

11th Signal Brigade

THUNDERBIRD

Quarterly

HAPPY 71st BIRTHDAY

October 2014
16- ISSUE 4

COL PARKS
BDE CDR



CSM RAMBERT
BDE CSM

11th Sig. Bde. 71st Birthday
40th ESB Combatives Training
62nd ESB Change-of-Command
86th ESB NCO/Soldier of the Quarter Board
57th ESB Change-of-Command
16th TIN I3MP

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THUNDERBIRD QUARTERLY

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Command and Editorial Staff

Commander: Col. James C. Parks, III
Command Sergeant Major: Command Sgt. Maj. Maurice R. Rambert
Brigade Public Affairs OIC: Capt. Peter Bogart
Editor, Layout, and Graphic Design: Capt. Peter Bogart, Staff Sgt. Kelvin Ringold

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peter.m.bogart.mil@mail.mil or kelvin.p.ringold4.mil@mail.mil

The 11th Signal Brigade Public Affairs Office can be reached by mail at:

HHC 11th Signal Brigade
ATTN: Public Affairs Office
Ft. Hood, TX 76544
Or by Phone at (254) 553-9267/9269

11th Sig. Bde. History

The Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Signal Brigade, was constituted on 1 September 1943 as the 3103rd Signal Service Battalion and activated 20 December 1943 at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. The battalion departed for England on 23 January 1944 and to France on 31 August 1944 in support of the war efforts. During World War II, the battalion received campaign credit for Northern France, Rhineland, and Central Europe. After returning to the United States, the battalion was inactivated at Fort Monmouth on 8 October 1945.

The battalion remained on inactive status until 4 September 1964, when Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 11th Signal Group, assigned to Fort Lewis, Washington, was activated. The group was reorganized and re-designated Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Signal Group, 25 April 1966. The following December, the group was reassigned to Fort Huachuca, Ariz. and designated on 1 October 1979 as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Signal Brigade.

In October 2001, the 86th Signal Battalion deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) until the spring of 2002. In August 2002, the A Co 40th Signal Battalion, deployed to the Horn of Africa. Thunderbirds supported CENTCOM's largest exercise of the year, Internal Look 2002 from Kuwait and continued their participation in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) in the spring of 2003 deploying over 1200 Thunderbirds to the CENTCOM AOR.

From May to October 2005, the 40th Signal Battalion and the 69th Cable Company deployed to support OIF 05-07. Their redeployment was spread from May to September 2006. In August 2006, the 86th Signal Battalion deployed to Iraq to continue to support OIF. The following year, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Signal Brigade, deployed in support of OIF 07-09, 3 October 2007 through 24 December 2008. In December 2007, the 40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion deployed to Iraq for a fifteen month deployment ending in March 2009.

On 1 October 2009, the 11th SIG BDE transferred command authority from the United States Army Network Enterprise Technology Command and the 9th Army Signal Command (NETCOM/9th ASC) at Fort Huachuca, to the U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) and III Corps at Fort Hood, Texas. The 11th Signal Brigade's home base continues to be Fort Huachuca.

In the spring of 2010, the 86th ESB deployed to Operation Enduring Freedom 10-11 as "Task Force Tiger" until the spring of 2011. The 40th ESB deployed June of 2010 in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn returning June of 2011. The 62d ESB deployed April of 2011 in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom returning October of 2011. 62nd ESB deployed again in September 2013 to Afghanistan and returned in June 2013.

57th ESB deployed 2 companies to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Bravo Company deployed in August 2011 and returned in July 2012. Meanwhile, Charlie Company deployed in March 2012 and returned in November 2012.

HHC, 11th SIG BDE deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in January 2012 and returned in December 2012, and then moved the Brigade Headquarters from Fort Huachuca to Fort Hood in June 2013.

In 2013, 62nd ESB deployed to Kuwait in support of CENTCOM. In 2014, 57th ESB deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom until July 2014, 62nd ESB redeployed from Kuwait to Fort Hood in June 2014, and 40th ESB deployed to Kuwait where they replaced the 62nd ESB.

Thunderbirds have supported contingency operations and training exercises at home and abroad in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Somalia, Egypt, Honduras, Korea, Cuba, Haiti, Afghanistan and Iraq. This operational tempo has given rise to the Thunderbirds' claim of the "Most Active Signal Brigade in the Army." "The Sun Never Sets on the Thunderbirds"

Shoulder Sleeve Insignia



Description

The 11th Signal Brigade shoulder sleeve insignia is centered on a white oblong shield with an 1/8—inch yellow border, arched at the top and the bottom, 2 inches in width and 3 inches in height overall. A white globe with orange gridlines is surmounted by a black Thunderbird with yellow lightning bolts extending over the globe from it's orange eye.

Symbolism

Orange and white are colors used for the Signal Corps. The globe signifies the worldwide scope of the unit's mission. The Thunderbird, an American Indian symbol of great power that controls the skies and sees all that occurs on the ground, refers to the unit's Southwestern heritage. The lightning, issuing from the Thunderbird's eye as in Indian legend, denotes the speed and abilities of electronic communications. The black Thunderbird and white background symbolize the night and day capabilities of the unit.

Distinctive Unit Insignia



Description

Two silver beacons, the baskets conjoined at the upper edge and ladders reversed, with orange and silver flames. The three areas within the confines of the beacons are black with the center area charged with a silver fleur-de-lis all above a silver motto scroll inscribed "FLEXIBILITY-DEPENDABILITY" in black enamel letters.

Symbolism

Flaming beacons are among the oldest devices used for signaling and communication. Two have been used in reference to the sending and receiving of messages and two poles also simulate the number "11," the organization's numerical designation. The three black areas and fleur-de-lis refer to the organization's three battle honors in Europe during World War II.

Brigade Commander



Col. James C. Parks, III

'Commander's Corner'

Thunderbirds ,

To the Soldiers, Families, and friends of the 11th Signal Brigade, I'd like to extend to all of you the warmest holiday greetings.

Thank you for the outstanding job you are doing executing missions and staying ready during this time when the nation continues to call on the Thunderbird Brigade for mission worldwide. It truly is a team effort and the more than 2300 Soldiers of the 11th Signal Brigade all play a role in ensuring our mission success.

During this holiday season, I ask each one of you to remember both those that are no longer with us and those currently serving overseas in harm's way, both Thunderbird Soldiers and other fellow Soldiers from across the Army. All too often we forget that the freedoms and way of life that we are afforded in this great country also come with a great price, the service of those in uniform today and the service of those who have come before us.

Finally I ask that during this holiday season you take the time to take care of yourself, your loved ones, and your fellow Soldiers. The holidays are a joyous time but can also be a challenging time for those who have recently lost loved ones or are alone during the holidays. Reach out to those around you and let's make sure that nobody is alone during the holiday season.

Thanks again for what you do and have a great 2014 holiday season.

The Sun Never Sets on the Thunderbirds.

— Thunderbird 6

Command Sergeant Major

'Troop Talk'

Thunderbirds ,

I recently attended a seminar on the Army's Ready and Resilience campaign. The Ready and Resilient Campaign integrates and synchronizes multiple efforts and initiatives to improve the readiness and resilience of the Total Army, Soldiers, Army Civilians and Families. Ready and Resilient will build upon mental, physical, emotional, behavioral and spiritual resilience in our Soldiers, Families and Civilians to enhance their ability to manage the rigors and challenges of a demanding profession.



Command Sgt. Maj. Maurice A. Rambert

Our profession is a demanding one and it is easy to get overwhelmed by the daily stressors of Army life and lose sight of the bigger picture. The Ready and Resilient campaign is designed to help leaders at all levels manage their mission readiness as a unit with the well being of their Soldiers.

Being ready means having the ability to accomplish assigned tasks or missions through resilience, individual and collective team training, and leadership. Resilience is the mental, physical, emotional, and behavioral ability to face and cope with adversity, adapt to change, recover, learn and grow from setbacks.

Being ready and resilient is a critical part of our job because a healthy mind and body are essential to individual and unit readiness. The Thunderbird Brigade continues to be called up on for various missions around the world and will continue to for as long as all of us are in this unit. It is important that we take care of each other, use the tools provided to us, and take resiliency training seriously so that we cannot just continue to achieve mission success but also take care of those on our left and right.

Resilient individuals are better able to bounce back and overcome diversity by leveraging mental and emotional skills and seeking out training. This resilience can be built, maintained, and strengthened through regular training.

I encourage all of you to take resiliency training to heart and continue to use the resources available to you. Below is the Ready and Resilient website and the Military Crisis Line, both are available 24/7 for you to use.

<http://www.army.mil/readyandresilient>

Military Crisis Line (U.S.) 800-273-8255 (TALK)

The Sun Never Sets,

— Thunderbird 7

Brigade Chaplain



Lt. Col. Zan Sellers

'Inspirations'

Hello, my name is Zan Sellers, your new 11th Signal Brigade Chaplain. Our new Chaplain Assistant is SGT Octavia Martin. What an honor and privilege to serve as a Thunderbird. Both SGT Martin and I, your Unit Ministry Team (UMT), are glad to be here.

This is the time of year for many of us to observe important religious holidays. First, as Americans all of us have Thanksgiving – a time when our country stops to be thankful for what we have. If you are with your family, take time to be thankful for them and the opportunity you have to be with them. If you are away from your family, please reach out to them during the

holidays. If you are Jewish you have Hanukkah in December and if you are Christian there is Christmas. For both faith traditions there will be special worship services on your posts. Again, spend quality time with your Soldiers and Family.

This is also a time to make sure we are taking care of each other. Look into the eyes of your Soldier or Family member. If they need help there is great help available for them. The UMT is a resource. We also have great Military Family Life Consultants (MFLC). Mr. Jones, our FRSA, is willing to help. Fort Hood has one of only two Family Life Training Centers in the Army. The FLTC is located next to Spirit of Fort Hood Chapel. We have Behavioral Health professionals, physicians, social workers and your Chain of Command. Several times leaders have done the right thing and escorted personally their troubled Soldier to see a Chaplain or MFLC. IF you need help or see someone that needs help, please get it out. We want to help.

Also, there should be more Strong Bonds events for all units after the new calendar year. This includes both Singles and Couples events and especially for those who have redeployed. Look for these great opportunities of great training.

The other UMTs in the Brigade are: 40th ESB, CH Calvert and SPC Hill, currently in Kuwait; 57th ESB, CH Cochell and SPC Wallace; 62d ESB, SPC Wilson; and 86th ESB, CH Remy and SPC Kim. CH Holsinger, the 62d CH, leaves the Brigade after over two years of ministry and a deployment with the Thunderbirds.

- Thunderbird Chaplain

Thunderbird Brigade Celebrates it's 71st Birthday

By Capt. Pete Bogart

On September 1st, the 11th Signal Brigade turned 71. To commemorate the event, the Brigade Commander Team hosted a cake cutting in the Brigade HQ. Brigadier General Tim Lai, United Kingdom, Deputy III Corps Commander, attended the event and cut the cake as the guest of honor. General Lai said that he particularly appreciated the Brigade motto of "The Sun Never Sets on the Thunderbirds" since the same saying was also what used to be used when describing the British Empire.



Col. James Parks, Brigadier General Tim Lai, Command Sgt. Major Maurice Rambert, participate in the cake cutting in honor of the 11th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade's 71st Birthday on September 4th, 2014 at Fort Hood, TX

The 11th Signal Brigade was originally constituted on September 1st, 1943, as the 3103rd Signal Service Battalion and activated in December, 1943 at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey.



The battalion departed for England on 23 January 1944 and to France on 31 August 1944 and played a critical role in deception operations leading up to the invasion of Normandy. After the war, the Battalion was deactivated but reactivated in 1966 at Fort Lewis, Washington as the 11th Signal Group. Since being reactivated, the 11th Signal Brigade has participated in every major conflict and numerous other humanitarian and peacekeeping missions across the globe. The Thunderbird

Brigade continues this tradition today with Soldiers deployed worldwide supporting combat and humanitarian missions and stateside supporting training and homeland security missions, living up to it's motto of The Sun Never Sets on the Thunderbirds.

Thunderbirds Complete FTX

By Sgt. Jacob Mahaffey



Soldiers from the 11th Sig. Bde. receive training on a SNAP Terminal, or a SIPR/NIPR access point August 16 during a field training exercise on Fort Hood.

Soldiers from the 11th Signal Brigade completed a field training exercise on Fort Hood, Aug. 12-20 to ensure they remain in a high state of readiness for any mission.

The Thunderbird brigade is a theater tactical signal brigade, able to provide communications support to the Soldier or customer from any location in the world. Because of this mission, the Thunderbirds must be able to perform in austere environments in all types of weather.

“The brigade deployed to the field to evaluate our ability to respond on short notice to support a disaster response mission within CONUS,” said Capt. Jordan Norrish, officer-in-charge of network operations, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Sig. Bde.

The 11th Sig. Bde. Thunderbirds conduct quarterly field exercises using various scenarios they could potentially face. The specific scenario for this FTX was a hurricane striking South Texas.

“This FTX involved the activation of an expeditionary signal company with the brigade headquarters serving as the joint network control center to provide network monitoring and mission command of the tactical communication teams in the field,” Norrish said.

The FTX took place during the hottest two weeks of the year, and in Central Texas the heat can be grueling and unforgiving. The Thunderbirds wanted to ensure their ability of being able to move tactically independently while at the same time training within the safety standards for extremely hot weather.

“The keystone of the FTX was the signal support bullring that provided training opportunities and a real-time customer base for the communication teams,” Norrish said.

All of the training conducted was meant to come as close to real life as possible.

Spc. Drew Coursey, Company A, 86th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11th Sig. Bde., said the FTX was a good training tool for Soldiers.

“This was a great opportunity for Soldiers to learn the basics of the SNAP system. Hands-on experience is always a plus when working with this type of equipment,” Coursey said.

Non-signalers completed plenty of training as well, according to Spc. Timothy Gerlach, a human resources specialist assigned to HHC, 11th Sig. Bde.

“This FTX was a great experience for some of our newer Soldiers who have not yet deployed or went into the field. They were able to see how difficult it can be to pack up everything from the office and set it up at a remote location and still provide the Soldiers with the services we provide on the base,” he said.

Although complicated at times, Gerlach said the overall training went great.

“All teams demonstrated a strong improvement in the time it took to establish communication services with each rotation,” he said. “Individual team members showed consistent fortitude in developing team sites in the Texas summer and always displayed a mission-first attitude.”



Soldiers from the 11th Sig. Bde. Set up their Satellite Transportable Terminal (STT) August 16 during a field training exercise on Fort Hood.

Thunderbirds Win Phantom Warrior Week Tourney

By Staff Sgt. Kelvin Ringold



The 11th Signal Brigade combatives team finished with four first place wins during the combatives tournament during Phantom Warrior Week. The wins allowed them to finish in first place for the entire tournament.

During Phantom Warrior Week September 15-18, 2014, the combatives team representing the 11th Signal Brigade won the combatives tournament by a landslide.

The three day tournament saw seven Soldiers from the team advancing to day three to fight for third place or for the first place trophy.

Spc. Merle Gillam III, 62nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion, lost a hard fought battle for third place in the welterweight division. Although he lost his match, he showed the heart of a champion and will come back even better his next fight.

The remaining six Soldiers fought for first place in their weight classes.

Entering his first tournament, Spc. Harry Jenkins, 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, was also new to world of combatives.

“I actually had just completed level one and two combatives in August,” said Jenkins. “It was my first structured introduction to combatives.”

After dominating his opponent in the welterweight division, Spc. Jenkins was disqualified after accidentally slamming his opponent to the canvas, causing him to land on his neck.

Just losing is a disappointing feeling, but beating yourself can be even harder to deal with.

“I was excited to have made it to the finals in my first tournament but definitely disappointed in the outcome,” said Jenkins. “The team trained so hard for those kind of moments and I made a mental mistake that cost me the match. A disqualification has a different sting than the pain of a loss.”

Sgt. James Canada, 62nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion, finished second in a hard fought cruiserweight final.

The remaining fighters all dominated their respective matches.

Sgt. Carlos Armendariz, 62nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion, choked his opponent out to win the flyweight division.

Sgt. Armendariz has been involved with the combatives program throughout his almost five year military career, and the win keeps him even more determined to stick with it.

“To me this win means I will keep training, getting better, and maybe one day fight professionally,” he said.

In the lightweight division, Spc. Jacob Belcher, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division destroyed his opponent in 20 seconds with strikes.

In the light heavy championship, Spc. Christopher Ramos, 57th ESB, also took out his opponent via stoppage by strikes.

In the heavyweight final, Spc. Justin Vargas, 57th ESB came out and stopped his opponent with strikes as well, but he also did it in 20 seconds.

These first place finishes gave the Thunderbirds an overwhelming victory in the overall



Spc. Merle Gillam III takes his opponent down and issues some ground and pound during his welterweight fight.



Spc. Harry Jenkins prepares to enter the ring before the start of his first place match during the Phantom Warrior Week Combatives tournament.



Spc. Christopher Ramos smothers his opponent into the cage delivering crucial strikes to the body during the Phantom Warrior Week Combatives tournament.



After a quick, one-sided victory, Spc. Justin Vargas acknowledges his wife in the front row, and shows off his first place trophy.



After getting his opponent to the ground one final time, Sgt. Carlos Armendariz finally finishes the fight by applying a rear naked choke to his opponent, winning him the first place trophy.



Spotlight Soldier

HHC, 11th Signal Brigade



Spc. Demtrus D. McNeill

Spc. Demtrus McNeill became part of the Thunderbird family on March 27, 2013. As a 42A coming straight from Advanced Individual Training (AIT), then PV2 McNeill was thrown into the busy life of the Brigade S-1 shop. Working in the Brigade S-1 can be an overwhelming experience, but Spc. McNeill took on the challenge head on.

After quickly becoming proficient in awards processing and many other aspects of the shop, Spc. McNeill was quickly promoted to private first class and continued learning everything and anything that would make him a valuable asset for not only his shop, but the brigade as a whole.

In December 2013, 1SG Stewart needed a hardworking, dedicated Soldier to help fill a void in the orderly room, and Spc. McNeill was picked because of his already established work ethic. Once in the orderly room, Spc. McNeill's hard work helped transform the orderly room and was crucial in implementing new processes to increase productivity. His hard work was recognized once again when he earned promotion to specialist on June 1, 2014.

Spc. McNeill has been an important member of the Thunderbirds from day one. He not only excels at whatever job that is placed in front of him, but he is always first to lend a hand for whatever task may come up. He also constantly volunteers at the unit's adopted school, Ira Cross Elementary.

Spc. McNeill continues to be a driving force at whatever job he is placed in and continues setting the example for his fellow Soldiers, leadership, and Brigade.

HERE IT COMES

Are you ready
to hit the
road?

- Have your vehicle serviced
- Plan your route
- Pack an emergency road kit
- Check the weather forecast
- Get plenty of rest
- Complete a TRiPS assessment

READY ...OR NOT?

Ready ... or Not is a call to action for leaders, Soldiers, Army Civilians and Family members to assess their "readiness" for what lies ahead—the known as well as the unknown.

Throughout our professional and personal lives, events happen all around us. We are often able to shape the outcome of those events, but many times we're not. Navigating life's challenges is all about decision-making.

So are **YOU** ready ... or not?



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<https://safety.army.mil>



Words From 40th ESB Company Bravo Brawler 6

By: Capt. Brian Boundy

Thunderbirds:

Greetings. As another month is beyond us, the adage around here seems to be very true... the days are long but the weeks are short. We all work hard to ensure that the mission gets accomplished and that the Soldiers are taken care of. Even though everyday has 24 hours in it, time is flying by.

I know the Mighty Brawlers have been able to communicate with you back home. Once again, I am amazed as I have seen this neck of the woods a time or two before, yet with only DSN call centers that Soldiers used to huddle around at night for hours just for 20 minutes to say, "Hey," to their loved ones. Now, most Soldiers have in-room internet capabilities.

One thing that is new to me while I have been working here is that as fancy as you may call the newest technical piece of equipment, it still has basic communications components.

It can be named anything you like, but the network remains consistent as long as there is a power source, some routing, and a transmission path. Each and every time the Brawlers have been called, they have met the challenge. With Brawlers spanning four countries in Southwest Asia currently, we are not only making a mark, but improving our respective footprints as well.

Of course, all of the Brawler's accomplishments, far too many to be listed here, could not be done without your support. As time marches on, so do we with the knowledge of your concern and care from Continents away...

Brawler



6

40th ESB Kuwait Combatives Training

Photos By: Sgt. Kalie Jones



Sgt. Eric Rennert works on passing the guard against Sgt. Mike Augayo using the knee in tailbone technique Sep. 18, 2014. The 40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion and 518th Signal Company Tactical Installation and Networking soldiers are enrolled in combatives level two training on Camp Buehring, Kuwait. This is a two-week course where students will be required to pass written and instructional portions to graduate.



Sgt 1st Class Syreeta Greene works on her form while jabbing during combatives class Sept. 18, 2014. The 40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion and 518th Signal Company Tactical Installation and Networking soldiers are enrolled in combatives level two training on Camp Buehring, Kuwait. This is a two-week course where students will be required to pass written and instructional portions to graduate.



On Sept. 17, 2014, Pfc. Bryce Calvo and Spc. Albert Umana Franco practice the single wing choke. The 40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion and 518th Signal Company Tactical Installation and Networking soldiers are enrolled in combatives level two training on Camp Buehring, Kuwait. This is a two-week course where students will be required to pass written and instructional portions to graduate.



Sgt 1st Class Syreeta Greene works on her form while jabbing during combatives class Sept. 18, 2014. The 40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion and 518th Signal Company Tactical Installation and Networking soldiers are enrolled in combatives level two training on Camp Buehring, Kuwait. This is a two-week course where students will be required to pass written and instructional portions to graduate

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:

1-800-273-8255(TALK) PRESS "1" for the Veteran's Crisis Line



Ask your buddy

- Have the courage to ask the question, but stay calm
- Ask the question directly:
Are you thinking of killing yourself?

Care for your buddy

- Calmly control the situation; do not use force; be safe
- Actively listen to show understanding and produce relief
- Remove any means that could be used for self-injury

Escort your buddy

- Never leave your buddy alone
- Escort to chain of command, Chaplain, behavioral health professional, or primary care provider
- Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

TA - 095 - 0510

USAPHC <http://phc.amedd.army.mil/>



Messenger's Celebrate 81 Years



Messengers,

On October 1, the 62nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion commemorated its 81st birthday. In that time, the Messengers have continued to uphold the tradition of highly-trained, technical Soldiers in support of communications requirements worldwide. Command sergeant major and I truly enjoyed the battalion's birthday celebration and appreciate all the Soldiers who participated in making this a special event.

Our battalion was first constituted on October 1, 1933. Since then, it has been activated and inactivated four different times in locations such as Fort Sam Houston, Japan, Fort Bragg and our present one in Fort Hood. We are proud to be part of the battalion's history and lineage which includes participation in four World War II campaigns, fourteen Vietnam campaigns and two Global War on Terrorism/Overseas Contingency Operation campaigns.

Command sergeant major and I are proud of your commitment to this great unit, the US Army and this great Nation as we continue to make a new chapter in the history and traditions of the 62nd ESB.

Forewarned is Forearmed!

Lt. Col. Luis Alvarado and Command Sgt. Maj. John Ronquillo

Leadership Changes Around 62nd ESB

Photos By Sgt. Jacob Mahaffey



Clockwise from top left:

(1) *Lt. Col. Gregor prepares to receive the colors from Command Sgt. Maj. Ronquillo during his change-of-command ceremony July 18, 2014.*

(2) *Lt. Col. Gregor thanks the Soldiers and leadership for their hard work and dedication while he was in command of 62nd ESB.*

(3) *Lt. Col. Alvarado thanks Col. Parks for the opportunity and vows to continue the high standards set by Lt. Col. Gregor.*

(4) *As the new commander of 62nd ESB, Lt. Col. Alvarado stands in front of the formation waiting to lead the Messengers to great*

Leadership Changes Around 62nd ESB

Photos By Sgt. Jacob Mahaffey and Staff Sgt. Kelvin Ringold



Clockwise from top left:

(1) 1st Sgt. Johnson from the brigade S-3 shop takes over for 1st Sgt. Knowlton at Company Charlie, 62nd ESB..

(2) On October 3, 2014 Company Alpha, 62nd ESB, saw Capt. Zeno leave command and welcomes in Capt. Sorensen.

(3) Capt. Mynatt holds the colors as he takes over command of Company Charlie, 62nd ESB, from Capt. Whipple on October 3, 2014.

(4) On October 16, 2014, Company Charlie of 62nd ESB had a change of responsibility for 1st Sgt. Rice. 1st Sgt. Rivera from the brigade S-3 shop took over responsibility of the company.

(5) After the 1st Sgt Rivera's change of authority, he provided those in attendance with cake and snacks.



‘Messenger’ makes fitness her goal; improves self, Soldiers

Photos and Story By Sgt. Jacob Mahaffey



Sgt. Amanda Hoover, a team leader in Company C, 62nd ESB, 11th Sig. Bde., coaches Spc. Vinh Vo on the proper lifting technique and procedures while he performs the dead lift exercise.

As Soldiers, it is their job to keep themselves physically and mentally prepared for anything. Sgt. Amanda Hoover, Company C, 62nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11th Signal Brigade, takes being fit very seriously and shares this passion with her battalion.

While deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Hoover decided she wanted to make a change in her life. Hoover wanted to become more physically fit, but she needed help.

“I always got a really good sense of pride when I saw a Soldier standing tall and looking good,” Hoover said. “That will be me one day.”

Units across the Army have had their difficulties with physical training due to injury, illness, duty and other obstacles to get in a Soldier’s way. Hoover believes education is another reason for this difficulty.

Arriving in September 2013, she set out to lose 45 pounds and score a 300 on her Army Physical Fitness Test. Not wanting to do it alone, she enlisted the help from her fellow Soldiers.

Talking with her battalion executive officer, 1st. Lt. Bentley Phillips, she found out he had a degree in exercise technology. Hoover explained her fitness goals to him and they began brainstorming ideas for the program.

“We started this program to help our Soldiers get in shape. We wanted more than a normal special population physical training. We wanted our leaders and teachers to be just as passionate as we are,” Hoover said.

“We started this program to help our Soldiers get in shape. We wanted more than a normal special population physical training. We wanted our leaders and teachers to be just as passionate as we are,” Hoover said.

The program is designed to help a Soldier pass the APFT or lose weight.

“A lot of Soldiers want to work out; they want to be in good shape, but they may not know how,” Hoover said. “That’s why I wanted to start this program.

“Most programs offer just physical fitness,” Hoover said. “We gave classes, nutrition advice and were always available if the Soldiers had questions.”





United States Army *Values*

Loyalty

Duty

Respect

Selfless-Service

Honor

Integrity

Personal Courage

86th ESB Supports Network Integration Evaluation

Story By: Capt. Pete Bogart | Photos Courtesy of: The Army Chief Information Officer G-6 Office

86th ESB continued their support to the Network Integration Evaluation as they deployed to the field at Fort Bliss, Texas in support of NIE 15.1. Network Integration Evaluation (NIE) 15.1 is the eighth in a series of Solider-led evaluations designed to further integrate and rapidly progress the Army's tactical communications network which is a critical Army modernization priority.



2nd Brigade, 1st Armored Division's TOC during the Network Integration Evaluation

Team, 1st Armored Division and other supporting units.

As the Army of the future is designed and built, it is critical for the Army to continuously upgrade, protect and simplify the network being used by the Soldiers to communicate during missions. A globally responsive, regionally engaged Army requires an advanced, versatile and rapidly deployable tactical network to enable expeditionary operations. NIE 15.1 serves as a way-point for delivering this network and setting the conditions for Force 2025.

The primary purpose of NIE 15.1 is to execute the Follow-on Operational Test and Evaluation (FOT&E) 2 for Warfighter Information Network-Tactical (WIN-T) Increment 2, the mobile backbone of the Army's tactical network. NIE 15.1 is taking place at Fort Bliss, Texas, and White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico, from Oct. 15 through Nov. 2 and includes Soldiers of the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat



SGM Allen and Soldiers from the 86th ESB during SGM Allen's recent visit to the 86th ESB



SGM Allen and Soldiers from the 86th ESB during SGM Allen's recent visit to the 86th ESB

Sgt. Maj. Earl B. Allen, the Army Chief Information Officer/G-6 Sergeant Major stopped in at Fort Bliss in advance of the start of NIE 15.1. He visited the 86th ESB to hear firsthand about Soldiers' experiences in preparing for the NIE. He also visited the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy talk to NCO leadership about the direction the Army is taking in network modernization.

86th ESB Hosts Brigade NCO/Soldier of the Quarter Board



Master Sgt. Torres annotates uniform deficiencies on the participants during 86th ESB's NCO/Soldier of the Quarter Board.



Command Sgt. Maj. Ronquillo carefully inspects Spc. Richardson's Army Service Uniform during the NCO/Soldier of the Quarter board at Fort Bliss, TX.



Command Sgt. Maj. Rambert goes over the board packets for the Soldiers before the board begins.



Command Sgt. Maj. Greening inspects the Soldier's Army Service Uniforms before the NCO/Soldier of the Quarter board begins.



Command Sgt. Maj. Barnett looks over the Soldier's uniforms and annotates any deficiencies her finds during the NCO/Soldier of the Quarter board at Fort Bliss, TX.



After doing her facing movements, Command Sgt. Maj. Rambert instructs Spc. Peden to take the most direct path to her seat to begin answering questions from the board.



NCOs from around the brigade review the packets of the Soldiers participating in the 86th ESB's NCO/Soldier of the Quarter Board.



Command Sgt. Maj. Barnett reviews some questions he will ask Soldiers for the NCO/Soldier of the Quarter board at Fort Bliss, TX.



Command Sgt. Maj. Greening goes over the board packets for the Soldiers before the board begins.



Pfc. Gordon reports during the NCO/Soldier of the Quarter board at Fort Bliss, TX.



Command Sgt. Maj. Ronquillo quizzes the Soldiers on his ADP subjects during the NCO/Soldier of the Quarter board at Fort Bliss, TX.



The Soldiers eagerly await the decision on who will be the Soldier and who will be the NCO of the Quarter.

Brigade 1st Quarter Soldier of the Quarter



**Spc. Ricaya S. Peden
HHC, 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion**

**11th Signal Brigade NCO of the Quarter
(1st Quarter)**



**Sgt. John M. Smart
HHC, 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion**

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Your Constant Vigilance Represents the Strength of Our Communities



Always Ready, Always Alert
Because someone is depending on you



<https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/605757>

57th ESB Change of Command

Photos By Sgt. Jacob Mahaffey



Clockwise from top left:

(1) *Lt. Col. Straub salutes the formation one last time before the start of her COC on September 5, 2014.*

(2) *Lt. Col. Straub and Command Sgt. Maj. Greening exchange the colors and thank one another for all they accomplished while in command.*

(3) *Lt. Col. Straub passes the colors to Col. Parks and thanks him for her time with the brigade, and he thanks her for taking care of her Soldiers.*

(4) *Lt. Col. Straub welcomes Lt. Col. Gill to the Thunderbird family, and wishes him the same great success she had in 57th ESB.*

(5) *Lt. Col. Gill addresses the Soldiers and lets them know he is ready to handle whatever the future holds for the battalion and brigade.*



57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion Soldiers Return From Afghanistan

Story By: Erinn Callahan| Herald Staff Writer

Photos By: Bryan Corriera| Herald Photographer

FORT HOOD — Nikolai Vega was just 3 months old when his father, Spc. Marcos Vega, deployed to Afghanistan.

On Monday, Marcos Vega smiled at his now 10-month-old son, as older brother Jayden, 3, swiped his dad's cap and placed it proudly atop his own head. The elder Vega returned to Fort Hood along with about 40 other soldiers from Bravo Company, 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11th Signal Brigade, during a ceremony at Thunderbird Field after an eight-month deployment.

This wasn't the Vega family's first deployment, but that didn't lessen the pain of separation.

"It doesn't get any easier," said Marcos Vega's wife, Ember.

It was, however, the first deployment for Monique Barsh and Spc. Kenneth Taylor. The couple immediately snapped a selfie to commemorate their reunion.

"I feel great," Taylor said, grinning. "I feel awesome."

Barsh said the experience wasn't nearly as difficult as she anticipated.

"We conquered through faith," she said, holding a pink sign decorated with balloons that read, "Welcome home, baby."

Lt. Col. David W. Gill, commander of the 57th Signal Battalion, wore an expression of elation that mirrored the ones on his soldiers' faces.

Gill was meeting his soldiers for the first time after taking the reins from former commander Lt. Col. Darlene Straub on Friday.

Straub originally deployed with the unit, but is now at Fort Bragg, N.C. The change of command occurred while the unit was deployed.

"It's not often on your first day of command that you get to welcome back soldiers," Gill said. "This is what it's all about. It's the most amazing feeling."



A little boy and girl look for their returning fathers during a homecoming for soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11th Signal Brigade, at Fort Hood on Monday, Sept. 8, 2014.



Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11th Signal Brigade, who returned home Monday, Sept. 8, 2014, march on to the field before reuniting with their families at Fort Hood.



Monique Barsh and her husband, Spc. Kenneth Taylor, with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11th Signal Brigade, take a selfie Monday, Sept. 8, 2014, to be posted on Facebook. Taylor returned to Fort Hood on Monday from Afghanistan.



Monique Barsh gets a kiss from her husband Spc. Kenneth Taylor with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11th Signal Brigade, during a homecoming at Fort Hood on Monday, Sept. 8, 2014.



Spc. Marcos Vega, with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11th Signal Brigade, who returned home Monday Sept. 8, 2014, smiles as his son Jayden Vega, 3, puts on his father's cap.



Casey Roberts, left, sits with her mother-in-law Cyndi Roberts, awaiting the arrival of Spc. James Roberts, along with Monique Barsh, right, who awaits her husband Spc. Kenneth Taylor, both soldiers with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11th Signal Brigade, who returned home Monday, Sept. 8, 2014.

HERE ARE SOME CLEAR LINES OF FRATERNIZATION:

- Living together as roommates;
- Ongoing business relations;
- Gambling;
- Borrowing or lending money;
- Dating and sexual relationships; and
- Commercial solicitations (asking your subordinate to buy something).

THERE ARE SOME EXCEPTIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE ARMY PERMITS:

- Landlord/tenant relationships;
- One-time transactions, such as the sale of an automobile or a house;
- Business relationships which exist through civilian occupation or employment (Army National Guard and Reserve only); and
- Social and family relationships within the context of community organizations, athletic teams and events, unit-based social functions or family gatherings.

HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS PEOPLE MUST ASK THEMSELVES ABOUT INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS:

- Would the relationship lead to partiality, unfairness or favoritism?
- Would you be able to do a critical fitness report for someone you are dating or give the person non-judicial punishment?
- Does the relationship involve the improper use of rank for personal gain?
- Is the situation exploitative or coercive?
- Will the relationship have an adverse impact on discipline, authority, morale or mission accomplishment?
- Would the relationship appear to violate any of these standards or expose you to accusations of violating any of these standards?

16th TIN plays key role in I3MP upgrades

By Capt. Pete Bogart



Soldiers from the 16th Tactical Installation Networking Company have spent the last few months installing network upgrades at bases across the United States. Installation Information Infrastructure Modernization Program (I3MP) is an infrastructure upgrade that will increase the bandwidth of the DoD network backbone.

“Essentially that means that all DoD services will be drinking their Slurpee through a much larger straw, in most cases 15 to 30 times the size” said Capt. Tony Severson, Commander, 16th TIN. “However it is the DoD backbone not the internet, which means it will affect DoD domain services such as file shares, SharePoint portals, Outlook email services, and government websites.”

The 16th TIN is one of only two Tactical Installation Networking companies in the regular Army. The Soldiers of the 16th TIN possess a unique skill set specifically when it comes to cabling and complying with industry standards during installation. More than 40 Soldiers from the 16th TIN have been involved in the I3MP mission and have conducted installations at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama, Fort Bliss, Texas, Red River Army Depot, Texas, and Fort Sill, Oklahoma as well as a team of 20 Soldiers working with the Network Enterprise Center here on Fort Hood in preparing for the I3MP upgrade here.

While the I3MP upgrade will benefit users at all levels, the mission for the 16th TIN has also benefitted its Soldiers with key hands on experience. The installation upgrades require inside cabling and replacing every switch on the installations that currently provides network services.

“These tasks offer a great real world training opportunity for our Soldiers that we can’t duplicate in the Company,” said Severson. “The struggle for Signal Soldiers is that their job is often performed by civilian contractors. This project offers a unique opportunity to train and keep their skills sharp. The experience they gain is great preparation for upcoming missions as most Signal Soldiers only perform these unique tasks in a deployed environment.”



Signal Soldiers installing new switches as part of the I3MP upgrades



Spotlight Soldier

16th Tactical Installation Networking Company



Sgt. Wells of 16th TIN was selected as site NCOIC of a six Soldier team supporting Installation Information Infrastructure Modernization Program (I3MP) at Red River Army Depot. The team was responsible for assisting in the Network Modernization CONUS (NETMODC) upgrades of the network infrastructure across Red River Army Depot. Sgt. Wells and her team played a pivotal role in this process proving that military support for I3MP is not a commodity but a necessity.

Sgt. Wells has also established a 25B MOS enhancement program for her Soldiers. This program is designed to identify areas in their profession that need strengthening. This program will ensure that she, as well as her Soldiers, stay competitive in their field as they continue to progress technically. Wells is aspiring for all of her Soldiers to achieve the next level and to be competent technicians within today's Signal Corps.

Sgt. Wells has continued to be an NCO that all can depend on with unwavering character. She leads with the motivation and the desire to improve every mission she is involved with. Her dedication and relentless focus has already become a standard within the 16th Signal Company that all Soldiers and NCOs now strive to emulate.

Fort Hood Celebrates Women's Equality Day

By Capt. Pete Bogart

Soldiers from various units, retirees and civilians attended Fort Hood's Women's Equality Day observance Aug. 26, to mark the ratification of the 19th amendment in 1920 which culminated many years of women struggling for the right to vote and paved the way toward equal rights.

The progress of women in the Army is evident nowhere more than the 11th Signal Brigade. Dynamic women leaders are found in battalion command teams, staff primaries, and at leadership levels across the brigade.



Tracei Parks, spouse of the 11th Brigade Commander Col. James C. Parks III, has seen first hand how opportunities for women today are greater than in even the recent past.

“Women now do not think if we can but we know we can. Their confidence no longer stops at the glass ceiling,” said Parks “The Army women of today understand and appreciate all those who were able to pave the way so they can hold careers that are equal to their counterparts.”

Women currently make up only 17% of the active duty military and are underrepresented in Brigade Combat Teams. This could change as more than 10,000 positions previously only open to men are expected to be open to women next year and as many as 90,000 positions over the next five years. The Army is also planning an integrated Ranger school assessment for early 2015 in which women will be allowed to apply for the first time to the intense 61-day combat leader course.

One organization that is committed to women's equality in the Army is the Fort Hood Women's Mentorship Network. It was founded in early 2014 and one of its co-founders was a Signal Officer, Maj. Heather Gunther. The Women's Mentorship Network was introduced to the Soldiers as a way for women to have access to female mentors.

WMN is a volunteer program open to everyone who supports the cultivation of military leaders. For more information, visit <http://www.meetup.com/Fort-Hood-WMN/>.

