

Programs help DEPs, trainers

By Maj. Keith ABNER
3/398 Bn.

“Fall in!” bellows the Drill Sergeant.

Most of us would in reflex snap to attention, but the young recruits participating in the Delayed Entry Program training conducted at Paducah, Ky., on a cold Saturday in February look at the Drill Sergeant somewhat perplexed - not knowing exactly what to do; but knowing they had better do something and fairly quickly.

In a cooperative event planned and jointly conducted by the Paducah, U.S. Army Recruiting Station and the 3rd Battalion, 398th Regiment (OSUT)(AR), 2nd Brigade, 19 new soldiers who had enlisted under the Army’s Delayed Entry Program received basic map reading and first aid training by Drill Sergeants from 3/398.

This event was hatched by 3/398 Command Sgt. Maj. Johnny McGuire and Sgt. First Class Michael Johnson, of the Paducah Recruiting Station.

McGuire had been looking for some additional training opportunities for the unit’s drill sergeants while visiting local recruiters, and Johnson was looking to provide pre-IET training for some of the soldiers the station had recruited who were awaiting basic.

Johnson made a short notice “can you help us” request and McGuire



3/398 th OSUT Battalion

Staff Sgt. Brent Shelton, a Drill Sergeant with B Co., of the 3/398, answers a question regarding the finer points of basic map reading by a Delayed Entry Program soldier during training at the reserve center in Paducah, Ky.

responded by finding three Drill Sergeants — Sgt. First Class Keith Buchanan and Staff Sgt. Brent Shelton, of B Co., and Staff Sgt. Neil Pierce, of A Co. — who were willing to take a Saturday to help.

McGuire said the event was a win-win.

“First it helped developed a solid relationship with the local recruiters. Secondly it allowed our Drill Sergeants to sustain their skills, thirdly it allowed the DEP soldiers to interact with a real Drill Sergeant and ask any questions they might have about basic. In addition, the local recruiters receive a good rating from their command if they are credited for the soldiers learning certain tasks.”

The training was beneficial for both the new soldier and the USAR Drill Sergeants.

Staff Sgt. Brent Shelton, of B Co. said “the DEP program is very beneficial to the soon-to-be soldier. It gives them a good understanding of

the essential skills needed to complete their basic training cycle and starts the process of transforming them from a civilian into a soldier. At the same time, it helps us Drill Sergeants to improve on our teaching techniques and stay proficient in our core area of expertise.”

Added Johnson: “The reason for the assistance is two-fold, One, (Drill Sergeants) can keep abreast with instructional procedures; and Two, when a DEP completes what we call BCT (basic combat task) they can received a promotion, and the classes (map reading and first aid) are some of several tasks that need to be completed. And we know, with real Drill Sergeants, they would get the basic training-type instruction needed, and a taste of what basic will be like in a learning, stress-free environment.”

The unit plans to conduct more DEP training with the local station(s) and expand as time permits.