



WILDCAT

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81st RSC, Birmingham, Alabama

Summer 2000

81st RSC units respond to mock terrorist attack

Story by Spc Jenna C. Bisenius
300th MPAD

FORT GORDON, Ga. – Scenario: Augusta, Ga., has been targeted by terrorists. Their goal is widespread fear and panic, and the major media attention that follows. They will calculate their success by loss of human life. Several buildings on Fort Gordon and in downtown Augusta are blown up, and the aftermath of the attack is horrific. Local agencies work frantically to respond to the attack, but the number of casualties is staggering. The city lies in chaos.

This was the scenario at Consequence Management 2000 (CM 2000), a joint terrorism response training exercise attended by more than 1,500 participants from local, state and federal agencies held at Fort Gordon on May 15-21. The Army Reserve focused on training military and civil authorities to work together on responding to domestic terrorist attacks involving nuclear, biological and chemical weapons of mass destruction.

“With Consequence Management 2000, we’re basically providing a platform to pull together federal partners in emergency response situations,” said Brig. Gen. Donna F. Barbisch, who is a member of 3rd Medical Command, Decatur, Ga., and was the executive coordinator for CM 2000.

“Part of our strength as reservists is the fact that we’re embedded in the civilian community,” Barbisch said. “We have a foot in each world. We need to determine how we can best use that strength when communities call on us for assistance.”

Along with Army Reservists, members from the Air Force Reserve, Georgia Army National Guard, and active Army participated in CM 2000. Participating civilian agencies included the Department of Veterans Affairs, U.S. Public Health Service, Federal Emergency Management Agency, local hospitals and fire departments.

“Interacting with different branches such as the Air Force and various civilian entities gives us a chance to see how all of our skills would come together if there were a real-world incident,” said Spc. Greg Miller, chemical operations specialist with the 326th Chemical Co., Huntsville, Ala. “We get the opportunity to sharpen our skills and see how everyone else contributes to the cause.”

“This was our first time working in conjunction with a field hospital,” said Sgt. 1st Class Jeff W. Jennings,



Spc Jenna C. Bisenius

A mock chemical casualty arrives at the decontamination site and is removed from the litter by a soldier from the 326th Chemical Company from Huntsville, Ala., during CM2000.

chemical operations noncommissioned officer with the 326th. “It was also our first time decontaminating patients. We normally just do equipment. Working with live patients allowed us to tweak our techniques and see what procedures we need to modify so that casualties receive the best possible care.”

“The training was extremely realistic,” said Miller. “The

casualties were wearing plastic wounds and makeup, so their injuries looked very life-like. It’s not like learning from the manual, where it’s hard to visualize a real mass casualty situation. Here, we had to deal with live patients who pretended to be incoherent, scared, and sometimes even difficult; much like you’d have to deal with in the real world. It was a great learning experience.”

Reservist jumps into action, saves life of civilian

Story by Eric Herchenhahn
Messenger Staff Reporter

MARTIN, Tenn. – Sometimes in life, the unexpected happens. There is no way for you to prepare yourself moments before. But there are ways to be prepared beforehand, and one is learning to deal with difficult situations before they arise.

Lieutenant Colonel Bill Buckler, deputy commander of the 640th Area Support Group (ASG), Nashville, Tenn., encountered such a situation one Saturday afternoon; and he was prepared.

Buckler went in a gas station to buy beverages for his wife and two of their friends, but once inside the store, he discovered that all was not well. The store clerk, 45-year-old Kathy Ordway of Grand Rivers, was having a diabetic seizure behind the counter. A coworker had tried to deal with the emergency, but he lacked the knowledge and skill to be of assistance.

While Ordway’s coworker was dialing



By Eric Herchenhahn

Lieutenant Colonel Bill Buckler, center, receives an award from Martin Mayor Larry Taylor for his heroism, as his wife, Carol, looks on.

911, Buckler stepped in to help. He checked Ordway’s pulse and breathing and, fearing that she might swallow her tongue or bite down on it in her seizure, he slid a plastic comb between her teeth.

By the time the seizure subsided, Ordway

had stopped breathing. Buckler immediately performed cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), giving her mouth-to-mouth resuscitation until the emergency medical technicians (EMT) arrived. According to ambulance

technicians, Ordway would not have survived had Buckler not been there to help.

Buckler said he was able to help Ordway because of the training he has received through the years. Training that started when he was a Boy Scout and first learned CPR and first aid.

Referring to his first emergency situation, Buckler said, “You get that training and you don’t ever think about it, but you need to refresh your mind about it because you never know when you might have to use it,” he added.

Ordway is thankful for Buckler’s help. She learned about a year ago that she was diabetic, but Ordway said the recent emergency situation was the first time anything so serious had ever happened to her.

“I’m glad I was there,” Buckler replied. “You don’t think about those kinds of things until it happens. And looking at her and being afraid she was going to die, I’m glad I was able to help.” (Story courtesy of Weekly County Press, Martin, Tenn.)



Front cover:
Soldiers from the 427th Medical Battalion learn how to perform sling load operations from the 44th Medical Brigade at LZ Sparrow, Camp Lejeune, NC. (Photo courtesy of Lt. Col. Carrie UtterGarrett)Page 5

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GENERAL COMMENTS



Brig. Gen. Michael R. Mayo

I usually like to use this column to talk about positive things happening in the 81st Regional Support Command (RSC), but in this issue of the WILDCAT I must instead share with you a troubling and growing problem.

Safety

For all of the good things we accomplish, we are becoming first in a category that is not consistent with our otherwise outstanding performance. That category is our accident rate. Safety is the issue.

Since October 1999, the 81st RSC has experienced 35 military-related accidents. This is over 10 more than the last three years combined. Property damage, legal expenses, and medical costs related to these accidents have exceeded one million dollars.

Readiness

Each of these accidents has a negative

impact on our readiness. Equipment has been destroyed and damaged, affecting our units' ability to conduct its missions. More importantly, however, our soldiers are being injured at an alarming rate. Injuries to our soldiers impact their ability to perform their assigned mission, as well as adversely affect their families and civilian employers.

POV Accidents

Privately owned vehicle accidents continue to plague the Army. These accidents continue to be the number one cause of soldier fatalities. Tragically, the 81st RSC has suffered four fatalities involving automobiles and motorcycles so far this year. This loss of life is unacceptable. Our soldiers are the RSC's most valuable assets.

Leadership

The primary reasons causing these

accidents continue to be leadership failures, poor training, and the failure to follow established standards or procedures.

I need your help... each of you... to end this terrible trend. Every soldier, civilian and family member is a safety officer. When you see a potential safety problem, your obligation is to warn the person at risk or alert their supervisor of the potential hazard. Be proactive. Sound the alarm. Take action before an accident occurs; prevent loss—protect lives.

Training

Unit members should have received training in Risk Management. If you haven't, contact your first sergeant or unit commander and demand the training.

Safety is everyone's business. This is one area where we are truly responsible for each other's welfare. Get involved before we lose another soldier or family member.

CHAPLAIN'S CHAT

I am excited about serving as your new staff chaplain and covet your prayers. I consider my chaplaincy as a calling to serve the soldiers and families of the entire 81st Regional Support Command and to provide support and leadership to the unit ministry teams who minister to our total force at every level. I believe in the scripture that says, 'except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.' (Psalm 127:1).

I am writing this on the 225th Anniversary of the Army Chaplain Corps. Maj. Gen. Gaylord T. Gunhus, chief of Army Chaplains, placed a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns and conducted a brief memorial service at Chaplain's Hill at Arlington National Cemetery, Va., to observe the anniversary.

As I think of chaplains who made a permanent impact upon my life, I think of our most recent past staff chaplain, Col. Ed McDaniel, who will be retiring in September. Ed has been an inspiration to so many of us and I want to dedicate my first column to him. He is that part of the history of the Army Chaplain Corps that touches us. He came aboard as the 81st staff chaplain when the command was still the old 121st U.S. Army Reserve Command.

I had just arrived back from Desert Storm and was finding my place again in the 375th Trans. Gp. in Mobile. When the challenge came to form the 81st RSC, Chaplain McDaniel was the man God had prepared for the task of bringing a diverse group of chaplains and chaplain assistants into an organization working together and exhibiting a godly spirit of unity and



Chaplain (Col.) Tommy W. Smith

ministry.

Ed would not accept credit for such a job well done. He would immediately point to his staff and to the major support command chaplains, commanders, and others who had worked diligently to make today's unit ministry teams effective forces providing religious support to soldiers and their families through worship, rites and sacraments, prayer and pastoral care. This mission of the Corps has not changed since the Revolutionary War to the present.

In his remarks at Arlington, Chaplain Gunhus said, "Army chaplaincy can be a costly discipleship. In the 20th century alone, a total of 124 chaplains gave their lives in service to

our nation."

Serving in our armed forces and in the Reserve can be costly in other ways too, the time away from families and jobs. We are all called to sacrifice ourselves in the service of others. The Apostle Paul declared, "We preach not others, but Christ, and ourselves your servants."

"Serving in our armed forces and in the Reserve can be costly..."

Chaplain (Col.) Tommy W. Smith

CSM MEMOS

The Senior Noncommissioned Officer Promotion Board has concluded and the recommendations for promotion have been made. The recommendations signal success and a challenge for those being promoted. These results also echo a "job well done" from all of us who rejoice in successful accomplishments of soldiers at all levels.

To those not recommended, as well as those who did not apply, I wholeheartedly encourage improvement and thorough preparation for the next promotion opportunity.

Experience, education and desire are critical elements that give not only direction and encouragement to each individual, but also guarantee the perpetuation of our forces. Anything less would not be in the best interest of the force or the individual.

To that end, each soldier must strive to his or her highest level to ensure that the force and its members are the best that they can be. We must be the best soldiers we can be at all times. Our nation depends on us.

Promotions are only one way to recognize our soldiers. Awards and decorations play an integral role as well. Each leader should devote a concentrated effort to identify and recognize individual and unit successes. Such endeavors demonstrate to each of us



Command Sgt. Maj. George Johnson

that individual and unit success is valued and will be acknowledged accordingly. Often, issues as simple as administrative oversight are culprits to appropriate recognition. "Taking care of our own" is a responsibility every leader bears. Take care of your soldiers so they may learn by example and in turn embody that example in our future as a professional force.

Taking care of one another involves being safe and ensuring that safety is a primary consideration.

Being safe and avoiding accidents translates into less agony for all of us who are a part of the caring support systems. We must continue to be vigilant to prevent loss and protect lives. I encourage all to continue to think safety. Someone's future is counting on you.

"Take care of your soldiers so they may learn by example..."

Command Sgt. Maj. George Johnson

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WILDCAT

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Volunteer receives award for devotion to soldiers, Army Reserve



Maj. James Billings

Cynthia Sykes, spouse of Lt. Col. Timothy Sykes from the 75th CSH located in Gulfport, Miss., holds the Volunteer of the Year Award.

Story by Vernessa Barnes
Family Readiness Office

ATLANTA, Ga. – The 81st Regional Support Command (RSC) Family Readiness Office recently recognized Cynthia Sykes (Cindy), spouse of Lt. Col. Timothy Sykes, as the 81st RSC Volunteer of the Year. Sykes, who resides in Tuscaloosa, Ala., has been active with both the 75th Combat Support Hospital (CSH) Family Support Group and the 81st RSC Family Readiness Program.

Sykes' packet was reviewed by the Family Readiness Office for consideration for volunteer of the year. She received official recognition as the 81st RSC Volunteer of the Year at the July Family Program Academy in Atlanta, Ga., along with other command nominees.

From the mundane, to the tedious, to the technical, Cindy has provided support and assistance in a number of ways.

Sykes has organized family days, helped with the unit's Breakfast Corner and has been an instructor at Family Readiness training events. As a shining example of a dedicated family volunteer, she has contributed more than 700 hours of service during the past year.

Other volunteers receiving recognition were: Ann Currie, 8th Battalion, 229th Aviation Regiment.; John Gannon, 81st RSC; Nan Crawford, 81st RSC; Jan Cruthirds, 81st RSC; Patti Colt, 75th Combat Support Hospital; Robert Blackmon, 12th Legal Support Office; Debbie Blystone, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 108th Division; Judith Santo, 3220th U.S. Army Garrison.

Education Hotline

The Department of Defense has established a "Voluntary Education Information Hotline" for use by service members and family members desiring information about active duty and Reserve education programs. All information is recorded and must be accessed from a touch-tone telephone. It is recommended that you have paper and pencil available when listening to the recorded information. You may listen to the information or have the information faxed to a commercial telephone number. The hotline number is 1-800-482-4533. For additional information contact your Education Services Specialist, Nicholas Manetakis, at 1-877-749-9063, ext. 1741.

Family Readiness promotes self-reliance for millennium

Story by Vernessa Barnes
Family Readiness Office

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – The 81st Regional Support Command (RSC) Family Readiness staff has echoed the fact that training year (TY) 2000 has been a very eventful year for their staff and Family Readiness representatives throughout the region. The staff is making great strides along their continuum of preparing families to be self-reliant. Throughout the year, the staff trained commanders, soldiers and family members on every aspect of the Family Readiness program. Topics included family care and family support plans and preparing families for separations. They have also trained volunteers to be trainers and to serve on the Family Program Advisory Council.

The Family Readiness staff has also continued to provide program overviews to units throughout the command, provide assistance to family support groups throughout its region

and conduct deployment and other briefings as necessary. In addition to offering two academies, they have also

conducted new volunteer training.

Walter Goodrich, chief of the 81st RSC Human Resources Division, said

their big push for TY 2000 was to improve the communication between units and themselves; and to also increase volunteer involvement and program reporting.

Through the efforts of volunteer Darby Quinn, the Family Readiness Office published its "Family Readiness" web page. They also published "The First Family," a tri-annual newsletter designed to serve as a valuable chain of command and chain of concern asset.

The staff plans to begin TY 2001 with a valuable tool in hand. Each commander will be required to submit an assessment of training needs that will include the number of TPU and full-time staff who have not attended a U.S. Army Reserve Regional Family Program Academy or the equivalent 12-hour training program.

The assessment will also identify training requirements for volunteers. According to program staff members, such plans will enable the staff to work smarter and plan more precisely to meet organizational goals.



Sgt. Derrick Witherspoon

Captain Monice Jackson-Ferrill (right), former 81st RSC personnel actions officer, shows a family the contents of an MRE (Meal Ready to Eat) during a recent Family Readiness visit to the Children's Hospital located in Birmingham, Ala.

Reservist sings the blues

Sergeant First Class Sharon Lane-Henley, an Army Reservist with the 3rd U.S. Army (Augmentation) located at Fort McPherson, Ga., sings "Summertime" from the Broadway Musical "Porgy and Bess."

Lane-Henley performed the song along with other reservists at the recent Family Readiness Academy held in Atlanta, Ga. They are members of the 81st RSC Soldiers Show. The Soldiers Show is a new 81st RSC program consisting of several soldiers from various units throughout the command who do everything from singing to stand-up comedy.

The Soldiers Show consists of approximately 11 soldiers and they are looking for more volunteers. Anyone interested in becoming a member of the 81st RSC Soldiers Show can contact Sgt. Jacquelyne Ford-Parnell, administrative assistant, at 1-877-749-9063, ext. 1757, or Chief Warrant Officer Ida Tyree-Hyche, administrative coordinator, at ext. 1953.



Maj. James Billings

81st RSC Soldiers Show Schedule

September 22, 2000

Atlanta, Ga.

81st RSC Commanders' Conference
1800-1930 hours, Westin Hotel

October 14, 2000

Charleston, S.C.

The Traveling Army Capabilities (TAC) and Soldier Show to the general public at the Air Force Airfield.

November 3, 2000

Jacksonville, Fla.

The Traveling Army Capabilities (TAC) and Soldier Show with the "Air, Sea, Land, Spectacular" at The Landing/Riverfront to the general public - A recruiting mission

November 4, 2000

Jacksonville, Fla.

The Traveling Army Capabilities (TAC) and Soldier Show with the "Air Sea, Land Spectacular" at the Airport/Airfield.

Reserve officer takes command of active Army unit

Story by Lt. Col. Ronnie McDonald
81st RSC, PAO

FORT HOOD, Texas – The ivy field of green bustled with a flurry of activity from masses of battle dress uniformed figures. Soldiers assembled on the parade field under the watchful shadows of Apache attack helicopters poised like birds of prey. The warm wind of Texas ruffled through rows of ceremonial flags adding a background accompaniment to the orders being issued on the field. Preparations were underway for the most unique change of command in the history of the 1st Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment (Attack), 4th Brigade Combat Team (BCT), and the 4th Infantry Division. An Army Reserve officer was about to take command of an active Army regiment.

“It is not something I will take lightly nor will I take my command or my soldiers for granted,” stated Lt. Col. Michael N. Thome.

Thome was about to become the first of only four Reserve officers to take command of an active Army unit.

“I have been accepted very well and I believe the reasons are two-fold. One, I’m a former instructor pilot in the very aircraft we fly, an AH-64 (Apache), with lots of experience to include combat. Two, is that I do have combat experience,” Thome explained.

Thome and his Apache accepted the first surrender of Iraqi soldiers in Operation Desert Storm.

“And third, if there needed to be one, I’ve flown with some of the guys who are now senior warrant officers and they have said good things. I feel very fortunate because I see how this could be a difficult situation to overcome.”

Thome spent more than 11 years on active duty. During this time he commanded an Apache company during Desert Shield/Storm.

Command (RSC). Brig. Gen. William B. Watson, Jr., RSC deputy commanding general, attended the change of command representing the 81st RSC. Ironically, Watson earned his combat patch with the same 4th Infantry Division in Vietnam.

The new commander, whose father was in the service for 31 years, took charge of his unique command with the “Ivy Division” on May 25. The unit is an attack helicopter battalion with 24 AH-64 Apache’s, 330-plus personnel and assorted ground vehicles.

“I hope to lead and guide these soldiers and leave a positive lasting impression in their minds and souls. I don’t want them to ever think of the fact that I’m a reservist. But if they do, I want it to be a positive one, and one of, ‘I’ll go to war with that guy,’” Thome emphasized. He will serve as commander of the battalion for two years.

Thome served his entire six-and-one-half-year Reserve career with the 121st Army

Two Apache helicopters roared to life on the field...

Reserve Command and 81st RSC in Birmingham. His duties included Aviation Standardization/Training Officer; Deputy, Individual Training; General Secretary Staff (GSS); and Chief, Operations Branch.

Thome attended the University of Alabama where he received a bachelor of science degree in Civil Engineering. He was commissioned as a second lieutenant, Distinguished Military Graduate, in May 1981 in field artillery, with a specialty of aviation.

After Field Artillery Officer Basic Course he went directly to Fort Rucker, Ala. Thome served as a Cobra and Apache Instructor Pilot (IP) as well as with the British Army on exchange as an IP flying the Gazelle helicopter.

What are the plans of a new Reserve commander of an active Army unit?

“My goals coincide with my command philosophy. Ensure the soldiers are trained and prepared to accomplish our mission. Take care of the soldiers and families under my command and do all of the above safely,” Thome replied. “When I left the service over seven years ago, I never thought this would be in my realm of possibilities. I love soldiers, soldiering and flying, so this is an opportunity, a reality.”

When it comes to family, the commander is clear on his position.

“My family is the most important element in my life,” he stated. Thome is married to the former Selina Ruth Albright of Huntsville, Ala. “Selina is almost 16 weeks pregnant with triplets. A true blessing from God. We are very excited about the additions to the family, but just a bit sad that we are not home to be closer to our direct family members,” Thome noted. “However, we’ll have lots of family, military family, out here.”

Two Apache helicopters roared to life on the field where Thome had taken command earlier. Their picturesque departure into a setting sun seemed a fitting finale for the day.



Lt. Col. Ronnie McDonald

Lieutenant Colonel Michael N. Thome (center) passes the unit colors back to the command sergeant major after receiving them from the 4th Aviation Regiment commander, Col. Craig K. Madden (left), as the outgoing commander, Lt. Col. Dyfird A. Harris (right), looks on.

His battalion was the second unit deployed in August of 1990. His background was what made him a credible candidate for the command.

The significance of the event did not go unnoticed by the 81st Regional Support



Capt. Tim McDonald

Right: Soldiers from the 1st Bn., 4th Aviation Regiment stand in formation on the 4th Infantry Division’s “Ivy Field.”

427th Med. Bn. aids soldiers at Purple Dragon 2000

Story by Lt. Col. Carrie UtterGarrett
427th Med. Bn.

CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. – Members of the 427th Medical Battalion (Logistics) based in Forest Park, Ga., participated in exercise “Purple Dragon” as members of Task Force 261 at Camp Lejeune. Task Force 261’s mission was to provide “real world” and simulated veterinary and medical logistics support to all Department of Defense (DOD) personnel in Purple Dragon.

The 18th Airborne Corps was known as Joint Task Force 761 and was the higher headquarters for Purple Dragon participants. Soldiers of the 427th were fully integrated into active Army, Navy, and Marine force requirements. They supported the Navy Hospital Ship “Comfort”, two Marine Expeditionary Forces, 82nd Airborne Division, and Army hospital assets.

The 427th assets provided medical resupply and blood management for the exercise. The units stayed in a basic field environment for the duration of their annual training. The 427th Medical Battalion also conducted force protection and trained on common soldier skills.

While providing assistance to Purple Dragon, the 427th also received sling load training from the 44th Medical Brigade, an active duty medical unit located at Fort Bragg, N.C. The soldiers were taught how to prepare boxes of blood products and medical supplies to be medically evacuated (MEDEVAC) to various locations.

Although sling loading medical supplies is not one of the 427th’s main missions, storing supplies is. The 427th Medical Battalion was the first Army Reserve medical unit to receive, store, and issue the Anthrax vaccine.

The soldiers from the 427th who participated in Purple Dragon said they enjoyed the training they received and they look forward to receiving more quality training, like sling loading, in the future.



Photo courtesy of Lt. Col. Carrie UtterGarrett

Members of the 427th Medical Battalion, Forest Park, Ga., learn how to perform sling load operations at LZ Sparrow, Camp Lejeune, NC., from members of the 44th Medical Brigade from Fort Bragg, N.C., using boxes of simulated blood products.

375th Transportation Group loads up, heads out for SEDRE

Story by Capt. Janice Demings
375th Trans. Group

PORT HUENEME, Calif. – Each year, Forces Command funds the Sealift Emergency Deployment Readiness Exercise (SEDRE) cycles to test and validate the joint readiness of various Reserve and Active Component units supporting strategic mobility. The 375th Transportation Group from Mobile, Ala., is providing command and control for SEDRE cycles during fiscal year 2000-01.

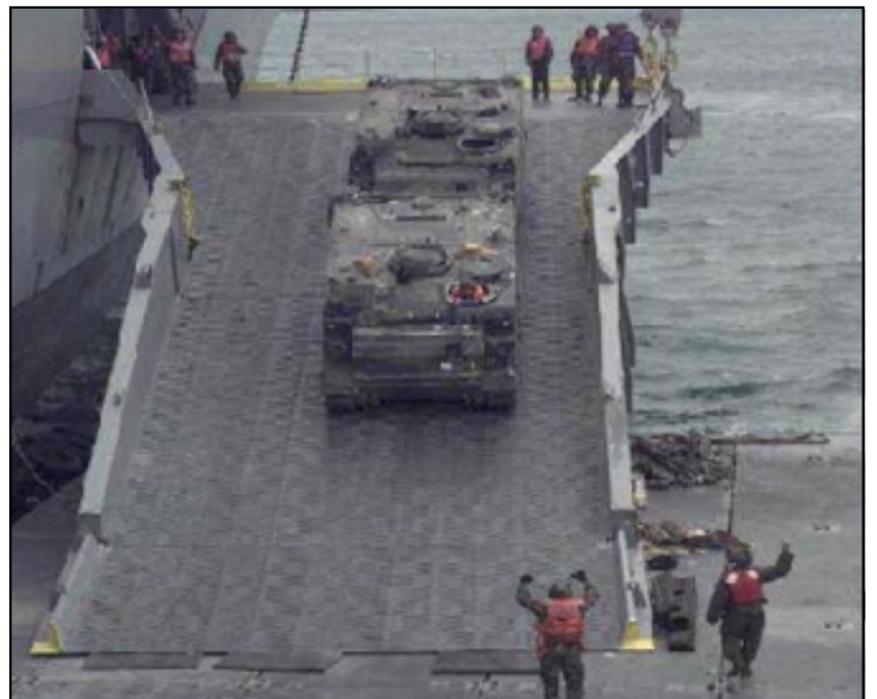
SEDRE 2000 is a two-phased deployment exercise consisting of an upload at Savannah, Ga., and a download at Port Hueneme, Calif. Reserve transportation personnel are brought into SEDRE to test and validate readiness. More than two thirds of the Army’s transportation assets belong to the Army Reserve. The 375th was in direct support of the 3rd Infantry Division and the U.S. Army’s 3rd

Brigade, who task organized as the Brigade Combat Team (BCT).

The 375th Transportation Group’s mission was to command and control reception, staging and onward movement (RSO) of the Combat Team’s equipment and vehicles from Port Hueneme to Fort Irwin, Calif., for National Training Center (NTC) rotation 2000.

The 375th Transportation Group’s S-4 logistics section, together with battalion and company maintenance sections worked to ensure all transportation equipment was inspected and certified to standards. Some of the equipment was loaded onto 872 A2 trailers, also known as 18-wheelers, chained down and staged in marshaling areas. Other equipment was refueled, matched-up with organic trailers and staged for drive-away missions.

The 375th also established a Convoy Support Center (CSC) at Edwards Air Force Base (AFB), Calif., and a



Capt. Janice Demings

Soldiers from the 483rd Transportation Battalion, Mare Island, Calif., off load M1A2 tanks from the ship “Cape Edmond.”



Capt. Janice Demings

Soldiers from the 375th help load vehicles to be moved into the National Training Center.

Logistics Support Area (LSA) at Fort Irwin, Calif. They also ensured accountability for all 3rd BCT equipment from the point of discharge until it arrived “in the box” at the NTC. During this mission, safety planning was more difficult than normal because of congested roads along the coast, and weather and elevation extremes from the port to Edwards AFB.

The 375th, well aware that the key to successfully completing any mission is a strict adherence to all safety standards, faced challenges along one of few 220-mile stretches of land in America where

the environment changes rapidly. This diverse environment provided a great location for Area of Operations Responsibility validation and the entire mission was accomplished without an accident or incident.

A majority of the soldiers who participated in SEDRE 2000 said they gained a better understanding of how important and complicated this type of operation would become in a wartime deployment where the volume and tempo of operations would be drastically increased.

Blowing Smoke

81st RSC chemical units smoke-up Fort Bragg during RIO LOBO 2000

Story by Sgt. Derrick Witherspoon
81st RSC, PAO

As enormous, white clouds of smoke billowed over the hills and rolled across the sandy terrain, they left a blanket of security that could keep soldiers covered and undetected while they moved through a combat zone. Although these giant clouds of smoke created at Fort Bragg did not conceal any soldiers, the exercise signaled that RIO LOBO 2000 was in full swing.

The 415th Chemical Brigade, Greenville, S.C., hosted RIO LOBO 2000, a chemical exercise primarily used to evaluate smoke and decontamination missions of various active Army, Army Reserve and Army National Guard chemical units throughout the United States.

Approximately 21,000 soldiers - active, reservists and guardsmen - from 13 states participated in the exercise. The 81st Regional Support Command (RSC) had 11 different Reserve units involved in the exercise. The units were performing their annual training (AT) and worked side-by-side with active Army and National Guard soldiers.

During the exercise, the chemical units performed individual smoke and decontamination missions while being evaluated by a training assessment model (TAM) evaluator.

Company, Athens, Ga., said this exercise taught him how to perform his job better while working in the field.

"I really learned a lot about my job during this AT. I just came back from basic training and the fact that we got more hands-on training during this exercise really helped me to understand my job as a fuel specialist better," Evans said. "Our company had a lot of different functions, like providing clean water, food and supplies to the units. My main function was just pumping fuel, but without us the units would be humping it on their backs," Evans said, smiling as he pumped gas into a high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle (HMMWV).

Also participating in RIO LOBO was the 3274th U.S. Army Hospital (USAH), based in Durham, N.C., which was unusual for them. As a table of distribution and allowances (TDA) unit, the 3274th generally doesn't go to the field. TDA units usually don't deploy or train in the field because they are headquarters-based units. This year various soldiers from the unit were selected to support the exercise.

Captain Peggy L. Wilson-Stephens, a registered nurse with the 3274th USAH, has volunteered six times to provide medical support to exercises like RIO LOBO. She said this year makes number seven.

"We usually don't come out to the field because we aren't a field unit. We basically volunteer to come and work with these soldiers every year because we enjoy it," Wilson-Stephens said as she smiled, wiped the sweat from her forehead and adjusted the Kevlar on her head. "I look forward to coming back next year. It's hot out here, but this is a great



A soldier from the 413th Chemical Company, Florence, S.C., drives a HMMWV, as it sprays smoke, while performing a smoke mission during RIO LOBO 2000.

"We had Army Reservists from seven different RSCs participating in this year's exercise," said Maj. Connie Peeler, RIO LOBO public affairs officer for the 415th Chemical Brigade. "They came from Reserve units as far west as Fort Lewis, Wash.; as far east as Florence, S.C.; as far north as Jamaica, N.Y.; and as far south as Tampa, Fla."

Peeler said on the Army Reserve side of the exercise there were five chemical battalions, one quartermaster battalion, and one military police battalion. She added that although this was primarily an exercise to evaluate chemical units, quartermaster, medical and military police units supporting the exercise were also evaluated on their job performance.

"The M.P.s' overall mission was to support the chemical units by providing perimeter and convoy security when they rolled out to perform their missions," said Sgt. 1st Class Douglas W. Lofreddo, 351st Military Police Company, Ocala, Fla. "This was really a good exercise on all levels. From my level as platoon sergeant, to the operator level and down to the lowest ranking soldier. Everyone got trained on his or her level."

Private First Class Wayne Evans Jr., a fuel specialist with the 1014th Quartermaster

way to stay up on your field training."

Lieutenant Colonel Terry Parker, chief of plans and training for the 3274th USAH, expressed the same sentiments as Wilson-Stephens when it came to the training RIO LOBO provided to their unit. "For some of our soldiers this is the only unit that they've been in and their field experience is very limited. I think it was important for them to get out to the field because they are technically proficient, but perhaps not tactically proficient, and this is how you learn your soldier's skills," Parker said. "One thing that I'm really proud of is how the medical soldiers got out and actively engaged with the troops. They didn't wait for the soldiers to come to them with their problems, they went out and checked on the soldiers to make sure they were all right. I also can't brag enough on how the active components integrated with the reservists. I have never seen an exercise where the integration of the active and Reserve component soldiers has gone so smoothly," Parker said as she gazed around in amazement at the soldiers as they hustled throughout the base camp.

Many of the soldiers said RIO LOBO 2000 was definitely filled with massive clouds of white smoke throughout the air, but none said that the exercise went up in smoke. As the soldiers packed up to head home, many reflected on the training they received from RIO LOBO and were already focusing on how they could make next year's exercise even better.



Sgt. Derrick Witherspoon

Chemical units use "Smoke Pots," like the one above, to see what direction the wind is blowing so they can insure the smoke they dispense does not blow in their direction while they are driving.

Combat medics put medical skills to test at JRTC

Story by Staff Sgt. Judith L. Keeney
300th MPAD

FORT POLK, La. - The perimeter is breached and the 75th Combat Support Hospital (CSH) is overrun. A war-weary amputee sits at the entrance to the Intermediate Care Ward, M-16 rifle at the ready. "I can still use my arms," he says. The diminutive chief nurse stands guard over her domain. The soldiers of the 75th used their medical skills to save their patients once, now they must use their combat skills to save them again.

The above scenario was just one event designed to test the soldier skills of the 75th CSH unit members during their three-week rotation at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) at Fort Polk. The Tuscaloosa, Ala., based unit was challenged with an average of 17 scenarios per 24 hours during their rotation, according to Maj. Valerie W. Brown, a psychiatric nurse with the 75th CSH, who acted as the civil affairs officer during the exercise.

The unit trained for its JRTC rotation several years prior to its experience here. "In the first phase we looked at the layout of the field hospital, doctrine and tactics, and utilization of equipment. The next two years we concentrated on 'patient play.' So, this has been the culmination of many years of training," Brown said.

"The JRTC is the most well-integrated exercise you will ever participate in," said Col. Marietta P. Stanton, who assumed command of the 75th CSH only three weeks before deploying to JRTC. "The experience is very similar to combat operations and taxes the soldiers just as much. It is the most realistic training I have had in my 23 years of service."

"The most surprising aspect of the training has been the amount of contact with civilians in a humanitarian role," Stanton continued. "They are teaching us specific ways to interact with civilians under our rules of engagement. It's also a lot more 'hands-on' with a concentration on maintaining clinical skills while also practicing our soldier skills."

Every soldier skill the unit possessed appeared to be tested as 75th soldiers went through the exercise. "In Vietnam, the medics wore red crosses on their uniforms and kept getting shot," Brown said, explaining the strong emphasis on combat



Sgt. Judith L. Keeney

A litter team from the 75th Combat Support Hospital, Tuscaloosa, Ala., evacuates casualties during its rotation at the Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, La.

"The enemy knows that if they take out our medical assets it demoralizes the troops."

Maj. Valerie W. Brown

skills. "The enemy knows that if they take out our medical assets it demoralizes the troops."

Approximately 200 soldiers from the 75th CSH, supplemented by volunteers from other 81st Regional Support Command (RSC) units, participated in the rotation. Staff Sgt. Geraldine Coleman, a licensed practical nurse (LPN) with the 75th CSH, said the mission was vastly different from her civilian job as an LPN in here local Veterans Administration (VA) Hospital. "I am doing a lot more patient care here, and practicing basic survival skills," she said.

"My advice to anyone coming to JRTC is to come

in shape or you are not going to survive. Physical fitness is a must," said Spc. Curtis L. Samuel, a combat medic who has been with the 75th for the past six years.

The mission also taught the soldiers how important each one is to the success of the unit. "It was a real challenge protecting each other. The supply section was the only section that didn't get hit," said Spc. Melba A. Craig, a supply specialist. "This hospital cannot function without supplies, so we have to make sure we stay alert," she added.

The enemy is on the run and the noise and dust from the UH-60 Black Hawks coming in with fresh casualties fills the air. Litter teams run out to the landing zone and rush the wounded off the choppers and into triage. The combat medics are at it again.

Mobile petroleum lab helps 373rd Qm. Bn. keep vehicles mission ready, fit to fight

Story by Pfc. Jeffrey S. Keown
372nd MPAD

LOUISVILLE, Ky. - You're driving down the interstate. Your vehicle begins to sputter. Then it stalls. Your heart is somewhere in your stomach as you dodge the speeding traffic. You make it to the side of the road, barely. As you wait for a wrecker to come and tow you to the nearest repair shop, you begin to wonder about the gas station where you just filled up. Was the fuel contaminated? Is that why the car died?

Now imagine being in combat. Your Apache helicopter begins choking and the engines stall. Look out below.

"The Army cannot afford to take chances with the fuel used in combat vehicles. The cost of repairing a fuel injection system needs to be the least of worries when bullets start flying," said 1st Lt. Carl L. Dillard, officer-in-charge of the Petroleum Semi-Trailer Mounted Laboratory with the 373rd Quartermaster Battalion, located in Louisville.

"The Army cannot afford to take chances with the fuel used in combat vehicles."

1st Lt. Carl L. Dillard

"The Army must keep its vehicles running. This is why the petroleum lab is used to run various tests on fuels and oils. The tests ensure that the fuel is free of contaminants that could damage or impair a vehicle," Dillard said.

The 373rd's petroleum lab is the only one of its kind in the 81st Regional Support Command (RSC). It is also one of few in the Army Reserve. "This makes the job seem even more important," Dillard said.

The lab's crew is made up of 77Ls, petroleum fuel technicians. It takes between six and seven crewmembers to operate the lab once deployed. Dillard said the fuel in question is tested in the lab and the results are reported to higher headquarters.

"We test the fuel several different ways. Most of the tests only take a few minutes," said Sgt. Lorenzo M. Tarrence, petroleum lab technician with the 373rd.

It is very important to ensure the quality and purity of fuel before



Pfc. Jeffrey S. Keown

The inside of the Petroleum Semi-Trailer Mounted Laboratory shows the extensive testing equipment the laboratory contains.

attempting to run machinery with it. "If a tank breaks down in the desert or a truck gets stuck on a highway, then manpower, time, money and strategic prowess are lost," Tarrence said.

The Jet Fuel Tactical Operation Test, conducted with a \$150,000 machine, is the most intricate test in the lab. "It takes two days to test aircraft fuel in the machine," Tarrence said.

"The military wants to be darn sure that the fuel we put in an aircraft doesn't cause problems," he added.

According to Tarrence, being in the field with the trailer can be quite comfortable. There is

enough room to sleep on the floor of the air-conditioned and heated trailer and its crew appreciates the amenities.

"The trailer is a hotel on wheels. It has a refrigerator, a freezer and two ovens," Tarrence said. "The petroleum lab serves as a preventive combat measure. It has no offensive power, but it protects the fuel systems of all the vehicles that do," he added.

When the military sends its people to the field or into battle everything needs to work properly, especially vehicles. The petroleum fuel technicians of the 373rd are helping to keep those vehicles running safely and smoothly.

Reservists get “Revved-up” for annual Drivers Rodeo

81st RSC promotes safety, family readiness at Drivers Rodeo

Story by Sgt. Derrick Witherspoon
81st RSC, PAO

GULFPORT, Miss. – While soldiers concentrated on backing five-ton trucks into tight corners, or making sure they performed their preventive maintenance checks and services (PMCS) to standard, thoughts of driver’s safety and family were not far away.

The 81st Regional Support Command (RSC) recently held its annual Drivers Rodeo at the Naval Construction Battalion Center in Gulfport, where approximately 70 soldiers competed to see who was the best driver in the RSC.

The grand champion of this year’s Drivers Rodeo was Sgt. 1st Class Carl D. Sims from the 413th Chemical Company, Florence, S.C. Sims said it was a great honor to win the competition and he looks forward to competing again in the future.

Safety

Although the soldiers were focused on winning the competition, performing safely during the competition was a major priority.

“Driver’s safety is a big concern in the Army Reserve and events like these help soldiers maintain and perfect their driving skills,” said Capt. Jonathan C. Cox, officer in charge of the rodeo. “The soldiers not only have a number of things to do with the vehicles, they also have to remember to do everything in a safe manner. For every unsafe act they perform they lose points that could be vital in them becoming the overall winner of the rodeo.”

Cox said the Drivers Rodeo is designed to help promote esprit de corps and unit cohesion, but in the process, to also stress proper PMCS

and driver safety. Master Sgt. Gene Brown, noncommissioned officer in charge of the rodeo, said the competition definitely helps improve the way soldiers drive military and civilian vehicles.

Training

“Participating in the rodeo teaches the soldiers the correct way to perform driver’s safety and how they can drive in a safer manner,” Brown said. “These rodeos tell us a little about how our soldiers are being trained to drive military vehicles. By watching them perform in the rodeo we get an idea of where the 81st stands when it comes to our drivers training program.”

Brown said the rodeo also gives unit commanders an understanding for the reason and importance of conducting drivers training on a sustained basis. “Commanders need to be able to keep their soldiers trained so they can operate vehicles without hurting someone or destroying government equipment. Participating in the rodeo helps the soldiers focus specifically on their driving skills, which is good driver’s training for them,” Brown said.

Family

While performing safely in the competition was a priority to the soldiers, spending time with their families was just as much of a priority. The soldiers were given the opportunity to bring their families along so they could watch them compete. Many of the soldiers said they wished there were more events like this for them to bring their families to.

Sergeant First Class Steven McRae, 844th Engineer Battalion, Knoxville, Tenn., said having his family at the competition was a big morale booster. “I’m really glad the 81st allowed me to bring my family with me. This is one of those event that you want your family at, cheering you on,” McRae



Sgt. Derrick Witherspoon

Specialist Lynwood Owens, 315th Qm. Det., Jacksonville, N.C., looks backwards as he tries to back a forklift through an obstacle course without spilling any water out of the container he is transporting.

said. “What I really enjoyed is being able to have my family see part of what I do in the military, and that is drive military vehicles.”

Support

McRae’s Wife, Carol, said events like this are a great way for families to get out and support their family member serving in the Army Reserve. “I think there should be more events like this so families can stay involved in the lives of their family

members serving in the Reserve. The more families support reservists, the better they will be able to perform their jobs for the Reserve,” she said.

Although this year’s rodeo had more reservists, two new events and some new equipment, a few of the old fundamentals were still there: driver’s safety and family support. Two fundamentals that soldiers said made this years competition a success.

Estonians train, bond with reservists during visit to 81st RSC

Story by Staff Sgt. Scotty Johnson
81st RSC, PAO

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – Kinship was forged and language barriers overcame when an Estonian public affairs delegation recently visited the 81st Regional Support Command (RSC) headquarters for a familiarization tour.

One officer and three civilian representatives comprised the delegation. 3rd Lt. Tanel Rutman, Heikki Kirotar, Aare Lepaste and Hannes Reinomagi made up the contingency. The familiarization tour provided the Estonians with an overview of the 81st RSC’s public affairs strategy, methods of doing business and the role of the 81st RSC’s public affairs units in mission accomplishment. Kirotar, who fluently speaks several languages, served as the translator for the non-English speaking members.

Staff members of the 81st RSC Public Affairs Office (PAO) briefed the foreign delegates on areas ranging from Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) to media relations. Long hours and few breaks were necessary to disseminate the amount of information covered. “The public affairs briefings were very cost-efficient because a great deal of information was shared quickly,” Reinomagi said.

During their Birmingham-area stay, the delegation toured The Birmingham News facility and ABC 33/40 News Station. There they viewed first-hand how both award-winning agencies operate. They were especially impressed with the production studio at ABC 33/40. “Their excellent technical equipment allows them to produce better quality productions,” Lepaste said.

The contingency also traveled to Allen



Paul Adams

Lieutenant Colonel Ronnie McDonald, 81st RSC, PAO, right, briefs (from left to right) 3rd Lt. Tanel Rutman, Aare Lepaste, Heikki Kirotar, and Hannes Reinomagi on website development at Allen Thornton Career and Technical Center in Killen, Ala.

Thornton Career and Technical Center, located in Killen, Ala. During the two-hour trip from Birmingham to the school, the delegates got an opportunity to see some of the most beautiful countryside Alabama has to offer. At the school they received training and instruction in desktop publishing techniques, the Avid Video System and website development from Lt. Col. Ronnie McDonald, 81st RSC PAO and instructor at the

school. “As a result of the training we received here, we will most likely purchase digital equipment to bring us up-to-date,” said Kirotar.

The week was not all work and no play. Each evening, the PAO Staff planned leisure activities for the delegates. They took in a Birmingham Barons baseball game, attended an informal dinner and visited Wheeler Lock and Dam in Florence, Ala.

MAKERS

Soldier receives Governor's Award

GUNTER AIR FORCE BASE, Ala. – Master Sergeant Merrel R. Gage, an Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) soldier stationed at Headquarters, 81st Regional Support Command (RSC), recently received Alabama's highest military award from Governor Don Siegelman. The Alabama Governor's Award for Outstanding Enlisted Representative was presented to Gage in a ceremony held at Gunter Air Force Base in Montgomery, Ala. Gage was one of approximately 30 service members to receive the prestigious award.

Sergeant Major Jose Mojica, 81st RSC command retention NCO and Gage's supervisor, said Gage is an outstanding NCO and that is one of the reasons the 81st chose him to receive the award. "Master Sergeant Gage is one soldier I would go to war with any day. We are very proud to have him as a member of our office," Mojica said.

Gage received the award as a representative of the 81st RSC, where he is currently assigned to the 81st RSC Retention Office serving as a senior retention NCO. Gage provides support to two major subordinate commands and four direct reporting units.

"This was really an unexpected honor to receive this award. I think it was a distinct honor to represent the soldiers of the 81st RSC," Gage said.

Gage was also recently selected as the 81st RSC NCO of the Year for 2000.

(By Sgt. Derrick Witherspoon)

Reservist awarded Outstanding Leadership Certificate

ROME, Ga. – Maj. Lora L. Tucker, commander of the 209th Broadcast Public Affairs Detachment (BPAD), located in Rome, was presented an "Outstanding Leadership Certificate" at the Department of Defense Sustaining Base Leadership Management Course, Fort Belvoir, Va., in April. As one of seven out of 160 military personnel selected for the three-month course, Tucker was commended for her outstanding leadership and professional achievement that demonstrated concern for the soldiers and their families.

Tucker was chosen to become the first active duty commander of the 209th PBAD in 1998. The detachment was going through a difficult time after returning from their deployment to Bosnia. The 209th was the first Army Reserve unit in the south activated for the peacekeeping mission in Bosnia. This activation came six years, to the day, after the Armed Forces Radio and Television Services broadcasters reported for duty in Saudi Arabia during the Desert Storm War.

By the time Tucker assumed command, only a handful of the soldiers that deployed to Bosnia had re-enlisted. "I think she was exactly what we needed at the time and we're very fortunate to have her assigned to us," said Sgt. Christopher Parker, 209th

Broadcast NCO, discussing the morale of the detachment during and after their deployment to Bosnia.

"For me the key to leadership is caring about soldiers," said Tucker. Her credo is exemplified by the way she treats new recruits to the detachment. Rome native, Pfc. Adam James Daley, who enlisted in the Army Reserve before graduating from high school, said, "When I came (to the Detachment) she was even asking me if I noticed anything that can be done better....she thinks that we're all important here."

After leaving the 209th next year, Tucker hopes to attend the U.S. Army War College and take command one more time as a joint-staff commander.

Sergeant Victor R. Borges, 209th unit administrator, credits Tucker's caring attitude and good communication with the troops as the reason for the detachment's high morale. "Her recent Outstanding Leadership Award will give credit to what she does for the soldiers of the 209th," said Borges.

(By Staff Sgt. Pat Johnston, 319th MPAD)

Painting honors reservists

WASHINGTON, D.C. – During the celebration of the Army Reserve's 92nd birthday, Reserve officials unveiled a painting depicting the Reserve's contribution to the peacekeeping mission in Bosnia. The painting was one that captured the soldiers of the 351st Military Police Company from Ocala, Fla., as they performed their daily duties in the Balkans.

The painting, entitled "BOSNIA – MARCH 1998," depicts military police checkpoint operations at Camp Bedrock, Bosnia, and was created by retired Army Colonel Gary N. Cassidy. Soldiers from the 10th Psychological Operations Battalion of St. Louis, Mo., were also portrayed in the painting.

The 351st sent Capt. Charles W. Seifert, commander of the 351st; Staff Sgt. Jacqueline L. Knowles and Sgt. Christopher C. Thrift to the celebration to represent the unit at the unveiling of the painting.

Seifert said he was honored to be a part of such a huge ceremony. "As reservists, it made us feel honored and respected to be a part of this painting," Seifert said.

"I think the painting and the deployment show not only to the Army Reserve, but to the Army as a whole and the general public, that we are a part of the whole team and we can do the job just as well as anybody. The painting and ceremony made us feel like that," he added.

Seifert said the unit received a framed copy of the painting and they were given individual copies that the artist signed for them. "We have our big painting hanging in our Reserve center. We are very proud of the work we did in Bosnia and this painting

really catches that spirit," Seifert said.

(By Jane McHugh, Army Times staff writer)

Warrant Officer Professional Development & Mentorship Conference

ORLANDO, Fla. – A team of 81st Regional Support Command (RSC) Command Warrant Officer mentors, supported by Brig. Gen. Michael R. Mayo, commanding general of the 81st RSC, recently set about planning the 81st RSC's first Warrant Officer Professional Development and Mentorship Conference. The conference's target audience included the 359 warrant officers assigned to the 81st RSC, and eligible noncommissioned officers who had processed applications for warrant officer candidacy, as well as warrant officer candidates.

This initial effort produced 189 registered attendees who gathered for continuing professional development through briefings on topics, such as: "Overview - What is Mentorship," "Senior Warrant Officer Professional Development," "Award of MOS and WO Reclassifications," "Warrant Officer Recruiting," and much more.

Opening the conference was Mayo, who is a strong supporter of the Warrant Officer Mentorship Program and an advocate for warrant officer professional development. He challenged each warrant officer to go back to his or her respective units and tell other warrant officers that he expects their presence at the 2001 Warrant Officer Conference. Mayo encouraged the entire group to set aside three annual training days at the beginning of fiscal year 2001 for the conference and offer no excuse for not appearing. He also challenged the Command Warrant Officer Mentorship team to follow his initial suggestion of providing breakouts by proponents at the next conference.

(By CW3 Ida Tyree-Hyche, 81st RSC, EO Office)

Supply Excellence Award

The 81st Regional Support Command (RSC) recently had two units recognized as winners in the Department of the Army level, Chief of Staff, Army Supply Excellence Award (CSASEA) competition.

The winning units were the 802nd Ordnance Company, Gainesville, Ga., and the 844th Engineer Battalion, Knoxville, Tenn.

A ceremony was recently held in Arlington, Va., in honor of all the CSASEA winners.

(By Sgt. Derrick Witherspoon)

Free passes for ex-POWs

Story By Paul Adams
81st RSC, PAO

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Army Reserve Lt. Col. Bart Billings of the 332nd Medical Bde., located in Nashville, has been working behind the scenes to get Major League Baseball to offer free game passes to those who were Prisoners of War (POWs) during World War II and Korea.

Billings' work in the Army Reserve and his interest in POWs goes hand-in-hand with his civilian occupation. As a clinical psychologist and special projects officer with the 332nd, Billings founded and directed, for eight years, the 81st RSC's and 63rd RSC's annual Combat Stress Conference. The Association of Military Surgeons of the U.S., the 332nd and the 113th Combat Stress Co., Los Angeles, Calif., sponsored the conference.

In civilian life Billings is a clinical and consulting psychologist and a district psychologist for the California Department of Rehabilitation. He is a resident of Carlsbad, Calif., near San Diego.

Major League Baseball has already awarded lifetime passes to former POWs of the Vietnam War, American hostages held in Iran, sailors aboard the Navy vessel

Pueblo captured off North Korea and POWs from the Gulf War, according to Billings.

Ever since the first National Tri-Service POW Conference, founded and directed by Billings in 1999 in Andersonville, Ga., at the National POW Museum, Billings has been aware of the inequality among POWs receiving lifetime passes to big league baseball games, and decided to do something about it.

Although he has yet to win the brass of the big leagues over to his way of thinking, Billings convinced the San Diego Padres to play ball with him.

"I initially contacted the Padres to solicit their assistance in lobbying Major League Baseball to issue lifetime passes to the WW II and Korean War POWs nationwide. My request was forwarded to Major League Baseball. While they are still deciding, we are fortunate that the San Diego Padres organization decided to proceed with this idea," Billings said.

While Billings is continuing in his efforts to persuade the "Majors" to adopt his idea league wide, the leadership of the Padres realized the importance of what the POW veterans of WW II and the Korean War



SFC Joseph Tesoro

Participating in the San Diego Padres' symbolic ceremony where lifetime passes were presented to ex-POWs from WW II and Korea are, from left to right, Brig. Gen. Richard D. Lynch, Lt. Col. Bart Billings and Larry Lucchino, president and CEO of the Padres.

contributed to this country and implemented Billings' idea by symbolically presenting to representatives from both groups lifetime passes in a Padres game last March. Billings, along with his commander, Brig. Gen. Richard D.

Lynch, attended the ceremony.

The Padres played the dedication game in Battle Dress Uniforms (BDUs). Billings said that this was a first for Major League Baseball and that the uniform tops were sent to the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, Ohio.

ROUNDUP

3 PERSCOM

741st AG CO

ORLANDO, Fla. – The 1st Platoon, 741st Adjutant General Company, located in Orlando, became the first 81st Regional Support Command (RSC) unit to deploy to Kosovo, following a farewell ceremony held at the Orange County Army Reserve Center in June for 18 of the unit's soldiers. The platoon will perform postal operations for troops supporting Operation Joint Guardian.

Held amid the hugs and farewells of approximately 50 friends and family members, the ceremony was a deserving tribute and sendoff for a unit that has been called to active duty previously. Just two years after the 741st was initially activated in September 1995, the 2nd Platoon was mobilized and deployed to Bosnia in support of Operation Joint Guard. They returned in March 1998 after a 270-day rotation.

In delivering his remarks during the ceremony, Sgt. Maj. Richard Watkins, from the 3rd Personnel Command, the 741st's major subordinate command, told the soldiers, "What you are going to be doing is delivering that special note, that special letter. Even that special package a soldier has been waiting on could pass through your hands. You don't realize how important this is," he said.

As they all listened in deep thought, the soldiers were beaming with an air of confidence that they could perform their mission and live up to the unit's motto, "Delivering Morale with Blood, Sweat and Courage," as other unit members had in the past.

(By Paul Adams, 81st RSC, PAO)

834th AG CO

MIAMI, Fla. – As its unit motto states, "WE DELIVER, FIRST CLASS," the 834th Adjutant General Company (Postal), located in Miami, has been at the forefront providing first-class postal support to every major deployment from World War II; Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, Saudi Arabia; New Horizons '99, El Salvador; as well as a second deployment to Bosnia in support of Operation Joint Forge.

During the unit's recent deployment to Bosnia, several commands and staff from Forces Command, U.S. Army Reserve Command and U.S. Army Europe visited the 834th. On each visit unit members received such items as military coins and has received congratulations for their excellent service.

In addition to providing postal service, the deployed soldiers adopted a Bosnian school, Gornje Vukovije Elementary, and worked with the children, spending time with them and providing them with needed school supplies.

Though the soldiers said their deployment to Bosnia was long and challenging, they agreed that they fared well and continue to, "DELIVER, FIRST CLASS!"

(By Capt. Faye Slater, 834th AG Co., Postal)

640th ASG

373rd Qm. Bn.

BOWMAN AIR FIELD, Ky. – On Saturday, May 20, 1950, former President Harry S. Truman brought the five military branches together to celebrate and honor the lives of service members. The event was named Armed Forces Day.

In honor of 50th Anniversary of Armed Forces Day, and for training and deployment preparation, Lt. Col. Robert Seifert, commander of the 373rd Quartermaster Battalion in Louisville, Ky., brought together the four Army Reserve units under his command at Hangar seven on Bowman Air Field.

The 373rd's subordinate units - the 475th Transportation Detachment, Bardstown, Ky; 125th Transportation Company, Lexington, Ky; and the 400th Quartermaster Company, Maysville, Ky., made night movements to Bowman on the 19th. The 5010th U.S. Army Hospital, Louisville, Ky., also came to help medically process 400th soldiers for their

deployment to Korea scheduled in November and December.

The four units sat up their equipment for display at the celebration, allowing civilians to get hands-on experience. The 373rd Family Support Group was also on hand, selling refreshments to raise money.

The celebration brought the public and the military together, enhancing community relations.

(By Pfc. Jeffrey S. Keown, 372nd MPAD)

212th TC CO

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Soldiers from Detachment 1, 212th Transportation Company, from Nashville, recently participated in the observance of Armed Forces Day held at the Bicentennial Mall State Park in Nashville.

Staff Sergeant Michael Brown, Spc. Ken Harris, Spc. Chris Denham and Pfc. Chris Smith wheeled a Palletized Loading System (PLS) alongside the Mall as part of a demonstration for the event.

Detachment 1 is under the command of the 640th Area Support Group also located in Nashville.

Armed Forces Day was set aside 50 years ago by President Truman to foster awareness of the present day soldier and provide a continuing awareness of their importance.

(By Lt. Col. Ken Tarkington, 640th ASG)

5 MD GP

358th Med. Det.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – Major John Martin of Marietta, Ga., recently took command of the 358th Medical Detachment (Vet) (Small) located in Tuskegee, Ala. Martin assumed command of the 358th from Lt. Col. Joel Ward, who has been commander of the unit since December 1997. Col. Roger S. Blackstock, commander of the 5th Medical Group in Birmingham, conducted the change of command ceremony during the unit's April drill at the Cleveland Leigh Abbott U.S. Army Reserve Center in Tuskegee.

Martin assumes responsibility for a veterinary detachment company of approximately nine soldiers. The 358th's mission is to provide veterinary service to all branches of the military, conduct food wholesomeness and procurement inspections, provide health care for all military animals, and establish prevention, control and sentinel programs to protect soldiers from food-borne illnesses and zoonotic diseases.

(By 1st Lt. Alan Hicks, 358th Med. Det.)

926th EN GP

844th En. Bn.

COMALAPA AIR BASE, El Salvador – Company C, 844th Engineer Battalion, Greenville, Tenn., recently sent approximately 58 soldiers to El Salvador to lend a helping hand while performing their annual training (AT). In El Salvador, the soldiers performed construction work on two school buildings, a clinic, and a bathroom facility.

Staff Sergeant Frank Barrett, a noncommissioned officer from the 844th who was in charge of one of the project sites, said the unit's mission in El Salvador was a true success.

"Most soldiers on my site were new to this type of mission. Our unit has undergone a significant transition in the last few years due to the downsizing of the military," Barrett said. "Practically all the soldiers on my site had only recently graduated from their MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) school. We were teaching and training these new soldiers while concentrating on the mission at hand. We also cross-trained heavy construction equipment operators to lay block as well."

Barrett said the speech barrier between the Salvadorian block layers and the 844th soldiers was a difficult obstacle to overcome, but worth it in the end. "I feel our efforts were instrumental in helping the local people have better conditions to educate their children in. I wish we could do this type of training and assistance in our own country where it is needed," Barrett said.

"We have traveled to different countries many times since I was assigned to the unit, and I think all young

people today could benefit from such travel. They would be able to see the conditions of people in these countries, and realize that we are very fortunate. Maybe they would no longer take our abundant lifestyle for granted," Barrett concluded.

(By Sgt. 1st Class Clay R. Shelton, 844th En. Bn.)

81st RSG

3220th USAR GSU

West Palm Beach, Fla. – Lieutenant Colonel Edwin R. Marrero recently assumed command of the 3220th U.S. Army Reserve Garrison, West Palm Beach, during a ceremony held at the Armed Forces Pavilion in Lake Lyde Park, also in West Palm Beach.

Colonel Phillip R. Speake, the outgoing commander, held the position since April 1997. His next assignment will be as the Commander for the Army Element, Joint Reserve Unit, U.S. Joint Forces Command, Norfolk, Va.

Marrero, a native of San Juan, Puerto Rico, comes to his new position from the 32nd Transportation Group (Composite), Tampa, Fla., where he held the Deputy Commander's position.

Marrero's civilian job is Supervisory Staff, Operations and Training Specialist for the 143rd Transportation Command, Orlando, Fla. He is responsible for the command's training program and supporting resources, which includes a three million dollar training and operations budget in support of 53 Army Reserve units.

(By Staff Sgt. Roberto Amoroso, 3220th USAR GSU)

375th TC GP

356th Qm. Bn.

LAUREL, Miss. – Soldiers from the 356th Quartermaster Battalion, located in Laurel, recently gave their new commander a warm welcome and bid their old commander a fond farewell as they held their change of command ceremony.

Lieutenant Colonel Don Crosby assumed command of the 356th during the change of command ceremony held at the 356th Reserve center in Laurel. As Crosby addressed the unit for the first time, he stated, "It's good to be back home."

The outgoing commander, Lt. Col. Cynthia K. Patton, had a successful command and served from May 1997 to January 2000.

(By Staff Sgt. Mitchell Scott, 356th Qm. Bn.)

641st ASG

PINELLAS COUNTY, Fla. – Soldiers from the 641st Area Support Group (ASG) recently participated in the Pinellas County, Florida Law Enforcement Torch Run 2000 to raise money for the Special Olympics. This was the 18th annual five-mile run through downtown St. Petersburg, Fla., to raise funds and awareness for this cause.

The St. Petersburg based soldiers wore their Army physical fitness uniforms to represent the Army Reserve in the community and demonstrate their involvement. The reservists' participation in this event was another continuing effort with local law enforcement to tell the Army Reserve story.

Members from the 641st ASG, 317th Military Police Battalion, U.S. Army Recruiting Command, Correctional Facility and City/County Human Resource Directors are members of a coalition recruiting team to recruit local law enforcement officers to join the Army Reserve.

They work together to identify junior officers, high school and college students interested in law enforcement to be a part of the Army Reserve while serving as a law enforcement officer in the community.

Local television reporters were present at the celebration and soldiers were seen on television leading the formation run supporting the cause. All appeared to have had a good time while raising money for Special Olympics and getting into shape.

(By Maj. Cecil Hersey, 641st ASG)

BRIEFS

Absentee Ballots

Are you an Active Guard and Reserve soldier residing in a state other than your domicile pursuant to military orders while maintaining a residence in another state? If so, you can obtain a "Registration and Absentee Ballot Request - Federal Post Card Application - Standard Form 76." This is a non-reproducible form.

Coordinate with your friends to see how many SF 76s are needed at your unit. Resources are limited. Plan to use photocopies of SF 76 as a draft, rather than the actual form. E-mail your military address exactly as it should appear on the envelope, using capital letters, to: Daniel.Bernard@usarc-emh2.army.mil.

The SF 76 forms you request will be mailed to you. Instructions on how to fill out SF 76 can be found at the following website: <http://www.fvap.ncr.gov/vagchapter3-00.html>.

(81st RSC Staff Judge Advocate Office)

Korean War Service Medal

U.S. veterans of the Korean War are now eligible to wear a medal initially offered to them more than 50 years ago, but never issued.

In a May 13, 2000, letter to Defense Secretary William S. Cohen, Republic of Korea Defense Minister Seong Tae Cho formally announced that his government would provide the Republic of Korea War Service Medal (ROKWSM) to eligible U.S. veterans of that conflict, or to their surviving next of kin. The medal will be provided at no cost to veterans. The U.S. Air Force has been designated the lead agency to receive and distribute the medals.

To apply, veterans must provide a copy of their discharge paper, commonly known as a "DD-214," or a corrected version of that document, a "DD-215." National Guard members must provide their statement of service equivalent, "NGB Form 22."

Additional information on how to apply for or request the medal can be found by contacting the Air Force Personnel Center, Monday - Friday, 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. (CST) at (800) 558-1404, or the Awards and Decorations Section (210) 565-2432/2520/2516, fax (210) 565-3118, or by writing to HQ AFPC/DPPRA, 550 C Street West, Suite 12, Randolph Air Force Base, Texas 78150-4714. Information can also be found by visiting the web site: <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/awards>.

(Defense Link)

Distance Drilling Credit

The Army has found a new way for soldiers who cannot attend Army Reserve drills to continue to earn drill credits, from their homes.

The Community Open Source Program Office (COSPO) of the Foreign Broadcast Information Service is seeking participants to earn drill credits by working on the World Basic Information Library (WBIL) project.

The WBIL is a program that uses Virtual Private Network - Open Source Information System (OSIS) and Internet resources to build a basic information library. Employing Internet connectivity, it allows reservists to telecommute and prepare intelligence products for use by all source analysts, deploying units, and the law enforcement community.

The WBIL has over 100 remotely located people from all four branches of the service doing "virtual" production utilizing OSIS connectivity and their home Personal Computers (PCs). In other words, working at home using your PC to conduct research on assigned areas of the world for retirement point credit, just as if you were attending non-paid drills.

For more information visit the WBIL recruitment website at: <http://call.army.mil/call/fmso/wbil/wbilcontact.htm>.

(Sgt. Derrick Witherspoon)

Military Pay Raise

President Clinton signed into law an appropriations bill that raises soldiers' pay by 3.7 percent and increases Pentagon spending for next year by \$20 billion. "Our high military readiness must remain our top national security priority," he said.

Clinton signed the Department of Defense appropriations act without fanfare. The bill, passed late last month 90 to 10 in the Senate, allots \$288 billion for military needs.

The president said he was disappointed that the legislation did not address some of his priorities, such as money to finance a facility to destroy chemical weapons in Russia, while reducing funds for other key programs.

"The resulting cuts are troubling," Clinton said, but he added that he was pleased that lawmakers did provide military personnel with a pay increase and military retirees with prescription drug coverage.

(Washington Post)

Internet University

The Army will begin handing out notebook computers and printers to thousands of soldiers as early as December for online study, Army Secretary Louis Caldera announced earlier this month.

The program will create "the largest education portal in the world" as the service tries to improve recruitment and retention in the ranks.

Soldiers can take courses through the Army University Online Access portal at their barracks, which will be wired with broadband optical fiber, as well as at times during the duty week. The Army has earmarked \$50 million for the project in fiscal 2001 and \$550 million more over the succeeding five years.

Caldera said the portal will offer bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees as well as skill certifications. He added that education and training will be offered at low or no cost to those on active duty.

Caldera also added that spouses of Army personnel, as well as Army National Guard and Reserve citizen-soldiers will eventually be eligible to take the courses.

(Government Computer News)

New PT Uniform

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Aug. 30, 2000) – The Army began issuing the "Improved Physical Fitness Uniform" to basic trainees Aug. 15. On the same day, the new shorts, shirts and warm-up uniform hit the display racks at Clothing Sales Stores on most Army posts, despite shortages in some sizes.

"My staff loves the new uniform," said 1st Sgt. Charles Hire of the company that runs the Reception Station at Fort Jackson, S.C. He bought the new physical training clothes the same day his staff began issuing the PT uniform to incoming trainees.

"The shirt actually wicks away moisture and seems to wash better than the other shirt," Hire said. He added that the new shorts don't seem to stretch as much as the old ones and don't stain as easily.

The new PT uniform consists of a gray and black jacket with a reflective stripe costing \$55.80; black pants priced at \$28.80; black, moisture-wicking trunks with reflective letters priced at \$10.35; a gray, moisture-wicking, short-sleeved T-shirt with reflective letters costing \$6.10; and a gray, moisture-wicking, long-sleeved T-shirt with reflective letters priced at \$7.90. The total cost of the entire uniform is \$108.75.

The mandatory possession date for the Improved Physical Fitness Uniform, or IPFU, is not until Oct. 1, 2003 and officials said the old PT uniform can be worn until then.

For the next three years, commanders should expect to see some soldiers wearing the old PT uniform and some the new, said Martin Fadden, acting chief of the Clothing and Individual Equipment Team for the Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics.

While individual soldiers may choose to wear the old items until the wear-out date or purchase the new one as soon as possible, Fadden said they cannot "mix and match" wearing the old and new. For instance, he said wearing the old trunks with the new shirt is not authorized. Pants and shirt must always be from the same uniform, he said.

For the next three years, about \$30 of soldiers' clothing replacement allowance annually will be based on the increased cost of the new PT uniform, Fadden said. He said soldiers receive this allowance on the anniversary of their enlistment.

Army National Guard and Army Reserve soldiers do not receive the annual allowance, so reserve component units will begin an Issue-in-Kind replacement of the old PT uniform beginning in October, Fadden said.

(Arm Link News)