, started working for AER through volunteering, She said she had never worked with the military community prior to joining the team through her AER efforts but she felts it was important to acknowledge the hard work the men and women in uniform do and to thank those who supported the fund-raising campaign.

"Never in my life have I been so proud of working until I came here to work with all the Military and Civilian at Fort Sam Houston," said Mancillas.

Additional information is available on the Army Emergency Relief program at: http://www.aerhq.org/.

Talking about work to friends, Family is good – but there are things to keep to yourself

By Capt. Bruce Hill Jr.
JTF-CS PAO

How many times in your life have you said something and wished you could take it back?

How many times have you sent out an email or other form of communication and wished you could have taken that back?

Ever since the tragedy of 9/11, there has been a heightened concern over the security of information communicated — both written and oral. This concern covers a wide range of subjects spanning from casual conversation in public places and meetings in unsecured areas, to the media interview of a troop or the content of a DoD or other publicly viewable Web site.

It's important to understand OPSEC does not deal with classified information, but rather the protection of unclassified critical information. Unfortunately, depending on how the critical information is released, it could be impossible to take back.

When spoken:

In an article by Roger L. Kay called "Nightmare on the 'Nerd Bird' Flight," a senior technical manager from a semiconductor manufacturer was a passenger on a public flight between San Jose, Calif., and Austin, Texas, when he overheard a man sitting across the aisle talking to a woman in the seat in front of him. He perked up when he overheard the man worked for a direct competitor.

Jabbering freely about issues he faced in launching a new product, within the hour, the listener knew the competitor's price, the bugs in its chip and the product's anchor customer.

As soon as he was off the plane, the accidental spy called his salesman giving him the details. His company not only won the business by undercutting the competitor's price and pointed out where the flaws in its product were, the customer became pivotal in winning more business, and the other company was never able to launch its product.

When written:

At the National OPSEC Conference & Exhibition in 2005, one particular DoD organization became the model example for OPSEC practitioners who readily identified several OPSEC vulnerabilities within the organization's numerous Web sites. OPSEC practitioners discussed how adversaries could potentially use the web-posted information to target specific buildings, missions and personnel identified in project photos and written descriptions. When the critical information was pointed out, the DoD organization began removing the content in question.

Unfortunately, much of the information that gets posted to a public Web site, though removable from that site, isn't necessarily completely "gone." In many cases the removed information can be found on public Web archiving sites, which OPSEC practitioners assume adversaries know about and frequently use.

Privately owned, publicly accessed Web sites used as platforms to share first- and second- hand information on a military member's experiences, thoughts and/or expressions (which includes blogs), can also knowingly or unknowingly contain critical information that may never be taken back.

It might be hard to understand, but unless you see through the eyes of an adversary, even organizations and individuals that don't typically deal with classified can potentially create significant vulnerabilities.

The best thing to do is keep OPSEC in mind while at work and home, maintain situational awareness and keep critical information close. Share only with those who need to know and where it is safe from prying eyes and ears.

Army North delegates tackle military community and Family issues at conference

By Staff Sgt. Keith Anderson
Army North PAO

Photo by Staff Sgt. Keith Anderson, U.S. Army North PAO

Capt. John Withers, U.S. Army North Army Family Action Plan conference delegate, briefs Lt. Gen. Guy Swan III, commanding general, Army North and Fort Sam Houston, on the two primary issues his working group developed to be passed on to senior Army leaders during Army North's mid-level AFAP conference May 27 at an Embassy Suites Hotel in San Antonio.

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas — Should single Soldiers get the same money for housing as married Soldiers? Could the post open more child development centers? Should those in post housing have to pay for utilities?

Twenty delegates from U.S. Army North met to decide which issues, including the previous questions from Soldiers and Family members from Fort Sam Houston and Army North, would be presented to Lt. Gen. Guy Swan III, commanding general, Army North and Fort Sam Houston, for consideration by senior Army leaders in Washington, D.C., during a mid-level Army Family Action Plan conference in San Antonio from May 24-27.

"The Army Family Action Plan is our voice," said Tania Cuervo, quality of work-life program coordinator, Army North. "It improves the quality of life for our Army Families."

Delegates were divided into two working groups. Each group was given a list of issues to review, led by a facilitator.

Officials from Tricare, Brooke Army Medical Center, Army North's human resources office, post housing and other organizations and agencies were on hand to advise delegates.

The conference volunteers are critical to ensuring that Soldiers, Civilians and Family members receive the best services and support possible from the military community, said Maj. Gen. Perry Wiggins, deputy commanding general, Army North.

"It's important your voices are heard," Wiggins told conference attendees during his opening remarks. "My children are benefactors of this program."

In one of the working groups, delegates debated issues ranging from employment opportunities for spouses and Family programs training to preventative care and paying for utilities in base housing.

In the other group, delegates debated basic allowance for housing, remote identification card registration and having a liaison to aid in the transition to new schools for incoming Families.

Demauri Malin, AFAP delegate and wife of Lt. Col. P. Thomas Malin, deputy defense coordinating officer, Region VIII, said she thought many of the issues stem from Families not getting the information they need.

"I think mostly a lot of the issues have to do with communication breakdowns," Malin said. "There are a lot of programs and opportunities out there, but the Army is a big organization and there are breakdowns."

AFAP delegates briefed Swan on issue development recommendations on the closing day of the conference May 27.

The four primary issues they recommended were the Army's overuse of Social Security numbers, continental U.S. cost of living entitlements, dissemination of Tricare Management Activity information to beneficiaries, and the marketing of employment resources for military spouses in remote locations.

News

Obama to deploy 1,200 more troops to Mexico border

AFP

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama is to send up to 1,200 more troops to the joint border with Mexico and ask for $500 million in extra funds to battle drug-trafficking, a U.S. official said May 25.

"As part of his comprehensive plan to secure the Southwest border, President Obama will request $500 million in supplemental funds for enhanced border protection and law enforcement activities," a senior administration official said.

"The president will also deploy up to an additional, requirements-based 1,200 National Guard troops to the border," he added.

The extra troops would "give immediate support to counternarcotics enforcement" and help with intelligence, he added.

The move comes after Mexican President Felipe Calderon last week urged U.S. lawmakers to halt the flow of arms over the border into Mexico in a bid to stem his country's bloody drug warfare.

More than 22,700 people have died in surging drug-related attacks since Calderon launched a military clampdown on organized crime, involving some 50,000 troops, at the end of 2006.

Relocation exercises keep command center personnel sharp

By Staff Sgt. Thomas Doscher
NORAD and USNORTHCOM Public Affairs

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — If the power goes out at home, you usually just light some candles and wait for it to come back on, but when you have the security of two nations resting on your shoulders, you don't really have that option.

To make certain that operations can continue during an emergency where the command center at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., is no longer an option, the North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command command center crews will often practice moving their operations to the alternate command center at Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station.

Relocation exercises such as these help the command center crews make sure they can pick up and move operations as quickly as possible, said Col. Scott Glascock, NORAD and U.S. NORTHCOM command center director.

"The goal is to be able to move everything to Cheyenne Mountain without a break in operations," he said. "That means we want everything to be plug and play and work the first time. To do that, we have to practice."

Every month, the command center personnel will exercise this concept by moving to and operating from the alternate command center for several days. Glascock said this allows them to deal with unforeseen problems in practice rather than having to deal with them during a real emergency.

"A terrorist attack, a natural disaster, whatever the emergency may be, is the wrong time to find out that you have significant computer issues or something as administrative as problems accessing the alternate command center," he explained. "If those problems are going to arise, we want them to come up during these exercises where we have the time to find out what the problem is and find a permanent fix for it."

"Practice makes perfect," Glascock said.

The command center recently returned to the primary NORAD and NORTHCOM Command Center after a two-week relocation exercise. During this timeframe, the center went through a significant upgrade of its network systems.

Through Soldiers' eyes, 'The First YouTube War'

By Noam Cohen
The New York Times

NEW YORK — The whistle-blower site WikiLeaks released a classified video taken in 2007 showing an American Apache helicopter crew killing 12 civilians in Iraq, including two Reuters journalists, it rang a bell with Hayden Hewitt.

The familiarity was not just because it was yet another "Apache video," thousands of which are available on LiveLeak.com, the video-sharing site Mr. Hewitt helped to found in 2006.

Videos taken from Apache helicopters can indeed be as stylistically consistent as dollar bills: there is the bird's-eye view of an Iraqi city captured in infrared "negative," accompanied by the clipped banter of the crew members.

Everything usually ends with "a group of people on a FLIR camera being killed," Mr. Hewitt said, referring to infrared equipment made by FLIR Systems.

But in this case, Mr. Hewitt meant there was something familiar about that exact WikiLeaks video, which documented 38 minutes of flying above Baghdad punctuated by gun

bursts that ended in carnage, including the deaths of the two journalists, whose cameras were mistaken as weapons.

A number of trusted, longtime visitors to LiveLeak distinctly recalled seeing it about a year earlier, he said.

"There are many more types of recording devices, mounted in different ways," said Jennifer Terry, an associate professor at the University of California, Irvine, who produced a study of military videos from Iraq and Afghanistan for the multimedia journal Vectors. "The way these videos circulate on the Internet is unprecedented, in all these different leaky ways. That is why I like to say this is the first YouTube war."

"There are graphically worse videos, but this is a journalist who was killed," he said.

"These videos will have a strong impact, but it is hard to tell what it will be," Mr. Hewitt said. "Some people watch it and think, 'That is grotesque, how can we do it?' Others will say, 'Hell yeah, go team.'"

Army admits suicide is a growing problem

by Meagan Harris
WFAA

LEWISVILLE, Texas — Two-star general Mark Graham paused and sobbed as he relived the painful moments that followed the death of his two sons. They died just seven months apart. His youngest son took his own life and his oldest died in an attack in Iraq.

Graham finished his speech at a Dallas hotel with a single line inscribed on their headstones:

'This is the land of the free – because of the brave."

From the audience, Lewisville's Traci Thomas Ratliff quietly cried. It was Gen. Graham who saved her brother's life. Graham is based out of Atlanta, but he heard Ratliff's desperate cries for help when her brother, serving in Iraq, threatened himself and others. It was a downward spiral that began a year prior after he witnessed the death of his good friend while serving on his first tour in Iraq.

"He became really withdrawn, really angry," Ratliff said, adding that her brother started drinking and showing signs of Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome. Even so, he was redeployed for a second tour.

On the way to Iraq, Ratliff said, her brother's anger became evident.

"His unit had gotten into Kuwait and he had a problem with his first sergeant. He actually threatened to kill him."

That threat landed Ratliff's brother in the Army's brig – the base jail in Kuwait. He spent 30 days there before being sent out with a new unit to Iraq.

By that point, she said, her brother had lost his rank and over the coming months, he would lose his control. Ratliff spoke to her brother every day over instant messenger.

"It was a helpless feeling," she said. Her brother told her that he felt like a caged animal and that he didn't know what to do.

One day, he sent his sister a clear message for help. "He said he was going to do something. We didn't know if that meant that he was going to do something to himself or to the people around him," Ratliff said.

Each day, she said they promised to get her brother help. But each day in their communications via instant messenger, her brother told Ratliff that a chaplain had yet to meet with him.

By the third day, Ratliff wrote a letter and e-mailed it to 11 Army commanders and numerous local politicians. In it, she described her brother's situation in harsh detail.

"I'm writing to reconfirm to you that my brother is mentally unstable and requires immediate psychiatric care for PTSD," the letter read. Carroll forwarded the e-mail to Gen. Mark Graham.

Ratliff received a call from Graham within hours. Since his son's death, Gen. Graham has joined the Army's effort to curb the growing suicide problem. Vice Chief of Staff General Peter Chiarelli is leading that charge.

"Every three months, they give me a briefing on their findings to date and there is a heck of a lot more that we have to do," Gen. Chiarelli said.

Last year, 160 active-duty soldiers committed suicide, which is a larger percentage than the general population.

The Army is facing a shortage in mental health professionals and is challenged by the stigma that comes with suicide in the military.

Welcome to this week's DSCA newsbriefs. My name is Joe Miller, DSCA instructor and editor of the DSCA newsletter.

In this week's DSCA newsletter, please note the articles on NORTHCOM's new commander, Admiral James Winnefeld Jr.; BP's Emergency Response Plan approved by the Federal Minerals Management Service; and California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's initiative to conduct an anti-terrorism exercise for California ports that involved over 3,000 local, state and federal responders.

If you would like to comment on these and other DSCA stories, please submit your observations in the Joint Knowledge Online communities of interest.

You can access the JKO communities of interest by clicking on http://jko.jfcom.mil enter JKO, and click on the tab labeled JKO communities.

On the right hand side, scroll down to Civil Military Operations and then click on the DSCA Community of Interest.

Scroll down below the DSCA course schedule to the DSCA newsletter comments section.

You can enter your comments and view the comments from other DSCA Phase III readers.

I encourage everyone to read the newsletter and stay informed.

NORAD and NORTHCOM leadership changes hands

USNORTHCOM

North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command welcomed Adm. James Winnefeld, Jr. as its new commander during a change of command ceremony on May 19 at Peterson AFB, Colo. Winnefeld takes over from Gen. Victor "Gene" Renuart Jr., who is retiring after 39 years of service.

Free advice on rebuilding available at Home Depot

FEMA

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – People affected by the recent storms in the Memphis area who are rebuilding can receive valuable information for projects around the house.

Beginning June 7, hazard mitigation specialists with the Federal Emergency Management Agency will be at The Home Depot on Poplar Avenue in Memphis.

Specialists can answer questions about protecting homes from future disaster damage as well as offer other home improvement tips and techniques. Topics covered include mold and mildew, flood- and wind-resistant building methods, wind straps, flood insurance and other measures to make homes stronger and safer. FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from and mitigate all hazards.

Disasters And resilience: Perspectives From FEMA deputy administrator Timothy Manning

The Center for National Policy

FEMA did a survey last year as part of our community preparedness programs, where we found the same numbers we've seen for a great number of years. So what we've been doing, we've been trying to engage the public for about 50 years in roughly the same way, all through the civil defense era, the Cold War and to traditional emergency management now.

And we've always seen the response engagement of the public in about 50 percent, hasn't really moved. Slides a little bit here and there.

But what's most concerning is that when you actually deconstruct that number and you ask, "Have you actually done this? Have you done this or this?" The things that we mean when we say, "Are you prepared?" The number's actually about 37 or 40 percent.

Most people, about 67 percent of respondents, say that they plan on relying on government, that they won't take any actions and they plan on relying on government in the first couple of days.

BP response plan shows lack of readiness

USA Today

An emergency response plan prepared by BP shows the British energy giant never anticipated an oil spill as large as the one seeping

through the Gulf of Mexico.

The 582-page document, titled "Regional Oil Spill Response Plan – Gulf of Mexico," was approved in July by the federal Minerals Management Service.

"These oil spill response plans suffer from what I would consider a 'failure of imagination,' " said Rep. Nick Rahall, W.Va., chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee.

Parts of the document read like boilerplate used by BP from region to region and underscore the energy company's inability to adequately prepare for a major spill in deep water, said Rick Steiner, a former University of Alaska marine scientist and oil spill response consultant who has reviewed the plan.

In a section titled "Sensitive Biological & Human-Use Resources," the plan lists "seals, sea otters and walruses" as animals that could be impacted by a Gulf of Mexico spill — even though no such animals live in the Gulf.

The plan also promises that BP can respond to a "worst case discharge" of around 1 million gallons a day, even though engineers have struggled for nearly a month to control a well spewing one-fifth of that, Steiner said.

'Big' hurricane season lies ahead

Baltimore Sun

With the official start of the Atlantic hurricane season just weeks away, AccuWeather.com's chief storm forecaster said that the East and Gulf coasts should be prepared for as many as five storms with hurricane-force winds.

"I'm very, very concerned about this year," said Joe Bastardi, the private company's chief long-range and hurricane forecaster, echoing the warnings of other meteorologists in recent months.

"The weather patterns that are setting up now on the Atlantic are very similar to those in 1995, 1998 and 2005, and also to some extent 2008," he said. "All these were high-impact years on the U.S. coastline."

Louisiana Guard works to protect shoreline

by Pvt. Tarell Bilbo
www.army.mil

VENICE, La. — Soldiers of the Louisiana National Guard's 1023rd Vertical Engineer Company, 528th Engineer Battalion, continued laying out water diversion system materials May 14 near Venice, La., in the southwest pass of the Mississippi River Delta.

The 1023rd, headquartered in Oak Grove, La., has been constructing a 7.1-mile barrier across a beach in the southwest pass as a secondary line of defense to the boom line, to protect the natural marshlands. They have completed nearly one mile of this operation.

This water diversion system replaces sandbags and is comprised of a series of interlocking flexible tubes that are inflated with water to form a temporary dam or levee. The dam will act as a second line of defense to the boom line, in order to protect the marshlands.

The water diversion systems are normally used for flood control, but will be used to support the shoreline protection mission.

State, federal conduct terror attack response exercises

San Francisco Chronicle

Federal and state authorities conducted a series of anti-terrorism training exercises May 18-21 at ports throughout California.

More than 3,000 federal, state and local responders focused on counterterrorism response at California ports. Simulated attacks were conducted at the ports of Oakland, San Diego, Los Angeles, Long Beach, Redwood City and Sacramento, as well as California State University, San Marcos.

DSCA Daily News input welcomed

www.dsca.army.mil/DSCA/News.aspx

As always, we're eager to hear feedback on the usefulness of this service, your suggestions on improving it, as well as any potential information or articles you think might be valuable.

If you have a question, please reply to this message with your request: DoD DSCA Course Distance Learning Manager staff@arnorth.org

Disclaimer: The purpose of this news brief is to increase your situational awareness concerning events that may impact your mission.
Articles are taken from established and diverse professional periodicals, news articles and editorial commentaries.
Opinions expressed in the articles/commentaries do not constitute endorsement by the Department of Defense, U.S. Northern Command, or U.S. Army North.

THE 235TH UNITED STATES ARMY BIRTHDAY

U.S.ARMY 1775-2010 235 years Strong

Army's 235th birthday is a testament to professionalism of service, institutional values

By Lt. Gen. Guy Swan III
Commanding General, U.S. Army North and Fort Sam Houston

Scores have joined together to celebrate an institution, uniquely American, yet older than the nation itself. June 14th is our United States Army's birthday, and I want to share with you why I think it is so special and what I think our obligations are this many years later.

For 235 years our Nation, born of noble ideals, bonded by the blood of patriots and shining as a beacon of hope to the oppressed, has drawn its strength from her Army. We are justifiably proud to sing the words of its song of praise: "First to fight for the right, And to build the Nation's might, And the Army Goes Rolling Along. Proud of all we have done, Fighting till the battle's won." Let us all be vigilant now, here and abroad, just as our forefathers had to be.

It is a testament to the professionalism of our Service and our institutional values that we have sustained the support of our fellow citizens. So take pride. Uphold her standards. Continue to pass along the traditions that are unique to our great Army and its values.

We should study our Army and its past, and share its merits with others. The Army has established a wonderful Web site at http://www.army.mil/birthday/235. Check it out, read and enjoy. A great list of books about the Army is at http://www.history.army.mil/reading.html.

Let me close by saying that I think that it is noteworthy that we share June 14th with another American tradition. Here I refer to our Flag Day, annually observed June 14th owing to that day when, in 1777, the Continental Congress proposed a national flag. The significance, of course, is that were it not for one, then there may not have been the other. It seems fitting when I see a Soldier in a joint color guard, bearing those grand colors, uniting the Army and our flag in glory just as they have from the beginning.

So again, to every Soldier and Civilian that has ever served, and to our beloved armed service, Happy Birthday and thank you for being the strength of the nation.

from **Protection**, *Pg. 4*

"Terrorists continue to exploit divisions between law enforcement and the intelligence communities that limit the sharing of vital counterterrorism information."

It is important that the gap between military services and agencies be closed, said Ron Canale, anti-terrorism officer, Tooele Army Depot, Utah, adding that conferences such as this are an important tool in helping resolve such issues.

"The more of these conferences you can have, the better to get everyone on the same sheet of music," Canale said.

The conference also provided an opportunity for the attendees, who traveled from installations throughout the nation, to enjoy some of San Antonio's renowned hospitality.

"Many of those that attended enjoyed San Antonio's famous Riverwalk and other world-class attractions during their off-hours," Draeger said.

Sgt. Maj. Timothy Dudley (left), communications sergeant major, U.S. Army North, reads "Duck for President," by Doreen Cronin, for the children in Mrs. Ibarra's third grade class May 27 at John J. Pershing Elementary School. More than 30 Air Force and Army senior enlisted leaders from Joint Base San Antonio took time to read books and answer questions about the military for students in grades pre-kindergarten through fifth grade.

Senior enlisted leaders from Joint Base San Antonio visit children at Pershing Elementary

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Keith Anderson
Army North PAO

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas — Army and Air Force senior enlisted leaders from Joint Base San Antonio took time to read books to area children May 27 at John J. Pershing Elementary School in San Antonio.

More than 30 enlisted leaders read books to children from pre-kindergarten through fifth grade, and answered questions about the military from the youngsters.

"It was just a way to get involved and give back to the community," said Command Chief Master Sgt. Juan Lewis, command chief, Joint Base San Antonio.

It was the first joint community project for NCOs under the new Joint Base San Antonio structure.

Sgt. Maj. Timothy Dudley, network operations sergeant major, U.S. Army North, read "Duck for President," by Doreen Cronin, for the children in Mrs. Ibarra's third grade class.

"He read to us with expression," said Esmeralda, a student in the class.

The students asked Dudley, and fellow-reader Sgt. 1st Class Viet Nguyen, rear detachment first sergeant, 14th Military Intelligence Batallion, some tough questions.

"Have you got shot?" asked one student. "What happens when you get hurt?" asked another.

Dudley said the outreach project motivated him.

"This is one of the reasons I joined the Army," Dudley said.

Task Force battle captain earns Team Bliss Volunteer of Excellence honors

Story and photo by
Armando Carrasco
JTF-N PAO

FORT BLISS, Texas — U.S. Navy Lt. Kimberly D. Filos, recently named the Joint Task Force-North Volunteer of the Year, was selected as a Team Bliss Volunteer of Excellence winner during Fort Bliss' National Volunteer Week recognition ceremony Apr. 23.

Only three individuals among all the military and civilian volunteers in the installation-wide competition earned the coveted excellence honors.

Filos, who serves as a battle captain in the task force's joint operations coordination center, has been the command's Partners in Education Program volunteer coordinator since May 2008.

Her personal contributions to JTF-N's partnership program with El Paso's North Loop Elementary School are credited with enhancing the students' education.

U.S. Navy Lt. Kimberly Filos, battle captain, JTF-N, talks with co-workers in the joint operations coordination center at Fort Bliss, Texas. Filos earned recognition as the JTF-N Volunteer of the Year.

"Commitment and support are crucial to the survival of our 15-year education partnership with JTF-N; Lt. Filos hit the ground running and has provided the school with readers and mentors throughout the school year," said Rosalinda Oaxaca, North Loop Elementary School counselor and Partners in Education Program coordinator. "She is a wonderful person to work with; her dedication has taken the program to a much higher level."

JTF-N's military and civilian volunteers promote literacy in the classrooms by serving as readers, science fair judges and mentors for troubled students; they also speak to the students about living drug-free. The program supports students from kindergarten through sixth grade.

"The volunteers are great role models and encourage the students to reach their dreams," said Oaxaca. "Our teachers feel that the program has definitely helped the students learn to verbalize more and has given them more confidence."

As part of the education partnership, JTF-N staff members additionally share their professional career experiences with the students at the school's annual career day activities and host students at JTF-N organization and holiday events. Filos and the JTF-N volunteers also support other schools in the greater El Paso area.

As a career Navy aviation officer, Filos quickly draws the students' attention every time she enters the schools wearing her flight suit.

The students, many which have had limited exposure to the military, bombard her and the other military volunteers with endless questions regarding their experiences.

"I jumped at the chance to volunteer when I first heard about the opportunity to work with children. I wanted to provide them with a positive role model and show them that if they work hard, they can achieve their goals in life," said Filos, who previously served as a JTF-N support mission planner. "The Partners in Education program allowed me to focus on one particular school for my volunteering efforts, thereby focusing on providing quality assistance in multiple ways."

Filos' message to the JTF-N Partners in Education Programs volunteers is simple: "You can make a difference in the lives of children!"

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas — Motorcyclists from U.S. Army North idle their bikes in front of the historic clock tower in the Quadrangle May 26. The bikers conducted buddy inspections on each other's bikes and refreshed their motorcycle safety skills for Motorcycle Awareness Month. *(U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Keith Anderson, Army North PAO)*