



Inside SWCS

The official newsletter of the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy
Special Warfare Center and School

Oct. 10, 2011
Issue 37, Volume 2



Fire in the hole!

Aspiring Special Forces engineer sergeants blow through demolition training

Top left: An instructor for the demolition portion of the Special Forces engineer sergeant specialty phase of the Special Forces Qualification Course teaches students to properly shoot and use the M-136 AT-4 light anti-armor weapon during the third day of the demolition course, Aug. 19. Bottom left: A Marine Corps special operator attending the course sets up an improvised charge on a Fort Bragg, N.C. range. Right: Special Forces Qualification Course instructors supervise Special Forces engineer sergeant students during a live-fire training exercise with the M-136 AT-4, a lightweight, self-contained anti-armor weapon.

Story and photos by Spc. Bethany L. Little
40th Public Affairs Detachment

“Just another day of training” is anything but what aspiring Special Forces Soldiers experience in the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School’s Special Forces Engineer Sergeant Course at Fort Bragg, N.C.

This course, held for those seeking the 18C military occupational specialty in the Special Forces career field, includes several portions the trainees have to complete in order to become engineer sergeants on Special Forces operational detachments.

One of the portions within the course is the demolition module, which provides the aspiring engineer sergeants with a baseline knowledge of explosives theories, formulas for calculating various types of charges, and the standard methods of priming and placing charges.

“The students learn how to fire conventionally and set up an ambush site. We also teach the students how to improvise a charge by looking for what the enemy has left behind and using that to create something,” said retired Sgt. Maj. Ernie Tabata, the lead civilian instructor for the demolition course.

“I guess that’s why they call us unconventional warriors,” he added. “They can’t afford to be too commercial or too conventional, instead we teach them by handing them a tool and they have to get it to work.”

Tabata, a distinguished member of the Special Forces regiment who served three combat tours

during the Vietnam War, served with the 1st, 5th and 7th Special Forces groups, among other assignments, throughout his 30 years of active-duty service. Since 1984, he has trained and mentored new generations of Special Forces Soldiers in his current role as a civilian instructor.

The engineer students also learn about explosive entry techniques, demolition material, demolition safety, firing systems, calculation and placement of charges, expedient charges and range operations.

In six days, students not only study demolitions, they also learn how to teach it to other Soldiers or host-nation forces they’ll work with worldwide.

Following the Special Forces Qualification Course, these men will join the Army’s special-operations community, the Department of Defense’s only force specifically trained and educated to shape foreign political and military environments in order to prevent war.

“It’s like the old saying, you crawl, walk then you run,” Tabata, a native of Honolulu, Hawaii, said. “Many of [the candidates] come here without any prior experience in demolitions, so we teach them.”

For example, on the first day of training the candidates learned how to prime explosives. The next

day they learned the formulas and calculations for how much explosive matter they would need to use for the different types of charges.

During their time in the demolition course, there are more than a few challenges for the students.

“Learning at a quick pace has been the most challenging for me so far in this course,” said Staff Sgt. Kenneth Stanley, one of the potential Special Forces engineer sergeants in the course. “We have to be able to grasp and understand everything they are teaching us within the short amount of time that they

have to teach us.”

Despite the fast pace of the course, some candidates enjoy what they’ve learned so far.

“The best part so far has been doing the demolition am-

bush because we got to work with different weapons and explosives, such as the M-136 [AT-4 light anti-armor weapon] and improvised charges,” said Staff Sgt. Jake Dixon, another member of the course.

“This is one of the only schools I’ve been to where it’s more of a learning basis, which most people wouldn’t expect,” said Stanley, a native of Newark, N.J. “The instructors are really helpful. They’ve done a great job answering questions and teaching. If you listen to what they teach and what they say, you’ll pass.”

“I guess that’s why they call us unconventional warriors. They can’t afford to be too commercial or too conventional, instead we teach them by handing them a tool and they have to get it to work.”

Ernie Tabata

Special Forces Engineer Sergeant instructor, 1st Bn., 1st SWTG(A)

Retention update: don't wait to check on possible bonus

By Sgt. 1st Class Ricky Harris
SWCS Senior Career Counselor

With October has come a new fiscal year, a new Selective Re-enlistment Bonus MILPER message (11-301) and a new Bonus Extension and Retraining program MILPER message (11-302).



Harris

What does this mean for you?

The new Selective Re-enlistment Bonus becomes effective on Oct. 17; Soldiers with an ETS (ending term of service) date in

Phase 1 (more on that below) should contact the retention office as soon as possible to see if the bonus for their military occupational specialty is going to go up or down. Some Soldiers will want to re-enlist before the Oct. 17 effective date, and others will want to do so after, depending on how they will be affected.

For Soldiers wanting to reclass into a new occupational specialty: the Bonus Extension and Retraining program could be for you. It is a special extension that allows you to go to advanced individual training and then re-enlist in your new occupational specialty, thus qualifying for the bonus in that MOS. You can enter into the BEAR program 24 months prior to your ETS date.

For additional information and requirements about the BEAR program, come on over and visit the SWCS Retention Office in their new location: building D-3404 on Fort Bragg. It's the one-story building behind Bryant Hall, co-located with Family Programs. Our office's phone numbers have not changed; the main number is (910) 396-0235.

There is also a new re-enlistment window. This fiscal year, it is split into two phases.

Phase 1 started Oct. 1 and will run through Jan. 31, 2012; this is for Soldiers who have an ETS date between Jan. 1 and Sept. 30, 2012. These Soldiers must re-enlist prior to the end of Phase 1.

Phase 2 runs from March 1 to Sept. 30, 2012, and this is for Soldiers who have an ETS date between Oct. 1, 2012 and Sept. 29, 2013. Soldiers not in the re-enlistment window with a service remaining requirement, for example, on assignment, will have to get an exception to policy from Human Resources Command.

Upcoming Event Highlight

SWCS Fall Festival

4 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Oct. 28 at the Special Forces Association

Fun for the whole Family! Activities include:

- Apple-bobbing
- Pumpkin painting
- Hay rides
- Bag decorating

Treats, prizes, balloons and games for kids in the children's area!
Costumes are welcome and encourage, but we're not holding a costume contest.

Menu: Hot dogs and hamburgers, with chips and drinks

Ticket prices: \$2 each for adults, \$1 each for children

For tickets and information:

HHC, SWCS: (910) 432-6001 ♦ matthew.c.hanrahan@soc.mil ♦ Room 109, Bryant Hall

Ask not what your country can do for you, ask how you can give to the Combined Federal Campaign

By Dave Chace
SWCS Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School. Every time we hear the name of our organization, we also hear the name of President John F. Kennedy — often without giving it a second thought.

President Kennedy's work on behalf of the United States special-operations community is common knowledge for those of us who work within that community today, but did you know that Kennedy also established the Combined Federal Campaign 50 years ago?

The CFC is the world's largest and most successful annual workplace charity campaign, according to a recent letter penned by President Barack Obama; having raised nearly \$7 billion in support of a plethora of non-profit organizations and causes, the CFC is an annual representation of American citizens' generosity and compassion.

Even during periods of economic turmoil, the CFC has helped federal employees, including postal workers and military personnel, give hundreds of millions of dollars to those in need. Last year's 2010 campaign raised approximately \$281.5 million.

This year's season began Sept. 1, so if you haven't donated yet, you've still got time! The season will close on Dec. 15, but don't wait until the last minute. Before you get wrapped up with seasonal travel plans and fes-

tivities in late November, think about contributing to those who won't be as fortunate through the holidays, winter and coming year. No donation is too small.

At the same time, remember that those who have worked to make the CFC a success over the last 50 years are doing so in your best interest: according to government policy, the CFC is the only authorized solicitation of federal employees in the workplace on behalf of charitable organizations.

In other words, this is a streamlined way for the government to vet charitable organizations and give you the opportunity to contribute to any of these organizations.

If you'd like to contribute to an organization registered with the Combined Federal Campaign, you can speak with your unit's CFC point of contact. If you don't know

who that is, call the SWCS CFC point of contact, Sgt. Andy Delvillar at (910) 396-1002, and he'll point you in the right direction.

You can also donate online at www.sencfc.org — just select "Click here to pledge online" and follow the site's registration process. Make sure you select "USA-JFKSWCS" when the site asks you which organization you belong to, so SWCS gets credit for your donation!

President Kennedy said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."

You already have the honor and privilege of serving our country. What can you do for your fellow man?

This year's season began Sept. 1, so if you haven't donated yet, you've still got time! The season will close on Dec. 15, but don't wait until the last minute.

SWCS Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9	 Columbus Day	TRADOC Staff Assistance Visit (through Thursday)	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	"Shred It & Forget It!" Safely destroy personal information at Fort Bragg's destruction facility (GMD-F). Make an appointment at: (910) 907-3670	20	MISO QC Graduation 9:30 a.m., JFK Auditorium National Defense University Distinguished Lecture Series 1 p.m., JFK Auditorium	Robin Sage begins
23	24	25	26	27	SWCS Fall Festival 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Special Forces Association	29

4th Quarter Civilian of the Quarter nominations are due Oct. 11

<https://arsocportal.soc.mil/swcs/g1/coq/default.aspx>