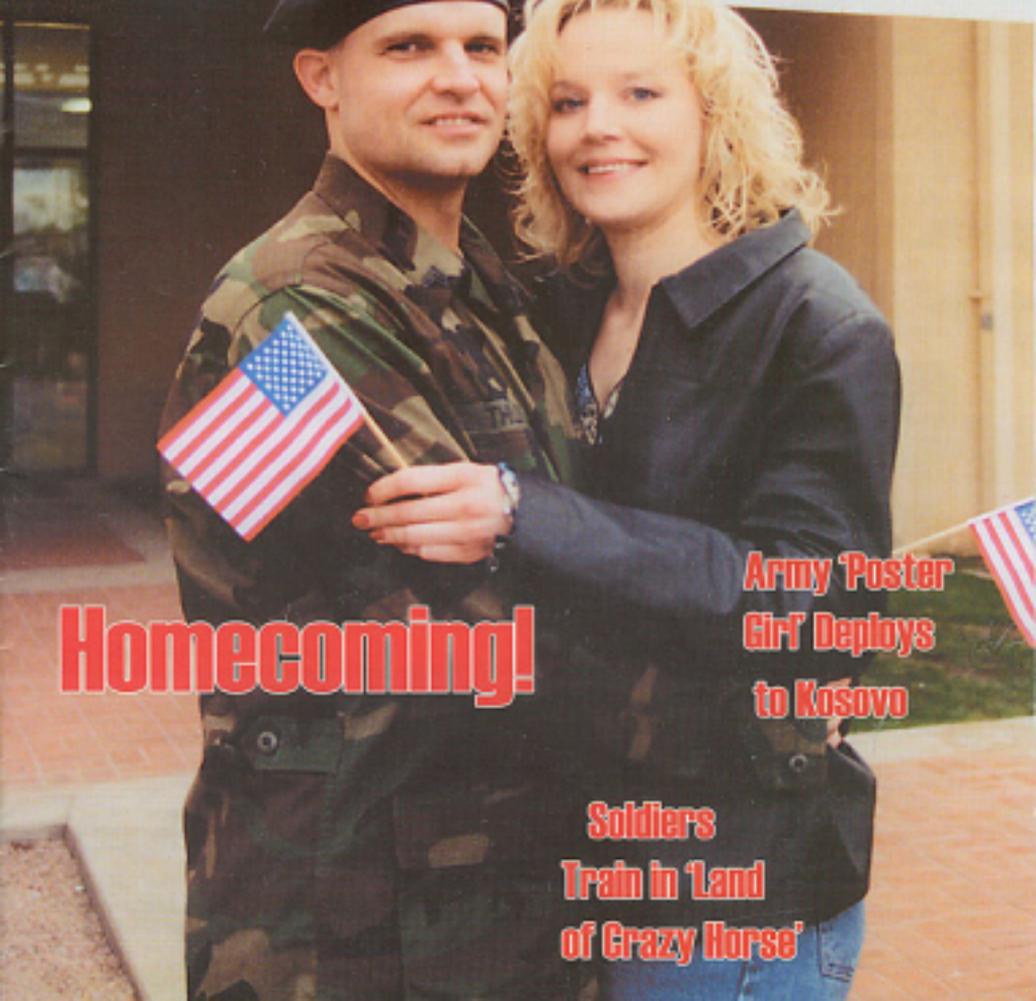


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HARSHI-KHANA
JUNE-DECEMBER 2002

The Blade



63rd Regional Support Command, Los Alamitos, Calif., Spring 2003



Homecoming!

Army 'Poster Girl' Deploys to Kosovo

Soldiers Train in 'Land of Crazy Horse'

We must be ready!

At *Blade* press time, our nation is at war with Iraq. The contract we in the Army have with the American people, is to defeat the enemy and win such wars. Leaders in our command at every level must ensure they and their soldiers are trained and ready to serve if called to active duty.

Leaders need to plan and execute realistic training and attempt to get into a field or other appropriate environment at least twice a year. This is to sustain or improve both individual and collective training until the skills become second nature.

It is during this type of training that soldier confidence and competence to execute required tasks to standard is developed. Leaders then ascertain if their units are deployable and battle ready.

I have had the pleasure to visit our soldiers in Kuwait, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Guantanamo, Cuba over the past several months. The units and soldiers of the 63rd RSC have reported for duty in a high state of readiness and are qualified to perform their duties

to the Army standard. They will also do so in this conflict against Saddam Hussein.

We have kept our contract with the American public and we will continue to work with our higher headquarters and provide the proper forces to combat those who endanger our nation.

Many of you have volunteered your services and I want to thank you for your continued commitment.

We will continue to train and be prepared if needed. I wish each and every one of you, and your families, a very rewarding and prosperous 2003 and may God bless you.

Maj. Gen. Robert B. Ostenberg
Commanding General



'Hi' from new CSM, in the war zone

It is with great pride for me to have been selected as the new command sergeant major for 63rd RSC, Command Sgt. Maj. Don Adny, recently departed, has done a great job with military leadership, the NCO Corps and improving unit readiness. He will be a tough act to follow. But I will give the soldiers, civilians and families 100 percent.

We need for each NCO in the command to make sure that all soldiers are trained and ready to do the job they are being called upon to do in defense of our country. The War on Terror will be a long one and we are making positive steps each day.

The service members involved in Operation Enduring Freedom are doing a great job to help the people of Afghanistan move toward some level of freedom.

The soldiers deployed are very proud to be doing the job they have been trained

for. The only complaint we hear is that they all miss their family and friends.

In the 63rd RSC, I will continue to emphasize unit, soldier and family readiness. We will work extra hard on retaining our quality soldiers. I will need the senior NCOs to work harder in the area of retention, recruiting and promotions. We all need to be developing our replacements as our total force is getting older.

We ask each of you to keep our soldiers in your thoughts and prayers. Keep the faith and take care of our soldiers.

Lawrence Holland
Command Sergeant Major
Uzbekistan

(Editor's Note: Holland returned home with the 164th Corps Support Group in December.)

Top Talk

The Blade



Staff

COMMANDER

Maj. Gen. Robert B. Ostenberg

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

Maj. Jorge Swank

MANAGING EDITOR

John D. Wagner

CONTRIBUTORS

Staff Sgt. Kurt Ambrose
Sgt. Eric Barker
Julia Bobick
Spc. Lucrecia Gutierrez
Capt. Meera Maheswaran
Sgt. 1st Class Brian McNutt
Staff Sgt. John Pinedo
Master Sgt. Bill Reid
Spc. Patrick Rodriguez
Spc. Patrick Singrajphak
Michael Stephany

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We need your stories, photographs, and suggestions. We also welcome letters. Mailing address is:
63rd RSC PAO
ATTN: Mr. Wagner
4135 Yorktown Ave.
Los Alamitos, CA 90720-5002

Telephone: (562) 795-2368
Fax: (562) 795-2724
Email: John.Wagner@usarc-ent2.army.mil

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Front Cover: Sgt. David Thelon of the 164th Corps Support Group and girlfriend Linda Bailey rejoice after the unit's return home from Uzbekistan.

Photographer: John D. Wagner
Back Cover: (Top) Actor Robin Williams visits 164th soldiers in Uzbekistan. With him is Chief Warrant Officer Cesar Manuel. **Photographer:** Spc. Patrick Singrajphak (Bottom) Spc. (now Sgt.) Paul Dowd of the 1980th Forward Surgical Team prepares to fire his weapon while deployed to Afghanistan.

Photographer: Staff Sgt. John Pinedo

SOUND OFF

How Can We Improve Safety?



*Pvt. 1 Jeremy Saunter
418th Quartermaster Battalion*

"Be observant. By doing this we may prevent accidents and fix existing problems that we have. We must also not be afraid to act quickly and efficiently."

"A proper safety briefing before every mission will help reduce safety hazards. An NCO should be on sight to oversee all activities to ensure proper procedures. Stay Alert, Stay Alive."



*Spc. Darrell Chapman
359th Signal Battalion*

"We need to have more and better safety classes, to make it part of the training schedule and to test soldiers on it."



*Spc. Sharon Hilton
113th Medical Company*

"By having hand-outs of things to be aware of — a list of things to do and not to do whether you are in uniform or out of uniform."



*Pfc. Victor Shen
421st Quartermaster Platoon*

Army raises tuition assistance

Soldiers have more money to pay for their education, through changes in the Department of Defense's tuition-assistance policy.

The Army's tuition-assistance program now pays up to \$250 per semester hour of credit and an annual ceiling of \$4,500 to soldiers enrolled in post-secondary education. The previous policy paid up to 75 percent of tuition, up to \$187.50 per semester hour and \$3,500 a year. The increase came about through changes in federal law.

If an institution's fees are above \$250 per semester hour, an alternative is to apply for a federal Pell grant, said Janice Yoo, tuition assistance program manager, Total Army Personnel Command, Alexandria, Va. —Army News Service

Reservists eligible for 'Troops to Teachers'

The Troops to Teachers program, which offers to help qualified service members become school teachers, has been extended to the Army Reserve.

Reservists who want to participate in the program must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university or have one year of college with six years experience in a vocational or technical field.

Reservists qualify who are either retiring, serving as a reservist for at least 10 years or transitioning from active duty after at least six years service.

The need will be most acute during the next decade in special education, science, mathematics and foreign language.

For more information, access the Troops to Teacher site at www.ProudToServeAgain.com.

—American Forces Press Service

Tricare online offers easier service

Tricare Online is being phased in to provide easier access for the program's Prime and Plus beneficiaries Armywide.

The website address is www.tricareonline.com. Those in the Prime and Plus categories can make appointments with primary health care providers. The web site features a 30- to 40-day calendar showing patients all available appointment times with their primary care manager or the manager's team members where they have enrolled.

Beneficiaries must set up a password-protected account on the site to take full advantage of the program.

"Once they do that, we know who the beneficiaries are and in which facilities they're enrolled," said Brian Kelly, e-business director, Tricare Management Activity, Falls Church, Va. "We can then tailor the site to them."

—Armed Forces Press Service

'Stop Loss' extends to mobilized reservists

The Army recently announced a "Stop Loss" measure to keep all mobilized reservists in service until at least 90 days after their unit demobilizes.

The policy will help reserve-component unit readiness because it keeps mobilized reservists from departing their unit and the Army in the middle of a mission, at the end of an enlistment or leaving for other reasons.

The measure takes effect upon Reserve soldiers the day their units are alerted for mobilization.

It was started because reserve soldiers leaving their units for retirement or separation during mobilization has created a domino effect—causing units to have to reach into other units that have not been mobilized.

—Army Reserve Homepage

Kudos to General

Sgt. Hsiyi Lo shakes hands with retired Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf. The former commander of operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm was honored by Pepperdine University at a banquet in Beverly Hills. Soldiers from 63rd RSC including Loh served as a colorguard. (Photo by Master Sgt. Bill Reid)



63rd honors heroes in ground breaking, dedication

By Maj. Jorge Swank

Spading up dirt and recalling valiance in combat, the 63rd RSC honored two American war heroes from different generations recently.

In a dignified ground-breaking ceremony in Mesa, Ariz. Army officials named a planned building after Sylvestre Herrera, a World War II Medal of Honor winner and recipient for courage under fire. The structure will be part of a new \$12.5 million Reserve center scheduled for completion in fall 2004.

Assistant Secretary of the Army Reginald J. Brown was the keynote speaker at the Arizona ceremony. He noted that every generation must have those heroes who are called upon to act above and beyond the call of duty.

Brown praised the bravery of Herrera in World War II and noted that our soldiers engaged in the war on terrorism will be bolstered by the past actions of men and women who passed the torch of bravery.

Maj. Gen. Robert B. Ostenberg, commander of the 63rd RSC, recalled his days at Fort Benning, Ga., and noted that many of the buildings there were named after war heroes. He said it was the only right and fitting that a new Reserve center be named after one of our war heroes.

More than 250 people attended the ceremony on a sunny Arizona day. Many members of the American

Legion and other veterans groups were present. U.S. Rep. J.D. Hayworth also attended and spent a few minutes with the troops, acknowledging the hard work and dedication of America's citizen-soldiers.

A month earlier on a sunny Saturday afternoon, Army Reserve officials dedicated an existing structure in Garden Grove, Calif. to another gallant soldier. The command honored the late Walter Shelton, a highly decorated Vietnam combat vet.

More than 50 family, friends and co-workers of Shelton's were in attendance at a solemn but upbeat event at the local U.S. Army Reserve Center. His friends recalled the incredible spirit and resilience of a man who just loved to be with soldiers.

Shelton had been awarded a silver star and four bronze stars for valor during service in Vietnam in the 1960s. Following his service in Vietnam, Shelton remained in the Army Reserve and rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel. He later served in various civilian capacities including civilian head of the 176th Medical Group in Garden Grove.

The courage of Shelton and Herrera reflect the best instincts of the American fighting spirit. This is further exemplified today as our nation is engaged with major ground forces in actions such as Operation Anaconda and in Iraq.



Sgt. Eric Coy of the 729th Transportation Company out of Fresno, Calif., straddles a 915 A-1 truck hauling an armored personnel carrier. The event was Native Atlas, a huge, joint-service exercise last year. Ten 63rd RSC units took

part, with some hauling vehicles that were off loaded from ships at Camp Pendleton and others unloading heavy cones in Concord, Calif. (Photo by John D. Wagner)

Commanders play equal role in equal opportunity workshop

by Staff Sgt. Kent Ambrose

LONG BEACH, Calif. - Someone receives an untoward sexual remark. An orthodox Jew is told to work on Saturdays in conflict with his religious laws. A Hispanic woman cannot get promoted because of her race.

For the first time, 63rd RSC unit commanders along with equal opportunity officers and NCOs faced these and other mock scenarios *together* in a training environment and worked on solutions. The event was the annual Equal Opportunity Advisors Workshop designed to deal with religious accommodation, sexual harassment and soldier-discrimination issues. About 32 attended.

The workshop goal was to enhance communication and understanding between commanders and equal-opportunity soldiers in dealing with such real-world situations. It therefore strengthened their working relationships, noted Aaron Wilkes, the command's equal opportunity officer.

He noted that the equal opportunity advisor (at the brigade level and up) and representatives (battalion and below) are important tools for commanders.

"A lot of good discussion was generated by the scenarios," said Wilkes, who organized the workshop. In addition to working through the scenarios and devel-

oping solutions, commanders got the chance to relate their own experiences dealing with soldiers in similar situations. Their participation greatly benefitted the workshop, said Wilkes.

Brig. Gen. Donna Dacier, deputy commander for 63rd RSC, spoke at the event and shared about being a lieutenant at Fort Gordon, Ga., in the 1970s at a time when female soldiers were mistreated and discriminated against. Dacier said there are now very few instances of overt discrimination. But commanders should afford soldiers opportunities to advance in their careers in a competitive context, instead of sometimes just working with soldiers they know. "I want to focus on the word 'opportunity,'" said Dacier.

By promoting the commander-and-equal-opportunity-expert working relationship, the equal opportunity advisor therefore becomes more noticed by unit soldiers, Wilkes said. "I want visibility for the advisors so that everyone knows they have access to (them)," said Wilkes. "Soldiers (often) don't know who to go to if they have a problem."

Wilkes' plan is to get sergeants more involved in the equal opportunity program and intends to get command sergeants major to attend the next workshop.

Anti-terrorism training is crucial

The infamous date of 9-11 changed the world as we know it. As a result, anti-terrorism training is a cornerstone of the Army's Force Protection program. This training focuses in many ways on protecting our people from terrorists' acts.

Soldiers from our command have deployed throughout the world to protect this nation. But, at each home-station drill we need to be aware of steps and procedures we must take to assess our own vulnerability to terrorism. Commanders need to conduct risk assessments to gauge the effectiveness of their own force protection plans.

The mission statement says 63rd RSC "conducts force protection operations to protect soldiers, civilian employees, facilities, and equipment within the 63rd RSC area of respon-

sibility, at home station, during mobilization, during deployment, and in conjunction with overseas temporary duty or permanent change of station. Commanders at all levels are directed to read and become familiar with the contents of AR 525-13, about anti-terrorism."

All soldiers can become familiar with Level I Anti-Terrorism Awareness training by going to this website <http://www.at-awareness.org/>. Please go to our intranet website for more information at this address: <https://55.144.130.242/dsops/PMO@terrorism.htm>.

As we continue in the global war on terrorism, let each of us resolve to do our part at the individual-soldier level to ensure we protect the force. Remember The Army of One starts with you.

63rd RSC seeking NCOs to become warrant officers

Are you seeking a greater challenge in the Army Reserve? Do you want increased leadership skills and technical training? If you answered "yes" then you should consider applying for the warrant officer program.

The 63rd RSC is seeking NCOs to apply for 30 vacant warrant officer positions throughout the command. Specialty fields include personnel, supply systems, military intelligence, and criminal investigation.

To attract NCOs, the 63rd conducted a Warrant Officer Mentorship Career Forum in Phoenix in February. Another is set for Orange, Calif., in June. These forums serve to educate and inform reservists about the program and to centralize the selection, record screening, application preparation, interviewing, medical screening, and hiring of potential Army Reserve warrant officers.

The qualifications for becoming a warrant officer are difficult. But, with the rank comes higher pay, better retirement benefits, higher levels of responsibility, advanced leadership and technical training, and an opportunity to ensure your skills are being optimally utilized in your military service.

Soldiers who have completed the Basic NCO Course and have a General Technical score of 110 or higher should ask a retention and transition NCO how to become a warrant officer. For general information, visit <http://www.usarc.army.mil/retn/>. For more information, contact Sgt. 1st Class Robert Hilliard at (562) 795-2174; email address is Robert.Hilliard@usarc-emh2.army.mil.

Going for Gold



First Lt. Jessica Beecham, wearing a gold medal, cradles a trophy after winning first place in the women's team category at the 2002 NATO Military Pentathlon in Draguignan, France. The five-event competition included track, swimming and marksmanship events.

Beecham is assigned with the 208th Transportation Company, Tucson, Ariz. Flanking her are teammates Army ROTC Cadet Christine Gritzke, left, and Air Force Capt. Maitye Kraus. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Donald K. Johnson)

Chaplain assists family receiving remains of Vietnam vet

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Kent Ambrose

VISTA, Calif.—Chaplain (1* Lt.) James Giddens never met the Vietnam veteran who lay in the flag-draped coffin. Yet, Giddens, with his wife Claudia by his side, didn't feel strange sharing the grief along with many others at a small Wesleyan church.

Family, friends, and veterans came to honor the memory of Capt. Larry F. Lucas, an Army pilot who was killed in 1966 when his plane was shot down over a remote jungle in Laos.

He had been listed as "Killed in Action, Remains not Recovered."

An excavation team working at the crash site discovered bone fragments, which were recently determined to belong to Lucas. His remains finally came back to the United States last October, escorted by his nephew, Michael Holmes.

"I do feel like I knew him," said Giddens, who would come to appreciate Lucas' story and the loved ones he left behind. "I know his family and the children who had fond memories of their father. Knowing his family makes me feel this way."



On a Friday, a day before his weekend drill in August, Giddens, a member of the 105th Chaplain Team, 653rd Area Support Command, received a call from his executive officer Maj. Albert Thompson. Thompson explained that two U.S. Army officials were looking for a chaplain from the San Diego area to assist them in the return of a soldier's remains to his family.

Giddens and two officers from the



Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Gerry Fox officiates at memorial service for Capt. Larry Lucas.

U.S. Army Mortuary Affairs Center met at the home of David and Martha Ryan (Lucas' widow) on Saturday to present positive evidence of Lucas' remains and prepare the family for their return. There, Giddens also met Lucas' son Mark, and daughters, Melissa Lucas-Condit, Andrea Lucas-Ayers.

However, Giddens soon discovered his initial position, as chaplain, was only part of the job. He quickly assumed the responsibility of a casualty affairs officer, who fills out much of the paper work involved in arranging mortuary services and military honors for veterans. He had no previous experience in that capacity.

"I was in continual daily contact by telephone or email," said Giddens, who helped the family fill out lots of paper work. "I was there for emotional support in addition to helping them understand military issues and acronyms."

Meanwhile, Giddens, who lives in Clairmont, went to drill on Sunday. That day, he received a call from Melissa Lucas-Condit. She told Giddens that her grandmother, Jessie,

Lucas' mother, was on her deathbed.

"I went with my supervisor, Chaplain (Maj.) Michael Pomorski to a convalescent home in Escondido and met with her grandmother," said Giddens. "I visited three more times before she died on Sept. 5.

"She was still very emotional about his death; it was still fresh with her," reflected Giddens. He said that although she died before her son was buried, she had a sense of closure and some satisfaction in knowing his remains had been found.

Giddens was asked to speak at the memorial service. Giddens however asked Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Gerry Fox, the 63rd RSC staff chaplain, to give the sermon and read scripture.

"We had a neat opportunity to minister to this family," said Fox. He said this was the first time he had officiated at a memorial service like this one, for a U.S. veteran whose remains were recovered from Southeast Asia.

Lucas' remains were later buried with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

In the Land of Crazy Horse

Dental soldiers pull teeth, fill cavities at Indian reservation

Story by Staff Sgt. Kent Ambrose
Photo by Spc. Lucrecia Gutierrez

In the Black Hills of South Dakota, in the land of Chief Crazy Horse and General Custer, soldiers rallied in the pre-dawn hours to drive south through 70 miles of grasslands to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation.

"I cherish the opportunity to help people, to go places," remarked Capt. Alan Chien, dentist with the 185th Medical Company out of Stanton, Calif. "Imagine coming to South Dakota with the Army."

Whether yanking out rotting teeth, filling cavities in others or snapping x-rays, these soldiers who specialize in dentistry were busy.

For the third year, through medical exercise Walking Shield, the Reservists provided basic dental care to American Indians of the Oglala Lakota tribe.

Nine soldiers, consisting of three dentists, two hygienists, and four dental assistants, worked with the seven dentists, nine assistants and a receptionist at the Pine Ridge Health Care Facility Dental Clinic. The 185th treated 167 walk-in patients, adults and children, from the reservation.

The most common service during the annual training was drilling teeth and filling them with liquid silver "amalgam." Other times they pried out wisdom teeth, took x-rays, scraped away plaque and instructed patients to bite into molds from which dentures would be made.

During the summer months, when the children are out of school, the clinic gets very busy and cannot accommodate all of the patients, said Jose Rodriguez, chief of the clinic.

"The dental need here is very high," added Michael F. Gmurek,



Lt. Col. George Soohoo, left, and Pfc. Edwin Castillo perform dental surgery on a local Indian patient.

deputy chief. "And the prevalence of (dental) disease is higher (than average). Our working relationship with the soldiers is very good. They do more than the minimum. They could just fill one tooth and have a patient come back in a return appointment, but they'll do as much as they can (in one sitting)."

Pfc. Lloyd A. Cobarrubia, dental assistant, noticed the difference working on the reservation compared to life back home in Southern California. "You have to adjust a little, you're out of the noise and traffic, a real quiet town," he said.

He observed how cooperative and appreciative his patients were. Cobarrubia assisted dentist Capt. Carlos A. Horiguchi, refining the skills he recently learned at advanced individual training.

He and Horiguchi drilled out four cavities on a patient. Cobarrubia got instruction on using the light curing unit, a bright light that helps harden and set "composite" plastic resin fillings. Before starting to clean a

patient's teeth, Staff Sgt. Ted Schofield often conversed with them about their cultural and oral histories. Schofield was also taken by his patients' names. "All the different last names like Yellow Feather, Blue Legs, Many Wounds, they are fascinating names," he commented.

Elliott, 10, came in with his mother for a checkup. The possibility of having cavities, though, did not stop his big smile when Capt. Chien and Ng greeted him in their Army uniforms. When asked how he felt about the Army giving him a check up he said with a grin, "fine."

It seems the 185th accomplished their objectives at the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Next year the 185th plans more dentistry at reservation in Sheridan, Wyo.

Wanda "Buffy" Yellow Boy, a dental assistant at the clinic for 11 years, says the employees really appreciate the Army Reserve. "We all get along really well and joke around," said Buffy. "They (the soldiers) enjoy the sites and going places. They are interested in our culture."



Soldiers from the 164th Corps Support Group return home to Mesa, Ariz., in a joyful reunion with family members. (Photo by John D. Wagner)

Home! Soldiers return from war against terrorism

Story by John D. Wagner

MESA, Ariz.—On a cool, overcast day with crowds of people waving flags, busses rumbled in, carrying precious cargo—more than 120 soldiers returning home.

The troops poured out of the busses into waiting arms and streams of tears.

"You're baack!" screamed former soldier Linda Bailey as she hugged Sgt. David Thelen, there at the Sylvestre S. Herrera U.S. Army Reserve Center.

The soldiers were from the 164th Corps Support Group and were back from six months in Uzbekistan on the border of Afghanistan. They were among more than 70 63rd RSC units that have deployed—including against Iraq—since Sept. 11, 2001.

Their mission had been a crucial one in the war against terrorism—organizing the vast supply chain to troops in the Afghan theater.

Whether food, water, ammunition, clothing, fuel or other supplies, the logistics barons of the 164th provided high-level coordination. Planes and trains brought in supplies constantly. Soldiers stored food in hundreds of metal shipping containers or transported it out on other planes or in trucks driven by

Uzbek nationals 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Before they arrived at the camp, a former Soviet air base, there was only one building, according to Col. Jon Miller, commander.

"We had to build a city for 2,500 people," (the total amount) he said. "In the end, we had 220 tents and eight buildings" constructed by local contractors.

The soldiers were involved in many tasks. Miller noted that they had about 300 Uzbek nationals working on the base. Each had to enter through a security check point and be searched. Master Sgt. Ramona Sandoval was in charge.

Maj. Scott Swanson organized the storage and movement of food. He first came up with strategy to move all food onto the installation. Much had to be stored. Swanson helped oversee the construction of about 25,000 square feet of storage facilities for meat, vegetables, fruit and other food items.

Miller noted another mission: to a Jordanian hospital.

"Our soldiers provided food, water, fuel, laundry, bath, repair parts. We contracted and built roads and (Continued on page 11 under **Soldiers Return**)

Surgical unit saves lives in Afghanistan

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Brian McNutt
1980th Forward Surgical Team

KHANDAHAR, Afghanistan—Arriving apprehensive, but jumping into duty, citizen-soldiers from a 63rd RSC medical team performed about 70 surgeries during deployment here.

Twenty members of the 1980th Forward Surgical Team mobilized and shipped out last year in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Their mission was to treat U.S. and coalition forces fighting the war on terror, including Afghan locals in danger of losing "life, limb or eyesight," said the team's head nurse, now a casualty. They treated burns, blast wounds and high velocity gun shot wounds. They took care of civilians, children, Afghan National Army regulars, coalition soldiers and detainees in addition to U.S. forces.

One of the casualties was their own. The already-seasoned 1980th unit stood ready when 1st Lt. Doug Elmore, an Army Reserve nurse, was rushed into the operating room with a gunshot wound just

above his right ankle.

"I had the best seat in the house," said Elmore, an emergency room nurse at Scripps Hospital in San Diego. "I was on the receiving end and saw how everybody rallied, responded and provided care—the best care anywhere."

Attached to a unit of the 101st Airborne Division, the team of medical reservists, the primary surgical asset in the theatre, stabilized Elmore and performed surgery to repair the damage caused by the bullet fragments.

Elmore and several other medical personnel were fired on while in a convoy from a hospital in Kandahar to their base several miles away. Small arms fire in the ambush hit Elmore, who received the Purple Heart from the 101st Task Force commander. Elmore was the first Army Nurse to receive the award since the Vietnam war and was flown back to the United States to recover from his wound.

(Continued on next page under **Surgical Unit**)



Col. Tom Broach does paperwork while doctors operate in a field hospital in Afghanistan. (Photo submitted by 1980th Forward Surgical Team)

Surgical Unit

(Continued from p. 10)

The team consisting of surgeons, anesthetists, critical care and emergency room nurses, operating room technicians and medics. They would soon be tested in their ability to treat critically wounded patients, endure the hardships of a combat environment and the hot desert area.

"We can start (intravenous) lines, we can do tracheotomies, we can take care of the ABC's (airway, breathing, circulation) better than any other configuration the Army has come up with," said Lt. Col. Frank Conn, a general surgeon who joined the forward surgical team in June.

The 1980th's first patient was an Afghan shepherd who was injured when one of his sheep he was tending stepped on a land mine. The land mine exploded, sending shrapnel into the shepherd's arm and killing 20 of his sheep.

"I felt very good about taking care of him," said Sgt. Tim Nickle, an Army medic and licensed vocational nurse. "When I took him to the gate (of the base camp) and released him to his father, his father started crying and thanking us," said Nickle. "We did a great job."

Soon after, an Apache helicopter crashed, critically injuring the pilot and gunner. "There is a good chance he (the gunner) would have lost his life, had we not intubated (inserting a breathing tube) him," explained 35-year-old Capt. David Kolodji, nurse anesthetist. The medical team then stabilized the injured crew and evacuated them to a hospital.

While deployed, the 1980th would see many more critically wounded patients including a surviving member of an explosive-ordnance-disposal accident. And they treated others including four Canadian soldiers and four children who were injured in separate friendly-fire incidents.

"This was perhaps our finest hour," said one soldier,



1st Lt. Doug Elmore receives a Purple Heart from Col. Mike Livingston, task force commander, for being shot during duty in Afghanistan.

referring to the children. "Four critically wounded patients, ages 18 months to five years, three of whom needed surgery and one who sustained a serious head trauma, made it out."

The young patients emotionally moved Spc. Mary Policarpio, a recent graduate of army medic training. "Seeing those kids cry, it was just awful that they had to be a part of this war," she said.

The 1980th redeployed to the United States last July.

Soldiers Return

(Continued from p. 9)

bridges within the compound," Miller said. "They saw 350 patients a day. We built wood floors for them in the hospital tents. We built a mosque for them. We provided Ramadan holiday meals."

The soldiers at the Uzbek camp all lived in tents and slept on cots. The whether shifted radically from summer to winter, noted Sgt. Thelen. "It went from about 120 degrees, to later what you would expect in upper Montana," Thelen said. "Below zero."

The soldiers noted that an uncomfortable part of the environment was dust—a light brown powder that landed

on everything.

"It was like flower," Miller said "It affected everything. It affected your personal comfort—dust in your eyes, dust in your food—everything. We brought in more than 100,000 loads of gravel to deal with the problem. By the time we left, there were few if any problems. It was not the nuisance when we left as when we arrived."

The soldiers also had an time of "comic" relief—literally. Comedian Robin Williams came and visited them. "The whole freakin' base stopped," said Thelen. "He was funny. He was the same guy you see on TV."

SJA troops head for field, learn 'law of war'

Story and photo by Capt. Meera Maheswaran

78th Legal Support Organization

FORT HUNTER LIGGETT, Calif.—Leaving aside their legal tomes, trial briefs and judicial minutiae, about 80 soldiers took to the field to train for war.

For four years now, the 80-plus members of the 78th Legal Support Organization have conducted their own annual field training at an active-duty Army post in order to further develop and refine their soldiering skills.

The 78th and their support units flew in Black Hawks to Fort Hunter-Liggett where they conducted mock-battle training in the rough and varied terrain of hills, brush, woods and waist-high streams.

On the day of arrival, all members underwent intensive review in common-tasks including land navigation, first aid, identifying land terrain, hand-signal movements and law-of-war training. The classes lasted about four hours. The next day, the soldiers were divided into five platoons with about 10 soldiers each. Accompanying each platoon was a medic and an observer-controller. A tactical operation center was established for coordination.

For starters, each platoon was given coordinates to find, using a topographical map of Hunter Liggett, compasses and protractors. As they maneuvered from point to point, the platoons encountered scenarios of enemy-soldier ambushes, CNN reporters, civilians on the battlefield, CS gases, injuries and more.

"You never knew where they were being attacked," commented Master Sgt. Rosie Rocha, unit administrator. "Grenades were thrown—smoke grenades."

In one instance, a "husband" used his "wife" as a shield while trying to obtain food. He pulled out a weapon later. Five teams dealt with him on separate occasions. Some killed him, some didn't. "The laws of war deal with how they encounter such people," Rocha explained. "They are supposed to apprehend him without killing him."

"Another time they came across a landmine. Teams were told, 'You've tripped the mine; what do you do?' They called in the casualties to the center. Participants also got gassed and had to put on their masks."

Said Rocha: "For a bunch of JAGs it was a good day's training."

After each encounter, they were reviewed on the spot by the controller and the platoon would radio the center for the next coordinates.

1st Lt Gary Grant, one of the "players" in the well-planned scenarios, observed, "It was interesting to see how the (legal) officers responded under pressure. One shot me a few times, even though I was completely



Capt. Kenneth Egan, right, plays a foreign militiaman, while Sgt. Alejandro Ornelas is an enemy sniper during the legal unit's annual field training.

unarmed...so you can just imagine how a 19-year-old kid would respond under those circumstances."

Like most situations, war and stress bring out the best and the worst in people—practically everyone comported themselves with sound presence of mind and strong military bearing. Capt. Eric Strong, a member of the advanced party, was bitten on the hand by an unusually aggressive garter snake within his first few hours there.

Although feverish with an unnamed illness, Strong, (with the panther-like reflexes he presumably acquired during his early days at West Point), managed to capture the potentially rabid reptile with his other hand. He later reflected philosophically, "Wow! That was cool."

At the end of the four days, everyone agreed that it was the best field exercise ever.

"This was a terrific practical clinic of what we preach as attorneys," said Strong. "We got the chance to actually practice the law of war, instead of just knowing the law of war."

63rd runners land trophies in Army Ten-Miler event

by Michael Stephany

Loping along on a flat, picturesque course in an even stride, 63rd RSC soldiers ran away with three trophies in the 2002 Army Ten-Miler held last October.

The command fielded 22 soldiers for the event in Washington D.C. Nearly 12,000 runners completed the competition. The 63rd soldiers took awards in the following categories: 2nd place: U.S. Army Reserve Command participation; 2nd place: Reserve Men's Team; and 3rd place: Reserve Women's Team.

This was the first year that a sergeant major team category was established. The 63rd team of George Fisher, Albert Munoz, Henry Serrano and Robert Roberson placed eighth among the active-duty sergeant major teams and were, unofficially, the top Reserve team.

Co-hosted by the U.S. Army Military District of Washington and Association of the United States Army, the Army Ten-Miler is one of the premiere running events in the country. It is recognized by *Runner's World* magazine as the largest sanctioned 10-mile race in the United States. The event's vision is to promote a positive image of the Army through commitment to physical fitness, esprit de corps and organizational excellence.



Chaplain's Column

A New Year's Challenge

By Chaplain (Col.) John South

As we enter 2003 I believe it's the greatest time in history to be a soldier. I also believe that 9-11 has taught us that a key purpose in life is that we need each other. Therefore, we need to come together one-minded and dedicated to one mission, united as an Army before God and in thanksgiving for being an American soldier.

Here is an acronym: S.O.L.D.I.E.R. A soldier is solid, obedient, a leader, dedicated, an individual—eternally—and rugged. Why that particular definition? Well, soldiers throughout history have proven to be the key element that God has used to make a difference in the fight and success of combating those who would take away our democracy and freedoms.

As a matter of fact, God teaches us that a true soldier should not be entangled in the business of the everyday world but be dedicated to what he or she represents. That is the mission of the soldier. What a great time to utilize our God-given gifts and talents in making a continued difference in the lives of those we touch.

In doing so we will continue in our fight for the preservation of the freedoms we so enjoy. Remember, God did not give us the spirit of fear that makes us

afraid, but a spirit of power, love and self-control in the face of battle.

In the book, *Sea of Glory*, a description of the life of one of the four chaplains that gave their lives on the USS *Dorchester* in 1943 is portrayed. What inspired me about this particular young chaplain, Alex Goode, is that at age 13, he was so moved by the dedication of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington Cemetery, Dec. 11, 1921.

His pride in being an American and his love for soldiers prompted him to walk from his home in Georgetown to the cemetery to show his love and respect for soldiers who gave their lives for his freedom. Later, he followed in their steps.

In closing, let us stand shoulder to shoulder and commit to memory in heart and song the following:

"God Bless America,
Land that I love,

Stand beside her, and guide her
Thru the night with a light from above,

From the mountains, to the prairies,
To the oceans, white with foam

God bless America, My home sweet home."

'Army-of-One'-ad star goes to Kosovo

Story by Julia Bobick
Army Recruiting Command PAO

Photo by Spc. Patrick Rodriguez

People who know her call her the "poster soldier" for the U.S. Army Reserve, but Spc. Sandra Mercado is not letting the publicity go to her head. A year after being featured in the "Army of One" advertising campaign, she is still focused on her goals and proud of her decision to enlist. And she's getting more from the Army Reserve than she ever expected.

The broadcast journalist admits she had high expectations of her military job skill, the Army and her unit, the 222nd Broadcast Operations Detachment in Bell, Calif. She strongly believes her Reserve experience will help her get ahead in her civilian career in television broadcasting.

Last year, Mercado deployed to Kosovo for six months with the 302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, her Reserve unit's sister unit, also in Bell.

With the 222nd, she would help produce the *Video Blade* magazine, about activities within the 63rd RSC. But in the real-world atmosphere of her deployment, she has gained a new level of accomplishments for her resume. Now she covers "real-world" events. She has covered infantry soldiers conducting an "air-insertion" near the Yugoslav-Macedonian border, live night fires and shooting footage while riding in a Black Hawk helicopter.

"It's been so much fun," she said. "I'll be very proud when I come back to have that field experience."

So far, the Army Reserve is exceeding the expectations of this energetic 20-year-old soldier. The Pasadena City College student said she is happy she already has close to three years experience in the Army Reserve and as a broadcast journalist.

"I'm very happy I made this decision," said Mercado. "I expected a lot out of the Army and now the Army expects a lot from me. I like that; I like the pressure."

The Rosemead, Calif., high school graduate joined the Army Reserve in November of her senior year. She attended drill weekends as a senior, and went to basic and advanced individual training after graduation.

"At first, I wanted to be like everybody else and go straight to a university," she said.

Mercado said she had applied and been accepted, and was ready to start working on her degree. But then she started thinking about how she would get the experience to back it up. So she thought about the military recruiters who had already been calling her, and decided to check out her options.

"For a soldier who weighed under 100 pounds before



Spc. Sandra Mercado prepares to shoot video on a Kosovo street with a child helping her.

basic training, she was challenged from the beginning to meet weight standards. By the time she graduated basic training, she gained seven pounds and was able to carry heavy camera equipment that offers a challenge to 6-foot, 200-pound male soldiers," said Staff Sgt. Scott C. Marvin, broadcast noncommissioned officer for the 222nd.

A writer for her high school newspaper, Mercado said she has always been interested in journalism, and knew at a young age that broadcasting was her niche.

Mercado has tremendous natural broadcasting talent, according to Capt. Greg Gordon, 222nd commander.

"Her unique personality and communication skills are essential to her duty position, but many of these qualities are not the sort that are easily taught in military or civilian training programs," Gordon said.

"To its credit, the Army makes the most out of everyone, but there is no substituting raw natural talent, and in the case of Spc. Mercado, that's what we get."

'Bomb' searches and taut fences

Evans helps keep 63rd buildings safe in tense times

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Kent Ambrose

Allen C. Evans ran his hand across the chain links, eyeing the ground where the edge of the fence met the dirt. He scanned the top where metal outriggers hold three thick strands of barbed wire stretched along its length. A gap or weakness in the fence surrounding the perimeter of the reserve center spells a potential security problem.

"The fence should be taut," explained Evans to operations officer Capt. Stephanie Cha from the 376th Personnel Services Battalion, 63rd RSC. Evans makes routine inspections of facilities to make sure they meet the standards to keep unauthorized people out.

"There shouldn't be any gaps at the bottom where someone could slip under," said Evans as he pointed out things to look for. Fortunately, the fencing was sound.

As a physical security specialist in the Office of the Provost Marshall since 1996, Evans' priority is protecting 63rd soldiers, civilians, buildings and equipment.

He works closely with and fills request from facility managers and staff in matters ranging from upgrading alarms to inspecting security lighting in motor pools to erecting concrete barricades that protect buildings from being rammed by vehicles.

He also supervises anti-terrorist and bomb-threat management teams at the more than 40 reserve centers throughout California, Arizona and Nevada.

All these responsibilities keep this former Army ranger and Special Forces soldier very busy.



Allen Evans checks a fence as Capt. Stephanie Cha watches.

As a part of his security assessment, Evans will see how units react to a bomb threat scenario. "It's fun," said the lanky, avid swimmer who says he is part fish.

Evans usually hides a simulated bomb in very conspicuous places. Evans said most of the time a unit's bomb threat team will search for the device and pass by it many times before he points it out to them. He said he is not trying to be a "wise guy" but explained, "You don't have to hide something (mock C-4 explosive) too hard for people to miss it." Evans distributes a bomb threat management video to every 63rd unit.

"It's gratifying to fix security problems—fences, lighting, access problems," said Evans, whose responsibilities increased when he filled a vacancy at his office. Evans said he finds working with a budget, talking with people and making things happen challenging and rewarding. He analyzes the requirements and scope of a project, including funding and resources and works with the 63rd engineers and contractors.

Recently, he got a work order for

heavy metal wire cages to be constructed and put in an arms room in San Diego. He coordinated with engineers, the unit's facility manager, and contractors to start the project.

"It's a 63rd triumph to put cages in this arms room," said Evans, who explained the facility had badly needed the upgrade for over two years.

Evans, who is also an Army Reserve military intelligence major, was born in North Charleston, N.C. and joined the Army in 1976. He earned a bachelor's degree in parks, recreation and tourism management.

He has been a river guide on rubber rafts on the Chattooga River in Georgia and a federal police officer at Fort Jackson, S.C. Evans said the Army has taken him to several continents, from Bangkok, Thailand to Budapest, Hungary. "All the jobs I have held have involved group dynamics with people," said Evans. "If I can't get along with people, I wouldn't be in this business. I deal with everybody from the general down to privates."

Soldiers pump water, haul fuel in exercise

Story by Maj. Ron Lane

419th Quartermaster Battalion

and Maj. Clifford Brown

418th Quartermaster Battalion

CRANE NAVAL WEAPONS STATION, Ind.—The scenario: A city water system is shut down by terrorism or earthquake, endangering the lives of citizens. Can a specialized Army unit produce enough replacement water to prevent disaster?

The 419th Quartermaster Battalion took part in a real-world exercise with nine other units in case this ever happens. Pumping and then purifying 5 million gallons from a nearby lake, the team ultimately completed the mission ahead of schedule.

The event was part of the Petroleum, Oils and Lubricants Exercise—dubbed POLEX—which featured a sub-component for water. Units include four that were subordinate to the 419th: The 316th Quartermaster Company and 415th and 307th Quartermaster detachments, all out of Camp Pendleton, Calif.; and the 968th Quartermaster Company, Tustin, Calif. Five units from other parts of the country worked with them.

The soldiers assembled here in May and divided the equipment and activity into five sites. The units set up two pumps at the shore of a lake on base that would suck out 600 gallons per hour. The water would flow to 15 giant water-purification units—resembling semi-truck trailers—that would take the dirty lake water and turn it into clear, clean liquid. The water was then pumped into huge storage bags typically holding 50,000 gallons apiece. The bags were assembled collectively into “farms.” The 316th and 968th were among the units running the storage mission.

Units including the 419th ran the water through more than six miles of hoses. And the soldiers ultimately produced about 2.3 million gallons of drinking water, much of which was added to the base’s stored water supply.

“I am proud that we were able to take on this unique mission,” said Sgt. Robert Ogg of the 968th. “I am confident we set the bar high for follow-on units to try and meet.”

Meanwhile, soldiers from Arizona worked on another avenue of POLEX. About 40 soldiers from the 418th Quartermaster Battalion out of Tucson, Ariz., took over a function normally handled by civilian contractors. They set up brown tents with camouflage netting at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., and managed a larger team of 250 soldiers from New Mexico, Indiana and Colorado.

Many rumbled along in 18-wheel tanker trucks through



Spc. Jorge Morales of the 418th Quartermaster Battalion connects a fuel hose during recent exercise.

the Arizona desert, transporting jet fuel from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base to the National Guard in Tucson, Luke Air Force Base in Phoenix and to Fort Huachuca, Ariz. Typically the trucks carried about 5,000 gallons in 110-plus-degree heat. Sometimes the trips were short—such as 15 miles to the National Guard. But the journeys to Luke were 210 miles one way.

Part of the exercise involved one of the units storing about 20,000 gallons in a “bag farm”—mobile, collapsible storage bags—brought to Fort Huachuca.

“On the battlefield, we don’t have the big permanent storage tanks,” explained Capt. Raymond Croslin, petroleum operations officer during the exercise.

“The mission went quite well,” he said. “We performed it in a timely manner with no accidents. All the units left better trained than when they arrived.”

Who let the dogs out?

Vet team helps canines, inspects food for troops

Story and photo by Sgt. Eric C. Barker

300th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—Prowling the war zone with a keen sense of smell and a growl in the throat, man's best friend has become a new ally in the war on terror.

And the 109th Medical Detachment is ensuring that these dogs, used for both patrols and mine-sniffing, will continue to do their jobs.

Not only does the 109th provide medical service to all Coalition Force dogs—commonly German Shepherds and Belgian Malinois—but they are also responsible for the food health of Coalition service members. “We have three primary types of jobs in the 109th,” explained Capt. Mark Dierberger, veterinary corps officer for the 109th and a civilian veterinarian from Redding, Calif. “The unit officers, who are actually veterinarians; food inspector specialists and animal care specialists.”

They usually see the dogs every two days and check the animals' health by performing visual exams, according to Spc. Napoleon Guevaiza, an animal care specialist and a civilian computer programmer in Norwalk, Calif.

Sometimes these are simple checks such as using a stethoscope to listen to breathing and heart beat.

The unit, out of Stanton, Calif., occasionally provides higher levels of care as well. The vet team is equipped to handle almost any medical situation that may occur with in-theater dogs. “Dog care is very similar to human care here, at Kandahar Airfield,” explained Dierberger. “We provide basic emergency and surgical



Capt. Mark Dierberger, right, of the 109th Medical Detachment gives health check to “Rocky,” a military dog. With him is Staff Sgt. Brian Stammeyer of the 202nd Military Police Company.

care. If they need more advanced care, doctors can do major surgery in Bagram.”

Medical treatment can include suturing shut leg or tail cuts, cleaning and dressing scrapes, performing stomach surgery or operating on broken bones.

“The injuries are typically from falls or running into objects,” noted Lt. Col. Gary Brickler, commander. “These are pretty energetic dogs.”

The unit, working out of Kuwait, has a dual mission. It also works closely with the preventive medicine unit, here, to inspect the quality of incoming food. These are typically Meals Ready to Eat, as well as beef, chicken, bananas, apples, oranges, grapes, carrots, cucumbers, lettuce, milk, and other products.

“We are on call 24-7 for food deliveries,” said Sgt. Eduardo Gonzalez, food inspection specialist and a route salesman in his civilian job in Walnut, Calif. “We inspect all the food that comes in.

“We look for good quality and try to make sure the Army gets what it paid for,” Gonzalez said. “We also inspect the food labels to make sure the manufactures are from a pre-inspected and pre-approved group back in the states,” added Staff Sgt. Randy Arbelo. In Afghanistan, where temperatures can reach more than 100 degrees, such inspection is important—to detect food-poison bacteria.

“It’s our job to protect the health of soldiers,” explained Gonzalez. “We do that by making sure the food is wholesome and right for consumption.”

According to 109th soldiers, their mission here is far from being over.

“We are trying to coordinate some humanitarian missions with Civil Affairs,” said Dierberger. “We want to get out and maybe help the local Afghans with their live-stock”—goats, sheep and cattle. This would include include giving them syringe-shots of anti-parasite medicine, Brickler said.

“It’s all a part of winning hearts and minds,” noted Dierberger.



Legion of Merit

COL	Forden, Donald	326th Fin. Gp.	LOM
COL	Walter, Michael	176th Med. Gp.	LOM

Command honors units, employees at banquet

Numerous soldiers and civilians were honored for their service during the 63rd RSC Leaders Conference Banquet held last year in Buena Park, Calif. The awards were:

Facility Manager of the Year:

Large Facility: Maj. Jefferey Robinson, 368th Military Intelligence Battalion

Small Facility: Frank Williams, 376th Personnel Service Battalion

Retention and Transition NCO of the Year: Sgt. 1st Class Cheryl Brady, 63rd RSC

Unit Retention Awards:

Small Unit: 78th Legal Support Organization

Medium Unit: 437th Medical Company

Large Unit: HHC, 63rd RSC

Battalion or Hospital: 484th Transportation Battalion

Major Subordinate Command: 176th Medical Group

Family Readiness Awards:

Civilian: Brenda Smith, 2nd Medical Brigade

Military: Staff Sgt. Mandy Raymond, 63rd RSC

Soldier of the Year: Spc. Jonathan Boucher, 355th Chemical Company

NCO of the Year: Staff Sgt. Michael Ryan, 348th Transportation Company

Unit Administrator:

Small: Rosana Rocha, 78th Legal Support Organization

Medium: Wayne Elliott, 437th Medical Company

Large: Theresse Peterson, 921st Field Hospital

Ambassadors: Dr. Howard Schwartz, Dr. Richard A. Lunin
ROA Award:

Louis Caldera, former secretary of the Army

Best Unit:

Small unit: 222 Broadcast Operations Detachment

Large unit: 316th Quartermaster Company

Battalion/Hospital: 319th Signal Battalion

Major Subordinate Command: 176th Medical Group

"HOOAH" Award: Capt. Kelly Jones, 1st Sgt. Paul Swanson

Additional Awards:

NGOA:

Command Sgt. Maj. Eugene DiLorenzo, 328th Finance

Group; Command Sgt. Maj. Gregory Gunning, 1394th

Deployment Support Brigade; Command Sgt. Maj. Clarence

Howard, 2nd Medical Brigade; Command Sgt. Maj. Donald

Aday, 63rd RSC.

170th Medical Group:

Command Sgt. Maj. Eugene DiLorenzo, 176th Medical

Group; Command Sgt. Maj. Gregory Gunning, 1394th

Deployment Support Brigade; Command Sgt. Maj. Clarence

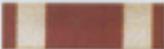
Howard, 2nd Medical Brigade; Command Sgt. Maj. Donald

Aday, 63rd RSC.

From Maj. Gen. John L. Scott, Maj. Gen. Robert

Outsberg and Brig. Gen. Donna Daxler:

Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Aday, 63rd RSC.



Meritorious Service Medal

SFC	Aboytes, Davis	63rd RSC	MSMw/2ole
CW4	Benson, Raymond	63rd RSC	MSM
SFC	Biesik, Norma E.	1394th DSB	MSM
SFC	Lee, Harold	63rd RSC	MSM
LTC	Morgan, Steven	419th QM Bn.	MSMw/5ole



Army Commendation Medal

SGT	Azeilaga, Alfred	368th MI Bn.	ARCOM
SFC	Brady, Cheryl	63rd RSC	ARCOMw/ole
SGM	Friedrichen, Ray	63rd RSC	ARCOMw/ole
SFC	Hilliard, Robert	63rd RSC	ARCOMw/5ole
SFC	Lemberger, Maria	63rd RSC	ARCOMw/4ole

News Flash!

Med brigade administrator wins prestigious award

Rowmell Hughes, supervisory staff administrator for 2nd Medical Brigade, recently received the Association of the United States Army's highest award given to federal civilian employees at a conference in Washington D.C.

Hughes, assigned to the brigade in San Pablo, Calif., was given a citation for "exceptional service in support of national defense." She is the first Army Reserve military technician to receive this award in the region covering several states in the Northwest, including northern California, Oregon, Nevada and Idaho.

"She takes that extra step," said Command Sgt. Maj. (Ret.) Joseph Sweeney, award presenter. "I feel great giving her this award." Sweeney said Hughes' tireless efforts and outstanding leadership and management abilities have resulted in the brigade being one of the finest medical commands in the Army.

"I felt honored—it was an awesome experience," said Hughes, who has 32 years of civil service experience.

