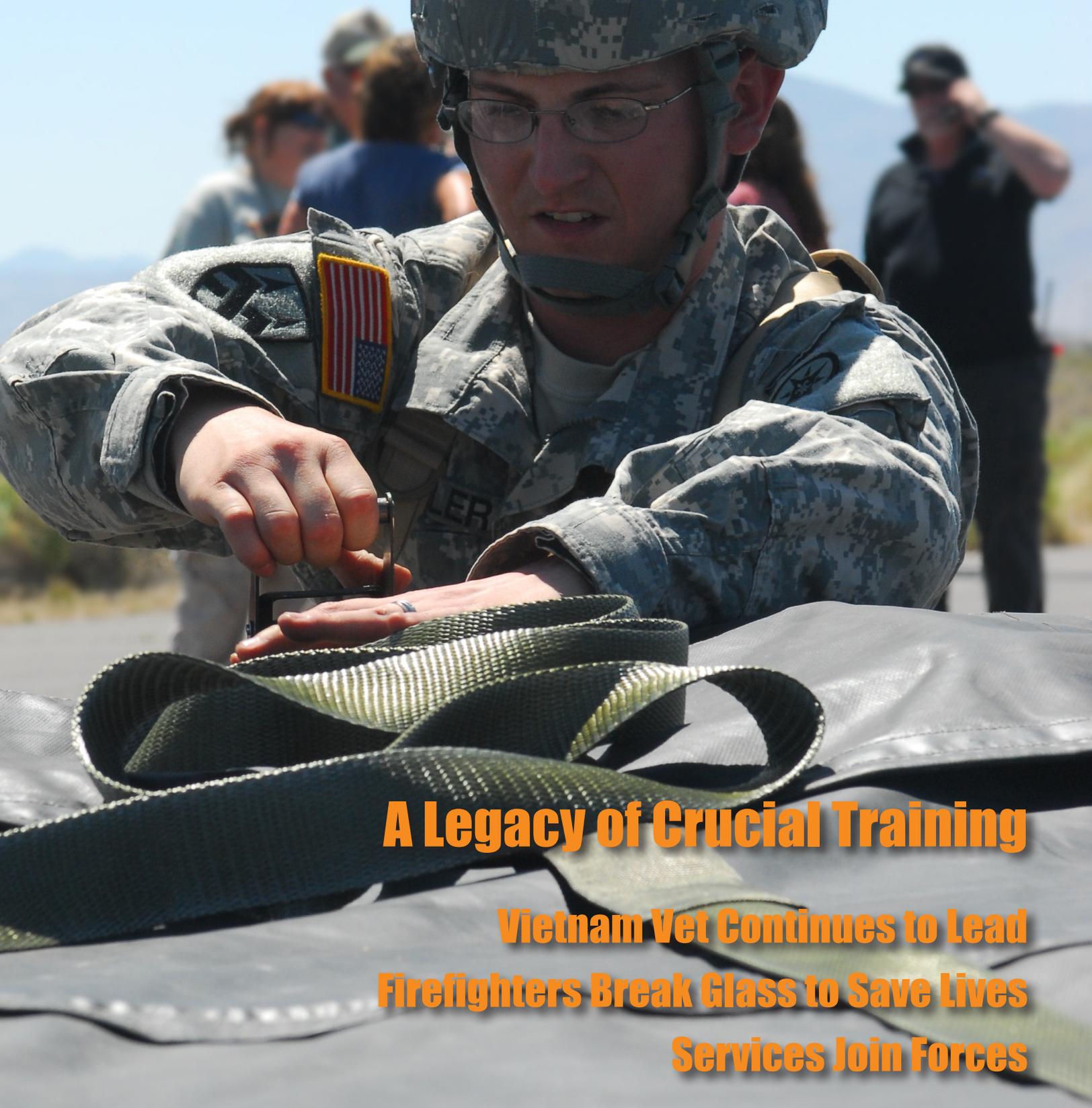


THE GOLDEN EXPRESS

The Magazine of

Golden Cargo 2009



A Legacy of Crucial Training

Vietnam Vet Continues to Lead

Firefighters Break Glass to Save Lives

Services Join Forces

THE GOLDEN EXPRESS



Golden Cargo 2009, 10-31 July

Table of Contents



GOLDEN CARGO EXTRAS

Golden Cargo 2009 adds to Legacy of Crucial Training..... 6
 Understanding the Demilitarization Process..... 7
 AAR-Lessons Learned 46
 Year of the NCO 47

AO EAST

Locations and Statistics.....5
 Joint Operations Center unites forces, moves cargo.....8
 Nurses, medics find Golden opportunity in logistics setting 11
 Soldiers and Civilians Come Together to Fight Fires..... 12
 Massachusetts Soldiers in the mission for the long haul..... 14
 Soldiers receive MOST training at Blue Grass Army Depot 15
 Communication barriers present training opportunities 17
 Vietnam Vet continues to serve country, lead the way 18
 Mechanic shares expertise, orchestrates missions 19
 Army PLS transporters stage ammo, train to fight..... 20
 Maintaining trucks one wrench turn at a time 23
 Head 'em up, move 'em out..... 24
 Movement control Soldiers rise early, keep convoys moving 26
 Now We're Cookin' 27
 McAlester mechanics train Soldiers, keep vehicles rolling 29
 USAR Soldiers break glass, train to save lives 30
 MCAAP firefighters provide HAZMAT certification..... 32
 Stabbing your buddy to save him 33

AO WEST

Locations and Statistics.....4
 Junior Soldiers take on leadership role, maintain accountability..... 35
 Hawthorne Army Depot: A history rich in munitions..... 36
 Hawthorne offers real life, joint military training..... 37
 MWR program offers city-dwelling Soldier valuable exposure to America's breathtaking West 38
 Sierra Army Depot turns up the heat 41
 Services join forces for Golden Cargo..... 42
 Golden Rule: Safety is top priority at Golden Cargo..... 44
 Army transporters: Always moving, always ready..... 45



Soldiers and civilians come together to fight fires..... page 12



Stabbing your buddy to save him page 33



Services join forces for Golden Cargo..... page 42

On the Cover:
 Staff Sgt. Michael Miller, 261st Ordnance Company, Charleston, W. Va., secures a tarp to a crate of ammunition in preparation for movement during the Golden Cargo exercise at Sierra Army Depot. During the exercise there were daily ammunition convoys from Sierra to Hawthorne Army Depot, Nev., where most of the ammunition will be destroyed. (Photo by Spc. Jay Venturini)

Back Cover:
 Illustration by Spc. John Sheldon

316th Commander's Overview

Today's U.S. military has more than 250,000 servicemembers in 80 countries, with more than 140,000 currently serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. The ability of our forces to serve in these locations is determined by the ability of our logisticians to sustain them with commodities like food, fuel, water, and ammunition.

For this reason, the experience servicemembers gained during Operation Golden Cargo 2009 was priceless. There is nowhere in the continental U.S. where we can obtain better training in handling and transporting munitions, which is one of our primary missions when we deploy.

We made this operation as realistic as we could, ensuring Soldiers trained as they will fight. The terrain in California and Nevada is a good approximation of the terrain in Iraq and Afghanistan, making the western portion of Golden Cargo a valuable location for an exercise. The unique partnership established between the Joint Munitions Command, U.S. Army Reserve, the Marine Corps and the Navy, as well as installation civilians and federal, state and local government agencies was vital to our mission success. By working in a joint environment, participants walked away from this experience better prepared for deployment.

Congratulations and thank you to the Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, civilians, and Families who contributed to make this mission a success. Take this valuable experience with you when you deploy -- that you may Sustain the Victory!



Col. Kenneth Demers

“At Ease!” A few words from the 316th CSM



Command Sgt. Maj. Stacey E. Davis

The success of each mission the Army takes on at home or abroad is determined by the non-commissioned officers who execute their objectives while providing for the training and welfare of their Soldiers. NCOs know their mission, their training, their equipment, and most importantly, their Soldiers.

Operation Golden Cargo 2009 was a success because troop leaders saw each individual assignment through to its completion, maintained the safety of their troops, and upheld the Army standards. The opportunity to take on real responsibilities by overseeing the movement of munitions across this country both afforded NCOs invaluable training and demonstrated the professionalism of the NCO corps.

America's NCOs are empowered and trusted like none other in the world. In America's Army, each Soldier is continually trained to step into leadership positions. The strength of our Army is our ability to hand off command and control between large and small elements smoothly, as well as to transfer training, knowledge, and responsibility to new Soldiers. It is the noncommissioned officers who make this exchange possible.

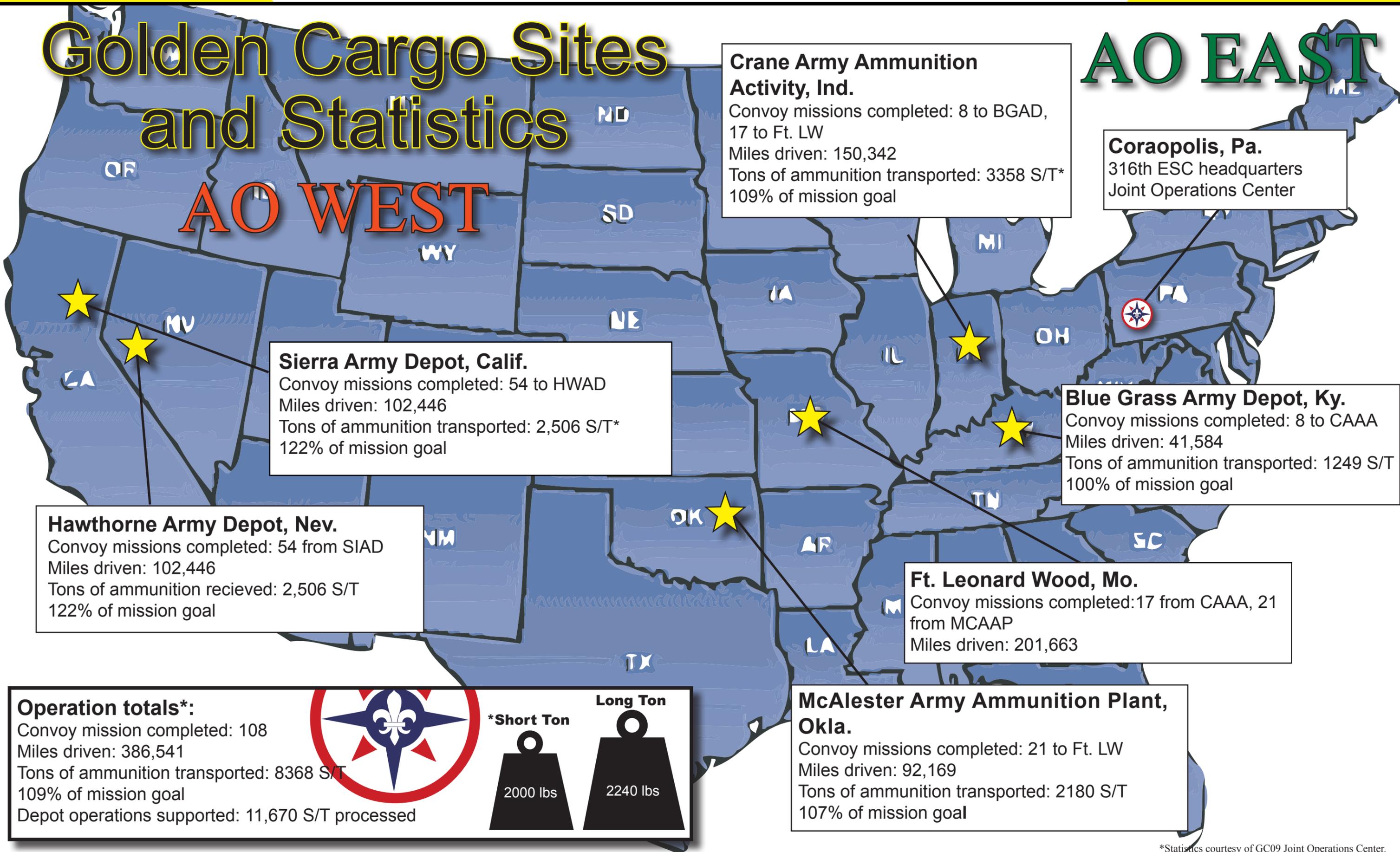
In this, the year of the Noncommissioned Officer, it is important that we recognize the vital role our NCOs play and more important that we NCOs remember the legacy of professionalism we must uphold. Every unit, and therefore every mission, is only as good as its first line of leadership. I urge you to take what you learned from Golden Cargo 2009 and carry it with you to your next mission -- Sustain the Victory! Soldiers First!

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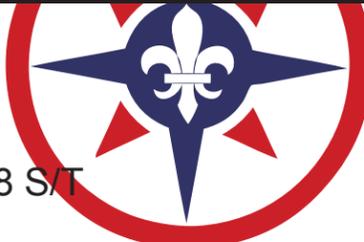
Golden Cargo Sites and Statistics

AO EAST

AO WEST



Operation totals*:
 Convoy mission completed: 108
 Miles driven: 386,541
 Tons of ammunition transported: 8368 S/T
 109% of mission goal
 Depot operations supported: 11,670 S/T processed



***Short Ton**
 2000 lbs

Long Ton
 2240 lbs

*Statistics courtesy of GC09 Joint Operations Center.

Golden Cargo 2009 adds to Legacy of Crucial Training

Story by Sgt. Yvonne Vairma
361st PAOC

The Golden Cargo Exercise is an annual training operation sponsored by Joint Munitions Command and executed by members of the U.S. Army Reserve, U.S. Marine Corps, and U.S. Navy.

“Back in 1991, we had a need to relocate large amounts of ammunition due to some of our base closures or our mission reductions. So we hooked up with the Reserve component and came up with the Golden Cargo program,” said Karen Hackett, Golden Cargo program manager for Joint Munitions Command.

The Golden Cargo program has four primary objectives: Provide safe and efficient movement of ammunition, conduct standard depot operations such as re-warehousing or demilitarization, conduct safety and storage inspections, and lower the cost to the taxpayer.

Prior to Golden Cargo, there were no training opportunities in place to give military personnel in the ordnance, quartermaster and transportation fields of the U.S.

Army Reserve the necessary training to execute their missions. Ordnance units would have had to be co-located at a depot in order to have the opportunity to handle and re-warehouse and move ammunition. Transporters had very limited opportunities to coordinate movement control, or to drive long-haul missions.

Hackett explained that this is now the largest exercise in the reserve component where servicemembers have the opportunity to handle live ammunition. The exercise serves as real world training for non-divisional Combat Service Support units within their Sol-

diers' individual Military Occupational Specialties. These include shipping and receiving, inventory, storage planning, transportation, movement control, documentation, life support operations, safety, hazardous materials handling, and leadership.

Golden Cargo also offers leadership and planning training from command level down to the individual level. Participating units train from theater-level command down to company level. One principal benefit is training at the intermediate command and control headquarters level which plans and executes the exercise. Few other training opportunities give this scope of planning for senior staff.

2009 marks the 19th year of the Golden Cargo program.

Participating locations for Golden Cargo 2009 included Blue Grass Army Depot, Ky., Crane Army Ammunition Activity, Ind., Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, Okla., Hawthorne Army Depot, Nev., and Sierra Army Depot, Calif.

The participation of locations in Nevada and California gave Soldiers the opportunity to train in terrain similar to that of Iraq and Afghanistan, which enhanced the realism of their training for the U.S. military's current missions abroad. 🏠

Information referenced in this article was sourced from Joint Munitions Command materials.



Understanding the Demilitarization Process: from **MEAN** to *Green*



A Hawthorne Army Depot employee dismantles munitions as part of Hawthorne's demilitarization activities. HWAD is the largest ammunition depot in the country with demilitarization capabilities.

Story by Sgt. Bob Timney
354th MPAD

Many things are left behind in the aftermath of war, including dangerous artifacts that could hurt or kill unsuspecting finders or get into the wrong hands if the items are not destroyed or made unusable. That's where demilitarization comes in.

Demilitarization refers to the process of destroying the inherent military offensive or defensive capability of equipment, such as ammunitions, thereby rendering it useless and non-dangerous. This may include scrapping, melting, burning, or the alteration of the material to prevent further use in its originally intended purpose.

Safety and intelligence security are two main reasons to have a solid demilitarization plan in place. So what is the plan for the Department of Defense?

DOD services assign a demilitarization, or "demil" code, to every item they purchase. The code represents whether the item contains sensitive military technology or capability, and establishes what must be done to an item before it is sold to the public. Codes are reviewed and revalidated every five years. One concern, however,

is that each branch of service independently sets and assigns a different demil code for each item. The Defense Logistics Agency does have the ability to challenge the item's code, but each military service ultimately retains the decision-making authority.

According to DOD, there are nine code categories ranging from no demilitarization, to total destruction of item and components. The process includes various stages of melting, cutting, tearing, scratching, breaking, punching, neutralizing, etc.

The Federal Government reserves the right to change the demil code on any given item at any time, even after the demilitarized items were sold. It has been reported that some buyers have been contacted as much as a year after a sale and were required to return the items purchased. This is a risk of buying directly from the government, even when using government agencies.

The demilitarization process increases safety, recycles materials, reduces pollution, reduces costs, and provides the perfect opportunity for training during Golden Cargo, which can be put into practical use when deployed. 🏠

Joint Operation Center unites forces, moves cargo



Capt. William Brine, of Pittsburgh, the battle captain for the 316th ESC works with Sgt. Andrew Shepard, of Mt. Jackson, Va., the knowledge management NCO, to manage information on their computer system while overseeing Operation Golden Cargo from the JOC in Coraopolis, Pa., July 19.

Story by Staff Sgt. Michel Sauret 354th MPAD

Army cargo is transported on more than just the rubber of truck tires passing between checkpoints. It rides on the will of Soldiers and the plan set before them.

And when that cargo consists of thousands upon thousands of pounds of live ammunition, that plan better be good.

The Soldiers inside the Joint Operation Center, operating under the 316th Expeditionary Sustainment Command, have been keeping a close watch from their control stations here. They are leading a three-week annual training exercise called Golden Cargo throughout

the month of July.

“The benefits of training here in the Joint Operation Center is training as we would fight and how we would run a JOC overseas,” said Lt. Col. Michael Roberts, of Pottsville, Pa., the chief of operations and member of the 316th ESC. “So it’s really (about) working together as a team to better communicate our leadership direction down to the modes and nodes of the operations.”

Golden Cargo, which began in 1991, involves approximately 1,500 servicemembers from the Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps and operates within six locations throughout the country; Blue Grass Army Depot, Ky., Crane Army Ammunition Activity, Ind., Hawthorne

Army Depot, Nev., McAlester Army Ammunition Plant; Okla., Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., and Sierra Army Depot, Calif. The goal is to transport hundreds of thousands of tons of ammunition across various states. The overall operation supports the Joint Munitions Command and the Department of Defense ammunition requirements. The exercise gives commanders the opportunity to develop plans while Soldiers train for deployment or dust off old skills.

“It’s all about practice,” said Sgt. Andrew Shepard, the JOC knowledge management noncommissioned officer who

deployed with the 316th ESC to Iraq in 2008 to conduct a very similar mission.

“It’s all about keeping the skills sharp. Any reservist knows that you have a lot of time away from Army duty, and when you do go back to drill every month, you may not be flexing your skill-set; so this allows them to jump back into the fight, and if you’ve been deployed before, this allows them to mentor and teach and give knowledge.”

The locations are divided into an east and west region for the purpose of the exercise. Soldiers at the JOC here communicate with the 207th Regional Support Group in the east and the 718th Transportation Corps Battalion in the west. Combined, they move a total of 300,000 short tons of ammunition. That is the equivalent weight of more than a thousand Statues of Liberty moving to and from the states of Oklahoma, Kentucky, Indiana, Missouri, Nevada and California in a matter of three weeks.

With such a big load in front of them, the key to the JOC’s success is to stay focused on the big picture.

“Sometimes (we get) bogged down in the weeds, sort of speak, in the really minor details we have no control over,” said Capt. William Brine, of Pittsburgh, the battle captain for the JOC. “It’s something that the units on the ground need to solve and figure out on their own.”

“One day we may be fielding just normal operations and ... then out of nowhere, events come in to us and ... you’ll go from zero to 60 in nothing.”

Brine served as a Military Police platoon leader while in Iraq in 2004-2005, and he understands the processes of Soldiers on the ground trying to solve the issues they face. He is confident in their abilities and emphasizes the importance of keeping the big picture in view for the sake of the larger scope of the operation.

The view from the JOC is much different than what the transportation Soldiers see every day. While on the road, Soldiers get to see the routes, maneuver through traffic, feel the weight and bulk of the ammunition. Everything is up close and personal.

From inside the JOC, however, the picture is bigger and broader. Instead of mile markers, Soldiers here look at patterns and checkpoints on a map that stretches from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. They track transportation in every direction and verify checkpoints to keep up with the flow of information that is ever changing. It may just be an office, but it’s more an office in motion.

“One day we may be fielding just normal operations and ... then out of nowhere, events come in to us and ... you’ll go from zero to 60 in nothing,” said Shepard, of Mt. Jackson, Va.

“Just an email. That’s all it takes to get the JOC popping, and everybody is shooting (information) at each other.”

During the three-week exercise, the JOC Soldiers run a 24-hour



Maj. Harold “Nevins” Parkinson, Butler, Pa., manage information on his computer system while overseeing Operation Golden Cargo from the JOC in Coraopolis, Pa., July 19.

operation. They oversee mission procedures, to include planning, logistics intelligence, safety, and communication and quickly respond to daily challenges. The entire operation here requires information to flow through the staff quickly and efficiently during every shift at all times.

“(During) this particular mission, I think we’re learning a lot about how to ... properly share information and push information up and down the proper channels,” Brine said. “Bad information is never good for decision-making.”

The Soldiers understand the importance of the exercise, whether they’re getting ready to deploy or have just returned from an overseas deployment.

“I take this seriously because I’ve seen this job before and ... I am helping those around me get to that same level,” Shepard said.

“You have to take it seriously because it’s of the utmost importance that you learn this type of position now where it’s not a life and death situation where you’re not towing Soldiers into harm’s way ... Here ... you can make a mistake and learn from it and keep going.”

Blue Grass Army Depot, Ky.

Snapshots



Assembling Tires



Moving Cargo



Fighting Fire



Adding it Up

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDER OF BLUE GRASS ARMY DEPOT



Golden Cargo is a unique opportunity for Soldiers to work with Depot employees to execute critical ammunition missions. It provides them with real world, hands-on missions distributed across the United States.

The critical skills training they receive not only prepares them for their wartime missions but supports JMC Depots with cost-saving benefits, ultimately resulting in saving taxpayer dollars.



Col. Joseph Tirone

Nurses and Medics Find **GOLDEN** Opportunity in Logistics Setting



Maj. Sandra A. Gress, intensive care unit nurse with 4010th U.S. Army Hospital from New Orleans, La., consults a Soldier about a minor hand injury while performing sick call duties at Operation Golden Cargo 2009 at Blue Grass Army Depot, Ky.

**Story and photos by Sgt. Yvonne C. Vairma
361st PAOC**

Wherever Soldiers train, they also need medical care. For Soldiers participating in Operation Golden Cargo 2009, much of that care comes in the form of Pfc. Dustin R. Smieja and Pfc. Nathan D. Kalstad, both healthcare specialists from the 7212th Medical Support Unit of Rochester, Minn.

“For this particular mission, we’re conducting sick call for Soldiers here for Operation Golden Cargo,” Smieja said. “It’s good training. We do what we were trained to do.”

Smieja and Kalstad are part of a small team of medical personnel assembled from three separate units in Louisiana, Minnesota, and Texas to provide healthcare support for more than 300 Soldiers training at Blue Grass Army Depot throughout July.

“When in a garrison situation we work like a nurse’s assistant,” Kalstad said. “But in the field or on patrol, we’re like paramedics.”

While at BGAD, Smieja and Kalstad are working as assistants to two registered nurses along with Sgt. Herbert Armstrong, health care specialist, 5501st U.S. Army Hospital, San Antonio, Texas.

“The three Soldiers working with us are excellent,” Lt. Col. Alma J. Bell, 5501st U.S. Army Hospital nurse, said about Smieja, Kalstad, and Armstrong. “They have good assessment skills and good people skills. Send me to the field with them anytime; I would be remiss without them.”

Together the team provides basic first aid and medical assessments to meet Soldiers’ needs on a daily basis.

“We’re here to take care of the troops,” Bell said. In caring for training troops, the medical personnel are training themselves, she explained. “We work with the [healthcare specialists], and if they’re not doing this job on a daily basis, here is an opportunity for them to practice their skills and learn new skills.”

“For me, it’s great to get out of a purely medical setting,” said Maj. Sandra A. Gress, an intensive care unit nurse with the 4010th U.S. Army Hospital from New Orleans, La. “[Here] we get to spend some time with regular Army Soldiers, think through new challenges, get into a mindset for deployment working with non-medical people, and ask ‘how can I best be able to fit into a field or combat situation and help Soldiers?’” 🙌

SOLDIERS, CIVILIANS COME TOGETHER TO FIGHT FIRES



Pfc. Christopher R. Kerr (right), a firefighter with the 802nd Ordnance Company from Gainesville, Ga., demonstrates a fog pattern while Spc. Earl Warren Jr. (left), also a firefighter with the 802nd Ordnance Company, braces him from behind for support. Fog patterns are used by firefighters to shield themselves from the initial heat of a blaze. The demonstration was part of a firefighter training exercise at Blue Grass Army Depot, Ky.

Story and photos by Sgt. Yvonne C. Vairma 361st PAOC

One team attacked the faceless enemy from the front door of the smoking building, while the other team mounted the roof to contain the threat from above. Although the teams were a combination of Army Reserve Soldiers and civilians, they had one thing in common - they were all firefighters, and the enemy they faced was the smoking fire filling the building.

For the duration of operation Golden Cargo 2009, the civilian-staffed Blue Grass Army Depot Fire Department is receiving assistance from Soldier firefighters. A team of ten firefighters assembled from the 802nd Ordnance Company, Gainesville, Ga., and the 811th Ordnance Company, Fort Gillem, Ga., is training and working to supplement the civilian fire department. During a joint military-civilian training exercise held July 17, the Soldiers and civilians responded as a team to a simulated structure fire.

"Today we did search and rescue, ventilation, and basic firefighting drills," said Spc. Amber L. Ilstrup, a firefighter with the 811th Ordnance Company from Rainelle, W.Va. Ilstrup stated that as a Reservist, each opportunity to train and refresh skills is valuable.

"Being here a whole two weeks, we get to do what we're sup-

posed to be doing," she said. "It brings back all the knowledge we're supposed to have."

"The drill went down very well, I thought, as a coordinated effort," said Capt. Wayne Adams of the Blue Grass Army Depot Fire Dept. He explained why working together with the Soldier firefighters was a good experience, saying it allowed his firefighters to see how things can be done outside his department.

"It pulls new people in and let's us learn from them," Adams said. "It also let's our instructors get experience training them."

Prior to the exercise, the Army firefighters also had the opportunity to demonstrate the unique firefighting capabilities of their Tactical Firefighting Truck.

"If an airplane breaks and there's fuel on the runway, the ground sweeps will activate with either water or foam and push the debris away," explained Staff Sgt. Christopher W. McGhee, 811th Ordnance Company fire chief.

Overall, Golden Cargo presented an opportunity for civilians and soldiers to come together, train, learn from one another, and most importantly fight fires. 🙌



Spc. Amber L. Ilstrup, a firefighter with the 811th Ordnance Company from Rainelle, W.Va., drives the Tactical Firefighting Truck during a firefighter training exercise at BGAD.

"Being here a whole two weeks, we get to do what we're supposed to be doing. It brings back all the knowledge we're supposed to have."



Firefighters from the 802nd Ordnance Company in Gainesville, Ga. and the 811th Ordnance Company in Rainelle, W.Va., demonstrate the capabilities of the tactical firefighting truck when responding to an aircraft rescue call.



Firefighters from the 802nd Ordnance Company in Gainesville, Ga. and the 811th Ordnance Company in Rainelle, W.Va., demonstrate the ability of the tactical firefighting truck to clear the runway of fuel when responding to an aircraft fire.



Capt. Dwight Hamilton (left) of the Blue Grass Army Depot Fire Department, and Pfc. Christopher R. Kerr, a firefighter with the 802nd Ordnance Company from Gainesville, Ga., conduct vertical ventilation during a joint military-civilian firefighter training exercise at BGAD. Vertical ventilation helps firefighters contain a fire in a specific portion of a structure.

Mass. Soldiers in the mission for the long haul

Story and photos by Sgt. Yvonne C. Vairma
361st PAOC

During the month of July this year, long lines of U.S. Army tractor-trailers wind through approximately 200 miles of Kentucky and Indiana countryside. Behind the wheels of these long-haul trips are Army Reserve Soldiers of the 304th Transportation Company from Springfield, Mass., and the cargo they haul is of great value to the U.S. military.

Operation Golden Cargo 2009, as their mission is called, is the latest in a series of annual training operations sponsored by the Joint Munitions Command and executed by members of the U.S. Army Reserve, Marine Corps and Navy. Loaded onto 40-foot trailers, munitions of all sizes and sorts are hauled from Blue Grass Army Depot, Ky., and eventually end up at Crane Army Ammunition Plant in Crane, Ind. Likewise, munitions from Crane are transferred to BGAD, one of the nation's critical military storage facilities.

While performing this critical service for the Department of Defense and JMC, Soldiers of the 304th are also gaining experience rarely available to them during monthly battle assemblies.

"It's been valuable for the convoy training," said Spc. Andrew R. Peterson, 304th heavy motor transport operator. For inexperienced Soldiers, it's an opportunity to get behind the wheel and practice, he explained.

"For a lot of them, this will be their first lengthy mission," said Lt. Col. John W. Aarsen, 207th Regional Support Group deputy commander, after visiting the Soldiers at BGAD. "I think they're learning, and it looks like they're having fun."

According to Peterson, work days for the 304th are long, starting out with early morning vehicle inspections. The trailers must then be loaded with cargo and secured with straps and tarps before the Soldiers are given a safety briefing and sent on their way.

"On a personal level, I've learned some about paperwork and convoy operations," said Peterson, who works in the civilian sector as a driver of municipal vehicles such as dump trucks and snowplows. Peterson said that his Golden Cargo experience taught him the process of how to turn convoys into reality, from start to finish. 🏰



Soldiers of the 304th Transportation Company from Springfield, Mass., roll out on convoy at Blue Grass Army Depot, Ky.



Pfc. Nicholas D.A. Sobolew (lower left), 304th Transportation Company heavy motor transport operator ratchets a strap tighter with the assistance of Spc. Jason J. Smith (Upper right), 304th infantryman. The two Soldiers are securing a shipment for delivery from BGAD to Crane Army Ammunition Plant in Crane, Ind.



Soldiers of the 304th Transportation Company man their vehicles as they begin pulling out on a convoy to Crane Army Ammunition Plant, Ind., from BGAD.

Soldiers receive MOST training at Blue Grass Army Depot

Story and photos by Sgt. Yvonne C. Vairma
361st PAOC

More than 300 Army Reserve Soldiers arrived at Blue Grass Army Depot, Ky., recently to participate to receive specific ordnance and logistics training during their annual training exercise called Golden Cargo. Some of these Soldiers, however, received training of a different sort.

Members of the 811th Ordnance Company from Rainelle, W.Va., are participating in Mobilized Ordnance Specific Training in preparation for deployment this fall. MOST is a program designed to provide critical job-specific training, currently unavailable at mobilization stations, to Soldiers who will be working with ordnance during their deployment.

"Once we get there, we'll be in an Ammunition Service Point," said Pfc. Christopher J. Thompson, 811th ammunition specialist. "There we'll load ammunition and rockets, things of that nature, and get it to whichever unit is picking it up. We'll have to get it done fast so other people can do what they need to do... so we can all go home."

In order to best prepare Soldiers for ordnance operations, units in the MOST program review their standard operating procedures and set a daily schedule which mirrors the rhythm of working in theater. As these units perform their daily work routine they receive hands-on training in loading and unloading munitions, maintenance of munitions, as well as driving and operating large load-bearing vehicles such as forklifts and super-stackers. The availability of this training here has even benefited ordnance Soldiers participating in Golden Cargo, who would have otherwise not taken part in MOST.

Pfc. David F. Stone is a cargo specialist with the 302nd Transportation Company from Fort Eustis, Va. Although his unit is at Blue Grass Army Depot for Golden Cargo, Stone was able to receive driver's training on the All Terrain Lifting Army System, which is a 10-ton forklift used to transport pallets of cargo.

"It's helping us refresh and keep trained on the vehicles for future deployments," Stone said. 🏰



Pfc. David F. Stone, a Cargo specialist with the 302nd Transportation Company from Fort Eustis, Va., operates a 10-ton All Terrain Lifting Army System under the supervision of Sgt. Richard W. Hill, a heavy motor transport operator with the 302nd Transportation Company during a forklift driver's training course at BGAD.



◀ Super Stacker

Crane Army Ammunition Activity, Ind.



Safety Always



Snapshots

PT - "Hooah!"



Securing the Ammo



Chow Time

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDER OF CAAA

The hard work and dedication of the Soldiers participating in this year's Golden Cargo was evident by everyone employed at Crane Army Ammunition Activity. Our workforce was excited to be able to give these young Soldiers experience at ammunition handling and help them to understand how to do it in the safest manner possible. Exercises like these are the right thing to do across the enterprise to help ensure we have the best trained and equipped Army to defend America.



Col. Charles W. Kibben



Crane Army Ammunition Activity

History in Brief

Commissioned as Naval Ammunition Depot, Burns City in 1941.

Renamed NAD, Crane in 1943 in honor of Commodore William Montgomery Crane, the Navy's first Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance.

Renamed the Naval Weapons Support Center in 1975.

Crane Army Ammunition Depot established in 1977 in response to the Department of Defense's implementation of the Single Manager for Conventional Ammunition concept.

Communication barriers present training opportunities

Story by Staff Sgt. W. Watson Martin
319th MPAD

When it comes to getting the job done, a lot of junior troops had to get creative when it came to communicating during this year's Golden Cargo annual training mission.

One Soldier, in particular, understands the stresses associated with communication networks but still found a way to make it possible via Army and federal networks.

"Our primary mission is to handle radios, telephones and Internet connectivity - the network here is limited but somehow we're still able to get the job done," said Staff Sgt. Kimbal Cox, team leader for the 812 Transportation Battalion, communications section.

In some instances, providing additional technology resulted in an educational opportunity as well.

"We've set up the tactical radio systems for secondary ammo, which has provided additional training," he said.

Cox and his small team even went above and beyond their military occupational specialties by pulling out manuals for other signal equipment.

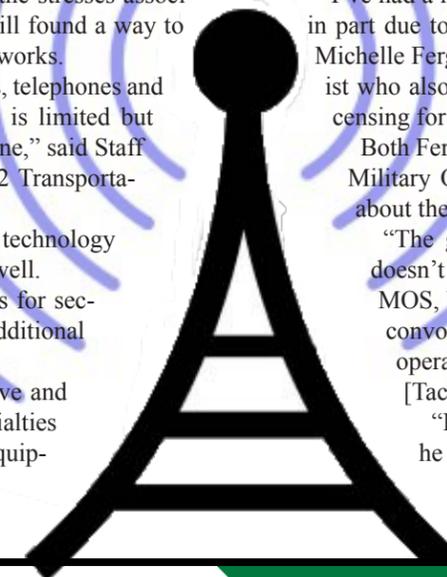
The team set up and monitored mobile tracking systems for the M915 tractor trailers as well as erected and monitored 30-foot antennas.

"I've had a lot of fun on this AT [Annual Training], which is in part due to great leadership and good training," said Spc. Michelle Ferguson, an 812th information technology specialist who also took advantage of her time here to train on licensing for the Humvee.

Both Ferguson and Spc. Chris Josey, who holds the same Military Occupational Specialty, had good words to say about their team leader and the overall mission.

"The great thing about Golden Cargo is that it just doesn't provide you with an opportunity to train in your MOS, but it also helps give you the big picture of how convoys operate to how a tactical operations center operates - if you're lucky enough to work in a TOC [Tactical Operation Center]," said Josey.

"I hope I get to come and do this again next year," he added. 🙌



VIETNAM VET CONTINUES TO SERVE COUNTRY, LEAD THE WAY

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. W. Watson Martin
319th MPAD



There is a small fraternity of Vietnam Veterans and an even smaller number still serving in the military today. One of them, however, was here at Crane Army Ammunition Activity, Ind., during the Golden Cargo exercise to participate in training, provide leadership, and more importantly, to bestow upon the Soldiers his many years of military experience.

Army Reserve Sgt. Thomas M. Owen, a native of Doraville, Ga., and ammo sergeant with 802nd Ordnance Company, Gainesville, Ga., served one tour in Vietnam and is anxious to deploy to the Middle East.

At the age of seventeen, forty years ago this month, Owen entered military service with the United States Army. Now, while the majority of the 802nd Soldiers are currently participating in mobilization training in another state, the "stay-behind" troops participate in Golden Cargo 2009. The three-week exercise is designed to provide transportation and ordnance units with real world training delivering ammunition to the war fighters.

Owen, along with the other 802nd Soldiers, holds his breath as anyone one of his them could be called to deploy should any of the deploying Soldiers fail to validate or complete mobilization training.

From huffing it as infantryman, working as an administrative clerk, to his current duties as an ammo sergeant, Owen finds himself constantly looking for ways to help his fellow servicemembers become better people and Soldiers. Golden Cargo provided him the opportunity to do just that.

"He's a great guy ... always willing to bend over backwards and is there if you ever need him," said Pvt. Justin Evans, a mechanic of the 802nd. "Sgt. Owen has a way of smoothing things over and making you feel better."

Owen along with Staff Sgt. Robert Smiley, non-commissioned officer in charge of the 802nd, are here for Golden Cargo without any officers. Together, both Owen and Smiley are serving as the leadership and have kept the morale of the servicemembers high by ensuring that they all have opportunities to practice their respective military occupational specialties.

"We came here without any trucks due to the nature of the exercise, and therefore our junior troops were getting snagged for extra duties, but after I coordinated with the 812th Transportation Battalion, our troops have gotten the chance to get the training they came here for," said Smiley.

We're getting to go over and work at a Navy motor pool so I can do my job," said Evans. Even though

the Navy facility is not part of the Golden Cargo exercise, the CAAA civilians and Navy personnel have gone out of their way to help the Army Reservists.

From the many challenges they faced planning their annual training to safely arriving, Owen and Smiley continually looked for ways to reward their Soldiers. One way of doing that is to award medals to deserving Soldiers, such as Pfc. Venita Martin, an ammo specialist Smiley plans to put in for an Army Commendation medal.

"She's come here and gained the most knowledge out of all of our 89 Bravos, and she's become a good forklift operator," said Smiley.

"This group of Soldiers couldn't have found better leadership than from the non-commissioned officers who have taken charge of them," said Command Sgt. Maj. Paul Robinson, 812th command sergeant major. "Sgt. Owen and Staff Sgt. Smiley represent what's best when we think about the Year of the NCO."

"As far as Sgt. Owen, it's really great to see someone who has given so much already and so willing to give even more," said Robinson.

Owen and Smiley worked closely with the troops and with the CAAA civilians here.

"The CAAA civilian, Josh – who's a bow hunter – and I spot deer together going from one High Explosive Magazine to the next," said Owen. "This has been a very rewarding experience training here ... all of the civilians I have worked with have been very nice and polite."

"I think this post is a good thing ... I hope it's never destroyed or changed ... they take very good care of the forests and the wildlife and historical places here ... this is like a nature preserve, history being left untouched."

Fellow Soldiers agree that anyone who takes the time to get to know these NCOs quickly realizes that they both care about looking out for Soldiers, helping them, and giving them moral and spiritual guidance. 🙏

Mechanic shares expertise, orchestrates missions



A native of Mableton, Ga., Staff Sgt. Walter Chambers, a mechanic with the 1015th Maintenance Company, Fort Gillem, Ga., replaces a fan clutch on a M915 tractor trailer during Golden Cargo 2009 exercise at Crane Army Ammunition Activity, Ind. The exercise is designed to offer real-world training to Army Reserve ordnance and transportation companies while completing an essential mission of delivering ammunition to the war fighters.

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. W. Watson Martin
319th MPAD

It only takes one Soldier to keep a group of mechanics in synch so that a battalion full of transportation companies can accomplish their missions.

Staff Sgt. Walter Chambers, a family man and heavy equipment mechanic in his civilian life, is here at Crane Army Ammunition Activity, Ind., supporting Golden Cargo operations for the fourth time. With so much mechanical expertise both with Golden Cargo and in his civilian career, Chambers' fellow Army Reserve Soldiers point to him as one of the key persons that keep the convoys' tractor trailers rolling during Golden Cargo.

Without him, the 1015th Maintenance Company, Fort Gillem, Ga., wouldn't have been able to perform their mission, said Chief Warrant Officer Jon Leland, team chief of the 1015th.

Always willing to lend a helping hand, Chambers is a veteran role model who steps up to the plate to offer his exper-

tise any time, anywhere.

"The troops here really look up to Chambers who has been more than willing to share his knowledge with not only the mechanics in our unit, but the transportation and ordnance units that are here too," said Leland.

Chambers works in a maintenance building next to the 812th Transportation Battalion tactical operations center along with other members of his unit. Meanwhile, mechanics from others units either drive Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck recovery vehicles at the rear of convoys or work with CAAA installation service centers outside of the Golden Cargo exercise.

Even though others are quick to praise Chambers, he recognizes that he is part of a team that works together to accomplish a mission.

Every mechanic has a job, and the other mechanics are doing just as important work, said Chambers.

Having worked during many Golden Cargo exercises, Chambers does bring something unique to the table, such as information on which me-

chanical issues are more prominent during this exercise than others.

"The M915 tractor trailers hold up fairly well being almost brand new," said Chambers. "I've seen a lot of broken axles ... seized brakes ... even a transmission ... right now I'm replacing a fan clutch."

The heavy work comes easy to Chambers who travels from place to place around Atlanta, Ga., during his civilian career for Cowin Equipment Company where he performs mostly engine and hydraulic repairs.

"He's the main man," said Sgt. 1st Class Wiley Dawsey, also a mechanic who works as a bus driver back in Fort Rucker, Ala.

Although the repairs may vary and the missions may change, Chambers is dedicated to sharing his knowledge, training Soldiers, and keeping those convoys rolling during Golden Cargo. 🙏

Sgt. Thomas M. Owen

Army PLS transporters stage ammo, train to fight



Army Reserve Spc. Chris Shaffer, a truck driver with the 401st Transportation Company and native of Portage, Mich., ground guides Pvt. Worthem Spencer, a mechanic. Shaffer taught Spencer to drive and operate this HEMMIT, palletized loading system during the 3-week annual training, Golden Cargo recently. The 401st will use this experience during their tour overseas to deliver ammo to war fighters.

Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. W. Watson Martin 319th MPAD

The hauls were long but the days were even longer for the crew of mechanics and truck drivers of the 401st Transportation Company, a Palletized Loading System company from Battlecreek, Mich.

“I like the fact I get to switch it up out here and learn how to drive and operate a [heavy expanded mobility tactical truck] palletized loading system,” said Pvt. Worthem Spencer, a mechanic with the 401st.

Along with the long hours, there were other natural elements impacting the mission on a day-to-day basis.

The weather, for instance, was a factor. Temperatures hovered in the muggy 80s to 90s early in the mission but later dropped into the cool 70s. Other than fighting fatigue, another concern for the

Army Reserve Soldiers and Marines either flew or crawled into the mission; insects.

“I heard someone got bit by a black widow so we’re being really careful when working around the High Ex Mags (earth-covered storage bunkers),” said Spc. Chris Shaffer, a truck driver with the 401st who also trained Spencer on the PLS.

The weather and insects were part of the overall concern for safety- a concern that was prioritized during Golden Cargo as it would be with any military mission.

“Whenever I’m training a new Soldier, I always stress safety and make sure we wear all of our proper gear, to include gloves ... you never know what your hand might touch when reaching into dark spaces,” said Shaffer.

The Golden Cargo exercise prepared the 401st Soldiers and other servicemembers for the safety hazards that they may all face when deployed to

the Middle East – instead of black widows, they could face scorpions in the middle of the night.

The Soldiers of the 401st have been a valuable asset to the overall success of the 812th Transportation Battalion by moving ammo between the loading docks to the proper High Explosive Magazines located throughout the 60,000-acre federal weapons station here, said Master Sgt. Joseph Herman, operations sergeant, 812th.

Herman, a former PLS platoon sergeant, stressed that without this unique unit, the regular transportation units making the long hauls would bottleneck at the loading docks. 🚧

What is a Palletized Loading System?



MISSION: Perform line haul, local haul, unit resupply, and other missions in the tactical environment to support modernized and highly mobile combat units. Rapid movement of combat configured loads of ammunition and all classes of supply, shelters and containers.

DESCRIPTION AND SPECIFICATIONS: The Palletized Load System consists of a prime mover truck with an integral self-loading and unloading capability, a payload trailer, M1076, and demountable cargo beds, referred to as flatracks. The PLS prime mover truck carries its payloads on its demountable flatrack cargo beds, or inside 8 x 8 x 20 ft International Standards Organization containers, or shelters. The PLS prime mover truck comes in two mission-oriented configurations: the M1074 and the M1075. The M1074 is equipped with a variable reach Material Handling Crane to support forward-deployed Artillery units. The M1075, without MHC, is used in conjunction with the M1076 trailer in support of transportation line haul missions. The M1076 trailer, capable of carrying payloads up to 16.5 tons, is equipped with a flatrack that is interchangeable between truck and trailer. The prime mover truck and trailer form a self-contained system that loads and unloads its cargo without the need for forklifts or other material handling equipment. Without leaving the cab, the driver can load or unload the truck in less than one minute, and both truck and trailer in less than five minutes.

TRUCK PAYLOAD: 16.5 tons
 TRAILER PAYLOAD: 16.5 tons
 TRUCK LENGTH: 431 in.
 TRAILER LENGTH: 327.4 in. (includes trailer tongue, with flatrack)
 TRUCK WIDTH: 96 in.
 TRAILER WIDTH: 95.7 in.
 FLATRACK DIMENSIONS: 8 x 20 ft.
 ENGINE TYPE: 500 horsepower Detroit Diesel

TRANSMISSION: Automatic (5-speed forward, 1 reverse)
 NUMBER OF DRIVEN WHEELS: 10
 RANGE: 300 miles
 FORDING CAPABILITY: 48 in.
 AIR TRANSPORTABILITY: C-5A, C-17, C-141 (with preparation)
 CAB: 2 person

Information on the PLS sourced from www.army.mil

FORT LEONARD WOOD, MO.

Snapshots



Calling In



Moving Out



Fixing Flats



Checking Twice

Ft. Leonard Wood Mission Statement

The Maneuver Support Center, enabled by a world-class garrison at Fort Leonard Wood, creates Warriors and develops leaders and capabilities that assure the mobility, freedom of action, and protection of the forces they support.

TRAIN Warriors and develop innovative, adaptive leaders ready for full spectrum operations.

SUPPORT our forces in combat today.

TRANSFORM and integrate maneuver support organizations and capabilities based on the Army's current needs and future vision.

TAKE CARE OF our Servicemembers, Civilians, and Families .

ENGAGE our stakeholders to ensure their understanding and support.

Maintaining trucks one wrench turn at a time

Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. Christopher Land
319th MPAD

This truck needs an outer wheel seal, that one needs a marker-light lens. The taillight is burned out on the one over there and those five have blown inner wheel seals.

The M915 line-haul trucks in use for Golden Cargo 2009 come in from their runs with problems ranging from the minor, quick-and-easy-to-fix issues like burned-out bulbs to more involved issues like inner wheel seals that have sealed their last. The repair of those can leave the uninitiated with the impression that the vehicle may never be put together again.

But it will be... tonight.

The Soldiers working in the maintenance shop during this annual training come from several units, but that has not hindered them from forming a team that approaches the nightly repairs with enthusiasm and determination.

"They're working miracles in there," said Lt. Col. Robert Wiley, the commander of the 352nd Corps Support Service Battalion, Macon, Ga.

Those miracles help to keep the loads of explosive cargo Army Reserve truck drivers are hauling to and from McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, Okla., and Crane Army Ammunition Activity, Ind., moving during Golden Cargo 2009. The exercise is the latest in a series of annual training operations sponsored by the Joint Munitions Command. Golden Cargo, which is carried out by Army Reserve Soldiers and Marine and Navy personnel, is designed to offer real-world training to ordnance and transportation companies while completing an essential mission for JMC.

During the exercise, 25 to 30 Golden Cargo trucks roll in to Equipment Consolidation Site 66 on Fort Leonard Wood each evening, where they are processed, repaired as needed, and set up to depart the next morning.

Whatever issues have arisen with the M915 line-haul trucks are addressed by the maintenance shop immediately so that the trucks can roll out with their convoys the next morning. That can make for some long days and late nights for the Soldiers turning the wrenches.

"Our goal is that every one of the trucks makes it here and makes it back," said Staff Sgt. Jeff Duncan, a mechanic from the 289th Corps Support Detachment, Athens, Ga., who is constantly reinforcing the lessons he teaches his young mechanics with a running dialogue of how to handle whatever is on the agenda.

To accomplish that goal takes knowledge, dedication and teamwork.

"The knowledge out there in that pool and the working together - it's really incredible," said Duncan.

The result is trucks that are ready for their drivers.

One truck has a repaired outer wheel seal, one has a shiny new marker-



Staff Sgt. Jeff Duncan, a mechanic with the 289th Corps Support Detachment, Athens, Ga., removes lug nuts from an M915 line-haul truck in preparation for an inner axle seal repair during Golden Cargo 2009. Duncan lives in Alto, Ga. Golden Cargo 2009 is the latest in a series of annual training operations sponsored by the Joint Munitions Command and carried out by Army Reserve Soldiers, Marines, and Sailors. The exercise is designed to offer real-world training to ordnance and transportation companies while completing an essential mission for JMC.

light lens.

The tail light is no longer burned out on the one over there, and those five with the blown inner wheel seals?

All fixed and ready to roll. 🚚

Head 'em up, *move* 'em out



Sgt. Mark Swinarski, a senior driver with the 189th Trailer Transfer Point Detachment, Council Bluffs, Iowa, directs a Golden Cargo 2009 convoy comprised of trucks from the 424th Transportation Company, Galax, Va., out of the trailer transfer point at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. The convoy is bound for Crane Army Ammunition Activity, Crane, Ind.

**Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. Christopher Land
319th MPAD**

The first hints of the sun's arrival color the eastern sky as the diesel engines of M915 line-haul trucks are roaring in the trailer transfer point at Equipment Consolidation Site 66 at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

It's morning at Golden Cargo and the Soldiers of the 189th Trailer Transfer Point Detachment, Council Bluffs, Iowa, are organizing convoys for their trips to McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, McAlester, Okla., and Crane Army Ammunition Activity, Crane, Ind.

While the Soldiers participating in Golden Cargo perform a vital mission for Joint Munitions Command by helping them realign assets at their depots or

deliver them to sites for demilitarization, it is also a golden opportunity for transportation Soldiers to practice their military skills in a real-world situation.

"It lets them put their hands into the work," said Master Sgt. John Stearns, the acting sergeant major of the 352nd Corps Support Service Battalion, Macon, Ga., which is the unit responsible for feeding, housing, and taking care of the needs of the Golden Cargo Soldiers assigned to and convoying to and from Fort Leonard Wood.

The 189th's commander, 1st Lt. Reid Hastings, pointed out that there is a lot of classroom time on battle assembly weekends for Reserve Soldiers, so a mission like Golden Cargo is a change of pace for those troops.

"When they finally get to do the job they're

trained for, they enjoy it," said Hastings.

His Soldiers echoed his statements. "We've been doing what our unit's supposed to be doing, and it's fun learning," said Spc. Nick Petersen, a motor transport operator with the 189th who lives in Omaha, Neb.

What the unit is "supposed to be doing" is facilitating the transition of equipment from one unit to another.

Motor transport operators driving for the 424th Transportation Company, Galax, Va., and the 428th Transportation Company, Jefferson City, Mo., convoy daily to and from Fort Leonard Wood. The loads of explosive cargo that they

haul from Crane and McAlester, respectively, have to be traded along with the trailers each evening so that the convoys can leave on time each morning.

When the convoys roll in each evening, the drivers park their trailers and drive their tractors to the fuel point, which is operated by 189th personnel. After the trucks are fueled and checked for any problems by the drivers and maintenance personnel, the drivers move to a new set of trailers that are loaded with cargo bound for the sites they left earlier in the day.

After taking their Department of Transportation-required rest break, the drivers perform their final checks, complete their paperwork, and head for the gate- all under the watchful eyes and guiding hands of the 189th Soldiers.

Even with all of those moving pieces, the drivers are still impressed with the 189th's efficiency.

"They're on it," said Staff Sgt. Thomas Williams, a platoon sergeant and mechanic for the 428th who served as the convoy commander for multiple Golden Cargo convoys traveling between McAlester and Fort Leonard Wood. "There's no wait time. They get you in. They get you out."

That efficiency is a result of the training his troops have received, according to the detachment's commander.

"This is the first time we've gotten to set up a trailer transfer point as a unit," said Hastings. "It's a good training experience. When my unit comes to a different site, and we come up against different obstacles, we get training in how to establish a trailer transfer point from scratch." The unit had the Golden Cargo trailer transfer point here up and running in a day, he added.

When the last remnants of the sun are fading from the western sky, the 189th Soldiers are often still hard at work, doing whatever it takes to get the convoys out on time. ■■■



Staff Sgt. Robert Delarosa, the detachment noncommissioned officer in charge for the 189th Trailer Transfer Point Detachment, ground guides an M878A2 yard tractor driven by Sgt. Mark Swinarski at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., at an equipment consolidation site that is being used during Golden Cargo 2009. The 189th is an Army Reserve unit headquartered in Council Bluffs, Iowa.



Spc. Kyle Salkeld, a transportation management coordinator with the 189th Trailer Transfer Point Detachment, Council Bluffs, Iowa, communicates with the fuel office at the equipment consolidation site at Fort Leonard Wood during Golden Cargo 2009.

Movement control Soldiers rise early, keep convoys moving

Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. Christopher Land 319th MPAD

It's 3 a.m., and alarms are sounding in Fort Leonard Wood's "twelve hundred block." There are convoys to get rolling for this year's Golden Cargo annual training exercise.

To get those trucks with their explosives placards safely on the road beginning at 6 a.m., the Army Reserve Soldiers assigned to the movement control team are up well before dawn.

"I'm learning a lot about teamwork and going the extra mile," said Spc. Jason Thomas of Durham, N.C.

"That means staying out late and coming in early," added Spc. Tiffany Carpenter, who is from Jacksonville, N.C.

Thomas and Carpenter and their fellow transportation-management coordinators from the 216th Transportation Detachment, Fort Bragg, N.C., are part of the movement-control team for Golden Cargo 2009 at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. Golden Cargo 2009 is the latest in a series of annual training operations sponsored by the Joint Munitions Command and carried out by Army Reserve Soldiers, Marines, and Sailors. The exercise is designed to offer real-world training to ordnance and transportation companies while completing an essential mission for Joint Munitions Command.

The plan is for two convoys to roll into the equipment consolidation point at the south end of the Fort Leonard Wood cantonment each evening and for two convoys to roll out the post's west gate each morning.

One of the things that the Soldiers are learning is how to adapt to change when everything does not go as planned.

"This job calls for a lot of changes," said Maj. Ruth Solivan, the commander of the 216th. "We come up with the movement tables, but things don't always go as planned. There is a lot of readjusting."

Because of that readjusting, those ear-



Pfc. Jonathan Morgan, a transportation management coordinator with the 216th Transportation Detachment, Fort Bragg, N.C., chalks the convoy number on the door of a Golden Cargo 2009 truck bound for McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, McAlester, Okla. Morgan is from Hamlet, N.C.

ly mornings can be the start of some very long days.

"We start at 4:30, and we've been here as late as one in the morning," Solivan said.

The motor transport operators who drive the trucks in the convoys during Golden Cargo 2009 need to have all of their paperwork in proper order so that they can leave at 6 a.m., so accuracy is important to the entire process, said Thomas.

"If we don't have the right information the first time, there are going to be delays," he said.

And delays stack up. Convoys deal with the same issues on the roads that any truck driver encounters, but with a twist.

"If the general traffic has problems, imagine how difficult it is for a 12-vehicle convoy to maneuver," Thomas said.

Once everything else is checked and rechecked, the convoys are sent on their way, to either Crane Army Ammunition Activity in Crane, Ind., or to McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, Okla. The movement control team's job does not end when the convoy leaves the equipment consolidation site, though.

"We monitor the convoy through their whole route, until they reach their final destination," Solivan said.

"We're communicating with them all day," Carpenter added. They also have a series of reports to make up the chain of command as the convoys roll through their checkpoints and communicate with the movement-control team.

Golden Cargo's real-world training environment

helps Soldiers to understand the importance of what they learned in their Advanced Individual Training and during their weekend battle assemblies every month.

"They get to see a picture of what we can do when we deploy," said Sgt. 1st Class Atilya Singletary, the 216th noncommissioned officer in charge. "They get to see the questions that are asked, the issues that come up — just without all the danger" of a combat environment, Singletary said. "They understand the 'why' more now."

Golden Cargo allows them to apply the "why" in a real-world environment.

"In school, it was easy," Carpenter said. "We learn more out here because we're actually executing" a mission.

"You learn to incorporate flexibility and adaptability into the operation," Thomas added. "You can't learn that in the classroom. You get terminology and concepts, but... here... you get to utilize it. It's game time."

And the game is constant. Even before the convoys that leave in the morning get to where they are going, the movement-control team is talking to the next convoys headed for Fort Leonard Wood, taking information and making plans.

And they're setting those alarms - again. 🚧

Now We're Cookin'

Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. Christopher Land 319th MPAD

As the sun rises over the installation, a few Army Reserve Soldiers are prepared to start Fort Leonard Wood's day on a full stomach. They are the food specialists, or cooks, who are here to feed the military truck drivers participating in Golden Cargo.

"We're going to open up at three in the morning and feed those drivers before they hit the road," said Master Sgt. Audrey H. Chambers, Mess Sergeant, 352nd Combat Service Support Battalion dining facility here. The 352nd CSSB, headquartered in Macon, Ga., is at Fort Leonard Wood for three weeks in support of Golden Cargo. In addition to serving meals early in the morning, the dining facility will be open as late as 10 p.m. to feed truck drivers coming in on later convoys, Chambers added.

The master sergeant and her team of 16 food service specialists and volunteer kitchen police Soldiers, from several units within the 352nd CSSB, set up the dining facility in a building that has been mothballed since October. Chambers said there was a lot of cleaning to do to prepare the facility to serve 139 Army Reserve Soldiers here in support of Golden Cargo and nearly 60 truck



Spc. Christopher Whigham, a food-service specialist with the 377th Quartermaster Company, Tifton, Ga., prepares breakfast in the kitchen of the 352nd Combat Service Support Battalion dining facility. Whigham and his fellow 352nd CSSB Soldiers are here in support of Golden Cargo 2009.

The gamut of work necessary to operate and support the mission includes everything from cleaning to final food preparation.

"We washed every pot, pan and utensil," Chambers said. The food specialists also cleaned floors, facility walls, and boiled water to clean every surface used for food preparation. During all the cleaning, 400 cases of Meals Ready to Eat, or MREs, were loaded and unitized group rations were picked up to feed the hungry truckers and

support personnel.

"We work hard because we're here to serve," said Chambers. "That's what the 3-5-2 does. Whatever it takes," she added, in keeping with the 352nd CSSB motto.

Doing "whatever it takes" to feed the Army Soldiers assigned to Golden Cargo or convoying to

and from Fort Leonard Wood is a great training opportunity for her Soldiers, according to Chambers, and her Soldiers agree.

Spc. DeAnna Furlow, food-service specialist, 377th Quartermaster Company, Tifton, Ga., said

that working in the dining facility prepares her for the next step in her military career.

"It's all a learning process," Furlow said. "I'm learning the procedures as far as paperwork is concerned and the proper steps for ordering supplies and getting food out in a timely manner."

Her co-worker, Spc. Roletta Hamilton-Goldsby, said she is "learning a lot of things" through her work in the dining facility. A transportation management coordinator from the 352nd, Hamilton-Goldsby said that her time volunteering for KP presents an opportunity to work in a team larger than the four-person team in which she typically works.

"I've learned a lot about teamwork," she said. "We came together well."

As the sun sets and rises each morning, the food service specialists like Hamilton-Goldsby and her dining facility teammates are there to ensure that the drivers are fed for their trips to and from Crane and McAlester each morning and before their trucks roll in each evening. 🚧

"We work hard because we're here to serve, that's what the 3-5-2 does. Whatever it takes."

Discipline is the key to setting up and operating the dining facility, whatever the hour, said Chambers. "You can't fall in on a facility this size, needing the kind of work this did, without a caliber of discipline in tune with the Army values," she said.

McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, Okla.

Snapshots



Raising the Roof



Strapping it Down



Stacking it up



Saving Lives

MCAAP Mission Statement

Providing Global Joint Service To The Warfighter...

McAlester Army Ammunition Plant was originally commissioned as a naval ammunition depot in May of 1943. The plant was transferred to the Army in May of 1977 under the Single Manager for Conventional Ammunition and became the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant. Our workforce is comprised of nearly 1,500 employees assigned to ammunition production, storage and demilitarization operations along with various support functions. In 1999, the Red River Munitions Center in northeastern Texas joined MCAAP and has been fully integrated as a part of Team McAlester.

Located on 45,000 acres in southeastern Oklahoma, MCAAP is centrally located in the United States with access by major highway, railway, and waterway. MCAAP has six ammunition production, maintenance and renovation complexes and is a major ammunition storage site for all branches of the Armed Forces, with nearly 2,300 storage magazines and six million square feet of covered explosive storage space. It is the Defense Department's largest explosive storage facility. MCAAP has a proud history of meeting the munitions needs of our customers - America's Armed Forces - through war and peace for over 60 years. Team McAlester has but one goal, "a total commitment to ammunition and missile readiness with our focus on the Warfighter".

Our focus is on our core competencies - bomb production (Group Technology Center), ammunition and missile maintenance and renovation, storage/distribution, and demilitarization of obsolete or unserviceable ammunition. Team McAlester is one of the Joint Munitions Command's key power projection platforms. As the nation's premier bomb manufacturing, and ammunition and missile maintenance facility, we partner with commercial industry to expand our capabilities and strengthen our position within the Department of Defense.

Our non-negotiable contract with the American people is to provide goods and services to ensure the warfighter is persuasive in peace and invincible in war. Team McAlester will fully support the Commanding General, U.S. Army Joint Munitions Command, by "Transforming INDUSTRIAL POWER into MILITARY READINESS".

McAlester mechanics train Soldiers, keep vehicles rolling

**Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Shane Slaughter
319th MPAD**

Whether vehicles are being used for training in the hot sun or require an impromptu repair, McAlester Army Ammunition Plant motor pool Soldiers are here to keep the equipment rolling in support of Golden Cargo.

Army Staff Sgt. James King, 1015th Maintenance Company, Fort Gillem, Ga., conducts vehicle recovery training to Soldiers who would not, under ordinary circumstances, receive the kind of training they are getting today during their annual training exercise. The training utilizes the Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck Wrecker, M984 HEMTT.

"This is a great opportunity to train new Soldiers. Right now we are doing vehicle recovery and later we will do towing," King said.

"Vehicle recovery, using a snatch block training, is great," said Sgt. Rachel Nesbitt, of the 1015th. "This is the first time we've

trained on this equipment."

The training was briefly interrupted as a Palletized Load System vehicle arrived, needing a left rear wheel repair. A valve stem was knocked off. In just a few minutes the motor pool team had the stem replaced and the truck was rolling away to continue its mission.

Spc. Ramiro Garcia, 370th Transportation Company, Mission, Texas said, "The training mission is good. Out here there is more equipment, personnel and knowledge."

Spc. Gabriel Cueto, of the 1015th said, "I just love being around this stuff. We don't get to do this kind of thing at home."

Military vehicles will always need repairs and fortunately, MCAAP Soldiers are here to keep Soldiers trained and proficient at their skills so that vehicles will continue to run for years to come. 🙌

USAR Soldiers Break Glass, Train to Save Lives

**Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Shane Slaughter
319th MPAD**

McAlester Army Ammunition Plant firefighters recently conducted a vehicle extraction exercise for Army Reserve Soldiers to help train on new equipment that can save lives.

Soldiers from the 395th Ordnance Company, Appleton, Wis., utilized equipment from the fire company's newest asset: a Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck Tactical Fire Fighting Truck to increase their level of knowledge in safely extracting persons trapped in vehicles following an accident.

Fire department Shift Captain, Emory Dilbeck, MCAAP, conducted the training exercise. "I want the Soldiers to be more comfortable working with the truck and to ensure there is no problem working as a team."

The equipment was laid out and Soldiers became familiar with the different types of equipment, options for utilizing different tools for various applications and choosing the right one for the situation.

"This equipment is easy to use," Spc. Sadie Spurka said of the rare opportunity to use the equipment.

Soldiers were introduced to proper techniques for breaking windows, cutting out the windshield, removing the doors, roof, dashboard, seats and gaining access to the vehicle appropriately for the situation.

"Hands down, this is the best training so far," said Spc. Adam Vogel.

When all was said and done, little remained intact of the old vehicle, but what remained with the Soldiers were the invaluable lessons learned in saving somebody's life.

"This was more advanced training than fire school on vehicle extractions," said Spurka. 🙌



An Army Reserve Soldier from the 395th Ordnance Company, Appleton, Wis., uses a cutting tool on a windshield during a vehicle extraction training exercise held at the MCAAP firehouse. Soldiers learned how to properly use many types of equipment in the removal of trapped persons in damaged vehicles.

MCAAP firefighters provide HAZMAT certification

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Shane Slaughter
319th MPAD

Looking like something from a science-fiction movie inside her vapor protective suit, Pfc. Amanda Lainberger, 395th Ammunition Ordnance Company, Appleton, Wis., works her way across the floor on her way to stop a simulated leak on an old air tank inside the McAlester fire station's garage.

"Using the equipment to patch things up helps a lot," said Lainberger.

Lainberger and other Army Reserve Soldiers participating in the Golden Cargo exercise are learning new skills to enhance their operational readiness in dealing with a multitude of potential incidents that could threaten human life or the environment.

"This is a forty-hour course that teaches how to identify containers, contain leaks, select the proper personal protective equipment and taking care of the PPE," said Shift Capt. Jeff Humphries, MCAAP Fire Department.

Participants are presented scenarios in which they must plan by using chemical, biological and radiological manuals and respond accordingly.

"If they are not properly trained, irreversible long-term health effects or death could occur."

"They present the plan, and we critique," said Humphries.

The students were familiarized with the different types of equipment and how to decontaminate large numbers of people.

"We try to get them proficient enough that they can work alone, and train them on how to get information," said Humphries.

The Soldiers are trained in the use of various chemical-detection devices, including Drager tubes, which draw in vapors to the Smith's Detection System, which is an infrared spectrograph that can check solids, liquids and gasses. These systems are portable and can be carried on trucks to the scene.

The firefighters training the Soldiers take their mission very seriously.

"If they are not properly trained, irreversible long-term health effects or death could occur," said Humphries. "Like chess, everything is calculated and deliberate."

Upon completion, Soldiers receive a Department of Defense certificate. They are required to be recertified every two years.

"The training they receive over the two years is cumulative and counts toward recertification," said Humphries. 🧡



Pfc. Amanda Lainberger, 395th Ammunition Ordnance Company, Appleton, Wis., wears a vapor resistant suit and self contained breathing apparatus while "repairing" a broken fitting on a training bottle as part of Hazardous Material training held by the MCAAP Fire Department.



Spc. Sadie Sperka assists Pfc. Amanda Lainberger, both with the 395th Ordnance Co., Appleton, Wis., don a vapor protective suit as part of HAZMAT training conducted at the MCAAP firehouse.

STABBING YOUR BUDDY TO SAVE HIM

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Shane Slaughter
319th MPAD

Soldiers participating in Golden Cargo here furthered their combat preparedness by taking the Combat Life Saver Course conducted by the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant Fire Department. The course teaches Soldiers advanced life saving techniques to include airway management, bleeding control, chest decompression, splinting broken bones and inserting IVs into wounded Soldiers for certification - the "wounded Soldier" being your battle buddy.

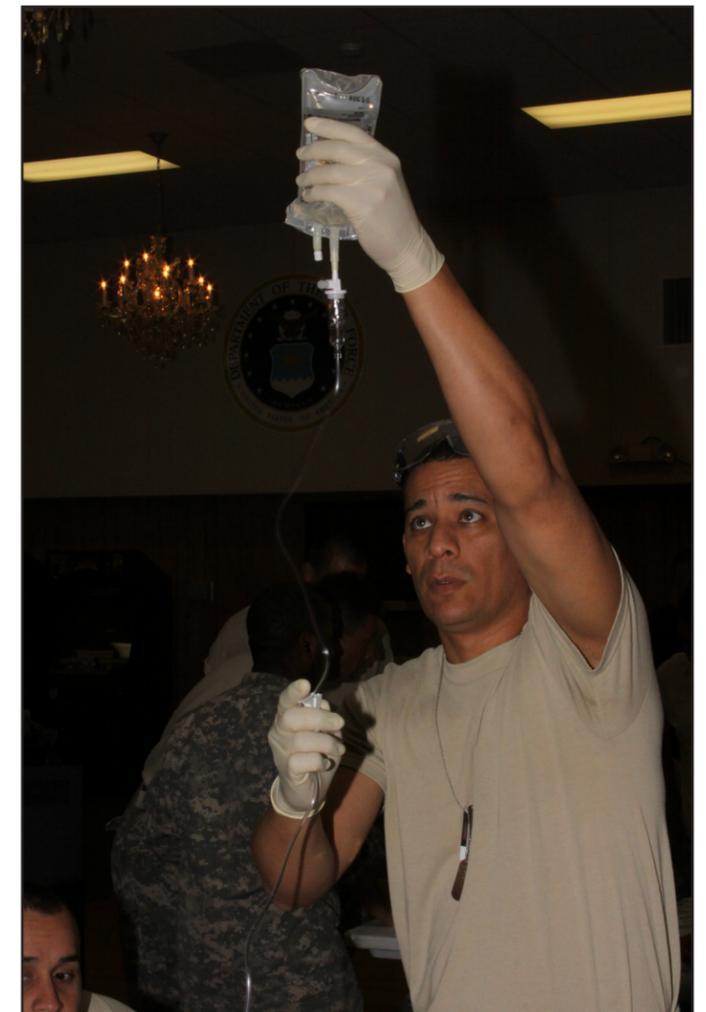
"Today we are training on IVs... sticking your partner. I'm sticking my battle buddy for the fourth time."

Organized on tables in neat rows are all the necessary items to complete the task: from needles and bags of saline solution to plenty of gauze and tape for all the failed attempts. At each table trained medical personnel stand ready to step in and assist as needed.

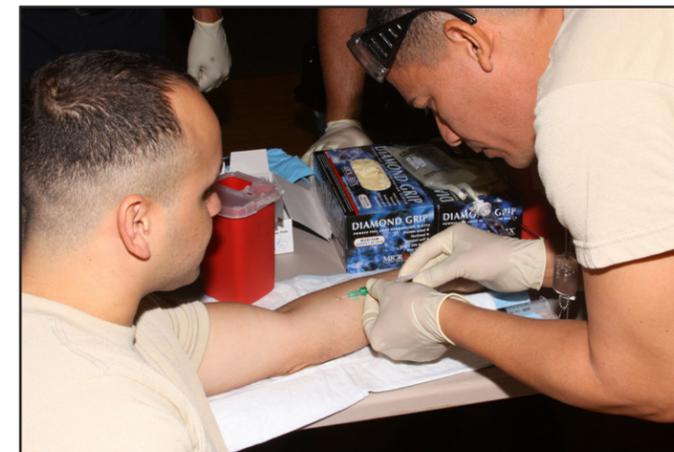
"Today we are training on IVs... sticking your partner. I'm sticking my battle buddy for the fourth time," said Pfc. Candice Hankwitz, 395th Ordnance Company, Appleton, Wis., with a sheepish grin.

As painful as it may be, the training provides a valuable skill that may be required to save somebody's life.

Assistant instructor Capt. Alex Monje, 5501st US Army Hospital, San Antonio, Texas, said, "The Soldiers can use this on the



Sgt. Cesar Osario, 393rd CSSB, Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico, is adjusting the flow from an IV after successfully inserting it into the arm of his battle buddy. Soldiers participating in Golden Cargo work can towards obtaining their Combat Lifesaver certification.



Sgt. Cesar Osario, 393rd CSSB, Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico, prepares to start an IV during a combat lifesaver class. One requirement for certification is successfully inserting an IV into each other's arms.

road, in the field or on civilians."

Along with gaining life-saving techniques, Soldiers who complete the class for the first time have their time accredited to the Army Institute for Professional Development and earn promotion points, which aids in the promotion process.

This year, more than 60 Soldiers are expected to earn or renew their certification in Combat Life Saving. In order to stay current, the Combat Lifesavers must renew their certification annually.

Chris Morris, the MCAAP paramedic who conducting the 40-hour course said, "I really enjoyed working with the troops. It's our chance to help out."

He added, "If only one Soldier benefits from the training, it's been worth it." 🧡

HAWTHORNE ARMY DEPOT, NEV.

Snapshots



Scenic View



Ammo Strong



Unloading



Line 'em up

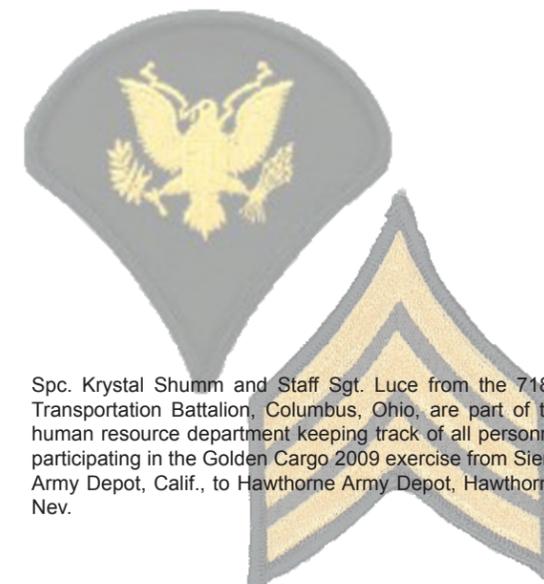
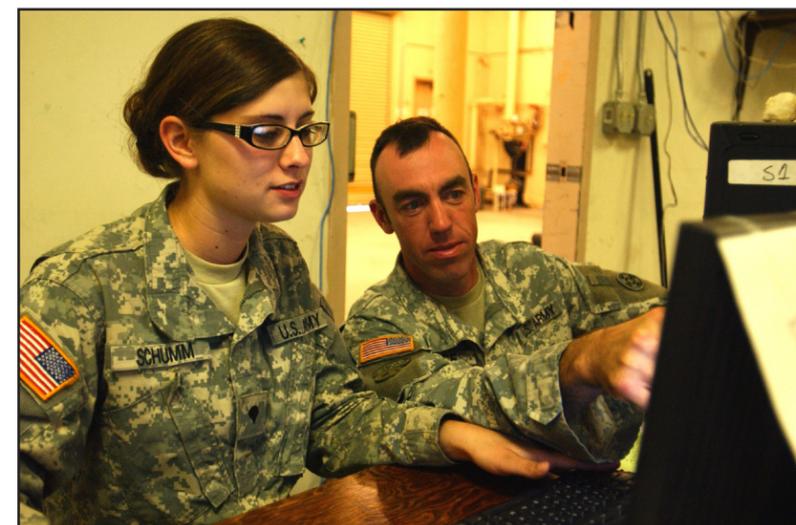
Message from the commander of Hawthorne Army Depot

Task Force 316th is to be commended for the oversight of this year's Golden Cargo operations at Hawthorne Army Depot and should be applauded for their outstanding achievements. Over 2,600 tons of ammunition were received during this premier effort that allowed our government, contractor and military troops the opportunity to execute high operations tempo ammunition operations in support of the warfighter. Job well done!



Lt. Col. Kimberly Gilbert-Mason

Junior Soldiers take on responsibility, maintain accountability



Spc. Krystal Schumm and Staff Sgt. Luce from the 718th Transportation Battalion, Columbus, Ohio, are part of the human resource department keeping track of all personnel participating in the Golden Cargo 2009 exercise from Sierra Army Depot, Calif., to Hawthorne Army Depot, Hawthorne, Nev.

Story and photos by Spc. Galo Calderon
361st PAOC

Golden Cargo 2009 presented an opportunity to put education, experience, and training to the test. For one battalion at Hawthorne Army Depot, Nev., the exercise gave junior, enlisted Soldiers the chance to serve in a leadership capacity - an opportunity they welcomed with open arms.

The 718th Transportation Battalion S1, human resource department and the S3, or training operations department, were two dedicated Soldiers who were consistently the first to show up for work and the very last to leave. They were Staff Sgt. Daniel Moore and Sgt. Suzanne Best working within the S3, and Spc. Krystal Schumm from the S1.

For both Best and Schumm, this was their first time serving in this capacity and having such weight put on their shoulders. Best, a hands-on type of a person, was placed into the operations portions of the convoy missions only recently. Schumm is only 20 years old and was placed as the section leader for the human resource section and was responsible for keeping track of over 250 personnel from Sierra Army Depot, Herlong, Calif., to here.

Best said that her workload was much more detailed as an operations noncommissioned officer than she could have imagined.

Both Soldiers agreed that their roles here provided a venue to sharpen their skills.

As for Schumm, being a section leader during Golden Cargo has

helped strengthen her leadership skills and improve upon her communication skills, she said.

Best said that she had fine-tuned her leadership skills as well. Her workload consisted of pre-planning and tracking down the progresses of each training event. At the end of the day, she felt good knowing that she had complete accountability of her section, she said. The best part of the job, however, was reporting to her leaders that the mission had been accomplished successfully.

The hours were long, but in the end, Schumm felt that the experience helped her to be a better person, a better Soldier, and a more efficient worker.

In her civilian career, Schumm is a team leader for Coopers Farm. At Coopers Farm, she is responsible for about 16 employees. Her workload consists of more than just paperwork; nevertheless, Schumm says that Golden Cargo helped her confidence to manage a substantial amount of people successfully.

Golden Cargo brought servicemembers together to complete a mission. Although the jobs varied, Soldiers walked away with new experiences. For Best and Schumm, this was a chance to serve in leadership positions. By the end of the exercise, both of these Soldiers contributed to Golden Cargo's success on a logistical level; a level that is often overlooked. 🙌

Hawthorne Army Depot: A history rich in munitions

Story and photos by Spc. Galo Calderon
361st PAOC

From firewalls and bunkers to the demilitarization process, Hawthorne Army Depot is rich in history and has been connected to the war fighter both here and overseas for many years.

Taking its name from the surrounding town of Hawthorne, Nev., the depot is known for its storage compound and demilitarization site. Golden Cargo annual training exercise this year supported the depot's missions while also providing hands-on training for Army Reserve Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines.

Hawthorne Army Depot, the largest ammunition depot in the country, got its start back in the 1940s by the Navy.

The depot's origins began in New Jersey, where an explosion occurred that took many people's lives. After the explosion, the Navy decided to move to a more remote place, said Ray Montoya, the supply manager specialist for Day Zimmerman Hawthorne Corporation, the private company that is runs the demilitarizing depot here.

The depot was alive and well during WWII with approximately 12,000 employees. There was also a large amount of employees during the Vietnam Conflict. Shortly after, in 1977, the Army controlled the depot, according to Montoya, who has been working here since 1964.

Throughout these years, the depot's mission remained the same but the methods varied depending upon munitions, policies, and procedures. The mission is to demilitarize ammunition, which means to render weapons, i.e. munitions, ordnance, and warheads for rockets, inert and unserviceable. In the past, for instance, certain ammunitions were destroyed by open detonation. This method is no longer feasible, however, because of pollution rules established by the Environmental Protection Agency, said Terrence Young, the logistics management specialist, who is currently under the Army intern program here.

DZHC is not trying to blow up things or create hazardous waste but rather

evaluate and recycle the ammunition, said Young.

The Army has moved to a "greener" spectrum, said Young, and the goal is to continue planning for the future in which we can be even more environmentally conscientious in ways that could benefit the community and the Army.

Everything today is contained, and after each round is either taken apart or melted, it is stored in sealed containers and later recycled, said Dustin White, ammunition depot supervisor.

In addition to making Hawthorne Army Depot "greener" than it already is, demilitarizing ammunition here is also cost efficient, according to Young.

The cost efficiency is made possible by recycling the product and re-selling it to private enterprises, in which all the funds spent are received in return. In other words, it is a constant circulating expenditure, said Young.

Other cost-saving methods come in the form of servicemembers. Having the Army, the Navy, and the Marine Corps here during exercises, such as Golden Cargo, to transport ammunition to Hawthorne for demilitarization is a great opportunity for the servicemembers to get hands-on, real-life training, said Young.

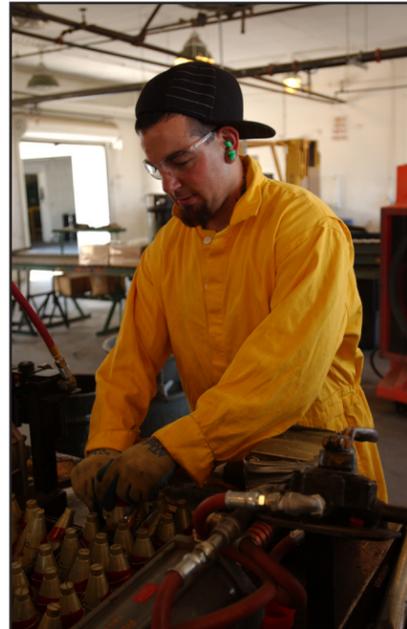
Golden Cargo is a joint-task exercise that consists of approximately 14 states in the U.S. in which munitions are transported by convoy to their rightful destination, said Young.

The servicemembers have performed excellently, according to Young. He added that everyone has demonstrated great enthusiasm throughout their mission here.

One of the greatest features of Golden Cargo is that the Navy and the Army work together just as they would have to when deployed, said Young.

Hawthorne's mission here gives servicemembers joint training and experience to assist them overseas, but it may also help to keep the depot's mission and history alive. Ammunitions used in Iraq and Afghanistan cannot be left over there. They have to be transported back into the U.S. to be rendered inert and recycled. This is the key: cleaning up after the war, according to Young.

Through exercises like Golden cargo, servicemembers get hands-on training and hopefully return home with a better understanding of Hawthorne, its mission, and how the depot and its personnel help to keep the environment clean...one piece of munition at a time. 🇺🇸



An HWAD employee boxes dismantled ammunition for storage and eventual transport to the explosives removal facility. HWAD is the largest ammunition depot in the country.



The Ordnance Museum of Mineral County in Hawthorne, Nev., has various displays of ordnance from World War I to modern-day ordnance in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Hawthorne is known as "America's Patriotic Home" for its history of support of the Armed Forces.

Hawthorne Offers Real Life, Joint Military Training



Army and Navy Reservists unload 75mm rounds at Hawthorne Army Depot, Nev., during Golden Cargo 2009.

Story and photos by Spc. Galo Calderon
361st PAOC

Hawthorne Army Depot is one of six locations supporting a nationwide, joint military exercise this year. The exercise, Golden Cargo, is a joint task force mission sponsored by the Joint Munitions Command consisting of Army Reservists, Sailors, and Marines who will focus on demilitarizing and transporting ammunition for the three-week exercise which started July 12th.

The exercise is divided into two Areas of Operation; East and West. Golden Cargo West consists of Sierra Army Depot, Calif., and Hawthorne Army Depot, Nev. Every depot offers training; however, Hawthorne provides a unique opportunity for some hands-on, real-life training and terrain to better prepare servicemembers for overseas missions.

Throughout the annual training, demilitarized ammunitions, or ammunitions that are no longer fit for military purpose, are transported by the servicemembers from SIAD to HWAD. Ammunitions are dropped off here so that they can be inert.

The daily operations require constant interaction between government, contracted, and civilian workers and all branches of service. The depot provides a perfect environment partly due to its mission and its size. HWAD has the largest volume of demilitarized am-

munition in the country. It has over 3,000 bunks storing ammunition powder to be re-sold to private enterprise, said Karen Hackett, JMC, Golden Cargo Program Manager.

Training is made even more realistic at Hawthorne for another reason; deadlines. Here, servicemembers unload all of the cargo from the Palletized Loading System vehicles and finish all the proper documentations within one hour, said Senior Chief Pablo Rosado, Naval Cargo Handling Battalion 1, Williamsburg, Va.

Since the task consists of handling explosive materials, safety is the most eminent objective, said Lt. Col. David A. Roscoe, commander, Golden Cargo AO West.

To ensure all missions are executed efficiently and safely, everyone must wear their proper gear which includes a helmet, gloves, goggles and steel-toe boots if necessary. Drinking water is also a concern, especially in an environment similar to that of Afghanistan. "Hydration is a priority and constant reminder for the Soldiers participating in Golden Cargo," said Roscoe.

Army Reserve and active-duty Navy servicemembers also receive specialized training in logistics, shipping and handling, inventory, storage planning, transportation, movement control, life support operations, safety, hazardous materials handling and leadership throughout the annual training.

"This is the first time that I have ever seen training on this grand of a scale with different military

components all working together," said Rosado. Overall, Golden Cargo is split East and West consisting of over 14 states participating, said Roscoe.

One of the biggest challenges is effective communication, said Rosado. There are times when things are left last-minute, nevertheless, the purpose of training is to correct faults when they exist and that's what this is about, he said.

"We train like we fight and we fight like we train," said Rosado.

The Golden Cargo training exercise first began in 1991 as a result of the need to move material from sites that had been affected by recommendations of the Defense Base Realignment and Closure Commissions, said Hackett.

Participation in Golden Cargo has grown steadily over the years because the active Army, Army National Guard, Army Reserve, and other services have all recognized it offers an important and unique opportunity, she said.

Golden Cargo is the best opportunity in the nation to provide hands-on training for servicemembers, said Roscoe. It gives Soldiers a sense of real mission accomplishment and it gives them an opportunity to work with other components as they would do in a war, he said. 🇺🇸

MWR program offers city-dwelling Soldier valuable exposure to America's breathtaking West



Deer roam freely at Yosemite National Park, Calif. Wildlife sightings were one of the many treats for servicemembers who participated in an MWR trip during their annual training exercise called Golden Cargo hosted at Hawthorne Army Depot, Nev.

Story and photos by Spc. Galo Calderon 361st PAOC

Aside from the realistic training Golden Cargo exercise offered here in Hawthorne Army Depot, as a photojournalist covering HWAD, I could not resist the abundance of beautiful sites surrounding the installation.

As soon as I heard that some of the Soldiers here were going to Yosemite National Park, Calif., as part of a Morale, Welfare, and Recreation program, I took the opportunity of going also. Born and raised in New York City, I had never been this far West, nor had I ever seen anything quite like it before.

Yosemite is only about two and a half hours away from the depot. The drive itself is quite magical. Each mountain I drove past had its own distinctive features, some even having snow on top in the middle of July.

A couple of mountains had giant letters on their slopes, which are tradition-

ally created by the local high school students. Each is the first letter of their town, for example H for Hawthorne or B for Beatty.

To top it all, as I drove past Hawthorne, an enchanting rainbow appeared in front of me behind the mountains – a wonderful omen for a spectacular journey.

“Yosemite is an immense park. It makes Central Park look like a cockroach.”

Each town had its own character, its own humble quiet magic to offer. One place felt like it was a ghost town with an old fire truck dating to the early 1900s placed on the side of the street, as well as an old locomotive.

Tourists stopped by these attractions to take pictures and record their journey. I was smiling

to myself, amazed at how tourists can be found literally everywhere.

Nearing Yosemite, some of the trails had sharp inclining and declining slopes that resembled the streets of San Francisco, like I had seen in the movies. As I drove along the trail, I couldn't help but feel the sensation of being on a roller coaster ride. The rush of feeling an instant drop and then a rise again was a treat.

Before I knew it, I was in Yosemite. The view was everything I had seen in books when I was a little boy. The mountains, sequoias and waterfalls were breathtaking. There were tourists swimming in the creeks, some tanning upon the rocks.

One main feature in Yosemite is a 'dome' – an oval-shaped, rocky cliff where rock climbers traditionally go for sport. The sheer size of this dome can be

seen from as far as Yosemite's entrance gate.

In addition, I caught glimpses of wild-life. The sight of animals roaming freely, such as deer and ram, compared to the Bronx Zoo's caged animals, gave me an understanding of how free spirited these animals are in nature.

Yosemite is an immense park. It makes Central Park look like a cockroach. After realizing the enormous size of Yosemite, I knew I couldn't explore everything in just one day.

I interviewed some of the servicemembers who were stationed in HWAD for the Golden Cargo exercise about their experiences during the MWR Yosemite trip, and here are some of the comments they made.

Spc. Benjamin Bechtel, a computer technician for the 718th Transportation Battalion, Columbus, Ohio, said, “I had lots of fun. I took pictures all over the place. Yosemite is beautiful and we were just having a great time and not thinking about work for a change.”

“I had the greatest of times. I love being outdoors. I'm from Ohio so everything there is flat. Watching these mountains was simply beautiful. I believe we all deserved to have a little fun after working so hard for the past three weeks. This certainly was a morale booster,” said Spc. Krystal Shumm, 718th, a human resource specialist.

Staff Sgt. Daniel Moore, 758th Maintenance Company, Whitehall, Ohio, a training operator said, “I am a forester as a civilian so this is my world. I can't get enough of it. I've been to Yellowstone, but I've never been to Yosemite. Yosemite is definitely different and just as beautiful. As soon as I saw those creeks, I had to jump in. It was cold, but it felt great. I love nature.” 🌲



Yosemite has a mix of coniferous tree species, including the Sequoia, or California Redwood. The tallest species on Earth, Sequoias have been measured at 379 feet and can live up to 2,200 years.



SIERRA ARMY DEPOT, CALIF.

Snapshots



Don't Faint



Tarp it Down



Bring it In



Load Up

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDER OF SIERRA ARMY DEPOT
The Soldiers, Marines and Sailors flawlessly executed their wartime mission in support of Operation Golden Cargo 2009. In incredible fashion, these true warriors averaged 2-3 CL V pushes a day from SIAD to the Hawthorne Army Depot without incident or accident, transporting 2,500 plus short Tons over a 185-mile route. An absolutely amazing feat and a true testament of their dedication to unit, mission and country. Well done, SIAD applauds you!



Lt. Col. Joseph G. Dalessio

SIERRA ARMY DEPOT TURNS UP THE

HEAT



Soldiers participating in Golden Cargo at Sierra Army Depot, Calif., conducted operations in similar environments to those found in Iraq and Afghanistan.

**Story and photos by Spc. Jay Venturini
354th MPAD**

The United States is unique when it comes to climates. From the everglade swamps of Florida to the towering Rocky Mountains of Colorado, there is a climate for every different taste. Fortunately for the U.S. military, some of these climates offer real-life training opportunities for servicemembers.

With the conflicts continuing in Iraq and Afghanistan, the military turned to the deserts and mountains of Nevada and California to conduct this year's Golden Cargo exercise which gave participating servicemembers a preview of what to expect.

"This is a great training environment for the current operations overseas," said Staff Sgt. Michael Miller, noncommissioned officer in charge, 261st Ordnance Company, Charleston W.Va. "With temperatures above 100 degrees it gives the Soldiers a good feel for how it is to work in Iraq."

The Golden Cargo exercise, which is also taking place in Oklahoma, Kentucky, Indiana and Pennsylvania, is in its 19th year of operation with the goal of providing real world training for ordnance and transportation companies in a safe and controlled environment.

"We are doing exactly the same job here that we would do in Iraq or Afghanistan," said Spc. Kevin Felty, 261st Ordnance Company, who deployed to Iraq as a truck driver.

One of the most important aspects of the training is for the Sol-

diers to learn how to combat the high temperatures while still getting the job done.

"We make sure there is always plenty of water on hand and we also follow a work cycle to ensure every Soldier has adequate time out of the sun," said Miller, who is responsible for the safety of the Soldiers under his charge.

The exercise is conducted as if the servicemembers were in a deployed situation to include wearing body armor and a Kevlar helmet whenever outside or in a vehicle. Also, before any convoy leaves for Hawthorne Army Depot, Nev., every Soldier receives a detailed convoy and safety brief.

"It is important to make the training as real as possible so when these younger Soldiers do deploy overseas, they won't suffer from culture shock," said Felty. "This is our chance to make mistakes so we don't make them over there where they can be very costly."

When the exercise ends and the units go back to their home stations, it's safe to say that every servicemember will have a better understanding of their job, responsibilities, and will be more familiar with deployment environments and conditions.

"This is the best kind of training for these Soldiers," said Col. Gary Miller, 316th Expeditionary Sustainment Command, support operations officer. "They are out here getting their hands dirty doing the job instead of sitting in a classroom." 🙌

Services join forces for Golden Cargo

“Safety has been the biggest priority out here for everyone. The different services might have different names for some of the procedures but they all equal everyone getting the job done safely.”



Petty Officer 1st Class Steven Johnson, Navy Cargo Handling Battalion 11, Jacksonville, Fla., ensures a crate of ammunition fits perfectly along side other crates in preparation for movement during the Golden Cargo exercise. During the exercise, Marines, Sailors and Soldiers work side by side to complete real world training for ordnance and transportation companies by transporting several convoys of obsolete ammunition to Hawthorne Army Depot, Nev., for destruction.

**Story and photos by Spc. Jay Venturini
354th MPAD**

Throughout the years and numerous conflicts and operations, the United States has utilized every branch of the armed forces to complete its goals throughout the world. While most times, the services conduct their operations separately, they sometimes come together and work side by side.

Golden Cargo is an exercise where Marines, Sailors and Soldiers work together to organize, load and transfer obsolete ammunition to Hawthorne Army Depot, Nev., for destruction.

“It’s been nice to see the other branches doing the same job as us but in their unique way,” said Sgt. Michael Miller, 261st Ordnance Company, Charleston, W.Va. “Working side by side with Marines and Sailors, I’ve learned more of how they operate which has been very beneficial to me and my Soldiers.”

The Golden Cargo exercise, which is also taking place in Oklahoma, Kentucky, Indiana and Pennsylvania, is in its 19th year of operation. The goal has always been to provide real-world training

for ordnance and transportation companies in a safe and controlled environment.

Working along side different services is a significant factor in real-world training because many operations in Iraq and Afghanistan require joint support.

“The training is very relevant for today’s operations in the Middle East,” said Marine Cpl. Ridardrian Kelly, Detachment 1 ammunition, Rome, Ga. “When I was deployed to Iraq we did missions with the Army so there is definitely joint support over there.”

Even though there were a few kinks at first, the process slowly became fluid with every servicemember doing their part to get the job done.

“It’s still a work in progress but everyone is working together to get job done,” said Petty Officer 1st Class David Meyers, Navy Cargo Handling Battalion 11, Jacksonville, Fla.

Because the exercise consists of the handling and movement of



Sgt. Aaron Whorf, 261st Ordnance Company, Cross Lanes, W.Va., secures a tarp to a crate of ammunition in preparation for movement during the Golden Cargo exercise. During the exercise there will be daily ammunition convoys to HWAD, where most of the ammunition will be destroyed. The exercise is designed to offer real world training to ordnance and transportation companies while completing an essential mission of destroying obsolete ammunition.

live ammunition it’s vital every servicemember is on the same page when it comes to following the proper safety procedures. This not only ensures that the ammunition is transported safely and securely, but that no one is injured in the process, said Kelly.

“Safety has been the biggest priority out here for everyone,” said Meyers. “The different services might have different names for some of the procedures, but they all equal everyone getting the job done safely.”

When Golden Cargo comes to a close and the servicemembers go back to their home stations, many will have a greater appreciation for their fellow brothers-in-arms who just happen to wear a different uniform.

“I’m proud to be working along side the other services,” said Kelly. “I don’t often interact with them and it’s exciting to see how they function. You begin to realize that the people are no different than you are and you form a bond. It’s been a great experience.”



Marines, Sailors and Soldiers work side by side to unload obsolete ammunition in Operation Golden Cargo. This is the 19th year of Golden Cargo annual training which provides real-world training to servicemembers.

Golden Rule

Safety is top priority at Golden Cargo

**Story and photos by Spc. Jay Venturini
354th MPAD**

There are a few basic concepts that are drilled into every military servicemember's head such as discipline, military bearing, fitness and most importantly, safety. This year's Golden Cargo annual training exercise is no different.

Army Reserve, Marine, and Navy servicemembers participating in Golden Cargo are responsible for transporting ammunitions from here to Hawthorne Army Depot, Nev. With so many moving parts and personnel involved in the exercise, there are a variety of safety concerns.

"There are many aspects when it comes to safety for an exercise of this size," said 1st Lt. Eddie Woody, Golden Cargo safety officer, 421st Transportation Company, Colorado Springs, Colo. "Everything comes into play, from the weather to wildlife."

Due to the desert climate and summer temperatures dehydration and heat stroke are the main concerns for the servicemembers who are responsible for loading the ammunition in preparation for transport. To ensure their safety while getting the job done certain protocols are implemented.

"We make sure there is always plenty of water on hand and we also follow a work cycle to ensure every Soldier has adequate time out of the sun," said Staff Sgt. Michael Miller, 261st Ordnance Company, Charleston, W. Va.

Before the ammunition is even loaded on to the palletized loading systems for transport, both the ammunition and the trucks are thoroughly inspected to ensure safety.

"The ammo has to be properly covered and labeled as explosive before it can get on the PLS's," said Woody. "Also the trucks go through a thorough Preventive Maintenance Checks and Services before they leave on their convoy."

After all of the PMCS and the trucks are lined up to head out of the gate, there is one more safety protocol in place before the convoy can begin.

Just like in theater, before anyone rolls out the gate there is a convoy and a safety brief to inform the Soldiers about the route and to answer all the 'what if' questions, said Woody.

After the drivers and assistant drivers are properly briefed on the route, conditions and standards for the convoy, they head out onto the civilian highways for perhaps the most dangerous aspect of the mission.

"During the convoy you've got to watch out for the wildlife. They will jump out right in front of you," said Miller. "Another thing to watch out for is civilian traffic, especially in the blind spots."

After the 186-mile-drive through mostly open desert, the convoy arrives at Hawthorne to download the ammunition and recuperate before they get back into their now empty trucks and head back north.

Through all the inspections and checks, the briefs and travel, every Soldier makes it back to Sierra without incident, which is the ultimate goal of the exercise.

Through the long hours and hard work each servicemember gained a better understanding of their job and responsibilities which will stay with them long into the future, said Woody. 🙌



Petty Officer 3rd Class Brian Doyle, Navy Cargo Handling Battalion, Williamsburg, Va., loosens a tarp to a crate of ammunition in preparation for demilitarization during the Golden Cargo exercise. During the exercise, there will be daily ammunition convoys to HWAD, where most of the ammunition will be destroyed.



Army 1st Lt. Eddie Woody, 423rd Transportation Company, Colorado Springs, Colo., gives a pre-convoy safety brief to the drivers and assistant drivers who are about to travel to HWAD to unload obsolete ammunitions for destruction during the Golden Cargo exercise. The exercise is a three week training opportunity for ordnance and transportation companies to simulate real world scenarios in a safe and controlled environment.

ARMY TRANSPORTERS: Always Moving, Always Ready



Army Reserve Soldiers drive along the roads at Sierra Army Depot, Calif., during an annual training exercise called Golden Cargo. The training is a joint exercise sponsored by the Joint Munitions Command that provides real-life training for ordnance and transportation Soldiers.

**Story and photos by Spc. Jay Venturini
354th MPAD**

Working long hours with little recuperation time can make a Soldier in a transportation company feel like they are a commercial truck driver. However, for many Army truck drivers, that's the way they like it.

During the Golden Cargo exercise here recently, drivers from transportation companies throughout the nation headed out onto the highways and completed a vital mission of transporting obsolete ammunition to Hawthorne Army Depot, Nev., for destruction.

"I love being on the roads," said Spc. Kevin Felty, 261st Ordnance Company truck driver, Charleston, W. Va. "It's a lot of hard work and long hours but I think it's worth it."

Since the beginning of the exercise, convoys have made the 168-mile trek between the two installations on a daily basis. On many occasions, the trip was made in a single day.

"This has been great training, especially for those who haven't deployed, because this is the same kind of pace that you experi-

ence over there," said Felty, who deployed to Iraq for a year as a truck driver.

Due to the long hours on the road and traveling amongst civilian traffic, safety is always the top priority.

"Before anyone rolls out the gate every truck [is] thoroughly inspected and every Soldier receives a convoy and safety brief," said 1st Lt. Eddie Woody, Golden Cargo safety officer, 423rd Transportation Company, Colorado Springs, Colo.

No matter where Soldiers are deployed to around the world, there will always be a need for highly trained Army truck drivers and transportation companies. This makes the training at Golden Cargo vital to the overall readiness of the Army, Felty explained.

"We are always in demand, which is why we [need] to keep our skills sharp because we know it's only a matter of time until we get that call to go overseas," said Felty. "When that call does come, we'll be ready." 🙌

AAR-Lessons Learned

“What have you learned while at Operation Golden Cargo?”



“Communication needs to be tight and that’s critical – from the top all the way down to the bottom.”
-Spc. Juan C. Martinez
304th Transportation Company
heavy motor transport operator



“I’ve gotten some good driver’s training since I’ve been here.”
-Spc. Kai M. Harris
302nd Transportation Company
food service specialist



“I’ve learned that transportation Soldiers keep up with their training.”
-Sgt. Antoinette B. Johnson
302nd Transportation Company
food service sergeant



“I learned that units don’t always bring what they’re supposed to bring to complete the mission such as repair parts and bug repellent.”
-Master Sgt. Charles Winley
812th Transportation Battalion
maintenance NCO



“If anything, it’s a refresher.”
-Pfc. Scott C. Huth
304th Transportation Company
heavy motor transport operator



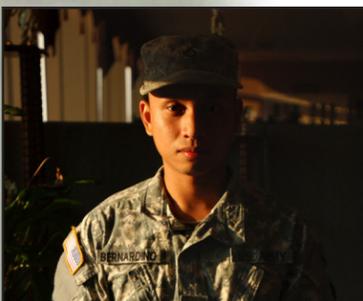
“I learned how to better educate troops by giving them the tools they will need to take care of themselves down range, to include teaching the combat lifesaver course.”
-Sgt. Daniel Farris
5501st United States Army Hospital



“Patience is definitely the most important thing.”
-Spc. Damien R. Owczarski
304th Transportation Company
heavy motor transport operator.



“I learned how convoys operate and how a tactical operations center works.”
-Spc. Chris Josey
812th Transportation Battalion
Information Technology specialist



“I learned how to work as a team.”
-Pfc. Eirol P. Bernadino
302nd Transportation Company
food service specialist

YEAR OF THE NCO

No one is more professional than I. I am a Noncommissioned Officer, a leader of soldiers. As a Noncommissioned Officer, I realize that I am a member of a time honored corps, which is known as "The Backbone of the Army." I am proud of the Corps of Noncommissioned Officers

and will at all times conduct myself so as to bring credit upon the Corps, the Military Service and my country regardless of the situation in which I find myself. I will not use my grade or position to attain pleasure, profit, or personal safety.

Competence is my watchword. My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind -- accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my soldiers. I will strive to remain technically and tactically proficient. I am aware of my role as a Noncommissioned Officer. I will fulfill my responsibilities inherent in that role. All soldiers are

entitled to outstanding leadership; I will provide that leadership. I know my soldiers and I will always place their needs above my own. I will communicate consistently with my soldiers and never leave them uninformed. I will be fair and impartial

The NCO Creed

when recommending both rewards

and punishment.

Officers of my unit will have maximum time to accomplish their duties; they will not have to accomplish mine. I will earn their respect and confidence as well as that of my soldiers. I will be loyal to those with whom I serve; seniors, peers, and subordinates alike. I will exercise initiative by taking appropriate action in the absence of orders. I will not compromise my integrity, nor my moral courage. I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are professionals, Noncommissioned Officers, leaders!

OPERATION GOLDEN CARGO 2009



Participating Army Units

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 316 th ESC | 207 th RSG |
| 352 nd CSSB | 393 rd CSSB |
| 257 th MCB | 321 st Ord Bn |
| 718 th Trans Bn | 812 th Trans Bn |
| 200 th MCT | 216 th MCT |
| 516 th MCT | 528 th MCT |
| 531 st MCT | 678 th MCT |
| 822 nd MCT | 888 th MCT |
| 163 rd Ordnance | 261 st Ordnance |
| 395 th Ordnance | 802 nd Ordnance |
| 811 th Ordnance | 962 nd Ordnance |
| 206 th Transport | 302 nd Transport |
| 304 th Transport | 370 th Transport |
| 401 st Transport | 423 rd Transport |
| 424 th Transport | 428 th Transport |
| 189 th TTP Det | 471 st TTP Det |
| 784 th TTP Det | 851 st TTP Det |
| 1015 th Maintenance | 5501 st Hospital |
| 361 st PAOC | 319 th PA Det |
| 354 th PA Det | |