

Celebrating 25 years of South Dakota's Guard training exercise, Golden Coyote: Pages 4, 5

The engineering tradition continues with the 200th Engineer Company: Pages 3, 8

Coyote Courier

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By 1ST LT. YLIANA RAPHAEL/Army Photographer

Staff Sgt. Amber McGraw, dental hygienist, 455th Medical Company (Dental Services) out of Devens, Mass., performs a routine dental cleaning for Ernie Little, a local resident, at the Pine Ridge Reservation Hospital on June 12.

Pine Ridge dental clinic staff augmented by Guard during Golden Coyote

By Staff Sgt. Carlos J. Lazo
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Det.

PINE RIDGE, S.D. – Little Wanbli had been crying for over a week. His father didn't know what was wrong with the child's teeth, or what caused him so much pain. Unfortunately, the local dental office was closed, and had been for a long time.

He decided to travel the 25 miles to the Pine Ridge Reservation Hospital, to seek treatment for his son. He didn't

know before leaving that the hospital's dental office was minimally staffed. It was unlikely Wanbli would be seen that day.

There are very few dentists in the area to meet the needs of the local residents, according to Staff Sgt. Marcela Reyes. "We have populations that come here all the way from Colorado."

Reyes, senior dental noncommissioned officer, 455th Medical Company (Dental Services) out of Devens, Mass., explains how the lack of dental support for the community helped her unit decide where

to come for their annual training this year.

"We wanted to come here because we like to provide care for the local population. We just like to lend a helping hand," said Reyes. "To provide dental care for the local Native American population."

Lt. Col. Edward Hovarth, deputy commander, chief clinic services for the 256th Combat Support Hospital, Twinsburg, Ohio, is working at Pine Ridge during the Golden Coyote training exercise and said, "I just love being here doing this type of

work because the Sioux people have such a warrior tradition and they greatly appreciate our people in uniform."

For the five days of operations thus far, an average of 38 to 40 patients a day have been seen at the dental clinic for various procedures. Although tooth extractions were the most common procedure done, Reyes said her unit also helped with simple procedures like root canals and cavity fillings. The 455th's work has not

See DENTAL page 7

How much wood would a Guardsman chuck if a Guardsman could chuck wood?

Story, photos by Sgt. Mike Getten
106th Public Affairs Det.

PINE RIDGE, S.D. — Servicemembers from all over the country are helping transport more than 200 truckloads of timber to the Oglala Sioux and Crow Creek Reservations in South Dakota as part of the Golden Coyote training exercise. The residents of Pine Ridge Reservation will use the timber for firewood for heating and ceremonial purposes.

The mission coordinator, Maj. Jade Beehler of the 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, from South Dakota, is leading a diverse group of Soldiers to accomplish the mission. Soldiers from

three engineering companies, from South Dakota joined those from 152nd CSSB and four transportation companies from South Dakota, Iowa and New Mexico.

The National Forest Service and Custer State Park cut and pile the timber and then identified individual piles for Golden Coyote to transport to the drop sites.

Engineering assets are used to load the timber onto the flatbed trucks of the transportation companies. Hydraulic excavators lift the

See TIMBER page 7



Spc. Even Wempe of Detachment 1, 200th Engineer Company, Pierre, S.D., trims a load of timber destined for Pine Ridge, S.D., using a chain saw. Wempe is taking part in the timber haul mission while attending the Golden Coyote training exercise 2009.

SD ARNG assistant adjutant general tours Golden Coyote

Generals recognize efforts of outstanding Soldiers and find the training exercise off to a good start

Story, photos by Staff Sgt. Carlos J. Lazo
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CUSTER STATE PARK AIRPORT, S.D. – Task Force Commander Brig. Gen. Timothy Reisch, assistant adjutant general for South Dakota Army National Guard, and Brig. Gen. Jeffrey E. Bertrang, assistant adjutant general for Minnesota, visited Forward Operating Base Custer State Park Airport (CSPA) to assess the progress of the units training and speak to Soldiers.

Reisch’s visit comes two days after the units set up and began training operations as part of this year’s Golden Coyote training exercise in the Black Hills.

Reisch said he was impressed with how great it looked.

During his visit Reisch presented Spc. Christopher M. Julius, information system specialist, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 139th Brigade Support Battalion of Brookings, S.D., with a coin for his outstanding support of both the wireless and land-based computer networks that were set up for FOB CSPA.

The 139th and 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion out of Pierre, S. D., are two units training at FOB CSPA.

There are 63 units participating in this, the 25th anniversary of the Golden Coyote training exercise.



Task Force Commander Brig. Gen. Timothy Reisch, assistant adjutant general for the South Dakota Army National Guard, looks out of a Blackhawk helicopter window at Forward Operating Base Custer State Park Airport on June 8. Reisch spoke with servicemembers participating in the 25th annual Golden Coyote training exercise held in the Black Hills of South Dakota.



Task Force Commander Brig. Gen. Timothy Reisch, assistant adjutant general for the South Dakota Army National Guard, presents a Golden Coyote coin to Spc. Marcus A. Martin, generator mechanic, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion out of Pierre, S. D., at Forward Operating Base Custer State Park Airport on June 8.



Task Force Commander Brig. Gen. Timothy Reisch, (right), assistant adjutant general for South Dakota Army National Guard, and Brig. Gen. Jeffrey E. Bertrang, (left), assistant adjutant general for Minnesota, tour Forward Operating Base Custer State Park Airport with local unit commanders on June 8. Reisch and Bertrang received status briefs and presented coins to Soldiers during their visit to the FOB, which is used by units participating in the Golden Coyote training exercise held in the Black Hills of South Dakota.

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The changing face of ARNG Journalism

By Sgt. Theanne Tangen
129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Typewriters, film and heavy camera equipment no longer exist in the 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment (MPAD) of Rapid City, S.D. Today’s military journalists are working with the latest digital technology to tell their stories.

This transformation into new technology has been occurring over the past ten years and, according to 1st Sgt. Donald Matthews of the 129th MPAD, “this is the best time to be in the unit.” Matthews has specialized in broadcast journalism since the time he joined the unit in 1985. “We are the first national guard unit to step out of the box and shoot video with all new high definition tape-less cameras,” said Matthews.

He added, the 25th anniversary of the Golden Coyote training exercise has given these Soldiers the opportunity to train on their new equipment as well as become technically proficient with the newest software packages.

“The digital aspect allows the journalist to be more efficient because they can look at their photographs right away in the field,” said Matthews. “They determine if they have what they need, which saves time and money; no longer having to wait to develop the film.”

According to Staff Sgt. Walter Talens of Anaheim, Calif., member of the 302nd MPAD, Golden Coyote provides the opportunity for other MPAD’S to work together and learn from each other. This year’s exercise combines three MPAD’s; the 302nd of Bell, Calif., the 129th of

Rapid City, S.D., and the 106th of Reno, N.V.

“My unit hasn’t received new equipment since the last deployment. So I’m enjoying the opportunity to use this new gear the 129th MPAD issued to me,” said Talens. “This equipment is better than what most Universities have and since I’m an independent film maker, I appreciate the chance to use this new technology.”



By SGT. MIKE GETTEN/Army Photographer

Sgt. Michael Bisson, of Sioux Falls, S.D., films Soldiers on a mission as Staff Sgt. Walter Talens, of Anaheim, Calif., supervises during South Dakota National Guards Golden Coyote training exercise June 6.

Hung out to dry



Members of Detachment 1, 200th Engineer Company out of Chamberlain, S.D. assemble a heavy dry span bridge during the 25th annual Golden Coyote training exercise in the Black Hills of South Dakota, 6-2 June.

Engineers span newest bridge in arsenal

Story, photos by Spc. Joseph Bungert
129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CUSTER STATE PARK AIRPORT, S.D. – Following on the heels of rafting National Guard Soldiers across the Missouri River, the 200th Engineer Company, from Pierre with Detachment 1 in Chamberlain, and Detachment 2 in Mobridge, assembled a pair of heavy dry span bridges for the second time during the 25th annual Golden Coyote training exercise in

the Black Hills of South Dakota, 6-20 June.

Equipped with two types of bridges, the improved ribbon bridge and the dry span bridge, the 200th is classified as a multi-role bridge company capable of bridging both rivers and dry land gaps like gullies or dry riverbeds.

“The purpose of the dry span bridge is to enable any military or

civilian traffic to cross a dry land gap, meaning no water beneath it,” said Sgt. 1st Class Dave Trautman Jr., a bridge crew noncommissioned officer and combat veteran with Detachment 1, 200th Engineer Company.

The dry span bridge can extend 40 meters, or it can be divided into two sections of 20 meters each. The unit has four of these bridges that can be split to make eight. To assemble the dry span bridge, a series of steel beams are pieced

together that will reach across the gap to be traversed. Once the beam is in place, a section of the bridge is lifted onto a launch vehicle, and the sections are tethered to the spanning beam and slid forward.

This process continues until the bridge reaches the end of the beam across the gap. The assembled bridge is then lowered to the ground and ramps are attached each to end. With the bridge in place, vehicles weighing up to 110 tons can safely cross.

“With a crew of only eight Soldiers, this is a hard bridge to build,” said Trautman. “It takes a great deal of teamwork. There are so many things that have to happen in the right sequence and so many steps to follow. If you skip

one you can severely damage the equipment.”

This bridge is so new to the military and there are no standards as to how long it should take to assemble the bridge. The 200th is a seasoned group of professionals and their vast experience here at home and in combat have proven they will figure it out.

“We have new crews on the bridge teams that haven’t worked together before so we planned on six hours to complete a build, and it’s only taking three,” said Trautman. “That shows teamwork and knowing your job allows the crews to accomplish great things. I am proud of everyone here and proud to say I am a member of the 200th.”



Above: Sgt. Martin Konechne, from Kimball, S.D., a bridge crewmember with Detachment 1, 200th Engineer Company in Chamberlain, S.D., operates a crane to lift a section of a heavy dry span bridge onto a bridge launch vehicle. Engineers with the 200th Eng. Co. maneuver equipment into place. Right: From left, Staff Sgt. Michael Dejong, operates the bridge’s launch vehicle as Sgt. 1st Class Dave Trautman Jr., supervises.



A look back at the beginning

As SD National Guardsmen wrap up Golden Coyote and move into the future we take a look back at where we came from.

By Sgt. Theanne Tangen
129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

For a quarter century, servicemembers from around the world have trained in the Black Hills of South Dakota as part of a nationally recognized exercise known as the Golden Coyote.

According to Brigadier General Theodore D. Johnson, Director of the Joint Staff, South Dakota National Guard, "The staff and the Soldiers of the South Dakota National Guard have become better military decision makers due to the requirements that an exercise such as Golden Coyote demands."

About 65,000 military personnel from the National Guard, Army Reserve, Air Guard, Air Force, a Naval Fleet Hospital and numerous foreign countries have participated in the event since its beginning in 1984.

"That first year was held at Camp Ripley, Minnesota and every South Dakota national guard unit went there for its two-week annual training," said Duke Doering, who spent 42 years in the Guard.

Doering, who lives in Rapid City, is noted for being the resident historian when it comes to the happenings of the National Guard over the past 50 years.

There were many challenges in coordinating a training event of such a large size.

It wasn't quite practical to have all the units train together that year. "Every unit was so diverse that it

was hard to combine them under one scenario," said Doering. But the next year, Golden Coyote became an engineer-oriented exercise in the Black Hills and the training became more focused. The South Dakota National Guard partnered with the National Forest Service and Custer State Park to gain additional space for training.

"It was a win-win situation," said Doering. "Engineer units could do mission training and, in turn, the State Park, National Forest Service, and communities got new roads, timber trails, and structures built."

Some of the major projects over the past 25 years include building soccer fields in Rapid City, the golf course at Ellsworth Air Force Base, bridges along the 109-mile Mickelson Trail, crosswind runways at Wall and Sturgis, and structures at the Girl's and Boy's Scout Camps.

"I can remember working on a project, in 1992, when we used helicopters to sky lift iron beams and timbers out of the Hall of Records behind Mount Rushmore," Doering added.

In recent years, the exercise developed into one that provides training for combat support and combat service support units such as transportation, medical, quartermaster, signal, chemical, public affairs, military police and aviation, while supporting the event. As more states became involved, the exercise grew in notoriety and drew attention from other countries.

According to Col. Scott Jacobson, staff director for Golden Coyote, leaders from across the nation recognize the value of leaving their state to work in a realistic training environment.

"It's an opportunity for units to mobilize from home station, set up in a different location, work with combat support units and redeploy back to their home station," he said.

Currently, the exercise involves a joint task force of 62 units totaling approximately 3,600 service members. A military police unit from Canada has paired up with the American troops to gain experience and hone their military tactics.

Other countries such as Singapore, Suriname, Germany and Great Britain have also participated or sent service members to observe Golden Coyote. This task force operates under a common wartime scenario with a mission to provide force protection, humanitarian aid and improvements of the Black Hills infrastructure.

Jacobson added, the benefit of having other countries participate in Golden Coyote affords the opportunity to learn tactics, techniques and procedures from other countries. He also stated we all learn how to work together, as allies, we fight wars together; and so as the saying goes, "you train like you fight." The exercise maintains a multi-national flavor to it, which enhances the training and educational value to everyone involved.

Sgt. Maj. Tad Aufer, member of Joint Force

Headquarters of R when the 155th E bridge on the Mic "We did a lot of materials for a 14 British and German next morning cou such a structure in greatly."

Auker feels Gol the needs of the m "We have transitio operational force,"

He added, uni which ensures they be fully capable of have the necessary their mission, hav familiar with the l

Hopefully, the fectiveness, decrea lost during post-m

Future goals of continue to focus able units to be pr missions and over Golden Coyote ex ing venues for Na duty military, prov ties for all particip



Photos by SPC. JOSEPH BUNGERT/Army Photographer



hypothetical DMZ war



The two-week event from June 3-17 will involve about 3,000 soldiers from 46 units. **Bridge build** about five miles west of Custer.



The 200th Engineer Company at Roser

Deep in the heart of the Black Hills

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Rapid City, S.D., remembers a time
engineers were tasked to build a
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ercise is one of the premier train-
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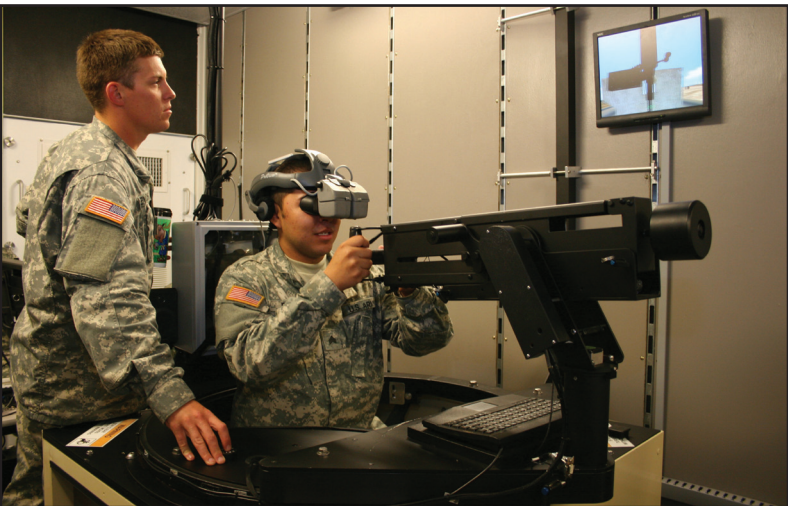
By SPC. JOSEPH BUNGERT/Army Photographer

Colorado National Guard Soldiers from the 220th Military Police Company drive past Mount Rushmore, guns mounted on their Willies Jeeps.



The 200th Engineer Company of Chamberlain, Pierre and Mobridge, S.D. is supporting the exercise on June 6 in the Black Hills of South Dakota. The unit is a longtime participant in the Golden Coyote, South Dakota National Guard's longest running joint training exercise.

By SPC. JOSEPH BUNGERT/Army Photographer



By STAFF SGT. FRANK MARQUEZ/Army Photographer

Sp. Tyler Weyrich, a trainer with Company C, 1st Battalion 189th Aviation Regiment, Rapid City, S.D., calibrates the 50 caliber machine gun simulator for Sgt. Robert Bryson of the 67th Network Support Company, Billings, Mont., at the Virtual Convoy Operations Trainer at West Camp, Rapid, June 10, during the Golden Coyote training exercise in the Black Hills of South Dakota.

ding: A whole new game

Where is he? There he is ... get him!



By SPC. JOSEPH BUNGERT/Army Photographer



By SPC. JOSEPH BUNGERT/Army Photographer

baum training area, near Elk Point S.D.,

Soldiers man a machine gun nest during perimeter security training in the Black Hills.



*In an instant,
fellow Soldiers
can become
combat casualties,
so these servicemembers ...*

Train to save

Army Reserve Soldiers from the 396th Combat Support Hospital out of Spokane and Vancouver, Wash., practice the two-man litter carry technique with the added challenge of loading the litter into a Huey medical evacuation helicopter during a battlefield first aid practical training class on West Camp Rapid during Golden Coyote 2009.

When overseas contingency operations go south and medics are unavailable, medical training can buy casualties valuable minutes

*Story, photos by Staff Sgt. Stephanie Abdullah
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Det.*

RAPID CITY, S.D. – Though it was wet, rainy and muddy, that didn't prevent the Army and Navy joint effort battlefield first-aid classes from taking place as scheduled. Medical staffers from both the Army and Navy Reserve taught classes on how to provide first responder medical aid to comrades who have become battlefield casualties.

The classes included about 45 minutes of instruction at three different stations. Participants received instruction on medical techniques like applying bandages, starting an I.V., treating a sucking chest wound, clearing and maintaining an airway, and applying a 9-line medical evacuation procedure and manual carrying techniques.

U.S. Navy Reserve Hospitalman 2nd

Class Marvin Makarwich of the Operational Hospital Support Unit of Dallas, Texas, said the Navy's primary mission during Golden Coyote 2009 is to provide "real-world" medical support to exercise participants.

Makarwich said he appreciated working with the Army to put together the first aid training for the exercise and expects to provide instruction to hundreds of personnel.

"The training is very basic and is designed for non-medical or non-seasoned personnel. The medical techniques taught here can very easily be applied in the field," said Makarwich.

While the weather may not have been blue skies and sunshine, Makarwich takes the "if it ain't raining it ain't training" approach. "The weather isn't bad enough to affect our training. We have to treat this like it is real time and simulate real-world scenarios, and inclement weather is a reality on the battlefield," said Makarwich.

Command Sgt. Maj. Melvin Jordan of the 396th Combat Support Hospital of Vancouver, Wash., said he normally works in an administrative function, but this day he went through every training station with his Soldiers and even took to the mud with them in the first aid practical exercise.

"I was reminded today that I could be the first responder in a battlefield medical emergency and it could be up to me to save a Soldier's life," he said. "The training today was extremely valuable and it was clear the

trainers weren't just teaching from the text book. Many of them have combat experience; this allowed them to offer additional information on the "hows and whys" of these techniques," continued Jordan.

Jordan and many others found themselves wet and muddy

when it came time for the practical exercise, in which role players acted as the enemy. Participants were engaged by enemy contact from various directions and had to react to the contact, as well as provide appropriate medical treatment to comrades who'd become wounded.

The scenario placed the Soldiers in situ-

“The classes we are teaching will give Soldiers the skills to provide on the spot treatment of these types of injuries and help save lives.

-Staff Sgt. Marcus Goodwin
I.V. station trainer

”



Staff Sgt. Marcus Goodwin, an Army Reserve Soldier from the 6252nd U.S. Army Hospital in San Diego, Calif., demonstrates the proper way to start an I.V. during a battlefield first aid training class on West Camp Rapid during Golden Coyote 2009.

ations that required quick reactions and allowed them to use the techniques they'd just learned to treat their injured buddies. The practical exercise finale had the Soldiers using manual carry techniques and carrying casualties to a stationary medical evacuation helicopter.

"I've been to Afghanistan twice and Iraq once," said Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Marcus Goodwin of the 6252nd U.S. Army Hospital in San Diego, Calif., who served as an instructor at the I.V. station.

"The number one killer on the battlefield is hemorrhaging and the number three killer is the sunken chest wound or collapse lung," said Goodwin. "The classes we are teaching will give Soldiers the skills to provide on the spot treatment of these types of injuries and help save lives."

Goodwin noted that confidence is very important when it comes to providing medi-

cal treatment and he hopes the trainees leave with more confidence.

While first aid may have been the focus of the training, some Soldiers learned leadership skills as well. Spc. Kevin Greer found himself in charge on the battlefield when the two senior leaders became casualties.

"I definitely felt the pressure of leadership responsibilities. It was kind of hard to take the lead and deal with patients too," said Greer. "Overall, I thought the training was really good. The simulated helicopter sounds and all the noise and commotion made it seem real. It was very effective training."

Makarwich noted the training was a great opportunity for the Army and Navy to come together off and on the battlefield.

"When we go to battle, we go to battle together," said Makarwich. "By working together off the battlefield it lets us know we've got a buddy on the battlefield."

DENTAL: AMOUNT OF PATIENTS RECEIVING CARE HAS DOUBLED

Continued from page 1

gone unnoticed.

"It is wonderful to bring in an Army unit to provide these dental services to people in such a mass quantity," said Lt. Cmdr. Nicole Glines, community and clinical hygienist at Pine Ridge Reservation Hospital and part of the U.S. Public Health Service.

The 455th brought a total of 31 personnel here, said Reyes. That includes four dentists, dental assistants and supply personnel to help with operations.

"This 16-chair dental clinic is full and busy because of their (455th) presence,"

said Glines. "Normally, with our (regular) staff we can only keep about four operatories (stations) going and that's including two hygienists and the three dentists that we have."

With all the stations going, little Wanbli was able to be seen and receive the help he needed.

Spc. Cristina Serratos, a native of Boston, used her experience to help calm Wanbli earlier in the day during his tooth extraction procedure. "He's very small, he's only five years old," she said, "We had to do an extraction because the new teeth were pushing right underneath ... the baby teeth were getting in the way."

It's something Wanbli's father is grateful for.

"They talked to him and calmed him down and made sure he was alright," said Cornell Whiteface, Wanbli's father and a local resident of Pine Ridge Reservation. "He came out ok, and the toothache is gone."

"Pine Ridge residents are eager to see the dentists that come during Golden Coyote," said Havarth. "It benefits the Pine Ridge community as a whole, because their presence increases the access of care and that is the most important thing here." The sentiment at the clinic is that there are different standards for creden-

tialing dentists aiding the Pine Ridge community. "Credentialing is always a problem," said Jan Collon, acting clinical director. Dentists come for only a few days because of this process and according to Collon, "It's unfortunate we only have these professionals for one to two days."

Even though the equipment is aging in the clinic, Capt. Jose Rodriguez, chief dental officer for Pine Ridge stated, "We are pretty well equipped here." He also said the extra help allows people to share information and ideas, which he says, "doubles the capabilities of dental care for those two weeks. It's wonderful for the community here"

TIMBER: LOAD IT UP, TIE IT DOWN, TAKE IT DOWN THE ROAD

Continued from page 1

timber to load it onto the trailers, and then the chainsaw crews trim the timber to eliminate branches protruding from the load. The drivers secure the load and haul it to the drop site where the forklift operators push the load off of the flatbed trailer.

"We are hauling timber out of the Black Hills from two locations, to 14 drop sites within the Oglala Sioux Reservation," Beehler said. "There have been four drop sites identified on the Crow Creek Reservation where we will drop timber on our return trip to home station."

The mission was first suggested as a possible training exercise in Oct. 2006, when the U.S. Forest Service personnel met with Lt. Col. Dan Iverson, the exercise coordinator. They discussed the National Guard hauling away the thinning piles produced by implementing their conservation program to thin the forest, in an effort to avoid the spread of major forest fires.

They also suggested moving the timber to the reservation where it could be best consumed.

In that first year the mission hauled more than 90 loads and has steadily grown since.

"Last year my group did the mission and we exceeded what had been done the year before, hauling 130 loads. If things go right we are going to exceed that this year," Beehler said. "Our goal is 210 loads and after today we will be halfway through our operation. As of last night, we hauled 90 loads, so, if we double whatever we get on the ground today, we should meet our mission."

The familiarity of the mission and Golden Coyote's heavy equipment assets have contributed to the success of the task.

"Last year we had one day when we couldn't haul due to climate conditions. This year we were a little proactive and picked a couple of sites just in case the weather got bad, and it did, so we adjusted," Beehler said.

The units assisting with the haul are primarily accustomed to highway driving and rarely have the opportunity to get the vehicles off of the pavement.

"We have to be cautious and have certain conditions in order to drive the trucks on the gravel and dirt roads in Custer State Park," Beehler said. "We want to make sure we do this safely. There have been neither injuries nor major accidents; everyone is driving as safely as possible, that's the way we like to



Spc. Stewart Fladager of the 260th Engineer Company from Peerless, Mont., guides his operator on the hydraulic excavator to drop the load of timber onto the trailer during the timber haul while taking part in the Golden Coyote training exercise in the Black Hills of South Dakota.

keep it."

The drivers are getting some training in tie-down and strapping due the unusual load. They are also getting some experience driving in adverse weather conditions, because of the rain and they are driving off road on some muddy surfaces.

"The training is outstanding," said the 152nd's Readiness Noncommissioned Officer Sgt. 1st Class Chadwick Schmitz from Pierre S.D. "The forklift operators are doing a nonstandard task of pushing the timber off. There is a lot of good recovery training, we've had a lot of these outfits stuck in the mud and have had to pull them out. So operators are good training on all aspects."

The timber haul benefits all agencies and people involved by clearing away the timber, providing training and finally providing firewood to those who can use it.

"Last year we were out there and a couple of people came up to thank us," Beehler said. "One time in particular that stands out

“One time in particular that stands out is when a young lady came up and said her grandmother had used the wood during the previous winter to keep her warm and she appreciated it.”

-Maj. Jade Beehler
Mission Coordinator

getting some aspects."



A truck from the 1742nd Transportation Company from Sioux Falls, S.D., passes through Hot Springs, S.D., during the Golden Coyote training exercise while transporting timber to Pine Ridge, S.D., where the load of timber will be off loaded for use by the people there, as firewood for heating and some ceremonial uses.

is when a young lady came up and said her grandmother had used the wood during the previous winter to keep her warm and she appreciated it. It has been a positive reaction from the tribe members and the people of the community."

Beehler remains passionate about the exercise and the overall benefits to everyone involved because they reap the rewards of the timber haul mission.

"I want to thank the people involved from

the tribe for using the wood, the National Forest Service and Custer State Park because they have allowed us to use their facilities and provided the timber," Beehler said. "It allows the opportunity for the intense training and the soldiers feel good about what they are doing."

We all gain from this mission. It looks like we are on our way to meeting mission goals. As long as we do that safely, our annual training will be very successful."



By SGT. LUIS DELGADILLO/Army Photographer

South Dakota National Guardsmen from the 200th Engineer Company from Chamberlain, Pierre, and Mobridge, S.D., stage boats and equipment in the Missouri River near Chamberlain, June 6 during the 2009 Golden Coyote training exercise.

South Dakota Guardsmen find success in exercise

By Staff Sgt. Carlos Lazo, 302nd Mobile Public Affairs Det. and Sgt. Mike Getten, 106th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

CHAMBERLAIN, S.D. – Overcoming natural obstacles has always been a challenge for military forces. Similarly, crossing the Missouri River is one such hurdle many Golden Coyote training exercise participants faced June 6 and 7 near Chamberlain, S.D.

The 2,540 mile-long Missouri River, which runs through central South Dakota, is an obstacle the Soldiers of the 200th Engineering Company of Chamberlain, Pierre and Mobridge, S.D. have become familiar with.

The unit has been training for years on how to complete a bridge crossing as part of the Golden Coyote training exercise.

“We’ve been tasked to maneuver units across a water obstacle,” said 1st Lt. James R. Forbes, executive officer, 200th Eng. Co. “Our goal is to safely get [units] across.”

While the well-being of Soldiers is a priority for 200th troops, speed and efficiency are also highly valued.

“We give them a good safety briefing and get them across as quickly as possible so these commanders can drive on and go do what they need to do,” said Forbes.

By using improved ribbon bridge rafts controlled by combat support boats, the unit’s engineers and bridge crew members safely transported 290 vehicles.

“After an hour of operation, the unit had transported 45 vehicles and 96 personnel across the river using five rafts,” said Forbes. “Each raft used for the mission consisted of six individual pieces, or bays, commonly referred to as a six-float. Up to seven bays can be added together to make a raft with a maximum weight capacity of 140 tons,” said Forbes.

The boats control and propel across the river on the floating platforms from opposite sides of the rafts in pairs. The five floats and two ends of the ribbon bridge that create the raft can be a challenging undertaking.

“Everyone does everything to cross-train,” said Sgt. Kris Mullen, boat driver and Rapid City, S.D. native from Detachment 2, 200th Eng. Co. of Mobridge.

“Even if it’s cold it’s fun. This is something the 200th looks forward to. When the water is open we get out here and train.”

Movement across the Missouri River takes the visiting units one-step closer to



By SGT. MIKE GETTEN/Army Photographer

Above: Vehicles from the 185th Combat Services Support Battalion, of Johnston, Iowa are ferried across the Missouri River in support of the 25th annual Golden Coyote training exercise. The 200th Engineer Company of Chamberlain, Pierre and Mobridge, S.D. is supporting the exercise on June 6 in the Black Hills of South Dakota. The exercise takes the 200th Eng. Co. one day to set up, two days to ferry nearly 200 vehicles across the river, then an additional day to retrieve their equipment from the water.

the completion of their Golden Coyote missions.

On the beachhead, a noncommissioned officer designated as beach master guides the vehicles into position prior to loading, before the raft commander takes over vehicle loading.

Many units moving across the waterway come from all over the country.

“A lot of them are coming from the east; Minnesota, Iowa, and the eastern part of South Dakota,” said Sgt 1st Class Darrell K. Beck, platoon sergeant, 200th Eng. Co. of Pierre, S.D.

This training also translates very well into the company’s mission in wartime, said Beck.

“We had this very similar mission in Iraq,” said Beck. “You learn how to deal with a lot of military convoys.”

According to Beck, the unit was de-

ployed in 2003 and help set up a bridge north of Baghdad, near the city of Balad.

Along with preparation for wartime, Forbes also sees this operation as a good way to train new personnel in the unit, especially young Soldiers.

“My first drill as an officer was with this unit,” said Forbes. “It was their first drill after deployment ... and after an hour, we had still not built a six-float. We had brand new boat operators, the build crew was new ... you had all those factors in there.”

Now they take about 12 minutes to complete setting one up.

“That just comes from everybody knowing their job and working together,” said Forbes.

“It’s one of the most enjoyable aspects of being in a leadership position – watching the growth of a unit – and getting more proficient.”



By SGT. THEANNE TANGEN/Army Photographer

Below: Sgt. Joanne Hight, of Pierre, S.D., member of Detachment 1, 200th Engineer Company of Chamberlain, S.D., keeps the combat support boat in place during the 25th anniversary of the Golden Coyote training exercise.