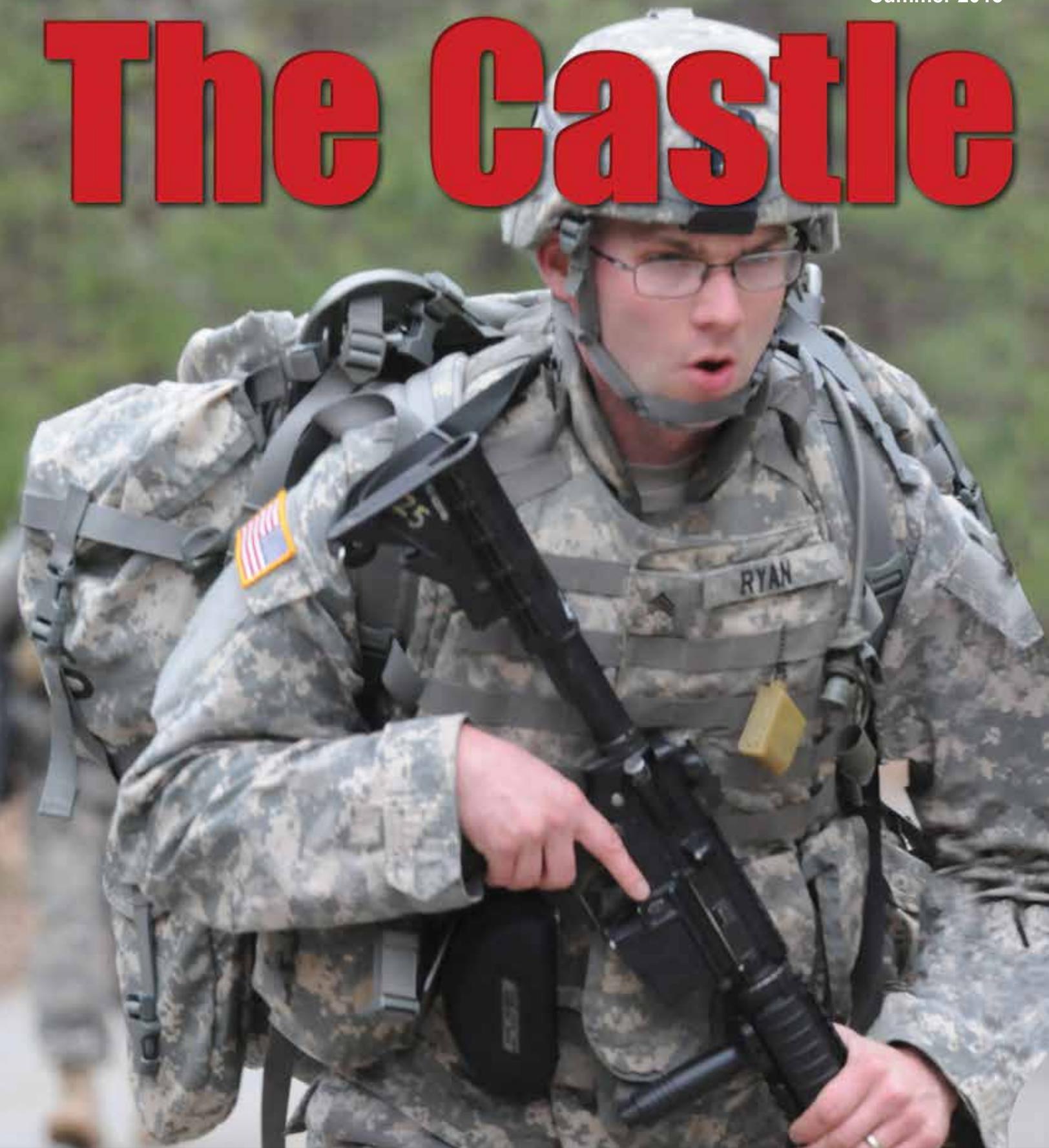


The Castle



News and Information for the 412th Theater Engineer Command

**Army Engineers Unite in Solving
Global Military Engineering Issues**

see story page 4

**Combat Engineers Demonstrate
Their Skills at Ardent Sentry**

see story page 14

The Castle

Summer 2013



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412th Theater Engineer Command 'Build To Serve'

About the Cover: Sgt. Daniel R. Ryan, a combat engineer with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 365th Engineer Battalion, 411th Engineer Brigade, steps it out during the 10 km ruck march on day three of the 412th Theater Engineer Command's 2013 Best Warrior Competition held at Fort Devens, Mass., April 23. Ryan eventually claimed the title of NCO of the Year and was presented the award by Maj. Gen. William M. Buckler, Jr., commanding general of the 412th TEC.

About the Back Cover: Photo of The Quarter-Pfc. Hunter Gummo (right), combat engineer, 316th Engineer Company, steadies a board while Army National Guard Spc. Josh Fazio (left), horizontal construction engineer, 877th Engineer Company, cuts a wedge from the other side during Ardent Sentry 2013 at Camp Blanding, Fla., May 20, 2013. (Photo by Spc. William J. Taylor, 314th Press Camp Headquarters)

A Word from the Commander



The summer is upon us. That brings to mind multiple opportunities for all of us, Soldiers, Civilians, and Family members. Those opportunities are in many areas but the most pressing should be in our efforts keep safety primary for all of us and friends and Family. All military members are trained in Composite Risk Management. With a summer full of training in the field and fun in the sun (at home), I hope that we all look at everything we do and mitigate the risks of every activity and that we all stay safe. It is all of our responsibilities to keep ourselves safe.

As Citizen-Soldiers, we often do not get a true appreciation of the significance of the service we provide to the Nation. Our efforts are a critical part of the national defense efforts. It is easy to make the connection when we are getting ready to deploy. Fulfilling our combat mission requirements is our number one priority. There is no question that we will continue to meet any and all requirements to support our Soldiers going into harm's way.

The future, though, is bright with potential opportunities to support the National Defense without going to combat. GEN Odierno, the Chief of Staff, Army, is moving our Army forward in support of all the Geographic Combatant Commands (GCC). Though the concept of Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF), the Army will further the efforts of each GCC as it engages with other nations around the world. By working with these nations, we develop partnerships and alliances that will keep us all safer. In the USAR, our support to that effort has just taken a significant step forward. A look at our 412th TEC web page will show many items discussed during the recent

ENTAPE (Engineer TEC – Army Service Component Command (ASCC) Planning Exercise). This effort was designed to get both TECs' effort lined up to support the needs of the ASCCs while ensuring that all the training required to have ready units occurs – meeting the ARFORGEN training model. The vision of the future is that the TECs will manage much of the effort to support the Engineer aspects of support to the ASCCs. This effort is even more significant because we are not only looking at how to work our own units into this effort, but also those in the National Guard and Active Component. After over 10 years of combat, side by side, we cannot allow the components to stop working together. The TECs are pushing forward, with the lead Engineers in the Army National Guard to ensure all units get the best training and best overseas opportunities – all the while staying ready to deploy into combat if necessary.

What I just described is in no way simple and we have just scratched the surface. Where we need to be is much easier described than attained. Nevertheless, we are pushing forward to ensure the best possible training opportunities and the best prepared Soldiers and units. I am looking forward to making this trip with the Team.

Enjoy the summer!
BUILD TO SERVE!!

MG William Buckler, Jr.



Army Engineers Unite in Solving

by William J. Taylor, 314th Press Camp Headquarters

In one of the most momentous occasions in the history of the United States Army Engineer Regiment, the 412th Theater Engineer Command's Engineer TEC-ASCC Planning Exercise (ENTAPE) has proactively brought all of the Army engineering components together to bridge capability gaps in an era of declining resources.

Key officials from the Active Army, United States Army Corps of Engineers, United States Army Reserve Command, United States Army Engineer School, Army National Guard, 416th and 412th TECs collaborated to examine Army Service Component Command's resource deficits and provide cooperative solutions during ENTAPE, May 16-18, 2013, in Orlando, Fla.

Underscoring the importance of this attempt to integrate the Army Engineer Regiment was the number of commanding officers who attended the exercise. Those present were, Maj. Gen. William M. Buckler, Jr., commanding general, 412th TEC, Maj. Gen. David J. Conboy, commanding general, 416th TEC, Brig. Gen. Douglas R. Satterfield, deputy commanding general, 412th TEC, Brig. Gen. David L. Weeks, deputy commanding general, 416th TEC, Brig. Gen. Lewis G. Irwin, brigade commander, 926th Engineer Brigade, Brig. Gen. Robert D. Carlson, brigade commander, 372nd Engineer Brigade, Brig. Gen. Tracy A. Thompson, brigade commander, 420th Engineer Brigade, Brig. Gen. Jeff H. Holmes, brigade commander, 194th Engineer Brigade ARNG and John P. Constable, brigade commander, 411th Engineer Brigade.

Maj. Gen. Luis R. Visot, deputy commander (operations), USARC, attended via video teleconference.

“There is a huge amount of emphasis placed on what we are doing here, we are talking about not just the future of the Army Reserve, we are talking about the future of the Army and the Engineer Regiment well beyond 2020,”

said Lt. Col. Tony Forte, chief of global force management, USARC, during the first day of the exercise.

Each day of the conference focused on a different theme. Day one consisted of “demand signal,” in which representatives of six ASCCs outlined specific needs in their area of operations.

The TECs work with six ASCCs in an effort to provide the best available training opportunities for their Soldiers as the United States moves closer toward a time of peace. The 412th TEC is regionally aligned with United States Army Africa, United States Army Europe, and United States Army Pacific, and the 416th TEC is regionally aligned with United States Army Central, United States Army North and United States Army South.

“The TECs’ bread and butter is what we do with the regionally-aligned ASCCs,” said Maj. Stephen Tribble, G5 plans officer, 416th TEC. “We find ways to help support their operations. With the reduction of the contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, we do theater security cooperation operations with those ASCCs to keep our forces trained and ready.”

“First we have to understand the ASCC’s operational requirements then we develop solutions and



Global Military Engineering Issues

Key Engineer Officers and Non-commissioned Officers from the Active Army, United States Army Corps of Engineers, United States Army Reserve Command, United States Army Engineer School, Army National Guard, 416th and 412th TECs collaborated to examine Army Service Component Command's resource deficits and provide cooperative solutions during ENTAPE, May 16-18, 2013, in Orlando, Fla. (Photo by Spc. William Taylor, 314th Press Camp Headquarters)

finally supply their issues with engineer resources,” said Lt. Col. Jamie Birmingham, chief of operations, 412th TEC.

Conversation during day one included the ASCCs’ resource issues in the time of decreasing defense budgets and reductions to the Army and engineer formations.

Everyone works in resources constrained environments, said Tribble. The biggest thing we can bring to the table as Army Reservists is the access to the large body of talent of the TECs. We both have over 12,000 Soldiers each. We have degreed engineers, and we have a variety of different capabilities that we bring to help those ASCCs. The ASCCs do not have enough engineers to support their commander’s priorities, and the countries they are in working in request a great deal of support. We are here to discover that balance of what we can support with what assets we have available.

“The by-product of this planning exercise is that we find we have a viable, exciting real world exercise operations for Soldiers to participate in,” said Tribble. “They really get to go to a foreign country and use a dozer or build a school. When the time comes where they have to deploy somewhere they will have that skill.”

The day started off with Lt. Col. Chad Walker, deputy chief of staff, engineer, United States Army Pacific, identifying capability gaps of the USARPAC.

Lt. Col. Walker showed the demand signal that is there, said Tribble. A lot of people had no idea there was that much of a need in that region. All day long

the six ASCCs explained that same need was shown. Now that there is more work than there are people to do it, it is exciting because we actually see a need, and we know we can fulfill that need. We look forward to continuing to establish relationships with the ASCCs as we have moved to a regionally-aligned force.

A RAF is a force that has habitual relationships in a given area of the world, said Forte. The purpose is to have long histories in these areas with Reserve Components to capitalize that base of knowledge that will be created because of the region being aligned, so we can be more efficient in the future and create opportunities for engagement. These engagements help us avoid conflict by creating an understanding. We want the local populace in the countries to see the United States and the Army reserve as a viable organization.

Day two shifted the flow of information the other way, where representatives from the Engineer School, National Guard, USARC, and USACE exchanged and provided information to the ASCCs. Presentations and discussions were focused on understanding the problems in front of the Army engineers of the future.

The reserve component has adopted the plan of using Army Reserve Engagement Cells to project the engineering capabilities of the component.

At each theater command level we will have this small cell of Army Reservists that work to coordinate efforts between different government agencies explaining and assisting these organizations giving them access to the Army Reserve and the Guard when it is needed, said Forte.

Discussion was led about how the Army Reserve and Army National Guard components want to keep their relationship strong going forward from wartime engagements into a peacetime mission.

“There is not the wall that there use to be between the guard and reserves,” said Forte. “What we have learned over ten years is that none of us can do this alone.”

The Reserve Component has seen fighting together throughout Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Both the Army Reserve and Army National Guard have assisted each other in humanitarian missions and disaster responses. Hurricane Sandy saw active-duty Army, Army Reserve and Army National Guard working together side by side.

“This is the first time I have seen all three (components) in a forum like this working this hard together,” said Forte. “We have never taken on an issue this broad with a unified purpose.”

“We can hear the issues and elaborate and collaborate on solutions to those issues and provide a joint solution for all the reserve components instead of just for one,”

said Brig. Gen. Jeff Holmes, deputy chief of engineers, ARNG Affairs.

Between the Army Reserve and the National Guard we represent over 80 percent of the engineer capacity in force structure, and that’s very significant, said Holmes. We realize in a unified effort the Army

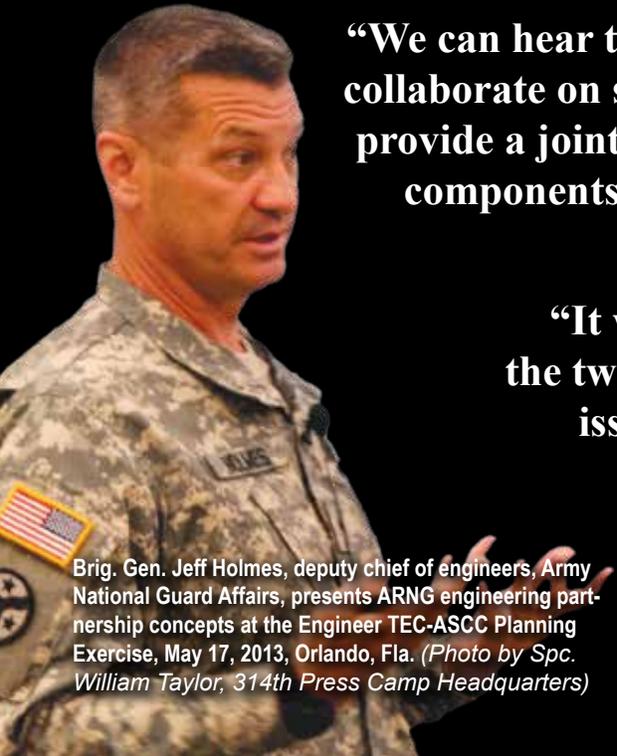
National Guard and Army Reserve together can fulfill those ASCC capability gaps.

The main thrust of the last day’s effort was the separate 416th and 412th TEC’s breakout sessions were their Soldiers and representatives of their regionally-aligned ASCCs got down into the weeds and knocked out some answers to the support problems identified the first two days of the exercise. ASCC representatives and their counterparts from USACE and the ARNG also discussed concepts of how the reserve component can provide realistic support to their specific ASCCs with the forces they have available within the Army Force Generation cycle.

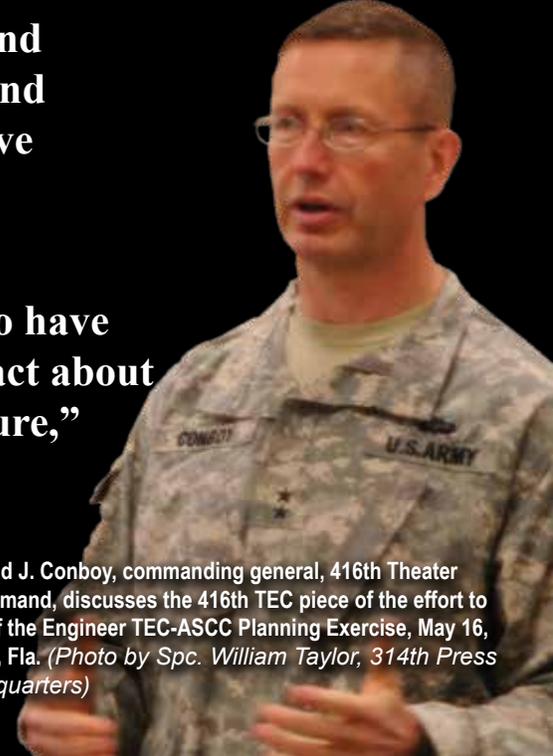
“I think it was a great session,” said and Maj. Scotty Autin, deputy chief of staff, engineer, Army Service Component Command, United States Army Africa, who worked with 412th TEC personnel in the breakout room. “We were able to actually sit down and move from a conceptual view to looking at unit capabilities and assigned those capabilities to projects that we have planned and working through the real details of it.”

This is important to USARAF, which does not have any assigned troops. They do have regionally aligned active component brigade, but it only supplies a minimal amount of engineer capabilities, namely sappers. USARAF needs help with technical, construction engineers, and this is exactly what the solutions forged in the breakout sessions will help them with in the future.

What we are answering is what’s next, said Col. Adam Roth, deputy assistant commandant, United



“We can hear the issues and elaborate and collaborate on solutions to those issues and provide a joint solution for all the reserve components instead of just for one,”
said Holmes.



“It was incredibly valuable to have the two TECs together to interact about issues important to our future,”
said Conboy.

Brig. Gen. Jeff Holmes, deputy chief of engineers, Army National Guard Affairs, presents ARNG engineering partnership concepts at the Engineer TEC-ASCC Planning Exercise, May 17, 2013, Orlando, Fla. (Photo by Spc. William Taylor, 314th Press Camp Headquarters)

Maj. Gen. David J. Conboy, commanding general, 416th Theater Engineer Command, discusses the 416th TEC piece of the effort to participants of the Engineer TEC-ASCC Planning Exercise, May 16, 2013, Orlando, Fla. (Photo by Spc. William Taylor, 314th Press Camp Headquarters)

“It’s an exciting time right now,” Buckler said, “but we’re not done.”

Maj. Gen. William M. Buckler, Jr., commanding general, 412th Theater Engineer Command, address participants of the Engineer TEC-ASCC Planning Exercise, May 16, 2013, Orlando, Fla. (Photo by Spc. William Taylor, 314th Press Camp Headquarters)



States Army Engineer School. As we start moving out of Iraq and Afghanistan, we are taking the things we use to do before 9/11 with what we have learned over 10 years of war fighting and are finding those great training solutions. This presents great opportunities to work with our ASCC partners. Being regionally aligned means that across the globe you can have the opportunity for engineers to receive great training.

A common trend of this exercise was the take away for the citizen-soldier.

What we decide here is going to determine how Soldiers train in the future and where they get to train, said Forte. A large quantity of their lives as Army Reservists is going to be determined by what we have done here. Our leaders are engaging in exactly the right things at the right times, and they are doing it with the interest of the individual soldier.

Soldiers want to have purpose and know the mission and know that they are a part of that mission’s success, said Birmingham. It is a direct translation to them feeling like their part of a team, utilizing their training, doing real world type of missions and participating in exercise that allow them to show their skills. Everybody wants to be good at what they do, and they want others to see what they do.

We are trying to line up opportunities so that all ranks can feel that they are actually making a difference and their skills are being used to solve some of the world’s problems. These opportunities are real and have real outputs. Having come out of two major conflicts and transitioning from an engaging to an operational Reserve demands signals are getting

louder for reserve engineers to step up and do more than what they have done prior to 9/11. We are twice the citizens, so we have to balance our professional life and our military life.

The event was unprecedented in its occurrence and ambitious in its scope.

This is definitely historical, because we haven’t had the opportunity to get everybody in one room, not only to talk but also to work, and be able to work out plausible solutions as we move forward, said Roth. Nowhere else in the Army is there a two-star engineer command. We happen to have two of those. The TECs are definitely a relevant part of not only our regiment but also to the Army and the joint force in the nation. We have one regiment, and it is the TECs who are able to bring all that together proving that there is relevance in what they do and more importantly that they will be shaping the future of the engineer regiment moving toward the army of 2020.

“It was incredibly valuable to have the two TECs together to interact about issues important to our future,” said Conboy. “The hard work that has been done, and begun and still has to continue, is all about the planning piece and ensuring that we’re tying in with our customers, the ASCCs and combatant commands, to ensure we stay relevant. We know what the requirements are, and we’re working hard to meet those.”

Buckler, in his closing remarks, praised the product that was built during the ENTAPE exercise, and the people who help build it.

Regional Alignment of Forces

by Sgt. 1st Class Lyndon Miller, 412th Theater Engineer Command Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Reserve is an operational force, part of the Total Army. As such, the Reserve is and will be called upon to provide mission-ready forces on a continual basis. However, to further improve this operational status, the regional alignment of Army Reserve forces to Army Service Component Commands (ASCC) and Combatant Commands (COCOM) is required.

What is the Regional Alignment of Forces? The details have yet to be finalized, but, generally, is it the method by which the Army Reserve will resource, train and employ conventional forces to enhance the global responsiveness and regional engagement of the ASCCs and COCOMs. The RAF concept applied to the 412th Theater Engineer Command (and the 416th TEC) will, in turn, determine what engineer assets will be available to meet the needs of the same two entities.

This idea is not new. For decades, the Army Reserve has worked directly with Active Component commands to enable and support ASCC and COCOM requirements, and the TECs have been an integral part of that. What is new here is that the Army Reserve RAF now formally provides ASCCs and COCOMs with up to Joint Force capable, Army Reserve headquarters together with other scalable and tailorable AR capabilities to help shape their regional environment.

There are six ASCCs and six COCOMS. An ASCC is the command responsible for recommendations to the combatant commander on the allocation and employment of Army forces within that combatant command. A COCOM, for the purposes of RAF, is a geographically-based unified or specified command with a broad continuing mission

under a single commander established and so designated by the President, through the Secretary of Defense and with the advice and assistance of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The 412th TEC is responsible for U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC) and U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM), U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR) and U.S. European Command (EUCOM), and U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) and U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM). The 416th TEC supports U.S. Army North (USARNORTH) and U.S. North Command (NORTHCOM), U.S. Army South (USARSOUTH) and U.S. South Command (SOUTHCOM), and U.S. Army Central (USARCENT) and U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM).

Aligning Army Reserve engineer forces and capabilities with ASCC and COCOMs needs was exactly what the recent Engineer TEC-ASCC Planning Exercise (ENTAPE) in Orlando was all about. Representatives from both the 412th and 416th TECs and each ASCC and COCOM sat down together in breakout sessions and matched, one-for-one, regionally aligned needs with capabilities.



Army Force Generation

What is it?

In response to the demand for ground forces to meet current worldwide operations, the Army implemented in 2006 a new force generation construct, called Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN). ARFORGEN is the model and process used to achieve progressive levels of readiness with recurring periods of availability as both active and reserve component units progress through three distinct force pools: RESET; Train/Ready; and Available.

The RESET Pool is the initial ARFORGEN force pool and begins when the unit returns from a deployment or other mission. While in RESET, units conduct activities to return personnel and equipment to levels sufficient to begin collective training.

From the RESET Pool, units progress to the Train/Ready Pool, where they continue to receive new personnel, manage and retool equipment, and begin collective training -- ending with a culminating training event.

From Train/Ready, units move to the available pool, where they either deploy as a Deployment Expeditionary Force (DEF) unit for rotational missions such as Iraq and Afghanistan or they remain available for contingency expeditionary force (CEF) missions. A CEF is an AC or RC modular or task organized unit preparing to execute any contingency operation.

What has the Army done?

ARFORGEN originally was developed as a supply-driven construct for generating forces. Operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have become the longest military campaigns in our nation's history, and the first protracted conflicts without conscription. This high demand for Army capabilities resulted in a de facto demand-driven process that put stress on Soldiers and families, introduced cost inefficiencies

associated with providing forces quickly and expensively, and left our nation with fewer ground forces to respond to other crises. As Army Chief of Staff General George Casey said, years of high demand for forces caused the Army to become "out of balance."

Why is this important to the Army?

The Army is at a strategic inflection point due to requirements to operate in an environment of prolonged conflict against a hybrid threat.

What is planned for the future?

Transition to stability operations in Iraq-and subsequent added CEF units-has begun to restore balance to the force. As such, the Army has an opportunity to leverage the FY12-17 Program Objective Memorandum (POM) to institutionalize ARFORGEN as a supply-based construct; posturing the force to provide increased operational depth and strategic flexibility; a force best suited to achieve the Quadrennial Defense Review's (QDR) four strategic objectives and to systemically build a "balanced Army for a balanced strategy" that is relevant to the 21st century.

Resources:

- U.S. Army Forces Command
- U.S. Army Posture Statement



Col. Richard Takishita (left), G3 chief of readiness, 412th Theater Engineer Command, and Maj. Scotty Autin, deputy chief of staff, engineer, Army Service Component Command, United States Army Africa, collaborate during a breakout session at the Engineer TEC-ASCC Planning Exercise, May 17, 2013, Orlando, Fla. The intent of the collaboration is to match requirements of the ASCC with solutions provided by the 412th TEC and other components of the Army Engineer Regiment.

The Delta: The Challenge of Leading Extraordinary People to Do Ordinary Things

by Colonel Adam S. Roth

When we speak of those who are decorated for bravery or heroism, a frequent comment is that they were ordinary people doing extraordinary things. As the current wars wind down, we have grown a force that is—without reservation—the most combat-proven force in generations. These were volunteers who came forward and served in a time of war. They were frequently placed in positions where life or death decisions had to be made immediately; and frequently, the results were stellar. This is the force we have today. They are Soldiers who expect to be treated as adults, having had that responsibility in theater and having gained life experience during deployment. But how do you get Soldiers who have been slaying dragons for a year to now set their sights on smaller targets and do ordinary things—and **want** to do them?

While serving at the U.S. Army Engineer School, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, I regularly conduct out-briefings with U.S. Army Reserve students as part of their Engineer Basic Officer Course. I start out with a simple question: What is it that you haven't learned during the course, but want to? Almost invariably I get the same set of topics that includes—

- Counseling.
- Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Reports (NCOERs).
- Officer Evaluation Reports.
- Command Supply Discipline Program.
- Command Maintenance Discipline Program.

Although it is not a doctrinally correct term, the lost art of “garrison leadership” is the locus of those topics. Growing up as a lieutenant in Germany, many of these topics occurred with regularity and created stability and predictability for the Soldiers of U.S. Army Europe before the fall of the Berlin Wall. As the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan terminate or decrease in scope, white space appears more frequently on training schedules. The patch chart, though vitally important for driving operational tempo for the past 10 years, will no longer be the sole driver of training.

The next generation of leaders may not start their lieutenant years on an operational deployment, but rather learn to master the art of garrison leadership while having time on their hands to focus on ordinary things. This article focuses on training that supports that end—the mastery of garrison leadership. It is our collective challenge to take these extraordinary Soldiers and make them want to do the ordinary things that comprise garrison leadership tasks.

Counseling

I cannot overstate the importance of counseling at every level. In units where I have served, leaders have often been frustrated with individual Soldiers. When I ask the leaders if they have counseled the Soldiers or documented their performance, the usual answer is that they have never had the time. When I dig further down, I usually see that they have never really understood **how** to counsel Soldiers. My first exposure to counseling was at the Infantry Officer Basic Course in 1988, where we conducted role-playing with real Soldiers. The quality and realism of that training were so vivid that when I met the instructor again recently, we could recall word for word what was said 23 years ago. Whether using a Department of the Army (DA) Form 4856, *Developmental Counseling Form*,¹ or an informal document of your own creation, you need to take the time to establish expectations and standards with each subordinate in your organization. If you can quantify those expectations and standards, so much the better.

The other step in the process, sometimes overlooked, is to truly listen to what subordinates say, get their perspective on what was said, and discover what their personal goals are. While conducting counseling sessions with students at the Engineer School, I am frequently amazed at their reaction to having a senior leader sit down, one on one, to discuss their careers, dreams, and issues. Taking the time for these sessions has been a personal priority for me, and I hope that the result will be a generation of junior leaders who will do the same with their subordinates. In order

to grow our next generation of leaders, this sort of hands-on career management is probably one of our most solemn duties.

NCOERs

As a battalion commander, I often saw substandard NCOERs. Sometimes they were simply a cut and paste from the last noncommissioned officer (NCO) who was rated. On my last deployment, we took the opportunity to conduct a 2-day workshop on a litany of topics, to include NCOERs. Under the direction of the battalion command sergeant major, we trained more than 200 NCOs during the deployment, and the resulting NCOERs improved markedly. The key points of completing good NCOERs come back to counseling, setting realistic goals with appropriate metrics, and getting feedback. The rater and the rated NCO need to ensure that the duty description is meaningful and includes details such as the number of people supervised and the value of equipment for which the NCO is signed. The rater and senior rater also need to know the correct career progression for the NCO. Do they have DA Pamphlet 600-25, *U.S. Army Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Guide*,² open in front of them to see logical future positions for the NCO and to determine what key and developmental positions are available; or are they simply writing in “squad leader” or “platoon sergeant” as recommendations? Finally, counseling and final NCOERs need to be done on a timely basis. If a final NCOER is late, the leader has failed the Soldier and the Army. If proper NCOER procedures are not part of the culture in your unit and you’re not tracking such ordinary things at your level, there will be harmful consequences. Only you, the leader, can change this situation.

Officer Evaluation Reports

The bedrock of this process is DA Form 67-9-1, *Officer Evaluation Report Support Form*.³ Though some changes to the form are coming, including the return of a block check for senior raters other than field grade officers, the concept and importance of this form will remain the same. The first instinct for any officer when meeting the new boss should be to leave that meeting with a copy of the Officer Evaluation Report Support Form. It is not infrequent that a rater, especially in the Reserve Components, does not have a copy of the form available. The rated officer should

nonetheless prepare a support form for feedback. This document serves as a sort of contract between the rated officer and the rater and as a blueprint for how the leader will measure the performance of the subordinate. Raters and senior raters must develop attainable metrics to gauge that performance. The metrics should include not just easily quantifiable things, such as the number of Soldiers who have undergone urinalysis, but also harder ones, such as the development of a training plan that materially contributes to the improvement of the unit’s rating on the unit status report. Finally, it is crucial that leaders provide their officers—especially the most junior officers—with quality feedback. The impact of corrective or reinforcing counseling is the biggest combat multiplier that I have experienced, and time is the only cost for this ordinary task.

Command Supply Discipline Program

This is critical to our success as leaders, especially as equipment and supplies stop flowing as freely as they have for the past 10 years. Leaders will have to regularly account for what they have, to show due diligence, and to avoid that signature wound inflicted on commanders by the current wars—the financial liability investigation of property loss. Leaders will need to know what constitutes an end item; what the components of that end item are; what basic issue items come with it; and what sets, kits, and out-fits are involved. Whether a commander decides to perform 10 percent inventories monthly or 25 percent inventories quarterly, the creative leader should see this as a training opportunity for subordinates and thereby renew the lost skills of garrison leadership.

Command Maintenance Discipline Program

Especially important in mechanized or wheeled vehicle units, this program should be bread and butter for leaders. Regular Monday morning *motor stables* were a staple of existence in U.S. Army Europe. But there were other staples too, including mileage restrictions that prohibited the use of tracked vehicles for more than 800 miles—in an entire year. Leaders should be in the motor pool with their Soldiers. If they have vehicles assigned to them, they should also participate in the normal preventive maintenance checks and services process for the vehicle. The fact that many of the vehicles we have operated in the past 10 years have been



Col. Adam S. Roth speaks at an engineer planning exercise May 17, 2013, in Orlando.

maintained by contract workers has created a divide between Soldiers and their equipment.

But maintenance is not only about automotive equipment. When is the last time your Soldiers pulled good preventive maintenance on their weapons; communication equipment (to include radio checks with a company or battalion tactical operations center); or their chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear protective gear? Leaders need to know how to do these tasks, demonstrate their leadership through their physical presence in the mud with their Soldiers when they pull a drive sprocket on a Bradley fighting vehicle in the mud, and use these ordinary things as training vehicles to teach the next generation of Soldiers.

It is not my intention to turn back the clock to an Army that will never be again. It is, however, imperative to recognize that the muscle memory from some of those skills, learned so long ago, have atrophied. Before many of the senior leaders who started during the Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm era retire, it is imperative to renew those garrison leadership skills for leaders who weren't even born in a time when

there were two Germanys. Our Soldiers, our Army, and our Nation deserve nothing less.

Endnotes:

- ¹ DA Form 4856, *Developmental Counseling Form*, August 2010.
- ² DA Pamphlet 600-25, *U.S. Army Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Guide*, 28 July 2008.
- ³ DA Form 67-9-1, *Officer Evaluation Report Support Form*, October 2011.

Colonel Roth serves as the Deputy Assistant Commandant (Army Reserve) at the U.S. Army Engineer School. Before his graduation from the U.S. Army War College, he commanded the 844th Engineer Battalion and deployed to Iraq as part of Task Force Sky. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and holds a master's degree in mechanical engineering from Boston University.

The article was originally published in the January-April 2012 edition of The Engineer magazine, the professional bulletin of Army engineers.

Odierno: Regional Alignments to Begin Next Year

May 16, 2012

by Rob McIlvaine

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, May 16, 2012) – The Army will begin implementing a regionally-aligned force concept next year to better support combatant commanders, the service’s chief of staff announced this morning.

Gen. Raymond T. Odierno made the announcement at a Pentagon press conference as he outlined the Army’s vision for the future to meet the tenets of the DOD Strategic Guidance signed by the president in January. He said the Army will be transitioning to a leaner, more agile, adaptive, innovative, versatile and ready component of the joint force.

The regional alignments are part of that vision and the concept will begin with a pilot program involving a brigade combat team from the 10th Mountain Division aligned with U.S. Army Africa Command, Odierno said. This will be followed by more units aligned to other theaters, he said.

“The regionally aligned forces concept will be especially important in the Asia-Pacific region as we move forward, home to seven of the 10 largest Armies,” Odierno said, adding that enduring commitments in some theaters may warrant rotational units in the future.

About 92,000 Soldiers are currently deployed in support of operations, he said, and 68,000 of those are in Afghanistan.

“First, our Army Force Generation, or ARFORGEN, process has served us well in meeting our demands over the last several years in Iraq and Afghanistan. But with operations in Iraq complete and ongoing transition in Afghanistan, we will have the opportunity to adapt this process to be more wide-ranging,



CSA briefs reporters, May 16, 2012. Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Raymond T. Odierno briefed reporters, May 16, at the Pentagon, about the Army’s vision for meeting tenets of recently released Department of Defense strategic guidance.

especially as we re-balance toward the Asia-Pacific region,” Odierno said.

The intent of this new process, he said, will be to focus units during their training cycle on specific mission profiles and unique environmental characteristics that will make them available to specified combatant commanders for employment.

“In today’s increasingly uncertain and complex strategic environment, we must ensure that we sustain a diverse mix of rapidly deployable capabilities, adapt processes to reflect a broader range of requirements, and (provide) options to our national security decision makers,” Odierno said.

As the Army reduces two forward-stationed brigade combat teams in Europe over the next two years, he said it will leverage pre-positioned equipment and multi-lateral training exercises to promote regional security and sustain relationships with NATO and other European allies.

“Finally, as the Army’s end strength reduces over the next five years, it is important to note that this leaner Army will be vastly more capable than our pre-9/11 Army,” Odierno said.

Continued on page 17

Combat Engineers Demonstrate

by William J. Taylor, 314th Press Camp Headquarters

Combat engineers are skilled in mobility, counter mobility, and survivability. The 316th Engineer Company out of Chattanooga, Tenn., is a prime example of that, but as combat operations are drawing down overseas, they may have another mission ahead.

The 316th Engineer Company along with a squad of Soldiers from the 766th Engineer Company out of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., have trained alongside their Army National Guard counterparts, as well as members of the Air National Guard and civilian first responders during the Ardent Sentry training exercise, May 17-22, 2013 at Camp Blanding, Fla.

“The point of the operation is to call in National Guard from multiple states, civilian organizations like FEMA and then Title X support, which would be us on the ground, to come together in one task force to complete the mission and provide support,” said 1st Lt. Morgan Berg, company commander, 316th Engineer Company, 926th Engineer Brigade.

Ardent Sentry is a North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command exercise that incorporates a command post exercise along with multiple field training events throughout the United States. In Montana, the Air Force Global



Spc. John Glover (left) and Spc. Corey Elliot (right), combat engineers, 316th Engineer Company, extract a role player with a simulated injury during Ardent Sentry 2013 at Camp Blanding, Fla., May 21, 2013. (Photo by Spc. William J. Taylor, 314th Press Camp Headquarters)

Their Skills at Ardent Sentry

Strike Command conducted a response operation for a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear type incident near Malmstrom Air Force Base. In Florida, the Air National Guard, Army National Guard and Army Reserve worked with state and local officials to respond to major hurricanes and hazardous material events. In South Carolina, the Army National Guard conducted events at multiple locations in response to a hurricane and hazardous material events. U.S. Army North also worked with the Mexican military to provide a coordinated response to a simulated disaster event along the U.S.–Mexico border.

“The training these guys are getting is outside the wartime atmosphere,” said Master Sgt. Laynard Armstrong, G5 liaison officer, 412th Theater Engineer Command. “We have another mission that is close to home for many of us, which is disaster relief. These Soldiers have boots on the ground and are getting great training geared toward the future of the Army Reserve.”

Each day, Soldiers were placed in unique scenarios that dealt with real world disasters ranging from tornadoes and hurricanes to plane and train crashes. The main focus of these exercises were searching for and extracting casualties from a disaster area while working with a team of Army National Guard engineers and Air National Guard medics to successfully transport them to a safe extraction zone.



Pfc. Brandon Christensen, combat engineer, 316th Engineer Company, uses a blowtorch to cut through metal blocking a pathway during Ardent Sentry 2013 at Camp Blanding, Fla., May 22, 2013. (Photo by Spc. William J. Taylor, 314th Press Camp Headquarters)

“We extracted a casualty from a car that was on top of some rubble in a simulated hurricane event,” Said Spc. John Glover, combat engineer, 316th Engineer Company. “I got to personally climb in and assist an Air Force lieutenant in getting the casualty out of the vehicle.”

The 316th and 766th Engineers worked alongside the Air National Guard 116th Medical Group and the Army National Guard 877th Engineer Company throughout the exercise.

“The Army Reserve Soldiers jumped right in, and they had good

ideas on how to get to people and pull them out of the rubble,” said Air National Guard 1st Lt. Sarah Kathe, clinical nurse, 116th Medical Group. “They helped the medics out, especially in situations where we only had a few medics but multiple wounded individuals.”

During this exercise, Army Reserve Soldiers learned from the Army National Guard about how to work with civilians during natural disasters while incorporating tactics learned from wartime training. This type of training is new for Army Reserve Soldiers as the main focus of training missions since 2003 has been on wartime efforts due to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

“I feel like we adapted fairly quickly since this is out of the normal for us as combat engineers,” said

Pfc. JaMaael Noble, combat engineer, 316th Engineer Company, who is one of Glover's Soldiers.

Due to the recent devastation in areas like Oklahoma, it is important for Reserve Soldiers and National Guard Soldiers to work together in the event of a natural disaster.

"My hometown has had tornadoes hit before and seeing the devastation then and turning around and doing this now has definitely opened my eyes," said Noble. "Although this is all simulation, it has shown me that if it I was to help in a natural disaster, I could possibly be saving lives."

Glover returned home just in time to see the aftermath of the tornadoes that hit across his home state of Alabama during April 2011.

"Doing training like this helps me in knowing I can assist my family, community and friends when something like this happens in our communities," said Glover. "I had just gotten back from Afghanistan when the tornadoes hit, and I drove through and saw the damage that they did immediately after. It was devastating to see neighborhoods completely torn apart looking like a warzone."



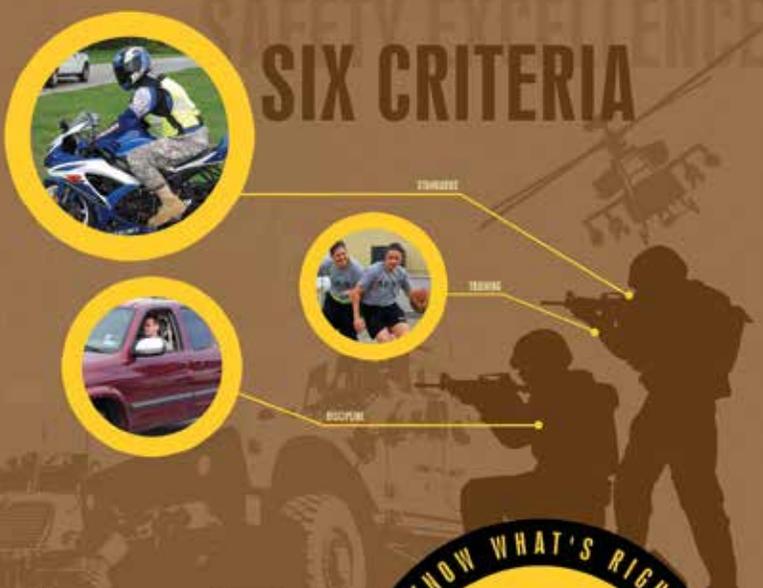
Sgt. Ickson Petitdo, horizontal construction engineer, 766th Engineer Company, used a backhoe loader to remove a tree and large piece of concrete slab blocking the road to an disaster site during Ardent Sentry 2013 at Camp Blanding, Fla., May 21, 2013. (Photo by Spc. William J. Taylor, 314th Press Camp Headquarters)

"This is a true chance for the Reserve Soldier to give back," said Berg. "We say 'citizen-soldier' all the time, but opportunities like this are a great chance for our citizen-soldiers to get in the community and have a true impact on what is going on."



A team of horizontal construction engineers from the 766th Engineer Company removes a metal pipe that was blocking a disaster site during Ardent Sentry 2013 at Camp Blanding, Fla., May 22, 2013. (Photo by Spc. William J. Taylor, 314th Press Camp Headquarters)

SIX CRITERIA



Training, Discipline and Standards

1. Senior leaders are visibly committed to the safety program.
2. Junior leaders are actively engaged.
3. Supervision is performance-focused.
4. Soldiers are actively participating.
5. The safety program accommodates unit culture.
6. The safety program is positively perceived by all stakeholders: Leader, Soldier and Civilians.



STORMS

You know what to do during inclement weather, but does your battle buddy?



Training, Discipline and Standards

Training, discipline and standards are the bedrock of our Army, and as Soldiers, you've been taught what right looks like. As leaders, you have a duty and a responsibility to maintain standards in your formations. You also have an obligation to your Soldiers and their Families to manage risk and take action to correct problems. In our fight against accidental injuries and fatalities, knowledge is the weapon of choice.



Odierno: Regional Alignments to Begin Next Year (continued from page 13)

Also, he said, with 10 years of hard-earned combat experience, the Army will continue to increase Special Operations force capacity.

“We have significantly increased our ability to conduct intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. We’ve increased our aviation assets to support worldwide missions and responsiveness around the world. We continue to increase our cyber capability as we move forward, and we continue to look at other capabilities in order to move forward.

In his introduction to the new strategic guidance, President Barack Obama wrote the following:

“Our nation is at a moment of transition we have responsibly ended the war in Iraq, put al Qaeda on the path to defeat allowing us to begin the transition to Afghan responsibility.

However, the Budget Control Act of 2011 mandates reductions in federal spending, including defense spending, he continued.

“I therefore directed this review to identify our strategic interest and guide our defense priorities and spending over the coming decade,” he said.

As today’s wars end, Obama continued, America will focus on a broader range of challenges and opportunities, including the security and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific, the Middle East and North Africa, join allies and partners to build their capacity.

Reprinted from: http://www.army.mil/article/79919/Odierno_Regional_alignments_to_begin_next_year/

412th TEC Chaplain's Assistant Speaks Out

by Sgt. 1st Class Lyndon Miller, 412th Theater Engineer Command Public Affairs

“We’ve got to get beyond the only time we talked to people is during battle assembly. We’ve got to talk to people during the week.”

This is the recommendation of Sgt. 1st Class Bob Judge, chaplain's assistant at the 412th Theater Engineer Command.

Not only is this what first-line leaders should be doing anyway, Judge said, but staying in contact with your soldiers is a good way to keep abreast of their emotional state and which might even prevent a suicide.

Judge also said it would be good to have all first-line leaders educated with Suicide Assistance Intervention Training, or assist trained, as he called it.

Judge himself was assist trained several years ago, and it came in handy one day. He was cleaning up a chapel getting ready for a service when he noticed a

distraught soldier sitting there holding a knife to his wrist.

“It’s important to have all those squad leaders, team leaders and platoon sergeants assist trained.” “We really ought to make that training mandatory, it is not right now,” Judge said.

Judge stayed calm, spoke to the soldier coolly and even made a humorous comment to lighten things up. After talking awhile, Judge eventually acquired the knife, walked the Soldier down the hall to see the chaplain who was able get the Soldier more help.

“If you’re not trained, you just might freak out and panic,” Judge said.

Judge compared the assist training to applying first aid on the battlefield, where initial medical attention is given to Soldiers to keep them alive long enough to receive more thorough treatment at a hospital.

“Assist training is like “mental first-aid,” Judge said. “It’s how to help someone who thinks life is



Sgt. 1st Class Bob Judge (center, wearing the Army improved physical fitness uniform) and other 412th TEC Soldiers, Army civilians and contractors discuss Bible verses and strengthen their spiritual resilience during a weekly Bible study held at the 412th Theater Engineer Command. Judge said that spiritual resilience is one possible way to prevent suicides.

hopeless, put a band-aid on for that instant till we get the soldier the proper help they need.”

In keeping with helping Soldiers maintain a healthy mental life, Judge said care must be taken to ensure Soldiers are spiritually resilient.

“Coming from a chaplain’s assistance perspective, we need to make sure the spiritual needs of our Soldiers are met and people have an opportunity to go to chapel during battle assembly,” Judge said.

Judge said starting from the brigades, then battalions and companies, chaplains, chaplain’s assistants and first-line leaders need to know the religious beliefs of their Soldiers, whether Jewish, Protestant, Catholic or Muslim, and meet their needs accordingly.

Judge also organizes a weekly Bible study at the 412th TEC for full-timers, Army civilians and contractors.

Whereas Judge is aware of the difficulty of making room on the battle assembly training schedule to accommodate all the necessary training Soldiers are required to do, he said the noncommissioned officer development program, or sergeant’s time, is really important.

“A sacred time needs to be set aside, just like a chapel service is sacred, for leaders to sit down and talk with and get to know their Soldiers,” Judge said. “You can’t skip that time. It has got to be sacred. I think that is really going to make the difference” in regards to suicide, he said.

“It’s really people to people, communication, taking care of one another,” Judge said.

What is Strong Bonds?

by Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Birch Carleton

What is the Strong Bonds program? Strong Bonds is a chaplain-led program for commanders which builds relationship resiliency. The Strong Bonds mission is to increase Soldier and Family readiness through relationship education and skills training.

Four Strong Bonds programs applied to the Army Force Generation cycle help Single-Soldiers, Couples and Families to thrive in the turbulence of the military environment.

Attendees voluntarily participate in a Strong Bonds offsite retreat format designed to maximize relationship training impact. The retreat or “get away” provides an emotionally safe and secure training environment in which to address the effect of military lifestyle stressors.

What has the Army done? Beginning in 1999, with four events and 90 couples in the 25th Infantry Division, Hawaii, Strong Bonds has spread throughout the Active and Reserve Components of the Army.

In 2004, the US Code was amended to allow command funding for “chaplain-led programs to assist members of the armed forces ... in building and maintaining a strong family structure,” (Title 10, ~1789).

In FY 2010, the Army completed the third year of a five-year longitudinal study evaluating the outcomes of the Strong Bonds

training program. Preliminary outcomes show a fifty percent lower rate in divorce with an increase in marital satisfaction for participants.

What continued efforts does the Army have planned for the future? The Army continues to provide relationship training tools and make them available to Soldiers and their Families. For Fiscal Year 2011, commanders from the Active Army, the National Guard and the Army Reserve have planned more than 5,000 Strong Bonds events including units and Soldiers geographically dispersed from military installations.

Why is this important to the Army? Healthy relationships contribute to the maintenance of a healthy Army and a secure future force. With increasing demands placed on Soldiers and Families, to include both frequent deployments and duty relocations, intimate relationships are fully tested.

Research shows that training in communication skills, intimacy, and conflict management increases marital satisfaction and reduces rates of Family violence.

Building Army Family resiliency is part of a strategic approach to cope with the high operational demand placed on today’s Army.

Source:
<https://www.strongbonds.org>

412th Theater Engineer Command's 2013 Best Warrior

by Sgt. 1st Class Lyndon Miller, 412th Theater Engineer Command Public Affairs

FORT DEVENS, Mass. – After five, grueling days of striving, the 412th Theater Engineer Command's 2013 Best Warrior Competition is over and two Soldiers have risen to the top to claim the title "Best Warrior."

Sgt. Daniel R. Ryan, 26, a combat engineer with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 365th Engineer Battalion, 411th Engineer Brigade, and Cpl. Martin T. Norment, 22, a combat engineer, 366th Engineer Company, 479th Engineer Battalion, 411th Engineer Brigade, secured the title in the noncommissioned officer and soldier categories respectively.

Staff Sgt. Christopher Williams, 441th Engineer Company, 467th Engineer Battalion, 926th Engineer Brigade, and Spc. Matthew Hagy, 733th Engineer Company, 844th Engineer Battalion, 926th Engineer Brigade, were the runners-up.

Awards were presented to the winners during a ceremony at Fort Devens, Mass., April 26.

Although the BWC is about the efforts of an individual Soldier competing against other individual Soldiers, Ryan expressed solidarity and respect for those Soldiers he was up against.

"It's an honor to be counted among the high caliber of NCOs and Soldiers that were participating," Ryan said.

The M9 pistol qualification was one of the tested events. Ryan had never fired the weapon previously. All competitors received familiarization training on the weapon right before they fired for qualification. Ryan scored a perfect score of 40 out of 40.

"It's definitely an honor to win,"

Ryan said, a Woodbridge, N.Y. native.

"I was just happy to be here to compete and represent my unit."

Although, Norment felt "very proud" of his personal victory, he quickly acknowledged others who helped with him reach this point.

"I owe a lot to my sponsor 1st Sgt. Lee MacKay," Norment said, a native of Brockport, N.Y. He "helped me out a lot." MacKay is with the 479th Engineer Battalion, 411th Engineer Brigade.

Like Ryan, Norment also spoke well of others in the competition. "I'm very impressed with the other soldiers I met of the 412th TEC," he said. "I think



Sgt. Daniel R. Ryan, 26, a combat engineer with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 365th Engineer Battalion, 411th Engineer Brigade receives the 412th Theater Engineer Command's 2013 Best Warrior Competition NCO of the Year award from Maj. Gen. William M. Buckler, Jr., commanding general of the 412th TEC, during an awards ceremony held at Fort Devens, Mass., April 26. (Photo Credit: Sgt. 1st Class Lyndon Miller, 412th Theater Engineer Command Public Affairs)

Competition Best of the Best

“This is the Best Warrior Competition,” Green said, “this is not the best top chef, or the best cup-cake maker, or whatever show they have on TV.”

We were not only looking “to have a good time,” Green said. **“We were looking for the best of the best.”**

they’re a motivated bunch of soldiers. They came out here and gave it their all.”

Staff Sgt. Williams was the runner up in the NCO category and Spc. Hagy the runner up in the Soldier category.

Maj. Gen. William M. Buckler, Jr., commanding general of the 412th TEC, attended the awards ceremony.

“We’re going to pass out some awards and we’re going to recognize the winners,” he said, emphasizing that only the best will be crowned.

Buckler went on to say to the competitors, “You’re all winners, or you wouldn’t be here.”

When the 302nd Maneuver Enhancement Brigade was tasked last year to host the Best Warrior Competition, Command Sgt. Maj. Cedric Green, non-commissioned officer in charge of the 412th TEC 2013 Best Warrior Competition, asked himself, “So, what makes a warrior?”

During the awards ceremony, Green said a warrior is one who is reluctant to tap-out in the combatives competition, or a Soldier who endures the cold during the land navigation event.

Ryan and Norment, the best of the best of the 412th TEC, will represent the command at the United States Army Reserve Command’s Best Warrior Competition at Fort McCoy, Wis., June 23-28, 2013.



Cpl. Martin T. Norment, 22, a combat engineer, 366th Engineer Company, 479th Engineer Battalion, 411th Engineer Brigade, receives the 412th Theater Engineer Command’s 2013 Best Warrior Competition Soldier of the Year award from Maj. Gen. William M. Buckler, Jr., commanding general of the 412th TEC, during an awards ceremony held at Fort Devens, Mass., April 26. (Photo Credit: Sgt. 1st Class Lyndon Miller, 412th Theater Engineer Command Public Affairs)





Memorial Day

Left to right: 412th Theater Engineer Command Soldiers Spc. Matthew Young, Sgt. Otis Jordan, Staff Sgt. Cedric Douglas, Spc. Malayna Blair and 1st Sgt. Richard Broussard, first sergeant 412th TEC HHC, in the rear, provide a color guard detail during a 2013 Memorial Day service held at the Vicksburg Auditorium in Vicksburg, Miss.



Spc. Daniel Thomas (left) and Spc. Labaron Wiggins, with the 412th Theater Engineer Command, render a salute to fallen service members during a 2013 Memorial Day wreath laying service held at the National Cemetery in Vicksburg, Miss.



U.S. Army Spc. Ricardo Alarcon, with the 758th Engineer Company, 841st Engineer Battalion, 926th Engineer Brigade, performs pushups during the Army Physical Fitness Test on day two of the 412th Theater Engineer Command's 2013 Best Warrior Competition at Fort Devens, Mass., April 22, 2013. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Lyndon Miller, 412th Theater Engineer Command Public Affairs)



U.S. Army Spc. Ricardo Alarcon, with the 758th Engineer Company, 841st Engineer Battalion, 926th Engineer Brigade, performs pushups during the Army Physical Fitness Test on day two of the 412th Theater Engineer Command's 2013 Best Warrior Competition at Fort Devens, Mass., April 22, 2013. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Lyndon Miller, 412th Theater Engineer Command Public Affairs)



A 412th Theater Engineer Command soldier fires his 9mm pistol engaging targets during the reflexive fire range for the 412th TEC's 2013 Best Warrior Competition held at Fort Devens, Mass., April 24. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Paul Roberts, 314th Press Camp Headquarters)

Staff Sgt. Christopher Williams, 441th Engineer Company, 467th Engineer Battalion, 926th Engineer Brigade, performs a magazine exchange while in a crouched stance during the M9 pistol qualification range for the 412th Theater Engineer Command's 2013 Best Warrior Competition held at Fort Devens, Mass., April 24. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Paul Roberts, 314th Press Camp Headquarters)





Capt. Michael Griffie, commander of 333rd Engineer Company, 365th Engineer Battalion, 411th Engineer Brigade, 412th Theater Engineer Command, and command team case unit colors during the a farewell ceremony Apr. 14, 2013, in Reading, Pa. The construction unit is deploying to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. (Photo by Capt. Maryjane Falefa Porter, 412th TEC Public Affairs)



(Left) Maj. Gen. William M. Buckler, Jr., commanding general of 412th Theater Engineer Command, receives the unit colors of the 411th Engineer Brigade from outgoing brigade commander, Brig. Gen. David L. Weeks, in a change of command ceremony held April 5 at the Sgt. Dima Army Reserve Center in New Windsor, N.Y., Weeks, a native of Tallulah, La., and commanded the unit since March 2009, relinquished command to Col. John P. Constable, a native of Watertown. (Photo by Capt. Maryjane Falefa Porter, 412th TEC Public Affairs)

Lt. Col. Timothy Gothard, Battle Captain of the 412th TEC Operations Center, helps kick off commemoration of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month by wearing a Samoan lava lava during Friday morning physical fitness session May 3, 2013, in Vicksburg, Miss. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Lyndon Miller, 412th Theater Engineer Command Public Affairs)



1st Lt. Benjamin Rowland (center), the 411th Engineer Brigade, 412th Theater Engineer Command, poses with family members and Deborah Bryant (far left), First Lady of Mississippi, at the Jackson-Evers International Airport after a deployment in Afghanistan.



Maj. Savas Kyriakidis, 412th Theater Engineer Command Deputy Staff Judge Advocate, leads children from the Agape Montessori Christian School in reciting the nation's pledge of allegiance during the observance of the National Day of Prayer May 2, 2013, in Vicksburg, Miss. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Lyndon Miller, 412th Theater Engineer Command Public Affairs)

Spc. Sidney Kemper, with the 412th TEC Medical Advisory Section, helps kick off commemoration of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month by wearing a Samoan lava lava during Friday morning physical fitness session, May 3, 2013, in Vicksburg, Miss. Kemper, a native of Palau, came to the United States in 2010 to make "a better life for my child," she said. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Lyndon Miller, 412th Theater Engineer Command Public Affairs)



302 MEB Officer Gets Employer Recognized

by Sgt. 1st Class Lyndon Miller, 412th Theater Engineer Command Public Affairs

U.S. Army Reserve forces entered continuous operations more than a decade ago. The war in Iraq is over, and the majority of U.S. forces in Afghanistan are scheduled to withdraw by the end of 2014.

Even so, the Army Reserve is an operational force now, not part of the strategic reserve of days gone by, and will continue to be so in the foreseeable future.

It is paramount that Reserve Component Soldiers (Reserve and National Guard) have meaningful employment, and that this employment not be jeopardized when Soldiers mobilize or deploy.

Possessing employment and then knowing a job is secure when serving overseas, allows a Soldier to focus on the mission. It also increases retention rates and the quality of our national security.

For over 40 years, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) has been resolving issues between employers and service member's military commitments, in peace time and in war.

A Department of Defense office established in 1972, ESGR provides almost 5,000 volunteers in all 50 states, Guam-CNMI, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the District of Columbia.

ESGR grants several DOD awards in recognition of outstanding employer support and the sacrifices they have made to Soldiers and their Families. These awards originate from the nominations of Reserve Component service members in appreciation of an employer who has demonstrated a strong commitment to veterans.

U.S. Army Reservist Lt. Col. Gavin Heater, Fire Support Coordinator, 302 Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, and an electric field operations supervisor with NSTAR Electric Company's Station Operations Central Division based in Dorchester, Maine, nominated NSTAR Electric Company in January 2013 for the national Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. The nomination paid off.

NSTAR Electric was recognized for its outstanding support of Guardsmen and Reservists over the past few years due to the Freedom Award nomination packet I submitted on behalf of the company in January 2013," said Heater.

ESGR presented the Pro Patria Award to NSTAR Electric Company at the Annual Award & Recognition Dinner for the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve May 11, 2013, in Marlborough, Mass.

"NSTAR Electric was recognized for its outstanding support of Guardsmen and Reservists over the past few years due to the Freedom Award nomination packet I submitted on behalf of the company in January 2013," said Heater, a 27-year veteran serving nine years on active duty and 18 currently as an Army Reservist.

While not the national-level award, the Pro Patria award is the highest level award bestowed by a state ESGR committee.

"Unfortunately, NSTAR Electric was not selected as finalist for the 2013 SECDEF Employer Support Freedom Award," Heater said.

Heater wasn't daunted. "We will try again next year," he said.

Heater has nothing but praise for NSTAR, specifically, its hiring practices. NSTAR has become a vanguard for veteran hiring, including personnel who completed their military service, as well as, personnel continuing to serve in either the Army Reserves or the National Guard, he said.

Throughout 2012, NSTAR hired 175 personnel of which 20 were veterans (11 percent of new hires).

Although the overall veteran population in NSTAR is only 95, representing 3 percent of the total work force, 30 percent of external hires from 2006 to 2011 were veterans.

Heater always tries to give NSTAR as much advance notice he can, but said "He was pleased to have a management team who is receptive to some of the last minute needs when I have to perform military training."

Riding responsibly

by Sgt. 1st Class Lyndon Miller, 412th Theater Engineer Command Public Affairs

“Although motorcycle fatalities have fallen markedly in 2013 – current statistics indicate a 59 percent decrease as compared to this time last year – officials expect numbers to rise through the end of summer,”

according to a U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center article in May.

The article was written to kick off Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month and apparently designed to set the tone for the summer, when ridership is likely to increase, with an emphasis by Army officials stressing greater personal responsibility while riding.

Taking the mandatory Motorcycle Safety Foundation course is one thing Soldiers of the 412th Theater Engineer Command can do to assume this greater responsibility.

“If you’re going to ride, you need to have the training,” said Capt. William Irwin, safety officer for the 412th Theater Engineer Command. **“You need it. It’s not an option. You have to have it before you get on that motorcycle.”**

Major military installations provide the Motorcycle Safety Foundation course. For Soldiers at remote Reserve centers, the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center website lists by state approved civilian entities that offer the course.

Units will pay for the course. Also, commanders may allow Soldiers to take the course during battle assembly or let Soldiers reschedule training. Either way, Soldiers do not pay anything and they get some good safety education to boot.

“You might think you’re the best rider out there, but it is not going to hurt you to take this course,” Irwin said, **“and it might even save your life.”**

Associated with the MSF is the Motorcycle Mentorship Program. This company-level managed program and is dictated by the 412th TECs commander’s training guidance put out by Maj. Gen. William M. Buckler, Jr., commanding general of the 412th TEC.

The purpose of the Motorcycle Mentorship Program is to establish voluntary installation-level, or Reserve Center, motorcycle clubs where less experienced riders and seasoned riders team up to create a supportive environment of responsible motorcycle riding and enjoyment.

“The mentorship program is actually where a company would put together their motorcycle safety program, appoint a mentor, who is usually a senior person who has ridden for years and is very familiar with motorcycles,” Irwin said, **“and they would take the lead on the motorcycle safety program.”**

The mentor would identify other riders within the unit and make sure they have or will get the MSF training and help setup the training on the battle assembly training schedule. The mentor represents the company commander and facilitates the unit’s motorcycle safety program.

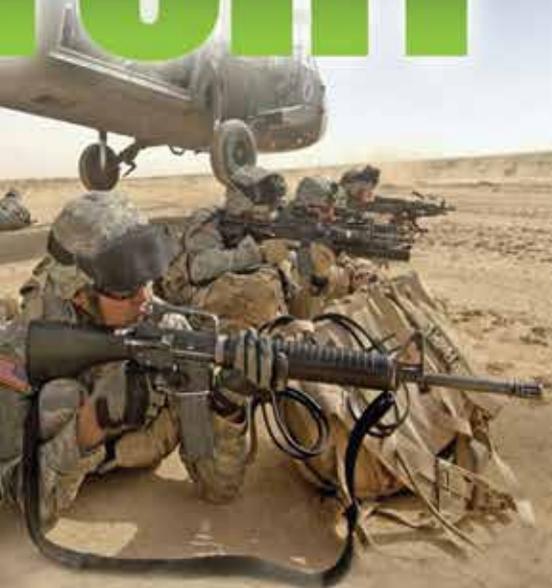
Based on the 412th TECs commander’s training guidance, mentors are required to lead two company rides a year during battle assembly for all identified riders of the unit who have completed the MSF. During these rides, mentors should foster an atmosphere that emphasizes skilled and disciplined riding.

“Army accident data show that speeding and other forms of reckless riding, neglecting to wear personal protective equipment, and failure to complete required training are among the most common indiscipline-based errors Soldier riders make,” U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center stated.

“The Army says, you are not to ride your motorcycle unless you have the Motorcycle Safety Foundation,” Irwin said.

Motorcycle safety is a

TEAM EFFORT



Protective gear has two basic purposes:

1 COMFORT. Uncomfortable gear can distract you from riding. Properly fitted protective gear will help you stay comfortable when encountering various riding conditions.

2 PROTECTION. In the event of a crash, protective gear can help prevent or reduce injuries. What you see here is the important gear needed for comfort and protection.

Personal Protective Equipment

SAVES LIVES



ARMY SAFE IS ARMY STRONG



Three generations of Mississippi Soldiers

by Sgt. 1st Class Lyndon Miller, 412th Theater Engineer Command Public Affairs

Hattiesburg, Miss. – “We’re here today to pin, my son, Walter Don Easter III, to the rank of sergeant first class.”

So said Army Reserve Col. Walter Don Easter II, G3 of the 412th Theater Engineer Command, during his son’s promotion ceremony held at the 184th Expeditionary Sustainment Command’s National Guard Armory here May 10, 2013.

My son “came to me and asked if I would be willing to pin him, and of course I said it would be a great honor,” Easter II said.

Sergeant 1st Class Easter goes by the nickname “Trey.” He is the third with the same name and a third-generation Soldier.

Easter III and his wife, Sheila, drove the three and a half hours from Tupelo to Hattiesburg to take part in the ceremony.

Easter III said he will probably retire before his son makes the rank master sergeant, so he wanted to have a chance to pin the sergeant first class rank on him now before that happens.

My son’s “been around military armories since the day he was born,” Easter III said. He played in them as a child. As a teenager, he would be allowed to crawl up in the engineer equipment from time to time. So, it was no surprise to me when it became the time he would want to join and make it a career.”

No surprise, but Trey did have another career option to choose



from. He had a college golf scholarship. He was one of the top golfers in this state in 2002 when he graduated from high school.

Before he graduated, however, Trey, age 17, enlisted in the Mississippi National Guard as a horizontal construction engineer, operating big machinery.

After only attending six days of college classes at Itawamba Community College, Fulton campus, Trey’s unit, the 223rd Engineers, was called up in January 2003. They served in Iraq for over a year, where the unit help build up the military infrastructure in the early days of the war. The unit redeployed stateside May 2004.

For the next three years, Trey was put on active duty orders at Camp Shelby doing engineer operations. A year after that, he worked as a recruiter assistant.

Since January 2008, he has been working as an Active-Guard Reserve recruiter in Laurel, just north of Hattiesburg.

“I have about 11 years of service and about 10 year and about 4 months as active duty,” Trey said.

Trey has resumed his college studies majoring in business at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg.

Easter III has served in the military for 34 years and enlisted in March 1977 in the Army Reserve.

“I’ve pulled several active duty tours since then,” Easter III said. “I think I’m up to seven different tours now. He listed them, “Honduras, Panama, Costa Rica, Barbados, Germany, Alaska and Italy.”

“I was in Iraq too for over 15 months,” he said. “I loved it.”



Col. Walter Don Easter II, G3 of the 412th Theater Engineer Command (center), chats with Command Sgt. Maj. Eddie Jenkins (right), command sergeant major of the 184th Expeditionary Sustainment Command's recruiting battalion and newly promoted Sgt. 1st Class Walter Don Easter III, a recruiter with the 184th Expeditionary Sustainment Command's recruiting battalion, at the completion of Easter III's promotion ceremony held at the 184th Expeditionary Sustainment Command's National Guard Armory in Hattiesburg, Miss., May 10, 2013.

When he came by to the United States after Iraq, Easter III thought he would just go back to Reserve status.

"I was called back to help establish the Regional Training Centers for the Army Reserve," he said.

Three RTCs were setup, one at Fort Dix, N.J., now Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, Fort McCoy, Wis. and Fort Hunter-Liggett, Calif.

He continued on active duty status until the fall of 2012. "So I actually stayed on active duty for about seven years," Easter III said.

Easter III is a farmer. "Last year we grew corn on the bottomland. This year we're going to grow soybean," he said. Up on the high ground, we got a 35-acre tree farm. Some trees we will harvest for pulp. In five years, we will harvest the rest for lumber."

Speaking of the military legacy that his family represents, Easter III said, "This is the third genera-

tion. My father was a Guardsman. He did his time. I came along and did mine. And now my son is going to do his.

Perhaps referring to the marriage of this son three years ago and a possible fourth generation military career in the works, Easter III said, "We will see where it goes from here."

Trey knows that the second rocker of a sergeant first class carries a load of responsibility.

"Of course, being a senior NCO, a lot of junior soldiers will be looking up to me," he said. "Just like when I was looking to my senior NCOs."

Trey has plenty of encouragement on the home front.

His wife Lindsey, born in the one red-light town of Monticello, was also present at the ceremony.

"I'm very proud of him. He's worked so hard," she said.

Lindsey, a physical therapist assistance in Hattiesburg, said she does everything she can to support her Soldier.

"I tell him every day, whatever he wants to do, I will support him 100 percent," she said. I am behind him the whole way. I think this is the most important thing as an Army wife. He is motivated and strong minded and knows what he wants. The best role I can play is to support him."

Lindsey's devotion and support apparently will still be needed in the future.

"I'm going all the way," Trey said. "At least 20. I'm going to get at least that 20 years and I'll go from there."



Newly promoted Sgt. 1st Class Walter Don Easter II, a recruiter with the 184th Expeditionary Sustainment Command's recruiting battalion, poses with his wife, Lindsey, after his promotion ceremony held at the 184th Expeditionary Sustainment Command's National Guard Armory in Hattiesburg, Miss., May 10, 2013.

‘Build to Serve’ Soldiers Support

by Sgt. 1st Class Lyndon Miller, 412th Theater Engineer Command Public Affairs

JACKSON, Miss. – Almost immediately after the Boston Marathon bombing of April 15, 2013, local Boston businesses and philanthropists called Mayor Tom Menino and offered their support to do whatever they could to help.

The One Fund Boston was formed.

Through The One Fund Boston website, corporations and individuals have contributed millions of dollars to help the victims, their families and friends.

The willingness to help spread from Boston all the way to Jackson, Miss. Fleet Feet Sports organized a run on May 8 to honor and support all who were involved in the tragedy.

The willingness to help continued to spread from Jackson, Miss. to Army Reserve Soldiers of the 412th Theater Engineer Command in Vicksburg. Lt. Col. Mark Leighton, secretary of the general staff, Maj.

Savas Kyriakidis, deputy staff judge advocate, Sgt. 1st Class Anna Allatt, G3 training, Mr. Ashley Rankin, G3 budget analyst, and Mr. Earnest Green, unit administrator technician for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, participated in the Fleet Feet run.

Leighton’s wife, Christina, daughter, Emelia, and her boyfriend Rayshaun Stalling, also contributed their time and effort as well. Allatt ran together with her son, Will.

The run was free. Shirts were sold and all the proceeds went directly to The One Fund Boston.

The Leighton family is from the northeast part of the country and the bombing hit them hard.

“When the incident occurred we were basically on the edge until we could find out if everybody was safe,” Leighton said, “and being from New England, it kind of struck home.”

He said that being so far away from home, supporting this race here was the next best thing we could do.

Speaking of donations and support for the victims Leighton said, “This is the first thing we’ve seen here in Mississippi so we’re jumping in to help.”

Christina’s father is from Boston, and she was born there herself. She spent most of her life in Massachusetts and considers it her home state.

In 1992, the Leighton family attended the Boston Marathon to cheer on a friend who was running.

“I know people who still run, I immediately made sure all my people were fine,” Christina said, who made phone calls right after she learned of the bombing.

Several times when speaking about the terrorist incident that attacked the people of her state, Christina’s voice quavered and broke.

After a long pause, she continued.



Sgt. 1st Class Anna Allatt, 412th Theater Engineer Command G3 training, and her son, Will, run in an event held at Jackson, Miss. May 8, 2013 to honor and support all who were involved in the tragedy of the Boston Marathon.

Boston Bombing Victims

“I feel for the people who lost family members, and I feel especially for the little ones who have to suffer,” Christina Leighton said. **“Being a mom myself, I just wanted to pay some tribute and honor them properly”** by getting involved in the Fleet Feet run.

Allatt echoed similar sentiments when the bombing occurred. Her last duty station was in Boston. She has family and friends who live and work in the city and surrounding areas and so is emotionally invested in the welfare of its people. “It’s home to us,” she said.

Christina compared the citizens of Boston to Irish siblings and spoke of how the bombing created a unified front.



Lt. Col. Mark Leighton, 412th Theater Engineer Command’s secretary of the general staff, runs in an event held at Jackson, Miss. May 8, 2013, to honor and support all who were involved in the tragedy of the Boston Marathon.

“We can insult each other, beat the daylight out of each other but the second somebody else does ... well, you can’t do that,”

Christina Leighton said.



Mr. Earnest Green, 412th Theater Engineer Command, unit administrator technician for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, runs in an event held at Jackson, Miss. May 8, 2013, to honor and support all who were involved in the tragedy of the Boston Marathon.



Mr. Ashley Rankin, 412th Theater Engineer Command G3 budget analyst, runs in an event held at Jackson, Miss. May 8, 2013, to honor and support all who were involved in the tragedy of the Boston Marathon.

Soldiers Must Consider OPSEC When Using

by Lisa Ferdinando, ARNEWS

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, May 16, 2013) – It's as easy as a click of a mouse or a tap on a smartphone, and in a few seconds sensitive Army information might be shared that could get Soldiers killed.

With the ease of social media, in any part of the globe, at any time, a Soldier, Army civilian or family member can post pictures from a deployment or talk about an Army mission.

But these seemingly innocent posts could actually contain sensitive information that endangers Soldiers by revealing locations, security measures, mission operations or troop movements, said the Army's social media experts.

Soldiers, Army civilians and family members need to be mindful of what they put online, with operations security at the forefront of their considerations, said Staff Sgt. Dale Sweetnam, with the Online and Social Media Division, Office of the Chief of Public Affairs.

He said this applies to whether the person is a Soldier or Army civilian communicating as an organization or as an individual on social media sites.

Sweetnam compiled the Army's Social Media Handbook and conducts training for Soldiers about the dos and don'ts of posting on social media.

The dos include using social media to get out the message of your command, inform the public of Army activities or stay connected with loved ones. The don'ts, said Sweetnam, include revealing sensitive information about missions, units or Soldiers.

**“Once it's out there, it's out there.”
“You can delete it, but if the wrong person
took a screen shot, that's actionable
intelligence and you can't get that back,”**

Sweetnam said.

Besides considering operations security, Soldiers must maintain their professionalism at all times, even on their off time, said Sweetnam.

They are subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice and could face corrective or disciplinary action if they violate the rules of conduct at any time, he said.

Those violations would include a Soldier releasing sensitive information, insulting his or her chain of command, posting discriminatory statements, or sharing or linking to inappropriate material.

STEPS TO PROTECT THE ARMY FAMILY

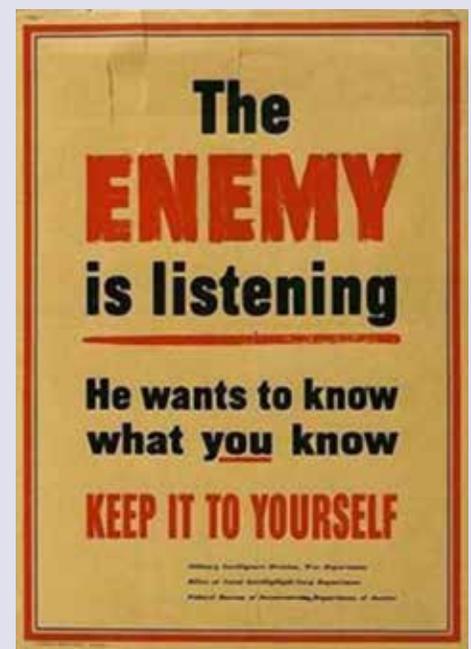
Sweetnam said the Army encourages Soldiers to share with their families the lessons of operations security and using social media.

“The spouse, when the Soldier is deployed, may post something about his or her return and that could be considered OPSEC,” said Sweetnam. “It even goes an additional level, to not only police

yourself but make sure your family knows what it can and cannot do.”

The Army's social media experts tell Soldiers not to use location-based social networking services when deployed or in classified areas; for Soldiers and families not to post specific dates or locations of deployments; and recommend setting privacy settings to 'friends only' on personal accounts to prevent personal information from ending up in the wrong hands.

The Army warns users about the geotagging feature that is automatically turned on in some smartphones and digital cameras. Geotagging is the equivalent to adding a 10-digit grid coordinate to a photograph telling where it was taken, which could reveal sensitive information about a location—



World War II-era posters such as this one were a common sight both on the frontlines and back home during the war. (Photo Credit: U.S. Army graphic)

Social Media

information that terrorists could use to target Soldiers or Army installations.

Sweetnam said for the most part, Soldiers understand the importance of being vigilant at all times when using social media.



Soldiers must maintain professionalism and consider operations security when they post on social media, since even a seemingly mundane or innocent post could contain sensitive information. (Photo by JD Leipold, ARNEWS)

“The majority of the Soldiers who are in uniform now have grown up with social media. This is the way they communicate,” he said. “They are more aware of the dos and don’ts and we don’t necessarily have to constantly drive it into them, but occasionally we have to send out those reminders.”

BE PROFESSIONAL AT ALL TIMES, SAYS ARMY

A post by a Soldier or Army civilian could be potentially taken by a member of the public as an official post, said Brittany Brown with the Online and Social Media Division. That is why it is important for everyone in the Army family to always be professional, she said.

“Ultimately what we tell Soldiers and civilians is that you are responsible for anything that you put on social media sites, whether



it is a Facebook page you’ve created in an official capacity as a Soldier or Army employee, or it’s your personal page that you’ve only connected to your loved ones,” said Brown.

Brown recommends that if it isn’t something you wouldn’t say in formation or in a public setting, then don’t post it on social media, no matter how locked down your page is.

You just never know who ultimately ends up seeing the information you post, she said.

“These things can have long-term effects,” she said. “In the 20 seconds it took you to post the photo, you may have put lives at stake. Of course you wouldn’t do that intentionally, but if that photo has that

metadata embedded in it, then you are putting Army operations and more importantly lives at stake by posting that.”

She said family members should be careful when posting information, such as if their spouse is deployed and they are now home alone, as someone with bad intent could use that information to target that family for a robbery or worse. They should also think about the “trickle down effect” before they post, she said, and how the information could impact their Soldier and others.

“At the end of the day, it keeps all of us safe,” said Brown, noting the age-old adage, **“It’s better to be safe than sorry.”**

‘Strike’ Soldier Graduates Air Assault School

by Sgt. Joe Padula, 2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky. (April 30, 2013) – For almost 12-miles he has been carrying about 35-pounds of gear. He sees a clock in the near distance with red digital numerals closing in on the three-hour mark, the time limit for the near half-marathon march. He wants to sprint to the finish line, but his face winces with every right step taken. His breaths are heavy and pain can be heard with each inhale.

His left leg is in full stride, but his right, being amputated more than six years ago, now pushes forward on a damaged prosthetic; a piston broke a few miles back eliminating fluid motion. He picks up a faster, but still a limping pace. Sweat drips into his eyes and his fists are clenched tight as he approaches the finish line with two minutes to spare.

He stops before crossing, pulls out his canteen, pours water on his helmet and face. He takes a giant step with his left foot and says two words, “Air Assault.” He then takes another step with his prosthetic, exhales and accomplishes his mission.

He has just completed the Army’s Air Assault School, on one leg.

Sgt. 1st Class Greg Robinson, a 34-year old combat engineer assigned to the Company A, 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), pinned on his Air Assault badge

during a graduation ceremony held at Fort Campbell’s Sabalauski Air Assault School, April 29.

According to the school’s records, Robinson is the first Soldier with an amputated limb and prosthetic to complete the Air Assault School.

“It’s a really good feeling and I just hope this can inspire other amputees and other people with disabilities that they can accomplish things,” said Robinson, who lost his lower right leg while deployed to Kandahar, Afghanistan, during a fire-fight in Operation Medusa, Oct. 3, 2006. “My biggest thing today is to let that someone who is laying there wounded in that hospital bed know not to get down on yourself. You can still continue despite missing a limb. A disability is only a disability if you let it hold you down.”

The Army’s Air Assault School is a ten-day course that qualifies Soldiers to conduct air-assault helicopter operations, sling-load missions, fast roping and rappelling, aircraft orientation that ends with a fast-paced, heavy load, 12-mile ruck-march. It is designed to push a service member’s limits mentally and physically. It has been called the hardest ten-days in the Army.

“That was the toughest part, but it’s over with now,” said Robinson moments after completing the 12-miler. “I had problems with my leg during the Tough One, but fixed it and continued.”



Sgt. 1st Class Greg Robinson, a combat engineer with Company A, 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), displays the prosthetic leg he used during the 12-mile road march for the Sabalauski Air Assault School, April 29, 2013, at Fort Campbell, Ky. Robinson is the first amputee to graduate the school. (Photo Credit: Sgt. Joe Padula, 2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs)

An air-valve was knocked off during the school’s obstacle portion of the course. During the ten-days the school’s staff ensured that a professional standard was maintained in regards to their grading of Robinson. There would be no bias for or against the amputee Soldier.

“The instructors were a bit nervous when he first started, but they did their job just as if it were any other student and on that

Despite Amputation

“A disability is only a disability if you let it hold you down.”

note, I am very proud of them; they didn't see him as a disabled Soldier and treated him just like anyone else coming to school to earn the Air Assault wings,” said Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Connolly, a senior instructor at Sabalauski. “We are very proud of him and I think others need to look at him as a mentor and an example of what you can accomplish when you set your mind on something.”

Prior to attending the physically demanding school, Robinson needed a waiver from the unit's medical staff. Robinson's accomplishments continue to surprise and inspire those medics.

“Some of these guys never even learn to walk on a prosthesis, let alone go through the Air Assault course,” said Capt. Gregory Gibson, the brigade nurse with the 101st's 2nd BCT, who has worked with amputee Soldiers at Walter Reed Hospital before coming to the Strike Brigade. “He's had this thing happen to him that most would see as a career ender; he's a shining example that life can carry on.”

Robinson's momentum continues as he now looks to attend the school's master rappel course, which qualifies Air Assault school graduates in the skills and techniques necessary to rappel from moving aircraft. His wounded friends are still in his thoughts.



Sgt. 1st Class Greg Robinson, a combat engineer with Company A, 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), conducts a 12-mile road march with a prosthetic right leg during the Sabalauski Air Assault School at Fort Campbell, Ky., April 29, 2013. Robinson earned his Air Assault wings upon completion of the march and is the first amputee to do so. (Photo Credit: Sgt. Joe Padula, 2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs)



Sgt. 1st Class Greg Robinson, a native of Elizabethtown, Ill., and a combat engineer with Company A, 2nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), rappels from a 40-foot tower during the Sabalauski Air Assault School, at Fort Campbell, Ky., April 26, 2013. Robinson lost his lower right leg during when his unit was ambushed during Operation Medusa in Kandahar, Afghanistan, 2006. (Photo Credit: Sgt. Joe Padula, 2nd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs)

“When I was at Walter Reed I looked around, felt sad for myself, but the more I looked, the more I realized there were so many who had it harder, who had it worse than me,” said Robinson, as he spoke of his wounded warrior comrades. “A triple amputee, a quad-amputee—and watching them work and push so hard inspired me.”

Robinson slowly repeated an earlier phrase.

“A disability is only a disability if you let it hold you down.”

This article was originally published April 30, 2013, on http://www.army.mil/article/102264/Strike_Soldier_graduates_Air_Assault_School_despite_amputation/

Photo of The Quarter

