



The Official Magazine of The U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne)

PEACEMAKER

Spring 2013



Operation **Toy Drop**

USACAPOC(A) hosts
15th anniversary of
world's largest combined
airborne operation.



PEACEMAKER

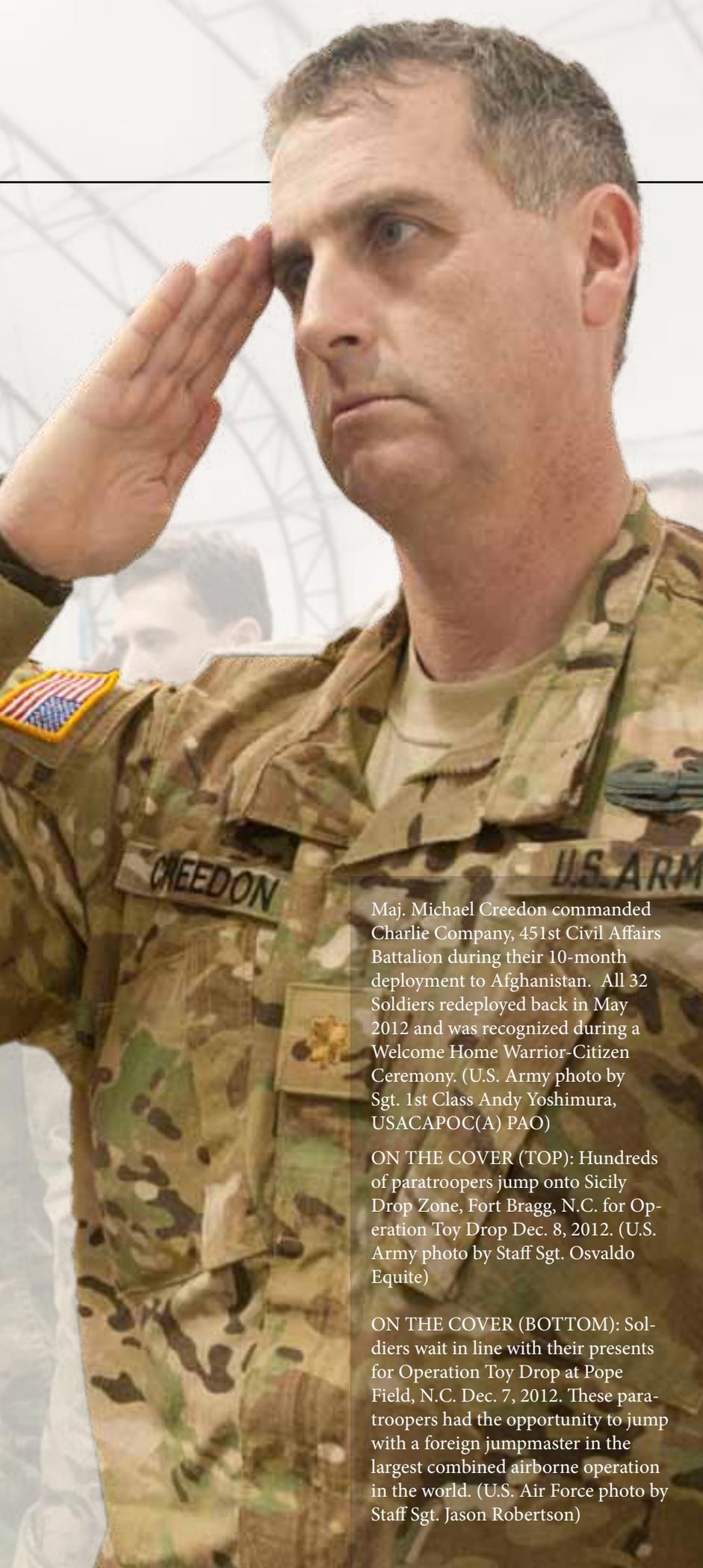
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Operation
Toy Drop



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Maj. Michael Creedon commanded Charlie Company, 451st Civil Affairs Battalion during their 10-month deployment to Afghanistan. All 32 Soldiers redeployed back in May 2012 and was recognized during a Welcome Home Warrior-Citizen Ceremony. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Andy Yoshimura, USACAPOC(A) PAO)

ON THE COVER (TOP): Hundreds of paratroopers jump onto Sicily Drop Zone, Fort Bragg, N.C. for Operation Toy Drop Dec. 8, 2012. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Osvaldo Equite)

ON THE COVER (BOTTOM): Soldiers wait in line with their presents for Operation Toy Drop at Pope Field, N.C. Dec. 7, 2012. These paratroopers had the opportunity to jump with a foreign jumpmaster in the largest combined airborne operation in the world. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Robertson)

From the Commanding General



Maj. Gen.
Jeffrey A. Jacobs

“Just because it’s hard doesn’t mean we can’t do it. We must do it. As you’ve heard me say before, leadership is a 24/7/365 responsibility; a leader’s job doesn’t go away between battle assemblies. We have to walk through our barracks, and we must know our Soldiers and stay engaged with them during non-duty hours – which, for us, is 28 days a month.”

Suicide remains one of the Army Reserve’s major problems. Last year, the Army Reserve had more Soldiers commit suicide than the active component and the Army National Guard combined.

None of us has the solution to this problem. There is no silver bullet. Each suicide involves an individual Soldier with individual issues.

I am convinced, though, that suicide prevention is directly related to engaged first-line leadership. I wrote about engaged first-line leadership in the last issue of Peacemaker, but it is so important that I need to continue the discussion.

We had five USACAPOC(A) Soldiers take their own lives last year. Of those five, four were TPU Soldiers in a non-duty status; that is, they were in a civilian status at the time of their deaths. Our challenge as an Army Reserve unit is to stay engaged with our Soldiers – to lead them – even though we may see them only two days every month.

This is a much tougher leadership challenge for us than it is for an active component unit. Two of the four Soldiers an active component junior noncommissioned officer leads probably live in the barracks, and the other two are within shouting distance of the installation. That NCO can walk through the barracks and can keep track of her Soldiers during non-duty hours; she may even live in the barracks herself. We have no barracks, and, with a few exceptions, we have no installations. The Soldiers our NCOs lead may live fifty or a hundred miles away from the Reserve center – and the NCO may live fifty or a hundred miles away in the other direction. And, to make it even more difficult, our Soldiers have civilian employment.

But just because it’s hard doesn’t mean we can’t do it. We must do it. As you’ve heard me say before, leadership is a 24/7/365 responsibility; a leader’s job doesn’t go away between battle assemblies. We have to walk through our barracks, and we must know our Soldiers and stay engaged with them during non-duty hours – which, for us, is 28 days a month.

How? We do it by phone, by e-mail, by text, by Facebook. We do it at night, on our lunch breaks, on weekends. We keep leader’s books to track our Soldiers’ vital information (there’s even a leader book app for smartphones). We keep in touch with our Soldiers’ Families – not only because Families

are integral to our readiness, but because Families are another key to spotting Soldiers’ problems. And spotting those problems is the key to getting Soldiers the help they need to deal with them effectively.

Not only must our leaders do this, but we must ensure that battle buddies check up on each other, also.

Engaged first-line leadership can help discover problems

and prevent them from becoming statistics.

Engaged first-line leaders

can get help for those

Soldiers who need it. This

is tough work, but being a

Soldier in the Army Reserve

is a tough job. Let’s rise to the

challenge.

I invite your comments and

discussion on this issue on my

Facebook page, <http://www.facebook.com/MGJeffJacobs>.

Charlie Mike --
Continue Mission!





From the Command Sergeant Major

BORNE



Last August, when I arrived at USACAPOC (A), I spoke of our NCO Corps and our need to re-blue ourselves. I stated that the success of our command is directly related to the quality of noncommissioned officers among our ranks. Here we are 6 months later and I'm seeing a back

log in some levels of NCOES. The

NCOES back log is

defined as all NCOs with 3 or more years TIG without the required NCOES for that grade they hold. This

concerns me. Now that our OPTEMPO is slowing down and deployment manning

eases, we need to put more focus on training such as NCOES.

In order to prepare for our future missions, our USACAPOC (A) NCO Corps needs to develop the academics piece and not just the technical and tactical experience.

Our NCO academies help to shape and train our leaders with current and relevant information.

The Warrior Leaders Course is the biggest part of my NCOES focus.

This is a cornerstone in building our NCO Corps foundation. I appreciate the outstanding efforts by our young SPCs who have attended WLC, especially those who have been honored with Distinguished Honor Graduate, Honor Graduate or making the Commandant's List. But we have too many SGTs that simply

are not attending. And by not attending they don't get promoted to SSG and thus the SPCs can't get promoted to SGT. Some of our SSGs are worse off. They are conditional promotees and must have WLC. Without WLC, they can be reduced to SGT. Yet still, the SSGs aren't attending the course and their leadership is not making it a priority. As I travel and visit with our units, I've found that many of our Soldiers and leaders have a certain mentality when it comes to both OES and NCOES. The mentality is simply that they believe that they do not need to focus on OES/NCOES until they are looking at promotion to the next rank. Some may not see a vacancy for the next pay grade in their unit, or they don't have TIG or TIS, so they aren't motivated to attend. This mentality has to change. Our Team SGTs, 1SGs, and CSMS need to be counseling their subordinate NCOs and help map out their career development milestones. These leaders and our officers need to enforce NCOES attendance and take hard action when necessary. At USACAPOC (A), we have a plan to reduce the back log, but I expect the immediate leadership be given yet one more chance to address the issue first. We are noncommissioned officers in a profession of arms and members of the world's most powerful and professional fighting force. Every army needs a professional NCO Corps in order to successfully accomplish the mission. I am committed to developing ours. This starts with at USACAPOC (A) by building a solid foundation for our NCO Corps as we move ahead and shape our force for the future battlefields. We need to be demonstrating our commitment to education and developing ourselves. We must continue to develop and mentor experienced, educated, trained and effective leaders. This will not just produce a better individual leader, but it contributes greatly to the strength of our force.



Command Sgt. Maj.
Harry Bennett

One final note on NCOES, I would like to congratulate HHC USACAPOC(A), SSG Charlie Whitted for being recognized by the school house for exceeding the course standards in the Advanced Leaders Course common core distributed learning. Although there is no formal recognition available for this accomplishment, the leaders of this program wanted to ensure they provided me with their observations of his outstanding achievement. SSG Whitted has demonstrated the highest degree of commitment to self development, the NCO education system, and the Army.

Chaplains Helping Peacemakers

Ch. Barry R. Baron, USACAPOC(A)

The title of this magazine, Peacemaker, reflects the role of USACAPOC's Soldiers in extending the influence of U.S. military forces through work with civilian populations in a given operational environment. Peacemaking is a value in the religious traditions representing among our Soldiers, as it is a value of chaplains, the Army's religious leaders.

Chaplains and Chaplain Assistants have historically been assigned to Military Information Support Operation battalions and groups, but were not assigned to Civil Affairs battalions until about five years ago. In the USACAPOC (A) Command Chaplain's office, we have seen this circumstance as an opportunity to define and expand the ways in which our Chaplain's Sections and Unit Ministry Teams serve commanders and Soldiers.

Current Army doctrine defines two core competencies for chaplains and chaplain assistants: provide religious support and advise the command. While there are many ways to describe religious support, a verse from Psalm 23 gives a convenient summary: "Though I walk through

the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no harm, for You are with me; your rod and your staff – they comfort me." In many ways and at many times, chaplains and assistants provide comfort, assistance, and support for commanders, Soldiers, and Families. In happy moments, we help give voice to gratitude. In more difficult moments, we seek, through our words and actions, to remind Soldiers that they always have a companion on life's journeys, a friend who will not judge them, and help in meeting challenges.

Advising entails two lines of effort, internal and external. Internal advising encompasses the UMT's traditional role in sensing the major issues facing Soldiers, whether these are individual or collective, bringing them to commanders' attention, and recommending appropriate responses.

In all situations, communications with chaplains and assistants are absolutely privileged. We do not use names in discussing Soldier situations without specific permission from the Soldier to do so. More commonly, we discuss issues with command that Soldiers are facing collectively. Names are irrelevant in these situations.

External advising involves chaplains and assistants in analyzing issues outside the command that affect our units. The most prominent issue in this arena is the prospective or actual impact of religious issues on Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations activities. We are now, or are in the process of becoming, your religion subject matter experts for the places where your Soldiers are now, or in the future may, be employed. Our UMT training in this area is specifically directed toward augmenting our skill sets to enhance your mission. As one author has written, "Religions...can encourage hatred, discrimination, and violence. However, they seem to also have strong potential to facilitate conflict resolution and peace." Our task is to help you ensure that religious forces that you encounter can enhance your work as peacemakers.

Your chaplains and chaplain assistants are some of the very best that the United States Army has. If you have used our services in the past, please come back and ask us for more. Like you, we are always developing our skills. If you haven't tried us yet, please do so. I know you will like what you find.



Ch. (Col.)
Barry R. Baron,
USACAPOC(A)

Father and Son Celebrate Christmas in Bagram

Story and photo by Spc. Alex Amen, 426th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne)



Lt. Col. Scott Perrenod (left) and his son, 2nd Lt. Bryan Perrenod, stand together at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan.

In the season of giving this year, two Soldiers deployed to Afghanistan, a father and son, received a rare gift; the opportunity to spend Christmas together on Bagram Air Field.

Lt. Col. Scott Perrenod, the reintegration deputy chief for an office with the 426th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne), and his son, 2nd Lt. Bryan Perrenod, a member of a security forces advise and assist team under Task Force 138, were able to spend Christmas together this year despite being deployed to different parts of Afghanistan.

Bryan was able to travel from Kandahar to Bagram in order to spend Christmas with his father.

“Family is important and being together is important,” said Scott. “Having the ability to spend time together as a Family during war-time is even more special. Wherever I am, whether it’s Af-

ghanistan, or back home, I’m reminded of the importance of being together as a Family, and keeping those Family bonds,”

The Perrenod Family is saturated with the military lifestyle. Scott’s youngest son, Erik, is serving with the Army in Germany, and his wife, Alina, serves with the California National Guard. His father fought in World War II and two of his brothers have retired from the Air Force.

“From my perspective, I’m extremely proud to have my sons choose this career path on their own,” said Scott. “It’s an honor to pass the baton to a new generation.”

For the Perrenod Family time together has become a precious thing.

“We haven’t been together as a Family for the holidays in three years now,” said Scott. “It’s awesome to get together with the Family all being in military, but to do it in Afghanistan is pretty indescribable.”

Our Firefighter

Story by Spc. Tonya Ritter, 412th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne)



Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Kloha displays his award. (U.S. Army Photo by Valerie Minor)

Army Reserve Soldiers are used to wearing a uniform when defending our country. When many citizen-Soldiers are not wearing their Army uniform, they put on another. One such Army Reserve Soldier is Command Sergeant Major Mark Kloha, who was recently awarded the Midland, Michigan, Firefighter-of-the-Year award -- for the second time in his career.

Kloha has been a firefighter for 21 years and a Soldier in the Army Reserve for 29 years.

Kloha is the Command Sergeant Major of the 412th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne). He mentors junior non-commissioned officers for future leadership roles.

“Leadership,” said Kloha “is the main thing in common with my civilian and Army Reserve jobs.”

“He always goes above and beyond to

help junior Soldiers and puts forth a great effort with the Best Warrior Competition to develop leaders,” said Sgt. 1st Class Jennifer Skunza, training NCO with the 412th CAB.

“He is always looking out for Soldiers’ well being,” said Spc. Vancil Casebolt, a Best Warrior representative for the 412th.

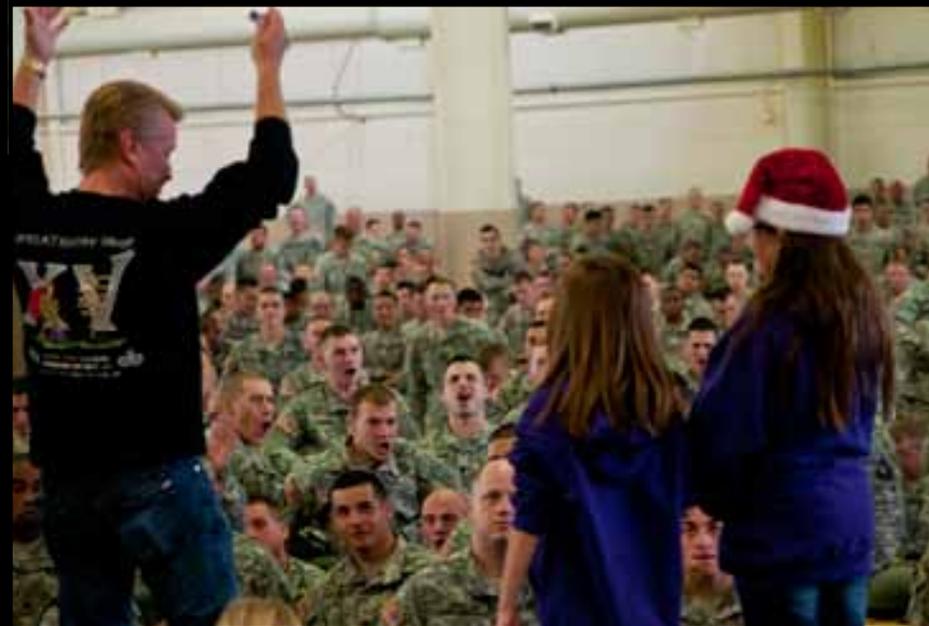
Kloha began working as a City of Midland firefighter in 1991 and received his first Firefighter-of-the-Year Award in 1999.

“He is always looking to take the next step and roles for the betterment of his department,” said Mark Laux, a fellow firefighter.

Kloha has been an American Red Cross first aid and CPR instructor since 1986, and he and his wife have hosted 13 minor league baseball players at his home over the past five years.

“Army Values,” said Kloha, “and caring for people go hand-in-hand with being a firefighter.”

(Courtesy photos:
U.S. Army)



Operation Toy Drop

CAPOC: Keeping the Tradition Alive

Story by Spc. Lalita Guenther,
USACAPOC(A) Public Affairs Office

2012 marks the 15th anniversary of the Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop. But it wasn't always known by that name. Operation Toy Drop was first launched in 1998 by a then-Staff Sgt. Randy Oler, a U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) Soldier with one dream – to help children in need around the country.

The real holiday miracle here is how such a small group of people, grew together to have a large impact. Toy Drop has gone from just a few hundred Soldiers and a few hundred toys, to more than 2,000 Soldiers and more than 2,500 toys donated each year during the “lottery day,” which is day one of the two-day airborne operation known as Operation Toy Drop.



On lottery day, Soldiers line the street at Green Ramp on Pope Field, N.C. to donate a toy in exchange for a ticket, which may have the winning number to win a chance to earn foreign jump wings the next day – “jump day.”

Toy Drop is now the largest combined airborne operation in the world and draws more and more Soldiers from around the country to participate every year. Toy Drop has grown from having only one foreign country come to give their jump wings to American paratroopers, to having up to a grand total of more than 7 countries on some years; and now that Toy Drop has “gone national” and is beginning to include subordinate USACAPOC(A) units, the amount of Soldier participation from all over the country is on the rise.

Operation Toy Drop has had a significant impact on USACAPOC(A) as a whole, with the number of people it takes to run the show and how it really boosts morale.

“It takes a lot of people,” said Cpt. Jennifer Foster, Operation Toy Drop Elf with Headquarters and Headquarters Company

“That’s their job
- to reach out to
communities and
fill a void for them.”

— Cpt. Jennifer Foster, HHC USACAPOC(A)

USACAPOC(A). “And within a week and a half’s time we put in about 100 hours of work.”

With all the work required, it is necessary for the U.S. Army Reserve unit to put many of their HHC Soldiers on annual training orders during Operation

Toy Drop in order to cover all the time and work that is required by this sizeable operation,

explained Foster.

Toy Drop doesn’t stop with just Fort Bragg. Soldiers from all over the country are getting involved. In 2011, Operation Toy Drop went national, using USACAPOC(A)’s subordinate units from around the nation for help with toy collection and distribution.

“Some of the units do local toy drives,” said Foster. “They get involved with their communities. Then, the Soldiers help distribute the toys.”

Operation Toy Drop is all about the children, from the perspective of the Family in need. However, what people may not see is that Toy Drop is ultimately a training opportunity for Soldiers in USACAPOC(A), as well — especially with the particular military occupational specialties the Soldiers hold.

“It’s a civil affairs and psychological operations unit,” said Foster. “So, that’s what the Soldiers do. That’s their job – to reach out to communities and fill a void for them.”



This is valuable training on the airborne operations and logistics side of the unit, as well. It takes a lot of planning and organization to get Toy Drop up and running every year. Usually, the planning begins months in advance — if not right after the last Toy Drop ends.

“Toy Drop doesn’t start today,” explained Foster. “It started last January with the planning and trying to get the foreign jumpmasters here and make sure we have all the logistical support. Eventually, all the pieces have to fit together to make the operation run smoothly.”

Though USACAPOC(A) runs the show with Operation Toy Drop, they are not the only ones involved in making things come together. Toy Drop has expanded substantially since it began, and now involves several other units in coordinating the operation.

“It [Toy Drop] started out with only one aircraft,” said Phil Maughan, secretary of the general staff at HHC, USACAPOC(A).

“Now it has expanded to in-

“This is our big event, and we would like to keep it that way.”

— Phil Maughan, secretary of the general staff at HHC USACAPOC(A)

clude the XVIII Airborne Corps and the 82nd Airborne Division’s participation. Also, with Special Operations Forces week, we have the participation of U.S. Army Special Operations Command and Special Warfare Center and School and some of the Special Forces groups, as well,” said Maughan. “It’s a really good wide range of unit involvement over about a week and a half time period.”

Through all the expanding of Operation

Toy Drop, the addition of more units and all the coordination that is involved, USACAPOC(A) still plans to be the unit to maintain the operation for the foreseeable future. With talk of other units trying to take over, USACAPOC(A) sees Operation Toy Drop as their ‘thing’, and wishes to remain as having such an impact on the Soldiers and the community.

“When Randy Oler started this,” Maughan explained. “He was a Soldier with HHC, USACAPOC(A). This is our big event, and we would like to keep it that way. It supports not only the Soldiers and their training, but the community as well.”

Operation Toy Drop



Story by Spc. Lalita
Guenther

Photos by Staff Sgt. Felix
Fimbres

ABOVE:
Soldiers from
the 410th Civil Affairs
Battalion deliver toys to the
El Paso Children's Hospital
during Operation Toy Drop:
Mission El Paso on Decem-
ber 14, 2012. The 410th and
the U.S. Army Civil Affairs
& Psychological Operations
Command (Airborne) col-
lected and donated over
8,000 toys for children
this holiday season.

DASHING THROUGH EL PASO

Army Reserve Soldiers from the 410th Civil Affairs Battalion donated love and kindness and over 200 toys to the El Paso Children's Hospital Dec. 14, 2012. These Soldiers carried three large red sacks overflowing with toys and brought holiday cheer to the children who might spend their Christmas in the hospital.

This was certainly not just a random act of kindness, though. The Soldiers of the 410th decided to participate in the 15-year-old tradition of Operation Toy Drop, started by a Soldier who was a part of the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), based at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Operation Toy Drop was started in 1997 by then Staff Sgt. Randy Oler

with one dream – to help children in need around the country receive toys for the holidays they might otherwise not be getting.

“We were inspired by USACAPOC(A) to do our own Operation Toy Drop out here,” said Master Sgt. John Craemer, the battalion operations sergeant for the 410th. “It’s a little different than what USACAPOC(A) does, but it’s still the same concept.”

A relatively new unit which began a little over a year ago, the 410th and many other subordinate units across the country have used Operation Toy Drop as a beneficial opportunity to train as well as integrate with the community around them.

“This is much more than a donation,”

said Craemer. “This is increasing *esprit de corps*. It’s team building. It’s training for civil affairs Soldiers with all the inner-agency coordination they are doing, and reaching out to the community.”

“The 410th Soldiers are so motivated to help out with this operation, that many of the part-timers are volunteering their time to come in and sort toys and prepare them for distribution to the hospital without being put on orders,” added Craemer.

“I wanted to do this because it’s an amazing feeling,” said Sgt. Graciela Alvarez, staff administration assistant and civil affairs specialist in the 410th. “I think this is not just a unit ‘thing’ either. You can do this on your own without the unit organizing anything.”

The Soldiers were not the only ones to feel amazed. The 410th’s presence affected the hospital, the children, the employees, and the community around them.

“This has had a huge impact on the hospitalized children,” said Georgina Panahi, the marketing manager for the El Paso

Children’s Hospital. “And it is so rewarding to see our armed forces, especially the reserves, do such a great thing this time of year, because the biggest importance here is the children.”

Panahi said the Soldiers came to the hospital, and although they were not able to distribute toys to the individual children, they did meet some of the Family members and patients in the waiting areas to hand out toys to them.

While children in need are getting a little extra something for the holiday season, this, again, has created the perfect opportunity for civil affairs Soldiers to put their skills to good use and good practice in real life.

“This is such a wonderful thing they [410th CAB] are doing,” said Panahi. “And it really exemplifies the unit’s leadership on and off the field. They have been able to bring joy and smiles to everyone in this hospital and for that we are very thankful.”

“They have been able to bring joy and smiles to everyone in this hospital and for that we are very thankful.”

— Georgina Panahi, marketing manager for the El Paso Children’s Hospital



Soldiers from the 410th Civil Affairs Battalion deliver toys to the El Paso Children’s Hospital during Operation Toy Drop: Mission El Paso.

TOY DROP CONTINUES EXPANDING

Story and photo by Spc.
John Martinez, 17th
Psychological
Operations Battalion



Soldiers of the 341st Tactical Psychological Operations Company helped raise toys for Operation Toy Drop. Soldiers then transported the toys to the Fisher House.

“To be able to come and share the wealth of what we have and be fortunate enough to pass on these gifts means a lot to us.”

-- Sgt. 1st Class Victor Escobar of the 341st TPC.

“Fun, cool, and awesome,” is how 12-year-old Raven Vazquez described Operation Toy Drop: San Antonio.

“It’s cool that someone thought of us today,” continued Raven while playing with her new, stuffed pink animal.

For the second consecutive year, members of the 341st Tactical Psychological Operations Company participated in the Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop by dropping off toys at the Wilford Hall Fisher House on Lackland Air Force Base located here.

The Fisher House program’s mastermind was New York real estate philanthropist Zachary Fisher. His goal was, and continues to be, providing temporary housing, a “home away from home,” for families of hospitalized military personnel in their time of need.

Currently, the Fisher House Program has 58 comfort homes worldwide and lives by their motto that a Family’s love is the best medicine.

Like the Fisher House, Operation Toy Drop aims to provide comfort and peace to those that are in need, especially during the holiday season.

In 1998, then Staff Sgt. Randy Oler came up with the idea of combining his two favorite things; airborne oper-

ations and helping children. His operation started small, raising just 300 toys, but has grown into collecting more than 23,000 toys in 2011 alone.

Since its inception, the once small-scaled mission has turned into a nationwide event in six states, stretching from coast to coast.

For the first time this year, Soldiers deployed to Afghanistan are also given the opportunity to participate in Operation Toy Drop.

Lt. Col. Robert B. Sentell, commander of the 17th PSYOP Battalion in Austin, Texas, has been an active participant for several years in Oler’s Toy Drop.

“I’ve participated in Toy Drop throughout the years, and I have seen it grow. When 17th PSYOP Battalion was given the opportunity to help expand the operation nationwide, we were very excited,” Sentell said. “For the past two years, the 341st has helped bring holiday cheer to children in need within the San Antonio area.”

Though the kids are the ones receiving toys from Santa, it’s the Soldiers that are left feeling like they’ve received a gift.

“To (be able to) come and share the wealth of what we have and be fortunate enough to pass on these gifts means a lot to us,” said Sgt. 1st Class Victor Escobar of the 341st TPC, San Antonio.

Safety Impressions

By Kathryn M. Anderson,
Safety and Occupational
Health Director, USACAPOC(A)



Do you look around at your unit and see disorderliness?

Have you ever thought to yourself that it does not seem right but... continue on with your day?

Your safety impression is correct.

Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) considers the hazards identified in these pictures as a violation of general Housekeeping. More importantly, the hazards can cause death, injury, or property loss. OSHA states, "All places of employment, passageways, storerooms, and service rooms shall be kept clean and orderly and in a sanitary condition," 29 CFR §1910.22(a) (1).



Volunteering Taken to the Next Level

Story and photos by Sgt. Katie Summerhill, 333rd Military Police Brigade

Every person in the US military is a volunteer. They willingly accept the possibility of being deployed to foreign countries, in harm's way most times, away from their families and friends, to serve their country and help those in need.

For many, this is enough. No further charity is needed from these men and women beyond raising their right hand and swearing loyalty to the death to their nation and its people. But for others, it's not.

Once deployed to Afghanistan, members of the 320th Tactical Psychological Operations Company felt being in Afghanistan wasn't enough--they had more they could give and do. They joined together with local volunteer groups to help even more.

"As soon as we hit the ground, we sought different avenues to help the Afghans outside of our regular duties," said Maj. Katherine Kennedy, commander of the 320th TPC. "We have

nine months here; we aren't worried about sleep. We want to help this country in any way we can."

One of the avenues they found was working with Operation Pencil and Operation Care. These organizations gather school supplies, toys, hygiene items, winter clothes and blankets to donate to local children. The 320th, along with other Soldiers and Airmen from around Bagram Air Field and Camp Sabalu-Harrison, joined together in Operation Pencil and Operation Care to pack 1,200 back-packs for Afghan children. Though it may seem that the contents are basic, Kennedy knows the impact of simple necessities is huge.

"For some, it might just be another bag from America. For others, it might be the only pencils and notebooks they have in the house," she explained. "Think back to your childhood when someone did something nice for you; how did that affect you? Touching 1,200 kids, their siblings, parents and extended Family members; if just one of those kids allows our act of kindness to touch his or her heart, think of the impact we could have through the rest of their life."

ABOVE: U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Ian Johnson, from Warner Robins Air Force Base, Ga., picks up a radio and Dari flashcards to place into a bag during a volunteer event hosted by the 320th Tactical Psychological Operations Company at their compound on Bagram Air Field, Dec. 2, 2012.

While the long-term affect might not be seen by these volunteers, the immediate impact is something that leaves a long-lasting impression on those who deliver the bags.

“To see a smile on a young child’s face when you give them a toy, or the thank you in the eyes of an adult when you provide them with something that will keep their families warm in the winter time, is a feeling that cannot be matched,” said 1st Lt. Molly Hope, a human resources officer with the 19th Criminal Investigation Division Battalion and officer-in-charge of Operation Pencil.

The troops who participate in volunteer organizations do their part in their off-time, which while deployed, is very precious.

“We have an amazing group of volunteers who, despite being in a deployed environment, want to spend the little free time that they have giving back to the community,” explained Hope. “What a great

representation of the giving spirit of the American Soldier.”

For the back-pack project, about 20 volunteers from all over Bagram Airfield participated. The amount of people who wanted to help was reason enough for Kennedy to get excited and considered the day a success.

“Did you see how many people were there? Not only was it a blast meeting people, pumping music, but we took all of the stuff people back home donated, and in three hours, packed 1,200 back-packs. That is amazing,” Kennedy said.

The ability to come out, meet new people and do something for the Afghan children doesn’t just impact the recipient’s of the back-packs, but the troops who do the work as well.

“The mission I was deployed for involves no interaction with the local population,” explained Hope. “...so to be involved with volunteer organizations like Operation Pencil really makes me feel like I have a purpose here. It makes me feel like I am having a direct impact on Afghan lives.”

“That
is
amazing!”

— Maj. Katherine Kennedy,
320 TPC Commander

The 320th, along with other Soldiers and airmen from around the base took part in Operation Care and Operation Pencil, and packed 1,200 back-packs with school supplies, hygiene items, toys and winter clothes to be distributed by the Afghan National Army to schools in the Parwan Province.

From Newlywed to



Story by Sgt. Erick Yates, 352nd Civil Affairs Command

BELOW: Sgt. Justin Arrington, a civil affairs noncommissioned officer with the 450th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne) and a student at American University, shares a candid moment with his wife, Shayna, during their wedding day in June at the Agricultural Historical Park in Derwood, Md. (Courtesy photo)

An Army Reserve civil affairs Soldier and American University student rose to dual challenges this past summer. In June, Sgt. Justin Arrington, a civil affairs noncommissioned officer with the 450th Civil Affairs Battalion in Riverdale, Md., got married. Two weeks later, he was on his way to Fort Benning, Ga., for one of the

Army's toughest training programs: Ranger School.

"We were married in June and two weeks later, I was in Ranger School," said Arrington, who married his wife, Shayna, at the Agricultural History Farm Park in Derwood, Md.

Shayna, who works as an attorney, said that while their lives are busy, the summer's events were quite significant.

"Every day with Justin is exciting, but this past year has been particularly packed with changes in our lives," she said.

Arrington's road to Ranger School was a year-long process. In 2011, then-Pfc. Arrington completed Airborne School and represented the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) in the Army Reserve Best Warrior Competition. After that, his leaders asked the 26-year-old resident of Washington what he wanted for his next challenge.

Arrington said he knew he wanted to go to another challenging school that would help him develop as a leader. Knowing that civil affairs reservists don't often get a chance to attempt Ranger School, Arrington said he knew he had to convince his leaders he was up to the task.

"It was an easy decision for me to make," Arrington said. "It's always harder to follow through."

Arrington said Sgt. 1st Class Scott Bambu, who helped him prepare for the Best Warrior Competition, came on board again to help him pursue this next challenge. Bambu and a group of Arrington's leaders worked to both make Ranger School a possibility and, more importantly, prepare him to be successful there. Arrington said the mentorship of those leaders is a big



RIGHT: Sgt. Justin Arrington, a civil affairs non-commissioned officer with the 450th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne) and a student at American University, poses with his wife, Shayna, after completing the Army's two-month Ranger School in August. Arrington was promoted shortly after his graduation. (Courtesy Photo)

part of what helped him succeed in the arduous two-month program, which sees nearly half of those who attempt it fail, according to the Ranger Training Brigade website, www.benning.army.mil/infantry/RTB/.

"Nobody can do it alone in the military," he said. "It's not an individual sport; it's a team sport."

Arrington said Ranger School was by no means an awesome summer adventure; it was hard work. According to the RTB website, more than one-third of those who do finish each of the course's phases have to try more than once. He said it was the kind of challenging work that made him question his own determination some days. Arrington said he earned valuable leadership experience there.

"I remember waking up at times and thinking I couldn't go through the entire day," he said.

One of Arrington's mentors and leaders, 1st Sgt. Erich Muehleisen, said that he had no doubt that his Soldier would be successful at Ranger School.

"I believe that no matter which route he chooses, he will continue to show the same veracity and motivation that carried him through his training," he said.

Arrington's military path grew out of his



interest in international studies and relations. He said that by growing up in the D.C. area, he knew in high school that he wanted to go into some sort of international work, and he felt that Washington's American University would be a good place to pursue that interest.

"I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do, but I knew it would be in international relations," he said. "I knew I always wanted to be part of bridging the gap between another country and the U.S."

After starting at AU, Arrington said his professors and mentors asked him what his career goals were beyond his major in international relations. After those conversations, he said, more than one suggested what he wanted

to do had a lot in common with civil affairs Soldiers. Arrington took their advice and enlisted in the Army Reserve.

Getting married and completing Ranger School made Arrington's summer a memorable one, but as he regroupes and refocuses his energy on his civilian life and career goals, his passion for international relations will impel him to complete his bachelor's degree in international relations at American, where he has focused on U.S. foreign policy.

Attorney Achieves Milestone in Army Career

Story and photos by Sgt. Erick Yates,
352nd Civil Affairs Command



TOP: Lt. Col. David Cline poses for a photograph with his wife, Jennifer, at the command's dining out in April.

BOTTOM: Lt. Col. David Cline walks away from the drop zone after completing a jump during Airborne School at Fort Benning, Ga., in August. Cline reached a milestone in his career by completing the training at age 52.



A 52-year-old Wilmington, Del., attorney and Army Reserve officer reached a milestone in his career when he graduated from the Army's Basic Airborne Course at Fort Benning, Ga., in August.

Lt. Col. David Cline, a civil affairs officer with the 352nd Civil Affairs Command, learned during training that he was 10 years older than the oldest instructor and the highest-ranking officer in his training cycle. Since he was over the school's age limit of 35, he needed a waiver and a physical before he could attend the training.

Cline attended airborne training earlier in his career, but broke his hand during training, making him unable to finish it. As he continued in his career, he found himself restricted from some positions that required airborne qualification, so he waited for another opportunity to present itself.

"When I came to the 352nd, I was asked what schools I wanted to go to," Cline said. "To reward me for my good performance with the unit, I was given the chance to attend airborne training."

Cline said he was surrounded by other trainees who were significantly younger than him. He was at least 30 years older than some of his fellow graduates.

"They were very young people," he said. "I wondered if I was ever that young." The school is physically demanding and includes 3.2-mile runs every other day. Cline said he lost 14 pounds going through that punishment in August.

Cline said the most challenging parts of the course were the conditioning and preparation drills trainees went through before they got to jump.

While at the BAC, trainees also take an Army Physical Fitness Test in which men must run two miles in 15:54 and perform 42 pushups and 53 situps in two minutes.

The unit responsible for training at the school has a specific section that guides students to prepare for the training in a hot, humid southern Georgia climate.

Cline said the actual jumps were just as challenging because of weather conditions. He bruised his shoulders and hips running with his parachuting equipment to the plane for one of the five jumps required for graduation.

Cline said he was constantly reminded by the instructors that being the highest-ranking Soldier in the class meant younger Soldiers were looking up to him.

"I'm proud to have completed the training in the twilight of my military career," he said.

WELCOME HOME, 451ST!

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Andy Yoshimura, USACAPOC(A) Public Affairs Office

Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base is located in the fourth largest city in the U.S., Houston. Home to Mission Control, the Houston Texans and 32 redeploying Soldiers who spent 10 months in Afghanistan. Soldiers of Charlie Company, 451st Civil Affairs Battalion, were recognized in a Welcome Home Warrior-Citizen Ceremony hosted by the commander of the 451st, Lt. Col. Michael Howard here, January 12, 2013.

Former Major League Baseball player, and Houston native, Roger Clemens was the guest speaker as Family members, Soldiers employers, peers and colleagues, filled a tent right on the airfield where Air Force drone and fighter jets were located nearby.

“My brother served and I had many uncles that served,” said Clemens. “Because of these troops, we get to do a job that we love doing and feel safe doing it.”

Clemens who was born and raised in Houston, played baseball for Spring Woods High School and eventually played college baseball at the University of Texas and four different baseball teams felt that representing his hometown was important.

“When I have the opportunity to thank the troops, I’ll do it,” Clemens said. “I just enjoy seeing their discipline and how they work together and we can only appreciate that.”

The 32 Soldiers made up of civil affairs, supply, and medical specialists provide support to many provinces in Afghanistan. They worked with local elders in helping provide bridge and road structures and building schools for the local villages.

“It’s an honor to deploy with a great group of guys,” said Spc. Darrell Fales,

a civil affairs specialist. “It’s great to go there and come back as one team and bringing everyone home.”

Fales also works part time as a paramedic for Minute Maid Park (home of the Houston Astros) and appreciated having someone like Roger Clemens to meet with the troops.

He [Clemens] started his roots here. He’s home grown. He’s supportive of the community and makes an attempt to come out here and hang out with the guys, added Fales.

This was not the first time Clemens visited Soldiers of the 451st. Six years prior, he did the same thing as Soldiers were welcomed back by the community at Minute Maid Park after their tour in Iraq.

“The reason why we invited Roger is he is very supportive of the military,” said Maj. Michael Creeden, the commander of Charlie Company. Creeden added that the Soldiers appreciate someone popular like Clemens to be here.

The commander of the 350th Civil Affairs Command, Brig. Gen. Mark McQueen handed out the Welcome Home Warrior-Citizen Award to each of the redeploying Soldier for their contribution as a Soldier and as a warrior-citizen. Soldiers employers and Family members were also recognized in supporting the unit while they

were deployed.

“It feels good to have my Family here today,” said Sgt. Vicky Bratcher, supply sergeant for the 451st and a mother of four. “It makes me proud because I did something.”

For Bratcher, being away from the kids was the hardest part of the deployment.

“With my youngest daughter turning one during the deployment, when I came back it was hard for me to adjust to her and her adjusting to me.”

Staff Sgt. Ron Pena, a civil affairs specialist who carried his 1-year-old daughter as she held an autographed baseball from Clemens, was fortunate to come back a month early to be home for the birth of his first child.

“Being back is always good, but being there for the birth of my child is even better,” said Pena.

As the ceremony ended, so does the final saga to Charlie Company’s deployment. Now these Soldiers will go back to their full time jobs, schools, and being a fathers and mothers.

“This ceremony is the conclusion to our deployment,” added Bratcher, “while holding her daughter’s hand.”

Former Major League Baseball pitcher, Roger Clemens, speaks to Charlie Company, 451st Civil Affairs Battalion prior to the Welcome Home Warrior Ceremony at Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base in Houston. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Andy Yoshimura, USACAPOC(A) PAO)



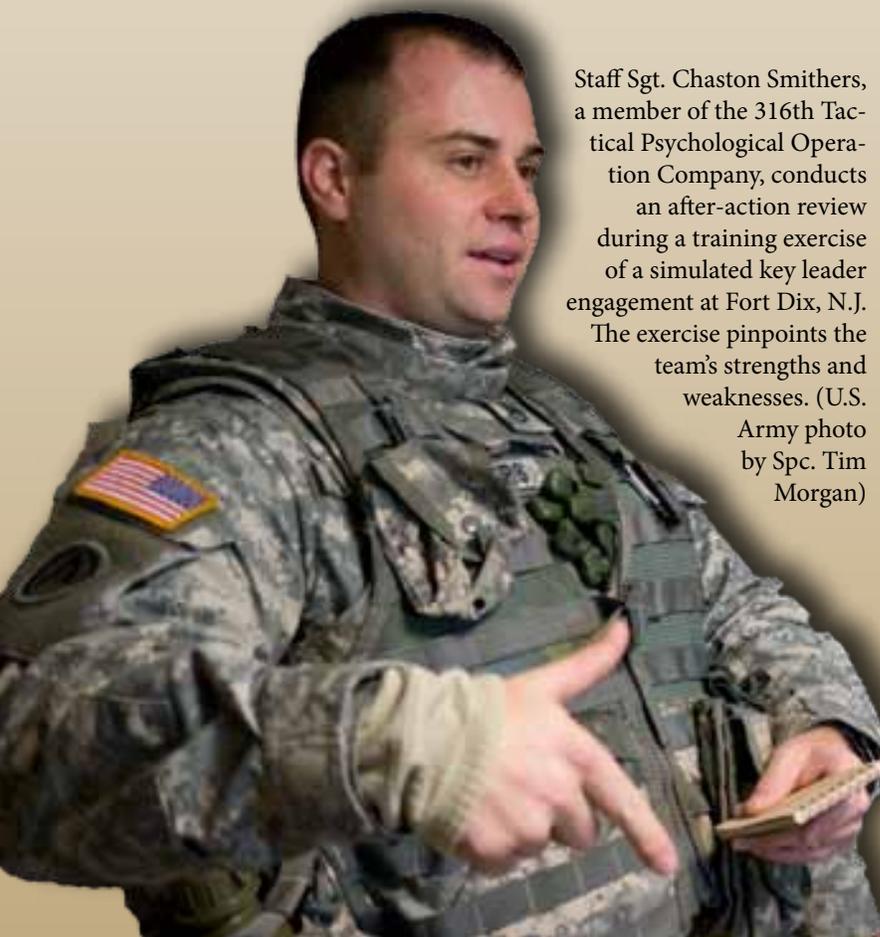


TOP: Soldiers from the 316th Psychological Operations Company stand in formation during a departure ceremony held at Indianapolis International Airport. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Ben Mota)

24 Deploy to Horn of Africa



Story by U.S. Air Force



Staff Sgt. Chaston Smithers, a member of the 316th Tactical Psychological Operation Company, conducts an after-action review during a training exercise of a simulated key leader engagement at Fort Dix, N.J. The exercise pinpoints the team's strengths and weaknesses. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Tim Morgan)

Words of encouragement and gratitude filled the air as airport travelers and awaiting Family members thanked Grissom Soldiers preparing to deploy to Africa.

Twenty-four Soldiers from the U.S. Army Reserve's 316th Tactical Psychological Operations Company at Grissom Air Reserve Base departed from the Indianapolis International Airport Dec. 7, on their way to conduct additional training at Fort Dix, N.J. There they will complete their final training before deploying to the Horn of Africa in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The 316th TPC provides worldwide military information support operations to conventional and special operations units, both in peace and war.

“Our primary responsibility is to conduct military information support operations and allow for the truthful dissemination

RIGHT: Staff Sgt. Chaston Smithers (left), a member of the 316th Tactical Psychological Operation Company, plans for a simulated key leader engagement with his team member Sgt. Brandon Olivi during a training exercise at Fort Dix, N.J. The unit's first deployment will be to Africa starting next year. (U.S. Army Photo by Spc. Tim Morgan)



of information to foreign audiences to support foreign policy and national objectives,” said Maj. Glenn Baugh, 316th TPC Commander. “We do this by disseminating media to the local population that supports national objectives and the units in the area.”

Preparation is an essential part of any deployment, especially when the deployment is overseas. Members of the company were notified of the deployment in January, started initial training in March and were mobilized a month ago to conduct essential training.

“For the last month we have been conducting culture training consistent to the area we will be deploying to,” explained Baugh. “We also conducted combat life saver courses and numerous online training courses to prepare us for our deployment.”

While Soldiers of the company have strenuously prepared for their future task at hand, the looming idea of being away from Family still seemed to weigh heavily on their minds.

“You can prepare for a deployment, but you can't prepare for leaving a loved one,” said Sgt. 1st Class Warren Seegers, 316th PSYOP Company tactical detachment acting first sergeant. “Being away is always

the toughest part of the deployment.” Seegers spent his last moments in Indiana with his wife, who joined him at the airport to participate in a departure ceremony just before the Soldiers boarded the plane.

Sen. Dan Coats, Senator-elect Joe Donnelly and Indiana State Rep. Kevin Mahan were present at the ceremony to thank the Soldiers for their service to their country and to offer words of encouragement to Family members.

“When we travel around the world, people often come up and say ‘Your country is so extraordinary, how did that happen?’” said Donnelly. “And the answer is easy; because of you, the dedication you have, the love for the country, and the example you set for all of us.

Grissom is not only home to the 434th Air Refueling Wing, the largest KC-135 Stratotanker unit in the Air Force Reserve Command, but also three Army Reserve units and a Marine Corps communications detachment. Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors and Marines routinely deploy from Grissom in support of the Department of Defense missions and U.S. strategic objectives.

“This country is extraordinary, because of you, the dedication you have, the love for the country, and the example you set for all of us.”

— Senator-elect Joe Donnelly

Sandy Strikes

Hurricane

by David Ronald
Bruce Pekrul

“It blows from above, and blows from beyond, and blows until all that we have is gone. All that we’ve worked for and all that we have, is gone in the blink of an eye... A moment ago we had a fine home, with everything there in its place, and then in an instant our whole world has changed, we see naught but a large empty space.”

Story by Sgt. Patience Okhuofu, 351st Tactical Psychological Operations Company

Such was the plight of most residents of New York and New Jersey when Hurricane Sandy struck on Oct. 29.

Cpl. Michael Pushkal, a newlywed Soldier with the 360th Tactical Psychological Operations Company, came back from his honeymoon a few days before Sandy.

“My wife and I got the basic stuff like food, batteries and flashlight,” said Pushkal. “I have neighbors that lived in my neighborhood for the past sixty seven years who told me that they have never flooded. So the chance of being flooded never crossed our mind.”

Sandy, a category 2 hurricane, proved different. At about 2 o’clock, things started looking bad for this Toms River neighborhood when the wind started picking up and ripping the roofs off the houses. Cpl. Pushkal who lived by a lagoon, still felt confident that he would not be flooded but decided to move all the furniture from one side of the house to another in case the glass windows shatters.

“Around 7:30pm the lagoons started coming up, contrary to the forecast placing the high tide at about 1am. At that point I decided to pack a bag and leave with my wife to my parents’ house,” he said.

But they never made it to their room. Just then, their neighbor came banging on their door to inform them that they were about to get flooded. With a few items, two dogs and a cat, they camped with other neighbors in a nearby two story house.

Seeing there was no movement in his neighbors’ houses, Pushkal left the safety of the house he was in and waded through water that was already about 4 feet deep. He feared they might not be aware that their houses were filling up with water, so he started to bang on doors. He was able to assist some of his neighbors to the two-story home where ultimately eight people and seven animals crammed in one upstairs room.

By the time rescue workers arrived, the first floor was covered with water, houses were going up in flames all around them, and Pushkal’s own house was flooded. They had to evacuate through the window upstairs.

On the Saturday following the storm, thanks to Sgt. Justin Vail and the 360th TPC, 17 people (Soldiers and Family members), armed with trash bags, masks, and cleaning supplies showed up at Pushkal’s house.

Pushkal contacted a shipping container company to get a portable storage unit delivered. That made it easier to store the few items they managed to salvage. Pushkal had also left his windows open to enable ventilation and to keep mold from festering

“When Cpl. Pushkal called me and said he got flooded, I knew we had to do something, seeing as we are one big Army Family and we take care of our own,” said Vail, a close friend of Pushkal. Vail said that being without electricity for eleven days paled in comparison to the devastation that he encountered in Pushkal’s neighborhood.

One of Our Own

With emotion-laden voice, Vail recalled the moment they finished cleaning up his house and, instead of going to their respective homes, his buddies went door to door around his neighborhood assisting those in need.

“I was so proud of them,” he said.

When asked why they decided to assist Pushkal’s neighbors, Spc. Timothy Kobe, who drove all the way from Philadelphia said, “It’s hard to look around and see people in need and do nothing. It just seems natural.”

Because he is an Army Reserve Soldier, Pushkal did not qualify for some of the assistance that is readily available to active duty Soldiers said 360th Family readiness group leader Lindsey Harrar.

“Knowing what is available at the city, state, and federal level to assist victims is crucial for Army Reserve FRG leaders,” said Harrar who is still investigating different programs that are out there to help Soldiers like Pushkal.

So far, the 360th Command Team has set up a fund to provide immediate financial assistance for Pushkal and his pregnant wife.

“This brought our unit closer,” said Capt. Phaedra Rosario, commander of the 360th TPC. “I have been telling my Soldiers that this is more than a unit; we are Family and Families look out for each other. They listened and have surpassed my expectations. It is a pleasure and honor to be the Commander of the 360th.”



The destructive force of the ocean is visible on Mantoloking, N.J., where Hurricane Sandy buried cars and knocked houses off of their foundations altogether. (U.S. Army photo by Andrew Stamer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)



New Jersey National Guard Soldiers assist displaced residents at the town of Hoboken Oct. 31. Four trucks and eight Soldiers were dispatched to Hoboken at the request of the state Office of Emergency Management to assist in rescue efforts of approximately 2,000 displaced residents. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Joseph Davis)

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE MU

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Brad Staggs, Atterbury - Muscatatuck Public Affairs Office

A man stands in the doorway of his shop in the marketplace as Capt. Ryan Demro, team leader of Delta Company, 412th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne), approaches to talk to him. Demro asks the man about the area, what the mood of the people is, and if he has seen any Taliban in the area. The conversation goes well and Demro and his team get the information they are looking for before heading to the next location.

This may seem like a normal conversation, but a trained Civil Affairs Soldier can extract very useful information from a simple exchange, including how best to help the local people to get their lives back on track. In the words of Maj. Ron Deweese, D Co. commander, Civil Affairs plays a critical role in today's battle space.

"There is so much more than just de-

feating an enemy force in battle," Deweese explained. "For the U.S. Army, for the Department of Defense, that's the easy part. It's shaping what happens after the combat takes place that is the heart of battle. Especially in today's operating environments."

The 412th is preparing for an overseas rotation and, even sooner, a rotation at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif. As a lead-up to their training and deployment, 412th Commander, Lt. Col. David Volkman, brought his battalion to Camp Atterbury's training range, Muscatatuck, in order to take advantage of the one-of-a-kind training opportunities.

"In January, we are training with the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, at NTC," Volkman said. "Training here gives us the chance to sharpen our skills before heading out there." Working on real world Civil Affairs skills at Muscatatuck also brought the commander of

BELOW: Soldiers of D Co., 412th Civil Affairs Battalion from Columbus, Ohio, arrive at the mock Afghan marketplace in order to talk to role players during training at the Muscatatuck Training Range.



SCATATUCK



the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), Maj. Gen. Jeffrey A. Jacobs, to Indiana and Ohio.

“I am here to check on training. Plain and simple,” Jacobs admitted. “Our mission, as any Army unit’s mission, is to be prepared and be ready.

With nearly 13,000 Soldiers and employees working in the Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations world, Jacobs is a busy man. His command makes up approximately 94 percent of the DoD’s total Civil Affairs forces and more than 70 percent of the DoD’s PSYOP forces.

Jacobs still likes to get out to view training in the field to ensure that the level of training is meeting the demand for his Soldiers. “Civil Affairs plays a huge role,” Jacobs said. “It’s evident in the demand signal we get from the combatant commanders to deploy our forces. Civil Affairs is going to continue

to be in demand after we get out of Afghanistan in supporting theater security cooperation plans around the globe.”

According to USACAPOC(A) Command Sergeant Major Harry Bennett, that role is being filled by the highest quality Soldiers.

“I think the quality of Civil Affairs Soldiers is excellent, and that’s a great indicator of what we have for young men and women in the Army Reserve,” Bennett said about the Soldiers he talks to everyday. “90 percent of all CA forces are reservists and are out there as active members of our community - first responders, teachers, and government workers who are making America grow and, at the same time, getting their experience overseas in real world operations. It’s pretty impressive.” Demro’s team and the others who are training at Muscatatuck in various



BELOW: Cpt. Ryan Demro talks to Cpt. Perry Thomas who is playing the part of an Afghan national at the mock marketplace during training at Muscatatuck Urban Training Center on Saturday.



“Camp Atterbury and Muscatatuck are great facilities. There’s no place like Muscatatuck, frankly, in the entire United States”

— Major General Jeffrey A. Jacobs, Commander, USACAPOC(A)

scenarios with civilians at the marketplace, radio station, water utility, and village do a fine job, but Jacobs is a hands-on commander who always pushes his people to do their job better, to the best of their abilities.

“We’re making great progress,” said Jacobs. “No commander worth his salt is ever satisfied with the readiness of his unit and I’m no different in that regard. But the 412th is making great progress.

Following three days of urban training at Muscatatuck, the 412th conducted a battalion jump at Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center, in which Jacobs will participate.

“Camp Atterbury and Muscatatuck are great facilities,” Jacobs said. “There’s no place like Muscatatuck, frankly, in the entire United States. So I think it’s a great venue, and I think the training is more than worthwhile. Civil Affairs will continue to train here.”



Capt. Ryan Demro, 412th Civil Affairs Battalion, gives a briefing to his Soldiers prior to heading out on their Civil Affairs mission during training at Muscatatuck Urban Training Center.

Established Program Gets New Audience

Story by Capt. Saska Ball,
USACAPOC(A) Deputy PAO

Since the launch of the Comprehensive Soldier & Family Fitness-Performance and Resilience Program in 2006, only active duty Soldiers have participated. But on Jan. 5, 2013, the first U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers had the privilege of starting on their year-long journey to total fitness.

Soldiers of the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion, Greensboro, N.C., received their first of six classes on mental skills foundations followed by practical application while using the engagement skills trainer to apply what they learned in the classroom to maintain mental sharpness in a stressful environment.

“The Reserve Soldier can really gain value from this program because we’re both citizens and Soldiers at the same time, so these skill sets are transferable on the military and civilian side,” said Lt. Col. Robert Cooley, battalion commander for the 422nd. “Soldiers become better in their school work or civilian jobs, they become crisper and better on the military side, this is a win-win on many different levels,” he added.

For one weekend a month from January to July, the Soldiers will have lessons incorporated into their battle assembly training schedule: learning confidence building, attention control, energy management, goal setting and integrating imagery, with a culmination event occurring during their two-week annual training, where they will be evaluated on all the lessons



learned.

While the first six months of training occurs, leadership and trainers will continue to discuss and plan the way ahead on how to adapt the program specifically to the Army Reserve Soldier in order to make it a one-year program, the same amount of time an active duty unit goes through the program.

“Army Reserve Soldiers have different backgrounds but we know from research that what we do applies to all performances in life. Where an active duty Soldier is going to focus on their basic MOS [military occupation specialty] related tasks, applying these things and maybe a little bit on the side, the Army Reserve Soldiers can go and apply these things in their civilian jobs just as much as while they are here,” said Joshua Orr, program specialist.

Spc. Dustin Sutton, a civil affairs specialist for the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion, sits behind a MK-19 Grenade Launcher during a simulated exercise. This was Sutton’s first time operating this weapon and was evaluated on confidence building during the Comprehensive Soldier & Family Fitness-Performance and Resilience Program. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Andy Yoshimura)

TRAIN AS YOU FIGHT

By Master Sgt. Dave Johnson, 412th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne)

The 412th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne), based in Columbus, Ohio, used cadre and one outside instructor to train its Alpha and Bravo Company Soldiers in rappelling and tactical mountaineering.

“This tactical, team building training was a tremendous benefit to our Soldiers,” said Sgt. Maj. Ron Wright. “The training combined physical fitness, land navigation, terrain association, and a lot of teamwork in tactical scenarios.”

During the cool morning, the Soldiers dismounted, loaded their 40-pound rucksacks on their backs and began the one-mile trek to the cliffs for training.

The sky had silvered, foliage was red and amber, the brush was very thick -- typical Ohio forest terrain.

When the Soldiers arrived at the cliffs, though, they saw that the terrain is similar to much of Afghanistan.

“That’s why I like Hocking Hills,” said Capt. Patrick Seaman, Bravo Company commander. “Rappelling and mountaineering here will benefit these Soldiers.”

In order for the Soldiers to begin training, they had to ascend to the top of the cliffs where Wright was waiting.

Many Soldiers stated that with this training in navigating

Pfc. Richard Elliott (left) and Spc. Leslie Dempsey (right) receive instruction on knot-tying from Sgt. Maj. Ron Wright (middle). (Photo by Valerie Minor)



“This is great tactical training. It is financially feasible to conduct, involves all members of the companies and provides intense, demanding tasks for all Soldiers to complete.”

— Sgt. Maj. Ron Wright

difficult terrain, once they are deployed to a mountainous region, they will reflect back on this, knowing their unit prepared them for combat and survival.

“I climbed only once in Afghanistan,” said Seaman. “But I know from that experience that proper climbing skills are imperative.”

Wright, the operations senior non-commissioned officer, organized a tactical teambuilding scenario with the help of his fellow police officer co-worker, Master Sgt. Joe Pickering.

The two senior NCOs constructed four rappelling lanes. All Soldiers entered the rappelling lane tactically, using small squad tactics: hand signals, command and control, move with cover and concealment, and utilized troop leading procedures.

“I learned how to lead and be led, step-by-step, in a combat training situation,” said Spc. Colton Denig, a member of Bravo Company.

The troops were so excited about mountaineering; many are vying for a training seat in the mountain warfare course.

“This is great tactical training,” said Wright. “It is financially feasible to conduct, involves all members of the companies and provides intense, demanding tasks for all Soldiers to complete.”

Because the 412th conducts tactical training during battle assembly weekends to prepare Soldiers for deployments, its Soldiers are primed for any mission.

RIGHT: Capt. Brad Fleming is at the half-way point as he rappels down the cliff at Hocking Hills, Ohio. (Photo by Valerie Minor)



STEEL CITY UNIT BIDS FAREWELL

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Andy Yoshimura

Soldiers of the 303rd Tactical Psychological Operation Company stand in formation during their mobilization ceremony. The 303rd will spend the next month at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst for mobilization training then will spend nine months in Afghanistan providing military information support operation with the Marines.

Dozens of Family members and Soldiers lined outside the McGarity U.S. Army Reserve Center, bidding their farewells to more than 60 Soldiers from the 303rd Tactical Psychological Operation Company. Soldiers and Family braved the 25-degree temperature with warm hugs and kisses before boarding the two buses that will take these Warrior Citizens to Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., for mobilization training before deploying to Afghanistan this spring.

These Army Reserve Soldiers will provide military information support operations with the Marines in various locations in Afghanistan.

Mobilizing an Army unit is no easy task. Weeks and months of preparation are needed to make sure these Soldiers are trained and Family members are informed on struggles that they might face while their loved one is deployed.

“As part of a leadership team it is our job to make sure that they are trained properly for their mission,” said 1st Sgt. Nicholas Moore. “And also that they are communicating back home and make sure that their families are taken care of.”

A Yellow Ribbon event, which helps Family members with resources needed before, during and after a deployment, was held three days prior. For Spc. Christie Chester, a Yellow Ribbon representative for the 303rd, her ultimate goal is to have the families better prepared.

“We need the Family to have all of the information that they need and to know what resources that they have out there so they can take care of themselves,” said Chester. “Family readiness plus Soldier readiness equals mission readiness.”

For approximately 20 percent of the Soldiers mobilizing, this will be their first mobilization. The busy combination of a Yellow Ribbon event and a mobilization ceremony during the same week has helped the first-timers.

Spc. Robert Fabyanic, 40, a sales manager for Radio Shack and a psychological operations specialist joined the Army Reserve for his two daughters.



LEFT: First Sgt. Nicholas Moore, holds his daughter Alexis for the last time before boarding on the bus to Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., for mobilization training. Moore will spend about nine months in Afghanistan as the 303rd first sergeant.

RIGHT: Sgt. Matthew Parson, hugs his loved one during the 303rd Tactical Psychological Operations Company Mobilization Ceremony. Parson will travel to Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., for mobilization training then will spend approximately nine months in Afghanistan conducting military information support operations with the Marines.

“With this being my first deployment, it’s a bag of mixed feelings. I’m excited to go out and finally get to go and do my job but at the same time, I am definitely going to miss my Family.”

“It’s a new experience for me, it’s a new experience for them,” added Fabyanic.

A mobilization ceremony means a lot for these men and women of the 303rd as it brought not only Family members and friends but also the Pittsburgh community closer to the unit.

“My father, who served two tours in Vietnam, didn’t get anything like this when he left or came home,” said Staff Sgt. Tobe Hutchins, a PSYOP sergeant for the 303rd.

Hutchins, a mother of four and a grandmother

of two, appreciated today’s events.

“Out of all of my Family, it is hitting my dad the most because I am the only one out of 14 kids to have joined the military. This mobilization ceremony means a lot for our Family and it shows that we have the [community] support behind us.”

For the next month, Soldiers of the 303rd will train in various tactical and technical exercises at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst that will prepare them for many missions in Afghanistan. While completing these missions is the short-term goal, for most of the Soldiers there is only one long-term goal.

“We want everybody that goes with us to come back with us safely,” added Chester.

Peacemaker talks with Master Sgt. Coreen Foote about Sexual Harassment Assault Response and Prevention.



Q: What is SHARP?

A: *In December 2008 the Secretary of the Army (SA) and the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) directed the HQDA Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Office to restructure and integrate Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH). The new Division became what is now the Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) Office.*

Q: Why do we have a program like SHARP?

A: *To eliminate incidents of sexual harassment and assault through a comprehensive program that centers on:*

- *Awareness and prevention*
- *Training and education*
- *Reporting*
- *Response*
- *Victim advocacy*
- *Accountability*

Q: What should a Soldier do if they do get sexually harassed?

A: *The Soldier can contact:*

- *First Line Supervisor*
- *Sexual Assault Response Coordinator*
- *Victim Advocate*
- *Unit Chaplain*
- *Unit Commander*

Q: Why does a Soldier not report the incident when they get sexually harassed or assaulted?

A: *There are various reasons why a Soldier may be reluctant to report.*



- Embarrassment or shame
- Fear of reprisal by perpetrator or command
- Depression and feelings of helplessness
- Low self-esteem
- Anger and/or guilt
- Belief that nothing will be done
- Fear of being punished for “collateral” misconduct (e.g. underage drinking, etc.)

Q: How often does a Soldier get sexually harassed or assaulted?

A: An average 233,986 Americans age 12 and older are sexually assaulted each year. Every two minutes, someone in the U.S. is sexually assaulted. One out of every six American women has been the victim of an attempted or completed rape in her lifetime. Among all victims, about nine out of ten are female. One out of every 33 American men has been the victim of an attempted or completed rape in his lifetime. About 10% of all victims are male.

Q: Do deployments raise the percentage of possible attacks?

A: Deployed environments can present special risks for Army personnel because: 1) Sleeping areas (tents, bunkers, and other buildings) may be less secure in a deployed environment. 2) Many non-Army personnel are present in deployed unit and working areas. 3) Deployed environments may have different lighting conditions and facilities than those in garrison. 4) Different cultures may treat females differently than they are treated in the U.S.

Q: Who should you contact if you are a victim of a sexual assault?

A: First, get to a safe place. If you are in need of urgent medical attention, call 911. If you are not injured, you still need medical assistance to protect your health. The medical treatment facility (MTF) offers you a safe and caring environment. To protect evidence, it is important that you do not shower, brush your teeth, put on make-up, eat, drink, or change your clothes until advised to do so. You or the MTF may report the crime to law enforcement, criminal investigation agencies, or to your chain of command. If you feel uncomfortable reporting the crime, consider calling a confidential counseling resource available to you such as your Unit Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, Unit Victim Advocate and or Chaplain.

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