

U.S. Army South

Defense & Fraternity

April - June 2011



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U.S. Army South

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Front cover: **CAMP BULLIS, Texas** – Staff Sgt. Viviana Veliz makes her way through a potentially hostile urban area during a U.S. Army South field training exercise here May 17. (U.S. Army photo by Robert R. Ramon, U.S. Army South Public Affairs)

Back Cover: **ESPERANZA, Dominican Republic** – Capt. Melvin Lorenzo (center,) an operations officer with the 478th Civil Affairs Battalion in Perrine, Fla., and other members of the Beyond the Horizon 2011 civil affairs team distribute toys to children while a Dominican soldier looks on June 6 in Esperanza, Dominican Republic. (U.S. Army photo by Eric R. Lucero, U.S. Army South Public Affairs)



Command Corner

Maj. Gen. Simeon G. Trombitas

Welcome to the first edition of our new command magazine. I directed my public affairs office to start publishing a quarterly command magazine with the goal to educate and inform not only the command, but the other units on Fort Sam Houston on our mission and on the great work each of you do every day.

As the Army Service Component Command for U.S. Southern Command we must remain ready to conduct contingency, humanitarian and security operations.

From Panama to Puerto Rico to San Antonio, wherever the headquarters has been located we've been at the forefront of building lasting relationships that have helped nations within the SOUTHCOM region become partners we can count on to ensure security and stability within our hemisphere and worldwide.

It has been more than a year since we returned from Operation Unified Response. Since then we have responded to other disasters in the region, returned to Haiti conducting exercise New Horizons 2011, and conducted myriad other activities in the region.

I thank each of you for your hard work, dedication to duty and perseverance.

This magazine will showcase the hard work we do in planning and conducting exercises and operations. I encourage each of you to support the public affairs office in helping to shape and tell the ARSOUTH story.

In the next few weeks this command will be participating in Staff Talks with the country of El Salvador and leading the annual PANAMAX exercise with partner nations. These two engagements are vital to our core mission of building partner nation capacity and demonstrating we are trained and ready.

We are now in the 2011 hurricane season, so while we all remain focused on successfully completing this command's upcoming exercises we must be prepared to conduct humanitarian or contingency operations at a moment's notice.

To all of our great Soldiers, civilians, contractors and their families, have a great summer and stay safe.



TOLEMAIDA, Colombia - Maj. Gen. Simeon G. Trombitas (right), U.S. Army South commander, discusses human rights and ethics training with Colombian soldiers at Tolemaida March 23. (U.S. Army photo by Col. Jane Crichton, U.S. Army South Public Affairs)

Defense and Fraternity

Maj. Gen. Simeon G. Trombitas
Commanding General
U.S. Army South



Maj. Michael Cole (center), a dentist with the 965th Dental Company in Mesquite, Texas, extracts a tooth from a Dominican man at the medical readiness training exercise site June 7 in Laguneta, Dominican Republic.

BTH 11 Soldiers, doctors execute training, bring relief to countries

**Story and photos
by Eric R. Lucero**
U.S. Army South Public Affairs

Watching your infant child's mild cough slowly turn into a forceful hack, and later a full-on struggle to breathe can be terrifying. Living in the countryside with no transportation and no medical clinics within your immediate area can surely turn that slight cough into a struggle for life.

For Anna Duran, a resident of Laguneta, Dominican Republic, this became a reality when last year, with the help of a passing motorcyclist, she carried her infant son several miles away to the town of Mao, where she begged doctors to save her child.

For many people of Laguneta and the Valverde Province, immediate, local access to healthcare is a foreign concept. For these people, medical facilities are too far away. For the Valverde populace, traveling 20 miles to the nearest medical clinic would be considered an epic journey.

However, for the past three months, there are

new doctors in town; doctors in military uniforms wearing the rank and insignia of the U.S. Army and the residents of the Valverde Province capitalized on the sudden availability of healthcare. More than 25,000 residents of the province were treated by U.S. Soldiers and doctors, according to Lt. Col. Luis A. Feliciano, the commander of Beyond the Horizon 2011 – Dominican Republic and commander of the 393rd Combat Services Support Battalion in Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico.

This year, BTH 11 focused on the Dominican Republic and El Salvador. Since March 19, the two countries have hosted more than 2,000 U.S. Soldiers. The Soldiers are in the country in support of Beyond the Horizon 2011, a U.S. Southern Command-sponsored, U.S. Army South-led, joint service, interagency combined field training exercise geared to provide humanitarian and civic assistance to partner nations.

"Anybody in the U.S. can walk into an emergency room and get healthcare," said Maj. Daniel Schwartz, an emergency physician with the 5501st U.S. Army Hospital at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

"Here, that's not necessarily the case. A lot of these people haven't seen a doctor in 40 years."

BTH 11 conducted 10 separate medical readiness training exercise (MEDRETE) sites, and three separate dental readiness exercise (DENTRETE) sites, between March 19 and June 11 providing dental, optometric and general healthcare. The Soldiers conducted dental extractions, eye exams and provided basic medical support for other ailments to thousands of Dominican and Salvadoran citizens.

"I want the Soldiers to go back home with plenty of confidence that what they have done here today will have a long-lasting effect in the commu-



nity," said Feliciano. "They should feel very proud of their ability to influence this country."

Some residents admit they were skeptical at first, but were calmed by friends returning from the MEDRETE sites.

"At first, I didn't think this was true. Why would American Soldiers come here and give me free medicine," said Mediolina Santana, a Laguneta resident. "Many people cannot afford the medicine and treatment, but thanks to the Soldiers, it's possible for the people to receive this today for free."

In addition to providing medical assistance, BTH 11 also focused on construction projects that will allow the countries to expand on healthcare and other issues important to their respective regions.

In total, BTH 11 constructed two new medical clinics and renovated one other clinic and a school in the Dominican Republic. The engineers assigned to El Salvador built two new schools and one new auditorium, while renovating two other schools.

The Soldiers also benefited from the real-world training and it provided them an opportunity to fulfill personal goals of why they joined the Army.

"It's one of the reasons I joined the Army," said Schwartz. "We have the ability to provide care. This is a different face of the Army that I think we need to continue to show the world."

Another backdrop of the program was to conduct a joint-humanitarian assistance effort with the Dominican army and with other agencies, to train in operations skill sets while providing medical care for the people of the region.

"It is of vital importance for the comradeship of our countries," said Maj. Nathaniel Aria Dominguez, commander of the Special Operations Brigade of the Dominican Republic army. "The U.S. has always given us assistance when we need help. This exercise helps maintain the unity and friendly relations between our countries."

"Without the support of the 4th Infantry Brigade of the Dominican Republic army, this would not have been possible," said Feliciano

Although the BTH 11 missions in the Dominican Republic and El Salvador are complete, the Soldiers hope the impression they leave will go a long way in improving healthcare in the region. For the residents, simply being able to see a doctor is all they need.



For Duran, Dominican doctors saved her son that frightening day last year, but today she was able to have her entire family see a doctor and for her son to receive medicine for follow-up



care from U.S. Soldiers and doctors.

"This program is very important," said Duran. "It has helped me because I am a poor mother with four children and it has given me medicine for them. The Soldiers have been very good to the children. I am very thankful and will never forget that."

"To be able to walk in and tell a doctor their problems, get some advice and get some medication, even if it's for two weeks or a couple of days, it means the world to them," said Schwartz. "There's no replacing knowing that you made somebody's life better if only for that day. If you can put a smile on their face and they shake your hand and say 'thank you for what you are doing.' All we need is a smile; I don't even need the words."



Col. Matt Brand, deputy director of strategy, plans and policy for Headquarters DA, provides a presentation during the Latin America Army Section Chief and Military Personnel Exchange Program conference May 22 at ARSOUTH HQ.

Army section chiefs gather for annual meeting in San Antonio

Story and photos
by Eric R. Lucero
U.S. Army South Public Affairs

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas – U.S. Army South hosted the U.S. Army Section Chief and Military Personnel Exchange Program conference May 22-27 at the ARSOUTH headquarters here.

The conference provided a forum for the staff from the Department of the Army headquarters, U.S. Southern Command, Training and Doctrine Command, and other conference guests to better understand how to synchronize their efforts in support of the ARSOUTH mission and the ARSECs' partner nation army programs and activities, and to facilitate future coordination.

It also provided an opportunity for Maj. Gen. Simeon G. Trombitas, ARSOUTH's commanding general, to reiterate his vision and engagement strategy for partner nation armies in the SOUTH-COM region and for the ARSECs to interact with the ARSOUTH staff.

The Army section chiefs are foreign area offi-

cers assigned to partner nation countries to act as a direct link between the U.S. Army and partner nation militaries and to serve as a singular point of contact within American embassy country teams to coordinate and deliver all army-to-army assistance.

"Everything the U.S. Army does in support of a country in Latin America and the Caribbean gets funneled through an ARSEC," said Col. Ehrich D. Rose, ARSOUTH operations director. "They are able to have access and coordinate the type of support that ARSOUTH provides to build, enhance or sustain various capabilities within a partner nation; all under the rubric of theater security cooperation."

ARSECs are typically selected as foreign area officers after serving approximately seven years in their respective career fields.

Once selected, they undergo up to four years of specialized training to ensure they have the language, and foreign area cultural and technical skills to perform the tasks requested of them.

Once training is complete, they begin their two-to-three-year assignment as an ARSEC. Given the remote nature of their assignment, the ARSEC/

MPEP conference offers the participants a chance to gather valuable networking and situational awareness training to carry out the ARSOUTH mission, commander's intent, and address regional issues with key agency resources and officials.

"This conference provides direct interaction with the commanding general. That interaction is important to understanding the direction that Army South is going and how we support that," said Lt. Col. Ian Lyles, ARSEC to Argentina. "The ARSEC conference provides a forum for interaction, where we share our best practices and lessons learned, and is also a mentoring opportunity where the senior officers that are getting ready to leave or move on can talk and provide guidance to the new guys that are coming in."

The conference included round table discussions that provided members of Army South leadership a chance to understand the various partner nations' challenges and requirements.

This dialogue is vital to understanding and building partner nation capacity and enhancing regional stability.

"The Department of the Army gains a great deal through fostering and building partner nation capacity," said Col. Brian McNaughton, ARSOUTH chief of the Security Cooperation Division. "Theater security cooperation highlights all of the things we are looking for in our partner nations. Our ARSECs make sure that our support plan is synchronized with SOUTHCOM to ensure the effects and end states are completed."

One of the benefits of theater security cooperation is the decreased necessity of large numbers of American service members deployed within the region.

"What we have come to learn over the past few decades is that we cannot solve all of the world's problems by ourselves," said Rose. "By building

partner nation capacity, we are able to expand their ability, in many cases to be able to solve their own problems, or in some cases, to augment U.S. military forces."



Maj. Gen. Simeon G. Trombitas (center), U.S. Army South commanding general, provides closing remarks for the Latin America Army Section Chief and Military Personnel Exchange Program conference May 27 at the ARSOUTH headquarters here.

Army South's efforts have led to measurable increases in partner nation capacity and the willingness of partner nations to assist in United Nations peacekeeping operations worldwide.

El Salvador has deployed 11 rotations of soldiers in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, while the Dominican Republic, Honduras and Nicaragua have all provided military support for combat operations in Iraq.

As of March 2011, 14 countries in the ARSOUTH region were contributing more than 7,000 observers and troops to 14 United Nations peacekeeping missions worldwide.

"There is a reciprocal nature in theater security cooperation," said Rose. "By building the capacities of our partners, collectively, that makes us better."

The Army section chiefs are the conduit through which many of these programs are planned, coordinated and executed.

Latin America and the Caribbean have traditionally been important to the U.S. because of shared culture and heritage, said Rose.

In nearly every country in Latin America, the United States is a primary trading partner.

It is equally important to promote security and stability in this hemisphere and throughout the world. Col. Matt Brand, deputy director of strategy, plans and policy for headquarters Department of the Army, believes that the Army section chiefs are a key component in this process.

"Simply put, without the ARSECs we couldn't do it. They are the fundamental, necessary piece of this puzzle that we need," said Brand. "They are absolutely critical. Without the ARSECs, the whole thing falls apart."

"Simply put, without the ARSECs we couldn't do it. They're absolutely critical. Without the ARSECs, the whole thing falls apart."

*-Col. Matt Brand,
deputy director of strategy, plans and policy, DA*



Robert L. Pelegreen (left), U.S. Army South International Military Affairs deputy director, visits with Foreign Liaison Officers at the Army South headquarters building here June 8. FLOs assigned to the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command from Brazil, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Israel, Italy, Japan, Singapore and Spain toured the Army South headquarters and received briefs on the command mission, current operations and various exercises conducted with partner armies during the past year.

TRADOC Command Foreign Liaison Officers tour ARSOUTH

**Story and photos
by Robert R. Ramon**
U.S. Army South Public Affairs

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas — Foreign Liaison Officers (FLOs) assigned to the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command from Brazil, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Israel, Italy, Japan, Singapore and Spain visited U.S. Army South at its headquarters here June 8.

The visit was designed for the FLOs to receive information about Army South's successful foreign liaison program.

In addition, TRADOC representatives gathered information about Army South's unique mission of building partner nation capacity within Central and South America and the Caribbean.

"TRADOC is working on building a partner nation capacity concept for the Army," said Jeff Hawkins, the TRADOC International Army Programs Directorate foreign liaison program manager. "Army South is heavily involved in working with partner nations, so we came to see their FLO program in action."

The ARSOUTH staff knows well the benefits of including foreign liaison officers as part of the team, said Dan Meyer, Army South deputy chief of staff. FLOs from Brazil, Chile and Colombia currently serve at the U.S. Army South headquarters.

"We didn't realize how much these officers would bring to the table until they arrived here," said Meyer of the ARSOUTH FLOs. "It's a great benefit and we're certainly a better organization

due to the presence of these three officers and their contribution to the command."

The TRADOC FLOs toured the ARSOUTH headquarters and received briefs on the command mission, current operations, various exercises conducted with partner armies during the past year and presentations from FLOs about their personal experience while assigned to the command.

"In order to understand TRADOC's mission and how TRADOC is supporting the rest of the Army, we feel it's important for the FLOs to go out and visit with U.S. Army South and other commands," said Hawkins. "It gives them a better understanding of our Army overall and its various missions."

The Army FLO Program was created to foster cooperation and mutual understanding between the U.S. Army and partner nation armies.

"Having the TRADOC FLOs here today provides a leader-level exchange of information that we can benefit from, and they can take back to their countries,"

said Walter Leon, ARSOUTH deputy of exercises. "It's a better, hands-on approach of creating and providing enhanced theater cooperation."

According to Japanese Self-Defense Forces Lt. Col. Daisuke Ichimiya, the visit with ARSOUTH was helpful and very positive.



Col. Ehrich Rose (center), U.S. Army South director of operations, visits with Foreign Liaison Officers at the ARSOUTH headquarters building here June 8.

"This has been a great opportunity," said Ichimiya. "I'm always focused on partner nation capabilities within the Pacific region so the environment here at Army South is completely different than what I'm used to. It provides a very different perspective on great ways to do things."

Royal Danish army Lt. Col.

Thorsten Lyhne Joergensen said there's no replacement for actually visiting the various U.S. Army commands up close and personally.

"Typically, as in every other organization, you'll find there's a bit of discrepancy from what you hear secondhand versus what's actually going on," said Joergensen. "It makes a huge difference to actually see it for yourself and get a chance to talk to these guys and ask them the questions you want to ask."

The exchange of ideas was successful and "is a very useful benefit for those of us who are part of smaller armies," said Czech Republic army Col. Petr Markvartl.

"Being able to see how such a big Army

works and operates allows us to adapt and apply some things to use for ourselves and make things better," said Markvartl.

Hawkins said the 16 foreign liaison officers currently assigned to Training and Doctrine Command tour various Army commands twice a year.



Lt. Col. Thomas Small (right), ARSOUTH Combined Operations and Intelligence Center chief, briefs FLOs at the ARSOUTH headquarters here June 8.

U.S. Army South



Col. Michael Stewart (left), the Fuerzas Aliadas Humanitarias 2011 exercise co-director, speaks with a Trinidad and Tobago news reporter after the opening ceremony for FA HUM 11 at the Temple Court, Ministry of National Security Head Office here April 6.

U.S. Army South successfully completes FA HUM 11 exercise

Story and photos
by Robert R. Ramon
U.S. Army South Public Affairs

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad and Tobago –

Fuerzas Aliadas Humanitarias 2011 (FA HUM 11), or Allied Humanitarian Forces 2011, came to a successful close during a ceremony here April 13.

The Caribbean nation of Trinidad and Tobago hosted FA HUM 11 in cooperation with U.S. Army South, U.S. Southern Command's executive agency for the exercise.

The aim of FA HUM 11, which began April 4, was to partner regional military and civil organizations to build ca-

capacity in order to better respond to humanitarian assistance/disaster relief operations in the region.

Approximately 30 partner nations and ten governmental, non-governmental and international organizations teamed up for the exercise.

FA HUM 11 tested national and regional disaster-response plans, and improved the capabilities and interoperability of the various governmental and non-governmental organizations that typically support rescue and recovery efforts after a major calamity within the Caribbean and Central American region.

"It's about saving lives and alleviating human suffering," said Maj. Gen. Simeon



U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Sherry Crandell and Sgt. 1st Class Donna Rousey, ARSOUTH Logistics and Transportation, receive cargo from an MD-11 aircraft at Piarco International Airport here April 8 in support of FA HUM 11.

G. Trombitas, U.S. Army South commanding general. "It's about our coordination and cooperation at all levels to be able to respond to these disasters in a unified manner; bringing to bear all our capabilities and allowing us to practice, increasing our capacity to do this."

FA HUM 11 was designed using an earthquake scenario that tested participants in tactical-level field training events such as search and rescue, mass casualty assistance, logistics support, and operational/strategic national-level emergency operations center command and control operations. It also required participants to become proficient on the topic of international coordination in response to requests for assistance.

Simply having disaster response plans in place isn't enough, said John Sandy, Trinidad and Tobago minister of national security.

"We must ensure that systems and plans are in place and consistently and sufficiently tested in order to be able to effectively react to natural and manmade disasters," said Sandy. "FA HUM 11 is one way in which we tried to improve our efforts to deal with a major impact which would undoubtedly challenge our resources.

These plans must be tested repeatedly because it's only through consistent testing that we can be sure the collaborative response continues to improve."

FA HUM 11 also marked accomplishments in significant and specific areas.

"We transferred the operations from the Trinidad National Emergency Operations Center to the Tobago Emergency Management Agency while the NEOC relocated to a more hardened facility," said Trombitas.

The exercise also established a humanitarian

operation center to integrate, coordinate and synchronize support from all of the international partners and agencies involved.

"We'll never be able to do things alone but we need to coordinate," said Trombitas. "Having this center allows us to do that."

Overall, the exercise was considered a success according to the U.S. ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago.

"I had the opportunity to visit the sites and see the responders in action and I was very impressed with the commitment and dedication of the participants," said Ambassador Beatrice Welters. "We are always striving to improve and increase our capabilities, since as we've seen time and time again, you can never be too prepared for a natural disaster."

During the exercise, key leaders took note of successes and missteps alike. "Everyone knows that we're not perfect," said Trombitas. "Success is identifying shortfalls, via means of this exercise, so we can improve on those areas where we are weak and so we can better respond to any natural disaster in the future."

Natural disasters are

often unavoidable as witnessed during the recent earthquakes in Japan; however, the goal of FA HUM 11 was to minimize destruction as much as possible, said Dr. Stephen Ramroop, Trinidad and Tobago's Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management chief executive officer.

"Disaster management is rooted in the fundamental belief that we can do something during a disaster to lessen the potential for substantial loss of life, destruction of property and the environment on which people depend," said Ramroop.

"It's about helping our fellow man under trying circumstances and to come back from a disaster even better and stronger than before."



Search and rescue personnel from the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Department assist mock victims during the simulated collapse of a three-story building here April 10. This scenario was developed to test the capabilities of firefighters and search and rescue personnel during Fuerzas Aliadas Humanitarias 2011. (U.S. Army photo by Miguel Negron, U.S. Army South Visual Information)



Col. Kenneth Donnelly, Task Force Bon Voizen commander, turns over the keys of a new school and medical clinic to the residents of Upper Poteau, Haiti, June 20, as part of the New Horizons 2011 exercise. The school and clinic were two of the engineer projects built in Haiti by troops of Task Force Bon Voizen. (Department of Defense photo by Fred W. Baker III)

Task Force Bon Voizen closes Haiti New Horizons operations

Story by Sgt. Aaron LeBlanc
Louisiana National Guard

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti – The Louisiana National Guard-led task force providing humanitarian relief to Haiti officially ended its two-month mission in a small ceremony here today.

Task Force Bon Voizen – translated ‘good neighbor’ – provided medical, dental and veterinary care to more than 2,100 animals and 32,000 people. Its engineers built a three-room school, two medical clinics and restroom facilities.

Task Force Bon Voizen, New Horizons Haiti 2011, is a Commander, U.S. Southern Command sponsored, U.S. Army South conducted, joint foreign military interaction/humanitarian exercise under the command of the Louisiana National Guard.

This year’s exercise marked the second time

the Louisiana National Guard was called upon to lead humanitarian relief efforts in Haiti since the January 2010 earthquake.

More than 2,300 service members from three countries came together in the Artibonite department, a rural area 70 miles northwest of here.

The task force commander, Col. Kenneth Donnelly, thanked the adjutant general of the Louisiana National Guard, Maj. Gen. Bennett C. Landreneau, for the opportunity to command the exercise, and he praised the efforts of the troops who deployed here to work in the austere conditions.

“The Soldiers, Airmen and Marines of the task force are regular people, with regular jobs back in their hometowns and duty stations. They are just like you and me, willing to do what it takes to make the world a better place,” Donnelly said. “They came to give instead of take. They came to act instead of talk,” he said.

"I measure their success, not by the structures they built or the number of patients they treated, but rather by the lives they touched," he added.

Support for the task force came from National Guard troops from several states including Louisiana, New York, Massachusetts, Georgia, Florida, and North Dakota. The Army Reserve provided medical staff and engineers. The active-duty Army supplied communications troops, the Air Force provided meteorologists and the Marine Corps provided civil affairs specialists.

The task force was also supported by physicians from the Colombian and Canadian armies and engineers from the Belize Defence Force. Japanese engineers also helped to build the school, and U.N.



Col. Kenneth Donnelly, Task Force Bon Voizen commander, speaks to invited guests at Toussaint Louverture Airport during a ceremony signifying the official end of the task force June 22. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Aaron LeBlanc)

peacekeeping forces from Argentina provided security at task force medical and dental clinics.

Lisa Samson, the director of civil military operations for U.S. Southern Command, was present at the closing ceremony, and thanked the task force for taking the opportunity to "improve what we're doing here in Haiti."

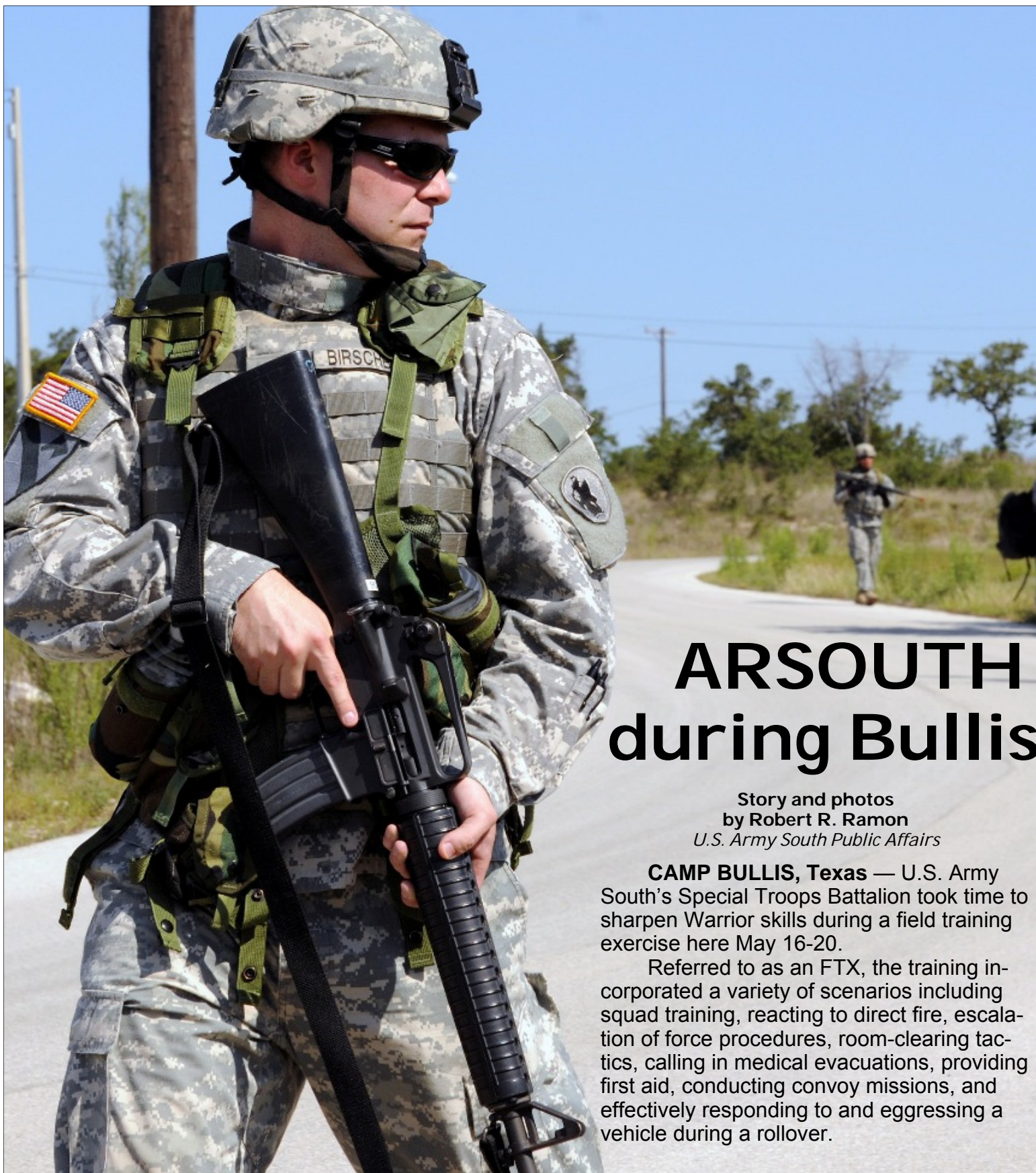
"The relationships and partnerships formed have been immense ever since the earthquake and have forged a bond that we can't break," she continued. "The work the task force has done here is evident ... the clinics and the school that you built are going to have a lasting and enduring impression."

The important piece now is how to make it a sustainable type of investment."



STB & ABCs ...

SAN ANTONIO – (Left to right) Command Sgt. Maj. Luis A. Gonzalez, command sergeant major of Special Troops Battalion, U.S. Army South, Mary A. Olson, principal of Booker T. Washington Elementary School, and Lt. Col. Charles A. Walters, STB commander, sign a charter designating STB as the school's partner in Fort Sam Houston's Adopt-A-School Program June 2 at the school. (U.S. Army photo by Eric R. Lucero, U.S. Army South Public Affairs)



ARSOUTH during Bullis

Story and photos
by Robert R. Ramon
U.S. Army South Public Affairs

CAMP BULLIS, Texas — U.S. Army South's Special Troops Battalion took time to sharpen Warrior skills during a field training exercise here May 16-20.

Referred to as an FTX, the training incorporated a variety of scenarios including squad training, reacting to direct fire, escalation of force procedures, room-clearing tactics, calling in medical evacuations, providing first aid, conducting convoy missions, and effectively responding to and egressing a vehicle during a rollover.

Sgt. Larry Birschbach conducts a patrol with his squad during a field training exercise at Camp Bullis, Texas, May 17.

stays sharp FTX training

At the Camp Bullis Combined Arms Collective Training Facility, a replicated urban environment, the Warriors put their skills to the test by engaging in simulated battles while conducting patrols and medical evacuation missions.

Each scenario was unpredictable and sharpened the individual Soldier's skills as well as those of the leaders who planned the missions.

"We get caught up in the real-world missions," said 1st Sgt. Juan Munoz, Company B first sergeant. "But having Soldiers trained in the things they're supposed to be doing is our priority."



Sgt. Travis Richardson (left) and Sgt. Henry Camacho prepare to enter and clear a building during a U.S. Army South field training exercise at Camp Bullis, Texas, May 17.



(Left to right) Sgt. Joe Rodriguez, Sgt. Sully Moises and Staff Sgt. Samuel Merced call in for a medical evacuation during a U.S. Army South field training exercise at Camp Bullis, Texas, May 17.



Spc. Crystal Ray scans the area as her squad makes its way through a potentially hostile urban environment during a U.S. Army South field training exercise at Camp Bullis, Texas, May 17.



(Left to right) Staff Sgt. Joseph C. Hansen, 525th Military Police Battalion, and Spc. Ethan J. Berry, 56th Signal Bn., are congratulated by Maj. Gen. Simeon G. Trombitas, commanding general U.S. Army South. Berry was named ARSOUTH's Soldier of the Year, while Hansen was named ARSOUTH's NCO of the Year.

Army ball celebrates nation's strength, remembers the fallen

Story and photos
by Lt. Col. Antwan C. Williams
U.S. Army South Public Affairs

SAN ANTONIO — With the theme of "America's Army: The Strength of the Nation," service members from the Fort Sam Houston and Joint Base San Antonio community celebrated the 236th Army Birthday on June 17 at the Marriott Rivercenter Hotel in downtown San Antonio.

The birthday ball celebrates the anniversary of June 14, 1775, when the U.S. Army was first established to defend the nation.

This year's ball was hosted by Lt. Gen. Guy C. Swan III, commanding general, U.S. Army North, Maj. Gen. Simeon G. Trombitas, commanding general, U.S. Army South and Maj. Gen. Reuben D. Jones, deputy commanding general for operations, U.S. Army Installation Management Command.

"We are a witness tonight to the presence of an extended family," said Command Sgt. Maj. Neil Ciotola, U.S. Army IMCOM's command sergeant major. Ciotola delivered the ball's keynote remarks to an audience comprised of service members and civilians from the area's major Army commands and personnel from the Navy, Marines and the Air Force.

This year, ARNORTH, ARSOUTH and IMCOM

decided to jointly host the Army's birthday together in one large consolidated event.

Not only were there Soldiers from ARNORTH, ARSOUTH, IMCOM and the Army medical community, including the Southern Regional Medical Command and Brooke Army Medical Center's new commander, Maj. Gen. M. Ted Wong present, but a large number of service members from other branches of the Armed Forces were in attendance.

Ciotola said America's Soldiers and its Army are a recognized strength of the nation, but he also encouraged the ball attendees to "recognize the importance and strength of all the U.S. Armed Forces" and all the service members in the Joint Base San Antonio area.

Ciotola spoke about his distinguished career as an armor crewman and how his more than "three decades" of leadership experiences taught him that each of the branches of the U.S. Armed Forces is important to the strength of the nation. "For example many of us owe our lives to the U.S. Air Force," said Ciotola as he explained how each branch of the armed forces supports the other on the battlefield.

Ciotola, who enlisted in August 1976, announced at the ball that he would soon retire and reminded the attendees to not forget fallen comrades and to "never forget the families of our fallen."

As the command sergeant major spoke to an audience of more than 500, an empty chair sat at a small round table with a lit candle at the front of the dining room symbolizing Ciotola's earlier comment that "fallen comrades will never be forgotten."

Sgt. Maj. Jorge C. Escobedo, ARNORTH deputy chief of staff for personnel sergeant major, expanded on this underlining theme of remembering fallen comrades.

"The ball provides the opportunity for the Army to celebrate its numerous accomplishments dating all the way back to the Revolutionary War with comrades and family members, as well as it builds unit cohesion, all the while remembering those who made the ultimate sacrifice," said Escobedo.

During his remarks, Ciotola asked the youngest Army enlisted Soldier, NCO and commissioned officer present to come forward to the center of the dining room and he spoke directly to each of them, as only great sergeants major can, by strongly encouraging them to remember the unity and strength of our nation and Army.

He also recognized and thanked service members from the U.S. Navy, Marines and Air Force and a delegation of Mexican military personnel and their spouses present at the ball by stating "you honor us with your presence." In addition, Ciotola thanked the Army spouses for their unwavering support.

Finally, Ciotola thanked Army commissioned officers for investing in the noncommissioned officer corps in the 1970s and for giving NCOs more responsibilities. Ciotola reminded the audience that it was commissioned officers that fought for and led initiatives to restructure and develop a professional education system for NCOs.

Ciotola said these initiatives "helped to make NCOs the backbone and strength of the U.S. Army and the envy of other nations' armies."

During the ball ARSOUTH announced the selection of their Soldier of the Year, Spc. Ethan J. Berry, 56th Signal Battalion and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, Staff Sgt. Joseph C. Hansen, 525th Military Police Battalion. Berry and Hansen escorted and presented the birthday cake to Lt. Gen. Swan, the senior ranking officer present.

In keeping with tradition, the oldest and youngest Soldier present at the ball assisted Swan with cutting the traditional birthday cake. Pfc. Kyle L. Fischer, 470th Military Intelligence Brigade, was the youngest Soldier and Col. Daniel S. Berliner, command surgeon for ARSOUTH, was the oldest Soldier present at the ball.

"The Army Birthday Ball brought me a great sense of pride by reminding me of the long lineage of one of the oldest and greatest organizations in the world," said Escobedo.

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Peacekeeping Operations



Brazil deems exercise 'vital' to planning for 2014 World Cup, 2016 Olympics

Story and photos
by Eric R. Lucero
U.S. Army South Public Affairs

BRASILIA, Brazil – The Brazilian armed forces believe the U.S. Army South-led Peacekeeping Operations – Americas 2011 exercise has helped its country in its preparations to host two of the world's largest sporting events.

"We will be able to gain from all the lessons we have learned here and move forward," said Brazilian army Maj. Gen. Fernando Ferreira, PKO-A 11 co-director. "Everything we gathered here will be vital to our ability to plan for the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympics."

ARSOUTH participated in the closing ceremony of PKO-A 11 in Brasilia, Brazil, May 13. PKO-A 11 is an annual, U.S. Army South-led, regionally oriented command post exercise involving partner nation armed forces from within the Western hemisphere. ARSOUTH was the executive planning agent for PKO-A 11.

The two-week command post exercise, which kicked off May 2, is the capstone event in a series of professional development engagements and command post exercises.

These activities increased participants' capabilities and prepared partner nations to conduct peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance operations worldwide.

PKO-A 11 was designed to bring nations together to enhance regional relations, reinforce security arrangements, promote interoperability and obtain support for mutual security interests.

ions — Americas 2011



In addition, the professional development engagements promote and improve cooperative measures and collective military capabilities, and support and enhance democracy and stability in the Latin American and Caribbean region.

During PKO-A 11, participants negotiated their way through a mock election process.

The scenario forced members of 16 different nations to work together to ensure the peaceful completion of a fictitious country's elections, and also react to a simulated, mid-scenario earthquake that required the participants to plan and provide humanitarian assistance without losing sight of the primary mission.

"The intent was for us to be able to capitalize on the abilities and the experiences of all the countries involved in terms of peacekeeping operations," said Maj. Gen. Luis R. Visot, the PKO-A 11 co-director and commanding general of the 377th Theater Sustainment Command. "The key here was the exchange of ideas and to build trust in each other."

Besides the technical skills developed during PKO-A 11, a secondary goal for the exercise was for

the participants to develop working relationships among the many partner nations involved.

"I know the friends I made here will help in the future," said Brazilian Col. Paulo Eduardo Monteiro, a PKO-A 11 participant. "It really helps when you make a call and you recognize the voice on the other end. When you ask for help, you know he'll come and support you."

During his closing ceremony speech, Visot shared his belief that the skills learned and the close relationships established at PKO-A 11 will be crucial in supporting AR-SOUTH's mission in the Western hemisphere,

and will go even further in providing tangible results in the form of supporting democracy and stability for all the partner nations involved in the exercise.

"The highlight of this exercise has been the close friendships that we have established," said Visot. "Building that trust gives us the ability to stay focused on our mission and that mission is to save lives and find out what can we do to better provide for humanity."

"Everything we gathered here will be vital to our ability to plan for the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympics."

*-Brazilian army Maj. Gen. Fernando Ferreira,
PKO-A 11 co-director*

U.S. Army South

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(Left to right) Col. Wilfredo Lopez, Honduran army commander, Brig. Gen. Juan Morales, chief of staff of National Defense of Guatemala, and Maj. Gen. Oscar Salvador Balladares Cardoza, Nicaraguan army chief of staff, listen to Maj. Gen. Simeon G. Trombitas, commander of U.S. Army South, as he discusses aspects of the Soldier Medic Training Site at Camp Bullis March 15.

Central American military leaders gather at ARSOUTH for regional conference

**Story and photos
by Eric R. Lucero**
U.S. Army South Public Affairs

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas – U.S. Army South hosted military commanders from four Central American countries for a conference at ARSOUTH headquarters here March 14 -17.

Leaders from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua attended the four-day meeting that focused on building relationships to meet regional challenges.

During the conference, commanders briefed their nation's military posture and identified critical

current areas of concern. Many of the common topics included natural disasters, countering illegal trafficking, and border security. The briefings also stressed the importance of police professionalization, maritime interdiction, and anti-gang efforts.

For many of the commanders, this was a rare opportunity to communicate in an open forum with the other members of the region and address shared problems.

"The conference gathers army commanders together and brings us up to date as to what's going on in their countries," said Brig. Gen. Manuel Ortiz, ARSOUTH deputy commanding general. "One of the great benefits is that it also gives all an opportunity to really get to know each other."

Through dialogue, the commanders were able to understand the growing concerns of illegal drug production and trafficking in the Central American region and how these problems affect each other as neighbors.

"We've been able to identify themes and threats which concern us within the region," said Brig. Gen. Cesar Adonay Acosta Bonilla, Salvadoran army chief of staff. "Together, with the cooperation and support of U.S. Army South, we're confident we can overcome these threats."

The conference encouraged each commander to develop new ways to improve partner nation capabilities.

"We cannot face these problems effectively if we don't work together," said Maj. Gen. Simeon G. Trombitas, ARSOUTH commanding general.

"We can exchange ideas, tactics, and tech-

niques to better our capacity to combat the problems of our region."

After the briefings at ARSOUTH's headquarters, the group visited U.S. Soldiers conducting vari-

ous forms of military training to include military operations in urban terrain, patrol and convoy operation techniques, and combat medic skills at Camp Bullis, Texas. In light of the recent March 11 earthquake and tsunami in Japan, the interoperability and partnerships generated by the leaders' conference can be instrumental in establishing prompt responses during emergencies, which is a crucial determining factor in saving lives and diminishing human suffering.

"Through this conference, commanders can develop relationships that in times of natural disasters or mutual need, they can use to reach toward each other for support," Ortiz said.

In addition to strengthening partnerships, the main goal of the conference is to promote security cooperation, stability and peace in Central America.



Brig. Gen. Juan Jose Ruiz Morales, chief of staff of National Defense of Guatemala, gives a briefing on his nation's current military posture during a conference at ARSOUTH headquarters here March 14-17.



(Left to right) Capt. Chris Montoya, physician assistant and officer in charge of the Soldier Medic Training Site at Camp Bullis, explains a medical training procedure to Brig. Gen. Cesar Adonay Acosta Bonilla, Salvadoran army chief of staff, and Brig. Gen. Juan Jose Ruiz Morales, chief of staff of National Defense of Guatemala, with the help of Ramon E. Berrio, ARSOUTH command translator.



Maj. Gen. Simeon G. Trombitas (left), U.S. Army South commanding general, presents Staff Sgt. Joseph C. Hansen, 525th Military Police Battalion, with an Army Commendation Medal for being named noncommissioned officer of the year during the U.S. Army South 2011 Soldier and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year competition here June 14.



'Best of the Best'

Story and photos
by Robert R. Ramon
U.S. Army South Public Affairs

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas — One Soldier and one noncommissioned officer distinguished themselves during a five-day competition to identify the U.S. Army South 2011 Soldier and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year. Spc. Ethan J. Berry, 56th Signal Battalion, was named Soldier of the Year while Staff Sgt. Joseph C. Hansen, 525th Military Police Battalion, was named NCO of the Year.

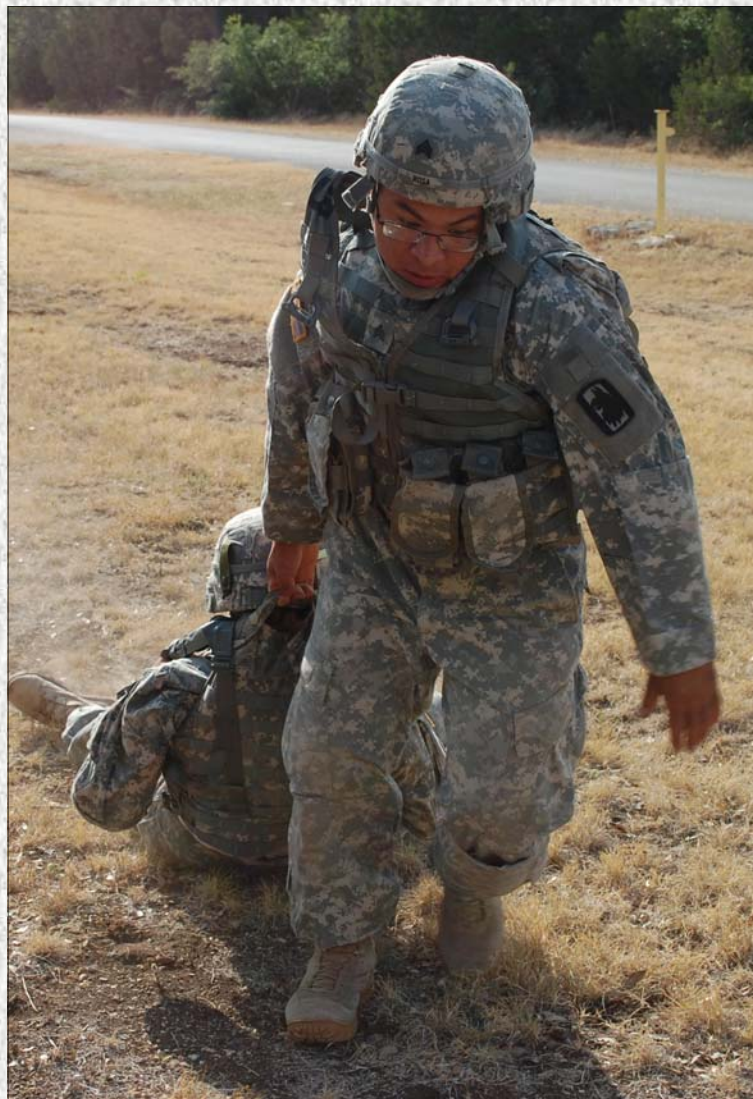
"We really challenged the Soldiers participating in the competition and they performed very well," said Command Sgt. Maj. Luis Gonzalez, U.S. Army South Special Troops Battalion command sergeant major. "It was very impressive to see them in action."

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Spc. Ethan J. Berry (below), 56th Signal Battalion, stands before a formal board during the ARSOUTH 2011 Soldier and NCO of the Year competition here June 14.



Sgt. John Putman, 512th Engineer Detachment, carries a mock casualty during ARSOUTH's 2011 Soldier and NCO of the Year competition at Camp Bullis, Texas, June 14.



Sgt. Jose Rosa, 717th Military Intelligence Battalion, moves a mock casualty during ARSOUTH's 2011 Soldier and NCO of the Year competition at Camp Bullis, Texas, June 14.

The competition included an Army physical fitness test, land navigation exercise, weapons qualification, various Warrior tasks, a written examination, drill and ceremony and face-to-face time with a formal military board.

"The competition was great," said Hansen. "My fellow competitors were on their game. They seemed to give it all their effort and it made things very challenging."

Berry and Hansen will represent U.S. Army South during the United States Army Forces Command NCO and Soldier of the Year "Best Warrior" competition to be held this summer at Fort Hood, Texas.

"I'm looking forward to competing in FORSCOM since there will be many more participants from throughout the Army," said Hansen. "It will be a tougher challenge."

Gonzalez, who served on the board during the formal interviews, said he was especially impressed with each Soldier's ability to remain calm under

pressure.

"It's not easy to be on a board with five sergeants major throwing questions at you," said Gonzalez. "They did very well. It was remarkable."

Hansen said the competition helped him to improve his performance, especially during stressful situations.

"Participating in the competition taught me to relax under pressure," said Hansen. "I found that while I was in a stressful situation all of my training came to me without having to think about it."

Maj. Gen. Simeon G. Trombitas, U.S. Army South commanding general, said he's confident that Berry and Hansen will perform well as they represent U.S. Army South during the U.S. Army Forces Command "Best Warrior" competition.

"Throughout my career, I have never seen the caliber of Soldiers and NCOs that we have today," said Trombitas. "I think our competition winners are a fine testimony to what our Army produces and are in fact the best of the best."



Tough way to earn a paycheck ...

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas -- Pfc. Donovan Refamonte of Lihue, Hawaii (right), wrestles Thomas Zabel, president of Lone Star Sumo Association, as members of U.S. Army South look on in amusement May 17 at the ARSOUTH headquarters here. Refamonte, of the ARSOUTH Special Troops Battalion's Operational Protection Directorate, assisted Zabel in a sumo wrestling demonstration to celebrate Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month. The next ARSOUTH observance will be National Hispanic Awareness Month 15 Sep - 15 Oct. (U.S. Army photo by Eric R. Lucero, U.S. Army South Public Affairs)

For more information on upcoming observances and celebrations, please contact Master Sgt. James Crook, ARSOUTH Equal Opportunity Advisor, or Cindy Pierson, ARSOUTH Equal Employment Opportunity Director, at 295-6305.

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U.S. Army South History—A Timeline

In 1910, the 10th Infantry Regiment was the first permanent Army unit in Panama.

On July 1, 1917, the Panama Canal Department was activated as a geographic command of the U.S. Army.

On February 10, 1941, the Caribbean Defense Command (CDC) was activated.
All U.S. forces in the region fell under control of this element.

On January 25, 1943, Sixth Army was activated at Fort Sam Houston, code name “Alamo Force.”

In January 1946, Sixth Army inactivated after the successful completion of its mission in Japan.

On March 1, 1946, Sixth Army was reactivated at the Presidio in San Francisco, California.

On November 15, 1947, U.S. Army Caribbean (USARCRIB) was activated,
as the Panama Canal Department was simultaneously inactivated.

In 1963, Caribbean Command was redesignated United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM).

In 1963, USARCRIB became United States Army Forces Southern Command (USARSOUTHCOM).
Later it was shortened to USARSO (U.S. Army South). That same year it became a Major Command (MACOM).

On July 1, 1974, U.S. Army South was relieved of its MACOM responsibilities and assigned to Fort McPherson.

In January 1973, Sixth Army became responsible for readiness training for the
Army Reserve and National Guard for most of the states west of the Mississippi River.

On December 4, 1986, U.S. Army South was designated a MACOM for the second time in twenty-six years.
In addition, U.S. Army South became the Army element of Southern Command
and its new headquarters became Fort Clayton in Panama.

On June 23, 1995, Sixth Army was inactivated. Fifth Army located to Fort Sam Houston, Texas
and assumed Sixth Army's operations.

In August 1999, U.S. Army South moved from Panama to Fort Buchanan in Puerto Rico.

On September 30, 2003, U.S. Army South completed its relocation move from Puerto Rico to Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

On October 1, 2003, U.S. Army South became a major subordinate command (MSC) to FORSCOM
and relinquished its MACOM designation.

In 2005, the Department of the Army ordered all of its geographical armies to employ numbered Army insignia and flags.
Geographically, U.S. Army South was designated to take on Sixth Army's unit patch, flag, and motto “Born of War.”

On October 16, 2006, U.S. Army South was designated an Army Service Component Command (ASCC)
giving it control over all Army forces under Southern Command.

On July 31, 2008, the Army Chief of Staff approved U.S. Army South's request to retain its current patch featuring the Spanish
Galleon, and motto “Defense and Fraternity.” However, U.S. Army South would consolidate its lineage with Sixth Army.

On January 23, 2009, U.S. Army South introduced its new flag.

March 2010, U.S. Army South Deployed for the first time in its history in support of Operation Unified Response in Haiti.

*For more information on U.S. Army South's history, contact the command historian, Dr. Isaac Hampton II
at (210) 295-5782 or isaac.hamptonii@us.army.mil*



U.S. Army South

Defense & Fraternity

April - June 2011