

The Lion's Roar

The Official Magazine of the 35th Signal Brigade



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Fort Gordon, Ga.

"Utmost of Our Ability"

4th Quarter FY '12

THE LION'S ROAR



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Brigade Command Sergeant Major

Command Sgt. Maj. Angel J. Ramos

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Cover Photo: Photos by 2nd Lt. Victor Turchany

Two Soldiers provide security, while the third Soldier assess the casualty. This is part of B Co. July FTX and team certifications.

"Utmost of Our Ability"







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From the Commander



Photo by Sgt. Dianne M. Carter

Throughout the fourth quarter, Soldiers of the Lion Brigade continued to excel in every mission executed, whether deployed or at home. Soldiers from the 518th TIN Company continue to excel in Afghanistan. They have set the standard for all to follow and continue to work very hard to provide the best communications support to their customers. Please keep these Lion Brigade Soldiers and their families in your thoughts.

At Ft Bragg, 50th Signal Battalion remains busy rebuilding the team from the last deployment. The Battalion supported several communication systems support missions, to include support to an XVIII Airborne Corps exercise. C Company excelled supporting the Severe Weather Support mission and recently passed the mission to B Company. If called upon, B Company is prepared to respond to any natural disaster within the continental United States.

The 51st Signal Battalion has enjoyed several months with the entire Battalion at Joint Base Lewis-McCord (JBLM). Each company is processing through different phases of the Army's Force Generation process. They have performed exceptionally well providing communications systems support to multiple units on JBLM, and ended the month by deploying B Company to the National Training Center (NTC) at Ft. Irwin, Calif., to support 2nd

Brigade, 10th Mountain Division (LI).

63rd Signal Battalion sent several teams to the NTC and maintained C Company in a high-state of alert, prepared to respond to any National contingency operation. The Battalion ended the quarter supporting Exercise Vibrant Response, a US Northern Command sponsored exercise designed to certify units to assume Defense CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear) Response Force (DCRF).

67th Signal Battalion completed its year-long mission in support of DCRF and immediately began preparing for deployment to multiple locations throughout southwest Asia this winter. The Battalion also conducted a change of command ceremony, saying farewell to Lieutenant Colonel Dan and Brenda Kuntz and welcoming Lieutenant Colonel Calondra and David Fortson.

Many challenges await us as we enter the first quarter, but I am confident we will rise to meet these challenges head-on, overcome them with professionalism and continue the Brigade's proud tradition of excellence. To do this, we must continue to focus on our three Lines of Effort—People, Teams and Community.

-People—Resilient Soldiers, Civilians and Family Members; aggressive and adaptive professional Soldiers who are physically fit, experts in their field, masters of the fundamentals and prepared for the competition of their lives as part of a team. Soldiers, Civilians and Family Members that are prepared to meet any challenge and, just as important, able to ask for help whenever and wherever needed.

-Teams—Expeditionary by culture: trained, ready and well-led, with well maintained equipment, prepared to deploy anywhere in the word and achieve mission success on arrival.

-Community—A strong combat multiplier created by support and involvement in FRGs, installation programs, the local community, the XVIII Airborne Corps and the Signal Regiment. Thank you for all your sacrifices in Service to our Country.

Utmost of Our Ability!
THE Lion Brigade!
L6



Backbone of the Army



Greetings Lion Brigade! The year has come to an end and what a year it was for the Brigade. I'm extremely proud of what the unit has accomplished, but make no mistake about it, it was the outstanding contributions of every Lion Brigade Soldier, civilian, and Family that has made us successful. Thank you for your commitment and service to this organization.

During the fourth quarter, the Brigade continued to remain undefeated..... The 518th TIN Company remains deployed in support OEF; the 63rd ESB participated in Vibrant Response in August, and the 51st ESB provided SME support to the 101st ESB beginning in mid August through the first week of September. The Brigade headquarters sent Soldiers in support of USS Mount Whitney; the 50th ESB supported the 27th Engineer Battalion, and the 51st ESB supported the 10th Mountain Infantry Division at NTC. At Fort Gordon, the 63rd and 67th ESB completed their NET fielding and testing of all Mission Command Systems. Our Soldiers continue to do an outstanding job.

The Brigade is currently engaged in many missions. 50th ESB is prepared and ready to support the Severe Weather Mission. 63rd ESB is currently engaged in the Global Response Force, and the Command and Control CBRNE Response Element-Alpha (C2CRE-A) mission. At a moment's notice, the 67th ESB is ready to provide communication support for the Domestic CBRNE Response Force. With the 518th TIN Co. deployment, training exercises, equipment fielding, and the multitude of other events that was executed this quarter, the Brigade continued to support the community with activities such as the Lakeside High School JROTC Rogers Cup.

The Brigade recently conducted its NCO and Soldier of the Year Board. The Soldiers represented themselves extremely well and should be proud of their accomplishments. As we all know, we can only have one winner. This year, the 63rd Signal Battalion had a clean sweep. Sgt. Patrick Rautert (25Q) was selected as the NCO of the Year, and Spc. Christopher Puthoff (25Q) was selected as the Soldier of the Year. For the second time in the last three years, "THE Lion Brigade!" swept the Signal Center of Excellence and Fort Gordon, Ga., NCO and Soldier of the Year honors. Sgt. Anthony Rosa (25Q) and Spc.

April Ghiroli (25Q) were selected as the installation NCO and Soldier of the Year.

Before I close, I like to take a moment to discuss Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness. CSF2 marks a new era for the Army by comprehensively equipping and training our Soldiers, Family members, and Army Civilians to maximize their potential and face the physical and psychological challenges of sustained operations. There are five dimensions to CSF2: physical, emotional, social, spiritual and Family. The Army recognizes the increased sacrifices our Family members make on a daily basis, and instituted the CSF2 program to provide Family members with the cognitive skills and coping strategies needed to take care of themselves and their Soldier. The program helps link them with resources and tools available in the military community that are able to strengthen Soldier and Family resilience. For more information on how this program may assist you, please see your unit Master Resilience Trainer (MRT) or Resilience Trainer Assistant (RTA).

Again, I am enormously proud of what this Brigade has accomplished and honored to serve as your Brigade Command Sergeant Major. Thank you for all you do..... "We MUST Coach, Teach and Mentor!"

Lion 7



Photo by Sgt. Dianne M. Carter



Soldier of the Quarter

*Essay by Spc. Christopher A. Puthoff
63rd Signal Battalion*

As Sergeant Major of the Army, the three key areas I would work to improve for the quality of life for my Soldiers would be barracks and housing for Soldiers and their families, PX Exchange services and family readiness.

To improve housing my first step would be to identify key problems. I would do this

by issuing post wide surveys to Soldiers and families about their living conditions. Once we have identified key issues we can begin to improve them. One key issue I would like to improve upon is building maintenance. I would make sure repairs are done in a timely manner.

For PX Exchange services my first step would be to evaluate their facilities

and services to make sure they are following regulations and keeping their facility clean and presentable at all times. My next step would be to improve the services that they provide. I would look at different installations to see what they have that are successful and bring those successful items to posts that need them.

In the Army training is what we do, not something we do, which makes the quality of training very important. I would like to focus on suicide training and family readiness. The Army has a much higher rate

of suicide and divorce then our civilian counter parts. There are already programs available for this, so I would like to focus on awareness. I would do this by having post wide town halls to put out all the programs that are available to help Soldiers and their families. If more Soldiers and their families know there is help available, they will be more inclined to use it.

As the Sergeant Major of the Army I believe that focusing on these areas will improve morale of the Soldier's and their families, thus improving the quality of life.



NCO of the Quarter

*Essay by Sgt. Richard V. Hendricks
67th Signal Battalion*

If I were ever afforded the opportunity to be the Sergeant Major of the Army, I would focus on three initiatives to improve the Corps of the noncommissioned officers. First, I would emphasize retaining the best. Second, I would incentivize civilian education. Finally, I would make it a point to celebrate the best. These three initiatives, if pursued, would ensure that the NCO Corps continues to be recog-

nized as the most professional war fighters in the world.

Retention is currently a hot-button issue, considering the reduction of force initiatives. Gone are the days when simply a pulse was sufficient for reenlistment. The Army as a whole is now blessed with an opportunity to be selective in both recruiting and retention. However, our current retention strategy seems focused simply on weeding out the bad and that is short-sighted. The focus ap-

pears to be on correcting for the weakened recruiting standards accompanying the war on terror. The conflict also brought some highly qualified individuals who were inspired to serve their nation in war. These Soldiers are now among the NCO Corps. Further the economic downturn has brought in premium candidates who are now becoming sergeants and staff sergeants. We must do everything to retain them. Failure will leave us with an average NCO Corps. See, the rift-raft is being asked to leave, while the average NCOs are reluctant to return to the economy. For our best, plenty of opportunities exist even with the limited jobs in the private sector. For our first term NCOs, they are not yet invested in the retirement system or the military career, yet we are offering them nothing to retain them.

Money is the best retention tool, but there is no hiding that it's in short supply. We can offer them other incentives. Such as additional education benefits or even school sabbaticals to complete degrees. We can offer those choice assignments and the best military training schools. We can use merit instead of timing to ensure the best are given first choices. And finally, we can use tools such as Troop Savings Program to use small sums to still provide quality financial incentives to retention.

We need to educate the best. Right now, the Army offers tuition assistance to 18 hours of higher education. This is a good start, but at this rate it would take a Soldier seven years to complete a bachelor's degree. Further, the Soldier isn't provided any time beyond their personal time to complete the



Signal Center of Excellence Soldier and NCO of the Year



Spc. April Ghiroli
HHC, 35th Signal Brigade



Sgt. Anthony Rosa
63rd Signal Battalion

35th Signal Brigade Soldier and NCO of the Year



Spc. Christopher A. Puthoff
63rd Signal Battalion



Sgt. Patrick Rautert
63rd Signal Battalion



degree. We can do better for our NCOs. First, we should work with our brothers in the Air Force to expand the community college of the Air Force to Army personnel. This is a valuable resource and could be open up additional education opportunities to our Soldiers. Second, we should invite our best educated NCOs to teach civilian classes to our troops. It would give both the troops and senior NCOs incredible professional growth opportunities. Finally, we should offer sergeants and staff sergeants two year education sabbaticals. They should

include two years of drill with a local guard or reserve unit, full-time benefits, but not pay, and a commitment to active duty for three years upon completion of the degree. This would ensure we bring back good NCOs whom would otherwise leave to complete school. With these initiatives in place, we'd ensure our NCOs are among the best educated people not just Soldiers.

Finally, we need to celebrate our best. We should encourage our NCO's to gather and recognize the best performers. I would encourage all

my sergeant majors to gather their NCOs quarterly for an NCO call. During this informal gathering NCOs would be recognized among their peers for outstanding duty performance exceptional results on the APFT and weapons qualification, volunteer work, board appearances, assignment selections and anything else that sets a high mark on NCO performance. This need not be a formal or drawn out affair, and awards like Army Achievement Medals and Army Commendation Medals are not appropriate. Rather, just a

simple acknowledgement from peers and seniors to those whom present it. This would develop esprit de corps and foster a culture of excellence in our ranks.

These three incentives would set the stage for a vibrant NCO Corps in the future, and prevent the impending flight to mediocrity the current environment fosters. The Army would be a leader in developing and retaining the best war fighters and the best leaders. These incentives would be transformative in the NCO Corps, and in the Army as a whole.



HHC Receives New Commander

*Story and photos by Sgt. Dianne M. Carter
Public Affairs NCOIC, HHC, 35th Signal Brigade*

The Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the 35th Signal Brigade held a Change of Command Ceremony July 20, 2012 at the Bicentennial Chapel, Fort Gordon, Ga.

The Change of Command Ceremony was held to welcome the incoming Commander, Capt. Dennis E. Sidre II and to bid farewell to the outgoing Commander Capt. Stephen J. Joosten.

Joosten has held several posi-

tions and deployed multiple times with the brigade since 2005. After a successful command of C Co., 67th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), he relinquished command of C Co. and assumed command of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 35th Signal Brigade, in April 2011.

"When in a position of command, responsibility and accountability become absolutes," said Capt. Joosten. "Capt. Sidre has already shown to possess these qualities and I know he will be a great addition to the Lion Brigade."

Sidre is a third generation Soldier in his family to serve in the United States Army, who began his career in 2006. His most recent assignment was as commander of A Co., 63rd ESB.

Capt. Sidre said, "Although today is not as significant as landing on the moon, I am truly grateful for the privilege to take command of HHC and another step forward in the Army."





HHC Organizational Day at Points West

*Story by Capt. Stephen J. Joosten
Commander, HHC, 35th Signal Brigade*

It started as a typical Friday; however, the ending was anything but typical. Instead of the grueling Willard Hill run, the Soldiers of HHC, 35th Signal Brigade participated in an Organizational Day. It started with gym three overrun with black unit shirts, as we showed our skills or lack thereof on the volleyball and basketball courts. The spirit of competition was strong and the camaraderie even stronger. On the volleyball side our HHC Command Team showed what they were made of. 1st Sgt. Berry took to the court like a Raging Lion, spiking the ball over the net on several occasions. With him and Sgt. Pitchford on the same team Capt. Joosten didn't stand a chance. Then the tables turned, with 1st Sgt. Berry taking a break Capt. Joosten put his game face on and won. On the other side of the curtain, there were a plethora of knee and ankle braces, the court looked more like the physical therapy clinic than anything else, but it was an interesting game none the less. With PT out of the way, the unit prepped for the rest of the Organizational Day. After a little personal hygiene and about a 35 minute drive everyone began to arrive at Points West Army Resort.

As people began to gather the sound of

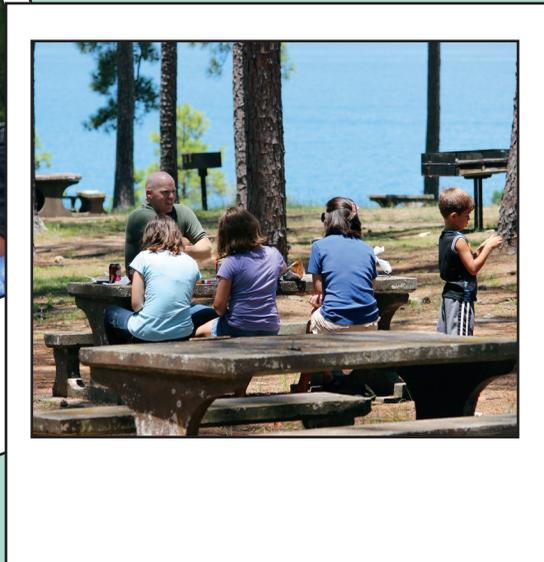
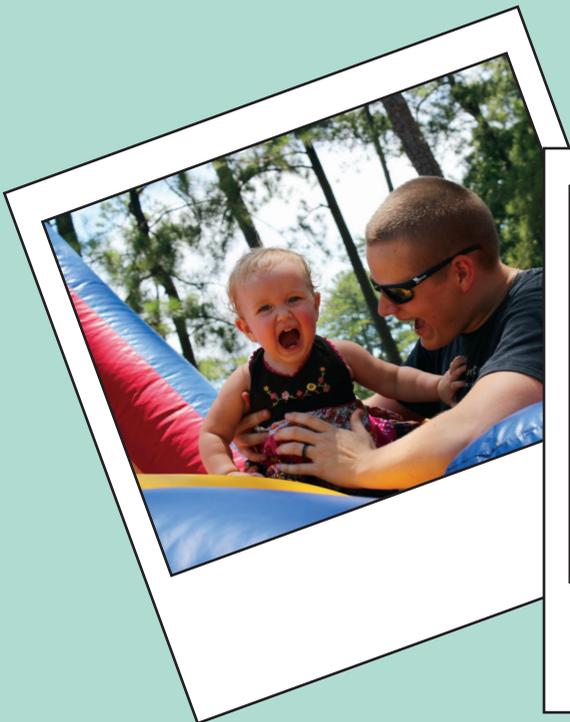


Photo courtesy of Spc. Adam M. Wuornos

laughter and conversation filled the pavilion which we occupied. The biggest thing on everyone's mind was, "Where's the food"? As soon Spc. Clement and Spc. McCall arrived and set up the food, a line quickly began to form. 1st Sgt. Berry and Capt. Joosten said a few words to welcome the Soldiers and their Families. Staff Sgt. Abdon blessed the food and the serving began. After everyone's stomachs were full; some people went fishing, some continued to talk and others played games. There was a fierce competition in Catch Phrase. The female team included; Spc. Ayala, Spc. Brown, Sgt. McGriff, Sgt. Blount and a few female family members. Versus

the male team; Capt. Joosten, Sgt. Pitchford, Capt. Thomas, Staff Sgt. Gilliam, Pvt. Vawters, along with some family members. By the time the game was over and the males won, we realized that it was time to wrap everything up, or so we thought. With one last burst of energy, Sgt. 1st Class Sowells was challenged by Capt. Joosten to a race on the obstacle bouncy house. Yes, the bounce house. Although I am still unsure who won, Sgt. 1st Class Sowells ended up with a war wound which seems to be pretty common in his sporting competitions.

All in all, everyone seemed to have a good time. After all, any day off is a good time.



Spiritual Fitness Breakfast Hosts Guest of Honor

Story and photos by Sgt. Dianne M. Carter
Public Affairs NCOIC, HHC, 35th Signal Brigade

Reverend Kenneth L. Gainous was the guest speaker at the Spiritual Fitness Breakfast hosted by the unit ministry team assigned to the 35th Signal Brigade at the Fort Gordon Club Aug. 15, 2012.

Reverend Gainous spoke to Soldiers of the brigade to ensure four of the five dimensions of strength, outlined in the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program, are being met.

This is a Spiritual Fitness Breakfast to highlight Soldiers’ comprehensive fitness. This breakfast fulfills four of the five dimensions, which are the spiritual, emotion, social and family, and are important to a Soldiers overall health, said Lt. Col. Barth G. Edison, chaplain assigned to the 35th Sig. Bde.

Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program is a structured, long term assessment and development program to build the resilience and enhance the performance of



Reverend Kenneth L. Gainous speaks to Soldiers assigned to the 35th Signal Brigade about the everyday challenges Soldiers have in life.

every Soldier, Family member and Department of the Army civilian. The CSF helps build strong minds and strong bodies. Gainous said he encourages all Soldiers to step up and meet their challenges. Not to let the things going on in their life now, define them forever. Success is defined by the quality of a Soldiers life, not by what people say is successful.

“Before you accept a challenge, you need courage. Two, you need confidence which is rooted in your experiences and competence. Three, you need your faith that will sustain your hopes and expectations. It gives you your vision”, said Gainous.

Gainous has accepted many challenges in his life and speaks from experience. Gainous began meeting his challenges as All-State and All-American high school athlete in Track

and Field, and he was captain of his schools team for the 1978 State Champion Track Team. He then went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Design Engineering and Technology, a Master of Science degree in Technology Management and a Masters in Strategic Studies.

Gainous knows the challenges that Soldiers face each day because he is a retired Colonel of the 30 years from the Army Reserves. He has commanded a tactical Signal company during Desert Storm, commanded a Logistics Support Battalion, served as Deputy Brigade Commander of the 359th Signal Brigade and Deputy Chief of Staff for Information Systems/G6, 335th Theater Signal Command.

“The Army is the greatest team you’ll ever be a part of. I have been on a lot of teams in my life and nothing can compare,” said Gainous.

This breakfast was made possible by all the donations the unit ministry team has collected in the Chaplaincy Tithe and offering fund.



Soldiers line up for a hot breakfast.



Reverend Gainous autographs his book “Be a Contender, Not Just a Contestant!” for the Soldiers.



The Sankey Takedown

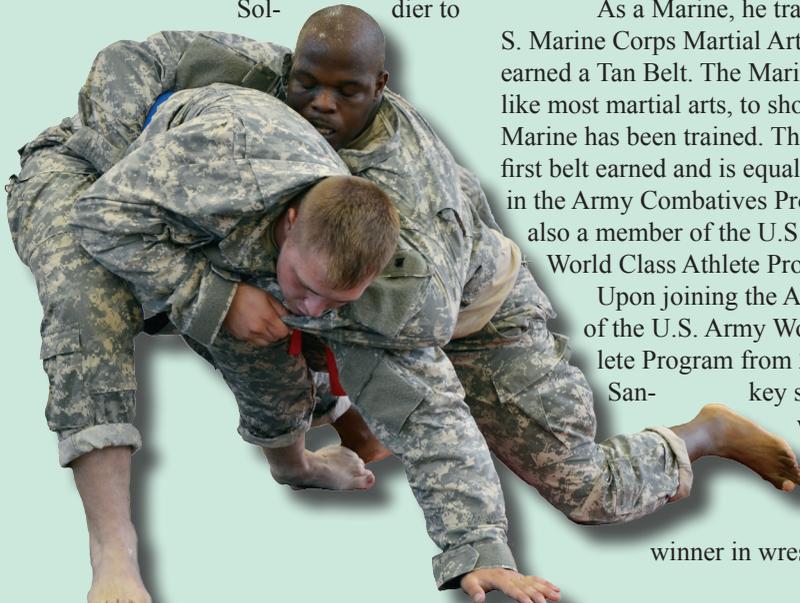
Story and photos by Sgt. Dianne M. Carter
Public Affairs NCOIC, 35th Signal Brigade

As people walked into the Gym 5 Saturday, they were assaulted with the sights and sounds of service members fighting and the crowd of people in the bleachers shouting as they watched competitor in the three matches being held simultaneously on the gym floor. The floor of the gym had three fighting areas covered with mats. Each area had a table with two people posting the scores for all to see. Judges, with their Army Combat Uniform pants and black T-shirts, were following the combative matches closely to ensure all points were awarded accordingly.

The fighters were briefed before the combatives tournament to dress in their regular duty uniforms, stripped of all patches and name tapes for safety, and they had to be barefoot. Each fighter in the tournament fought until they were eliminated by losing two matches, said Staff Sgt. Albert W. Sankey, a 35F, an all source intelligence analyst, assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 35th Signal Brigade.

This dedicated and hard working Soldier, from the 35th Sig. Bde., strived to keep himself in peak physical condition for the Army and for contests like the Combatives Tournament hosted by the Better Opportunity for Single Soldiers July 14 at Fort Gordon, Ga.

Sankey was the first 35th Sig. Bde. Soldier to



Staff Sgt. Sankey, wearing the red belt, takes one of his opponent to the mat.

be called to the mat. He showed his skills immediately when he used a technique he learned, from his many years in wrestling, to pick up his opponent and slam him down on to the mat, soon after he won the match.

Sankey said he started wrestling at 11 years old. Since then he has wrestled all throughout high school and college. He was a Junior college all American wrestler.

“A lot of my experience in grappling comes from Armed Forces Free-style and Greco-Roman wrestling.” said Sankey, “Those are the styles used for Olympic wrestling, where as folk-style is used in American wrestling.”

As a Marine, he trained in the U. S. Marine Corps Martial Arts Program and earned a Tan Belt. The Marines use belts, like most martial arts, to show the level a Marine has been trained. The Tan Belt is the first belt earned and is equal to a level one in the Army Combatives Program. He was also a member of the U.S. Marine Corps World Class Athlete Program.

Upon joining the Army he was part of the U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program from 2001 to 2006.

Sankey said he actually wrestled Adam Wheeler, a 2008 Olympic bronze medal winner in wrestling, and won

when he first started the program. He left the program when his age made it more difficult to compete at that level.

“I stay prepared by staying involve with free-style, folk-style, and Greco-Roman wrestling,” said Sankey. Now, Sankey is a member of the Columbia County Mat Club. This helps him stay in shape and keep his skills razor sharp. He also volunteers as a coach for three days a week. The club mentors middle and high school students during the summer to keep the students involved in wrestling. All of Sankey’s efforts paid off with him winning second place in the heavy weight category of this combatives tournament.



Training at the Fort Bragg Regional Hub Node

*Story and photos by 1st Lt. Jessica Yahn
2nd Platoon Leader, C Co., 50th ESB*

Signal Operators in 2nd Platoon, Charlie Company, 50th Signal Battalion and members of the 578th Signal Company had a unique opportunity to talk face-to-face with the personnel they normally troubleshoot over the phone with when trying to install their Phoenix AN/TSC-156 strategic Ku, Ka, C, and X-Band satellite links. The meeting took place at the Fort Bragg Regional Hub Node and was a great learning experience for both the Phoenix and AN/TTC-56 Single Shelter Switch 25S Satellite Communication Systems Operator-Maintainers. This first time interaction outside of the field environment allowed the RHN Satellite Communications technicians the opportunity to record the digital settings on the Phoenix terminal after the link was established.

The purpose of 2nd Platoon’s visit to the Fort Bragg Regional Hub Node was to troubleshoot historical connection issues that tend to occur based on the previous After Action Reviews. The SATCOM technicians in the facility, in addition to conducting training with the 50th ESB, were excited to learn more about the Phoenix system because it is an assemblage that is not widely used on the installation. The RHN deals more heavily with Satellite Terminal Trailers and Very Small Aperture Terminals versus satellite terminals like the Phoenix, which serves as a transport node for the Warfighter Information Network-Tactical



Fort Bragg Regional Hub Node

and the transport medium for theater-based Network Service Centers. RHNs provide satellite, voice and data services to support forces as they flow into a theater of operations, including domestic disaster relief, and enable deployed units to connect to Department of Defense networks accommodating the heavy network traffic of up to three divisions. The benefit of positioning the Phoenix and SSS assemblages directly at the RHN was that it allowed the Signal operators and RHN technicians to all work side by side and to streamline the troubleshooting process.

The 578th 'Dragons' Signal Company is a strategic communications asset that reports to the 302nd Signal Battalion in Fort Detrick, Md., but is geographically separated to provide Regional Hub Node and Standardized Tactical Entry

Point support to the Warfighters’ worldwide.

The 578th company commander, Capt Vinny Dueñas, highlighted the significance of tactical and strategic Signal units conducting joint training by stating, "As communicators, our top priority is to provide robust, reliable and redundant communications to all our customers. Opportunities such as this one, where the Soldiers, Civilians and Contractors of the 578th 'Dragons' get to work right alongside Soldiers of the 50th Signal Battalion and troubleshoot equipment before it gets employed in a real-world mission are invaluable. These types of training events enhance everyone's operational readiness and are a form of rehearsals for the communications missions that Signaleers execute."

Questions and concerns regarding the link were asked directly to the operators on each end and troubleshooting became incredibly easier and streamlined to better support the Warfighter and Commanders.

The Phoenix and SSS operators were able to work out all the previously noted connection issues, but they received guided tours of the RHN facility and received a detailed explanation from the technicians of the signal flow on their end.

Sgt. Stewart, assigned to 2nd Platoon, C Co., 50th ESB, walked out of the heat into the air-conditioned facility and exclaimed, “Whew, it’s like Iraq. Hot outside and freezing inside the Technical Control Facility.”

The RHN is similar to a TCF, but is much larger. Inside, technicians walk around bundled up in sweaters because the sensitive electronic equipment has to remain cool to prevent overheating and potential damaging. The training was very beneficial because it allowed the 50th ESB operators





Hub Node from pg 14:

to see exactly where their satellite link was coming in and why accurate shot information is needed prior to establishing the link on the ground during both training and deployed conditions.

The training conducted at the RHN built a better

relationship between 2nd Plt equipment operators and RHN technicians, especially the SATCOM technicians. The takeaway was that the next time 2nd Plt deploys to the field and is establishing a satellite link into Fort Bragg, they will have a better understanding of what is

required to get the communication link in. More importantly, the Phoenix operators will be talking to someone they've met and worked with, in person, during their next troubleshooting battle drill, allowing the process to be smooth and efficient. 2nd Plt and the RHN personnel

look forward to scheduling and conducting further training together. The benefits on both ends are enormous and the RHN personnel enjoyed the chance to work with operators and equipment deployed at the tactical level.

50th Signal BN Staff Assisted Visit

*Story and photos by 2nd Lt. Jerad Romine
Operations Officer, HHC, 50th ESB*

In August, the 50th Signal Battalion (Expenditary) underwent a Staff Assistance Visit that was a follow-up to the Initial Command Inspection which occurred in March 2012. The purpose of this visit was to get a sense of how the unit operated in accordance with XVIII Airborne Corps and 35th Signal Brigade standard operating procedures and to gauge where organizational deficiencies and shortcomings were throughout the unit. For the past four months the Soldiers have sought to fix the deficiencies annotated during the SAV and



SGT Knotek

almost every section in Headquarters and Headquarters Company was in need of a few improvements. Under the leadership of Capt. Pierce and 1st. Sgt. Royal HHC, 50th ESB met their goal of improvements in all areas.

On 13-16 August 2012 Staff members of HHC, 35th Signal Brigade inspected the Battalion and what they found was a drastic improvement of every section, not just in HHC, but across the entire Battalion. Spc. Garcia went from not having a Chemical, Biological, Radiation, and Nuclear program to having the "best one in the Brigade" according to the Brigade CBRN inspector. Sgt. Knotek and Spc. Arroyo were commended by the BDE inspectors during the command out-brief as being Soldiers who went "above-and-beyond the call of duty not only to fix their sections deficiencies, but assist the other companies after their inspection was complete".

Some of the areas that Sgt. Knotek and Spc. Arroyo improved in were the areas of flags, leave, and passes because of their hard work, dedication, and determination to the Soldiers and the mission. Other improvements within HHC, were made by Staff Sgt. Daniels by receiving a "Green" in Motor Pool operations; Sgt. Jones who received a "Green" in Supply Operations; Sgt. Derossett passing in the Arms Room; and Sgt. 1st. Class Mirabal breezing through her EMS inspection with a "Green." The



SPC Arroyo

success of the organization would not have been possible if it was not for the commitments and expertise of these Soldiers and many others.

Although HHC did well, there are still improvements that need to occur and these deficiencies will be fixed in the coming months.

According to Lt. Col. O'Connor: "It's always good to have folks from the outside come examine how we conduct business. It helps us grow stronger as a unit and points out where we can improve."

He has invited them back in another four months and when they arrive, the unit will be that much better and will be successful in all areas!

"above-and-beyond the call of duty not only to fix their sections deficiencies, but assist the other companies after their inspection was complete".

Communication Support

*Story and photos by 1st Lt. Adam Visbeen
2nd Platoon Leader, A co. 50th ESB*

In August, Soldiers from 1st Platoon, Alpha Company 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) had the rare opportunity to participate in a Joint Training Exercise on Fort Bragg supporting the 100th Engineer Company, 30th Engineer Battalion, 20th Engineer Brigade as well as Soldiers from the countries of Germany, New Zealand, Great Britain, and Canada. The 100th Engineer’s specialize in topographical analysis and their mission during this exercise was to analyze the best location for tactical personnel and equipment insertion within different parts of Africa. The Engineers evaluated the best avenues of approach to deploy equipment and personnel for both combat operations and Global Response Force Operations in various regions of the world. The unit was required to provide their higher headquarters with both printed and digital data maps. They requested support from the 50th Signal Battalion in order to accomplish this mission.

Alpha Company, 1st Platoon assisted in the success of the joint mission by providing the 100th Engineer Company with non-secure voice and data communications throughout the training exercise. The services provided gave the Engineers the ability to communicate via both voice and data throughout the training site and to their higher headquarters. First Platoon deployed two Command Post Nodes and two Satellite Tactical Terminals in order to provide seamless data services under the leadership of Sgt. Keesee and Sgt. Wheeler and their two



teams consisting of 11 Soldiers. The internet services that the platoon provided allowed for the Engineers to pull live streams of data on land terrain, elevation, and roads within their target areas.

1st Lt. Norlin, the 100th Engineer Company Executive Officer stated, “50th Signal Battalion was a vital part in the success of this mission and provided a quick flow of demands and needs throughout all personnel due to the communications provided.”

Throughout the training period, 1st Platoon Soldiers engaged in weapons familiarization training consisting of the M2 .50 caliber machine gun, and the M67 fragmentation hand grenade. All soldiers were given Preliminary Marksmanship Instruction prior to the training in order to achieve success. The training taught the Soldiers the proper way to assemble, disassemble, load, and unload the machine gun; in addition to proper prone, crouch, and standing throwing techniques of the hand grenade. Soldiers engaged pop-up targets on the .50 caliber range from a distance of 400-1000 meters and engaged targets from 10-30 meters on the live grenade range.

1st Platoon Soldiers stand ready to receive future missions supporting various types of units.

Sgt. Keesee stated, “The opportunity to provide active communication services to units in the training environment

allows for our teams to increase our skills in preparation for future tactical combat communication operations.”

Some of the Soldiers stated that their favorite event on the training exercise was firing the M2 .50 caliber machine gun and throwing the live M67 hand grenades.

As the A Co. Smokin’ Aces continue to validate their systems and press ahead in improving the unit’s confidence in communications. 1st Platoon will always answer the call when the next opportunity arises to successfully support that customer whether it is a U.S. or foreign unit and represent the 50th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary).





Charlie Cobras performed expeditiously during "Lion Distance"

*Story by 1st Lt. Kollie Nimmo
Operations officer, C Co., 50th ESB*

The first company formation was held at 0500 in the early-morning rain in the 50th Signal Battalion's motor pool. Rain, snow or shine, the Cobras of Charlie Company, 50th Expeditionary Signal Battalion were at it again. Preparing once again to leave behind the comfort and the amenities of their homes and go to the field to master both their tactical and technical skills.

This time the brigade Field Training Exercise was called "Lion Distance" and we all have been anticipating this FTX for many different reasons. For the noncommissioned officers of Charlie Company, 50th ESB, this was another excellent opportunity to leave the Garrison environment in order to optimize the training opportunities. According to Staff Sgt. Schaf, who is a section sergeant assigned to first platoon, "getting away from garrison and going to the field allowed me to influence my Soldiers on a more personal level." 1st Lt. Yahn, a platoon leader of second platoon and the officer in charge of this year's hurricane season disaster-relief team, is taking



Photos by Capt. Brian Herring

Above from left to right: Staff Sgt. Schaf, Pfc. Delgado, Pfc. Irvine, Spc. Dwyer and Spc. Schmidgall

"getting away from garrison and going to the field allowed me to influence my Soldiers on a more personal level."

the same equipment she took to the field two weeks ago during her platoon FTX. This opportunity will afford her another chance to validate her equipment and ensure that both her Soldiers, and their equipment are ready to deploy anywhere in the United States in support of a major command in the unfortunate event of a hurricane disaster. For the Charlie Cobra Soldiers, this was a chance for them to incorporate lessons learned during the previous FTX and to dem-

onstrate what their NCOs have taught them over the past six months since redeployment.

Upon our arrival to the field and after establishing security, our main focus was obviously the successful deployment of our Signal assemblages and the acquisition of the satellite. Staff Sgt. Linquist who is one of Charlie Company's Command Post Node subject matter experts immediately took charge of his team and went to work. He was determined to be the first team to successfully acquire the satellite and make the required test Phone call back to the battalion Administrative Logistic Operation Center. According to Staff Sgt. Linquist "This should be an easy task for my team, because we were just in the field two weeks ago, where we had to fulfill the same requirements."

"This should be an easy task for my team, because we were just in the field two weeks ago, where we had to fulfill the same requirements."

With the exception of a few minor setbacks, Staff Sgt. Linquist's prediction was correct. He and his team worked together like clockwork and expeditiously deployed their Satellite Transportable Terminal locking in on the satellite in no time. The Cobras of Charlie Company, 50th ESB once again executed their mission and performed their duties with flying colors in a timely matter, and they definitely deserve a standing ovation for a job well done. Like our motto states "Strike first, Strike to kill!!"



Staff Sgt. Ferrera poses for a photo.

Bravo Co. Steps Up Training with Air Operations

Story by 2nd Lt. Quintin Davis
2nd Platoon Leader, B Co., 50th ESB

The Soldiers of Bravo Company, 50th Signal Battalion made a return to the Landing Zones of Fort Bragg August 10, 2012. They successfully completed the first ever sling load exercise in the battalion.

Every Soldier knows that the ability to transport equipment and other supplies from one point to another efficiently is essential to accomplish any mission. With that being said, the use of trucks and other wheeled vehicles are not always a feasible option in some of the current combat zones like Afghanistan. This is where a unit's ability to sling-load their equipment under rotary wing airframes becomes an essential skill.

Bravo Company sent 10 Soldiers to Fort Lee, VA for the Sling Load Inspector Cer-

tification Course. This course taught them the necessary skills to not only perform sling-loads, but also to train their teammates

to do so as well. As soon as the Soldiers returned to Fort Bragg they started teaching small group classes, training a total of 112 members of Bravo to properly conduct sling-loads. Once the training time with the helicopter was set, the Bravo Red Bulls started clocking in countless hours of rehearsals to take full advantage of the rare opportunity.

On the last day of a weeklong field exercise each platoon convoyed to separate landing zones, 1st Platoon at LZ Creswell and 2nd Platoon at LZ Latham. The two LZ's, located about two and half kilometers apart, were a perfect distance for the UH-60 Blackhawk to make a lot of trips maximizing the training time.

Each platoon took turns to sling a 10k generator being trans-

ported back and forth between the two areas. Each team in the platoons got an opportunity to load the generator under the Black Hawk and also to ride in it as well. Spc. Steven Pitts said "he had sat in classes about sling-load before, but never done it. Being able to do it and ride in one was incredible!"

Excellent and well-planned training like this is a great learning experience for everyone involved including the pilots, who were new to sling-loading also. Bravo Company stepped it up and will continue to do so with more real-world and combat focused training.

More than one Soldier said very similar things to what SGT William Hayes said when he stated that "this was the best FTX I ever had. Being in class and learning how to sling load is one thing, but then actually doing a live exercise was a lot of fun."



Photos by 2nd Lt. Quintin Davis

Crew members from Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 169th Aviation Regiment navigate a UH-60 Blackhawk to transport B Co, 50th Signal BN's 10kw generator from Latham LZ to Creswell LZ, where members from another platoon re-inspected and re-rigged the equipment.



B Co. Soldiers sling load a 10kw generator onto a UH-60 Blackhawk.



RUN FOR THE LEGEND

*Story and photo by 1st Lt. Dolak, Ryan
Operations Officer, A Co. 50th ESB*

Volunteers have both supported and served in the Army by playing a vital role in the families and the lives of Soldiers. Today, America's volunteers are those who have dedicated their lives to serving in the military and serving America's people. It is important as Soldiers that we dedicate time and service to the people within our local community in order to build strong supportive relationships. 1st Lt. Adam Visbeen, a Platoon Leader in Alpha Company, 50th Signal Battalion states, "From personal experience, most Soldiers would agree that it is a humbling experience when neighbors in the community or people in the airport say "thank you for serving." In order to help sustain a relationship between the community, 1st Lt. Visbeen and some of the Soldiers who serve within his Platoon dedicated some of their time and service to the community in June.

Lieutenant Visbeen and his Platoon Sergeant, Staff Sgt. Mark Martin, along with a number of other Soldiers, offered their assistance to the Airborne and Special Operations Museum downtown Fayetteville, NC June 2, 2012. The museum held its 5th annual museum fundraiser run called the "Run for the Legend." The run route went throughout downtown Fayetteville, beginning and ending at the museum. Reflecting on the volunteer service, Specialist Thomas stated, "We sought to ensure that others have an opportunity to learn, honor, and respect those who have gone before our generation and fought for America's freedom."

Visbeen encourages Soldiers to seek different ways to volunteer when in the garrison home environment. Visbeen believes that it is vital to volunteer time outside of our duty to the community. Volunteer opportunities allow Soldiers to shed a positive light on military leaders and actions guided by a set of values. Lieutenant Visbeen told his Soldiers, "We as Soldiers of the United States Army are to set an example of servanthood and implement the Army Value of selfless service within our life not only to our country, but to our fellow men and women in the community."

The volunteer service the Soldiers provided contributed to a successful run with over 250 participants. Cathrine Hodge, the museum volunteer coordinator said, "It was a huge relief for us to have the Soldiers taking care of the water points and directing traffic. The Soldiers were professional and courteous and we will definitely call on them again when in need of volunteers!"

Following the end of the event, all volunteers received an event t-shirt and a free ride in the simulator located at the museum. The museum's next event is national Airborne day, August 18, 2012, which will commemorate the 72nd anniversary of the Army Parachute Test Platoon's first official jump. and the 10th anniversary of the museum. Alpha Company plans to seek out ways to volunteer for this event and others in the future, in order to show the 50th Signal Battalion support and dedication to the community.



"We as Soldiers of the United States Army are to set an example of servanthood and implement the Army Value of selfless service within our life not only to our country, but to our fellow men and women in the community," said 1st Lt. Adam Visbeen.



Bravo Company, 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary)
July FTX - Team Certifications

*Story by 2nd Lt. Victor Turchany
Platoon Leader, B Co, 51st ESB*

During July 23-27, Bravo Company, 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), completed a strenuous validation of each team and their equipment. Leaders and Soldiers alike worked hard to ensure that their teams were up to standard for readiness, training and maintenance, ensuring that at a moment’s notice they would be able to support the war fighter efforts.

B Co. executed flawlessly during the July Field Training Exercise, utilizing their JNNs, CPNs, and HCLOSs to certify each team. Leaders and team members came together to help each other accomplish the battalion’s goal.

The mission was difficult with long hours and little sleep. Soldiers worked hard to make deadlines and complete the mission to its fullest but all could not be done without the support of each other.

Despite many challenges presented by this FTX, the leaders and Soldiers actively engaged themselves in the tasks at hand, sacrificing sleep to make sure that their platoon, section, and teams were able to certify and provide tactical communications. OPORDs, convoy briefs, Situational Training Exercise Lanes, and team certifications were all grueling tasks. The high morale of B Co. provided a non-stop adrenaline rush for the Soldiers and leadership to push through any obstacle that stood in their way.

The in depth training that was provided during this exercise assessed the Soldiers ability to adapt and overcome all situations. Training ranged from first aid, 9-line medical evacuation,



convoy operations and mounted land navigation, all while providing tactical communications.

The response by the Swampdog team was one of adaptability and professionalism. The team cohesion in B Co. was readily apparent. Leaders were able to take a step back and watch as the Soldiers took it upon themselves to perform well above the expectations of their leaders.

This hard work and dedication to the unit is why all others need to **“Move Aside and Let the Swampdogs Through!”**



Photos by 2nd Lt. Victor Turchany

Above: Two Soldiers guard the casualty and while the third Soldier assess the casualty.
Right: Soldiers gather around a map to discuss tactical battle plans.





National Training Center Preparation



Photos by 2nd Lt. Victor Turchany

Story by 2nd Lt. Victor Turchany
Platoon Leader, B Co, 51st ESB

In August and September, Bravo Company, 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), prepared their platoons and equipment for a support mission to the National Training Center (NTC) in Ft. Irwin, CA. Leaders and Soldiers spent countless hours preparing their equipment to support a communications network to support 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division. Throughout the past few months, Bravo Company executed multiple training events that ensured their teams were prepared for the deployment.

Bravo Company put their maintenance teams to the test and made sure all their rolling stock was fully mission capable by executing ULLAC operations before heading to the Strategic Deployment Center (SDC) at Fort Lewis. At the SDC the Swampdogs executed tips and scales and went through extensive inspections. With a strong maintenance crew and the Soldiers working like an assembly line, B Co. completed out load ahead of schedule.

With a small window of allocated

time, the Swampdogs prepared all of the tri-cons, load plans, and executed a SRP for their personnel.

Soldiers worked many long days to meet deadlines and complete the preparation to its fullest, but they would not have completed without the support of each other. Despite many challenges presented by this NTC rotation, the leaders and Soldiers actively engage themselves in the task at hand and the high morale of the company allowed for well executed preparation for the upcoming mission. The response by the Swampdog team has been one of adaptability and professionalism. The team cohesion in B Co. is readily apparent. Leaders were able to take a step back and watch as the Soldiers took it upon themselves to perform well above the expectations of their leaders, thereby helping one another achieve success.

The Soldiers' hard work and dedication to the unit are why all others need to "Move Aside and Let the Swampdogs Through!"



Finding 51st Signal Battalion’s Finest

Story by 1st Lt. Joshua Wang
S3 Training Officer, HHC, 51st ESB

From Sept. 6 to Sep. 7, seven of this year’s 51st Signal Battalion’s (Expeditionary) NCO and Soldier of the Quarter winners and runners-up competed for the coveted title as the 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) NCO and Soldier of the Year. After all was said and done, 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) hailed SPC Sotler from Bravo Company as the FY12 Soldier of the year and SGT Dupuis from Alpha Company as the FY12 NCO of



Sgt. Dupuis, NCO of the Year Spc. Sotler, Soldier of the Year

features on a map, sandbag carry, chemical decontamination and employing a tactical radio.

“It was hard to see the targets with my sweat dripping down my eyes and fogged eye protection,” said one competitor. The concurrent mental and physical tasks were designed to simulate real combat in order to test their mental focus under stress.

Once Soldiers expended their 40 rounds, they ruck marched 2 miles back to the battalion area to write an essay. The essay topic was “if you were the Sergeant Major of the Army for a week, what changes would you make?”

On day two, the competitors faced a challenging land navigation course through the dense forest on Miller Hill. To pass, they needed to score a minimum of four out of five points in four hours. The

land navigation course was especially challenging due to the lack of terrain features in the dense forest. Exhausted from day one events and a four-hour land navigation course in the morning, fatigued competitors had to display their focus and mental acuity at an EST 2000 rifle marksmanship competition in the afternoon.

On the final day of competition, sharp looking competitors in Class As and Army Service Uniforms filled the battalion classroom. One by one, each Soldier and NCO exhibited their professionalism, composure and technical knowledge through a barrage of in depth questions from the unit’s ISGs and CSM.



A competitor identifies major and minor terrain features between rifle marksmanship iterations

the year.

The NCO and Soldier of the Year Competition FY12 was an especially grueling competition that pushed their physical and mental limits. Over the course of three days, these NCOs and Soldiers endured a battery of events that tested their professional, technical and tactical skills under stressful and physically demanding conditions.

The first day of competition started out with an Army Physical Fitness Test and a timed two mile ruck march out to a firing range wearing full tactical gear including Kevlar helmet, IBA, LBV, eye protection, gloves, assault pack, water source and rifle. At the range, Soldiers raced to be first in a Stress Shoot event. During the Stress Shoot, they had to transition to and from firing their assigned weapon and events that included a 100 lb log drag, evaluating a casualty, tire flip, identifying terrain



Photos by Sgt. Pamela Paine



A competitor evaluates a casualty between rifle marksmanship iterations



Charlie Company Welcomes New Commander

*Story by 1st Lt. Kristopher Conklin
Executive Officer, C Co., 51st ESB*

On June 29th, 2012 Capt. Emmet J. Gariepy relinquished command of the Charlie Company Cobras to Capt. John D. Rohn. The ceremony took place on a rare sunny and warm day with distinguished guests, community veterans, Cobra families and the Soldiers of C Co. Lt. Col David R. Lamy, the Commander of the 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), greeted the audience and spoke in length about the journey that not only Capt. Gariepy had been on for the past two years, but also those of the C Co. Soldiers.

The journey started for Capt. Gariepy and C Co. when he assumed command of the unit on June 1st, 2010. One platoon was preparing for a deployment to Qatar and Bahrain to support Overseas Contingency Operations while the remainder of the company was postured to assume the Global Response Force mission. This posed several challenges for a new Commander. He would lose 50 percent of his combat power to the CENTCOM area of responsibility while simultaneously preparing, training, and assuming Global Response Force responsibilities.

The focus, hard work, pride, and discipline of the Charlie Company officers, noncommissioned officers, and Soldiers were paramount to the success of the deployment to Qatar and Bahrain as well

as the GRF mission. The leaders of 2nd platoon brought back all of their Soldiers and the GRF mission was successfully turned over to another battalion in the Brigade. With these missions now complete, it was time for C Co. to turn its attention to change of command inventories and prepare for a new Commander.

A Change of Command inventory is a dreaded, but vital task. An Inventory can take up to 4 -6 weeks. The inventory ensures that the outgoing Commander turns over a fully mission-capable company. It gives the incoming Commander the opportunity to see all of company's equipment and the Soldiers who operate it. The incoming Commander receives his initial impression of the company during this time as well and takes notes on what can be improved and what can be sustained.

A Change of Command ceremony represents the pride, discipline and teamwork of the Army and, in particular, the unit that participates of the ceremony. The ceremony is important in developing and maintaining unit pride, building esprit de corps, and preserving tradition. In some cases, military ceremonies are the only contact and impression of the Army the public gets.

After two years of non-stop training including deploying 50 percent of the

company for half of his command, Capt. Gariepy conducted a flawless change of command with Capt. Rohn. With Capt. Rohn now at the helm of C Co., the Cobras remain poised to execute its Mission Essential Task List tasks and the duties of an Expeditionary Signal Company.



Photos by Sgt. Pamela Paine



Photos by Spc. Matthew Rich

What is the IAWF?

The Digital Rifleman on the Digital Battlefield

Story by Capt. Scott Bier

Information Systems Management, HHC, 51st ESB

Over the last six months, the term IAWF is part of everyday conversation within the 51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary). What is the Information Assurance Work Force? The IAWF is the 51st Signal Battalion’s first line of defense in Cyber-warfare. The battalion has employed a demanding training approach to aide in the Nation’s defense against Global Network cyber attacks. The Mercury approach requires Soldiers to take extensive online training, attend a 40-hour week classroom instruction, self-study, and finally take and pass the certification exam. According to CompTIA, Security+ Certifications designates knowledgeable professionals in the field of security. This certification is an international, vendor-neutral certification that demonstrates competency in network security, compliance and operational security, threats and vulnerabilities to the network, application, data and host security,

access control and identify management, and cryptography.” As seen by the wide range of technical terms and extensive array network knowledge required, this certification is difficult for Soldiers to obtain. However, this training allows Soldiers to protect, monitor, and maintain the Army’s information and communications systems.

Each Signal Soldier regardless of their Military Occupational Specialty receives broad security training in order to identify and mitigate threats to US Army information systems and data. Soldiers begin this training as part of their Advanced Individual Training as each Soldier receives instruction on network and desktop operations as well as network security. As they move to their first unit, they continue their professional quest for knowledge by taking online classes using the Army Skill Port Training System. The unit’s chain of command select the best and most techni-

cal Soldiers to serve as part of the IAWF. Once the Soldiers are part of the IAWF and complete the online training requirement, they progress to the Ft Gordon IA website studying Information Assurance Security Officer (IASO) fundamentals that further refine their technological security skills.

Upon completion of all these requirements, Soldiers attend the 40-hour instructor lead training provided by a Mobile Training Team out of Fort Gordon to prepare for the certification exam. This class requires students to have a base knowledge of the material prior to attending. 51st Signal Battalion has sent over 80 Soldiers through the MTT increasing the battalion’s ability to protect the Army’s network.

Soldiers from A/51st Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) attended Security+ MTT and JBLM as part of their focus on individual Soldier training program.



Upon completion of the class, Soldiers receive a “voucher” that is used to take the certification exam. Joint Base Lewis McChord has two separate testing facilities that Soldiers can schedule and take their exam within the next year. The current IAWF requirement requires four Soldiers per team to achieve their certification in Security Plus as well as either Cisco Certified Network Associate or Windows 7 Certification. To assist Soldiers in the ability to gain more knowledge, the Team Mercury is developing a network lab in which Soldiers can access online training on and off duty to increase their technical Knowledge. This classroom, once complete will house 16 computers and historical memorabilia dating back to the Korean War symbolizing the constant change in technology and ever changing mission of the 51st Signal Battalion.

As Soldiers complete their S+ training and certification, they transition into taking MOS specific computing environment training. The modules for both certifications are also on the

Army Skill Port site. The training is broken down between Microsoft Windows 7 for 25B's and 25U's and the Cisco Certified Network Associate for the 25 E/F/N/Q/S/ and W's. When both areas of the train-

systems, and information support systems. Soldiers on these systems can not only configure, manage, and provide communications on their assigned assemblage, but can also monitor, identify, and defend their portion of the digital battlefield, which contains both internal and external threats.

The responsibilities of the IAWF Soldiers are extensive requiring network users to account for their actions on DoD systems by order of the Commander on the tactical network, and by the policies from the Network Enterprise Center's on the Garrison network. This includes, limiting downloading software, access to specific folders and web sites, restricting users' abilities to change settings, and overall access to the network. This sounds easy however, those at the front line dealing with users as they demand access to audio and video sites that threaten the health of the network becomes

a tough and demanding challenge. If not done appropriately, unmitigated threats can lead to loss of information dominance on the “digital battlefield” that can result in the loss of life.

Very soon, IAWf Soldiers will become the “digital rifleman” on the “digital battlefield” with assemblages becoming the terrain and wires becoming avenues of approach. Information assurance systems and applications are already “digital weapon systems” that have the ability to inflict more damage than conventional kinetic weapons systems. In the future, it will fall to the IAWf Soldiers to find, fix, and destroy threats to Army information systems, data, and the Warfighter.



Spc. Rich runs wires as part of the installation of 15 computers into the 51st Signal Battalion new computer lab.

ing are completed, the Soldier is then authorized by United States Department of Defense Directive 8570.1 to have privileged level access on applications, information



Reintegration and Reset

*Story and photos by Capt. Jonathan Perez
Commander, A Co., 51st ESB*

After spending some quality time with family and friends locally and abroad the Apaches return to work and begin the process of inducting equipment into reset as well as re-training on individual Soldier skills to include weapon qualifications and Information Assurance certifications.

The first event on the agenda was to uncase the Company's guidon and reintegrate the Apaches who represented the Company here at home-station while the forward element conducted its war-time mission. 34 Apaches were reunited with their peers thus increasing the size of the tribe and morale of what was once a split Company. Upon completion of reunification the Apaches shifted their focus on examining their equipment closely to ensure its functionality or turning over certain items to subject matter experts who can provide assistance. The Company leaders managed equipment spread in the four winds; items inducted into the Leave-Behind-Equipment program, laterally transferred equipment to HHC, in theater items still in transit via sea transport, and WIN-T assemblages undergoing reset with multiple organizations. There is no doubt the Apaches are busy however, they continue to accomplish the mission and maintain a high level of morale throughout the week.

After being away for a year you can predict that requirements will change but, the end-state continues to be focused on educating and training our Soldiers for the future. The Information Assurance Work Force has become one of those requirements. Soldiers continue to spend endless nights and weekends increasing their knowledge on their specific MOS for developmental purposes as well as receiving higher level certifications that assist with career progression. The Apaches were given the opportunity to receive instruction from a MTT for an entire week preparing them to attain their Security Plus certification which proved to be an arduous task.

Lastly and long overdue, on the afternoon of 17 August, the Apaches finally executed their End of Tour Awards ceremony. These awards highlight the responsibility and accomplishments of each individual for the duration of the deployment. Thirteen Leaders were awarded the Bronze Star and 97 Soldiers were awarded the Army Commendation and Achievement Medals.

Despite having a full schedule the Apaches take in the great weather the state of Washington has to offer this time of year. They continue to participate in water activities, retreats, hiking, golf or anything that gets them outdoors during weekends and down-time. Ensuring a healthy balance of personal activities is a necessary ingredient to a Soldiers well being during high OPTEMPO periods. Death-Before-Dishonor!



Ninety-seven Soldiers, assigned to A Co., 51st ESB, receive an ARCOM as their End Of Deployment award.



Thirteen Leaders, assigned to A Co., 51st ESB, are awarded the Bronze Star, their End Of Deployment Award.



Alpha Co. Soldiers listen to Lt. Col. Lamy during their End Of Tour Awards Presentation.



Soldiers of 51st Signal Battalion strike hard during "Operation SNAKEBITE"

Story and photo by Sgt. Angela Lamb
C Co, 51st ESB

The morning of August 20, 2012, the Soldiers of Charlie Company, 51st Signal Battalion, 35th Signal Brigade, received their convoy brief and departed to training area 7S on Joint Base Lewis McChord to begin a week long Field Training Exercise dubbed "Operation SNAKEBITE".

The exercise would allow the "Cobra" Soldiers to practice crew drill training certifications as well as Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills.

In the weeks leading up to the FTX, the Soldiers had gone through New Equipment Training for their WIN-T systems and had conducted various team certification exercises in the unit area. Operation SNAKEBITE was the company's opportunity to deploy its Soldiers and signal assemblages to a field environment and put their training to work. During the operation, each platoon and section had a specific mission in order to certify their systems. Additionally, the Soldiers practiced their ability to shoot, move, communicate, and survive, by conducting various WTBD.

For the certification phase of the exercise the Command Post Node teams moved from one location to another in order to practice all of the skills required to employ their systems; vehicle movement, site selection, installation, operation, and continuous maintenance. The Single Shelter Switch sections from first and second platoons provided 24 hour support for the Company Command Post. They successfully practiced the techniques of bringing down one system and bringing up another without interruption to the network, to ensure that the commander was able to maintain mission

command at all times. Each signal team also spent several hours cross-training on every facet of their systems in order to prepare for any personnel or equipment contingency that could ever arise.

Every Soldier in the company participated in the operation, including the company maintenance section, the company food service Soldiers, and the company Network Operations section. These Soldiers helped to ensure that the Charlie Cobras and their equipment were prepared for continuous operations.

When the Soldiers were not operating their signal systems, they spent time practicing their WTBDs. They were put through their paces reacting to contact, practicing land navigation, and conducting security at their signal sites. They also conducted training at night, including driving with their Night Vision Devices; for many Soldiers, this was their first time doing so. The training was led by the company master drivers and took place on a route approximately three miles long, weaving through the dense training area of JBLM.

Friday morning came quickly and the Cobra's packed their gear and moved back to main post to begin recovery. By

week's end each team and every Soldier successfully completed their certifications, and was better prepared to survive on the battlefield. The company's top NCO, First Sergeant Kirk Shriver, summed it up perfectly, "This is where we make our money. Every hour spent training (on these skills), is one less second of indecision in combat". "Always Constant"



518th Signal Company (TIN) Puts Boots on Ground

*Story and photos by Capt. Ryan C. Boileau
Commander, 518th TIN Co., 63rd ESB*

On the Army's 237th birthday – 14 June 2012 – at Fort Gordon, 121 members of the 518th Signal Company (Tactical Installation and Networking) marched into Gymnasium 3 to the rousing applause of its extended Family – servicemembers, spouses, and relatives from within the 35th Signal Brigade. The formation represented the main body of the company, which would depart that day to meet up with its advance party, already in theater preparing the way for the transition with 230th SC (TIN) of the Tennessee National Guard. The 518th is one of two Active Army TIN companies and one of four TIN companies within the entire US Army. The others are the 490th TIN, US Army Reserve, and the 16th TIN, US Army, 11th Signal Brigade out of Fort Hood, Tx. The 518th TIN will be relieved by the 16th TIN, marking the first time one company has interacted with two other TINs. During the departure, members of the 71st American Legion Post from North Augusta, South Carolina provided hand-made quilts to each Soldier as they boarded the buses. Members of the Freedom Riders served as escorts from the gym to the airport. For the next 24 hours, the Raiders travelled east, ultimately arriving at Ali Al Salem airbase in Kuwait, where they remained for 3 days.

Prior to departing Kuwait, the company held one final formation to award the 35th



Capt. Ryan Boileau stands in front of his company after casing the colors. The 518th SC (TIN) deployed to Afghanistan on a 9 month tour in support of Operation Enduring Freedom

Signal Brigade combat patch to each Soldier. By regulation, there is no time in theater requirement for the Shoulder Sleeve Insignia – Former Wartime Service (SSI-FWTS), and this proved to be the last opportunity to present it to all Soldiers of the 518th in a single setting. Following the ceremony, the 518th dispersed from Kuwait in four-waves, portions of the company flew to Qatar to assume a critical helpdesk and drive team mission with the 25th Signal Battalion's HHD; to Kabul to

the Raiders immediately began contributing to the organization, providing a seamless transition with their counterparts in the 230th. Fourteen days later, members of the 518th signed for over 60 million dollars worth of equipment and assumed responsibility of five sites in addition to the company headquarters footprint – Camp Nathan Smith, Camp Stone, Forward Operating Base Lagman, FOB Farah, and FOB Pasab.

The Soldiers of 518th TIN prepared rigorously for their wartime mission. Knowing they would be dispersed across the entire theater of operations, the leadership sought to instill in each the ability to accomplish any mission, anywhere – simply to "Make it Happen," as the Raider motto states. For the Soldiers remain-

augment the 319th Signal Company; to Bagram to augment the 580th Signal Company; and to Kandahar to replace the 230th TIN and to augment the 550th Signal Company. Upon arrival,



1SG King Holmes shares the meaning of the combat patch with the Soldiers of the 518th.



Soldiers receive a Safety briefing shortly after arrival on Kandahar from 1st Sgt. Holmes and Capt. Boileau

Deploys from pg. 28

ing on Kandahar itself, this included acclimating to the very different climate which exists here. After recovering from the time difference, the company began with physical fitness each morning to get them into the mindset of maintaining a physical edge. This also gave leaders

the opportunity to perform a morning sensitive items check, ensuring all Soldiers had their accountable items. Nearly half the Soldiers of 518th on Kandahar itself became attached to the 550th Signal Company, a sister company within the 25th Signal Battalion operating on Kanda-

har. These Soldiers backfilled shortages in the 550th, working in Outside Plant, helpdesk, and company orderly room positions.

Immediately after assuming mission command, the 25th Signal Battalion notified 518th's command team of an impending Operational Environment change. The 518th would lose control of two sites, FOB Farah and Stone, and assume responsibility for the Technical Control Facilities on Kandahar. Simultaneous to signing the property books for the current mission set, the company headquarters began planning the necessary steps to ensure a seamless transition of the Kandahar mission.

On 21 July 2012, the

518th assumed mission command of the Kandahar TCFs and of 53 personnel organic to the 550th Signal Company. At the time, these mission critical sites were under dual hazardous conditions of UPS and generator faults. Over the next 39 days, members of the 518th, along with the 550th personnel attached to 518th on Kandahar, worked tirelessly to remediate the problems. On 22 August 2012, the TCF team conducted a controlled shutdown of TCF2 and brought the UPS system back online, ensuring the site had continuous backup power available. On 29 August 2012, technicians completed the TCF's connection to the prime power grid, resolving the last HAZCON situation.

A Military of One

*Story and photos by 2nd Lt. Joshua Anderson
Platoon Leader, C Co., 63rd ESB*

On June 6 at 10:00pm EST, the men and women of Charlie Company 2nd Platoon began a 36 hour mission that tested the effectiveness of the interoperability of the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps.

The Joint Forcible Entry Exercise or Joint Operations Airborne Exercise mission was underway. The sky was flooded with parachutes deploying not only soldiers, but millions of dollars worth of equipment

that would strike fear into the hearts of our enemies. If the troops that were knocking down doors and clearing rooms were considered the eyes and force of the Army, then the communication equipment provided by 2nd Platoon provided ears and direction to ensure stability and effectiveness.

Captain Hoffman, C Co Commander oversaw much of the initial drop. As a former Platoon Leader in a field artillery unit, much of the action at JOAX were familiar to him as he related to the Battle Captain the specific rounds being shot at the site.

The rest of the Company had a different yet equally important mission, to support the communication for the Brigade Field Training Exercise. They had arrived at Fort Bragg a few days previous and verified they had mission ready equipment. From 1-9 June, C Company successfully accomplished all mission parameters and demonstrated why we are the Rock of the 63rd ESB.

At missions end, the departments



of the military parachuted, flew, sustained and stormed at their various locations around the country in a joint effort to demonstrate that despite wearing a different uniform, we all salute the same flag. Overall the JOAX was a success allowing field support to the 10TH Mountain Division, by supporting seven direct lines and more than 25 additional subscribers from the company's CPN capabilities. CHARLIE COMPANY ROCK HARD ROCK STEADY.



Stian Berg Larsen



Photos by Spc. Gwendolynn Peterson

Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Quarter Competition

*Story by Spc. Peter Kingsnorth
BN CSM Driver, HHC, 63rd ESB*

The 4th Quarter, FY12, 35th Signal Brigade Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Quarter Competition was held over three days during August 2012. Junior enlisted Soldiers and NCOs from grades E-5 through E-7 competed, representing the 63rd and 67th Expeditionary Signal Battalions from Fort Gordon, 50th ESB from Fort Bragg, 51st ESB from Fort Lewis, and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 35th Signal Brigade.

On 25 August, the Soldiers fired the M4/M16 rifle at the EST 2000 indoor range. The standard rifle qualification consisted of two phases, zeroing, and qualification, where the Soldiers attempted 40 shots on target from three different firing positions.

The following day was the most grueling for all concerned. There were three key tasks on which all Soldiers were graded. The Army Physical Fitness Test took place first thing in the morning, the results from which were converted to a scale, with a maximum 50 points scored for a perfect 300 APFT score.

The Land Navigation task commenced at 1000 hrs, with a total of five points to navigate to, and one hour total time permitted to achieve up to a perfect 50 score. Each additional minute taken to complete the course took one point from the

total score. The location of the five points were programmed into a DAGR, requiring Soldiers to be proficient with the DAGR. After lunch all Soldiers were required to take an exam to gauge their level of understanding on a range of Army topics. Subsequently, an essay question was answered which asked for the Soldiers' personal opinion on the topic concerning the improvement of the quality of life in the Army.

The final task for many is considered to be the most mentally arduous and stressful. On August 27th, dressed in Class A uniform or Dress Blues, Soldiers were questioned extensively over the course of

20 minutes in several different areas.

Following the recitation of the Soldiers Creed or the Creed of the Noncommissioned Officer to the Board members, Command Sgt. Maj. Frye (67th Signal BN), the President of the Board, completed a uniform inspection and appraisal of marching, and facing movements. He then asked questions relating to current events both domestic and international.

The other four voting board members asked two to three questions per topic, out of a total of 28 questions on subjects ranging from First Aid to Army History. At times further questions were asked to measure the individual's depth of knowledge





Competition from pg. 30

on a subject. More points were available to score in this phase than any other, therefore a good board showing was key! In the end, there could be only two winners: Sgt. Hendricks, BDE NCO of the Quarter, said "The competition affords a challenge that I encourage all Soldiers

and NCOs to pursue – just volunteering for a Soldier of the Month Board reflects well on you professionally, and finding success can open up opportunities for promotion, special assignments, and Green to Gold." Spc. Christopher Puthoff, BDE Soldier of the Quarter, said "I enjoyed taking part as I appreciated the chance to represent my Battalion, and to experience camaraderie and competition between fellow soldiers from across the Brigade."

63rd ESB Headquarters and Headquarters Company Organizational Day

Story and photo by Capt. James Martin, Commander, HHC, 63rd ESB

Summer is in full swing, but the Georgia sun was not enough to keep the Soldiers and families of HHC, 63rd Signal Battalion inside. HHC hosted its company Org Day for the Soldiers and their families in celebration of the Fourth of July holiday on 5 July, 2012.

The Soldiers and families enjoyed a multitude of food and participated in a range of activities for adults and children. Amid the clatter from the dominoes tournament, 1st Sgt. Mojica could be seen working the grill for a line of hungry Soldiers and family members. Homemade chili bubbled in crocks and pots from a table that hosted the chili cooking contest.

The three legged race and sack race provided great fun for the kids as they skipped and hopped their way across the finish line. At the same time families tossed around Frisbees and enjoyed some leisurely fun in the sun. Toddlers chased a soccer ball back and forth under the watchful eye of their parents. For those looking to escape the heat, Soldiers and Family members participated in the Spades Tournament and Domino Tournament under the shade of the pavilion. There were plenty of ice cold drinks and many different deserts on hand



HHC Volunteers helping raise funds to support FRG Events.

to refresh everyone.

Over the chatter from the pavilion, the clang of a "ringer" could be heard as the Soldiers and families put their accuracy to the test in a horseshoe tournament. With such a wide range of activities there was something for everyone who wished to par-

ticipate. The afternoon wore on and as the festivities slowed families said their farewells before one by one departing. Thank you to all the friends, family members, and Soldiers who attended and all those that worked to make the event a success.



Lineman's International Skills Competition

*Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Jackson, Kimberly
HHC, C CO 63d ESB*

The 35th Signal Brigade was tasked with the opportunity to send 10 Soldiers throughout the BDE, MOS 25L (Cable System Installers Maintainer) to the Lineman International Skills Competition on 4 June 2012 in Kingston, Canada.

Day one began with a meet and greet with the Canadian Squadron Unit and the 5- man team from the United Kingdom. The Soldiers went through briefings about other country lineman structures and history. Staff Sgt. Jennings, Frederick had the privilege to brief the international competitors on a few jobs the "cable dawgs" assigned to 35th Signal Brigade had accomplished throughout the years. The Soldiers also had a tour around the Canadian Forces Base and a walk through of some events in the competition. The next three days were filled with training: tower climbing, gaffing up poles, dummy rescues from a tower, learning rope tying and knots, and Pfc. Elve, Marvin had the privilege to climb a 70 foot pole using "chicken pegs." The most challenging technique for just about every Soldier was gaffing the poles and the tower climb (mostly due to inexperience).

The Canadian instructors had the Soldiers gaffing for three

days to establish familiarization and confidence in their equipment. Just about every Soldier overcame their fears and were astonished by the new techniques they learned while gaffing the poles (something they rarely have an opportunity to do). Besides the Soldiers challenging days of training with the Canadian Army, the Soldiers enjoyed dinners and socializing with the other foreign soldiers in attendance. All the teams had the opportunity to visit the Royal Canadian Mint, which produces



coins and medals, and the Canadian War Museum. The main training event began on 8 June 2012; with the blowing of a horn at 0800 hours the competition began. 35th Signal Brigade's two, 4-man teams consisted of Sgt. Maurice Washington, Sgt. Monica Del Rio, Pfc. Zeeshn Kahn, and Pfc. Marvin Elve, (Team 1) and Sgt. Jose Maldonado, Spc. Chorlesarian Mesik, Spc. Corey Lyttleton, and Spc. Mantis Williams-Arnold, (Team 2). Some of the events included, a 100 foot tower climb, a 200 meter manhole-to-manhole 1,000 pair cable pull, 70 foot pole climb, gaffing poles while playing dodge ball on the top, knot tying (even blind folded), pulling two 60 pound bags up to the top of a 50 foot pole, 100 meter sprint carrying a reel of field wire, routing CATV through a small pipe, and securing a 100 pair cable aerial. In the end, the Soldiers from 35th Signal Brigade trained and competed hard. Team 2 placed 4th out of and Team 1 placed 5th. The overall experience provided every Soldier with an appreciation on how other countries run, install and maintain their equipment and execute their mission (camaraderie, knowledge and new techniques were gained by all)



AFRICOM Views Static Displays at 63rd ESB

Story by Maj. Heinz Eder
Operations Officer, HHC, 63rd ESB



Photos by Sgt. Dianne M. Carter

A delegation of nine senior communication officers from seven African countries and one regional organization visited the 35th Signal Brigade Aug. 14, 2012 at Fort Gordon, Ga.

The visit was part of an U.S. Africa Command event hosted by the Fort Gordon Signal Center of Excellence to foster friendship and familiarize

the Economic Community of Central African States. The event was part of a Military-to-Military program coordinated by AFRICOM to assist African militaries in enhancing the professionalism of their service members by familiarizing them with U.S. military values, standards and other relevant concepts with personal, face-to-face contacts, said John

to extend the land War Net to operational forces, at all echelons, to support Unified Land Operations,” said Col. Thomas A Pugh, Commander of the 35th Signal Brigade, as he gave the delegates a command brief explaining how this type of signal brigade is organized and operates.

After the brief the delegates were shown a static display that highlighted two of the 63rd Signal Battalion (Expeditionary) signal equipment, the AN/TTC-56 Single Shelter Switch and the AN/TSC-93E Satellite Communications Terminal display. They were also briefed by each team

on the installation, operation and maintenance of each piece of equipment.

“We very rarely get visits such as this,” said Lt. Col. Keith A. Garwold, commander of 63rd ESB, “Soldiers like events that are out of the ordinary. They are always proud to display their equipment and explain their roles in its operation and upkeep. This was a stellar opportunity for young Soldiers to brief allied leaders through an interpreter-in today’s contemporary operating environment; communication with non-English speaking coalition members has more bearing than ever on mission success.”



African partner nation armies on how the United States Army Signal Corps trains their Soldiers and operates their equipment.

The Delegates represented the countries of Benin, Cameroon, Lesotho, Mauritania, Republic of Congo, Sao Tome and Principe, South Sudan and

Doyle, J69 Program Manager, Coalition Division, US Africa Command. The United States benefits from enhanced military professionalism, since this in turn strengthens democratic values and stability.

“The brigade’s overall mission is to deploy and conduct network operations





Sustaining the Line in Afghanistan

Story and photos by Major Cedric L. Felton, Sr.

J6 for Joint Sustainment Command – Afghanistan, 518th TIN, 63rd ESB



On May 19, 2012, Major Cedric L. Felton, Sr., began his journey back to combat. He previously deployed to Mosul, Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2005 and 2006 with the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team out of Alaska.

This current journey would land Maj. Felton in Afghanistan for up to nine months

with the 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) out of Fort Knox, KY.

Maj. Felton completed training in preparation for onward movement on May 25, 2012. He then went on leave for two weeks prior to reporting back to Fort Benning, Georgia, for departure to Afghanistan.

Asked if this deployment felt any different, Felton commented, "Definitely this deployment has a totally different feeling. On my last deployment, I trained with my team for over a year, but on this deployment, I've only gotten to observe my unit for two weeks.

In 2005, my family was over 4,000 miles away from home, but now they are less than 200 miles away. This really puts me at ease knowing that they are close to home while I am deployed. My kids were

just getting started with school and now I have two preparing for high school graduation next spring.

Finally, having my dad with me on my last day at Fort Benning instead of my wife and kids was definitely different. Having the wife and kids there made the situation sad, but having dad there made it a little comical, as I observed him notice the changes on Fort Benning and the way we currently processed for combat operations."

Maj. Felton serves as the J6 for Joint Sustainment Command – Afghanistan (JSC-A), where he is responsible for joint command, control, communications and computers (C4)/cyber requirements, operations, capabilities and integration. He is the principle advisor to the Commanding General of JSC-A on all concerns

related to communications. battlefield support facilitates the force commander's ability to generate combat power at the decisive time and place.

Maj. Felton stated, "This is a totally different fight. I'm no longer on the ground with the Infantry Soldiers and watching the battle first hand. Now I'm several levels up watching sustainment operations; from getting equipment and Soldiers around the battlefield to managing food contracts. This is a totally different fight. Before I spent a lot of time prepping the fighters on the ground but now I am training, teaching, coaching, and resourcing the communication teams throughout the command."

Maj. Cedric L. Felton, Sr. is a 1992 graduate of Macon County High School and a graduate of Tuskegee University where he received his commission into the U.S. Army as a Communication's Officer. His military assignments include: Fort Gordon, Georgia, Fort Wainwright, Alaska, and Minneapolis, Minnesota, where he served as the Executive Officer for Minneapolis Recruiting Battalion. He is currently assigned to the 35th Signal Brigade located at Fort Gordon, Georgia. He is married to the former Angela R. Watkins of Henderson, Ga., and they have four children: Rakeem, Cedrena, Cedric, Jr., and Kiara.

In closing Maj. Felton stated that he would like to wish his mom and dad a Happy Birthday on September 25th and 21st respectively. He would also like to offer his sincere condolences to the Haslem family. Their



Afghanistan view





67th ESB Welcomes New Commander

*Story and photos by Sgt. Dianne M. Carter
Public Affairs NCOIC, 35th Signal Brigade*

The 67th Signal Battalion (Expeditionary), 35th Signal Brigade held a Change of Command Ceremony Sept. 14, 2012 at Barton Field.

The ceremony was to welcome in the new incoming battalion commander, Lt. Col. Calondra L. Fortson, and to say farewell to the outgoing commander, Lt. Col. Daniel F. Kuntz.

“Today, the 67th Signal Battalion stands ready to add another line to its extremely impressive lineage,” said Col. Thomas A. Pugh, brigade commander, 35th Signal Brigade. “It will do so with Lt. Col. Fortson.”

During this time honored ceremony, Col. Thomas A. Pugh, spoke to the audience about the type of leader Lt. Col. Kuntz was during his 2 years in command of 67th ESB.

“Under the leadership of Dan Kuntz, the last two years have seen the battalion rise to even greater heights,” said Pugh. “Kuntz drilled and exercised the battalion to technical and tactical excellence, setting the example for the Brigade in Soldiers skills and collective unit level training and certification.”

Kuntz took his place at the podium and addressed the audience and his troops one last time as the commander.

“The Soldiers of the Lightning force have accomplished a great deal in the past two years and I am extremely proud to say that I was their commander,” said Kuntz. “These Soldiers selflessly serve our country with honor and pride in everything they do.”

“You worry about who is going to take over your battalion, will they be able to build on what you have done, will they be

able to take the unit to the next level, and will they care as much about the unit as you do?” said Kuntz. “When I found out that Lt. Col. Calondra Fortson was taking over for me all of those concerns disappeared.”

After Kuntz relinquished his command to Fortson, she took her place at the podium and addressed her troops for the first time.

“To the most important people here today, the men and women of 67th ESB, you look outstanding,” said Fortson. “I pledge to you that my efforts will be second to none. Removing what mission obstacles I can and help develop you into the best Soldiers you can become.”





OPERATION LIGHTNING DISTANCE

*Story by Staff Sgt. Christopher Kendall
BN SATCOM OPS NCO, HHC, 67th ESB*

On May 30th, 2012 the Soldiers of the 67th Expeditionary Signal Battalion began Operation Lightning Distance, an exercise that would validate each platoon of the Battalion on installing a communications network. The Lightning Force was called upon to leave the comforts of their homes and the motorpool to spend a

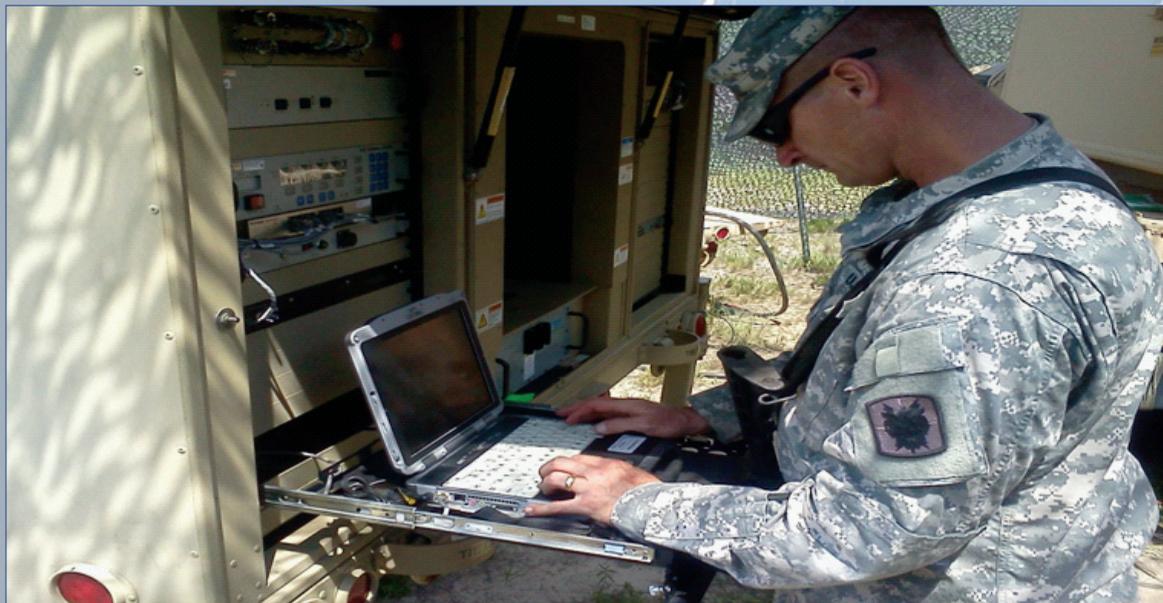
week and a half living on the training areas of Fort Gordon. They left behind such conveniences as showers, beds, and home cooked meals to live in tents, sleep on cots, and eat MREs and meals made by the Battalion's cooks.

As each platoon was validated by the Battalion S3, the Soldiers had opportunities to practice key tasks ranging from performing maintenance on their communications equipment, vehicles, and individual weapons to completing Army Warrior Tasks and Drills. Soldiers set up and operated an entry control point or ECP. In addition, each Company operations cell was able to refine their reporting procedures to the Battalion headquarters, which in turn reported to the Brigade headquarters. Most importantly, the Soldiers of the Lightning Force were able to get key experience installing, operating, and maintaining their main signal assemblages. They were required to complete troubleshooting procedures to install communication links between terminals in their platoon. The Battalion S3 Network Operations section was also able to gain important training and experience on monitoring the Battalion's network using tools such as SNMPc and



Sgt. Durand, C Co., 67th ESB, teaches first aid to his CPN Section. Spc. Stephens portrays the Solarwinds casualty.

As the exercise's ENDEX date of June 8th drew closer, Soldiers eagerly anticipated returning to their families and their showers. After performing a successful operation and putting in eight days of hard work in the Georgia heat and humidity, the break provided by the weekend was well deserved by all in the Battalion.



Staff Sgt. Poplawski, C Co., 67th ESB, verifies that services are being provided.

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Amy Simms

The Recovery Process

Story and photos by Spc. Kennedy F. Rice II
Transmission System Operator/Maintainer A Co. 67th ESB

“Don’t quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life as a champion.”
-Muhammad Ali

Monday, June 11th, 2012. The Alpha Company Gators had returned from the field not even three days prior after participating in a brigade wide field training exercise. The weekend, while short, offered much needed rest and recuperation time for the soldiers as they prepared to tackle the recovery process that follows every field excursion. What traditionally would have been one of the easiest, through-the-motions work weeks turned into one of the longest weeks in recent memory.

Wash racks and inventories; sweeping, scrubbing and layouts. Inspection upon inspection on top of more inspections filled the week. Morale was wavering and frustration was high. Many soldiers were tasked out to support the Force Protection exercise, leaving many teams short on manpower. Couple this with getting released at 1900 on a near-daily basis and a deadline to have Security+ Skillports done by the end of the week and it would be plain to see why one might want to forgo any sense of effort and cease to even try. However, through the unusually large amount of tasks and the abnormally short amount of time; through all of the late nights and exasperated breaths; something extraordinary happened...

1972 Olympic gold medalist Frank Shooter once said, “A good athlete always mentally replays a competition over and over, even in victory, to see what might be done to improve the performance next time.” This holds true to military personnel at all times, but particularly in times like these. Ask any Soldier, NCO, Warrant or Commissioned Officer involved with this exercise on any level if they learned anything and you would be hard-pressed to find

anybody who would reply to the negative. Whether it is in reference to technical skills or associated with leadership or soldiering, everybody took something away from this exercise that will be used to complete the mission more effectively in the future. In relation to the recovery process, Alpha Company, as a whole, acquired effective methods to complete a vast amount of work in a short amount of time. They learned what tools and methods worked and how to be proficient in using them to their absolute fullest potential.

Through the trials, frustrations and extremely high recovery goals, the Alpha Gators were able to overcome all odds and complete every single task. Vehicles had to be washed, many more than once; most, at some point, by hand. TA-50 had to be cleaned, collected, laid out and inspected. Shelters swept, and tricon containers organized to standard. Weapons recovered and Skillport classes completed. All were

time consuming tasks that led to a few late nights for many of the Soldiers. Despite it all, every task saw completion and every Soldier was instrumental in some way to the success of the recovery mission.

There is no better time to be an Alpha Company Gator. Through all of the challenges and difficulties, the unit grew stronger, closer and more efficient. The Gators learned to adapt and overcome adverse situations coupled with stress. They overcame a lack of sleep, manpower and resources. They learned to be inquisitive and to listen to those with experience. Throughout this recovery process, which in reality was an exercise in itself, it was clear that there was no task that Alpha 67th could not accomplish. The motto rings true now, more than ever: “Gators lead the way!”

“Accept the challenges so that you can feel the exhilaration of victory.”
-General George S. Patton



Spc. Nieves repairs a morror on a Humvee



Fort Gordon's Iron Unit Competition

Story by Staff Sgt. Christopher Kendall
BN SATCOM OPS NCO, HHC, 67th ESB

Competition is in the hearts of many Soldiers in today's Army. It is what drives us to win boards, outscore our battle buddies in the Army Physical Fitness Test, and to shoot better on the rifle range. Competition was definitely alive in the hearts of the 67th Expeditionary Signal Battalion's Iron Unit Competition team.

On September 12th, 2012, the Lightning Force demonstrated their competitive drive as they went head to head and defeated the other units on Fort Gordon in the annual BOSS Iron Unit Competition. As the winning team, they won \$700 in MWR funds for their unit and the Iron Unit Trophy that will proudly be displayed in the battalion headquarters until next year's competition.

The team, consisting of 14 of the most athletic and knowledgeable Soldiers from the 67th's ranks, began a rigorous training program led by Capt. David Patton and Staff Sgt. Christopher Kendall on August 14th in preparation for the event. The Iron Unit Competition was one of the most physically challenging experiences the Soldiers have ever faced. The event consisted of 7 strength-oriented events spread around the two-mile loop of Barton Field including a tire flip, burpees, kettle bell presses, and air squats, all followed by a 3 mile sprint to the finish line.

The event not only challenged the Soldiers physically, but mentally as well. Three of the team members competed in the knowledge portion of the contest on September 11th, which not

only determined the starting order of the physical competition, but will also deduct time from the overall score for each question answered correctly. The team's success was greatly helped by the performance on this test, as the knowledge team finished third overall on the test.

The competition was fierce. The team had completed their training. In the words of the 67th ESB Command Sergeant Major Andy Frye, "Failure is not an option." The 67th ESB Iron Unit Team proved they were ready to bring the championship trophy to its rightful home in the Lightning Force Headquarters.



Photo by Sgt. Dianne M. Carter



Photo by Staff Sgt. Christopher Kendall

Capt. Cayia, 2lt. Lias, 2lt. Damm, 2lt. Wright, and Spc. Tyrrell prepare to flip a tire during the Iron Unit Competition.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Christopher Kendall

Pfc. Martinez assigned to C Co., 67th ESB, performs "knees-to-elbows" as the rest of the team cheers him on.



Photo by Sgt. Dianne M. Carter



Bulldawgs take to the field

Story and photos by Pfc. Donald Sanders

25Q, Transmission System Operator/Maintainer B Co., 67th ESB

FORT GORDON -- During the week of 4 June 2012, Soldiers for Bravo Company, 67th ESB, practiced validating their signal equipment to support other Units. The next week, Soldiers put that practice to the test, setting up an actual network.

Bulldog Soldiers began their work for Operation Lightning Distance with a refresher on their equipment setup and experience in the field environment. The first few days were spent putting up the equipment and troubleshooting to get the shots in. Once the equipment was verified the Platoons were broken up into their teams and asked to move out to remote sites to test their line of site shots. Both platoons spent more than a day on the exercise, dealing with weather difficulties and fixing their equipment.

Later, the teams moved back to their different HQs. A stable network was established in a matter of hours, and Soldiers were able to cross train on other equipment as well as train on warrior skills.

Soldiers spent time learning Warrior tasks in a classroom setting before going outside to practice.

Soldiers worked on skills involving reacting to indirect fire, convoy operations, and direct fire. The skills are important to practice because we are all Soldiers first. The basic Soldiering skills are important and need to be trained just like their military occupational specialty (MOS).

The exercise concluded and the unit returned to the motorpool to start recovery operations. "The exercise was a great experience," said one Soldier, "I always like working with the equipment." These exercises are important because it gives Soldiers an opportunity to train on the equipment in a safe environment.



Spc. Baggett works on his CPN stack. (Below) Sgt. Coleman does some roadside teaching about tactical environment training. Spc. Henry grounds his HCLOS shelter.





67TH EXPEDITIONARY SIGNAL BATTALION HABITAT FOR HUMANITY VOLUNTEER WORK

*Story and photos by 1st. Sgt. Gary Smith
First Sergeant, A Co., 67th ESB*

The Alpha Company, 67th ESB Gators have had a long standing relationship with the CSRA chapter of the Habitat for Humanity. Working with the local Habitat for Humanity Volunteer Coordinator, Mr. Bill Waters, work teams have been sent out to assist in the home building process, whenever and wherever they are needed. The size and scope of many of these projects have recently seen the need for an increased work force, and Alpha Company extended an invitation to all Lightning Force companies to come out and lend a helping hand. Since that day, the build projects have been supported by Soldiers from throughout the Lightning Battalion. From framing walls, hanging floor joists, and constructing roof rafters, Lightning Force Soldiers have come to realize that they need no degree in engineering to help the cause, just a desire to better the CSRA community and a taste for dirty and sweaty work. The reward for their hard work is the feeling that each Soldier has contributed immensely to bettering someone's life, and occasionally, a non-

stop "thank you" while working side by side with the soon to be new home owners. To date, Lightning Force Soldiers have assisted in the building of two homes in the greater CSRA area, one near the Augusta State College, and the most recent off of Dean's Bridge Road, in the West Augusta area. The recent project is near completion and the plan is to start another build in the same neighborhood, as soon as Habitat for Humanity clears the legal hurdles to start construction.

Habitat for Humanity volunteers are needed usually once or twice a month on a Saturday, and usually for only four hours in the morning. Dealing with the summer heat and the occasional splinter are normally the hardest part of the job, but these risks have been reduced by mandating that each volunteer bring a water source, work gloves, sun block and some sort of eye protection.

Any Family member or Soldier who would like to volunteer to make a difference in our community can do so by



Lightning Force Soldiers pause for a photo opportunity following a recent build project

contacting 1st Sgt. Gary Smith at (706) 791-4644 or DSN 780-4644 at any time, and you will be added to the work force for the next Lightning Battalion event. If you have a large group that you would like to get more involved in improving the CSRA area, he can also put you in contact with the Habitat for Humanity Volunteer Coordinator to start your own build project. 1st Sgt. Smith is also an organizational POC for the VMIS system and can add and validate your volunteer time in VMIS, for any individual desiring to log hours toward the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal (MOVSM).

Overall, the Lightning Battalion's involvement with the Habitat for Humanity home building projects has been rewarding for each Soldier involved. They have built lifelong friendships with not only the other volunteers from

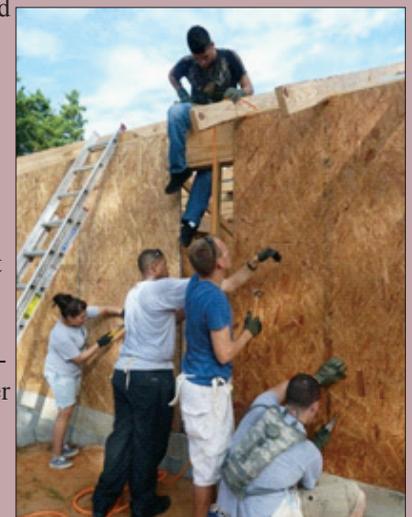
the area, but also with those individuals who will soon dwell in the much needed new homes. Their efforts have gone a long way to build a lasting relationship between the Lightning Battalion, Fort Gordon, the U.S. Army and the local community. There is no greater feeling than leaving a lasting impression on those where you live. Mission accomplished..., "Lightning Force"!



Staff Sgt. Foster uses his prior MOS skills (12B) to hang joists



It's all about teamwork... Augusta and the Lightning Battalion!



The workforce hangs an exterior wall





Story by Master Sgt. Shelia J. Obleton
Career Counselor, 35th Signal Brigade

First quarter, fiscal year 13, marks the ‘New Year’ for Retention. Although a New Year, many of our previous goals will remain the same. The Army is continuing to draw down and our focus still and always remains on retaining the best qualified Soldiers for reenlistment. It has come a time that we realize that being a part of the Army is a privilege and not a right. Fiscal year 13 will introduce the Commanders Allocation Program that is designed to facilitate force alignment while sustaining unit readiness and achieving Army end strength requirements.

This program will target Soldiers with a fiscal year 14 End term of service date 1 October 13 thru 30 September 2014.

RETENTION

BEAT THE

DRAW DOWN



This program provides the unit commander with the authority to reenlist a specific number of Soldiers serving in over strength MOS/skill levels identified in forthcoming MILPER message to remain in that MOS. Commanders will be provided an allocation on how many they can retain in the over strength MOS. Identified Soldiers desiring to reenlist, but who do not receive an allocation by the unit commander to remain in current MOS will be processed for retraining. If no training is available Soldier will be denied reenlistment and forced to separate.

No longer is being eligible for reenlistment enough, you need to set yourself apart from your peers. Programs will

continually be put in position to help the Army become a better place; the Army is ever-changing. Be proud of the organization you are a part of and make the Army a great place to work.



Resilience



Story by Sgt. 1st Class Rowan H. Stevens
Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 35th Signal Brigade

Hello “Lion Brigade”! My name is Sgt. 1st Class Rowan H. Stevens and I am the Brigade Master Resilience Trainer NCO. I am replacing Sgt. 1st Class Terry T. Moore who is the former Brigade Master Resilience Trainer NCO. I want to take this time to wish Sgt. 1st Class Moore farewell and good luck in his future endeavors.

Over the course of the past two years, Moore has educated the Brigade on what that position is and what it entails.

I, along with the battalion MRTs and the Company Resilience Trainer Assistants will continue to train Soldiers on resilience.

So what is Resilience? Resilience is the ability to grow and thrive in the face of challenges and bounce back from adversity. It is built through a set of core competencies that enable mental toughness, optimal performance, strong leadership and goal achievement. Over the past two years, the MRT program has helped fellow Soldiers to stay combat ready as well as get



Equal Opportunity



Story by Sgt. 1st Class Jennifer Berry
Headquarters and Headquarters Compan, 35th Signal Brigade

As many of you know, the Army is ever changing and last month I informed you of some upcoming changes to the Equal Opportunity and SHARP Programs. These changed have been postponed. Please see the chart below for the current topics covered by each program, until further notice or October 2013.

EO	SHARP	IG
Race	Sexual Assault	Sexual Orientation
Religion		Reprisal
Color		Other Issues
National Origin		
Gender		
Sexual Harassment		

We also recognized two national observances this quarter: Women's Equality Day and Hispanic Heritage Month. In August, we recognized Women's Equality Day on 26 August 2012, "Celebrating Women's Right to Vote". Then from 15 September – 15 October 2012, we take time to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, "Diversity United, Building America's Future Today".

Every quarter, I invite you to join Fort Gordon in celebrating our national observances. This is a time to reflect upon our history and learn from each other. When we take time to understand where we have been, we will ensure our future will be strong.

- Martin Luther King's Birthday (17 January)
- African American/Black History Month (February)
- Women's History Month (March)
- Holocaust Remembrance Day/Days of Remembrance (April or May)
- Asian Pacific American Heritage Month (May)
- Women's Equality Day (26 August)
- Hispanic Heritage Month (15 September – 15 October)
- National Disability Employment Awareness Month (October)
- National American Indian Heritage Month (November)

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help for those who have needed additional support. MRTs are not counselors, but are supportive in helping Soldiers cope with stress on the job or even with family issues.

Each quarter, we will teach skills to build mental toughness through thoughts, emotions and behaviors.

For 1st Quarter, FY 13, Soldiers will learn what is Resilience, and Hunt the good stuff. If a Soldier needs counseling, we work with the following agencies and personnel to provide counseling; Army Community Services, Chaplain, Military Family Life Consultant, Behavioral Health, Social Work Services and Army Center for Enhanced Performance. Resilience for family members is taught by ACS however if family members need assistance the MRT will provide that assistance. They will then be referred to ACS and enrolled in classes on resilience for spouses. Each installation

has an ACS MRT who provides the classes for spouses.

The listed personnel are trained to help Soldiers bounce back from adversity. Feel free to email your designated MRT for assistance or support with Resilience and/or Resilience Training. "Utmost of Our Ability; We are the Lion Brigade"! The following personnel are the MRT's for each unit:



HHC, 35th:
Sgt. 1st Class Stevens (rowan.h.stevens@us.army.mil)

50th ESB:
Sgt. 1st Class Sanker(deployed)
Sgt. 1st Class Schuler(Patrice.n.schuler@us.army.mil)

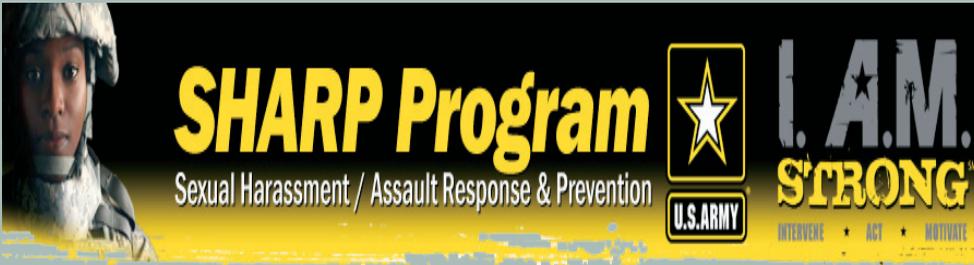
51st ESB:
Sgt. 1st Class Ware(timothy.j.ware@us.army.mil)
SSG McVey(dennis.j.mcvey@us.army.mil)

63rd ESB:
Sgt. 1st Class Hinds(Charles.hinds4@us.army.mil)
Sgt. 1st Class Daniel(Sandra.r.daniel@us.army.mil)

67th ESB:
Sgt. 1st Class Gordon (brandy.gordon@us.army.mil)
Sgt. 1st Class Bulloch(Quettitia.e.bulloch@us.army.mil)

"Hunt the Good Stuff!"





Three Categories of Sexual Harassment:

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Michael T. Perkins
Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 35th Signal Brigade

Three Categories of Sexual Harassment: Part II – Nonverbal Communication in Sexual Harassment

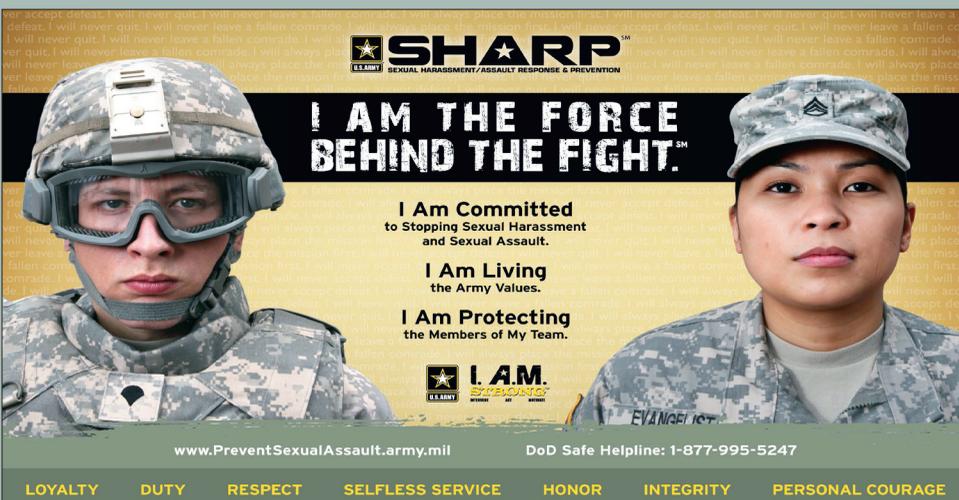
In part one of the Three Categories of Sexual Harassment I talked about the first of the three categories of sexual harassment, which is verbal sexual harassment. No one should have to work or live in an environment where they are subjected to any type of behavior that sexually discriminates, propositions, or coerces them in to things that make them feel uncomfortable. As Service Members and DA Civilians, we are responsible for conducting ourselves in a professional manner. That being said, everyone is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect without exception. There is a zero tolerance policy for Sexual Harassment in the Army, and yet there are people out there who continue to treat people in ways that are not consistent with the Army Values, the Soldiers Creed, or just plain old good order and discipline. We are held to a higher standard than the average citizen. I am referring to the people who choose

not to serve our country and guard our way of life. If you witness or if you have knowledge of any form sexual harassment, I challenge you to take action and report it. If you stand idly by, you too are guilty of sexual harassment. In this article, we will explore the category of Nonverbal Sexual Harassment.

Nonverbal communication is defined as the act or process of transmitting information without the use of a spoken word. Nonverbal communication has been around for millions of years. As a matter of fact, it is so easy... a caveman can do it! By pairing nonverbals with cues and gestures, you can easily convey your thoughts and intentions. Sometimes this is done unknowingly or uncontrollably. For instance, you may see something that catches you off guard or something that catches your eye. We know that some people can be overcome with emotions sometimes. And if you are that person, you have to make a conscience effort to control these emotions. If you can't, you could find yourself in a

position where you have a Sexual Harassment complaint filed against you; and I'm sure that's not the type of recognition you want. Depending on the way your actions are perceived, facial expressions and eye contact could be considered sexual harassment. From the Army's perspective, nonverbal sexual harassment includes but is not limited to staring, winking, blowing kisses, licking your lips, posting printed material or sending sexually oriented pictures, notes, letters, faxes, e-mails or text messages.

Facial expressions can be any form of over exaggerated contorted physical characteristic that conveys a message. What message are you sending? Is it something sexual in nature? Eye contact can be anything from staring a little bit too long to undressing someone with your eyes, almost as if you had x-ray vision. As an Army we have to do better. This type of behavior is unacceptable and inappropriate. Don't get me wrong. Although we are trained to pay attention to detail, I know we are not robots. Let's try to put this in to perspective. Picture it: you are on an observation post, in a training exercise or the real thing. You have been there for a couple of hours when you see someone approaching your position. How many times out of ten will you pick up a megaphone to say, or yell out, "HEY! What Cha' Doing Over There?" None, I'm sure. You have to consider the environment you are in everyday life as well. If needed, take a moment to gather your thoughts and try to remember that this could be a relative of yours. How would you feel if they were being treated as prey instead of a valuable member of a team? What would you do if you saw one of your Soldiers approaching someone in this way? I'm sure you would make the on the spot correction. No one is saying that you can't look, just be respect-





ful and not disrespectful. Have you ever seen anyone lick their lips in a sexually suggestive way that made you feel uncomfortable? Even if you were in a restaurant, it is proper etiquette to use your napkin and not your tongue to clean your mouth. Oh, you say your lips were dry. Ok, you can purchase Carmex. It will take care of the dry lip issue. Bottom line up front: If you are undressing people with your eyes, winking, licking your lips and blowing kisses at people, you are asking for trouble. Ask yourself: Is this behavior unwanted? Is this professional? I know what you are saying. Some people might find these actions perfectly acceptable, and this is true. However, I have to caution you. You may encounter people that are not as receptive of this type of behavior, and they may find it intolerable. Remember your actions do not have to be directed toward any particular person. Your behavior may be offensive to others, which in turn creates a type of sexual harassment known as a hostile environment.

It is against the law to display, transmit, or generate sexually oriented material in and around the workplace. Sexually oriented material includes any type of sexually oriented written notes, graphic cartoons, drawings, magazines or posters. There was a time when, depending on the unit you were in, it might have been socially acceptable to possess sexually oriented material around the office. Although the material may not have in plain sight, it was present. Long gone are the days when it was ok to have the “hottie” of the week as a screensaver on your computer. Gender gaps in units are closing more and more each day. It is not ok to send sexually oriented emails, not even as a joke. Let’s face it, there are those people that could care less about what pictures you may have on your computer or plastered all over the walls at work. On the other side of that coin, there are people that just don’t want to be subjected to sexually explicit or implicit material every time they visit your office or open an e-mail from you. Did I mention it is against the law? We are a diverse Army with people from

all walks of life. We all have the right to work and live in a place where it is free from hostility. If I respect your way of life and your beliefs, do I not have the right to expect the same of you toward mine? When you create an environment where people feel uncomfortable, this is a problem. It creates hostility, trust is broken and it places the mission at risk. If you are being sexually harassed, there are several techniques you can utilize to stop the unwanted behavior. By using the direct approach, you can tell the harasser that the behavior is unwanted, not appreciated, and it must stop. The

indirect approach will allow you to send them a letter stating the specific behavior that offends you and how you would like the situation resolved. Another option is the use of a third party to talk to the harasser on your behalf. The chain of command is also a viable option in resolving any issue you may have with a harasser. In the event that none of these things work, you always have the option of filing a formal or informal complaint. In the next article we will talk about hostile environments. Until then, live life to its fullest, tomorrow is not promised to anyone.

35th Signal BDE Sharp Bldg 25426
706-791-7038
Fort Gordon SHARP Hotline: (706) 791-6297
DoD Safeline: 1-877-995-5247

MY STRENGTH IS FOR DEFENDING.

So when my friend reported what that guy did, I said:
I'M WITH YOU.

PREVENTING SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT IS MY DUTY.

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I AM STRONG

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www.preventsexualassault.army.mil

Loyalty Duty Respect Selfless Service Honor Integrity Personal Courage

INTERVENE

When I recognize a threat to my fellow Soldiers, I will have the personal courage to **INTERVENE** and prevent Sexual Assault. I will condemn acts of Sexual Harassment. I will not abide obscene gestures, language or behavior. I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I will **INTERVENE**.

ACT

You are my brother, my sister, my fellow Soldier. It is my duty to stand up for you, no matter the time or place. I will take **ACTION**. I will do what's right. I will prevent Sexual Harassment and Assault. I will not tolerate sexually offensive behavior. I will **ACT**.

MOTIVATE

We are American Soldiers, **MOTIVATED** to keep our fellow Soldiers safe. It is our mission to prevent Sexual Harassment and Assault. We will denounce sexual misconduct. As Soldiers, we are all **MOTIVATED** to take action. We are strongest...together.



Chaplain's Corner

Story by Capt. Linda Murtala,
Chaplain, , Unit Ministry Team, 50th Signal Battalion

The last decade of war has taken a huge total on our Nation, military and Families. Family members have accepted the call to be the anchors at home while their love ones are deployed defending our great Nation. Family members wait in anguish for the return of their loved ones from deployment. Many children lose touch with their deployed parents while waiting patiently for their return. The marriage bond is strained and married couples wait for a blissful reunion with their families and loved ones.

The United States Army Chaplain Corps with the support of the United States Army has developed a program which focuses on strengthening relationships for single Soldiers, married couples and Families. The program is called Strong Bonds

Strong Bonds was established in 1997 and since its inception the program has truly helped to enhance and foster family cohesion and strengthen relationships. The core mission of the Strong Bonds program is to increase individual Soldier and Family member readiness through relationship education and skills training. Strong Bonds is conducted in an offsite retreat format in order to maximize the training effect. The retreat or "get away" provides a fun, safe, and secure environment in which to address the impact of relocations, deployments, and military lifestyle stressors.

Soldiers and their families spend a wealth of time on a weekend covering courses ranging from communication,



commitment, understanding their spouses and their own love languages and personality traits. The curriculums consist of, but not limited to Laugh Your Way To A Better Marriage, Five Love Languages, and The Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program are all hilarious and realistic DVDs that provide instruct on ways to enhance relationships. The Strong Bonds program is for single Soldiers and married couples and is minimal cost to the Soldier. The events are hosted at quality hotels, such as the Sheraton, Omni and Marriot with no cost to the Soldier and range from a one or two night stay. In addition, meals and child care are provided at no cost. Travel and hotels incidentals are at the expense to the

attendees.

Here are a few testimonials that illustrate how the program has helped build better and stronger relationships:

"After spending a year apart, this retreat was amazing for our marriage. We get so busy in our day to day lives that sometimes we forget the little things- such as the Love Language of our partner."

"The opportunity to be together as a family and not worry about anything other than being together and having fun especially after a 12 month deployment... WE REALLY NEEDED IT"

"First of all, thank you for this opportunity, this was much needed and a great change of pace for both of us. The video and message was spot on for a marriage. For us, we are starting over because we almost lost our marriage; we were both selfish and just seen things differently. This will help us so much. They are great tools for any married couple to see the light and reality."

"The presentations were excellent, very helpful DVD; break on Saturday with my wife meant so much and was a special time. Thank you very much!"

As the Chaplain and Chaplain Assistant of the 50th ESB, we have enjoyed establishing many lasting relationships with Soldiers and Families during our Strong Bonds training. Providing resources that help to build a great, resilient and strong marriage brings us great joy. Hope to see you at the next Strong Bond!





35th Signal Brigade UMT Highlights

"Utmost of Our Ability"
1 July – 30 September 2012



In July- Lt. Col. Barth G. Edison, chaplain, and Staff Sgt. Arthur S. Abdon, chaplain assistant, of the 35th Signal Brigade Unit Ministry Team, conducted a successful Strong Bonds Event for the Senior Leaders at Stone Mountain, Georgia.



One of the hands-on training sessions during Strong Bonds for Senior Leaders



Above and Below: Children enjoy their toys and crafts during child care.



Col. Thomas A. Pugh, Commander, 35th Sig Bde, thanks Reverend Kenneth L. Gainous for speaking at the 35th Signal Brigade Spiritual Fitness Breakfast August 15, 2012.



Capt. Javon A. Seaborn, chaplain, assigned to the 67th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, and his wife, Virginia, enjoy their fellowship meal.



The teens loved the activities provided during the Teen Workshop.



51st Sig Bn UMT Capt. Hyuntae Kim, chaplain and Pfc Russell Ludlow, chaplain assistant provided Strong Bonds Training to their Soldiers and Family Members during the months of July, August, and September.



Capt. Joseph Lea, 63th ESB Chaplain, sponsors his Ecclesiastical Endorser, Archbishop Broglio.



Couples of the 50th ESB listen to Chaplain Linda Murtala about enhancing their communication skills.



The 35th Bde UMT and 51st Bn UMT shared a team building opportunity in August.





The Lion's Roar needs YOU! How would you like to get involved in your Brigade magazine! Get YOUR story and photos published and tell your unit's story!

NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY!!!!

The 35th Signal Brigade Public Affairs Office is looking for talented photographers, news and sports writers to contribute to the 35th Signal Brigade quarterly publication. If you see action happening in your unit, get involved and spread the word!

Photos and articles must be in good taste and the editor reserves the right to edit submissions as per commander's intent, Associated Press Style Guide, and Department of Defense requirements.

"Get the message through."

Send all submissions or inquiries to dianne.m.carter.mil@mail.mil