



# Castle

M a g a z i n e



News and Information for the 412<sup>th</sup> Theater Engineer Command

October 2015

**River masters piece it together like  
a puzzle**

see story page 16

**Pain can't stop a Sapper**

see story page 30



# COLD CASE



**D**riving in the winter means snow, sleet and ice that can lead to slower traffic, hazardous road conditions, hot tempers and unforeseen dangers. Make sure that you and your vehicle are prepared for the extremes of winter. For more information, go the U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center's Web site <https://safety.army.mil>.

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# The Castle

October 2015



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Maj. Gen. Tracy A. Thompson

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Command Sgt. Maj. Richard  
Castelveter

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# 412<sup>th</sup> Theater Engineer Command 'Build To Serve'

About the Front Cover: U.S. Army Reserve Spc. Ricardo Gomez, combat engineer, 364th Engineer Company (Sapper), and Denver, resident, probes the ground while clearing an area on the north side of the Arkansas River Aug. 4 during the gap crossing of Operation River Assault 2015. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Debralee Best)

About the Back Cover: A wave splashes onto an MK-2 Boat operated by U.S. Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Chad Bentley, bridge crewmember, and Spc. Ben Adams, medic, both from Tulsa, Okla., from the 341st Engineer Company (Multi-Role Bridge), from Fort Chaffee, Ark., during a sling loading operation on the Arkansas River near Fort Chaffee, July 31. (U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Michel Sauret)



# Major General Tracy Thompson

## Commanding General, 412<sup>th</sup> TEC

### A Word from the Commander

#### The Power of a Squad Leader

One of the most powerful leaders in the Army is a Squad Leader.

I often wonder if our squad leaders realize early enough in the tenure of their position just how influential they really are in that role.

A squad leader is almost every Soldier's real introduction to Army leadership. Although a drill sergeant may be a Soldier's first noncommissioned officer leader, he or she is temporary and has a different, very narrow mission. A squad leader, on the other hand, is part teacher, part parent and part drill sergeant – with the mission of growing and maturing you into a Professional Soldier and leader.

That mentoring mission is the most important one we can give to a leader; to grow other leaders. Think of what that means in the big picture of the Army. It means we place the entire future of the NCO Corps in the hands of our squad leaders.

I bring this up because I believe nearly all the problems we face in today's dynamic and complex Army can be solved by these key first-line leaders.

Readiness is the Army's No. 1 priority. I submit that one person - the squad leader - has the most power to not only build our bench, as I discussed above, but to quickly improve readiness. Within a few text messages, a leader can help arrange a needed medical appointment to ensure one of their Soldiers is "green" to deploy. This helps the unit's Unit Status Report (USR), the most important tool we use to measure readiness, and which is also read at the 4-star level. The same applies to equipment readiness when the leader ensures squad equipment is being exercised and maintained. Leaders can also track their Soldiers' schooling and ensure they enroll, prepare and attend the right schools to maintain their skills and get promoted.

If your squad leader is not doing these things for you, speak to him or her and get them started. They owe it to you and to the Army. If they are not willing to do these things for you, let your platoon sergeant or first sergeant know. When you become a squad leader, ensure you get these things done for your Soldiers.

Several times each year, the Chief of Staff of the Army and the Sergeant Major of the Army bring the Army's senior leaders together to talk about the most important things in our Army.

In every one of those events, we spend almost half of our time talking about squad leaders and company commanders. That's how important you are to the success of our force. If you are a squad leader, I need your help to grow the NCO bench and improve readiness across the board. If you are an E1 to E6 who is not a squad leader, I hope you are setting a goal to be one of those keystone leaders. Army Strong!



Essayons!  
Build to Serve!  
MG Tracy A. Thompson

# 'Build to Serve'



# Command Sergeant Major Richard Castelveter

## Command Sergeant Major, 412<sup>th</sup> TEC

### A Word from the CSM

When I look back at my nearly 34 years of military service, I recognize that from my first day as a private in basic training, my inspiration has been driven by top-notch leaders, men and women who motivated success by demanding excellence every step of the way. Today, even as a command sergeant major, I look to others to help me continue to cultivate my leadership skills.

Serving in the United States Armed Forces is a challenging undertaking. We are expected to be deployment ready, battle trained, physically conditioned, equipped and prepared to fight anywhere in the world at a moment's notice.

We have proven ourselves, time and again, up to the task, through performance during past deployments and as measured by our current readiness status and willingness to serve, and multiple deployments in hostile areas when necessary.

Think about how we are tested each day to reach optimal levels of preparedness. Imagine, however, how we would perform without competent, effective and reliable leadership, without the mentoring needed to develop into skillful leaders.

Former Secretary of State and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Colin Powell once said, "Leadership is solving problems. The day Soldiers stop bringing you their problems is the day you have stopped leading them. They have either lost confidence that you can help or concluded you do not care. Either case is a failure of leadership."

Think about Gen. Powell's words, that leadership is solving problems, noting that the day we stop identifying problems is the day we stop leading.

We can never stop leading nor can we ever stop developing future leaders, at all levels of service.

There is an abundance of problems in the world today, but, there are also no shortages of leaders prepared to solve those problems. You are those leaders, whether privates or generals. We all have a role in identifying and bringing viable solutions to problems.

I encourage you peek outside your silos and seek out discernible problems. At times, problems are self-presented, and at times, problems are deep rooted, hidden within the bowels of a structure, waiting to be plucked. Challenge yourself to develop problem solutions.

As you are reading this column, reflect back on your careers, either civilian or military and identify those leaders who had the greatest impact on your careers. I then ask you to ask yourself if you have taken what you have learned in becoming leaders and shared it with other future leaders.

We all have a degree of leadership skills. Some of us are born to lead and others require years of development. And candidly speaking, some simply do not aspire to lead.

Regardless, at some point in your career, you will be asked to lead, whether voluntary or



involuntarily. Think about your leadership skills and self-examine asking:

- Do I give strength to my fellow Soldiers through encouragement?
- Do I inspire confidence?
- Do my actions inspire younger Soldiers to follow in my footsteps?
- Do I have the courage and patience to help Soldiers develop their leadership styles?
- Do I set an example by my character and dress?
- How well do I know my Soldiers?
- How well do I know my job?
- Have I been successful at developing young Soldiers to assume greater responsibility?
- How interested am I in the personal welfare of my subordinates?
- Do I have or need an open-door policy?
- Am I more concerned with promotion vs. mission?

Ask yourself these questions and answer them, privately and then in the company of your peers. Rely on strength of others to grow your

*CSM continued on page 6*



## Chaplain's Notes

### A holiday thought from the Command Chaplain

A quick look out the window, a visit to a nearby shopping mall or a review of our most recent credit card statement is enough to remind us that another holiday season is here! May this year be your best ever. All of us at the Command Chaplain's Office hope and pray that regardless of circumstances, you sense God's love, guidance and presence in just the way you need to.

For those of us in the Christian tradition, the approach of Christmas is an especially important time of year. It serves as a powerful reminder that the King of Kings and Lord of Lords is actively pursuing a relationship with us.

The Christmas story as described in the Gospels describes several journeys key players in the unfolding drama undertook. The Angels journeyed from their heavenly abode to announce the birth of the Christ Child to the shepherds keeping watch of their flocks by night. In response, the shepherds journeyed to Bethlehem to seek out the Christ Child. The magi from the east journeyed several hundred miles when they'd observed the star announc-

ing Christ's birth. Mary and Joseph journeyed to Bethlehem in order to take part in a census ordered by the King.

Though all these journeys are noteworthy, they don't even begin to compare to the journey Christ Himself took on our behalf! Leaving behind the glory of heaven for a humble birth in a manger, He became one of us that we might become one of His!

Philippians 2: 6-7 states, "Who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be desired, but emptied Himself taking the form of a slave, being made in the likeness of men."

During the typical rush of the holidays, may we understand that the Lord seeks us, is knocking at the doors of our hearts, desiring access and intimacy.

Let us take time to reflect on the things that matter most, such as what we believe about our life and the world, where we're at in our unique faith journeys and how our



key relationships are going. Finally, remember that a loving and caring God is worthy of trust.

"Even to your old age, I shall be the same, and even to your graying years I shall bear you! I have done it, and I shall carry you; I shall bear you and I shall deliver you." (Isaiah 46: 4)

God bless you all richly!

CH (COL) Timothy M.  
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*CSM*  
*continued from page 5*

own leadership attributes and share your attributes to help your peers develop their skills.

Whether you are stepping into a new leadership role or carrying out your existing leadership responsibilities, heed the words of Gen. Powell, "I think whether you're having setbacks or not, the role of a leader is to always display a winning attitude."

We are a team of winners, so let's keep on winning.

Build to Serve!  
CSM Richard E. Castelveter





# Inspector General Thoughts

The Inspector General (IG) Training Year (TY) 2015 has come to a close and your Inspector General Office is ready to continue to support our great Soldiers in the upcoming training year.

We have had several personnel changes in our office. We have added three new IGs. Lt. Col. Wai-Kin Tong is a Troop Program Unit officer and is our Chief of Inspections. He comes to us from the 411<sup>th</sup> Engineer Brigade. Maj. Derrick Davis is an Active Guard Reserve officer who comes to us from Human Resources Command and Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Shanika Johnson, also an AGR, comes to us from HRC as well. They jumped in with both feet running and have already been a valuable asset to the 412<sup>th</sup> Theater Engineer Command.

In the last year we handled many issues dealing with promotions, counselings and leadership issues. This continues to be a trend throughout our military. Most of this almost always leads back to mentorship and initial counselings. It's not very difficult to ensure Soldiers are given their initial counselings. With today's technology there are many ways to ensure this is done. I myself email the counseling to my TPU Soldiers then call them to discuss it. This is one method to ensure they can look at it and ask any questions. Then when we have Battle Assembly we do a final review and sign. Do what works for you, just ensure you do it.

your unit? This is a document we regularly ask for because many times Soldiers are not being rated by the person on the rating scheme. When the rating scheme changes, and it will, the Soldiers affected need to be counseled.

A current trend we are seeing is an issue with Line of Duties. AR 600-8-4 explains how the LODs work. Every officer and senior noncommissioned officer needs to be familiar with this process. Soldiers get hurt all the time and it is the leaders that are failing their Soldiers by not knowing or following the proper guidelines. This is not a personnel (S1/G1) issue. This is a leader issue. We have several cases where Soldiers have been waiting two years or longer for an LOD to be approved. Commanders need to crack down on this. This affects Medical Evaluation Boards, incapacitation and several other areas.

The Inspector General is here to support the Soldiers of the 412<sup>th</sup> TEC. We are fact finders. We ensure regulations are adhered to. We do our best to make sure each case is handled with the utmost care. Anyone can call us at any time. We just ask that you give your chain of command a chance to fix the issue first. We look forward to supporting you in TY16.

You can contact our office by emailing [usarmy.usarc.412-eng-cmd.list.ig@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.usarc.412-eng-cmd.list.ig@mail.mil) or call 601-631-6159/6173/6175/6180.

How often do you review the rating schemes in

412th TEC IG team



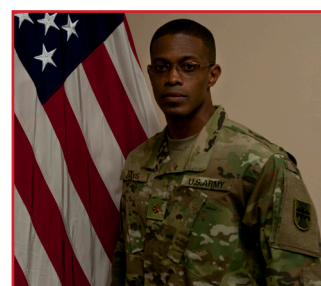
Lt. Col. Andy Love



Lt. Col. Wai-Kin Tong



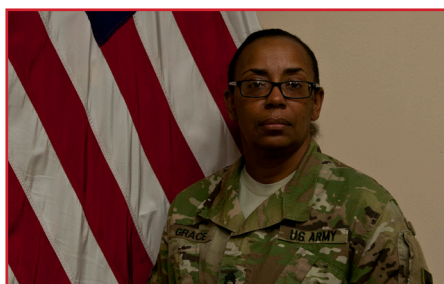
Lt. Col. Jerry Jerdin



Maj. Derrick Davis



Master Sgt. Gus Jenkins



Sgt. 1st Class Rosanna Grace



Sgt. 1st Class Shanika Johnson



If you're still struggling with consent, just imagine instead of initiating sex you're making them a cup of tea.

If you say, “Hey, would you like a cup of tea,” and they reply, “Well, you know, I’m not really sure.” You could make them a cup of tea, but be aware, they might not drink it. If they don’t drink it, this is the important part, don’t make them drink it.

They might say, “Yes, please, that’s kind of you,” and when the tea arrives they actually don’t want tea at all. Sure, that’s annoying as you’ve gone through all the effort to make the tea, but they remain under no obligation to drink the tea. They did want the tea, now they don’t.

Some people change their mind in the time it takes to boil the kettle, brew the tea and add the milk. It's OK for people to change their mind and you're still not entitled to watch them drink it.

If someone said yes to the tea, started drinking it, then passed out before they finished, don't keep pouring it down their throat. Take the tea away and make sure they are safe.

If you can understand how completely ludicrous it is to force people to have tea when they don't want tea, then how hard is it to understand it when it comes to sex. Whether it's tea or sex, consent is everything.

*Written by: rockstardinosaurpirateprincess*

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# MRT: Resilience

Is resilience a way, to help me grow and to thrive  
A way to get past, all these thoughts deep inside  
Can I control how I'm feeling, if I'm more self-aware

Will I leave today thinking, "I really don't care"

Resilience is only, a word on a page  
Has the Army gone soft, a hug-fest, a phase

I stand at a crossroad, with one of two options  
To apply what I've learned, and let it seep into conscience

Or simply forget, all the skills I've obtained  
Drive on with my mission, and not use what's been trained

Self-regulate be aware, positive thinking connection  
Will my character have strength, could I be resurrected

Will I bounce and not break, will I stand under pressure  
Will I lead and not follow, are these skills beyond measure

They say knowledge is power, so I crawl, walk, then run

I'll avoid traps of thinking, perhaps my healing has begun

Core values and beliefs, icebergs below the surface  
Never realized they existed, but now I know they have a purpose

They make up who we are, and what we believe to be true  
But are they in proportion, inside of me and you

Rigid ways of thinking, have consequences in life  
Now armed with understanding, between what's wrong and right

No stranger to the loss, of someone I really loved  
My father took his life last year, not looking at what was

Avoiding all those thinking traps, like perhaps it was all me  
Why did I not see warning signs, why can't I let this be

Now I hunt the good stuff, and fond memories remain  
Which allows me to move past, all the hurt, sorrow and pain

I believe with all my heart, we have received a gift  
That MRT is not just something small, that should simply be dismissed

Our battle buddies are hurting, and they need to realize  
If they put things in perspective, if they look with different eyes

They'll understand tomorrow, holds their future and their dreams  
And that all life's little problems, are not as complex as they seem

So as we take up arms, standing side by side  
Our sisters and our brothers, our husbands and our wives

We're strengthened with the knowledge, that resilience is for real  
It lives down deep inside us all, it's something we can feel

It guides us when, our thoughts deceive  
It lifts us up, helps us believe

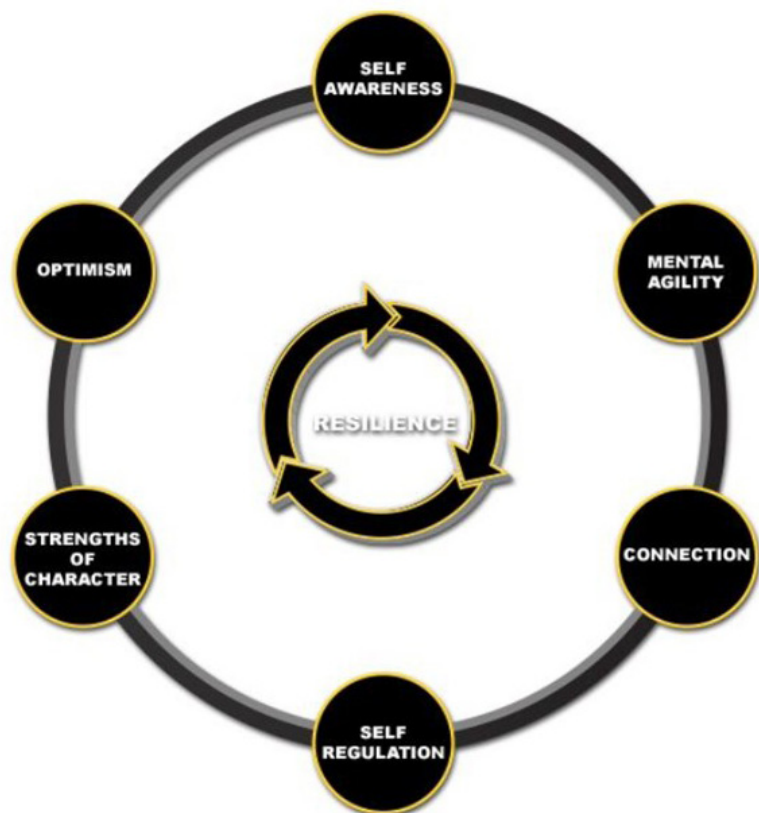
That in those moments, when confusion comes  
And negative thoughts, seemed to have won

We'll be reminded, of how we take control  
Winning the battle, within our soul

*Written by Mr. Tim Rolfe, Anniston Army Depot*

When you look in the mirror what do you see in yourself, and what is the story you tell yourself behind it? You should see and hear the stories of survival, greatness, passion, hunger and faith. You are a conqueror so put on your best look and be great!

CW4 Destria Gladney  
412th TEC MRT





# 390th Eng. Co. builds learning opportunities for Bulgarians

By Staff Sgt. Debralee Best,  
412th TEC Public Affairs

**VELIKO TARNOVO, Bulgaria** – Education plays a key role in a child's future. Some children in Bulgaria had their future brightened by Soldiers.

U.S. Army Reserve and Bulgarian Soldiers conducted construction operations Aug. 3 to 19 at two schools in Bulgaria, concluding with ceremonies Aug. 19.

Approximately 15 Soldiers from the 390th Engineer Company out of Chattanooga, Tennessee and 10 Soldiers from the Bulgarian Army worked together to improve conditions for children attending these schools. The Humanitarian Civil Assistance projects were funded by U.S. European Command through the U.S. Office of Defense Cooperation Bulgaria.

In Veliko Tarnovo, the Soldiers replaced a roof on Prolet Kindergarten and in Tsersova Koria, improved a bathroom and two classrooms. The roof was com-

pletely retiled and all the gutters were replaced at one school. At other school, the bathroom was gutted, then retiled and all fixtures replaced as well as two classrooms painted and four ceiling fans and two heating and cooling units installed.

"It makes me feel really good that we're going to be able to help these kids out. This building is 50-plus years old and it hasn't seen any remodeling or anything nice in a really long time," said Sgt. Clinton Dodson, 390th Eng. Company, site noncommissioned officer-in-charge in Tsersova Koria. "I hope it's going to help them and encourage them to come to school and want to learn and better themselves to get an education here in Bulgaria."

The U.S. Soldiers worked side-by-side with the Bulgarian Soldiers trying to improve and share their skills.

"My guys have been trying to get in there and learn the ways they do things here, it's a little different than



U.S. Army Reserve Cpl. Stephen Truelove, construction engineer, 390th Engineer Company, pulls lumber on the roof. The 390th Engineer Company out of Chattanooga, Tenn., partnered with the Bulgarian Army to renovate a roof on Prolet

Kindergarten in Veliko Tarnovo, Bulgaria, Aug. 3 to 19 for a Humanitarian Civil Assistance project funded by U.S. European Command through the U.S. Office of Defense Cooperation Bulgaria. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Debralee Best)



what we do in the States, but we are learning, adapting and overcoming,” said Dodson, a Sparta, Tennessee, resident.

While the Soldiers learned from each other, it wasn’t always easy.

“About the biggest issue we have is the language barrier,” said Spc. Noel Loera, 390th Eng. Company, construction engineer. “It’s hard to have one or two interpreters moving consistently and needing the language at all times to communicate with them.”

While there may have been some communication issues, the U.S. Soldiers were impressed by the Bulgarians.

“They’re very hard-working, humble people. They want to do nothing, but help us, help their country,” said Loera. “We’ve tried to converse back and forth as best we can to accomplish the mission.”

The troops did find a universal language: being a Soldier.

“We have each other to boost each other up, boost the Bulgarian soldiers and they do the same for us. Morale has been really good as far as teamwork amongst ourselves and with the local people,” said Loera, a Miami, native. “The local people really like what we’re doing here and knowing they can rely on us to help them out really boosts our morale very, very much.”

While the community likes the projects now, this is something that will endure for the future.

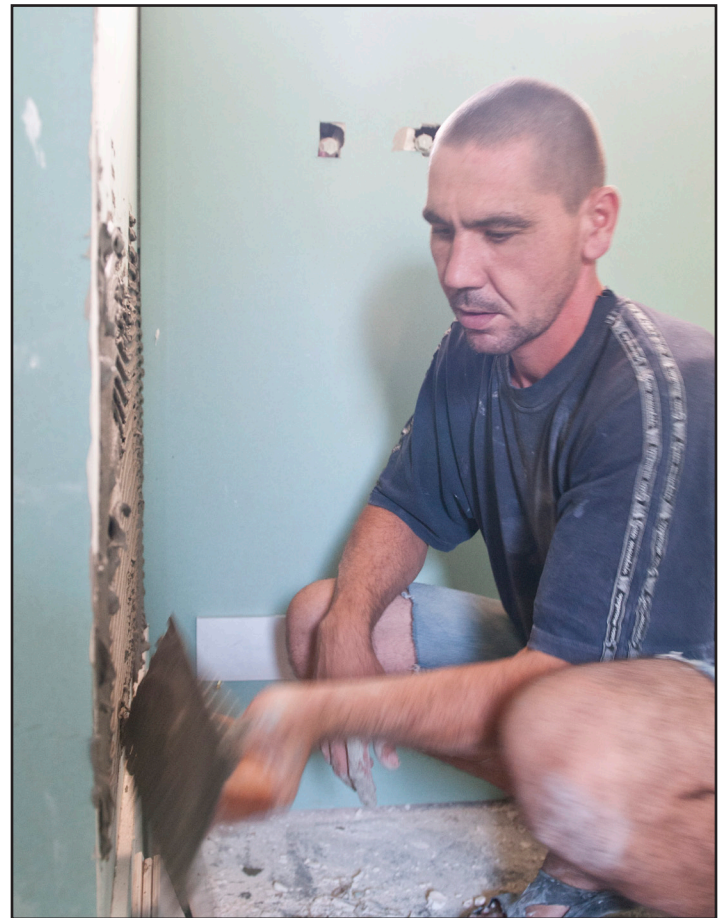
“It’s rewarding to me, rewarding to the guys I work with,” said Loera. “I know I’m going to go back home to the States knowing that although it may be one school, two schools, in the end we’re helping multiple kids and it’s not going to be just a few years, it’s going to be generations of children and building that bond

with this country as best we can.”

The U.S. Soldiers expressed thankfulness for working projects where they were desperately needed.

“I would love nothing more than to come back here. I’ve been all over the world and this is one of the place I see can use our help as much as possible,” said Loera. “It starts out with just one, two schools, but I would love for us to move on to five, 20, 100 schools, government buildings, homes if possible, in the future.”

While Loera may not come back soon, there are other HCA projects planned for next year to continue improving educational and medical resources for the people of Bulgaria.



**Above:** Bulgarian Army Pvt. Dimitar Marchev, prepares a wall for tile. The Bulgarian Army partnered with the 390th Engineer Company out of Chattanooga, Tenn., to renovate two classrooms and a bathroom for the Tserova Korja, Bulgaria, kindergarten Aug. 3 to 19.



**Left:** Spc. Noel Loera, construction engineer, 390th Engineer Company, and Miami, native, touches up a shelf in one of the classrooms of an HCA project funded by U.S. European Command through the U.S. Office of Defense Cooperation Bulgaria. (U.S. Army photos by Staff Sgt. Debralee Best)

# River Assault 2015 serves as a premier training site for engineers

*By Staff Sgt. Roger Ashley,  
412th TEC Public Affairs*

**FORT CHAFFEE, Ark.** - In swarms, engineer Soldiers muster together to breach, build and engage in every aspect of military engineering operations for Operation River Assault 2015 at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, July 25 to Aug. 7.

Soldiers from each component: Army Reserve, National Guard and active duty work together to accomplish this year's annual exercise by combining in partnership forces, which improve every facet of the engineer skill set.

Most of the Soldiers participating in River Assault are part-time citizen-Soldiers. They don't have the time or opportunity to train every day, but this exercise is their yearly opportunity to come together to hone their skills as they complete the mission, not in just their lane but learning about the total engineer mission.

"I've done a lot of this training before at previous River Assaults, but I'm excited this year because this will be the first year I'll get to work with the (CH-47) Chinook helicopters and building the bridge. That's something I've never done," said Spc. Dustin Willet, 346th Engineer Company, a Washington, North Carolina, native and a 15-year combat engineer who's served as an active Army explosive expert for previous River Assault operations.

The integration of the different training helps makes every Soldier better at their skills, contributing to the team overall.

"This type of training keeps us sharp and continues to build the type of partnerships and relationships we need to have now and in the future," said Col. Ralph Henning, commander, 411th Engineer Brigade, from Denver.

The Army's engineer units are concentrated heavily in the Army National Guard and Army Reserve, but after fighting alongside the active duty component, leaders want to continue combined training and preparation for any future operations where everyone will be working together.

"Having the different components here at River Assault is a huge benefit," said Henning. "Because we've worked together for the last 13 years as one

total Army force, and we can lose that if we just come back home and train just within our own individual components."

River Assault is an Army Reserve sponsored exercise. To make the exercise better rounded, some of the behind-the-scenes effort was to reach out to the active component partners and ask "would you like to come to River Assault," according to Henning.

"They were definitely excited about the opportunity to cross the river," he added.

Operation River Assault mainly focuses on constructing an approximately 300-meter floating bridge across the Arkansas River, but there's more going on than just down by the river. Soldiers are training on vehicle familiarization, driving and safety; weap-



**U.S. Army Reserve combat engineer Spc. Dustin Willet, a Washington, N.C., native from the 346th Engineer Company, Knightdale, N.C., sets up to fire the M2 50-caliber crew-serve weapon during Operation River Assault 2015, Aug. 2. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Roger Ashley)**



ons familiarization and firing; demolitions; roadside bomb detection and defeat; construction and repair; breaching minefields; clearing buildings through urban operations and that doesn't include all of the other training that goes into the bridge building aspect of River Assault.

"The training is awesome," said combat engineer Spc. Travis Duffus, 841st Engineer Battalion, a Miami, resident. "It's been a lot of high-speed training. I didn't expect the helocast, where you drop from a helicopter into the river, and I loved driving the armored personnel carriers. That was a blast. I also enjoyed doing the vehicle rollover training."

Henning felt every part of the training was useful, but wanted every Soldier to get the most out of the opportunity.

"Mission accomplishment for me is for the Soldiers to come away learning something and feeling a little more confident in their skills," said Henning. "I want every Soldier come away feeling they've improved ... that the training is relevant."

The engineer Soldiers are openly excited about the daily individual and team training going on during River Assault as End-Ex comes closer.

"Morale is pretty high," said Henning. "You can feel the energy when talking to the Soldiers, as we get closer to the river-crossing event. They're pretty excited."

The finale of the training exercise is when ground, water and air units work together using trucks, CH-47 Chinook helicopters and boats to maneuver the floating bays into place until creating an entire bridge.

"I'll feel pretty good when that bridge is done," said Henning. "That's a pretty good sign, telling me the entire team worked together, in the background as well as on the river, then everyone will be successful."



**Above: U.S. Army Reserve engineer Soldiers from the 841st Engineer Battalion, Miami, offloaded from a CH-47 Chinook Helicopter participating in a situational training exercise to assault Lonestar Village at Fort Chaffee, Ark., to secure and rescue high value targets, while battling opposition forces and booby traps during Operation River Assault 2015, Aug. 2. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Roger Ashley)**



**Left: Engineer Soldiers watch from a safety boat while Soldiers helocast into the Arkansas River, Aug. 1 while participating in Operation River Assault 2015 at Fort Chaffee, Ark. Soldiers had a variety of training opportunities in addition to helocasting including urban breaching, demolitions and weapon familiarization. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Debralee Best)**

# Sapper company launches mine-clearing rockets at River Assault

*By Staff Sgt. Debralee Best,  
412th TEC Public Affairs*

**FORT CHAFFEE, Ark.** — It's an elusive tool few of the Soldiers have seen and even less have touched.

That all changed for the Soldiers of the 364th Engineer Company (Sapper), out of Dodge City, Kansas, July 29 when they fired two M58 Mine Clearing Line Charges (MICLIC) at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, while attending River Assault.

"It was awesome," said Sgt. Joshua Moreau, team leader, 364th Engineer Company. "Both rockets were successful, which is two-thirds of the battle: Getting the rockets to go off, setting them up properly and making sure they're in the right location. Then from there, it's basically clean up after that when they're inert, considering nothing goes boom, so we don't have to worry about live ordnance. So, that's the more extensive, un-fun part."

A MICLIC is a rocket-projected line charge usually used to clear mines.

"Basically, it's a mine-clearing device which shoots a rocket out alongside C-4 to clear a path for incoming units to follow behind us," said Moreau, a Denver native. "Obviously, it was inert. We didn't get a chance to blow it up today, unfortunately, but we came out here and shot two separate rockets."

Although the line charge was inert, for the combat engineer Soldiers, this was an experience not always easy to come by.

"I've been in almost 15 years and have never been near one. My

first sergeant has been in even longer and has not been around one. It's tough to get these," said Capt. Richard Durham, commander, 364th Engineer Company. "It's a very useful tool, but they're also expensive. One day I hope to fire a live one. That's a lot of demo, but it was a lot of fun."

"It was awesome. It was a once-in-a-lifetime thing, really," said Moreau. "I think there are only two places in the United States that allow a MICLIC to go off. So, even to get your hands on one that's inert and get the training is awesome."

Although very few of the Soldiers had ever shot a MICLIC, they performed well.

"It was a great learning experience," said Durham, a Kansas City, Missouri, native. "The Soldiers always do well. These guys, I've never been disappointed in them. They do everything top-notch,

they're some of the best Soldiers there are from the Heartland. Good country kids, good city kids and they all work really hard. I couldn't ask for more. I literally could not ask for better Soldiers. They did an excellent job."

While the training went well, Durham hopes the Soldiers take the experience to heart.

"We have a lot of toys to play with as 12Bs (combat engineers). This is just one more thing they can hang their hat on, and they have the experience to take with them and use down the road as they progress in their military career," he said. "They can reflect on the days: 'Back when I was at River Assault, we did that, and here's how you do it,' and they have a good story to tell."

With River Assault just beginning, the 364th Engineer Company has more training to accomplish.



*U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers with the 364th Engineer Company (Sapper), fired two inert M58 Mine Clearing Line Charges, rocket-projected line charges usually used to clear mines, during Operation River Assault 2015 at Fort Chaffee, Ark., July 29. (U.S. Army video still by Staff Sgt. Roger Ashley)*



While the MICLIC was unique, they are looking forward to more interactive training.

“Unfortunately, it’s a little anticlimactic with these. There is not much to it. The rocket goes off and that’s the end of it, so I think this was a good warm-up,” said Durham. “They had a good day yesterday. Today was neat. It was neat to get their hands on, but I think tomorrow is going to be a lot of fun. We’ll be doing urban ops. They’ve got a really high-speed training

facility they go through here that plays with all your senses.”

Some of the Soldiers expressed their excitement to keep the training pace at a high rate of speed.

“That, I’m excited about. I love that close-quarter combat stuff,” said Moreau. “As long as it’s continuous training throughout, it’s kind of hard to get bored.”

The unit has a busy schedule, but the end goal is to train them to

accomplish their missions.

“I think coming out of it, we’ve trained for the past year on a lot of the things we’re doing now. This is sort of the culminating event, and they’ll be able to hang their hat on that and say, ‘Hey, we can do that. We can clear the way,’” said Durham.

“Whether it’s mine sweeping, whether it’s taking out minefields, whatever it is we’re doing, these guys know they can do their job.”



*Clockwise from left: U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers with the 364th Engineer Company (Sapper), repack an inert C4 line to re-fire a M58 Mine Clearing Line Charge, rocket-projected line charge usually used to clear mines, during Operation River Assault 2015 at Fort Chaffee, Ark., July 29. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Roger Ashley)*

*The 364th Engineer Company (Sapper), fired two inert M58 Mine Clearing Line Charges, rocket-projected line charges usually used to clear mines. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Debralee Best)*

*U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers with the 364th Engineer Company (Sapper), prepare an inert M58 Mine Clearing Line Charge to fire. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Roger Ashley)*



# River masters piece it together like a puzzle

By Staff Sgt. Carrie Castillo

416th Theater Engineer Command



**An Army Reserve CH-47 Chinook helicopter assigned to Bravo Company, 7/158th Aviation, Fort Hood, Texas, delivers an interior bridge bay to bridge crew members with the 502nd Engineer Company (Multi-Role Bridge), from Fort Knox, Ky., during Operation River Assault 2015 at Fort Chaffee, Ark.,**

**Aug. 4. Soldiers from various Army Reserve and active duty units trained together at the exercise, a bridging training exercise involving Army engineers and other support elements to create a modular bridge on the water. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jeff Shackelford)**

**FORT CHAFFEE, Ark.** – Bridges serve a straight path for troops and vehicles to go from point A to B. But how do they cross a river, from shore to shore, without a bridge to traverse?

Army engineers can build one in three hours or less thanks to Operation River Assault.

The exercise is a training event involving bridging engineers from the Army Reserve and active duty components, with the support elements. Together, four Multi-Role Bridge Companies created a modular floating bridge spanning 47 bays and 327 meters across the Arkansas River.

“The Improved Ribbon Bridge gives the Army a way to provide assured mobility to take on an objective and make it there without much concern from enemy forces,” said Capt. Timothy G. Rhodes, of Tucson, Arizona, commander, 502nd Engineer Company (MRBC), headquartered in Fort Knox, Kentucky. “This exercise allows us to have a culminating event and work with Reserve units.”

The entire training exercise lasted from July 25 to Aug. 7, at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, involving one brigade headquarters, two battalions and 17 other units, to include bridging, sapper, mobility, construction and aviation companies.

To build the bridge, engineers use bridge bays dropped in the water by helicopter and lowered from the shore by massive military trucks. The whole process is a calculated one, from the convoy staging to the breakdown of the bridge.

A reconnaissance team determined the best location to cross the river, a horizontal construction company cleared land and residue from the shores, Sappers jumped out of helicopters into the water to provide security, and roughly 400 Soldiers drove boats and pushed bays through the water to make it all possible. As the dropped bays opened in the water, they kicked up huge splashes of water. Boat operators pushed the bays around, maneuvering them into place. Crew members launched themselves from boats to bays, throwing ropes to each other to pull the pieces together



like a puzzle. Finally, at the end, the two halves of the bridge came together in the middle.

With all of these pieces fitting together, it would be hard to guess most of the operations on the water were carried out by junior enlisted Soldiers. While higher ranking noncommissioned and commissioned officers on the ground made the plans, specialists, corporals and sergeants ran the show on the water.

“We are short a lot of staff sergeants and even sergeants,” said Cpl. Kevin Fowler, an Arlington, Virginia, native and bridge crew member for the 310th Engineer Company (MRBC) from Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia. “Both myself and a specialist were assigned as acting squad leaders for this exercise. We got to come out to the slip and recon the area to figure out how many trucks would fit here at one time.”

These two junior enlisted Soldiers were in the leadership role for all truck movement of the bay and boat launches on slip four, a role usually handled by sergeants or staff sergeants.

“It’s a great opportunity for them,” said 1st Lt. Gregory Bucci, commander, 310th Engineer Company. “We took the Soldiers close to being promoted to a noncommissioned officer, or those that have previously deployed with us and put them in charge. We entrusted them with the plans and orders of execution.”

Once all of the bays were deployed and assembled, a small floating bridge was sent from near-side to far-side with two armored personnel carriers. After this mini-mission, more bridge bays were deployed and sent up-river by the bridge erection boats.

Roughly 80 percent of the Army’s engineers are in the Army Reserve and National Guard. This exercise reflected that breakdown as the 502nd Engineer Company (MRBC), joined the 310th, 401st and 341st

Eng. Companies, from Fort Knox, Kentucky; Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia; Mustang, Oklahoma; and Fort Chaffee, Arkansas; respectively. This cooperation between companies allowed them a “train as you fight” reality, using scenarios and tactics that have applied in most recent combat theaters for more than 13 years.

“If you look at our chest, it says Army, it doesn’t say Reserve or National Guard,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Cedric L. Richardson, of the 841st Engineer Battalion. “It’s important for me to see us all come together and get the job done.”



**Top: An Army Reserve CH-47 Chinook helicopter assigned to Bravo Company, 7/158th Aviation, Fort Hood, Texas, flies away after a helocast while Soldiers in Zodiac boats prepare to pick up the waterlogged Soldiers. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Debralee Best)**

**Above: Army Reserve Soldiers from the 310th Engineer Company (Multi-Role Bridge), from Fort A.P. Hill, Va., work to connect two improved ribbon bridge bays together during Operation River Assault 2015, a bridging training exercise involving Army Engineers and other support elements to create a modular floating bridge on the water across the Arkansas River at Fort Chaffee, Ark., Aug. 4, using improved ribbon bridge bays. The entire training exercise lasted from July 28 to Aug. 4, 2015, involving one brigade headquarters, two battalions and 17 other units, to include bridging, sapper, mobility, construction and aviation companies. (U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Michel Sauret)**



# Operation River Assault 2015









# Army Reserve, active Army engineers bridge the gap on training

By Sgt. 1st Class Darrin McDufford,  
416th TEC Public Affairs

**FORT CHAFFEE, Ark.** — U.S. Army Reserve and active Army engineer units cooperated in constructing a movable bridge across the Arkansas River to create a path for units to cross during Operation River Assault, a training exercise that culminated Aug. 4 at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas.

“The partnership is an advantage. After a persistent conflict [over] the past 14 years, this exercise helps tie together many of the experiences of these units,” said

Lt. Col. Jon Brierton, of Pittsburgh, battalion commander, 841st Engineer Battalion located in Miami.

Brierton refers to the proficiency units have earned by these units deployments.

“These units training here continue that partnership. We don’t know where the next contingency is going to be, but this builds the relationship between the forces,” said Brierton. “There is all kinds of cool and sexy training here to benefit the active duty and reserve Soldiers.”

This event gave the Army Reserve and active units an opportunity to share knowledge and familiarize with each other.

“The cross training here allows the reserves to see how the active unit works. We showed we can work together, and this is a proof in the pudding moment,” said 1st Lt. Nikolas Johnson, commander, 401st Engineer Company (Multi-Role Bridge Company), Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Coordination for this exercise took place over the past year, bringing together a multitude of units, mostly from the Army Reserve. The bridging event was a partnership of three Army Reserve and one active duty bridging units.

“We are bridging companies, and we do our job. It’s no different. It’s just training with other units and we build bridges,” said Johnson. “Separately, we may have different ways of operating back home, but here on the water we’re taking care of business and building bridges.”

The units did not find many differences as much as they did similarities.

“This gives us the ability to see what the reserve is and observe their techniques. Our training cycles are different but basically we’re able to maneuver our units to an objective,” said Capt. Timothy G. Rhodes, of Tucson, Arizona, commander, 502nd Engineer Company (Multi-role Bridge Company), located at Fort Knox, Kentucky. “I hope to build relationships and continue that relationship for future training and share results.”

For operational effectiveness the collaboration of the two forces will allow for improved synchronization and communication on the battlefield and during training.



**Together, four Multi-Role Bridge Companies - 502nd, 310th, 401st and 341st Engineer Companies, from Fort Knox, Ky.; Fort A.P. Hill, Va.; Mustang, Okla.; and Fort Chaffee, Ark.; respectively - created an Improved Ribbon Bridge spanning 47 bays and 327 meters across the Arkansas River. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Roger Ashley)**



“Assure mobility to maneuver and make it to an objective free of concern or without much interferences will show the culmination of future operations and training,” said Rhodes.

River Assault is designed to exercise the unit’s ability to cross a river obstacle. Forces working together serves as a benefit for mission success.

Staff Sgt. Zachary Stinzel, combat engineer with the 401st Engineer Company (Multi-Role Bridge Company), said, “This training is a good deal for us. This is what we do (to) get Soldiers out there to get that experience and deployment training for the main mission. Cross training with the active force enhances our practice.”

Soldiers work hard at training, and this involves an abundance of planning just within a unit. A natural by-product of that is the development of leaders.

“Half of the Soldiers have experience and half haven’t, so some are a bit green,” said Staff Sgt. Wayne Bolen, combat engineer with the 401st. “This gives those Soldiers the experience they don’t get during the month.”

Another benefit of this training exercise is leader development and setting the example

“Our noncommissioned officers are taking care of the Soldiers and setting the example of what leadership is and what leaders do,” said Col. Ralph Henning, “Morale is very high.”

Johnson added that the Soldiers have been really motivated, and it’s been a good experience for them.



**Above:** Two Army Reserve Soldiers from the 310th Engineer Company (Multi-Role Bridge), from Fort A.P. Hill, Va., jump onto an improved ribbon bridge bay during Operation River Assault 2015, a bridging training exercise involving Army Engineers and other support elements to create a modular floating bridge on the water across the Arkansas River at Fort Chaffee, Ark., Aug. 4, using improved ribbon bridge bays. The entire training exercise lasted from July 28 to Aug. 4, involving one brigade headquarters, two battalions and 17 other units, to include bridging, sapper, mobility, construction and aviation companies. (U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Michel Sauret)



**Left:** Sgt. Nicole Pierce, 401st Engineer Company, from Mustang, Okla., serves as the raft commander directing the watercraft to align both halves of an Improved Ribbon Bridge. Bridge crewmembers from different engineer companies joined forces deploying watercraft from transport trucks on the river bank, pushing bridge bays into place to construct the floating bridge across the Arkansas River, Aug. 4 as the culminating training event of Operation River Assault 2015 at Fort Chaffee, Ark. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Roger Ashley)



# Mud is no obstacle: Horizontal construction company

*By Staff Sgt. Debralee Best,  
412th TEC Public Affairs*

**FORT CHAFFEE, Ark.** – River Assault almost didn't happen.

The unusually high river levels of the Arkansas River left behind residue along the four "slips" used to unload bridge bays and bridge erection boats into the water. Those areas were covered in 2 to 4 feet of sediment from the river.

But, the 712th Engineer Support Company (Horizontal) had a mission to complete, and they made it happen.

Operation River Assault is a two-week combat training exercise with a culminating event of an Improved Ribbon Bridge assembled to cross the Arkansas River. Four different Multi-Role Bridging Companies work together to execute this high-light event.

But with an exercise heavily focused on water activities, who would have believed horizontal

engineers would pave the way.

"We came down here with our heavy equipment: with our dozers, graders and scoop-loaders," said Staff Sgt. William Adkins, heavy equipment operator and manager of the job sites. "We cleaned all the silt off to the side, so we could find the hard surface and the bridgers could build their bridges here and get access to the river without getting stuck."

When the advance party checked the area before the exercise, the water was so high the company wasn't sure they would even be able to bring their heavy equipment out to the river.

"It was a little intimidating because it was water, then mud. The water was about 6 to 7 feet above where it is now so 100 meters back it was all flooded and we couldn't get back there for two days," said 2nd Lt. Bartley Schwegler, platoon leader and construction site officer-in-charge. "The water went down really quickly, like 2 feet a day to

the point where it was just mud. After that we just pushed it out."

Schwegler makes it sound easy, but the Soldiers had some difficulties.

"Getting closer and closer to the water, it's a little bit difficult, trying to find the slip that was already there because the water had risen so much, taking off a bunch of feet of mud off the top of that and just scraping it down," said Spc. Jaelen Brown, heavy equipment operator. "It was a bit difficult; I got the grader stuck a couple times, but I got out of it ... nice training though getting real acquainted and better at the grader than I was before."

Moving silt and debris wasn't the full extent of the work to be done.

"At slip two, there was a tree growing in it. It had gotten shifted because of the water, so it was in the middle of it," said Schwegler, an Aiken, South Carolina, native. "That was really cool to watch get moved. That got done in a day, which is crazy because that was supposed to be the worse one. They got on it and they fixed it; blew my forecasting out of the water. That was great."

The company completed the slips ahead of schedule and their Soldiers became more knowledgeable.

"The biggest learning experience was just learning how to deal with all the mud and just watching everything happen: the before-and-after picture in your mind," said Brown, a Salisbury, North Carolina, native. "Seeing things going



**U.S. Army Reserve Sgt. Nicholas Chiodini, heavy equipment operator with the 712th Engineer Support Company (Horizontal) out of York, S.C., clears slip four of sediment at Fort Chaffee, Ark., Aug. 1 during Operation River Assault 2015. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Debralee Best)**



# clears way for bridge building

from real muddy to how we cut out all the mud to the next step, to the next, to the final product of just grating it all out and being able to just drive on it, seeing the (M1977 AC Common Bridge Transporter) drivers drive on it, and them having no problem.”

Brown took more than the before-and-after picture with him.

“I got a little pride in me today when I was out there, and I saw on slip four how they couldn’t drive on it to now there is a smooth transaction, smooth turnaround point,” said Brown.

Adkins knows from experience this mission has real-world application.

“It keeps us training; it keeps us with good training because being overseas, there was a lot of times when I was overseas that we had to do joint operations with bridge builders to go over the Euphrates River,” said Adkins. “I thought it was a good impact on (the Soldiers) to let them see how it can affect them in the future, either deployed or stateside.”

In addition to the slips, the 712th Eng. Company also improved the transportation route for the exercise.

“The roads here, they were all washed out, hadn’t really been maintained. It’s actually owned by the county, not Fort Chaffee, so they’re letting us fix their roads,” said Schwegler. “In the north part, toward the river, there are potholes the size of two cars and 2 feet deep in the middle. We’ve gotten a lot of those fixed, too. We should have the whole 7 kilometers of

road done by the time we leave on (Aug.) 4. It’s pretty cool to watch these guys go out and get the work done.”

The company has completed many improvements for the exercise and it has not gone unnoticed.

“Especially with this (military occupational specialty), you really don’t get that much appreciation. It’s really just pushing dirt, building roads. It’s important, but it’s not glamorous,” said Schwegler. “It’s great to come here and have them fix the boat slips, create roads that are passable and serviceable for the operation and then hear them actually get the accolades from battalion and brigade. They’re like, ‘Yeah! Good for you! You’re the reason this is going to happen!’ So that was really cool and I’m glad I got to be in charge of that. That’s rare praise, I think.”

“It makes everybody in the company feel real good about our mission and that we’re able to complete what we need to complete for everything else to work the way it needs to work,” added Adkins, a Rock Hill, South Carolina, resident. “We’re really excited that we’re actually appreciated by a battalion in coming here and can do our job and they respect that and appreciate it. They’ve done a great job of telling us and showing us that they appreciate it.”

The battalion and brigade weren’t the only ones who showed they valued the work the 712th completed.

“The guys who are doing the bridging, they’ve done a great job of showing their appreciation toward us,” said Adkins. “They’ve

gotten some Soldiers on some boat rides and it keeps morale up. It helps them see what they’re doing impacts everybody else.”

Schwegler hopes the Soldiers take that gratefulness to heart.

“I know a lot of them often feel pushed into a corner just because of their MOS and their job. ‘Oh, we push dirt. That’s not cool. We’re not jumping out of airplanes.’ But, hopefully they’re really going to come away with an appreciation for how important their job can be,” he said. “When they need mobility enhancement capabilities, we’re the guys they call, and without us really nothing can happen a lot of the time, especially with a bridging operation.”

Horizontal engineers provide an asset to other companies so it is important to train together. In addition to horizontal and bridge companies, River Assault brings together Sapper, mobility, route clearance companies as well as aviation and divers.

“The biggest thing I think the Soldiers can take away from here is the joint operations going on so they see how their job plays a part in the Army,” said Adkins. “This is one of the best ways to see that because rivers are all over the world. We always have to cross some body of water to get somewhere, so they see how construction equipment ties into all that, and how we support the Army to continue moving forward. That’s the biggest thing I’d like them to get from it.”

The 712th Eng. Co. leave Fort Chaffee knowing they ensured the bridge companies could continue moving forward.



# ***Around the TEC...***









# 80th Teen Council leads the way

*By Sgt. 1st Class Phillip Eugene,  
80th Training Command*

**ALEXANDRIA, Va.** - Ten members of the 80th Training Command Teen Council participated in a joint meeting with members of the 412th Theater Engineer Command and the 75th Training Command teen councils in Alexandria, Virginia, July 27 to 31.

The meeting afforded the 80th TC teens an opportunity to share their ideas, challenges, and best practices with members of the 75th TC and the 412th TEC councils.

"Our teens are now more confident and they came into this event as leaders," said Francis Mitchell the 80th TC family programs coordinator. "Since our first council meeting 10 months ago, many of them have served in their communities as spokespersons, advocates and volunteers."

"Some have worked with school counselors advocating for other military youth to encourage school morale, while others have participated in clothing drives and served food to the homeless," Mitchell added.

During last year's meeting, where they all met for the first time in person, the council filled back packs with school supplies for children who at the time each had a parent deployed to Afghanistan.

This year, they joined the 412th TEC and 75th TC teens to beautify the grounds of the Bethesda, Maryland, Fisher House, which provides free temporary lodging to military

veterans and family members while their loved ones receive care at nearby Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

"It's cool to have our parents as Soldiers and be able to do this for other Soldiers and their families," said Zachary Forrest, whose mother is Col. Sandra Forrest, logistics director, 80th TC.

Each two-star command in the Army Reserve is required to have a teen council that works with Child, Youth and School Services to support readiness and enhance quality of life by reducing conflict between mission requirements and parental responsibilities.

The 80th TC Family Readiness Programs office initiated the council with guidance from the U.S. Army Reserve Command to facilitate the development of leadership skills for the youth, and to ensure they have a forum to voice their

needs and concerns as military family members.

Council members plan and execute initiatives that support youth



**Top:** Josh, a teenaged Family member from the 412th Theater Engineer Command, sweeps the sidewalk during a service volunteer project at the Fisher House, Bethesda, Md., during the Joint Teen Council.

**Above:** Maj. Gen. Tracy Thompson, commanding general, 412th Theater Engineer Command, gives teenagers participating in the Joint Teen Council Training in Alexandria, Va., the Teen Council Oath of Agreement. The event included three parts: Teen Council Training, Teen Resiliency Training and a service volunteer project and involved teenaged Family members from three different Army Reserve commands. (U.S. Army photos by Capt. Patrick Bishop)





and families across the command.

Since they're all from various locations across the country, the council conducts monthly meetings via conference call. They also communicate through an ongoing group text message and other phone messaging applications.

During a breakout session, the

*Yasmine drops an egg, as Jeremaih watches, during a resiliency exercise at the Joint Teen Council Training in Alexandria, Va. Both youths are Family members from the 412th Theater Engineer Command. The training included three parts: Teen Council Training, Teen Resiliency Training and a service volunteer project. It involved teenaged Family members from three different Army Reserve commands, the 412th TEC, and the 80th and 75th Training Commands. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Patrick Bishop)*

teen councils discussed creating a phone application that would show benefits available to military teens in their respective areas.

"I think it's a good and creative idea," said Gregory Peloquin, son of Col. Marisa Peloquin, commander, 97th Training Brigade. "We might be able to incorporate parts of the app into websites that are already out there, like Military Kids Connect."

Gregory represents the 80th Teen Council as a member of the Army Reserve Teen Panel. The ARTP gives teens opportunities to develop strategies and implement solutions regarding issues they face as military youth.

"I'm definitely going to present the idea for the app to the teen panel the next time we meet," Gregory said.

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## Building a strong engineer family through ENTAPE conference

*By Staff Sgt. Roger Ashley,  
412th TEC Public Affairs*

**ORLANDO, Fla.** – What happens when you put 73 engineers together into one room?

That's easy: They talk shop at the third annual Engineer Total Army Planning Exercise Conference hosted by the 412th Theater Engineer Command in Orlando, Florida, July 16 to 19.

It didn't matter their background or specialty, they're all engineers talking - not about building and blowing things up - but sharing their experiences and struggles, bringing a better understanding of each engineer element to one another.

This one conference has the potential to affect the entire engineer community by building new training opportunities for the more than 100,000 engineers across the civilian and military sectors with representatives coming from the Active Component, National Guard, U.S. Army Reserve, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Air Force.

Participants came to learn about their engineer counterparts, the challenges they face and how better they can integrate training and force management.

"I approach this under the presumption that none of us have the resources to do what we need to do anymore in this era of scarcity," said Col. Scott Chambers, logistics and engineering directorate, National Guard Bureau, U.S. Air Force. "Nobody can do the job alone. Everyone needs a partner."

Chambers felt making the connection to fellow engineers while deployed was easier.

"What I've noticed over my deployments is that it's easy to form those partnerships when you're down-range," said Chambers. "It's because you're in the moment. You're in the mission. You do what you need to do to get the mission done."

While Chambers found these relationships easier to build while deployed, he wasn't going to pass up this opportunity for growth.

"I've been mostly listening, but this is an opportunity to do some cross-leveling and cross-pollination," said Chambers, who felt ENTAPE helped him learn more about the Army engineer regiment.

"It's important to me that I learn more about the other engineers," said Chambers. "I've learned a little bit how Army engineers are organized and that we have some of the same training challenges, defining that reason for existing and how to get the training to serve the way you want to serve. We all struggle with that."

One of the topics ENTAPE covered was the National Guard's capabilities. Col. Gregg Hadlock, a senior National Guard advisor, discussed how its structure can combine the state and federal troops in a domestic operation when a catastrophe happens.

"The issue is all catastrophes are local," said Hadlock. "They go up to the state emergency level and federal aid comes down to the state level at the state's request providing support. The problem in the past was there might be two or sometimes three military organizations for the civilians to deal with and it complicated the efficiency of the effort."

The solution Hadlock explained came after Hurricane Katrina.

"After Hurricane Katrina, the federal response framework was reworked to improve the federal and state cooperation," said Hadlock. "Say you have an earthquake and you have a



**Craig Hancock briefs the Reachback Engineer Data Integration portal at the ENTAPE conference. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Roger Ashley)**



certain amount of damage. There's always that 'fog of war.' Same thing applies to a hurricane or a fire and your initial responders will be 98 percent of the time your local authorities, (police or fire departments) and they have enough capacity to deal with that in house, but when it gets to a catastrophe-level and the state is unable to deal with that alone, they have the capability to go to the Federal Emergency Management Association to ask for federal aid to help. The local authority is still in charge of the state, so that federal support has to funnel down through FEMA to make sure that people aren't sticking stuff in and hurting more than it helps."

Hadlock explained that's where the Dual Status Commander position comes into play.

"It's not a unity of command but a unity of effort. A position which puts one military person in contact with that state, usually appointed by the state's adjutant general or governor and can communicate with the operations center."

Hadlock explained the Army National Guard's unique capability to fill both the state and federal obligations together.

"All National Guardsmen are dual status. We have our state's responsibilities and our federal responsibilities."

National Guardsmen are able to continue the unity of effort and interagency coordination effort throughout between both the state and to the federal-level agencies.

Chambers, as a National Guardsmen, also felt that multi-agency coordination for domestic operations was a key topic of the conference.

"It's really important because domestic operations are a team sport," said Chambers. "It's meant to be by design multi-agency and if it looks like we're uncoordinated or isolated and not talking or coordinating with each other, it makes us all look bad and we're letting down the public."

"When we're doing domestic operations, the civilians don't care what uniform we're wearing," said Chambers. "They don't care what service we're in, if we're National Guard, Active component or Army Reserve. They want us to serve and serve properly. Disasters don't care about jurisdictions and neither does the public."

Another topic for ENTAPE led by Craig Hancock, a civilian emergency operations specialist, U.S. Army

Corps of Engineers Reachback Operations Center, Mobile, Alabama, was the array of tools available for today's engineer. One of the tools explained in particular was the Reachback Engineer Data Integration portal.

"RED-I is like Match.com," said Hancock. "You can search the site for troop projects available to find the perfect match for your unit."

"We're busier now than we were at the height of the war," said Hancock, who thinks the UROC and RED-I portal is becoming better known for its "Cloud-like" Internet storage and information database for engineers who need to track, manage and archive project files. RED-I also exchanges information with humanitarian, civilian and military services bridging the gap in communication drops to provide a common place to store and relay information so it's not lost or confined to one service or unit without visibility.

ENTAPE participants said they think the conference will to improve training opportunities and the engineer community.

"I find personal relationships are key to making sure you get that inter-agency cooperation," said Hadlock. "One of the primary things that comes out of this is you get to sit down and talk with people about their concerns, what they're going through and do some of that pre-coordination so when that time comes to work together, it becomes a little easier."

Command Sergeant Maj. Richard Castelveter, 412th TEC, also felt that the best aspect of the conference was meeting everyone.

"What I enjoy and get out of all these events is the interaction and networking with other Soldiers from other organizations," said Castelveter. "We're a family; working with your brothers and sisters here just makes a real difference. You can see why we're a special organization. That's the best part, looking eye-to-eye and understanding each other's background and what you bring to the table and how we can integrate all of our experiences."

Castelveter said he enjoyed the networking part, but also values the knowledge to take back to train the troops.

"We're building a strong engineer family from all organizations within the engineer community," said Castelveter. "This is going to enhance our training and broaden our experiences that we in the Army Reserve are not exposed to enough. We're going to work together and train together. That's the bottom line."



# Pain can't stop a Sapper:

## Teams from around the nation test mettle

*By Sgt. Devin Wood,  
215th Mobile Public Affairs Det.*

**FORT CHAFFEE, Ark.** — A fresh-legged cadre member stepped out into the dark, setting the pace for 134 Soldiers whose legs were torn from two days of competition. They did their best to keep up, a few already falling into a van riding behind the formation.

Two up-hill miles done. Only 10 more to go.

This ruck march would separate the strongest teams from the pack, and went a long way toward deciding this year's winners.

"We crawled across the line, but we finished," said one Soldier after the march.

U.S. Army Reserve and National Guard combat engineer teams from around the country navigated their way through physically and mentally challenging events during Sapper Stakes 2015. Sapper Stakes is a nationwide competition, inviting Sapper teams to compete, enhance their leadership and strengthen teamwork in a field environment Aug. 30- Sept. 1, 2015.

"It's real world environment stuff out here," said Staff. Sgt. John Mullins, a drill sergeant with A Company, 1st Engineer Brigade, 31st Engineer Battalion, out of Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. "You're never going to be able to just drive up in a vehicle and throw something up. You're going to be asked at times to go out and they will drop your necessities from a bird. You have to operate fatigued. You have to be able to ruck 12 miles and still be able to fight and set up

your position ... If you can't do that, you're a useless force."

When the final event is complete, these combat engineers will have traveled approximately 45 miles by foot, mostly carrying gear.

Competitors constructed fences with concertina wire, detonated explosives, carried 200 pounds of dead weight a half mile on a Skedco stretcher and divided 500 burpees among their 6-man teams.

On day two, they started at 4:30 a.m. and returned to their bunks at 1:00 a.m. the next morning. If fatigue wasn't enough, the heat index at Fort Chaffee hovered in the 90s, the humidity attached itself to the faces of each competitor as sweat poured throughout the week.

"I didn't really know what to expect," said Spc. Jeffery O'Connell,

a combat engineer from the 309th Engineer Company, Brainerd, Minnesota. "Didn't know how much they were going to push us ... it's pretty intense."

"A lot of guys coming off active duty perceive the Reserve as low tempo," said Staff Sgt. Omar Castaneda, a combat engineer with the 350th Engineer Company out of Bell, California. "When they come out to an event like this, it says otherwise."

This year, the competition was organized and run by the 489th Engineer Battalion, headquartered in North Little Rock, Arkansas.

As the active Army reduces its ranks, many Soldiers find a home in the Army Reserve, and continue their service while also pursuing civilian careers. Anyone looking for



**U.S. Army Reserve and National Guard combat engineer teams conduct a 12-mile ruck march through the dusty hills and roads of Fort Chaffee, Ark., during Sapper Stakes 2015, Aug. 31. The road march was graded as a team event, and it was said by several competitors that it was the hardest and most physically challenging event from the entire competition. In all, the combat engineers marched more than 40 miles by foot throughout Sapper Stakes. The competition is designed to build teamwork, enhance combat engineering skills and promote leadership among the units. (U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Michel Sauret)**



# in Sapper Stakes 2015

an easy ride, need look elsewhere.

“We still run at the same tempo as the active component and train as hard as they do,” said Castaneda. “We just have a civilian job.”

For Sgt. Nicholas Kloberdanz, a combat engineer with the 402nd Sapper Company, Des Moines, Iowa, a former active duty Soldier, and banker, the Reserve component provided some much needed time away from the office and the camaraderie that one might miss when leaving active duty.

“I have a masters degree, so I’m not in this for money,” said Kloberdanz. “It’s just a fun thing to do. I have a desk job ... It’s nice to get out and do those things I did on active duty, like play with explosives. While I may not be doing the active duty go, go, go cycle anymore, I still get to enjoy coming out and doing these fun things every once in awhile, and playing around on the weekends, working with my guys ... That’s what keeps me coming back.”

The competing teams looked to their more experienced Soldiers for guidance throughout Sapper Stakes. Several of the events they faced dealt with combat engineering skills that haven’t been taught at the school house for several years due to the current urban operational environment overseas.

“It’s the first time I’ve done anything like this,” said Spc. Ross Odom, a combat engineer with the 309th Engineer Battalion, Boise, Idaho. “It’s a good experience, I’m learning a lot and I’m with guys that are dropping knowledge on me left and right, and its helped me

getting here and I know it will carry me through the competition.”

The competence of a team leaders played a major role in the success or failure of a squad.

“It relies heavily on the team leaders, their knowledge and what they’ve been training their teams,” said Mullins. “A lot of the tasks out here, such as the 11-row fence, aren’t really practiced at the unit level, so the team leader has to know it, and how to properly manage his Soldiers and his time, so that you don’t wear your guys, you have to be on your game and have a proper plan.”

“It’s back to the basics where a lot has been forgotten,” said Mullins. “Over these deployments, the focus has been strictly on route clearance, and we have gotten away from the mobility, counter mobility and survivability part of our jobs.”

While opportunities to lead in this type of environment don’t come along every day, this was but a small taste of what these leaders would see in a combat zone or in the coveted Sapper School, a 30-day, high intensity specialty school that sits atop many combat engineers’ career bucket lists.

“Every possible thing a combat engineer team leader would be



***A combat engineer team disembarks and prepares to carry a Zodiac boat from the water as part of a nonstandard Army Physical Fitness Test during Sapper Stakes 2015 at Fort Chaffee, Ark., Aug. 30. Sapper Stakes is a nationwide competition for Army Reserve and National Guard Soldiers, allowing Sapper teams to compete to develop teamwork and enhance leadership. (U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Devin M. Wood)***

expected to do is being thrown at these guys here,” said Castaneda. “They are working under pressure with limited time, and resources and they are expected to adapt.”

“It’s pretty rigorous,” said Castaneda. “You aren’t going to get this kind of leadership training anywhere else unless you’re deployed.”

One of the toughest jobs leaders face in this type of environment is to maintain unit cohesion and morale. The teams must stay motivated.

Drive and perseverance are key to winning Sapper Stakes.

It took a little extra to reach the end of a 12-mile ruck march, their legs cramping and locking up from two physically demanding days. A few quit, and it’s hard blame them. Those who finished survived for one more day of suck. And several of this year’s competitors are already priming to show up again next year.



# Army Reserve, National Guard Soldiers survive

*By Staff Sgt. Debralee Best,  
412th TEC Public Affairs*

**FORT CHAFFEE, Ark.** – “It’s a rough, tough competition ... Three days of tough-guy stuff. Only the best engineers will win.”

Spc. Elliott Vitelli, combat engineer, 680th Engineer Company out of Webster, New York, is one of the U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers competing in Sapper Stakes 2015 at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, Aug. 30 to Sept. 1.

Sapper Stakes is a three-day competition challenging combat engineers through various physical and mentally events focusing on mobility, counter-mobility and survivability.

Last year, the inaugural event was exclusively an Army Reserve competition. This year National Guard Soldiers were invited to participate.

Four states accepted the offer: Missouri, North Carolina, West Virginia and Wisconsin.

For some of these teams, this was a last-minute scramble to put a team together.

“I got a phone call, and they said there was an event coming up, and it’s the first time our state has been invited to do this,” said Spc. Zakhar Zimin, combat engineer, 119th Engineer Company (Sapper), West Virginia National Guard out of Moundsville, West Virginia. “They asked me if I wanted to do it. I said, ‘Yeah, sure, I love doing this stuff!’ It was kind of a short notice so we didn’t have a lot of time to prep.”

While other National Guard units put their teams together earlier and had more time to train, they still ran into difficulties getting Soldiers to the competition.

“We originally had three companies train up in our battalion. Most of them had to drop out because of ... (other exercises),” said Capt. Troy Meneffe, commander, 151st Engineer Company (Mobility Augmentation), North Carolina National Guard, out of Laurinburg, North Carolina. “We’re one of the units who has (an exercise) coming up next year. We stayed on there, so they really volunteered to come out here.”

In coming to this competition, some of the Soldiers missed their first week of the school semester and will have to retake tests when they return home.

“It’s really hard for them,” said Meneffe, a Jack-

sonville, North Carolina, resident. “I appreciate them coming out.”

Getting to the competition with complete teams was half the battle for the National Guard units. The competition itself hasn’t been a stroll in the park as Sapper Stakes was designed so that each Soldier rucked, ran and marched a cumulative 45 miles minimum in three days.

“We’ve never done anything like this before. It’s a good challenge, good test of knowledge of our unit and what we can do. (We’re doing) pretty good, not bad. Better than I thought we’d do,” said Zimin, a Clarksburg, West Virginia, resident. “We’re just here to survive: try to make it to the end. We were all talking about it. It’s harder than we all thought it was going to be. We honestly didn’t know what to expect. It’s a pretty tough competition.”

Tough is a good way to describe the competition, with events beginning before dawn and ending well after dark, with only the moon and headlamps to light the way.

While this is a competition, it also helped enhance engineer skills.

“Sapper Stakes is the kind of event that absolutely augments the training the individual and team-based skills Soldiers are learning throughout the training year, at battle assemblies and at (Extended Combat Trainings),” said Capt. Chris Scott, commander, 688th Engineer Company out of Harrison, Arkansas, and officer-in-charge of Sapper Stakes 2015. “I would even say that it is another cumulative training event Soldiers can look forward to outside of ECT in terms of overall readiness and improving the warfighting abilities of the regiment.”

The competition focused on engineer skills, but also included plenty of physical activities to wear the Soldiers out including 500 burpees as a team for the nonstandard Army physical fitness test, 100 push-ups as a team between every two points during land navigation and nonstop pain-inducing carries of heavy objects throughout the competition.

Some National Guard Soldiers recognized the training value here.

“Sapper Stakes has been a challenge, beginning from day one. It’s not only a physical challenge, but it’s a mental challenge as well. There are different



# Sapper Stakes, turn a challenge into friendship

challenges that we don't normally do so it's good to come down here, train with other team leaders, other teams, see how they operate and combine arms, so we can take something out of this," said Staff Sgt. Joshua Steffens, squad leader, 273rd Engineer Company (Sapper), Wisconsin National Guard out of Medford, Wisconsin and Appleton, Wisconsin, resident. "Worse case scenario, even if we do not place, we're still training, we're still learning, and we're still meeting outstanding Soldiers from other units."

The building of relationships across units and components was one of the goals of the planners of the competition.

"It's going to develop because they're all going through the same thing, they're all hurting from the same events," said Scott, a Fayetteville, Arkansas, native. "When you breed that level of intensity and that level of competition, it's only going to draw these guys together and show them they are the same in so many ways."

Some Army Reserve Soldiers said they wouldn't have known the National Guard Soldiers from the Reserve.

"(Competing against the National Guard is) the same as any other Army Reserve unit. We get the same training everyday, whatever our weekends contain," said Vitelli, a Rochester, New York, resident. "We're all fighting for the same thing: 'Merica. I've seen them

compete, they're pretty good. I'm sure they're here for a reason."

The Reserve Soldiers seeing the National Guard teams succeed may increase competitiveness, but leaders think that will grow into something more.

"Rivalry is great. Rivalry always breeds a certain heightened performance level, and that's a great thing, but when rivalry also transcends into cohesion what you have is one fighting force. To fall into that old cliché, and it's a cliché because it's true, you have one team, one fight," said Scott. "These Soldiers start to recognize that, and they start to work together. In the end, we're all better for it and the Army gets better. We become more effective in how we fight, we become more effective in how we train."

Scott has seen first-hand how competition can bring Soldiers together.

"I was a part of the 420th Engineer Brigade's competition. At the start of the competition, they were all individual teams, they were all eyeballing each other and they're looking at each other as adversaries and competitors," he said. "By the end of that, it's high-fives all around, and I guarantee if you watch social media as a temperature check trended, you'd watch friend requests and follower on Twitter just blasted left and right because all the sudden they interact and these guys are like, 'Hey man, I'll see you at WLC, I've got the same school days as you.' Now that guy is your friend for life in the Army."

While making a friend for life is great for the Soldier, the relationships built are also important for the entire engineer team.

"Some of these guys are going to go on and see each other at Sapper Leader Course or some other schoolhouse, and they're going to be better because of this experience for these three days," said Scott. "It has nothing to do with me, has nothing to do with the cadre who are out here. You could throw any cadre and any (noncommissioned officer-in-charge) or OIC out here working, and those Soldiers would experience the same amount of rivalry and cohesion and team-building that will effectively improve our Engineer Regiment going forward."

In the end, these U.S. Army Reserve and National Guard Soldiers will finish Sapper Stakes knowing they competed in a grueling competition and built lasting camaraderie.



*Spc. Mark Whaley, 1138th Engineer Company (Sapper), Missouri National Guard, disassembles a MK 19 grenade launcher during a weapons jumble at Sapper Stakes 2015 in Fort Chaffee, Ark., Aug. 30. Each team member was required to disassemble, reassemble and perform a weapons check on a weapon system. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Debralee Best)*



# Sapper Stakes 2015









# Sprint for the win: Combat engineer team from Des Moines

*By Staff Sgt. Carrie Castillo,  
416th TEC Public Affairs*

**FORT CHAFFEE, Ark.** – Orange cones and white tape marked the finish line for the culminating race of Sapper Stakes 2015, a gauntlet of events referred to only as the X-Mile. A total of six Army Reserve teams and two National Guard teams, each with six Soldiers, had made it this far into the competition after three gruesome days of physical and mental torture in the Arkansas heat.

The winner of this race would take home the title of the top Sapper Stakes team this year.

This U.S. Army Reserve Command competition, which took place Aug. 30 to Sept. 2, is the final leg in the series of the Sapper assessments beginning at the brigade level. Twenty total teams from the 412th and 416th Theater Engineer Commands and the National Guard united at Fort Chaffee with one common goal: bring the title home.

The 402nd Engineer Company (Sapper), U.S. Army Reserve unit from Des Moines, Iowa, had the prize in their sights, yet had the most difficult time getting through the five check points of the X-Mile foot-race, stretching across five miles of dusty, graveled roads. They started in the first place position but received a

“bolo” in every event, meaning the grader made the determination they were not performing the task to standard. Each bolo resulted in a penalty that would slow down their race. As a result, they completed 200 push-ups, conducted hundreds of burpees, carried picket pounders or a 40-pound bag of sand to their next checkpoints.

“We jumped right in and ‘no-goed’ our first event, so we jumped into push-ups, the same thing happened to the two teams right behind us,” said Staff Sgt. Nick Kloberdanz, squad leader, 402nd Eng. Co. (Sapper). “It really didn’t put us at a disadvantage but it pushed us to run, constantly looking over our shoulders every five steps to see how far the other team was [behind us].”

The X-Mile was run under the obscurity of the Arkansas sky just after nightfall. The teams began their trek into the unknown after completing their first station, with only headlamps to illuminate their path. Shuffling down the gravel road they made their way to each station, missing their mark and paying their physical penalty to continue on.

“With this X-Mile we had no idea how far we were going or how many events there were, so we just pushed each other the whole way,” said Spc. Luke Dawson, 402nd Eng. Co. (Sapper) team member. “We



**A U.S. Army Reserve team from the 402nd Engineer Company (Sapper), from Des Moines, Iowa, took first place at Sapper Stakes 2015 at Fort Chaffee, Ark., Sept. 2. From left: Spc. Timothy Draper, Sgt. Cutler Holland, Spc. Lucas Dawson, Staff Sgt. Nicholas Kloberdanz, Spc. Jordan Millard and Spc. Tyler Chatterton. (U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Michel Sauret)**



# wins national Sapper Stakes competition

honestly had no clue [we were winning], until we came around the last corner and we saw the smoke pop. We all said this was it, we need to line up so we can cross the line together.”

Boundaries were pushed and broke through with the motivation of two junior Soldiers, never once complaining about their own ails or mental breakdowns.

It was unanimously agreed by the team that Spcs. Tyler Chatterton, of Knoxville, Iowa, and Jordan Millard, of Strawberry Point, Iowa, were the biggest motivators of the team.

Chatterton came into the game just three days before leaving for Fort Chaffee, as the relief hitter for another team member that had broken his leg, and had not had any prep time with his team. Millard fought through his own physical pain from the 12-mile ruck march the day before to give his team the strength to drive-on to the finish line.

“It makes me feel good that my teammates appreciate the effort that I put into it and I gave my all,” said Chatterton. “You have to take it seriously, it’s all mental. Sure it’s physical too, but you can do anything if you don’t give up.”

“This event is less about what you can do as an engineer Soldier or a Sapper, and more about the six

inches between your ears,” said Maj. Gen. Tracy A. Thompson, commanding general 412th Theater Engineer Command. “It’s not so much the training as it is the mental prep for it.”

The first place team was the 402nd Engineer Company (Sapper), U.S. Army Reserve unit from Des Moines, Iowa. The team members were Staff Sgt. Nick Kloberdanz, of Des Moines, Iowa; Sgt. Cutler Holland, of Hague, Virginia; Spc. Tyler Chatterton, of Knoxville, Iowa; Spc. Luke Dawson, of Monroe, Iowa; Spc. Timothy E. Draper, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa; and Spc. Jordan Millard, Strawberry Point, Iowa.

The second place team was the 309th Engineer Company (Mobilization Augmentation), U.S. Army Reserve unit from Brainerd, Minnesota. The team members were Staff Sgt. Michael T. Koering, Spc. Jonathan DuBois, Spc. Trevore D. Klein, Spc. Randy O. Lene, Spc. Jeffrey R. O’Connell and Spc. Johnathan D. O’Connell. Spc. Todd R. Brandell was an alternate.

The third place team was the 680th Engineer Company, U.S. Army Reserve unit from Webster, New York. The team members were Staff Sgt. Kevin A. Guy, Sgt. Michael D. Barber, Sgt. Michael J. DiPaola, Spc. Joshua R. Miller, Spc. Daniel R. Trembath, and Spc. Elliott W. Vitelli. The alternates were Spc. Joseph M. Lynch and Pvt. Brandon Wilson.



**A U.S. Army Reserve team from the 309th Engineer Company (Mobility Augmentation), from Brainerd, Minn., took second place at Sapper Stakes 2015 at Fort Chaffee, Ark., Sept. 2. From left: Spc. Johnathan O’Connell, Spc. Randy Lene, Spc. Jonathan Dubois, Staff Sgt. Michael Koering, Spc. Jeffrey O’Connell, Spc. Trevore Klein and Spc. Todd Brandell. (U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Michel Sauret)**



**A U.S. Army Reserve team from the 680th Engineer Company, from Webster, N.Y., took third place at Sapper Stakes 2015 at Fort Chaffee, Ark., Sept. 2. From left: Sgt. Michael DiPaola, Sgt. Michael Barber, Spc. Joshua Miller, Staff Sgt. Kevin Guy, Spc. Daniel Trembath, Spc. Elliott Vitelli, Spc. Joseph Lynch and Pvt. Brandon Wilson. (U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Michel Sauret)**



# Army Reserve leadership fights stigma attached to seeking help

By Capt. Olivia Cobiskey,  
Office of SECDEF Public Affairs

**JOINT BASE MYER-HENDERSON HALL, Va.** – The mental and emotional health of Army Reserve Soldiers and their family members continue to be a priority, said Lt. Gen. Jeffrey W. Talley, chief of the Army Reserve and commanding general of Army Reserve Command.

“After over a decade of conflict there are daily reminders of the struggles that our Soldiers and family members encounter,” said Talley, during the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with Give an Hour, a non-profit network of licensed mental health professionals who will provide complimentary counseling services to Army Reserve Soldiers, families and veterans, July 29.

Through this partnership, Give an Hour and the Army Reserve Private Public Partnership Office will work to increase awareness of available services while continuing to reduce the stigma associated with using mental health services.

They will do this by leading education, training, and outreach efforts in military communities.

“Partnerships with organizations that support physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual readiness provide alternative means to enable our Soldiers to reach out during times of difficulty, building a more resilient force,” said Erin Thede, director of the Army Reserve Private Public Partnership (P3).

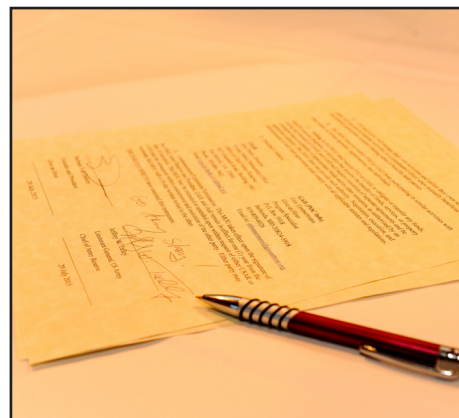
According to Thede, these partnerships empower and encourage Soldiers, civilians, and their Family members to increase their readiness and resiliency, while providing training, tools, and resources to improve their overall health.

Col. Adam L. Rocke, special assistant to the chief of staff of the Army and director, Soldier for Life Program, agreed a resilient Reserve Soldier makes a resilient employee.

“Through private public partnerships, communities understand the value of veterans,” said Rocke. “This is beneficial to both the Soldier and the community: not only do Soldiers, veterans and their families feel comfortable and embraced by their neighbors and employers, they step up and continue to serve and lead as the professionals the Army trained them to be, bettering the systems around them.”

The Army Reserve’s partnership with Give an Hour will provide Army Reserve leaders access to a nationwide network of individuals to establish a culture free of stigma and encourage help-seeking behavior utilizing P3 resources.

Give an Hour providers are psychiatrists, substance abuse counselors, psychologists, pastoral counselors, social workers, marriage and family therapists, psychiatric nurses, and licensed mental health counselors. They are available throughout the nation to provide free counseling to active duty, National Guard, Army Reserve members, and veterans. Give an Hour also offers free services to parents, siblings, unmarried partners, and grandparents.



“We’ve found that working with strategic partners is critical in ensuring the successful reintegration of military families back into their communities,” says Barbara Van Dahlen, Ph.D., founder and president of Give an Hour.

In addition to direct counseling services, the partnership will work with the Army Reserve to provide training and education on the psychological and emotional issues affecting soldiers and their families

Dahlen said teaching Army Reserve Soldiers the signs that indicate that someone close to them is suffering emotionally is key.

“Those men and women are going to become ambassadors in their communities, they’re going to teach those signs to the kids they coach, they’re going to teach them to their co-workers, they’re going to see when people around them are in need: their battle buddies, their family members, members of the community they live in,” Dahlen said. “So, once again our military will lead the way as we change the culture of mental health in America.”



**Lt. Gen. Jeffrey W. Talley, chief of the Army Reserve and commanding general of Army Reserve Command and Barbara Van Dahlen, Ph.D., founder and president of Give an Hour sign a Memorandum of Understanding at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Va., July 29. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Olivia Cobiskey)**



Antiterrorism



# Awareness For Travelers



ARMY  
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## Personal protection – your life may depend on it

### Assess the environment before travel:

- State Department travel warnings
- Combatant Command warnings or restrictions
- Terrorist threat level
- High crime rate areas

### Key references covering personal protection:

- CJCS Guide 5260, A Self-Help Guide to Antiterrorism
- CJCS Pocket Card, Antiterrorism Protective Measures
- Unit Antiterrorism Officer Handbook
- Antiterrorism Enterprise Portal

### Determine travel requirements:

- Soldiers and DA civilians complete Level-I AT Awareness Training
- Family members ages 14 and older traveling outside CONUS on official business complete Level-I AT Awareness Training
- Encourage family members to complete Level-I Training before any overseas personal travel
- Country/Region (AOR) specific training
- Determine requirement for a Country Clearance

Always Ready, Always Alert  
*Because someone is depending on you*





# Army Reserve must think resourcefully in fiscally stringent times

By Master Sgt. Michel Sauret,  
416th TEC Public Affairs

**DARIEN, Ill.** – After World War II, Winston Churchill is credited with saying, “Gentlemen, we have run out of money. Now we have to think.”

The chief executive officer of the Army Reserve repeated that quote when he visited the 416th Theater Engineer Command to speak with its command leaders and headquarters staff in Darien, Illinois, June 16.

To be fair, even though the Army Reserve faces budget uncertainty, it is not financially broke, nor does it face the same problems Churchill did. Overall, the Army Reserve’s budget is projected at a slight increase over the next two fiscal years, said Mr. James Balocki, chief executive officer and director of services and installations for the Army Reserve.

Balocki works in the Office of the Chief of Army Reserve and has oversight responsibility for 12,000 civilian employees and manages the contracts and installation operations and services that support the 200,000-strong command.

On his visits to Army Reserve commands around the country, Balocki stresses to leaders that throwing money at a problem doesn’t solve anything. Additionally, the Army Reserve is in the process of losing approximately a thousand civilians from its workforce, plus it will downsize its overall Soldier force over the next few years.

Under these circumstances, leaders must apply strategic planning and hard thinking to meet the Army’s continual needs.

“The first underlying principle of any military operation is good planning. ... But it’s a skill. It’s got to be practiced ... And then it involves some feedback, and usually that involves some level of scar tissue being added ... Some successes and some failures,” said Balocki.

Balocki has been in this position for 18 months, and already he’s experienced his share of lessons learned and scar tissue. He was there when he received a call on Dec. 3 – just weeks before Christmas – that RLAS went down. RLAS is the system used to pay Army Reserve Soldiers. In response, he witnessed finance Soldiers and civilians pull together to process more than 180,000 Soldiers’ payments manually. During that period, they actually outperformed the system with fewer pay errors than RLAS would have produced. That was a great display of good stewardship, he said.

He also knows of the frustrations that full-time Soldiers and civilians face in performing their day-to-day jobs, whether due to a clogged and slow network, or because of policies that resulted in unexpected “second- and third-order effects.”

“The point of these battlefield circulations is to demonstrate to those units, any member of that organization, that you are present and among them. That you really are genially concerned about having difficult conversations because these are difficult times,” he said.



**Above and right:** James Balocki, chief executive officer and director of services and installations, Office of the Chief of Army Reserve, answers questions during a town hall meeting with the 416th Theater Engineer Command headquarters in Darien, Ill., June 16. Balocki oversees the Army Reserve’s 12,000 civilian employees and manages the technological and physical infrastructure and military construction support for the 200,000-strong command. (U.S. Army photos by Master Sgt. Michel Sauret)







**James Balocki (center), chief executive officer and director of services and installations, Office of the Chief of Army Reserve, visits command and staff leaders from the 416th Theater Engineer Command at their headquarters in Darien, Ill., June 16.**

**Balocki oversees the Army Reserve's 12,000 civilian employees and manages the technological and physical infrastructure and military construction support for the 200,000-strong command. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Michel Sauret)**

Already Balocki is two-thirds of the way through visiting every major Army Reserve command across the country. He plans on visiting the rest by the end of this year.

"I hope that folks carry away from this is the idea that we'll be okay. The army and the Army and Army Reserve are strong, solid institutions that have a long history and relevance for our nation that I don't see changing in the near – or even long-term – future," he said.

Balocki's visit in Darien began with a briefing from the TEC's leadership on the command's mission. Then, in the afternoon, Balocki held a town-hall meeting with the headquarters' staff to stress the importance of using resources wisely and answer any of their concerns.

Staff asked questions on a variety of topics to include: Army Reserve units supporting deployment needs, how to improve information technology support down to the company level, how to properly budget for upcoming fiscal years, how to better manage training days and more.

In visiting the 416th, Balocki learned of the TEC's redesign plans and its training process to validate as a Joint Task Force command within three years. The redesign would keep the TEC relevant in the ongoing evolution of the Army's needs.

"It's heartening to see an organization as a learning organization, that it's attempting to think about its relevance in the current environment and think about the future environment ... This demonstrates to me incredible mental flexibility and agility on behalf of the TEC," said Balocki.

That's a recurring theme he's seen throughout the Army Reserve during his visits: command leaders who have a desire to solve the problems they face, while making the most out of the limited resources they have at hand.

"Managing resources is really every leader's responsibility. It doesn't start or stop with me," said Balocki. "It really is a continuum of requirements to ensure that the taxpayers of this nation are getting the security they need and deserve at the most affordable cost."



# Military Renaissance Man teaches future leaders

*By Capt. Patrick Bishop,  
412th TEC Public Affairs*

**West Point, N.Y.** – Renaissance Man is a 1994 American comedy film directed by Penny Marshall, and stars Danny DeVito and Gregory Hines. After getting fired from his advertising job, down-and-out divorcé Bill Rago (Danny DeVito) gets a job teaching English at a nearby army base. There, he takes on a group of students from different backgrounds who seem apathetic about their education. Bill becomes frustrated, but finally turns the class around when he begins discussing “Hamlet.” However, Sgt. Cass (Gregory Hines), a hardened drill instructor, is skeptical of Bill’s teaching methods.

Like the character played by Danny DeVito, Capt. Murray B. Shugars was invited by West Point professors and staff members to assist with literature and writing

skills at the United States Military Academy at West Point in New York, the nation’s most prestigious military academy.

Shugars, an Army Reserve military history officer assigned to the 412th Theater Engineer Command, works as a tenured professor of English at Alcorn State University in Lorman, Mississippi, where he has taught for thirteen years. He teaches a range of writing and literature courses and directs the Alcorn Writing Center, which he founded twelve years ago.

Shugars worked as a project officer with the U.S. Military Academy’s Department of English and Philosophy. He was chosen to work with the West Point Writing Program due to his civilian credentials and extensive teaching and administrative experience. Being a seasoned professional in his civilian career and being an experienced officer made him the

best candidate for this project.

“This has been a remarkable experience, the first time that my military and civilian careers have synchronized completely,” said Shugars. “What is more, the Army and civilian faculty and administrators here have welcomed me as colleague. I have been part of the West Point Writing Program working group, exploring ways to strengthen and

support writing-in-the-disciplines, and the faculty have treated me as a valued member of the team.”

The younger instructors, who will begin teaching at West Point for the first time, have looked to Shugars for mentorship based on the needs of West Point and his past experiences.

“Bringing Captain Shugars on board, as an Army Reserve officer, as a visiting faculty member, is the first time this has been done”, said Col. Marshall Banks, 412th TEC operations officer. “Captain Shugars being selected for this mission that the 412th Theater Engineer Command is funding shows the additional capabilities of the 412th TEC and the fact the 412th can be another force multiplier”.

The West Point Writing Center enables cadets and faculty across the Academy to advance their study of critical thinking, academic argument, writing within the disciplines, college pedagogy and professional communication. Through a variety of forums, namely the Writing Fellows Program, select students and faculty work together to research the most powerful ideas and effective practices available within composition studies, to contribute to high-level scholarly conversations, and above all, to enhance the resources to cadets for the development of their thinking and writing.

Currently, the Writing Center also offers individual consultations to cadets working on writing assignments for core courses; these consultations take place with more experienced peers who have demonstrated exceptional promise as writers, teachers and communicators.



**Capt. Murray Shugars, 412th Theater Engineer Command, command historian from Vicksburg, Miss., stands in front of Lincoln Hall of West Point Military Academy as the project officer with the U.S. Military Academy’s Department of English and Philosophy. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Patrick Bishop)**



“Captain Shugars has the unique set of skills that we need for this to work”, said Col. David Harper, Department head of the English and Philosophy Department at West Point. “He stood up a writing center at his own school and brings a good bit of expertise.”

Harper received a call from the dean of the academic board about an opportunity for West Point to bring an Army Reserve officer on board.

“I received his biographical sketch and saw that Murray met the needs of the institution,” said Harper. “I met with him on the second day and he already

had a lot of ins and outs about the program. There is definitely a potential to do this again with the needed skillset in the future.”

Transition about citizen Soldiers’ and what they bring to the table.

“Reservist have backgrounds that you don’t see on their uniforms”, said Lt. Col. Trent Mills, West Point Writing Center executive officer. “It’s always a pleasant surprise when you find someone in uniform that is multitasking such as Captain Murray. He has such a different perspective as he is able to see things from a scholar’s perspective.”

**HERE IT COMES**

**Do you have an evacuation plan ready?**



- Gather as a family and make a plan by walking through your home and inspecting all possible exits and escape routes.
- If you have children, show them two exits from each room such as a door and window.
- Designate a gathering point outside the home for everyone in the house to meet once they exit the structure.
- The plan should include two ways out of every room and an outside meeting place where everyone will gather. Once outside the home, call 911 using a cellphone or a neighbor's phone. It is important to practice your home fire drill at least twice a year.

**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?

<https://safety.army.mil>



# 412th TEC participates in Ulchi Freedom Guardian '15

By Capt. Patrick Bishop,  
412th TEC Public Affairs

**YONGSAN GARRISON, SEOUL, South Korea** –More than fifty soldiers from the 412th Theater Engineer Command took a long journey from the continental United States to Camp Carroll, South Korea and Hawaii in order to participate in this year's two-week long exercise Ulchi Freedom Guardian 2015, Aug. 17 to 28.

The annual UFG exercise is one of the largest training exercises in the world.

It covers nearly the entire South Korean peninsula and the 412th TEC played a major role in this training exercise. UFG used computer-simulated scenarios to test the abilities of South Korea and United States forces to respond to contingencies on the peninsula.

Seven United Nations Command Sending States participated in UFG 2015, including Australia, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, France, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

In addition, the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission monitored the exercise to ensure compliance with the Armistice Agreement.

In the scenario, alleged North Korean mines seriously wounded two South Korean border guards. The Koreans exchanged artillery fire along their demilitarized zone, although no one was reported injured.

North Korea ordered its front-line troops onto a war footing in a drastic raise in tensions. This drastic increase in tensions is underlying focus of this year's annual Ulchi Freedom Guardian. According to a

statement from the Combined Forces Command in South Korea, the exercise is "a routine and defense-oriented exercise designed to enhance CFC readiness, protect the region and maintain stability on the Korean peninsula."



"Our hope is that we will never reach a full scale contingency operation but due to the continual commitment to this exercise and the South Korean people, we feel we are very well prepared if such a course of action must be taken," said Brig. Gen. Donna R. Williams, deputy commanding general of

support of the 412th TEC.

Williams said one of the most important things to be taken away from this exercise is what the individual Soldiers are truly learning.

"Soldiers are learning how things would all come together if they were in theater," said Williams. "The exercise is a tremendous exercise for future deployments and a good tool to measure what additional training is needed."

Routine training exercises are carried out in the spirit of the Oct. 1, 1953, ROK-U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty and in accordance with the Armistice.

These exercises also highlight the long-standing partnership, commitment and enduring friendship between the U.S. and ROK, and help to ensure stability and security on the peninsula.

"We have been allies since the Korean War," said Williams. "They have deployed with us to places like Iraq, Vietnam, and Afghanistan. A concrete relationship is a must to move into the future. There are challenges we will learn to overcome, but this exercise gives a valuable lesson as we sweep forward."



# HERE IT COMES

Are you ready  
for winter  
sports?



- Warm up before hitting the slopes
- Wear the proper protective gear
- Dress in layers
- Take frequent breaks to avoid dehydration and overheating
- Watch the weather

# READY ...OR NOT?

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



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<https://safety.army.mil>



# Sleep issues bedeviling Soldiers' health

By David Vergun,  
Army News Service

**WASHINGTON** – “I didn’t realize that all this time I’ve been in a formation of drunks,” the noncommissioned officer told Lt. Col. Kate E. Van Arman.

The NCO was referring to a quote Van Arman repeated to him from her top boss, Surgeon General of the Army Lt. Gen. Patricia Horoho: “If you have less than six hours of sleep for six days in a row ... you are cognitively impaired as if you had a .08-percent alcohol level. ... We never will allow a Soldier in our formation with a .08-percent alcohol level, but we allow it [sleep deprivation] every day [in Soldiers who have] to make those complex decisions.”

Adding to what Horoho said, Van Arman pointed out that after being awake 17 hours, response time has been shown to be the equivalent to a person with a blood alcohol content of .05 percent and 24 hours awake translates to a blood alcohol concentration, or BAC, of .10 percent.

Van Arman, medical director, Traumatic Brain Injury, Clinic on Fort Drum, New York, spoke at the 2015 Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury, held at the Defense Health Headquarters in Falls Church, Virginia, Sept. 9.

Although her topic was “Sleep Disorders Among Military Mild TBI Patients,” much of what she said applies to all Soldiers, whether or not they have TBI.

## SLEEPLESS IN THE ARMY

It’s not just the Soldiers who are partying all night who lack sleep, Van Arman said. Demands of Army

life are responsible for a lot of it.

For instance, Soldiers who misbehave can be ordered to do extra duties as punishment, up until midnight, she said. Assuming that reveille is at 6 a.m., that’s six or less hours of sleep. Staff duty often requires the Soldier to be awake for 24 hours, she said. When the pre- and post-briefs are added, it’s closer to 30. Overall, one-third of military members sleep less than five hours per night and two-thirds less than six, she said.

Deployed Soldiers get an astonishing average of just three hours of sleep per night, she said, particularly those serving in the combat arms branches. It’s not for lack of them trying to sleep though, she said. Those deployed or on extended exercises attempt to catch winks whenever or wherever they can, on the ground or when being transported in vehicles or airplanes.

A lot of it, though, is fitful sleep which throws off their circadian rhythms, she said. The battlefield, even the peacetime “battlefield,” can be a noisy place with others snoring, lights, helicopters flying and so on, not to mention weather conditions.

While being sleepless in the Army seems to be the norm, there are other professions that have sleepy people, particularly in jobs where that sort of thing would be concerning. For instance, 72 percent of U.S. commercial airline pilots reported being drowsy to the point of nearly falling asleep and 45 percent of all pilots admitted to actually dozing off on occasion, she said.

## ‘CULTURE OF CAFFEINE’

All this sleeplessness has resulted, not surprisingly, in a “culture of

caffeine,” Van Arman said.

During a recent visit to the Fort Drum shoppette, Van Arman noticed “a big refrigerator of monster sodas and energy drinks popular with young Soldiers.”

Last year energy drinks in the United States netted \$27.5 billion and energy drink consumption went up 5,000 percent since 1999, she noted.

A meta-analysis of caffeine on cognitive performance showed that 100 to 300 milligrams of caffeine results in mood improvement, she said. That’s about one or two cups of coffee.

Anything greater than 400 mg., though, results in mood deterioration, she said, adding that while the extra caffeine may result in a person staying awake, it may not improve decision making.

Another thing to be careful about with caffeine, she said, is not to take it within six hours of bedtime, as it will result in fitful sleep. Also, alcohol in excess will result in disruptive sleep.

## ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION

When Van Arman was stationed on Fort Bragg, North Carolina, she said she was surprised to see a lot of special forces Soldiers in their 20s who stopped by the pharmacy for pills to help with erectile dysfunction, or ED.

Their testosterone levels were around 200 nanograms per deciliter, when it should have been around 500 or more. She said she’d tell them, “Your testosterone levels are that of a 60-year-old man because you’re getting crappy sleep.”

The brain is sensing stress so



to conserve energy, it's not making testosterone, she explained. Instead, it's making the stress hormones associated with fight-or-flight survival.

"Once you get better sleep, your testosterone levels are going to go up and your ED issues will improve," she said she'd also tell them.

### 'QUICK REACTION FORCE BRAIN'

Soldiers in the field are expected to be able to pack up and move out on a moment's notice, even if it's in the middle of the night, Van Arman said. Often, Soldiers won't know what time that will be so the training will be more realistic. She referred to this situation as the "quick reaction force brain" that's needed for this mindset.

Dr. Robert Sapolsky, a biologist at Stanford University, conducted research along these lines, she said.

Sapolsky divided test subjects into three groups, she said. The first group went to a sleep lab where they were told they'd get a good night's sleep, but be awakened at 6 a.m. The second group was told they'd be awakened once every three hours and the third group was told they'd be given no warning at all when they'd be woken up - similar to the quick reaction force.

All the subjects from the groups were hooked to an IV while sleeping so blood could be drawn to determine cortisol levels, meaning the amount of stress hormones present in the bloodstream.

For the first group, cortisol levels spiked 30 to 60 minutes before 6 a.m. That meant, she said, that the sleepers were subconsciously anticipating being awakened and became stressed close to that time.

For the second group, the corti-

sol levels spiked 30 to 60 minutes before each and every one of the three-hour periods they were told they'd be awakened.

For the third group, the cortisol levels remained elevated the entire night, meaning that instead of having restful sleep, they had stressful sleep the entire night, she said.

High cortisol levels, she noted, have been associated with higher-than-average rates of cardiovascular disease.

### OTHER STUDIES

A separate study done in the United Kingdom in 2012 showed more than 700 genes being adversely affected by sleep deprivation, she said.

Anecdotally, Van Arman said Soldiers on Fort Drum told her that when they go to the rifle range and they're sleep deprived, it takes them three times longer to qualify. This provides a dilemma to commanders, she said. Is it better to train Soldiers as they fight or save on time and ammunition by allowing Soldiers adequate sleep time before live-fire training?

Other studies have shown that people who are sleep deprived have memory challenges. This could affect sleep-deprived Soldiers studying for a promotion exam or learning new tactics, techniques or procedures, she said.

Another study shows that sleep deprivation intensifies pain. She said a lot of Soldiers at Fort Drum are infantry and have sore backs from carrying heavy loads. Sleep deprivation intensifies that pain.

### TBI SOLDIERS

Sleep problems are "the absolute No. 1 military disorder when people come back from deployments. Among TBI Soldiers, it is the No. 2

problem, after headaches," Van Arman said. Sleep disorders include insomnia, sleep apnea, nightmares, fragmented sleep, restless leg syndrome and bruxism (grinding of teeth).

Some 300,000 military members have some form of TBI, so that's a pretty significant number, she said, providing a number of other facts and statistics of service members with TBI:

- 97 percent complain about some sort of sleep problem, primarily insomnia
- 34 percent have sleep apnea
- 90 percent report napping during the day
- 50 percent have fragmented sleep

Regarding fragmented sleep, the average person awakens three to five times per night, Van Arman said. An Army specialist who was treated for mild TBI was put in a sleep lab and monitoring results indicated that he awoke 529 times in a single night.

### EXCITING DEVELOPMENTS

Van Arman said medical researchers are working on a host of problems relating to sleep disorders and there will most likely be effective treatments ahead.

For example, researchers are close to being able to provide imaging that shows changes to the brain resulting from TBI. Currently, TBI is largely based on self-reporting and incident reports.

For sleep apnea, a new device may soon be in the offing that will sense when sleep apnea is about to occur and prevent blockage of breathing.

Other areas in which advances are being made, she said, include therapies and pharmacological interventions.





Photo of The Quarter