



The Castle

Spring Edition
2017

**Maj. Gen. Thompson
relinquishes command**

**Supply NGOIC wins
USARC Supply
Excellence Award**

**TEC contingent among
detail who rendered
Military Funeral Honors**

The Castle

Spring 2017



Commander:

Maj. Gen. Tracy A. Thompson

Command Sergeant Major:
Command Sgt. Maj. Richard
Castelveter

412th TEC Public Affairs:
Maj. Patrick Bishop
Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood
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The 412th Theater Engineer Command

'Build To Serve'

About the Front Cover:



Spc. Joey M. Bove, 417th Engineer Company, 458th Engineer Battalion, 411th Engineer Brigade, uses a mine detector on the Counter Improvised Explosive Device lane at Camp McGregor during Pre-Mobilization training at Fort Bliss, Texas. (Photo by Spc. Aaron Weigand, 417th Engineer Company)

HERE IT COMES

Watch Where You Walk

On average, one pedestrian dies in a crash-related accident every two hours. Use crosswalks and look both ways before crossing and never walk on train tracks. Most pedestrian accidents occur at night, so see and be seen.

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 - both the known and unknown.

<https://safety.army.mil>

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?



Major General Tracy Thompson Commanding General, 412th TEC

A word from the Commander

As most of you know, 2016 was the “Year of the Squad Leader” for the 412th Theater Engineer Command. My intent for that focus was threefold:

First, I wanted every squad leader to realize from their first day on the job what a tremendous impact they have on those they lead. Second, I wanted every Soldier to aspire to be a squad leader – and to be a good one. And third, I wanted those squad leaders to step up and take charge of their formations. Almost all of our challenges can be dealt with quickly by pro-active Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs) out in front of squads or sections.

It is no accident that only two positions in the U.S. Army have the word “leader” in their title: squad leader and platoon leader. Those positions require direct, active and professional leadership that set them apart from others and always will.

So as we enter 2017, I want to congratulate all those squad and section leaders who did what we asked: For those who stepped up and took charge, who kept their Soldiers “green” in their readiness categories and ensured they had the right gear for Field Training Exercises and who supervised them doing Preventive Maintenance Checks and Services to show them what “right” looked like – well done!

For those just taking the job, pick out the traits and characteristics of leaders you have admired in the past and copy them. Do the opposite for those you thought were poor leaders: Pick out what you thought made them bad and ensure you don’t repeat their mistakes. That’s what most of us who have advanced through the ranks have done.

2017 will be the “Year of the NCO.” It is the next group we must focus on, since it not only includes the squad leader, but all of our NCOs.

It begins with that first set of stripes, whether corporal or sergeant and it means you are expected to lead others. But unlike any other workplace, those stripes mean we expect you to know your trade and to lead your Soldiers both in peace and under the intense pressures and dangers of war. So get ready. Learn the trade craft of your skill and rank. Get yourself physically and mentally ready and get your teams ready. Get your squads ready and your platoons ready. Get a sense of urgency and pass it to those you lead. The next few years will be the most dangerous we have seen in the last 30 years, and we need you and your units as ready as they can possibly be.

Get every Soldier in your formation “green” from a medical and dental perspective. They can’t deploy on short notice if they need six weeks of dental work that you discover at the Mobilization station. Get them as fit as possible so they can attend schools and be promoted when selected. A Soldier merely “selected” for E6 (staff sergeant) has little value to us if he or she cannot attend Advanced Leaders Course because they are overweight or cannot pass the Army Physical

-Continued on page 7-



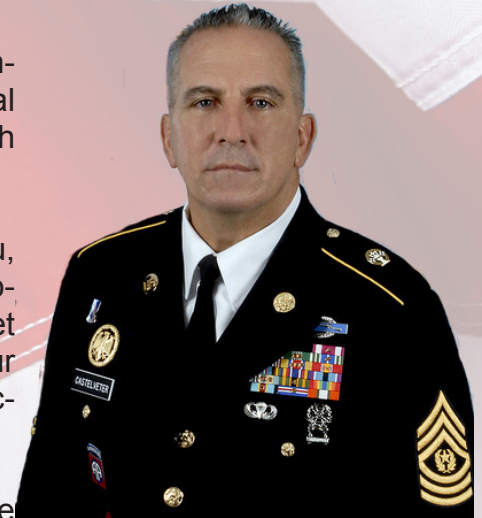
Command Sergeant Major Richard Castelveter

Command Sergeant Major, 412th TEC

A word from the CSM

Together, we have faced numerous challenges in 2016, turning those challenges into opportunities while strengthening our tactical readiness to deploy and focusing on the core values associated with good Soldiering.

During the course of the year, I have visited with many of you, learning of your concerns but also reveling in your continued patriotism and unselfish willingness to serve our great country. I have met your families, broke bread with you and sadly mourned the loss of our brethren, casualties attributed in part to war, suicide, and vehicular accidents.



As I reverse the mirror and look into 2017, I can say that we must be absolutely certain that we are ready for deployment anywhere in the world.

In June, I will have reached that magic age, forcing me to proudly retire my uniform, having served the U.S. Army for 35 years.

You too should be proud of your accomplishments and honored to be able to continue to wear the uniform of a member of U.S. Armed Forces. We are the greatest fighting force in the world.

I am hugely disgusted by public protests where the American flag is unceremoniously desecrated, the flag which is symbolic of our nation's freedoms. Men and women, our families, friends and colleagues suffered, sacrificed and died defending those freedoms.

As repulsed as I am by this display of obliviousness and non-patriotism, you can't allow those egregious distractions to deter your training, your commitment to service or your readiness for deployment.

I have articulated time and again that none of us should put off for tomorrow the responsibilities that we face today, in our personal and military lives. At a moment's notice, we likely will be called to duty, home or abroad and we must be prepared.

Your actions, your motivations, your results-oriented attitudes, have proven that you are ready and will remain ready and that you will not allow your commitment to training to be ambushed by geopolitical affairs.

You are, in my opinion, quite prepared to deploy if and when called upon. You have ensured your warrior task proficiencies, your leadership abilities and your professionalism. You are highly disciplined men and women who are ready to face future threats both physically and emotionally. Your medical and physical fitness eagerness assures me that you are a top notch fighting force. Those younger in their careers have been mentored by our more seasoned Soldiers, which powers -CSM continued on page 7-

The Chaplain's Corner

African-American History Is Every American's History

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Timothy Montgomery



Black History Month has become the time of year that this country recognizes the positive progress of its African-American citizens. It is imperative, that as a nation, we take this opportunity to pay tribute to the rich traditions of a proud and prosperous people, America's people.

The month of February focused specifically on significant Black personalities like Carter G. Woodson, the father of Black history, Harriet Tubman, leader of the Underground Railroad and Malcom X, civil rights and religious leader and so many more. These individuals deserve recognition for their efforts to impact change in America. It is with the utmost respect we celebrate the lives and contributions of those courageous individuals who endured tremendous persecution in an effort to bring about a new day in America.

As so often the case, most historical African-American figures did not deliberately set out to become a part of history. It was the result of social circumstance that they emerged and responded to a need for a more productive and equitable existence for an oppressed people. Working with what they had, early African-American heroes and heroines improved upon the "American way of life" through science, arts, education, medicine, religion, technology, politics, international relationships, sports and entertainment, just to name a few. Despite their remarkable accomplishments, people of color too often have had to endure harsh and undeserved second class treatment, blatant racism, discrimination, denial of constitutional privileges and the decency and respect afforded to other American citizen.

During the month of February, America acknowledges the brave spirit of African-Americans past and present who have triumphed unmerciful abuse, systematic injustice and repeated intolerance to achieve nothing short of greatness. Their voices were heard through bus boycotts, sit-ins, freedom rides and endless protests.

Today we must continue to lift our voices in the struggle for what is right, as the fight for freedom and equality marches on proud and strong. It is imperative that we foster positive change that will guide us in the right direction. America's history must be presented in a manner that reflects the whole truth about African-Americans and their journey in the land of the free, home of the brave.

We must not only give the facts but we must embrace the full story of our country's bitter-sweet history. By doing so, we show respect to those who have given their lives to the cause of advancement of all people, regardless of race, creed or color.

W.E.B. DuBois asked the question, "Would America have been America without her Negro people?" Undoubtedly not! DuBois appealed to America's conscience as it relates to the Negro's role in American history and today that appeal remains a matter of critical importance. Aside from a few well known individuals, most Black leaders have gone virtually unknown in American History books. Individuals such as Lewis Latimer, Bayard Rustin, Charlie Sifford, Bessie Coleman and Madame C. J. Walker are unknowns and under appreciated by most Americans.

-Chaplain continued on page 7

-Commander continued from page 4- Fitness Test. Getting your units as ready as possible also means getting all of your equipment (including Expeditionary Sustainment Command-stored equipment) inventoried, maintained and exercised.

As we moved into 2017, I ask you to think about what would happen if your unit were notified on a Wednesday that it would be mobilizing on that Friday. There is a lot you must do right now in preparation for that moment, and much more to be done in that short window between notice and mobilization. In both cases, however, there is only one group of leaders that can ensure we accomplish all the tasks required in the time we have: Thinking, proactive NCOs who properly train their Soldiers and who know their tradecraft are the key to preparing us for war, and for ensuring we win it.

2017 is the Year of the NCO in the 412th Theater Engineer Command. Step up. Lead, follow, or get out of the way.

-CSM continued from page 5-leadership by example. You have not compromised safety and you have embraced the Battle Buddy concept of Soldering, critical to wartime survival.

While your accomplishments in 2016 were many, expectations for 2017 are growing exponentially, as the threat of war remains real. Our enemies are determined to exploit our weaknesses, all the more reason to commit to loyalty and duty to our nation.

I appeal to you never to lose focus of the importance and necessity of keeping family front and center in our lives. We are obliged to responsibly and with timeliness prepare not only ourselves, but also our families for the possibility of short or longer-term deployments. I urge you to include your spouses, children and grandchildren, and parents in your military life. Bring them to training assemblies where appropriate. Share with them what you do and how you do it. They are equally important to our preparedness.

Let's recommit, now, to excel beyond what we achieved in 2016. Let's reach an unprecedented status of preparedness. You are courageous men and women of character esteemed for your integrity and selfless service. I am deeply honored to serve with you.

CSM Castelveter, Build to Serve! HOOAH

-Chaplain continued from page 6- It is imperative that every American citizen take responsibility to erase the ignorance as it relates to the positive role "Blacks" have played in American history. Only then will we overcome the bigotry and prejudice that breeds hatred and dissension among races.

We must embrace the biblical principle of "loving your neighbor as you love yourself." It is simple but it simply works. Explore African-American history and discover a wealth of knowledge that will enrich your life forever. African-American history is every American's history.

Army's acting secretary sends initial letter to the force

By Hon. Robert M. Speer

Dear Soldiers, Civilians, and Families of the U.S. Army, I am honored to continue serving in the Army as the Acting Secretary. I am proud of our Army, having served in many capacities over the past 35 years, both in and out of uniform, on active duty and as a Civilian, to include deployments and in support of our great Nation. Most recently, I served for the past seven years as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary and then Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management and Comptroller. It is my great honor to continue serving the Army!



Thank you for your professionalism during the past several months culminating in the Presidential Inauguration, as the world again witnessed our peaceful transition of power. Today, we must ensure continuity within the Department of the Army, and remain ready to defend our nation as we transition new civilian leaders.

During this time, my priorities remain:

- Readiness for countering global threats to the United States and our allies.
- Providing every Soldier, Civilian, and Family member the care and respect they deserve.
- Resourcing our Army to maintain readiness and ensure future capabilities to win our nation's wars.

Thank you for your dedicated service to our Army and our nation.

Message to the Department of Defense from Secretary of Defense James Mattis

It's good to be back and I'm grateful to serve alongside you as Secretary of Defense.

Together with the Intelligence Community we are the sentinels and guardians of our nation. We need only look to you, the uniformed and civilian members of the Department and your families, to see the fundamental unity of our country. You represent an America committed to the common good; an America that is never complacent about defending its freedoms; and an America that remains a steady beacon of hope for all mankind.

Every action we take will be designed to ensure our military is ready to fight today and in the future. Recognizing that no nation is secure without friends, we will work with the State Department to strengthen our alliances. Further, we are devoted to gaining full value from every taxpayer dollar spent on defense, thereby earning the trust of Congress and the American people.

I am confident you will do your part. I pledge to you I'll do my best as your Secretary.



Fanning, Murphy send farewell message to the force

By Secretary Eric Fanning and Under Secretary Patrick Murphy

To the Soldiers, Civilians, and Families of the U.S. Army, It has been the greatest honor of our lives to serve alongside you, the Soldiers, Civilians, and Families who make up our Army family. Your profound sense of duty, selfless service, and personal courage have inspired us, guided us, and will continue to motivate us as we leave office.

The highest privilege of leading this great Army has been the opportunity to connect with you, the members of the Army's team. Whether engaging with Soldiers supporting NATO Allies in Europe, observing rigorous training from the jungles of the Pacific to the Arctic of Alaska, or meeting the men and women on the front lines of today's conflicts, we have witnessed and taken pride in what you do every day to keep our nation secure. Administrations change and threats to our nation's interests evolve, but it is your deep commitment to preserving and defending our Constitution that endures. It is your service and sacrifice that safeguard our freedoms and provide opportunities for our people and nation to thrive.

Our greatest hope is that our service has improved your ability to accomplish your missions. We hope that we have provided you with the equipment, technology, and support you need -- and quickly -- so that you can confront rapidly changing threats across the world. We hope we have helped bridge the divide between those who serve and those they protect by sharing the Army story with more of America's communities. We hope we have enabled more Soldiers to make a successful transition to civilian life with our advocacy and the partnerships we helped to forge.

Whether administering the Oath of Enlistment to men and women at recruitment centers or paying our respects to the fallen at Dover as they return home, we will never forget the courage and character that define the American Soldier. We will never forget our responsibility to those who have returned from battle with wounds seen and unseen and our solemn obligation to support them and their families. We will never forget the portrait of America the Army provides, a force encompassing citizens from every faith, ethnicity, and background, who come together to accomplish a common mission and then return to America's communities committed to a lifetime of service. In many ways, the Army's story is America's story. As our Army confronts threats in cyberspace or outer space and our Soldiers continue securing our homeland and countering dangers beyond our shores, we take great confidence in the Army's future and in our country's future.

Our optimism comes from our confidence in your abilities to fight and win, to adapt and endure, and to attract and develop the best from across our nation -- men and women who, like you, honor the Army's past through their commitment to America's future. We leave office humbled by your example and grateful for your continued devotion.

Secretary Eric Fanning and Under Secretary Patrick Murphy



Maj. Gen. Thompson relinquishes command

Story/Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood

412th TEC Public Affairs

VICKSBURG, Miss., – The 412th Theater Engineer Command (TEC) said farewell to its 15th commanding general in a relinquishment of command ceremony at the Command headquarters outside of the George A. Morris Reserve Center here March 4, 2017.

Maj. Gen. Tracy A. Thompson and his wife, Sheri, leave the Command after leading it since July 2014.

The 412th has three Brigades and more than 100 other assigned units with approximately 12,000 Soldiers throughout the southeast and northeast United States.

The TEC's primary mission is to provide theater-level engineer support to the Combatant Commander in the event of a contingency operation.

Maj. Gen. David J. Conboy, deputy commanding general (Operations), United States Army Reserve Command (USARC), officiated the ceremony.

Conboy pointed out to the audience who included the Vicksburg Mayor and former TEC command teams, that the TEC does a "phenomenal job around the world."

"Today as we have this ceremony, we've got Soldiers from the 412th that are deployed and serving with distinction in harm's way in Kuwait, Afghanistan, Iraq and doing an absolutely phenomenal job," said Conboy.

He noted that the TEC also has chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defense units, firefighting units and urban search and rescue construction elements able to respond to homeland defense missions in a timely manner.

"Every day through his leadership, Tracy has made this unit better," said Conboy who commanded Thompson while Conboy was the 416th Theater Engineer Command commander. "Particularly impressive has been the outstanding work he has done with our combatant commands and our Army Service Component Commands."

Conboy continued to note that Thompson has also helped build Army Reserve Readiness daily which is the primary focus of the Chief of the Army Reserve and USARC.

"Also building relationships and continuing relationships between the 412th and the 416th with ERDC (U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center) and other engineer units around the world," said Conboy.

Conboy also said Thompson did a "superb" job in ensuring the TEC Soldiers maintained their individual medical and administrative readiness.

Conboy finished his speech by thanking Shari for her hard work in supporting the TEC Soldiers and Families.

Thompson stepped to the podium and by commented on how the aforementioned former command teams could probably sympathize with what he was feeling on this day.



"I am just trying to soak it in, make it last a little longer, said Thompson as he glanced over at the audience sitting underneath a canopy while holding his clenched fists near his chest.

He noted that despite Conboy's overly generous comments," it's one of those things that's a journey and you are never quite done with it," said Thompson. "So you are not done.

"It is clearly the honor of my career to command the 412th and that includes my professional career as a lawyer," continued Thompson. "This is by far the pinnacle."

He thanked his wife for her support always and taking over the responsibility of raising his two teenage children in his absence.

"Honey there is no way I could have come to this point here today and be where I am today without your love and support and I really appreciate that, so thank you very much," said Thompson.

Thompson also thanked his brigade and battalion senior command teams who were present for making his job "not only extremely enjoyable but much easier than it could have been."

Thompson also pointed out how he appreciated that the full time support staff at the TEC headquarters always completed every task he asked of it despite some tasks being difficult.

"You do
the right
builds real
Thompson
Pounding."
Brig.

one of the best jobs in the entire USARC of sending folks to those missions at the right strength where it readiness.
closed with, "Essayons and as the boss says Keep

Gen. Daniel Christian, deputy commanding general (Operations) will be the TEC interim commander.

Conboy acknowledged that he and Christian have served together in several units.

"He is just a phenomenal leader," said Conboy. "He gets it. He will do a superb job with this command."

Thompson echoed Conboy's thoughts.

I couldn't have any higher confidence in a Soldier and leader than I do in Dan," he said.

<https://www.dvidshub.net/news/226589/412th-theater-engineer-command-says-farewell-its-commander>

Maj. Gen. Tracy A. Thompson relinquished command of the 412th Theater Engineer Command during a ceremony at the TEC headquarters in Vicksburg, Miss., March 4, 2017. Thompson passed the Command Colors to Maj. Gen. David J. Conboy, deputy commanding general (Operations), United States Army Reserve Command in a time-honored tradition.



Supply NCOIC wins USAROC

*Story by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood
412th TEC Public Affairs*

This current U.S. Army Reserve Supply Noncommissioned officer in charge (NCOIC) with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 533D Brigade Support Battalion, 302D Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, 412th Theater Engineer Command (TEC), based in Fort Totten, New York, said one of the biggest challenges as a unit supply specialist is transferring to a new unit.

Sgt. Paul Addison who has been in the Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) program since 2007 explained the reason for this is that very few supply sergeants find their new unit in the same shape as the one they left.

“You have to start over again and it’s a long time consuming process but the benefit is showing your unit what you can do and what right looks like,” said Addison, who has been with the company since 2014.

Addison has definitely showed the company what he could do for it and his dedication and hard work has been noted.

A Department of the Army (DA) Inspection team inspected him for the Category A Level 1 Modified Table of Organization and Equipment Chief of Staff Army Supply Excellence Award in February. He won the United States Army Reserve Command’s Supply Excellence Award (SEA) in 2016.

The DA inspectors were extremely impressed and stated that Addison set the bar for active component and Reserve Components to meet or exceed,” said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jason Pitts with the Command’s supply division.

“We feel he has an excellent chance to win the USAR portion at DA level,” said Pitts.

Addison, who joined the active duty Army as a cannon crewmember in 2000, said the inspection was a great experience.

“To possibly win this inspection means the world to me to be the best,” commented Addison.

He pointed out that the inspectors asked him several questions with the theme of what he would do in different situations.

Addison’s experiences as an active duty Soldier and Reservist probably assisted him with these questions.

Addison joined the active Army when he was 17 years old and served for three years.

“It was my childhood dream,” said Addison.

Within that time span, he deployed to Iraq during the 2003 invasion with 1st Battery 377th Field Artillery Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). This deployment which saw his unit in austere conditions, including sparse living areas, sparked his interest in becoming a unit supply specialist, said Addison.

He said he told himself if he ever rejoined the military, he would strive to become a unit supply specialist and “make sure any unit I go to never needs anything.”

He joined the Army Reserve in 2006 as a unit supply specialist. “Once I found out about the AGR program and was accepted into it, I knew I made the right choice,” said Addison.

Addison deployed once again, this time to Afghanistan in 2011.

He was the only supply sergeant for his unit which was split into six detachments within three countries. His duties for this Joint NATO unit included ensured the securing of housing, showers, meals, and work areas to name a few for officers’ visits around the country.

“Being the only Army unit supply specialist, there was a ton of long hours and many missed meals,” said Addison. “But in the long run, the mission was completed.”

Addison created nine property books totaling more than \$50 million and managed more than 15 units.

He arrived at the 533D in April 2012 as a property book NCO. His immediate supervisor, a master sergeant, was deployed overseas for several hundred days. This saw Addison mentoring three specialists and one staff sergeant, all new AGR Soldiers, on their duties and responsibilities.



C Supply Excellence Award

“With the battalion commander’s support, I was TDY (on temporary duty) a lot and I was able to teach and provide guidance for each down trace unit,” said Addison.

When the master sergeant returned, Addison was assigned to his current unit.

Addison explained that within his first year at the company, he constructed 10 section cages, created a sensitive items room and built a gymnasium.

He said once his Soldiers saw the end results, their complaints of having to move items each Battle Assembly ceased.

“I feel I have set the standards because I am doing my job and showing what right looks like,” said Addison.

The Brigade’s Supply NCOIC, Master Sgt. John Lebherz, knew what right looked like too.

He completed a Command Supply Discipline Program Inspection of the company. The company scored a 90 percent rating. The rating went up to 94 percent after the company was inspected by the TEC G-4 in a Staff Assistance Visit.

As Addison, a married father of four children, commented, “As a supply NCO, my job is to take care of Soldiers and complete the mission and if I don’t accomplish this, I have failed as a NCO and as a supply NCO.”

He has definitely completed his mission and his new units of action will reap the rewards as well as the U.S. Army Reserve.



Ready to Serve



TEC contingent among detail who rendered Military Funeral Honors

*Story by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood
412th TEC Public Affairs*

Several Soldiers from the U.S. Army Reserve's 412th Theater Engineer Command (TEC) based in Vicksburg, Mississippi, and the 365th Combat Support Sustainment Battalion (CSSB), 321st Sustainment Brigade, 143rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command, 377th Theater Sustainment Command, based in Jackson, Mississippi, demonstrated that the reserve is ready to serve.

The TEC contingent for the first time rendered Military Funeral Honors (MFH) for a Reserve officer at the Enon Baptist Church in Philadelphia, Miss. Jan. 14, 2017. This honor steeped in tradition included providing pallbearers, a rifle team and a bugle player.

This also was the first time that the Command's Staff. Sgt. Ariel DeLeon, who has performed more than 300 MFH as both a Troop Program Unit (TPU) and Active Guard Reserve soldier, was both a pallbearer and a member of the rifle team at the same funeral.

"It was a great experience and even a greater honor," said DeLeon who as a TPU Soldier performed at four to five funerals Monday through Friday at the Puerto Rico National Cemetery.

This also was the first time that Sgt. 1st Class Corey Abel, budget noncommissioned officer at the Command, took the reigns as a detail commander. This funeral also was personal to him. He knew the fallen soldier who at one time served as an operations officer at Camp Shelby, Miss.

"I was told by several people that we did a great job," said Abel. "The family and friends treated us with so much respect."

This also was the first time that Command Safety Officer Lt. Col. Glenn Scott assumed Casualty Assistance Officer (CAO) duties. His tasks included escorting the fallen soldier's former wife and his two daughters to all functions.

He said that the detail performed well.

Its noteworthy performance could have stemmed from two days of practice in the TEC headquarters drill hall. Tables were used as the casket. One of the tables was draped with a United States Flag. This allowed Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy Reed of the TEC and Sgt. Luis Gonzalez of the CSSB to practice the ceremonial folding of the United States flag. When done, the flag was folded 13 times on the triangles and into a symbolic tri-cornered shape.

Like every good soldier, Abel and his team still had to adjust for the unexpected. A United States flag had to be

Top: Sgt. Luis Gonzalez, left, 365th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion (CSSB), 321st Sustainment Brigade, 143rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command, 377th Theater Sustainment Command, Sgt. 1st Class Laverne Cohill, Staff Sgt. Brandon Shaw, both with the 412th Theater Engineer Command (TEC), Staff Sgt. Gregory P. Fancy, back left, 365th CSSB, Sgt. Ariel DeLeon and Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy Reed, both with the TEC, practice their roles as military funeral honor pallbearers at the Command headquarters in Vicksburg, Miss., Jan. 20, 2017. (U.S. Army Reserve Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood)

Bottom: Sgt. Luis Gonzalez salutes a U.S. Flag held by Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy Reed at the Command headquarters in Vicksburg, Miss.,



placed on the casket, something his soldiers did not practice.

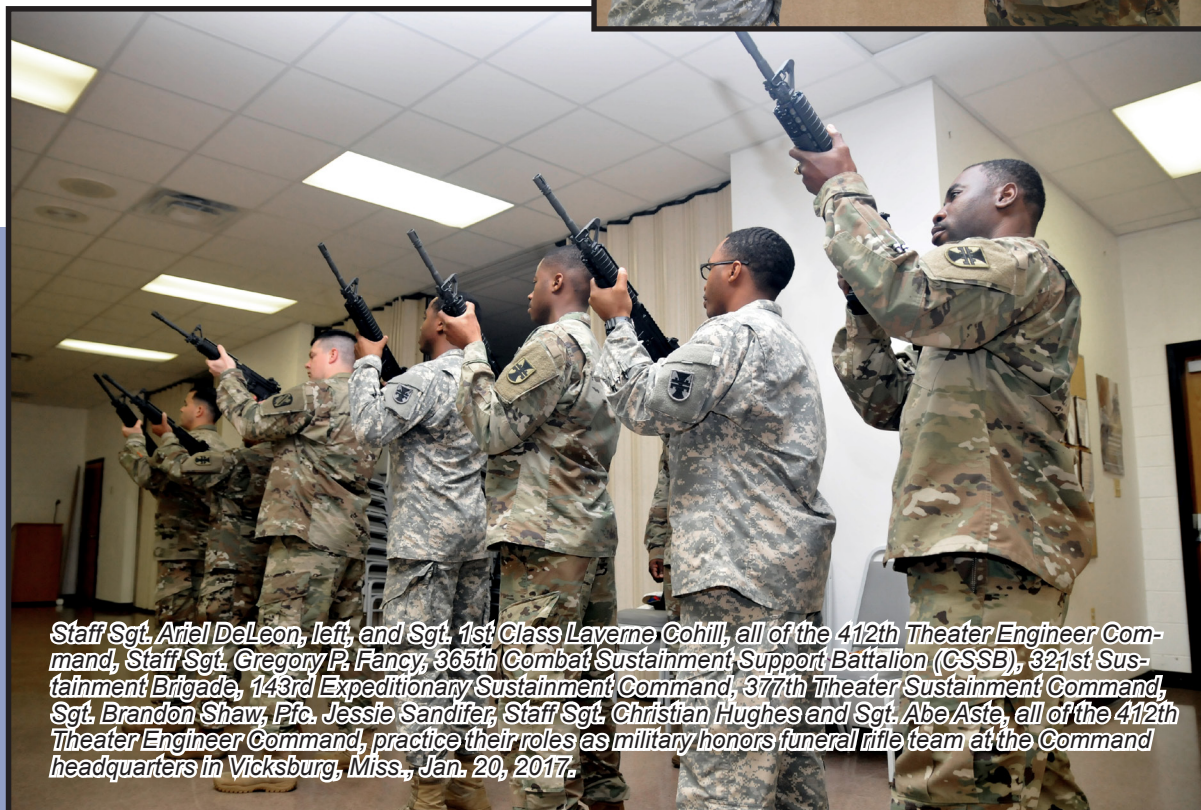
When asked what were the lessons learned from this experience besides adjusting and overcoming, he replied, "More practice time, have the right number of Soldiers and have a casket to practice with."

"As a soldier we can make anything happen with a short notice," he added. "One team, one fight."

Scott, who pointed out he will volunteer for more CAO duties, said he was impressed with the Soldier's commitment.

"They were professional, well-practiced and executed their duties flawlessly," he said.

This detail was ready to serve and rendered full honors to a soldier for his honorable and faithful service.



Staff Sgt. Ariel DeLeon, left, and Sgt. 1st Class Laverne Cohill, all of the 412th Theater Engineer Command, Staff Sgt. Gregory P. Fancy, 365th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion (CSSB), 321st Sustainment Brigade, 143rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command, 377th Theater Sustainment Command, Sgt. Brandon Shaw, Pfc. Jessie Sandifer, Staff Sgt. Christian Hughes and Sgt. Abe Aste, all of the 412th Theater Engineer Command, practice their roles as military honors funeral rifle team at the Command headquarters in Vicksburg, Miss., Jan. 20, 2017.

<https://www.dvidshub.net/news/224606/military-funeral-honors-demonstrates-units-ready-serve>

Soldiers join area bowl



Staff Sgt. Robert Laws, left, and Maser Sgt. Leveron Cameron, both of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 412th Theater Engineer Command based in Vicksburg, Miss., practice bowling at the Indian Lanes in Clinton, Miss., Nov. 17, 2016. Laws and Cameron are among several Command soldiers who compete in a bowling league at the bowling alley once a week.

*Story/Photos by
Sgt. 1st Class
Clinton Wood
412th TEC Public Affairs*

It was a win-win situation for several Soldiers assigned to the U.S. Army Reserve's 412th Theater Engineer Command (TEC) based in Vicksburg, Miss., and a bowling league in Clinton, Miss.

The Powerball League of Indian Lanes had a vacancy and Staff Sgt. Robert Laws was looking for an activity he and a few Active Guard Reserve (AGR) Soldiers from the TEC

could participate in after hours. He chose Indian Lanes because of its proximity to Vicksburg (about 30 miles).

"We started bowling to do something together outside of the military," said Laws.

The four-man team of Soldiers bowls in the league once a week. Each team member bowls three games. The TEC team joined the league in August, 2016.

Coincidentally, league president Tim Brown is an Army veteran. He noted that the league has been in existence for several years.

This league naturally has veteran bowlers which we know means they could have high averages

Just ask team member Master Sgt. Leveron Cameron, a veteran bowler with an average above 150. "They have a lot of good bowlers here," pointed out Cameron.

The other Soldiers on the team are Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Miller, Staff Sgts. Gloria Rivera and Ariel DeLeon and Sgt. Brandon Shaw. They take turns composing the team each week.



Staff Sgt. Gloria Rivera, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 412th Theater Engineer Command based in Vicksburg, Miss., practices bowling at the Indian Lanes in Clinton, Miss., Nov. 17, 2016. Rivera is among several Command soldiers who compete in a bowling league at the bowling alley once a week

Shaw is the other veteran bowler besides Cameron and Laws, an intelligence noncommissioned officer, has been bowling for about 20 years with an average of 200.

Shaw, who is on his first AGR tour as a motor sergeant, has been bowling for about four years. He said he enjoys bowling on the team because of the opportunity to spend time with fellow Soldiers while not at work and it also builds camaraderie.

ing league

On the other lane, DeLeon is on his second AGR tour in the transportation job field and is an amateur bowler.

“I’ve been improving a lot,”

said DeLeon.

He noted that he has even been practicing on his own time – sometimes on weekends.

So how does he like bowling so far?

He replied that it has become his hobby.

“It gets me out of the house for a few hours and I am able to exercise in some sort of way,” he said.

He added that the actual bowling movement is a good way to stretch.

Rivera’s reflections on her first bowling experience included that she was not aware of the complexity of bowling.

“Anyone can throw a ball and knock down pins but it definitely takes practice like everything else in life,” said Rivera who is on her second AGR assignment in the supply job field.

Being the team leader also has allowed Laws to practice teaching his bowling skills.

He admitted teaching his bowling prowess has been challenging. Some of these challenges, include teaching his team how a handicap works, he said.

He added that one of his strategies is ensuring the first bowler is capable of rolling a strike on the first frame. Some thing else he enjoys is knowing that this team is engaging with the community.

“They see the military is trying to get involved with the community,” said Laws.

Brown agreed.

“It really brings the community’s focus a little more when they see them out, especially when they are wearing shirts that say the U.S. Army,” said Brown.

The team wears custom-made shirts with Army Strong in gold letters and a red Engineer Castle on the front and the back.

None the less as Laws said, “We just have fun and come out and enjoy what we do.”

Everyone also wins.

As Rivera said, “It is amazing how much positive feedback and encouragement you get from teammates, other bowlers and even from the opponents.”

Click on link for more photos.

<https://www.dvidshub.net/news/223826/soldiers-hit-lanes>

Sgt. Brandon Shaw, left, Staff Sgt. Gloria Rivera, Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Miller, Staff Sgt. Robert Laws, Kayla Moore, Staff Sgt. Ariel DeLeon and Master Sgt. Leveron Cameron make up the Army Strong Team which bowls in a league at Indian Lanes in Clinton, Miss. All are members of the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 412th Theater Engineer Command based in Vicksburg, Miss., except for Moore.



Saving Reserve Soldiers' lives one at a time

By Rosario Urquieta



Margaret 'Meg' Haycraft, left, director of psychological health, 63rd Regional Support Command, jokes with U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers at a Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention class at Camp Parks, Dublin, Calif., Nov. 9, 2016. Haycraft helps Reserve Soldiers in mental health distress and aids them on the path to recovery through various means. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Sgt. 1st Class LaTonya Kelly)

To most people she is simply known as 'Meg.' But to the Soldiers she helps and works with she is the "Stress Management Fairy Godmother."

This particular 'godmother' saves lives.

Margaret Haycraft is the director of psychological health (DPH) for the 63rd Regional Support Command in Mountain View, California, and as part of her contract she works in the 63rd RSC's surgeons group in the behavioral health section.

Haycraft knew by the age of 16 that helping people was her calling in life. "I've been a licensed clinical social worker for 35 years. I had my own private practice for 20 years in Chicago, as well as my own call in radio show and a monthly newspaper column," said Haycraft.

"15 years ago I was recruited to provide mental health services to Navy reservists. I was then recruited to an Air Force contract and provided the same services for Illinois National Guard Airmen," Haycraft continued.

After her Air Force stint, Haycraft took a break as she relocated to Northern Calif. Once settled she learned the 63rd RSC needed a DPH in Mountain View and within the span of a two hour interview she was hired. Although she lives 100 miles away in Napa Valley, Haycraft comes to Mountain View one day a week, the rest of the time teleworking from home.

According to William Kammerer, suicide prevention program manager, 63rd RSC, Haycraft has dealt with people that have become extremely angry because they can't get in contact with their chain

of command. "These kinds of situations tend to escalate in making Soldiers think they have no one to help them or no one cares enough to want to help them," Kammerer said.

When suicidal ideology or suicide attempt cases emerge, Haycraft is the professional who assists in mitigating the situation in which the reserve Soldier finds themselves in, he said. "Miss Haycraft works for the suicide prevention program as a resource. She is a licensed clinical counselor,"

"I can think of five people in the last four months that have had major issues and she was able to contact them, calm them down, and get them referrals. She is pretty much on the front lines of crisis intervention," Kammerer explained.

Kammerer said professionals like Haycraft are a resource every RSC has available to them and these are individuals who can be called on to help with mental health issues or other crises that Reserve Soldiers face. "Resources like Meg support our program by helping out with prevention events for units that have had suicides or suicide attempts. Meg is a very headstrong person who is able to connect with people and get to the root of the problem," Kammerer stated.

Haycraft's clinical and interpersonal skills are phenomenal, he continued. "She can get past all the emotions and find out what the problem really is. She is a very headstrong and determined person with great communication skills."

With her experience in dealing with various situations, Haycraft can diffuse the problem and prevent it from escalating, she explained. "I am responsible for reaching out to Soldiers who've been identified as being in some mental health distress," said Haycraft. "The Soldiers in distress are identified through a physical health assessment (PHA) and mental health assessment (MHA), by their command or unit."

Haycraft then reaches out to that soldier by email or phone calls, and once in contact she conducts an assessment to identify the source of distress, determining a course of action. "The course of action usually includes referrals to no-cost or low-cost counseling in their geographical area and other free resources unique to military members. If necessary, I also contact their command to let them know I'm on the team and the Soldier is getting help," Haycraft said.

Haycraft also attends 63rd RSC Yellow Ribbon events. At the events she conducts presentations on a range of topics such as suicide prevention, reintegration, post-traumatic stress disorder and communicating with family members while deployed. "I organize and sometimes attend Postvention's. These are events that are special requests from a unit who've lost a member by suicide or some other form of sudden death. I recruit Military and Family Life Counselors (MFLC) and Vet Center staff to participate in supporting the unit in distress," Haycraft said. "I have talked six Soldiers out of ending their lives and instead to seek professional help. I get to affect a change in people's lives, be compassionate and real, and to be trusted by people in need who are hurting."

Assisting Soldiers in their darkest hours is something Haycraft doesn't take for granted. "I am tremendously privileged and honored to have been there for them - I believe it doesn't get any better than this," Haycraft beamed. "This is my dream job. I am living my life's purpose and am immensely grateful."

Soldier completes historic combat tour

By Sgt. 1st Class Joel Quebec



Pfc. Neesy Sanders, stands next to the vehicle she drove in Iraq during Operation Inherent Resolve. In August 2016, Sanders became the first female to deploy to Erbil, Iraq as a Combat Engineer since the Military Occupational Specialty 12B was opened to women in June 2015. Sanders is assigned to Company B, 39th Brigade Engineer Battalion, 101st Airborne Division. A Combat Engineer's duties include constructing fighting positions, fixed and floating bridges, obstacles and defensive positions and emplacing and detonating explosives. Sanders is from Columbus, Mississippi. Her mother also served in the Army in the mid-1980s. Erbil, Iraq is home to one of four Combined Joint Task Force locations under Operation Inherent Reslove dedicated to training Iraqi defense forces to assist in the defeat of ISIL in Iraq and Syria.
(U.S. Army Reserve Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Joel Quebec)

When Pfc. Neesy Sanders joined the Army she was given three choices of military occupational specialties (MOS): 56M, Chaplain's Assistant, 92G, Food Service Specialist and 12B, Combat Engineer, which was opened to women in June 2015. After watching a combat engineer video she made her choice. She hails from the small town of Columbus, Mississippi, and wanted to try something different.

"I didn't want to stay behind a desk all day at a computer, I don't want to cook, so I'll breach these obstacles," said Sanders.

A combat engineer's duties include, constructing fighting positions, fixed and floating bridges, obstacles and defensive positions and emplacing and detonating explosives. Their operations can include conducting operations that include route clearance of obstacles and rivers, preparing and installing firing systems for demolition and explosives and detecting mines visually or with mine detectors including mine-resistant ambush protected vehicles (MRAP) with rollers for Improvised Explosive Devices.

Although Sanders already had obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Sports Medicine from Coppin State University in Maryland, she still decided to try serving in the Army as her mother had done in the mid-1980s.

Sanders felt the job would be exciting, but what she didn't realize, nor could anyone plan for, was being the first female combat engineer to deploy to Iraq, which she did in August of 2016 with Company B, 39th Brigade Engineer Battalion, 101st Airborne Division.

"The fact that my leadership had so much confidence and faith in me made feel ok with my job." She said. "It made me feel like 'Ok Sanders, c'mon you can do this.'"

Although honored being the first female combat engineer in Iraq, it seems her unit members were a bit more excited about it then she was. "It means a lot [to the unit]" said Capt. Tyandre Ellis, commander of B Co. "It's a ground-breaking step in the right direction."

Although Sanders feels honored about her status, she is not one to seek the limelight and prefers to concentrate on her job. "I feel privileged because this is the first time they [the Army] have integrated males and females into this MOS, but I just feel like one of the guys. We have a job to do, survivability, counter-mobility and mobility, and we do it."

According to her commander she does her job very well. "She quickly proved mastery of her skill set," said Ellis, "and led the team as one of the few that actually drove the RG-31 [MRAP] with rollers supporting two distinct area clearance missions for named operations."

Ellis added that she has a bright future ahead of her as she completed Air Assault school very soon after being assigned to the company and is being considered as a strong candidate for the unit sapper platoon.

In the U.S. Army, sappers support the front-line infantry, and they have fought in every war in American history. Their duties are devoted to tasks involving facilitating movement, defense and survival of allied forces and impeding those of enemies.

As for the deployment itself, although Sanders is the only female combat engineer among a group of men she feels comfortable in the situation. "I think it was more awkward for the guys having a female around," Sanders said. "They're used to their 'guy talk' and walk around in their boxers but the fact that they made me comfortable, were aware that I was around and really protected me, I feel this has been a great deployment."

‘Social media could be powerful suicide prevention tool,’ Army secretary says

By Sean Kimmons

As an Army officer in Iraq, Daniel Feehan relied on his driver to keep him safe while they traveled on dangerous missions. But once they were back on home soil, Feehan said, he failed to do the same for his driver, Spc. Sergio Betts, when Betts made a call for help.

After redeploying, Feehan recalled, they had parted ways but kept in touch on Facebook, which is how he learned that Betts had returned to Iraq again before eventually getting out of the Army. Once out, Betts’ social media presence took on a bleaker tone. “I watched a deep and profound sadness come over him,” said Feehan, now the principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for readiness.



Former Secretary of the Army, Eric Fanning speaks during the Symposium on Suicide Prevention and Social Media in the Pentagon Jan. 18, 2017. **(Photo Credit: Sgt. Jose A. Torres Jr.)**

Then one night in September 2013, Feehan checked his Facebook and came across an ominous post by Betts, simply stating: “Lost.” Unaware of the meaning behind the post, Feehan chose to go to bed rather than reach out to Betts. Later, he discovered that Betts, the Soldier who once kept a watchful eye on him in Iraq, had fatally shot himself. “We must be prepared ... to intervene before that last post,” said Feehan, who now helps direct U.S. military suicide prevention policies.

He spoke Wednesday at a Pentagon symposium on suicide prevention and social media. “Call the person, message them back, and offer them a helping hand. Just ask if they’re OK,” he added, choking up.

As his last public appearance as secretary of the Army, Eric Fanning hosted the symposium, addressing leaders of suicide prevention groups, researchers and social media experts from Facebook, LinkedIn, Google and Apple. In his remarks, he expressed hope the Army could reduce suicide rates with their help.

In the coming weeks, participants in the symposium are expected to offer recommendations

to Army senior leaders on how they can use social media to stem suicidal thoughts and acts among Soldiers.

“It shouldn’t surprise any of us that those who experience the crucible of combat or those who spend multiple tours away from home are affected by it,” Fanning told the group. “The strains for a Soldier in combat are difficult to comprehend. They’re difficult for Soldiers themselves to explain and communicate.”

In recognition of the heightened risk Soldiers face, the Army has embedded more than 60 behavioral health teams at the brigade level, making care more accessible to Soldiers at their workplace. As a result, behavioral health visits across the Army have grown from about 900 in fiscal year 2007 to more than 2 million in fiscal 2016.

There were also 67,000 fewer inpatient bed days for behavioral health conditions last fiscal year compared to fiscal 2012, according to Lt. Gen. Nadja West, the Army’s surgeon general. “I think the message is getting out, and we’re improving,” West said at the symposium. “The incremental change we’re seeing ... really is showing that we’re on the right track.” In fiscal 2015, nearly 280 Soldiers in the Army took their own lives. In the first three quarters of fiscal 2016, there were just over 200 suicides across the Army, according to the most recent Defense Suicide Prevention Office data.

Fanning noted that more work is needed to reduce these numbers further and that measures that have been shown to be effective during the Obama administration should endure into the next. “This is not a partisan issue,” the secretary said. “It’s not even exclusive to our military. No matter our profession or background, each of us has known someone in our community or family who needed help but for some reason didn’t get it in time.”

Noting the widespread use of social media among Soldiers, Fanning charged those in the audience to help develop ways to harness its power. Peer-reviewed research has shown certain behaviors and patterns on social media can reveal a person is in distress.

“We have to find ways social media can be a tool in [suicide] prevention,” he said. For instance, a person who searches certain words on Google that indicate a desire to cause himself or herself harm will automatically be shown ads offering help. But that kind of search engine algorithm isn’t the Army’s only ally in suicide prevention, Fanning said. Service members who recognize the signs can be just as responsive. “We can help make service members aware of what kind of posts or patterns of behavior should raise concern,” Fanning said. “We can make them aware of how to respond in the right way and make the right resources available to them.”

For Feehan and the many others who have lost someone close to them to suicide, any missed opportunity to help out a fellow Soldier can have a lasting negative consequence. “It takes a lot of courage for a peer to step up and ask someone if they’re OK,” Feehan said. “But it’s part of the military culture; that is, leave no man behind.”

U.S. Army Reserve assists sheriff's office after Hurricane Matthew

Story by Timothy Hale

As Hurricane Matthew churned towards North Carolina on Oct. 8, the Lenoir County Sheriff's Office was ready for any weather-related situation he would bring their way. Or so they thought.

Unfortunately, torrential rain inundated the area causing the Neuse River to crest its banks. The Neuse River snakes its way into downtown Kinston to a point less than half a mile from the Lenoir County Courthouse. Rising water overwhelmed downtown streets and the city sewer system flooding the basement of the courthouse where the sheriff's office is housed.



This was the third time the courthouse has flooded after the Neuse overflowed its banks – first in 1996 from Hurricane Fran (23 feet, 9 feet above flood stage), and in 1999 from Hurricane Floyd (27 feet, 13 feet above flood stage). The flooding from Hurricane Matthew surpassed both of those earlier marks.

Sheriff Ronnie Ingram knew something had to be done. “It really set us back, there was a lot of flash flooding and we are in a state of disarray right now,” Ingram said. “We pumped water out of here for four or five days. We had water and feces out in the hallway covering everything. The water levels got so high (in the city) that everything started backing up. The smell was overwhelming. The last time I looked, there was 2-feet of water in the elevator shaft and it's out of service now.”

In the basement, the sheriff's office housed their patrol and civil divisions. Ingram knew he had to continue day-to-day operations but he couldn't do it in the courthouse basement. “What I'm looking for is a permanent fix. I'm looking to pull up stakes and work somewhere else. If it was a one time thing (that would be different) but if you get settled back in and we have another hurricane we'll go through the same thing all over again,” Ingram said.

That more permanent fix might just be in a former U.S. Army Reserve Center located at the town's airport. The center, which was underutilized, was a good place for the sheriff and his staff to temporarily continue their day-to-day operations pending U.S. Army Reserve and Department of the Army approval.

Jan Haigler, the 81st Regional Support Command director of plans and training at Fort Jackson, S.C., said the sheriff's office submitted a request to use the center. "We were able to allow them to occupy the building under Stafford Act (Disaster and Emergency Act), which the U.S. Army Reserve has to cover about the first 72 hours of a disaster," Haigler. "We're allowed to do that based on preventing loss of life, human suffering, or mitigating great property damage."

"It has to go to the Department of the Army for approval because this is a law enforcement agency and under posse comitatus and other ancillary parts of that we can't grant that approval, it's held at DA-level," Haigler said. "That process will be expedited because this is a major disaster declaration area."

Haigler said this community partnership is an important milestone for the U.S. Army Reserve. "The American public sees a uniform and wonders why we are not helping," she said. "They are used to seeing the National Guard in the communities. Well, the U.S. Army Reserve is in the communities as well. This gives us a chance to showcase what we can do (to help our neighbors). Under the NDAA (National Defense Authorization Act) and Immediate Response



It was determined by the U.S. Army Reserve Homeland Operations Division that this would qualify as mitigating great property damage." The request for use of the facility was extended, Haigler said, in order to allow the processing of paperwork for a long-term agreement. That agreement was staffed and signed at the Army Reserve Installation Management Directorates at Fort Bragg, N.C. and Fort Belvoir, Virginia, then approved at the Department of the Army.

Reluctant to turn down a good challenge, first sergeant competes in Ironman triathlon

By Spc. Sean Harding



1st Sgt. Christopher Mitter with the 315th Engineer Battalion, 301st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, 416th Theater Engineer Command, crosses the finish line of the Ironman in Tempe, Ariz. on Nov. 20, 2016. (Photo credit: FinisherPix.com)

1st Sgt. Christopher Mitter from the 387th Engineer Company, based in Scottsdale, Arizona, didn't fully know what he was getting himself into when he signed up to compete in an Ironman after a few of his Soldiers challenged him to compete in the event.

Mitter, a horizontal construction engineer, began his Ironman journey three years ago while conducting physical training (PT) with his Soldiers at Tempe Beach Park in Tempe, Arizona. During the PT session, they noticed people setting up for the Ironman competition that was to take place the next day. A couple of his Soldiers asked Mitter if he had ever competed in a triathlon, and teased that although he had run several marathons before, an Ironman would be too big for him, and therefore out of his league. "I'll do it," replied Mitter. Shortly after the PT session, he was signed up for his first triathlon.

The Ironman is a triathlon consisting of a 2.4 mile swim, 112 mile bike ride, and 26.2 mile run, and competitors must finish in less than 17 hours to be considered an "Ironman." 140.6 miles is a lot of ground to cover in one day. The average thru-hiker on the Appalachian trail travels an average of 12 miles per day. Most long-distance foot races, and even the Tour de France, rarely exceed 100 miles in a single day. To prepare for Ironman, Mitter stuck to a rigorous training regimen and competed in two half-length Ironman competitions. He would train for three to four hours each day, and up to nine hours on Saturdays. The support of his family was vital to his training and completion of the race. "Training

can be painful sometimes,” he admitted. His family met him on the road during his training days to offer support or even snacks, and soldiers in his company would constantly ask him how his training was going. “It was a huge boost to morale,” said Mitter. “When you’re out there training for so long you get tired, sore, hungry and so on, but when you get a hug or a wave on the trail, it helps.”

Time management was also crucial to his mission. Between Army life, his training schedule and his civilian job, he said his family sacrificed more than he had, because of the time he had spent away from them training.

Minor Setback

Training did not come without a cost, however. Nearly two months before the race, he broke his shoulder blade. The doctor told him it wouldn’t be possible to finish the swim. “It would have been the easiest thing in the world to drop out of the race,” said Mitter. He finished anyway.

Race Day

Despite some of the setbacks he encountered during training, race day went without a hitch. “The water wasn’t that cold,” he said. There were no flat tires during the bike portion, and no problems or issues with the transitions. Then came the run, and after about 14 hours he earned the title “Ironman.” “There’s nothing like the feeling of coming across the finish line,” he said. “They treat you like a rock star; there’s the cameras and lights and everything. You do something that a lot of people don’t get to do.”

Excellence is Contagious

Mitter’s competitive spirit isn’t new to the 387th. Earlier this year Sgt. Michael Orozco won the Army Reserve’s Best Warrior competition. This January, Mitter and seven Soldiers from his company will be competing in the Arizona Rock ‘N’ Roll Marathon. Another Soldier from the company will be competing in his first sprint triathlon this upcoming summer. “When I look around here, it is a contagious thing,” Mitter said. “When you’re doing something awesome, people want to jump in on that. When I first came to the unit, PT was a ‘dirty word,’ now a 5k, half marathon, or even a full marathon isn’t even that much of a stretch.”

“The unit is very motivated,” said Capt. Heathra King, commander of the 387th. “We had our own week-long Best Warrior competition that multiple Soldiers wanted to compete in, and we’ve had other Soldiers form teams to compete in other events around the state. The culture of the company is strong for physical fitness and teamwork.”

Since no one forced him to train, he had to be the one to motivate himself. Having the support of his family, as well as his employer, and the Army Reserve was key to his success. “Challenging yourself, that’s the ticket! The most intense battle will be between the person you are, and the person you are capable of becoming,” concluded Mitter, referring to a quote from Ironman announcer Mike Reilly right before the race.

The Ironman is a triathlon event that was first held on the shores of the island of Oahu, Hawaii, in 1978 after a dispute among local endurance athletes about which long distance endurance race was most difficult. To settle the dispute, Commander John Collins of the U.S. Navy, who was stationed there at the time, suggested an “ultimate” race combining the three main long-distance endurance races on Oahu, the Waikiki Rough Water Swim (2.4 miles), the Around-Oahu Bike Race (originally 115 miles, reduced to 112 for the Ironman so that the bicycle portion could end at Aloha tower), and the Honolulu Marathon (26.2 miles).

Army Reserve Soldier finds comfort in heavy metal

By Sgt. Russell Toof

Staff Sgt. Brad Miller, a public affairs non-commissioned officer with the U.S. Army Reserve's 326th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment in Reading, Penn., performs Jan. 28 with his band Divination. The show marked the last performance for the band. Miller and some of his bandmates are now in a new band, Whatever This Is. Miller has been performing since coming off of active duty in 1998. (Photo by Sgt. Samuel Conrad)



"When people are surprised to hear that I'm in a metal band, it's when I talk after hearing me sing; it's, 'How did that come out of you?'" said Staff Sgt. Brad Miller, an Army Reserve Soldier who also sings with a local metal band.

Miller joined the active-duty Army in 1994 and spent four years as an intelligence analyst before getting out. His passion for music lead him to become the lead singer of a local band after coming back to Reading, Pennsylvania, in 1998. "I was one of seven people to audition for the band – the second to go – and they cancelled the others after I sang for them," he said. "I've been dabbling in bands since high school. It was never about making money, it was about having fun, having a release."

Twelve years after being released from active duty, Miller switched his military occupational specialty and joined the 99th Regional Support Command's 326th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment in 2010. "I lost my job and needed some source of income until I got back on my feet, but I've subsequently had a lot of fun in this unit," said Miller, a Williamsport native.

The Army Reserve has three-dozen public affairs units stationed throughout the United States. The Soldiers in these units attend journalism school at Fort Meade, Maryland, where they learn skills such as photography, videography, news story and feature writing, publication layout and design, radio broadcasting and on-camera interview techniques, all using the latest industry-standard software.

Miller admitted there's been a surprising link between the skills he has developed through the Army and his music. "I've made some promotional videos for the band on my own time utilizing the skills I gained in the Army Reserve," he explained. "I'm a print journalist, but I've gotten video production training at Fort Meade, so I didn't have to hire someone to do the work for me."

Although Miller's musical focus was never on reaching commercial success, his band has played with well-known acts and has been played on SiriusXM's 'Liquid Metal.' "Jose Mangin has played us; when you talk about metal on Sirius, everyone knows Jose," he said.

One day, everyone may know Miller as well, either as the singer in a metal band, or perhaps as a disc jockey or journalist covering the music scene thanks to his public affairs training in the Army

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Army Reserve Soldiers and units must be ready, flexible

By Lt. Col. Jefferson Wolfe



LTG Charles D. Luckey, commanding general of U.S. Army Reserve Command, speaks to Col. Bidemi Y. Olaniyi-Leyimu, commander of the Medical Support Unit - Europe during a visit to the 7th Mission Support Command at Daenner Kaserne, Jan. 22, 2017. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Chlosta)

Army Reserve Soldiers and units must be ready to conduct their mission at any time or place and adjust to whatever conditions or changes they face, the commanding general of U.S. Army Reserve Command told the commander and other leaders of the 7th Support Mission Command. To illustrate, LTG Charles Luckey took a black Sharpie marker out of his notebook and wrote a series of letters on a stack of paper. Luckey held up the paper, which read, “SOTWISUF.”

He asked more the dozen people in the room if they were familiar with the acronym. None of the leaders knew what it stood for. “It stands for ‘Something Other Than What I Signed Up For,’” Luckey said. Soldiers often face conditions they didn’t expect or plan for, he added.

This highlights how Army Reserve Soldiers have to be prepared at all times to deploy and perform their mission, and be flexible enough to excel in any mission they are assigned, Luckey said. “That’s

who we are.”

Luckey visited the 7th MSC Jan. 22, speaking to leaders and Soldiers from the headquarters and subordinate units, including the 361st Civil Affairs Brigade, Medical Support Unit – Europe, the 773rd Civil Support Team, the 406th Human Resources Command, the 589th Engineer Detachment and the 446th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control).

Leaders need to engage to ensure individual readiness and collective readiness, Luckey said.

“It’s important that Soldiers and staff get to hear it from him – from the three-star level,” said Brig. Gen. Steven W. Ainsworth, the 7th MSC commanding general. “It’s very refreshing” to have the commanding general of all the Army Reserve to validate the 7th MSC leadership’s emphasis on individual and collective training. Ainsworth has been emphasizing basis measures of readiness, for example, ensuring they meet height and weight standards, pass the Army Physical Fitness Test, maintain medical and dental readiness and meet other requirements, said Col. Alex Wells, the 7th MSC deputy commanding officer.

Luckey understands the demands on the 7th MSC Soldiers, as they serve in the Army Reserve’s only forward-stationed unit in Europe, he said. “He recognized the great work they’re achieving and their contribution to the theater,” said Col. Alex Wells, the 7th MSC deputy commanding officer.

The 7th MSC not only has to meet its Army Reserve commitments, but also must support United States Army Europe and the 21st Theater Sustainment Command, Ainsworth said. “I think it’s very important for the American people to know that, as a forward-based Army Reserve unit, they’re getting a very good return on their investment,” he said. “We are a contributor to the Army Reserve, but also provide capability and capacity to the 21st and USAREUR at the same time.”

There are only three time zones in the world in which the Army Reserve does not have a consistent, persistent presence, Luckey said. “What makes us awesome is we’ve got 200,000 Soldiers spread from Bagram Air Force Base to Guam.”

It’s also part of Luckey’s job to make sure senior leaders in the various theaters of operation around the world understand what the Army Reserve can do to support their efforts. “We get asked to do things by all kinds of folks,” he told the 7th MSC audience. “My job is to say yes as often as I can and allow you to say yes as often as you want to.”



KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — LTG Charles D. Luckey, commanding general of U.S. Army Reserve Command, participates in a decontamination demonstration with Soldiers from the 773rd Civil Support Team at Daenner Kaserne, Jan. 22, 2017. The demonstration took place during a visit to the 7th Mission Support Command and its downtrace units. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Chlosta)

His goal is to create situations where the Army Reserve can provide a capability to the combatant commanders and the individual units can sustain and build their own readiness. “He recognizes the demands in theater,” Wells said. “We have to determine a measure of effectiveness that proves a return on investment.”

In the past, the 7th MSC has provided a few individual Soldiers to support an exercise or operation, Wells said. This may contribute to individual readiness, but may not increase the unit’s collective readiness because it is not training together with all of its assigned Soldiers. Training events and exercises that enhance the 7th MSC’s readiness and capabilities are key, Ainsworth said.

To see the command’s capabilities up close, Luckey visited a half-dozen static displays set up by the various units. While, there, he spoke with dozens of 7th MSC Soldiers, and followed that up by meeting about a dozen more at the Clock Tower Cafe dining facility on nearby Kleber Kaserne.

This kind of interaction builds the credibility of senior leaders, said Command Sgt. Maj. Raymond Brown, the 7th MSC senior enlisted leader. “When senior leaders are genuine, Soldiers know it and in Lt. Gen. Luckey, it came through,” he said.

“Any time any senior leader can engage Soldiers, it’s a positive,” Ainsworth said.

All Army Reserve Soldiers are part of a team, Luckey said. “The mission of this team at the end of the day is to win America’s wars”. While the Army Reserve is largely a combat service and combat service support force, the main focus remains to “close with and destroy the enemy,” he added.



LTG Charles D. Luckey, commanding general of U.S. Army Reserve Command, speaks during lunch with Soldiers Jan. 22, 2017 in the Clock Tower Cafe dining facility on Kleber Kaserne during a visit to the 7th Mission Support Command. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Chlosta)

Luckey is not worried about uncertain funding in a fiscally constrained environment, instead focusing on the capability the force has. “Whether we get bigger or smaller, we’re going to get more powerful,” he said. The key is to ensure that individual Soldiers and units are ready to perform their missions.

Back to SOTWISUF, Soldiers and units must always be ready to go and prepared for anything, Luckey said. “Make sure you are ready to be employed and deployed anywhere on the planet.”

Ainsworth echoed Luckey’s statement, adding that almost any job description doesn’t cover everything a person will be asked to do. Ainsworth, too, had a unique acronym — “AAA-O.” He used to wear it on the back of his hat, “until the Army told me I had to remove it,” he said. It stands for something Ainsworth lives by as a commander, namely “Anything, anywhere, anytime — bar nothing.”

926th Engineer Brigade Hosts Final Planning Conference for Resolute Castle 2017

By 1st Lt. Louis Stevens



1st Lt. John Temple and 1st Lt. Cameron Johnson, during the Final Planning Conference hosted from February 8th to February 10th in Mihail Kogălniceanu, Romania, present designs and specifications for projects to be built by a multi-national task force in Cincu, Romania during the initiative Resolute Castle 2017.

The initiative, which consists of a series of engineering construction projects, advances the ongoing efforts of Atlantic Resolve commenced following Russian intervention in Ukraine in 2014; the militaristic actions of which have been considered a potential threat to the economic, militaristic and political ties manifested in the alliances formed through North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union. The Final Planning Conference represents the culmination of many months of planning, which will contribute heavily to furthering the initiative of Atlantic Resolve, and its tenets of interoperability, allied assurance and deterrence of aggression by parties with interests counter to those of NATO, the EU, and the

United States.

Representatives from the U.K. Royal Engineers, the Romanian Armed Forces, United States Army Reserves, the South Carolina National Guard, the North Carolina Army National Guard, the Navy Sea Bees, and ODCSENG convened in their final meeting prior to the initiation of Resolute Castle 2017. The mission is to be conducted in such a way that units, i.e. brigade staff, battalion staff and companies, from the aforementioned contingents will deploy, arrive and operate in the span of 21-day rotational cycles. Their projects, the details of which were finalized at the Final Planning Conference, have been assigned to specific units based upon their unique and distinctive skillsets. An example of this dynamic can be understood through the NCARNG's, and their subordinate element: 882nd Vertical Engineer Company, task to construct breach facilities, which will be used for training in forcible entry via physical or explosive force.

The planning conference's conclusion left all involved parties with a more solidified understanding of the Resolute Castle 2017 Initiative, a deeper camaraderie amongst the diverse unit representation, and a vision for successful interoperability; all of which lend to the ultimate goal of Atlantic Resolve: "U.S. commitment to collective security through a series of actions designed to reassure NATO allies and partners of America's dedication to enduring peace and stability in the region in light of the Russian intervention in Ukraine."

368th Engineer Battalion conducts its first NCO induction ceremony while deployed

Story by Capt. Maria Mengrone

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait – Approximately 106 Soldiers across the 368th Engineer Battalion participated in the battalion's first Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Induction Ceremony signifying the passage from enlisted Soldier to the rank of sergeant within the NCO Corps, Nov. 29, 2016.

"I am incredibly proud to be able to do this and especially proud of all the NCO's that are here today," said Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen M. Bodwell, 368th Eng. Bn. and native of Northbridge, Mass. The ceremony kicked off with a welcome introduction from guest speaker, Command Sgt. Maj. Anthony Simms of the 176th Engineer Brigade based in Grand Prairie, Texas. "NCOs must have character, a mixture of values and attributes that motivate their ability to see what needs to be done, do it, and influence others to follow," said Simms.



Each participant marched on stage and sounded off with their name and unit affiliation while a short biographical description with accompanied personal photographs displayed in the backdrop. "It was a rite of passage for me, I'm going from being a junior enlisted to a member of the NCO Corps" said Sgt. Kendra K. Taylor, construction engineer, 389th Eng. Co. and native of Chicago, Ill. "I'm looking forward to the leadership development and hoping to become the leader I look for in my own leaders," said Taylor.

The packed ceremony filled nearly every seat in the base theater. "We were all a little nervous but after today we move to the next step in our careers. We have to be more professional and take care of our Soldiers and be the best NCO we can be," said Sgt. Roberto J. Sierra, horizontal construction engineer, 475th Engineer Company based in Ponce, Puerto Rico.

During the ceremony the participants, one-by-one signed the "Charge to the Newly Promoted Noncommissioned Officer" oath as a symbolic contractual gesture of commitment to uphold the NCO Creed and Army Values. "The NCO induction ceremony is an incredible event to see and to partake in and if anyone has an opportunity to do this within their unit I highly encourage it," said Bodwell.

Representation from the following companies participated in the ceremony: 312th Eng. Co., 389th Eng. Co., 461st Eng. Co., 475th Eng. Co., Headquarters and Headquarters Co. and Forward Support Co. of 368th Eng. Bn. The 368th Eng. Bn. (Task Force Granite) headquarters is currently serving a nine-month deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (Spartan Shield) under the 176th Eng. Bde. (Task Force Chaos).

The 368th Eng. Bn. is a U.S. Army Reserve unit based in Londonderry, N.H. and is a subordinate unit of the 302D Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, 412th Theater Engineer Command.

On Target: USAR marksmen have strong showing at FORSCOM Competition

Story by Timothy Hale

Four U.S. Army Reserve marksmen were among the 48 competing at U.S. Army Forces Command's (FORSCOM) second annual marksmanship competition, Nov. 8-10, 2016. Master Sgt. Robert Mango, with the 9th Mission Support Command; Sgt. 1st Class Joel Micholick, with the 9th Battalion, Army Reserve Careers Division; Sgt. Joseph Hall, with the 310th Psychological Operations Company (Airborne), and Staff Sgt. Thomas Walsh, with 744th Engineer Company, 321st Engineer Battalion, 416th Theater Engineer Command, represented the U.S. Army Reserve in the competition.

Mango and Hall finished second in the Expert category using the M9 pistol and M4 rifle, respectively, while Micholick and Walsh, finished second and third, respectively, in the M249 squad automatic weapon (SAW) and M9 Novice categories. Mango, Micholick, and Hall are all members of the U.S. Army Reserve Combat Marksmanship Program while Walsh is hoping to make the team. In addition to the U.S. Army Reserve marksmen, the four-day FORSCOM competition also featured marksmen from the active Army and the Army National Guard in events for the M9, M4, and M249, to recognize Soldiers who are beyond expert marksmen. The multi-tiered events challenged the competitors' ability to accurately and quickly engage targets in a variety of conditions and environments.

Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Schroeder, the FORSCOM command sergeant major, said that while this is a competition to see who is the best in the Army, ultimately this event will hopefully inspire individuals, and thereby their units, to become better with this basic Soldier skill – the ability to shoot and engage targets with lethal force. “There is nothing more fundamental than being able to engage and destroy our enemies on the battlefield,” Schroeder said. “We do that with our weapons systems and it's important to build these competencies in our leaders.”

Schroeder said this competition is different from others in that this event tests combat marksmanship – the ability to adapt and overcome a particular situation while still putting lethal rounds down-range. “We want to test combat marksmanship,” he said. “We want to get troopers operating in the same conditions that they would be operating in combat. Competitions drive the way we train. So we want to take these Soldiers and have them go back to their unit leadership and tell them what they did here and we want them to drive their training to get better at these competitions, which will make us better in combat. That's really what this is all about; improving individual and unit proficiency and that will help us in the future.”



All four U.S. Army Reserve marksmen fully understand the importance of individual and unit readiness. All four served in the active Army before moving into the U.S. Army Reserve and Mango, Micholick, and Hall all previously served in the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit based at Fort Benning, Georgia. They all said there was a good combination of traditional and combat marksmanship events to challenge their skills and abilities. “(This competition) is trying to introduce marksmanship down at a unit level,” Mango



said. “So it can’t flood the newer shooters with all brand new things that’s going to be foreign to them. So a lot of it was what you would expect a Soldier to have – from the holster and running to find cover – the things that the Army teaches you. But it just wasn’t black on white (paper target) bulls-eye type shooting. It really sped up (the competition) and that’s a good thing.”

Hall said he enjoyed the competition, especially all of the more unique events. “The competition was great with all the different scenarios – the stress shoots, the alleyways, everything,” Hall said. “It challenged us in every different style of shooting – stuff that you would see in combat to actual marksmanship. There were just so many different aspects of it; it was just a great time.”

Hall said the biggest take-away for him was to share what he learned when he returns to his unit to include shooting under pressure and time constraints. “All the different scenarios – you can run through those with any Soldier out there,” Hall said. He added that this competition was more about the combat shooting than precision shooting. “This teaches you a quick response in how to take your target down,” he said. For Walsh, a former infantry Soldier and drill sergeant on active duty, now a U.S. Army Reserve combat engineer, said competitive shooting has made him a better Soldier and he is able to share those experiences with his fellow Soldiers.

“It’s nice for me as a prior 11-Bravo (infantry) to go into these units and say, ‘Hey, let’s take a step back and get back to the basics and become shooters again.’ Soldiers need range time in order to become individually better which ben-

efits the entire unit,” Walsh said. “Each Soldier needs to be good on all the weapon systems not just their assigned weapon. My lowest private should be able to shoot a pistol and all the squad guns plus his M4 (rifle).”

Soldiers interested in joining the U.S. Army Reserve Combat Marksmanship Program, they are encouraged to find out more online at <https://armyreservemarksman.info> or on social media at <https://www.facebook.com/USARCMP>

Trust is bedrock of Army profession

By C. Todd Lopez

WASHINGTON (Army News Service) -- Trust, say Army leaders, is a key component of the Army profession and it is critical to everything Soldiers do. Army leaders from across the force met last week in Fairfax, Virginia, during the Army Profession Forum, hosted by the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic, to discuss, among other things, the role trust plays in the Army profession.

Kicking off the day-long event, Secretary of the Army Eric Fanning addressed several hundred Army senior leaders regarding Soldiering as a profession. “We must train on this, train on what we define as our profession, like we train on everything else, so that it’s instinctual in a way that maybe isn’t for other people, again, because of the incredible things we ask the Army to do, that we ask our Soldiers and civilians to do,” Fanning said. “This needs to be ingrained in a way that we wouldn’t expect for others outside this profession.”



Secretary of the Army Eric Fanning delivers opening remarks during this year’s Army Profession Forum, an Army senior leader symposium held in Tysons, VA, Dec. 07, 2016. Facilitated by the Center for the Army Profession and Ethic (CAPE). The Secretary spoke about what we do as an Army, “Everything we ask of our Soldiers serving around the world is built on a single word -- Trust. As leaders, this trust starts with us, and that’s the essential part of what we’re here to talk about today.” (Photo Credit: John G. Martinez)

A key component of the Army profession is trust, said Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mark Milley, who outlined three areas where trust manifests itself inside the Army. First, he said, the Army must maintain trust with the American people. “We are the people’s Army, and we always have been,” he said. “We come from the people and we defend the people. That’s our purpose. That’s the only reason we exist. And we have to maintain the trust of the American people. Right now you have it. We have it. But trust is a fragile thing. And every time somebody breaks the trust, you’re chipping away at the trust, the bond, the cohesion, between the people, and the people’s Army,” said Milley.

Individual acts, or institutional acts can destroy that trust, he said. When high-ranking Army officers are in the news, or the public eye for misdeeds or misconduct, he said, that “breaks the trust with the American people, and we are diminishing this institution’s esteem in the eyes of the people we serve.”

Secretary Fanning’s comments elaborated on these thoughts “In order to build and sustain trust across the force, we must promote understanding within the Total Force of the roles and unique capabilities of each of the three components -- Regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve, as well as U.S. Army Civilians.” Another facet of trust in the Army, said Milley, is trust that goes vertically up and down through the chain of command, as well as laterally amongst peers.

Trust for leadership, he said, means that Soldiers who have problems with their bosses must have the confidence to approach and confront their bosses, rather than “snipe” or undermine them amongst peers. Amongst peers, said Milley said, “destructive competitiveness” destroys trust. “It’s the guy who stabs you in the back in order to advance himself,” he said. “Sometimes it’s done in a subtle, snide, snikey ways. Sometimes it’s done in open, gross, disgusting ways. Either way, whatever the technique of the guy sniping, it’s wrong. It breaks down trust. So, if you are like that, cease-fire. And if you see people around you like that, crush them. But don’t put up with it. You have to be able to trust the person on your left and right.”

Trust must also be earned down the chain of command. “Don’t be that general, don’t be that officer who is always looking upward and outward, and looking for your next job,” he said. “Take care of those Soldiers, and civilians and family members that you are in charge of. And take it to heart. You must love your Soldiers.”

Finally, trust manifests itself in warfare, said Milley. And in the near future, that trust will become increasingly important, as enemy advancements in electronic warfare might mean that Army leaders in the field will have to carry out their missions even in the absence of direct lines of communication with or oversight by their superiors. “Our purpose, in order to defend the Constitution and defend the American people, is to kill people who threaten our people, kill people who threaten that Constitution. Our purpose is to close with and destroy the enemies of our country,” he said. “And for that it requires trust.”

In the future, said Milley, that requirement for trust is going to be compounded exponentially. “We’re going to operate in a very compartmented, distributed battlefield,” he said. “All these communications and all this network stuff may or may not work, and I would bet on the not-work.”

In the absence of that communications capability, Soldiers will need to be trusted to know the mission objective -- what’s expected, what the goal is -- and carry it out, even without direct supervision from their superior. “You can take it to the bank you’re not going to get directions right from the West Wing of the White House or the Pentagon,” he said. “You might not even get direction from your next level of higher headquarters.”

So how will Army officers of the future be able to execute their missions, even without being able to talk with their superiors for days, weeks or even months at a time? “You achieve it through trust, you achieve it through mission command and intent-based tactics,” said Milley. “Understanding the purpose of the higher headquarters operational design, understanding why you are doing the task, not just to do the task.”

In the future, he said Soldiers will need to achieve their purpose in the absence of orders. “That’s the very essence of mission command, and it’s all built upon that single word that’s in the doctrine, the bedrock of the Army ethic: which is trust,” he said. “I trust that you will achieve the purpose, and you will do it ethically and morally and legally correct. And that takes an immense and off-the-charts level of character. You’ll have to have a spine of titanium steel to withstand some of the pressures of intense ground combat, and you’ll always have to do the right thing when no one is looking.”



This is our



Sgt. 1st Class James Greco became one of the newest U.S. Army Reserve Inspector Generals after our Commanding General, Maj. Gen. Tracy Thompson, administered the Inspector General Oath at the 412th Theater Engineer Command Headquarters Feb. 12, 2017. Greco's military experience includes the United States Coast Guard. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood).



Spc. David M. Lyons, left, and Spc. Rudolph Tripp, both of the 417th Engineer Company, 458th Engineer Battalion, 411th Engineer Brigade, use a Sked stretcher to carry a "casualty" during Pre-Mobilization training at Fort Bliss, Texas. (Photo by Spc. Aaron Weigand, 417th Engineer Company).



207th Digital Liaison Detachment Soldiers zero their weapons in the fog at Fort Bragg, N.C., Jan. 21, 2017.

Command

A competitor in the 302D Maneuver Enhancement Brigade Best Warrior Competition tosses a live grenade during the competition at Joint Base McGuire-Dix Lakehurst, N.J. March 9, 2017



Staff Sgt. Maria Funes, right, checks head-space and timing with her gunner, Sgt. Stephen Smith, both with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 926th Engineer Brigade, in preparation for qualification live-fire during Operation Cold Steel at Fort McCoy, Wis., March 23, 2017. Operation Cold Steel is the U.S. Army Reserve's crew-served weapons qualification and validation exercise to ensure that America's Army Reserve units and Soldiers are trained and ready to deploy on short-notice and bring combat-ready and lethal firepower in support of the Army and our joint partners anywhere in the world. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Debralee Best)





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