

53rd Troop Scoop

SUMMER 2010

VOL. #1, ISSUE #3



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About the 53rd Troop Scoop

The 53rd Troop Scoop is published to the web quarterly as approved by the 53rd Troop Command, New York Army National Guard, and New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs. Views that appear in this publication are not necessarily those of the Department of Defense, the Army or the National Guard.

Submissions

Articles and photos are welcome. Please provide articles in Microsoft Word format along with high resolution digital (jpg.) photos by e-mail to thomas.w.wheeler@us.army.mil. Submission deadlines are as follows:

Winter Edition- March 15

Spring Edition- June 15

Summer Edition- September 15

Fall Edition- December 15



FRONT COVER (LEFT): Soldiers assigned to the NYARNGs 501st Ordnance Battalion (EOD), headquartered in Glenville, NY, conduct Pre-Mobilization Training (PMT) at Fort Drum in preparation for their fall deployment to Iraq.

BACK COVER: 1st Lt. John Harder, Headquarters, Headquarters Company Commander, 501st Ordnance Battalion (EOD), watches as an instructor from the New York National Guard's PTAE shows his team how to best clear a room of bad guys.





Brig. Gen. Mike Swezey
53rd Troop Command
“For The Soldier”

Greetings Fellow Soldiers of the 53rd Troop Command, Another training year is upon us.

First, I want to thank you for all the effort you, and your families, put in to serve our National Guard.

Our profession of arms is not easy. The demands and pressures are many. We ask, among other things, competence in your specialties, physical fitness, the ability to shoot accurately.

For those units and individuals who are deploying we also expect that you will go into harms way to serve our Nation and State. A lot is asked of you, our Soldiers.

Secondly, with all that you are required to do – balance your military duties, your families, your civilian jobs – it is not surprising that some of us have difficulty coping.

I want to let each and every one of you know that “we” are there for you.

Who is the “we” that I am referring to? We is all of us, but it is also particularly your chain of command. The Army has a new term called “resiliency”. You are going to hear more about this word, and a new program called “Comprehensive Soldier Fitness” in the next year.

“Resiliency” is the ability to develop fortitude in order to thrive under challenging situations and succeed under extreme conditions without suffering permanent disability. I ask all of you to keep an eye on your battle buddy. Leaders, watch your people. “We” can take care of each other if we are watchful and caring. Taking care of Soldiers is what we are all about. Shoulder to Shoulder, No Soldier Stands Alone.

Have a great training year. Take pride in your service and commitment. Thank your family members and significant others for letting you serve. It is my honor to serve with each and every one of you.

Soldiers of the 53rd, I would like to take this opportunity to talk about Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF).

While Comprehensive Soldier Fitness can sound like something new it is really just going back to the basics, taking care of Soldiers and their families.

This is something our NCO Corp has done, and done well for years. However, with our significantly increased optempo our resources have been stretched beyond their capacity.

In the past we were able to spend more time working on Soldier issues. The significant amount of time we are now spending preparing and executing our deployments, coupled with the increased requirements and stressors on our Soldiers, has created a situation which puts all of us at risk.

The CSF program will help us to focus on the physical, emotional, family, social, spiritual, and financial well being of our Soldiers. In the near future there will be guidance published on this new program, but bottom line is time will be set aside where first line leaders will spend time discussing these topics with their Soldiers.

We must consider this another tool in our tool kit to help us, and our Soldiers succeed.



Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Frank Wicks
53rd Troop Command
“For The Soldier”

CERFP Changes Hands, Validates New Skills

Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. Dennis Gravelle, 369th Sustainment Brigade

Camp Smith, Cortlandt Manor, NY-- Ever sense the massive attacks on the World Trade Center on 9-11, New York National Guard Units have trained their Soldiers for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, but there is another mission that is just as important here at home.

Should another disaster strike NY, natural or otherwise, one team needs to provide an immediate response capability to the Governor, searching an incident site, including damaged buildings; rescuing any casualties, decontaminating them, and performing medical triage and initial treatment to stabilize them for transport to a medical facility.

That responsibility goes to the Chemical, Biological, Radiological/ Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) - Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) Command and Control Team, which was recently handed over to the 104th Military Police Battalion, Kingston, NY.

"At this time we are going through the validation process and when that is complete we will take over the CERF-P mission," stated Lt. Col. David A. Gagnon, commander 104th MP Battalion, and new commander for the CERF-P team. "The validation process incorporates every element on the team, from command and control, to search and extraction, decontamination and medical screening."

According to Lt. Col. Robert T. Martin, commander, Joint Inter-agency and Training Center in West Virginia, there are 16 training and evaluation tasks that the 104th will be evaluated on in order to pass and receive a certificate to receive



Soldiers assigned to the Kingston, NY, based 104th Military Police Battalion set up decontamination tents during CERFP training held during the battalions training and validation exercise held in July at Camp Smith Training Area, Cortlandt Manor, NY.

certification for the CERF-P mission.

"The validation process is important because it proves that the teams are capable of handling all the components that they are going to be required to do in an actual event," said Martin.

The scenario for the validation process was that an old munitions storage facility for the military had exploded and several buildings nearby were effected by the explosion had structural damage, and there was also a possibility of a blistering agent. The CERF-P team was requested to help with search and extraction, decontamination and a mass triage of casualties.

"There are approximately 150-200 casualties in the hot zone," stated Capt. Jamie Cenicola, 104th MP Bn. "Our search and extraction team has been pulling casualties out and getting them into the decontamination tents so they can

receive medical treatment."

The CERF-P is composed of four elements staffed by personnel from already established National Guard units. The elements are search and extraction, decontamination, medical, and command and control.

The CERFP command and control team directs the overall activities of the CERFP and coordinates with the Joint Task Force - State and the Incident Commander.

The CERFP search and extraction element mission is assigned to an Army National Guard Engineering Battalion, the decontamination element mission is assigned to an Army National Guard Chemical Battalion, and the medical element mission is assigned to an Air National Guard Medical Group. The security duties are performed by the state National Guard Quick Response Force.

"This training is critical for us to be able to respond efficiently and to

be able to save lives down range if there ever is another disaster where citizens need our assistance,” stated Gagnon.

Brig. Gen. Renwick Payne, Director of Joint Staff for the New York National Guard added that this training is essential to bring the confidence to the people, that the NY Guard is not just present, but well

trained, and will continue to train so that we can provide the appropriate service when our service is needed, and ready to provide the security that is necessary at any given time.

The Soldier's of the 104th MP Bn., take their jobs of protecting the people of NY very seriously and are very attached CERF-P mission and will train hard daily to ensure they

are ready should a disaster strike, natural or otherwise.

“The Soldier's performed admirably today,” stated Gagnon. “They have met all their times and processed casualties above their required rate, so I feel with great confidence that these Soldier's would execute their mission if called.”

Local Guard Soldiers Support BSA Jamboree

Story by Lt. Col. Ellen Krenke, National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va.--More than 600 Army National Guard members from 15 states will support this year's national Boy Scout Jamboree, which will celebrate 100 years of scouting in the United States, at Fort A.P. Hill in Virginia.

The annual event will also include several special guests with ties to the National Guard, including NASCAR drivers Dale Earnhardt, Jr., and Jeff Gordon, AMA Super Bike rider Jake Zemke, Indy Car driver Dan Wheldon and several FLW professional fisherman and World Wrestling Entertainment personalities.

“All will be interacting with scouts and representing what the National Guard is all about,” said 1st Lt. Benjamin J. Bullington, a program manager for the Army Guard's recruiting office.

Four states, including Alabama, North Carolina, New York and Tennessee, will provide military police for security missions, while infantry troops from the New Jersey and Mississippi Guard will operate as a Quick Reaction Force during the event, which began July 26.

“We think it is going to be an interesting mission to do, considering the Boy Scouts have the same values as the military,” said 2nd Lt. Stephen Groene, the officer in



Military Police assigned to the 206th MPs joined more than 600 National Guard members from more than 15 states to support this years Boy Scout Jamboree, held at Fort A.P. Hill, Va., celebrating 100 years of scouting. (Photo courtesy of the 206th MP Company)

charge of New York's 206th and 107th Military Police Companies. “We are looking forward to going down there.”

Although Groene finished his Boy Scouting career as an Eagle Scout, he never attended a Jamboree as a boy. He said he looks forward to seeing what he missed.

Aviation units from Kansas, New Jersey, Virginia and West Virginia will provide two UH60 Blackhawks each for various aviation missions during the two-week event. Arkansas will send an additional air crew, while North Dakota and Georgia plan to send an aviation battalion headquarters section.

The only Guard medical personnel will come from Alabama's medical battalion headquarters. Three air ambulance aircraft from Maryland Guard will also join the mission.

On the ceremonial side, two bands from Virginia and Rhode Island will support the festivities and an artillery battery from the Virginia Guard will provide the cannon salute.

More than 44,000 Boy Scouts will visit various service exhibits that will be based in the Armed Forces Adventure Area during the jamboree. “The AFAA is an area allocated to all services in order to provide a venue for them to showcase what their branch does and what they are

all about,” said Bullington.

The Army Guard’s Mobile Event Team assets will be on display in this area, including the NASCAR, Indy car, AMA Motorcycle and Bass Fishing Ranger Boat.

“These displays will be static and provide Scouts and visitors an up-close experience with the National Guard’s national racing programs,” Bullington said.

The Army Guard will also set up an air-conditioned theater tent, where a video will be show that “showcases the continuity of ideals and beliefs held by both organizations,” Bullington said. “There will

be a dedicated master of ceremonies in the tent as well greeting and interacting with the scouts, providing an enthusiastic and motivated face for the National Guard.”

Promotional items available to the scouts will include a special edition GX Magazine made specifically for the Centennial Jamboree celebration, a commemorative t-shirt and a sew-on patch.

“The promotional items inform Scouts about the Guard and how scouting is very similar to what the Guard does in our communities,” Bullington said. “They also provide a keepsake for the scouts to hold

onto for years to come.”

The Army Guard will showcase the patches that the Boy Scouts traded with them in 2005, the last time the Guard attended the Boy Scout Jamboree.

“These patches, at the time, were posted on a wall that now contains highly sought after commemorative patches from that year’s jamboree,” Bullington said. “This year, the Guard has constructed a bigger wall that we will again post patches that the Boy Scouts give us.

“We look for this to be a hot focal point for scouts at the Armed Forces Adventure Area.”

EOD Soldiers Prepare for Deployment at Drum

Story and Photos by Spc. Mary Hogle, 138th PAD

FORT DRUM, N.Y. -- The HM-MWV (High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle), carrying six Soldiers, made its way down the dirt road kicking up a dust cloud that would make a desert sand storm envious. Upon reaching their destination, the Soldiers dismount, brush the dust from their uniforms and begin another day of training in the hot August sun.

Members of the 501st Ordinance Battalion (EOD) are conducting the units Pre-Mobilization Training (PMT) at Ft. Drum from August 2-20, 2010 in preparation for a fall deployment in support of Operation New Dawn, the operational name scheduled to replace Operation Iraqi Freedom September 1, 2010.

As part of the three week PMT the unit conducted in depth training that includes Army Warrior Tasks, Battle Drills, combatives, marksmanship, urban operations, and cultural awareness, among others.

“PMT ensures assigned Soldiers complete all theater and destination



Soldiers with the 501st Ordinance Battalion practice urban assault tactics August 18, 2010. During a pre deployment training, the 501st prepare for entering buildings safely and tactically while overseas. (Photo by Spc. Mary Hogle, 138th PAD)

specific training requirements,” said Lt. Col. Robert A. Mitchell, Commander, 501st EOD. “In short, it ensures Soldiers have the right training at the right time that prepares them to conduct their deployed mission.”

Although the 501st isn’t expecting to be involved in heavy combat, the unit isn’t taking any chances.

“Anything can happen when you’re over there, so we are training for all the possibilities” said Sgt. William B. St. John Jr. a volunteer

attached to the 501st.

As with any unit getting ready to deploy into harm’s way, leaders with in the 501st haven’t forgotten that mission success depends on a unit’s ability to work as a team.

“The 501st is a unit of less than 40 soldiers. In order to succeed, teamwork is pivotal,” said 1st Lt. John A. Harder, Commander, Headquarter, Headquarter Detachment, 501st EOD.

“It’s been the best part of this training. Everyone in the unit works great together, and that builds moral,” added Harder.

St. John, appreciates the small size of the unit.

“It’s a small unit, so I’m able to

easily interact with everyone in the 501st, said St. John. “That, more than anything has prepared me for this deployment.”

The moral in the unit is above par and excitement seems to be in the air.

“The Soldiers are excited for this deployment,” said Harder. “Whether the Soldier is married, has kids or has a great job, they are all looking forward to this deployment.”

The 501st EOD is a relatively new unit. Converted from the New York National Guard’s historic 105th Infantry Regiment in 2005, the Glenville-based unit is capable of taking command and control of two to five Explosive Ordnance Disposal companies in a combat theater.

Since its conversion to an EOD Battalion in it has sent technicians to both the Iraq and Afghanistan theater of operations. This will be the battalion headquarters’ first combat deployment since its conversion to an EOD battalion.



The 501st EOD Battalion trains on Fort Drum in preparation for a fall deployment on Thursday, August 18, 2010. The Soldiers work on moving tactically into a village safely and quickly.. (Photo by Spc. Mary Hogle, 138th PAD)

Chaplains Det. Preps for Fall Deployment

Story by Spc. Trisha E. Pinczes, 138th PAD

FORT DRUM, N.Y. -- For Army chaplains, observing combat training is crucial to understanding the Soldiers they are charged with supporting. Just as important is the teamwork between chaplains and their assistants.

Capt. Brian Pidkaminy, a chaplain with the 138th Chaplains Detachment, New York Army National Guard, and Sgt. Joseph Prewitt, a chaplain’s assistant with the detachment, teamed up for the first time as chaplain and chaplains assistant during Pre-Mobilization Training (PMT) conducted from August 2-20, 2010 at Fort Drum, NY, in preparation for a spring deployment.

Due to the unique size of the 138th, the duo joined forces with the 501st

Ordnance Battalion (EOD) who are scheduled for a fall deployment in Support of Operation New Dawn, the new operational title scheduled to replace Operation Iraqi Freedom September 1, 2010.

Pidkaminy said that pairing up with his assistant has been the highlight of the training.

“It’s been nice observing and working with the chaplain’s assistant (Sgt. Prewitt) for the first time,” Pidkaminy said. “We’ll be prepared for the deployment.”

While it’s the chaplain’s job to support the emotional well-being of the troops, it’s the job of the chaplain’s assistant to provide tactical support for the chaplain himself.

“It’s my job to make sure he stays secure,” Prewitt said.

Because Pidkaminy does not carry

a weapon, he does not actively participate in the training. However, being able to see combat operations performed has been paramount to Pidkaminy’s preparation for deployment.

“I want to be able to understand how they operate,” Pidkaminy said. “That way I can help the Soldiers as much as possible.”

Regardless of their specific functions, Pidkaminy and Prewitt feel that their priority is service to country.

“Our mission is to provide religious support to the Soldiers,” Pidkaminy said. “However, we are Soldiers first.”



AROUND THE





153RD!



37th Finance Detachment Welcomed Back to NYC

Story and Photos by Pfc. Ubon Mendie, New York Guard Public Affairs Office

NEW YORK, NY -- The 37th Finance Detachment is Back. On July 22, the 37th returned home from a 13-month mobilization supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"We are the money men," said 1st Lt. Andrew King, 37th Finance Detachment executive officer. "Most importantly 26 left and 26 came back."

During the deployment the 37th was tasked with providing financial support to more than 20,000 seamen, sailors, Marines and Department of Defense civilian employees in southern Iraq.

The team has been back in the states since Sunday night, following the troops' self dubbed freedom flight to Atlanta. The soldiers then

connected to Philadelphia and were then bused to Ft. Dix, NJ, where the unit completed post deployment in-processing.

After completing Debriefs it was back to home base -- the Lexington Armory.

"You're back home from a job well done, but the hard part of your mission has just begun," said Lt. Col. Norman Easy, deputy brigade commander of the 369th Sustainment Brigade.

"Statistically, more Soldiers die during post deployment than do in combat, so looking after your battle buddy does not stop now."



1st Lt. Andrew King 37th Finance Detachment executive officer shakes hands with his uncle Mark Cunningham. King, an Astoria NY native, has been deployed for 13 months along with 25 others in Iraq.

369th trains on EST at FIG

Story and Photos by Sgt. Michael E. Davis Jr., 369th Sus. Bde.

"Harlem Hellfighters"

Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa. -- Harlem, NY based National Guardsmen from the 369th Sustainment Brigade conducted an engagement skills trainer exercise at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., Sep. 10.

Two Soldiers from the "Harlem Hellfighters" -- Sgt. David J. Pizarro and Spc. Hector J. Pichardo, both dental hygienists, shot expert at an M-16 rifle range after receiving simulated training in zeroing their weapons and qualifying with pop-up targets.

"It's the closest you get from the real thing," said Pichardo, describing his experience with the EST 2000 training.

Pichardo said this is the third time

he has use the EST 2000 and feels it definitely helps improve your shooting.

"It gives you more feedback on how to prevent certain errors when you shoot, so it's definitely a great tool to use before you go to the range to do the real thing," said Pichardo.

Sgt. Scott G. Torro, EST 2000 instructor, said he feels it's a proven fact that Soldiers will do well on the actual range if they conduct themselves with the EST 2000 training previously.

"The more Soldiers that can get



Soldiers of the 369th Sustainment Brigade practise on the EST 2000, an engagement skills trainer, at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., during the units September drill. (Photo by Sgt. Michael Davis, 369th Sus. Bde.)

in here and get trigger time, before they go outside, they're going to be warmed up," said Torro. "In any sport that you watch you can see any team player warms up before they get into the game - and that's what the EST is - you're able to warm up before you go live."

206th/ 53rd Soldiers Featured on 'Colbert Report'

Story by Lt. Col. Paul Fanning - JFHQ-NY

New York--“Hey you can’t park that here,” yelled a voice from an upper floor of the New York City studio on West 54th Street.

“You want to tow it?” replied one of the Soldiers from the street, knowing he wasn’t just speaking with a comedian, but also the host of one of America’s hottest shows.

Comedy Central star Stephen Colbert took a short ride on September 8 in an M1117 “Guardian” Armored Security Vehicle driven by troops of the New York Army National Guard’s 206th Military Police Company.

They took him up to the front door of his studio while the cameras rolled.

The taped sequence was the introduction for his evening broadcast and his Guard crew was enjoying the ride even more than he did.

The three Latham-based Guardsmen were the opening act in a special edition of Comedy Central’s “The Colbert Report” that aired on the cable channel that same evening.

The Soldiers had returned in June from a 10-month deployment to Iraq and were just the kind of cast members that The Colbert Report was looking for -- Soldiers from New York who had served in Iraq.

“This is great,” said Sgt. Joshua Flint from Cherry Valley. “He’s even going to use one of my jokes,” he boasted.

“What a great guy,” said Staff Sgt. Kent Theobald from Fort Johnson. “He’s obviously a big supporter and the whole staff here has been wonderful.”

They came to New York City to take part in a show that included in-



New York--New York Army National Guard Soldiers pose with comedian Stephen Colbert on Wednesday, Sept. 8 at the studios of Comedy Central in Manhattan. They are (from left) Capt. Shawn Tabankin, Staff Sgt. Kent Theobald, Sgt. Joshua Flint, and Spec. Jeffrey Vucich. Theobald, Flint, and Vucich appeared with Colbert in a segment which opened his Sept. 8 program which saluted troops who served in Iraq

clude Vice President Joseph Biden and Gen. Raymond Odierno and a studio audience of over 150 military personnel.

The Colbert Show is Comedy Central’s most watched program and the format is of a “fake” news show that parodies main stream media.

In this episode, The Colbert Report delivered a comic salute to American service personnel who served in Iraq and was tied to coverage of the recent withdrawal of combat forces from there.

At the show’s request and with Army approval, one of the 206th’s armored cars was brought down to Staten Island by flat bed trailer from the Guard’s Mobilization and Training Equipment Site at Fort Drum.

The crew then drove the vehicle over the Verrazano Narrows Bridge, up the Brooklyn Queens Expressway and into Manhattan through the Battery Tunnel. They had a police escort and even the ride over was a

thrill for the crew and escort staff.

“It was a blast,” said Specialist Jeffrey Vucich from Rhinebeck, NY, who rode in the turret. “Going over the bridge was amazing and people kept hitting their horns, waving and giving us the thumbs up,” he said.

The “Guardian” has been used by Military Police units in Iraq to escort convoys and protect check points. This time it was being used as a TV show prop and got a lot of approving public attention while on the road and as it sat parked in front of the Colbert Show studio.

Curious pedestrians, production staff as well as security personnel enjoyed taking photos and speaking with the crew following the taping session outside and prior to the studio portion of the program that followed.

Another 10 members of the New York Army National Guard from the Westchester County-based 53rd Troop Command and New York

City's 1st Battalion 69th Infantry later joined the 206th members in the studio as an audience comprised exclusively of Iraq veterans and including the most recent former commander there, Odierno.

Capt. Shawn Tabankin, operations officer for the 53rd Troop Command, also appeared on the program; as the Soldier who won the chance to use Mr. Colbert's luxury toilet.

Titled *Been There, Won That*: The

Returnification of the American-Do Troopscape!, the episode is a comic tribute said to originate with the host himself, whose visit to Iraq last year to both entertain and report on the troops brought cheers from both service members and viewers.

It was the Colbert Show which wanted to feature local Soldiers and veterans.

The 206th Military Police Company deployed 180 Soldiers to Iraq

in September of 2009 and provided security during the Iraqi elections in March while also training and mentoring Iraqi police.

While the unit is headquartered in Latham, its members come from across the state and include many civilian law enforcement professionals in its ranks.

Approximately a fourth of the unit's members had completed a previous deployment.

14th Finance takes on National Training Center

Story and Photos by Sgt. Brandon LeFlore - 363rd Mobil Public Affairs Detachment

FORT IRWIN, Calif. -- The California sun beamed down on a group of Army National Guard finance Soldiers from New York as they hiked through sand, rocks and brush to find four plotted points on their land navigation course here, Aug. 10.

The land navigation course was a little different from a traditional training scenario, with opposing forces and simulated improvised-explosive devices, Soldiers from the 14th Finance Company from New York City moved with skill and agility to accomplish their goal.

"The objective here was to advance tactically through enemy territory using the (Defense Advanced G.P.S. Receiver) systems," said Sgt. Matthew Feuer, a finance specialist.

The DAGR system is a relatively new satellite G.P.S. It's more powerful and a quarter of the size of the old Precision lightweight G.P.S. Receiver systems, more commonly

known as PLGRs, and allows Soldiers to see terrain maps as opposed to simply grid coordinates.

The 14th Finance Co. doesn't normally have the opportunity to conduct dismounted land navigation or driver's training in a desert terrain, but the National Training Center at Fort Irwin offers the proper climate and training resources to train this unit for a future deployment.

"The environment here is drastically different from what we are used to," said Staff Sgt. Lisa Neely, a

Detachment Sgt. "We don't have the opportunity to do much land navigation training back home, but we were able to actually get out there, plot points and try not to get lost."

Instead of skyscrapers and paved road, the New York-based finance Soldiers are met with rolling hills and sandy trails which offers them a chance to practice their basic Soldier skills in a desert environment.

"The land navigation course is something we can't do in the city," Feuer said. "The National Guard



FORT IRWIN, Calif. -- Elements of the 14th Finance Co. advance through simulated enemy territory during a land navigation training exercise here, Aug. 10. The Finance Soldiers are training for an upcoming deployment to Afghanistan next year.



FORT IRWIN, Calif. -- New York Army National Guard Pfc. Quanise Miller (left), finance specialist, 14th Finance Co., and Cpl. Christmally Torres (right), a supply specialist and New York native from the 369th Sustainment Brigade, collaborate to send up a mock nine-line medical evacuation request during a land navigation exercise here on Aug. 10.

has places to train in upstate N.Y. and N.J., but the biggest difference here is the climate and the terrain.”

This land navigation course is not unlike something the unit would experience while deployed. If for instance, there is a forward infantry unit, the finance company might have to move cash out to that unit through rough terrain, said 1st Lt. Mark Weisenborn, commander of the 14th Finance Co.

The finance company doesn’t routinely have the chance to train in a tactical environment and in addition to conducting land navigation training the unit has also participated in a combat lifesaver’s course, nine-line medical evacuation, convoy operations, radio procedures and driver’s training while at NTC.

The National Guard is limited as far as resources go and we don’t have the newest Humvee’s (or) as many resources as the active Army but the unit has been able to adapt, Feuer said .

“Here Soldiers have access to up-armored Humvees and have a

chance to drive-off road as opposed to around the block in a place like Queens.”

“There’s no driver’s training non-commissioned officer back at our company so we normally have to seek out other units to conduct driver’s training,” added Neely.

While all the training the unit receives during their annual training here is not necessarily essential to their role as a finance company, it provides an opportunity for the unit members to hone their core competencies in a field environment.

“The training is not necessarily central to our mission because we don’t typically run convoys or plan logistical routes, but in the event that we have to assume control we have to rely on the basic Soldier tasks we’ve been training on here,” Feuer said .

In addition to training tactically, Soldiers from 14th Finance Co. have trained with the finance office here at Fort Irwin.

“Here we have access to a finance office and active duty pay and ac-

tive duty Soldier’s pay problems. We have exposure to a lot more training resources and hands-on training than we would ever get at home in our armory,” Feuer said .

The finance training offered here is unique in that Soldiers have the resources available to process actual pay inquiries for active duty Soldiers stationed here at Fort Irwin, which is particularly useful for Soldiers who have not deployed yet.

Many of the Soldiers in

the 14th Finance Co. have recently finished basic training and (advanced individual training), so they haven’t really seen the system applied to real-world scenarios, but here they have a chance to work with someone who uses it routinely, said Sgt. Desiree Timothy, a Finance Specialist.

“At home ... there is a lot of paper or field manual training making it a little harder to train adequately, but here the Soldiers have access to the systems and get a chance to really get hands-on training,” Timothy added.

With a slew of new Soldiers, training here at NTC will be paramount to the unit’s readiness as they look forward to an upcoming deployment to Afghanistan next year.

“The training here is extraordinary,” said Staff Sgt. Virginia Waldon, Senior Financial Management Specialist, 14th Finance Co. “The Soldiers have a chance to see what they’ll face when they go down range.”

1427th Wins 53rd Inaugural Squad Stakes

*Story by Capt. Amy Bonanno,
138th PAD*

Camp Smith – For the first time, the 53rd Troop Command created the annual Squad Stakes Competition here.

The weekend started on Friday with in-processing and weapons qualification. On Saturday, the completion really heated up and began with a combat fitness test which included two minutes of pushups, two minutes of sit-ups for each squad member, and a squad combat run with obstacles. The day continued with map reading, combat medical testing, weapons assembly and weapons functions checks, and a reconnaissance operations order focused on developing the squad leader's troop leading procedures. If Soldiers received a no-go they were trained to standard prior to departing the event, time permitting.

By Sunday the winner was clear - the competition was won by the 1427 Transportation Company. The day continued with an award ceremony.

The 1427 Transportation Company received a trophy they will keep un-



The Squad Stakes Team representing the Queensbury, NY, based 1427th Transportation Company (seen above) won top honors at the 53rd Troop Commands inaugural "Squad Stakes" held at Camp Smith Training Area, Cortlandt Manor, NY. (Photo Courtesy of the 53rd Troop Command)

til next year's event where they will be expected to defend their title as the "best squad". Each squad member also received an Army Achievement Medal and a pocket knife with the blade engraved "Best Squad 2010, 53rd Troop Command".

"Congratulations to all the Soldiers who participated in this, the inaugural 53rd Troop Command Squad Stakes. Everyone this year was very enthusiastic. I cannot wait to see next year's teams. I expect the competition to be fierce," said Brig. Gen. Mike Swezey, Commander of the 53rd Troop Command.

"I would like to thank everyone who contributed to making the Inaugural 53rd Troop Command Squad Stakes Competition a success. The squads were all very motivated and were well led by their squad

leaders," said Lt. Col. Carlton Cleveland, Operations Officer for the 53rd Troop Command.

"Our team worked hard to bring our best skills to the competition. While participating, we were able to test our abilities individually and build team camaraderie at the same time.

"We're looking forward to competing again next year and anticipate winning again," said Sgt. First Class Angel Ocasio, Readiness NCO, 1427 Transportation Company.

The squad designation / selection was left to the decision of each command. Some squads were a composite of units within a battalion while others were composites of Soldiers within a specific company.

"Squad leaders were presented with problems throughout the competition and had to solve those problems and develop a plan for their Squads to complete the task," Cleveland said, "the squad leaders were given a "task list" upon in-processing that contained all the tasks they would be evaluated on during the competition."



Competitors perform reconnaissance operations during the inaugural 53rd Troop Command 'Squad Stakes' held at Camp Smith Training Site, Cortlandt Manor, NY

Artwork Commemorates Hometown Feeling

Story by Lt. Col. Paul Fanning - Joint Force Headquarters-NY

SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY -- A Saratoga Springs artist and her latest work are getting the home-town-treatment during a reception on Friday, July 30 at the New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center. But to Rumara Jewett, it's her subjects who deserve the attention.

"Nowadays, there is a general recognition that the community needs to support soldiers as individuals," wrote Jewett about her reasons for starting and completing the project, which pays tribute to members of all of the nation's service branches. "All around are cars and lawns decorated with 'Support our Troops' yellow ribbons," she said.

"Coming Home" depicts a homecoming parade for local members of the various military services and is currently on display at the museum through the summer. According to Jewett, the painting is meant to represent any service members from any community in an ideal homecoming celebration. The subjects in her work include area members of the New York Army and Air National Guard as well as members of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps. It is 72 by 80 inches, oil on canvas in a vibrant display of color and local pride.

"...this project had a big emotional draw for me," she explained, referring to the Soldiers, Sailors, Airman and Marine who modeled for her. She said it was a privilege for her to work with real service members instead of just models in rented uniforms. "Also, I had been studying portraiture for several years and the chance to work with a variety of faces with their unique emotions

reflecting what it would feel like to be in the situation portrayed, was a big attraction."

It started out as a commissioned work with a private client and Jewett developed a concept built around a military homecoming. As a working commercial artist, she approached the project first by re-

searching her subject and then making a plan. This was her first military subject. Through personal contacts and outreach she identified some area military members who were willing to serve as models. She also drew upon her own memories of family members who served in the military. Although the commission fell through, she was determined to complete the work she started.

Jewett explained that she felt the energy of the project was much larger than her. "It seemed important to do the work because of what it represents, namely the proper closure to the deployment experience of military service and respect, love and support for the individuals who are deployed. This project represented what art can do," she said -- "to crystallize and reflect back an attitude prevalent in the general society."

Participants in the reception and in the painting include Lieutenant Colonel Robert Mitchell, of the New York Army National Guard's 501st Explosive Ordnance Disposal Battalion based in Scotia and Lt. Col. Kim Terpening, formerly of



"Coming Home", the picture now on display at the New York State Military History Museum.

the New York Air National Guard's 139th Aero Medical Evacuation Squadron in Scotia and now serving on assignment with the Air National Guard at Andrews Air Force Base in MD. Also participating and portrayed is Russell Howe who served as a captain in the 1st Special Forces Group from 1993-95. Now he is a Lieutenant colonel in the National Guard's 42nd Infantry Division, in Troy, NY.

"Coming Home" was completed in the spring and was first exhibited in a public library in her parent's hometown of Lincoln, MA. She put more time into this project than any other, and according to Jewett, the public reaction to "Coming Home" is very different than her previous efforts.

"The responses to the painting have been phenomenal and really much stronger than anything I've experienced in the past," she said.

"I've seen the strength of emotion on people's faces when they first see it," she said, noting that moist eyes, broken speech and hushed tones were common reactions. She has also received an "outpouring" of compliments.

