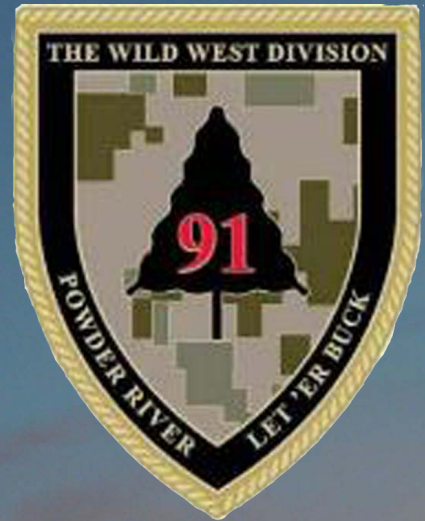


THE WILD WEST WARRIOR

Official publication of Combat
Support Training Exercise 91 12-01

July 9-29, 2012



C-130 Rolling Down the Strip

Mass casualty exercise
kicks off CSTX p. 4

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Photo by 1st Sgt. Larry Mears

Spc. Jeff Shackelford, 343rd MPAD takes photos of a C-130 at Base Camp Schoonover.

Public Affairs Soldiers in action on the battlefield at CSTX 91 12-01



Photo by Spc. Jeff Shackelford

Spc. Jacqueline Guerrero, 302nd MPAD, focuses in on medivac helicopters during evacuation training.



Photo by Spc. Jacqueline Guerrero

Staff Sgt. Jay Townsend gets a patient's eye view for the camera during medivac training.



Photo by Sgt. Clifford Coy

Staff Sgt. Brian Raley, 343rd MPAD, hangs in for a shot of a C-130 taking off despite a swirling duststorm being kicked up on the gravel airstrip.

The Wild West Warrior

91st Training Div. Commanding General
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Sgt. Peter Ross

CG's column

ONE FORCE, ONE FIGHT

Welcome to the home of the 91st Training Division (Operations) and Fort Hunter Liggett. We are proud to provide the training venue for CSTX 91 12-01, which is part of the Army Reserve Training Strategy. This training platform is designed to address



the collective task training needs of your units.

One of our missions at the 91st Training Division (Operations) is to conduct Warrior Exercises and Combat Support Training Exercises for Combat Support and Combat Service Support units on collective tasks so they are trained and prepared for deployment. 91st Training Division also provides training to joint, combined, and active component forces.

I want to thank our enablers who have supported this exercise, for without your efforts we could not have brought together this multi-echelon experience for the training units. It is because of your work that these operations are successful. I also want to thank our training units for your hard work in preparing for the exercise and

working throughout the training period to improve your technical and tactical skills. We continue to learn from these exercises to prepare Soldiers, leaders, and units if called upon for service as part of the National Security Strategy. Again, I want to send my, and the Division's, appreciation to all for your efforts during CSTX 91 12-01.

Safety is always a priority. Thank you for the discipline to make safety part of your daily checks and training. We must always remember that safety is a combat multiplier in protecting our force and resources.

Train hard and train safe.

Brig. Gen. Jon D. Lee

Commanding General

Wild West Division

CSM corner

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to Fort Hunter Liggett and the 91st Training Division's CSTX 91 12-01. The 91st Division is tasked by USARC to provide a platform for Train/Ready Year 2 and



leaders can be challenged in their capabilities to execute missions and METL tasks. I also want to emphasize safety. Our most important responsibility is to ensure safety is the number one priority when it comes to training and taking care of our Soldiers.

While here at Fort Hunter Liggett remember that we train to standard and not to time. This is one of the few collective training opportunities Soldiers and Leaders may have to get their units proficient and prepared for an environment in the ever changing landscape in which we fight and win. Again I'd like to welcome you and challenge you to engage in the training opportunities Soldiers of the 91st set before you.

POWER RIVER, "LET ER BUCK"

GREGORY S. CHATMAN

Division Command

Sergeant Major

3 units in order to enhance capabilities and be a force multiplier in today's total Army.

The Soldiers of the 91st Division will continue to refine our training support requirements to provide an environment where



Flight of a lifetime

Medics whisk away wounded



A C-130 Hercules rests on the runway as it prepares to evacuate "casualties" during CSTX 91.

Story and photos by Spc. Jacqueline Guerrero
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

A loud humming is heard from afar. Growing vastly in size as it nears the airstrip, the bird begins to land. Once the Multi-mission C-130P Hercules touches ground, dust bellows out from behind, leaving a long powder trail as it slowly comes to a halt.

The medical units here participated in a medical evacuation training exercise during CSTX 91 12-01 with the use of a C-130, July 11, 2012.

"This particular event is the upload and download of patient litters," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jason Lonergan, a San Diego native with the 91st Training Division out of Ft. Hunter Liggett, Calif. "We are simulating moving patients from a cache to a rear medical facility."

"We are practicing the proper loading techniques," said Spc. Brandon Ericksen, a field medic with the 5502nd U.S. Army Hospital. "Loading the litter patients into the C-130 and strapping them in to make sure they are secure."

The exercise is important practice for the medical troops. It assisted them to be better prepared for future situations when using a C-130 and experience the take-off and rough landing, said Sgt. Carol Browne, a field medic and station administrator with the 55th Sustainment Brigade located at Ft. Belvoir, Va.

"This is stuff that happens on a daily basis in theater," said Lonergan, an OH 58D Kiowa Warrior helicopter pilot. "You don't want the Soldier to see that for the first

time once they get boots on the ground."

The majority of the medical personnel have never been on a C-130 and this opportunity has given them the opportunity to not only fly in a C-130 but to experience a theater-like simulation, said Cpt. Leslie

**"I think this exercise gave my troops a bigger picture of working with other services and not just Army ... We work together and are a team."
Capt. Leslie Mudge, 5502nd USAH**

Mudge, an operating room nurse with the 5502nd USAH, based out of Aurora, Colo.

The MC-130P is owned and operated by the 130th Rescue Squadron Air National Guard, located at Moffett Field, in Mountain View, Calif

"It was a unique experience flying in the

C-130," said Browne, a Smyrna, Del. native, "There was an overwhelming response from our Soldiers."

"It was a lot for fun," said Ericksen, a Denver native, "It was interesting to see everyone's expressions during the flight."

"The Soldiers loved flying in the C-130," said Mudge, a Colorado Springs native, "They felt like this was a once-in-a-lifetime experience."

"I enjoyed the C-130," said Spc. Anna Rosa Allen, an operating room technician with the 6250th USAH from Joint Base Lewis-McCord. "It was a new experience. There was some turbulence; it reminded me of a rollercoaster," said the Gig Harbor, Wash. native.

"I think this exercise gave my troops a bigger picture of working with a different service that is not just Army," said Mudge. "All the services, we work together, we are all a team."

"The exercise was well-planned," said Browne. "It was very detailed and that made the experience great. I became aware of the expectations and mindset we should have should we be in this situation."

"It was a great exercise," said Ericksen. "The only thing I would like to see in the future built on this is kind of getting more into the theater aspect. For instance we would have those 'real' injuries to work off of and work with the teams on the ground, so when we land we can act as if we are sending out those patients to hospitals."

"The opportunity to participate in this exercise was welcome and we all enjoyed it," said Browne.

The medical units appreciated the help and hard work carried out by the 130th RQS.

"They were awesome and very nice," said Mudge. "It was great to work with them."



A "wounded" Soldier lies on a litter waiting to be medically evacuated in a C-130 Hercules during a mass casualty exercise as part of CSTX 91.

Bringing everything *and* the kitchen sink

Soldiers make swift work of dirty dishes, austere field conditions notwithstanding

Story and photos by Sgt. Michael Connors
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

A reprieve from doing dishes at home may be a consolation for Army Reserve Soldiers attending CSTX 91 12-01. But for others here — it's their job — only within a crucible of high temperatures and hot steam.

Typically only troops on kitchen patrol wash dishes, but Spc. Luis Mercado, a cook working on Base Camp Tusi, relishes the opportunity to pull double-duty — cooking on the first part of the shift and washing dishes on the backend among the KPs.

"It's a dirty job, so we have to use teamwork to get out of here on time," said Mercado, who serves with the 448th Engineer Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico. He is known as the fastest dishwasher on Tusi, a skill he uses to motivate the others.

Since early June, Mercado has been supporting exercises here on Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., including CSTX. The 91st Training Division (Operations) based on Liggett is leading CSTX, which is being supported throughout July.

The Tusi chow tent serves approximately 200 Soldiers per meal. Dishwashing per meal can take up to two hours, Mercado said, but on his shift he's cut the time down to between 45 minutes and an hour.

It's easy to imagine the drudgery dishwashing could become and how some could begin to drag their feet on the task, but with Mercado taking the lead he's a whirlwind of activity, motivating the other dishwashers to work

at their highest capacity. "I'm al-

ways telling him you don't have to do this, but he likes doing dishes," said Spc. Manuel Bencosme, a fellow cook with the 448th. Cooks are not required to share the work of dishwashing, but Mercado's enthusiasm for the task has even motivated Bencosme to

scrubbed with 170-degree soapy water, then rinsed in 120-degree bleach water and finally rinsed in 100-degree water. Nor do they go so fast that safety is compromised, they said. They stand on wood pallets to prevent slipping and wear high, thick, plastic gloves to prevent water burns.

Combine field conditions, extremely hot water and steam, and hot weather, and one can see how the job could quickly become miserable without the right attitude that Mercado has displayed.

Both cooks acknowledged other Soldiers don't always realize how long and hard they work. They're up at 3:00 a.m.

to start breakfast; and while they get the middle of the day off, they're back again in the early afternoon through the early evening for dinner.

"They only see us for the hour-and-a-half during chow," said Bencosme. "We do so much more."

**"They only see us for the hour-and-a-half during chow ... We do so much more."
Spc. Manuel Bencosme, 448th Eng. Bn.**

jump in and help out too, so the shift can be completed as soon as possible.

This is not to say Mercado and the others cut corners in the name of speed. He and Bencosme explained the rigorous standards they enforce and maintain in the three-step process. First, dishes are



Evening chow's sticky mess of chicken alfredo is no match for Spc. Luis Mercado, as he scrubs a serving container at Base Camp Tusi during Combat Support Training Exercise 91 12-01 July 13, 2012. Mercado serves with the 448th Engineer Battalion, an Army Reserve unit based at Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico.

OLD SCHOOL

Soldier-cowboy passes on wisdom

Story and photos by Spc. Andrew Orillion
302nd Public Affairs Detachment

His hat reads, "Authentic Original Cowboy." For Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Gary Bruce, a Chemical, Biological, Explosives, Radiological and Nuclear Specialist with 592nd Ordnance Company, Detachment 1 out of Butte, Montana, it's just one of many hats he's worn in a military career that has spanned almost four decades.

"I've heard my troops say that my first command was, 'Archers, prepare to fire,'" said Bruce.

Bruce's career began in 1973 when he enlisted in the Marine Corps shortly after his 18th birthday. He worked in Marine Recon and in the legal department, among others, before switching to the Army National Guard. He served in the National Guard from 1982 until 1992. After a four-year stint as a civilian, Bruce entered the Army Reserve and has been there ever since.

Over the course of his career, Bruce has served under eight U.S. Presidents and has had 11 different Military Occupational Specialties. In one form or another, he has served in all four branches and even worked in the Coast Guard doing drug interdiction. He is currently both a CEBRN and a Chemical and Radiation Safety Officer with the 592nd.

"He's got knowledge for days, it's amazing," said Sgt. Cecil Pugh, 647th Transportation Company. "He's too squared away. He's always going. He's one of those one who will come to you before you get a chance to come to him."

Pugh, an Observer-Controller for CSTX 91 12-01, works with Bruce, who currently leads one of the largest OPFOR cells for CSTX.

Bruce has been doing OPFOR missions for most

of his military career, even when he was in the Marine Reserve. While in the National Guard, he was a full-time OPFOR cavalry scout, using Soviet anti-tank tactics.

Being OPFOR has changed since those early days, Bruce said. The training and various lanes have gotten much better and the enemy itself has changed, too.

"Before, I was doing it against tanks and ground units. Now, I'm doing it against all types of units," said Bruce. "Today, you don't know who the enemy is on the battlefield."

Bruce loves the challenge of OPFOR, but he also sees a deeper mission. For him, it's about saving the lives of the Soldiers he "fights" against.

He uses his extensive OPFOR background to put the deploying Soldiers through the paces and give them the best training possible. If his OPFOR team does its best, the troops preparing for deployment will make their mistakes here, instead of downrange.

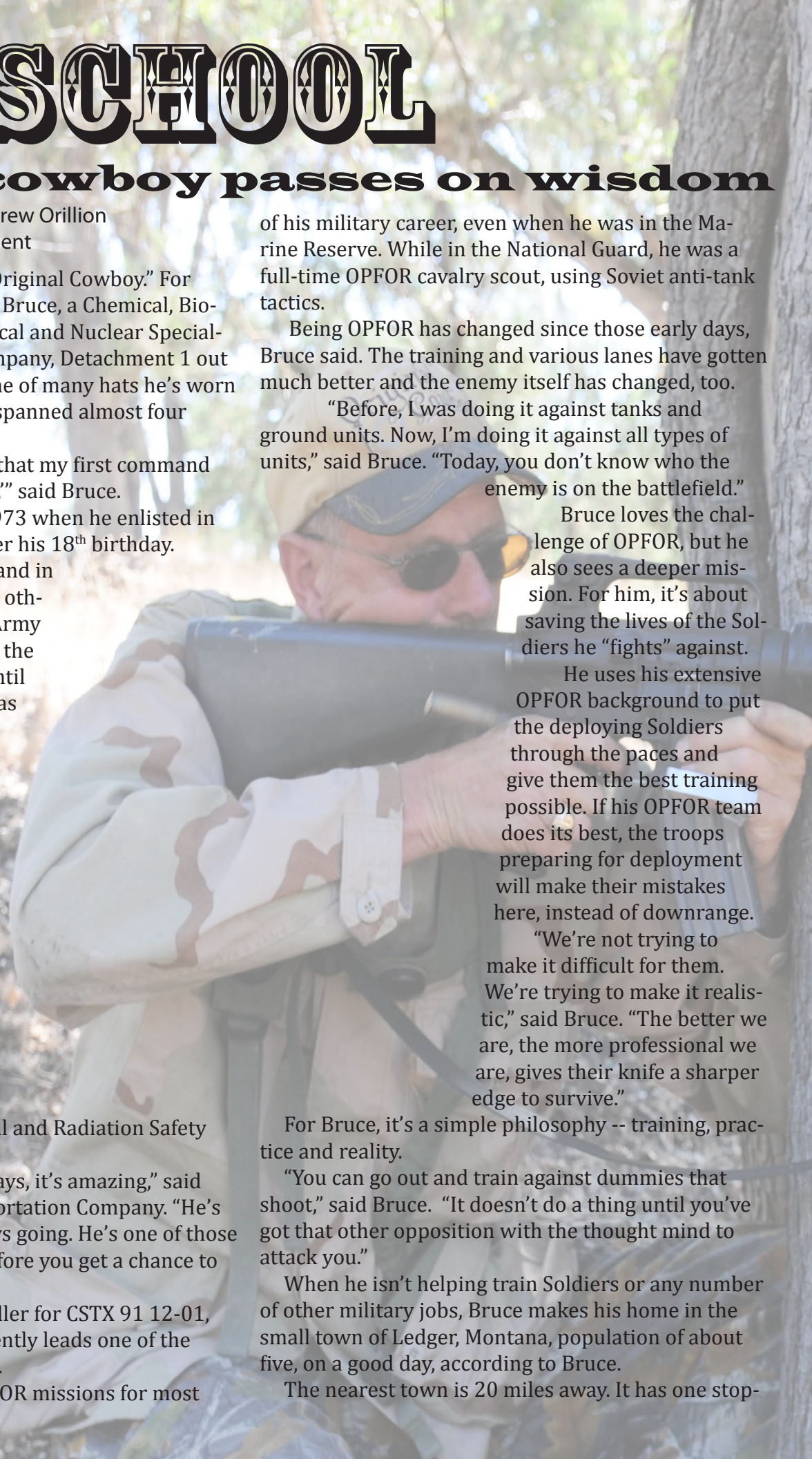
"We're not trying to make it difficult for them. We're trying to make it realistic," said Bruce. "The better we are, the more professional we are, gives their knife a sharper edge to survive."

For Bruce, it's a simple philosophy -- training, practice and reality.

"You can go out and train against dummies that shoot," said Bruce. "It doesn't do a thing until you've got that other opposition with the thought mind to attack you."

When he isn't helping train Soldiers or any number of other military jobs, Bruce makes his home in the small town of Ledger, Montana, population of about five, on a good day, according to Bruce.

The nearest town is 20 miles away. It has one stop-



light, one restaurant, one gas station and one grocery store. Anything else, and you have to travel 90 miles to Great Falls, Bruce said.

As might be expected, Bruce is a farmer, rancher and self-described fair-weather cowboy. According to Bruce, being a cowboy in Montana can be like stepping back in time.

"Some of the ranges I've worked with, I put on my boots, my spurs and chaps. Take my gun belt off the peg, strap it on and take it off at the end of the night," said Bruce.

Before his last deployment to Afghanistan, Bruce worked a ranch where he covered over 1,500 miles on horseback and watched 15,000 head of cattle. Most of the time there is no Internet, no cell phones or any communication at all in the rural landscape of northern Montana.

As with his military career, Bruce isn't just a cowboy in his civilian life. He also works as a private investigator. Bruce said most of the work involves investigating workers compensation claims for the state of Montana and insurance companies.

Ever once in a while, a job will come along that harkens back to Bruce's cowboy roots; tracking down cattle rustlers. With the price of meat, especially beef, going up, cattle rustling can be a serious problem, said Bruce.

"I have seen where a group of individuals will come in with three semis, set up on a herd of cattle, round them up, shoot them, then use chainsaws to tress them, hang them up and they're gone. 100 head just gone," said Bruce. "One of my neighbors lost 100 head of pigs that way."

His years of service have helped him in the world of private investigations, Bruce said.

A lot of times I have to use the experience I have in the military to go in to an urban environment to videotape without being seen. Stealth and concealment, blend in," said Bruce. "If I have to pick up a hunter who's out hunting, I have to be able to get up the hill side and take photographs with a telephoto lens or get up close."

Being a rancher and farmer, Bruce has a lot of experience with horses. In his career, he has trained Green Berets to ride and was a member a member of

"We're not trying to make it difficult for them. We're trying to make it realistic," said Bruce. "The better we are, the more professional we are, gives their knife a sharper edge to survive."

Staff Sgt. Gary Bruce 592nd Ordinance Company

the Marine Corps Equestrian Team, which specializes in drill and ceremony on horseback.

"I love to see that rider become tuned to the horse," said Bruce. "A horse and rider are a team, just like an ammo-gunner and a machine-gunner are a team."

With nearly 40 years of service to his country under his belt and cowboy buckle, Bruce had some advice for the next generation of servicemembers.

"They are going to be filling my shoes," said Bruce. "Take pride in your work. Be patient. Don't let those beneath you, that want to go the wrong path lead you astray," said Bruce. "Be a mentor."



Staff Sgt. Gary Bruce, 592nd Ordinance Company, gives advice to Soldiers in the field during CSTX.

GETTING THE HOOK-UP

Commo Soldiers run the show, supplying power, communications

Story and photo by Sgt. Scott Akanewich
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Combat operations in a theater of operations require many things from Soldiers. Courage, selfless service, and dedication to duty only begin to scratch the surface of what is required to fight and win America's wars.

However, none of these character traits can be fully operational without a simple resource we often take for granted – power, as in electricity. If the lights go out in a tactical operations center, a mobile kitchen trailer, or even a shower trailer, it's just an additional obstacle Soldiers in the field must overcome to accomplish their respective missions.

At Combat Support Training Exercise 91, this daunting task falls on the troopers of B Co., 392nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion.

"We're responsible for setting up and maintaining for all the trainers and trainees," said Sgt. Troy Rice, B Co., 392nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion, nodal network operator-maintainer. "We operate the voice and internet communications."

Conducting training at Fort Hunter Liggett provides the perfect environment for these signal Soldiers to prepare for deployment, said Rice, an Augusta, Maine native and 11-year veteran with two combat deployments under his belt.

"In a place like this, we have the opportunity to coordinate command-and-control over long distances and have the capability to provide battlefield updates," he said. "We have a total of 32 Soldiers covering all the base camps and they've all had vigorous tasks."

Sgt. 1st Class James Hummer, B Co., 392nd ESB, was also duly impressed with the atmosphere provided by the rolling hills and dry grasslands of Central California, he said.

"I've never seen a better training environment," said Hummer, a police officer from Phillipsburg, N.J., who has also been deployed to Iraq twice in his career. "Especially for the junior Soldiers who haven't been deployed. Going through this training is great for them because it gives our future leaders a chance to step up."

According to Hummer, another positive gleaned from CSTX is that Soldiers who normally only train on a one-weekend-per-month basis have the opportunity to immerse themselves in their respective roles full-time.

"Active duty Soldiers do this every day," he said. "But, these are perishable skills they need to stay knowledgeable about."

One of the Soldiers charged with running the logistics side of the operation is Spc.

However, checking a generator involves much more than just ensuring the unit is functioning, he said.

"We check to make sure the load is at the correct level, it's at the correct frequency and has enough fuel," said Magana.

The "load" is the proportion of energy being generated by a particular unit to how much is actually being used, said Rice.

"Too much voltage stored up in a generator is as bad for the unit as not having enough," he said. "If the load drops below a certain range, it's not good."

In other words, if a generator is at 90% production, but only 50% is actually being used at a given moment,

Alexandro Magana, B Co., 392nd ESB, cable system installer and maintainer.

"My job is to make sure everything runs smoothly, from paperwork to making sure the generators are up and running," said Magana, of Reading, Pa. "We check those every four hours around the clock."

problems such as equipment and systems malfunctions can occur.

When all is said and done, though, it's all about making the consumers happy, said Rice.

"The fewer complaints we have, the happier our customers are," he said.

"I've never seen a better training environment ... Especially for the junior Soldiers who haven't been deployed. Going through this training is great for them because it gives our future leaders a chance to step up."

Sgt. 1st Class James Hummer, B Co., 392nd ESB



Sgt. Robert Flowers, B Co., 392nd ESB, checks the readings on a generator on Base Camp Tusi.

91st Division CG puts boots-on-ground

Lee visits Camp Roberts during CSTX

Story and photos by 1st Lt. Fernando Ochoa

CAMP ROBERTS, Calif. — Now that CSTX 91 12-01 has begun, Soldiers from around the U.S are beginning to in-process through the Reception Staging Onward-Movement and Integration cell here July 9, 2012.

Brig. Gen. Jon D. Lee visited the troops at Camp Roberts, where he thanked 2nd Lt. Christopher Jones and Sgt. 1st Class Linda Jones-Pierce of the 90th Sustainment Brigade, Little Rock, Ark., for their hard work of in-processing hundreds of troops to the CSTX at Ft. Hunter Liggett.

"I wanted to recognize the young lieutenant who has been doing such a great job," said Lee.

Jones, a former infantryman and truck driver, was commissioned in May 2011 as an Army medical corps officer and also serves as the duty safety officer for this exercise.

"I will always remember this experience," said Jones. "I learned a lot about operations, planning and how to execute operation orders."

Jones-Pierce, who is both a human resource specialist and finance technician, was recognized for her dedication to the enormous job of processing hundreds of Soldiers in and out of Camp Roberts. With 23 years of experience, she enjoyed the hard work, she said.

"I loved my time here," said Jones-Pierce. "You never stop learning and I have met a lot of interesting people."

Lee took command of the 91st Training Division, which organizes the exercise, at the end

of June. As the new commander, he wanted to observe the in-processing first hand. He met with many of the

troops and sat in on a policy briefing. The general also addressed the group being briefed and made his policies clear.

"I will not tolerate the consumption of alcohol or sexual harassment, but more than anything else, I want everyone to be a safety officer and make that is your number one priority," said Lee.

The RSOI is a very important function of exercise. Before

troops can enter the cantonment zone, they must be processed for accountability. More than 2,000 Soldiers from across the country will eventually begin and end their training at Camp Roberts.

Camp Roberts is a California National Guard

post. It is named after Harold W. Roberts, a World War I Medal of Honor recipient.

"I will not tolerate the consumption of alcohol or sexual harassment, but more than anything else, I want everyone to be a safety officer and make that is your number one priority."

Brig. Gen. Jon D. Lee



Addressing incoming troops at Camp Roberts, Brig. Gen. Jon D. Lee emphasized his policy of no alcohol consumption, zero tolerance of sexual harassment, and most of all his number one policy of safety.

A place to worship

Chaplains provide Soldiers religious peace-of-mind, even in field

Story and photos by Sgt. Scott Akanewich 302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers leave many things behind when they leave home – family, friends, their everyday way of life. However, one crucial aspect of their existence will always be available to them regardless of location – a place to worship.

Here at CSTX 9112-01 is no exception.

Enter the Mayor's Cell on Base Camp Tusi and one will find tucked away in a corner a humble collection of chairs behind one of the many orange curtains that separate the different sections. At the front stands a table filled with spiritual literature – the Holy Bible and other books of religious inspiration and behind this, hangs a cross.

“When Soldiers walk in and see that cross, they feel at home and

definitely know what this is – which is a place they can worship,” said (CH) 1st Lt. Julio

Vargas, 91st Chaplain Detachment, based at Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico. “This is so they realize there is always a place for them to connect with God.”

However, a physical building is not a requirement for Soldiers to give glory to the Lord, said Vargas, of Aguadilla, P.R.

“Anyplace you gather can be a place of worship, be it an open field,” he said. “A church is just a place to meet, but fellowship can be had anyplace, anytime.”

According to Vargas, the opportunity for Soldiers to break away from training, even for a brief period of time, is mission-critical.

“When Soldiers are handling weapons and preparing for war all day or week long, they need to get away a little bit and be able to worship with others,” he said.

SpC. Justinet Oquendo, 91st Chap. Det., chaplain assistant, echoed this sentiment.

“What we've set up here is a place to spiritually interact with others and break away from the world of today,” said Oquendo. “This is where they can hear the voice of God.”

As for Oquendo, there was never any doubt his vocation would be that of service to the Lord, he said.

“All my life, I've been interested in religion,” said Oquendo,

a Catholic who served as an altar boy for 21 years while growing up and is now a Eucharistic minister, which means he has the ability to give Holy Communion during Mass. “My brother is studying to become a priest and my entire family is very religious.”

Vargas, 43, is brand new to military ministry, having only been a chaplain now for seven months. How he entered the service is a story unto itself, he said.

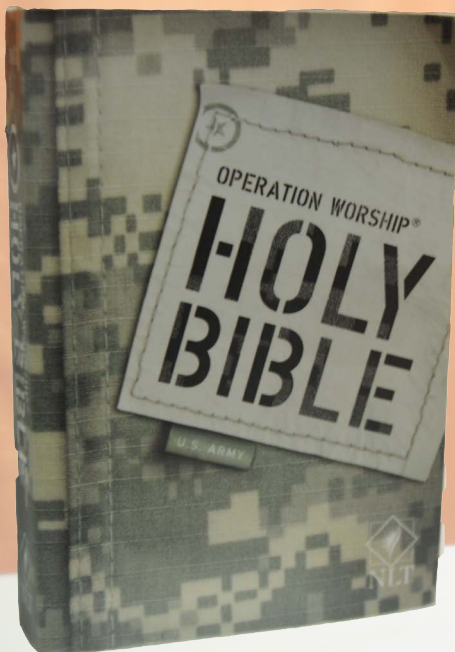
“I belonged to the Freemasons back home,” said Vargas, of the world-wide fraternal organization known for their charitable efforts based on common belief in a “Supreme Being” regardless of an individual's religion. “Ironically, I'd spend time there with a group of Army lawyers and one day, one of them said to me, ‘You know what? You'd make a good Army chaplain,’ so here I am.”

Despite the fact he wears the cross of a Christian chaplain, it is his duty to accommodate Soldiers of all faiths to the best of his ability in a given environment, he said.

“Even Soldiers of different faiths and denominations can come to me, be they Jewish, Muslim, Mormon or any other,” said Vargas. “Even if all I can do is provide them with a Quran or Torah, I do my best to help with their spiritual needs.”

(CH) Capt. Charlie Bechtold, 112th Chaplain Detachment, commander, based in Little Rock Ark., reiterated the need for Soldiers to have a physical place to worship.

“We try to recreate the House



of God,” said Bechtold, who runs a Nazarine ministry in Aubrey, Texas. “When they enter, just the sight of a cross or scripture puts them more at ease with their faith.”

Bechtold recounted an anecdote he witnessed while here on Base Camp Tusi, when a solitary Soldier entered the makeshift chapel before a recent service.

“He walked in and immediately dropped to his knees and began to pray,” he said. “Just by doing that made it a holy place for him.”

Bechtold was thankful to have Vargas and Oquendo, as well as other clergy on hand for CSTX, he said.

“We are blessed to have the contingent from Puerto Rico to conduct services in Spanish, as well as a Catholic priest and a rabbi,” said Bechtold. “This exercise has been unique in we’ve had access to chaplains from a variety of faiths.”

He also spoke of what he referred to as establishing a “ministry of presence” amongst the troops.

“Part of our job as chaplains is to go out and visit with the troops,” said Bechtold, who recalled how he was out running one day and happened across some on-duty military police. “Once Soldiers recognize you’re a chaplain, they tend to open up a bit more. They don’t necessarily have to come to us individually or to chapel service for religious guidance or advice.”

Vargas concurred with his com-



(CH) 1st Lt. Julio Vargas (left) and Spc. Justinet Oquendo, 91st Chaplain Det. stand before a cross in the chapel set up in the tactical operations center during CSTX 91 12-01 at Fort. Hunter Liggett, Calif.

rade.

“The approach you take with Soldiers and their impression of you is very important,” he said. “When you’re out doing physical

training with the troops, they realize even though you’re a chaplain, you can still be out there playing soccer and joking around like any other Soldier does.”

“When Soldiers walk in and see that cross, they feel at home and definitely know what this is – which is a place they can worship. This is so they realize there is always a place for them to connect with God.”

(CH) 1st Lt. Julio Vargas, 91st Chaplain Detachment,

Running the gauntlet

ECP training provides real-world reaction simulation

Story and photos by Spc. Charlotte Martinez
345th Public Affairs Detachment

Located on military bases worldwide, entry control points play a vital role in ensuring the safety of our Soldiers and the people both inside and outside of that point.

ECP operations are just one of the many training lanes the Soldiers of the 288th Quartermaster Company, based out of Victoria, Texas, are going through at CSTX 91 12-01 this month. The Soldiers reacted to three different scenarios when they went through the ECP lane at Base Camp Milpitas, located within Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. The training

“Even if we go (overseas) to purify water, we will have to go from point A to point B. We need to be able to defend our own assets as we move through there. “In addition to that, when you get over there, you wind up doing some additional (Forward Operating Base) support and this is exactly the type of mission you wind up with.”

**Capt. Duane Fousie
288th Quartermaster Company**

included finding a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device, reacting to direct and indirect fire and interacting with role-playing Afghan citizens.

“Even if we go (overseas) to purify water, we will have to go from point A to point B. We need to be able to defend our own assets as we move through there,” said Capt. Duane Fousie, a San Antonio, Texas native and commander of the 288th. “In addition to that, when you get over there, you wind up doing some additional (Forward Operating Base) support and this is exactly the type of mission you wind up with; guard the east end of the gate, guard both gates; we actually guarded the entire Kuwaiti Naval Base when I was there.”

One of the first scenarios the Soldiers encountered during their training included hostile locals coming up to the gate. The Soldiers then had to

disperse the crowd in the safest way possible.

“We learned how to sustain the area,” said Spc. Arturo Ramirez, a water treatment specialist with the 288th QM Co. and Corpus Christi, Texas native. “We had to regulate who came in and who went out and identify if they were hostile or friendly.”

During the second scenario, the Soldiers faced simulated mortar rounds along with local civilians trying to enter the base for work. One of the role players pretended to receive an injury from the incoming mortar and the 288th had to react with combat life-saving and casualty-evacuation procedures. The third portion of the training, the Soldiers had to search a vehicle and upon doing so, they found a



Soldiers of the 288th Quartermaster Company, based in Victoria, Texas, participated in entry control point training during Combat Support Training Exercise 91.



During Combat Support Training Exercise 91 12-01, while participating in one of their training scenarios for entry control point operations, the Soldiers of the 288th Quartermaster Company, based out of Victoria, Texas, had to face simulated hostile local nationals while providing security for the base camp.

simulated VBIED and reacted to more incoming rounds.

"We are water support; we are water treatment specialists," said Spc. Aaron Gonzalez, a Benbolt, Texas native and water treatment

done this training and I learn something new all the time," Ramirez said. "This is a really good experience for everyone. Everyone should have this training."

CSTX is a sustainment-focused training exercise developed for units in Train/Ready year-3 of the 5-year Army Forces Generation model.

With many of the units par-

"This training is a good heads-up for us because when we get overseas we don't know what to expect."

**Spc. Aaron Gonzalez
288th QM Co.**

specialist with the 288th. "This training is a good heads-up for us because when we get overseas we don't know what to expect."

Focusing training on the latest enemy techniques, tactics and procedures is crucial.

"This is the second time I have

Fousie commented that his Soldiers do not receive entry control point training during their weekend battle assemblies in Texas. He added the type of training offered at CSTX is what his unit needs to focus on when preparing for future deployments.

ticipating in CSTX 91 becoming available for deployment next year, the remote training environment Fort Hunter Liggett provides offers rugged terrain, realistic training opportunities and living conditions Soldiers may face while deployed.

Lake to cup

Soldiers purify water

Story and photo by Sgt. Peter B. Ross
210th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORT HUNTER LIGGETT,

Calif. — Soldiers of the 288th Quartermaster Detachment, located in Victory, Texas, honed their skills while providing clean water in support of the CSTX 91 12-01.

The 288th utilizes the Army's Tactical Water Purification System (TWPS) to provide more than 680 Soldiers at Base Camp Milpitas with purified lake water for drinking, bathing, cooking and laundry.

"The 288th is a water purification unit. We have four pieces of equipment to purify 1,500 gallons an hour," said Capt. Duane Fousie, a native of San Antonio, Texas, and 288th company commander, "If we run all our equipment in one 24-hour period we can purify 200,000 gallons that can be used for laundry, showers, cooking, by the engineers as well as the civilian population."

"This is a company-level exercise that lets us run the equipment and purify tens-of-thousands if not hundreds-of-thousands of gallons of water. This is the time when we run raw lake water into our system and produce drinkable water," said Fousie.

Fousie said he had the highest unit attendance to date for this extended combat training.

"We have had five years together and we just keep trying to break our own record everyone wants to be part of it," Fousie added.

CSTX offered realistic training for the 288th while they provided a necessary service for other units attending.

"This water supports the laundry and baths here for the Soldiers and also for drinking. It is used by the cooks at the (mobile kitchen trailer) for cooking and cleaning and for dust control," said Staff Sgt. Malcolm Littles of Austin, Texas, a water treatment specialist with the 288th, "This system is very vital to the mission. So far we have produced 75,000 gallons and

distributed 58,000 gallons."

Each TWPS is capable of producing 30,000 gallons of water per day, a quantity capable of sustaining operations for extended periods on the battlefield.

The water produced by the TWPS has allowed the Soldiers using the Laundry Advanced System to utilize more than 2500 gallons of water daily to wash and process loads of laundry.

The field showers are accommodat-

"This is where they get out, live in the tents, work with the other units, purify the water. This is as real as it gets without being deployed."

Capt. Duane Fousie, 288th Quartermaster Co.

ing more than 600 Soldiers nightly and about 125 in the morning. The kitchen and the four water buffalos would not have clean water to be mission ready.

The water is drawn from different sources through a filter into the TWPS then through a micro-filtration process that also uses reverse-osmosis ele

ments to remove any contaminants and impurities. Chemicals are injected into the water before it is safe for use and consumption. The water is tested hourly to ensure the pH balance and temperatures are in acceptable ranges. The TWPS is also capable of filtering salt water for use by Soldiers.

Experience gained at CSTX keeps Soldiers trained and ready for missions anywhere they are needed. Soldiers gain firsthand knowledge while doing their jobs in preparation for deployments.

"We do not get to this on our weekend battle assemblies. We are sometimes in cities, we may go to a range but it is right on the edge of a town," said Fousie. "This is where they get out, live in the tents, work with the other units, purify the water. This is as real as it gets without being deployed."

CSTX is a sustainment-focused training exercise developed for units in Train/Ready year-3 of the 5-year Army Forces Generation model.

With many of the units participating in CSTX becoming available for deployment next year, the remote training environment Fort Hunter Liggett provides offers rugged terrain, realistic training opportunities and living conditions Soldiers may face while deployed.



Spc. Reynaldo Canalas, checks the chlorine mixture of the Tactical Water Purification System) as part of the required hourly tests he performs as the 288th Quartermaster Detachment provides clean water in support of the Combat Support Training Exercise 91 12-01.

Quartermasters on the Move

Give me fuel, give me fire

Story and photo by Sgt. Peter Ross
210th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

An army preparing for war can't stand still. It needs fuel, water and supplies to keep moving and that's why the Combat Support Training Exercise-91 is important to sharpen battle readiness skills.

The 849th Quartermaster Detachment is one of about 50 other quartermaster, transportation, engineering and supporting companies participating in CSTX 91 12-01. The 849th, located in Rocky Mount N.C., is here to help move

"I am the power man and if you need power, I run the power, without power you can't do anything."

Pfc. Jasper Ayars, 849th Quartermaster Detachment

supplies from base camp to base camp.

"Our mission here is to run a warehouse at Camp Roberts. We have about 27 Soldiers on the ground at (Base Camp) Schoonover and more than 30 at Camp Roberts," said Staff Sgt. Savannah Barrett a native of Greenville N.C. and supply specialist with the 849th Tactical Operation Center, "The troops are transporting (Meals Ready to Eat), ice and other supplies from Camp Roberts to (Base Camp) Schoonover and (Base Camp) Milpitas."

Amidst the heat and dust, the unit prepares to relocate to Camp Roberts from Schoonover to better facilitate their mission. Supply isn't the only job for the 849th. Other major



Pfc. Jasper Ayars power generator equipment repairer with the 849th Quartermaster Detachment, performs maintenance on a diesel generator engine during operation CSTX 91 12-01 at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif.

responsibilities include operating the 6000-pound-capable forklift and maintaining their electric generators.

Spc. John Anthony, a native of Andrew, N.C., uses these forklifts to move supplies from the warehouse on to trucks for transport to the different base camps.

"I was deployed to Afghanistan. I did the same jobs there,"

said Anthony, a Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic with the 849th. "The living conditions and the weather are similar to Afghanistan. There is one shower house, no sinks, no bathrooms, living in a tent and sleeping on cots. It feels like Afghanistan."

This mission helps them conduct operations in similar conditions they may experience if they were deployed. This might be as close to the real thing as many Soldiers here may face. They must always be prepared to maintain their own equipment.

"I set up generators, keep them fueled and run diagnostics and make sure they don't break down," said Pfc. Jasper Ayars, of Chocowinity, N.C., a power generator equipment repairer. "I am the power man and if you need power, I run the power, without power you can't do anything."

CSTX tests unit's mission readiness. With the majority of quartermaster and support units belonging to the Army Reserve, this is a vital step in preparing for deployment.

Many of the units are in the second phase of the Army Forces Generation (ARFORGEN) model. Units must complete this three-phase process before they are ready for deployment.



Spc. John Anthony, wheeled vehicle mechanic with 849th Quartermaster Detachment operates a 6000-pound-capable-forklift while assisting Staff Sgt. Savannah Barrett and Pfc. Jasper Ayars in loading a container during CSTX 91 12-01 at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif.

Squad Leader for a day

Learning leadership one Soldier at a time

Story and photo by Spc. Jeff Shackelford
343rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

For more than a year, squad leader Sgt. Jeffrey Nault, assigned to the 797th Engineer Company, located in Barrigada, Guam, has been mentoring his Soldiers to be professional, disciplined, and train each other in a unique way.

The vertical engineer calls the concept “Squad Leader for a Day.” He said the idea came to him during his unit’s last combat support training exercise.

“I came up with the idea because my guys are always asking me questions and wanting to know why things had to take so long or be done a certain way,” said Nault. “I thought the best way to show them would be to give them a sense of responsibility.”

Nault said putting a Pfc. in an acting squad leader’s position is a great way to develop their confidence and other leadership skills needed to be mission ready.

“I normally work my way up from the lowest to my assistant squad leader and continue the cycle everyday,” said Nault, a native of Sinajana, Guam.

Nault said the assigned squad leader’s responsibilities continue throughout the day and including sensitive items accountability, weapons maintenance and ensuring all assigned tasks are completed.

“This gives them a better idea of what it’s like to be in a leadership position,” said Nault. “They learn communication skills and how to process information. I’m there to back them up while

they are squad leader, but I want them to make the first decision and take responsibility for their decisions.”

Nault said that it was challenging to implement, but that the Soldiers adapted quickly.



Spc. Paul Anthony Atalig, a vertical engineer, assigned to the 797th Engineer Company and squad leader for a day trainee, observes his team discussing how to build plywood tables at Base Camp Schoonover during Combat Support Training Exercise 91 12-01 at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif.

“In the beginning it was difficult. They had a lot of questions but after they sat through some briefings and they did it, it was easier for them,” said Nault. “Now when I assign them a task, they just do it.”

Nault’s new developmental training has produced results. He said the Soldiers are bonding and assuming more respectability for themselves after being in the squad leader’s boots.

“The Soldiers like the leadership position and are demonstrating values needed for training and forward deployment,” said Nault.

Spc. Paul Anthony Atalig, a vertical engineer with the 797th said that this is a good tool for Soldiers and should help with CSTX 91 12-01.

“This is my first time as squad leader. So far I like the experience,” said Atalig. “I think this is a great way for the lower enlisted to gain experience as a leader.”

CSTX is a sustainment-focused training exercise developed for units in Train/Ready year-3 of the 5-year Army Forces Generation model.

With many of the units participating in CSTX becoming available for deployment next year, the remote training environment Fort Hunter Liggett provides offers rugged terrain, realistic training opportunities and living conditions Soldiers may face while deployed.

From the ground up

Vertical engineers make something from nothing

Story and photo by Spc. Jeff Shackelford
343rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers from the 372nd Engineer Company, located in Pewaukee, Wis., conducted training and improvements to Base Camp Milpitas during CSTX 91 12-01 July 14.

Despite the heat and supply issues, Soldiers from the 372nd stay sharp and motivated while building offices and sleeping quarters, helping the unit gain experience and stay busy until the CSTX training lanes open.

"We are doing some training and we are letting some of the lower leaders lead these projects to get leadership experience," said Sgt. 1st Class Kurt Lindenberg, a Vertical Engineer Project Manager assigned to the 372nd.

Lindenberg, a native of West Bend, Wis., said the new huts are outfitted with electricity and air conditioning, with the construction providing training opportunities for carpenters and plumbers as well.

With temperatures regularly reaching above 100 F, these improvements not only provide training for the engineers but comfort for the Soldiers.

"The buildings will help get Soldiers



Pvt. Jordan Rowe, 372nd Engineer Company, cuts joints that will be used to make trusses at Base Camp Milpitas during Combat Support Training Exercise 91 12-01, July 15, 2012.

out of tents so they can be a little cooler," said Lindenberg. "We will outfit them with electrical outlets and air. It will be a much nicer place to live for future Soldiers."

Lindenberg said that one of the most important aspects of building is a good foundation.

"The buildings will help get Soldiers out of tents so they can be a little cooler."

**Sgt. 1st Class Kurt Lindenberg
372nd Engineer Company**

"We worked with another unit to have the ground rolled and compacted, so as time goes on the building does not settle and start falling apart," said Lindberg. "You have to have a strong foundation."

Even though there have been some challenges, the 372nd builds on.

"There have been some tool issues," said Lindenberg, "not all of our equipment is here yet."

CSTX is a sustainment-focused training exercise developed for units in Train/Ready year-3 of the 5-year Army Forces Generation model.

With many of the units participating in CSTX becoming available for deployment next year, the remote training environment Fort Hunter Liggett provides offers rugged terrain, realistic training opportunities and living conditions Soldiers may face while deployed.



Soldiers from the 372nd Engineer Company build huts that will be equipped with electricity and air-conditioning at Base Camp Milpitas during CSTX 91 12-01 at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif.

What are you seeking from God?

By (CH) Lt. Col. Kimon Nicolaides
9th MSC Command Chaplain

A while back my wife asked me what kind of relationship we are seeking with God. She was reading a book by Anne Graham Lotz and was convicted by what Ms. Lotz had written about people



seeking God because they want Him to give them what they desire. Like, getting them a better-paying job, a bigger house, a girlfriend, or in my wife's case, completing her

class assignments quickly so she could enjoy her favorite TV show (and mine too)- 24, and yes, moving to warmer climes. Nothing wrong with those things, but what about God Himself?

What are you seeking from God? Most of our prayers are filled with our needs in the immediate or foreseeable future. Praying for our health, strength, for good relationships with our fellow Soldiers, for quick resolution to any problems, etc. Are we such selfish creatures? No, we are not always self-centered. We do pray for the needs of others as well, for their healing, for their children to get into good colleges, and so on, even for the salvation of others.

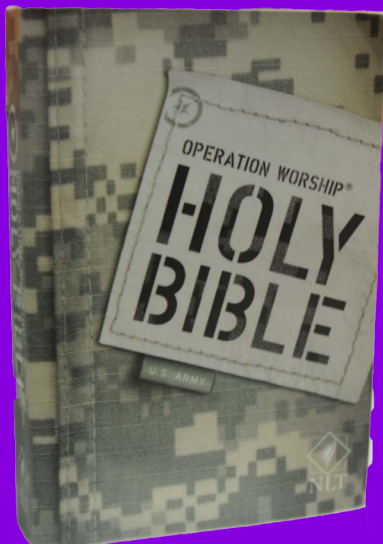
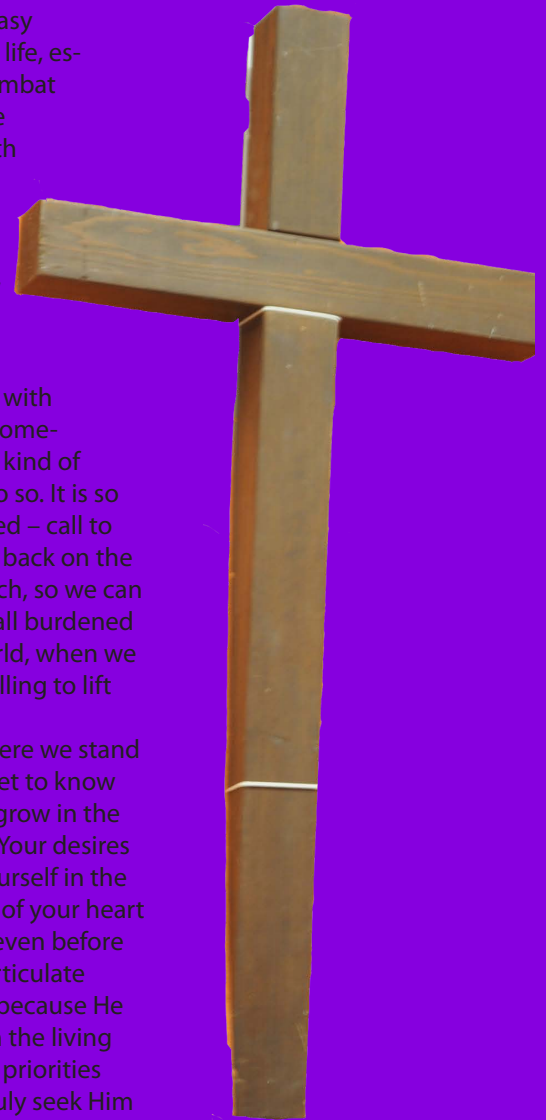
But we may have forgotten to seek

God just to enjoy the privilege of His gracious company. This is a very easy thing to do in the busyness of today's life, especially for Soldiers who are in the combat zone, facing dangers every day on the battlefield and also having to deal with family issues back home. We can only cope with so much.

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart (Jeremiah 29:13).

Most of us do not knowingly or intentionally only want a relationship with God so He can fulfill our desires, but somehow we may have stumbled into that kind of relationship because it is so easy to do so. It is so convenient to just take God for granted – call to Him when we need Him and put Him back on the shelf when we don't need Him so much, so we can get on with our daily routine. We are all burdened and distracted by the cares of the world, when we need not be, for the Lord is ever so willing to lift them from us.

Let us consciously take stock of where we stand with God. Let us make a decision to get to know Him better, to grow closer to Him, to grow in the knowledge of Him, and guess what? Your desires will be in line with His will. Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart (Psalm 37:4). He knows all our needs even before we know them, certainly before we articulate them before Him. Let us all seek Him because He is most worthy. He will refresh us with the living waters as we seek Him. Let us get our priorities right when we worship God. Let us truly seek Him and pray for our relationship with Him...and everything will fall into its rightful place, because we will be in His will.



Let us consciously take stock of where we stand with God. Let us make a decision to get to know Him better, to grow closer to Him, to grow in the knowledge of Him, and guess what? Your desires will be in line with His will. Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart (Psalm 37:4)

Former Special Forces engineer helps keep Tusi troops on track

Green Beret now a small-arms trainer and battle-tracker

Story and photos by Spc. Andrew Orillion
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Sometimes life takes Soldiers down unusual paths. For Staff Sgt. Nicholas Garza of the C Company, 2nd Battalion, 91st Training Division, the road to CSTX 91 12-01 has been very winding.

It began six years ago, when Garza started training to become a Special Forces demolition expert. The training took two years, but Garza passed the course and became a Special Forces engineer.

Garza said a Special Forces engineer functions as the team's supply sergeant, as well as its demolition expert. After leaving active duty, Garza worked in the private sector for a year before returning to the Army via the Reserve.

He came back because he just enjoyed being around military weapons and teaching people how to use them properly, said Garza.

For the past six months, Garza has been part of a Small Arms Readiness Team, currently deployed to Fort Hunter Liggett's Base Camp Tusi.

"What we do is, we train other units on using different weapon systems," said Garza. "Specifically, weapons systems that are organic to them when they actually do deploy."

The training is not standard to every unit, Garza said. It varies according to the mission the unit is deploying for and what the unit does.

"It also depends on what the unit actually wants. If the want guys to zero and qualify, then that's what we try to

train them for," said Garza. "Like a lot of the other guys inside of our unit, they have so much combat experience that it's hard not to bring personal things into it."

Personal choices when it comes to shooting include different ways of holding a weapon and different ways of placing your body, said Garza.

"You're normally taught to hold the weapon with the palm of your hand on the heat shields," he said. "Another way you can do it that we were shown, is to

Army and police force.

"It was difficult because of the language barrier. But, we got there and trained them up as best we could," said Garza. "We've got a lot of good people doing a lot of good things out there."

When not training troops on weapons systems, Garza works as a battle-tracker and command post Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge of the Base Camp Tusi Exercise Command Cell. This is Garza's first time working such a mission and he's transitioned well according to Mas-

ter Sgt. Ryan Randall, Master Instructor with the 91st Training Division, Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, Small Arms Readiness Group

"When I came into the unit, he'd been

here before me and he's kind of gotten me up to speed on what our role is with the SARG unit," said Randall. "I use him frequently for questions asked of me and I depend on him when missions come out to get it done and he's always ready and available."

"It was difficult because of the language barrier. But, we got there and trained them up as best we could. We've got a lot of good people doing a lot of good things out there."

Staff Sgt. Nicholas Garza, Small Arms Readiness Group C Company, 91st Training Division, of his experience training the Afghan National Army

use a c-grip, really close to the magazine. With this, you can control the rise of the barrel easier. This is especially good for the kneeling position."

Army Reservists weren't the first troops Garza trained. In 2008, he helped to train members of the Afghan National



Staff Sgt. Nicholas Garza (left), a Special Forces demolition expert with Small Arms Readiness Group, C Co., 91st Training Div. (Operations), Small Arms Readiness Team, shows Capt. Bob Irizarry, a general logistician with 10th Bn., 1st Bde, 91st Training Div., the latest information on troops training at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. for Combat Support Training Exercise

A little Afghan flavor

Cultural training gives Soldiers an overseas preview

Story and photos by Spc. Charlotte Martinez
345th Public Affairs Detachment

Training exercises, such as CSTX 91 12-01, are set up to enhance and train Soldiers on a variety of tactics, techniques and procedures. Currently, this includes hiring personnel of Afghan descent to role-play and teach Soldiers the cultural differences between the Afghan world and ours.

"It is the small things that make a big difference," said Khalid Sadozai, an Afghan-born United States citizen and role-player for Valbin Corporation. In addition to not wearing gloves for a handshake, you should never wear shoes

you as well," said Sadozai, who has also worked with and provided the United States Marine Corps with cultural awareness training.

"It helps (servicemembers) a great deal," Sadozai said, "especially the young ones who have never been over there before."

Sadozai said he has lived in the United States off and on since he was four-years-old and even enlisted in the United States Navy when he was younger. About four years ago when Sadozai heard about the role-playing

local Afghans could tell she was American, even when she wore the traditional clothing.

"I feel like (cultural awareness training) benefits Soldiers by teaching them the culture and giving them a heads-up about what to expect," said Amin, another role-player with Valbin Corporation. "It shows them the dos and don'ts."

Amin said Soldiers should take in the culture and the training they receive and make the most of it, no matter where they are sent.

"My main advice would be to observe

"It is the small things that make a big difference. For example, when you want to shake hands, you should always remove your gloves; otherwise, the Afghan may take offense."

Khalid Sadozai, an Afghan-born United States citizen and role player

in a mosque or give an Afghan a 'thumbs up,' Sadozai stated. In the Afghan culture, a thumbs up is a derogatory symbol while in the American culture, the thumbs up is a symbol of a good job with a positive connotation, so it is vital for Soldiers to know the difference. A mosque is equal to a church or temple for the Muslim religion.

Sadozai said every Soldier should have basic cultural awareness and they should learn Afghan greetings and what they mean. He said it can be a huge ice breaker and make a difference when interacting with the local people if you show them cultural respect.

Asalamu 'alaykum means 'may peace be with you' and is a greeting in Afghanistan and the proper response is waalai-kum as-salaam, which means 'peace to

and cultural programs the military was providing to its servicemembers, he instantly felt the need to participate and saw it as a 'great program and a great way to serve my country.'

"I went to Afghanistan for the first time four years ago," said Shela Amin, who is a Hayward, Calif. native and United States citizen of Afghan descent. "I grew up in an Afghan household, where my parents maintained customs and taught me the language, but going back was a culture shock."

Amin continued to state that her parents lived in Kabul more than 32 years ago, before the Russians invaded, and the way they described the people and atmosphere turned out to be completely different than what she experienced when she visited. She said the

before you take action," Amin said.

"Come in with a neutral attitude and keep an open mind. Most people come in with a somewhat defensive attitude and it would benefit them to have a neutral attitude instead."

The Afghan role-players are given different missions and scenarios during CSTX to ensure the Soldiers gain a variety of experience and get a full idea of some of the cultural differences they could expect while deployed.

"Something that might be acceptable (in the United States), might not be (in Afghanistan)," she said.

"We want our military to be safe and most importantly, we want them to come back home."

“It helps (servicemembers) a great deal. Especially the young ones who have never been over there before ...”For example, when you want to shake hands, you should always remove your gloves; otherwise, the Afghan may take offense.”

Khalid Sadozai, an Afghan-born United States citizen and role-player



“My main advice would be to observe before you take action. Come in with a neutral attitude and keep an open mind ... Something that might be acceptable (in the United States), might not be (in Afghanistan). We want our military to be safe and most importantly, we want them to come back home.”

Shela Amin, Hayward, Calif. native and United States citizen of Afghan descent

GET TO THE CHOPPER

Medics get high-speed training on handling casualties from helicopters

Story and Photos by Spc. Jacqueline Guerrero
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Training in a mock medical evacuation with a helicopter can be dangerous. This is why the medical group at the acute care clinic on Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. takes extra precautions to guarantee the safety of its Soldiers and patients.

"This is a very dangerous exercise," said Sgt. 1st Class Roderick Brown, a field medic with an additional identifier as a Licensed Practical Nurse with the 55th Sustainment Brigade located at Fort. Belvoir, Va. "Anytime you approach a bird and the rotors are still running it is important to be aware of your surroundings."

The significance of this mock training is to provide their Soldiers the knowledge and hands-on experience of dealing with a helicopter, said Brown, a Charlottesville Va. native.

"Our mission for this exercise is training the medics how to load and unload

from a helicopter," said Staff Sgt. Zachary Benton, a Denver, Colo. native with the 5502nd U.S. Army

Hospital, located in the same city. "We are also ensuring our Soldiers keep their head low and are aware of the rotary wings."

"This is a very dangerous exercise. Anytime you approach a bird and the rotors are still running it is important to be aware of your surroundings."

Sgt. 1st Class Roderick Brown
55th Sustainment Brigade

The medical group ensures every one of their Soldiers receives a safety brief and are aware of the dangers surrounding this exercise, said Brown.

"Safety is the number-one priority," said Spc. Liaini Vasquez, a field medic

with an additional identifier as a LPN attached to the 6250th USAH located at Joint Base Lewis-McCord, Wash. "If the medic is not safe no one is safe."

The medics also hold a safety briefing when dealing with any aircraft, said Benton.

"The importance of the exercise is

to have our Soldiers familiar with the aircraft," he said. "So if they do end up getting deployed they know how to approach an aircraft. They know how to load and unload a patient from the helicopter, ensuring a safe environment for the patient and the medic."

With an important caveat, Benton's comrade, Brown clarifies on why they train on any and every aircraft.

"It is very important to train on diverse types of aircraft because each aircraft is different," he said. "There are particular standard operating procedures for each aircraft. The medics need to be aware of how to approach the bird to avoid losing a life or a limb."

The medics also perform a police call to retrieve any debris before the helicopter makes it's way to their facility.

"The police calls ensure the debris on the ground is picked up so it won't damage the bird as well as the medics," said Brown.

The goal for the medics is to get their patients unloaded from the aircraft, into acute care and begin treatment as soon as possible, said Vasquez, a Tempe, Ariz. native.

"The optimal time to get the patient into the clinic and beginning treatment from when the bird lands is under five minutes," said Benton.

The medical group's main mission here at CSTX 91 12-01 is to address sick call



A Mercy Air employee briefs the medical units here during a medical evacuation exercise during training exercise Combat Support Training Exercise 91 12-01 at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. The purpose of this exercise is to familiarize the medics with the loading and unloading techniques when using a helicopter.

patients and any emergency injuries, said Vasquez.

"Our mission here is to provide medical safety for the Soldiers participating in CSTX," she said. "Whether they are here for deployment readiness or just to keep up their combat skills, we are here in support."

"If the Soldiers out in the field get injured, we are here to get them to return to duty as soon as possible," said Benton.

The key to being a medic is to continually train, said Vasquez.

"You can never get too much training when it comes to the medical field," she said.

The leadership tries to keep their soldiers psyched about the training.

"It is always about trying to keep them excited and motivated," said Benton.

"This way they are more receptive to what we are teaching."

Repetition comes hand-in-hand with training as well, said Benton.

"A gunshot wound to the chest is different than a gunshot wound to the leg," he said. "We try to work on everything



The medical group loads a patient on to a gurney during a medical evacuation exercise during training exercise Combat Support Training Exercise 91 12-01 at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. The purpose of this exercise is to familiarize the medics with the loading and unloading techniques when using a helicopter.

we can, we always try to keep ourselves trained on different injuries."

There is one golden rule every Soldier should remember while out in the field,

said Vasquez.

"Stay alert, stay alive and if you do those two things you won't find yourself in my care," she said.

"A gunshot wound to the chest is different than a gunshot wound to the leg," he said. "We try to work on everything we can, we always try to keep ourselves trained on different injuries."

Spc. Liaini Vasquez
6250th USAH



Biting the bullet

MARKSMANSHIP COMPETITION BRINGS OUT BEST IN SHOOTERS

By Spc. Jacqueline Guerrero
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Most people's curiosity runs rampant when they see the President's Hundred tab. The two most common guesses about this rare tab are either the carrier is one of the guards of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier or a guard for the President. 1st Sgt. Mark Bearnson clarifies on this subject revealing the truth behind the rarest of the four tabs available in the Army.

The tabs are used to identify a certain skill of a Soldier or unit. The President's Hundred tab signifies the top 100 shooters in the National Shooting Championships, which takes place at Camp Perry, Ohio, said Bearnson, a field medic infantryman with the 10th Battalion, 104th Division, which is a downtrace unit of the 91st Training Division (Operations).

"In order to make the top 100 it takes a lot of work, a lot of years of practice," said the Wanship, Utah native.

The championships are in the first two weeks of August every year. The first day of that two-week period they fire a match known as the President's match. The President's match has been around in one form or another since 1884, said Bearnson.

The top civilian teams from each state, top individual shooters from each state,

as well as the top military teams from both active and reserve components fire in this competition, he said.

"Depending on the year, there will be anywhere from 1,200 to 1,500 people who compete in the championship," explained Bearnson. "The top 100 finishers are known as the presidents 100 for that year."

The course of fire for the President's 100 match goes as follows: 10 shots are fired from 200 yards in the standing position, 10 shots are fired rapid fire from 300

yards in the prone position and then 10 shots fired in 70 seconds. The last 10 shots are fired from 600 yards in the prone position again. However, those shots are fired at a much slower pace, he said.

"There are 300 points possible," said Bearnson. "The target system is not a hit or miss -- it is actually a bulls'-eye target with scoring ranks. The center bulls' eye is 10 points and the rings leading to the outside are 9, 8, 7, 6 and 5."

Army personnel who place in the top 100 receive permanent orders and are known as the Presidents Hundred. Those

Soldiers can wear that tab for the rest of their military career, he said.

Bearnson obtained the tab for the first time back in 1989.

"I ended up 10th place over all, out of a little over 1,500 people firing in the competition," he said. "That is the highest I finished in the President's match."

It seems like the only two people who are remembered from the President's match each year, is the person who wins it and the person who places 100th, said Bearnson. "I have had the distinction of not winning the President's match but I have placed 100th before" he said.

"I am almost more proud of placing number 100 than I am of placing 10th."

Bearnson has participated in the competition approximately 10 to 12 times. However, he has never placed first. As the NCOIC of the Army Reserve's National

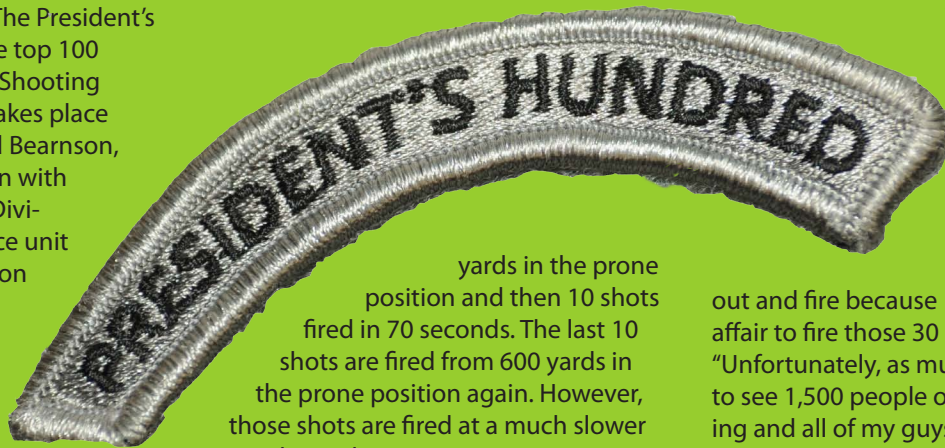
Firing Team he hasn't participated in 20 years.

"Being the NCOIC of the team is very intense and usually doesn't afford me the opportunity to go

out and fire because it is an all-day affair to fire those 30 shots," he said. "Unfortunately, as much as it pains me to see 1,500 people out there shooting and all of my guys firing away, I just have too much to do to participate in the competition. I keep threatening that one of these days I'm going to bite the bullet and go out and shoot the match. Hopefully I can make it again."

For those Soldiers who are interested in attempting to compete for this rare tab, Bearnson has a few recommendations.

"I would say number one recommen-



"The big thing Soldiers need more than anything, if they attend and fire in the U.S. Army Small Arms Championship, is a five-gallon bucket of enthusiasm. If they can go out there with a lot of enthusiasm and if they can get ramped up for this, they will do absolutely fine in the course and event. They will learn more about marksmanship in a ten-day period then they have learned in their entire military careers."

1st Sgt. Mark Bearnson
10th Battalion, 104th Division

“Soldiers will learn so much about marksmanship. Steady position, breathing, aiming process and trigger squeeze. They will learn so much about these fundamentals and this will lead them into the more advanced type of shooting.”

1st Sgt. Mark Bearnson
10th Battalion, 104th Division

dation would be to get involved with the local civilian competitions and activities,” he said. “This could be local club shooting events and it doesn’t matter what type of firearm you use. Many times going to these competitions, there are organizations that sponsor these events. It allows people to just go down and see what these events are all about. You would be amazed at how many people have extra gear and ammunition for others to use.”

There are competitions within the Army that Soldiers can participate in, as well. The most well-known competition is the U.S. Army Small Arms Championships, held at Ft. Benning, Ga. usually in the spring, said Bearnson. Army Knowledge Online advertises in late November and early December for this competition.

“This course and competition is an excellent way for Soldiers and units themselves to get advanced marksmanship training,” he said. “The Army Marksmanship Unit provides a small-arms firing school. The instructors cover all firing techniques, not only shooting techniques, but safety, sight adjustments and all of the little things Soldiers don’t normally learn when they go through basic marksmanship courses.”

Passion is a must for any Soldier willing to participate in this event.

“The big thing Soldiers need more than anything, if they attend and fire in the U.S. Army Small Arms Championship, is a five-gallon bucket of enthusiasm,” said Bearnson. “If they can go out there with a lot of enthusiasm and if they can get ramped up for this, they will do absolutely fine in the course and event. They will learn more about marksmanship in a ten-day period than they have learned in their entire military careers.”

Participating in the U.S. Army Small Arms Championship is a great step closer to the President’s 100 match.

“Soldiers will learn so much about marksmanship. Steady position, breathing, aiming process and trigger squeeze,” said Bearnson. “They will learn so much about these fundamentals and this will lead them into the more advanced type of shooting.”

The U.S. Army Small Arms Championship offers firing awards, as well.

“They are called the Excellence-in-Competition Badges,” said Bearnson. “You receive permanent orders for those, as well as a badge you can wear on your Class As.”

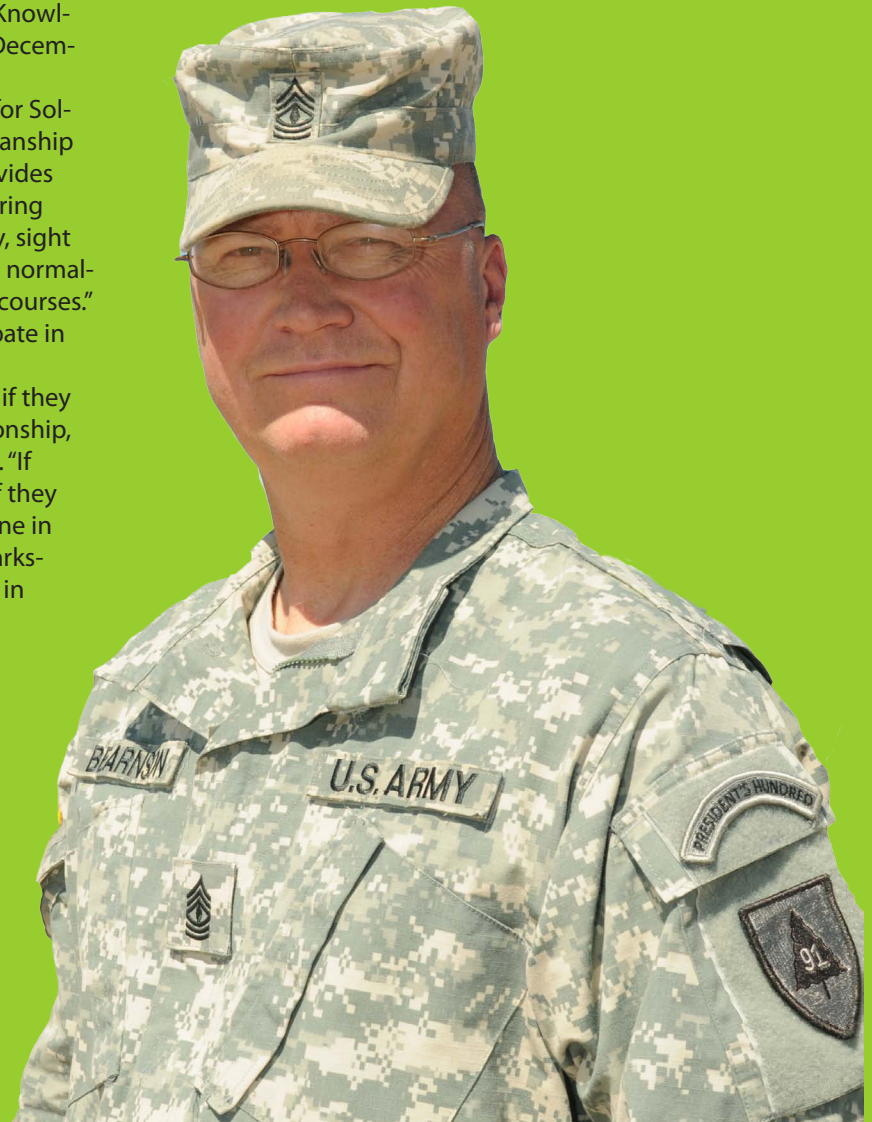
There are three different badges for rifle

and pistol you can earn each year – Bronze, silver and gold, said Bearnson.

“The gold badge is 14-carat gold and the Army engraves your name into the back of it,” he said.

On Bearnson’s ending note, he had one final message for all military units.

“I would really encourage units to look into the All Army Championships,” he said. “They have information about all of the Army Reserve’s shooting teams. There are links on usar-



CSTX 91 12-01



Photo by Spc. Andrew Orillion

Sgt. Joseph Martino, petroleum supply specialist with the 389th Engineering Battalion out of Davenport, Iowa, plants simulated explosive rounds at a training lane on Fort Hunter Liggett during CSTX.



Photo by Spc. Andrew Orillion

Staff Sgt. Brian Gonterman, an instructor with the SARG, C Co., 91st Training Division, addresses a formation of the OPFOR at Base Camp Tusi during the CSTX.



Photo by Sgt. Jaime Avila

A convoy from the 208th Trans. Co. leaves behind a trail of dust in its wake as it travels down a back road during CSTX 91 12-01 at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif.

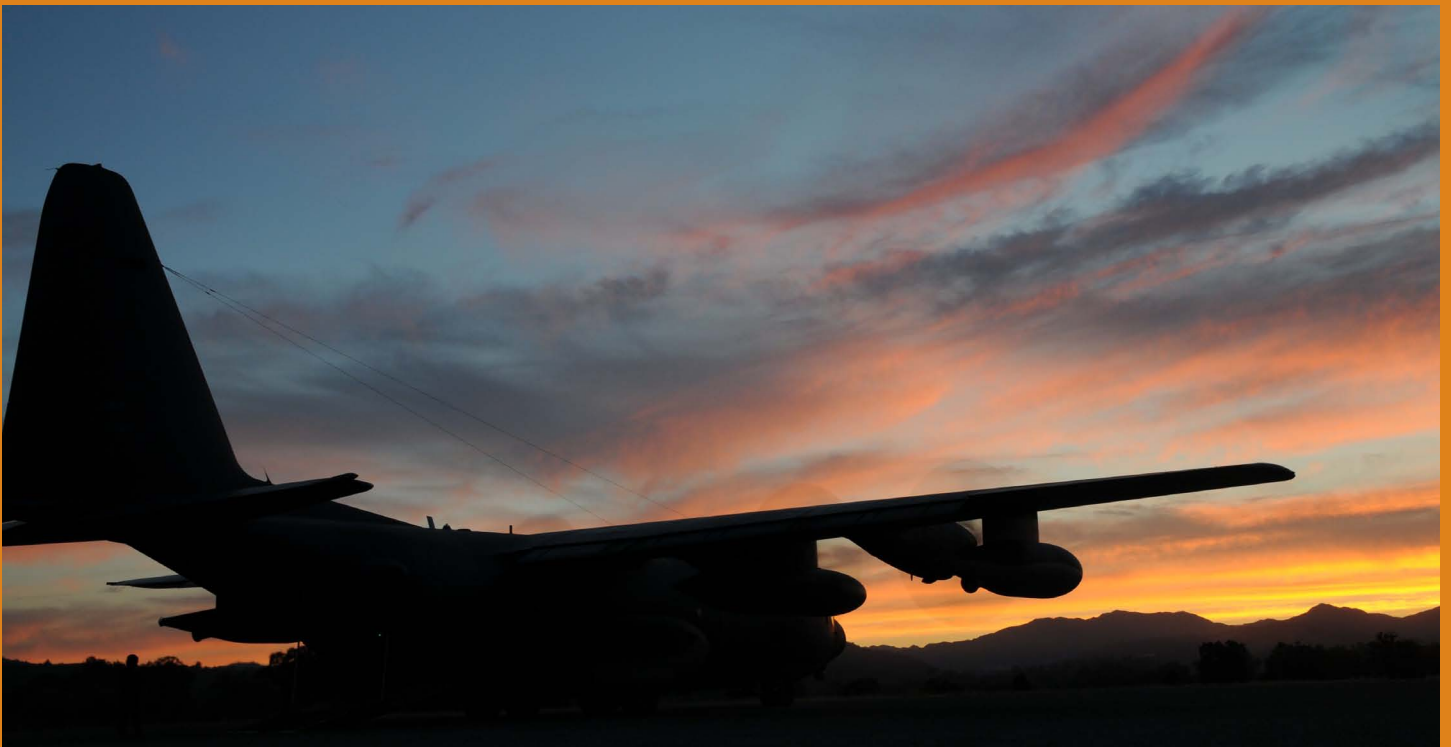


Photo by Spc. Jacqueline Guerrero

A C-130 sits on the dirt runway at Schoonover Strip at dusk while participating in a medical evacuation exercise during CSTX 91 12-01 at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif.