

WARRIOR CITIZEN

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE U.S. ARMY RESERVE WINTER 2009

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OF THE YEAR**
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ARMY RESERVE COMMAND TEAM

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ON THE COVER

Spc. David Obray, representing the U.S. Army Reserve Command, exits a UH-60 Blackhawk during the Department of the Army NCO & Soldier of the Year "Best Warrior" competition at Fort Lee, Va. on Oct. 2, 2008. Obray was selected as the Army's Soldier of the Year, topping 11 other junior enlisted Warriors representing major Army commands during the five day competition. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale)

ON THE BACK COVER

Help the Army Reserve with The Army Reserve Recruiting Assistant Program (AR-RAP). (Photo by Maj. William Wynn)

UPPER RIGHT

Approximately 40 Soldiers from the 335th Signal Command, Fort Gillem, Ga., hold the Atlanta Falcons flag at the Georgia Dome on Nov. 9, 2008, as part of the Falcons salute to military veterans. After the pre-game festivities, the 335th Soldiers and their Family members were guests of the Falcons as they watched Atlanta defeat the New Orleans Saints, 34-20.

(Photo by Timothy L. Hale)

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EDITOR'S NOTE

The Secretary of the Army, the Honorable Pete Geren, has declared 2009 as the Year of the Non Commissioned Officer in recognizing the NCO is the backbone of our modern day force structure. Army Reserve Command Sgt. Major Leon Caffie leads off this issue with some insight into what a true NCO leader is. He says you must be "on top of your game" and "lead from the front." More of Caffie's byline begins on page 4.

Yet, the year 2008 was indeed a good year for the Army Reserve. Army Reserve Soldiers did make it happen. Spc. David Obray was named Department of the Army Soldier

of the Year, the first time in the seven-year history of the competition that an AR Soldier earned top honors. Spc. Gregory Scott Ruske, now a sergeant, received the Silver Star for his bravery in combat in Afghanistan. And the Golden Knights, the Army's prestigious Parachute Demonstration team, selected Army Reserve Sgt. Jennifer Schaben as one of their newest members in the program. Their compelling stories begin on pages 14, 20 and 22.

And finally the first place winners in the Army Reserve Photo Contest, "A Day in the Life of the Army Reserve," begin on page 8. The photos, among hundreds of entries we received, bring us face-to-face with the people, events and cultures our Soldiers come in contact with in their

every day lives. The contest gives us a chance to see our Soldiers in a way we would not have otherwise. This is a feature we hope to continue in the future issues.

On a personal note, this issue of *Warrior-Citizen* marks the magazine's second birthday, under its current name. The magazine has been published since 1955, marking its 55th year, but under different names. The first issue was known as *Army Reservist* but later changed to *Army Reserve Magazine* in March 1964. The last change occurred with the fall 2007 issue when it assumed its current name, *Warrior-Citizen*. Happy 55th birthday!

Paul Adams
Editor-in-Chief

FROM THE TOP



ARMY RESERVE NCOs NEED TO LEAD FROM THE FRONT



Command Sgt. Maj. Leon Caffie leads NCO Professional Development at Bahgram Airfield, Afghanistan.

Sgt 1st. Class James Sowers

The officers in your unit look to you for guidance, knowledge and expertise.

You are the binding agent between the officer corps and the junior enlisted Soldiers in your unit. You must always be “on top of your game” and challenge yourself to excel in all aspects of Army life.

While the Army Reserve continues to transform into our next 100 years, you will be called upon to “lead from the front.” Not only are we in a fluid battle space Iraq and Afghanistan, our home front is fluid as well.

As our regional, operational and functional commands and subordinate units realign, you will be the catalyst for continuity of operations. There is no room for indecision in

day-to-day operations. By using sound judgment and looking at each task from every possible angle, you are charged with making the right decisions at the right time.

Our Army Reserve NCO Corps is among the best in the world. You are given the freedom to lead unlike any other NCO Corps around the globe. Military leaders in Allied nations are continually amazed at how well our NCOs are trained and the responsibilities you are given.

When it comes to education, it is imperative as an NCO that you strive to continue to grow and develop—not only your military education, but your civilian education as well. Many of our NCO leaders not only have the skills to excel in their military careers but these same skills and educational traits cross over into their civilian careers as well.

As an NCO Corps we need to practice good health initiatives. Our NCOs must incorporate their own individual health

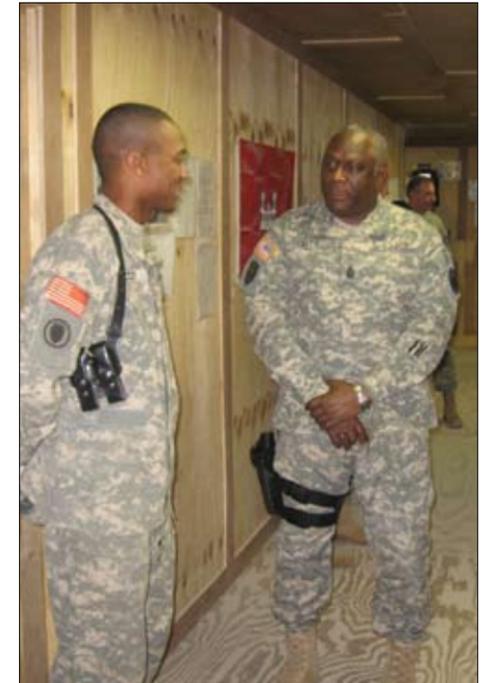
and fitness programs and instill in the Soldiers they lead to do the same. A strong and healthy NCO is the hallmark of a true leader.

There are very few born leaders. True leaders are developed over time. We can all think of some individual in our careers that instilled in us the traits of what a true leader is. We must build on these traits to continue the construction of a benchmark for today’s young NCO leaders.

Do not take your duty as an NCO lightly. Follow the NCO Creed. It best sums up your duties.

Each paragraph starts with three important letters: N-C-O. This is no accident. The words contained in the Creed are not just words on a page they are your mandate for success. Know them by heart. Live them every day.

If you do this, I promise you our Army Reserve will never fail! ❏



Sgt 1st. Class James Sowers

Command Sgt. Maj. Leon Caffie chats with a Soldier from the 420th Engineer Brigade at Forward Operating Base Sharona, Afghanistan, November, 2008.



Sgt 1st. Class James Sowers

Command Sgt. Maj. Leon Caffie talks to Soldiers of the 221st Ordnance Company at the Ammunition Supply Point of Forward Operating Base Sharona, Afghanistan.

*By Command Sgt. Major Leon Caffie
Command Sergeant Major
U.S. Army Reserve*

THE ARMY RESERVE Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) is the backbone of our modern day force structure.

The Secretary of the Army, Hon. Pete Geren, recognizes this fact and he has declared 2009 as the Year of the NCO.

As an NCO, you are empowered to lead the men and women with whom you serve. You are a mentor, an inspiration, an innovator, a colleague and sometimes, even a disciplinarian.

“At the front of every Army mission in the United States or overseas, you’ll find a non-commissioned officer. They know their mission, they know their equipment, but most importantly, they know their Soldiers.” —Secretary of the Army Pete Geren

PEOPLE

A WHITE HOUSE "SPANISH" WELCOME

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

By Maj. Edward McCray
Public Affairs Office
200th Military Police Command

FORT MEADE, WASHINGTON—
"Hola! Siéntese. Bienvenidos a la Casa Blanca." President George W. Bush opened his address in Spanish during a White House celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month in Oct. 2008. During his address, President Bush recognized the patriotism and service of a deployed Warrior-Citizen, Lt. Col. Enrique Guerra.

"It was an honor to meet the President. I am humbled to be selected to be here," said Guerra about the invitation to the White House and recognition by the Commander-In-Chief.

"As you may be aware, I was born in Cuba. I came to this country with my parents and my sister when I was seven months old. I feel a strong sense of

American patriotism and commitment to my country," said Guerra.

"Enrique has always had a sense of patriotism. It's in his blood. As a child, he was always playing Army. He always wanted to be a Soldier. He loves doing what he does," said Karen Guerra, Lt. Col. Guerra's wife. Mrs. Guerra stood proudly

**"It was an honor to meet the President. I am humbled to be selected to be here."
—Lt. Col. Enrique Guerra**

by her husband as the President shook his hand, thanked him for his service and presented him with a Presidential coin.

Guerra is currently the commander of the 744th Military Police Battalion, from Bethlehem, Pa. He is also the Theater Interment Facility Commander of Remembrance II at Camp Cropper, Iraq.

In the President's Hispanic Heritage address on the South Lawn of the White House, he recognized Lt. Col. Guerra with these remarks, "I'm especially proud to be the Commander-In-Chief of a military in which there's 225,000 Hispanic men and women. One of these Hispanos is an Army Lieutenant Colonel named Enrique Guerra. Listen to his story."

President Bush briefly recounted the narrative of Lt. Col. Guerra's arrival to America and his current military service.

The President concluded his acknowledgments by saying, "And today I'm proud to honor his service, and the service of all Hispanic Americans, who ensure that freedom is available to all. Enrique, bienvenidos. Thank you for coming." ❏



President George W. Bush, Lt. Col. Enrique Guerra and his spouse Karen listen to the music of Andrés Cabas, from Colombia on the South Lawn of the White House with other guests.

Maj. Edward McCray

MP CHOSEN FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARD

By Capt. Michael Delborrell
Public Affairs Office
2nd Battalion, 383rd Regiment
First Army Division West

KANSAS CITY, Mo.—Maj. Scott McGaha, an Army Reserve Military Policeman and a U.S. Marshall in the Kansas City, Mo. metropolitan area, was honored with an award for his outstanding investigative work on a recent drug case here. Each year, the Kansas City Metropolitan Chiefs and Sheriffs Association and Kansas City television network, KMBC-TV 9, present the Silver Award for Valor to a distinguished law enforcement officer in the community. McGaha of the 2nd Battalion, 383rd Regiment at Fort

Leavenworth, Kan., was chosen to receive the illustrious award during a November 2008 ceremony.

McGaha was recognized for his exceptional investigative efforts on the Bryan Leonard case, a collective effort to bust one of the largest methamphetamine labs seen in the Kansas City area. Subsequent follow-up investigation led to the arrest and prosecution of nine suspects in a large-scale meth production conspiracy. All nine people have since entered guilty pleas for the charges. Bryan Leonard should be sentenced in early 2009 and is facing a possible sentence of 30 years to life.

McGaha has been an active member with the Army Reserve for 10 years, as a



Courtesy photo
Maj. Scott McGaha, chosen for law enforcement award.

military police officer. While performing his duties as a Warrior-Citizen, McGaha diligently worked as a U.S. Marshall, where his efforts on the Bryan Leonard Case earned him the respect of his peers. ❏

CIVIL AFFAIRS NCO AUTHORS DEPLOYMENT BOOK

By Master Sgt. Gary Younger
Army Reserve Communications

LIKE MANY DEPLOYED SOLDIERS, Sgt. Melia Meichelbock kept a journal of her wartime experience. As one of a few females in her unit and as a woman mixing with Iraqi civilians, she had plenty of spice for her diary.

After returning home Meichelbock, of the 426th Civil Affairs Battalion, Upland, Calif., turned her journal into a book entitled, "In the Company of Soldiers." Because her book gives readers a candid you-are-there perspective on her experience, all told with a few healthy doses of humor, she was named as an award-winning finalist in the autobiography/memoir category of the National Best Books 2008 Awards, sponsored by USA Book News.

"I feel extremely honored to be an award-winning finalist in this national

book competition," Meichelbock said. "I hold nothing back in this tell-all book in the hope that readers will gain an honest insight on the war from a unique perspective."

Meichelbock describes a defining moment for her during her September 2004 to June 2005 deployment: "My task one day was to frisk the Iraqi women coming in to claim property or injury damage after the battle. Needless to say, I was feeling pretty down.

"An Iraqi woman I had to frisk must have seen some discomfort in my eyes because she looked my face up and down and then moved a wisp of hair that had inadvertently fallen down my face back up behind my ear. From that point on I felt a stronger conviction that what we were doing and why we were there in Iraq was good. The kindness the Iraqi woman

showed me that day led me to believe that the Iraqi people were good people and well worth helping," Meichelbock said.

"My vision in publishing this journal is to give Soldiers an idea of what to expect when deploying and to also give civilians insight to what life is really like over there. It's a viewpoint far different from anything a reporter could tell you—a very personal one," she said.

In the Company of Soldiers is available for sale online at Amazon.com, BookSurge.com, Target.com and retail channels worldwide. Ten percent of book sale profits go to aid disabled veterans.

Meichelbock received an honorable discharge and gave birth to a baby girl, both in May 2008. ❏

ARMY RESERVE PHOTO CONTEST

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE ARMY RESERVE

Army Reserve Soldiers, Family members and Civilians sent in photographs commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Army Reserve. The photos depicted everything from training to Family support. These are the first place winners.

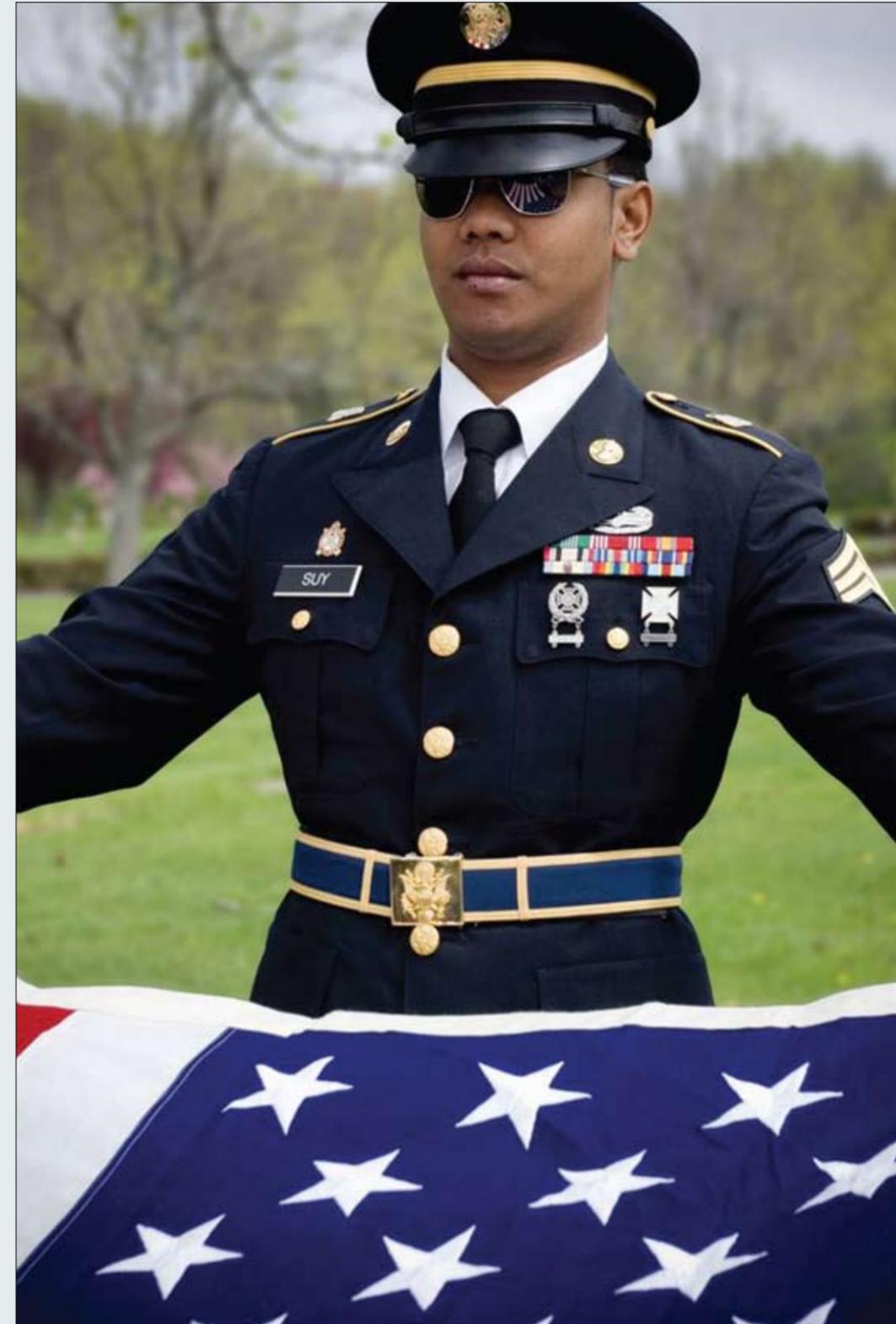


Photo by Maj. Stephen V. Reinis/77th Regional Readiness Command

Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Photo by Sgt. 1st Class John F. Ranschaert/ U.S. Army Garrison, Fort Hood, Texas • Photo by Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Peter E. Sousa/ 641st Regional Support Group • Photo by Staff Sgt. Brian Schoonover/354th Civil Affairs Brigade



Photo by Maj. Jack Givens/2145th Garrison Support Unit



Photo by Sgt 1st Class Kristen Kirby/
Army Reserve Careers Division, Region 7, Area 5



Opposite page, top to bottom: Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mary Pace/
367th Engineer Battalion • Photo by Lt. Col. Bill Gazis/75th Battle
Command Training Division

DEPARTMENTS

BLOGS AND WEB SITES

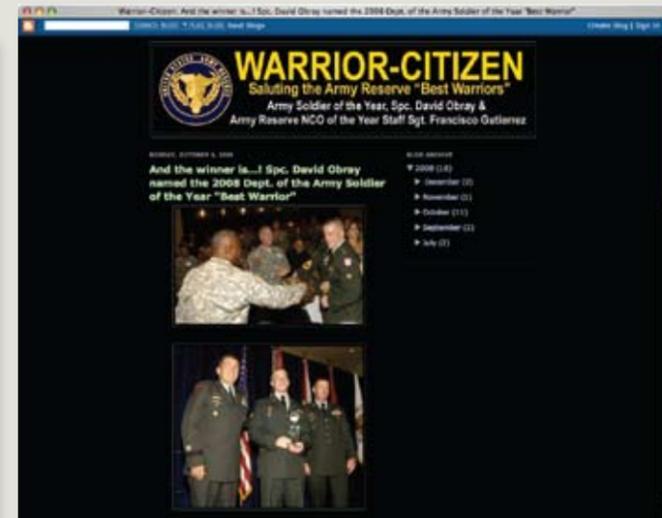
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See story on page 20.



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Visit EPI on the Web on Facebook and My Army Reserve where you can network with fellow Army Reserve Soldiers, share successes, offer recommendations, and tell us about your experiences as you advance your civilian career through the Employer Partnership Initiative.



CREATIVE LEARNING

NEW INITIATIVES MAKE PRE-COMMAND COURSES MORE RELEVANT, INTERACTIVE



Maj. Christopher Perner (center), instructor, answers maintenance questions from students, Capt. Frank Perez, 560th Transportation Detachment, Springfield, Mo., and 1st Lt. Marjorie Eastman, 321st Military Intelligence Battalion, Austin, Texas.

*Story and photos by
Master Sgt. Christina Steiner
2nd Battalion, 339th Regiment
84th Training Command*

FORT MCGOY, Wis.—Army Reserve pre-command courses being taught here have been upgraded with creative learning initiatives to make them more relevant, current and interactive, and students like the changes.

Most notable changes to the Battalion Brigade Pre-Command Course (BBPCC) include: introducing adult-learning techniques to the classroom—less lecture, more student-oriented teaching with practical exercises and dialog and mandatory attendance by command sergeants major. The course also offers a Web site which includes links to class presentations.

Basic course topics cover human relations, personnel, finance and training management, as well as Web-based tools

for unit management. New discussion includes the commander’s role as leaders, ethics, critical thinking and self-awareness.

“We’ve evolved to meet the needs of commanders,” said Jim Davis, course director.

Other changes build on the concept that effective leadership comes as a by-product of teamwork, which include command sergeants major and commanders’ spouses. Command Sergeant Majors are now expected to attend, and commanders’ spouses are invited to attend for the first couple of days of the course.

“We offer a variety of classes for the spouses that will be invaluable resources for them when they return home,” said Master Sgt. Teddy Grace, BBPCC NCOIC.

“The Families help fill the ranks of our units in the forms of support as much as our Soldiers do. Our goal is to foster a team concept and an understanding of leadership.”

For the most part, student feedback has been positive.

“All my experiences have prepared me for command, but the pre-command course has given me a framework,” said Lt. Col. Alex Fink, a February 2008 BBPCC student.

“I kept my notes handy. When I go to my own staff meetings, the notes have helped me ask relevant questions,” Fink said. ☑



Staff Sgt. Carissa Lelonek, new military technician instructor with the 2nd Battalion, 339th Regiment, participates as a student in the Company Detachment Pre-Command Course (CDPCC) at Fort McGo. All newly assigned instructors attend this course as students.

MY ARMY RESERVE LIFE

Newest Golden Knight

By Timothy L. Hale
Army Reserve Public Affairs

AN ARMY RESERVE female Soldier has been selected as a member of the prestigious Army Golden Knights Parachute Demonstration Team.

Sgt. Jennifer Schaben, assigned to the 10th Psychological Operations Battalion, St. Louis, Mo., was one of five female Soldiers selected in the unit's most recent assessment program.



Donna Dixon, U.S. Army Parachute Team Public Affairs
Sgt. Jennifer Schaben quotes the Golden Knight Creed as Lt. Col. Anthony Dill knights her during the graduation of the U.S. Army Parachute Team 2008 Golden Knight Assessment and Selection Program.

For Schaben, who only started civilian skydiving in April 2007, becoming a member of the Golden Knights is a dream come true.

"I really liked it (skydiving) after the first time," she said. Her civilian skydiving

Sgt. Jennifer Schaben on final approach to the target during the graduation of the U.S. Army Parachute Team 2008 Golden Knight Assessment and Selection Program. (Photo by Donna Dixon, U.S. Army Parachute Team Public Affairs)



was interrupted with a deployment to Iraq. After she returned, she again took up the civilian sport and decided she would try out for the Golden Knights.

To be selected to the team, an individual must be on active-duty status, have completed 150 free-fall parachute jumps and have a good military and civilian record.

Individuals submit their packets for selection, a process that includes a rigorous six-week assessment and selection program of training.

Members that successfully completed the six-week training program were knighted in a special ceremony at Fort Bragg, N.C. as an official member of the Golden Knights.

The demonstration team travels all over the country performing aerial demonstrations at air shows and special events in support of Army recruiting goals.

The two competition teams travel, competing nationally and internationally at various skydiving competitions, continuously bringing home gold, silver and bronze medals. They are the most successful U.S. Department of Defense sports team.

Schaben joined the Army Reserve right out of high school nearly six years ago serving as a medic. During that time, she was able to earn a four-year degree in international studies.

For her, joining the Army Reserve was the right choice to achieve her goal of earning a college degree.

"If you know what you want out of life and the Army, you may have to give a little of yourself to achieve your goals," she said.

Schaben will serve on the team for four years. She added, "I'm really glad that I was given this opportunity to give something back." ✦

BATTLE STAFF OPS, SQUAD TRAINING

ENGINEERS COMPETE IN SAPPER STAKES



Soldiers of the 489th Engineer Battalion read their mission packet and prepare to plot the route to their first event point.

SAPPER

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Joel Quebec
211th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

NORTH LITTLE ROCK, Ark.—Engineer Soldiers of five Army Reserve companies from the 489th Engineer Bn. gathered at Camp Robinson, Ark. Sept. 6-7, 2008, to participate in the third annual Sapper Stakes competition. Each company represented had one or more six-member teams.

The competition is designed to train, improve and enhance the skills that engineer Soldiers would need during a deployment. "Not only do the engineer squads get training," said 2nd Lt. William Ake, one of the key event planners, "this event also trains the headquarters staff in battle staff operations and tracking. The competition is used to bring the battalion together, train engineer squads, and promote esprit de corps among the troops and units."

The competition was set up with a central Tactical Operations Center (TOC) and each team drew a number to determine which of the five stations would be their first event. The stations were located at points surrounding the TOC and teams had to find the points on a map and road march to each station either on a road or by a shortcut through the woods.

The stations consisted of a dismounted route clearance, timber cutting charge calculations, vehicle search for contraband

and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), building a 50-foot triple strand concertina and barbed wire obstacle, disassembling and reassembling their own M-16A2 rifles and an M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon, clearing a mine field and wire obstacle, setting up a field radio antenna including calling in a 9-line Medical Evacuation request.

A physical fitness station included a team relay effort of five minutes of push-ups, five minutes of sit-ups and throwing a grappling hook, low crawling to its landing point and continuing the process until the Soldier reached 100 meters and then sprinting back to the starting point until the entire team had completed the task. This event was concluded with a half-mile team run.

All the stations were timed events and the best overall time won the competition. The antenna station purposely had one

piece of equipment missing in order to make the Soldiers adapt and overcome the deficiency as they may have to in actual operations.

“The tasks were chosen to test the Soldiers mentally and physically,” said Ake.

The Soldiers were not given the specific tasks prior to the competition, but instead received an operations order at the site. “One thing we do the month before,” explained 489th Engineer Bn. Commander Lt. Col. David Ragusa, “we give them a verbal op-order that will somewhat hint of some things they can be looking for.”

The Soldiers had been already training for about six months on general engineer tasks that they expected to be included in the competition. “One of the keys,” Ragusa said, “is PT. It’s also a way I encourage PT because the guys who can do the PT have an advantage and it’s designed that way. If you’re going to hump 15 miles, you need to be in shape.”

Planning for the event began about six months prior to the event itself, and although it went off, it was not executed quite as planned. The weather played an important part in the allocation of assets such as helicopter support that had to be diverted to Louisiana for Hurricane Gustav relief support. Also, the obstacle course was deemed unusable due to the amount of rain received during the week.

The competition, which began on Friday morning, culminated in the Engineer Ball on Saturday evening where the winner was announced and various awards were given.

The winner of the 2008 Sapper Stakes was the 704th Route Clearance Company of Hot Springs, Ark., whose team consisted of Staff Sgt. Joshua Klober, Staff Sgt. Matthew O’Neal, Cadet Rory Garcia, Spc. John Oxford, Pfc. Barry Jewell and Pfc. Garrett Base. Besides the perpetual trophy, all of them received Army Achievement Medals for their victory.

Other participants were the 383rd Mobility Augmentation Company of Jonesboro, Ark., who provided two teams; the 806th Route Clearance Company of Conway, Ark., also with two teams and a combined team with Soldiers from the Headquarters and Forward Support Companies, 489th Engineer Bn. from North Little Rock, Ark. ❏

Clockwise from top left: A Soldier of the 489th Engineer Battalion throws a grappling hook during the 3rd Annual Sapper Stakes competition. • Soldiers of the 489th Engineer Battalion, assemble a field antenna. • Soldiers of the 806th Mobility Augmentation Company prepare a triple strand concertina and barbed wire obstacle. • Spc. John Oxford of the 704th Route Clearance Company performs sit-ups in the physical training event. • Soldiers of the 704th Route Clearance Company perform the half-mile run in the physical training event.



A NEW STRATEGY FOR PHYSICAL FITNESS

Story and photos by Spc. Monte Swift
203rd Public Affairs Detachment

DES MOINES, Iowa—Physical fitness and Soldiers often go hand in hand, especially when it comes to the tough conditions a Soldier can be subjected to. It takes a good routine and high motivation to stay consistently fit.

Army Reserve Soldiers don't usually get the structured Physical Training (PT) that their active-duty counterparts receive, thus it's important to make unique routines fit into Soldiers' busy lives. That is why Army Reserve units in and around Des Moines, Iowa, are working on a new program, called Operation Career Builder, to help Soldiers who are having difficulty with PT succeed.

The first classes of the program were held at Camp Dodge, Iowa from Aug. 1-3, 2008, and included motivational speaking with insightful information on nutrition, physical fitness and strategies for success.

"We want Soldiers to know they are never on their own for receiving help," said Warrant Officer Jeffery L. Holtmyer, 103rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command, Fort Des Moines, Iowa. "We help Soldiers get over the mental challenges of getting into and maintaining good physical health."

Operation Career Builder provided details on meal preparations, recipes and good choices for Soldiers buying fast foods. Nutritionists, dieticians and physical therapists were on hand from the 4224th U.S. Army Hospital at Fort Des Moines to give classes on maintaining good health and fitness levels for Soldiers.

Soldiers received many hand-outs on foods and different types of training plans.

"It is important to introduce Soldiers to new types of exercises that they can easily perform while doing daily activities," said Sgt. 1st Class Robert Mayhew, a career counselor at Fort Des Moines. "We want to give a positive approach to fitness and nutrition and help maintain morale."

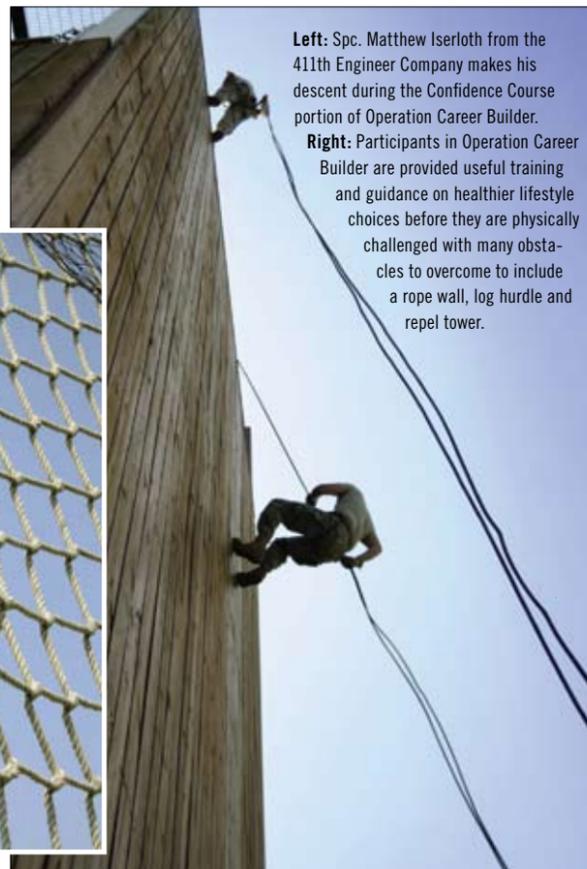
Operation Career Builder also gave Soldiers classes on educational and officer advancement to further their military careers.

Soldiers were shown demonstrations and practiced new types of exercises in the morning, then moved to the rappelling tower and an obstacle course in the

afternoon which further challenged their abilities while adding enjoyment and group camaraderie to the training.

The training ended with individual and group counseling from the physical therapists and dietitians who evaluated Soldier workout routines and eating habits, then tweaked them to fit the individual needs of the Soldier.

"We try to give Soldiers everything they need to be successful on the next level," said Holtmyer. "Every Soldier is worth helping." ❏

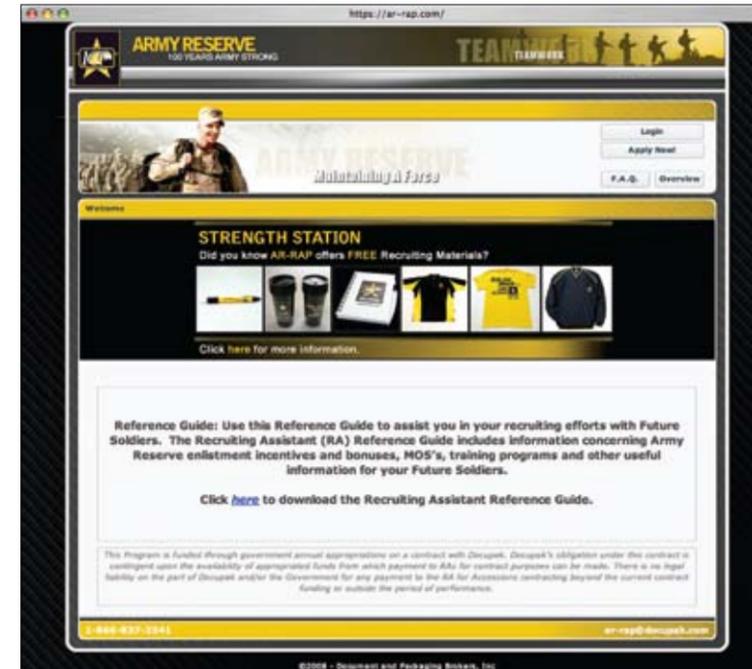


Left: Spc. Matthew Iserloth from the 411th Engineer Company makes his descent during the Confidence Course portion of Operation Career Builder.

Right: Participants in Operation Career Builder are provided useful training and guidance on healthier lifestyle choices before they are physically challenged with many obstacles to overcome to include a rope wall, log hurdle and repel tower.

AR-RAP FIELD GUIDE

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TOP REGIONAL RECRUITING ASSISTANTS

REGION 1

2nd Lt. Kate Roberts
Maine

REGION 2

Sgt. Brandon Ownes
Pa.

REGION 3

Staff Sgt. Donald Trout
W. Va.

REGION 4

Pfc. Nicholas Adair
Tenn.

REGION 5

Sgt. 1st Class Barbara Thomas
Fla.

REGION 6

Pfc. Kirsten Dennis
Ga.

REGION 7

Staff Sgt. Duaine Martin
Colo.

REGION 8

Spc. Michael Abramski
Iowa

REGION 9

Master Sgt. Steven Yach
Ill.

REGION 10

Pfc. Christopher Crable
Ind.

REGION 11

Master Sgt. Grace Bermudez
Calif.

REGION 12

Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Boone
Texas

2009: THE YEAR OF THE NCO

AND THE WINNER IS...

SPC. DAVID OBRAY NAMED ARMY SOLDIER OF THE YEAR

Story and photos by Timothy L. Hale
Army Reserve Public Affairs

WASHINGTON—
For the first time
in the seven-year
history of the Department of the
Army NCO and Soldier of the Year
“Best Warrior” Competition, an
Army Reserve Soldier has won
top honors.

Spc. David Obay was one of 12
junior enlisted Soldiers representing
the major Army commands at the five-
day competition held at Fort Lee, Va.
His selection as the top Soldier was
announced at the Sergeant Major of
the Army luncheon at the Association
of the United States Army annual
convention on Oct. 6, 2008, in
Washington, D.C.

In the end, Obay won the competi-
tion by conquering urban warfare
simulations, board interviews, essays,
physical fitness tests and Warrior
Tasks and Battle Drills relevant to
today’s current operating environment.

“My fellow competitors were
outstanding individuals and there is
no doubt I will see them again,” he
said. “From the beginning my mindset
was this is a lot of training and I
looked forward to bringing it back to
my unit.”

In a post-announcement press
conference, Obay said he felt the competi-
tion reflected what Soldiers and



Spc. Obay competes in the
Dept. of the Army NCO and
Soldier of the Year “Best
Warrior” Competition at Fort
Lee, Va., Sept. 28–Oct. 3, 2008.



Top to bottom: Army Reserve Soldier, Spc. David Obay, center, is flanked by Gen. Peter Chiarelli, Army Vice Chief of Staff, left, and Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth O. Preston after being named the 2008 Department of the Army Soldier of the Year on Monday, Oct. 6, 2008 at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. • Spc. David Obay, representing the Army Reserve, engages targets during the Dept. of the Army NCO and Soldier of the Year “Best Warrior” Competition at Fort Lee, Va., Sept. 28–Oct. 3, 2008.

NCOs are facing during operations
in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The 22-year-old Construction
Equipment Repair Specialist with
the 492nd Engineer Company, 414th
Engineer Command, Mankato, Minn.,
is a senior at Winona State University,
Winona, Minn. He is the President of
the Student Association at WSU and
is pursuing a Bachelor’s Degree in
Law & Society and Business Law.

Weighing 300 pounds at age 16,
Obay credits military discipline with
giving him the courage and ability to
become physically and mentally fit.
Obay’s brother and sister currently
serve in the Army.

Being named the Army’s top
Soldier brings new challenges for
Obay. In the days following the
announcement, he had numerous
national television and hometown
media interviews, visited the White
House and met with 600 World War



II veterans, 130 of which
were from his home state
of Minnesota.

Throughout the next
year, Obay will balance his
time in college with being
a spokesperson for not only
the Army, but the Army
Reserve as well at public
functions throughout the
United States.

In the NCO of the Year
competition, Staff Sgt.
Michael Noyce Merino of the
Montana Army National
Guard took top honors. It
was also the first time the
National Guard has won this
prestigious competition. ❏

*Editor’s Note: Spc. Obay
was promoted to the rank of
Sergeant on Dec. 3, 2008.
In the 2006 Army NCO and
Soldier of the Year competi-
tion Army Reserve Spc. John
Emmett won the Soldier of the
Year title. However, he was
on active duty and represented
U.S. Army Europe at the time
of the competition.*

SPC. RUSKE RECEIVES SILVER STAR



By Staff Sgt. Melissa Garcia
Army Reserve Communications

“WE WENT LOOKING FOR THE TALIBAN— and we found them.”

Sgt. 1st Class David Baltrusaitis, along with nine of his team members found a lot of Taliban fighters on April 21, 2008, perhaps 50 or so, well-armed and on the high ground.

The Americans were soon in the fight of their lives, a battle that would see one of them, a 28-year-old Army Reserve Soldier,

The squad was in the village of Afghanya conducting a dismounted presence patrol in Kapisa Province, Afghanistan. These patrols helped the Americans to get a general feel for the people. With them this day were two Afghan National Police (ANP) officers.

“There was an old guy in his 50s and a younger guy in his 20s,” Ruske said of the ANP officers. “I recognized the older guy from the vehicle check points we had done. He was always helpful and nice to me.”

The two ANP officers with the squad were not as lucky.

“The opening salvo hit both ANP officers,” Ruske said. “These poor ANPs weren’t even supposed to be with us that day, but they came along to help us out.”

The younger ANP, struck by a bullet in the forearm, made it back with the Americans and was treated immediately. In the open, under the unrelenting Taliban fire, the second ANP was on his back, not moving. The squad had no medic, but the squad members were trained combat lifesavers.

The patrol fell back and took cover behind the wall of a large two-family compound.

“We kicked down the door of the courtyard and kept returning fire for I don’t know how long,” Baltrusaitis recalled. “The enemy was maneuvering on us. We called for help, but the nearby patrol got pinned down at the same time.”

A communications glitch prevented the air support flying overhead from engaging the enemy.

“We had no combat air support, no vehicles and no medic,” Ruske said. “I told our lieutenant and Sgt. 1st Class Baltrusaitis that I was going to go up on the roof and see if I could get a better angle up there. My buddy, Spc. Eric Seagraves, and Capt. Jason Monholland came with me and we climbed a little ladder to the roof of the home. We couldn’t see much of anything, so we turned to go back down.”

The captain and Seagraves had started down the ladder when “things started exploding around us,” Ruske said. He threw himself down and returned fire, barely realizing he had been hit.



“Nothing seemed to be going our way that day,” Ruske said. “The enemy had the high ground, and help was a long hike away. The rounds came within inches of my walking out of there with a hole in the head. I considered myself lucky.” —Spc. Gregory Scott Ruske

attached to this squad of Pennsylvania Army National Guardsmen, perform so heroically that he would earn the Silver Star.

That Army Reserve Soldier was Spc. Gregory Scott Ruske, attached as a member of Baltrusaitis’ team from the 1st Squad, 3rd Battalion, 103rd Armor Regiment. The regiment was attached to a task force from the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). Ruske was the squad’s grenadier. He was on his first deployment to Afghanistan.

The patrol was suddenly hit by gunfire coming from the hills surrounding the valley. A hail of grenade, rifle and machine gun fire came at the patrol as they passed through an open field at the edge of the village.

“Nothing seemed to be going our way that day,” Ruske said. “The enemy had the high ground, and help was a long hike away. The rounds came within inches of my walking out of there with a hole in the head. I considered myself lucky.”

Army Reserve Spc. Gregory S. Ruske tries to calm Afghan National Police officers wounded in combat in the Afghanya Valley, Kapisa Province, Afghanistan, April 21, 2008. Ruske and the officers were on patrol with 3rd Platoon, Company A, Task Force Gladiator, Combined Joint Task Force 101. (Photo Courtesy of the U.S. Army)



“After he got dragged back and we put a tourniquet on him, he would start shivering uncontrollably. I did what I could to keep him calm between all the other stuff going on.”

Eventually, the patrol was relieved. Other than Ruske and the two Afghans, there were no friendly casualties. Something had gone his way after all.

“Despite everything that went wrong that day, I feel like we did all right,” he said. “We managed to bring everyone home alive.”

After finishing his tour in Afghanistan, Ruske came home and returned to his civilian job as a juvenile corrections officer in Denver, Colo. Fully recovered from his wound, Ruske and his team leader recently reminisced about the battle.

Ruske said he did not think his action deserved such a high decoration.



“I felt like someone had snapped me in my left hip and back with a rubber band,” he said. “Surprisingly, it didn’t hurt at all. I looked at my glove and saw blood. The round punched through my magazine and came out my lower back. I decided maybe the roof wasn’t the place to be.”

After another Soldier applied a dressing to his wound, Ruske moved to the corner of the house and saw the older ANP crawling along a shallow ditch.

“I noticed rounds impacting the ground near him and he looked scared—those [expletive] were taking potshots at him while he was wounded and crawling,” Ruske said.

Ruske quickly convinced some of the squad members to provide suppressive fire as he and Seagraves raced to the ditch and quickly moved the ANP to safety.

While the wounded Afghan was being treated, the wounded Ruske kept firing back at the enemy with his grenade launcher. While doing so, he took time to calm the man whose life he had just saved by holding his hand to reassure him that he was going to be okay.

“There were times when I didn’t think he was going to make it,” Ruske said.



Baltrusaitis, who recommended him for the Silver Star, said that he had carefully checked into the criteria, which calls for ‘gallantry in action while engaged in combat against an enemy, or while serving in combat with Friendly Foreign Forces.’

“What you did that day was right in keeping with that,” Baltrusaitis told the younger Soldier.

Both said they would go back and fight again with the same bunch of guys they served with in Afghanistan. For Baltrusaitis, he would be particularly pleased if that bunch included a Soldier named Ruske.

“I think of him as a hero,” Baltrusaitis said of Ruske. “He risked his life for a guy he didn’t even know. It says a lot about him personally. Absolutely one of the bravest men I have had to fight next to.”

His comrades, an Afghan police officer and the U.S. Army would agree. But like many Soldiers in extraordinary circumstances, Ruske does not think he acted heroically.

“I reacted based on my upbringing, training and compassion, and, thankfully, it worked out in the end,” Ruske said. ❏

Editor’s Note: Spc. Ruske was promoted to the rank of Sergeant Jun. 23, 2008, about a week before the end of his deployment.



Lt. Gen. Jack C. Stultz, chief, Army Reserve and Command Sgt. Maj. of the Army Reserve Leon Caffie, award Sgt. Gregory S. Ruske the Silver Star during the Senior Leader War Council held in Orlando, Oct. 23, 2008. Also present was Ruske’s mother, Somsri Ruske. (Photo by Pfc. Ian Morales) • Army Reserve Spc. Gregory S. Ruske watches over an Arizona National Guard platoon as it moves down the wadi in the Alasay Valley, Alasay District, Kapisa Province, Afghanistan, Nov. 16, 2007. Ruske was an individual augmentee assigned to Company B, Task Force Gladius, Combined Joint Task Force 82, CJTF 82 in Afghanistan is responsible for security and stability operations in NATO’s Regional Command East. (Photo Courtesy of the U.S. Army) • A Soldier on patrol studies the rugged terrain surrounding farm fields in the Afhanya Valley, Kapisa Province, Afghanistan, April 21, 2008, shortly before his unit, 3rd Platoon, Company A, Task Force Gladiator, Combined Joint Task Force 101, is attacked by a superior enemy force with heavy grenade, machine gun and rifle fire. (Photo Courtesy of the U.S. Army) • Army Reserve Spc. Gregory S. Ruske smiles as he returns to his vehicle after Soldiers from his unit and the Pennsylvania National Guard engaged with key leaders in a small village off main supply route Vermont in the Kapisa Province, Afghanistan, in June 2008. The Soldiers were able to reach the village only by climbing the steep rocky hills that surround it. (Photo Courtesy of the U.S. Army)

ARMY RESERVE COMMUNITIES

HELPING THE ENVIRONMENT



SALTWATER STATE PARK, Wash.—Active-duty Army divers used Army Reserve watercraft as transportation and floating platforms to help Northwest agencies remove an artificial reef of tires from Saltwater State Park near Seattle in August 2008.

By Pam Garrison » Public Affairs Office
70th Regional Readiness Command



The Army Reserve landing craft Malvern Hill, 170 feet long by 40 feet wide, dwarfs the LCM-8 Mike boat preparing to tie up alongside it. The Malvern Hill was used as a dive platform for the Innovative Readiness Training project to remove an artificial reef of old tires from Saltwater State Park in Puget Sound near Seattle. (Photo by Pam Garrison)



Pam Garrison

Automobile tires that hadn't seen the light of day for 30 years are lowered to the deck of the Army Reserve's 175th Transportation Company's LCM-8, or Mike boat. Army divers from the 544th Engineer Dive Team from Fort Eustis, Va., prepared the tires for removal by attaching bunches to a float bag, seen suspended above the tires and floating the tires to the surface where they were picked up by a crane aboard the landing craft Malvern Hill and swung aboard the deck of the waiting Mike boat.

The tires were placed there 30 years ago, but wildlife didn't grow well on them, nor were other forms of life attracted to them, and they were found to exude toxic substances.

They had to come out.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) sponsored a plan

submitted as an Innovative Readiness Training request for the Army's help. Once approved, the Northwest Straits Commission coordinated all the pieces that came together in August at Saltwater State Park near Des Moines, Wash., halfway between Seattle and Tacoma, to remove about 500 tires in 50 to 60 feet of water, across 55 acres.

Soldiers from the Army Reserve's Pier 23 units in Tacoma—the 709th Transportation Co., 175th Transportation Co., 481st Transportation Co. and 467th Transportation Co.—manned the LCU 2000, named the Malvern Hill, and two of the LCM-8s, otherwise known as "Mike" boats. The Malvern Hill is 170 feet long and 40 feet wide. The Mike boats are smaller and have limited space below decks. The divers are using the Malvern Hill as a "base" to prepare for dives and the Mike boats are used to carry the tires to a predesignated site ashore where they are loaded into a container.

"That's the biggest load we've had yet," said Watercraft Operator Spc. Joel Siemienczuk of the 175th Trans. Co. "Yesterday we only had 17 but the divers are kind of getting into their groove now."

The divers are active-duty Soldiers of the 544th Engineer Dive Team, from Fort Eustis, Va. Twenty of them tackled the work of removing the tires.

The removed tires will be shredded and put into a landfill.

That part of Puget Sound is cleaner and can "heal." The area will

be prepared for the construction of a reef made of rocks, pre-cast concrete posts and "artificial kelp." These materials are stable and are environmentally safe and the WDFW hopes the reef will provide habitat for marine wildlife. ☐

EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE

THOUSANDS OF JOB OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE NATIONWIDE TO ARMY RESERVE SOLDIERS

WASHINGTON—The Army Reserve’s Employer Partnership Initiative continues to gain tremendous support from many of America’s leading employers, providing Army Reserve Soldiers with a wide variety of job opportunities, spanning industries from transportation and logistics to telecommunications, to healthcare, law enforcement, and retail. Since Lt. Gen. Jack C. Stultz, Chief of the Army Reserve, founded the program in April 2008, more than 150 public and private employers in 43 states nationwide have joined the initiative.

join an impressive list of partners in both the private and public sector across the U.S.

In addition to adding Wal-Mart as an employer partner in 2008, the Army Reserve also signed agreements with Schneider National, Inc., Pickens-Kane, CB Richard Ellis Group, Inc. and the Sears Holdings Corporation.

During the signing ceremony with Schneider National, Tim Fliss, the company’s executive vice president of human

resources, noted the importance of the partnership—the first of its kind for the state—as well as for Army Reserve Soldiers.

Wis. on Sept. 12, provided Stultz an opportunity to address a large crowd of Schneider employees during the company’s trademark “Sound the Horn” event. The Employer Partnership Initiative provides career opportunities and advancement for all Army Reserve Soldiers who have successfully completed their initial entry training, earned the requisite certifications and are in good standing with the Army Reserve.

According to Stultz, “The initiative gives our Soldiers the opportunity to advance their private sector careers and provides family stability while they continue to defend and protect our country.”

The Employer Partnership Initiative provides Soldiers with professional development in their civilian career, offering the support of career counselors to Soldiers as they navigate the job opportunities offered by Employer Partners. Additionally, the Army Reserve helps Soldiers maximize their individual skills, training, employment opportunities and advancement plans. Soldiers benefit from increased job opportunities and greater stability, resulting in continuity in their civilian careers, Family lives and Army



Lt. Gen. Jack C. Stultz and Karen Kaufman, senior manager for tele-acquisition for U.S. Cellular, sign a partnership contract at the Employer Partnership Initiative luncheon.

“We are talking about great individuals who’ve been tested under fire who want to be able to do a great job back in civilian life with the confidence they have the support of their employer and they can stay in uniform for their country.” —Lt. Gen. Jack C. Stultz, Chief, Army Reserve, Commander, U.S. Army Reserve Command

Stultz believes in the program’s growing success. “I am proud to have launched the Employer Partnership Initiative to show my gratitude to our brave Warrior-Citizens and to thank them for their service.”

The world’s largest private employer—Wal-Mart—signed an agreement during a Veterans Day event on Nov. 14 at company headquarters in Bentonville, Ark. “I’m honored to officially begin an enduring partnership with a company of such impressive stature, the nation’s largest private employer,” said Stultz at the signing. “Wal-Mart has been a great friend to the military, and I look forward to collaborating with our newest valued partner to achieve mutual goals to attract, develop and retain a quality workforce.”

Just one week later, during a ceremony at the Union League Club in Chicago, U.S. Cellular became the 100th employer to enroll in the initiative. These companies

resources, noted the importance of the partnership—the first of its kind for the state—as well as for Army Reserve Soldiers.

“This program is truly a win-win scenario for Soldiers, the U.S. Army and Schneider National,” said Fliss. “It provides American Soldiers with great career opportunities near their reserve unit, allowing for more stability in their careers and lives. The positions the Soldiers hold at Schneider provide them with business experience that helps in their reserve careers and further strengthens the U.S. Army. Schneider National wins because the company’s job vacancies are filled with quality employees who are well-trained Soldiers.”

The ceremony, held at the company’s headquarters in Green Bay,



Sgt. 1st. Class Chris Farley

Top to bottom: The 432nd Civil Affairs Battalion located in Green Bay, Wis. presents the colors for the Employer Partnership signing between the U.S. Army Reserve and Schneider National, Inc. Lt. Gen. Jack C. Stultz, Chief of the Army Reserve, is pictured on the far right standing atop the truck’s flatbed. • U.S. Army Reserve Brig. Gen. Robert P. Stall, commanding general of the 80th Training Command and president of Euclid Hospital, addresses the crowd assembled for the Employer Partnership signing event with the Cleveland Clinic in September 2008.

Reserve service. The partnership also affords Soldiers the unique opportunity to use the cultural and language experience they get in the current Army environment as many of the employer partners have global operations which afford Soldiers exciting opportunities.

Employment opportunities exist in a range of industries across the country from Fortune 500 companies such as General Electric and Boeing; hospitals such as INOVA Health Systems in Northern

Virginia and the Cleveland Clinic; municipal organizations such as the New York Police Department and the DC Metropolitan Police Department; as well as States such as Vermont, Missouri and Florida, among others. ☒



Photo Courtesy of the Cleveland Clinic

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. How do I apply?

A. Visit the Army Reserve Web site at www.armyreserve.army.mil and click on the Employer Partnership Initiative icon. Click on the link for the Employer Partnership Initiative then click on the job search link. The job search page gives you the option to search by keyword, job, company, or location. When you select a job, you will first be required to fill out your personal information in order to verify your status in the Army Reserve. Submit your personal information and the screen will take you to the Employer’s Web site and the job description.

For help with placement send an email to arcareers@usar.army.mil.

Q. Who is eligible to participate in the Employer Partnership Initiative?

A. All Army Reserve Soldiers, regardless of age or rank, are eligible to participate in the Employer Partnership Initiative as long as they are in good standing with the Army Reserve and have successfully completed their MOS training.

Q. Does the program guarantee a job?

A. Employer Partners know that Army Reserve Soldiers are well-qualified and make good employees. That is why they are eager to consider Army Reserve applicants for their positions. Army Reserve Soldiers must still meet employer skill requirements for available job openings.

SOME EMPLOYER PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE PARTNERS

- American Trucking Association
- BAE Systems
- Bausch and Lomb
- British Telecom
- Cleveland Clinic
- Continental Airlines
- Dell, Inc.
- Exxon Mobil
- Iowa Department of Public Safety
- Lands End
- Lockheed Martin
- Marriott Corporation
- Merck & Co, Inc
- Meridian Technology Group
- New York Life
- Penske Truck Leasing
- Phoenix Environmental Labs
- Rolls Royce Corporation
- Schneider International
- Sears Holdings, Corporation
- State of Arizona
- State of Maine
- State of Ohio
- State of Tennessee
- Vulcan Materials

For a complete list of partners, visit www.armyreserve.army.mil.

GIVING BACK: VOLUNTEERS HELP IN S.C. COMMUNITY

By Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bell
Public Affairs Office
81st Regional Support Command

FORT JACKSON, S.C.—Military and civilian members of the Army Reserve's 81st Regional Support Command (RSC) traded their Army Combat Uniforms and business attire for work boots and gloves during a community project on Sept. 26, 2008.

Drenched from coastal storms that hovered over the entire East Coast, Soldiers and civilians assigned to

for families while they look for a permanent alternative.

"Giving back to the community is an extension of one of the Army's core values of selfless service," Slay said. "The ethos of selfless service means not only serving fellow Soldiers and their Families without regard to self, but also the larger community that we are pledged to support and defend."

Armed with rakes, shovels and a strong appetite to help others in need, more than 12 members quickly assembled and

"I feel that I am blessed and to give something back to the community will make a difference," she said. "The time and effort (we put in), especially during the weather limitations, showed the community that there are people who really care."

"It made me appreciate life just a little bit more," she said. "It also made me happy to help others, knowing that they appreciated our help."

With more than 30 years of volunteering on her life resume, Slay, who is originally from West Point, Miss., and a colonel in the Army Reserve, said it was important to give back to the community.

"I feel strongly that everyone has skills, and they should give back to the world as much as they are able," Slay said. "Also, volunteering always results in a more positive self-image and often leads to other opportunities, such as becoming friends with people from different backgrounds or different parts of town."

As the team carried boxes of trash, yard debris and recyclable items outside, nearby residents continually thanked them for their support for their community.

"I really hope that they appreciate life and understand that no matter what you do to help others, it's a heartwarming experience," Stewart said about the thankful neighbors.

As the command officially began business Oct. 1, 2008, the day's event gave a jump start on working together as Soldiers and civilians as one team.

"These few hours contributed to team-building for our new organization and allowed us to learn new things about each other," Slay said. ☑

tackled the labor-intensive project with a positive attitude.

Staff Sgt. Patricia Stewart, a resource management specialist who is originally from South Haven, Mich., said she enjoyed volunteering in the Columbia area and looks forward to future community projects with the 81st RSC.

Fort Jackson's newest tenant took a day away from their busy schedules to help their new neighbors and the Columbia, S.C., community.

Leonette Slay, the 81st RSC director of human resources, said the team volunteered to clean up a local family shelter that provides transitional housing



Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bell

Lt. Col. Richard Evely, chief of facility planning for the 81st Regional Support Command, clips bushes at a Columbia, S.C., family shelter that provides families with transitional housing while they look for a permanent alternative.

WWII "WILDCATS" RETURN TO CAMP JACKSON

By Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bell
Public Affairs Office
81st Regional Support Command

FORT JACKSON, S.C.—Generations of "Wildcat" Soldiers returned to the dawn of the 81st Infantry Division that began more than 90 years ago here. The nickname reportedly was adopted for the division when a group of Soldiers encountered a wildcat roaming the creeks of Camp Jackson, later named Fort Jackson.

The 81st Infantry Division Association's annual reunion, held Oct. 9–12, 2008, brought veterans of World War II, Korea, Vietnam and more recent eras together with current members of the 81st Regional Support Command (RSC) to exchange personal stories of past military operations.

From interacting with the Army's newest Soldiers in basic training to eating at an Army dining facility, Dr. (Lt. Col.) John Boyd, the 81st RSC historian, said reunions are moments in which Soldiers, Families and friends can meet and educate each other about the past and future life of being a Soldier.

"It offers them a chance to reflect on their sacrifices and achievements and to memorialize their friends and comrades who did not make it," he said.

Some of those stories came from World War II veteran Pfc. Wendall R. Clift, who joined the 81st Division on Aug. 12, 1943.

"It's about camaraderie," he said. "We don't really talk about the days of combat, but rather funny stories that relate to certain events during the war."



Becky Gallagher

Maj. Kenneth Crowe, the Headquarters and Headquarters detachment commander for the 81st Regional Support Command, talks to visitors with the 81st Division reunion during a stop at the 81st RSC headquarters building.

Clift has spent the past 21 years attending the reunion, visiting old friends and reminiscing about the past. Clift admits as years go by, the number of living 81st Division Soldiers is shrinking.

"We are getting old and there are not too many of us left out there," said the Venice, Fla., resident. "We used to have 50 to 60 veterans show up, but now there is just a handful."

Boyd said keeping in contact with veterans of past wars is rewarding for both today's Soldiers and the veterans.

"We take the time to reminisce and reflect on past achievements as well as to

educate members about current operations and trends in our military," he said.

Bringing a historical perspective to what the Army is and was, is one goal of the annual reunion.

"Most importantly, we need to treat them like we someday want others to treat us—with honor, respect and a recognition that the experience of a veteran is unlike any other," Boyd said.

Whether it is 1944 or 2008, Clift said Soldiers will always have something in common.

"Duty. Honor. Country," he said. ☑

“VISIT OUR UNITS, GET TO KNOW OUR SOLDIERS”

ARMY RESERVE AMBASSADOR JOSEPH THOMAS: “IN THE CENTER OF IT ALL”

SOUTHFIELD, Mich.—As the largest center of concentrated businesses in the Midwest, Southfield, Mich. prides itself as being “In the Center of it All.”

The man who represents Army Reserve units and concerns to the Chief, Army Reserve (CAR) likewise keeps himself “truly in the center” even though he has never served in the Army or Army Reserve.

“I’ve always been military minded. As a matter of fact, a lot of people think that I used to be in a branch of the service,” Ambassador Joseph Thomas said. In college, he attended four semesters of Military Science but it was law enforcement which enticed Thomas more.

“I learned to work for and care for Soldiers early in my law enforcement career,” Thomas said. “I worked very closely with military groups in Jackson, Albion and Southfield, Mich., partnering with the units that were in the city I was the police chief in. I was supporting Soldiers and their Families before I was appointed to the Ambassador program. The Ambassador program seemed to be a way to get things done faster.”



Joseph Thomas

DO YOU KNOW YOUR AMBASSADOR?

Joseph Thomas

6888 White Pines Drive, Brighton, Mich. 48116
jthomas@cityofsouthfield.com
www.armyreserve.army.mil/ARWEB/OUTREACH/

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Chief of Police

Civilian Education

Doctoral Degree, Educational Leadership and Counseling, Eastern Michigan University; Specialist of Arts Degree, Educational Leadership, Eastern Michigan University; Master of Science Degree, Public Administration, Western Michigan University; Associate of Arts Degree, Law Enforcement, Jackson Community College; Bachelor of Science Degree, Mathematics, Alcorn State University

Community Honors

Award of Excellence for Aiding in USAR Recruitment; Awarded the Freedom Team Salute Certificate of Appreciation by the United States Army’s Chief of Staff and Secretary of the Army; Presented Crime Fighter Award by Fight Crime: Invest in Kids Michigan; Detroit Area Council’s Boy Scouts of America Heroes of Scouting Award

For More Info

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Organizations, Clubs, Philanthropies

Phi Beta Kappa, Eastern Michigan University Chapter; FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Association; Michigan Emergency Management Association; Southfield-Lathrup Optimist Club; Advisory Board of the Salvation Army; Member of The Southfield Rotary Club

On a typical day as Army Reserve Ambassador, Thomas could be found coordinating with local unit points of contact, attending and participating in various unit functions while getting an opportunity to talk to officers and enlisted Soldiers. He also awards special Ambassador coins to Soldiers and their Families, thanking them for their services.

He also follows up on concerns brought to his attention with the appropriate Army Reserve personnel; sharing information with general officers and making public presentations about the Army Reserve and the advantages for young people to join.

He stays “in the center of it all” throughout the state of Michigan. “At least twice a year I train in the field with Soldiers. “I live with them, eat with them, train with them,” Thomas said. In this way, he knows how they train and is in a better position to be able to talk with organizations and groups about the benefits and challenges faced by today’s Citizen-Soldier—and how those groups and organizations can get behind and support those Army Reserve Soldiers and their Families. ❏

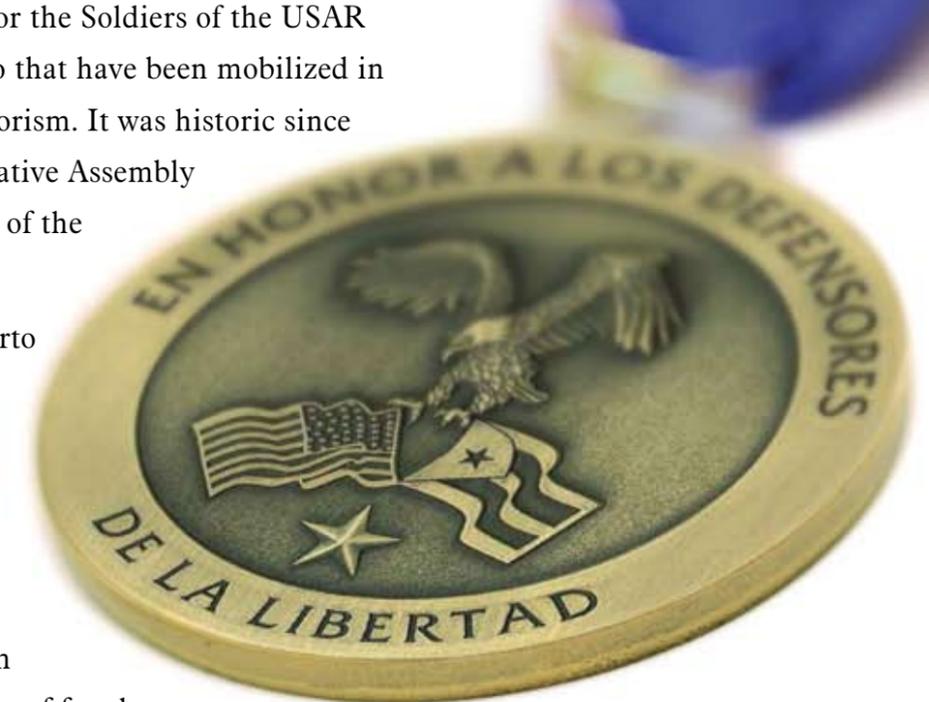


LEGISLATIVE MEDAL

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO—On September 11, 2008, the Senate and the House of Representatives of Puerto Rico held a historic joint session to honor the Soldiers of the USAR and National Guard in Puerto Rico that have been mobilized in support of the Global War on Terrorism. It was historic since it was the first time that the Legislative Assembly convened in a joint session outside of the Capitol building.

The session was held at the Roberto Clemente Coliseum in San Juan, presided by the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House and the Mayor of San Juan. Over 2,500 Soldiers received the medal.

The medal is engraved in Spanish and says: “In honor of the defenders of freedom. Legislative Assembly, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.” ❏



Cheryl Anne Thomas

Ambassador Joseph Thomas recognizes fallen comrades of the Vietnam War in front of a replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Brighton, Mich. Sept. 11, 2008.

Thomas serves as the chief of police in Southfield, located just minutes northwest of downtown Detroit, Mich.

TRANSFORMATION

99TH RSC ACTIVATION CEREMONY

NEW ERA FOR ARMY RESERVE

Story and photos by Jack Gordon
Public Affairs Office
99th Regional Support
Command/West

FORT DIX, N.J.—“Today marks a major milestone in the mission success of realigning the Army Reserve to better address our role in the Army and for America’s defense,” said Maj. Gen. William Monk III. “With this ceremony we take another major step in making Army Reserve transformation a reality, and put another building block in place to transform our force from a Cold War strategic reserve to a well-trained operational force that complements the Army across the full spectrum of capabilities.”

Only moments before, Monk officially received the 99th Regional Readiness Command’s colors from Maj. Gen. Alan D. Bell, deputy commanding general, U.S. Army Reserve Command; and deputy chief, U.S. Army Reserve, for operations, readiness, training and mobilization. The exchange symbolically designated Monk to assume command responsibility for the new Regional Support Command (RSC)—the first of four RSCs which were consolidated from 10 Regional Readiness Commands (RRCs) under Army Reserve transformation initiatives.

The late summer sun bathed Sharp Field in bright light as the 78th Army Band and the 99th’s Color Guard set the grassy stage for the official passing of the colors. The 99th RSC’s new headquarters



Top to bottom: With Maj. Gen. Alan D. Bell holding the 99th RSC’s colors, 99th Command Sgt. Maj. Kurtis J. Timmer carefully unrolls them, revealing the 99th’s “Checkerboard” patch. • Sgt. Caroline Stitt plays the piccolo as the 78th Army Band featured patriotic music during the ceremony.

here, currently under the final phases of construction, is expected to be ready for occupancy at the beginning of 2009. By spring, Monk indicated, the command should be fully operational at the site.

The 99th RSC now comprises the geography that was once assigned to the 77th, 94th and 99th RRCs, stretching along 13 states of America’s Eastern Seaboard from southern Virginia to the northern tip of Maine.

Through the transition, the staffs of all three RRCs are continuing their efforts for the 99th RSC, working from their past RRC locations, but now more focused on the new RSC mission—base operations. Prior to the disestablishments of the RRCs, all three had significant command and control (C2) and support missions for assigned units within their areas of operation and geo-boundaries. The RSC now

has diminished, minimal C2, and instead is primarily responsible for facilities management of all AR facilities within the Northeast Region. It’s a new mission... and challenge.

“These are challenging times...but not impossible times,” said Bell. “Challenges are nothing new to Soldiers, and (challenges) are especially nothing new to the 99th.”

“The 99th has been tested over the years. Its strength has been proven through countless campaigns such as the Battle of the Bulge and crossing the Bridge at Remagen in WWII, only to face the sands of Saudi Arabia ...” Bell said. “Each time, the 99th has emerged victorious, brushing the dust and desert from their uniforms and driving forward...ready to face the next objective.”



TAKING FLIGHT

ARMY RESERVE RECEIVES JOINT CARGO AIRCRAFT

By Maj. William S. Wynn
Army Reserve Aviation

WACO, Texas—The latest addition to the U.S. Army Reserve Aviation fleet is the C-27J Joint Cargo Aircraft (JCA) unveiled during a “Roll-Out” Ceremony for the U. S. Army and the U.S. Air force held on Oct. 15, 2008, at the L-3 Integrated Systems Aviation Facility in Waco.

The ceremony served as L-3 and Finmeccanica/Alenia North America’s first production aircraft delivery to the military, signifying the first of 78 aircraft for the Army Reserve, Army National Guard, Air Force Reserve and the Air National Guard.

Once fielded, the C-27J, or Spartan as it is referred to by the manufacturer, will enable the Army and Air Force Reserve components to accomplish critical theater-level transport missions bridging the gap between the C-130 cargo airplane and the CH-47D Chinook helicopter. According to the manufacturer, the JCA is the world’s most advanced tactical transport aircraft of its size and offers the military unmatched mission versatility due to the Spartan’s power plant performance, excellent structural features and handling characteristic.

According to Master Sgt. Stanley Brown, Army Reserve Aviation Directorate, the major anticipated mission for the Spartan includes providing ground forces with

aerial sustainment and operational support, providing troop transport, serving as a casualty evacuation or medical evacuation platform, an airdrop or parachute platform for service personnel and cargo, and is anticipated to provide critical support to homeland security and humanitarian assistance in the U.S. and abroad.

Col. Alvin L. Foshee, director of Army Reserve Aviation, said this aircraft will “enable Army Reserve aviators and aircrews to provide superior support and flexibility to commanders on the ground.” Foshee, who served on the original aircraft steering committee, stressed the aircraft alone will not be the sole factor in the Army Reserve’s ability to provide unmatched support. “It will be a combination of the new aircraft and a pool of highly trained and proficient Warrior-Citizens who will operate the machine,” he said.

Fielding of the C-27 JCA is scheduled to occur in 2012 and will fall under the operational command of the 11th Aviation Command. ✕



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88”x103”x83”	VLTT
88”x125”x83”	UH-60 Rotor Blade
Light Truck	340”x24”x24”
	ENGINES M1A1, M2, M3 UH-60, HMMWV
	84”x84”x60” max

SOURCE: L-3 Communications Integrated Systems (L-3 IS), Finmeccanica’s Alenia North America, Global Military Aircraft Systems (GMAS).



ARMY CAVALRY UNIT HANGS UP ITS SPURS AND STETSONS

Story and photos by Army Sgt. 1st Class Ron Burke
211th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CONROE, Texas—We read about it in history books. Troops marching through tree-studded, foggy hills in some southeastern state, wearily lining up to face off against each other, bugle calls piercing the air to signal movement and, suddenly, along the ridge...thunder. With battle cries and sabers held high, the cavalry charges into the fray. A roar erupts from the line as Soldiers see their colors rise in the charge and they rush to engage, following the lead of the U.S. Army Cavalry.

That was then. Now that thunder comes from a formation of AH-64 Apache attack helicopters cresting a sandy ridge in a foreign desert. Gone are the bugle calls and the troop maneuvers. The cheers now erupt from mounted and dismounted Soldiers who watch from the ground as their cavalry engage the enemy with salvos of 2.75 in. rockets and long-range hellfire missiles.

That long and illustrious tradition has now come to an end here as the Soldiers of the 7th Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment



silently watched seven mounted cavalry troops from the 1st Cavalry Division, Horse Cavalry Detachment of Fort Hood, Texas, ride out of the Lone Star Convention and Expo Center with their encased unit flag and distinctive red and white guidons during the unit's re-designation ceremony.

This re-designation is the result of the Army's transformation from a heavy division-based structure to a more modular brigade-oriented force to fight the war against terrorism and confront 21st century threats. The 7-6th is the last Army Reserve cavalry unit to be transformed into an aviation battalion and its history dates back to the Civil War. After several re-organizations and re-designations in the regular Army, the squadron was allotted to the Army Reserve in 1988 as one of the first Apache attack squadrons. The unit has seen action in over 30 campaigns and its troops have recently served in Iraq and Afghanistan in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

The 1-158th also has a storied past. It was constituted in 1968 as an element of the 101st Airborne Division, participated in nine campaigns in Vietnam earning two Presidential Unit Citations, two Valorous Unit awards and four Republic of Vietnam awards. Today, after several reorganizations and activations, the

1-158th replaces the 7th Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment.

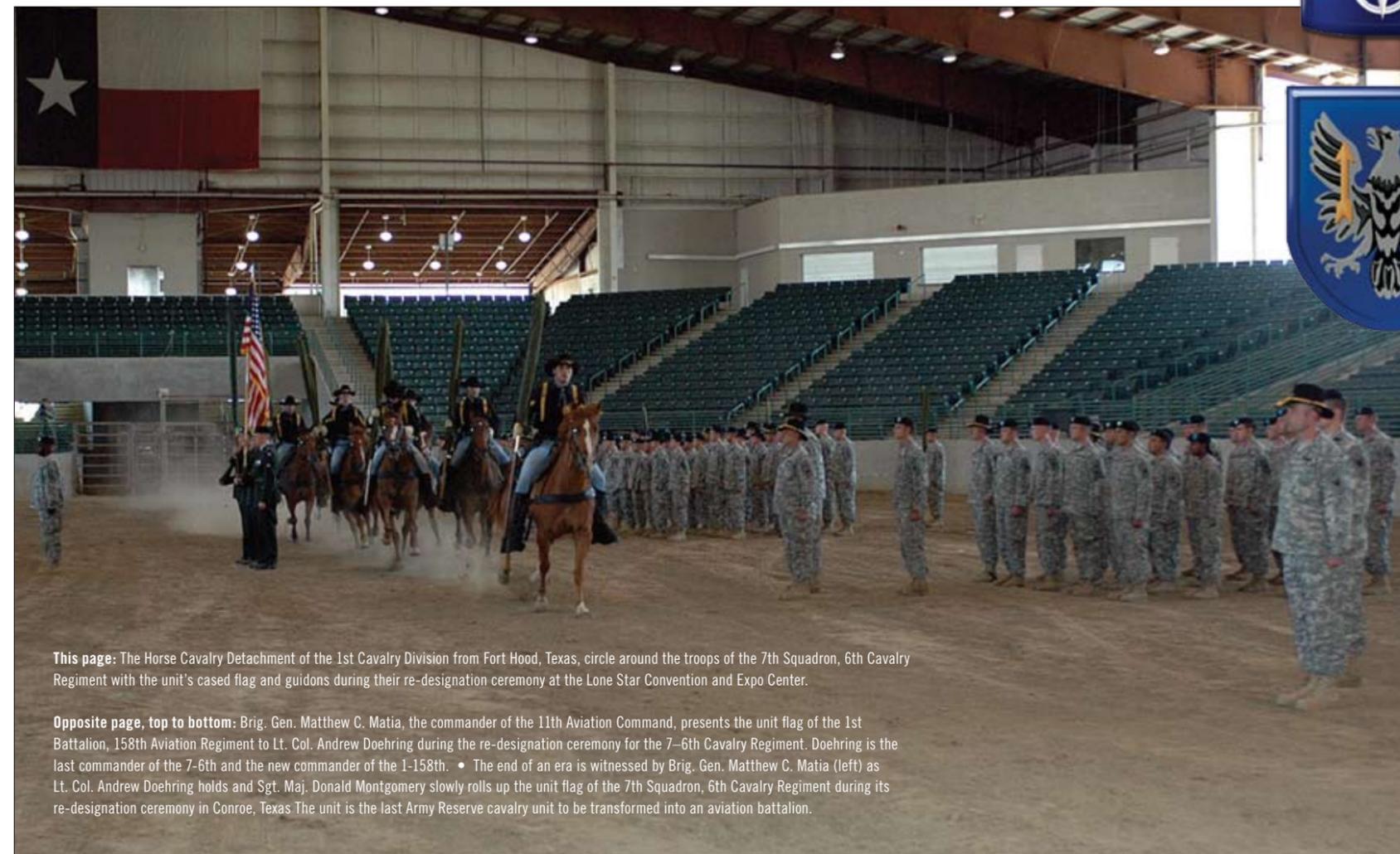
As the dust slowly settled on the convention center floor, Sgt. Maj. Donald Montgomery and his six First Sergeants slowly unrolled their new unit colors and guidons. Lt. Col. Andrew Doehring, the last commander of the 7-6th and the new commander of the 1st Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment rose to address his troops.

"The cavalry has a long legacy of pride and heritage, but more importantly, the organization and legacy of a unit comes from the people who serve in it," he said. He went on to name several well-known Soldiers who have served or are still serving in the 7-6th that have helped make the unit strong.

"We all come and go," said Brig. Gen. Matthew C. Matia, the commander of the 11th Aviation Command and presiding officer over the re-designation ceremony. "But the Army remains steadfast in serving the people of the United States. It endures and so will our nation in this new era of persistent conflict," he said. "This unit has a new challenge in support of the Global War on Terrorism," he said as the brilliant orange and ultramarine blue guidons lifted slightly with the breeze. "It's the transformation from the A-model Apache to the Longbow and continuing the tradition of Army aviation here in Conroe."

"A lot of pride is in this unit," said Doehring. "We may lose a little bit of our identity but it's just a name. There's no change to our mission, just a manifestation of how we will do business in the Army," he said.

Soldiers of the 7-6th will hang up their black Stetsons and lay out their spurs with pride, like those who came before them. Their name may change, and their distinctive red and white guidons may go away, but the spirit of the Army cavalry will live on in the new pages that will soon be added to the history books and a new challenge awaits the 1st Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment. ❏



This page: The Horse Cavalry Detachment of the 1st Cavalry Division from Fort Hood, Texas, circle around the troops of the 7th Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment with the unit's cased flag and guidons during their re-designation ceremony at the Lone Star Convention and Expo Center.

Opposite page, top to bottom: Brig. Gen. Matthew C. Matia, the commander of the 11th Aviation Command, presents the unit flag of the 1st Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment to Lt. Col. Andrew Doehring during the re-designation ceremony for the 7-6th Cavalry Regiment. Doehring is the last commander of the 7-6th and the new commander of the 1-158th. • The end of an era is witnessed by Brig. Gen. Matthew C. Matia (left) as Lt. Col. Andrew Doehring holds and Sgt. Maj. Donald Montgomery slowly rolls up the unit flag of the 7th Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment during its re-designation ceremony in Conroe, Texas. The unit is the last Army Reserve cavalry unit to be transformed into an aviation battalion.



ARMY RESERVE DIGS IN

RESERVE COMMAND AND FORCES COMMAND BREAK GROUND ON NEW HEADQUARTERS BUILDING

Story and photos by Timothy L. Hale
Army Reserve Public Affairs

FORT BRAGG, N.C.—With the turn of a shovel, Lt. Gen. Jack C. Stultz, chief of the Army Reserve, and Army Reserve Command Sergeant Major Leon Caffie put into motion the construction of the combined headquarters of the Army Reserve and Army Forces Command in a ceremony on Dec. 8, 2008.

Under clear but cold skies at Fort Bragg, the ceremonial ground breaking marked the beginning of the biggest transformation project of the Army Reserve under the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure initiative.



www.defenselink.mil/brac/

“From an operational standpoint, we are linked at the hip with FORSCOM,” said Stultz adding the Army Reserve provides over 200,000 Soldiers for FORSCOM-directed missions around the world.

Stultz said that when the Army Reserve develops rotation plans for support to Iraq, Afghanistan, other portions of the world plus stateside missions, the two commands already work closely together at Fort McPherson, Ga.

“We’re sitting down with Forces Command and developing the Army Reserve forces we have available.” Stultz added that together with FORSCOM and First Army, the forces are trained and then deployed.

The new combined headquarters building will encompass approximately 600,000 square feet of office space and will house over 2,700 military and

civilian personnel. Once completed, the new headquarters will be one of the premier showcase headquarters in the Army.

“Today is an important milestone,” said Gen. Charles C. Campbell, commander, Army Forces Command. “We’re making a real and tangible step forward.”

Campbell said the new state of the art command and control facility will provide a greater level of cooperation between FORSCOM and USARC.

Both Stultz and Campbell praised Fort Bragg, Army Corps of Engineers-Savannah District, Fayetteville and North Carolina congressional officials for their efforts in paving the way towards this phase of Army transformation.

“Fort Bragg is going to continue to be at the forefront in even greater ways in terms of what our nation’s military does,” said U.S. Rep. Mike McIntyre, N.C. 7th District.

“We are so proud to be able to support our military in this strong of a way and do it in a way that really shows we have a commitment here in North Carolina,” he said.

The new headquarters will be located at the corner of Knox and Randolph streets and will be built at an estimated cost of nearly \$300 million.



According to Ken Williamson, Army Reserve Command chief executive officer, the construction plan is slated at 1,000 days build time with an estimated completion in the summer 2011. ❏



Lt. Gen. Jack C. Stultz, chief of the Army Reserve, (fourth from the left) and Army Reserve Command Sgt. Major Leon Caffie (far right), along with other Fort Bragg and U.S. Army Forces Command dignitaries toss the first shovels of dirt at the ground breaking ceremony for the Army Reserve and Forces Command headquarters building at Fort Bragg, N.C.

335TH TESTS LATEST TECHNOLOGIES

By Maj. Greg Majewski
Public Affairs Officer
335th Signal Command

EAST POINT, Ga.—Imagine being able to provide instant Web access to any remote region of the world, while also providing secure cell phone service via an internet wireless connection in support of combat operations.

That’s what the 335th Signal Command is testing with its own commercialized Mobile Operations Center (MOC), that streamlines the latest wireless and satellite up-link technologies into one unified package.

The MOC is the brainchild of 1st Lt. Luke Roy, plans officer with the 335th.

Roy said the concept was developed during a brainstorming session he had with a fellow Soldier on a long flight from an exercise last year.

“I was returning from Bright Star in 2007 when we talked about some of the capabilities we wish we could instantly have when these types of training exercises come along,” said Roy. “We started diagramming out what we wanted and the Mobile Operations Center was born.”

Routinely large training exercises like Bright Star in Egypt or Grecian Firebolt in the United States incorporate signal assets from the Army Reserve, National Guard and active duty.

“We have a 30-mile radius antenna on the MOC that allows cell phone access through our internet uplink connection,” said Roy. “Something like this would have been perfect for us at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan.”



The 335th Signal Command Mobile Operations Center.

Maj. Greg Majewski

“By having a commercialized asset like the Mobile Operations Center, commanders can have links to the outside world within minutes while a unit’s Tactical Network Operations Center is being established,” said Col. Timothy Hybart, operations officer.

“The MOC shows us that there are no boundaries,” said Maj. Gen. Dennis Lutz, 335th commanding general. “The systems inside make it easier to communicate with government and civilian agencies as well as our allies, while greatly increasing effective command and control.”

The Mobile Operations Center will contribute in another forum outside just operations for the 335th.

It’s a recruiting tool the command hopes will help inspire the next generation Soldier about the ever changing world of the Signal Corps.

“Wireless, video and data routing equipment are all utilized in the MOC and are exactly the skills civilian employers are looking for, so its recruiting applications are endless,” said Lutz.

For the Soldiers who get the chance to work in the MOC, it’s just good ole’ fashion fun.

“I love it, it’s like being in a candy store,” said Sgt. Jacob Williamson. I get to use so many of our internet and wireless technologies in a non-contemporary way.” ❏

FEATURES

MONUMENT UNVEILS LEGEND OF 'LOST BATTALION'

FRENCH CITIZENS PAY TRIBUTE TO FAMOUS WWI AMERICAN UNIT

Story and photos by
Sgt. Maj. Cameron Porter
Public Affairs Office
21st Theater Sustainment Command

BINARVILLE, FRANCE—Nine decades have passed since more than 116,000 American Soldiers lost their lives in battle during World War I, but the people of France have not forgotten and continue to pay homage and honor to these fallen heroes.

In the small town of Binarville, a monument was unveiled Oct. 7, 2008, as a humble gesture of appreciation to 687 of these heroes best portrayed in the 2002 A&E movie "The Lost Battalion" starring Ricky Schroder.

Bus loads of local officials, towns people and school children attended the solemn but salient ceremony. Maj. Gen. William Terpeluk, who traveled from New York to attend—still wearing his Statue of Liberty patch upon his left shoulder—was the keynote speaker.

Terpeluk is the last commander of the 77th Regional Readiness Command (RRC), which inactivated Sept. 30, 2008. The 77th RRC inherited its lineage from the 77th Infantry Division. The fame of the 77th, the "Statue of Liberty" Division, began in World War I with its Lost Battalion.

On Oct. 2, 1918, Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 308th Infantry Regiment entered a narrow ravine in the Charlevaux area of France, just outside of the town of Binaville. That night the Germans quietly occupied the high ground around them, cutting the Lost Battalion off from its higher command. Five days later, 194 survivors walked out of the ravine and into legend.



Terpeluk, speaking to hundreds of French men, women and school children who attended the ceremony, spoke of how their presence and their devotion has preserved the spirit of the 77th Division and its most famous unit, the Lost Battalion.

"It is not merely an American military legend. It tells the story of sacrifice and liberty that our two nations have shared for over two centuries," Terpeluk said.

"The Soldiers of the 77th have always worn the patch of the Statue of Liberty," Terpeluk said, "and we have never forgotten that it is a gift from France."



The ceremony began with commemorative speeches by Terpeluk, the mayor of Binarville, and other state officials from the Argonne region of France. Following the unveiling of the monument and the speeches, elementary children from a neighboring school assisted in laying wreaths in front of the monument. Pigeons were released and taps was played to conclude the event. Immediately following, a showing of the movie "The Lost

Battalion" in French was presented to those in attendance, and a gourmet lunch was served. Earlier in the day, junior high and high school students walked the area where the Lost Battalion was pinned down while their teachers and professors talked about the battle as part of their history and world geography classes.

Jacque Christopher Sauvage was one of the French teachers who walked the battleground and attended the monument dedication ceremony to the Lost Battalion with his students. He said his high school students are studying the First World War, and they chose to study this battle because it happened near their homes.

"We started out this morning taking the actual trail this battalion walked through ninety years ago," said Sauvage. "On the way, I explained to my students why the Americans were here and why France was at war with the Germans."

"The remembrance of what happened is very important," said Sauvage, "because it's important the students know the sacrifices of everyone who fought in World War I."

"I watched the film "The Lost Battalion" as part of my history class at school," said Kevin Agruaska, a student at Sonnevile Junior High School. "And today, we walked through the area where the Lost Battalion suffered so many casualties. The ceremony today and the monument built were both very well done, and they commemorate these Soldiers very, very well."

The Lost Battalion's 77th Division was the first Army Reserve division to deploy overseas and fight in World War I. Meuse Argonne American Cemetery is the largest American cemetery in Europe. The number of Soldiers from the 77th Division buried there is greater than any other two-star command that fought in Europe during World War I, said Terpeluk.

"A lot of Soldiers wearing the Statue of Liberty patch gave their lives on this soil, so I'm here to honor them. It makes me proud and humbled to be here today and honor those sacrifices from so long ago. There's a certain completeness about coming here to honor those Soldiers from the 77th who lost their lives during the First World War," Terpeluk said. ☐



Clockwise from top left: French elementary school children from the local area stand ready to assist with the laying of wreaths at the 77th "Liberty" Division's Lost Battalion memorial monument ceremony. The monument was dedicated to the American Soldiers who lost their lives while fighting in the Argonne forests of France exactly 90 years earlier. • Pigeons were released as a tribute to the fallen American Soldiers who served with the Lost Battalion. A memorial monument dedication ceremony to honor the 77th "Liberty" Division's Lost Battalion was held at Binarville, France, Oct. 7, 2008 • A memorial monument dedication ceremony was held outside of Binarville, France, to remember the efforts of the Lost Battalion and the 77th "Liberty" Division. Local citizens from nearby villages attended the ceremony in period uniforms to add to the commemorative atmosphere.

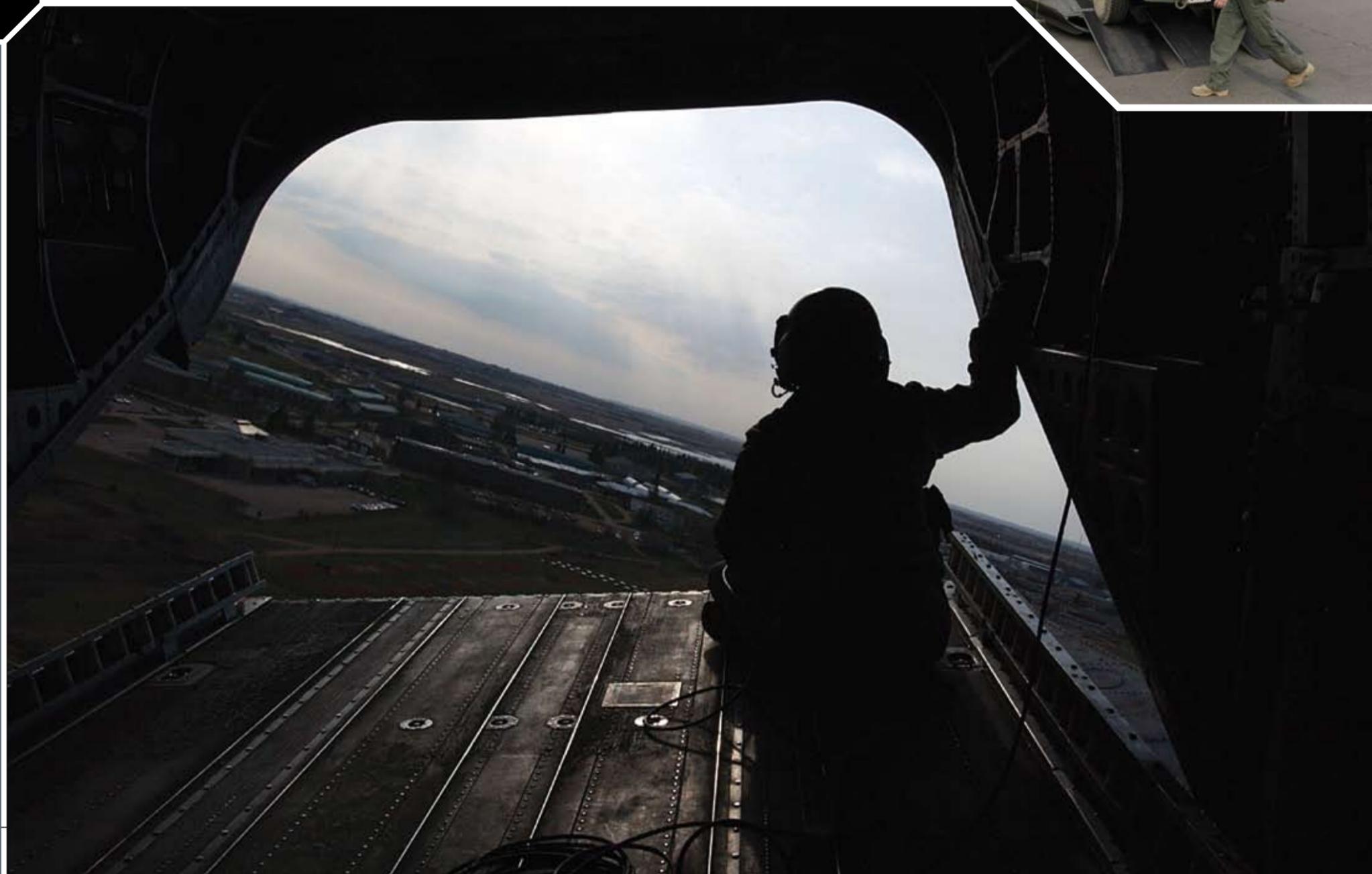
By Sgt. Adam Dielschneider
364th Public Affairs Operation Center

OPERATION MAPLE GUARDIAN

***CAMP WAINWRIGHT,
ALBERTA, CANADA—
During Operation Maple
Guardian, Soldiers from
Company A, 5th Battalion,
159th Aviation Regiment
trained alongside Soldiers
from the 3rd Royal Canadian
Infantry Regiment. The
unit flies the CH-47D
Chinook helicopter.***



Clockwise from top left: A CH-47D Chinook helicopter from Company A, 5th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, flies overhead during Operation Maple Guardian near Wainwright, Alberta, Canada. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Adam Dielschneider) • Sgt. 1st Class Jason Loveday, a flight engineer from Company A, 5th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, helps to load a Canadian Army truck into a CH-47D Chinook helicopter at Edmonton Airport in Alberta, Canada, during Operation Maple Guardian. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Adam Dielschneider) • A flight engineer from Company A, 5th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, watches out the rear hatch of a CH-47D Chinook helicopter during a flight at Operation Maple Guardian near Wainwright, Alberta, Canada. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class L. Maurice Miller)



The main reason

for the Army Reserve's participation in this exercise was to provide help to the Canadian armed forces in the form of heavy lift helicopter support, said Maj. William Wynn, then commander of Company A. They were also there to share their experience and wisdom from being deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan in the past, Wynn said. The Canadian forces at this exercise are slated for deployment to Afghanistan in the near future, said Canadian Lt. Col. Douglas Moodie, commander of the 400th Tactical Helicopter Squadron, another unit that took part in the exercise.

The Americans and Canadians teamed up for this exercise for reasons that benefited both forces.

Not only are the Canadians training for a future deployment, but they are also preparing to purchase several American CH-47D Chinook helicopters, Moodie said. This training showed them how they would be able to use heavy lift air assets in the future. It gave them a chance to develop tactics that would allow the Canadian Griffon helicopters, a military variant of the Bell 412, to fly alongside the Chinooks as escorts, said Moodie.

"On the American side, Company A was eager to share with the Canadians what



the Chinook is capable of and how it can benefit their forces overseas," said Wynn. "While training their allies, Company A gained valuable experience, said Warrant Officer Darrick Nelson, a Chinook pilot with Company A. "The only way to simulate the conditions a unit will be flying in is to actually fly in those conditions, which is why we are in Canada right now. This is simulated Kandahar (province)—not as dusty and not as hot as Kandahar is, but the elevation is almost equal," Nelson said.

During the exercise, Company A performed three basic types of missions: internal cargo loads, external cargo loads and passenger loads, said Sgt. 1st Class Jason Loveday, a flight engineer and flight platoon sergeant. The Chinook can haul a variety of internal loads, including up to two HMMWV (Humvee) vehicles, said Loveday. They can also transport up to 33 troops or a total internal/external cargo of over 20,000 lbs, according to the official U.S. Army Web site.

This high capacity makes the Chinook a valuable asset in the field, said Nelson. One particular mission for the Chinooks during Operation Maple Guardian was supplying forward operating bases with lumber to build improvements. Rather than using a truck convoy to move the wood, Company A decided it would be a good opportunity to show the Canadians what the aircraft were capable of. "So they shut down all the roads, and we brought 80,000 pounds of lumber in a matter of five hours to that forward operating base," Nelson said. "I don't know how many trucks that would have taken, but we did it in a short amount of time, and it really opened their eyes to our capability." ❏

Left to right: A flight engineer from Company A, 5th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, acts as a ground guide while unloading a Canadian Army truck from a CH-47D Chinook Helicopter at the Edmonton Airport in Alberta, Canada, during Operation Maple Guardian. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Adam Dielschneider) • Spc. Cory Smith from Company C, 5th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment checks for exercise-related messages alongside Canadian Cpl. Kris Daum from the 400th Tactical Helicopter Squadron during Operation Maple Guardian near Wainwright, Alberta, Canada. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Adam Dielschneider) • Soldiers from the 3rd Royal Canadian Infantry Regiment guard the area surrounding a simulated helicopter crash during Operation Maple Guardian near Wainwright, Alberta, Canada. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class L. Maurice Miller) • Soldiers from the 3rd Royal Canadian Infantry Regiment unload from a CH-47D Chinook helicopter during Operation Maple Guardian near Wainwright, Alberta, Canada. (Photo by U.S. Army Spc. Steven Schmitz) • A Soldier from the 3rd Royal Canadian Infantry Regiment guards the area surrounding a simulated helicopter crash during Operation Maple Guardian near Wainwright, Alberta, Canada. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class L. Maurice Miller)

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