

ESC TODAY



UPARs start strong



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MORE ESC PHOTOS

CHANGING COMMAND

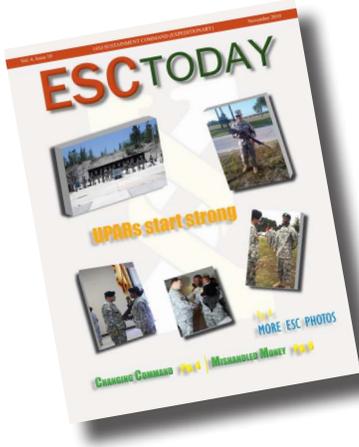
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MISHANDLED MONEY

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November 2010

VOL. 4, ISSUE 10



<< On the Front Cover

Photos taken by 143d ESC unit public affairs representatives (UPARs) are displayed. The 143d ESC held its first UPAR training conference Sept. 29 to 30 at the 1st Lt. David R. Wilson Armed Forces Reserve Center in Orlando, Fla., with more than 50 UPARs in attendance. Look for photos and stories from these newly-trained UPARs throughout upcoming issues of the ESC Today as well as the 143d Facebook page, My 143d ESC, at <http://www.facebook.com/143dESC>. Do you know who your unit UPAR is? Ask and collaborate with your UPAR on story ideas and photos!

See more UPAR photos >> 8



•*Top Left:* Soldiers of the 94th Transportation Company Detachment prepare to zero their weapons for their annual weapons qualification Oct. 2 at Homestead, Fla. (Photo by Sgt. Timothy Koonce)

•*Top Right:* A 196th Transportation Company Soldier waits to qualify with the M16 rifle at Camp Blanding, Fla., during the unit's battle assembly Oct. 1 to 3.

•*Bottom Left:* Command Sgt. Maj. Don B. Jordan, the new 207th Regional Support Group command sergeant major, replaces the unit colors during a change of responsibility ceremony Sept. 25 at Fort Jackson, S.C. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Christine K. Rogers Jr.)

•*Bottom Middle:* Command Sgt. Maj. Don B. Jordan, 207th RSG, congratulates Maj. Jeffrey Flood of the 385th Transportation Company Detachment in Fort Bragg, N.C., for serving his 20 years of service with the Army Reserve. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Sharon Wells)

•*Bottom Right:* Command Sgt. Maj. Don B. Jordan, 207th RSG, chats with Pfc. Reginald Brown, 385th TC Det. after a change of command ceremony Oct. 4. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Sharon Wells)

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ESC Today is the monthly command information magazine of the 143d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense, according to provisions in Army Regulation 360-1. The opinions and views expressed in ESC Today are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Defense Department, Department of the Army or the headquarters, 143rd ESC. The

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ESC TODAY

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<http://www.dvidshub.net/publication/101/esc-today>

The Command Post

Veterans Day is upon us once more, and we need to all take the time to recognize and remember our fellow service members from past and present that have fought and are fighting so valiantly for our freedoms. A mission statement from the Veterans Administrations says, "To fulfill President Lincoln's promise - To care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan" by serving and honoring the men and women who are America's veterans," a statement with which I couldn't agree more. From Pearl Harbor to Fallujah men and women have fought valiantly for our country without concern for themselves and only that of their brother in arms. These are attributes found within service members when facing extraordinary circumstances on the battlefield. Veterans from all periods of time continue to be honored through events such as parades, concerts, public gatherings and other celebrations. I encourage all of you to take the time

this Veterans Day and reflect upon your own service. Without national recognition of veterans, we lose an opportunity to honor and support those who have sacrificed so freely. Educate your peers, families and friends on the many sacrifices service members make. Encourage them to support various veterans' organizations. Invigorate their patriotism through your experiences; and most of all, remind them that without the countless veterans who've made the ultimate sacrifice, nothing they have today would be possible. You are a member of a time-honored tradition in this nation and for that, I honor and thank you.

Let's not forget another American tradition approaching fast...Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is a time when we come together, give thanks for what we have and spend time with our family and friends. Make this holiday count for everything its worth. Celebrate safely and responsibly with regard to our mission in



Col. Mark W. Palzer
Commander
143d Sustainment Command
(Expeditionary)

garrison and abroad. We must honor our fellow veterans and give thanks for what we have.

Sustaining Victory!
Army Strong!

The Bottom Line

As Veterans Day approaches, we feel pride for what we have accomplished and sadness for those we have lost. Many of us will have the chance to participate in Veterans Day events. You should take these opportunities, and educate those around us about what it means to be in the armed forces. Spend time with your families. Thank them for their sacrifice; they too are veterans of this war.

This Thanksgiving Day, enjoy food and festivities with your families. Be careful of drowsiness caused by excessive food intake.

As with any holiday, be mindful of safety. Traffic will increase on the roads as people drive to gatherings, retail sales, and other public locations. Follow road

rules and drive defensively. Never drink and drive. Tragedies may be avoided if one responsible person speaks up and does the right thing. Be aware of others.

Also maintain vigilance for any suspicious persons or activities. You all have been trained to serve and protect. Don't forget your training. If you see a potential threat, notify the appropriate authorities.

During these holidays, get outside with your friends and family. Throw the football around. Enjoy the outdoors and fall weather. Remember to stay physically active. Physical readiness is vital to a mission-ready Soldier.

Sustaining Victory!
Army Strong!



Command Sgt. Maj. James Weaver
Command Sergeant Major
143d Sustainment Command
(Expeditionary)

FORT JACKSON, S.C. – With family, friends, and brothers and sisters-in-arms present, Col. James C. Bagley assumed command of the 207th Regional Support Group Aug. 7 from Col. James H. Griffiths in an outdoor ceremony at Hilton Field here.

Griffiths’ next assignment will be as the operations officer for the 143rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command. Prior to assuming command of the 207th RSG, Bagley served as the assistant chief of staff for the 87th United States Army Reserve Support Command East in Birmingham, Ala.

Griffiths, a Pittsburg native, said he enjoyed his time at the 207th



Photo by Staff Sgt. Shane Slaughter | 319th MPAD

Incoming commander of the 207th Regional Support Command, Col. James C. Bagley, addresses the Soldiers during the change of command ceremony at Fort Jackson, S.C., on August 7. Bagley, an Atlanta native, said he is very excited about coming to the 207th RSG and be able to have the opportunity to command and ensure Soldiers have all the resources they need to be successful in their missions.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Shane Slaughter | 319th MPAD

RSG and that it was a pleasure watching Soldiers grow, get promoted and advance in the United States Army Reserve. He wants the Soldiers of the 207th, and all Soldiers, to know that they can be anything they want to be.

“I hope the command climate the sergeant major and I set was one of a growing and learning organization,” he said. Hopefully we successfully stressed to Soldiers that the only one holding you back is you, Griffiths said.

Griffiths said he wants the Soldiers of the 207th to remember a few things

that are very important to him as they continue through their careers in the Army.

“Have pride and passion, and be competent and confident in what you do,” he said. “The Soldier’s Creed, as well as the Army Values, are also important to me because they describe who we are as Soldiers and they bring us all together.”

Bagley, an Atlanta native, said he is very excited about coming to the 207th RSG and be able to have the opportunity to command and ensure Soldiers have all the resources they need

to be successful in their missions.

“My job is to ensure all the subordinate units that belong to the 207th are prepared for war,” he said. “So, I’ve got to make sure from a readiness standpoint that I’m able to give them all the resources they need, so if called upon, they can deploy, fight, and win.”

Just like Griffiths, Bagley also has a few points he wants the Soldiers of the 207th RSG to remember.

“In today’s Army Reserve, it’s not a matter of if the call is going to come, but when,” he said, “so, you have got to be ready to do your job as a Soldier. Be ready to deploy, be focused on what you do in your job, and be the expert in your field.”



Image by Staff Sgt. Shane Slaughter | 319th MPAD

Army Reserve Chief announces realignment

■ U.S. ARMY RESERVE

PHOENIX, Ariz. -- As part of the Army Reserve's ongoing and continuous transformation, the Army Reserve Chief announced another step in his plans to reorganize and realign his headquarters to better support worldwide operations and establish the foundations for an enduring Army Reserve.

"Transformation never stops," said Lt. Gen. Jack Stultz, Chief, Army Reserve and Commander of the U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC). "And today, I want to share with you a new structure for the Army Reserve headquarters that incorporates the core enterprises into our staff structure to more effectively conduct business and increase support to Soldiers and units."

Stultz said the transformation will also enable a stronger focus on requirements to establish and sustain an enduring operational Army Reserve well into the future.

The active component, as part of its own business transformation efforts, recently outlined four core enterprises to help staff elements better collaborate and synchronize planning and implementation of strategy. The Army Reserve has adopted those enterprises (Materiel, Human Capital, Services and Infrastructure, and Readiness), designating general officer level staff leads to serve as integrators and managers of their enterprise efforts.

"The coming months and years will bring a period of uncertainty, Stultz said, "but we can't wait to decide our future, we need to take action now. We know we face declining resources, so I've charged my enterprise leads with identifying re-

dundancy across the staff, and determining where we can establish efficiencies in what we do."

Internal realignment includes the establishment of: a Deputy Commanding General for Operations first with oversight of the readiness enterprise and all operational and functional commands; a Deputy Commanding General for Support with oversight of the consolidation and integration all supporting enterprises, regional support commands and installations; and designation of the current Assistant Chief, Army Reserve, as Deputy for Management.

"This realignment furthers the Chief of Staff of the Army's objective of institutional adaptation by transforming and integrating the Office of the Chief, Army Reserve (OCAR) staff and the USARC staff as a single USAR headquarters," Stultz said.

The changes will strengthen and clarify the leadership roles. "These realigned staff elements will support the enterprise approach, enabling better synchronization of strategic and operational efforts essential to establishing an enduring operational Army Reserve."

An additional element of the transformation mentioned was the potential realignment of USARC under U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) to strengthen and integrate operational force provider relationships.

"(FORSCOM Commander) General Thurman and I have signed a document recommending realignment of the Army Reserve Command under FORSCOM, and no longer as a direct reporting unit to Headquarters, Department of the Army," Stultz said. "We're not taking a step backward;



U.S. Army Reserve Photo

Retired Army General Dennis J. Reimer (left), former Chief of Staff of the Army, thanks Lt. Gen. Jack C. Stultz (right) and members of the audience attending the Army Reserve Senior Leader Conference in Phoenix Oct. 17. This bi-annual conference gives leaders the opportunity to discuss and plan the Army Reserve's future.

we are taking two steps forward with this effort to support Gen. Casey's realignment of the Army."

Stultz acknowledged that transformation is a continuous process and emphasized the need to take action now and make refinements as we move forward as an element of the operational force in the 21st century.

"We can't sit around and wait for things to play out before acting," Stultz said. "We are fighting a versatile enemy. We need to effectively compete for diminishing resources while simultaneously establishing efficiencies."

DID YOU KNOW?

Military veterans and active-duty servicemembers will be able to eat free at any Applebee's across the U.S. on Veterans Day. There will be six entrees available from the menu. Guests will be asked to show proof of service. For more information, visit <http://www.applebees.com/vetsDay/default.aspx>

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Note: Cost-shares and deductibles are the same as those listed for TRICARE Standard and TRICARE Extra ADFMs (active duty family members).

Paying Agents

First published in "Army Sustainment," this article highlights investigations into the loss of Department of Defense funds during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Maj. Bill Keltner, former chief of financial management operations for the deployed 16th Sustainment Brigade, provides lessons learned from the brigade's investigations of missing funds. Keltner currently serves as the Chief of Training and Operations for the 469th Financial Management Center out of New Orleans, La.

■ BY MAJ. BILL KELTNER
469th Financial Management Center

There is an old saying, "A fool and his money are soon parted." After recent news reports of illegal activities by some unscrupulous Army paying agents (PAs) in Iraq, perhaps a new adage is at hand: "A dummy and his dinar are soon damned." As the financial cost of Operation Iraqi Freedom approaches the cost of the Vietnam War, billions of dollars have been entrusted to PAs.

The financial management support operations (FMSPO) section of the 16th Sustainment Brigade was responsible for the operational oversight of around 300 PAs in northern Iraq while the brigade was deployed from July 2008 through October 2009. Those PAs were funded over \$125 million in FY09 to pay for procurement and services deemed vital to support the war effort.

PAs in the News

It would appear that the press has lifted an infested carpet to reveal maladroitness who are scrambling out like cockroaches. According to the press, there has been a "wave of prosecutions emerging from the tangled and expensive reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan," as Kim Murphy reports in the Los Angeles Times article "Some U.S. Troops Tempted by Reconstruction

Cash" (12 April 2009).

Murphy goes on to say, "The Justice Department has secured more than three dozen bribery-related convictions in the awarding of reconstruction contracts; at least 25 theft probes are underway." The article describes how an Army captain in Iraq managed to skim almost \$700,000 in cash from reconstruction projects and payments to a private Iraqi security force known as the Sons of Iraq. The captain is "accused of packing cash into boxes and mailing them to his family's home." All the while, his leaders believed he was making great contributions to the war effort. Not all the news is bad. Tom Gordon of the Birmingham News, posted a positive story, 5 June 2008, Mountain Brook, Alabama officer is planner, paymaster in Iraq, about a lieutenant, another PA in Iraq, who used money to improve a village's economic structure and its attitude toward the coalition. However, this same lieutenant was investigated after he

“. . . the press has lifted an infested carpet to reveal maladroitness who are scrambling out like cockroaches.”

incur a major loss of funds. So are PAs heroes that accomplish a mission vital to success in Iraq? Or are they actually a bunch of scoundrels robbing us blind? The truth is not always cut and dried.

Roles and Responsibilities of a PA

Let us start our journey for truth by taking a look at PA duties according to the procedures in Multi-National Corps-Iraq's standing operating procedure, Money as a Weapon System (MAAWS), and Field Manual 1-06, Financial Management Operations. PAs are appointed by a field-grade officer in their chain of command. Unit commanders provide resources such as transportation and security containers. PAs represent financial management company (FMCo) commanders, who disburse cash to them through

the good the bad and the ugly

the company's disbursing agents to pay for crucial wartime requirements. The servicing FMCo trains PAs on all requirements for drawing and safeguarding funds and clearing accounts.

Before drawing funds, PAs must sign statements acknowledging that they understand their duties and accept pecuniary liability for those funds if they have a loss. PAs are not authorized to delegate their responsibilities. A PA must also follow the instructions of either the project purchasing officer (PPO) or field ordering officer (FOO) who represents the contracting office, directs the PA to draw funds, and approves all purchases. PAs must not commingle any funds, public or private. And, very importantly, PAs must secure funds as specified in chapter 3 of the Department of Defense Financial Management Regulation (DODFMR), Volume 5. This means that if the funds are not in the PA's physical possession, they must be secured in an approved safe to which only the PA has the combination.

Critical support missions can be halted by PA losses. These losses equate not only to lost funding for the Army but also to lost man-hours as investigating officers must be summoned to conduct a month-long investigation.

Investigations of Major Losses of Funds

We in the FMSPO section oversaw five investigations into circumstances involving major losses of funds. (A major loss is a loss of \$750 or more.) Most of these investigations determined that the losses were caused by carelessness. The investigations also sometimes revealed deeper problems of fraud, waste, and abuse.

One loss of \$4,580.43 was discovered when a disbursing agent attempted to clear a PA's account. The PA maintained that he had already turned his money in several months earlier to a previous disbursing agent, who had cleared him and then redeployed. However, the PA kept no copy of the Department of Defense Form 1081, Statement of Agent Officer's Account, which would have served as proof of his clearing the account. It did not help matters that the next disbursing agent waited over 4 months to clear the

DID YOU KNOW?

Golden Corral's 9th annual Military Appreciation Monday dinner will be held Monday, Nov. 15 from 5 to 9p.m. in all Golden Corral restaurants nationwide for veterans, retired, currently serving, or National Guard/Reserve troops. For more information visit <http://www.goldencorral.com/military/>

PA. By the time the investigation was requested, the previous disbursing agent was no longer in the Army.

In another situation, \$1,000 was lost because a disbursing agent who was covering for another disbursing agent on rest and relaxation (R&R) leave funded the wrong PA to make a \$1,000 reward payment. The PA failed to pay attention to the emailed instructions of his PPO who told the PA not to make that payment. The PA claimed that after receiving the funds, he asked around, found the awardee, and paid him. Later, the other disbursing agent came back from R&R, but no reconciliation was done. Consequently, this disbursing agent funded the correct PA, who also paid the awardee, thus creating a dual payment.

Another loss of \$17,498.69 was reported and investigated because a PA was unable to obtain the documentation needed to clear his account because of an ongoing investigation into the illegal practices of his FOO. The Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) is the Department of Defense's financial agency responsible for gathering all evidence of losses to determine liability and to make the necessary collection from individuals responsible for the loss. In this case, DFAS later released the PA from liability but held the FOO responsible for the lost funds.

Another case involved a PA losing \$9,087.87 because he commingled funds and delegated authority to others to make payments. He also did not follow established timelines requiring him to clear his account every 30 days. His clearing took place 111 days after he drew funds, and he did not maintain a ledger.

The lieutenant who was mentioned favorably in the Birmingham News was ironically also the subject of a major loss of funds investigation. He was doing great work as a PA funding Sons of Iraq, who are former Sunni insurgents who provide security services and have been credited with helping calm violence in the country. However, he lost \$14,366.96. How? He did not use a safe. The investigation revealed that the lost currency had been in an assault pack on a chair inside his living quarters and that he left his quarters unlocked. He claimed that one of the unit's interpreters may have stolen the money while the funds were un-secured. Clearly,

this officer did not properly secure the funds entrusted to him.

Later, he produced a witness who claimed that the lieutenant had asked his command, not once, but several times for a safe. In light of this witness's statement, DFAS concluded that the proximate cause of the loss was not that he had left the funds unsecured in his unlocked quarters but that his commander had not provided him a safe, as should have been done in accordance with the DODFMR. As of this writing, it appears the lost funds will not be recovered. The PA probably will not have to pay back the lost money, and DFAS is leaning toward holding his commander to blame. However, while the legal wheels slowly turned and allowed new witness testimony for the PA's defense, his commander redeployed. Regardless, commanders do not hold pecuniary liability for PA funds in any case.

Not having a safe was just the tip of an iceberg of financial mismanagement by this PA's unit.

“Their work as PAs saved lives and improved the living conditions”

Another fact discovered during the investigation was that the PA's unit did not even call the military police after the money was allegedly stolen. Later, the same unit incurred a major loss of funds by another PA. To top that off, this second PA claimed his unit's leaders had directed him to shift funds from approved contracts to pay Sons of Iraq, who were not under contract. Ultimately, a higher headquarters conducted a commander's inquiry into these allegations. The inquiry found that both the battalion and brigade commanders gave the PA permission to use funds from other contracts to pay for Sons of Iraq, which was not properly authorized but which the leaders claimed was crucial security support for their troops. The investigator conducting the commander's inquiry concluded and recommended that all parties only be counseled.

Fixing the Problems

To help prevent losses, the 16th Sustainment Brigade FMSPO, the 101st FMCo, the 469th Financial Management Center (FMC), and 18th

FMC initiated programs to help PAs accomplish their mission. I, the FMSPO, started making staff assistance visits to the PAs' locations which accomplished many things. Getting out to the units allowed for better sharing of lessons-learned showing PA's what happens when proper procedures are not followed. I was also better able to find out if any pressure was being put on PAs to make improper purchases. It was also a great opportunity to check if PAs were following proper safeguarding procedures by securing funds in accordance with the DODFMR. I found in many locations that PAs were not storing funds properly. Many PAs were using safes that were locked and opened with a key instead of the required combination lock. In one in-stance, a PA was storing funds in a filing cabinet. Another time, a PA had several thousand dollars in a sort of toy safe that could have been easily carried away with one hand! These discoveries of non-compliance to safeguarding procedures prompted me to submit an update to the MAAWS warning unit commanders that they may be subject to adverse administrative action if funds are lost due to negligence. These staff assistance visits and inspections were fundamental to improving the PAs' success as the losses significantly decreased.

To prevent dual payments, the 101st FMCo established a database for disbursing agents to use in tracking payments. Now procedures require that newly assigned disbursing agents make contact with all their PAs to further ensure accountability of funds.

The 469th FMC and the 18th FMC implemented e-Commerce initiatives to remove cash from the battlefield and build confidence in the local financial institutions.

See Finance, pg. 10

ATTENTION

The 143d ESC Sexual Harrassment/
Assault, Response and Prevention
(SHARP) Training will be held in Or-
lando Dec. 6 to 17. To register, please
contact the SARC at 1-800-221-9401
ext. 2410 or email the
Family Programs Coordinator at
Annamaria.doby@usar.army.mil

Around the ESC

UNIT PHOTOS WANTED

Seeking photos of Soldiers from your unit performing operational duties and/or basic soldiering skills. Include a basic caption with names, ranks, place, date and a short description of what is happening in the photo. Send photos and/or any questions you may have to john.adams16@usar.army.mil



Photo by Staff Sgt. Christine K. Rogers | 207th RSG

Command Sgt. Maj. Eddie L. Hilliard, Col. James C. Bagley and Command Sgt. Maj. Don B. Jordan stand together during the 207th Regional Support Group Change of Responsibility ceremony Sept. 25 at Fort Jackson, S.C. Jordan is the 207th RSG's new command sergeant major.



Courtesy Photo

Soldiers from the 196th Transportation Company wait to qualify on their M16 rifles during the unit's battle assembly held at Camp Blanding, Fla., Oct. 1 to 3.



Photo by Sgt. Timothy Koonce | 94th TC Det.

Pvt. Carroll looks on as Sgt. Blue makes the necessary adjustments to Carroll's weapon during the 94th Transportation Company Detachment's range operations held Oct. 2 at Homestead, Fla.

Around the ESC



Photo by Sgt. Jacqueline Amos | 375th CSSB

The 375th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion of Mobile, Ala., started its October battle assembly with a running start. After signing in at the door of the Brookley Field Center Saturday morning, all Soldiers formed up and began the morning by participating in the first Physical Fitness Test of the new fiscal year. The push-ups and sit-ups were just a warm up for the breezy two-mile run.



Photo by Spc. Elisebet Freeburg | 204th PAD

Col. Fred Guzman, command executive officer, 143d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), welcomes attendees to the legal workshop held at the 1st Lt. David R. Wilson Armed Forces Reserve Center, Orlando, Fla., Oct. 1 to 2. The 143d ESC often hosts training events for Soldiers.



Courtesy Photo

Sgt. Hector M. Galindez, human resources noncommissioned officer, 993rd Transportation Company out of Palatka, Fla., runs in his first Army Ten-Miler race, held Oct. 24 in Washington, D.C. Galindez finished the race at 1:22; the 4,426 runner out of 30,000. The Army Ten-Miler, which marked its 26th consecutive year, is the third largest road race in the world, the largest in America, and the Army's premier running event. The course begins and ends at the Pentagon and run through the nation's capitol. Military and civilian runners from around the world took part.

DID YOU KNOW?

Home Depot and Lowe's offer a 10% discount to military members and their families and, in many cases, veterans and retirees. For more information visit <http://themilitarywallet.com/home-depot-lowes-10-military-discount/>

Finance, cont. >>

One such initiative was a pilot program for the use of limited depository accounts at Iraqi banks so that PAs may write checks instead of carrying cash. The PA clearing policy was also changed after a PA was killed by a roadside bomb while traveling to clear his account. The policy now allows PAs to clear electronically via email if they do not have any cash to turn in or pick up.

Additionally, The FMCo is now processing contracts that require mostly electronic transactions as the method of payment, further decreasing the need for cash on the battlefield.

Any loss of funds captures our attention, and incorporating lessons learned into training ensures they will not happen again. A new, enhanced PA training program is also underway in Iraq that incorporates many lessons-learned. Also, the 469th FMC is in charge of the planning and execution of this year's DIAMOND SABER exercise which is the Army's premier annual Financial Management training exercise

that will provide realistic training for FM warriors of all components and will incorporate lessons- learned to assist in their preparation for deployment to a theater of operations. This year, all sustainment brigade FMSPOs are invited to receive this valuable training which will occur 6-19 JUN at Fort McCoy, WI.

For further aid and assurance, sustainment brigade commanders could leverage their special troops battalions (STBs) for support in overseeing PA operations. The STB can be tasked to provide personnel, equipment, and transportation coordination to support a robust staff assistance visit program. This would further help to ensure PAs are properly safeguarding funds, especially at locations where the STB already has administrative control over financial management units. The STB commander could task the FMCo commander to ensure that disbursing agents within their financial management detachments take time to periodically visit PAs located at their contingency operating bases.

The losses mentioned above are the exception, and as bad as losses are, things have not exactly gone to pieces. As of this writing, there are currently almost 300 PAs in northern Iraq who are doing a great job spending over \$125 million during FY09 in their efforts to fund crucial mission requirements. Great strides are being taken to assist the unsung heroes who risk their lives in dangerous territories as they provide critical support and security for our troops.

One disbursing agent described the accomplishments of the PAs

working in his area in this way:

As PAs for Sons of Iraq and the Commanders' Emergency Relief Program, they assumed responsibility for nine Sons of Iraq contracts and a large literacy program. They each disbursed around \$1,000,000 as they worked closely with the [disbursing agent] to ensure the correct denominations of Iraqi dinar were requested and on hand. During their watch, the program progressed from paying the Sheiks directly by lump sum to conducting payday activities where each individual Sons of Iraq contractor was paid by the PA. Their work as PAs saved lives and improved the living conditions in their area of operations.

Perhaps there are a few bad apples in the bunch. But truthfully, the Army's PAs are an outstanding bunch of heroes who sustain the warfighter by helping commanders use money both as a weapon system and as a nonlethal means to achieve victory on the battlefield. ☒

Note: Diamond Saber 2010 was held successfully at Fort McCoy, Wis. from June 6 to 19. More than 600 Soldiers attended the Army's premier annual financial management training exercise.



DID YOU KNOW?

As an expression of Outback Steakhouse's appreciation to our country's veterans and active duty military, a free Bloomin' Onion and beverage of choice will be available to them at every Outback in the country on Veterans Day. For more information visit http://www.outback.com/pressroom/pr_101018.aspx

THE POST 9/11 GI BILL: Are you eligible? Is it right for you?

■ BY SPC. ELISEBET FREEBURG
204th Public Affairs Detachment

ORLANDO, Fla.—When the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs employed the new Post 9/11 GI Bill in August 2009, the problems immediately rose. The VA was unable to process the thousands of applications flooding them quickly enough to pay tuition for service-members. More than a year later, have the wrinkles been smoothed? Is the new bill really better?

Daniel Reichert—a Soldier—and Lolita Smith—a Soldier's wife—share their experiences with the new bill.

Reichert, a sergeant and senior information systems operator previously deployed with the 143d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) in Afghanistan, is a graduate student at Syracuse University. Smith's husband also deployed with the 143d ESC as its public affairs officer. She currently stud-

ies Accounting at Prince George's Community College in Maryland, and plans to transfer soon to a four-year institution.

"Every chance I get, I share my experience with Soldiers and their family members about the Post 9/11 GI Bill," said Smith.

Previous to the new bill, reservists qualified for the Reserve GI Bill version of the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB). The Reserve bill has two chapters, depending on if

the reservist served on active duty. If the Soldier served between 90 days and one year of active duty, he received \$547.20 a month as a full-time student.

The new Post 9/11 GI Bill pays up to the highest in-state, undergraduate tuition at a public institution. The percentage a reservist receives of the new bill depends on their sum of active duty service.

See Tuition, pg. 12



FROM THE FRONT

Transportation company Soldiers hold combat patch ceremony

BY 1ST LT. RONNIE PATRICK JR.
224th Sustainment Brigade

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE ADDER, Iraq - Soldiers of the 319th Transportation Company, from Augusta, Ga., were awarded the 143rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) shoulder sleeve insignia patch, Aug. 16, to recognize their wartime service in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn.

Lt. Col. David Scheideler, commander of the 110th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 224th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and Command Sgt. Maj. Edward Andrews, command sergeant major with the 110th CSSB, first presented Capt. Nancy Sison, commander of the 319th TC, and 1st Sgt. Christopher Herrick, company first sergeant, with their combat patches. The 319th TC unit and combat patches originate from the 143rd ESC.



Photo by Spc. Steven Artim | USA

Capt. Nancy Sison, commander of the, 319th Transportation Company, 110th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 224th Sustainment Brigade, 103rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), awards a combat patch to 1st Lt. Craig Durante, 3rd platoon leader with the 319th TC, while 1st Sgt. Christopher Herrick, first sergeant of the 319th TC, does the same for Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Simmons, 3rd platoon sergeant with the 319th TC, during the unit's combat patch ceremony held, Aug. 16, at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.

Each platoon's command team then patched their squad leaders and Soldiers with the combat patch.

"We have outstanding Soldiers. They've worked hard and deserve to wear the 143rd ESC combat patch," said Sison.

"The combat patch symbolizes you have the experience needed to accomplish great things and handle tougher missions," said Staff Sgt. Albert Banks, a safety officer with, 319th TC, and an Orangeburg, S.C., native.

The 319th TC shoulder sleeve insignia was originally approved Oct. 24, 1968, for the 143rd Transportation Brigade. It was later designated for the 143rd Transportation Command on Oct. 16, 1985, and amended to revise the description and symbolism. The insignia was effective approved effective Sept. 17, 2007, for the 143rd Sustainment Command, with the description and symbolism revised. ☒

Servicemembers celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month in Afghanistan

BY SPC. EDWARD GARIBAY
16th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - Servicemembers participated in a ceremony to honor Hispanic Heritage Month, Oct. 13, at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

The ceremony allowed servicemembers to learn about Latin American heritage and featured Hispanic cuisine and salsa dancing.

"It's a celebration of being Hispanic," said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Fernando Ortiz, guest speaker at the event and 581st Area Support Medical Company medical director from Ft. Hood, Texas. "But, it's much more

than that. It's the story of the nation."

Hispanic Heritage Month started as a weeklong celebration that was recognized from Sept 15-22. On September 15, 1821 Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua declared their independence. Mexico, Chile, and Belize all celebrate their independence during the same week. Since President Ronald Regan enacted the Hispanic Heritage celebration law in 1988, the celebration has grown from 14 to 30 days ending on Oct. 15 each year.

"It's great to be able to celebrate our heritage and all of the accomplishments of our people," said

U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Julian M. Cubides, 451st Expeditionary Communications Squadron project manager from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. "I think it's even more special because we're in a deployed environment."

Ortiz said combat theater celebrations like this are not exclusive to Afghanistan; they happen everywhere U.S. troops are deployed.

They provide both Hispanic and non-Hispanic servicemembers a fun and educational break from the rigors of deployment and build comradery and tradition, he said.

"I think it's great," said U.S. Army



Photo by Spc. Edward Garibay | 16th MPAD

Attendees sample Latin foods after the Hispanic Heritage Month Ceremony Oct. 13 at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.

Brig. Gen. Philip R. Fisher, 184th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) commander. "Everybody should celebrate their heritage and culture and remember where their families came from." ☒

Tuition, cont. >>

Also with the new bill, there are options for certain servicemembers to transfer eligibility to dependents.

"I am ever so grateful for the Post 9/11 GI Bill," said Smith. "Prior to that, I would not have been able to continue my education. For [a] reservist, there was no option to transfer benefits to family members."

Troops are only eligible for the new Post 9/11 GI Bill if they have served on active duty for at least 90 days total since Sept. 10, 2001, or have been discharged with a service-related disability after 30 days of active service. Veterans must have been honorably discharged or discharged through other qualifying means such as hardship, pre-existing medical condition, etc. to be eligible.

Equal to the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) for an E-5 with dependents at the school's zip code, a monthly housing allowance is only authorized for on-campus classes

through the new bill. Students studying exclusively through online or distance learning should consider using the old MGIB.

Reichert explained his reasoning for choosing the new bill, knowing he would not receive BAH for his distance classes.

"Total compensation for the Reserve GI Bill for a full-time student was only enough to cover one of the classes," he said. "Even as a distance learner, the Post 9/11 GI Bill covered almost full tuition."

While Smith has no complaints as yet, Reichert believes the eligibility requirements could be improved.

"I have done around half a year or more in active duty orders of 30+ days, but—even though I received full active duty benefits under them at the time—none of it counted towards my 9/11 GI Bill," said Reichert.

The books and supplies stipend is also based on the percentage of the bill you receive.

"The Post 9/11 GI Bill is possibly one of the greatest benefits our generation has received," said Reichert. "... I encourage any veteran out there who isn't happy with their

job and wants a career change to take full advantage of the 9/11 GI Bill to help them get on the right track at almost any institution of their choosing."

There are several ways to apply for the Post 9/11 GI Bill. You can apply online through the VA's Veterans ON-line APPLICATION (VONAPP) Website, <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp>; call 1-888-GI BILL-1 (1-888-442-4551) to have a form mailed to you; or obtain a form from your school's VA Certifying official. The official can usually be found in the Registrar's or Financial Aid office.

Both Reichert and Smith registered online.

"[Applying was] a bit of work over the course of an hour if I re-

call, but not too bad," said Reichert.

Through the Internet, Smith's husband was able to transfer his benefits to her, a process taking roughly three days to complete.

"The application process was very easy," said Smith. "As well, the application website was very user friendly."

A variety of resources regarding both education bills can be found at <http://www.gibill.va.gov/> including a Benefits Calculator and a Side by Side Chart to compare the programs.

Troops receiving 100% of the bill's benefits may also qualify for the Yellow Ribbon Program. In this program, high-tuition schools partner with the military, covering extra tuition costs that aren't covered by the bill.

"My husband and children have been very supportive," said Smith. "It has also encouraged my children to want to do better. So, this experience has been a win-win situation for my entire family." ☒

You wear it.

Do you know what it means?

The 143d shoulder sleeve insignia was originally approved in 1968 for the 143d Transportation Brigade.

Brick red and golden yellow are used for transportation units, the previous designation of the 143d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

The arrowheads denote leadership and a determined direction, while the interlacing of the arrows represents a strong support and simulates roads and viaducts, suggesting travel.

The 143d Transportation Command became an ESC in 2007, shortly before successfully pioneering command-level sustainment operations in Afghanistan in 2009.



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Native American Heritage Month observances

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – In observance of National Native American Heritage Month, celebrated each year from November 1-30, the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) proudly announces the availability of several products created and offered by DEOMI for use by equity professionals across the Field and Fleet as they invite all members of their organizations to join together and learn about Native American heritage.

National Native American Heritage Month honors the many contributions and accomplishments of American Indians and Alaska Natives. During November, we remember the legacy of the first Americans and celebrate their vibrant culture and heritage. Since the Revolutionary War, Native Americans and Alaska Natives have played a vital role in our country's freedom and security. They proudly serve in all departments of the United States Government today.

In 1990 President George H. W. Bush approved a joint resolution designating November 1990 "National American Indian Heritage Month." Similar proclamations have been issued each year since 1994.

The Department of Defense theme for this year's National Native American Heritage Month observance is "Life is Sacred – Celebrate Healthy Native Communities."

DEOMI illustrator Mr. Pete Hemmer describes this year's National Native American Heritage Month Observance poster:

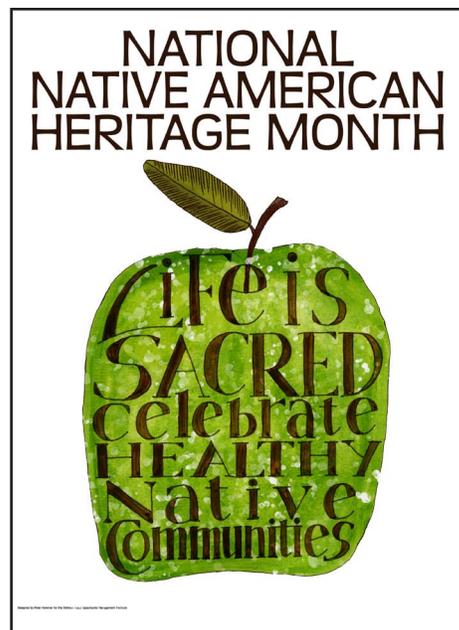
"In researching this year's theme of "Life is Sacred – Celebrate Healthy Native Communities," I was inspired to include some visual effect to illustrate something that is representative of nature and lends itself to good health – the

apple. Apples were obviously a major staple in the diet of Native Americans, and through good health -- support the idea that life is sacred. The leaf on the apple is also actually a feather, which references Native American heritage as well."

DEOMI's National Native American Heritage Month special observance program products include an original artwork poster; a special recipe book entitled "A River of Recipes: Native American Recipes Using Commodity Foods," – a document that contains traditional Native American recipes from tribes across North America; Native American Indian Heritage Facts of the Day; and a special observance program PowerPoint presentation, all available for download from our public Website, www.deomi.org.

Please note that you may download the hi-resolution poster image file by clicking the "download" link below the thumbnail image for this poster and take it to your preferred printing facility for display in your organization or use during your special observance programs. All DEOMI special observance poster images are hi resolution and may be used to print posters up to 30 X 40 inches. DEOMI does not have the capability to print posters and mail them out to customers upon request.

Given the annual National Native American Heritage Month, celebrated across the Department of Defense and the United States, A River of Recipes may serve as a wonderful tool in creating an interactive learning environment. These recipes can be used to bring together individuals over a meal where each can learn about the Native American culture – and taste it too! A River of Recipes allows individuals to actively



participate in the annual theme.

DEOMI's Facts of the Day for November 2010 may be used to provide interesting facts concerning American Indians and Alaska Natives as well as key historical dates related to Native American Heritage Month. This information can be used to help others have a better understanding of the Native American and Alaska Native culture.

Lastly, the DEOMI Native American Indian Heritage Month PowerPoint presentation may be used as a turnkey solution for conducting a Native American Heritage Month special observance program.

All DEOMI observance month products are in the public domain unless otherwise indicated. We request you credit the illustrator or simply, Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute when using them. ☒

ATTENTION

The 143d ESC Family Programs Coordinator is hosting the Family Programs Chain of Command Training (COC) in Orlando Dec. 1 to 3. To sign up, go to www.arfp.org and click the link to the left for conferences.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can access even more veterans benefits and great information pertaining to servicemembers at the 143d ESC's Facebook page "My 143d ESC" at <http://www.facebook.com/143dESC>

GEAR UP! FOR DEEP FRYING

- Keep the fryer in full view while the burner is on.
- Place the fryer in an open area away from all walls, fences or other structures.
- Never use a fryer under a garage, breezeway, carport, porch or any structure that can catch fire.
- Raise and lower food slowly to reduce splatter and avoid burns.
- Cover bare skin when adding or removing food.
- Check the oil temperature frequently.
- If the oil begins to smoke, immediately turn off the gas supply.
- If a fire occurs, immediately call 911. Do not attempt to extinguish the fire with water.

ARMY SAFE
FALLWINTER
NO TIME TO CHILL



ARMY SAFE
IS ARMY STRONG

