

ESC TODAY



A new year,
a warm welcome **8**

January 2012

VOL. 6, ISSUE 1



ESC TODAY



<< On the Front Cover

A Soldier with the 196th Transportation Company holds his wife during an emotional reunion that took place Dec. 23 at the David R. Wilson Armed Forces Reserve Center in Orlando, Fla. The 196th TC returned to its base of operations in time for the troops to spend Christmas and New Year's Day with friends and family members.

8 Photo by Spc. John Carkeet, 143d ESC

Inside This Issue >>

Messages from the top.....	3
Reserve Soldier helps cut cost in Afghanistan	5
Splish! Splash! Take a safe bath.....	7
196th TC returns from Iraq.....	8
941st TC DET heads home for the holidays.....	12
Around the ESC.....	14
824th QM Co. 'packs it in' for Operation Toy Drop.....	16
Range Safety? 'THINK' about it.....	17
Thank you veterans cruise.....	18

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

editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the 143d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) public affairs officer. This publication is written, edited, and published by the public affairs office of the 143d ESC, 9500 Armed Forces Reserve Dr., Orlando, Fla. 32827. Submit comments to: john.adams16@usar.army.mil or call 800-221-9401 ext. 1132. Send editorial and photographic submissions to: john.adams16@usar.army.mil.

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

Command Executive Officer
143d ESC
Mr. Fred Guzman

Command Sergeant Major
143d ESC
Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey E. Uhlig

Public Affairs Officer/Editor
143d ESC
Maj. John Adams

CONTRIBUTORS:

Lt. Col. Brian Ray
143d ESC Chaplain

Maj. John Adams
143d ESC Public Affairs Officer

Maj. Kenneth Biskner
143d ESC Deputy SJA

CW2 Rosalind Bush
642nd RSG

Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Lawn
143d ESC

Sgt. Tracy L. Korff
362nd QM BN

Sgt. Elisebet Freeburg
143d ESC

Spc. John Carkeet IV
143d ESC

Spc. Aaron Ellerman
143d ESC

Spc. Ruben D. Guzman
912th AG HRC

Mark Daly
143d ESC

The Command Post

Welcome 2012! Our ESC continues to be part of the strength of the nation. The trust between our Soldiers, leaders, families and the American people has never been stronger. None of this could have been possible without the hard work and sacrifice all of you have made during the past year. 2011 bore witness to many historical events, changes in the Army, significant blows to our enemies and much, much more. You, the bedrock of our Army, contributed to the success of a nation and especially, the 143d ESC during this volatile time. Without your professionalism, the mission at hand could not be accomplished.

Closer to home the ESC saw multiple successes across a vast number of operations, exercises and training events. Silver Scimitar, CSTX-91-11, WAREX, Diamond Saber, TRANSLOTS, Tradewinds, the Phillip Connelly Awards, and many more are examples of missions in which Soldiers and leaders from the ESC showed their excellence. The Command mobilized more than 37 units totaling more than 1,450 Soldiers in support of operations Enduring Freedom and New Dawn. We improved our antiterrorism and force protection postures through training, new equipment, and man power adjustments. The Command worked to shape the force by processing more than a 1,000 actions which resulted in underperforming Soldiers being separated from the Army Reserve. This creates a more profes-

sional force encompassing the Army Values and Warrior Ethos. Our Soldiers remain the best equipped and best trained through constant determination to enhance our formations by completing the countless taskers and requirements necessary to keep their fighting edge. The aforementioned are only a few of the many incredible accomplishments across the Command. None of these would have seen the success at hand without your teamwork and dedication to the mission.

We enter 2012 with dramatic changes occurring within the DoD, especially in the area of budget. We will preserve the capabilities that we judge are most important to protecting the 143d ESC, core U.S. national interests, and executing our defense strategy, while not breaking faith with our men and women in uniform and their families. This might mean tough choices for our force posture, but in no way does it mean we are moving away from or minimizing the importance of any one area of the ESC. Our number one priority is to ensure we continue to have the best military in the world. We do not have to choose between reasonable fiscal discipline and strong national defense; however, reductions to defense spending must be implemented carefully and thoughtfully. Be flexible throughout the year and understand the 143d ESC will remain a premier Army Reserve Operational Force capable of executing all assigned missions with professionalism and honor.



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

With the New Year here and our well-deserved holiday time with family and friends drawing to an end, I urge you to not become complacent with the basics. Safety, realistic training, equipment sustainability, and taking care of Soldiers and families must be our focus. Ensure proper procedures and attention to detail are present during your planning process and always review the risk involved. Nothing we accomplish is worth a senseless loss of life due to poor planning. Continue to strive for the best, and you'll get just that!

Sustaining Victory! Army Strong!

The Bottom Line

In July the Army Reserve helped launched the Individual Ready Reserve Affiliation Program, a global support network that provides IRR Soldiers and families valuable information and resources. The IAP provides participating IRR Soldiers an insightful advocate who answers questions relevant to his or her Army career. This local link improves IRR Soldier readiness by sharing information that guides, supports and encourages a continuum of service.

Reserve units such as the 143d ESC must maintain a meaningful relationship among our IRR Soldiers. Leaders should seek qualified warriors who will invigorate the IAP, for it is more than a platform to disseminate mere pamphlets. The program must bolster the bonds of the Army family by catering to the concerns of every Soldier. Though not necessarily a recruiting tool, the IAP opens channels to present the personal and professional benefits of the Army Reserve.

As we enter a new year, let us show our support to those Soldiers throughout the 143d ESC who spent the holidays preparing for and competing in the Best Warrior Competition. Deemed by millions as the Super Bowl of military contests, the Best Warrior Competition puts the Army's elite to the test. Several outstanding Soldiers earned the privilege to compete at the brigade level. I urge them to give their all in the arena as they would on the battlefield, and I encourage their peers to recognize their achievements.

By February only one warrior in each category will represent our command comprising of more than 10,000 Soldiers. It would be a disgrace to send them forth without fanfare. Let our elite know we praise their competitive spirit as they prove that the America's best warriors work among those who "Sustain Victory."

Army Strong!



Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey E. Uhlig
Command Sergeant Major
143d Sustainment Command
(Expeditionary)

Reflections by the Chaplain: *Strong Bonds offers Something for Every Soldier*

*Click here to watch an overview about
Strong Bonds*

*Click here to watch Strong Bonds'
Soldier testimonials*



Lt. Col. Brian Ray
Command Chaplain
143d Sustainment Command
(Expeditionary)

Dear Soldiers and families of the 143d ESC,
Happy New Year to you and your loved ones! Bishop Desmond Tutu, recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, once said the following: “You don’t choose your family. They are God’s gift to you, as you are to them.” Taking Bishop Tutu’s words to heart, I encourage you to invest in your God-given gift by participating in Strong Bonds, one of the Army’s premiere programs for Soldier wellness. Beginning in late January, and running through the end of August, there are a variety of outstanding Strong Bonds events for single Soldiers, married couples, and families. I strongly encourage each of you to give these events serious consideration. This is literally an opportunity for you to spend a weekend at a nice resort, on the Army’s dime, and invest in one of the most important things you have ... your personal relationships. The following is a short description of each of the three kinds of Strong Bonds events. As you will see in the following text (much of which comes from www.strongbonds.org), there are exciting weekend opportunities for each and every Soldier.

Strong Bonds for Single Soldiers

Choosing a spouse is one of the most important decisions a person can make. As a reservist, a supportive mate is critical — so the Army is committed to helping you learn how to make good relationship choices by offering the Strong Bonds Single Soldier program. With this program, you and other reservists will attend training during a weekend retreat. In addition to relevant teaching and skills training, Strong Bonds weekends include time for relaxation,

recreation, fellowship, and fun.

Strong Bonds programs are offered by Army chaplains with the full support of your commanding officer. You’ll gain practical, useful information based on a nationally-recognized curriculum. You’ll learn to examine priorities and how to evaluate a relationship’s potential for long term success.

Strong Bonds for Married Soldiers and Spouses

Whether you’ve celebrated one anniversary or twenty, couples in the U.S. Army Reserve can anticipate more challenges than civilians. Battle assemblies, annual training, and the stress of deployments can put stress on any marriage. That’s why the Army developed the Strong Bonds Program for married Soldiers. It’s the Army’s way of saying thank you for the sacrifices you and your spouse make every day as members of the best reserve force in the world. During the weekend event you and your spouse will gain skills that will strengthen your marriage and improve your communication skills. You’ll also get the chance to relax and unwind.

Strong Bonds for Soldiers and Their Family

From diapers and night feedings to recitals and soccer games, the responsibilities of raising kids can be especially difficult for military families. That’s why the Army Reserve offers Strong Bonds for Soldiers and their family. Your senior leadership understands the unique stresses that serving our nation places on families. Children 8-years-old and over may participate in most exercises of the Strong Bonds Family Program.

With the help of USAR chaplains, your family will gain skills to help sustain healthy interactions throughout the trials of life.

My chaplains and I are excited about this wonderful opportunity that the Army Reserve is providing for you at no charge. At your next battle assembly, approach your chain of command or unit chaplain about registering for one of this year’s Strong Bonds events.

Sustaining Victory ... Army Strong!

“Pro Deo et Patria ... For God and Country!”

STRONG BONDS 2012 EVENT DATES

Single Soldiers

20-22 January	New Orleans, La.
20-22 January	Savannah, Ga.
27-29 January	Orlando, Fla.
10-12 February	St. Petersburg, Fla.
16-18 March	New Orleans, La.
13-15 April	Asheville, N.C.
27-29 April	Jacksonville, Fla.
4-6 May	Orlando, Fla.
18-20 May	Charleston, S.C.
1-3 June	Orlando, Fla.
24-26 August	Orlando, Fla.

Married Soldiers

20-22 January	New Orleans, La.
20-22 January	Savannah, Ga.
27-29 January	Orlando, Fla.
10-12 February	St. Petersburg, Fla.
16-18 March	New Orleans, La.
13-15 April	Asheville, N.C.
27-29 April	Jacksonville, Fla.
4-6 May	Orlando, Fla.
18-20 May	Charleston, S.C.
1-3 June	Orlando, Fla.
24-26 August	Orlando, Fla.

Families

20-22 July	Orlando, Fla.
10-12 August	Orlando, Fla.

The Legal Corner

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Certain political activities and types of speech by Soldiers and federal employees are prohibited. Soldiers must refrain from participating in any activity while in uniform or while wearing any official insignia that may be prejudicial to the performance of military/government duties or is likely to bring discredit upon the Army. In addition, some activities that could be viewed as associating the Army directly or indirectly with a partisan political cause or candidate, although not expressly prohibited, must be avoided.

Soldiers are encouraged to get involved in political activities and fulfill their obligations as American citizens. However, certain political activities that create a real or apparent conflict of interest with their federal employment are expressly prohibited. Adherence to the rules regarding political activities is of paramount importance, especially during Presidential elec-

tion years when political partisanship is at its peak. Please consult your servicing JAG office regarding any questions you may have.

ABSENTEE VOTING

Q: What can you do if you are deployed or mobilized (away from your domicile) and your absentee voting ballot has not arrived?

A: The Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act provides for the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot (FWAB), which you can obtain from a Voting Assistance Officer in your unit or on-line at www.fvap.gov. The paper FWAB that you receive from your unit's VAO does not contain the names of candidates, but the on-line version does.

You should submit your FWAB in early October, if you do not have your regular absentee ballot by then. If you receive your regular ballot after having submitted your FWAB, you are permitted and indeed encouraged to mark and return the regular ballot as well. Include a note



Maj. Kenneth Biskner
Deputy Staff Judge Advocate
143d Sustainment Command
(Expeditionary)

to the effect that you have already submitted the FWAB. In that situation, the local election official will count your regular ballot (if it arrives on time) and set aside your completed FWAB.

Reserve Soldier helps cut cost in Afghanistan

■ BY CW2 ROSALIND BUSH
642nd Regional Support Group

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan -- For many Soldiers, deployment means entering a new environment and operating outside your comfort zone.

Sgt. Jhamon Grant, the 642nd Regional Support Group's operations noncommissioned officer in charge here, identifies with foreign operations. Grant, a native of Baton Rouge, La., transferred to the 642nd RSG from the 321st Sustainment Brigade, a U.S. Army Reserve unit in Baton Rouge for this mission. Operation Enduring Freedom marks his third deployment.

Grant says he's willing to go above and beyond what is expected of him, even though his mission isn't what he expected before getting here. Most of his leaders and peers are stationed in Kuwait; Grant is one of two 642nd Soldiers in Afghanistan.

Although Grant said he misses his fellow 642nd Soldiers, he's excited to be a part of the Mobile Container Assessment Team. The MCAT consists of 32 Soldiers in seven locations throughout Afghanistan.

Grant says that part of the MCAT's mission is to stop the government from receiving detention fees for non-government containers.

Once containers arrive in Afghanistan, they must be emptied and returned within 10 days to avoid late fees.

According to data obtained by USA Today, the Pentagon has spent more than \$720 million since 2001 on fees for shipping containers that it has failed to return on time. If the military doesn't return a container on time, a rent-to-own arrangement requires the military to pay the shipper nearly \$7,400 for a 20-foot container worth half that amount.

The Army's objective is to make the most use

of origin-to-destination containers to sustain operations. The Army maintains unit integrity by keeping a unit's equipment together in the same container or ship.

The MCAT works to reduce unnecessary spending and detention fees by using the integrated booking system container management module. The system allows the team members to track the container's location, assess the container, and empty its contents into a government-owned receptacle, which allows carrier-owned containers to be sent back in a timely manner.

Grant, who is married with four children, said he believes the MCAT mission is essential because it reduces costs and prevents unnecessary detention fees.

Grant, a nine-year military veteran, said he was thrilled about his sudden mission.

"I feel that I'm learning a lot and gaining experience," he said. ☒

DID YOU KNOW?

Joining Forces is a national initiative that mobilizes all sectors of society to give American servicemembers and their families the opportunities and support they have earned. The International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association (IHRSA) answered the call by creating the Joining Forces Network, an initiative that provides free health club memberships to immediate family members of deployed reservists and National Guard members. Visit healthclubs.com to find a participating club, then call the facility to discuss program details and documentation. For more information about Joining Forces or IHRSA, visit ihrsa.org/joining-forces-network.

gear UP! FOR ICY TRIPS

- During daylight, rehearse emergency maneuvers slowly on ice or snow in an empty lot.

- Steer into a skid.

- Know what your brakes will do: Firmly press antilock brakes, pump non-antilock brakes.

- Don't idle for a long time with the windows up or when in an enclosed space.

- Always take food, water and blankets.

- Have plenty of fuel.

- Let someone know your route and when you arrive safely.

ARMY SAFE
FALLWINTER
NO TIME TO CHILL



ARMY SAFE
IS ARMY STRONG



SPLISH! SPLASH!

TAKE A SAFE BATH

BY ELIZABETH RICH
Patch.com

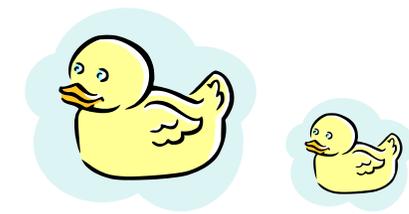
It may be cold, the kids may be home, and all you want to do is relax. How about taking a bubble bath? Jan. 8 is National Bubble Bath Day, part of National Bath Safety Month. The goal: to reduce the nearly 43,000 bathtub injuries that occurs every year in the United States.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends that people take the following tips to make your bathroom safe:

- Keep bathroom doors closed and secure toilet lids with lid locks.
- Never leave small children alone around any container of water. This includes toilets, tubs, wading pools, spas, aquariums, and buckets.
- Safeguard bathtubs and sinks used for

bathing by using faucet covers and nonskid mats or decals.

- Before bathing children, gather the soap, shampoo, toys, towel, diaper, clothing, and any other needed items you might need before running the bath water. Place these items so you can easily reach them.
- After running bath water, check the water temperature before placing the child in the bath water.
- Some people who are elderly may have less sensation in their hands and therefore may misjudge water temperature. If you have a loved one who is elderly, check the water temperature in their home to avoid scalding injuries.
- Once your child is in the bath, don't leave for any reason. Children can drown in just a small



amount of water. They can easily topple into the tub or toilet. It only takes a few seconds for a drowning to happen.

- If you must leave the room for the telephone or door, take the child with you after taking the child out of the water and wrapping him in a towel.
 - To avoid falls and slipping under the water, always keep one hand firmly around the child when bathing him and keep the child sitting.
 - For people who are elderly or have disabilities, consider installing grab bars on walls around the tub and beside the toilet and a portable, hand-held shower head. (Safety tips courtesy of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services)
- Happy "Take a Bubble Bath" day! ☺



Name: Marc T. Facunla
Rank: Sergeant First Class
Unit: 941st Transportation Company
Job Title: Platoon Sergeant
Hometown: Antioch, Tenn.

I wanted to pursue a college degree that my mother would not support. Not surprisingly, the Army's education benefits appealed to as I signed on the dotted line.

While at Basic Military Training, I met a sergeant who embodied every element of what a man should be. I did everything in my power to emulate him as well as several other Soldiers whom I worked with during my first active duty assignment as a

parachute rigger in Ft. Campbell, Ky. These men reminded me that the Army is more than just collecting a paycheck. Rather, it offers countless opportunities to push your physical and mental abilities to new limits.

Since the Army stands for doing what's good for the country, I find ways to go above what's expected of me while inspiring my Soldiers to follow my lead. On my most recent deployment to Iraq, I won several combatives tournaments and competed in the Best Warrior Competition. At the same time I was responsible for the livelihood of more than 50 Soldiers.

I set high standards on

my troops. I make sure they understand that the only way they will meet my expectations is to never be satisfied with meeting the minimum limits and instead accomplish goals that lie beyond their military occupation specialty (MOS). Naturally, I practice what I preach.

My short term career goal is to become a jumpmaster and earn my senior wings. I do not see myself becoming an officer, as I would like to return to the parachute rigger field.

The Army has taught me many lessons in life, especially when it comes to handling stress. My concerns in the civilian world rarely rattle me.

Photo by Spc. Aaron Ellerman | 143d ESC

WHY I SERVE:

DID YOU KNOW?

The Military Child Education Coalition offers scholarships for the children of active duty and mobilized reservists to attend Space Camp! Offered in Huntsville, Ala., Space Camp is a six-day program that shows young men and women firsthand what it takes to be an astronaut. Activities include simulated Space Shuttle missions, training simulators, rocket construction and launches, scientific experiments, and lectures of the past, present and future of space exploration. For more scholarship information including eligibility requirements and application deadlines, visit <http://www.militarychild.org/child-student/space-camp-scholarship/>.

'Twas the Friday before Christmas 196th Transportation Company returns from Iraq

PHOTOS AND STORY BY
SPC JOHN L. CARKEET IV
143d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

ORLANDO, Fla. – The water dripping from the wings and fuselage made the Delta B-757 glisten under the blue, sunlit skies over Orlando Friday. Having received a ceremonial water salute produced by a pair of fire trucks, the plane's soaked exterior outshined the hundreds of others that touched down at the city's international airport that day. Though normally reserved to recognize a plane or pilot's final flight, the recipients of this honor occupied the passenger seats.

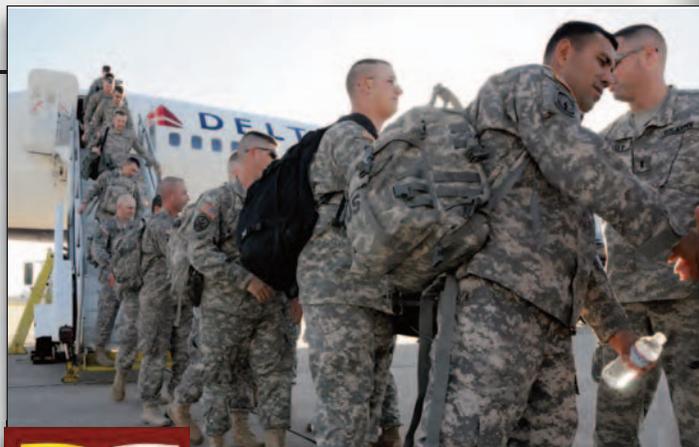


Minutes after the jet rolled to a stop, Soldiers from the 196th Transportation Company stepped smartly out of the aircraft, down a stair truck and to the tarmac. There, officers and senior non-commissioned officers from the 143d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) greeted every arrival with smiles and handshakes.

Maj. Gen. Luis R. Visot, commander of the 377th Theater Sustainment Command, was the first man in uniform to welcome these troops home.

"I'm proud that the Army brought home these Soldiers in time for the holidays," said Visot. "At the same time I'm humbled by how much these men and women accomplished in such a short period of time."

Nearly 170 Soldiers from the
196th Transportation



"We assisted in the successful closing of eight Forward Operating Bases ... This involved moving more than 200,000 tons of equipment and driving more than 350,000 collective miles."

Company deployed to Iraq July 2 in support of Operation New Dawn. Though searing temperatures, rugged terrain and tight deadlines pushed their sustainment capabilities to the limits, the Company met their mission's objectives.

The 196th TC proceeded with the retrograde closing of American military bases throughout Iraq as U.S. forces withdrew from the country by the Dec. 31 deadline, said 1st Sgt. Brian Hammer, the Company's first sergeant. The Soldiers performed immaculately despite the constant influx of missions that required large convoys to drive great distances.

"We assisted in the successful closing of eight Forward Operating Bases, including FOB Marez, FOB Warrior and Victory Base Complex," said Capt. Tony Rogers, commander of the 196 TC. "This involved moving more than 200,000 tons of equipment and driving more than 350,000 collective miles."

"And we amassed those miles on some of the roughest roads in the world," added Hammer. "I cannot thank our maintenance crews enough

"I'm proud that the Army brought home these Soldiers in time for the holidays. At the same time I'm humbled by how much these men and women accomplished in such a short period of time ... None of this would have been possible without the support of their Families."



Maj. Gen Lewis R. Visot, commander of the 377th Theater Sustainment Command speaks to the Soldiers and Families from the 196th Transportation Company at the David R. Wilson Center in Orlando, Fla., Dec. 22. The 196th TC spent four months in Iraq closing eight Forward Operating Bases as U.S. forces successfully brought the country's occupation to a peaceful close.

for keeping the Company's 65 truck systems operational."

Four months and 106 missions later, the men and women boarded buses that completed their trans-Atlantic journey to the David R. Wilson Armed Forces Center in Orlando, where television news crews stood ready with cameras and microphones in hand while hundreds of friends and relatives awaited with banners, flowers and flags.

"When I heard we would be home for the holidays, my first thought was 'no way,'" said Hammer. "I believed we would be somewhere in America before Christmas, but I did not believe that somewhere would be in the arms of our wives, husbands and children."

"None of this would have been possible without our Families," Visot said as he gestured toward the Soldiers hugging their children and kissing their

In the minutes that followed the official release of the 196th Transportation Company at the David R. Wilson in Orlando, Fla., Dec. 23, Soldiers such as this one greeted their loved ones with heartfelt kisses and embraces. The Company returned from Iraq in time for the holidays after a four-month deployment that supported Operation New Dawn.

spouses. "They are the center piece of what it means to serve."

As the reunion's rush abated, Hammer reflected on the 196th TC's brief but crucial mission.

"We were given a task that wasn't easy to do, but our Soldiers accomplished the mission at the top of their game," he said. "The families of the 196th (TC) trusted the Army's leaders to take their sons and daughters (to Iraq) and bring them home safely, and they did just that." ☒

Don't be That Guy (or Girl)

For more information or to get help, visit www.thatguy.com



The sobering side of the holidays:

- According to the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, people are two to three times more likely to die from alcohol-related crashes.
- Approximately 40 percent of traffic fatalities during New Year's Eve and New Year's Day involve a driver who is alcohol-impaired, compared to 28 percent for the rest of December.
- The coordination needed for driving are compromised long before the signs of intoxication are visible. Plus, the sedative effects of alcohol increase the risk of nodding off or losing attention behind the wheel.
- Caffeine may help with drowsiness, but not with the effect of alcohol on decision-making or coordination. The body needs time to metabolize (break down) alcohol and then return to normal. There are no quick cures—only time will help.
- For more information on celebrating your holidays safely and tips for cutting back, visit <http://www.rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov>.



WHY I SERVE:

Name: Brian Allen
Rank: Specialist
Unit: 94th Transportation Company Detachment
Job Title: Transportation Management Coordinator
Hometown: Miramar, Fla.

I wanted to join the military ever since I was a child. My Dad served in the Jamaican armed forces, and two of my brothers enlisted in the Marines. I felt it was my turn to join the ranks.

I've heard stories from Soldiers who received little or no support from their friends and relatives when they swore an oath to defend our country. I'm happy that no one in my family

objected my decision to join the Army when I was 17 years old. Instead, I made every one of them proud that I carried on a highly-respected tradition.

I entered the service at a young age, so I could retire at a young age. I plan to stay in the Army Reserve for at least 30 years before applying to the FBI and CIA. Until then, I will take full advantage of the best decision I've ever made in my life.

The military has opened many doors of opportunity that would have otherwise remained closed. There are not many career fields that would have allowed me to meet so many

people from around the world. Thanks to them I have a better understanding on how a person's cultural background affects his or her attitudes and behavior. Regardless who the Soldier is or where he or she hails from, every one of us treats one another with respect.

For those who are considering joining the military or making it a career, I urge you to do your research. The decision must be yours and yours alone. If you enlisted just because someone else told you it was the right thing to do, your regrets will make your military career a short but unhappy one.

Photo by Spc. John L. Carkeet IV | 143d ESC

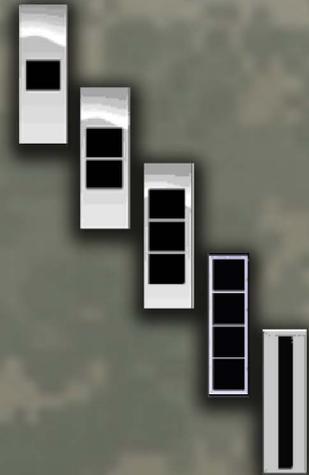
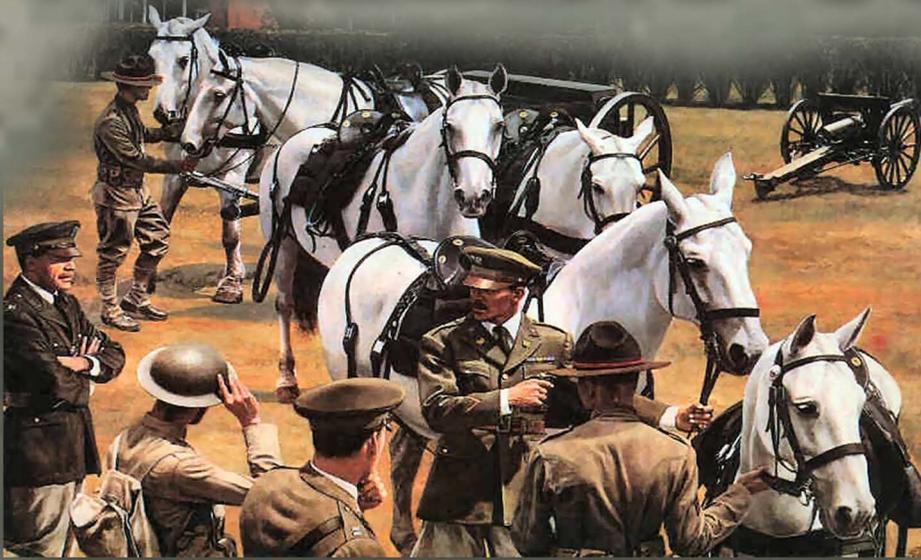


WANTED

Army Reserve



WARRANT OFFICERS



W.O.C.

Minimum WO Qualifications

Must be a US Citizen

General Technical (GT) score of 110 or Higher

High School graduate or GED

Secret Security Clearance (Interim secret is acceptable to apply)

Pass 3 event APFT and meet Height and Weight Standards

Pass the Chapter 2 Appointment Physical

Between ages 18 – 46 (waiverable)

Be a Specialist or above

Have Relevant Civilian Experience or hold a Feeder MOS

Additional criteria based on Warrant Officer MOS applying for:

Visit: www.usarec.army.mil/hq/warrant/

CONTACT INFO:

SFC Lionel Spooner@ 321.695.6189

lionel.spooner@usar.army.mil

MSG Angelina Craigen@ 386.916.5632

angelina.craigen@usar.army.mil

CW5 David N. Conrad@ 407.421.7097

David.N.Conrad@usar.army.mil

Call or Email TODAY for more information!

Heads held high, home for the holidays

■ BY SPC. JOHN CARKEET
143d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

FORT BLISS, Texas – A majority of the Soldiers who arrived at Biggs Airfield in Fort Bliss, Texas Dec. 12 and 14 had reached their final destination. As their loved ones stuffed their gear into cars and minivans, another group of new arrivals boarded buses that would bring them to their temporary quarters. Though hundreds of miles still separated them from their families, the men and women of the 941st Transportation Company held their heads high knowing they would be home for the holidays.

Based in Charleston, S.C., the 941st TC stood at 20 percent strength when Capt. Corey Willie, the company's commander, received word that his unit would mobilize to Iraq.

"We had five months to add 144 Soldiers to our roster," said Willie. "We then had to prepare them to take on a mission that few armies in world history had ever accomplished: the successful

closure of an entire theater of operations."

Pre-mobilization training began in earnest January 2011. After learning the art of convoy operations, the company touched Iraqi soil March 5 fully manned, equipped and trained ... or so it thought.

Sgt. 1st Class Marc Facunla, originally a parachute rigger who cross-leveled to a platoon sergeant with the 941st TC, explained how the evolution of Operation New Dawn forced his troops to adapt and overcome unexpected challenges.

"We were trained to transport equipment and supplies out of Iraq, said Facunla. However, the command ordered one of our platoons to manage two supply yards. For some of us, training became an on-the-job affair."

"The company took on the additional role as a Mobilization Material Redistribution Team," explained Willie. "Our efforts put \$24 million back into the supply



Photo by Spc. Aaron Ellerman | 143d ESC

system."

As the Dec. 31 deadline to withdraw all American military forces from Iraq loomed closer, the company's tempo hastened.

"We conducted 45 convoy missions in two months," said Capt. Jennifer High, executive officer for the 941st TC. "Sleep was hard to come by, and for the last two weeks all of our meals came in the form of MREs [meals ready to eat]."

Communication between commands also became more challenging as more troops and supplies left the country. However, the company adapted quickly thanks to its training and teamwork.

"My superiors couldn't believe that a Reserve unit that was literally pieced together at the last minute performed so well," said Willie.

When the first group of Soldiers from the 941st TC boarded a DC-10 that would take them to Texas, the company had performed more than 130 missions without incident.

"Out of 11 companies in our battalion, ours excelled in every category from PT [physical training] scores to mission

readiness," Falcuna said.

"We truly made history," Willie said to his troops during an award ceremony held at Fort Hood's old movie theater. "Go home and hold your heads high." ☒



Photo by Spc. John Carkeet | 143d ESC

Col. David Strickland III, commander of the 518th Sustainment Brigade, welcomes Spc. Jennifer Hoopes, a motor transportation specialist with the 941st Transportation Company, to Fort Hood, Texas. Hoopes' unit arrived at the post Dec. 12 and 14 after an 11-month deployment in support of Operation New Dawn. The company outprocessed from Fort Hood in time to fly to its final destination in Charleston, S.C. in time for Christmas.



Photo by Spc. John Carkeet | 143d ESC

Soldiers from the 941st Transportation Company stand at attention as they prepare to receive their respective awards during a ceremony Dec. 15 at Fort Bliss, Texas. Several Soldiers, including Sgt. 1st Class Marc Falcuna (far left) received the Bronze Star for their meritorious service during the company's deployment to Iraq.



Take 5 Safe Fireworks

- *Public displays put on by professionals are the safest way to enjoy fireworks*
- *Never light fireworks indoors or near dry grass*
- *Always have a bucket of water and a fire extinguisher nearby*
- *Never wear loose clothing when using fireworks*
- *Douse dud devices with water and dispose of properly*
- *Always read directions and warning labels*
- *Supervise children around fireworks at all times*



ARMY STRONG.



U.S. ARMY COMBAT READINESS/SAFETY CENTER
<https://safety.army.mil>

ARMY SAFE
IS ARMY STRONG



Around the ESC



Photo by Spc. John L. Carkeet IV | 143d ESC

Maj. Gen Luis R. Visot (right), commander of the 377th Theater Sustainment Command, shakes hands with a Soldier from the 196th Transportation Company. The 196th TC returned to its base of operations Dec. 23 in Orlando, Fla., after spending four months in Iraq in support of Operation New Dawn.



Photo by Spc. John L. Carkeet IV | 143d ESC

Sgt. 1st Class Anneris Nieves receives a plaque from Capt. Corey Waiters during the 143d ESC's full-time staff luncheon held Dec. 9 at the Rosen Shingle Creek hotel in Orlando, Fla. Nieves was the unit's Operations Plans and Weapons Training Chief. She will continue her Army career as the property book noncommissioned officer with the 100th Division in Sacramento, Calif.



Photo by Maj. John Adams | 143d ESC

A Soldier from the 824 Quartmaster Company (Airdrop) joins other jumpers as they participate in pre-jump sustained airborne training as they prepare for Operation Toy Drop that took place Dec. 10 in Fort Bragg, N.C. The operation included more than 1,500 airborne-qualified Soldiers from around the world, all of whom contributed at least one toy to a cause that donated more than 10,000 toys to children in need throughout Fort Bragg's surrounding communities.

Around the ESC



Photo by Spc. John L. Carkeet IV | 143d ESC

Sgt. Angelo V. Whitfield, the human resources readiness NCO for the 143d ESC Headquarters Company, decks the halls with holiday decorations as she escorts children throughout the headquarters building in search for Santa Claus. The 143d ESC HHC invited friends and family members to its annual holiday party held Dec. 4 at the David R. Wilson Armed Forces Reserve Center in Orlando, Fla.

UNIT PHOTOS WANTED

Seeking photos of Soldiers from your unit performing operational duties and 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 requests you may have to:
john.adams16@usar.army.mil



Photo by Spc. Ruben D. Guzman | 912th AG HRC

Sgt. Dennis Blockton with the 912th HRC Postal Detachment assists Air Force Master Sgt. George McEachern as he pays for his package Oct. 28 at Forward Operating Base Union III in Baghdad, Iraq. This transaction marked the final postal activity for all APO operations in the country as the military transferred such responsibilities to the State Department.



Photo by Maj. John Adams | 143d ESC

During a retirement ceremony held Dec. 4 at the David R. Wilson Armed Forces Reserve Center in Orlando, Fla., Brig. Gen. Mark W. Palzer, commander of the 143d ESC, congratulates Master Sgt. Claudine C. B. Jarrett for receiving the Meritorious Service Medal in recognition of her 27 years of service to the Army. Jarrett retired as the G-1 (Human Resources) noncommissioned officer in charge for the 143d ESC.

824th QM Co. joins Operation Toy Drop

■ BY MAJ. JOHN J. ADAMS
AND SGT. TRACY L. KORFF
143d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

FORT BRAGG, N.C. - Falling from the sky by choice, the paratrooper thought, “What am I doing here?”

Thanks to the parachute riggers of the 824th Quartermaster Company (Heavy Air Drop Supply), citizen Soldiers and active duty paratroopers felt safe in making the choice of jumping out of an aircraft at Fort Bragg, N.C. in support of a worthy holiday cause.

Reserve Soldiers of the 824th QM Co. diligently prepared for the 14th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, a week-long fundraising operation in which paratroopers donate toys and jump in support of the project.

The parachutes are laid out with the strings, webbing, and canopies stretched horizontally on the packing table while multiple checks and safety procedures are incorporated to ensure every chute is prepared with perfection.

“In this MOS, there is zero room for error,” said Staff Sgt.

Michael I. Sharp, parachute pack supervisor. “It must be 100 percent all the time.”

The 824th QM Co. is one of three reserve rigger units in the Army Reserve. Its peacetime mission is to provide chutes to Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), the organization that heads this fundraiser each year.

The parachute riggers of the 824th QM Co. packed approximately 500 parachutes in support of OTD.

Capt. Theodore Mataxis, commander of the 824th QM Co., has supported the mission for several years as an enlisted rigger, a jumpmaster and now as a company commander.

“I look forward to it every year,” said Mataxis. “You link up with allied countries and get good training.”

Jumpmasters from eleven visiting countries participated in the airborne operations and donated toys to be distributed to charities and social service agencies throughout the country



Photo by Sgt. Tracy L. Korff | 362nd QM BN

Wearing the signature red cap of parachute riggers, a Soldier from the 824th Quartermaster Company packs parachutes for Operation Toy Drop, a week-long philanthropic project that distributes toys to childrens' homes and social agencies. The unit packed one third of the more than 1,500 chutes needed during this holiday humanitarian mission.

In previous years USACAPOC collected a few thousand toys, and last year they collected more than 10,000, making it necessary for them to expand the distribution from local communities to throughout the country.

“It feels pretty good to take part in this mission,” said Spc. Joshua Medina, parachute rigger, 824th QM Co. “To do this job daily and then know that it is helping some deserving families feels great.”

Strict safety standards are in place for parachute riggers to help avoid mistakes and the possibility of fatigue on the part of the packer. “The quota is 25 [chutes] a day,” said Medina. “We have been preparing for this toy drop for about two weeks now.”

Medina, a native of Delray Beach, Fla., has been a parachute rigger for more than three years both on active duty and now as a reservist because he has chosen to pursue a college education.

In addition to rigging chutes, the unit personnel distributed them to jumpers and collected

them from the drop zone after the airborne operation. That is why communication is so important. Airborne operations cannot happen without rigger support which remains a highly respected military occupation specialty.

“You have a multitude of variables and things that can change,” said Sharp. “You just got to be ready and have patience.”

The term “rigger” is frequently shouted throughout the shed. The word means the chute currently being packed is ready for some level of inspection. Each chute used for this mission requires seven checks at different intervals of the packing process.

“When you’re dealing with life-saving, life-preserving equipment, attention to detail has a new meaning,” said Sharp.

At the end of the day, the Soldiers wearing their distinctive red baseball caps (authorized only for Soldiers performing rigger duty), must have confidence in what they do and can say, “I know what I am doing here.” ☒

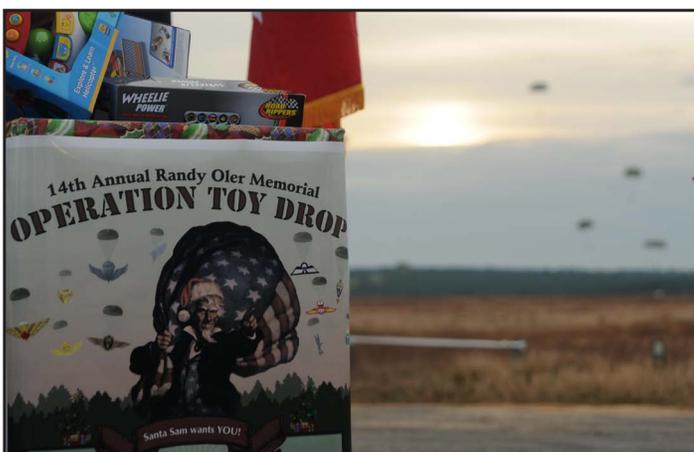


Photo by Maj. John Adams | 143d ESC

Parachutes float to their designated drop zone during Operation Toy Drop held Dec. 10 at Ft. Bragg, N.C. In exchange for earning foreign jump wings, every Soldier donated at least one new toy to this charitable cause that helps thousands of underprivileged families to put gifts under the Christmas tree.

■ BY MARK DALY

143d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

Going to the range is one of the most dangerous exercises Soldiers do State side. Safety has noticed far too many near misses during range qualifications, and all of them are 100% avoidable. First, let's talk about the most dangerous mistakes I've seen:

1. Soldiers did not have eye protection. 143d ESC Soldiers will wear eye, ear and head protection while at the range.

Always follow the strictest policy.

2. During a M9 qualification, a left-handed Soldier was having problems ejecting the magazine. He then violated one of the most basic rules of range safety: "always point the muzzle in a safe direction." The Soldier rolled the pistol right to expose the magazine eject button, but he pointed the muzzle at the Soldier standing to his left. An Alert Range Safety Officer immediately took corrective action.

There is additional training and procedures available for lefties.

3. During a M-16 qualification, a soldier was down range adjusting the target. The Soldiers on the firing line were still holding their weapons. This is 100% unacceptable.

4. Medical staff did not know the where the nearest hospital was located.

5. No radio communication due to dead batteries.

6. Ingress/egress to firing line not clearly identified.

7. Poor attitudes.

These are a few of the more serious offenses that were observed and fixed on the spot. Mistakes happen, but lives are at serious risk when they happen at the range. Use the "THINK" acronym when following as a basic guide for range safety.

Treat every weapon as if it is loaded.

Handle every weapon with care.

Identify the target before you fire.

Never point the muzzle at anything you don't intend to shoot.

Keep the weapon on safe and your finger off the trigger until you intend to fire.

Why are these problems occurring? Poor leadership.

It is up to the Senior NCOs and Commanders to:

- Ensure a very clear and concise safety brief is given, and all Soldiers heard the message.

- Make sure all lefties are identified and given refresher training.

- Medics know where and how to get to the nearest hospital, air evac might be required.

- Make sure communications are up and running and a working back up is ready to go.

- Make sure all Range Safety Officers are properly trained and certified.

Set the tone at the facility prior to getting to the range. There is no room for error at the range. ☒



Illustration by Sgt. 1st Class Tim Lawn | 143d ESC

1. This is your safety brief for range _____.
2. The Officer in Charge (OIC) is _____.
3. The Range Safety Officer (RSO) is _____.
4. Safety will always be priority NUMBER ONE. The five weapons safety rules are:
 - T**reat every weapon as if it is loaded.
 - H**andle every weapon with care.
 - I**dentify the target before you fire.
 - N**ever point the muzzle at anything you don't intend to shoot.
 - K**eep the weapon on safe and your finger off the trigger until you intend to fire.
5. During firing, the OIC will be located _____ and the RSO will be located _____.
6. The dedicated safety vehicle is located _____. The assigned driver is _____.
7. MEDEVAC will be handled by the OIC or RSO in conjunction with Range Control. All other personnel will stay clear of the emergency. (Go over routes to hospital or nearest LZ.) Move to the assembly area for accountability which is located _____. Senior Soldier take charge and get accountability.
8. Duds (UXO) may be found on this range. Do not pick up, kick, or hit any ordnance on this range. Notify the RSO immediately of possible dud locations.
9. If a Soldier is within 15 degrees of your muzzle, **DO NOT FIRE**. Be aware of your position and the Soldiers around your position. If you are in doubt of the situation, **DO NOT FIRE**.
10. If you should encounter a stoppage, apply immediate and/or remedial action (Go over immediate and/or remedial action for all weapons being fired on the range). If you should hear or feel an audible pop, immediately cease-fire and notify your OIC or RSO. An audible pop is a strange noise made when a primer detonates but fails to ignite any or all of the propellant. This may result in the bullet not being expelled from the muzzle. If you fire again it may result in an exploding barrel because of the obstruction.
11. The uniform for this range is _____. Kevlar Helmets/Advanced Combat Helmet (ACH), Improved Body Armor (IBA), eye and hearing protection will be properly worn and used.
12. Observe the downrange area. The range left limit is _____, and the right limit is _____. Your internal limits are the left and right of your targets. You will fire on your designated targets only. Muzzles will be pointed in a safe direction at all times.
13. Are there any left-handed shooters? Place these shooters on the far left of the firing positions.
14. Brief any local range regulations that might apply.
15. The designated smoking area is _____. Smoking is not allowed within 50ft of ammunition.
16. Ammunition issue point is located _____. This is where you will pick up your ammunition and drop off any unexpended ammunition. Shakedown of all personnel will take place to ensure 100% accountability of ammunition.
17. This concludes the range safety brief. Are there any questions?

Report all Soldiers trained, ammunition expended, by type, to Range Control, Officer-in-Charge and Range Safety Officer.

Live fire ranges pose potentially lethal consequences if Soldiers overlook even one precaution. Officers and noncommissioned officers should give a comprehensive safety brief such as this one above every time their Soldiers step onto the range.

Don't Think About Who Owns It. . .

THINK About WEAPONS SAFETY!

Treat every weapon as if it is loaded.
Handle every weapon with care.
Identify the target before you fire.
Never point the muzzle at anything you don't intend to shoot.
Keep the weapon on safe and your finger off the trigger until you intend to fire.

ARMY STRONG
 U.S. ARMY
 ARMY SAFE IS ARMY STRONG
 RANGE & WEAPONS SAFETY TOOLBOX

THANK YOU VETERANS CRUISE



For our Veteran friends making their own cruise reservation:

We thank you for deciding to join us in a memorable event for all veterans and especially our soldiers returning from their recent tours of duty in the Middle East. Young and old, we're all brothers and sisters who have shared the military experience. See you on board!

The Cpl. Larry E. Smedley National War Museum has chosen USAA's travel alliance partner, Explore Cruise and Travel, to handle bookings. They have assured us we are getting the best prices available. The stateroom prices found on the attached form include all taxes, port charges, onboard ship gratuities as well as a \$50.00 stateroom onboard credit. You are strongly encouraged to reserve with a deposit now in order to hold these room prices. Cancellation with a full refund is allowed prior to October 8, 2012. Low cost USAA travel insurance is also available through the Travel Agent.

The cruise will take place aboard the Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines ship Monarch of the Seas, sailing from Port Canaveral on Friday Dec. 7 returning Monday Dec. 10, 2012, with ports of call in Nassau and Coco Cay.

What you need to do -

Please refer to and complete the accompanying form.
Fax the completed form to: (602)896-4720 or
e-mail carol.lee@ourvacationcenter.com
For more information, please call Carol Lee, our Cruise
Coordinator at 800-571-4208, ext. 5078
Please Reference Our Group Code PV1207
A \$50.00 Per Person Deposit Is Required

