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ON THE COVER

Cover Image: The Signal Regiment has jobs that cover everything from satellite communications to cable splicing to camera operations. The Signal Corps' 150th Anniversary is a celebration of the Signal Soldier. (U.S. Army illustration by Lawrence Boyd. Photo sources: 1st Signal Brigade, 5th Signal Command (Theater), 160th Signal Brigade, 55th Signal Company (Combat Camera), Department of Defense)



NETCOM JOURNAL

The NETCOM Journal is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army Network Enterprise Technology Command/9th Signal Command (Army) Team, and its subordinate commands and organizations throughout the world, in accordance with AR 360-1. Contents of the NETCOM Journal are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, or the Department of the Army or NETCOM/9th SC (A). The design and editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the NETCOM/9th SC (A) Public Affairs Office. All submissions from outside sources may be edited for style, content, and space limitations. The NETCOM Journal, with a circulation of 2,500, is distributed via official mail. To contact the Public Affairs Office, call (520) 538-2374, or e-mail netcom.pao@us.army.mil. The mailing address is: ATTN NETC-PA (PAO), US Army NETCOM/9th SC (A), 2133 Cushing Street, Suite 3209, Fort Huachuca, AZ 85613-7070. Electronic copies of the NETCOM Journal are available upon request.



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CG's Corner

What an exciting time in our regiment and for NETCOM/9th Signal Command!

The task of implementing the Global Network Enterprise Construct (GNEC) is a huge undertaking, and absolutely essential to reduce the load on our expeditionary Army. As the single information technology service provider for all Army network communications, our mission to operate, maintain, and defend the global network enterprise in a time of war has never been more crucial.

Ours is a truly global mission, and in order for us to achieve success worldwide we'll have to make sure we have the most important aspect of any successful organization – effective communication. Being able to connect and collaborate with our peers is one thing that I cannot stress too strongly. Effective communication will allow us to solve most problems quickly and efficiently. Our Soldiers, Civilians, and Contractors need to realize that we are all in this together, and trust that whoever we are, wherever we are, we will always do the right things for the success of our mission.

While focusing on our mission is one of the most important things we can do as Soldiers, we should not attend to our duties at the sacrifice of our family responsibilities. In these times of increased operational tempo, NETCOM/9th Signal Command (Army) is dedicated to giving Soldiers sufficient time to prepare themselves and their families for deployment, as well as giving them time to attend to family needs. Balancing a Soldier's work and non-work lives is something that this command is firmly dedicated to – achieving this balance is essential for the quality of life that our Soldiers need and deserve.

I am proud to be the new commander of NETCOM/9th Signal Command (Army). In the past our Signal Soldiers have always performed to the highest standards in providing the communications capabilities essential to our success on the battlefield. In the upcoming years I look forward to working with all of you in meeting the new challenges ahead and achieving the same high level of success that NETCOM/9th Signal Command (Army) is known for. I wish everyone a safe and happy Holiday season, and may the New Year bring the best to all.



Brig. Gen. Jennifer L. Napper



Brig. Gen. Jennifer L. Napper speaks with Vince Breslin, Command Historian, after his selection as NETCOM's Civilian of the Month.

Voice of the Army! Army Strong!

CSM's Corner

As the Command Sergeant Major for the 9th Signal Command, I am called upon by the commander to travel to each of our units worldwide to make sure everything is being done to accomplish our mission of operating, maintaining, and defending the Global Network Enterprise. In the past several months I have done just that, and I'm pleased to say that the men and women of this great organization are doing just that. Our nation is truly fortunate to have great Soldiers and Civilians such as yourselves to take care of the Army's business. Each and every day, you shoulder unprecedented responsibilities that are absolutely essential to our Army accomplishing its worldwide mission.

In this time of persistent conflict, we are being depended on more than ever before. Because of our increased operational tempo, Soldiers are working longer hours, scheduling their lives around essential training and multiple deployments, and performing at the highest standards for the good of our nation. As the senior noncommissioned officer for 9th Signal Command I am proud of the enormous energy I see expended in these efforts, but it also my duty to ensure that our Signal Soldiers are not pursuing their mission at the expense of their family life.



Command Sgt. Maj. Gerald Williams

Making sure our Soldiers have the very best quality of life is directly linked to the relevance and readiness of our Army. The Army is focused on meeting the needs of our Soldiers before, during, and after deployment by organizing and integrating quality of life initiatives into a well-being framework. What is well-being? It is defined as, "the condition of being well, prosperous, healthy, and satisfied with life." This framework spans five domains: standard of living, health, career, community life, and most importantly, family life. A sense of well-being in all these domains enables Soldiers to focus on and perform their mission, and enhances their commitment to serve in our all-volunteer force.

For our Soldiers to accomplish their mission, whether in a combat zone or stateside environment, we must realize what a great opportunity we have to serve in the Army, in support of something larger than ourselves. As Soldiers, we live up to the highest standards; something we can all be proud of. We are offered many different avenues for personal and professional growth, something that I hope we all take advantage of. One of the many opportunities being a Soldier affords is one that allows us to concentrate on our Families, making sure that they are fit, physically, mentally and spiritually.

I want to stress in the strongest terms how important the well-being our Army Families is to the accomplishment of our mission. The services and support systems are in place to make sure our Families have the strength and resilience needed for the Army Life. I urge all our Soldiers, Civilians and their Families to visit the Army Well-Being web site at www.armywell-being.org for many helpful insights and suggestions on this most important subject. We owe it to ourselves and our loved ones, as well as to our nation, to ensure our Army Families have the very best life has to offer.

In closing, BG Napper and I would like to thank each and every one of you for your hard work dedication to duty and the personal sacrifices that you make to keep our country free. Keep up the good work.

Voice of the Army! Army Strong!

Army Cyber Command established

FORT BELVOIR, Va. – Maj. Gen. Rhett A. Hernandez assumed command of the U.S. Army Cyber Command Friday at Fort Belvoir, Va., during a ceremony officiated by Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli.

ARCYBER headquarters will be located in the National Capital Region and will realign Soldiers and Civilians into essential ARCYBER headquarters positions. The total command strength of 21,000 Soldiers and Civilians will be located around the globe.

ARCYBER is the Army's service component command to U.S. Cyber Command, a sub-unified command under U.S. Strategic Command.

ARCYBER's mission is to plan, coordinate, integrate, synchronize, direct, and conduct network operations and defense of all Army networks. When directed, ARCYBER will conduct cyberspace operations in support of

full spectrum operations to ensure U.S. and allied freedom of action in cyberspace, and to deny the same to adversaries.

Before today, the Army Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Command, under Lt. Gen. Kevin T. Campbell, has led the Army's cyberspace operations in

support of U.S. Cyber Command. The establishment of ARCYBER brings a unity of effort and synchronization of Army Forces operations within the Army cyber domain, officials said.

"Today is a historic day for the Army, Department of Defense and the nation," Hernandez said during the ceremony. "Today, Army Cyber Command assumes the cyber mission and brings unprecedented unity of effort and synchronization of all Army forces operating within cyberspace."

NETCOM/9th Signal Command and portions of the 1st Information Operations Command (Land) will be subordinate units to the new command. Additionally, the U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command will be under the operational control of ARCYBER for cyber-related actions.

(From an Army News Service release.) ♦



U.S. Army photo

Maj. Gen. Rhett A. Hernandez accepts the U.S. Army Cyber Command colors from Gen. Peter Chiarelli, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, during an assumption of command ceremony Oct. 1 at Fort Belvoir, Va.



U.S. Army photo by Eric Hortin

Brig. Gen. Jennifer L. Napper accepts the command's colors Sept. 22 from Lt. Gen. Jeffrey A. Sorenson, Army Chief Information Officer/G-6, during the change of command ceremony.

Command's colors changes hands

By Eric Hortin

NETCOM/9th Signal Command (Army) Public Affairs

FORT HUACHUCA, Ariz. – Maj. Gen. Susan S. Lawrence passed the reins of the U.S. Army Network Enterprise Technology Command/9th Signal Command (Army) to Brig. Gen. Jennifer L. Napper in a ceremony Sept. 22 here at Barnes Field House. The weather may have moved the ceremony away from Brown Parade Field, but it did not dampen the spirits of the approximately 300 people in attendance.

Prior to the official passing of the colors, Lawrence was presented the Distinguished Service Medal by Lt. Gen. Jeffrey A. Sorenson, Army Chief Information Officer/G-6, for her work leading the command through challenges and changing times.

“As the commander of the sole organization charged with the enormous responsibility of providing,

operating and defending the Army's information network, Maj. Gen. Lawrence established the foundation that allows Warfighters to access secure and trusted communications anywhere, at any time,” Sorenson said.

Sorenson also commended Lawrence on her unwavering support to combined and joint commanders, and the advancement of commercialization of communications in Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan. However, he said her commitment to Soldiers and Civilians was her trademark.

“Maj. Gen. Lawrence's driving concern was families – families of Soldiers and Civilians alike,” Sorenson said.

With the colors of all the theater signal commands, brigades and headquarters in front of the official party, it was Lawrence's final opportunity to express her

gratitude to the men and women of the command.

"I want to thank the men and women of 9th Signal Command for making the last 30 months the most memorable of my career," Lawrence said. "As I take off my green tabs for the last time today, I could not have ended my command time with any better professional team of men and women who give selflessly to the mission every day.

"There is just one thing I would like to say to the men and women of 9th Signal Command as I take my leave: any success I have enjoyed in my time here can be directly attributed to those of you around me who made it happen."

Napper, who recently relinquished command of the 7th Signal Command (Theater) in Fort Gordon, Ga., is not a stranger to taking over from Lawrence.

"This is my third time to take over command from Maj. Gen. Lawrence, and I know exactly what to expect: a highly trained, motivated team that embraces the Army vision and is dedicated to bringing it to life,"



U.S. Army photo by Eric Hortin

Maj. Gen. Susan S. Lawrence, outgoing commander, accepts a symbolic round casing Sept. 22 from Sgt. 1st Class James Weathers, Fort Huachuca Select Honor Guard Salute Battery, during the change of command ceremony.

Napper said. "In shaping the mission of the 9th Signal Command, General Lawrence has made huge strides in operationalizing the Global Network Enterprise Construct, changing forever the face of Army network communications, and giving our Warfighters the essential tools they need for success on the battlefield.

"While I reap the benefits of those who have commanded 9th Signal Command before me, there are still many challenges ahead... challenges that only the men and women of this organization can overcome." ❖



U.S. Army photo by Gordon Van Vleet

Maj. Gen. Susan S. Lawrence, outgoing commander, shakes hands with retired Maj. Gen. James Hylton, former NETCOM/9th SC(A) commanding general, after the change of command ceremony Sept. 22.

Afghanistan mission leads to worldwide concepts

Lawrence Torres III

5th Signal Command (Theater) Public Affairs

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – “It looks like we have been in Afghanistan for nine, one-year deployments instead of nine years,” said Maj. Neil K. Khatod, 5th Signal Command (Theater) deputy of Operations.

Khatod’s view of the communications setup was established from a five-month deployment to Afghanistan with Brig. Gen. Jeffrey G. Smith Jr., commanding general, 5th SC(T).

Smith was asked by Gen. George W. Casey Jr., Army Chief of Staff, to assist in increasing the communications pipes and capacity required in Combined Joint Operations Area Afghanistan to support the Presidential Troop uplift.

Smith took what he calls “the A-team” from 5th SC(T), which included Khatod; Col. Mark Baxter, International Security Assistance Force communications director; Lt. Col. John Harris, operations chief; Lt. Col. Joe Dupont, Defense Communications Systems program manager; Maj. Paul Howard, network planner; Chief Warrant Officer Lesley Cornwall, senior network technician; and Capt. Ernest Jones, aide-de-camp.

Smith and the team did more than 50 trips all over Afghanistan to meet with people and understand their challenges and issues.

After the first 30 days in theater, Smith’s team found some gaps and from that developed a campaign plan.

“When you go to Afghanistan you fight as a joint coalition team,” Khatod said. “We had Air Force users on a base and Army users on the other side of the base, but to talk between them you had to send information to a satellite, which then traveled 26 miles down to the other user... when they are only a kilometer apart. We tried to fix this.”

Their campaign plan included five lines of effort, which included a broader scope, from U.S. Forces to Coalition and National Afghan Forces.

“We all need to fight on the same network,” Khatod said. “In Afghanistan that’s called the Afghan Mission Network, which enables any Coalition Network partner to see the same things as the Americans, like targeting or Search and Rescue missions. Today we do this independently on separate networks.”

Smith said this is a paradigm change compared to Iraq.

“We essentially said it was OK to maintain your national network, but everyone is replicating those battle command applications on a brand new third network, the Coalition Network, a name we gave to the Afghan Mission Network,” Smith said. “So essentially, more than 40 nations have agreed to open up the gates, allowing their applications to feed every other nation’s applications. So the common operational picture is fed by data that is mutually accessible by everyone in the coalition which is a fundamental shift. So they fight on the same exact applications.”

Smith said this requires the intelligence community to classify their information and make it releasable to the Coalition.

“That release is really important,” Smith said. “All of the stuff they are collecting would become immediately accessible to all nations. When you do that, it is a significant step in the right direction.”

The second line of effort is to build and defend the network, which includes fixing and optimizing the network with bandwidth increases, routing improvements and data storage upgrades.

“We were looking at building out Area Processing Center-type



Courtesy photo

Soldiers in Bagram, Afghanistan work to establish communications.



Courtesy photo

Brig. Gen. Jeffrey G. Smith Jr., commanding general, 5th Signal Command (Theater), talks to Afghan Soldiers about the importance of literacy and network understanding in the Afghan Communications Support Unit.

capabilities to make data more accessible,” Khatod said. “We also wanted to extend the data network down to the Soldier on patrol.”

The third line of effort would be to integrate systems to provide a capability.

Khatod explained one example would be a British unit traveling from one sector to another would show up on the common operational picture of a U.S. element, and a call for fire would be noted by a French element. Multiple platforms could talk with one another, from the air support elements to the ground observer, the battalion or brigade commander who called it in, the local patrol observing the activity on the ground – are all communicating, under the Afghan Mission Network, as if they were part of the same unit.

The fourth line of effort is to manage and drive transmissions.

“How do you transition from one Coalition force to another, U.S. to French, minimizing that operational pause while you are shifting gears from one Coalition force to another?” Khatod added. “We also had to consider the transition capabilities from the U.S. to the Afghan National Security Forces or to the Government of Afghanistan, which would include simply getting

radios to the Afghan Soldiers.”

The final line of effort in their campaign plan was “Coach, Teach, Mentor and Lead.”

“This is about going out, integration and coming up with the Enterprise approach,” Khatod said. “Bring the (communications professionals) together and establish a working group. Two out of four you are trying to build are on the same base, so let’s do it once.”

Smith said that many of the lessons we learned apply to home station operations as well as other theaters.

“If you are going to build a joint information environment that includes the coalition, the interagency, the intergovernmental capability, you’re going to need that environment established well before you go to a coalition joint operation area,” Smith said. “The only way to establish that here is to act as if you have a single network in which each military branch shares information.

“I think it is going to transform who we are as a service provider, and I think it’s going to require the existence of a Coalition Network, full-time, here in Europe and Africa.” ❖



Blind school sees a brighter future with the help of 1st Signal Brigade Association

By Spc. Adam Carl Blazak

1st Signal Brigade Public Affairs

SEOUL – When alumni from 1st Signal Brigade wanted to help out a charitable organization in the area, a school for the blind and disabled immediately came to mind.

The Hanbit School for the Blind received a 2 million won (\$2,000) check from the 1st Signal Brigade Association during a ceremony held at the school's auditorium, Oct. 18.

"We are very excited about being here," said Col. Mark A. Elliott, brigade commander, who presented the large ceremonial check on behalf of his unit's association to Yang Soo Kim, a former pupil of the school who became school president and director of the Hanbit Foundation.

After the check was presented, students from the school's musical performance groups performed four songs as a token of appreciation to the Army unit. A chorus of singers, performers and band members roused the audience with modern renditions of Korean traditional songs. Song after song, the school demonstrated its musical capabilities in an awe-inspiring fashion.

Pulling no punches, the school unleashed classical baritone singer Jung Jun Kim for the last song who surprised many in the audience with his commanding vocal talent.

"The [donated] money will fund the performance group's trip to Washington, D.C., next year," Kim said. The group hopes to perform a musical concert at the White House for President Barack Obama at that time.

"The 1st Signal Brigade has supported us in the past, but we want to be able to give back," Kim said. "This way, we can give back to the United States."

The 1st Signal Brigade has been fostering a positive, working relationship with the school since the brigade's arrival in South Korea from Vietnam, said Larry Schumann, a 1st Signal Brigade alumnus sitting on the



Students from Hanbit Blind School perform modern renditions of Korean traditional songs during a ceremony held at the school's auditorium, Oct. 18. The 1st Signal Brigade Association donated 2 million won (\$1,766) to the school to help fund its musical performance at the White House slated for next year.

board of directors for the association.

In fact, this year marks the 50th anniversary of the school's inception.

One faculty member of the school has worked hand-in-hand with the brigade since the early 70s. Boasting nearly 40 years of service at the school, Dong Sil Yang, a teacher of music theory and moral studies, has seen the relationship between the school and the brigade evolve over the years.

Originally, the brigade helped the school by providing materials to make kimchi, she said. More



Col. Mark A. Elliott, 1st Signal Brigade commander, presents a 2 million won (\$1,766) ceremonial check to Yang Soo Kim, Hanbit Blind School president, with Command Sgt. Maj. Rudolph Johns, 1st Signal Brigade command sergeant major, and 1st Sgt. Denny Smith, Headquarters Company first sergeant, at Hanbit Blind School, Oct. 18. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the brigade's relationship with the school.

recently, the unit has been providing Christmas presents to the students on a yearly basis, she added.

"Though the association has had no previous relationship with the Hanbit School we are very happy to make this contribution through the 1st Signal Brigade to support the school's continuing work," said Schumann.

While this may have been the first time Schumann's association has directly worked with the school, the signal brigade looks forward to working with the school. The 1st Signal Brigade is proud to be partners with those who are often times under appreciated, Elliott said.

With the school motto of "We Can See" it seems like the future has never been so bright for its students.

"Even though they're disabled, they can help others

like the U.S. Army helps them," Kim said.

Currently, the Hanbit Blind School is one of two schools in Seoul dedicated to the needs of students with disabilities. Operating as a government funded, private Christian school, more than 130 students are enrolled at the school.

Because of the potential challenges facing students who seek employment after graduation, the school has a dedicated team of professionals teaching job skills such as acupuncture, massage and music. ❖



Army, Air Force collaboration helps installation save money

Story and photos by Rich Bartell

Joint Base Lewis-McChord Public Affairs

JOINT BASE LEWIS-MCCHORD, Wash. — An astute Airman on McChord Field and a tech-savvy Army civilian network engineer on Lewis Main came up with a winning idea that likely saved Joint Base Lewis-McChord several million dollars.

Airman 1st Class Eric Tedor and Tim Allman were working on a project that gave Air Force employees computer access to Air Force networks on Lewis Main.

Conversely, the network would give Army employees on McChord Field access to the Army's

computer network.

Tedor is a 21-year-old computer network technician known as a cyber transport specialist with the 62nd Communications Squadron. Allman is a network engineer for the Joint Base Lewis-McChord Network Enterprise Center.

Sure, it seems like a simple problem, until you find out that each military service must use its own proprietary network. For many security and administrative reasons, there just isn't a way for the military to use one central network.

According to Department of Defense regulations, service networks are separate, so Army and Air Force networks can't commingle. With the joining of Fort Lewis and McChord Air Force Base, there is ample reason to ensure that all civilian and military leaders can communicate with one another via e-mail and computer.

Fixing the problem looked complex and expensive. One of the primary solutions to the problem on JBLM was to run fiber-optic cable from McChord Field to Lewis Main.

"We aren't allowed to create an integrated or 'purple' network, one that would combine Army and Air Force," said Air Force 1st Lt. Mica Myers, 62nd Communications Squadron officer in charge of networks and infrastructure. "So it looked like the only option was to run one from McChord Field to Lewis Main. It was estimated it would cost up to \$13 million to run a fiber-optic network to Lewis Main."

Not only was the price tag high, the major construction project would have taken time and effort. According to Myers, just digging the trench for the cable would have taken months.

With sharp analysis and creative thinking, Tedor and Allman came up with an inexpensive way to piggy-back the systems — and save the joint base considerable time and money.



Airman 1st Class Eric Tedor and Tim Allman discuss server configurations in the Network Enterprise Center at Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

“The Network Enterprise Center (NEC) worked in coordination with the 62nd Communications Squadron to develop the proposal of this solution that was presented to both the Air Force and the Army,” said Heather Robinson, chief of services management, JBLM NEC.

“This joint effort ensured the solution was accepted and accredited by both services and is being implemented on base,” Robinson said. “With this solution in place, we are able to save both the Air Force and Army millions of dollars in new infrastructure costs.”

Tedor explained how the solution saved taxpayer money.

“When we came up with the proposal of a virtual network, or VLAN, it seemed like a best way to proceed,” Tedor said. “It was the best use of our time and money.

“We used a VLAN network to extend one network through the other network. It allows us to tunnel the Air Force network through the Army’s network without the

networks touching each other, which keeps data from each branch isolated.

“In the field, we have a way of incorporating a network within a local area network. We thought this would be a perfect use of that configuration.”

Currently, several computers to key leaders and employees are linked by the VLAN, with more connections likely in the future. With low start-up, maintenance and upkeep costs, the network appears to be an efficient and economical solution for Air Force and Army users on JBLM.

A process that began five years ago culminated Oct. 1 when Joint Base Lewis-McChord reached its final operational capability and was formally established as one of 12 joint bases worldwide. Merging Fort Lewis and McChord Air Force Base, the creation of JBLM was directed as part of a 2005 Base Realignment and Closure action. With the establishment of the joint base, all installation support functions are provided by the Army-led Joint Base Garrison to all the services on the base – Army, Air Force, Navy and Marines. ❖



Tim Allman gives Airman 1st Class Eric Tedor an overview of server operations in the Network Enterprise Center at Joint Base Lewis-McChord.

SIGNAL SOLDIERS PARTICIPATE IN LUCKY WARRIOR EXERCISES

Story and photo by Christopher Dunne

160th Signal Brigade Public Affairs

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait – Soldiers from Company C, 151st Expeditionary Signal Battalion (ESB), 160th Signal Brigade, provided critical communications and technical support for the recently concluded “Lucky Warrior” exercise at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

Currently attached to the 54th Signal Brigade, Company C, 151 ESB was responsible for providing networking capabilities such as voice, video, and data services to the U.S. Army Central Command Contingency Command Post using tactical satellite terminals and joint network nodes, said Maj. Benjamin Sangster, 54th Signal Battalion operations officer.

“The 54th assisted USARCENT by validating current and future communications requirements and by providing technical support via the Regional Hub Node

and Regional Network Operations Security Center,” Sangster explained.

Company C, 151 ESB participated in a Mission Rehearsal Exercise at Camp Shelby, Miss., prior to their September arrival in Kuwait. During the MRX, Soldiers trained on the systems they operated in support of Lucky Warrior.

Following their arrival in theater, Company C, 151 ESB also participated in an exercise to verify their equipment was fully operational, and to ensure systems were configured correctly.

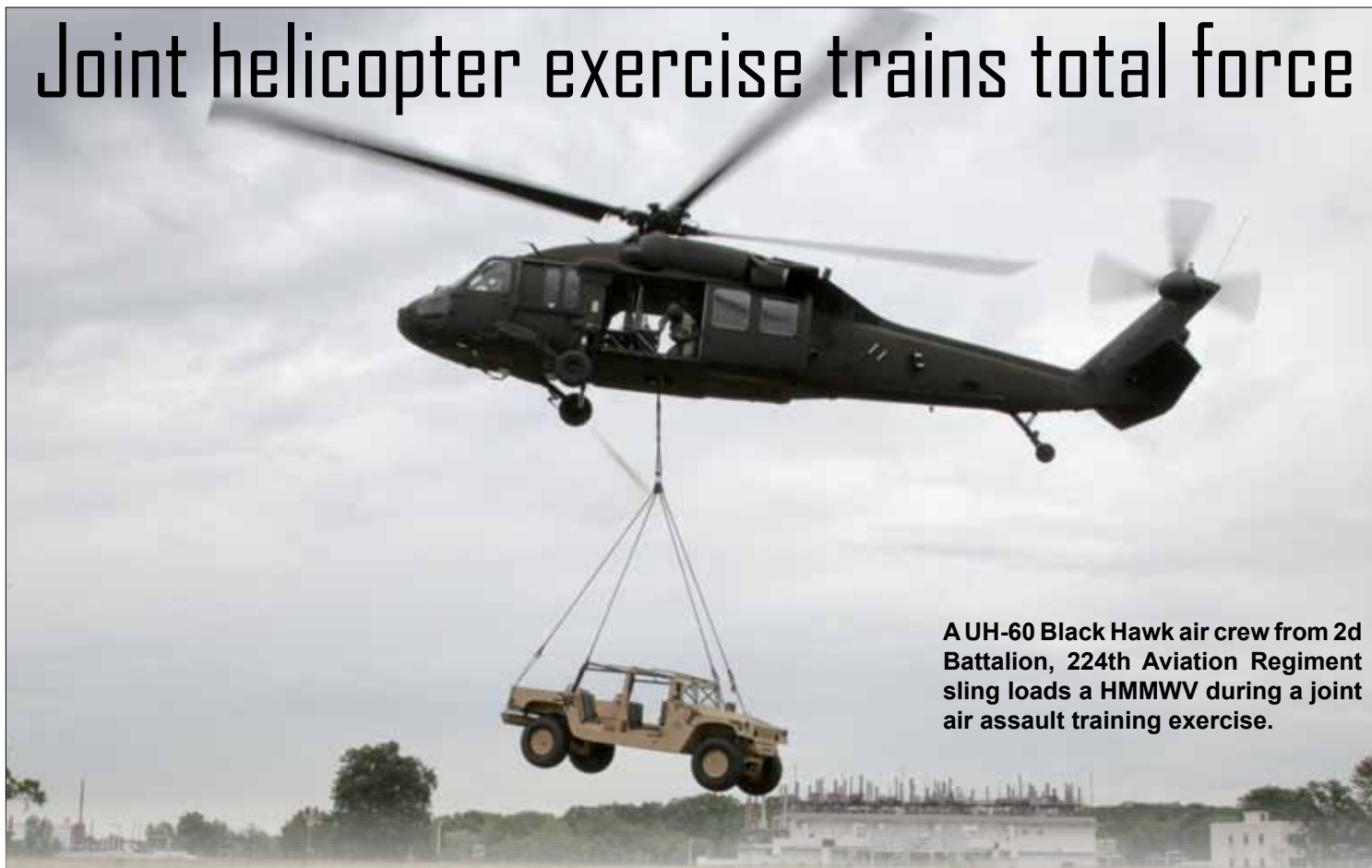
Mission success for Company C, 151 ESB was defined by their job performance in the field.

“We hope Soldiers developed a higher level of confidence in their mission along with better understanding of the role they play in the USARCENT mission,” Sangster said. ❖



Spc. Thomas Mize, Company C, 151st Expeditionary Signal Battalion, reviews settings to the Joint Network Node during Lucky Warrior exercises at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

Joint helicopter exercise trains total force



A UH-60 Black Hawk air crew from 2d Battalion, 224th Aviation Regiment sling loads a HMMWV during a joint air assault training exercise.

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Joseph Johnson

By Lt. Col. Kjäll Gopaul

Joint and Air Staff Liaison Office

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUNDS, Md. — Undeterred by inclement weather, a joint, total force team took to darkening skies here on Sept. 29, as active-duty Combat Camera Soldiers from the 55th Signal Company (Combat Camera) teamed with Maryland National Guard Airmen from the 175th Wing and Guard Soldiers from the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade for a tactical helicopter exercise with passenger loading and sling-loading of High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV).

“Today, we conducted our first sling load operation in the history of the company,” said Capt. Rock Stevens, 55th Signal Company executive officer, at Fort Meade, Md., underscoring the importance of the exercise. “We recently had five Soldiers graduate from the Air Assault School at the United States Military Academy, and several senior leaders in the company were previously Air Assault qualified. This exercise was the first time we’ve been able to leverage this specialized training back at home station.”

Starting off the day, Stevens and others surveyed the helicopter landing zone and prepped vehicles for rigging and inspection. Once the HMMWVs were ready for sling load operations, they performed rehearsals. All ground crews practiced signalman duties for guiding in

aircraft, and hook-up man duties for placing the reach pendant attached to the HMMWV into the helicopter’s cargo hook for a successful sling load.

“I felt pretty good about the exercise,” said Spc. Mark L. Salazar, a multimedia illustrator in the 55th Signal Company. “Especially after graduating from Air Assault School just two months ago, I personally find it very rewarding to put that specialized training to work. I think it’s important for Air Assault Soldiers to keep doing refresher training like this. Everyone benefitted today... even the members who are considering going to Air Assault School.”

Stevens said the unit took advantage of the opportunity to familiarize his unit’s Soldiers with all of the tasks taking place on the landing zone. Having hands-on experience before going to Air Assault School sets them up for success, since the sling load phase of the course has one of the highest student failure rates, Stevens explained.

After the vehicle rigging, the 26 service members were divided into three groups, called “chalks,” and began their passenger load training, which included Airmen from the 175th Wing from Warfield Air National Guard Base who were on-hand to learn more about helicopter operations.

“I served as the chalk leader for my team that

boarded the helicopter – I was responsible for personnel accountability, ensuring my team knew their mission and tasks, and ensuring that safety was practiced at all levels,” said Tech. Sgt. Olen D. Smith, assistant unit training manager, 175th Security Forces Squadron. “The crew chiefs taught us about safety in and around the aircraft: approach and exit routes, danger areas like the tail rotor and standing in front of the door gunner, avoiding the engine exhaust, and emergency procedures. As the day moved on, I definitely learned some critical skills, and it was just downright fun! Even though it rained, we really had a blast.”

The balance of the morning was spent on the landing zone conducting sling loads. With each lift, the ground crew’s signal man and hook-up man worked in tandem with the air crew to attach the HMMWV to the cargo hook. As one troop stood in front of the vehicle and braced against the full force of the helicopter’s rotor wash, another troop stood on top the HMMWV as the 11,500 pound aircraft hovered a mere four feet above his head. Confidently, the first Soldier gave hand-and-arm signals to the air crew to guide the helicopter over the vehicle, while the second Soldier kept his eyes on the aircraft’s cargo hook to initiate a successful sling load. With the hookup complete, the howl of the engines drowned out all other sound as the HMMWV— weighing almost three tons – was lifted toward the sky.

Chief Warrant Officer Daniel B. Chapman, Joint Forces Headquarters, Maryland Army National Guard, pointed out that their air crews also benefitted from the exercise.

“This was excellent training. We have an assault company and a medical evacuation company, and all of the pilots have to train on sling load operations. Today, we rotated five aviators through and got them trained up, as well as four non-rated crew members. We



Staff Sgt. Tarnish Pride and Capt. Tyler Ginter, both from 55th Signal Company (Combat Camera), attach break-away ties to sling load lines.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Joseph Johnson

Staff Sgt. Tarnish Pride, 55th Signal Company (Combat Camera) signals the air crew of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter to depart the landing zone.

always look forward to training with a unit on a tactical load, rather than self-hooking concrete blocks. Unlike a static concrete block, the HMMWV is a dynamic load that can spin or oscillate. It’s good experience for us to maneuver the aircraft to correct the load, as needed; and to use power management since a HMMWV comes so close to the maximum power of the airframe. And the personnel under the aircraft usually find their experience pretty exciting.”

“Under the hook, it’s kind of a rush,” Salazar said. “You have a giant aircraft hovering over you, and you feel small. But you stay focused and it goes by fast, because once you hook up you’re watching the bird do its thing and fly the load. I was prepared, though. It was definitely what I was expecting after having been to Air Assault School.”

Smith saw the benefits of sling loading for his security forces unit, as well.

“Just observing the sling load phase taught me how involved the procedure is – calculating the load plan for the HMMWV, safety taping the surfaces, calculating rigging length, and compliance with regulations. The effort definitely paid off, though. The vehicles were rigged, the crews performed signaling and hook-up duties, and executed safe and effective cargo retrieval. With our civil response missions, which commonly include movement of emergency personnel and supporting equipment, sling loading external cargo would give us the capability to rig our equipment and move it rapidly over great distances, and give us greater access to unimproved areas.”

“This training was historic for our company and tremendously beneficial for our Soldiers and their mission,” Stevens said. “By continuing to develop our relationship with the Maryland Army National Guard, we look forward to conducting this type of training at least quarterly in conjunction with our own airborne operations.” ❖

Sgt. 1st Class Donald Claxton, UH-60 Black Hawk crew chief assigned to 2d Battalion, 224th Aviation Regiment, ensures the helicopter is clear for take-off.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jacob Warren



55th Soldiers honcho Airborne operation

By Lt. Col. Kjäll Gopaul

Joint and Air Staff Liaison Office

FORT A.P. HILL, Va. – *It was brutally hot and the Marshalling Area Control Officer for the paratroop exercise was starting his pre-jump mantra.*

“I am Sgt. 1st Class Roderick Jackson, and I will now provide your MACO brief....”

The blistering 102-degree heat was oppressive and made it hard to focus on anything for very long.

“Drop altitude will be 1,500 feet AGL... six drops per pass...”

The combined weight of the combat gear with the main and reserve parachutes made it increasingly difficult to stand.

“Direction of flight is northwest... first jumper – we want you to make it to the ‘X’ on the drop zone...”

Drinking water helped, but it required extra effort to concentrate on everything being said.

“Any questions? Line up in chalk order!”

As the temperature rose to record highs July 7 at Fort A.P. Hill, Va., 34 Soldiers participated in an airborne exercise that played out like a textbook Total Force success story. The 55th Signal Company (Combat Camera) from Fort Meade, Md., led a team of Reserve and National Guard units in the groundbreaking paratroop of personnel from a helicopter onto the sun-scorched Bowling Green Drop Zone. The ambitious event had been weeks in the making, and was flawlessly executed in just a matter of hours by the air-ground cooperative.

Capt. Rock Stevens, 55th Signal Company (Combat Camera) executive officer, highlighted the significance of the training.

“Today’s exercise was a historic moment for the 55th, since it was the first Combat Camera-led airborne operation. This was a huge step forward – a proof of concept demonstrating that our unit can lead air operations involving rotary or fixed wing aircraft. Now we can step it up with sling loads or follow-on missions. In combat, we support all combat arms -- providing

commanders with a battlefield perspective of the front line. While we’re sometimes considered an after-thought, now we’ve shown that we can be part of the main effort – defeating enemy propaganda and running air operations.”

Lt. Col. John Harris, 114th Signal Battalion commander, noted the almost symbiotic nature of the exercise’s planning and execution.

“There are actually a lot of small units in the area that have an airborne mission and need this training. But since no one unit is large enough, it takes our informal ‘Mid-Atlantic Airborne Coalition’ to get organized and pull something like this off. And by working together, we all maintain proficiency on our airborne mission essential tasks.

“Our combat camera teams support the Rangers, the 82nd Airborne Division, and special operations units; and as more of our missions involve integrating with these types of forces, training like today’s jump ensures that we can support them,” Harris noted, underscoring the value of proficiency training. “This



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Brian Kohl

Sgt. 1st Class Roderick Jackson of the 55th Signal Company (Combat Camera), 114th Signal Battalion, performs a jump master personnel inspection on a soldier during an airborne operation at Fort A.P. Hill Va. on July 7, 2010. This was the 55th’s first time hosting their own Airborne Operation in the history of the unit.

exercise fostered team building; the same units we jumped with today – Operational Detachment Alpha Special Operations Forces, riggers, Civil Affairs, and aviation – are the types that we'll work with in the future: Definitely, this was the beginning of embedded training with units that we'll support."

Specialist Christopher Baker, a combat photographer for the 55th Signal Company (Combat Camera), also emphasized the credibility this training provides when embedded with other organizations.

"We deploy with multiple units, and sometimes they don't think we do a lot because we carry a camera. But if you have jump wings or an Air Assault badge, they look at you like you have more to offer to the mission. They put more stock in you. This builds up a rapport and camaraderie with the guys that you're going out with."

Maj. Tyler Shelbert, 55th Signal Company (Combat Camera) commander, describes the unit's operational tempo as high, with about a third of the company deployed at any time for Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and various other contingency operations.

"In fact, we just had 22 Soldiers return from Iraq, and another 20 are getting ready to go Afghanistan right now," Shelbert said. "Increasingly, more of our Soldiers are being embedded with front line units, which places a pretty heavy demand on the limited Airborne authorized billets in the company."

Providing a new perspective was a UH-60 Black Hawk air crew from Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 224th Aviation Regiment, of the Virginia Army National Guard's Army Aviation Support Facility at Sandston. Maj. W. Keith Nunnally, the battalion operations officer and one of the mission's pilots, remarked on how smoothly the exercise was executed.



U.S. Army photo by Cpl. Benjamin Boren

Soldiers of the 55th Signal Company (Combat Camera) prepare to board a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during their unit-led airborne operation.



U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Brian Kohl

Soldiers of the 55th Signal Company (Combat Camera) take off in a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during their unit-led airborne operation.

"It was a typical summer day with a low breeze – a little hot perhaps – and the drops happened effortlessly. Training also went very well for the air crew. This was our first time training with these units, since we usually support jumps at Fort Bragg (N.C.) or the Rigger School at Fort Lee (Va.).

"Since tactical jumps are normally conducted by the Air Force, you'll find that this is not a typical task for most Army aviation units," Nunnally commented. "That said, paradrops are part of our Commander's Task List for selected members of our unit to maintain proficiency, and this exercise provided a good training opportunity for us."

Some Soldiers of the 55th Signal Company who are scheduled for Air Assault School received sling load instruction on the DZ to have a leg up before arriving at the course.

"This was our second prep class today. Last month we learned about aircraft capabilities, mission planning, and rigged a HMMWV sling load," said Sgt. Jason Bushong, multi-media team leader, 55th Signal Company (Combat Camera). "This time we practiced the hand-and-arm signals that guide a helicopter, set up a tactical landing zone incorporating glide-slope ratios, and rehearsed how the ground crew and air crew work together to accomplish the sling load. You can read the manual, but that can be pretty dry. Getting hands-on training is beneficial since it fills in some of the gaps you hadn't thought of."

Shelbert summed up the reason for exercise's success with one word.

"Flexibility... We had a solid plan and were able to adjust to some minor, last-minute changes. To coordinate the execution of five diverse organizations and pull all of this together is quite an experience." ❖

21st Signal Brigade Soldiers compete for top honors at quarterly competition



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Venessa Hernandez

By Sgt. Christopher T. Sneed

21st Signal Brigade Public Affairs

FORT DETRICK, Md. – Twelve Soldiers and noncommissioned officers from across the nation converged on Fort A.P. Hill, Va., Aug. 22 -25 for the 21st Signal Brigade Soldier and Noncommissioned Officer of the Quarter Competition. The competition was held to determine most capable Soldiers and NCOs from across the brigade for the first and second quarters of 2010. The competition tested participants in many different areas in the form of written tests and real-life performance under field conditions.

Competitors arrived the first day to lay out all of their required military clothing and equipment for inspection. Any missing items would be noted and deducted from the competitors' ongoing tally of points for the competition. Upon completion of the inspection, a written test was given to the participants that assessed their knowledge of basic Soldier skills, as well as the multitude of Army programs, regulations, and services. Later that afternoon, the competitors were tested on their ability to complete Army Warrior Tasks. These tasks ranged from how to properly clear a weapon to how to don a protective mask. All these tasks had a time constraint to increase the stress level, and to simulate real-world situations.

The participants arose in the early hours of Monday

morning, and put on their Army Physical Fitness Uniform for the next event: the Army Physical Fitness Test. The test is designed to evaluate the muscular strength, endurance, and cardiovascular respiratory fitness of Soldiers. The Soldiers were able to score a maximum of 150 points in this event. Shortly afterwards, the competitors left to test their marksmanship on the M16 rifle in an indoor range known as the Engagement Skills Trainer 2000. The electronic firing range allows them to operate weapons systems without expending real ammunition. It tests the Soldiers' decision making in fire or don't fire situations. The day culminated with a land navigation course. Five points were chosen across a wooded course, and the Soldiers had to successfully locate as many points as possible in the time constraint.

The next day proved to be one of the most challenging for the competitors. At 5:30 a.m., the Soldiers stepped out with a 35-pound rucksack on an 8-mile road march. To successfully attain any points, male Soldiers had to finish the course in less than 2 hours 21 minutes; female Soldiers had to complete the event in less than 2 hours 30 minutes. Dusting themselves off and nursing fresh blisters, the competitors moved out to a M16A2 rifle zero and qualification range. Under the warm sun, Soldiers zeroed their weapons, and then fired at pop-up targets

ranging from 50 to 300 meters away from their firing positions. After their weapons were dismantled and cleaned to standard, a quick dinner was taken by the competitors before they were briefed on the next event, a night land navigation course. The course covered the same terrain as the day course, but only three points were laid out for the competitors to locate. They set out shortly after 8 p.m. onto the darkened course. The competitors did much better under conditions of night, as all but one returned by one minute before midnight to score points. Wearily returning to their barracks, the Soldiers dropped their gear and attempted to get a few hours of sleep for the final day of competition.

The last day of the competition began at 5:30 a.m. with an Army Combatives competition. Army Combatives is a hybrid of various martial arts disciplines adapted into a set of practical hand to hand combat techniques. Soldiers competed with one another and scored points in accordance with how many times they achieved a dominant position. Sore and sweaty from the morning competition, the Soldiers quickly ate breakfast, showered, and put on their Army dress uniforms. The last event was a board appearance of the Soldiers before the 21st Signal Brigade command sergeant major and senior leadership of the brigade's subordinate units. Competitors were judged on their military conduct in addition to answering questions on topics ranging from Army history to first aid and Army programs.

From the 12 competitors, only one Soldier and one NCO per quarter could be determined as the brigade's finest. After the computation of a possible 600 points



U.S. Army Pfc. Matthew Mathis, a native of San Marcos, Texas, from Headquarters Detachment, 56th Signal Battalion, 21st Signal Brigade, zeros his weapon prior to the M16 Qualification range event in the brigade-level Soldier of the Year and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year Competition Aug. 24 at Fort A.P. Hill, Va.



U.S. Army Sgt. Teng Lin, a native of New York City, from Company A, 114th Signal Battalion, 21st Signal Brigade, shoots an azimuth during the land navigation event in the brigade-level Soldier of the Year and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year Competition Aug. 23 at Fort A.P. Hill, Va.

for the entire competition, scoring was extremely close until the final events. Emerging from the pool of 1st Quarter Competitors, Pfc. Matthew Mathis from the 56th Signal Battalion, Fort Gordon, Ga., was named the 1st Quarter 21st Signal Brigade Soldier of the Quarter. Sgt. Teng Lin from the 114th Signal Battalion, Fort Detrick, Md., was named 1st Quarter 21st Signal Brigade NCO of the Quarter.

Among the 2nd Quarter participants, Spc. Curtis Min from the 302nd Signal Battalion, Fort Detrick, brought home the honors as the 2nd Quarter 21st Signal Brigade Soldier of the Quarter. Sgt. Lemuel Hatcher from the 114th Signal Battalion emerged as 2nd Quarter 21st Signal Brigade NCO of the Quarter.

The winners of the competition will compete next year to determine who will be the 21st Signal Brigade Soldier and NCO of the Year. ❖



Real-world Signal mission supports international exercises

Story and photos by Liana Mayo

311th Signal Command (Theater) Public Affairs

WAHIAWA, Hawaii – While most of the nearly 90,000 participants of the annual Ulchi Freedom Guardian 2010 exercise experienced notional challenges and accomplishments, a team of about 40 Soldiers and Civilians of the 311th Signal Command (Theater) experienced stress that cannot be simulated. Working around the clock in the Forward Command

Post at the Schofield Barracks Battle Command Training Center here, they fulfilled the real-world mission of providing secure and dependable lines of communication between all participants throughout the Pacific region Aug. 16-29, during UFG 2010.

The Signal team maintained three networks, the NIPR (unclassified network), SIPR (U.S. only classified network), and CENTRIX-K, a classified network shared by the U.S. military and the Republic of Korea. The



Sgt. Maj. Thao Kamakahi-Watson, 311th G-3 sergeant major, meets with Capt. Amanda Bielski, G-3 Battle Captain, for the UFG 2010 Forward Command Post at the Schofield Barracks Battle Command Training Center, Aug. 19.



Capt. Kevin Vasquez, plans officer for 311th Signal Command (Theater), and Sgt. 1st Class Gregory Mathis, 311th G-3 Plans NCO, discuss possible solutions for CENTRIX-K, a classified network shared by the U.S. military and the Republic of Korea (ROK) during UFG 2010, in the Forward Command Post for the exercise at the Schofield Barracks Battle Command Training Center, Aug. 19.

constant presence of a secure signal was vital to the success of this computer-assisted exercise that tests and builds the ability of the ROK and U.S. alliance to translate information superiority into actionable decision-making, in order to prevent and prevail against the full range of current and future threats to the ROK and the region.

“Although this Combined Forces Command exercise is notional for other participants, it is real-world for us, and a good opportunity to validate our support requirements to our fellow commands in Hawaii, the 8th Theater Support Command and the 18th Medical Command,” said Lt. Col. Scott Baer, the 311th operations officer (G-3). “We took this opportunity to not only validate, but also to activate our Troop Program Unit Soldiers to take over functions of the command which they would have to do if deployed.”

“This was my first time operating above the platoon level, and an incredible experience,” said Staff Sgt. Wesley Leiter, a TPU Soldier in 311th’s Headquarters Detachment in Costa Mesa, Calif. Leiter served as the G-3 Battle Staff Noncommissioned Officer for the UFG

2010 FCP. “It was fascinating to learn about all the units we support for U.S. Army, Pacific as the Signal command for the Pacific.”

Three 311th Soldiers, Lt. Col. Ge Yang, Master Sgt. Michael Kulikowski and Chief Warrant Officer James Seidler travelled to Seoul, South Korea to serve as Liaison Officers for the ROK and Combined Forces Command, to facilitate coordinated signal operations throughout the Pacific. Soldiers and Civilians at the 311th FCP maintained control of the exercise network while continuing to fulfill the 311th’s core mission of maintaining and defending the Pacific LandWarNet.

“What makes an exercise like UFG unique for us as Signaleers is that while most of the exercise is simulated, the communication aspect of the mission is real. While other units can simulate their success, we must be successful in order for those units to participate,” said Capt. Amanda Bielski, a TPU Soldier from Fort Mead, Md., assigned to the 311th. Bielski served as the G-3 Battle Captain for the UFG 2010 FCP. “This makes for a very challenging and rewarding experience, because you do see the results of your hard work every day.” ❖



“All I wanted to be was a Soldier”

By Charles E. Broach

Chief Warrant Officer (Retired)

“If George Custer ran his operations like those we see around here, he got everything he deserved!”

In retrospect, I often look back over these 38 years to try and understand how I got myself into this situation. Surely there were people who influenced or otherwise screwed up my view of life in the military to where I clearly saw that in almost all my assignments we were blessed with humor. Yes, there were days when serious issues prevailed, and, as always in the military, our door steps would be crossed with the dark days of a death of a friend. Reflecting back, even then we often hid behind the laughter to smooth the pain that still continues to hurt today.

Growing up in 60s and 70s in Walterboro, S.C., near Parris Island Marine Corps Recruit Depot, my best friend Eddie and I were always in wonderment about the mysteries and their on-goings behind those gates, and we often played Marines charging the sands on Iwo Jima.

After graduation from high school we no longer viewed the Marines in awe and wonderment.

Eddie and I joined the Army and entered basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C., in September of 1972. Eight weeks later Eddie shipped out to Fort Benning, Ga., and I went to Fort Gordon, Ga. I could hear his last words coming through the muffled sounds on that bus packed with other young overzealous Soldiers. “The next beer’s on me!”

On April 1, 1973, I reported to 440th Signal Battalion, 7th Signal Brigade, Darmstadt, Germany. There my platoon sergeant shoved a copy of the platoon roster in my face. Only after I had acknowledged my name as a member of the platoon and him as the platoon sergeant he simply stated, “Here. These are your adoption papers.” Life in the Army in the early 70s was a time of uncertainty faced with reasons for change.

Senior NCOs who served during the early 50s and 60s still manned the ranks. Most were hardened combat

veterans with tours in the Korean War or Vietnam, if not both. The majority of them spent most of their military life training Soldiers with little regard for the advancement in their own formal education. They “walked the talk” and knew the importance of being a team member, leadership and taking care of Soldiers. They established the standards for all others who would follow them into the hallways of the “Old School.”

Platoon sergeants would curse you out for any violation of wear of the uniform or simplest indication of disrespect; however, they would go toe to toe and argue with the “Old Man” and other NCOs for you, even if you were wrong. The simple rule was “you mess with my Soldiers, you mess with me.” They could drive any vehicle in the motor pool, set up a communications field site, and slice and dice cable beyond recognition and put in the comms systems. These men who would belittle and degrade us would be the first to notice a change in our attitude or our behavior. And on the rarest of occasions they would address you as “son.” They invited everyone home for the holidays and weekend football, BBQ and let you volunteer to help out on their favorite community event. Their wives became the mom for the platoon who ensured that each of us got a birthday card and a small Christmas gift.

We were young Soldiers who loaned each other money, pulled duty for another whom thought he had a hot date, pulled pranks on each other’s section, fought with each other and against others for each other; we had each other’s back. We openly joined in and made jokes behind the platoon sergeant’s back, made fun of him, impersonated him, but yet we respected him and loved him dearly for above all other things “he was our platoon sergeant!”

Mail call, those were actual letters that were hand written on paper mailed two weeks earlier from the states, was the major event of the exercise. In Oct. of 1973 while on REFORGER, I got a letter from my



mom. I ran back to the tent filled with the scent of diesel and got close to the potbelly stove and tore into that letter. The first line torn my heart out “Charlie, in August, Eddie was killed in Vietnam.” I have never hurt so much in my life, I cried unashamed for the loss of the best friend. I would no longer be able to share a beer with Eddie and I haven’t had one in over 37 years.

After completion of the Warrant Officer School in Fort Rucker, Ala., and the follow on certification at Fort Gordon, I was promoted from sergeant first class directly to chief warrant officer (2) in June 1985 and was off to Germany.

Over the remaining years, 1988-2010, I had the opportunity to stand in the Oval Office and meet with President Ronald Regan and later President George Bush, got my butt chewed out by Secretary of State Jim Baker, pulled pranks on folks at the highest level of government, visited the old Russia behind the Iron Curtain as part of the Nuclear Reduction Compliance Team inspectors and met with Soldiers all over the world to include Iraq, Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa.

It is difficult to reflect back upon the past 38 years without thinking about the contributions women have made in the advancement of the military. Far too long they suffered and endured the sexual discrimination that impounded generations of greatness of which we will never experience. They have shared side-by-side with their male counterparts the hardship of war and some have died on the same battlefield. They have made the difficult command decisions which have affected

the lives of every Soldier and family member in their command. They have and will continue to provide the inspiration that has ensured the foundation was cast for an “American Military without prejudice or limitations.”

My decision to retire was not difficult, for it was my time to go. We often dismiss the younger generation of Soldiers as less disciplined, free caring, limited potential combined with a lack of motivation and little desire to excel. I often remind my generation that they are a direct reflection of our style of leadership at home and in the military. The new generation of Soldiers is blessed with the availability and ease of worldwide communications and it was my generation that made this possible. Do not worry about their dedication to the cause, for they freely entered the military to preserve the principles that has made America the greatest nation in the free world, and they have made us all proud. However, ask them what they will leave for the next generation.

As I prepare to close out my 38 years in the military, I am constantly reminded that as a boy and teenager running the beaches of the Carolinas all I wanted to be was a Soldier. Now having spent most of my adult life in the service of my country I reflect back on the changes in myself and in our Army. I have been allowed to live my childhood dream only with small, but surprising changes.

I am finishing where I started, assigned to the 5th Signal Command. But here, as kind as people have been to me, this is not my home, for Dauphin Island is woven into the landscape of my mind so deeply that whatever bad storm comes or gentle breeze that blows across the waters, I miss with a physical pain. If the island misses me, I cannot tell, but of leaving 5th Signal Command, my first military home, and missing you, I will forever feel the sorrow. I now stand knowing that for some us know, that after tonight our paths may never cross again.

Thank you for your leadership, your friendship and the times we shared. ❖



Courtesy photo

Roland Fuerst (left) and Chief Warrant Officer Charles Broach stand in front of a deployable K-U Band Earth Terminal satellite dish in Kabul, Afghanistan, April 2004.

Think Safety

COMPLACENCY - A DEADLY AND SILENT ENEMY

By Jeff Speer

NETCOM/9th SC (A) Safety Office

Everyday in United States, 14 workers (on average) lose their lives as a result of injuries or illnesses related their work – that's over 5,100 people every year. These individuals leave behind families, friends, and co-workers. At the same time, almost 4 million non-fatal injuries and illnesses are reported, with appropriately 55% of those involving days away from work, job transfer or restricted duty. A major causal or contributing factor to these fatalities, injuries, or illnesses is complacency.

Here's a handy definition about what complacency is: "self-satisfaction accompanied by unawareness of actual danger or deficiencies." Breaking that down, this means:

- Self-satisfaction – You're feeling pretty good about yourself or what you're doing.
- Actual danger – There's stuff out there that can hurt you.
- Actual deficiencies – There's stuff out there that's going wrong.
- Unawareness – You're clueless about either or both of them.

If we just stop for a moment and think, we all can come up with instances when we did become complacent. It happens to all us because we perform many functions on an almost continuous basis. Many of our jobs are repetitive in nature; therefore, there is the tendency for an individual to become bored or complacent with the tasks and begin performing the task almost subconsciously. As an example, many of us have experienced the phenomenon when we travel the same route home from work every day: There are days when our minds are deep in thought about the day's problem, and the next thing we know we are pulling into our driveway. We can recall only small parts of the actual trip home; it was as if our brains and body were set on autopilot. Therein lays the potential danger... the danger of complacency.

We become complacent about our personal safety by repeated exposure to situations without consequence. We get in a hurry, take shortcuts and the absence of consequences causes us to become more lax about our personal safety. Personal safety is not like a light switch that you can turn on and off. The personal safety switch must continuously be in the "ON" position.

Safety is a state mind, as well as a practice – being alert, being focused, beware of potential risks and

hazards, being aware that barring "acts of God", unwanted incidents or accidents are waiting to happen. Waiting for a deviation from the required procedure, whether it is a technical malfunction or system failure, an unsafe or ill-informed human choice, or a moment of complacency. It's when things seem to be going really well that you need to be on your highest guard against hazardous attitudes or breaking habit patterns.

Here are a few tips you can use to enhance awareness and stop complacency:

- Be cognizant of where you are; when you are most familiar with activity, situation, or surrounding is when it can become perilous because the hazard is not so obvious to us. When you feel confident the environment is stable then you forget things are subject to change and become precarious in an instant. You must learn to react and interact with your surroundings to ensure you're alert to possibilities of catastrophe.
- Apply the composite risk management process before starting an activity. Consider what you'll be doing, what you'll be using or working with, where you'll be going, and what could go wrong. Remember, accidents or incidents occur in the blink of an eye. All it takes is one second of inattention, one moment of carelessness.
- Have a skeptical attitude about what is happening; ask an appropriate question or two. Don't trust that just because everything seems to be going fine, that it actually is going fine. Remember... Murphy is always out there, trying to trip you up.
- Report all unsafe conditions.

Leaders and supervisors demonstrate their commitment to safety by always setting the example, following safety rules, and taking personal action to correct unsafe situations. They integrate safety into all aspects of mission/operation planning and execution, and create opportunities for personnel to contribute to safety improvements.

Complacency is a dangerous thing – it's a killer. There is no cure for complacency; however, we can reduce its impact by being ever diligent in our prevention efforts, on and off duty. Always be on your guard for the unexpected to happen; you beat Murphy by making and executing good composite risk management decisions.

Army Safe is Army Strong.

Army & Defense News

Army increases support for suicide prevention

Army News Service

JOINT BASE LEWIS-MCCHORD, Wash. – According to Department of Defense (DoD) statistics, there has been a substantial rise in the number of suicides for Active Duty, Reserve and National Guard Soldiers this year.

In an attempt to combat the rise in Army-wide suicides, efforts are being made to increase awareness of the risk factors and warning signs to prevent suicides. In addition, Army leadership across the board is stepping up to provide better assistance in mitigating causes linked to suicidal thoughts and actions.

“Suicide prevention is a huge challenge in the military,” said Army Maj. Gen. (Dr.) Philip Volpe, chair of the Department of Defense Task Force on the Prevention of Suicide on Oct. 8 in Alexandria, Va. “There’s stress on our family members and stress on our servicemembers. This is a unique time. Nowhere before in our history did people have to deploy over and over again.”

For full story, go to <http://www.army.mil/-news/2010/11/02/47541-army-increases-support-for-suicide-prevention/?ref=news-health-title3>.

Army to launch enterprise e-mail

Army News Service

WASHINGTON, D.C. – It was announced Oct. 25 that the Army and the Defense Information Systems Agency recently agreed to initiate the migration of Army users’ e-mail addresses and calendars to the DISA-managed

Microsoft Exchange 2010 service.

“The Army’s move to Enterprise E-mail enables users to access their Army e-mail from any DoD location and to collaborate with any Army user worldwide via a Global Address List and enterprise calendar sharing,” said Lt. Gen. Jeff Sorenson, the Army Chief Information Officer/G-6. Today, most Army users are unable to share calendars or to find contact information for Army e-mail users at other locations.

In 2011, the Army will start migrating Army Microsoft Exchange e-mail users. The migration covers 1.4 million unclassified network users and 200,000 secret network users.

For full story, go to <http://www.army.mil/-news/2010/10/26/47210-army-launches-enterprise-email-disa-will-implement/>.

Portal helps vets, Reserves, Guardsmen land civilian jobs

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Just in time for Veterans Day, a new, state-of-the-art Web portal is being rolled out tomorrow to help veterans – as well as reserve-component members, their families and wounded warriors – land jobs with civilian employers who value their military experience.

The user-friendly tools will enhance the popular Employer Partnership of the Armed Forces program by making it easier for both job-hunters and employers seeking their skills, Army Lt. Col. Matt Leonard, the program’s public affairs officer, told American Forces Press Service.

The new portal simplifies the job application process by allowing

users to set up a personal profile and maintain a record of their job searches and search parameters, Leonard explained. That means users don’t have to start from square one each time they enter the system, saving them time and inconvenience.

For full story, go to <http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=61639>.

Fort Hood report cites ways to improve security response

Army News Service

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Nov. 9, 2010) -- The Army must establish a policy for contract security guards in an “active shooter scenario,” to clearly define their authority and responsibilities in a scenario such as the Nov. 5, 2009 shooting at Fort Hood, Texas, that left 13 dead and 31 wounded.

That’s one of the recommendations of a 120-page report just released that reviews Army force-protection and emergency-response programs, policies and procedures. An Army internal review team took a look at the service’s ability, below the headquarters level, to identify internal threats.

Maj. Gen. Robert M. Radin, the leader of the review team, wrote that the Army has implemented or is taking definitive action on 66 of the 79 DoD Independent Review Panel recommendations. DoD is the lead agency for the remaining 13 recommendations and the Army is working with DoD to determine specific future actions.

For full story, go to <http://www.army.mil/-news/2010/11/10/47897-fort-hood-report-outlines-ways-for-army-to-improve-security-response/?ref=news-home-title7>.

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U.S. ARMY

ARMY STRONG

Private Matthew Bryan
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