

The WILDCAT



81ST REGIONAL SUPPORT COMMAND, FORT JACKSON, SC

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Maj. Gen. Bill Gerety, commander of the 81st Regional Support Command, is shown here analyzing a packet submitted to the lieutenant colonel command board held Jan. 9-14. Already quite familiar to selection boards, Gerety said he enjoyed sitting on this particular board because he learned even more about the process.

Lieutenant Colonel command board held

Story and photo by Gail E. Anderson, Public Affairs Specialist

FORT JACKSON, S.C. – On Jan. 14, after a week of scouring over application packets for a recent lieutenant colonel command board, a team of 20 people, including the 81st Regional Support Command commander, Maj. Gen. Bill Gerety, completed reviewing more than 820 applicants.

The command board was made up of 10 troop program unit and active guard, reserve Soldiers from 10 different major commands, all colonels and above, who were assisted by nine administrative support personnel. While the nine administrative support personnel had no actual vote in the selection process, they were essential to conducting an efficient board. Because this was a Chief, Army Reserve directed board, not an 81st RSC board, the United States

Army Reserve Command human resources office sent two people to observe the proceedings and make sure that everything went according to regulation.

“Actually the Chief, Army Reserve is the convening authority for this board. The 81st RSC commanding general, who sat as the board president, simply executed it for him,” said chief of the 81st’s officer branch, Patricia Upton.

Generally, a lieutenant colonel command board is conducted quarterly and rotates between the four RSC’s so for this reason the 99th RSC also sent two people, Duval Tyson and Chief Warrant Officer Michael Balsamo and the 88th RSC provided Shalanda Harlan to assist with the administrative duties of running this command board. **see BOARD on page 4**

The Wildcat



Maj. Gen. Bill H. Gerety
Commanding General

Brig. Gen. Mark C. Arnold
Deputy Commanding General

Mr. James P. Eggleton
Chief of Staff

Command Sgt. Maj. James Wills
Command Sergeant Major

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Reserve senior enlisted boards

By: Alex Rivera, 81st RSC Boards Branch Chief

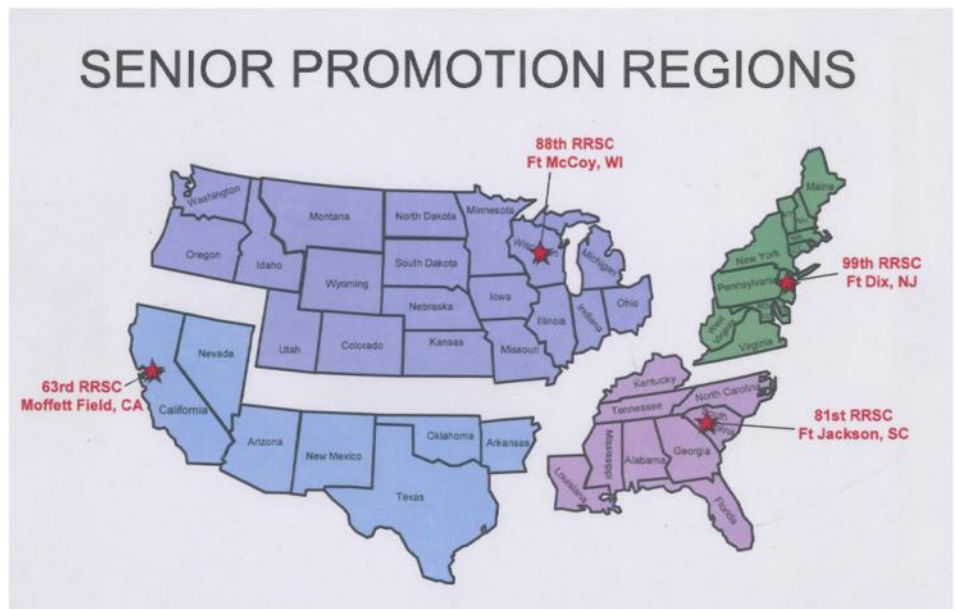
The senior enlisted promotion board process may seem confusing to many, but this article is intended to provide information necessary to understand it.

Currently promotion boards are held twice a year, in February and in August by each of the four Regional Support Commands. Soldiers in the ranks of staff sergeant to master sergeant must submit their packets by the suspense date (Dec. 1 for the February board and Jun. 1 for the August board)

to the region of their choice for promotion consideration. Soldiers who do not wish to be considered must sign a declination statement.

What one needs to know here is that a Soldier must declare enough mileage in his/her packet to cover travel from his/her home of record to a unit within the geographical region of the RSC he/she submitted the packet to.

It is important to note that the mileage must bring the Soldier



African Americans and the Civil War

By: Capt. Tiesha Powell, 81st RSC

The month of February is known as Black History Month, a time to honor African Americans and their achievements.

During the 1861 Civil War, African Americans played a vital role in the quest to end slavery.

In honor of their efforts, The Association for the Study of African American Life and History selected "African Americans and the Civil War" as the 2011 national black history theme.

During this month, we urge all Wildcats, Soldiers and civilians, to study and reflect on the value of their contributions to our nation.

Furthermore, take the time to reflect on the sacrifices that were made by many African Americans that not only ended slavery but brought freedom and equality in the United States.

Contact Capt. Tiesha Powell at (803) 751-9857 for more info.



(courtesy photo)

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from his/her HOR (not the location of your current unit) to the unit of promotion. The four geographical regions are depicted on the map, showing each of the states that each region covers.

So let's say for example that a Soldier lives in Ga. and is willing to travel up to 50 miles to a new unit if selected for promotion, he/she will then have to submit a packet to the 81st RSC for consideration because Ga. falls within the 81st RSC geographical region. If however, the Soldier lives in S.C. and wants to increase his/her chances for promotion they can submit a packet to the 81st RSC and the 99th RSC.

Soldiers need to make sure though that the packet they submit to the 99th RSC has enough mileage listed to bring them to a unit within their region, as they only have authority to promote Soldiers within their region.

If they only list 50 miles and get selected, they will never get promoted from the 99th RSC list because 50 miles is not enough to bring them from their HOR in S.C. to any unit within the 99th RSC region. Confused? Just ensure that enough miles are listed in the packet to increase the chances for promotion.

Let's talk about timeliness. Soldiers must submit their packets by the suspense date to ensure that they will be considered for promotion. Any packet post marked after the suspense date may or may not make it to the board and must be accompanied with a detailed letter of lateness explaining the reasons why the packet was late.

All late packets are reviewed by a panel that decides if they should be allowed to go to the promotion board.

It is recommended that packets are submitted prior to the suspense date and missing documents are added prior to the additional dates given in the announcement. This will ensure that the packet will go to the board if all eligibility criteria are met. To be eligible for promotion, a Soldier must meet the following criteria:

- Time in service/Time in grade (as per the announcement)
- Passing Army Physical Fitness Test within 12 months of the board
- Meet height/weight within six months of the board (both must be annotated on Form 2A with a date within six months of the board. DA Form 5500/5501 must be included if used.)
- Completed the appropriate Noncommissioned Officer Education System
- Have the appropriate security clearance for their military occupational specialty (all sergeants first class and above must have a minimum of an interim secret clearance to be eligible)
- Have completed the next level of NCOES if older than 55 years old (Senior Leader Course - if staff sergeant going to sergeant first class, Sergeants Major Academy - if master sergeant going to sergeant major)
- Not exceed 57 years of age

What is important to know here is what exactly constitutes completion of the appropriate NCOES. Soldiers must complete all phases of SLC or ALC to be considered NCOES qualified. Those Soldiers that have an MOS which has an active duty NCOES school must either attend the active duty course or have an approved

waiver by the United States Army Reserve Command.

MOSs in this category include most of the 25 series, 31Delta and 92Romeo among others.

If a Soldier has not attended the school and doesn't have an approved waiver, he/she will not be eligible for promotion.

Once packets are received at the boards branch they go through a screening process. All packets are screened to ensure they meet eligibility criteria.

If a packet does not meet eligibility criteria, an email will be sent to the Soldier and the unit point of contact listed in the packet, informing them of the discrepancies and the appropriate corrective action.

The boards branch will work with the Soldiers to help them get their packet to meet eligibility.

There are times however, that there is nothing that can be done to get the packet to that state, such as not meeting TIS/TIG or being older than 57.

This is everything one needs to know to get a packet ready for the board.

A Soldier will be on his/her way to promotion consideration by following the checklist closely and the information listed above.

Promotion announcements and results will be published and posted to our Army Knowledge Online files at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/files/19540077>.

Further inquiries can be directed to the boards branch at RSC081HRO-Boards@usar.army.mil.



Did you know?

You get three extra days to file your taxes this year?

They'll be due on Mon., April 18.

The bonus days come thanks to Emancipation Day, a little-known Washington, D.C., holiday that celebrates the freeing of slaves in the district.

Emancipation Day falls on Sat., April 16, but it is observed in D.C. on Fri., April 15. That prompted the IRS to extend the tax filing deadline to April 18 this year. Under the tax code, filing deadlines can't fall on Saturdays, Sundays or holidays.

Free 24-hour financial support, provided by the Department of Defense, is available to all Active Duty, Guard and Reserve members and their families. Consultants provide information and make referrals on a wide range of issues, including financial issues. You can reach the program by telephone at 1-800-342-9647 or through the Web site <http://www.militaryonesource.com>.

Military OneSource (MOS) continues to provide free tax filing services and free tax consultations to military service members and their families during the tax season. Visit the website or call the phone number above for more information.

About the upcoming BWC?

The Best Warrior Competition is designed to identify the best of the best from among the enlisted ranks. These elite competitors are tested in military leadership, knowledge and skills.

There are two categories in which the Soldiers can compete, the junior level, private through specialist or the noncommissioned officer level. Soldiers are pushed to both their mental and physical limits.

This year's events will be held Feb. 10-12, to determine the winners that will go on to represent this command at the regional level. The regional Best Warrior Competition will be held at this command on Apr. 15-18. The winners of the regional level will go on to compete at United States Army Reserve Command level and that winner will proceed to the Department of the Army level.

Each year this command strives to make the Best Warrior Competition more challenging than the previous year.

In order to make this event a success much coordination and command support is required.

For more information about the Best Warrior Competition, contact Master Sgt. Denise Underwood at denise.underwood@usar.army.mil or Sgt. 1st Class Robert Rayborn at robert.e.rayborn@usar.army.mil.

Chaplain's Corner



Valentine's Day is a time that we think of relationships with people and of the love that we have for those significant others in our lives. Over time what we give to others around us change. In elementary school we give cards and candy. As we grow older we still give cards but the type of cards and the saying change a lot, as they should.

Over time our love and what it means to us and how we show it changes. This happens because we mature but also we come to better understand what a relationship means and what we give to it. The love changes from just saying we love them to showing it in what we do for them and how we treat them.

Relationships are not easy and they take work. But we don't always have the tools that we need to have to make the relationship as strong as it needs to be. One source of these relationship tools is our Strong Bonds program. The Strong Bonds program is designed to give us the tools that we need to make our relationships stronger and able to handle the strains of not only life, but being in the military.

We have a Strong Bonds program for couples and for singles. The Strong Bonds for couples we can understand why they need the tools.

Singles may or may not be looking to get married and the Strong Bonds is just as important for them. Even though a person may not be looking to get married they do have relationships in their lives – Family, work, etc.

These are relationships that the tools we teach and provide can help strengthen.

Strong Bonds Upcoming Dates:

25 to 27 February – Orlando, FL (40 couples and 40 singles)

4 to 6 March – Savannah, GA (40 couples and 40 singles)

CH (Lt. Col.) Richard Savage

BOARD...

(continued from page 1)

After the board dismissed, Gerety said he was both pleased and impressed. Pleased with the way the board was conducted and impressed with the caliber of some officers who submitted their packets.

"I was reviewing the file of an officer where I saw not only their next step, but I could see this person moving on, three levels later. I have to tell you - the number of times that I was looking at some of these files, thinking to myself, 'Boy, I'm glad I wasn't getting evaluated against this person because my career would have stopped. There were just some superb officers coming forward,'" Gerety said.

YRRP relies on volunteers, support staff

Story and photo by: Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bell, Public Affairs NCO



81st Regional Support Command support staff assists Army Reserve families with the online Interactive Customer Evaluation form during a recent Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program workshop in Orlando, Fla.

Plane tickets, travel orders and navigating one of the busiest airports in Florida to find the right transportation bus are just some of the obstacles for Soldiers and families attending one of the monthly Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program workshops here.

Helping those Soldiers and families attend each event is a staff of four civilian employees of the 81st Regional Support Command.

As hundreds of Soldiers and families arrived at the Rosen Shingle Creek Resort on Jan. 7, a small army of volunteers helped mothers with hungry children, assisted fathers with wandering youth and corralled teenagers looking for a shuttle to one of the numerous family hotspots.

From ensuring hundreds of nametags matched the right person to positioning dozens of informational booths throughout the massive conference center, the 81st RSC Family Programs director, Christa Burns, kept a

watchful eye out for potential problems.

"Teamwork is the essence of our success," she said. "From the very beginning when we arrived here, until we closed up and got everyone on their way back home, our team has made this a great event for Soldiers."

Helping Burns and her staff are more than a dozen volunteers from all walks of life. Husbands, wives and Soldiers from other commands put on the yellow ribbon support staff badge and rolled up their sleeves to accomplish the mission.

One familiar face to Army Reserve families who have returned for their second or third workshop is 81st RSC volunteer Laura Ramsey.

Ramsey, who has assisted the 81st RSC YRRP staff at every event in 2010, said she believes in the mission to help families reunite and reintegrate after a deployment.

"I'm a huge military supporter," she said. "I have a dog in the fight. My son is in the military."

As Ramsey helped families sign into the workshop, another volunteer, Pfc. Albert Cortez, was busy making sure guests were not lost throughout the large resort.

Cortez, a member of the 689th Engineer Company, said he enjoys the long weekend away from his scheduled battle assemblies.

"Being a volunteer here is a great experience for me," he said.

"When I see that 'light bulb' go off on the faces of these families, I know that they got it. How much effort goes on behind the scenes at this event is mind boggling."

He said he hopes the families walk away from the event with the right information to be successful after the deployment.

"I can take pride in the fact I was part of the success, he said. "The reason we are here is to help. We want to make sure these Soldiers and families have a positive event and know we are here to help and assist them."

Cortez and other volunteers began their work several days before the first guest stepped off the airplane.

Printing out hundreds of workshop itineraries, ensuring hotel reservations are correctly filled out and moving hundreds of pounds of equipment to the right place are just a few of the details important to a successful YRRP mission.

"Our volunteers are some of the best people the Army Reserve has," said Burns about her small team. "If it weren't for them, there is no way we could ever get something this big off the ground and do it at the high caliber level we do here at the 81st RSC."

100th Band opens Senate session in Kentucky

By: Spc. Benjamin Garnett, 100th Army Reserve Band

FRANKFORT, Ky. --

Kentucky's top lawmakers rang in the new year with the 100th Army Reserve Band during the second annual performance of patriotic songs on Jan. 4.

Chief Warrant Officer Larry Barton led the Army Reserve band for the 2011 opening session of the Kentucky State Senate at the state Capitol here.

Based at nearby Fort Knox, Ky., the 100th Army Reserve Band is one of three bands assigned to the 81st Regional Support Command.

They performed the national anthem and "My Old Kentucky Home," the state song of the commonwealth.

One local business owner welcomed the citizen warriors and said she hopes to make the musical event a tradition.

"Having a military band present for the session is a great way to start the year," said Lizz Taylor, owner of a local Frankfort bookstore. "The band's musical selections did a good job of connecting the Senators to the people they serve."

Master Sgt. Sally Jewell, one of the newest Wildcat band members, said the state Senate performance drives home the level of dedication for which the army reserve constantly strives.

"Playing for the Senate's opening session was an inspiring mission for all of us," she said. "I'm proud to be a part of this highly professional group of Soldier-musicians."

The band is no stranger to the communities of Kentucky and the six surrounding states.

During the past year, the 40-member band performed at local festivals, several holiday parades, high school and collegiate music events, the Kentucky Derby, an NCAA basketball game and recruiting appearances at both the Kentucky Music Educators Conference in Louisville, Ky. and the Midwest Band Clinic in Chicago.

"It's been great to see how much support the community has shown to the military, and it's just as great to be able to give something back by performing for them," said Sgt. Jason Travis, the band's

trumpet section leader.

Although the extra performances may sometimes take Soldiers away from their day-to-day lives for longer than expected, they consider the rewards that come from their service to be well worth the time sacrificed, said 1st.

Sgt. Matt Labarbara, the band's senior enlisted Soldier.

Spc. Chris Van Dyke, a guitar player with the band, said he believes the 100th Army Reserve Band takes the idea of a military musician to the next level.

"We have members dedicated to reaching out to the surrounding communities of our region," he said.

Van Dyke said the band takes great pride in what they do, and they all thoroughly enjoy their dual role as musicians and front-line ambassadors for the Army Reserve.

"When we march down a parade route, play a ceremony, or perform a rock concert, we aren't only representing the United States Army; we represent a family member of many of those spectators," he said. "Nothing feels better than to represent those people in the best way we know how."

As the 81st Infantry Division 1917's motto, "Wildcats Never Quit," forged warriors in the Pacific, today's Army Reserve Soldiers assigned to the 100th, press forward with a busy schedule for 2011 – providing entertainment to communities across the Midwest.

At left, Sen. R.J. Palmer II stands for the playing of the national anthem by the 100th Army Reserve Band from Fort Knox, Ky., on Jan. 4.



(Photo by: David Perry/Lexington Herald-Leader)

Reserve team keeps force moving forward

Story and photos by: Staff Sgt. Toshiko Fraley, Public Affairs NCO



Francis Shoulders works on military vehicle at the 81st Regional Support Command's Equipment Concentration Site 124 on Fort Jackson, S.C. Shoulders is a military technician assigned as a mechanic.

Supporting dozens of Army Reserve units and ensuring hundreds of vehicles are ready to roll at a moment's notice is the job of a small group of military technicians here.

Tucked away in a nearly remote corner of post, the 81st Regional Support Command's Equipment Concentration Site 124 supports all reserve units in the region by storing equipment and maintaining the upkeep of military vehicles, communication equipment and small arms.

Leaning forward with the shop's mission and positive attitude of the 42 employees is ECS manager Billy Adams.

Adams said unit commanders do not have to worry about scheduling maintenance of their own vehicles, because his team takes the initiative to make sure all equipment and vehicles stored at the facility is ready to go for each unit to accomplish their mission.

Every piece of equipment at the ECS has a yearly service number to help technicians track scheduled maintenance.

Throughout a week, service technicians and an inspector walk around the property where trucks, Humvees and trailers are kept looking for potential issues.

"If they see a tire that is low, it gets fixed," Adams said about his team being proactive.

ECS 124 has a double mission according to Adams. From storing bulking equipment to helping maintain a large number rolling stock, the Army Reserve team stays busy throughout the year.

"Here, we are able to assist those units who are unable to store their own equipment and don't have the tools to maintain them," he said. "We also work on equipment that the units keep at their unit which is like the Air Maintenance Support Activity mission."

The team's goal is to have each maintenance request complete within 30 days, but Adams said there are elements like budget and availability of parts that can extend that time.

Units overseas or scheduled to deploy also have priority for parts and maintenance, said Adams.

Silas W. Silvers Jr., a heavy mobile equipment repairer supervisor, said as long as there is a military there will be equipment that needs to be repaired.

"People's lives depend on our work," he said while repairing a transmission case on a large truck.

For the Reserve military technician team, ethics play a very important role in their daily mission.

Silvers said the 81st RSC mission is an important part of the equation to take the Soldiers to the fight. "It has to be done right. That's somebody's life," he said.



Darius Taylor works on military vehicles at Equipment Concentration Site 124 on Fort Jackson. Taylor is also a military technician.



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